EXPLORING THE USAGE OF NEW MEDIA IN INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING: A CASE STUDY OF ALJAZEERA MEDIA NETWORK

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EXPLORING THE USAGE OF NEW MEDIA IN INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING: A CASE STUDY OF ALJAZEERA MEDIA NETWORK

ABSTRACT

Day after day, citizen journalism and social media platforms have been providing traditional media, including the Aljazeera Media Network, with abundant information in a feasible, quick and an affordable manner. Citizen journalism and new media have been functioning as open sources of information used in many press coverages, including investigative journalism. However, these sources are subject to criticism in terms of their accuracy, credibility, and objectivity, in addition to their failure to provide full-fledged stories covering all aspects of events and news. The main goal of this research aimed at shedding light on the usage of new media in investigative reporting of Aljazeera media network as an influential media institution in the Arab world. The objectives of this research are to explicate the regional importance of Aljazeera Media Network investigative reporting, to identify the factors that contribute to Aljazeera Media Network's use of new media in its investigative journalism, to explore the influences of new media usage on the practices of Aljazeera Media Network investigative reporting, and to explore the challenges of using new media in Aljazeera Media Network investigative reporting. The study adopted the technological affordances theory. Following the inductive qualitative approach of interpretive philosophical paradigm based on a case study of a phenomenological design that frames the methodology of in-depth interview data, this research adopted thematic analysis of 21 interviews with Arab journalists by coding the themes highlighted in the interviews' scripts. The results found out that the practice of investigative journalism provided Aljazeera media network with comprehensive and integrated media coverage. And, the employment of new media in investigative reporting made up for the shortfalls of official information obtained from other types of sources. The study also found out that there was a strong relationship between the rate of the usage of new media and the production of investigative reports (both in quantity and quality) in Aljazeera media network's media coverage. The results also showed that there were many challenges that face Aljazeera network in using new media in journalistic investigations. In conclusion, the study came up with the finding that the use of new media has in fact improved Aljazeera media network's investigative

reporting; however, there have been no sufficient evidence to claim that new media has become the main source of information for Aljazeera's media network.

Keywords

New Media, Open-source data, Citizen Journalism, Investigative Media, Aljazeera Media Network

MENEROKA PENGGUNAAN MEDIA BAHARU DALAM PELAPORAN PENYIASATAN: KAJIAN KES RANGKAIAN MEDIA ALJAZEERA

ABSTRAK

Dari hari ke hari, kewartawanan warga dan platform media sosial telah menyediakan media tradisional, termasuk Rangkaian Media Aljazeera, dengan maklumat yang melimpah dalam cara yang mudah, cepat, dan berpatutan. Kewartawanan warga dan media baharu telah berfungsi sebagai sumber terbuka maklumat yang digunakan dalam banyak liputan media, termasuk kewartawanan penyiasatan. Namun begitu, sumber-sumber ini sering dikritik dari segi ketepatan, kredibiliti, dan objektiviti, serta kegagalannya dalam menyediakan cerita lengkap yang merangkumi semua aspek peristiwa dan berita. Matlamat utama kajian ini adalah untuk meneliti penggunaan media baharu dalam pelaporan penyiasatan oleh Rangkaian Media Aljazeera sebagai institusi media yang berpengaruh di dunia Arab. Objektif kajian ini adalah untuk menjelaskan kepentingan serantau pelaporan penyiasatan Rangkaian Media Aljazeera, mengenal pasti faktor-faktor yang menyumbang kepada penggunaan media baharu dalam kewartawanan penyiasatan Aljazeera, meneroka pengaruh penggunaan media baharu terhadap amalan pelaporan penyiasatan Aljazeera, dan meneroka cabaran yang dihadapi dalam penggunaan media baharu dalam pelaporan penyiasatan Aljazeera. Kajian ini menggunakan teori kemampuan teknologi. Mengikut pendekatan kualitatif induktif dalam paradigma falsafah interpretatif berdasarkan kajian kes reka bentuk fenomenologi, yang membingkai metodologi data temubual mendalam, kajian ini menggunakan analisis tematik ke atas 21 temubual bersama wartawan Arab dengan mengekod tema-tema yang diketengahkan dalam skrip temubual tersebut. Hasil kajian mendapati bahawa amalan kewartawanan penyiasatan telah menyediakan Rangkaian Media Aljazeera dengan liputan media yang menyeluruh dan bersepadu. Penggunaan media baharu dalam pelaporan penyiasatan telah menampung kekurangan maklumat rasmi yang diperoleh daripada sumber-sumber lain. Kajian ini juga mendapati bahawa terdapat hubungan yang kuat antara kadar penggunaan media baharu dan penghasilan laporan penyiasatan (dari segi kuantiti dan kualiti) dalam liputan media Rangkaian Media Aljazeera. Hasil kajian juga menunjukkan bahawa terdapat banyak cabaran yang dihadapi oleh rangkaian Aljazeera dalam menggunakan media baharu dalam penyiasatan kewartawanan. Kesimpulannya, kajian ini mendapati bahawa

penggunaan media baharu telah memperbaiki pelaporan penyiasatan Rangkaian Media Aljazeera, namun tidak terdapat bukti yang mencukupi untuk mendakwa bahawa media baharu telah menjadi sumber utama maklumat bagi Rangkaian Media Aljazeera.

Kata kunci: Media Baharu, Data Sumber Terbuka, Kewartawanan Warga, Media Penyiasatan, Rangkaian Media Aljazeera

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LIST OF SYMPOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AA	Arab Audience
AJA	Aljazeera Arabic
AJE	Aljazeera English
AJMI	Aljazeera Media Institute
AJMN	Aljazeera Media Network
ARIJ	Arab Reporters for Investigative Journalism
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
FIJ	The Fund for Investigative Journalism
HR	Human Resources
ICFJ	The International Center for Journalists
ICIJ	The International Consortium for Investigative Journalism
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IFJ	International Federation of Journalists
IJ	Investigative Journalism
IJU	Investigative Journalism Unit
IP	Investigative Programs
IR	Investigative Reporting
IRA	Internet Research Agency
IRGC's	Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps'
IS	Information System
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
IUIJ	International Union of Investigative journalism
IW	Investigative Works
JJ	Junior Journalists
MT	Media Technology

NM	New Media
OCCRP	The Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project
OS	Open Sources
OSD	Open-Source Data
PI	Press Institutions
PO	Public Opinion
SJ	Senior Journalists
SM	Social Media
SMP	Social Media Platforms
TM	Traditional Media
WHO	World Health Organization
AS	Arab Spring
ASR	Arab Spring Revolutions

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Appendix A Sample of the Translated Email Interviews Transcript in English

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Appendix C Translated Transcript of the FGDs in English

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

On the eighth of January of 2020, a jetliner operated by Ukraine International Airlines crashed shortly after taking off in Tehran's Imam Khomeini International Airport. All 176 people on board were killed. This occurred on the same day in which military bases encompassing American soldiers in Iraq were intensively exposed to air strikes as a reply to the assassination of the General Qassem Soleimani, the head of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps' (IRGC's) Quds Force, at the hands of the US army, one week earlier. The Iranian government ruled out the existence of any relation between the two incidents and addressed the media to deal with the news as a natural weather disaster. However, the British Brillingat website and the US *New York Times* cooperatively managed to prove that the aircraft was shot down by an Iranian missile, which made Tehran, later on, admit the accident by declaring that it had occurred due to a human error. What matters here is not the news per se, but how the two news agencies managed to prove the incident. In fact, it was very interesting to know that both agencies managed to do so by conducting an investigative press inquiry, using scenes of two video clips, shot by an Iraqi man living by the Ukrainian plane's crashing site. In addition, the two websites used flight data published on the "Flight Radar" website" along with certain sections of "Google Maps" to identify the exact crashing location and other related information proving that the jet was knocked down by an Iranian rocket (Sakkur, 2020).

This story points to the significant role of new media in offering publicly published data for the sake of accessing the truth which is, at the end, the ultimate goal of media. Moreover, this story proves the need for the media to verify the accuracy of the information offered by formal sources such as governmental authorities or other similar institutions. However, the most important point here is the disclosure of the extent to which the communication technology has been developed especially with regards to its ability for the provision of the kind of information that can be easily accessed through new media in the form of open-source data.

Another good example of using new media (NM) in investigative journalism (IJ) comes from the ongoing military conflict in Libya. In order to prove its strength, the forces affiliated with Khalifah Haftar broadcasted pictures and videos about their military equipment by their official new media accounts in December 2019. These pictures include pictures of Egyptian armored vehicles. Aljazeera Media carried out an investigative report based on pictures and videos from new media and from sites specialized in armaments to prove that the Egyptian army supplied Khalifah Haftar's forces with these vehicles despite the international banning of supplying them with weapons (Mohammad, 2019).

The assassination of the Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi represents an important model to demonstrate the role of open-data sources as a part of new media in journalistic investigation. Khashoggi who is a columnist at the American famous newspaper *The Washington Post* was killed after he entered his country's consulate in Istanbul, Turkey on the 2nd October 2018. At first the Saudi authorities denied that Khashoggi had come to the consulate, and then they claimed that he attended to the consulate but left after finishing his work, thus the Saudi authorities continue issuing declaring that Khashoggi did not killed in the consulate until October 20, 2018 when they forced, under media pressure, to admit to killing Khashoggi by mistake inside the Saudi consulate

in Istanbul. In fact, the Turkish, Arab and international media have published a large number of pictures and recordings that deny the Saudi narrative about the circumstances of Khashoggi assassination. These published materials include the photo of Khashoggi when he entered the consulate, some pictures that have been captured from the cameras of Ataturk airport for the Saudi execution team while they arrived and left the city of Istanbul, and pictures of the tools used in killing Khashoggi and hiding his body, all these pictures which were stored in the X-ray machines at Istanbul's Ataturk Airport were used to gather clues about the Khashoggi murder story by the media before the Turkish Authorities issue their official report about the results of the investigations in the assassination process.

While all these procedures might seem like practices that deal with journalistic work with police mentality, they are organized under the framework of harnessing digital technology to serve investigative journalism, which is viewed from a philosophical framework in media studies as in-depth interpretive journalism of phenomena and events, primarily aiming at exposing corruption, deviation and shortcomings in the performance of institutions, and plays a supervisory role no less important than the role of parliaments. As for the procedural and executive aspect, they are perceived as media investigations that focus, in their procedures, on scientific and professional rules used by the journalist to uncover facts and dispel ambiguity with the aim of exercising oversight over public authority for the benefit of society (Tabet, 2022).

The above indicates the extent of the huge intersection between the functions of investigative journalism and the concepts of social responsibility, because the conclusions of the reports prepared by investigative journalists should open the door to judicial investigations into uncovered violations. One of the functions of investigative journalism is to find the truth as a

documentary reference for information preservation since it is in itself part of the oversight role in society; meaning that it focuses on considering the press the fourth authority (Tabet, 2022).

Investigative journalism has a number of features, most notably being critical and in-depth journalism (Ejik, 2005). Besides, it reveals the hidden to the public and uses confidential as well as open sources and documents (Hunter et al., 2011). Thus, it may share a set of techniques with traditional journalism, but it is more complex as it requires skills and time to master (Kaplan, 2013). Based on these characteristics, Cancela et al., (2021) argues that investigative journalism consists of uncovering wrongdoing independently based on collecting information of public importance that was hidden in some way. This often requires, implicitly and explicitly, an extraordinary amount of effort and resources (time and money), in addition to methods and tools.

1.1Background

It is well recognized that the recent two decades have been witnessing a huge revolution in the development of digital technology outputs which enhanced the content of social communication means and led to an easier access of public information (Schwab, 2016). Open-source data which is part of new media has been playing a key role in shaping the relation between technology and media (Yujie et al., 2022). In fact, it provides institutions and media men with chances to merely approach the truth away from certain misleading practices such as hiding or manipulating information. For instance, electronic applications, known as the second generation of internet websites (Web 2.0), have equipped consumers with comprehensive as well as specialized information (Anderson, 2007). Thus, such a strong relation that exists between technology and media gave birth to what has become known as the new media, paving the way for technology users to publish various contents via accessible publication channels and allowing for what is

currently known as citizen journalism, as one example. Interestingly, these outputs have quickly been professionally used in the field of journalism through the use of variant internet applications, including smart phones apps such as mobile applications on weather, traffic, flights, currency, and the like, in addition to social media accounts such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc. not to mention data taken by drones; and stored information in cloud technology, to add another. Academic scholars define new media in different ways either according to the message (Lievrouw & Livingstone, 2006) or to the social context in which these technologies and applications are used (Friedman & Friedman, 2008). However, Manovich (2002) defines new media on the basis of the technology behind its development. Such a tendency in the usage of digital data has led to a true media revolution that brought up open-source data into the scene, offering great chances to journalistic works aimed at revealing the truth. A good example is investigative journalism where journalists are usually keen on getting information from various sources of new media to overcome the obstacles that hinder approaching human news sources for the sake of accessing accurate information.

Other researches including (Shikhani, 2010) has defined new media as the media of information age that was born from the intermarriage of two prominent phenomena (information explosion) and (telecommunication). The volume of information flowing from new media channels has grown in recent years to the point that each of these media channels can be described as an empire of open and closed data. This information flow can be evaluated by accurate measures and tools that form graphic maps just as in an atlas of geographical areas and countries. The (Gurman) website for reading new media indicators, *Statista,* provides media practitioners and researchers with deep and clear details about new media atlas. According to its statistics, in April, 2024 Facebook has been placed at the top of the list of social media active users around the world

with 3.065 billion active users, followed by Instagram and WhatsApp applications came together at the 3rd place as the number of their active users in April 2024 reached 2.00 billion users.

Table 1.1: *Statista*'s ranking of international social media platforms considering the number of active users in April, 2024.

Social media platforms	**The number of monthly active subscribers**	**Social media platforms**	**The number of monthly active subscribers**
Facebook	3.065	WeChat	1.343
YouTube	2.504	Facebook Messenger	1010
Instagram	2.000	Telegram	900
WhatsApp	2.000	Snapchat	800
TikTok	1.582	Douyen	755

Source: Statista, (10, July, 2024).

The data of Statista clearly shows that Facebook dominates social media platforms. The total number of social media active users of Facebook, owned by Meta, reached 3.065 billion active users in April 2024 and make it the biggest empire in the virtual world. Facebook, like other social media platforms, is a main source of information flow to provide journalists and media workers with knowledge and evidence for investigative reporting. In second place, YouTube, the

American online video sharing platform owned by Google, reached more than 2.5 billion active users in April 2024. Instagram and WhatsApp applications came together at the 3rd place as the number of their active users in April 2024 reached 2.00 billion users.

Using new media in the Arab World has commenced after the emergence of social media platforms late in the 20th century. The usage of social media platforms varied in the Arab World based on differences of people's interests, types of electronic devices used to access the internet, and communication service quality. Research has shown that new media technology has been used the most by the youth. For example, a survey report issued by New Media Academy in the United Arab Emirates shows that 79% of Arab youth used social media platforms for following daily news. The report that was published under the title "How Did the Middle East Use Social Media Platforms in 2020?" also revealed that Arab companies' usage of instant communication apps such as WhatsApp, Zoom, and Google Teams, has remarkably increased during the same year considering safety procedures against COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, the same report revealed that communication companies' commercial brands such as Google and YouTube have still been listed within the first ten firms in the Arabic brand market. The report also demonstrates that there is a tendency among Arabs to use various social media platforms; for example, the average rate of social media accounts owned by the individual in the United Arab Emirates is estimated at 10 accounts. Egyptians, for instance, own 44 million Facebook accounts, which is the highest score in the Middle East and the ninth over the world. However, Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Egypt were placed within the first 13 countries in terms of the number of Snapchat subscribers (Radicliffe & Abu Hmaid, 2021).

1.2 Social media and investigative reporting in Aljazeera Media Network

The very fast global growth of using new media has promoted Arab press institutions to use new media platforms in three directions: the first is opening communication channels for Arab audiences in new media platforms. Printed newspapers, TV and radio channels transformed its content so rapidly to websites networks and millions of subscribers started to interact with new media accounts of YouTube, Facebook, X (previously Twitter), and Instagram. The second is following personal accounts of influencers, public figures, political parties, governmental leaders and social citizens as sources of daily news. And the third direction is establishing platforms, in the form of new media networks, allocated for quick publishing of blogs and posts focused on certain geographical regions (Belaid, 2016). As an example, Aljazeera launched a large group of Facebook accounts focused on different countries such as Aljazeera Syria, Aljazeera Egypt, Aljazeera Turkey, Aljazeera Iraq, and others. Besides, it created Facebook accounts to follow news based on the variety of its contents such as Aljazeera Politics, Aljazeera Economy, Aljazeera Art, Aljazeera Culture, Aljazeera Reports and Dialogues, Aljazeera Documentary, and others.

Of course, the high focus on social media platforms by a mainstream media outlet mostly affects its journalistic practice. Social media editors are fully integrated into Aljazeera's professional environment and become part of the network's overall content creation process where the role of social media moderators includes publishing and disseminating digital news, communicating with online audiences, and analyzing and sharing audience data (Neilson et al., 2023). The impact of new media practices and characteristics on Aljazeera cannot be ruled out, especially since the expansion of new media did not stop at its digital platforms and applications. Rather, the massive increase and great diversity of social media applications made them penetrate the daily production and consumption behavior of the media to a large extent, which imposed risks on mainstream media and created opportunities for it at the same time, in addition to directing

researchers to try to understand the different affordances provided by social media platforms (Hendrickx & Opgenhaffen, 2024).

For example, since the mid-2000s, Aljazeera has introduced the (Nashratkom- نشرتكم) program to its daily coverage. It displays the most tweeted hashtags on the X platform (formerly Twitter) in addition to excerpts from the most viewed topics on Aljazeera website, video clips broadcast on Facebook Live by social activists, videos posted on accounts of Facebook, YouTube, and other platforms. Although this is just one example of integrated new media into Aljazeera's journalistic practice, it provides evidence on the impact of social media on Aljazeera's journalistic practice in general. For example, by publishing tweets of the most frequent hashtags, Aljazeera links its programs to the top-rated hashtags on X and achieves the accessibility affordance by reaching the broadest audience, providing them with information and knowledge. By moving social media content to its screen, Aljazeera achieves the affordance of integrality. And by displaying the most read topics on its website, it achieves the visibility, all of which are affordances of new media technology (Siegert et al., 2020).

The above example illustrates the impact of new media affordances on journalistic practices in general. It represents an important preface to understanding the implications of new media affordances on Aljazeera's investigative journalism in particular, as open sources have been an important mine of investigative reporting in terms of developing investigative ideas, research, accessing and verifying information, as well as communicating with sources (Woude et al., 2024).

In September 2023 episode of Aljazeera program "The Hidden is More Immense", entitled "The Closed Space", prominent investigative journalist at Al Jazeera, Tamer Al-Mashaal, presented a report on the targeting of Arab content on social media platforms. It is true that the

report included interviews with responsible figures related to the file, including former Facebook officials and human rights activists, but the most sensitive information came from leaks that the producers obtained using new media technologies. This prompted the management of Meta, the owner of Facebook, to close the program presenter's account on the platform the day after the program was aired on Aljazeera on September 9, 2023 (Al-Khalij Online, 2023). This closely approximates the practice of investigative journalism by Aljazeera and the employment of new media in its investigative journalism as well as the challenges of using new media in investigative journalists of Aljazeera investigative reporting.

1.3 Investigative Media in the Arab World

Investigative work, or critical development journalism as some of the academicians prefer to call it (Alzowaimil, 2016), considering it as the least preferred journalist genre by governments and authorities, Aljazeera conducted special investigative works via reputed programs which remarkably contributed to the widespread of the channel. Examples for such programs include the following seven investigative reporting programs which Aljazeera has been presenting on its website over a quarter of a century:

- *Special Investigation:* a program produced and published every 2-3 months handling global issues like the ways of financing the nuclear reactor project of North Korea; the secrets of relationship between the ex-president of Libya Muammar Qaddafi and the ex-president of France Nicolas Sarkozy and the reasons for the failure of the World Health Organization (WHO) to manage the Coronavirus pandemic.
- *Aljazeera Investigations*: a worldwide series of films produced by the investigative investigation unit at Aljazeera Media Network. The topics of these programs vary from

political to economic and humanitarian issues. These programs include exposing the role of the mafia in managing the government in Bangladesh, the illegal trade of passports in Cyprus and the secrets of looting antiques in Syria

- *The Hidden is More Immense,* in Arabic ما خفي أعظم *Ma Khafi Aezam*: an investigative program that monitors issues shrouded in mystery in many countries of the world, traces their leads and details, and seeks to uncover new results in the field of investigative method, following up people associated with the case by using secret photography techniques and confront the concerned people with the camera. The most recent three parts of this program are the secrets of the Israeli spy program "Pegasus" and penetrating the phones of journalists and activists, the secrets of violence and organized crimes inside the Green Line, the Palestinian lands which have been occupied by Israel in 1948 where Palestinians are still live there, and the ways resistance movements in Gaza follow to gain weapons despite the pressure being practiced by Arab countries.
- The detective*, in Arabic* المحقق *Almuhaqiq:* a program deals with different issues in an investigative template that tracks the threads of the case and presents its details and implications, in a manner that gives the viewer the ability to understand the dimensions of the story and draw a complete picture of its merits. The detective revealed the secrets about the means of the UAE to control the western coast of Yemen.
- *Zero Distance*, in Arabic المسافة صفر *Almasafa Sifir:* a documentary program that reviews the thorny issues in the hot spots, the presenter of the program is close to the characters and events in order to give calm answers about burning stories like the plan of the Arab Gulf States and Egypt against Qatar, stopping the project of establishing the new Saudi city

NEOM and the involvement of the UAE and Saudi Arabia in funding research centers and fake accounts to attack Qatar.

- The Black Box*, in Arabic* الصندوق الأسود *Alsunduq Al'aswad :* this program aims to open the files by an investigator's eye for uncovering new secrets and details, discussing issues that have raised controversy issues that have been kept secret and re-narrating events with a documented vision. The black box has presented series including the secrets of Egypt Air plane crash (Flight 990) in the Atlantic Ocean in 1999, introducing ARAMCO, the Saudi oil company, in the IPO market and the reasons for withdrawing the idea and exploring the role of Abu Al-Abbas battalions in the assassinations that took place in Taiz city in Yemen, the way it was established, the sources of its financial support and the reality of its relationship with Al-Qaeda and ISIS.
- *Eyewitness,* in Arabic شاهد عيان *Shahid Eian*: the program depends on field research for presenting the details of a story or an issue that is rarely covered in media or ignored by the audience. This program focuses on details of the place where the hero of the story could be a single person or a group of people. The episodes of this program have dealt with issues including racism and violence against the immigrants in the USA, the conditions of women's lives in Tunisia during the rule of the president Zine El-Din Ben Ali and the suffering of people who live in Paris suburbs and the challenges that immigrants face in order to improve their reality and integrate into society.

Aljazeera network depended largely on new media for constructing these programs which are fed by citizen posts and leaked photos of modern technological photographing tools which provided them with so much information, evidence and data in addition to leaked documents. Moreover, Aljazeera also depended on new media accounts as platforms to market its programs

via broadcasting advertisements, announcements, and promos. In addition, new media has provided Aljazeera investigative programs with priceless opportunities to become the first trend after hundreds of thousands got tweeted on the hashtag of each of them.

1.4 Aljazeera Media Network

Aljazeera Media Network is a media corporation fully owned by the State of Qatar. The study of Sadig and Petcu (2019) states that it has been well known as Aljazeera Arabic (AJA) since it was established in 1996. After the war of Afghanistan in 2001, Aljazeera has become one of the most popular media networks and perceived as influential and widespread equally as CNN in the Arab World. Aljazeera has since then launched many space channels such as Aljazeera Live in 2005, Aljazeera Kids in 2005, Aljazeera English (AJE) in 2006, Aljazeera Documentary in 2007, Baraem TV in 2009, Aljazeera Balkans in 2011, Jeem TV in 2013, and Aljazeera Turkish in 2014. Additionally, Aljazeera Media Network encompasses a large number of satellite sport channels in many different languages known as “Bein Sport Channels.” Beside the satellite channels, Aljazeera has established a huge network of communication including electronic websites and social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and other applications and digital accounts followed by hundreds of millions of people (Sadig & Petcu, 2019).

Regarding the sources of media coverage, Aljazeera depends on the recruitment of globally distributed correspondents to provide the audiences with the most urgent and exclusive news. On the other hand, it also relies on its subscriptions in some international media agencies. As traditional sources of news, these two methods of news gathering were pursued as the main two basic sources of news coverage prior to the advent of social media era which seriously has become a third competing source that works side by side with the two traditional media sources.

1.5 News Verification Tactics in Aljazeera Media Network

The fact that social media platforms can be used as a source of fake news or manipulated information has led big media institutions such as Aljazeera to realize the great importance of generating new procedures and setting certain tactics for news verification. Senior officials and investigative program producers in Aljazeera Media Network have been following a system of news verification using electronic applications and computerized programs capable for checking the originality of photos and videos such as InVID or ten eyes applications, verifying whether the data were published in other occasions or not, examining the spread of and the reaction to the posts and comments, and testing the elements or components of videos or photos and comparing them to the given contexts, such as the weather, clothes, styles of buildings, car plate numbers, the language of signs and advertisements on shops' walls and windows, telephone numbers, products advertisements, etc., that may prove the falsity or truth of news. Moreover, the history and reputation of the source that publishes any data play an important role in determining whether it is valuable to be handled or not (Al-Najjar, 2021).

However, there is a great level of consistency between the tactics of Aljazeera's news verification and those provided for in the *News Verification Guide* by Trewinnard (2017) which categorizes fake content in three types of social media: wrong time/wrong place, manipulated content and staged content. The News Verification Guide also placed the news verification process in five stages. First: verifying the originality of the photos or videos published on social media; this can be done by checking the content and making sure that it is consistent with the related given information. Second: checking the original source of publication and verifying its accuracy and responsibility over the content published on social media. Third: the geo-location stage which

involves verifying the geographical location where the photo or video was taken. Fourth: verifying the time of publication; and fifth: analyzing the announced or anticipated reasons of publication.

1.6 Problem Statement

Aljazeera Media Network faces the challenges of sharp political polarization in the Arab World (Sultan, 2013). These challenges were evident during the Arab spring revolutions after 2011 (Campbell & Hawk, 2012) and during the Gulf crisis in 2017 (Ajaoud & Elmasry, 2020). This problem is manifested in two aspects; the first is related to restricting Aljazeera's ability to access information sources (Erraji, 2021); the second is blocking Aljazeera broadcasts from reaching the public (Cherkaoui, 2014). In the first aspect, Aljazeera's offices were closed in more than one Arab country (Eliades, 2020), its correspondents were arrested, prison sentences were issued against many of them (Bidart, 2019) and other correspondents were killed (Nearly 1,700 journalists killed, 2022) in the most terrifying security challenge for the staff. As for the second aspect, Aljazeera network broadcasts have been blocked and access to its digital platforms has been restricted in a large number of countries in the Arab World.

This problem appears to be very influential in the journalistic work in general, but it is more serious when it comes to the practice of investigative journalism, which depends mainly on the availability of accurate sources of information (Noah, 2017). This explains why Aljazeera resorted to intensifying its use of new media for accessing sources (El Gody, 2021) even though its validity and reliability were vulnerable to sharp criticism and many other questions (Izin, 2021). Aljazeera's behavior has created a research interest in explaining the influence of its intensive use of investigative journalism and new media on the one hand and a lack of information linking its

investigative journalism practice to new media, which leaves an important knowledge gap that needs to be covered on the other hand.

After the great spread of new media and its extensive use in many areas of life during the past few decades, it has become efficiently used in many areas including police and journalistic investigations as well (Wilding, et al., 2018). Accordingly, the employment of new media in investigative journalism has become extremely important (Gearing, 2014), because of its role in facilitating access to sources of information described as the "backbone of investigative journalism" (Alshawabkah, 2022), offering digital display technologies through multimedia (Franco, 2009); and providing investigative journalists with digital platforms that are easily affordable through social media (Nyamboga, 2014).

However, employing new media to conduct investigative journalism is still a challenging mission for journalists and press institutions (Nielsen et al., 2016). This is attributed to several reasons including digitization hassles (Wilding, et al., 2018) such as low reliability of new media products and the ease of withholding reliable information from the media by controlling access to data in new media platforms (Abu Elhamam, 2014). In addition, investigative journalism in general is a demanding and continuously developing journalism in many aspects (Yaroshchuk, 2019). Despite these challenges, important incentives motivate journalists and press institutions to practice investigative journalism by using new media either for personal, organizational or managerial achievements, or even to promote the competitiveness of media organizations among the opponents (Kurnia et al., 2021). Igweze (2020) found that new media tools have become widely used during the practice of journalism, as Investigative journalists around the world are finding in these tools new opportunities to reduce their workload and in return improve their performance. Some researchers such as Cheney Thomas mainly focused on the impacts of social media

platforms as outputs of new media development upon journalism practices in general. He concluded that "social media can be used as a source for writing material, it can also be used as a method to communicate/network with peers, to share knowledge through it, journalists use social media as a marketing tool to specifically promote either their own material, their own publication's work, or purely to pull traffic to their external site through promoting via social media" (Thomas, 2013, p. 32).

Moreover, the emergence of new media through the internet created existential influences on practicing journalism as it pushed the traditional media, especially the print press, facing the challenge of continuity by providing what is different. Some press institutions became aware of this change and began to focus on exciting investigative work to compete with the modern means of communication (Al-Hamadani, 2021). Significantly, the development of new media technology has profoundly affected the practice of investigative journalism in many aspects including the replacement of objectivity with transparency as an ethical rule for journalism, losing human capacity for the global news industry, and the most important aspect is the retreat of news making in a traditional way versus the rise of investigative journalism.

Therefore, this thesis considers the use of Aljazeera Media Network of new media in investigative journalism, which it practices in depth, to find out the most the importance of this use in the Arab World, its relation with new media, and the most important challenges it faces. Aljazeera was chosen in particular because it is a pioneer in employing new media in investigative journalism. There is plenty of evidences proving that Aljazeera Media Network is using new media, at least satisfactorily, in its press coverage including investigative journalism (Makharesh & Pitts 2019) even though the comprehensive investigative work in the Arab press is still in its infancy (Al-Falahi, 2012). However, the overlap and functional synchronization between open-

source data of new media and investigative journalism in Aljazeera still requires deconstruction. This interference impairs the ability to reach a broader understanding of employing Aljazeera's new media to serve its investigative journalism because data extracted from the new media "plays an important role in the various stages of an investigation, including how it is presented within the story" (Khalil, 2021).

Regarding the case of the Ukrainian airplane, mentioned in the background of this study, the British Brillingat website along with the US *New York Times* succeeded to present the real story of the crashing of the plane based on the usage of open-source data as an example of the new media technology in investigative media to compensate the absence of the human sources, the inaccurate information available, or blocking part of the true narrative (Sakkur, 2020). However, media institutions' usage of new media in the Arab World is still primary and incapable of serving the ultimate goal of seeking the truth or functioning as a tool for unveiling reality compared to investigative reporting (Abu Elhamam, 2014).

Open sources of information provided by the development of new media technology present great opportunities for journalists to produce influential journalistic work, including investigative reports (Müller & Wiik, 2021; Petrovski & Block, 2022 & Sill, 2014). Beside the traditional sources, Aljazeera relies in different levels on open sources of information provided by new media in its press coverage (Abdul-Mageed, 2008). this accreditation culminated in the launch of Sanad Agency for checking news in 2019, which has become an important news source for the various platforms of the Aljazeera network by producing about 70 verified news daily in various fields from new media sources and has proved itself as a source of verified and urgent news that editors cannot do without (Al-Qazzaz, 2020). The background of this study presented several

examples showing that Aljazeera efficiently used data from open sources provided by new media to produce investigative reports.

Yet, despite these sound examples, the presence of open-source data via Arab new media is still fragile due to the shortage of laws and legislations which is very essential to protect the journalists legally and physically and also as a result of the insufficient public awareness accompanied with the high level of self-censorship increases regarding publishing and broadcasting under the pressure of social controls and the penalties of ruling authorities (Abu Elhamam, 2014). Thus, the absence of freedom in accessing data sources leads some journalists to say that "open-source data is a new quest on board of news processing rooms" (Sakkur, 2020).

Some Arab big news agencies showed a certain interest in following and verifying open-source data via new media technologies. For instance, Al Araby TV, which broadcasts from London, presented a TV show called *Polygraph*, within its 2020 periodical TV programs, especially allocated for deconstructing false and fabricated narratives of Arab new media (Omar, 2019). However, research on investigative press productions does not lead to any results even after reviewing the vast majority of the sites and program plans of many Arab media networks, except for Aljazeera, which established a "monitoring and verification unit" specifically for the purpose of verifying information obtained from open-source data through the use of new media (El Gody, 2021). Another good example is Aljazeera's TV show, called "Ma Khafiya Atham" (meaning literally "The Hidden is More Immense" and has been classified as one of the most important Arab investigative TV shows, in which certain leaked audio and visual files are broadcasted in public (Alsangri, 2019). There is much evidence proving Aljazeera's high interest in investigative journalism contrary to other Arab media competitors. For example, on October 22, 2016, Aljazeera Net website announced the launch of a group of six televised investigative programs most of them

are still being broadcasted on the screen periodically. Moreover, Aljazeera's investigative journalism unit has won dozens of prestigious international awards in the last few years including the Investigative Journalists Organization (IRE) specialized award in the Digital Video category on April, 2022 (Rees, 2022). All of the above practices are evidences supporting the fact that Aljazeera Media Network is considered as the most important media network producing and publishing investigative journalism in the Arab World even though the current Arab investigative journalism is yet weak (Makharesh & Pitts, 2019; Bebawi, 2016 & Abu Elhamam, 2014).

Investigative journalism has entered the Arab World in a late time and it has been confined to a limited number of Arab countries (Al-Falahi, 2012). Al-Falahi argues that Arab media trends are still too far from the investigative work methodology. He attributes the reason for that to the nature of the political structure of the Arab states and to the investigation vision in the performance of the Arab World in addition to the qualifications required for the investigative work. *The Scientific Method in Investigative Journalism* argues that the emergence of investigative journalism has been delayed in Arab countries for many reasons, the most important of which is the absence of democracy, which is a necessary condition for the emergence of reliable investigative journalism. The book indicates that the term investigative journalism which is called "a very special type of journalism" began to emerge in the Arab World, especially in Egypt, after the year 2009, when bodies and institutions interested in investigative investigations emerged (Abu Elhamam, 2014, p. 25).

The success of any journalistic organization like Aljazeera in using new media to carry out successful investigative investigations requires effective use of open sources (Khalil, 2021). The Egyptian investigative reporter Ahmad Al-Shami supports the previous claim saying that "there is no magic wand or one tool to extract information from all open sources, rather it depends on several

skills to find and obtain knowledge in different ways. Especially in light of the restrictions imposed on movement during the COVID-19 pandemic". In a webinar for a series of digital seminars held by the International Center for Journalists in partnership with Facebook Journalism Project within the Social Media Platforms Solutions Program in 2020, Al-Shami clarifies that the information obtained by the journalist from open sources is available to the public and becomes no longer confidential contrary to what some might think; however, the journalist must know how to access information and how to use it to support investigations.

It is believed that influential investigative journalism needs to take sufficient time, that may last for weeks, months, and even years, in order to produce an important story that fulfills accountability and leaves a big impact on public opinion while at the same time being capable of reaching a wide audience. Given that, interaction is a key factor that leads to investigative journalism impact. Interestingly, some Arab media outlets have recently made tangible achievements in this particular regard (Anderson & Abu- Arif, 2015).

While some research studies discussed the topic of Aljazeera's new media usage including (Boumechta, 2021; Belabbas, 2019 & Abdul Hamid, 2012) and investigative journalism such as (Alsangri, 2019 & Mansour, 2019), few studies examined the relationship between the two subjects as two factors affecting one another. In other words, research is still lacking information on how the new media can be employed in developing investigative journalism for Aljazeera, the first Arab media network (Sakkur, 2020). Regarding research on new media, Boumechta (2021) presented an analytical study for the program "Nasherkoum" (which means your news) on Aljazeera channel, in which the researcher examined the use of social media in the production of news bulletins on Aljazeera satellite channel. Moreover, Belabbas (2019) studied the employment of new media in the news scenario industry and its impact on public opinion, while Abdul Hamid

(2012) dealt with Aljazeera from the perspective of social interaction within the framework of media sociology.

On the other hand, research on investigative journalism included Alsangri (2019) which addressed the problems of practicing investigative journalism in Iraq as a field study focused on thinking about the capabilities provided by the use of mobile phones in the production of media content, and considered this a quantum leap in the performance of media institutions in producing reports, documentaries, and immediate media coverage while (Mansour, 2019) discussed the interests and methods of preparation, writing and presentation of investigative reporting in the Arab World. Ergo, most of the mentioned research has studied specific aspects of Aljazeera network's activity in the field of new media or investigative journalism and dealt with it from certain aspects such as content, technology or impact, but it did not however provide a road map for understanding the relationship between the two elements in Aljazeera Media Network.

The foregoing information led to an important conclusion about Aljazeera's progress over other Arab media networks at the level of production and dissemination of investigative reporting by making use of new media despite facing the same objective conditions experienced by the entire Arab media. Thus, there is a significant need for more research to provide a comprehensive perception of Aljazeera's usage of new media in investigations by combining the two elements: Aljazeera’s new media and investigative journalism, which would turn Aljazeera into a role model for the Arab media to follow in developing their investigative journalism.

In the Arab countries, where non -democratic regimes dominated political and social life for decades, there are plenty of issues that can be covered by investigative journalism, but there is no equivalent process of production and publishing of these topics despite the large number of

journalists and media institutions. Therefore, there is insufficient normative journalism, chronic scarcity of investigative reporting of new unique revelations, in-depth research and accurate documentation (Alshawabkah, 2022).

1.7 Objectives of the Study

It is not possible to understand the reality of investigative journalism in the Arab media in general and in Aljazeera Media Network as a case study without deeply looking into two major developments that have emerged in the region during the last decade. The first is the very fast development of telecommunication technology that has been leading the information revolution represented in the high usage of new media and social media platforms around the globe including the Arab area. The second is the major political crises known as Arab Spring revolutions. The information revolution has led to a fundamental change in the style of news coverage by increasing the reliance on digital sources at the expense of human and other types of information sources and through decreasing the power of governments to control the information flow to the media organizations.

On the contrary, the Arab Spring revolutions have heightened the sensitivity of many non-democratic governments in the Arab World toward Aljazeera Media Network. In countries such as Syria, Egypt and Bahrain, where the Arab Spring failed to achieve its goals, governments started to view the role of Aljazeera as an instigator of revolutions. Accordingly, many harsh procedures were followed against Aljazeera Media Network and its affiliates. So many offices of Aljazeera got closed in many cities including Cairo, Damascus and Al-Manamah; many of Aljazeera teams were also banned from fulfilling their duties where a remarkable number of journalists were jailed and sentenced to long imprisonments. These measures limited the ability of Aljazeera Media

Network to access information sources from official government personnel or spokesmen at the time the audience needed more data and information on the ongoing crises. To that end, Aljazeera had intensified its reliance on new media and open-source data in order to satisfy its audience's continuous desire for up-to-date news coverage with a special focus on investigative reporting.

The study aims at achieving a general objective which is exploring the usage of new media development, especially the use of open-source data in the investigative practice of Aljazeera Media Network as a case study of Arab investigative media.

The study also aims at achieving the following four specific objectives:

i. To explicate the regional importance of Aljazeera Media Network investigative reporting.

ii. To identify the factors that contribute to Aljazeera Media Network's use of new media in its investigative journalism.

iii. To explore the influences of new media usage on the practices of Aljazeera Media Network investigative reporting.

iv. To explore the challenges of using new media in Aljazeera Media Network investigative reporting.

1.8 Research Questions

In order to achieve the above-mentioned goals and objectives of the study, every research question was designed to meet one of the related objectives in consistence with the research problem. The study tries to provide answers to the following main four questions:

i. What is the regional importance of Aljazeera Media Network investigative reporting?

ii. Why does Aljazeera Media Network use new media in its investigative journalism?

iii. How does new media usage influence the practices of Aljazeera Media Network investigative reporting?

iv. What are the challenges of using new media in Aljazeera Media Network investigative reporting?

1.9 Definitions

New media is mainly defined in different ways either according to the message (Lievrouw & Livingstone, 2006) or to the social context in which these technologies and applications are used (Friedman & Friedman, 2008). It is in many cases defined on the basis of the technology behind its development such as in Manovich, (2002). It is also defined as the media of information age that was born from the intermarriage of two prominent phenomena (information explosion) and (telecommunication) (Shikhani, 2010), or as everything related to the internet and the interplay between technology, images and sounds (Socha & Eber-Schmid ,2015).

Citizen journalism is defined as the process of forming news by people (Wall, 2015). It is a kind of information production as well as access (Kamel & Mohammad 2017) free of charge (Nikkanen, 2019) rapid and massive access to information sources (Yang, 2016) but with high level of accuracy and objectivity defects and low professional standards (Hafiz, 2018).

Aljazeera Media Network: A media corporation fully owned by the State of Qatar, established in 1996 and has become one of the most popular media networks and perceived as influential and widespread media including satellite channels and social media platforms followed by millions of people (Sadig & Petcu, 2019).

Investigative Journalism: It is mainly defined as deep and innovative journalism that employs systematic research methods for revealing secrets and focusing on social justice (Kaplan, 2013). It is characterized by taking a lot of efforts for preparation, consuming long period of time, dealing with only serious and deep topics, having great deal of responsibilities, taking awareness of legal caveats and employing records, and using data and documents frequently (Mansour, 2019).

1.10 Research Significance

Academic theorizing of the relation between technology and media, especially the field of new media, has yet been in its primitive phases due to the newness of the concept of new media in comparison to the rapid pace of technology development (Ngai et al., 2015). Moreover, the study states that they only found very little research carrying the term new media within the period of conducting their research entitled "Social Media Research: Theories, Constructs and Conceptual Frameworks", which made them use synonymous terminology (social media, blogs, etc.) in their searching processes for articles in the field. This conclusion points to the fact that the insufficient research on new media virtually indicates the scarceness of research on open-source data. Hence, it can be claimed that the volume of research conducted on the role of open-source data on investigative media is definitely insufficient. In addition, very little research has been focused on the relation between new media and investigative media in the Arab World (Nouri 2019; Qarara & Qarara, 2017). Ergo, the field of research provided extensive and important data and information about the new media, but the majority of studies were dealing with the impact of new media on the activities of human life in general, such as education, marketing or e-commerce (Hajar, 2017) or socialization (Kofahi & Warrad, 2020) and (Shared, 2018). However, there is still a need for research that examines the interplay between new media and other journalistic tracks in the Arab World, such as investigative journalism. Given that, this study is of great significance because it

builds a strong association between the development of new media and Arab usage of investigative journalism by focusing on the attempts of Aljazeera Media Network in this regard.

The significance of this study also stems from the fact that there are few past studies that focused on the same research problem or even the same elements highlighted in this research; most studies concentrated on addressing partial issues raised by this study. Moreover, this research provides a practical and procedural case study that applied the theories of social media on a renowned and reputable media network in the Middle East, compared to other studies that linked social media to considerable human and social sciences, in general, such as gender or citizenship studies or other major research fields as public relations, marketing, public opinion, and many more. Besides, this study is focused on the most developing and most modern research concepts consistent with scientific and professional ethics.

1.11 Research Scope

This research is a descriptive and exploratory study which provides in-depth information on using new media in investigative reporting of Aljazeera Media Network. Aljazeera Media Network specializes in news coverage in the Arab World which is lacking a lot of data due to many reasons related to wars, corruption, nationwide crises, and other reasons. Studying investigative media is important because it is a new kind of media coverage in the Arab media and because it helps in compensating for the lack and/or hiding of official information. Thus, open-source data of new media may be a helpful tool to establish media narration when the journalist missed the way to reach the information from their official sources. The research examined the coverage of Aljazeera Media Network in 2020 because it witnessed the development of COVID-19 pandemic, hitting the world; during the year, the pandemic restricted, to a large extent, journalists' movement for chasing

information of traditional sources, making them more dependent on digital sources for creating their stories and media coverage. Furthermore, the archive of Aljazeera Media Network, which is still fresh and easily accessible at Aljazeera website, supplies the study with so many investigative programs provided for the year of 2020.

Finally, studying investigative journalism and new media of Aljazeera is chosen for several reasons; the most important is the fact that the two of them reflect a contemporary journalistic practice that relies on information technology in the Arab media (Bebawi, 2016; Alzahrani, 2020). This means that both of IJ and NM have been providing a kind of an important accumulation of information that the field of media research still requires. Then, due to the availability of a lot of evidence on Aljazeera's intense practice of both of IJ and NM (Ben Moussa, 2007; Ben Abdullah, 2011) which offers rich materials to be studied carefully and provides observational information about them. And, for the possibility of employing both of IJ and NM to achieve the same goals, especially with regard to access to information sources and dissemination among the public (Howard & Hussain, 2013) which facilitates building perceptions about the relationship between investigative journalism and new media in Aljazeera coverage. Finally, because practicing each of them to the fullest is still a challenge for the Arab media (Mekki, 2020). All these factors make studying investigative journalism and new media in Aljazeera network very compatible with the objectives of this study.

Aljazeera Media Network is specifically chosen in this study for six reasons: its broadcasting media contents are focused on political issues; it is classified among the most influential networks in the Arab World as being watched by millions of Arab people; it has a long history of media production using independent studios equipped with its own production infrastructure with stable budgets and allocated units for full production programs. Furthermore,

Aljazeera Media Network is also selected for its developed production processes involving production outputs such as television, websites and social media accounts and channels managed by thousands of professional teams of talented and expert correspondents, editors, directors, producers, and many others. Moreover, Aljazeera Media Network has a well-organized and accessible archive that can be used for revision, analysis and eliciting examples that support or refute results.

1.12 Structure of the Thesis

This research addresses two key research parts: new media and investigative journalism. The study examines the relation between the two by focusing on the case of Aljazeera Network. Thus, these two terms are going to be used across the body of this research which contains five chapters: Introduction, Literature Review, Methodology, Results and Discussions, and Conclusion.

The Introduction chapter presents examples of and evidence on the development of world investigative journalism resulting from media technology development and sheds light on the reality of new media and investigative journalism over the Arab World as well as Aljazeera usage of each of them. Aljazeera Network is used as a representative case study of the Arab media. The research problem was mainly focused on understanding the relation between new media and investigative journalism. Moreover, the study addressed the impact of the contemporary social and political environment that has been prevailing in the Arab World during the past decade due to its vast intersection with media issues in terms of agenda identification, publication policies, media coverage and audiences' tendency to deal with the media. Besides, the chapter explained the main four objectives of the study as well as the research significance and questions.

The second chapter reviews the most important previous research in the field divided into introduction, digital online technologies in investigative journalism, Investigative journalism in Arab World, Aljazeera Investigative Journalism, New media characteristics, theoretical frame work, conceptional framework, and conclusion. The third chapter handled the methodology adopted in the research, which is the inductive qualitative approach based on the interpretive philosophical paradigm via focusing on a case study of a phenomenological design that frames the methodology of in-depth interview data. The fourth chapter presents and discusses the results being approached by the thematic analysis of the texts of the interviews. And, the fifth chapter presents the significant conclusions based on research results and data analysis.

CHAPTER TWO

LITRATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter highlights the most significant research conclusions on new media in terms of terminology, tools, and components of the communication process in order to understand the relation between new media and traditional media. And, it presents a background on the influences of new media development on various aspects of journalism practice including investigative reporting, which is introduced in the same chapter with the focus being put on its definition, ethics, literature and its development especially in the Arab World and in Aljazeera Network, in particular. Furthermore, this chapter has covered the most recent works of related past studies in order to pave the way for comprehending the most important keywords that are used in this research to the end of understanding the regional importance of Aljazeera Media Network investigative reporting and exploring the factors of its usage of new media in investigative journalism as well as to understand the influences of new media usage on investigative journalism; side by side with the challenges that restrict the effective use of new media in investigative journalism.

The bulk of the literature reviewed in this chapter discusses issues related to the philosophy of the thesis, including online digital technologies in investigative journalism, investigative journalism in the Arab world, investigative journalism in Aljazeera, and the characteristics of new media. Then moving on to explain the theoretical framework that frames this thesis and explains the research problem and its objectives, which are represented in the theory of technological affordances of new media. Finally, it provides a conceptual framework around the most important

elements that together constitute the components included in this study, including new media, investigative journalism, and Aljazeera Media Network.

2.1 Digital Online Technologies in Investigative Journalism

The development of technology has come up with the emergence of a new form of journalism whose distinguishing qualities include the availability of news everywhere, access to global information, real-time reporting, interactive multimedia content, and the promotion of specialization (Pavlik, 2001). These are all new media advances that can be accurately captured in every field that shows the connection of journalistic practice to digitization such as digital whistleblowing which enables the usage of online sources such as social media platforms for disclosing information including photos and videos for further media investigations (Widhiyanti & Bernawati, 2020).

The concept of whistleblowing has close ties with the press and the media, as leakers of information often whisper their news to journalists (Ochuco & Deliceirmak, 2021). It is a relationship that carries a lot of detail, such as training journalists to protect the privacy data of whistleblowers (Chatzinikolaou & Milkaite, 2018). According to instructions of many sources such as Hambursin (2010), whistleblowers are advised to go to the press if the institutions officials do not take any subsequent action after being alerted from them, but the whistleblower's approach to the media may face risks and consequences, including public embarrassment, scrutiny by the media in addition to the responsible authorities, as well as the possibility of exposing the institution or the whistleblower to lawsuits and the penalties that may result from them. (Hambursin, 2010).

The process of whistleblowing has been greatly affected by the development of digital communication technology via virtual platforms which changed the nature of whistleblowing

channels, motives, and associated outcomes (Lam & Harcourt, 2019). The study examined the motivations of whistleblowing through digital platforms such as social media, blogs or websites, for reporting violations by both employees and non-employees, the benefits and drawbacks of such reporting. The study concluded that digital technology has accelerated the impact on whistleblowers, organizations and the public, and has increased the conviction of the importance of whistleblowing more than before, especially during the time of traditional whistleblowing methods.

On the other hand, some studies such as (Bosua et al., 2014) believes that whistleblowing processes is one of the important processes that have taken advantage of the great opportunities of information and communication technology (ICT) revolution that allows individuals, groups and teams to socialize, collaborate and connect to online content across time and space.

The technological development and the acceleration of digitization have greatly affected various practices in the field of journalism and media (Macnamara, 2010) in a way that supports the predictions of the technological determination concept of Marshall McLuhan which perceived the world as being one small village due to the role of developed technology in shortening space and time among different far regions on earth (Ertuk & Taylor, 2015).

Lev Manovich (2002) highlights the significant integral role of computer technology in media production, which has greatly affected the nature of communication and led to important changes resulting in new communication processes. For example, all graphics, photos as well as audio effects have been nowadays produced by computer software, which points to the conclusion that media production is a combination of a group of industries: the most important of which are the media and technology.

In fact, whistleblowing is not the only practice that illustrates how investigative journalism benefits from the affordances of new media in general: there is also open-source data. The vast availability of data on the internet has made open-source digital investigations (OSINV) increasingly popular as more and more practitioners have turned to this kind of investigations. Open-source data, including satellite imagery, corporate records, and user-generated content such as photos, videos, and audio recordings, made investigative journalists deal with OSINV as a place to expand the information they use in their investigations while maintaining a delicate balance between journalistic transparency, privacy and digital security considerations (Woude et al., 2024). In this context, open-source investigations are in themselves a genre of conflict reporting because they rely on eyewitness images from conflict sites (Ristovska, 2022), a practice that Aljazeera has used in its investigative reporting on many events in five continents.

In addition, technological innovations in expanding the important sources of investigative journalism were not confined at open-source data. Rather, the practice of data journalism driven by technology has become inherently dependent on gathering information from social networks saturated with details and news in a natural and social way. It has also led to the creation of new practice behaviors among newsroom workers. It has achieved the greatest progress in its employment in journalistic fields, including the practice of investigative journalism (Santos & Mesquita, 2021). The professional behavior of data journalism investigators can be compared to the performance of a researcher who collects information at the secondary level without creating it but rather through deep diving into online data to conduct investigative journalism.

There seems to be no limit to the potential of innovative technology to serve investigative journalism. At least this is the conclusion one can reach when looking at the enormous advantages that generative artificial intelligence offers investigative reporters. The essence of these auxiliaries

is to generate images and videos that can, in theory, positively compensate for the lack or loss of original visual content related to investigative reporting, which some producers see as an opportunity to restore content, increase efficiency and quality, reduce costs, and enhance persuasion. However, the deepfake scare still places generative AI within the framework of challenges related to misinformation and misleading information, as well as concerns related to labor issues, copyright, and the possibility of algorithmic bias due to the accuracy of generating this content and its imitation of the original at a very high level (Thomson et al., 2024)

Among the new practices that the new media affords journalists in general are collaborative data-sharing networks, which are digital communities of journalists who form communication platforms to exchange information about the news they cover, given their reliance on pre-new media communication tools such as wireless, telephone, and fax.

It can be concluded that the exchange of news among journalists was previously characterized by individuality, communication between two people, locality within a single geographic area, and limitedness, as information was transmitted only orally, in writing, or in print. But with the emergence of new media affordances, technologies for connecting people have become networked through groups of people interested in communication tools that use special technologies such as WhatsApp, Telegram, Facebook, and many others. New media affordances have also provided these networks with the affordance of globality, so communication has become borderless. They have also provided the advantage of hypertextual content, where the transferred materials are now measured in bytes and multiples thereof and can include images, videos, live broadcasts, links, integration with live streaming programs, and others.

The technological affordances never sleep as digital surveillance represents another form of interaction between new media affordances and investigative journalism. For decades,

journalists have traditionally complained about being monitored by government systems and security agencies. But digital media affordances have turned things upside down, with journalists now able to track their target digitally and take photos with technological lenses hidden in a pen, a shirt button, or even a collar pin. Studies such as Tsui (2019) have shown that journalists with advanced security capabilities are able to work on a wider range of (sensitive) investigations. Thanks to technological surveillance.

Moreover, the police capabilities that new media affords make investigative journalists conduct digital interviews with human news sources and publish news under anonymous names. This journalistic behavior has been called the dark web, sometimes referred to as the dark internet, and is primarily intended to protect both the source and the journalist by first encrypting the names and then maintaining a distance where the source and the investigative journalist do not meet face to face (Hognestad, 2020).

All in all, the digital investigative journalist has gradually and rapidly become accustomed to all these practices that have resulted directly or indirectly from the affordances provided by new media technology, which makes the need to interpret and understand these practices an urgent need in order to contribute to the comprehensive theory of journalistic practice in the digital age.

2.2 Investigative Journalism in Arab World

In recent years, investigative journalism has been used in a haphazard and unsystematic way that hindered approaching the state of organized historical narrative (Abu Elhamam, 2014). On the contrary, investigative journalism has been seen for a long time as a seasonal activity that depends a lot on different specific circumstances (Bebawi, 2016). Despite the pessimistic view, there is some evidence that Arab investigative media has recorded progress over the past years in

this matter. For example, in 2013, Aljazeera Media Network broadcasted an investigative report based on documents and live testimonies proving that the Palestinian Authority former president Yasser Arafat was killed by a poison in the headquarters where he was besieged by Israeli occupation forces in the city of Ramallah in the West Bank. The conclusions of the report, entitled "Arafat's death... Aljazeera reveals the secret of his death" promoted the Palestinian Authority to launch an investigation in the conditions of Arafat's death. However, the investigation committee did not issue any results.

As the environment of investigative media in the Arab World cannot be viewed as a homogeneous unit, the details of such a journalistic profession differ from a country to another (Abu Elhamam, 2014) even though investigative reporting is described as new guest to the Arabic media in general (Sakkur, 2020). In a report published in Aljazeera Magazine on April 8, 2018 Mohammad Alfuwayris wrote that the cost of investigative media in Morocco is very expensive while his colleague Ahmad Haj Hamdo emphasized at the same online magazine on March 25, 2018 that all parties of the conflict in Syria agree on welcoming media investigations. Kholoud Alfalah (2018) said hard luck to investigative journalism in Libya. On the contrary, Majeda Alirami (2017) believes that her country, Tunis, can be considered as the hope of the Arabs in achieving a successful investigative media after the success of 14 January revolution in 2011 as being a part, basically the starter, of the rebellion of the Arab Spring. Asa'ad Zalzali, an investigative journalist from Iraq, wrote in Mars 29, 2018 about corruption and fraud in the elections of the Artist Syndicate; he also presented another report about human trafficking after he had heard while he was cutting his hair in in the barbershop about a girl who had to sell her kidney in order to cover university fees. He also conducted a press investigation about the so-called "clay schools" in Iraq disclosing that the budget for replacing these schools with more than 1700 modern

schools had totally disappeared in the pockets of those responsible for the project. All of these investigative works are described by Zalzali as being personalized but not reaching the level of being described as systematic journalistic efforts.

The above-mentioned information presents the picture of the general situation of investigative journalism in the Arab countries which can be attributed to many factors that can be summarized in: legislative and legal obstacles, security and political situations, the power of officials and professional obstacles of the journalists (Alsangri, 2019). Moreover, the novelty of the experience in the field of investigative journalism does not only appear in the small number of investigative reports in the huge number of the existing Arab media, but it is also clear in the shortage of studies and articles about investigative media in the Arab literature. Mansour (2019) states that the majority of research on investigative media in the Arab World focuses on exploring the directions of investigative journalists and their views about its development and challenges in the Arab World.

Interestingly, Mansour (2019) shows the contradiction between Arab investigative media and the international works of investigation regarding the types of sources and the topics each one covers. The study shows that 87.5% out of 72 investigative reports which were published by Arab media in 2015- 2017 were dependent on open data sources and only 12.5% of the reports depended on closed data sources. This was contrary to the international investigations practices which focused more on closed and secret data and documents such as in the cases of Panama Papers, WikiLeaks, Abu Ghraib and other issues. In this regard, Mansour (2019) found out that Arab investigative reporting was mostly concerned with social topics with a percent of 29.2% of the analyzed 72 investigative reports in the study; health issues was placed in the second position with 21% of the analyzed 72 investigative reports, then political, economic, environmental and

educational issues respectively. On the other hand, the international investigations were mostly concerned with issues of corruption and violations.

Investigative journalism emerged as an integrated concept with the advent of the twenty-first century and has been greatly influenced by the rapid development of means of communication. However, in the Arab World, it is still considered as a kind of modern journalistic arts where newsrooms are yet facing a deep technology gap (Al- Efranji, 2018) despite evidence of its efficiency proved by some of the Western major press institutions during the 19th century. This took place when Elizabeth Cochrane Seaman, who was known by her pen name "Nellie Ply", pretended to have a mental illness in order to be able to enter a mental hospital in New York City, USA in 1887. During her stay at the hospital, Nellie Ply managed to observe the mistreatment of mental health inmates and to write her views in a press report which was then published in *The New York World*, to become widely spread among readers at the time, causing a stir that promoted US officials to conduct investigations ended in corrective decisions in the mental hospital (Alsangri, 2019).

At the beginning of the 20th century, investigative journalism witnessed significant progress in the USA and became associated with journalists who were looking for secrets of scandals; those journalists were called "Muckrakers" as they were revealing information that institutions and people in power do not want to reveal. Then, media investigations scored many important points in influencing political and societal systems around the world including the famous Watergate scandal when *The Washington Post* conducted investigative reporting proving that the Republican Party spied on the rival Democratic Party of America. The case ended up with the resignation of the American president Richard Nixon and his departure from the White House. In addition, press investigations, conducted by dozens of journalists from 32 countries, revealed

that in 2016, Russia laundered more than $20 billion in global banks and financial companies around the world. Panama Papers, more than 11.5 million documents, is another good example of investigative reporting as they were leaked by unknown sources to the German newspaper *Suddeutsche Zeitung*. More than 370 journalists from 100 media organizations distributed to 77 member countries in the International Union of Investigative journalism worked on an investigative report that exposed the scandal. The report revealed the involvement of 143 politicians, including 12 current and former heads of states, in illegal acts such as tax evasion and money laundering through cross-border companies by the giant company Mossack Fonsica for Legal Services in Panama (Mansour, 2019). Another example is the case of WikiLeaks, the non-governmental electronic website found by the Australian journalist Julian Assange. The website released more than 250 thousand documents in November 2010, which constituted an important milestone in the performance of journalism that tracks undisclosed secrets. The documents included secret messages between the US administration and the American embassies around the world (Hindman & Thomas, 2013). In addition, less than two decades ago, the American CBC TV channel drew a very bleak picture about human rights violations from American soldiers against Iraqi detainees in Abu Ghraib prison near the capital Baghdad; humanitarian atrocities were revealed by an investigative report based on leaking 100 photos and four videos about torture of Iraqi prisoners to the CBC.

Developing the skills and abilities of Arab journalists in investigative reporting requires good knowledge of using websites that provide them with analytical indicators of social media platforms (Alshawabkah, 2022) like *Digital Global* which offers rich data about the main social media platforms in every country including internet users, social media active subscribers, smart mobile holders, etc. The data provided by *Digital Global* and other similar websites are very

important for investigative journalists because it helps them realize how significant is the value of digital information presented by social media platforms. For example, *Digital Global* statistics provide journalists with the information that the number of Egyptian people who use the internet is only 59.19 out of 103.3 million people of the total number of Egyptian populations even though 95.75 million Egyptians have mobile phones (Al-Najjar, 2021).

The offered information helps journalists understand the telecommunication environment in Egypt and know where and how exactly they have to search for related data and information. Moreover, accessing such statistical websites is very fruitful because they offer journalists indications about the levels of interior crises in many countries. For example, the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) obtained data from a digital rights group, called Access Now, about the fact that the internet had been deliberately cut off by the governments of 33 countries more than 200 times in 2019. Such information is very significant to journalists, especially investigative journalists who may use this piece of information critically and influentially (Al-Najjar, 2021).

Being well aware of the great importance of acquaintance with social media websites and other kinds of platforms, Aljazeera Media Network demonstrates huge keenness on educating their journalists and workers on how to use such websites, apps and other forms of new media. And, it allocates professional news gathering teams for subscribing, following, and liking new media platforms, in order to be updated with the live and latest news; most prominently X (previously Twitter) because it is more used by influencers and public opinion makers who are usually the main providers of the major media content (Al-Najjar, 2021).

In the book *The Investigative Journalism in the Arab World,* Bebawi (2016) mentioned the main characteristics and obstacles banning the development of investigative journalism in the Arab countries. The researcher propagates that people in the Arab area have become more interested in the right of freedom to access the information after the Arab Spring revolutions which has swept the region since 2011. The study described investigative reporting as a part of journalism that digs deep and leads to a serious change in the overall investigative media. It also stated that accessing information is very fundamental for journalists to offer the truth to the public either by day-to-day or investigative journalism. However, the book propagates both training and practice as two fundamental issues related to investigative journalism. Regarding investigative journalism training, the authors argued that even though the challenges of investigative media vary from an Arab country to another there are three major issues that should be considered across the region in the field of investigative journalism training: sustainability, time delays, and self-censorship. The authors realized that journalists in the Arab media should take a part of investigative journalism by practicing reporting in political, societal and environmental fields particularly by focusing on the uncovered events in the Arab World.

The book identified five main barriers to be considered when talking about investigative media in the Arab World:

1. The political constraints regarding the states and governmental regulations.
2. The issue of access to information.
3. Social pressure.
4. Cultural traditions.
5. The obstacles of funding.

There are many institutions and organizations that support investigative journalism in the Arab World. Among those institutions is *Arab Reporters for Investigative Journalism (ARIJ),* which was established in 2006 and defines itself as the first network in the Arab area that aims to consolidate investigative media in Arab news rooms by financing in-depth investigation projects, organizing advanced quality training workshops, and providing the experience of supervision by media professionals; it assists media workers and journalists of newspapers, radio and television stations and electronic website in many Arab countries including Jordan, Syria, Palestine, Lebanon, Egypt, Iraq, Bahrain, Yemen and Tunisia. The *Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project (OCCRP)* is another institution supporting investigative reporting in Europe, Africa, Asia, Middle East and Latin America; dozens of journalists from 34 countries are working on investigations on corruption and the issues of power abusing through the non-profit global organization established in 2007 (Sayed, 2019). The *International Consortium for Investigative Journalism (ICIJ)* is also a non-profit international organization, its headquarter lies in the United States of America, it has been famous due to its role in disclosing the information about the case of Panama Papers, more than 249 journalists from 90 countries are working with (ICIJ) in addition to more than 100 media organizations including giant corporations such as CBC, the *New York Times* and the Guardian (Sayed, 2019). The lists of investigative media supporting institutions includes dozens of organizations such *as Wealth of Nations Program, Forbidden Stories, 100 Reporters Project, The Pulitzer Center, The Fund for Investigative Journalism (FIJ)* and *International Center for Journalists (ICFJ)* (Sayed, 2019).

2.3 Aljazeera Investigative Journalism

In order to understand the journalistic practices including investigative journalism of any media institution, one needs to possess a deep recognition of the political, social, and technological

environment that surrounds the institution and shapes its route (Nielsen et al., 2016). New media technologies, the public communication crisis, and the multiplicity of information sources have all led to a change in journalistic practice and in the pattern of the relationship between journalists and news sources (Matar & Taha, 2023). The conditions for investigative journalism in the Arab media sphere differ fundamentally from the patterns followed in Western media environments and democratic societies in general. The reason for this difference is the fact that investigation is based on public data which is usually not available for journalists and the public. In addition, there are other differences related to the scarcity of equipment and the weakness of skills, not to mention the restrictions imposed on the practice of free media by Arab governments (Lewis & Nashmi, 2024).

It is unjust to claim that the delay in the practice of investigative journalism in the Arab world is due to technical and human factors only. Indeed, it is a natural result of the ongoing conflict over freedom of expression as the interaction of evolving political dynamics in the Middle East, which is also witnessing a rise in digital authoritarianism (Jamil, 2022), makes political systems more prepared to confront forms of journalism that dig for secrets and the hidden, as investigative journalism does.

Due to the nature of the undemocratic political environment in the Arab World, the emergence of investigative journalism has been delayed and affected by the absence of laws and legislations that protect journalists, ensure their right to access data, and guarantee the protection of the sources of information. In addition, the traditional impression about investigative journalism in Arab society was not very promising as Arab journalists face hostile positions from officials and society because of their alleged role in the Arab Spring revolutions. After the setback of the Arab uprisings, journalists became a target of accusation amid the prevailing political and social

system, including journalists who are now seen as having a foreign agenda and working to destabilize the situation. This stereotyping of journalists has contributed to limiting their ability to access data, information sources and news. On the other hand, journalists have turned to producing traditional content that is subject to a lot of self-censorship, engaging in producing neutral journalistic material instead of heading to investigative reporting (Elsheikh et al., 2024).

However, Arab journalism has provided many bright spots as its first practices appeared in Egypt in the 1940s, then declined in the following two decades due to the influence of the absolute military rule in the country. Later, at early 21st century, investigative journalism began to receive greater attention from journalists, in light of the emergence of international centers concerned with supporting and developing investigative journalism in the most fragile environments, in terms of investigation practice, as well as the emergence of Arab and regional institutions that focus on and support media investigations such as the International Journalists Network (IJNet), the Arab Reporters for Investigative Journalism (ARIJ) (Tabet, 2022).

Recently, the Arab media has shown more and more interest in investigative journalism. Al-Araby Al-Jadeed TV presented the Polygraph program, which is focused on exposing misleading and fake news in the mainstream and social media. Its website also dedicated a special outlet for investigative reports. Many Arab news verification applications and platforms on social media such as “Misbar” were also launched to examine information and expose fake news. Aljazeera Media Network also paid special attention to investigative journalism and for that reason, it established the "Sanad" agency, which aims to investigate the news and provide data to other network outlets. It also established an investigative reporting unit and launched more than seven investigative programs on its screen and within its daily coverage.

However, there are many challenges facing the practice of investigative journalism in the Arab environment, some of which Tabet (2022) summarizes as the limited culture of Arab journalists in IJ, the absence of an environment that supports IJ, the lack of coordination between journalists and media institutions towards implementing investigative projects and ideas, the lack of response from officials to the efforts of investigative journalists to obtain data as well as the difficulty of accessing it, the weak impact of investigative reports on public opinion, and the security restrictions on investigative journalists and their persecution.

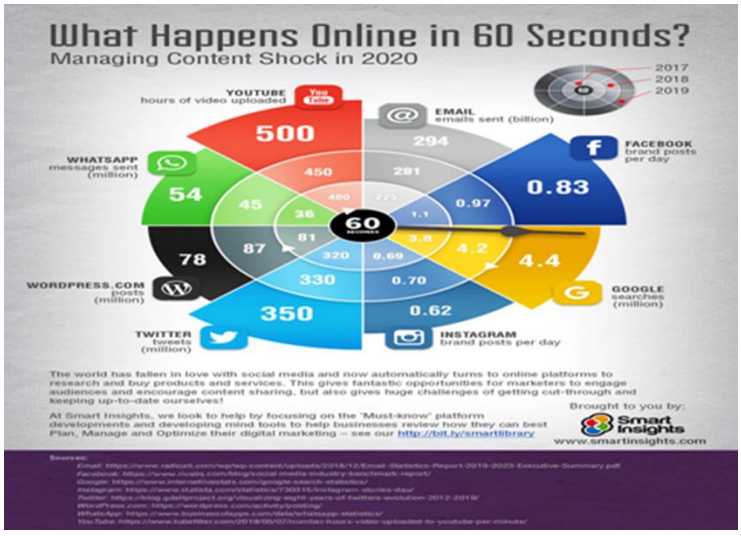
2.4 New Media Characteristics

New media can generally be defined as the form of media that rely on digital computer technologies as platforms for information distribution and exhibition (Manovich, 2002). As illustrated in Igweze (2020), the great control of content production and formation contributes to providing more content in new media tools and thus provides more sources that can be easily accessed by journalists and media professionals. The huge usage of digitalized new media content on electronic publishing websites and other platforms proves the importance of new media's role in enriching the content over the internet to extremely unprecedented levels, compared to the times that preceded the era of telecommunication technology revolution. However, the aggregated piles of new media data are, on the other hand, similar to mountains of hay in terms of accuracy. With such almost free restriction, new media usage has given room to new research on the relation between the development of new media and the levels of freedom of expression (Carlsson & Weibull, 2018). Regarding the huge numbers of new media usage, statistical studies have shown an enormous volume of information flow over the internet and new media platforms to the extent that in every 60 seconds during 2019 there were 294 billion messages sent via Email; 500 hours

of videos uploaded to YouTube; 500 messages sent and received by WhatsApp; 350 million tweets posted on Twitter (Chaffey, 2021).

Figure 2.1 shows the enormous volume of data flow over the internet and new media platforms in only one minute in 2019 as published by *Smart Insight website.* The figure shows that the total number of emails sent by users elevated from 225 billion emails in 2017 to 281 billion in 2018 and 294 billion in 2019. It also shows that Google searches increased from 3.8 million in 2017 to 4.2 million in 2018 to reach 4.4 million searches in 2019. As for tweets on Twitter, their number increased from 320 million in 2017 to 330 million the following year and 350 million in 2019. While the number of messages sent on WhatsApp increased from 36 million in 2017 to 45 million in 2018, and to 54 million in 2019.

Figure 2.1 The enormous volume of data flow over the internet and new media platforms in only one minute in 2019.

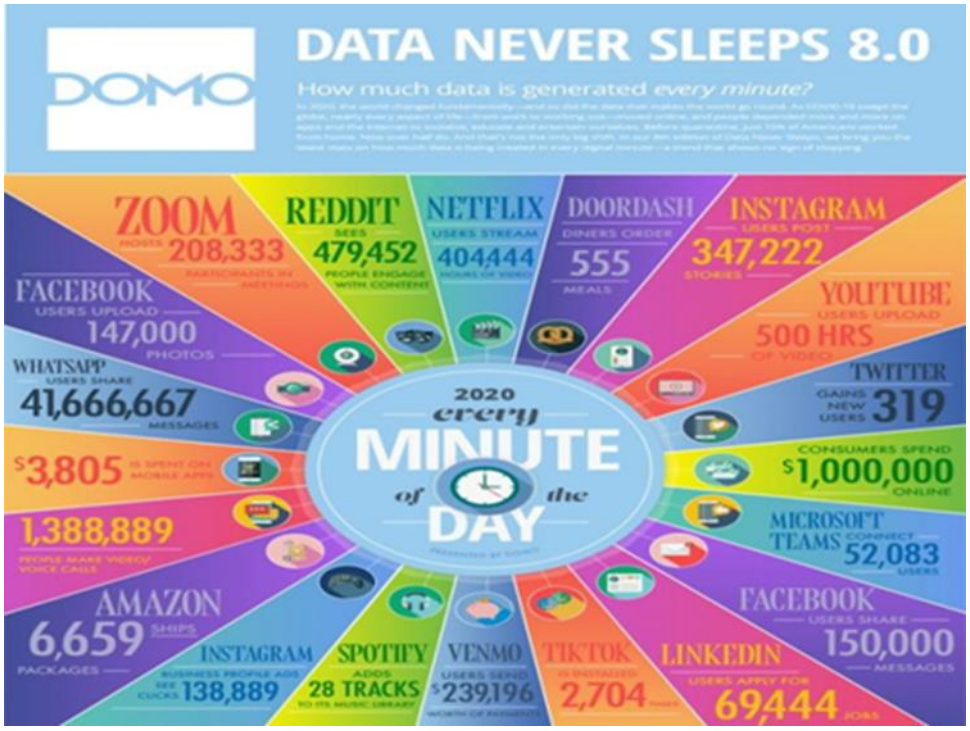


Source: Smart Insights, what happens online in 60 seconds in 2021? by: Dave Chaffey (21, June, 2021).

The website of *Health Care Social Media Monitor* reported that data initiators indicated that the pandemic of COVID-19, which hit the world in the late months of 2019 up to date, has positively affected the reliance on digital life and the use of new media (Chaffey, 2021).

Figure 2.3 shows the huge volume of data flow over the internet and new media platforms in only one minute in the year of 2020 as published by *Health Care New Media.* According to the above-mentioned website, users of new media uploaded 147,000 photos to Facebook; posted 327,222 stories on Instagram; conducted more than 208,000 conversations via Zoom, uploaded more than 500 hours of video to YouTube, and exchanged nearly 41.7 million messages via WhatsApp every 60 seconds in the year of 2020.

Figure 2.2. The huge volume of data flow over the internet and new media platforms in only one minute in the year of 2020.



Source: Health Care New Media. Data Never Sleep 8.0. (2020)

This massive flow of data across social media platforms has multi-dimensional significance for investigative journalism practitioners. It draws their attention to key public issues and societal events, meaning that the large content on social media provides the headlines that investigative journalists should pay attention to and produce reports about.

In addition, the content that users generate on social media platforms, including images, video clips, audio recordings, and even written narratives, which is now known as open source data (Woude et al., 2024), provides investigative journalists with testimonies that support the interviews they conduct with human news sources, documents that support the claims of their investigative reports, and references that they can rely on if they subject to legal accountability because of their investigative reports. Moreover, social media itself provides biographies of its users that reveal their movements and habits, their intellectual, cultural, and behavioral tendencies, and their personality traits. Besides, it draws a map of relationships that connect user communities. All these details provide databases for what is known as Data journalism (Santosa & Mesquita, 2021): a modern practice that gives the investigative journalist exceptional opportunities to analyze personal and relational dimensions in a way that enriches the investigative report.

Recent research in the field of advertising and consumer behavior has paid a remarkable attention to the phenomenon of using new media platforms to understand the factors of such a phenomenon. The factors are content publishing and consuming, dialogues engagement with other users, and interacting with brands and companies (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2010). Brandtzaeg and Heim (2009) mentions many differences between new media platforms and traditional media channels regarding the motives of users and audience. The researchers propagate that people use new media platforms for forming new relations, making friendships, socializing, debating, exchanging free SMS, sharing and consuming content, viewing users' profiles, etc.

Table 2.1: The similarities and differences between the motives of new media platforms users and traditional media audiences.

	Users' motives	New Media platforms	Traditional Media Channels
1	Searching information	✓	✓
2	Having fun	✓	✓
3	Time killing	✓	✓
4	Making new relations	✓	X
5	Finding friendships	✓	X
6	Socializing	✓	X
7	Debating	✓	X
8	Free SMS exchanging	✓	X
9	Content sharing and consuming	✓	X
10	Profile surfing	✓	X

Table 2.1 clearly shows the effectiveness of new media in meeting the needs of communication and it shows that all the needs of the communication process in traditional media are included in new media. The importance of this comparison can be an important point to answer the big question about the capability of new media to terminate the role of traditional media. This question is strongly related to the core of this study as it deals with source digitalization.

The interactivity is one of the most important characteristics of new media (Thompson, 2018) where the recipients of the message urgently react to the data or information with a sudden action using social media electronic buttons: Like, Comment, Share, post, Tweet and Retweet, etc. In this regard, the receiver of the message in new media plays an active role in the communication process (Al- Rowas, & Saleh, 2015), i.e., he acts as a new content maker or a sender. This process gives the method of new media production its spiral nature which enriches media sources with renewable and exchangeable content that is very useful in sourcing investigative journalism.

Analyzing the process of new media production with its components and parts leads to identify the features of the process that can be summarized in six key terms: digital, interactive, hypertextual, globally networked, virtual and based on simulation (Lister et al., 2008). Shikhani (2010) considered six other key terms: demassification, asynchronization, mobility, convertibility, connectivity and ubiquity. New media has come to life in the digital era of telecommunication technology (Kaul, 2012). It has been clearly observed that floods of Information have become digitized in each part of news production. Nowadays, media production sectors have been using technology for every single process of data gathering, processing, editing and publishing (Das, 2020). Surfing social media platforms from self-owned devices so simply and easily just by being provided with the internet service has become the first preferable destination that preceded the sense and observation of the journalist who had to chase news from place to place in order to access news and information in the time of traditional media. Journalists of today are also armed with an abundant flow of huge data from extraordinary sources such as drones, satellites, weather applications, traffic applications, and so many other outlets (Tilak, 2020).

At the level of news processing, Al-Najjar (2021) claims that daily scrutiny of journalistic arts shows that technology has become a helping factor in developing creative forms of media products with the use of highly qualified computer programs and applications such as Premier, Aftereffect, KineMaster, etc. Media production industry gains everyday more and more technologies and devices that enhance the quality of media products. Editing news is also one of the processes of the media industry that has deeply been affected by digitalization (Kolesnichenko et al., 2018). In the age of technology-based journalism, it is possible to find many journalists who prefer online editing because they can do it at home side by side with other kinds of work and duties. On the other hand, it is also possible to find media operators in news agencies and media

production establishments like newspapers and electronic websites who also prefer such a remote editing profession because it exempts them from the costs, they had to pay at traditional workplaces such as salaries of traditional editors and other related payments for transportations, electricity, internet, and the like. Owners of media organizations also prefer those who work online because it gives them greater opportunities to hire freelancers who get paid per a piece of work instead of per month or per year which means having no financial dues, or legal and administrative rights like health insurance services, social security, retirement fund, etc. All of these claims reinforce the argument that the news machine of the twenty-first century will soon become a reality, and that media technology will bring enormous benefits, which without a doubt will change the press (Kaul, 2012).

Finally, digitalization has deeply affected the process of news publishing in three dimensions: transparency, accountability and professionalism of news (Praprotnik, 2016). New media broke the firm control of media establishments and organizations over news publication in favor of the individual (Aborisade et al., 2011) who has become able to publish news in social media platforms. This converts the new media user into a comprehensive journalist who writes, takes photos and videos, edits his own content and publishes it without any systematic procedures of news production. However, although this way of media industry has increased the quantity of published news, it has reduced the level of its quality. Besides, the massive influx of news dissemination across new media platforms has flooded those channels with content with less respect for copy and distribution rights; therefore, the quick spread of news by new media has also reduced news exclusivity (Wilding et al., 2018).

Thompson (2018) identified six key characteristics which distinguish new media from old media: digital, interactive, hypertextual, networked, virtual and simulated new media. New media

interactivity has recently been directly linked to investigative journalism because the audience's interaction with investigative stories increases the popularity of these reports and thus increases the demand for viewing them and accordingly transmits investigations via social media platforms to wider segments of viewers. Certainly, these characteristics were not available in the era of traditional media, in which the audience was a mere recipient of media products with no interaction allowed. As such, it can be claimed that investigative reports increase the size of the audience of the channels that produce them due to interactivity (Abdenour, & Riffe, 2019).

The idea of hypertextuality can be perceived as the way of changing the linear form of text to a grid function or a web that new media users can transfer between its lines by only clicking on words, pictures, videos or other components of text building blocks (Sandbothe, 2017). Based on Sandbothe (2017) new media has strongly provoked hypertextuality even though the term hypertextual has been used several decades before the emergence of new media, which highly increases the level of websites accessibility by internet users. Imagining new media platforms as electronic gates to access media content is a good way to understand the role of hypertextuality as one of new media characteristics. For example, when Aljazeera Media Network, or any other media institute, publishes a media report, it turns out that while some people directly watch the report on the TV screen and some others may watch it by clicking the link on its electronic website, the majority of the audience follow the report at Aljazeera's new media platforms either by direct access to these platforms or by following the click buttons of links spread by the interested followers who react to and interact with the report. This, of course, applies to Aljazeera's investigative productions which because of the hyper textuality feature have become able to transfer the investigative product, similar to other products, from the TV screen to the Aljazeera website and network's outlets via new media platforms by the use of links that allow the audience

everywhere to watch the investigation on personal mobile devices any time without being bound by following the original investigative episode broadcast on Aljazeera.

Media globalization is mainly based on the revolution and development of technology to the extent that no one can imagine the limits it may reach in the coming decades (Thompson, 2018). This technological revolution has given every person the ability to produce and transmit his or her own message regardless of the circumstances and the community one lives in such as the geographical location, political system, social environment or even the level of technological development at the place. As cited in (Thompson, 2015), Giddens defines the concept of media globalization as the ability of modern media to present similar content from different geographical locations by using the technological methods. In this sense, he perceives that technology has increased the abilities of media to the level that it has been powerful enough to create and amplify facts based on images and symbols (Castaneda & Shemesh, 2016). Moreover, the globalization of media has a significant effect on media that can be summarized in, but not confined to, three points: accentuating journalism practices (Vaagan, 2008), intensifying information access by the audience (Matos, 2012), and reducing the restrictions imposed on publishing (Subasat, 2008). This has made media content capable of transcending political and cultural boundaries and increasing the choices of consumers to access data and information with lower costs compared to the fees used to be paid in order to access news sources in traditional media (Matos, 2012).

The diaries of journalists and news producers encompass many stories about the use of communication technology for accessing global information and data sources (Badies, 2015). The incident of the ship “Ever Geffen”, which is owned by the giant Taiwanies shipping corporation “Evergreen” which got stranded and closed the shipping course in the Suez Canal in Egypt on March 2021, is a good example showing how journalists have turned to accessing international

new media sources in order to check their information and news. According to a news report published in *The New Arab's* website on March 28, 2021, there were conflicting reports several times a day about the Egyptian Authorities' success or failure to move on the ship. To overcome the problem, journalists depended on the "Marine Traffic" electronic website to get information on the ship such as its position along with the surrounding other ships and the conditions of the shipping line across Suez Canal in general. *The New Arab's* website clarified that it turned out that the information provided by the electronic website was accurate, true and free of charge even though the journalists reached it from thousands of kilometers away. This example proves the importance of using global technological devices in media production particularly the use of the platforms of open-source data, which can be claimed that it has coined a new development in the history of news transmission among people across the world.

Marine Traffic is a platform that depends on tens of thousands of volunteers in addition to the information received from ports used to map all ships around the world (Tseroni, 2022). Based on Tseroni (2022) the volunteers capture the signals which are transmitted by large ships and indicate ships' locations, speeds, destinations, dimensions, weights and serial numbers. Volunteers also participate in providing photos of these ships in a way that makes the site a global database that allows everyone to follow merchant ships as they sail across seas.

The Coronavirus pandemic has placed the world in front of a severe challenge which is the necessity of combining the continuation of normal life activities and the maintenance of the requirements of social distancing to limit the spread of COVID-19 (Vyas & Butakhieo, 2021). The new situation of health measurements enhanced the global tendency towards electronic interaction with various service sectors in the many fields (Donati et al., 2021) such as education (Parlakkilic & Mertoglu, 2020), training (Hallgarten, 2020), and health (Yildirim et al., 2021). This global

trend of working online is very clearly reflected in journalistic practice; many work regulations and routines have been changed in favor of the virtual presence such as home broadcasting and holding online meetings, lectures, events and conferences with the use of internet platforms and applications such as Skype, Zoom, Teams and many other internet applications and accounts (Al-Najjar, 2021).

Finally, the simulation feature attracts internet users uniquely because it makes them live virtually as if in reality. The experiences of simulation in the digital world can be clearly observed in computer games including football matches, driving and flight simulations and other kinds of internet-based screens like 4D and 5D cinema shows (Thompson, 2018).

New media has created a contemporary style of communication which was unfamiliar during the time of traditional media. The difference between contemporary and traditional styles is not limited to the communication process's general frameworks or its components. Rather, the difference now affects the functional roles of each of the components of the modern communication process. For example, the recipient of information in traditional communication was just a final element in the chain of the communicative process, showing his interaction with the media message by changing the way of thinking, self-behavior, and one's ideas and beliefs. But now, in the new media era, the recipient has been playing a role of a new sender of the message; that is, he has turned into a new producer of content that he can manufacture and publish with tools that are easy for him to possess and manage. In addition, new media has given the media message recipient an unprecedented ability to choose from various media platforms according to personal preferences, the availability of these media in one's community, and the individual capabilities of using the available digital tools. This, in itself, provided a rich addition to the content that the journalist can access through open sources of information in which publishing restrictions can be

easily bypassed. All these affordances are a cumulative product of the development of the communication style based on investment in the aforementioned new media characteristics, which find their way to the development of media arts and its various forms, including investigative journalism.

2.5 Theoretical framework – Technological Affordances Theory

The theoretical processing of the current research is the technology affordances theory (TAT) of Gibson (1977) which was developed into technological affordances theory by Ivan Hutchby (2001). Since this research is mainly focused on the usage of new media in investigative journalism of Aljazeera Media Network, the advantages and benefits provided by the new media to investigative journalism represent the core of the theoretical structure of this research. This makes the theory of technological affordances an important framework of understanding and studying the relationship between investigative journalism and new media in general, as it applies to Aljazeera Media Network.

The concept of affordances emerged from a psychological background after the mid-seventies of the last century by the American psychologist James. J. Gibson (1904-1979) who defines the Affordances in an impartial relational way that links the actors and the environment that surrounds them (Gibson, 1977). This perception about affordances was intended to describe the functional capacities of materials based on its specific features (Gibson, 1977; Seidel et al., 2013). In other words, affordances refer to “what the world around us ‘affords’ us to do with it” (Matei, 2020).

Terminologically, the meaning of affordances differs from the sense of characteristics since the latter relates to the physical essence of objects, while the former refers to their capabilities that

make them appropriately usable due to certain characteristics (Stendal et al., 2016). Researchers have flooded the field of humanities with models and examples of materialistic contexts to differentiate between the two terms in authentic life. For a long time, the understanding of the sense of affordances has been largely revolving around some explanations stemming from a psychological framework, which deals with users' interactions with physical objects through focusing on topics depicting the advantages of a thing, realizing its materiality, capturing information about it, or building the cognition of its intrinsic nature by learning (Matei, 2020).

The psychological framework has been criticized for confining the sense of affordances to the object's physical characteristics (Oliver, 2005) and for the lack of mechanisms of using affordances through planned techniques capable of producing wider applications. However, in 2013, Donald Norman made a qualitative leap in dealing with the concept of affordances by transferring it from the materialistic environment to the digital context through the portal of designing the physical shape of products (Matei, 2020).

Norman's conception of transforming affordances from psychology to product design opened the door for the use of the theory of affordances in electronic and digital applications like "drag around" "click on" and "tap on" apps which are very popular actions in the digital world, but they are driven from origins in the physical world even though Norman's conception of digitizing affordances continued to face the problem of users' limited understanding of these applications and their need to realize their meanings in advance through learning (Matei, 2020).

Over the past three decades, the use of the digital approach of affordances has broadened the understanding of its relationship to users (Ostern & Rosemann, 2021). The study focused on affordances to analyze the relationship between information technology and organizational change

through developing a 5-stage model known as meta-characteristics of affordances in the field of information systems (IS). Ostern and Rosemann (2021) focused on IS which is rich in theoretical frameworks that deal with affordances, but in relation to technology. The two researchers believe that moving away from the specific environment of affordances, as well as the rapid and gradual development of IS, might lead to a kind of theory fragmentation and would impede the accumulated knowledge structure about technology-involved practices in an integrated approach that builds a comprehensive theory incorporating all developments from various aspects related to digital affordances.

Ergo, the 5-stages meta-view model of affordances appeared as an IS theory in the specific context of affordances interested in providing a tool for understanding the dynamic nature of rapidly evolving digital technology, which represents a severe case of generativity (Ostern & Rosemann, 2021). The 5-stages meta-view model facilitated understanding the relationship between the features of technology and the affordances of each new form of this technology. Thus, it provided knowledge of the descriptive characteristics of information systems and provided a tool for analysis and prediction of the expected affordances according to the pattern of continuing technological change (Ostern & Rosemann, 2021).

Moreover, Bucher and Helmond (2018) argue that the use of semantic symbols of a semiotic nature in the field of social media is an important form of dealing with technology affordances. The two researchers analyzed how Twitter users dealt with changing the favicon from star into a much more generic symbol like the “heart” button in November, 2015, in one of the most radical changes of Twitter symbols that caused a storm of reactions from the users of the social media platform. The perception of Bucher and Helmond (2018) agrees with Norman's understanding of affordances that they must be visible and understood because the affordances

themselves are communication elements identifying what a user can do in a given context and how to do so in that context. It is precisely this understanding that led Oliver (2005) to treat affordances as signs that transform the designer into an author and the user into a reader. This understanding was responsible for moving the screen and the internet research from the psychological field to the semiotic field (Oliver, 2005).

The semiotic view of affordances as symbols has allowed their use in a very large way in media studies and journalism (Matei, 2020). And, it was used in studies to provide important answers about the development of the human ability to communicate with others and to interact with the environment through technology (Schrock, 2015). In his quest to build a communicative affordances approach, Schrock (2015) suggested that the communicative affordances approach answers complex questions about the individual's choice of the most appropriate communication tools in his environment and how he can benefit from the advantages offered by this communication, elaborating that the communicative affordances framework has been used recently for implementing affordances theory to explore how technologies such as social media and social network sites affect the process of communication.

Schrock (2015) studied four communicative affordances of mobile media: Portability, Availability, Locatability, and Multimodality. He defined communicative affordances as “an interaction between subjective perceptions of utility and objective qualities of the technology that alter communicative practices”. Schrock (2015)’s work on the four affordances enables users to understand how journalism benefits from the advantages offered by digital technology because the communicative affordance “frames the practices through which technologies come to be involved in the weave of ordinary conduct (Hutchby, 2001, p. 45). To elaborate, Portability is defined as the awareness of physical properties of objects such as size, weight, and data usage that makes it

easier for the user to employ them in the necessary field (Ito et al., 2005). Within this definition, new media provides a lot of tools that users, including journalists, can carry, move around, and get information from anywhere, such as a mobile phone whose holder uses it easily while moving anywhere (Arnold, 2003). However, portability has a high value in small digital devices such as mobile phones and has a low value in relatively larger digital devices such as computers (Schrock, 2015). These devices can also be easily combined with other devices that provide the portability affordance (de Souza e Silva & Frith, 2012) which is so important because it saves investigative journalists time while working on their reports (Sanderson et al. 2019).

As for the availability affordance in new media, it provides a combination of communication possibilities shared by the user and the receiver (Schrock, 2015) so that the user has the ability to adjust the communication according to the most comfortable way (Coyne, 2010). Thus, the user has the choice between communicating with written texts or voice communication in order to achieve multiplexity (Boase, 2008). This diversification of communication methods expands the user's options to choose the most appropriate mechanism for his/her communication and thus increases the frequencies of communication (Schrock, 2015).

The locatability affordance of new media is generally perceived as enabling fundamentally different forms of communication based on using machines for better performance than humans with regards to the detection of exact geographical locations of people and objects (Rheingold, 2002). As for multimediality, it is closely related to the widespread use of digital cameras, including compact cameras, in various forms of technological means of communication, which have become an important differentiation criterion between different communication tools (Van Dijck, 2008) that contributed to the expansion and supplementation of communication practices that already exist (Schrock, 2015).

To realize the importance of the four affordances of Schrock (2015), let us take the aircraft tracking websites as an example, as they have the capacity of providing data and information for officially registered flights around the world (Al-Sayed, 2021). These websites provide media with images taken by cameras built in computer systems which correspond to the affordance of multimediality. They provide all the necessary information about the images in order to achieve the affordance of locatability; they present information to journalists on computers or even mobile phones within the affordance of portability; and thus, they enable journalists to have a high level of access to information available within the availability affordance.

As a digital technology, mobile-enabled flight-tracking websites allow investigative reporters to track information to gather clues about news stories (Marzouk & Boros, 2018). For example, Aljazeera Net published on June 5, 2020 a report about the Israeli El Al plane crossing the Sudanese airspace on a flight from Argentina to Tel Aviv after the plane had broadcasted the flight path through flight applications. The news stated that the plane, bearing the mark ELY046, was seen on the flight tracking website "Flight RADAR" as it entered Sudanese airspace about 12 hours after taking off from Buenos Aires. Thanks to portability affordance as this information has been used in press investigations for Aljazeera network, through which the report predicted that Sudan would normalize its relations with Israel which at that time did not have any diplomatic relations with Al-Khartoum and whose planes were not allowed to cross its airspace.

Schrock (2015) has defined portability, availability, locatability, and multimediality as four affordances for mobile, which is a part of new media (Kuyucu, 2021; May & Hearn, 2005 & Pearce, 2013). However, modern technology has provided a lot of other affordances that can be employed in the world of journalism (Day & Lloyd, 2007) including the affordances based on Thompson (2018)’s five characteristics of new media which characterized new media as digital,

for fulfilling the affordance of digitalization which is, according to Thompson, a very significant feature that allows people to keep huge amounts of information in compact hard disks or micro memory cards for instantaneous transmission of information via means of communications such as cables and satellites. Thompson believes that increased interactivity as an affordance of new media can be seen in simple acts such as liking a Facebook post or commenting on a news piece or blog. However, some users get much more involved and create their own blogs and videos and actively upload their own content as “prosumers”. The term 'interactivity' which was firstly used by Henry Warren White (1879), is often used to describe the message and refers to an active relationship between minimum two parties which can be people or objects and involves the property of being interactive (Mechant & Looy, 2014).

The affordance of hypertextuality means website links offering non-sequential connections of all kinds of data facilitated by the computer. Hypertextuality is defined as the practice of new media networking for freely transferring a huge amount of information within a series of interconnected nodes in the network (Chen & Zhang, 2010).

Globally networked affordances, which according to Thompson (2018) is a characteristic of new media derived from global networks, enable “collective intelligence” to increase the resources of talents and sources of information much more easily. Some studies argue that networked media have an essential role in “networked society” development whereas Facebook and Twitter have a global leading role (Bulck et al., 2018). The virtual Worlds of Thompson (2018) provide the new media with the affordance of virtual reality, particularly when it is related to social media platforms which provide practitioners with the capacity to present themselves in any suitable way. Nöll (2021) suggests that “the concept of affordance might offer a useful perspective when

looking at the design of Virtual Reality applications, assuming that virtual objects hold similar affordances to their physical counterparts".

Finally, mimicry is perceived as the closest affordance to the simulation characteristic of new media where Thompson says that simulation moves one step beyond the "virtual" nature of new media as usual. Simulation in Thompson (2018) is most clearly shown in computer games which provide the practitioners of "virtual life" with a very rich experience that is simulated through digital technology. The relationship between simulation and mimicry becomes clear when it is addressed in the real world of communication where Martin & Guéguen (2012) defined mimicry as a tool of communication employed for initiating and regulating social interactions and for illustrating what people need to understand.

The theory of technological affordances represents a reasonable framework for interpretive studies which are related to the how and have objectives of exploring and explaining previously unconsidered phenomena. This is because each of new media technologies such as X (formerly Twitter) has its own potentials that are reflected in its use within the journalistic practice (Nkoala, 2023). For example, social media platforms in general have affordances, the most important of which are visibility, persistence, association and editability, all of which indicate the ability to practice journalistic work in different aspects.

In relation to the subject of this study, feasibility specifically relates to the ease with which information and knowledge can be found (Siegert et al., 2020), which are two essential elements of investigative journalism whose practitioners have previously been referred to as muckrakers.

Persistence is linked to continuity or preserving information and perpetuating its existence as sources that can be referred to by investigative journalists who sometimes use data retrieval

techniques or refer in some of their reports to deleted posts that muckrakers must have already saved them on their screens, as they consider their deletion as evidence supporting their hypotheses in investigative reports.

Association is the process of tracing a network of direct and indirect links that may reveal relationships between stakeholders in a social media post (Siegert et al., 2020), which can be considered additional evidence that may support investigative hypotheses, or used to point out observations that may not be noticeable at first glance in the heart of the investigation.

Finally, affordances give investigative work the ability to re-edit opportunities (editability) to modify the content according to information that may emerge during the production period or even after its publication. It also grants producers the opportunity to develop the investigative product according to the reactions to it among followers to publish it on social media platforms.

The research literature provides a lot of information about the practice of new media and its technological affordances, as well as a lot of information about investigative journalism. However, much less literature talks about the employment of digital technology affordances in investigative journalism; and definitely what Aljazeera Media Network addresses in this employment is even less and less. It is like the act of zooming in repetitively to reach the most accurate point of intersection with the philosophy of this research based on integrating technological capabilities as a conceptual framework that frames and explains the research problem and objectives as well as the comprehensive theory of using new media in investigative journalism of Aljazeera Network as a case study.

The use of new media affordances by journalistic institutions is not a luxury for any institution seeking excellence in its performance, as new media provides very key affordances for

building a mix of professional, personal and private content, in addition to its ability to provide the characteristics of participation, interaction and discussion (Hedman, 2017). Within this framework, new media affordances are considered one of the encouraging factors in developing serious and influential journalistic practices such as investigative journalism in mainstream media such as Aljazeera Media Network.

Moreover, the technological affordances of new media enhance the interactivity and participation of the audience in media practices and thus enable different levels of creative effort, control, and editorial access (Spyridou, 2019); that is, it plays the role of the monitor and assessor of the quality of journalistic practice within its professional framework, including investigative journalism.

Thus, the growing interest in trying to understand the role of social media technologies in creating new forms of audience engagement with content, three of which were mentioned in Wu & Fitzgerald (2024): interaction with video content, interaction with characters appearing in the content, and interaction between users of technology that displays the content, adds another value to applying the TAT as a theoretical framework that frames and explains the research problem. That is because new media affordances are the features that enabled Aljazeera Network to confront the many restrictions on all requirements of implementing journalistic investigations.

These affiliations compensated for the lack of human news sources that represent the stem cell for creating any investigative work. It also provided AJMN with the ability to provide evidence by tracing the links between those who interact with new media publications, in addition to digital programmatic evidence. Moreover, it enabled AJMN to produce investigative works that can be followed by the audience even in areas where AJMN broadcast is blocked, and its journalistic crews are prevented from practicing their jobs.

2.6 Conceptual Framework

Beside the technical development that has accompanied the revolution of information technology, new related terminology has, as well, been emerging such as terms like new media, citizen media, and investigative journalism. This chapter provides a comprehensive presentation of these three terms in order to understand how each of them has been developed in academia and how they can be perceived during the period of new media dominance. This includes the reliance of media outlets, such as Aljazeera Media Network, on social media platforms and citizen journalism to collect information (Santos & Kooli, 2021) in forms of text, video, audio and/or photos, but this profound transformation has created crises related to truthfulness and professionalism of information from social media sources (Akpan & Ekpe, 2018) which is referred sometimes as digital crisis (Al- Najjar, 2020).

Recent studies consider the overestimation of new media transformation per se as part of the digital crisis. Kortti (2021) criticizes the notion that new media has opened a very wide door to freedom of opinion and expression. In his article, Kortti sheds light on the control of social media and other media and technology corporations on the maximal limits of freedom in the field of social media by presenting the remarkable example of Silicon Valley's disabling the personal accounts of the former US President Donald Trump. The article also argues that this incident reduced the positive perception on social media as a field of freedom which had flourished after the emergence of the Arab Spring revolutions in 2010 and 2011.

Kortti also points out that the need to understand the contemporary digital environment explains the recent increased interest in research and studies related to media history. He argues that digital revolution has been associated with propaganda concepts in terms of "trolling",

"disinformation" and "post-truth politics" and that it has also become associated with technical terms including "algorithms", "artificial intelligence" "internet of things" and other technical words with positive connotations. To confirm that argumentation, the article highlights that despite finding out that some 30000 search processes were conducted using the term "digital revolution" in JSTOR digital library, the exaggeration of researchers in their interest in new media and its effects cannot be ignored. Kortti (2021) argues that the world was networked before the emergence of the internet; he added that every media tool is perceived as new media when it first appears. For instance, he claimed that the television was a new media tool in the 1960s; telegraph was also a new media tool when it was invented in the 19th century, and so forth. Yet, Kortti (2021) acknowledges that the great change brought about by the current digital revolution has created forms of human societies describing them as human transformation into totally new social structure.

Other researchers show concern about the impact of the Arab legislative environment on publication freedom and flow of information. Although Arab legislation still suffers from a big shortage in dealing with comprehensive flow of information, there are many promising indications for future less-restricted access to information sources in light of crises. Hamdy (2017) argues that the power and influence of blogging in the Arab World is due to the sphere that puts Arab bloggers distant from the constraints of law. The study states that Arab bloggers are not journalists, nor members of press unions. Thus, despite being deprived of laws that usually protect journalists, they benefit from being exempted from law restrictions. Based on her approach, Hamdy argues that Arab blogs have succeeded in achieving a real breakthrough in the structure of the Arab media by forming a strong pressure force on the political and social systems. These blogs have also profoundly affected the information input to the Arab and international media outlets and draw

their attention to the issues of Arab societies which were absent from the agenda of mainstream Arab media. One of the issues that concerns the study is the expectation that Arab regimes may succeed in issuing regulations and legislations that would restrict the freedom of dealing with the internet as they did in 2006 when the Interior Ministers of the Arab States League, following their meeting in Tunis, issued resolutions restricting the accessibility to communication platforms as a way to confront terrorism and extremist ideology.

2.6.1 New media

Providing a deep understanding of the notion of new media is of great significance to this study because it is one of the key components of the research conceptual framework and one of the effects that determine the relation between its elements. New media has granted researchers and academicians new windows to get acquainted with the developments and updates associated with the profession at the level of institutions, individuals, practices, tools and behaviors of communication process practitioners of senders, receivers, and interactive mediators.

New media is defined by Socha and Eber-Schmid (2015) as everything related to the internet and the interplay between technology, images and sounds. The study which argued that defining the new media is not easy described new media as the main feature characterizing the 21st century. Even though there are many other definitions of new media regarding its role in binding media and technology, the distance is still wide to find a final comprehensive determination about what new media exactly is.

Other recent studies treat new media as a tool used for information reception, analysis and broadcasting, particularly when the issue under-coverage is related to global cases. Shuja et al. (2020) shows how new media has been used to disclose information about COVID-19 pandemic

across the world. The researchers found that new media was employed as an important source for transmitting and analyzing information as well as for making sure that the open information about the disease in various areas exceed the medical situations to include other fields such as public awareness and training to deal with the pandemic hitting the globe.

While some studies like Shuja et al. (2020) show consensus on the significance of new media in providing journalists with more sources of information, others including Lecheler and Kruikemeier (2016) indicate that many journalists have accepted the idea of dealing with online news collecting technologies, but they are reluctant to use this information as sources in the reports and journalistic materials they produce. The study finds out that the level of journalists' dealing with online sources varies according to the sort of journalism they practice; the countries they work in and the difficulties they face while verifying the information they obtain from electronic sources. Thus, conceptualizing the influence of social media emergence on facilitating the process of comprehending many social phenomena closely related to media practice such as propaganda, fake news, political promotion and terrorism (Chaudhari & Pawar, 2021) is of particular importance in understanding investigative journalism as one of the media practices deeply influenced by new media.

2.6.2 Citizen Media and Open-source Data

The wide spread of electronic publishing applications has enabled communication technology users to synthesize information obtained from computers, fiber or cable powered devices, and smart devices for individual or institutional devices by accelerating the integration between electronic computers and modern communication systems. This has been facilitating, to a large extent, information production as well as access (Kamel & Mohammad 2017). This proves that

information technology has vitally affected the access to open-data sources (Amugongo et al., 2016), which has created a reciprocal level of interaction between content creators and technology (Henriksen et al., 2016); as they, on the one hand, access initial databases from technological tools, and on the other hand, provide these tools with content they create to be then accessed freely by others. This is exactly what has been known today as citizen media or citizen journalism (Jurrat, 2011), which has gained a free of charge (Nikkanen, 2019) rapid and massive access to information sources (Yang, 2016). However, information circulated by citizen media has yet been criticized for issues of lack of accuracy, objectivity and the probability of its being subjected to low professional standards such as falsification or being taken out of context (Hafiz, 2018).

In fact, the importance of the content created by social media users is not limited to its materialistic value in terms of providing rich content for investigative journalism, but it has introduced fundamental changes to the concept of investigation in theory and practice together, within a framework that cannot be separated from the concept of citizen journalism, through what has become known as open data sources.

In practical terms, open data sources are credited with expanding the scope of actors in the field of investigation, by integrating non-journalistic entities such as Airwars, Bellingcat, Forensic Architecture, and the Syrian Archive, in the practice of this journalistic genre (Müller & Wiik, 2021). Thus, the study opines that this integration has created a completely new dynamic for investigative journalism based on participatory production, the use of new methods and tools, and the employment of technology capabilities in journalistic practice. This was demonstrated in the joint investigation conducted by Brillingat and the *New York Times* on the Ukrainian plane crash in Iran in 2020, detailed in the introduction to this doctoral thesis. Moreover, Müller and Wiik (2021) argued that the collaboration between investigative actors can create a path for developing

both the philosophy of investigative work and its practical methodology, through which a new cognitive framework can be created to define investigative journalism as a type of journalism that is increasingly sophisticated as digital media affordances continue to evolve.

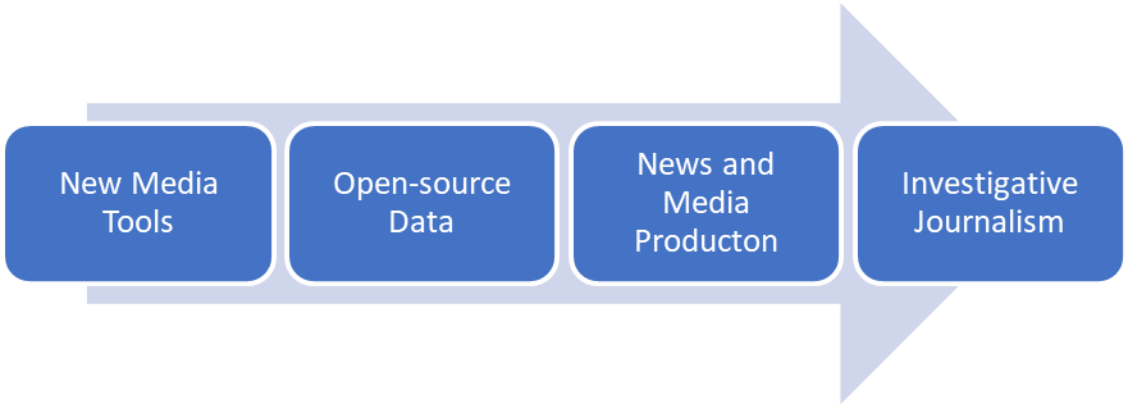
In general, the previous sections of this research have shown that the development of digital technology has affected the journalism profession in several directions, including the fact that it has restricted practices that were common in the era of traditional journalism such as gatekeeping. Moreover, it introduced new practices to the journalism profession that were not familiar before such as digital surveillance. It also changed the characteristics of other practices that were previously performed but turned to have a more technology-dependent nature such as the use of information sources. This is because open sources have become rapidly integrated into investigative journalism, and thus, the traditional role of the journalist has shifted from being a monitor to an enabler of free cooperation between actors in the investigative process (Müller & Wiik, 2021).

The emergence of citizen journalism presents one of the important forms of modern media arenas that have been established as a result of new media development in the field of research and practice (Licitar, 2018). Citizen journalism is defined as the process of forming news by people (Wall, 2015). The editorial level of this process consists of four types: Participatory, paragraphs, new media watchdog and community (Carpenter, 2019). Thus, the well understanding of citizen media paves the way to develop an accurate imagination about investigative journalism which is mainly defined as chasing information to produce a trustable news (Gearing, 2014).

Figure 2.3 shows the relations that link the four main concepts of the study together based on reviewed past studies. The series assumes that as new media develops more open-source data

become available, the more available open-source data leads to increasing work of media production and coverage, the more media production and coverage leads to investigative reporting thrives.

Figure 2.2: The relations that link the four main concepts of the study together based on reviewed past studies.



In some studies, citizen journalism is described as "citizen-led social media forums" (Amoncar, 2020) considering the role of media tools in finding citizen media. Nihar Amoncar argues that citizen media has significant effects on controlling the marketing of political discourse in social media platforms; the study was conducted by analyzing the content of Facebook groups and investigating the role of the admin of each group in distinguishing between rhetoric and reality in discourse and identifying the risks of using social media to publish false information. The study concluded that the admin of each Facebook group played the role of a press organization or association that encourages users of social media platforms to uncover and report fake news. The impact of new media emergence on the press and journalism practices has not been limited to turning the role of an individual into a self-contained institution that transformed social media platforms into stand-alone journalistic institutions, it has also made the users real journalists.

It is very difficult to imagine the important role of citizen journalism in the political environment in the Arab World without understanding the role of new media in breaking the government's practice of monopoly over classic journalism narration. Due to the emergence of new media, it has been much easier than before for individuals to own communication channels that are not subjected to the government's restrictions such as social media platforms like Facebook, YouTube and Twitter as the most well-known platforms in the Arab Countries in 2011. Citizen media which have emanated from new media has attracted the attention of many official press institutions including Aljazeera Media Channel (Alharbi, 2018).

Nowadays, every person who possesses any technological devices like digital cameras, tablets, iPads, or even smart phones and has a connection to the internet can easily be a citizen journalist. However, although citizen journalism can be easily utilized as an effective method of sending media messages, it lacks certain professional standards (Mutsvairo & Salgado, 2020) such as the issue of delivering impartial representations of reality. Regarding the Arab World, there is a body of research that focuses a lot on citizen journalism practice because it has proved that media can be used to access data and information that were not accessible before the emergence of new media technology (Alrehya, 2020; Alzahrani, 2020; & Saleem, 2018). For that reason, citizen journalism refers to major user groups including non-profit organizations, informal groups, and citizens not affiliated with institutional frameworks (Cox et al., 2024).

2.6.3 Investigative journalism

Investigative journalism is mainly defined as revealing information hidden either accidentally or intentionally from the public (Hunter et al., 2011). The researchers hold that traditional journalism works by publishing data or information that has been offered to journalists and media men from

different information sources. In contrast, investigative journalism seeks exposing hidden information that might even exist in other sources of information such as open-source data. Kaplan (2013) defines investigative journalism as deep and innovative journalism that employs systematic research methods for revealing secrets and focusing on social justice. In general, investigative journalism is distinguished from other journalistic arts by six main characteristics identified by Mansour (2019): the media which takes a lot of efforts for preparation, long period of time, serious and does not deal with superficial topics, great deal of responsibilities, awareness of legal caveats and employing records, data and documents frequently.

Thus, if sources are seen as a treasure for media and journalism, new media is definitely the mine of this treasure. This means that social media per se has become the place where traditional media agencies search for news, especially urgent ones as the source for their coverage (Kumari, 2019). Interestingly, research has strongly proved the frequency of using social media as a source of information for media coverage. For example, Mansour (2019) states that the internet web and its applications and platforms have strongly facilitated accessing data and information by media workers whether the information were open-data or closed. The study shows that 87.5% out of 72 investigative reports, which had been published by Arab media from 2015 to 2017, were of open data sources versus 12.5% of closed data sources. Moreover, the study found out that Arab investigative reporting is mostly concerned with social topics that cover 29.2% of the analyzed 72 investigative reports in the study; the health issue was placed in the second position with 21% of the analyzed 72 investigative reports, then political, economic, environmental and educational issues respectively.

Alshawabkah and Khalil (2020), classified media sources into three categories: paper sources, human sources and digital sources. They listed three main characteristics of digital

sources: the ability to provide fast access to information, the ability to access cross-border sources and being affordable in terms of the effort and finance compared to human sources or paper sources. Based on that, they perceived digital sources as a huge archive of information that can be accessed and analyzed to reach facts and conclusions. This archive includes governmental and private digital databases, websites, audio and video libraries, media and social media accounts. These digital sources provide solid and coherent evidence that serve the goals of investigative processes; mainly, tracing and revealing the truth (Alshawabkah & Khalil, 2020). Investigative journalism is of a particular importance in the Arab World due to the democracy crisis and the prevailing political systems of governments in many Arab countries which directly affect the climate of opinion and the right of expression.

Globally, there are many recent studies that have linked investigative media with journalistic sources at the level of freedom and the environment of democracy in the field of media work like Lanosga and Martin (2018). The research has been conducted on 757 American journalistic materials that participated in prize contests between 1976 and 2012. The study revealed a much-closed link between the emergence of investigative media and the democratic environment including the relationship between journalists and sources of information. The exciting information reported by the study reveals that the decision maker (the source of information) has a stronger connection to the investigative reporter compared to the average journalist who is collecting information only in a traditional or superficial way.

The development of communication technology has greatly contributed to creating intersecting areas between different forms of media. For a clear understanding of this intersection, it is enough to focus on the large traditional media coverage of investigative media products such as the Panama Papers or WikiLeaks. Some studies link the forms of media by the emergence of

online media as a result of communication technology development (Kurnia et al., 2020). Other studies form an inverse association between traditional media and investigative media such as Bennett (2020) which states that media is a main source provider of data and information to investigative reporting provided that these media inputs should be dealt with carefully to avoid inaccuracy or inappropriate knowledge that could affect the final results of media investigation.

The study brings up a set of information that researchers in the field of investigative media should know including the interests of investigative media, sources of its data and information, the average period of work on each piece of reporting, the styles of writing, editing and presenting of investigative media and the factors that changes the styles of preparation based on the change of its topics and research information tools. Given that, the studies about investigative journalism identified three methods of writing investigative media reporting: the method of storytelling which depends on suspense and enjoyment as the writing of literary novels; the method of displaying records and documents, which is a common style in dealing with hidden information that the investigative journalist searches for; and hypothesis method which is the most common one in international investigative media because it is based on a set of hypotheses provided from the data background available to the journalist who works to prove these hypothesis. Regarding the titles and headlines of investigative media, the studies present a set of title types that could be of direct news and events, descriptive, reportedly, short story title, expository, critical or interrogative title. Moreover, the studies suggested five styles of investigative reporting including interviews, viewing documents, field video shooting, analog video shooting and role play. Investigative reports are classified into three types based on the length of presentation: long, medium, and short. Long investigative reports are works that exceed 3000 words in writing and take more than 30 minutes of time such as videos for TVs and YouTube. Medium reports are works that are between

25000 and 3000 words in writing that take 15-30 minutes in time such as videos for TVs and YouTube. Short reports are works which are less than 1500 words in writing and take less than 15 minutes of time such as videos for TVs and YouTube.

Based on the above-mentioned studies, investigative journalism practitioners need to be very sensitive to the ethical controls regarding searching and dissemination of information particularly due to the close linkage between the journalists and secrets of their societies. Even in societies which are subject to firm legislation of censorship and publications, there are some cases where journalists violate privacy standards either at personal or collective levels. This shows that media ethics are more effective when linked to the conscience of the journalist rather than imposing them by the force of law.

Media ethics are defined as “values like trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, truth and self-restraint to be practiced by the media people voluntarily, to preserve and promote the trust of the people and to maintain their own credibility and not betray the faith and confidence of the people” (Tilak, 2020, p. 448). The study has considered media ethics as an important factor in maintaining an accurate balance between the rights of journalists to access data and information from one side and the right of people to preserve their privacy from the other side. Moreover, the study has argued that media ethics play a key role in developing people's understanding of their circumstances, objectives, principles of life, norms of society and rules and regulations that shape people’s lives. Tilak (2020) has also realized that media ethics reflect people's activities in all the fields of real life and help each part of the communication process in understanding and respecting the values of other parties. The study states that it is impossible to think of life without rules, values and ethics which are very significant for all people particularly the journalists who have had exceptional influential power in societies since a very long period of time.

The development of new telecommunication technologies has greatly increased the significance of Media ethics in communicative practices and media production especially after the emergence of new media channels and social media platforms. Tilak (2020) proposes that computer technologies allow media editors to manipulate any data and information, even the photographs which can be manipulated by changing their contents of colors, elements such as removing people from the frame or adding others who did not exist when the picture was shot. The development of images manipulation based on technology development shows the need of press communities for modern codes of ethics that can be continuously updated for maintaining the truthfulness of information provided by the journalists to saturate the need of people for news and media stories. The codes of ethics are also very important to control harmful practices of journalism such as bribery, defamation, fraud, extortion, personal gain and creation of prejudices and stereotypes.

Some studies, like Harfoush (2015), place investigative journalism at the front of the forms of journalism which aim to achieve communicative process, and at the same time, preserve journalism ethics. The study lists the main ethical values of journalism: the truth which stems from facts as the main motivation for any journalistic material production; respect of human dignity, whether for persons or assemblies, by avoiding deception, extortion, illegal photographing and other issues that detract from people consideration; achieving integrity by avoiding personalization or employing individual attitudes or opinions and neutralizing external pressures on journalistic work; taking responsibility for what the journalist produces of investigative materials and having the ability to defend the information he\she publishes; and finally, commitment to justice that puts all people in equal positions of rights and duties in media coverage.

Harfoush (2015) has divided media ethics into five sections related to the journalist's management of information sources: the audience of media message and the public, advertisement, the editorial policies of media organization that investigative journalists work for, fellowship ethics among journalists, professional level of investigative journalist and society's values, norms, customs and traditions. In general, media ethics must accompany investigative journalism in all work stages starting from choosing the topic of investigation that should be related to the issues of the society and does not contradict with the responsibility of investigative journalist toward it and enhances great societal values such as positivity, democracy, political sharing and anti-corruption. According to the same study, media ethics should also be considered during the stage of data gathering which must be conducted without violating the law or the privacy of individuals, ensuring the authenticity of the sources and protecting their confidentiality. Media ethics must also be observed during the stage of writing the investigation report with personal neutrality, objectivity, accuracy, honesty in the narration and avoiding explicit or suggestive bias (Mebrahtu, 2021).

2.6.4 Aljazeera Media Network

Showing a high level of interest in Aljazeera Media Network for studying the influence of new media on investigative reporting comes from the position of Aljazeera as one of the most influential media organizations in the Arab World and because there is much evidence that shows its interest in investigative journalism and its use of new media in this journalistic practice (Bebawi, 2016). The influence of Aljazeera on the Arab public opinion appears clearly in its intensive publishing and coverage on major issues such as the American wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and the rise of the extreme right parties in Western countries where some writers like Sam Cherribi (2017) says that Aljazeera has started to reconstruct the

Arab psyche and mentality. Based on his book *Fridays of Rage: Aljazeera the Arab Spring and Political Islam,* Cherribi argued that Aljazeera has succeeded in establishing a free media platform that brought together all the opposing sides in its screen and making it a tool for strategic influence in the global media. Aljazeera's coverage of the war in Syria since 2011 is an important model for understanding how it uses social media platforms as sources of data and information including videos and photographs for news stories (Khasib & Ersoy, 2017). The study indicates that Aljazeera has been able to use citizen media as the main source for the content of its screen from Syrian lands; one of the most important reasons explaining this dependence on social media is that Aljazeera journalists and teams are prohibited from working in the areas controlled by Bashar al-Assad regime in Syria (Khasib & Ersoy, 2017). According to the study, which analyzed five major events in Syria after 2011, the materials taken from citizen media origin that were published in Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and blogs exceed more than 46% of the total content published by Aljazeera about the same issues.

Some other writers, like Badawi Ben Abdullah, believe that the tendency of Aljazeera to use the content that is published by new media platforms has allowed the network to widen its media coverage around the world. In a report published in 2011, Ben Abdullah explained in detail the impacts of new media emergence on Aljazeera media coverage by assuming that new media reproduced Aljazeera based on interactive Media. According to the writer, new media gave Aljazeera the capacity to combine high quality media content with free access by the audience. The author believes that new media has limited the intervention of the gatekeeper and enhanced the role of McLuhan theory which links the content to the media tool where owning new media platforms enables Aljazeera to publish its media message globally and receive data and information freely from all over the world. It has been difficult to confine new media to only one

theoretical framework due to the continuing development of its concepts and the ongoing growth of its inputs.

In fact, Aljazeera Media Network has largely dominated the interest of researchers in the field of media and communication in the Arab World to the extent that they have autopsied its accurate details of work. For example, some researchers have studied the use of the perennial question “do you know that?” which has been used by Dr. Faisal Alqasim, the presenter of the program *The Opposite Direction* on Aljazeera screen since the middle of 1990s, the long-term very well-known weekly program held by hosting two guests who have an extremely opposite position regarding the case of discussion. Alqasim used to ask one of his guests the preemitive question: “do you know that?" before introducing the debated argument in order to weaken the debater’s ability to defend his position (Shalash, 2020).

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter has reflected on the great significance being given to examining the relation between investigative journalism and new media through communication technology development resulting in the availability of open-data sources that have been so beneficial to investigative journalism. Subsequently, the study of the effect of communication technology development on media was the first to be addressed in this chapter. Initially, the emergence of computational communication technology was introduced, and a glimpse on how the world has turned to dealing with such a communication technology was presented before discussing the usage of modern media technology in journalism and the journalistic needs for achieving that goal, with a special focus on Aljazeera Media Network. The chapter then reviewed studies and researches that tackled the subject of new media as a notion and listed the most important definitions and the explanation

of the difference between new media and traditional media. Moreover, the chapter discussed the huge body of information offered by new media and shed light on how new media platforms have been dealt with and what level of interaction was observed.

This chapter discusses the nature of new media in the Arab World in terms of importance, practice, and challenges as well as the synchronicity of the emergence of new media in the Arab World. It also explained thoroughly the theoretical and conceptual frameworks where the technological affordances approach of Gibson (1977) is addressed as the theory of the thesis. Definitions of the most significant terminology were listed including new media and citizen media along with its relations to open-data sources and investigative journalism. The latter was defined with a great emphasis on its origin and development as well as its most significant examples and some of its international assemblies, whereas a special interest was given to Aljazeera's practice of investigative journalism.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

As exploratory descriptive research, this study embraces the inductive qualitative approach based on the interpretive philosophical paradigm via focusing on a case study of a phenomenological design that frames the methodology of in-depth interview data.

The research deals with a journalistic practice: the use of new media technologies in Aljazeera investigative journalism. Data were collected from participants' answers to open-ended questions that consider their environments, experiences, and their exposure to Aljazeera Network's investigative programs. The participants' written answers were then analyzed inductively.

In this doctoral thesis, the researcher plays the role of the interpreter of the collected data by extrapolating general meanings and generating a pattern of meaning in convenience with the research problem and within the contextual interest, which gives this study, to a large extent, an inductive qualitative character.

The answers of the participants to pre-planned open-ended questions either sent by email or addressed to Arab media experts face-to-face, who were carefully selected according to research standards as well as quality standards that guarantee objectivity and credibility.

This part of the study explains the followed procedures of data analysis and the mechanism of sample selection as well as the criteria of selecting participants based on certain standards and qualifications. Moreover, it is then decided on the analysis method of the answers of the participants in order to achieve the four main objectives of this study: to explicate the regional

importance of Aljazeera Media Network investigative reporting; to identify the factors that contribute to Aljazeera Media Network's use of new media in its investigative journalism; to explore the influences of new media usage on the practices of Aljazeera Media Network investigative reporting; and to explore the challenges of using new media in Aljazeera Media Network investigative reporting.

Regarding data analysis, this research follows qualitative methodology of thematic coding of interviews' general concepts (Creswell, 2014) in order to achieve the research objectives. The thematic codes of the general concepts that are collected from the answers to the questions related to the first research objective reflect the regional importance of Aljazeera Media Network investigative reporting; whereas the thematic codes of the general concepts collected from the answers to the questions that are related to the second research objective reflect the factors that contribute to Aljazeera Media Network's use of new media in its investigative journalism.

Again, the thematic codes of the general concepts collected from the answers to the questions that are related to the third research objective reflect the influences of new media usage on the practices of Aljazeera Media Network investigative reporting; while the thematic codes of the general concepts collected from the answers to the questions that are related to the fourth research objective reflect challenges of using new media in Aljazeera Media Network investigative reporting.

In addition, this chapter illustrates the limitations that confront the conducting of the study at the content and logistic level. It shows to how extent the results could be representative and generalized based on credibility and reliability standards taking into consideration the related ethical issues.

3.1 Research Approach and Design

The qualitative inductive approach adopted in this study allowed for summarizing the extensive raw transcripts from participants' responses to open-ended interview questions. It helped to condense the content of the transcripts to draw conclusions and establish clear links between the four research objectives and its findings. Thus, the qualitative inductive approach contributed to transforming the participants' specific observations into a broader understanding under the umbrella of the interpretive paradigm and through the use of case study of a phenomenological design, which is one of the research designs included under the qualitative inductive approach.

The major philosophical idea of this research clearly stems from the fact that Aljazeera Media Network has many reasons that push it to intensify its investigative work in its media productions as a general trend growing in the Arab region, to which it belongs, and among the largest media institutions in the world as well. Therefore, Aljazeera needs news information sources which are considered a fundamental pillar for producing such programs. However, due to the great restrictions it has faced during the last two decades for many reasons as explained in the problem statement section in this thesis, Aljazeera Media Network has resorted to the affordances provided by new media technologies as an alternative artery that feeds its investigative journalism.

The interpretive framework was crucial to this study because it significantly helped the researcher to reach the outcomes in every stage up to the major results and conclusions. This is because the paradigms, which are also called the philosophical worldview, epistemologies and ontologies, or research methodologies, in a broad concept, or even more broadly called conceived research methodologies, represent the basic starting point for any serious research process (Creswell, 2014).

It is not surprising that the study of the use of new media technology in Aljazeera investigative journalism is framed within the interpretive paradigm, as it is one of the most common paradigms in framing research on the journalistic performance of major mass media institutions (Potter et al., 2006). The interpretive paradigm also gives power to open-ended research questions that revolve around how and why Aljazeera used new media in its journalistic coverage in search for information that increases the understanding of the phenomenon of employing technological affordances in Aljazeera's investigative journalism.

Adopting the interpretive paradigm contributed to explaining the outcomes of this research in detail by integrating them with the narratively expressed convictions and beliefs of the research participants on topics such as the interaction between Aljazeera and the audience, competition among media outlets, the need for news verification, and the use of digital technology affordances. Hence, the interpretive paradigm provided a deep and rich understanding of the phenomenon addressed by this thesis since it is linked to deepening the understanding of phenomena more than it is linked to finding strict and definitive answers about the case study of the phenomena being researched (Pervin & Mokhtar, 2022).

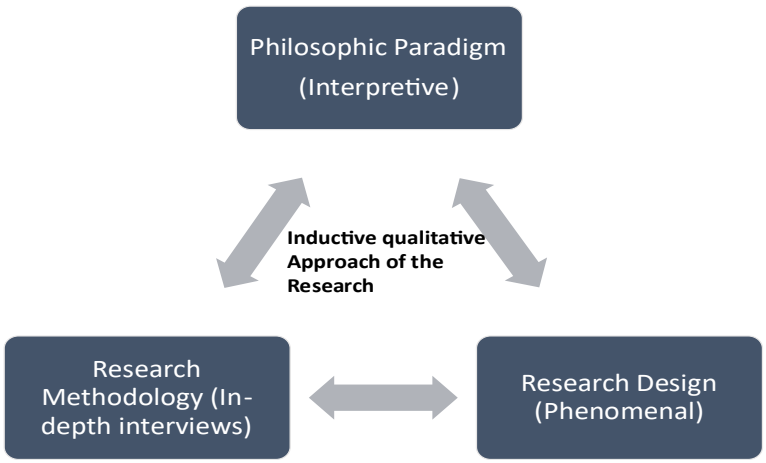
The case study of the phenomenological design, which is common in research that aims to integrate theory into performance and practice (Bouzioti, 2023) gave this thesis a great deal of flexibility to describe the opinions and impressions of the research participants about the use of new media affordances in Aljazeera investigative journalism, relying on the methodology of interviews with open-ended questions, where the researcher's position was determined in bias towards the rate of opinions that were most agreed upon among the research participants, despite the limitations due to the difficulty of avoiding subjectivity in phenomenological designs, especially that the researcher has been practicing journalism since 2003 and has previously worked

with several Arab journalistic institutions, including Aljazeera Media Network, the subject of this research.

Since case study research scientifically and deeply examines real phenomena within its environmental contexts, whether the case under study is an individual, group, organization, event, problem, or even an anomaly case, this thesis discusses a case study of the phenomenon of employing new media affordances in investigative journalism.

To conclude, the qualitative approach essentially combines three basic components: the research philosophy through the interpretive paradigm, the phenomenological study design, and its methodology based on in-depth interview data. It is also linked to the research problem and its questions related to Aljazeera Network's reliance on new media affordances in its investigative journalism for reaching a deeper understanding of the phenomenon, considering that it is a quite new topic, which makes it difficult to build a prejudgment on it from the available information.

Figure 3.1 the inductive qualitative approach based on the interpretive paradigm with phenomenological design and in-depth interview data methodology.



In-depth interviews technique was conducted in the thesis via three types of interviews with Arab journalists: email interviews, face-to-face interviews and focused group discussion. In-depth interviews are defined as a qualitative data collection technique used to comprehend, explain, explore and describe a phenomenon (Marilyn, 1997). Brouneus (2011) defined in-depth interview as a method of collecting data by a set of semi-structured and open-ended questions. It is usually used to acquaint researchers with the complexities taking place in conflict zones and to help them understand individual points of view on a certain topic or a few specific subjects accurately. In-depth interviews are also used to establish hypotheses or theories that could be examined in a later stage by other research methodology, especially quantitative. Besides, recent research points to the idea that in-depth interview as a technique is significant due to its role in extending daily dialogue and giving it an official aspect. In-depth interviews are mainly used to collect detailed information and complex data from small number of participants (Roller, 2020). It is also used to explore certain issues, to suggest related potential resolutions and to support and explain some other quantitative results.

Fox et al. (2000), classified interviews based on content into three categories: completely structured interviews, semi structured interviews and unstructured interviews. The first allows the interviewer to address same pre-planned and coherent questions, whether open-ended or not, to each participant, in a way similar to questionnaires. The second category is important for data collection on the opinions and points of view of the participants and uses only open-ended questions to address issues that have not been previously explored where only little information is known in relation to the issues under study. However, the third type represents the most natural daily conversations and accordingly rarely used in academic research. Moreover, the same study classifies in-depth interviews into focus group interviews, telephone interviews and face-to-face

interviews which is considered by (Marilyn, 1997) as the best way for data collection. Open-ended interviews are also classified into three types: informal conversational interviews, standardized open-ended interviews and general interview guide approach.

Face to face in-depth interviews that are conducted individually represent a good choice for qualitative studies when it is hard to meet all participants at once. Therefore, it is good for exploratory studies which require meeting experts and specialists who are capable to provide detailed and deeply analyzed information without the need for selecting a random sample of population. While Guion et al. (2011) opine that there is no alternative to face-to-face interviews, so many other research studies signify email interviews as an effective technique of data collection because of its ability to save time that used to be consumed during long processes of conducting face-to-face interviews such as time spent in arranging appointments, transportations, recording, analyzing records and transcription. Email interviews are also advantageous because of overcoming certain technical issues such as managerial burden and distraction among the participant and the interviewer. Moreover, it gives the interviewer more freedom in asking questions where he or she can bring up unlimited topics or ideas where maximum level of information can be obtained within the minimum level of time possible. In addition, email-interviews guarantee preserving information from being lost in comparison to closed data collection such as questionnaires or surveys. Furthermore, email interviews allow for asking questions of more quality and power to get to answers by operations of expansion, omission, clarification and contextualization. Another advantage of email interviews is the opportunity of sending the participant a new paper or file of questions, which increases the chance of positively controlling the quality of the interview; additionally, email-interviews save the interviewer the

burden of having conversational skills needed in face-to-face interviews such as being open-minded, flexible, responsive, patient, observant and good listener (Marilyn, 1997).

Roller (2020) opines that resorting to email interviews considering the continuously developing social media applications seems a little bit strange because of the latter's fascinating features of facilitating the access to participants and high technical features of presenting, saving and documenting interviews. Yet, the study reviews some cases in which email interviews were effectively used in various fields of human and social sciences. The study also cited other research papers which results demonstrated that email interviews provided longer pages with a range between 3-8 more pages of the answers of the participants compared to face-to-face interviews and 6-12 more pages than those presented by phone interviews. Another important feature is that email interviews escalate the privacy level between the participant and interviewer and give the participant longer time sufficient to give deeper, accurate and clearer written answers than those oral immediate answers; this contributes to a more developed and more enriched flaw of information. Besides, it grants participants more chances to change some aspects of their previous knowledge or schema by reviewing and updating their information before submitting their replies.

Roller & Lavarkas (2020) argues that email interviews have three main merits: to begin with, this kind of interviews encourage participants to present their answers and points of view in a narrative way in a form of storytelling free of pressure of face-to-face conversation which is affected by sensational expression. Rather, email interviews allow for deep thinking of and editing information before submitting the final answers. On the other hand, the interviewer as well enjoys the chance of thinking of and editing the questions before sending them to participants. Nonetheless, in-depth interviews as any other kind of interviews have some limitations as being

prone to bias whereas participants are asked to talk about their personal experiences. Another limitation is non-generalizable results due to selected qualitative sampling.

Based on the above criteria, which adopts Creswell's (2014) research design, the study was conducted using fully structured interviews of standardized open-ended questions by preparing a list of specific questions aimed at achieving the four objectives of the study and sending these lists of questions via email to ten senior Arab journalists, who are experts in the field of media.

As for the third data collection technique, focus group discussions, it has been known in research in various fields of study since the second decade of the last century, and researchers have recently increasingly used it as a valuable means of gathering in-depth information and increasing deep understanding about the topic under study (Then et al., 2014). Focus group discussions have recently become among the most common methods for conducting qualitative research in many fields (Vanderstoep & Johnston, 2008).The importance of using (FGDs) in qualitative social science studies in particular stems from the fact that focus groups are very effective for gathering data and revealing beliefs, opinions, perspectives, and experiences from several participants at the same time (Onwuegbuzie et al., 2009) in a purposeful sampling technique (Akyildiz & Ahmed, 2021). Bagnoli and Clark (2010) defined focus group as a method of data gathering where the interaction occurs between participants of the group rather than the interviewer and the participants.

One of the major advantages of using (FGDs) in research studies is the possibility of providing the researcher with the ability to develop collective ideas (Smithson, 2000) because of being an easy to be organized and inexpensive research method. The (FGDs) are characterized as a fashionable research technique that enables investigators to gather data from many people in a

short time where the source of data is a group of people (Acocella, 2012). The main advantages of adopting (FGDs) in research studies include the efficiency of the technique in collecting in-depth information from many people at the same time, providing flexibility for exploring the investigated issues, being very helpful in developing the ideas, empowering the participants by giving them a voice and the ability to redress the issues of power (Rose, 2020).

3.2 Data Sampling

The fully non-probable sample of this study consisted of 21 participants (n = 21) who were chosen purposefully among Arab journalists working in different fields of journalism and media. Limiting the interviews in the journalism sector aims at achieving the professional harmonization between the topic of the research and the sources of information in order to deepen the homogeneity of cognitive perception. This endeavor involves dealing with interview participants who have a uniform understanding of, or at least a high level of, affinity for the concepts covered in the study as the participants have an experience in the journalistic work (Ugalde, 2020).

In order to ensure getting access to a wide range of specialists and to stimulate data collection mechanism, the study sample was classified into three staged successive categories: the first category includes Journalists working in investigative journalism or have previously worked in this type of journalism and affiliated with investigative journalism institutions and associations. These constitute the largest category of the study sample, 11 participants of this category were interviewed (n1 = 11), all of whom were interviewed via email from seven Arab countries. The participants for this sample were chosen based on the snowball sampling strategy, where some journalists who meet the criteria of the study were asked to nominate other journalists to participate in these interviews. Participants were invited to this interview based on two professional criteria:

the participant has worked in the field of journalism for more than five years and has passed the stage of a novice journalist, and he should have deep knowledge of Aljazeera Network. The process of collecting data from the 11 participants took about eight months, between February and October 2022.

Regarding email interviews, 32 journalists were contacted; six of whom refused to respond in the first place, and eight others refused to provide their answers after they had initially agreed, while seven others refrained from sending their answers by e-mail and stopped responding. This reluctance to respond to e-mail interviews constituted the most important methodological obstacle in this study. Thus, it was an important motivation for using the other two types of interviews, which are face-to-face interviews and focus groups discussions.

The second category of the interviews was carried out face-to-face and one to one. It was conducted with five Arab researchers (n2 = 5) whereas four of them are holding a PhD degree in the field of journalism and media and one of them has a master's degree of journalism and has been working in an Arabic institute for research.

The participants were selected based on homogeneous sampling strategy which is mainly based on purposefully choosing members of a subgroup who possess similar traits or characteristics that achieve the research criteria (Creswell, 2014). The participants were invited to this interview based on the same two professional criteria of the email interview sample.

The door to volunteering was open through an advertisement posted on four digital communities (closed Facebook groups of Arab PhD holders in Turkey; all groups have about 126 members). The interviews invitation was accepted initially by 13 volunteers; four of whom were excluded due to communication difficulties because of residing in remote governorates in Turkey.

Besides, three others were excluded because their PhDs were in different fields, and one hesitated to participate then did not accept to take part in the interview for private reasons. Face-to-face interviews were conducted physically in person in Istanbul-Turkey in October and November, 2022.

The third and last interview category includes five Arab field journalists who work as freelance media reporters and correspondents in Turkey, holding either bachelor or master's degrees in media and communications.

They were chosen based on homogeneous sampling strategy by achieving the same criteria used in email and face-to-face interviews. The participants were interviewed collectively in a focus group discussion (FGD) in one session that lasted for more than two and a half hours in Istanbul, Turkey, in December 2020. These five participants were called on to participate in the focus group from four closed Facebook groups of Arab journalists in Turkey, with more than 133 group members (most of them shared memberships in two or more different groups).

The study sample used in this research represents an appropriate source of opinion and position on Aljazeera investigative programs and the use of new media technology in investigations. Therefore, the information provided by the participants can contribute to integrating the practice of investigative journalism in Aljazeera within the research framework related to technological affordances. Although the majority of participants in this research are not part of the Aljazeera network, meaning that they are not officially affiliated with it through work contracts, rather, they are all generally close to Aljazeera. The process of sample collection encompassed the following steps:

First: Selecting participants from the population of the followers of investigative programs on Aljazeera Network, provided that they are basically media professionals who have practiced journalism for five years or more.

Second: The largest number of participants in the research, 15 out of 21, had work relationships and direct contacts with Aljazeera, some of whom were specifically related to Aljazeera's investigative work. For example, Zaher Elbek worked as a freelance correspondent for Aljazeera Net for more than five years, and Sanae Elkouiti and Mounira Hajlaoui are still working for Aljazeera up to date. As for Adel Abdulmughni and Aseel Saraih, they worked as freelancers to supervise many of Aljazeera's investigative work, both also have previously won international awards for investigative journalism.

As a senior producer in Global Media Malaysia, Yousef Aljuneidi produced an investigative film for Aljazeera about (Plaza Tol Smart) in Kuala Lumpur. Sulaiman Bsharat is media analyst gust on Aljazeera's screen, while Hudhayfa Jarrar, Omar Fayyad, Wasef Qadah, Muhammad Fares, Mustafa Swelim, Khaled Ma'ali, Ahmad Albaitawee, and Samed Dwaikat stated that they received training on new media techniques and investigative journalism at the Aljazeera network's training institute in Qatar.

Third: These interviews set the aim of (satisfaction) as a post-criterion for adopting or rejecting the results of any of the answer transcripts that were harvested, meaning that the quality of the information collected from the participants is judged by considering the extent to which it meets the research needs cognitively by adding information that can be framed in the study results, and contextually through the consistency of the answers with the questions directed to each participant. Therefore, this research excluded the results of any interview that shows the

participant's clear lack of familiarity with the content and techniques of Aljazeera's investigative programs.

Fourth: The data sampling process took into account the diversity of the participants' starting points of understanding by diversifying the societal and professional context of the research sample. Participants were selected from eight Arab countries that differ in the characteristics of exposure to the media. The participants were also distributed among different professional practices, including researchers, TV program presenters, correspondents, producers, directors, and managers of media institutions.

Some of the research participants are veterans of practicing journalism, either consecutively or simultaneously. For example, Zaher Elbek was a correspondent for Aljazeera Net and is now an investigative reporter specifically for the famous Al-Araby Al-Jadeed (The New Arab website). He is also a media researcher at the Center for Future Studies in Ankara, in addition to holding a doctorate degree in media from Ankara University in Turkey.

Wasef Qadah is also a UX Researcher at Endeavor Technology and holds a PhD in research in Communication Design and Graphic Design. Sulaiman Bsharat runs Yabous for Consulting and Strategic Studies. He is also a researcher with many published research papers on various issues, including journalistic practices. He is also a media analyst on TV channels, especially Aljazeera. He started his career as a correspondent for several Arab news websites.

Fifth: Aljazeera Media Network enjoys the characteristic of being so popular among Arab media professionals. This means that Arab media professionals in general follow Aljazeera events and program developments with high motivation, interest, and curiosity which makes the Arab journalist naturally affiliated with Aljazeera.

Sixth: Many major media outlets include conditions in their contracting policies with their correspondents and employees stipulating on making no statements, speeches, or documented interviews related to the institution which consider the information to be disclosed as part of its private rights that must not be revealed. Despite the fact that there is no proven evidence of such conditions in Aljazeera's work contracts, two investigative journalists who are officially working for Aljazeera refused to participate in this study, after being contacted by the researcher, without specifying the reasons.

This thesis has chosen to expand the sample boundaries, to some extent, due to the difficulty, and perhaps impossibility of reaching a sufficient number of Arab investigative journalists, as there is scarcity in investigative journalists' numbers in the first place, due to the nature of the undemocratic regimes dominating the Arab world and accordingly imposing restrictions on journalism, making the practice of investigation therein unwelcome. Therefore, all these limitations were set to balance between two matters: First, expanding the number of participants to ensure knowledge saturation and diversifying sources to achieve the validity and reliability of the data. Second, reaching the journalistic category closest to the topic of employing technology in investigative journalism at Aljazeera Network.

Classifying the sample into three categories of interviews achieves a set of benefits and advantages for this research. First, it increased the number of participants in a way that was not possible with a single technique of interviewing. Second, it made it possible to sort the sources into classifications that increase the diversity of sources among those working in investigative journalism (researchers in the field of media and field journalists).

Third, it allows for greater flexibility in managing the process of capturing information and provided opportunities to use questions with each interviewed group focused on aspects that were not enriched during the interview with the previous group. Fourth, it facilitated ideas and information through the use of techniques that give the participants the opportunity to review and deepen their data carefully. For example, certain techniques that provide the researcher with the opportunity to focus on specific points and enrich them with individual discussion were used in the case of e-mail interviews and face-to-face interviews. And they enhanced interaction among the participants themselves as in the case of the focus group discussion, instead of only being in one direction between the interviewer and the participants in one-to-one interviews.

Fifth, using the three teqniques of data sampling enhanced research reliability and credibility by using three different sources of information within the same sample for achieving data triangulation.

Conducting the interviews successively, rather than synchronically, provided a good opportunity for evaluation when moving from one interview technique to another, among the three techniques and even among the interviews, especially in the face-to-face individual interviews. This allowed for discovering striking issues that were highlighted in each interview based on conclusions reached from previous interviews.

The largest number of participants in this study (11 out of 21) represented the participants who possessed a practical experience in the field of investigative journalism to benefit from their information based on personal experience. while the numbers of participants were distributed equally to face-to-face interviews and focused discussion groups by five members each to take advantage of the direct responses in the former and interactive discussion among the participants

in the latter. Thus, the diversification of the three interview methods enriched data collection in terms of diversity and results on the one hand and deepened its content on the other hand.

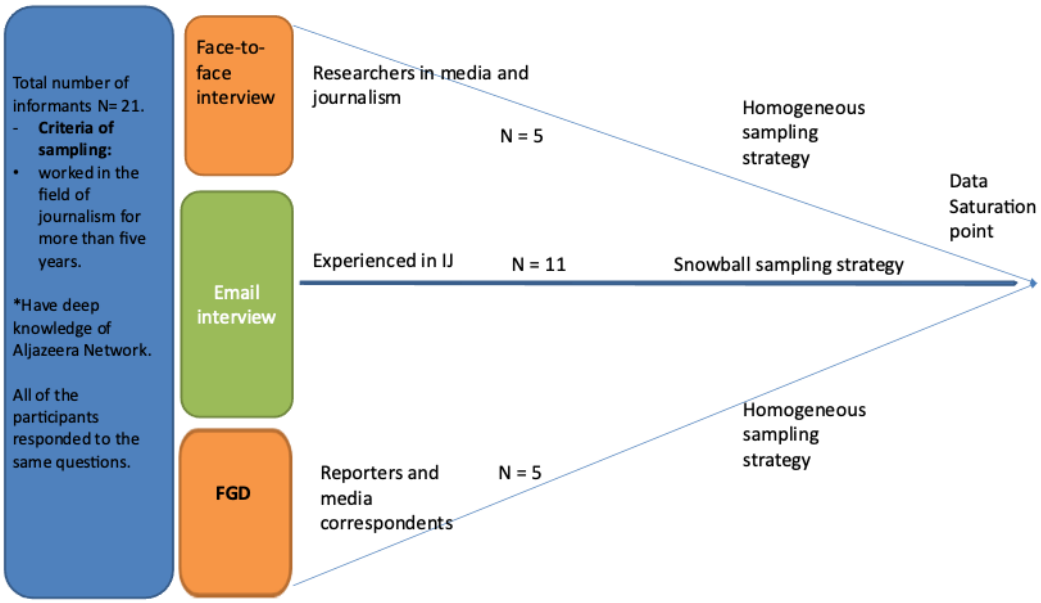
Table 3.1: The information about the three interviewing techniques used in this research study.

	Interview Method	**Number of Participants**	**Sample Sorting**	**Sample Strategy**	**Time of Interview**
1	Email interview	N1= 11	Arab investigative journalists	Snowball	February and October 2022
2	Face-to-face interview	N2= 5	Arab media researchers	voluntary response	October and November, 2022
3	FGD	N3= 5	Arab field reporters	voluntary response	December, 2022

Data is gathered from thematic analysis of written texts of participants' answers to email-interview questions about the usage of new media in Aljazeera Media Network's investigative programs. Eleven participants are mainly selected as a research sample. Though it is not a big sample, it fits well into the standards of qualitative data sampling standards of academic research, which allows for presenting an in-depth analysis of the opinions and perspectives of the journalists on the topics under examination. And the email interview with 11 participants (n=11) is also a part of the total participants of the bigger sample with 21 participants (n=21).

The email interview sample is the biggest sample because it consists of those who have practiced investigative journalistic works by themselves and because it includes the participants from different Arab countries (8 countries) which increases the chance of reaching more journalists than can be reached in just one country.

Figure 3.2: The information about the three interviewing techniques used in this research study.



The selection of research participants followed certain criteria of professional standards that guarantee objectivity of the answers of the participants, which increases the levels of validity and reliability of research results. First, the research participants are selected from different Arab regions (from eight Arab countries). Second, all of them possess work experience for at least 7 to 35 years in the field of media and journalism in order to obtain in-depth opinions related to the reality of journalistic work in the Arab media. Third, the selected research participants are either working in the field of investigative journalism, experienced in Arab media research or just having memberships in investigative media associations or unions or even have good knowledge about media investigations. Fourth, two of them are currently workers or were previously working for Aljazeera Media Network. Fifth, two of the participants are selected because they are working in top management positions at media corporations such as editors in chief and webmasters to guarantee their ability to reflect on how decision making is processed regarding the use of new

media in media investigative reporting. However, the above-mentioned criteria of participant selection may intersect among one or more participants. The interviews were conducted to find out the opinions of the participants about using new media in investigative journalism of Aljazeera Media Network.

Determining the exact number of the representative sample of participants has been one of the early challenges that faced this research because there are no specific standards followed for qualitative research compared to quantitative studies. However, Boyce (2006) associates the number to the maximum level of information saturation. In other words, the number can be determined as enough when the participants stop offering new information and whenever information presented by all participants become repeatedly produced. Roller (2020) states that there is so little research data on the issue of determining the number of interviews, leaving researchers with few guidelines for this matter. Nonetheless, the study shows that there are certain criteria that can be followed to overcome this problem; most significantly the nature of research; the level of coherence among the components of the subject under study; and the level of analysis and interpretation required to achieve research objectives. Moreover, there are other standards taken into consideration such as some logistic matters related to the availability of experts in the field related to the study; the chances of meeting the participants and the affordability of traveling costs, the participants' ability to offering clear-cut answers to each of the interview's questions; evaluating the answers whether they answer the questions or not or whether they confirm or deny new information, and whether they are valid to narrate a story or describe a phenomenon. Other studies that conducted in-depth interviews argues that selective or targeted sample should meet the standard of having a diverse mix of research participants that guarantee sample diversity whereas research participants are selected from different areas, genders, ages, educational levels and

specializations. In addition, selecting 10-15 participants is quite enough for a qualitative research sampling which depends more on a selective sample formation strategy such as judgmental and purposive formatting whereas in-depth interviews function as the research instrument. However, selecting the sample also needs to follow additional criteria such as the need for the participants to possess educational and experience qualification degrees in order to be able to provide in-depth information. The ability to provide in-depth analysis is, in fact, preferred in qualitative research to offering a sample that is representative of the population as the case in quantitative studies (Marilyn, 1997).

In consistence with the standards mentioned above, this study selected a sample of 21 Arab journalists who have been working in the field of media and journalism for more seven years including specialists in investigative media and all of them have good information and high interest of Aljazeera Media coverage.

3.3 Data Collection

The process of collecting qualitative data for this study goes through three basic stages: preparing for interviews, conducting interviews and collecting data. Interview preparation involved reading about the Aljazeera Media Network and getting more closely acquainted with its investigative reporting and programs, developing the questions consistent with the objectives of this research, and identifying the sample communities from which the participants will be selected.

A total number of 12 questions were developed and divided into four groups that represent the four objectives of the study. Each group consists of two to seven open-ended questions related to one objective. The questions are put carefully in a smart way that avoid any kind of repetitive, subjective, emotional and presupposed, whether positive or negative, answers. In addition, the

questions are set to focus on the content rather that the form; in other words, the questions seek answers that are focused on the use of new media in investigative reporting, not on Aljazeera itself. The question paper is divided into four main sections. The first includes the introductory part of the research and its purpose; the second is about personal biographical information on the participants (age, nationality, work experience, place of residence, etc.); the third section includes the interview questions (12 questions; 4 for the first objective, 4 for the second objective, 2 for the third, and 2 for the fourth); and the fourth section is allocated for expressing gratitude for taking part in the study and undertaking not to use the given information out of research purposes and information on the possibility of contacting them again for further explanations.

The interview questions are listed below as follows:

First four questions to meet the first research objective which is to explicate the regional importance of Aljazeera Media Network investigative reporting:

i. To what extent does Aljazeera use investigative reporting in its coverage?

ii. What are the Problems of conducting investigative reporting?

iii. How does investigative reporting affect media coverage of Aljazeera Media Network?

iv. Why does Aljazeera Media Network use investigative media among its total coverage?

Four questions for the second research objective which is to To identify the factors that contribute to Aljazeera Media Network's use of new media in its investigative journalism:

i. How do you find the effects of technological factors on the investigative journalism?

ii. What are the problems in using new media that affect investigative reporting?

iii. To what extent does Aljazeera use new media in investigative reporting?

iv. Why does Aljazeera Media Network use new media in its investigative journalism?

Two questions for the third research objective which is to explore the influences of new media usage on the practices of Aljazeera Media Network investigative reporting:

i. How does new media development affect the amount and the quality of investigative reporting of Aljazeera Media Network?

ii. How do you evaluate the credibility of information from open-source data in new media?

Two questions to meet the fourth research objective which is explore the challenges of using new media in Aljazeera Media Network investigative reporting:

i. What factors affect the abilities of Aljazeera Media Network journalists to use new media in investigative journalism activities?

ii. How can Aljazeera Media Network Journalists overcome the obstacles of using new media in investigative journalism?

The stage of interview preparation also includes selecting the most appropriate Arab journalists and media experts based on different sampling strategies with great keenness on achieving the most quality level of the answers to interviews' questions and the less amount of biasness in order to cope with credibility and reliability standards. As illustrated above 3 different groups of participants were identified as 11 Arab journalists with experience of investigation works, five Arab media researchers and five Arab field journalists who work as correspondents or reporters to different media outlets.

Table 3.2: The information of the 11 participants of the first stage (email interviews) of this research.

	The Participant	Age	Gender	Years of Work	Nationality	Current Position/ Profile Short Links
1	Adel Abdulmughni	35	Male	19	Yemen	Executive Manager of Mansa Foundation for Media and Development Studies. https://almasdaronline.com/articles/94362
2	Ahmad Albaitawee	40	Male	17	Palestine	Senior Editor in SANAD News Agency https://2h.ae/KtUU
3	Anas Radi	30	Male	7	Palestine	News producer in Alhiwar TV
4	Aseel Saraih	33	Male	8	Yemen	Investigative Media Director https://2cm.es/LQhk https://2cm.es/JBS0 https://2cm.es/LQh3
5	Khaled Ma'ali	55	Male	20	Palestine	Columnist and writer in Daily Palestinian Newspapers https://linksshortcut.com/JSRhS https://linksshortcut.com/jowUs
6	Mohammad Bin Salem	50	Male	28	Tunisia	News Presenter at Alhiwar Space Channel.
7	Mounira Hajlaoui	35	Female	12	Tunisia	Correspondent at Aljazeera Net Website.

						https://linksshortcut.com/JbgjN https://linksshortcut.com/alryo
8	Qutb Elaraby	60	Male	35	Egypt	News director at Al- Sharq TV. https://linksshortcut.com/NNTPy https://linksshortcut.com/nJtOc
9	Said Eminzade	35	Male	10	Syria	News producer in Alhiwar Space Channel.
10	Sanae Elkouiti	39	Female	14	Morocco	Correspondent to Aljazeera Net. https://linksshortcut.com/dKPdp
11	Suhaib Al-Falahi	42	Male	19	Iraq	Executive Manager of Times 24 for Digital Marketing https://2h.ae/Pazk

Table 3.3: The information of the five participants of the second stage of this research (face-to-face interviews).

	The Participant	**Age**	**Degree**	**University/ Country of Issuance**	**Field of Specialization**

1	Nidal Salah	46	PhD	Middle East University/ Cyprus	Media and Cinema Studies
2	Wasef Qadah	38	PhD	Arel University / Turkey	Communications and Media and Design Studies https://linkssshortcut.com/QsUob https://linkssshortcut.com/ZKcli https://linkssshortcut.com/xBrEn
3	Yusuf Al-Junaidy	40	PhD	University Putra Malaysia (UPM)/ Malaysia	Media and Communications https://linkssshortcut.com/DHffZ https://linkssshortcut.com/vExzg
4	Zaher Elbek	43	PhD	Ankara University/ Turkey	Journalism and Media Studies https://2u.pw/hgZOoU3a https://2u.pw/Isplb0yE
5	Sulaiman Bsharat	41	Master Degree	Yabous for Consulting and Strategic Studies	Media Researcher https://linkssshortcut.com/PDsxF https://linkssshortcut.com/rbiHU https://linkssshortcut.com/TeHWZ

Table 3.4: The information of the five participants of the third stage of this research (focus group discussion).

	The Participant		**Age**	**Degree**	**University/ Country of Issuance**	**Field of Specialization**
1	Hudhayfa Jarrar		29	Master's Degree	Al-Quds University / Palestine	Journalism

2	Samed Dwaikat		42	Bachelor's degree	An-Najah National University / Palestine	Communications
3	Omar Fayyad		33	Master's degree	Ataturk University/ Turkey	Media Studies
4	Muhammad Fares		40	Master's degree	University of Islamic Sciences (USIM)/ Malaysia	communications
5	Mustafa Swelim		41	Master's degree	Middle East University/ Cyprus	Media Studies

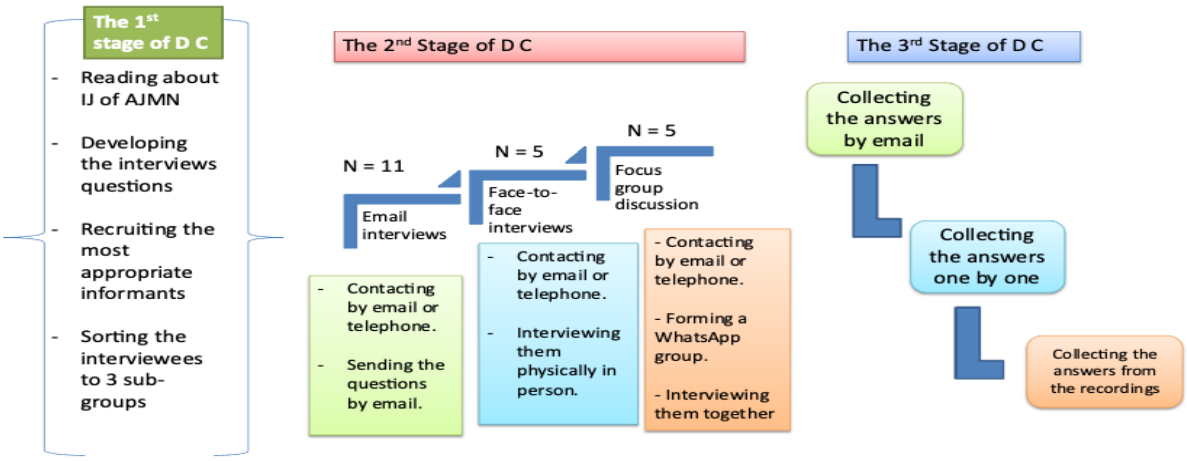
The second stage of data collection involves conducting the interviews: email interview, face-to-face interview, and focus-group discussion. The first stage includes three steps: 1. Selecting the participants; 2. Calling the selected journalists and taking their official consent to take part in the study and acknowledging them with the procedures to be followed and introducing them to the general idea about the study and the questions they need to answer; 3.

Conducting the interviews by sending the written questions in electronic files via email to each of the participants. Email interviews are preferred to face-to-face interviews because the participants reside in different Arab countries, which makes travelling across so many states time, money and effort consuming, not to mention travel restrictions in some countries due to COVID-19. Moreover, sending the question via email has the advantage of giving participants more room to respond comfortably, carefully and more qualitatively as answers would be more detailed and richer in information. The second stage is face-to-face interviews. It includes meeting five Arab media researchers who hold PhDs in Media, contacting the selected journalists one by one and having an appointment with each of them, and physically meeting each one of the participants in person in different places in Istanbul / Turkey.

The third stage is the focus-group discussion where five Arab reporters and correspondents were interviewed together in one meeting room in Istanbul / Turkey. This stage included contacting the selected participants one by one and having an appointment with each one of them, then forming a WhatsApp group to arrange the time and place of the discussion meeting and finally meeting them physically together in Istanbul / Turkey.

The process of data collecting from the 21 participants continued until reaching the point of saturation, where the participants no longer provided new information. Data were collected firstly from the transcriptions of the 11 Arab media professionals' answers to the questions of the email interviews, then from the answers provided by the five Arab media researchers who were interviewed face-to-face and from the recordings of the five journalists who participated in the focus-group discussion.

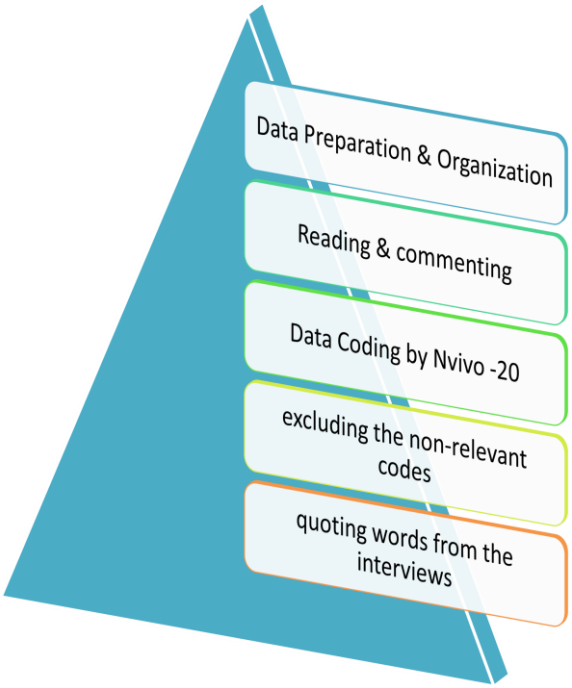
Figure 3.3: The main three stages of data collection with all the steps included in each stage.



3.4 Data Analysis

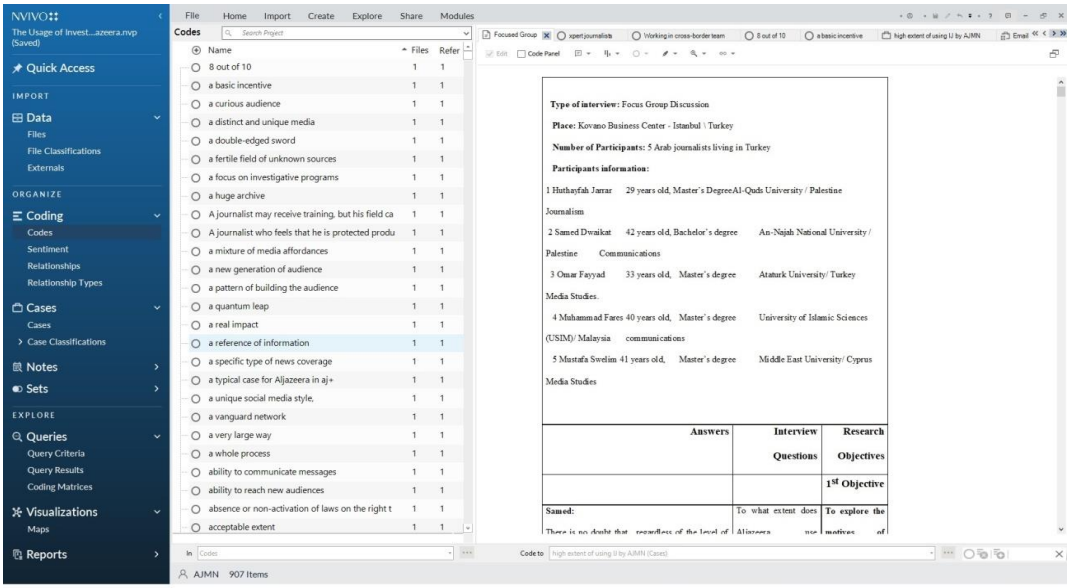
Analyzing the content of the answers of all the participants and the participants in the focused group discussion followed thematic analysis approach of Creswell (2014) which is based on a five-step process of data analysis and interpretation: preparing and organizing data by translating the interviews from Arabic into English language and transcribing them in computerized system files, reading the answers of the participants carefully for being familiar with the ideas and information and opinion of each participant, coding the synthesized document by using the software NVivo-20 for categorizing and organizing the data based on themes, excluding the non-relevant codes to reduce the number of codes and broaden themes to have a deeply detailed analysis, and finally making a list of similar codes and supporting them by quoting words from the interviews.

Figure 3.4 The five steps of data analysis for this research study.



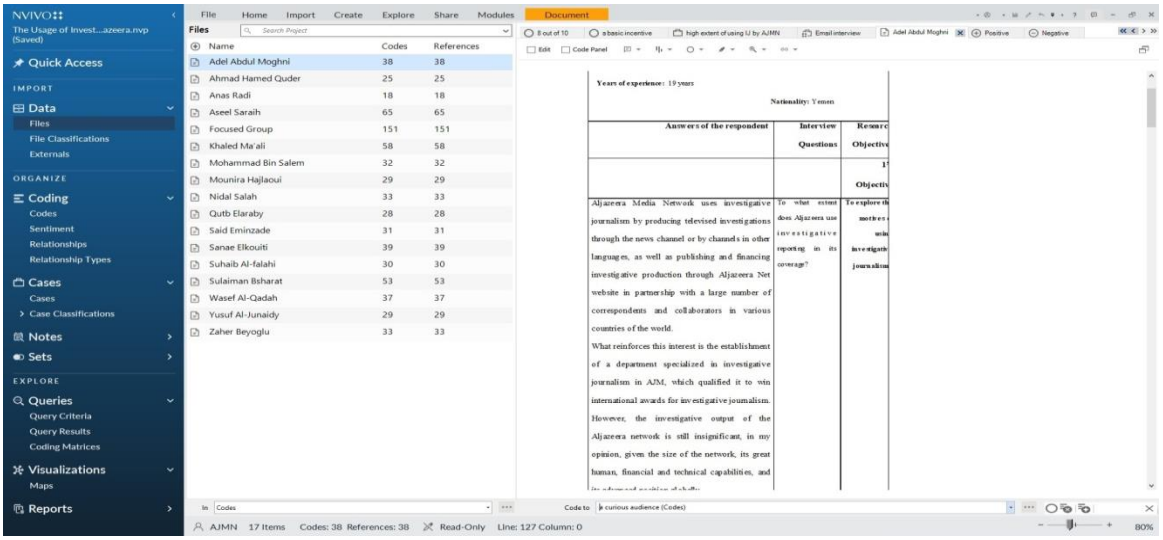
Based on the results of the analysis, a model that describes the relations between the elements of the current research was designed by finding the types of these relations through binding new media to the investigative reporting of Aljazeera Media Network. Data analysis was conducted technically by NVivo-20 for coding themes; where similar themes that are collected from each question were clustered as a major result based on compatibility with the topic as shown in figure 3.5.

Figure 3.5: The procedure of themes coding by using NVivo-20 software.



Then, themes of all the answers to questions raised in the three data sources (email interview, face-to-face interview, and focus group discussion) were counted and classified respectively by applying NVivo-20.

Figure 3.6: The process of themes identification by applying NVivo-20.



The results were reported and interpreted chronologically based on the time of data collection starting from email interviews to face-to-face interviews and ending up by the focus-group discussion. The reporting process of collected data included introducing the themes, presenting and discussing the participants' opinions about the themes from each of e-mail and face-to-face interviews as well as the focus group respectively, before approaching sound conclusions.

3.5 Limitations of the Study

Some limitations were countered during conducting this research including the fact that it has been so difficult to identify the size of the investigative work being used at Aljazeera News Network. While there are seven well-known programs classified by Aljazeera under investigative reporting, Aljazeera's investigative work is present at many of its media coverage whether at news broadcasts or other specific tools of Aljazeera such as its electronic website; making it so difficult to combine all the investigative works of Aljazeera in one integrated sample.

Moreover, finding research participants in the interviews was a very hard and time consumer mission; to get the consent of the 21 participants who took part in this study, three times of this number were contacted. But. many of them did not reach the stage of providing data according to the previously mentioned details.

One of the important obstacles that encountered this research was the time length it took to collect data from the participants, which is a process lasted for more than 10 months. Another difficulty was the great effort exerted and the long time spent for the translation process of the participants' answers from Arabic into English, making more than 350 pages that needed to be analyzed.

The study also faced challenges in making decision about using the NVivo-software as it is blamed for interpreting written opinions only, ignoring expressions, emotions, and signals and gestures which may carry significant meanings. Moreover, the high cost of the NVivo was another challenge to use it in a research thesis that does not receive any funding. Being time and effort consuming was another limitation that prevented the use of the software program. Nevertheless, the NVivo-20 was used in particular because of the very large volume of transcripts generated from the participants' interviews, which required storage, formatting, and sorting. The software was also used to cope with modern trends in research which tend to combine manual and technical analysis systems, as the use of software is considered a criterion for research quality and reliability.

This research faced some problems related to data collection techniques, as email interviews faced many problems related to the gradual arrangement and obtaining approvals, delay in sending the participants' answers, procrastination in responding, the presence of deficiencies

related to their data and information in the sent files, in addition to the absence of immediate response as well as the loss of social interaction that characterizes face-to-face interviews.

Focused group discussions, on the other hand, showed other challenges. Coordination and time and place managing to hold a meeting that gathers five participants who work in different organizations and live in different areas was extremely difficult. In addition, the discussions sometimes were branching out, making it difficult to transcribe all of the participants' statements due to their large size.

3.6 Validity and Reliability

Research validity and reliability is guaranteed by taking into consideration four important factors: the nature of the sources, the experienced sample, triangulation technique and achieving data saturation. This study focuses on a sample of senior experts in the field of investigative media and new media, which is one of the most factors that maximize reliability and validity of qualitative methodology whereas the researcher shows a high level of control over sample selection as a selective or purposeful sample (Brouneus, 2011). This goes in line with Roller (2020) which states that selecting experienced subjects for the interview enhances validity and reliability as well as satisfaction for research quality and increases data analyzability.

In addition, validity and reliability can also be strengthened by focusing the interviews on outsourcing materials. To that end, the sample of this research has 19 out of 21 participants who are not working for Aljazeera Media Network; this number guarantees being unbiased in their answers to the interview questions without being under pressure of the having regards for the interest of their workplace.

To strengthen validity and reliability, this research follows triangulation technique which is a well-known technique used in qualitative methodology (Guion et al., 2011). Data triangulation, that is concerned with collecting information from different sources of time, place, or people (Croswell, 2014), was applied in this research study which investigated three kinds of data sources: investigative journalists, media researchers and field journalists and freelance reporters. Validity and reliability were also sought in this research by focusing on reaching data saturation, where additional coding became no longer possible, which is the prerequisite for reaching data saturation (Fusch & Ness, 2015).

3.7 Ethical Rules

Following standardized ethical rules of academic research conduction, this research takes into consideration the information confidentiality of participants' personal information which are used only for academic research purposes and are not misused or shared with external parties in order not to cause any harm to anybody. Besides, in email interviews and face-to-face interviews, the participants were given no right to read or review the answers of each other and were not intentionally directed to answer some questions in a particular way for the purpose of getting them involved in answers that cause them any physical or spiritual harm of any kind such as losing their jobs or being subjected to legal trials. Again, the participants were granted freedom to decide whether to volunteer to take part in this research. They are kept frequently asked about their permission to use their answers in order to remind them of their rights not to publish some of their answers that would cause them trouble in case they were not familiar with it. In addition, it is also takes into account that the participants do not enter a state of "research fatigue" which may result from providing repeatedly detailed questions and confining the submission of answers to a limited time which requires disconnection of their daily tasks and duties (Brouneus, 2011). Respondent

3.8 Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter presented the main methodologies and data analysis procedures that were used in this qualitative research study. And, it provided an explanation of the main methods used to conduct this research particularly in-depth interview with 21 Arab journalists from different countries. Each one of the participants of the three interviewing techniques (email interview, face-to-face interview, and focus-group discussion) responded to open-ended questions sorted regarding the four objectives of the research.

A seven-step process of data analysis and interpretation was conducted based on thematic coding of in-depth analysis of participants' answers for achieving the four main objectives of this study: to explicate the regional importance of Aljazeera Media Network investigative reporting; to identify the factors that contribute to Aljazeera Media Network's use of new media in its investigative journalism; to explore the influences of new media usage on the practices of Aljazeera Media Network investigative reporting; and to explore the challenges of using new media in Aljazeera Media Network investigative reporting.

Moreover, this chapter also includes the major limitations that confront the conducting of the study and the credibility and reliability standards and finally the ethical issues related to this research.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

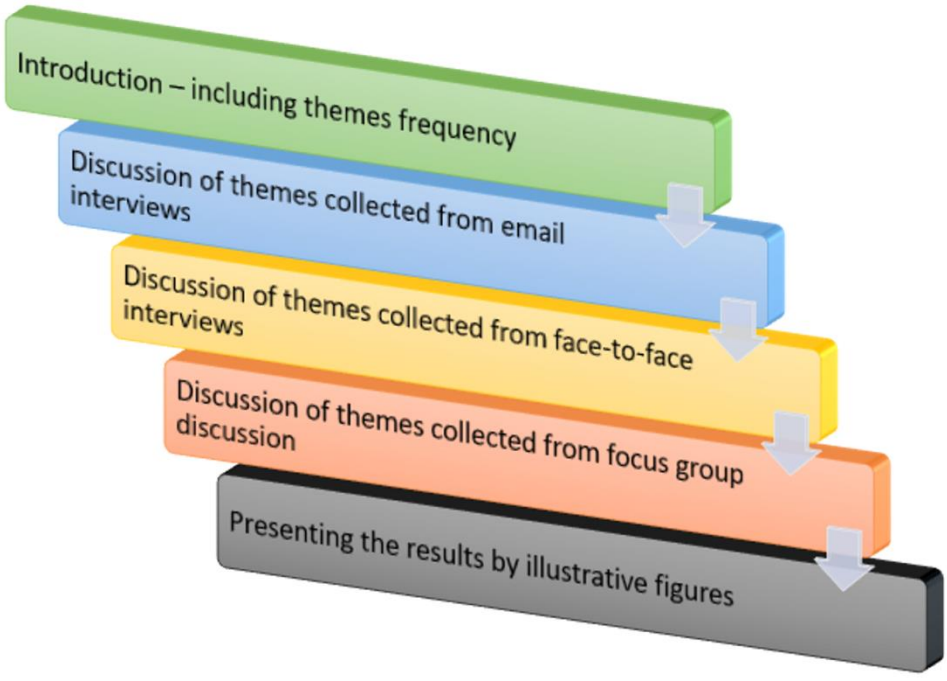
4.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings and results of the study following the identification of the major themes of the information given by the 21 participants in their answer transcripts of the 12 questions of the emailed interviews, face-to-face interviews, and focus-group discussion. The questions were distributed to cover the four research objectives of the study: to explicate the regional importance of Aljazeera Media Network investigative reporting; to identify the factors that contribute to Aljazeera Media Network's use of new media in its investigative journalism; to explore the influences of new media usage on the practices of Aljazeera Media Network investigative reporting; and to explore the challenges of using new media in Aljazeera Media Network investigative reporting.

The analysis of the participants' answers followed certain procedures that guarantee coming up with solid answers. First, the audio and video recordings of the face-to-face and focus group discussion were transcribed. Second, the transcripts of the participants' answers of the three stages of the interviews were translated from Arabic into English for inclusion in the appendices section of the thesis. Third, the transcripts were thoroughly read and analyzed to identify the most important themes related to the meanings associated with the elements of this study. Fourth, the most significant themes were identified in consistence with research objectives. Fifth, the themes were categorized based on the objectives they cover. Sixth, the themes were discussed while each theme was addressed in consistence with its related research objective. Seventh, the participants' most key statements were quoted to support the argumentations being discussed. Eighth, opponent

ideas that might contradict the themes were highlighted. Therefore, the participants' answers to the interview questions were analyzed based on the abovementioned objectives whereas the participants' opinions were discussed in consistence with the themes of each objective. On many occasions, some academic articles were also reviewed for supporting ideas, giving examples, and providing in-depth explanations. Thus, reporting the results followed a systematic pattern: introduction of themes based on the level of frequency in the transcripts, discussion of themes demonstrated in the results of the email interviews followed by the results of face-to-face interviews and the results of FGD; and finally, illustration of the results in a relational figure.

Figure 4.1: The reporting style of the results of this research.



Finally, this study committed itself to presenting information that is directly related to the answers to the research questions to meet the research objectives on the one hand, and to avoid

prolongation and dumping of data, on the other hand, to ensure that this thesis does not exceed the size standards adopted in scientific research. Therefore, the themes that does not provide direct answers to the research questions, such as the level of Aljazeera's practice of investigative journalism, global scientific approaches to investigative journalism, and the supremacy of Aljazeera TV over other network tools in producing and publishing investigative programs, were excluded.

The results presented in this chapter are distributed to four sections. The first section presents four themes that have been identified to explicate the regional importance of Aljazeera Media Network investigative reporting. The second section of the chapter presents five factors that contribute to Aljazeera Media Network's use of new media in its investigative journalism. The third section discusses five influences of new media usage on the practices of Aljazeera Media Network investigative reporting. The fourth section presents the main challenges of using new media in Aljazeera Media Network investigative reporting which were classified into eight categories.

4.1 The influences of Aljazeera's Investigative Journalism in the Arab World

Determining the significance of the use of investigative journalism in Aljazeera network requires the dismantling of the many intertwined factors that, in their entirety, can provide a comprehensive perception about how the network benefits from investigations. In this regard, the importance of Aljazeera network's usage of investigative journalism in the Arab World were determined.

The first objective of this doctoral thtsis derives its importance from three starting points: First, the practice of investigative journalism has become one of the most important journalistic

practices that distinguish the performance of Aljazeera Media Network; second, the interest in investigative journalism in Aljazeera began in conjunction with the digital revolution that began to dominate the performance features of mainstream media around the world; and third, investigative journalism began to find great interest in the Arab media context. Accordingly, explaining the importance of these three components in the first objective and interpreting their dynamics, represent one of the most important starting points that this study focuses on to understand the mechanism of interconnection of these elements on the path to building an integrated vision that leads to contributing to the comprehensive theory of investigative journalism.

The results of this study interestingly provided the research with rich information about the significance of using Investigative Journalism (IJ) by Aljazeera Media Network (AJMN) as categorized in four main themes: Investigative Journalism increases the popularity and competitiveness of Aljazeera Media Network in the Arab World, Investigative Journalism increases Aljazeera Media Networks' influence on public opinion and political change in the Arab World, Investigative Journalism increases Aljazeera Media Network's ability to use in new media technology, and Investigative Journalism increases the ability of Aljazeera Media Network to confront the constraints resulting from the political conditions in the Arab world.

4.1.1 Investigative journalism increases Aljazeera's popularity and competitiveness

While the digital environment has imposed challenges on the media to deal with its new style of journalistic practices and new audience characteristics (Oliver, 2014), Aljazeera was among the media networks that took advantage of the opportunities provided by the new media capabilities to adapt and develop. Aljazeera also took advantage of the financial resources, human and technical capabilities to practice investigative journalism at a high level, which enhanced its appeal to the public and distinguished it from its competitors. for example, open data journalism, which

led to a deep dive into data, evidence, clues, and proof in the investigative practice of Aljazeera Media Network, as a thoughtful and in-depth journalistic practice, contributed to proving Aljazeera's credibility and reliability and raising the efficiency of the channel's investigative workers. Research and verification applications and the applications of communications with news sources also contributed to enhancing the accessibility of Aljazeera media investigators to the IJ content. These two factors, in addition to other factors, were reflected in Aljazeera's investigative products in terms of meeting the audience's needs for knowledge, entertainment and suspense, which ultimately led to attracting large segments of the audience to the network and enhancing its audience superiority and competitiveness with other media outlets.

A sum of 20 out of 21 participants who took part in this research (including 10/11 from email interviews, five from face-to-face interviews and five participants of the FGD), showed a high level of agreement with the above argumentation about Aljazeera' usage of investigative journalism as a way to increase its audiences. For example, *Anas Radi, who* is a journalist of Iraqi origin residing in United Kingdom and works as a news producer for the Arab satellite channel Al-Hiwar, which broadcasts from London, described reporting stories from underreported regions as the "selling point" of Aljazeera. This is an interesting expression reveals the uniqueness of Aljazeera in accessing hidden information by investigative journalism. *Ahmad Albaitawee,* who is a Palestinian journalist with a master's degree in media and an editor at the Palestinian Sanad *News Agency.* said that practicing IJ by AJMN "increases its popularity and presence among the masses".

Qutb Elaraby, as an Egyptian senior journalist and one of the oldest Arab journalists in practicing media investigations believes that Aljazeera uses investigative journalism because it is *"*one of the most important journalistic forms that contribute to establishing a positive image about the channel among the audience". he said that "the use of investigative journalism gives Aljazeera

or any other channel more credibility". *Sanae Elkouiti,* Aljazeera Net correspondent in Morocco, who has been working in the media for more than two decades, also considered the usage of IJ as one of the factors that *"*raises the level of audience viewing of AJMN*".* To *Mounira Hajlaoui,* Aljazeera Net correspondent in Tunisia, the usage of IJ increases the audience approval of AJMN and "builds a trusting relationship between the network and the audience, because investigative work is always biased towards the person and the citizen who is looking for a way to talk about his suffering". she described the influences of using IJ by AJMN by saying that "it adds more credibility and reliability to the press coverage of the network". The Syrian media TV programs producer for Al-Hiwar satellite channel in Istanbul studios *Said Eminzade* agreed with this opinion by claiming that "IJ gives AJMN more credibility, seriousness and professionalism in conveying and documenting information to the viewer", he added that "the investigative work assures the reliability and accuracy of information".

As Khaled Ma'ali, he is a Palestinian journalist who holds a PhD in media and communications and has been working as a freelance journalist for more than 30 years. He is a columnist on journalistic practices in a number of Palestinian newspapers, including the daily Palestine newspaper, as well as Arab newspapers, including the Jordanian Al-Sabil newspaper. *Khaled Ma'ali* argues that AJMN earns more audiences via IJ because *"*IJ practicing gives AJMN credibility and confidence of the public of different spectra". Moreover, he considered many reasons to be factors of using IJ by AJMN "the most important of which is maintaining an advanced position in the face of strong competition from other networks".

Regarding *Adel Abdulmughni,* the Yemeni investigative journalist who has been practicing investigative journalism for more than 20 years and has won international awards in this field, "investigative journalism enhances the position of Aljazeera Media Network and gives it more

follow-up and attention". *Adel Abdulmughni* claimed that practicing IJ ranks AJMN among the major media organizations and raises its position among them. Moreover, *Aseel Saraih*, who is also a Yemeni investigative journalist who has been practicing investigative journalism for 20 years and has supervised a number of investigations for Aljazeera Media Network and has also won several awards, said that "Aljazeera's audience whether of the public or the elite likes diversify in media templates, including the investigative template. Aljazeera knows this diversity in the audience's taste very well, so it produces investigative works in its channels, whether in Arabic or English, there is a large audience who likes investigations, especially the video, which is preferred by the audience to a large extent, so Aljazeera focuses on the video*".*

Lastly, the issue of using IJ in improving the competitiveness of AJMN is discussed in detail by *Suhaib Al-Falahi*, the Iraqi eexecutive manager of Times 24 for Digital Marketing in Turkey whose profile reveals an interest and experience in framing concepts of new media practices such as Threads and new concepts of interaction who stated that *"*we see the extent of competition sometimes between channels in this field.

As a result, the screen is looking for high quality programs, and the investigative work is one of the most high-quality programs and this was evident in the early days of Aljazeera programs such as Asaad Taha's programs and the lengthy investigative programs from different countries such as "Under the Microscope" and "It is said that" and others; this helps the channel in achieving real superiority initially and then superiority over the rest of the competitors".

The data obtained from the face-to-face interviews presents strong evidence that Aljazeera used IJ for maximizing the audience. In this regard, *Zaher Elbek* said that when Aljazeera presents various news or political programs, it presents the same programs offered by other channels, but when it presents investigative programs, this contains excitement, which brings the large audience

base of viewers to AJMN that gain the public base. *Zaher Elbek* is a Palestinian journalist with Turkish citizenship. He worked as a correspondent and editor in a number of Palestinian newspapers, including the weekly Al-Risala, for more than 20 years. He currently works as an investigative reporter for the Al-Araby Al-Jadeed (The New Arab website) in Turkey, he is also a researcher who obtained a doctorate in media studies from Ankara University.

For his part, *Sulaiman Bsharat* believes that Aljazeera has outperformed the rest of its competitors in the Arab media in obtaining the trust of the public. He said, "Even those who oppose the channel, they follow it," and this requires Aljazeera to maintain this trust through diversification of templates and contents, and to provide the missing information that the masses thirst for through journalistic investigations. *Bsharat* currently runs Yabous center for Consulting and Strategic Studies in Ramallah in Palestine. He is also a researcher with many published research papers on various issues, including journalistic practices. He is also a media analyst on TV channels, especially Aljazeera. He started his career as a correspondent for several Arab news websites in 2004.

For his part, *Nidal Salah* believes that the Aljazeera network "is one of the largest Arab media networks operating in the modern era, and therefore it is concerned or keen on reaching the largest possible number of Arab and non-Arab audiences". He said that Aljazeera focuses its investigative production on the Arab audience as a basic audience for the network and maintaining that is an important motive for AJMN to produce investigative programs. *Nidal Salah* described the Arab audience as "curious audience", and therefore he believes that Aljazeera Network is trying to satisfy the curiosity of this audience. He also believes that Aljazeera is trying to extrapolate what this audience wants and likes in terms of programs, and therefore it is deliberately working on mysterious files by which it reveals strange stories that meet the curiosity of the Arab viewer.

Salah also said that investigative programs, by their nature, are "programs that reveal ambiguities and play on the chord of unknowns and question marks generated in peoples' minds"; so, he concludes that Aljazeera's motive of working in the field of investigative journalism lies in reaching the largest number of audiences. *Nidal Salah* is a Palestinian journalist who produced community stories for the Palestinian Family Magazine, *Alkhalil Voice*. He is currently a PhD candidate in Journalism and Media at the Middle East University in Cyprus. The researcher noted that Salah's focus during the interview was on the impact of investigative programs on public behavior and on the impressions and attitudes that investigations leave on the public. This seems to be linked to his professional background in community and family journalism.

he believes that Aljazeera "wants, by focusing on investigative journalism, to tell its viewers and followers that it is not providing fake information". He said that what Aljazeera is seeking is to establish the impression among its audience that it "has information backed by evidence and is based on a clear investigative approach, which is the investigative journalism approach". *Salah* concluded by saying that "This attempt raises the reliability and credibility of Aljazeera in front of its fans and followers".

The same opinion coincides with the position of *Wasef Qadah*, who considered that "Aljazeera increases the confidence of its audience in the accuracy of the information it provides to this audience when presenting investigative programs." He said, "The more investigative programs Aljazeera provides to its audience, the more reliable and credible it will be in the eyes of the audience, who usually describe its press coverage as objective coverage". *Wasef Qadah* believes that investigative journalism contributes to enhancing the audience's attraction to the media content provided by Aljazeera Network. He argues that Aljazeera Network is not only addressing the public with investigative journalism; rather, it is "addressing countries through these programs".

Wasef Qadah is a UX Researcher at Endeavor Technology and holds a PhD in Communication Design and Graphic Design from Arel University in Turkey. When he was asked by the researcher "to what extent does Aljazeera use investigative reporting in its coverage?", he answered, "Aljazeera is a pioneering network in the Arab world in particular and in the world in general. It is at the forefront of the media in the reports it provides with a reference nature in sources and in several other journalistic fields such as its use of opinion and opposing opinion, so it seeks to maintain its superiority through this form of journalism, i.e., investigative journalism. In addition, investigative journalism contributes to enhancing the audience's attraction to the media content provided by the network, and we are talking about important categories of the large audience distributed across the seven investigative programs of Aljazeera Channel. So, Aljazeera Network addresses countries through these programs. Aljazeera also works to increase the confidence of its audience in the accuracy of the information it provides to this audience when presenting investigative programs."

In his turn, *Yousef Aljuneidi* opines that AJMN has many media tools, and it uses more than one tool to reach different audiences through various contents, including investigative programs. *Yousef Aljuneidi* produced an investigative film for Aljazeera about (Plaza Tol Smart) in Kuala Lumpur while he was serving as a senior producer of (Global Media) in Malysia and he has a PhD in communications from University Putra Malaysia (UPM). *Yousef Aljuneidi* believes that there are various factors for AJMN's usage of IJ. However, he suggested that the most prominent of these factors depends on the fact that Aljazeera was one of the first satellite channels established in the Arab World and remained in the dominion of this media for a long period of time, but after more than 20 years it began to face competitors from other channels such as Al-Arabiya or Al-Arabi in Qatar. He stated that the existence of many competitive channels prompted

Aljazeera to attain distinction among competitors by the production of certain programs to preserve its own brand and reputation, which were established and maintained as the oldest media brand in the Arab region. He concluded that Aljazeera resorts to investigative programs to maintain its superiority over other names that compete in the arena of Arab television channels.

One of the focus group participants of this research, *Samed Dwaikat,* The Palestinian editor in Sanad media agency who received training in investigative journalism and data journalism from Aljazeera Training Center of Aljazeera Media Network, believes, as well, that Aljazeera practices investigative journalism for the aim of attracting the audience. He elaborated that large media networks such as Aljazeera have become focused on the detailed local dimensions of some issues to invest in its ability to access information. He added that these networks do this because they sometimes have higher capabilities than the local media in accessing local information, and this makes investigative work important to attract a local audience. *Mustafa Swelim* the Jordanian freelance reporter in Turkey supported the previous position by saying that "Aljazeera's implementation of investigative programs aims to maintain audience satisfaction and attract new audiences who do not watch regular programs on television".

As for *Omar Fayyad*, the Palestinian correspondent to Turk Press website in Turkey who received training in investigative journalism and data journalism from Aljazeera Training Center of Aljazeera Media Network, he believes that the public in general and the Arab public in particular "were not previously familiar with investigative journalism, unlike journalists or those interested in this type of journalism: its importance and role". *Fayyad* believes that the media is exposed due to political and ideological alignments as well as because of media campaigns and propaganda by competitors who always try to describe its coverage as biased, partial, and far from the truth. "This happened with Aljazeera in more than one case," he said. Therefore, *Fayyad* believes that the more

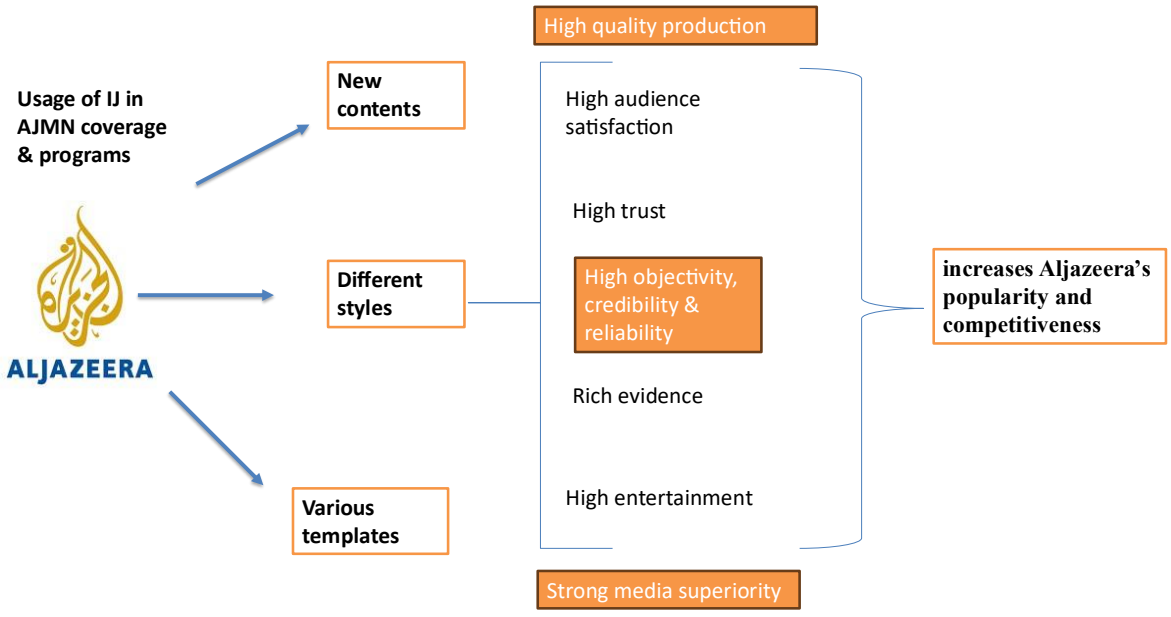
investigative programs Aljazeera makes, the more objective and accurate it will sound to viewers. "This raises the level of credibility it enjoys in the Arab street," he added. *Mustafa Swelim* seconded the opinion of his colleague, "Yes, that is correct. I also believe that credibility is one of the most important goals that Aljazeera seeks to achieve through its investigative journalism," he explained

In his turn, *Hudhayfa Jarrar,* the Palestinian editor in Orient center for media studies in Turkey and received training in investigative journalism and data journalism from Aljazeera Training Center of Aljazeera Media Network*,* believes that Aljazeera is looking for the public interest and excitement through the practice of investigative journalism. He added, "the audience today is looking for exciting works". He placed the issue of high competitiveness at the forefront of the factors behind Aljazeera's practice of investigative journalism. He said, "Previously, Aljazeera was working alone in the field of Arab media. Now there are international, Arab, or even Qatari channels, but they are interested in the Arab dimension". "These channels have advanced, developed and expanded the area of competition with Aljazeera, which is now looking for new spaces through which it can prove itself," he added.

Muhammad Fares, the Jordanian freelance film maker, disagreed with *Hudhayfa Jarrar* about the dynamics of the competitive impact of Aljazeera's investigative programs on the network's orientation. *Fares* believes that Aljazeera is not looking for competing other channels through the implementation of investigative programs as much as it is interested in proving that it is still superior to them. He said: "Since its inception, Aljazeera was the first to start working in Arab investigative journalism before other Arab satellite channels appeared, and it had well-known programs such as The Black Box, The Beginnings of Yousry Fouda, and others. Therefore, the continuation of Aljazeera's investigations does not aim primarily at competition as much as it aims

at proving its presence with competitors which already existed. This means that Aljazeera wants to prove to the public and to the competing channels that it is able to access accurate and deep information and present it to the public in a distinctive way". *Muhammad Fares* said that Aljazeera's ability to use modern visual technology such as graphics, visual arts and photography in investigative production contributed to the intensification of Aljazeera's reach to the elite audience, the public, and the social media audience, which is called the light audience, which is the audience that follows investigative programs because of its attraction to visual productions. However, his colleague *Jarrar* stated that Aljazeera's investigative work "targets groups from the older generation than the younger generation".

Figure 4.2 the influences of Investigative journalism on Aljazeera's popularity and competitiveness



Indeed, Aljazeera could not have provided this diversity of content without new media Affordances, which have given the AJMN access to open data sources that feed more than seven

ongoing investigative programs covering five continents. AJMN could not have supported the claims it makes in these programs without the massive availability of open source data. New media affordances have provided Aljazeera's investigative programs with satellite imagery, corporate records, user-generated content, video and audio recordings, manuscripts held in national archives, and crime scenes captured from surveillance cameras. This rich content has increased the appeal of Aljazeera's investigative programs and enabled it to reach places that were previously off limits. It has also saturated the audience with information and knowledge supported by images and evidence, giving it additional credibility, and objectivity. This has increased the interest of followers in Aljazeera, increasing its popularity and audience and enhancing its superiority over competitors in the Arab media as new media affordances enhances the interactivity of investigative journalism and gives it a wider audience (Abdenour & Riffe, 2019). In the end, thanks to new media affordances that have strengthened the position of open source investigations (Ristovska, 2022).

4.1.2 Investigative Journalism increases Aljazeera Media Networks' influence on public opinion and political change in the Arab World

Aljazeera Media Network's investigative journalism practice in particular cannot be separated from the political nature of its broader journalistic coverage. Since its foundation in 1996, Aljazeera has been associated with broad political content through which it provides in-depth treatment, covering many issues of the Arab street with its (largely) uncensored news. As a result, Aljazeera has come to be seen as a powerful catalyst for change in the Arab world (Sultan, 2013). From this perspective, Aljazeera's investigative coverage, which is part of its broader programming framework, can be considered as part of its efforts to influence public opinion and political change, as Aljazeera's focus in its investigative reports extends to exposing governmental

and authoritarian practices that can be classified under the categories of corruption, abuse of public power, leniency in national rights, indifference to the interests of the subjects, profiting from one's job, and personalizing one's public position. Indeed, nothing is more applicable to all of these implications than the broader theoretical framework of investigative journalism as critical and in-depth journalism (Ejik, 2005), which reveals hidden matters and wrongdoings to the public (Cancela et al., 2021) and requires the use of confidential and open sources and documents (Hunter et al., 2011).

This proceeded high level of media effect would not have been achieved without the abundant feeding of information from Aljazeera to the public. Hence, *Said Eminzade* said that *"*the investigative work confirms the reliability and accuracy of information for the audience and public opinion (PO), and that is why Aljazeera uses it in its coverage". Influencing public opinion requires a high capacity to provide information inputs. That is, the influential party becomes the controller of knowledge that drives public trends and refines their ideas and opinions. This is exactly what Aljazeera Network did through new media affordances that provided its investigative journalism with abundant information that now feeds public awareness. Therefore, *Mohammad Bin Salem,* the Tunisian news presenter in Al-Hiwar TV believes that "AJMN practices IJ for remaining its situation as a reference of information and news materials in the Arab World, it leads the media works with high level of professionalism which preserves the depth of journalistic works by practicing IJ".

Another theme that was highlighted in this part of study is the idea that Aljazeera practices investigative journalism as part of its social responsibility to develop knowledge and inform the public about information. *Ahmad Albaitawee* argues that Aljazeera focuses on investigative materials in its various programs as part of its social responsibility for educating the Arab street of

what its illegitimate governments are trying to hide on the basis of “The masses have the right to know the truth.” He added that Aljazeera considers itself, since it was launched in 1996, as the "People's Satellite" which is biased towards the masses and is not on the side of governments. He said: “It is known that in-depth investigations reveal hidden information and current news that the public opinion has not been aware of”. He added by saying that “today, all media outlets participate in reporting news and events, even in regular reports. This has no longer been a monopoly of the profession of journalism in light of the existence of social media, which has turned everyone who owns a smart device and an account on one of these sites into a journalist and a reporter of the event”.

Khaled Ma’ali stated that “the Arab situation is full of the repeated state’s media and the news of the ruling party, which is not new, and does not keep pace with time and does not meet the public’s need for knowledge”. *Suhaib Al-Falahi* argues that “AJMN is interested in investigative programs because “the IP achieves public opinion and produce an excitement that always puts the channel in the bright spot”. The point of *Al-Falahi* can be understood by noticing that the audience of AJMN always talk about the subjects that appear on it, and therefore this makes a noise and reactions that may not appear on other traditional reports.

In addition to the results of e-mail interviews, the findings obtained from face-to-face interviews also showed conviction among the participants that the practice of investigative journalism by Aljazeera Network aims to influence the public opinion. *Sulaiman Bsharat* believes that the association of the emergence of AJMN with the emergence of major Arab and regional issues, such as the invasion of Afghanistan, the invasion of Iraq, the second Palestinian uprising, the attacks on Gaza Strip, the attacks on southern Lebanon, the Arab revolutions, and others, equipped AJMN with diversity of experiences at the individual and institutional levels. He opines

that these experiences have opened horizons for AJMN to escalate the function of the media outlet from a mere conveyor of the event to a manufacturer, analyst, and even an in-depth researcher. In addition, *Bsharat* believes that Aljazeera has turned into an inclusive umbrella for the Arab intellectual academic and professional elites and has been able to attract a large segment of the elites. He said that this polarization necessarily raises the level of awareness of the importance of the media and requires raising the level of contents and objectives that AJMN seeks to achieve.

In turn, *Zaher Elbek* said that the first influence of practicing IJ is based on its values for Aljazeera which it was established as an independent Arab media that sheds light on Arab issues. He added that even governments are criticized directly by Aljazeera, and "therefore, the first motive is to shed light on the problems of the Arab society and its various economic, political, security, social issues, which are very sensitive topics. He also noticed that IJ is not new in Aljazeera, but it appeared since the beginning of the establishment of the network. From the beginning, it aimed at shedding light on problems, issues and phenomena that deserve investigation in order to address and solve these problems. The information obtained in the face-to-face interview stage drew attention to the idea that Aljazeera practices investigative journalism to enhance its uniqueness as a reference for information. *Zaher Elbek* argues that the endeavor to be unique, distinguished, and to appear as a distinct network through the exclusivity of its programs are among the factors of AJMN for practicing IJ.

However, *Yousef Aljuneidi* does not rule out the role of the political factor in Aljazeera's approach to investigative journalism. He said, "One of the most important factors is also to serve the policies of the state that sponsors AJMN". He explains his argumentation by saying, "It has been no secret that Aljazeera played a major role in the political crisis between Qatar and its opponents in the Arab Gulf states, especially Saudi Arabia. Closed files were opened in countries

such as the United Arab Emirates, and the ruling family's files were also opened in Saudi Arabia, as well as other old stories that were covered over history". Moreover, *Yousef Aljuneidi* believes that Aljazeera is trying to tell its audience that it is capable of bringing new aspects in its coverage of sensitive files that affect the Arab situation such as the issues raised in "The Hidden is More Immense" program. "Thus, Aljazeera is keen on maintaining its capability for providing authentic content to the public especially in the sensitive files that are difficult to approach by other channels or programs".

In this regard, the focus group discussions showed special interest in the role of investigative journalism in political practice. *Samed Dwaikat* said that Aljazeera had an important contribution to the attempts of political transformation that Arab societies witnessed during the Arab Spring period. He added that Aljazeera worked qualitatively in this aspect to an extent that exceeded mere reporting of news and focused on deepening knowledge of the political change taking place in the Arab World; and this was one of the factors for practicing investigative journalism.

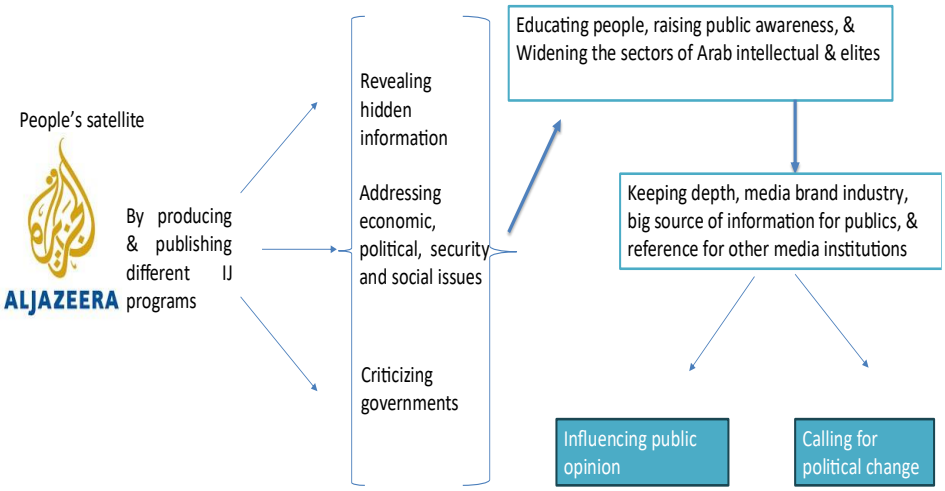
Hudhayfa Jarrar believes that following the Arab Spring, Aljazeera Network has come to see itself as an institution capable of working in the Arab World by presenting new programs. He added, "Aljazeera tried to highlight its role by presenting solutions to some issues and shedding light on them; so, for many people it became classified as being bias to a group against another; and it played a fundamental role and was even part of the recent Gulf crisis*"*. *Hudhayfa Jarrar* elaborated by saying, "The closure of Aljazeera was one of the basic terms of the four Arab countries that imposed the blockade on the State of Qatar, and this reveals the network's important role in guiding public opinion in the Arab World".

For their part, the participants in the focus group discussions also mentioned the role of social responsibility for Aljazeera Network as one factor of practicing investigative journalism. *Mustafa Swelim* said, "We have not witnessed this type of investigative work for a long time. Aljazeera, as a large network, is concerned with preserving IJ so that this type of reporting does not disappear from the Arab environment". As for *Omar Fayyad,* he believes that the investigative journalism of Aljazeera network has informed people about the subtleties and expanded their horizons about what is going on around them, especially as IJ "covers issues that are not known or previously familiar to the public". And finally, *Mohamed Fares* described Aljazeera's status as a media reference, through the employment of investigative journalism, as a status of comprehensive reference. He said, "Here we are talking about more than one point in Aljazeera's motives for producing investigative reports, including the added value that AJMN provides to the Arab viewer, and the visual material that has surpassed competition for the press scoop in light of the development of technology and its availability in all media institutions". He added, "At the end, when you provide deep coverage, it proves to the viewer that you are able to access the depth and uniqueness of the information".

Therefore, AJMN has become an important platform for the interaction of Arab publics with political events which made Aljazeera a maker of Arab public opinion by having a major influence on it (Jamal & Melkote, 2008). However, because of its activity, many Arab countries placed barriers between them and AJMN, banning its broadcasts, preventing its crews from working, closing its offices, and arresting some of its correspondents. In other words, many Arab countries such as Syria, Egypt, Yemen, and Saudi Arabia have withheld traditional sources of information from AJMN which made it search for information in unconventional ways including the investigative work as one of the most influential forms of journalism (Aldreabi, 2017).

On the other hand, the influence of AJMN on public opinion made many Arab Authorities fear from the reactions of publics when they expose to publications or news about violations and corruption on AJMN. Thus, it can be said that AJMN has become an important source of control over the performance of the Arab governments via its use of IJ.

Figure 4.3: The way in which public opinion formation serves as a result of AJMN usage of IJ in its media coverage.



The new media affordances have provided Aljazeera with an important opportunity to bypass traditional restrictions on content that undemocratic governments consider as taboo. Historically, media in the Arab world have been (silently) censored by government regimes and security services. But the possibilities of digital media have dismantled this strict censorship. Investigative journalism has begun to use technological surveillance to capture data that governments do not want to disclose (Tsui, 2019). In this way, Aljazeera has become able to provide information that contradicts the positions of governments to the public, and this has

contributed to strengthening Aljazeera's role in Arab public opinion and it has been reflected in popular movements demanding political change.

As a final result, this is one of the main influences of Aljazeera's practice of investigative journalism, which includes employing open data sources to produce investigations that reveal hidden information in politics, economics, security and social issues, and direct evidence-based criticism at governments and stakeholders. Societally, this leads to educating and raising awareness among people. On the professional level, it helps Aljazeera maintain the depth of its content provided to its general audience and elites, and transforms its investigative programs into a reference for information and guidance for societies and other media outlets; thus, it influences the public opinion and the public's demands for political change in the Arab region.

The research results significantly relate to the theoretical framework of this doctoral thesis. This is because the basis for the influence of Aljazeera's investigative programs on public opinion and the demands for political change in the Arab region is primarily due to the great development of Aljazeera investigative journalism at the production level and at the level of reaching the audience. Here lies the crux of the matter related to the development of new media, which provided important affordances to achieve the two goals.

4.1.3 Investigative Journalism increases Aljazeera Media Network's ability to use new media technology

In contrast to many traditional media practices struggling to survive in the digital age, investigative journalism is one of the journalistic practices that has benefited greatly from the development of media technology (Salaverria et al., 2019). For example, this benefit has been evident in practices such as whistleblowing, which new media have broadly brought into the digital

world. Digital whistleblowing platforms, such as WikiLeaks, which became famous after its famous leaks in 2013, have grown and expanded significantly in the last two decades, and have become widely adopted by investigative journalists who use special applications such as Pretty Good Privacy (PGP), Tor Browser, Signal, SecureDrop, and other encryption programs used as tools to protect sources confidentiality (Di Salvo, 2021). Conceptually, whistleblowing platforms are online tools that enable whistleblowers to provide documents to journalists in a more tightly encrypted manner to increase security and anonymity (Di Salvo, 2021).

Interestingly, the development of digital platforms for reporting violations was not limited to the technical aspect only, but rather contributed to creating a steady trend among media institutions towards adopting encryption and information security strategies. Based on Di Salvo (2021), whistleblowing platforms represent one of the many applications that new media technologies have introduced to the field of media practice and from which investigative journalism, in particular, has benefited such as journalistic investigations from open source data (Woude et al., 2024) and data journalism (Santosa & Mesquita, 2021). These examples provide brief indications of the extent to which investigative journalism practice has benefited from the affordances of new media.

In this regard, *Qutb Elaraby* is one of nine participants in the email interviews of this research study who said that AJMN preceded other Arab news channels with its investigative programs such as “Extremely Secret” before developing the modern forms of IP such as “The Hidden is More Immense”. *Suhaib Al- Falahi* believes that investigative journalism increases Aljazeera Media Network’s ability to invest in new media technology affordances. He stated that “Certainly, Aljazeera network in general uses investigative work in its coverage for many goals; the most important is the presence of very important rich television material that provides real

benefit to the audience". *Suhaib Al- Falahi* considered IJ one of the most difficult media products because of its dependence on evidences that are required by the screen to prove what the journalist says about sensitive topics under coverage by IJ. To manage the complexity of IJ, *Al-Falahi* suggested that investigative journalism needs a highly qualified journalist who must have a network of relationships with human sources of news and information as a critical factor for success and access to information and evidence. In this particular regard, he described the effects of HR on IJ as a significant impact. According to him, "the investigative report deals primarily with human news sources. Based on his relationships with these sources, the journalist's ability to reveal what information he is looking for in an investigative report is determined".

Aljazeera in particular has great capabilities to deal with the challenges of access to information, whether in terms of training its crews, possessing the technologies and equipment, or even financing investigative work and providing the necessary resources. In this regard, *Sanae Elkouiti* believes that AJMN relies on investigative work in its coverage especially on the TV channel (AJSC). In fact, the extent to which AJMN uses investigative practice can be realized from the conclusive answers of some expert participants who confirmed the high level of IJ usage by the AJMN. For example, *Aseel Saraih,* said that "Aljazeera Network in general uses investigative reports effectively, especially on the TV channel". He also argues that "the use of investigations in the TV channel is ranging from good to very good despite being limited; and the topics that the channel presents in various programs and in various formats are excellent and employ great capabilities regardless of orientation". *Aseel Saraih* said that some issues in the Arab World cannot be addressed by journalistic templates other than IJ which requires great materialistic, technical or political capabilities that are not available in the Arab World except for Aljazeera.

According to many participants of this research the special interest of AJMN in IJ is evident in its several practices including media production, Publishing and Financing as three tracks of Aljazeera activities in IJ. Based on *Adel Abdulmughni* these tracks are composed of "producing televised investigations throughout the news channel and by its related channels in different languages as well as publishing and financing investigative production through Aljazeera Net Website in partnership with a large number of correspondents and collaborators in various countries of the world". The three tracks within the investigative work map move together as if they were cogs running the Aljazeera network's activity in investigative journalism. *Adel Abdulmughni* argues that the establishment of the Investigative Journalism Unit (IJU) as a department specialized in IJ in AJMN reinforces its interest in investigations and qualified it to win international awards in the field. *Mohammad Bin Salem* also has the same opinion of *Abdulmughni* saying that the investigative work of AJMN is developing and we notice this development in some of the investigative works of AJMN on the Yemeni, Syrian and Gulf crises".

Other participants such as *Said Eminzade* described Aljazeera as one of the few media networks that uses investigative work; yet he mentions that "it focuses on certain files and neglects others, perhaps according to the nationality of the working team in the network or the type and importance of the event".

The participants who were met face-to-face focused on the role of Aljazeera's tools that strengthen its potential of practicing investigative journalism. *Sulaiman Bsharat* said that AJMN'S possession of a huge library of archived information, tremendous sources of information and huge body of working staff reflects the great role of Aljazeera's preparedness in this regard. He believes that the richness of the Arab situation in political, social, and economic issues, which are basic materials for journalistic investigations, represents an important influence of practicing IJ by

Aljazeera to invest in media covering of these issues. He said that there are critical issues that are still virgin as no one has ever tackled on either due to the lack of experience, or as a result of fear of the political situation.

The participants' responses revealed a clear link between Aljazeera's enormous capabilities and its strong focus on investigative journalism. In this regard, *Sulaiman Bsharat* added: "Aljazeera is one of the first news media networks that cares about political content in the Arab and Islamic worlds; and it was able to make a shift in the nature of media work to the extent that there are some sources that have become looking for presenting information to the channel not vice versa. This, by itself, is an important matter that increases the rate of obtaining hidden information". *Zaher Elbek* claimed that Aljazeera, being a network that is predominantly political in nature- as its news is predominantly political in nature- needs diversification in its programs and its various activities in the network. He concluded that on the contrary of other political and news programs, investigative programs always look for hidden diverse aspects, which is very important to break the routine of news coverage.

Participants in the focused group discussion remarkably concentrated on the issue of visual material and its role in stimulating AJMN to produce investigative journalistic materials. In this regard, *Muhammad Fares* said that Aljazeera's high ability to use modern technology in employing graphics and visual arts motivated it to enter the world of investigative production. He believes that Aljazeera was able to "employ its financial capabilities to reach people". He added that "Aljazeera's programs have proven that AJMN has a superior ability to access deep information".

Mustafa Swelim said that Aljazeera wants the investigation to "deliver information in a way different from the usual news pattern". He added, "The amount of information flowing through social media and television has created boredom among the public in recent times; therefore,

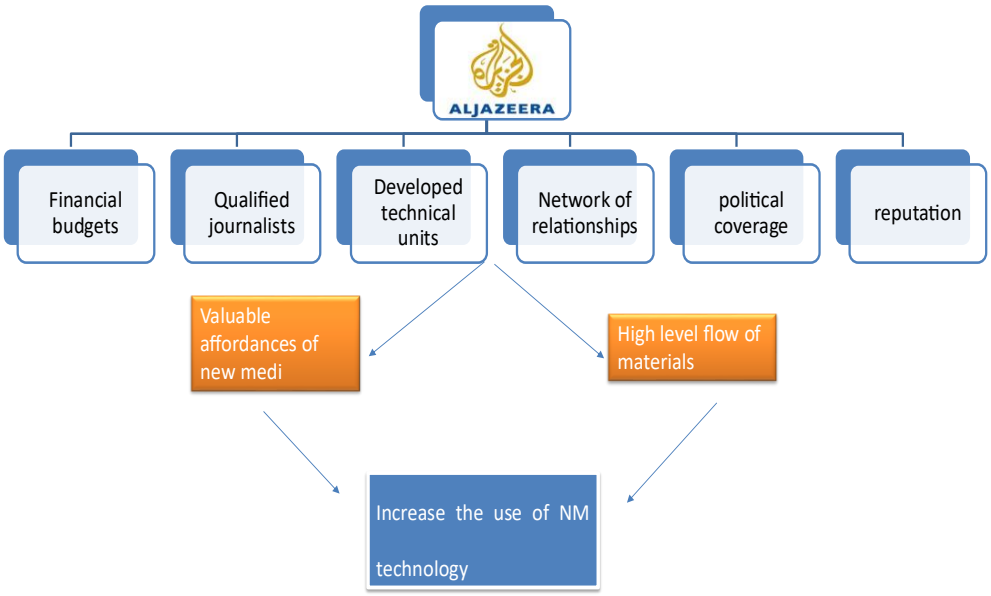
investigative programs have become more capable of delivering news information in more acceptable ways by the public". *Omar Fayyad* believes that Aljazeera's investigative programs opened the door to diversity of contents and groups targeted by investigations, in addition to touching on important new topics for the public by providing information and secrets of "what is going on behind the scenes and in closed rooms". He said that Aljazeera Network practices investigative journalism to take advantage of its "financial capacity, its widespread presence among audiences, and its ability to carry out investigative work that requires very high costs". Thus, *Jarrar* believes that "the availability of financial capabilities is the most important part of Aljazeera's approach to investigative journalism, which requires large expenditures on the financial coverage of correspondents and their assistants, costs of travel and other needs such as documents and evidence".

The use of media technology is one of the most important advantages provided by technical development of digital journalism (Baltezarevic, 2020). As soon as media entity accesses stored in an electronic recording device or published on a social media site, it becomes a primary material of media that can be built upon regardless of its ownership. It is sufficient for technical verification bodies to examine the material and provide a certificate about its originality and authenticity to become usable evidence in investigative journalism. The development of media technology has made it very easy for recalling this stock and using it in investigative production.

This is one of the virtues of the affordances of new media which seemingly have unlimited innovative capabilities in providing investigative journalism with services. It is enough to stop at the generative AI aforementioned. It is one of the most recent innovations that provides investigative reporters with images and videos that compensate for the lack or loss of original

visual content related to the investigative report despite concerns about copyright and deep fakes (Thomson et al., 2024).

Figure 4.4: The way in which using NM technology affordances serves as a factor of AJMN usage of IJ in its media coverage.



4.1.4 Investigative Journalism increases the ability of Aljazeera Media Network to confront the constraints resulting from the political conditions in the Arab world

This conclusion may seem strange given that investigative journalism is a self-evidently information-hungry practice. But in the Arab world, where political views are the cornerstone of viewer attitudes toward Aljazeera's programs and coverage, including investigative journalism, which is closely linked to viewers' opinions and their level of trust in their governments (Jamal, & Melkote, 2008), many Arab regimes exaggerate their hostility to investigative journalism and

thus stifle Aljazeera's practice, and these governments prevent Aljazeera investigative crews from accessing official sources of information and human news sources.

However, the reality is that preventing AJMN from accessing data sources in many Arab countries prompted Aljazeera to rely early on open-source data (OSD) as rich sources for investigative journalism (Bebawi, 2016), to the point that this has become part of the network's professional traditions in general and in its investigative programs in particular. The development of communication technology and its smart applications has facilitated access to open sources and thus provided the necessary information to build investigative reports, taking into consideration that this information is not confidential but rather available to everyone; yet the investigative journalist is the one who is experienced in accessing it and employing it in his investigative productions.

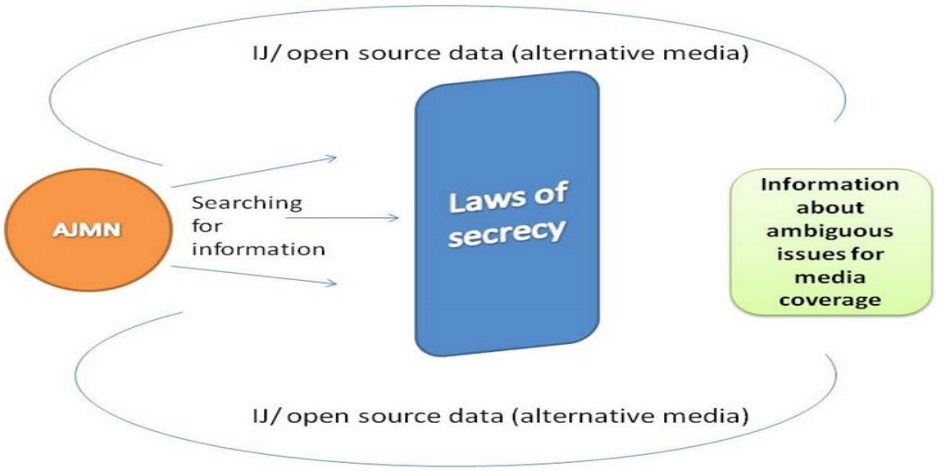
In the context of the political circumstances in the Arab World, *Sanae Elkouiti* stated that "the investigative report sheds light on the ambiguous areas in a number of files and issues that the network deals within the rest of its media coverage". She found IJ practicing a good way to reveal the ambiguity of the uncovered issues in the Arab countries as she said that IJ is used by AJMN "to reveal the hidden aspects of the news stories which need a long and in-depth effort to reveal them and to provide documented accounts of some mysterious events". *Khaled Ma'ali* considered IJ as "the most appropriate form of media coverage to the political situation of the Arab World and the developing countries in general were hiding and manipulating of information is wildly experienced by the authorities and official bodies". Moreover, *Aseel Saraih* argues that the IJ is the only suitable journalistic template for addressing some issues.

Some researchers view investigative journalism as a vital area for confidential information tracking. *Nidal Salah,* one of those interviewed face-to-face, said: "When you follow an

investigative broadcaster on Aljazeera who directs his camera to zones hidden from people's eyes, this leads you to mysterious and secret worlds". *Salah* continued that the viewers of Aljazeera wish to witness strange details, through its investigative cameras, that introduce them to the world of the story that is being investigated, whether research is in the world of drugs, political organizations and movements, or the world of human organ trafficking.

Other participants in the focus group argue that the use of camera and other information gathering tools are at the heart of Aljazeera's investigative work. In this particular context, *Hudhayfa Jarrar* believes that "It is important here that we agree on the concept of investigative journalism at its minimum, which is to reveal something unknown to people and to present it in a clear way". He considered that "this is an area that is not easy for AJMN to access despite its huge financial capabilities which are yet insufficient to reach certain information and sources".

Figure 4.5: The usage of open-source data by investigative journalism as alternative media source to overcome the barriers of laws of secrecy which block the ability of media to access formal information.



The intensity of investigative production in Aljazeera Network reveals the important relationship between investigative journalism and new media affordances. It is an interactive relationship, in the sense that as much as Aljazeera Network needs investigative journalism to prove its popularity and presence among competitors, to play a role in shaping public opinion and political participation, and to overcome the obstacles of bans and restrictions; new media, in turn, requires high-quality journalistic practices such as investigative journalism to suit its great affordances. To illustrate, let us imagine the level of the ability of daily print newspapers, as a mainstream press belonging to traditional media, to benefit from the hypertextual affordance of video links, or we may ask an important question about the need for the presenter of entertainment and social television programs, such as cooking shows, competitions, and fashion design and beauty shows, to have a security mentality. Accordingly, Aljazeera Media Network's practice of investigative journalism must be accompanied by a huge benefit from new media affordances because each is a key factor in the success of the other.

The results of the first objective of this research carries a philosophical reference to that the practice of investigative journalism is of great importance in framing the theory of affordances in the journalistic practice of Aljazeera Media Network. This importance cannot be read only as a reflection of journalistic practice on the audience or on the quality of work or even at the level of Aljazeera Network as a tool for the media message. Rather, the importance of practicing investigative journalism places all these elements in one category, affected by the affordances of new media. For this specific reason, it was necessary for this doctoral thesis to place the influences of the practice of investigative journalism by Aljazeera Network at the forefront of its objectives as a starting point for understanding the deeper connection between investigative journalism and new media, in the context of the Arab political and social environment.

4.2 The factors that contribute to Aljazeera Media Network's use of new media in its investigative journalism

The emergence of new media (NM) has strongly affected the tracks of journalistic works and news coverage including investigative journalism (Safori, 2018). Knowing the factors that contribute to Aljazeera Media Network's use of new media in its investigative journalism requires a deep realization of many key issues including the level of NM employment in the IJ of AJMN, the factors that make NM influential in IJ such as the continuous development of media technology (MT), the increased ability to benefit from human resources (HR), the employment of training in developing the capabilities of investigative journalists, and finally the level of development that has occurred to IJ due to the development of NM by comparing the situation of IJ before and after the era of NM.

The results of the interviews conducted within the three stages of this research study showed five factors behind Aljazeera's use of NM in its IJ: accessing sources of data and information, reaching new media audiences, competing with other media networks in new media field, making use of the affordances of media technology development, and achieving the sake of Aljazeera for Innovation. All the above-mentioned factors represent holistic or comprehensive incentives for Aljazeera to use new media. In other words, the great tendency shown by Aljazeera for investing in NM is not aimed specifically at developing its IJ as much as at employing NM in serving all its coverage tracks, including IJ.

Access to data and information sources is a vital factor for investigative journalism, as it contributes significantly to building stories and coverage, especially in non-democratic countries that practice blocking information sources. From this standpoint, the practice of data journalism

has gained importance in investigative journalism after it became an alternative source of information (Wu, 2024).

In addition, new media technologies have contributed to the access of investigative journalism to new audiences (non-television audiences). For example, in 2019, Aljazeera launched a podcast service to deliver in-depth coverage, including investigative productions, to new audiences, as podcasts gave a major boost to investigative journalism (Frary, 2017). Aljazeera transcribes excerpts from its television investigative investigations, publishes them in written transcripts on its website, and can be listened to vocally and directly through the podcast service available for most of the site's content; thus, new audiences can access them via mobile phones and devices without the need for television or radio, which were previously among the most important tools of traditional media.

The development of new media technology has created competition between mainstream media organizations and digital media platforms for audiences, scoops, information, and even news verification. Some studies, such as (Krebs et al., 2020), have shown that new media still dominate Google search but have fallen to the third place on YouTube, after amateur and institutional publishing. In this competitive context, Aljazeera's great focus on the use of new media in its journalistic practices in general, including investigative journalism, is comprehended.

As for taking advantage of the potential of developing media technology, Aljazeera Network for example has dozens of Facebook pages dedicated to specific countries or specific areas of its coverage, and even to its investigative journalism programs such as the Facebook page for the program The Hidden is More Immense. Hence, publishing investigative reports on Aljazeera's investigative report pages gives the network an opportunity to take advantage of Facebook's affordances, as the algorithmic system that enables page managers to accurately reach the target

audience is considered one of the most important affordances of Facebook (Papa, & Loannidis, 2023)

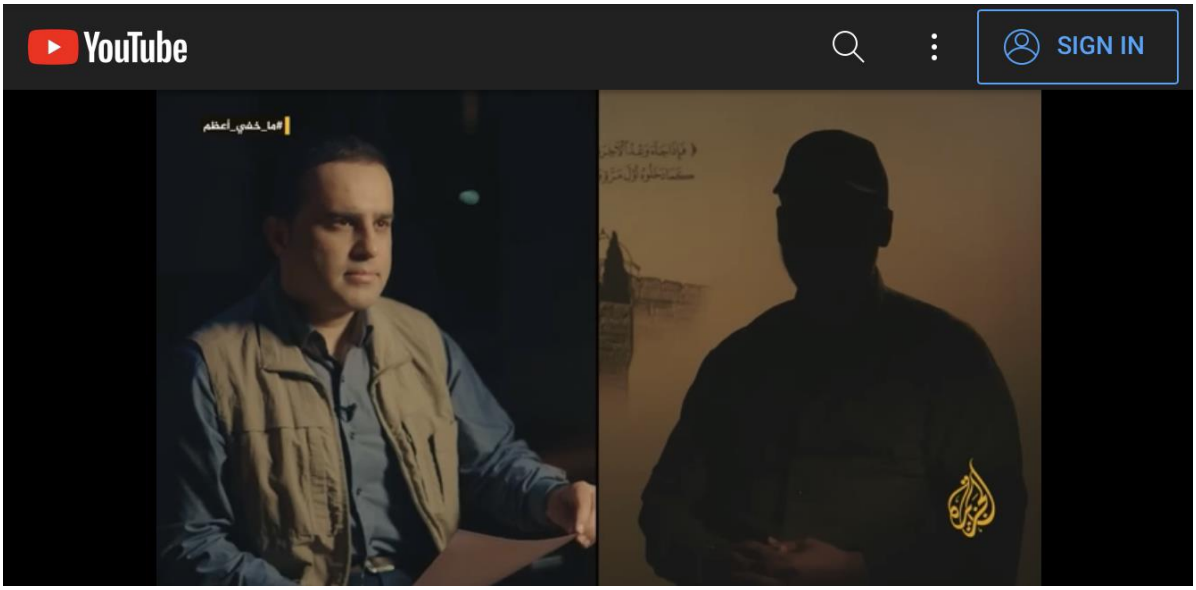
In conclusion, new media imposed itself within the digital revolution in the world of media (Baltisarevic, 2020), meaning that new media became one of the media tools accompanying the media industry and content. Therefore, integrating new media into the tools of new media institutions was not just an option, but rather a strategic imperative for survival, as some media institutions including Aljazeera Network were able to cope with this digital development since the beginning of the emergence of electronic news sites, then forums, communication stations among others, while other media institutions failed the task.

4.2.1 Access to sources of data and information

Some of the participants of this research study including *Anas Radi* look at NM as the strength point of AJMN; this is due to the many advantages it provides in different levels including access to sources of information. The emergence of NM saved the investigative journalists the hassle of travelling with all the time, effort and logistical obstacles it takes to access and conduct interviews with sources of information. For this exact reason, *Sanae Elkouiti* said that the use of NM has become important in IJ "especially in cross-border investigative work". *Said Eminzade* is also among those who believe that NM is important for IJ because of its close relationship to the information. Therefore, communication applications of NM provide investigative journalists with ample opportunities for communicating with sources and making conversations with them in audiovisual calls with amazing editorial features such as recording, memorizing and using mike and scene effects within the same application, *Qutb Elaraby* considered the ease and availability of editing and making corrections a good reason for which Aljazeera uses NM in its IJ. For example, the presenter of the Aljazeera's famous IP "The Hidden is More Immense", Tamer Al-

Misshal, appeared in more than one scene while speaking to the commander of Al-Qassam Brigades, one of the Palestinian resistance movements in the Gaza strip, Mohammad Sinwar, from inside Aljazeera's studious in Doha, the capital city of Qatar, without the need for travel, entry permits, use of airports, booking appointments and other complex security procedures normally used by members of Palestinian resistance factions.

Figure 4.6: A screenshot of Mohammad Sinwar during his online meeting with Tamer Al-Misshal in Aljazeera's "The Hidden is More Immense" IP.



Source: Aljazeera Net. An episode of the IP "The Hidden is More Immense", 27/05/2022

Moreover, communication with human news sources is not the lone pathway through which NM enhances the field of IJ. *Khaled Ma'ali* perceived NM as "a mine of information and data due to the abundant material published every day on its different platforms". NM is a mine of information because social media platforms are awash of posts including photos, videos, and information that can be used as evidence by investigative journalists to prove or refute the hypothesis of the IR. For example, Aljazeera published a photograph that was found on Twitter

accounts showing the Turkish mayor of Istanbul Ekrem Imam Oglu accompanied by the British Ambassador to Ankara, the Capital of Turkey, in a luxurious fish restaurant on 24 January 2022 at a time when Istanbul was suffering from an unprecedented snow storm during which the Municipality which is run by Imam Oglu was unable to rescue the stranded nor the open roads that had been closed for several days. The photo was posted to unofficial accounts and was widely used in media as evidence to deny the mayor claims that he was working hardly for more than 19 hours to solve the problems of Istanbul's people during the storm (Istanbul snows provoke a storm of criticism against Mayor Ekrem Imam Oglu, 2022).

Figure 4.7: A photograph published by Aljazeera from unofficial Twitter account showing Mayor of Istanbul Ekrem Imamoglu accompanied by the British Ambassador to Ankara, the Capital of Turkey, in a luxurious fish restaurant on 24 January 2022 at a time when Istanbul was suffering from an unprecedented snowstorm.

Source: Aljazeera Net. A report under the title "Istanbul snows provoke a storm of criticism against Mayor Ekrem Imamoglu and calls for his resignation, 26/01/2022.

In addition, NM is also considered as a huge source of data and information because of the fact that its different applications are rich of evidences that can also be used professionally in IPs as well as in malicious APPs used for hacking computers and penetrating mobile phones to leak files and information stored on phone memories, be it files of information, images, videos, maps or any documented materials that can be used as evidences in IJ such as the leaked videos that reveal ill-treatment of prisoners in Egyptian prisons which were broadcasted on Aljazeera's screen on 13 November 2019 (Exclusive photos from inside an Egyptian prison, 2019).

Figure 4.8: A screenshot from an episode published by Aljazeera on 13 November 2019 showing leaked videos that reveal prisoners' ill-treatment in Egyptian prisons.

Source: Aljazeera Mubasher. A report under the title "Exclusive photos from inside an Egyptian prison showing difficult living conditions of prisoners", 13/09/2019.

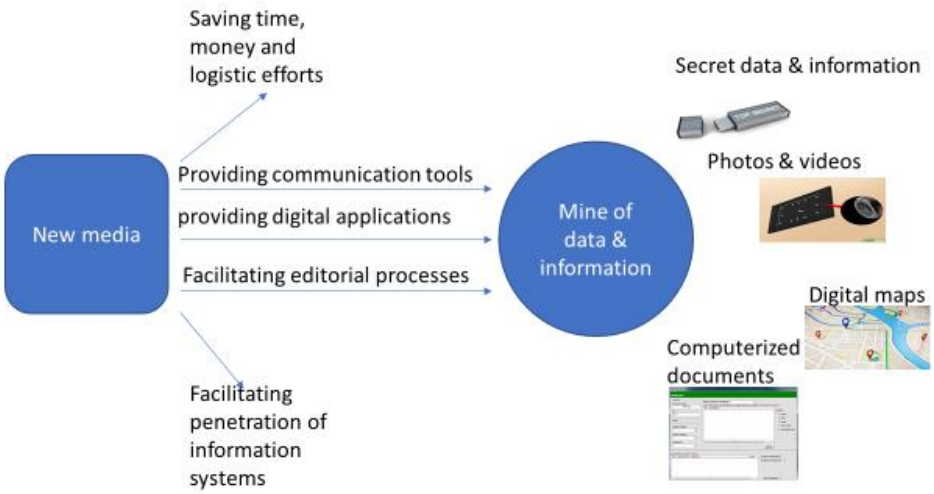
The face-to-face interviews also provided important insights into the significance of using new media in IJ of Aljazeera. *Zaher Elbek* said, "We are basically in the age of digital media. This is the era now, and whoever stays away from it loses a lot". He added, "Aljazeera, with its large fan base, has new media accounts that are followed by millions, so why it should not use these accounts? It reaches millions through its various accounts on YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, and others". *Zaher* believes that the official accounts of Aljazeera Network on social media platforms are approved tools already created for reaching the masses, and he wonders, "Why not to use them for collecting information and data?" *Wasef Qadah ,* also believes that new media platforms such as Facebook facilitated access to information and the process of communication and reduced costs. He added: "Any material from new media sources has become easily transferred to the traditional media as a result, and this created a bridge between large media networks and information sources; it also reduced the budgets that were paid for that".

Yousef Aljuneidi provided evidence that AJMN uses NM to access information, especially in areas where Aljazeera's activities and work is prohibited. He said, "For example, while covering the coup in Egypt in 2013, Aljazeera was banned from working in Egypt, but it was reporting what activists broadcasted on SM, which later on other media outlets began to broadcast". *Al-Junaidy* believes that this type of content exchange between Aljazeera and citizen journalism creates a common interest between AJMN and its audience. He added that Aljazeera "needs the content broadcasted by the audience to remain in the heart of the event, and the audience wants the network as a tool to deliver the content they produce to a wider sector of receivers." Thus, according to him, the new media "transformed the role of AJMN from a content producer into a linking tool between the audience who produce the content and the audience who receive it". He also considered this transformation in itself as "an important incentive for social media institutions to

support Aljazeera's investigative, intellectual and other programs". He said, "The more these programs are strengthened, the more the audience is exposed to them, and thus the more this audience follows social media.

The matter is similar to the role of the YouTube platform, which is a platform that does not produce content, but displays what the producers present and gets the trust of the audience based on the momentum of these shows". *Aljuneidi* clarified his idea by emphasizing that the intersection of interests between content producers, media brokerage companies, and major broadcasting networks, such as Aljazeera, is so beneficiary to all of the three parties in terms of maximizing their audiences and the number of their content views. He concluded that this form of cooperation guarantees the producer to display the content, the AJMN to expand its audience, and the intermediary companies to increase the value of their advertising and publicity returns, and all of this requires meeting the audiences' desires.

Figure 4.9: The usage of NM by AJMN in order to access data and information.



4.2.2 **Reaching new media audiences**

Press institutions (PI) and media networks are keen on renewing and expanding the sectors of audiences of their coverage on a continuous basis. Therefore, these PIs and networks are adept at creating new forms and innovative templates of coverage for attracting more and more people as audiences to their contents. While reaching new audiences is one of AJMN's causes of using IJ, reaching the huge audience of social media platforms (SMP) is an important factor for using NM in different fields and templates of coverage including IJ.

The research participants to the email interview of this research study (4/10) paid attention to the importance of using NM by AJMN in reaching new interactive audiences on SMP. *Said Eminzade* considered using NM by AJMN a result of the strong bond between NM and the new sectors of media audiences. *Mounira Hajlaoui* said that AJMN uses NM in its IJ "Because of the strength of the impact of new media on the public, especially with the technological development that accompanied it, the contemporary viewer, reader and listener have become very different from their counterparts of yesterday's audience, today they are educated, cultured, quick-witted and hasty". *Qutb Elaraby* also has the same idea about the emergence of new audience bearing new features which is the NM audience, so he states that "the new media reaches large segments of the audience who preferred social media over traditional media due to the dynamic features of new media and its interactivity with the audience".

The interest of PIs in the audiences of NM cannot be seen as a luxury or an extra activity for media networks, but it has become an urgent need for them in light of the changes brought about by NM in the characteristics of media audience. *Aseel Saraih* discussed this issue in detail as he argues that AJMN is the largest media network in the Arab World, and it deserves to be ranked among the first three or four most important media networks in the world. Over a quarter

of a century, it has created a very large audience by its TV channel (AJSC), but nowadays it has been, as all media networks, facing the challenge that television viewing in general is retreating in favor of SM and NM, and therefore maintaining the audience of the network requires working on these new platforms. He adds that is why "Aljazeera launched, for example, the AJ+ service and other media accessories that depend on the development of new media and media technology". *Saraih* has concerns over the point that TV followers will turn away from the screen "as we used to say that the paper press has begun to reach an end or at least it is almost ending". New followers are crawling towards NM and SM platforms, especially with the large spread of technical devices such as mobile phones and iPads. According to *Saraih* "This change in audience trends forced a large network such as Aljazeera to resort to new media to maintain its audience". He evaluated the performance of AJMN in NM practices as successful, arguing that "although it is one of the largest global networks in the world of television, it also succeeded in creating a large audience in new media as well; and it is on the top of the follow-ups on SM account by the public whether they agree with its policies or not". Moreover, *Saraih* believes that Aljazeera is one of the first Arab networks that turned to the NM for preserving its audience, and he considers this as a result of the efforts of its distinguished media researchers who succeeded in planning this matter.

In September 2021, Aljazeera published a televised report about its achievement for 23 years showing its strong presence in NM platforms. The report says that Aljazeera is the first Arab news channel with more than 20 million followers on its Facebook page and the number of followers of its various Facebook pages is mounting to 60 million followers (Aljazeera achievements during 23 years, 2021). These numbers clearly show how much AJMN is benefiting from NM platforms in expanding its audience base.

The researchers interviewed in this study view Aljazeera's quest to reach the new media audience as one of its most important factors of its usage of NM. *Zaher Elbek* elaborated on this issue, saying that this is "a primary goal to reach Generation Z, the generation under the age of 25". *He* described Generation Z as "a generation that does not watch television and does not have the patience to sit down and watch long TV programs. Rather, they tend to follow events via smartphones which give them the opportunity to remain updated at any given time and from everywhere. The generation Z represents a huge body of the Arab youth who usually connect to the world via their social media accounts. Therefore, reaching them through their accounts is very important to expand its audience base.

Nidal Salah reflected on the use of NM by AJMN from the perspective of the uses and gratifications which he describes as one of the largest and most important known theories in the field of media and the most consistent with the advantages of media in the modern era. He said, "You can connect your mobile device to the whole world, and therefore this makes it shameful for any media network, even if it is small, not to reach the audience through the simple tools available with the audience". He added that "Aljazeera benefits from the public tendency to use the available tools to satisfy their needs and desires for knowledge". *Nidal Salah* believes that the new media has become the easiest way to reach all segments of society. He said that reaching the public through the media is no longer limited to the educated, the rich, or adults alone; for example, "nowadays, school children use social media and other platforms available on phones, computers, and school computers. The merchant uses this network for marketing, and the citizen uses it on the street to reach the news everywhere". *Wasef Qadah* agreed with the voices which consider reaching out the public as one of Aljazeera's outcomes of using new media. He added by saying

that “Certainly, Aljazeera needs new media, because a very large percentage of the public follows the new media, which has evolved over the generations”.

Yousef Aljuneidi presented much evidence confirming that Aljazeera uses new media to reach the public. He said it has been common these days to see TV news broadcasters using their mobile devices to deliver bulletins, which represent the same technology used by the public; thus, Aljazeera has linked mobiles directly to news studios, which made AJMN closer to the audience. *Al-Junaidy* pointed out that Aljazeera today "boasts that its videos are watched by hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions, through social media, and in this reach, it has become comparable to reality television, after traditional television has become at stake in terms of the number of viewers”. He added, "We must not forget that Aljazeera opened accounts on new media to follow the events in each country separately, such as Aljazeera Tunisia, Aljazeera Egypt, Aljazeera Jordan, and Aljazeera Turkey to satisfy its local audience directly through these accounts”. He also believes that Aljazeera is now using new media in an attempt to reach its audience in any geographical location, in accordance with the viewer's nature and interest. He stated that this interest guarantees engagement or audience interaction with the content provided by Aljazeera on social media accounts such as Twitter and Facebook. Thus, *Aljuneidi* believes that Aljazeera uses new media strongly "with the aim of satisfying the audience's desire to interact and attend its programs and to give AJMN the ability to reach the audience in its place”. He said that this use of new media enabled Aljazeera to maintain its natural audience, who are used to follow it on its traditional media tools, and added to it a new audience, which is the audience of the new media. Returning to generation Z, *Yousef Aljuneidi* acknowledged that the young generation has desires and needs that media networks are trying to meet by adapting their programs to the requirements and tendencies of this generation. He said that this "explains Aljazeera's tendency to deal with

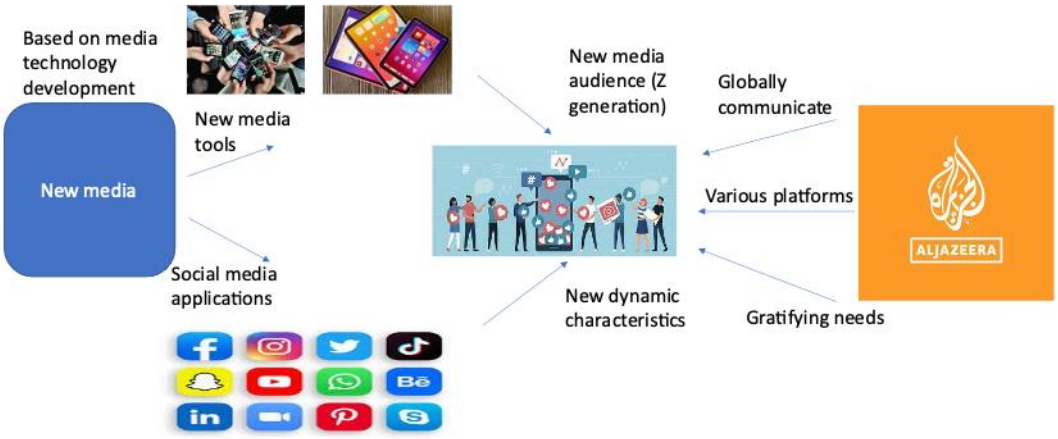
ridiculous issues often in order to reach this audience and maintain contact with it". *Aljuneidi* strongly believes that Aljazeera faces a major challenge in combining "the sobriety of its intellectual, cultural and knowledge content" and its ability to provide programs "of an attractive nature to the young generation, which are programs most related to entertainment content or even trivial issues". "For example, you find this generation interested in watching videos of a Russian soldier being chased by drones in Ukraine, more than they are interested in learning about the Russian-Ukrainian war, its details and repercussions," he says. *Aljuneidi* opines that the nature of Generation Z's interest in simple details "requires Aljazeera to go down to the level that attracts this type of audience through new content that differs from its sober content".

Exactly as it was in the case of the email interviews and the face-to-face in-person interviews, the focus group placed the reach of audience as one of the important drivers of Aljazeera's new media practice. *Hudhayfa Jarrar* considered that Aljazeera's awareness of the decline of television and traditional media with the advent of a new generation of audience, raised with the development of communication technologies and social media tools, prompted it to expand its use of new media. He said that this realization "pushes Aljazeera to go to the spaces where the audience is present to provide information for the new receiver of information, which requires a specific type of news coverage that facilitates the new audience's access to Aljazeera's coverage and compensates the audience's distance from television". *Muhammad Fares* considered that SM has become the basis of media networks, saying that "that is why we see satellite channels today competing for the volume of viewership, follow-up, and the level of interaction".

For his part, *Omar Fayyad* considered "making content available to the public" and "freedom of exposure" as one of the grants that new media provides to press institutions; and he believes that those grants represent some of Aljazeera's influences to focus on new media in its coverage.

Fayyad said, "We do not forget that new media provides an opportunity for archiving and categorizing programs so that the audience can choose the appropriate time for exposure to any program they want, unlike what was the case in the fixed schedules of programs on television". He pointed out that these characteristics of new media have raised the number of its programs' viewers.

Figure 4.10: The use of NM by AJMN to reach the audience



4.2.3 Competing with other media networks in new media field

With the decline of TM star and the transformation of large audience sectors to NM platforms, the later has become an arena of competition between various PIs and media networks. They compete, as previously explained, in making contents, counting interactive followers, having the ability of events coverage and provision of information, having the efficiency in collecting feedbacks and excitement, as well as competing in attracting content creators and influencers in SM platforms. From this point of view, *Suhaib Al-Falahi* believes that AJMN has used NM in a way of achieving competitiveness with international media networks, he considers any failure of AJMN, as a huge

global media network, in using NM as a serious weakness point, whether in investigative journalism or in other fields. He added "that is why we see that Aljazeera or the network in general uses the new media in a very wide and very strong and perhaps competitive way with every network in the world". *Ahmad Albaitawee* believes that the lack of keeping pace with media development means losing a large percentage of Arab viewers, especially the youth segment, which has been using technological means of communication extensively during the past decade in favor of other competing Arab satellite channels. *Adel Abdulmughni* also considered the usage of NM as a contemporary necessity to any media network; he thinks that Aljazeera uses NM for improving its leadership position among other media networks.

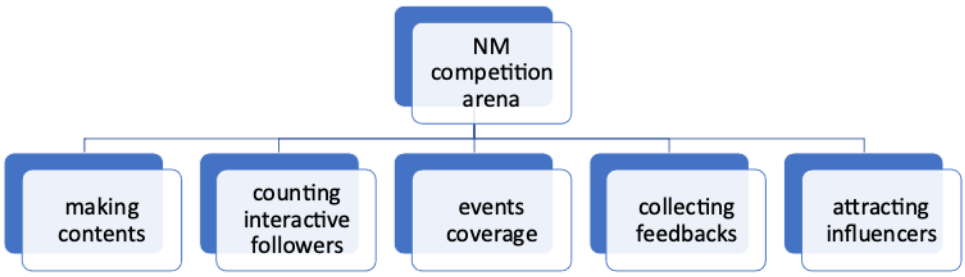
In his turn, *Khaled Ma'ali* presented a logical sequence of the competition requirements between PIs in the field of NM. He argues that "the success in dealing with new media lies in the fact that press institutions succeed in outperforming their competitors in making the necessary materials for social media platforms and succeed in having the appropriate platforms for disseminating these materials". What *Ma'ali* means is that any PI that does not pay much attention to NM will not find its way to success, which is journalistically measured in many aspects including the position of leadership among other competitors in the highly competitive media environment prevailing at the present time. When PI, for example, does not produce a suitable content to the NM, it will never succeed in marketing this content to the audience of SM platforms, therefore, this audience will turn away for the benefit of the PI which makes the suitable content.

On the contrary, when the PI fails in launching tools that meet the needs of the local audiences, they will resort to other media networks that have such tools, usually a competitor network. When this happens, the PI balance of content, tools, audiences and coverage would decline even if the number of its audience continues to aggravate, resulting in a slow and lower

progress rate compared to that of the competitors. This decline would necessarily lead to a decrease in the audience's interaction with the coverage of the PI, and consequently would lead to a lower audience evaluation and accordingly to the reluctance of social media pioneers and influencers to interact with this PI. Thus, for these reasons media networks compete frantically in the field of new media where Aljazeera has achieved a remarkable superiority over its competitors.

Sulaiman Bsharat also believes that Aljazeera resorts to new media because of its need to "raise the level of freedom of opinion and the other opinion", the slogan that Aljazeera has relied on since its inception and sought to achieve in a way that is distinct from the rest of the competing media.

Figure 4.11: The scope of AJMN competition with other media in new media field.



4.2.4 Making use of media technology development affordances

There is a wide agreement among the participants of this research on the argumentation that the development of media technology (MT) is one of the most important factors that have greatly

contributed to the development of investigative journalism by relying on new media. This development is what provided important innovations in terms of social media platforms and electronic applications that are easy to work with, which journalists are now using as new tools for journalistic work. This development also created applications for communicating with sources and access to information around the world through open sources, enhanced data documenting, preserving and making these data available as evidence upon request. On the other hand, it boosted the propaganda industry and flooded the cyberspace with inaccurate information and news.

The results showed that 15 out of 21 of the participants look positively at the significant impact of MT development on IJ practices through NM as it provided the investigative journalist with new technical tools used in many aspects during the whole process of IR production. *Adel Abdulmughni* found that the development of MT has a significant positive impact on IJ in terms of the use of tools and mechanisms that assist auditing and verification of IJ production. He exactly mentioned the influence of multimedia on journalism by saying that "Multimedia has achieved a great leap in the field of investigative journalism; accordingly, data journalism and Google Maps have become an integral part of investigative journalism just as how modern media has become an inexhaustible field of information and documents that enabled the investigative journalist to easily access information".

Aseel Saraih is among the participants who look with reverence to the role of MT in IJ development through NM while arguing that "there are also new tools that are useful for checking facts, documents, information, photos and videos, the role of artificial intelligence has become greater in helping the journalist to establish information". *Said Eminzade* also mentioned the role of MT development as a main factor enhancing the usage of NM in IJ "especially with regard to the quality of tools, methods of searching for information"; he points out that the most important

benefit of that tools is their quick accessibility and availability on websites and SM platforms as open sources of data and information.

So, the new journalistic tools, mainly multimedia equipments, have dual usage: contacting the sources and providing the journalists with data and information. *Sanae Elkouiti* confirmed this dual usage by saying that "the development of technology has facilitated investigative journalism, especially with regards to the development of photographic and audio recording equipment. It has also made it possible to quickly collect the required data and information, even if it is remote. It has also facilitated meeting with sources from a distance and obtaining the documents and reports that the journalists need to achieve their works without the need to go to the source physically.

Daily technological uses are full of many examples of constantly evolving and updating multimedia such as various audio recording programs, image and video processors, animation and films, text and word reading applications, GPS satellite map services, phone calls using the internet, video communications in various applications, scanning of screen content, e-mail and messaging applications, file sharing services on storage spaces, applications of using stored cloud technology and others (Pavithra et al., 2018). The importance of multimedia lies in its easy connection with smart mobile phones and other devices and its easy synchronization to PCs, provision of communication services, and content creation, saving and processing. It is sufficient for an investigative journalist, for example, to save a speech delivered by someone at a conference held by video-conference technology so that the speech, or only a part of it, becomes evidence used in support of an investigative report or might get published as a video clip on SM accounts on YouTube or Twitter platforms to be taken as evidence of a hypothesis of investigation by another journalist. This would not have been possible without the usage of multimedia as a product of information technology development which has been largely experienced in investigative

journalism. *Qutb Elaraby* supported this approach in understanding the impact of the development of MT on investigative journalism, he said that it is certain that IJ benefits greatly from the technological development of media and communications, "which has provided it with easy access to human or informational sources, dealing with them, analyzing and matching data, and providing IJ by these data. Modern technologies have also reduced the financial costs of IR, especially those related to travel and accommodation".

In addition to being the origin of information open sources, the new media platforms provided by the development of information technology have greatly contributed to the scrutiny of information and the examination of the facts contained therein. The speed of updating information and building on what is true of it has grown greatly in light of the development of media technology, and this has had a very large positive impact on investigative journalism, according to both *Khaled Ma'ali* and *Said Eminzade*. *Aseel Saraih* also agreed that MT development has greatly benefited IJ especially by its provision of open-source investigations that depends greatly on multimedia. He said, "In the investigation, we cannot document everything, but we have the ability, through modern technology to document evidence and obtain old photos or things that are not available in traditional systems". *Saraih* presented important examples of the role played by the development of technology in the development of investigative journalism by saying that there are international media platforms specialized in investigative journalism that rely only on open sources in their investigative production.

Moreover, *Saraih* believes that the development of technology has made it easier for journalists to search for documents and information; he adds "through advanced technologies, the journalist can access large libraries of research and media institutions that were previously difficult for the journalist to access". He also believes that access through modern technologies has helped

in searching for sites that provide research, studies, information, and laws that journalists were in vain looking for in their countries, which have become available online and outside borders. So, he concludes that technological development has certainly been advantageous to IJ.

Suhaib Al-Falahi looks at the impact of technological development on investigative journalism from two angles. The first is that this development provided journalists with advanced tools for recording audio and video, which are small and micro technical tools that have proven their effectiveness in obtaining confidential information without drawing the attention of the source to the important and very sensitive steps of IP. As for the second angle, it is represented in the fact that technological development also affects the stage after the completion of the press report, as it provides tools to verify information, the authenticity of photos and videos, and whether what the journalist did was correct or not; this is so important for those who follow the journalist's work and for the journalist himself who can scrutinizes his material very well before making it available to the public. Based on that, *Al-Falahi* evaluated the impact of technological development on IJ as a very strong and positive.

Finally, *Anas Radi* contradicted the opinion of the other participants by focusing on the negative impacts of MT development on journalistic process, arguing that "the disadvantage of the technology is to advance propaganda under the guise of news. In addition, the internet has allowed anyone to become an author: Anyone can create a blog and put an opinion out there into the world where it can go viral without any fact-checking or editing".

The researchers who were interviewed face-to-face talked about important connections between Aljazeera's influences of using new media and its need to take advantage of the affordances given by the development of information and communication technology. *Zaher Elbek* said that Aljazeera is keen to invest in the characteristics of new media or digital media such as

being "distinguished by multimedia, having superior flexibility, being widely spread and other features suitable for broadcasting clips of investigative programs".

As for *Nidal Salah,* he believes that Aljazeera uses new media platforms because it is "distinguished by its speed of access, the size of dissemination, and the cheap price". He said, "Its financial cost to the poor and the rich alike is simple and affordable". Thus, *Salah* believes that Aljazeera, as part of the global media, "is obliged to keep pace with the requirements of this era by creating platforms that reach out to marginalized segments who are unable to have much money, and this is what social media provides, which is cheap, simple and easy to access". In the same context, *Wasef Qadah* believes that Aljazeera's keeping up with the new media is a natural development in keeping pace with the development of communication technology in terms of tools and the opportunities and advantages it provides.

The focus group remarkably reinforced the finding which implies that benefiting from digital grants represents important cause for Aljazeera to practice NM. According to *Hudhayfa Jarrar,* the ease of information transmission and the low financial cost are important incentives for Aljazeera's use of new media. He explained, "Instead of operating studios, teams, lighting and sound engineering in order to release information to the public". "You can now produce the news and broadcast it with pictures, just by the use of a short video with the lowest capabilities and costs,". *Muhammad Fares* seconded *Jarrar's* opinion by mentioning some technical details, saying, "We do not forget the importance of reusing and reproducing materials" within what is known as the "molding" process. He said, "When you prepare a film, for example, you can prepare it in social media, divide it into parts, distribute it in different ways, and reproduce it based on clips in proportion to the audience of each social media tool that has its own characteristics and advantages". He concludes that this affordance represents "an important added value to social

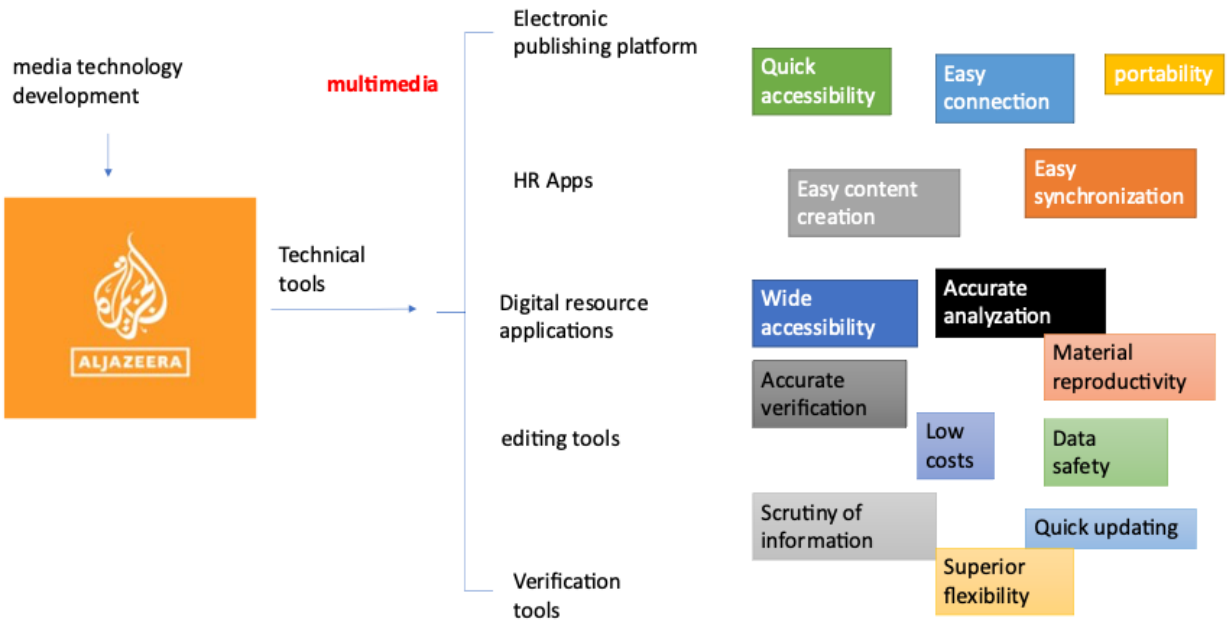
media, because it gives the media producer the ability to craft the message in accordance with the tool and the nature of the receiving audience".

For his part, *Samed Dwaikat* addressed the advantage of mobility as one of the most important aims that motivate Aljazeera to use the NM. He said, " During the past ten years, the audience has moved from the world of television to the world of smartphones, and the smartphone is the world of applications that connect the audience to the media circle without the need to be in a specific place, such as home, for example". He added, "We must keep up with this pattern of mobility, because the pattern of the audience waiting to return to home to watch the screen has ended; instead, it has been now the world of the smartphone, which moves with the person anywhere and gives him the ability to enter any world he wants to know about". *Samed Dwaikat* warned of the necessity of differentiating between generation Z and the generation of the smartphone, and he says, laughing, "By the way, the generation of the smartphone is no longer a young generation, there are old people who own it and deal with it". The point of using social media to measure the impact of the media message is another motive for Aljazeera to use new media in its coverage according to *Samed Dwaikat* who said, "Let's not forget that the measurement tool for views today is represented by social media platforms such as Facebook, for example, and many other applications". He added that "satellite channels resort to broadcasting their programs through new media networks" to easily measure their impact on society by tracking interactions and comments. "Aljazeera's YouTube and Facebook do not stop broadcasting, and this reflects the influence of these networks," he added. *Dwaikat* explained that social media platforms with a cheap or free cost gave the average person the opportunity to be equal to huge media institutions in terms of the ability to reach the audience. However, he added that the impact of the media message differs from the points of view of the press institution and the citizen journalist based on

the quality of the materials, the method of obtaining information, the availability of funding, and the unfair opportunities that offer budgets to press institutions at the expense of individuals in terms of investing in social networks.

While discussing the idea of the provision of new media technology to press institutions *Swelim* considered benefiting from such provision as one of Aljazeera's influences of using new media. "I can now access the previous episodes of any work produced by Aljazeera by searching for it on its electronic accounts," *he* elaborated. To him, however, this was previously available on websites, but in a weaker way with less storage space and greater access difficulty, "but now, with any keyword, you can access the content of Aljazeera, which has been even converting videos into texts whose links are easily accessible through keywords." he added.

Figure 4.12: The process of using NM by AJMN for benefiting from digital affordances in IJ.



4.2.5 The pioneering role and the constant search for innovation

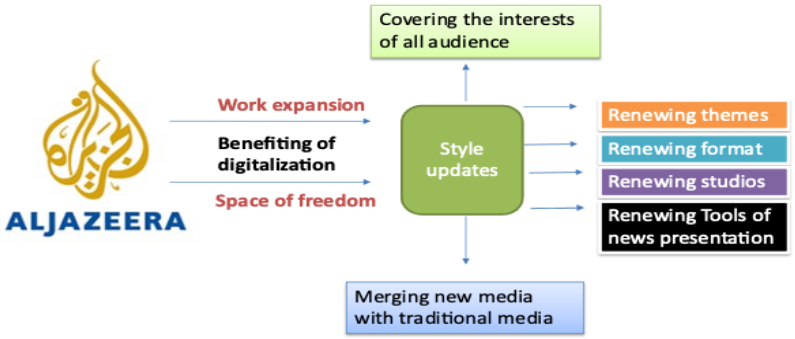
New media has imposed itself within the digital revolution in the world of media (Baltezarevic, 2020), in the sense that NM has become one of the media tools accompanying the media industry and media content. Therefore, PIs of all kinds did not have the option of integrating the new media into their tools. Some media organizations have been able to keep pace with this digital development since the beginning of the emergence of electronic news websites, then forums, communication stations, and others while other PIs failed in this mission.

In this regard, *Khaled Ma'ali,* who was interviewed by email, believes that Aljazeera is among the winners as it focuses on using new media as a distinct and unique media model in the Arab case. He said that this leadership made it imperative for Aljazeera to keep pace with the digitization of media and to engage with new media. He explained by saying that "At the right beginnings of the Internet, Aljazeera launched its website within advanced digital specifications that were ahead of other websites at that time".

Sulaiman Bsharat, who was interviewed face-to-face as well, strongly believes that the expansion and the freedom of work in digital space and the availability of this space within broad publishing policies, have achieved high follow-up for the digital tools and various models of AJMN. He believes that Aljazeera's awareness of the importance of new media in parallel with traditional media work has turned into an incentive for all the network's staff to mix the two types of media in all its platforms. He added, "For this reason, we find that the presenters of the programs and the most prominent workers in the channel have pages on the communication sites, and they are among the most followed and attended pages that touch all the concerns of the masses".

In this regard, *Yousef Aljuneidi* said that Aljazeera is one of the first channels that became aware of the issue of new media early in renewing its format and distinctive themes for its content and renewing its studios. He added, "All of this kept pace with the new media, even news feeds have become broadcasted by Aljazeera presenters directly using mobile phones".

Figure 4.13: The importance of AJMN's practice of IJ in enhancing professional innovation within the network.



4.3 The influences of Using New Media in Investigative Reporting of Aljazeera Media Network

The results of the study regarding the third research objective found five influences of using new media in investigative reporting of Aljazeera Media Network. The first, new media affordances increase the employment of digital technologies in Aljazeera's investigative journalism. The second, new media increases the volume of investigative production. The third, new media enhances the quality of investigative production. The fourth, new media usage decreases the

credibility of investigative journalism. And the fifth, Investigative journalism of Aljazeera Network benefits from digital affordances of new media.

The level of impact of new media on the investigative journalism of Aljazeera Media Network is closely related to the amount of the inputs provided by the new media to the various media works, which were previously discussed in this chapter, such as the development of media technology, human resources, and training. All of these inputs have increased the volume of data available to investigative journalism, the number of journalists involved in the field of IJ, and the spread of its products, including reports and investigative media coverage. In terms of quality, the results of the interviews for this research study showed that new media has greatly increased the quality of investigative content for media institutions, including Aljazeera. However, the results showed a noticeable discrepancy in the assessment of the impact of the new media on the reliability of investigative journalism; some participants perceived NM as a supportive tool for documenting and verifying facts, and some others opined that new media weakens the reliability of investigative journalism. Finally, the interviews provided ample evidence that Aljazeera network has benefited from many of the digital affordances of new media in its investigative journalism.

New media provided important advantages to Aljazeera Network that were directly reflected in its investigative journalism, increasing the volume of its production, and improving its quality. In terms of quantity, new media gave investigative journalism the ability to practice a comprehensive digital process to produce investigations through what is known as data journalism (Santosa & Mesquita, 2021), which accompanies the process of preparing the investigative report, starting with capturing the idea that interests the audience. Data journalism has saved the investigative journalist the time and effort that he used to spend, using trial and error methodology, in obtaining an idea or adopting a proposal to prepare investigative material. While, open-source

data gave the journalist the opportunity to improve the quality of the report he produces cognitively by expanding the informational content that can be accessed, and technically by providing him with images, videos, and other evidence produced by users of social media platforms (Woude et al., 2024).

The investigative journalism industry in Aljazeera Network has also benefited greatly from the affordances of new media that provided important features such as visibility, persistence, association, editability, algorithmic control, in addition to the possibility of working remotely through portability and handling global files through the affordance of the global networking. However, this massive reliance on new media technologies raises questions about credibility, reliability, and dependability because there is no effective and culturally appropriate business model for Arab investigative journalists in the contemporary digital journalism environment (Bebawi, 2021).

4.3.1 New media affordances increase the employment of digital technologies in Aljazeera's investigative journalism

Most of the participants in this study used positive expressions to describe the level of Aljazeera network's use of new media in its investigative journalism. *Said Eminzade* said that it reaches an "acceptable and sufficient extent", *Adel Abdulmughni* said: "to a good extent". *Qutb Elaraby* found that this usage reaches "a great extent," while *Mounira Hajlaoui* described it as "excellent usage". Both of *Suhaib Al-Falahi* and *Khaled Ma'ali* described the usage of NM in IJ of AJMN as being used to "a very large extent". However, as for *Mohammad Bin Salem*, he has another opinion about the level of Aljazeera network's use of new media in its investigative journalism, saying that this use "is still limited".

Using new media in various types of press productions as well as using multimedia in a smooth and feasible manner have been a credit to Aljazeera Network, which is seen by some of the participants as evidence for the network's well-planned usage of new media in investigative journalism. *Adel Abdulmughni* argues that the diversity of media genres in which Aljazeera uses new media in its investigative journalism is a proof of NM's deep influence on IJ. He said that this influence appeared in television investigations such as **"**The Detective" and "The Hidden is More Immense**",** and in written investigations produced by Aljazeera Net. On the other hand, he also believes that the use of multimedia in Aljazeera's investigative televised and written products provides another evidence for the depth of Aljazeera's investigative influence on new media.

Regarding the multiplicity of tracks of investigative production, *Aseel Saraih* contradicted *Abdulmughni's* opinion. Rather, he believes that Aljazeera's investigative production is almost confined to the TV channel, while the production of written investigations on Aljazeera's website are still very weak. Therefore, he said "Aljazeera network has a trend in journalistic investigation which is investigative videos that are broadcasted on the channel, those are very advanced and have a good impact and use techniques and diversify the material widely, but Aljazeera network still has a problem in providing written investigative products that benefit from the techniques on Aljazeera Net website".

Aljazeera's management of a huge network of social media tools through which it broadcasts its content and interacts with its audience directly is also an evidence of the network's extensive use of new media. No institution can undertake the high financial wages, salaries, incentives, rewards, technical and knowledge training unless it is keen on utilizing its outputs to the maximum extent. In this context *Anas Radi* said that "Aljazeera has a tremendous online presence and huge social network. They tweet all the latest news and update their website very

quickly. Moreover, they also have a mobile app, and they manage it very well. They engage the audience by quoting their tweets and Facebook messages during shows".

The dependence of both of investigative journalism and new media on media technological development increases the overlap's level between these two media genres, so that they benefit from each other, and this is what *Khaled Ma'ali* means by saying that "new media has its advantages that fundamentally help in the development of investigative journalism by using the latest new media methods to reach the best result in investigative journalism". The advantages of NM for IJ are not limited to the use of technological progress, but there are other characteristics that enable IJ for benefiting greatly from NM according *to Mounira Hajlaoui*, who considered that the investigative journalism of Aljazeera Network has benefited greatly from data journalism and open sources due to its ease, accuracy, rapid spread and ability to communicate messages to the public, despite being written in shorthand.

From his point of view, *Said Eminzade* believes that the types of the topics targeted in the investigative report largely determine the ability of investigative journalism to benefit from new media. This claim seems logical to a large extent, for the reason that an investigative journalist can find data, documents, and evidences such as photos, videos, and others in new media platforms that reinforce his hypotheses about certain issues, be it violations against certain people or cases of corruption and encroachments on public property, but such documents and evidences are rarely found on the platforms of new media about files related to secret agreements between higher authorities or to scientific innovations and secret research that are hidden behind the walls of laboratories and research centers.

Ahmad Albaitawee pointed out that new media opened horizons for new topics that firstly appeared on social networking sites, then started to occupy people's thinking before becoming a

widespread "trend". He added that “this interest by the pioneers of social networking sites prompted Aljazeera Network to investigate more and research more about the topics that occupied the minds of the audience of these sites”. According to him, the new media also increased the number of viewers of investigative journalism and contributed to reaching greater numbers as a result of the wide spreading of social networking sites, whether by “sharing” part of it or publishing it on the pages of social networking sites with a wide audience. In addition, *Ahmad Albaitawee* argues that the new media gave those in charge of the investigative programs an opportunity to know the opinion of the masses and their reactions to what was published in these programs through the comments available on the communication sites, he called this affordance as the “true feedback”, where the media message became carried out by two parties; not by one sending party based on the role of the receiver of the message in expressing his opinion and accepting or objecting to what was published.

One of the indications of the good use of NM in IJ of AJMN is that using IJ remains continuous during the preparation and production of investigative work as well as its promotion after publication. In this regard, *Suhaib Al- Falahi* said that “the daily, periodic, or seasonal programs that appear on the screen are very good at using new media, whether within the report itself or after the report is presented. Therefore, I evaluate Aljazeera's use of new media as very well”.

The impact of technology development on investigative journalism appears when considering the extent of IJ changes before and after the era of new media. There is a total agreement between the participants of this study on the fact that IJ has been known and has predated the era of NM for a long time. Initially, *Qutb Elaraby* argues that IJ has been founded several decades ago, but it was not called IJ as a well-known term. He also believes that paper

journalism was the most common arena of IJ, adding "a model for this is a journalistic investigation, by me personally, in Al-Shaab Newspaper in the mid-nineties about human organ trade in Egypt where many parties were involved in this crime. The report won the approval and appreciation of many health and regulatory bodies at the time". *Adel Abdulmughni* also has the same opinion, claiming that IJ has occupied a great place in journalism when it appears and "has proven a strong presence and a clear impact on societies, before the emergence of new media".

In general, the majority of the participants' assessments of IJ before NM's era have a negative aspect; yet, these assessments create important differences between the forms of IJ before and after the emergence of NM. *Mohammad bin Salem,* for example, described IJ before the era of NM as "slow and exhausting" while *Mounira Hajlaoui* perceives it as "weak" with less achievements than what has been recorded following NM's emergence. *Anas Radi* and *Ahmad Albaitawee* considered the reliance of IJ on the information provided by the journalists only before the emergence of NM as one of its shortcomings whereas *Said Eminzade* describes it as "elitist and limited". Likewise, *Khaled Ma'ali* describes it as "very limited". *Suhaib Al-Falahi* also said that IJ in the past was weak and subject to the decision of publishers and to the scissors of the censor.

Moreover, before the emergence of NM, IJ was a demanding journalism. According to *Sanae Elkouiti,* it "required huge budgets, a large team, and a longer time". And for *Adel Abdulmughni,* IJ needed more efforts, particularly regarding facts checking, documents verification and sources authentication. He added that IJ in the past "was also less widespread due to the limited distribution of paper or television broadcasts".

Furthermore, considering this level of agreement on negatively evaluating the IJ before the era of NM, there is also no dispute that the features and conditions of IJ have changed very

dramatically since the advent of NM. The most notable change is expanding the areas of practicing IJ by NM which plays a vital role in extending the presence of investigative coverage on media platforms from several sides. Firstly, NM allowed the amplification volume of investigative content by increasing the inputs from open sources and others, as well as increasing the outputs of the investigations through using multimedia in carrying the elements of the investigations. *Aseel Saraih* strongly supports this claim by arguing that before the era of NM, the majority of investigations were published on newspapers and printed press which allowed publishing materials of limited number of words and columns of a size that may reach half a page, one page, or more or less; and this area was not always suitable for journalistic investigations that basically include large-sized documents and large data of evidences. However, according to *Saraih,* NM and electronic platforms help, to a large extent, the investigative journalist to publish an integrated article. He also says that although it is not recommended to write more than 1500 words in written reports, NM has provided the journalists with great extra publishing space by multimedia and the ability to publish links which added a huge extra space to IJ, especially when a link leads to a visual video about a journalist's evidence that supports his investigative report, even if this report is a written material. Therefore, the new media has increased the ability of the journalist to publish the evidence in a more feasible way compared to the era of newspapers and TM that guaranteed the visual diversity. Therefore, he claimed that NM "does not recognize space". Secondly, NM increased the availability of publishing IRs on SM platforms. *Aseel Saraih* said that NM creates numerous platforms for IJ publishing in SM; so, when the journalist does not find a newspaper which agrees to publish his investigative work, he will find hundreds of these SM platforms which welcome the publishing. Thirdly, and lastly, NM helped IJ to be free of the scissors of censor. *Suhaib Al-Falahi* has the same argumentation of Saraih about the history of IJ before the time of

NM, but he assumes televised media as a basic arena of IJ practices. NM is certainly considered from his point of view as an important hinge in the journalistic field in general and in IJ in particular. According to *Al-Falahi*, before the time of NM, IJ was mainly dependent on televisions whereas the administrations of these TVs constituted the only authority which must be the first to decide whether to publish investigative materials or not. This situation, according to *Al-Falahi,* put the journalists under the censor's scissors whether of the administration's sergeant or the state's censor. Therefore, he strongly believes that new media has freed investigative journalism from the guillotine of censorship and has given it a very large space.

The researchers interviewed face-to-face for this research also believed that new media provided an unprecedented opportunity to publish investigative culture to the public. For example, *Sulaiman Bsharat* believes that the new media has provided "excitement in promoting the contents" of the investigative programs. He said that the new media is able to reach Aljazeera's investigative programs to the largest public base through the use of social media platforms because Aljazeera's investigative programs "get very high viewership rates compared to other programs". " The Hidden is More Immense " program, he added, "reaps millions of views in a short time".

Bsharat explained that the new media somehow imposes agendas on issues of interest and priority to the public; "for example, the incident of the Moroccan child falling into a well contributed to putting his case on the agenda of the various media" thanks to the continuous publication on social media accounts. "The same thing is happening with regard to the Palestinian cause and its daily developments," he added. In addition, *Nidal Salah* believes that new media provided other important opportunities for Aljazeera's investigative journalism, including "introducing the viewer to the same status of feeling that he used to experience in the past when he was following printed detective stories with featured images". He said that "the new media has

put the entire world on the screen in front of the viewer satisfying his curiosity for knowledge and learning in very modern ways by using the highest levels of media technology".

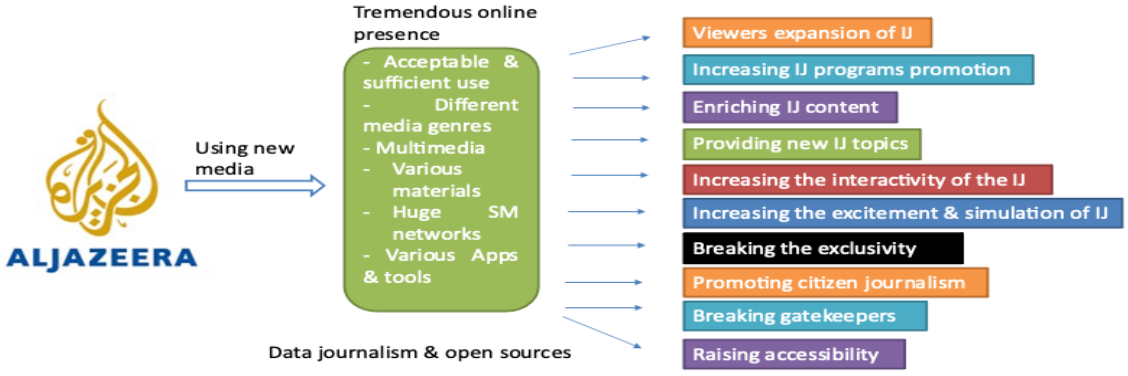
Wasef Qadah said that new media addresses specific groups of people and not a general audience, "that is why you find some SM platforms of AJMN directed to specific countries". *Al-Qadah* considered that the new media gave Aljazeera an opportunity to identify the target audience in its investigative programs, adding, "This accommodates the presentation of programs allocated specifically to each country, which are usually not suitable for the general public". He believes that these advantages gave the Aljazeera network "a high control on reaching the local audience through detailed programs that deal with delicate local issues with capabilities that exceed the those of the local media, which are originally obligated to deal with these issues". Thus, *Wasef Qadah* believes that "the new media has enabled the traditional media to reach the target audience with high accuracy." For example, Aljazeera's " The Hidden is More Immense " program covers a remarkable range of topics for youth and non-youth audiences, while delving into issues that had been hidden from them; thus, they show wide tremendous interaction with this program on social media. *Al-Qadah* added, "it is easier for the public to follow Aljazeera's investigative shows on social media compared to its satellite screen. For example, you may find that the audience's follow-up level of "The Hidden is More Immense" through Aljazeera's Facebook live broadcasting higher than the audience's follow-up level of the same program on the Aljazeera's TV screen". He explained this paradox by saying, "This is because new media platforms reach the audience in the center of its interest and satisfy its curiosity in specific aspects".

Participants in the focus group also presented many ideas about the impact of new media on investigative journalism of Aljazeera Network including weakening the concept of exclusivity of information, raising the capabilities of reaching the public, and strengthening citizen journalism

as a source of investigative journalism. *Hudhayfa Jarrar* said that the new media "opened investigative programs to the world," and the journalist has no longer been in need for a traditional media platform to present his materials to the public. He added, “While, in the case of the failure of any press institution to bear the consequences of producing the investigative material, social media platforms are there ready to bear such consequences; and therefore, the social media breaks the gatekeeper”. In this regard, *Omar Fayyad* believes that the new media gives investigative journalism "the opportunity to benefit from unstructured publishing by individuals and citizens, or what can be called citizen journalism, which now provides pillars of evidence and visual evidence for investigative journalism”.

For his part, *Mostafa Swelim* believes that "Social media has expanded investigative journalism by the virtue of the availability of archives, which gave journalists the ability to recall previous speeches of personalities that might contradict their current discourse”. He explained, "Playing on the contradictions of the positions of the same person from time to time fueled the satirical media with abundant content”.

Figure 4.14: New media employment in Aljazeera’s investigative journalism.



4.3.2 New media increases the volume of investigative production

The findings of this study showed a very reasonable agreement among the participants on the theme that the volume of investigative journalism of Aljazeera had increased quantitatively under the influence of new media. The participants grounded their opinions on the size of the investigative material on the criterion of personal observation in the absence of accurate detailed digital readings that show a comparison between the size of the investigative production of Aljazeera before and after the emergence of NM. However, their opinions were based on observation which remains worthy of reliance, because observation is one of the elements of conclusion used in qualitative research.

Most of the participants noted that Aljazeera's production of IJ increased significantly after being affected by the emergence of NM, and they mentioned evidence they used as indicators to support their conclusion about this increase. In this context, *Sanae Elkouiti* said that the volume of investigative work of Aljazeera "has increased" after the emergence of new media and *Said Eminzade* confirms that this volume has "remarkably increased", while *Mounira Hajlaoui* and *Khaled Ma'ali* described the impact of new media on the amount of investigative production for AJMN as "positive". Despite this agreement, the results are not devoid of different readings, ranging from that of *Mohammad Bin Salem*, who did not see any significant change, to *Aseel Saraih*, who considered the production of IJ of AJMN in the era of NM as still being "little though influential".

Anyway, the constant updating of data and the quick processing of information that NM continuously provides to IJ is one of the indications of the increase in the volume of investigative production for Aljazeera. *Khaled Ma'ali* said that "NM had a significant positive impact on IJ of Aljazeera, making access to the correct information more quickly, which was reflected in a large

volume of information and investigative work". New media's rapid and constant updates in information, or audience interaction and echoes, have made investigative journalism more capable of producing cross-border material and capable of handling thorny files. In this context, *Adel Abdulmughni* said that "I think that NM greatly influenced the volume of IJ production and pushed Aljazeera to produce cross-border investigative materials and encouraged it to deal with thorny issues that it would not have been easy to reach without relying on new media, citizen journalism and media technologies. Many of the advantages of new media, such as interactivity and universality, have greatly affected investigative journalism and created public opinion on many issues".

It is possible to look closely at the diversity of production paths in investigative journalism, and the fact that IJ is at the top of viewership lists as evidence of abundance in quantity of IJ and therefore the high productivity of investigative journalism under the influence of new media. In this regard, *Mounira Hajlaoui* said that "NM has a positive impact in terms of quantity and type, and investigative journalism was numerous and various (visual, audio and written), and the network topped the rates of views, reading and listening, and won awards". The new media has thus helped journalists to overcome significant obstacles to increasing the productivity of investigative materials, which necessarily means that its use has increased the volume of output from investigative journalism. In this regard, *Anas Radi* said "Aljazeera took advantage of the development of new media in their investigation to overcome the major challenges. Using new development will increase the level of information literacy and skills of investigative journalists".

On the contrary to the above-mentioned aspects, comparing the volume of Aljazeera's production of investigative works with the size of the network and the variety of its tools and capabilities does not give this production a high quantitative evaluation. In fact, what some parts

of the network have accumulated in terms of great works diminishes when it is distributed as a total production of the network, which suffers from deficiencies in a number of its tools in investigative production. In this regard, *Aseel Saraih* said that “Last year, I supervised a large group of investigations in Aljazeera Net yet taking into consideration that a large site like Aljazeera Net produces only 7-8 investigative reports annually, we realize that it is, in fact, a small number; the reason for that is the absence of a unit specialized in investigative journalism, and the absence of specialists running such a unit”. He added that “The lack of interest in investigative journalism in Aljazeera Net website has negatively and significantly affected the volume of materials produced for the website that the public wants, and this is of course unlike the channel that produces investigative reports with a small number, but its impact is very large as video investigations. Moreover, the huge financial capabilities of the TV channel made it more influential than the website, Aljazeera magazine, AJ+, or any other tools that follow Aljazeera”. He concluded then that “the production is small in terms of quantity on the site and in the channel, and this negatively affects the volume of production, but these materials have a strong impact, especially for the TV channel”.

Wasef Qadah, of the face-to-face group, also provided evidence of the new media's contribution to increasing the volume of investigative activity. In this regard, he said, "Yesterday, I read a research article on digital journalism that was prepared entirely based on open sources, which are part of the new media, and this means that the open sources created by the development of technology have become one of the most important inputs of building knowledge”. *Al-Qadah* also said, "Aljazeera already interacts in its coverage with Mega Trends on social media, and this interaction enhances the presence of the AJMN in the world of media and intensifies the public's tendency to follow its programs by virtue of its interest in the issues of those programs stemming

from the interest of the same audience". However, he believes that the sustainability of investment in this interaction with the public requires AJMN's continuing of keeping pace with the topics that interest its audience and raising the level of interaction between the audience and its contents. *Al-Qadah* considered that achieving this interactivity guarantees divergence that increases the audience's loyalty to the network and builds a broader audience, saying that "this is what has placed Aljazeera at the forefront of Arab media networks".

Participants in the FGD agreed with those who believe that New Media has already expanded the investigative journalism of Aljazeera in several ways. *Mostafa Swelim* believes that the new media has provided information, pictures, data and video recordings about any person or event that the investigative journalist is looking for. He said, "You can visit the account of the respondent on Facebook in order to know his personal information, tendencies and trends," explaining that access to this kind of data required, in the past, great efforts and high level of personal follow-up, but it has no longer been the case with the development of the digital age.

As for *Muhammad Fares,* he looks at this point specifically from two opposite angles. The first one agrees with *Swelim's* opinion that the new media has widened the door for the abundance of information and its openness to everyone, but on the other hand, he believes that the new media "narrowed the door to the dissemination of information by fighting the content practiced by some platforms for political or ideological reasons; it prevented the publication of some productions for those considerations.

Thus, *Muhammad Fares* said that this restriction "has become an entry point for the practice of voluntary self-censorship by producers who may refrain from producing some media productions when they realize that social media administrations may restrict the accounts of publishing platforms in the event that these productions are published on them". However, *Omar*

Fayyad did not fully agree with the opinion of his colleague *Muhammad Fares,* as he said, "The acceptance of new media platforms for content presented on major media networks such as Aljazeera and others is different from accepting the same content on the pages and accounts of the general public". *Fayyad* estimated, "Facebook, for example, may delete a person's account for publishing a post that is considered inciting within Facebook's standards, but it does not delete this account when it relates to Aljazeera, because the Facebook administration realizes that it is dealing with a large media network that serves professional, not provocative goals". From his point of view, *Samed Dwaikat* said, "Every person who shares any published material on his personal accounts transmits it to his followers and thus allows to expand access to it and interact with it in a spirally expanding manner, and this is a great positive for investigative work".

Figure 4.15: The way of benefiting AJMN from new media in increasing the volume of investigative production.

4.3.3 New media enhances the quality of investigative production

New media feeds investigative journalism with wide contents in various fields such as the political, social, economic, entertainment and other issues that concern local and international public opinion. It also presents these contents with different types of data as well as written, photographed or transmitted documents from open-source applications for information and multimedia, which did not leave evidence confined to the world of written documents as it had almost been the only official evidence of the investigations in the era of traditional media. This has contributed to giving investigative journalism more seriousness and an abundance of evidence, which has given investigative work a qualitative status that appears in the increasing public interest in its productions.

On the other hand, new media contributed to the development of the quality of investigative journalism by improving journalists' knowledge of the standards of good investigative production and raising their technical ability to simulate and benefit from them. New media provides Arab journalists with opportunities to learn about the global templates used in planning and implementing investigative works and to benefit from data journalism to enrich their products of media investigations. NM also provides investigative journalists with opportunities to view updates and working guides (Manuals) on how to construct the investigative material and how to make it available to the public. NM provides the journalists with technical services in editing the investigative materials, including editorial wizards, such as preparing the comprehensive video on mobile phones, including the editor's use of music, screen animation elements, and others. Finally, NM gives journalists the opportunity to evaluate their work by receiving feedback directly through likes, dislikes, and comments that they benefit from in their subsequent productions.

All of these opportunities are reflected in the highly positive evaluation provided by the participants in this study of the impact of new media on investigative journalism of Aljazeera network, whereas *Aseel Saraih* described IJ quality under the effects of NM emergence as a "high quality" and *Mounira Hajlaoui*, *Said Eminzade* and *Sanae Elkouiti* evaluated it as a "positive impact," while *Khaled Ma'ali* said about it that it is the result of offering quality over quantity.

The advantages and services provided by new media to the press in general, including investigative journalism, point to the IJ's qualitative benefit from the development of information technology, especially interactive applications. *Adel Abdulmughni* said that "the advantages of new media are undoubtedly reflected in the development of the quality of Aljazeera's investigative work due to the interactive applications that provide supportive and enhanced content and the simulation and multiple presentations they provide in addition to other advantages provided by new media". For example, these applications have given investigative report producers an unprecedented ability to simulate and re-enact events using animation software, or to cut representative scenes from movies to be used for expressing ideas in their reports. In roughly the same context, *Mounira Hajlaoui* considered that "the method of producing investigative works is one of the most important things that new media provided to improve the quality of investigative productions. Actually, NM enriches IJ in terms of the way investigative work is being presented, which is characterized by a quality of movement, suspense and richness, and thus the new media affected investigative journalism positively".

Besides the technical side and other additions, the administrative and financial accounts provide one of the aspects of the impact of new media on investigative journalism. New media, by its applications and platforms that have reduced the financial expenditures, time and effort that were spent in order to access information and meet sources, gives those involved in planning

investigative work more space for paying more attention to the quality of the work, raising its technical and directing level, and thus raising its quality. In this particular aspect, *Sanae Elkouiti* said that "there is no doubt that new media had a positive impact on the quality of the investigative work of Aljazeera network. The available sources enable the strengthening of the investigative work and reducing its cost and time, which leads to an increase in its quality and the level of mastery of the completed investigations as well. This development prompts the officials in Aljazeera network to establish the Monitoring and Verification Unit in order to monitor and verify the content provided by open sources, all with the aim of improving investigative work". For his part, *Said Eminzade* considered the abundance of information and sources offered by new media as an important reason for improving the quality of investigative work. This effect can be read in the audience's interactions with the content of the investigative material that is full of information and details that a special category of viewers is looking for, especially the kind of audiences who evaluate the journalistic work based on the information it provides and the facts it reveals. In this context, *Eminzade* said that "new media has contributed to improving the quality of investigative work in terms of the abundance of information, the quality of materials and documents, as well as the ease of access to human news sources. Thus, all of these criteria give more coherent, information-containing, and streamlined investigative material in the presentation; furthermore, it improves the quality of investigative work". In addition, new media provides a broad umbrella of investigative journalism services that improve its quality. Under this umbrella, as *Khaled Ma'ali* said, there is "education and training in techniques, access to business models, use of screen enhancers, and capturing audience evaluation".

Finally, and according to *Aseel Saraih*, acknowledging the technical quality of Aljazeera's investigative work does not negate its occurrence in a number of defects related to professional

issues such as objectivity and impartiality. He said that “The quality of the work is good, but the problem with the site lies in the little promotion of investigative productions. But the quality is excellent technically and editorially, regardless of the orientation and the agenda. There is a huge quality, even if objectivity is absent from many of them”.

From the point of view of the researchers who were interviewed face-to-face in this study, improving the quality of journalistic contents represents one of the most important advantages that the new media added to investigative journalism. In this regard, *Sulaiman Bsharat* said that social networks and new media in general have created what is known as the "citizen journalist", and therefore it has contributed to "infusing an amount of information that has become present through Aljazeera or other media channels”.

Bsharat also believes that the new media gave Aljazeera network "the ability to combine information, its power, and technical aspects”. He said, "For example, during episodes of The Hidden is More Immense, how techniques, sounds, lighting and colors are employed falls within the concept of multimedia which constitutes a process of attracting the viewer”.

On the other hand, *Wasef Qadah* believes that “new media has enriched the content of Aljazeera's investigative programs and expanded its reach to a larger audience”. *Qadah* believes that Aljazeera was also distinguished in employing new media to build a great reputation for investigative journalism, "because the tendency of digital media in general to reduce information made it difficult for some segments of the public to adapt to it”. He added, "But Aljazeera was able to develop digital content of investigative journalism, which raised the level of the public trust in digital media”.

For his part, *Hudhaifa Jarrar,* one of the participants in the focus group discussion, returned the dialogue to the starting point of the investigative process, "in which information is the most important pillar," as he put it. He said, "Social media has become a source of information for investigative journalism, regardless of how it is portrayed and presented". He added, "A complete investigation may be based on a few moments filmed with a mobile camera by an amateur, and this is the value of citizen journalism". According to *Jarrar*, the information provided by the social media may not be ordinary information, "as much as it is sensitive information about corruption and violations cases that require extensive investigations". Therefore, this is an important addition to the quality of investigative journalism in Aljazeera Network. As for *Muhammad Fares,* he believes that the quality of the investigative material is related to the production agencies more than its connection to the publishing platforms on social media or even in the traditional media. He attributes this to the idea that "producers are interested in the details of the investigative work more than they are interested in the publishers".

Fares explained his idea by saying, "Much of what Aljazeera publishes, for example, as a channel of investigative work, is produced by other parties through contracts with producing companies in which Aljazeera is a supervising producer and publisher whereas external sources are the implementing agencies". Therefore, *Fares* believes that the quality of the investigative work is related to "the technical and financial capabilities of the producing companies and the level of development of their teams, which is reflected in the quality and competitiveness of the reports". He also believes that the abundance of executive production companies operating in the field of IJ, which compete to produce high-quality investigative works that persuade publishers to pay for their products, is also an important factor in determining the quality of the investigative product.

Omar Fayyad linked the quality of the investigative material produced by Aljazeera to the level of its reach to the exact audience for which it was targeted. He said that the new media "has had a positive impact on targeting the specific groups that Aljazeera has been interested in delivering its message to, in every investigative work". He added, "Social media determines the category that you want your investigative product to reach. It determines the groups based on the number of men and women, the age, or the profession". He also believes that the sponsored advertisement on social media gives the producer of the investigative report "an opportunity to target a very accurate segment of the audience in terms of spatial geography and age, unlike what was the case on television". He clarified that "for example, some feminist organizations that produce investigative reports with the aim of raising awareness of gender issues marginalize men from the audience and target women exclusively within the age group that the publisher accurately defines".

Thus, *Fayyad* believes that social media "enhanced the ability of producers of investigative work to reach the parties they target with their productions," and this matter raised the quality of investigative work.

However, *Mustafa Swelim* seemed more reserved about *Fayyad's* praise of the role of social media in raising the quality of the investigative product by defining the audience categories accurately. In his response to his colleague, he said, "This point can be a double-edged sword, because you cannot control the content in social media". He explained his opinion by saying, "For example, a 10-year-old child who has a Facebook account can see a survey program directed at women or another group". Therefore, *Swelim* believes that caution should be exercised in dealing with social media, because it "presents a wide, uncontrolled world".

Figure 4.16: The effects of new media usage on the quality of investigative production of AJMN.

4.3.4 New media usage decreases the credibility of investigative journalism

The issue of reliability is often present in discussions related to open sources (OS) created by new media, because these sources publish what content creators produce without censorship or without many restrictions on this production, which exposes it to a high level of criticism on the basis of its position between objectivity and subjectivity (Izin, 2021). On the other hand, open sources created by new media also include platforms of a digital and technical nature that are programmed to publish computerized data that is not easy to tamper with, unlike social media platforms that place the responsibility for the content on the creator only. For example, it is difficult to question the satellite-related applications that provide images and maps of traffic jams, the locations of major fires in deferent areas, the level of congestion at some airports, or high or too low temperatures in an area or country. These simple examples are models of OS applications that NM made available to the public so that journalists can use them for investigative purposes and support their hypotheses in these investigations. Sources of open information such as the above-mentioned examples have the ability in many cases to change the entire course of any story and in some cases,

they open the door to criminal suspicions that may lead to investigations by Public Prosecution to change the course of the case completely, just as what happened in the story of downing the Ukrainian plane in Iran, which was explained in the introduction of this research.

Thus, questioning the reliability of OS related to computerized information and those based on access to satellite data and software algorithms remains more difficult than questioning the information that is presented in social media accounts that are usually subject to criticism, especially when they are linked to ideological and political conflicts raging in many countries, including the Arab region in general. In the Arab World, social media accounts as open sources of information have been linked to practices related to political and ideological agenda. For example, when trying to examine the transparency of some international famous accounts or pages run under fictitious names, it turns out that they are linked to accounts and pages of a large number of publishers and content makers in more than one country. SM accounts, as OS of information, have also been linked to propaganda and counter-propaganda campaigns, where thousands of accounts on Twitter, Facebook and others mobilize to spread the same content to serve the agenda of a specific party and enhance its narrative in the media.

All these practices make the agreement, on one direction, to assess the reliability of OS provided by the NM extremely difficult. While some participants of this research study such as *Mounira Hajlaoui* and *Khaled Ma'ali* described the reliability of OS as very high, others including *Sanae Elkouiti, Qutb Elaraby, Aseel Saraih* and *Said Eminzade* found that the reliability of OS can be achieved if and only if special conditions are available such as content verification and checking the reputation of publication platforms. However, other participants particularly *Mohammad Bin Salem* described the reliability of OS as weak.

There is a lot of evidence supporting the positive and high evaluation of the reliability of OS. *Mounira Hajlaoui* considered that some governments and international organizations resort to OS in their discussions of several events, “as evidence of their credibility and reliability”. Some participants, including *Khaled Ma’ali,* described that the reliability and credibility of OS as “excellent”, but they link their evaluation to the reputation of the parties to which these sources belong. However, *Khaled Ma’ali* believes that the source that the journalist relies on must be clear, with a high degree of reasonableness, and not likely to be skeptical or ambiguous, adding "but that does not prevent us from being cautious when taking from open sources, especially if they follow entities that have insufficient confidence”.

The ease of scrutinizing content and verifying sources due to NM applications and the low financial cost of these steps greatly encourage the adoption of open sources as reliable sources of information, because any forgery or misleading process is easy to be detected and accordingly would stigmatize the party that publishes false information as being unreliable, and this elevates the levels of OS credibility in general. In this regard, *Qutb Elaraby* pointed out that open sources are "an information treasure that does not load the channel with major financial burdens, and at the same time makes sure that the verification of its credibility has become easy through the platforms specialized in auditing; and for this regard, Aljazeera has created Sanad Agency which is specialized in this task”.

Adel Abdulmughni did not put all the OS of information created by NM in one pan in terms of evaluating credibility, rather he divided them into two groups: the first with high reliability such as “maps and applications for monitoring the movement of ships and aviation”, and the second requires verification of its validity “through the use of tools and technical means that enable the journalist to verify the information coming through these sources, especially those coming from

social media". However*, Abdulmughni* considered that open sources provide a large and unlimited amount of information and data. *Said Eminzade* seconded the opinions that consider verifying information as a condition of achieving credibility for open sources, while most important features of which are freeness and abundance of information, "but they need a great effort to verify the reliability and accuracy of information". As for *Sanae Elkouiti*, she said that the diversity of OS requires the journalist to have the ability to benefit from the information provided by these sources to support his investigative work and the ability for verifying the accuracy of this information, "because it is not always accurate especially due to the boom in information and data published on the internet".

In some considerations, the credibility of OS can be evaluated by looking at the quality of the content they provide to IJ. This is because open sources of information provide complete and integrated material for some investigative work, which makes them a substitute of documents in investigations. But the journalist should check the information he receives because there are unreliable open sources. According to *Aseel Saraih*, the use of OS has requirements, the most important of which is the idea that the journalist who relies on these sources in his investigations must have the ability to use their tools correctly and must have the knowledge of how to conduct research, audit and revision of information. *Saraih* added that OS have provided the Arab investigative journalist with the ability to document evidence and events, which compensates for the decline in his ability to document evidence from the field under the conditions of the Arab World. He pointed out that there are many reliable global tools and websites that provide open-source verification services for journalists, indicating that some of these tools are free and some have some fees. *Saraih* focused on the importance of the journalist's understanding of open sources as a prerequisite for mastering the use of these sources in journalistic investigations. He said: "We

have to understand the nature and definition of open sources. Not any information available to the public can be dealt with as an open source that is suitable for use in an open investigation". In his view, the use of OS by a weak and unqualified journalist results in *"weak investigations"*. He also believes that the reliance of IJ on OS does not dispense with the need for "documentation on the ground" and said: "Sometimes open sources may be important for investigative investigation, but they need field documentation". *Saraih* concluded that open sources are "the most important tool that has been added to investigative journalism in recent years" and sees the presence of institutions that provide training on the use of this type of sources in investigative reporting as crucial.

Suhaib Al-Falahi also presented very important ideas about open sources, which he considered as one of the most important sources that an investigative journalist may refer to. He strongly believes that IJ is based on directing a clear accusation to a party or even parties, which requires building a claim based on highly reliable evidence, and this requires high verification of information taken from OS. *Al-Falahi* believes that the journalist's reliance on open sources only, without strong evidence supporting OS is a major weakness of the journalist, who may be subjected to legal cases brought against him for using open sources without documentation. *Al-Falahi* strongly believes that the journalist should take into account the reliability of OS, which he desperately needs because of the weakness of other sources of information in the Arab region, where information is not available to everyone and is not easily accessible, especially sensitive information. He said that despite this need, "there must be other evidence by which he can prove the information he relied on, away from depending only on open sources".

The need for journalists to verify OS is very important in the Arab World where electronic platforms have become almost the only sources for journalists leading to a big reliance on such sources. This requires more verification of information credibility in order to avoid falling into the

web of misleading and false information due to the fact that the Arab World is governed, to a large extent, by ideological and political disputes, which facilitate the challenge and discrediting unproven information for the sake of serving political agenda. For these reasons, *Mohammad Bin Salem* described credibility of OS as "weak, although it is the most important element to be worked on before the source is approved".

The political and security pressure exerted by many regimes in the Arab World made people in power use media as an important field to influence public opinion and to employ new media specifically to achieve their political agenda. In almost the same concept, opposition forces in the Arab World also use NM for spreading their narrative and besieging the narrative of rival regimes, especially in light of the easiness of owning and managing its tools from different geographical locations that may benefit the displaced Arab opposition parties.

This political scramble will turn new media into a battlefield of conflicting narratives in politics and ideology and make its outputs known as questionable open sources, particularly after the emergence of what is called "Electronic Flies" in the five recent years as a term used to refer to using media technology for manipulating public opinion through SM platforms. In this regard, electronic flies are defined as "robots or software that are designed to appear as real people in social media, i.e., unreal users but in the form of computer programs that manage social media accounts such as Twitter, Facebook, or others" (Bensoula, 2020). In this regard, *Anas Radi* said that "with its emphasis on raw facts, open-source journalism has an immediacy that is effective at a time when readers of all ideological spectrum have become skeptical of new media". He concluded that "while access to information has become easier, investigations have become less credible and accordingly lacks the potential for social change".

The face-to-face interviews conducted with the researchers in this thesis also showed the need for caution in dealing with new media due to the questions raised about its reliability. Whereas *Nidal Salah* said that it remains important to note that "the new media, despite its enrichment of the contents of investigative journalism, requires a great deal of caution in dealing with the media with those contents that may undermine reliability and credibility". While *Al-Qadah* said that "However, these advantages provided by the new media do not reduce the seriousness of the side problems related to it, especially with regard to the need for media organizations to verify the contents they provide, which may include falsification and forgery".

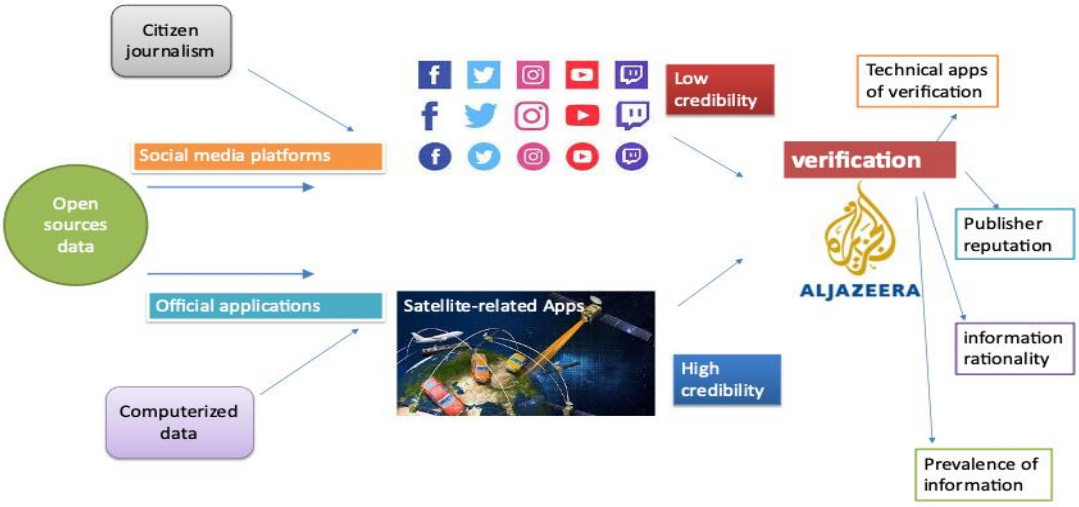
Participants in the focus group warned of the possibility of low reliability of the content provided by the new media for investigative journalism and the possibility of employing these contents in propaganda. *Samed Dwaikat* explained this by saying that "wars are among the most important examples of the use of communication networks in propaganda, such as the Russian-Ukrainian war, from which many videos spread promoting the victory of one party over another or exposing to setbacks by the other party". He added, "In the process of verification, we face the problem of exposure to a huge amount of incorrect information, so the social networks, despite the ease of transmission through them, have weakened the credibility of the content today, or at least they require more verification of the credibility of the above information and news". *Dwaikat* attributed this need of verification for two reasons: firstly, "because it is easy to use it in political propaganda"; and secondly, "because the carrier of information is often an unknown entity or an entity that does not care about its journalistic reputation, compared to official media organizations such as AJMN". *Dwaikat* said, "We do not forget that social media created a pattern of building the audience and creating fame without submitting to journalistic standards, and therefore this pattern adopts the principle of exploiting crises to build up fame, which is a well-known pattern in

the new media". Thus, he believes that the new media networks, despite breaking the monopoly of the traditional networks of news as well as the speed of its transmission of information, "have turned into a fertile field for information of unknown origin, and this has made it less credible due to the low cost the transmitter of information can pay from his journalistic reputation".

For his part, *Muhammad Fares* believes that technology is "really a double-edged sword", the first related to the ease of forgery and fabrication of information and the second is the abundance of technological tools and information that has become easier for journalists to access information. He said, "In the first aspect, forgery appeared to us by imitating voices, installing pictures of faces in other than their real places, and other uses of fabrication". In the second aspect, the new media has introduced the investigative journalism possibility of "using hidden cameras which facilitate the journalist's investigative use". As for *Hudhaifa Jarrar*, he believes that new media technology "has created verification applications for us, going back to the times of displaying and publishing images". He said that this was not available before the development of communication technology. Thus, *Jarrar* believes that the new media provided opportunities for researchers and stakeholders to verify and create tools to combat false content, albeit with less effectiveness than the level of spread of this content. *Fayyad* disagreed with the idea regarding the effectiveness of verifying information through the use of new media applications. He said, "verifying the credibility of social media content has become fantasy because of the amount of information pumped out and the diversity of its sources". He adds that the issue of verification has become more difficult "after the flow of information is carried out in systematic ways through armies and the establishment of electronic armies that are managed by states and security and political systems".

Finally, *Mustafa Swelim* believes that social media has weakened the credibility of IJ, "because anyone can produce an investigative report and publish it on unreliable social media accounts". He said, "Here, Aljazeera platforms can be dealt with as a reliable party because its sources are documented, but when you access the videos on Facebook, you will find a thousand of people who have produced reports on Ukraine, its war, and other various global events in an investigative style; however, one should ask is the information provided reliable? Is it real or not?". Thus, according to Swelim, "Social media contributed to the chaos of spreading information, and this is one of the negatives and frightening warnings".

Figure 4.17: The levels of credibility of open sources data and the verification strategies of AJMN.



4.3.5 Investigative journalism of Aljazeera Network benefited from digital affordances of new media.

As illustrated above in this chapter, the interviews of this research in the three stages showed that investigative journalism changed a lot after the advent of new media. Access to the public and to information is part of the advantages offered by the new media from which Aljazeera investigative

journalism has benefited greatly. Regarding to many participants, new media has expanded public access to investigative journalism. *Aseel Saraih,* for example, considered that investigative materials were reaching only the readers who buy and read newspapers at a regular basis, on the contrary to NM's era in which IJ has been easily approaching audiences through different applications of NM such as WhatsApp or Messenger. Besides, he perceived this ability as a great chance for IJ accessibility, especially when the IR relates to a television work that finds its way to be published as a video on SM platforms in light of the significant decline in television viewing. According to *Ahmad Albaitawee,* NM enables the Arab viewer to follow investigative programs at the time he deems appropriate and has been no longer forced to "glue" in front of the television screen at the specified broadcast time. He concluded that the new media has facilitated the access to parties related to investigative topics; and that personal communication with them has no longer been a condition for completing the preparation of these programs in light of the existence of modern means of communication simply because the producer of the investigative program might be in one country and the relevant party in another.

The "accessibility" is not the only affordance that distinguishes the benefits of investigative journalism in Aljazeera Network from the advantages of new media. The answers of the face-to-face participants confirm the same contents that the participants, who were interviewed via e-mail, spoke about such as "deliberation" and "participation" as characteristics of new media. In this regard, *Zaher Elbek* said, "The new media has increased the level of circulation of investigative programs through the participation feature, and it has also facilitated knowing the level of views accurately by number, which are important additions for the new media to investigative journalism". *Elbek* talked about the "feedback, comment and share" as new media characteristics that have been afforded to investigative journalism. He added that all these characteristics were

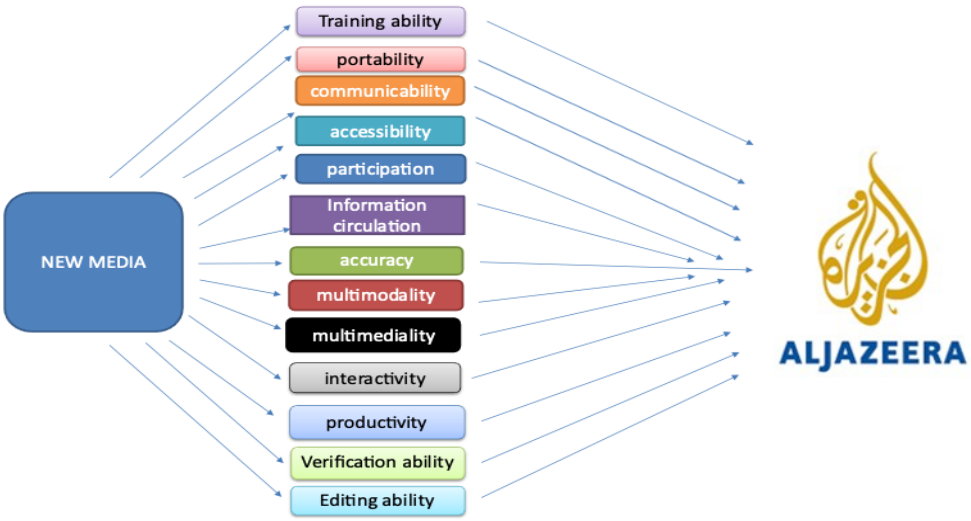
not available in the traditional media, through which it was difficult to reach the audience's impression or judgment on the programs presented and the information contained in them. However, on social media, "the public can comment on all kinds of investigative programs; thus, AJMN knows the audience's impressions and extracts their opinions". *Beyoglu* concluded that AJMN "takes advantage of these comments, whether negative or positive, provides additional information or corrects information that may have been received".

Yousef Junaidi discussed the impact of new media technologies on investigative journalism from deep angles in technical work. He said that new media greatly facilitated media production processes. He added, "Even Aljazeera is now discussing the value of a comprehensive journalist who masters production, photography, writing and preparation. Aljazeera's training courses are now focusing on mobile journalism, which aims to teach the journalist how to film the event, write the material, produce it, and send it ready for the network". He believes that this comprehensiveness in the performance of journalists represents "an important development, especially in light of wars and crises in which the capabilities of media networks are weak, such as providing live broadcasts, satellite services, and so on".

According to *Aljuneidi,* mobile technology today "includes tools that help media networks meet their technical needs for preparing television programs with content that achieves quick access and speed of presenting the event and displaying its first images, regardless of their quality". "Sometimes the images are poor, but they provide a direct connection between the audience and the event," he said. He also believes that mobile programs are now providing primary services for montage, "such as checking and commenting on photos, and making zoom-in and zoom-out". *Al-Junaidy* believes that these capabilities have become available even in social media applications such as TikTok, Snapchat and Instagram, "meaning that they are not only limited to TV channels".

Like *Zaher Elbek*, some of the journalists participating in the focus group believe that the ability to "measure impact" was one of the important possibilities offered by new media to Aljazeera's investigative journalism. *Samed Dwaikat* said, "Historically, the media world suffered from a crisis in measuring feedback," but today social media "provides a good opportunity for the media to measure impact and calculate feedback from audience interaction with what is being produced". *Dwaikat* believes that the feedback provided by the new media includes criticism of the content or even objection to the content presented in it, and "this is a positive point". He also believes that social media in this aspect has provided investigative journalism with the opportunity to build partnerships between the press organization and the public. *Omar Fayyad* seconded *Dwaikat's* opinion and said that the process of engaging the public in the activities of journalistic institutions through social media "opened the door to new investigative work because the public are also able to present ideas, proposals and complaints to the media openly so that press institutions can launch investigative work emanating from those proposals".

Figure 4.18: The affordances of NM that benefited IJ of AJMN.



4.4 Challenges of Using New Media in Aljazeera's Investigative Reporting

Described as one of the most difficult journalistic templates, investigative journalism practiced in the Arab World faces several Challenges that limit the abilities of Arab journalists and media institutions from performing it to a wide extent (Bebawi, 2016). This research study identified eight major challenges including: political and security threats, the lack of information, evidence and sources, poor qualification of journalists, challenges of open sources credibility and reliability, institutional challenges, Challenges of keeping pace with media technology development, Challenges of financial and budget weaknesses, and societal customs and traditions. These eight challenges that this research has concluded were identified by (Bebawi, 2016): The political constraints regarding the states and governmental regulations, the issue of access to information, social pressure, cultural traditions, the challenges of funding.

4.4.1 Political and security threats

The dangers facing the profession of journalism represent a general challenge for journalists in their journey of searching for truth. International press organizations and institutions provide shocking information about the extent to which violations are practiced against journalists around the World while fulfilling their duties of practicing journalistic work. Unfortunately, the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), which has 600 thousand members from 140 countries, revealed that 60 journalists were killed in 2020 and 45 others had lost their lives during 2021. In the journalistic context of the Arab World, the risks coming from security and political conditions constitute a real concern to Arab journalists. The matter is even more dangerous when it comes to the IJ which is specifically functions to uncover certain hidden files related to those who are keen on keeping these files out of the scene.

The political and security threats occupied the first position of the Challenges of employing NM in IJ of AJMN where it was mentioned by 17 out of 21 participants in this research including nine out of 11 of the email participants, three out of five of the face-to-face participants and the five participants of FGD consider the threats resulted from political and security conditions in the Arab World as Challenges banning Arab journalists from developing their role in IJ. *Mohammad Bin Salem* and *Mounira Hajlaoui* opine that monitoring practiced by organizational bodies whether of security systems or any other authority is one of the Challenges. As for *Sanae Elkouiti*, she believes that the absence of political and legal environment that encourages IW is one of the Challenges of IJ practice. From the point of view of *Adel Abdulmughni*, the risks of practicing IR are aggravated in countries of conflict. He described these risks as the major challenges of IJ because IW "depends on revealing and exposing many issues of great weight which often turn into issues of public opinion. Therefore, working on such issues and preparing a report on them is a work fraught with risks and challenges".

In more details, *Aseel Saraih* argues that "the security and political conditions in the Arab world where investigative journalists face threats of different kinds constitute an important Challenge to investigative journalism; as the Arab journalist gets sometimes threatened, arrested, kidnapped or even killed". *Suhaib Al-Falahi* claimed that the investigative journalist usually works in a dangerous area and gets exposed to problems related to security as well as physical and professional safety. According to *Al-Falahi*, if the journalist was not able to prove his claims with solid evidence, he could be often subjected to pressure either from parties targeted by the report, governments or even people in power. Interestingly, *Al-Falahi* shed light on the forms of concerns caused by governments in many countries by stating that "official authorities sometimes turn a blind eye, for unknown reasons, to some illegal practices such as undeclared agreements between

institutions, gangs, drug dealers and those who carry out illegal acts. The reasons are perhaps related to collusion among members of the state's security services with some illegal parties for mutual interests. This subjects the journalist to major problems of which he must be aware before heading to do investigative reporting".

The results also showed that there are many areas of restrictions that journalists face in their search for information in light of the severe polarization and the absence of democracy in the Arab World in general. There is no doubt that this restriction becomes more ferocious when it is linked to information which disclosure may harm the interests of those in power. Therefore, *Khaled Ma'ali* placed security and political pressure, in the field where the journalist works, at the forefront of the Challenges on the way of investigative activity that the journalist can exercise. *Ma'ali* enumerated the forms of pressure on the journalist including but not confined to imprisonment, arrest, prosecution, and confiscation of equipment. He added that general political conditions, especially the intensification of repression, the absence of freedoms and the perpetuation of dictatorship in Arab countries and third world countries in general, play a major role in limiting the journalists' ability to access information and restricting the public's right to knowledge about the truth. *Ma'ali* pointed out that "Repressive regimes are the biggest Challenge in the way of achieving distinguished and high-quality investigative journalism. A journalist who feels that he is protected produces strong materials, but the one who is under pressure finds it difficult to access information that can give his investigative production high credibility".

While many of the participants perceive IJ as a powerful tool for influencing PO through paving the way to political and societal change, other dissenting opinions contradict this view and do not see that the achievement of IJ as a reward due to the costs and harm that investigative journalists pay. This frustrating thinking is common in the countries of the third world including

of course the majority of Arab countries where the attempts of development collide with political dictatorship. These attempts include the efforts of journalists to develop their capabilities in journalistic works and to turn them into the direction of society's interaction on the way of influencing PO generally.

Hence, *Khaled Ma'ali* believes that the value of the achievement of IJ in terms of societal reform is much less than the price the journalist pays in terms of the harm and punishment for the involvement in investigative missions. He elaborated that there are many journalists who conducted important IRs by which they revealed stories of corruption, violations, and manipulation of laws in some Arab countries; they supported their reports with evidence; and these reports found their way to be published but that did not however change anything. *Sanae Elkouiti* asserted that "the impact of the investigative report remains limited in the Arab World, if not negative in some cases where the journalist finds himself, during the preparation of the investigative report, questioning the feasibility of the report and whether it would have a positive impact on the situations of victims or maybe it would worsen their conditions".

As for *Qutb Elaraby,* he considered that personal accounts and concerns related to personal and family safety may stand as an Challenge between him and his approach to some topics in an investigative manner. He believes that "the pressures exerted by some parties to prevent the handling or publication of some investigations" are part of these Challenges.

Political circumstances are not limited only to the category of suppressing journalists and preventing them from accessing information within one country but may also even go beyond the borders of countries to areas that deprive journalists, within a country where they can access information, to experience successes that some media organizations can achieve in the field of using NM in investigative journalism. This happened in the case of AJMN which has been banned

in a number of Arab countries, especially Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Syria, and Yemen. This ban is one of the impacting field challenges that hinder the development of the use of NM in IJ, especially since Aljazeera has not yet been able to find a solution to this ban as *Aseel Saraih* claimed. The effect of this ban lies, in particular, in depriving Aljazeera's news media platforms from interacting with the audiences in those countries as well as in depriving AJMN from collecting feedback from the audiences, which constitutes a valuable kind of information that is so significant to assess the credibility of the AJMN's investigative product based on the opinions of followers.

Zaher Elbek, one of those interviewed face-to-face in this research, considered the weakness of the laws governing the use of new media as one of the important Challenges in the way of investigative journalism benefiting from the development of communication technology. He said that "the lack of specific and fixed laws related to the use of new media" is part of these challenges. He elaborated that "governments set oversight laws, but they are laws that are difficult to control; and therefore, this may cause Aljazeera as well as others to have problems with those governments or authorities in any place that is targeted by a specific investigative program".

For his part, *Sulaiman Bsharat* considered that Arab political systems' adoption of a policy of closure and preventing information from reaching the public constitutes a part of the challenges facing the use of NM in the IJ of AJMN. He said that the closure policies depend on "preventing the public from accessing the channels and their contents, resulting in blocked websites, prevented broadcasts, or closed institutions' offices, etc.". *Nidal Salah* placed political and security Challenges at the forefront of the conditions that reduce the use of new media in investigative journalism for Aljazeera Network. He said, "The Challenges stem from the dangers of practicing investigative journalism itself, because the worlds of this journalism are dark and that entering the world of IJ in itself is digging into a hornet's nest". He explained, "When you enter any vague

place that is run by a certain system, you are considered a foreign body to this system, and therefore the doors of knowledge may not be open to you or you may be exposed to danger, especially when you are looking into serious issues such as gangs and high-risk issues". According to *Nidal Salah,* practicing investigative journalism in the Arab World is a difficult task, even if journalists are capable of doing it. However, what plays an important role here is the level of relations enjoyed by the journalist, the influence of the institution he works for, and many other factors. And "therefore, in our Arab World, investigative journalism is classified as dangerous journalism, and its practice is like playing with fire. Many Arab journalists who practiced this journalism were either assassinated, liquidated, or prevented from work, and there are many witnesses in Iraq, Palestine, Egypt, and others".

However, *Yousef Juneidi* believes that Aljazeera paid a heavy price for its presence in terms of safety and security of its crews. He said, "One day, we visited Sami Al-Hajj, the famous correspondent for Aljazeera, who was arrested by the American forces after their invasion of Afghanistan and detained in Guantanamo Bay, famous for its harsh reputation", whose story of is well known. He was arrested by mistake and quickly transferred to Guantanamo. The Americans realized after three years that they had arrested the wrong person but getting him out of jail was not easy; so, he spent eight years in Guantanamo". *Aljuneidi* concluded by saying that some of "Aljazeera crews paid the price of fulfilling their duties by being jailed for years, while others paid their lives, such as Sherine Abu Aqleh, whose assassination was a blow from the Israeli occupation for Aljazeera's coverage of the Palestinian file". *Aljuneidi* believes that each country has its own standards that affect the activity of journalists; "for example, journalist Mahmoud Hussein is still detained in Egyptian prisons due to his journalistic work". He added that "it is believed that the matter is also due to the role of the journalist and his position in the media work community, the

strength of his presence, the level of his influence and his relations with the ruling political environment in each country". *Aljuneidi* explained, "In Turkey, for example, you find that Aljazeera's journalists enjoy protection and ideal conditions for work, due to the nature of the country's dealings with the network and its appreciation of it, and due to the Turkish democratic governmental system, which has good relations with Qatar, the homeland of Aljazeera, unlike Egypt, which has deep disagreement with Qatar". Thus, *Aljuneidi* said, "We are talking about relative conditions that we cannot link to freedoms, as there are basically no freedoms in the Arab World, and even if an Arab journalist succeeds in producing an investigative film, he might pay his life for that after months and perhaps days".

Aljuneidi considered that the absence of freedoms remains a challenge for the Arab journalist to enter investigative work, because the price of this work is his soul, even if he has a secondary role as a technician or photographer. He added, "We know many who were killed because of their journalistic work. We mention the correspondents in particular because we know them from behind the screens, such as Tariq Ayoub and Sherine Abu Aqelah, but there are names we do not know, such as the Qatari photographer who was killed in Libya".

Aljuneidi also believes that the pressure is not limited to targeting the journalist's life but may lead to "closing offices, confiscating equipment and other measures". However, despite this, he believes that "there are journalists who have the courage and the love for challenge that make them enter this filed of the investigative journalism, while realizing well its repercussions and risks either at the personal level or at the family level, which might lead to killing, arresting or any other kinds of materialistic harm".

Political conditions and issues related to the security of journalists also occupied a central place in the focus group participants' view on the Challenges of the use of new media in

investigative journalism by Aljazeera Network. *Muhammad Fares* believes that “the political aspect is the most important Challenge.” He said that Tamer Al-Misshal, the most famous investigative journalist in Aljazeera network, for example, is banned from entering many Arab countries and “he is blocked” because he “has problems”. This is because some of the investigative programs presented by Al-Misshal created problems within some countries”. He elaborated by saying that "For example, there was a problem in Qatar's relationship with Saudi Arabia but could anyone from Aljazeera conduct an investigative program in Saudi Arabia?! In the end, the political dimension is a very important factor”, he said.

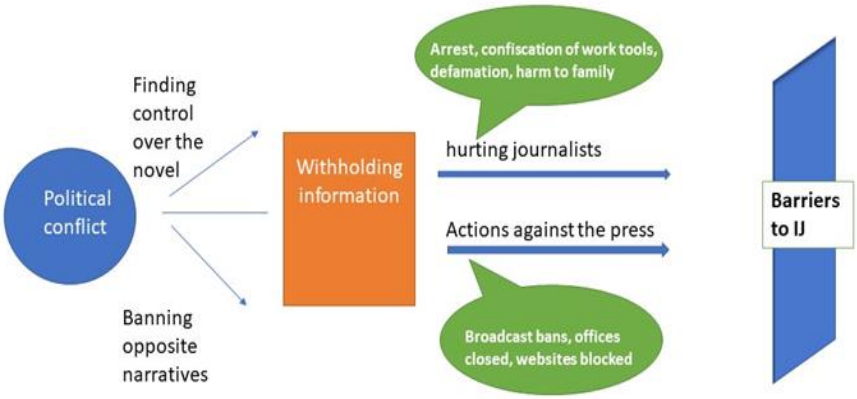
According to *Fares*, the Challenge of political issues could limit Aljazeera's ability to access information and raise the price paid for obtaining this information. "I mean, when Aljazeera discloses one of its sources of information, this source may pay a heavy price”. Fares believes that the low level of freedom in the Arab World greatly limits the quality of investigative work, and the journalists daring to present materials that may entail paying a heavy price.

Hudhayfa Jarrar agreed greatly with *Fares* and said, "The danger affects the IR producer and whoever assists him because the investigation does not depend on one person but mainly on the team”. He added that the team as well as a group of institutions usually seek to collect information from more than one place, which place them all at risk that amount to assassination. *Omar Fayyad* believes that the restrictions that some institutions may impose on Aljazeera crews' access to information such as the non-cooperation of some political or security parties represent a part of the challenges of using new media in investigative journalism of Aljazeera network. *Samed Dwaikat* interpreted the role of political Challenges in limiting Aljazeera's use of the media in investigative journalism from the angle of political biasness. He said, "I think that the main Challenge lies in Aljazeera's being influenced from the foreign policy of the State of Qatar leading

it to getting involved in political disputes as the case of the Gulf crisis". *Dwaikat* said when doing investigative reporting in countries that have good political relations with Qatar, Aljazeera's investigative programs including: The Other Side, The Interview, The Rest of The Story, and The Hidden is More Immense mostly cover neutral issues.

The case also applies to the opposite situation when a country's relations deteriorate with Qatar, Aljazeera carries out investigations about the performance of this country. *Mustafa Swelim* also believes that "the tyranny of the political side over any other side is the most important Challenge that faces investigative journalism of AJMN". He added that, at the end, Aljazeera will not deviate from the determinants of Qatari politics, whether it is standing on the side of or against any party. He pointed out that the dissatisfaction of the security services in some countries of journalistic investigations" restricts Aljazeera's ability to carry out such works.

Figure 4.19: The political conditions in the Arab Area as a hallenge of AJMN from practicing IJ.



4.4.2 The lack of information, evidence and sources

As discussed in the previous chapters, the lack of information and evidence is not a strange issue in many Arab countries which suffer from the crisis of democracy and the lack of journalist's rights to access information under the pressure of dictatorial regimes on one hand and under the secrecy laws that legitimize withholding information, on the other hand.

In this context, 10 out of 21 of the participants of this research considered the lack of information and evidence as the most important Challenge to practicing IJ by Arab journalists. To each of *Mohammad Bin Salem* and *Mounira Hajlaoui,* accessing information, tracing its source, and knowing its background for verifying the credibility of the knowledge under the pressure of the limited time, that is required to complete an effective investigative work, represent the top of the Challenges of Arab investigative journalism. *Said Eminzade's* point of view on the issue stems from the idea that the lack of communication with sources, which may be main characters or heroes of an investigative story or even just witnesses of its details, is one of the main Challenges of IJ.

Both of *Sanae Elkouiti* and *Qutb Elaraby* perceived the difficulty of accessing official information as one of the problems that face investigative journalists in addition to deliberate concealment of information and the obstruction of IW by those who might be affected by the investigations; and accordingly they consider their information as critical secrets that should not to be revealed so that they do not become subject to legal accountability or security prosecution; or even not to risk their lives at the hands of some powerful parties. *Qutb Elaraby* also said that some sources of IW may not respond to the journalist who tries to contact them for collecting data.

According to *Adel Abdulmughni*, the most prominent challenges facing IJ is "the absence of accurate information and compelling evidence without which hypotheses cannot be proven, especially in light of the prevention and blocking of information by some regimes, and the absence

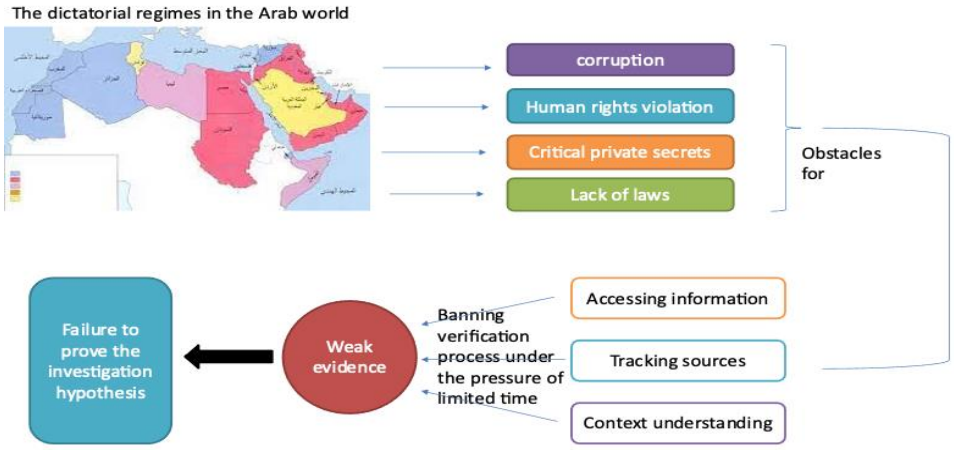
or non-activation of laws of the right to access information". *Aseel Saraih* considered the difficulties of accessing data sources as a problem that hinders successful processing of IP. He said that "IJ aims at revealing big mysterious information and data that are intended not to be revealed, be it cases of corruption, human rights violations, or even social issues that politicians, rulers and influential people try to bury away of sight, making the task of the investigative journalist more about digging deeply in order to unveil such hidden information.

Among the researchers who were interviewed face-to-face are *Nidal Salah* and *Yusuf Al-Aljuneidi*. Both mentioned the lack of information, evidence, and sources as Challenges of investigative journalism even though they believe that its influence is limited in the case of Aljazeera because of its great capabilities, unlike the case of many other press institutions. *Nidal Salah* said, "The spread of Aljazeera journalists, its great reputation and its relations open the door for it to access the information it wants".

Aljuneidi believes that the high financial capabilities and the high-quality relations owned by Aljazeera make it easier for AJMN to host sources and employ the most qualified journalists; and this increases its ability to obtain information and access sources.

In the focus group discussion, *Omar Fayyad* believes that the scarcity of information and the difficulty of accessing sources are among the most important challenges facing investigative investigations in order to complete the investigation.

Figure 4.20: The lack of information, evidence, and sources as challenges for IJ of AJMN



4.4.3 Poor qualification of journalists

The competence of journalists and their abilities to work in the field of IJ is related to a number of factors including the individual personality characteristics that distinguish one journalist from the other and their skills acquired through different practices including professional training and rehabilitation and the experience gained from working in the field of journalism. Together, these factors produce successful investigative journalists; yet their availability in the Arab journalistic environment, which suffers from the lack of funding for IJ and the lack of institutions sponsoring these activities, is still unsatisfactory.

The results of this study showed rich details about the concept of the competence of Arab journalists to practice investigative journalism, an issue considered by 11 out of 21 participants in this study, including seven out of 11 of those interviewed by e-mail, two out of five of those interviewed face-to-face and two out of five of the focus group participants.

Mounira Hajlaoui and *Khaled Ma'ali* are two of six participants who believe that the investigative journalist should have a special character in order to succeed in the journey of IJ. *Khaled Ma'ali* described such a journalist as "un-traditional journalist"; and he defines

such a journalist as the one "who has a very sensitive and high security sense and gets involved in the midst of a battle to fetch information, and at the same time maintain information confidentiality, especially in the Arab World which does not guarantee the right to accessing information where IJ sometimes costs the journalist his or her life in addition to other penalties such as imprisonment or restrictions". For his part, *Anas Radi* explained the effects of poor qualifications on investigative journalists, indicating that this weakness appears in the IW they produce including "weak introductions, no coherent structures, and short reports with excessive usage of colors".

According to *Adel Abdulmughni*, "the journalist's lack of skills is a challenge to the preparation of the investigative report, especially for those reports which rely on Google Maps or data journalism and other types that require technical skills". Moreover, *Aseel Saraih* provided a more detailed explanation and classified Arab journalists into two categories: the practitioners of journalism in general who represent the majority of journalists and a minor sector of those journalists who are really able to practice IJ. According to *Saraih,* the number of journalists who conducted investigations in Egypt does not exceed 100 out of over 100 thousand Egyptian journalists. He added that the number of those who produced IR with "ARIJ" in Yemen does not exceed 10-15 journalists. The claim of *Saraih* is totally supported by *Suhaib Al-Falahi* who agreed that not every journalist can be considered as an investigative reporter and that many journalists do not have the abilities to do IRs. Such information would paint a bleak picture of the level of expertise that Arab journalists have in the field of investigative journalism, which is still latent in the field of elite journalism. Despite the excellence of Aljazeera's investigative work, it seems like someone who tweets outside of the flock of Arab media organizations in terms of doing investigative work. Thus,

experience in any media field is one of the most key characteristics of the determination of the journalist professional level. *Khaled Ma'ali* put Arab journalists' lack of experience in the field of investigative journalism among professional Challenges hindering the development of IJ. He claimed that "the presence of well-experienced crews is so significant for achieving the development of NM usage in the IJ of AJMN".

In addition to the lack of experience as a form of lack of professionalism of Arab journalists in the practice of investigative journalism, there are other important aspects that can be classified in this issue. According to *Qutb Elaraby,* these aspects are related to the individual capabilities of the journalist, the level of his preoccupation and immersion in his profession, the absence of motivation and desire for investigative work, or the shortage of time to complete the investigative mission while being immersed in other journalistic assignments at the same time.

The lack of experience, lack of motivation, preoccupation with other journalistic work, and the lack of training can negatively and profoundly affect the professional level of the journalist. And this may lead to committing serious mistakes that may affect one's career and professional reputation, such as violating confidentiality of information and privacy of individuals who are primarily or secondary subject to the investigative work. From the point of view of *Suhaib Al-Falahi*, the violation of privacy is the most serious problem with the use of new media in investigative journalism, because "privacy is basically minimal in new media". He explained this point by saying: "The journalist's work may deviate from focusing on the journalistic material to concentrating more on persons and their privacy. This may be one of the most dangerous issues that affect the outcomes of the investigative work." He added: "The journalist may produce good press materials but might violate the privacy of the opposite party. And,

publishing private information in new media exposes the journalist to legal prosecutions, and therefore personal privacy is one of the most important issues that must be considered when using new media in investigative journalism".

Nidal Salah as one of the face-to-face participants believes that "There are Arab journalists who practiced distinguished and high-quality investigative journalism and were able to find out sensitive results and information by taking advantage of foreign journalists or under the umbrella of influential people to ensure the integrity of their work". *Wasef Qadah* put the competence of journalists at the forefront of four conditions the absence of which, he believes, represent Challenges on the way of new media investment in investigative journalism. He said, "Investigation requires skilled hands, money, relationships, and audacity, and whoever misses those requirements fails in investigative work, and this issue requires strengthening investigative journalists and the AJMN's investigative platforms".

Participants in the focus group indicated that the lack of competence of journalists was an important Challenge to the development of investigative journalism and its success in benefiting from new media in general, but this does not apply to the case of Aljazeera Network. *Hudhaifa Jarrar* said, "In the case of Aljazeera, whether the journalist is an advanced or a beginner; Aljazeera turns him into a part of a fully moving system". *Jarrar* inferred, "As evidenced by the fact that when some workers in Aljazeera move to other institutions, we notice that their performance appears at a level that is much lower than their proficiency level while they were working at Aljazeera. This is because Aljazeera has high potentials that melt the capabilities of individuals into the crucible of the institution, including its activity in new media". As for *Muhammad Fares,* he believes that "in light of the tremendous technological development, the successful journalist has become the comprehensive journalist who possesses

all skills". He said, "The time of the single-skilled journalist has ended, and we have become in the world of the multi-skilled journalist. Therefore, we see that the largest percentage of the staff working in investigative programs is from the youth category. Follow the cast of The Hidden is More Immense program, and you will find that it is based on a team of young journalists".

Interestingly, the study showed that the low efficiency of journalists in general represents one of the important Challenges of investigative journalism in general, but its impact on the investigative activity of Aljazeera network is still limited as a result of Aljazeera's permanent tendency to employ highly qualified staff and implement continuous training and human development programs.

Figure 4.21: The challenges of Journalists' Professional Deficiencies on using NM in IJ.

4.4.4 challenges of open sources credibility and reliability

The ongoing political and ideological polarization in the Arab World creates a conflict among the opponents whereas new media is considered as an open arena for the battle between divergent

viewpoints. Thus, the supporters of each side intervene to enhance the narrative of the party they support by creating, publishing, and promoting appropriate content to their positions in social media accounts, which are open sources of information. This activity, whether spontaneous or organized through the use of certain techniques for influencing public opinion such as the activities of the "electronic flies" that were briefly explained earlier, leads to a situation of open-source flooding with content directed from the agenda of its creators regardless of its accuracy, credibility, and reliability. This dumping of information in open sources is one of the reasons why sober media institutions, including Aljazeera network, deal with such information of OS with great caution and with a lot of verification and scrutiny.

From this point of view, *Sanae Elkouiti* considered the "inaccurate information" conveyed by open sources as one of the Challenges of Aljazeera's use of new media in its investigative journalism. *Said Eminzade* listed "false information and fabricated images" among those Challenges as well. As for *Adel Abdulmughni*, he said that "the huge amount of information and documents that modern media pumps are among the investigative journalism's problems created by new media" which "makes the mission of investigative journalist so big due to the need for verifying information authenticity in order not to fall into error by relying on incorrect documents". He added that "new media has facilitated the forgery, leakage and dissemination of documents by individuals". He also believes that new media "has also become huge platforms for the spread of rumors and misleading news, which puts the investigative journalist in front of a great challenge to prevent falling into the error resulting from such rumors, or even not to get involved in campaigns directed by individuals or parties that leaked correct information and documents but with the aim of using them by investigative journalists who may endorse them for private goals and interests". Moreover, *Ahmad Albaitawee* described new media as "a wide sea" that consists of

a lot of news and events in which the true and false are mixed to the extent that demands extra efforts from producers of investigative programs to sort the information and verify the news to promote credibility.

In his turn, *Mohammad Bin Salem* included "the issue of data credibility, the spread of flatness and the prevalence of a culture of the ease of publication in new media" among the Challenges that prevent its use by Aljazeera in investigative journalism. As for *Qutb Elaraby*, he believes that among the problems of new media that affect the investigative journalism of Aljazeera is "technical manipulation of data and images and the dangers of piracy". Therefore, the huge spread of information in open sources makes it a spoil or a treasure for major media outlets such as Aljazeera network, which can employ this information in many press outputs and programs they present to the public. Yet, the bad reputation surrounding the information published in open sources makes a network such as Aljazeera “count to a hundred” before publishing it, because any problem in the credibility of this information despite its popularity in new media affects the credibility of the broadcaster (AJMN) among 60 million followers of its Facebook page and around 565 million viewers of its five Arabic and English television networks as mentioned in the report of Aljazeera achievement in September 2021 (Aljazeera achievements during 23 years, 2021).

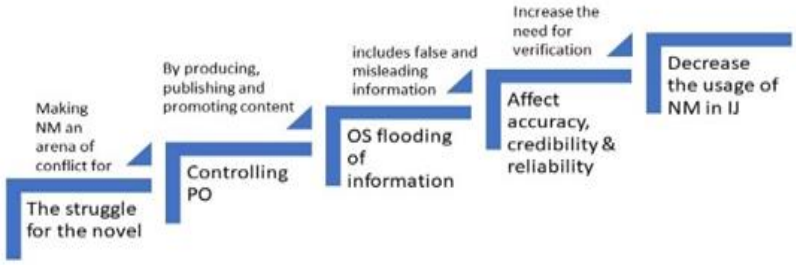
At a time when verification and scrutiny of information appears to be an important option to overcome the problem of the credibility of open sources in the new media, the process of scrutiny and verification requires time. Hence, a network such as Aljazeera may lose the factor of speed in feeding its followers with information, news and details that consume long time in the process of facts checking and data verification, affecting its competitiveness among its competing media networks. So, for these entire data, the lack of credibility of information in open sources

can be considered as one of the most influential Challenges that hinder the use of new media in the investigative journalism of Aljazeera Media Network.

There is near agreement among the researchers interviewed face-to-face in this study that the lack of reliability represents one of the challenges facing the use of new media in investigative journalism of Aljazeera Network. *Zaher Elbek*, for example, said, "I do not see that there are significant Challenges. On the contrary, new media is a very important addition and working through it is very easy." He added, "Therefore, I find no Challenges except what is limited to the ease of cutting out some contents and thus taking some materials out of context or distorting them by followers and the public, as well as the hacking attempts to which the pages and accounts of Aljazeera and other Arab media networks are exposed". As for *Sulaiman Bsharat*, he believes that the fear of inaccurate sources of information and the lack of credibility constitute one of the Challenges facing Aljazeera in dealing with new media in investigative journalism. He asserted, "As we said, the source of information in new media has become unclear in many events, and therefore this may constitute an Challenge to benefiting from all that it offers".

The problem of poor credibility and reliability of new media sources was not ignored by the focus group participants, though only a few of them referred to it. *Omar Fayyad* assured that the great need to verify the authenticity of information is one of the important Challenges facing Aljazeera Network in benefiting from new media in its investigative journalism. *Samed Dwaikat* explained his colleague's opinion by saying, "Sometimes you get information that may be unreal or unrealistic, such as the investigation launched by Aljazeera about the refugees to Europe".

Figure 4.22: The challenges of open sources credibility and reliability on using NM in IJ.



4.4.5 Institutional challenges

From a management point of view, the structure of any media organization plays a vital role in determining its functions; and the way it is built is directly reflected in its effectiveness in performing these tasks (Kalay & Lynn, 2016). Aljazeera was founded in 1996 and started with broadcasts that did not exceed six hours a day, and then expanded to include today five television news networks: Aljazeera News, Aljazeera English, Aljazeera Documentary, Aljazeera Live, and Aljazeera Balkans, in addition to dozens of channels specialized in sports, and children. As illustrated by its report about the achievements of AJMN over 23 years which was published in September 2021, the network employs about four thousand employees, and it has seventy offices around the world. Noticeably, a few of those employees are directly specialized in investigative work as a permanent job within the offices of Aljazeera and among its wide-spread teams of workers.

From the point of *Aseel Saraih,* the imbalance in investigative production between the high-productivity television channel and the digital sector of the network represented by Aljazeera

Net is one of the institutional Challenges that hinder Aljazeera's full use of the new media in its investigative journalism. He said that Aljazeera TV channel does not face any Challenges in investigative work in general; rather, it enjoys huge available capabilities and produces huge, good works in investigative journalism, but the problem lies in Aljazeera Net website, which, according to him faces "big Challenges that must be overcome". *Saraih* considered that the lack of a unit for producing investigative investigations on Aljazeera Net website, although it is a big and important website for being one of the most widely read Arab news websites, represents a remarkable weakness. He added that such an investigative unit can plan to produce at least one investigative report per a month; although 12 products yearly seem to be a small number, it is greater than the current rate of investigative production in Aljazeera Net website which did not exceed five investigations in 2021.

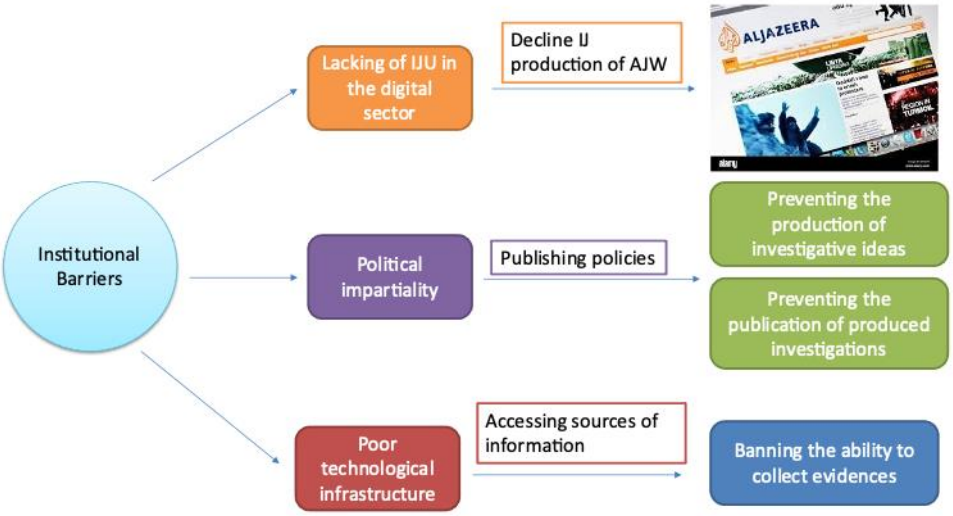
Moreover, Journalists' embracing of the orientations of the media institutions for which they work represents one of the major problems related, on one side, to the professional performance of investigative journalists and, to the institutional behavior of media networks, on the other. The danger of journalists' tendency to adopt the ideas of the institution for which they work appears when they go to search for any presumption or evidence in new media that makes their work marketable to the producing press institution. *Aseel Saraih* said that some journalists may abandon themselves in order to work with major media networks of well-known tendencies such as Aljazeera, and this makes them look to present works that are consistent with the network's trends, even if these journalists are not convinced of the content of these works, so they look for data and information to support them in new media. *Saraih* mentioned the names of journalists he says that they took advantage of their knowledge of the nature of the investigative materials favored by Aljazeera network; so, they made many proposals that were accepted, produced and

published on this basis, considering that the journalists' behavior raises the subjective standards of their work despite the high presence of the objectivity factor in the investigative journalism at Aljazeera network.

Sulaiman Bsharat, who was interviewed face-to-face, believes that the Challenges of accessing the public represent a form of institutional Challenges facing the employment of new media in investigative journalism. He said that Arab societies in general, despite the wide spread of the internet and the high rates of education, are struggling with difficult economic reality that may prevent permanent communication via the internet. He said, "this in itself constitutes an Challenge for Aljazeera network or any media organization to reach the largest possible segments of society".

Hudhaifa Jarrar, one of the focus group participants, referred to the Challenges related to institutions, saying, "We do not forget the administrative Challenges related to publishing policies". He elaborated by saying that it not uncommon that a journalist sometimes conducts an investigative production; and it happens that the publisher does not like it, which makes him decide not to publish it, meaning that the journalist's effort goes in vain".

Figure 4.23: The effects of institutional challenges on using NM in IJ production by AJMN.



4.4.6 Challenges of keeping pace with media technology development

The continued development of media technology poses important challenges for press institutions related to their ability for keeping pace with this development and for making benefits from its outputs. The required follow-up is not limited to communications technology updates, acquisition, and training in dealing with them, but goes beyond that to the institution's possession of the mentality of keeping pace with technology and away from the stereotyped bureaucratic performance that deprives many traditional institutions of important opportunities for developing their investigative journalism by taking advantage of the development of media technology. In this regard, *Mounira Hajlaoui* said that "the development of the benefit of press institutions from new media includes, in the technical aspect, providing information and data collection devices and owning access accounts on open source applications, as well as providing a high ability to deal with auditing applications and verifying information, and keeping pace with modern technical programs which can be used in audio, image and video processing to professional levels of artistic output for investigative work". *Ahmad Albaitawee* said that despite the expansion and spread of

new media in the world, it is still unavailable to a large extent in many Arab countries that suffer from poverty and the inability to possess such tools and have poor infrastructure such as telephone networks, electricity, and the internet.

As for *Mohammad Bin Salem*, he linked the success of any press institution in keeping pace with the development of media technology with four main factors: “the institution’s orientation to modernization and development, the availability of planning that takes successive updates into consideration in plans, availability of budgets for updating programs and tools, and availability of human cadres capable of managing updates optimally”. Therefore, the absence of any one of these four factors represents a loophole in the behavior of press institutions to keep pace with the continuous development of media technology and benefit from it. In this context, *Khaled Ma’ali* believes that "Aljazeera network has succeeded greatly in benefiting from the development of media technology in its various journalistic activities, including investigative journalism”. *Ma’ali* explained that “Aljazeera was one of the first Arab media networks that designed its own applications on Android and IOS systems and launched the services of Aljazeera magazine on the iPad for direct access to the audience of tablets, and it was among the first networks that invested in the services of podcasts".

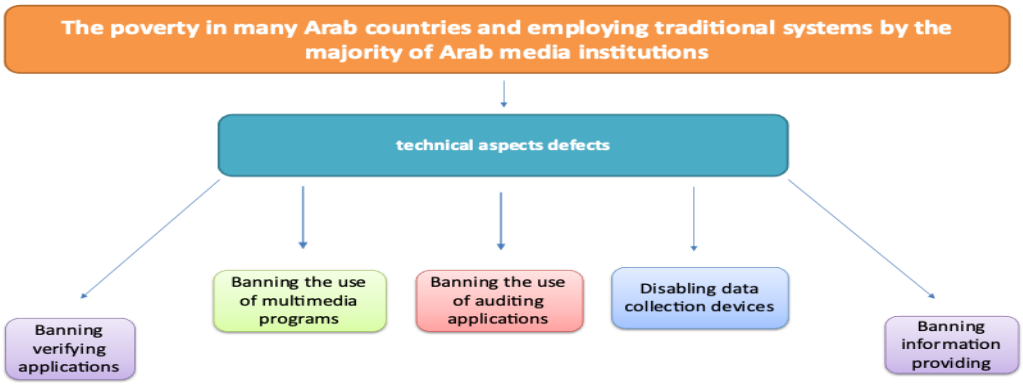
From his side, *Aseel Saraih* noted that the majority of the Arab media platforms is still traditional in the sense that it still relies on traditional systems "and do not want to move forward". He said that the platforms looking to benefit from the new media in the Arab World are still limited in number. He also pointed out that the number of Arab journalists who know new media techniques and methods is few, which makes Arab investigative production focused on written investigations or video investigations with little use of multimedia, cross media, digital media,

podcasts and other services provided by the development of media technology although "many studies say that the public can no longer tolerate lengthy materials".

Nidal Salah, one of the participants who were interviewed face-to-face and in person, considered some of the requirements of keeping up with technology in the modern era as Challenges facing the use of Aljazeera Network of new media in its investigative works. He said this is because "technology sometimes requires high costs". He added, "For example, obtaining certain confidential information may force you to pay huge amounts of money and to use some illegal methods to access it, and this in itself is one of the Challenges that are taken into account because it requires special circumstances, skills, and capabilities".

Participants in the focus group opine that Aljazeera has no problem in employing technology to serve its journalistic work, including investigative journalism. *Hudhaifa Jarrar* believes that "Aljazeera did not catch up with social media; rather, it was one of the first networks to develop social media. All the programs that we see today in the various Arab networks started from Aljazeera".

Figure 4.24: The challenges of keeping pace with media technology development in banning the usage of NM in IJ production.



4.4.7 Challenges of financial and budget weaknesses

For many reasons, investigative journalism is considered as an expensive journalism. This is attributed to the fact that the wages of qualified investigative journalists are normally higher than that of their beers who work in the field of traditional media. Some expenses also relate to the need for rehabilitation in the use of modern technical tools. There are also costs associated with travelling in search for sources of information, purchasing accounts on some special websites, purchasing, or renting some technical services, as well as purchasing photographic and video recording tools and their accessories that are required for recording under secret conditions, in many cases to get the appropriate camera shoots, video or voice records. All of these factors make IJ one of the most expensive journalistic templates, which bans poor media institutions and self-sponsored freelance journalists from working in the field.

Although Aljazeera is known for its financial wealth and the high budget it obtains from the Qatari Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Ros-Lehtinen, 2020), most of the participants in this study considered the high financial costs as one of the factors affecting the progress of its investigative journalism. Thus, six out of 11 email participants agreed on the idea that the high costs of IJ constitute a Challenge of investigative journalism in the Arab World including *Qutb Elaraby, Mohammad Bin Salem, Said Eminzade* and *Sanae Elkouiti*. *Suhaib Al-Falahi* also said that the need for big financial support and a good budget is one of the problems of working on IJ in the Arab World. He stated that “The investigative journalist needs many details different from the details of traditional journalistic work including photographing, transmission, recording and montage”. On the other hand, *Aseel Saraih* opines that financial difficulties form a major problem in conducting IJ which consumes a lot of time and therefore requires more financial resources. He added that the lack of funding bodies plays a key role in this regard because the investigative

journalist may spend three or four months working on IR, but his financial return does not exceed 100-200 USD. Therefore, such a low wage negatively affects the desire of the journalist and leads to refrainment from working on IR, which makes him or her prefer to work on regular reports which are less time-consuming and make greater financial income.

It is difficult to estimate the average financial cost of one minute of the investigative report because the budget ordinarily varies according to many elements or inputs that contribute to the manufacture of the investigative material. The financial cost of media production is related to almost all the investigative journalism including what are related to the use of new media and media technology techniques such as multimedia and open-source applications. The costs of media productions including wages of employing journalists qualified to use communication technology, the purchase of information and data technologies and subscriptions to new media applications as well as the training of journalists to use these technologies in investigative journalism, in addition to the wages of operating logistics and providing services to workers in this field.

The participants of this research study put the financial Challenges within the Challenges of working in the field of investigative journalism in general, including the use of new media in this journalism. Yet, they did not find it as a big issue to Aljazeera which is known particularly by its high budget. Therefore, *Qutb Elaraby, Anas Radi* and *Adel Abdulmughni* considered the financial issues as one of the Challenges of employing NM in IJ. In general, expenditure budgets for any media project can be identified according to several determinants that *Khaled Ma'ali* summarized as "the financial spending capacity of the press institution, the nature of the required media product, the identity of the implementing agency, the level of technical equipments used in production, and the abundance of documents and evidence related to this work". Moreover, AJMN is known with its high ability of financing and allocating great budgets for high quality media

productions. Yet, Aljazeera is not just an institution for investigative journalism, as it spends on so many journalistic pathways including salaries of employees, rental payments, satellite signal services, and many more other kinds of payments. This situation leads Aljazeera to manage the distribution of its budgets among all of these costs, which means that the abundance of spending money may not necessarily be directed for investing in the use of new media in investigative journalism.

The nature of the demanded investigative report is also very important factor for budget estimations. For example, the value of the video report differs significantly from the written report, and the budget of the report that includes multimedia content differs from the narrative report as well. Moreover, the value of the investigative material also varies greatly between reports dealing with political and economic situations and others related to the detection of war crimes or mafia practices, for example. The institutions that produce investigative works must also pay at different levels according to the topics addressed in their investigative productions, so that the financial costs absolutely increase when the investigative report entails a high level of risk to journalists' lives from potential perpetrators such as investigative reports related to the mafia and the work of organized crime organizations or drug dealers. In general, the deeper and more complicated investigative material depends more on content that includes multimedia and open sources, and this increases its production costs.

The identification of the implementing agency is also one determinant of the investigative report budget since media institutions have to pay for producers who are one of two kinds of producers: the first one is external sources who operate in cooperation and receive their rewards for on a "piece" basis; these outsource journalists could be media companies or self-employed freelance journalists. The second kind of the employees is those who work on a basis of permanent

employment contracts; these journalists receive monthly salaries from their institutions. In general, hiring the first kind (the outsource producers) is more expensive than the permanent staff in terms of the volume of production since the financial cost increases following the principle of supply and demand. The more producers are able to use new media for investigative journalism, the higher their operating costs and larger budgets will be.

The issue of producer costs also stems from the quality level of the journalist production in the fields of media investigations in terms of his experience, competence, level of fame, professional reputation, journalistic history, the level of stardom in the media field, the level of the journalist qualification in dealing with technical and electronic applications, the extent of training in collecting information from new media platforms and open source accounts, and the level of the ability to verify information using technical tools. In this regard, the wages of journalists working in investigative journalism increase whenever they are more qualified to deal with multimedia, open-source applications and new media technologies.

Besides, there are other issues that make budget provision a challenge for conducting investigations, even in an indirect way, on the way of the use of new media in investigative journalism. Among these challenges are the logistical expenses including internal and external travel fees for teams of journalists and researchers; the costs of providing accommodation in hotels, transportation, and the bills of cafes or restaurants that may host meetings with some sources. Knowing the finer details about all of these services requires that journalists stay online to search and locate addresses and pay for 4G internet services for keeping in contact with the resources and arranging appointments with them.

The costs of equipment and technical tools used in press production, including tracking devices, photography, call recording devices, multimedia, drones, GPS applications and others

affect the financial value required for the production of investigative work. These technologies cost the investigative journalists fees for purchasing hardware, equipment, and processing software as well as expenses of paid accounts on some applications and subscriptions periodically.

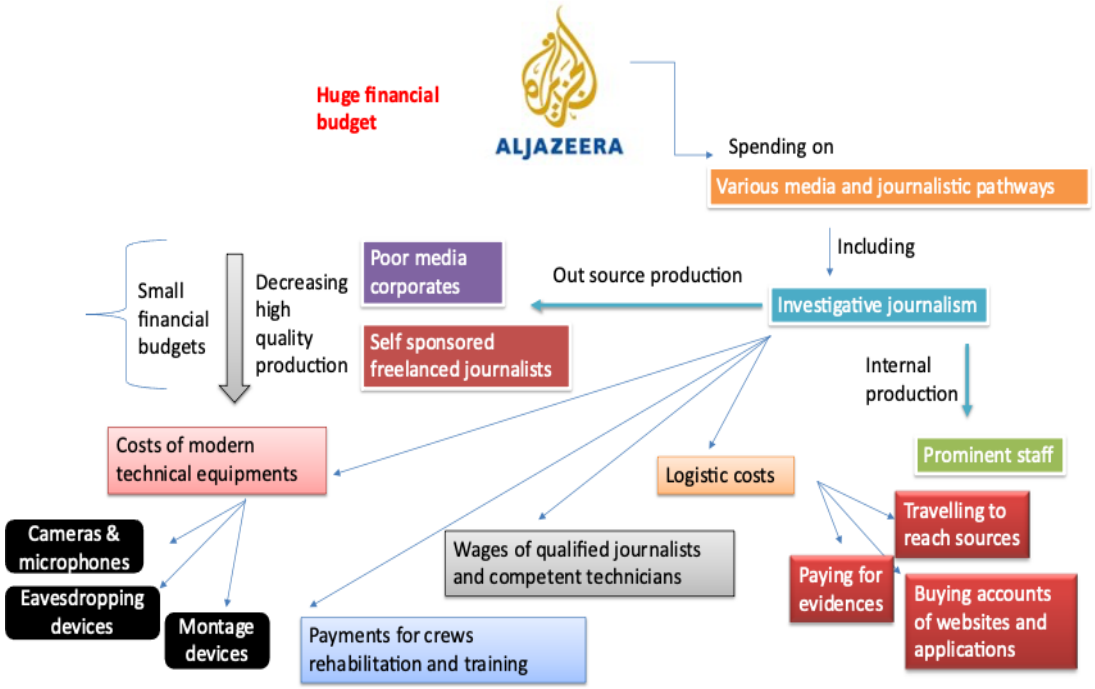
While talking about the financial costs as one of the Challenges of the use of new media in investigative journalism, it should also be borne in mind that the cost of preparing press material varies among deferent countries based on the cost of living and the varying prices of services from one country to another; and this applies, to a large extent, to the abovementioned labor costs associated with press production. This is related to journalists' wages, logistical costs and production fees that were previously explained. It is taken for granted that the cost of investigative work gets aggravated in rich countries where the individual standard of living is highly ranked; and on the other hand, it decreases in poor countries in which people earn little wages due to their low incomes.

Mustafa Swelim, one of the participants in the focus group discussion, believes that Aljazeera's broadcasting of more than five or six programs simultaneously means that "there are no Challenges that prevent it from carrying out investigative work in the sense that we understand". He explained his opinion by saying, "Aljazeera is capable of reaching, paying, and producing; and the evidence is that it produces four or five investigative programs in the same week on a regular basis. Perhaps these capabilities are not available to other press networks that do not have the ability to exert the same efforts and expenses".

Samed Dwaikat agreed with the statements of his colleague *Mustafa*, and added, "This explains the focus of investigative journalism on the Palestinian issue. For example, in programs such as The Hidden is More Immense, Israeli speakers accept to appear on Aljazeera screen, talk and provide evidence in exchange for hosting fees, even though the presenter of the program is a

Palestinian from Gaza". Therefore, *Dwaikat* asserted that the main Challenge to carrying out investigative work on the AJMN "is the political, not the financial Challenge". For his part, *Hudhaifa Jarrar* affirmed that money may contribute to solving the problems of accessing sources, and he concluded that "the financial issue is not an Challenge for Aljazeera, which can pay local journalists to join investigation teams and access its sources". He added that money, when available, can solve the problem of time. He explains this by saying, "A journalist can work for a year or two in an investigation in order to present the result, such as the investigation carried out by Aljazeera about the execution hole in Syria, where the information reached Aljazeera through a videotape that took two full years for being studied, during which financial budgets were consumed and paid to continue the process of searching and investigating the video".

Figure 4.25: The challenge of low financial budgets on using NM in IJ.



4.4.8 Societal customs and traditions

The Arab culture negatively influences the quality production of IJ in the Arab World. For example, the idea of "shame" prevents many Arab journalists from addressing very important ideas in investigative coverage in order not to provoke societal and regional sensitiveness or due to the fear of breaking some concepts that Arab societies wish to preserve within the list of "silent files". Therefore, many Arab journalists are reluctant to address issues that affect their social environment or may affect people within their circles of acquaintances or even the issues which may push the society to stand against them (Ayyash, 2014). For example, investigative journalists avoid raising issues that stem from stories about divorce, inbreeding, marital violence, marital miserliness or stories about fathers forcing their daughters to marry people they don't want because Arab culture considers these issues to be "homes secrets" that should not be published publicly. Arab culture also prohibits dealing with issues related to victims of addiction and bullying although they are among the most important societal crises that need to be put under the light of IJ.

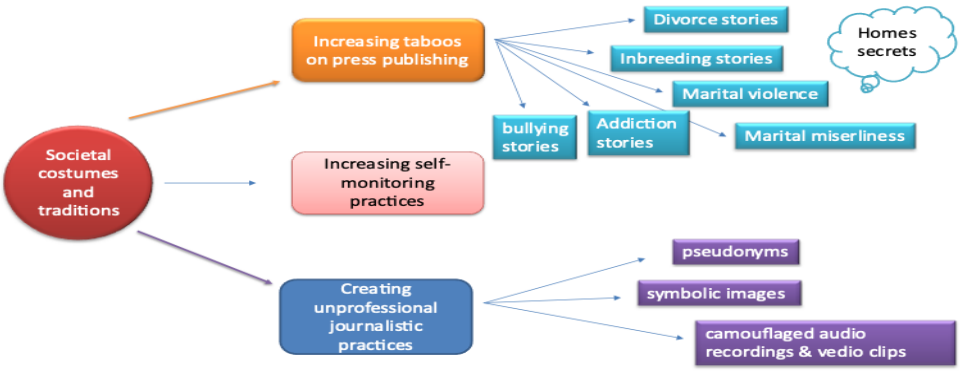
Even though only two of the participants who were met by email, *Adel Abdulmughni* and *Khaled Ma'ali*, mentioned the idea of societal customs and traditions, they are still relevant to be considered among the list of the Challenges of IJ in the Arab World. *Khaled Ma'ali* stated that "there are societal customs and traditions that are consistent with the provisions of the journalism code of ethics such as inadmissibility of publishing pictures of children without the permission of their parents; publishing pictures of martyrs whose bodies were mutilated; or announcing the names of the killed, in any given case, before their families are formally being informed about their death".

To elaborate, what is meant by the Challenges of societal customs and traditions in the context of this research is specifically the refusal of journalists to search for information and

evidence as well as their reluctance of publishing their reports attached by documents, photos, video clips, real names of witnesses due to their concerns of communities' unexpected reactions. This avoidance of documentation under the pressure of Arab societal traditions is common in the Arab media because of some journalistic customs of handling critical societal issues such as publishing under pseudonyms and the use of symbolic images instead of original pictures, camouflaged audio recordings, and video clips in which the faces of involved persons are hidden. These media methods are used as tools that are so significant in serving journalistic ethical codes which are usually employed to achieve confidentiality and individual personal protection. However, this may lead to confusion amongst journalists who may find difficulty in choosing between the need of using these tools and the need of highlighting evidence which may contradict the traditions of society.

According to *Sulaiman Bsharat*, who was interviewed face-to-face in this study, "Society's culture, customs and traditions, and what is associated with them" are part of the Challenges facing the use of new media in investigative journalism of Aljazeera Network. He said that the culture of society "may create determinants for the content that is broadcasted through new media".

Figure 4.26: Societal customs and traditions as a challenge of practicing investigative journalism.



4.5 Recommendations for Achieving Investigative Journalism

This part of the chapter explains in detail important suggestions given by the participants as solutions for developing the usage of investigative journalism by Aljazeera Media Network and for adapting the challenges that passively affect the employment of new media in order to achieve this goal. The recommendations are summarized in six basic solutions: improving the use of human resources, raising financial budgets for investigative works, avoiding engaging in political rivalries, relying on modern technologies, and establishing a special unit for investigative journalism within the digital sector of Aljazeera

1. **Improving the usage of human resources**

The journalist's interest in carrying out investigative work on any issue stems from the journalist's level of interest primarily in the subject matter covered by that issue. This means that the journalist's attitude determines the nature of what he wants to reveal of information and news, and the responsibility here lies in the press institution, which has to choose journalists known for their professionalism to practice investigative work.

The professionalism of the journalist as a concept differs from other concepts that seem erroneously close to it, such as objectivity, and this is a thorny controversial topic in which a thin hair separates the terms. However, what should never be disputed is that a journalist must be professional in his work by applying the highest levels of impartiality in his reporting. This includes not making accusations without conclusive evidence for any party, fairness in highlighting the different points of view and not concealing parts of the facts, balancing the granting of time spaces between the different parties, and taking into consideration the importance of presentation and delay in presenting the parties' positions within the investigative material. The issue of the level of professionalism becomes more dangerous when dealing with new media, which gives the journalist the opportunity to capture what he wants because of the richness of SM platforms with renewed content, but at the same time, does not force the journalist to take counter information under the pretext of the possibility of forgery.

As human beings, journalists vary in their abilities and capabilities, and there is no doubt that among them is the ability to comply with professional standards at work. Therefore, searching for journalists with a high level of professionalism is one of the important tips that participants gave to Aljazeera to improve the use of new media in investigative journalism. In this sense, *Mounira Hajlaoui* considered that the journalist has a great courage to separate all personal and subjective considerations and all external factors from his work as one of the important criteria in choosing a human cadre capable of raising the efficiency of investigative journalism at Aljazeera network.

Besides, perfection is an important factor in selecting the appropriate human cadre to provide high-quality work in press institutions. Proficiency is also one of the basic criteria in evaluating the level of human resources. In the case of Aljazeera, journalists are required to master searching for ideas, supporting these ideas with evidence from open and human information sources, editing,

writing and drafting as well as mixing audio and video elements, visual animation arts, art direction, voiceover, translation between languages and other missions. All these skills make the search for a journalist described as proficiently one of the important solutions addressed in this research, as *Adel Abdulmughni* said that Aljazeera should "attract more veteran journalists in the field of investigative journalism" to improve the employment of new media in it.

The competence arising from academic education, professional training and practical experience is a key factor in the path of journalists towards mastery. *Said Eminzade* recommended Aljazeera to choose investigative journalists from within the armies of applicants to work for it; saying that "it is very important to contract with expert journalists and specialized researchers to accomplish the investigative work". As for *Khaled Ma'ali*, he focused on the experience of the journalist as one factor to be chosen for working with AJMN. He said that "it is necessary for Aljazeera to search for experienced journalists for improving the usage of new media in its investigative journalist".

Moreover, one of the foundations of accrediting the competence of journalists is not to confine the scope of the search for competent journalists to a specific geographical sector. This expands Aljazeera's opportunities to elect the most qualified workers from among different countries on one hand and enhances the adoption of special teams from many countries for working on local investigations, on the other hand. In this context, *Sanae Elkouiti* advised Aljazeera to "work in cross-border teams" for improving its achievements in employing NM in its IJ.

Sulaiman Bsharat considered that human resources have a positive impact on investigative journalism. "Although talking about artificial intelligence and digital world can take a large part of the human effort, the media industry in particular cannot ignore the human presence," he said. Bsharat added, "Modern technologies and keeping pace with them can create much more models,

templates, and job opportunities than previous opportunities; this makes the challenge also greater in developing human resources to keep pace with these needs". *Zaher Elbek* believes that Aljazeera Network uses specialized technical teams, especially with regard to data journalism. He added that this certainly "leaves a very big impact on the development of investigative journalism through the sources of information that it accesses". As for *Muhammad Fares,* who participated in the focus group discussion, he asserted that Aljazeera should develop its human cadre to the highest possible extent and "Intensify the qualification of its journalists in the field of investigative journalism".

2. Raising financial budgets for investigative works

Because the low level of funding is considered as one of the most influential challenges on the way of developing investigative journalism, raising budgets for investigative work is a logically sure solution to dealing with these problems for elevating the production level of Aljazeera's IJ qualitatively and quantitatively. The power of funding is related to most areas of investigative work because rich budget is the gateway to the operation of highly qualified human resources, through which technical devices can be acquired, modern tools for access to open sources in the new media can be provided, logistics efforts for sourcing and accessing evidence supporting investigative work can be reached.

Based on the foregoing, the participants in this study present a set of recommendations regarding financial support that AJMN can contribute to improving the quality of its production of investigative work and for raising its ability to benefit from NM in this field. *Sanae Elkouiti* for instance considered that "providing budgets for investigative journalism" can contribute significantly to solving many problems related to the practice of investigation by Aljazeera, while *Adel Abdulmughni* also believes that "adopting sufficient budgets to produce in-depth journalistic investigations" is one of the proposed solutions; and, *Said Eminzade* suggested that "saving money

needed for the challenges of research and investigation" contributes to the development of investigative journalism at Aljazeera Network.

As for *Aseel Saraih*, he considered providing good financial support as one of the important steps that Aljazeera can take for producing media investigations particularly by the electronic website on the internet. He said that it is inappropriate for a "large site like Aljazeera Net not to produce large-scale, multi-media investigations". He then explained the link between the issue of funding and the efficiency of investigative journalism workers, saying: "Today, there are journalists who present ideas for investigative production, but as soon as they know the low financial return that they will receive in exchange for implementing these ideas for Aljazeera Net, they leave it and look forward to working for other sites that pay more". *Saraih* pointed out that the reluctance of competent journalists of providing distinguished investigative work to Aljazeera Net negatively affects the quality of the site's content, saying: "This affects the quality of the published investigative reports because the editor will then have to accept inexpensive ideas".

Finally, although none of the participants mentioned the role of the funding power and raising budgets in some aspects related to the investigative journalism such as purchasing of technical services, providing of paid subscriptions to open information sources, having high quality technical production services and others, the inclusion of all these matters within the list of the needs that require spending on them implies that improving budgets contributes to overcoming related challenges.

Wasef Qadah, who was interviewed face-to-face, believes that Aljazeera has great financial capabilities, and it spends generously on various journalistic activities. He said, "We know that investigative journalism in particular is expensive for many reasons; thus, I think that the most important way to develop investigative journalism is to allocate large budgets for this type of

journalism”. As for *Yousef Aljuneidi*, he said that the development of investigative journalism "fundamentally requires money”. He added, "Even small channels that have money can reach great limits through the money spent on many aspects, for example, paying some figures to appear and speak on their screens as witnesses and important sources”. *Samed Dwaikat*, one of the focus group participants, called money "the backbone of the media". He suggested that Aljazeera should "offer large budgets to investigative journalism agencies in order to obtain impactful products and high-quality work”.

3. Avoiding engaging in political rivalries

The police domination exercised by dictatorial regimes against the press and media is closely related to the nature of these political regimes and their self-interested agenda that pushes them to adopt action strategies based on ambiguity and concealment of information and facts from public opinion and media. This assessment completely contradicts the essence of investigative journalism, which is based on revealing facts to the public through documents and evidence as it was referred to earlier in this research. Accordingly, this contradiction puts the possibility of resolving the permanent conflict between dictatorial regimes and the media out of the question.

However, the interviews conducted in this research provide a set of recommendations that can be used to mitigate the impact of the complex Arab political reality on investigative journalism. The participants mainly recommend Aljazeera to avoid engaging in the political rivalries raging in the Arab countries; and advise journalists to deal with political issues with high levels of objectivity and impartiality. *Adel Abdulmughni* for example invited journalists initially for addressing the topics around which investigations revolve in a professional and abstract manner. Then, he advised Aljazeera journalists to "focus first on investigations that concern societies, such as health, education, children, corruption issues and cross-border crimes". All of these issues

constitute the subject of consensus in Arab societies and do not contradict, at least, the declared agenda of the Arab regimes. However, confining press coverage to undisputed topics restricts journalists to work only on such topics in order to avoid being exposed to violations, which accordingly narrows down the margin of freedoms under which journalists must work; and it sets in advance red lines that perpetuate political taboos and increases distances between people and media. In addition to all of that, some investigations in areas such as health, education, children, corruption issues, cross-border crimes, etc., as mentioned earlier by *Abdulmughni,* may lead to a kind of association between the parties criticized by the investigative work and governments under secret and undeclared agreements, as *Suhaib Al-Falahi* indicated previously in this study.

On the contrary to the previous argumentation about avoiding sensitive topics in investigative coverage, some participants see the difficult political conditions in the Arab World as an opportunity for improving investigative journalism. *Said Eminzade,* for example, suggested that Aljazeera have to exploit political conditions such as wars, conflicts and demonstrations to obtain the information required for investigative work, but at that time he focuses on "the importance of not endangering the work team". Since its inception and over the past two and a half decades, Aljazeera has been known for its great presence in conflict areas, starting with the American invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq, passing through the successive Palestinian uprisings, then the Arab Spring revolutions and their counterrevolutions, especially the crushing Syrian civil war, and most recently the Russian-Ukrainian war that started in 2022. However, during these events Aljazeera lost 12 journalists who were killed in different areas while searching for information and news; the last of whom was the famous correspondent of Aljazeera Shireen Abu Aqleh, who was killed by an Israeli sniper near the Palestinian city of Jenin on May 11, 2022 according to what

was announced by Ahmed Al-Sheikh, (2022) the adviser to the Aljazeera Media Network, in statements published by Aljazeera Net on May 13, 2022.

It can be claimed that practicing investigative journalism in light of a given political crisis is one of the most important challenges facing media institutions because it distressingly affects journalists who either lose their lives as a price for information, or their freedom by getting detained behind bars as happened, and is still happening, with a number of Aljazeera journalists who have been detained in Egyptian prisons because of their work with AJMN. Given that, *Khaled Ma'ali* described dealing with political conditions as "the most complex issue", and he advised Aljazeera network to study well the political situation of each region before conducting any investigative activity there. He said: "What is governed in Ramallah, for example, as a special circumstance differs from conditions in Cairo or Damascus; the differences between the behaviors and practices of different political bodies should be studied carefully before deciding to start the investigation work".

Nidal Salah, who was interviewed face-to-face, seconded the position of the previous interviewers. He said, "Since investigative journalism is fact-exposing journalism, the basis of its success is the access to sources; and this requires it to enjoy open relations to ensure that doors remain open to its research teams working in investigative journalism". In *Salah's* estimation, this "can only happen if Aljazeera succeeds in exercising the highest degree of professionalism and not to take the side of one party at the expense of another, especially in the Arab world, which is witnessing the peak of political and ideological polarization". As for *Hudhaifa Jarrar*, he said in the focus group discussions that preserving the source and the sequence of knowledge are very important as basic skills for the investigative journalist; "so that he -the journalist- is not exposed

to reactions of the parties he is investigating, before producing his report which may push them to further conceal their information".

4. Relying on modern technologies

Information technology provides very rich features for investigative journalism. As mentioned earlier in this study, media technology provides journalists with a rich menu of open sources of information and enhances their access to evidence for IJ; MT also provides press editors and media directors with technical output processors that improve the final journalistic output of investigative work; it gives PIs a better access to the audience and expands the levels of the audience's exposure to multimedia.

Therefore, the participants of this study increasingly recommend Aljazeera to elevate its reliance on information technology and communication techniques as an effective method for developing its investigative journalism, especially in light of the growing technologies provided by new media. *Adel Abdulmughni* said that the reliance of Aljazeera on media technology can be achieved through "purchasing more modern technologies in the field of digital journalism and by training journalists to use them". *Said Eminzade* suggested that Aljazeera should "rely on open sources and the internet".

One of the best advantages of increasing the reliance on media technology development is that it provides journalists with a huge list of options that PIs can choose from according to their financial capabilities, the qualifications of their staff, and the level of development of the technological infrastructure in the country in which they operate. For example, it is not logically for a press institution to ask a reporter who works for it to provide it with a live broadcast from a camera installed on a drone if he is working in a country where 4G and broadband internet services

are not available. Instead, this reporter may, for example, rent the services of Satellite News Gathering (SNG) and broadcast from out broadcasting vehicle (OB van). Therefore, *Said Eminzade* described the use of technology as "an important element in improving investigative work". He said that "at the absence of appropriate equipment such as professional cameras, fast computers, and the like, it is possible to work at the minimum level that guarantees the documentation and preservation of information. This level of journalistic work allows the journalistic material to be presented through the use of smart phones' applications equipped with cameras and editing software of photos and videos". Based on that, he strongly advised Aljazeera "to rely more and more on modern techniques and technological devices".

Suleiman Bsharat, one of the face-to-face participants, believes that technology has a significant positive impact on investigative journalism. He said that the development of technology can enhance investigative journalism and improve its performance, in addition to the possibility of "taking advantage of what modern technology provides, either to access information, or regarding how to publish and communicate it and regarding the templates through which it can be presented". For his part, *Mustafa Swelim,* one of the participants in the focus group, said that Aljazeera's greater reliance on technology contributes to the development of its investigative journalism. He added, "Today, media technology is no longer mere platforms, screens, or tools for communication, interaction, and presentation; rather, it is a mixture of all of that. If Aljazeera succeeds in continuing to employ this mixture in its work, its investigative journalism will become greater".

5. Establishing a specialized unit for investigative journalism

Establishing a specialized unit in investigative journalism would lead to a very high concentration on many important files of investigative work. The suggested investigative journalism unit (IJU)

may be concerned in detecting the requirement of IP in AJMN, identifying its shortcomings or weaknesses, and defining the essential topics of IJ coverage. IJU can derive an independent space for investigative work among so many journalistic tracks practiced by the AJMN.

In this context, *Aseel Saraih* attributed the superiority in investigative work at Aljazeera satellite channel to its possession of the investigative work unit; and on the other hand, he attributes the weakness of Aljazeera Net to the absence of a unit specialized in investigative work on the internet website. *Saraih* focused greatly on the necessity of establishing a unit specialized in investigative journalism in the digital sector of Aljazeera and believes that establishing such a unit does not require much work or efforts; he also claims that it is sufficient for this suggested unit to be managed by one or two workers to bear the burden of managing investigative activity. He also asserts that many other international media sites conduct their investigative activities in the same way or by owning IJUs. He added, "Therefore, they need to find two persons, highly train them, and produce investigations, because Aljazeera Net is one of the most widely read websites, and investigative investigations must be attended".

Among the responsibilities that the proposed investigative journalism unit in the digital sector of Aljazeera Network could assume is planning for investigative work in the medium, in the short and long term. This unit can identify issues and files that require the production of investigative reports, and it is the one that can manage the process of communicating with Arab investigative journalists on a specialized basis. IJU could also be the one that can present fixed and emergency financial budgets drafts for investigative coverage, and it is this unit that can be asked about promoting investigative reports and disseminate their elements using multimedia techniques.

Moreover, IJU can also assume the responsibilities of evaluating the work of investigative journalists, controlling the quality of investigative products, nominating outstanding work for

international awards in investigative journalism, identifying the digital sector's need for new technical accounts important in accessing open sources of information and also acquiring the new media applications needed for news verification and facts checking, in addition to the role that IJU can play in training journalists and Aljazeera crews on investigative work and identifying their needs for training courses in this field. In his recommendations to Aljazeera, *Qutb Elaraby* said, "Perhaps if a specialized unit for investigative investigations is found, it will contribute to the production of better and more investigations, as this unit will be concerned with setting its unified professional standards and mapping the priorities of its investigations, for it will create a fertile environment for honest competition among its members".

As for *Zaher Elbek,* he also believes that the establishment of a specialized investigative journalism unit in the digital sector of Aljazeera network has significant positive effects on its investigative journalism. He justified his claim by saying that "An important part of Aljazeera's audience visits the network's various platforms, such as documentaries, news, Aljazeera Net, its Center for Studies and the like from smartphones". In the focus group discussion, *Omar Fayyad* agreed with Beyoglu by saying that "The absence of a specialized investigative journalist within the digital sector of Aljazeera network represents one of the striking shortcomings in Aljazeera's investigative journalism." He added, "Therefore, the establishment of this specialized body will provide a lot of assistance to Aljazeera Network in investigative production".

4.6 Conclusion

All in all, the 21 participants provided very important and varied information to enrich this research with the details required to achieve its objectives. So, this chapter discussed in detail the results of the study by propagating the themes that were collected from the answers of the participants. For the first objective of the study, which is to explicate the regional importance of Aljazeera Media

Network investigative reporting, The results showed four influences of Aljazeera's investigative Journalism practice in the Arab World: increasing Aljazeera's popularity and competitiveness, increasing Aljazeera's influence on public opinion and political change, increasing Aljazeera's ability to use new media technology, and increasing the ability of Aljazeera to confront the constraints resulting from the political conditions in the Arab world.

Regarding the second objective of the study, which is to identify the factors that contribute to Aljazeera Media Network's use of new media in its investigative journalism., five main factors were found: accessing sources of data and information, reaching new media audiences, competing with other media networks in new media field, making use of the affordances of media technology development, and achieving the sake of Aljazeera for innovation.

For the third objective, explore the influences of new media usage on the practices of Aljazeera Media Network investigative reporting, the results showed that the emergence of new media has greatly expanded investigative journalism by increasing the quantity of produced investigative work and an improving the quality of these products by benefiting from digital affordances even though it raised doubts about the reliability of the open sources used in these works.

With regard to the fourth objective, which is to explore the challenges of using new media in Aljazeera Media Network investigative reporting, the results listed eight main challenges including political and security threats, the lack of information, evidence and source, poor qualification of journalists, challenges of open sources credibility and reliability, institutional challenges, challenges of keeping pace with media technology development, financial challenges and budget weaknesses, and societal customs and traditions. This chapter also provided recommendations for achieving investigative journalism of Aljazeera Media Network.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

5.0 Introduction

The rapid development of information technology is still opening up wide prospects for exploratory studies aimed at presenting reciprocal effects between new media and different journalistic genres including investigative journalism (Kaul, 2012). This research presents the most important aspects of the relationship between new media and investigative journalism practiced by Aljazeera Media Network as one of the largest journalism networks in the world. beside

New media provides the public with huge opportunities for being integrated into media process by involving the audience in the content industry (Alikilic, 2008), giving individuals platforms for publishing and interacting (Gonzalez et al., 2021) and enabling them to view evidences without having to move from one place to another in search for information and without the need to work formally in traditional press organizations (Schrock, 2015).

Investigative journalism provides media with unlimited opportunities for satisfying the citizen's need for knowledge by presenting atypical forms of press coverage, and by presenting evidences that confirm or deny the information received through new media. Thus, investigative journalism gives media outlets the opportunity to realize the desire of gaining the trust of viewers and guarantees satisfaction of followers (Agbo & Chukwuma, 2017). The attractiveness of media coverage is a great factor that makes one media outlet superior to another in its ability to get followers' satisfaction (Wilding, et al., 2018).

This chapter presents a brief summary of the study including the four research objectives and the research questions derived from those objectives. It also highlights the significance of the study in media field of research and the knowledge gap it covers. In addition to presenting the research methodology that was followed for collecting and analyzing data according to qualitative approach through thematic analysis of in-depth interview methodology, this chapter summarizes the most important general conclusions reached in consistence with the four objectives of the study. These summaries include direct and subsidiary answers that support each of the objectives of the study.

5.1 Summary of the Research

The problem statement of this study lies in the general political conditions in the Arab World, especially the crises of democracy and dictatorial rule, which makes it difficult for media to access information needed for news coverage, and makes it difficult to verify the truth of the information (Pepe, 2016). These circumstances motivate media networks such as Aljazeera Media Network to resort to investigative journalism as a deep form of journalism for searching for hidden information and supporting media reports with evidences and proofs (Zayani, 2005).

The emergence of new media which coincided with the so-called "Arab Spring revolutions" provided media institutions with a great ability to access data and information through what has become known as open sources of information, which include electronic applications, websites, and accounts on social networking sites (Pepe, 2005). Although new media has greatly contributed to the development of investigative journalism, there are challenges and problems that prevent its full usage. Among these challenges are those related to training, funding, barriers of technological infrastructure, the reliability of information and others (Bebawi, 2016).

While the investigative journalism programs offered by Aljazeera Network attract the attention of many followers, there is a clear gap in understanding the relationship between new media and investigative journalism (Igweze, 2020). This gap is mainly related to understanding how Aljazeera uses new media in its innovative investigative journalism to the extent of being described as a new guest on newsrooms. Hence, the novelty of the Arab media experience in investigative practicing is a major reason for the lack of research studies that broadly address the issues of investigative journalism. Then, the importance of this study stems from being one of few studies that deals with the use of investigative journalism of new media in Aljazeera Media Network as one of the largest Arab and international media networks and then as one of the rare Arab media institutions those continuously produce and publish investigative programs.

This study has four research objectives: to explicate the regional importance of Aljazeera Media Network investigative reporting; to identify the factors that contribute to Aljazeera Media Network's use of new media in its investigative journalism; to explore the influences of new media usage on the practices of Aljazeera Media Network investigative reporting; and to explore the challenges of using new media in Aljazeera Media Network investigative reporting.

The research questions of this study are: What is the regional importance of Aljazeera Media Network investigative reporting? Why does Aljazeera Media Network use new media in its investigative journalism? How does new media usage influence the practices of Aljazeera Media Network investigative reporting? and What are the challenges of using new media in Aljazeera Media Network investigative reporting?

The study is conducted following a qualitative approach methodology using thematic analysis of in-depth interview with 21 Arab journalists 11 of them were interviewed by email; 5

of them were met face-to-face; and another 5 participated in focus group discussion. The answers of the participants were analyzed based on thematic coding to finding the general themes which are dealt with as the results of the study in consistence with the four objectives.

5.2 Major Conclusions

In general, this study found out that Aljazeera Media Network uses new media to a relatively good level in investigative journalism. This usage can be described as good because of the large number of programs and investigative reports produced by Aljazeera, the reports' large-scale content coverage, the use of electronic applications, multimedia, and the high level of technical quality of programs direction. Moreover, this is also due to the high interest of Aljazeera in investigative journalism which stems from the multiplicity of forms of journalistic works as it is unspecialized in investigative journalism exclusively.

However, taking into consideration that Aljazeera is one of the largest Arab press networks and one of the largest media institutions in the world that possess huge human, financial and technical resources, the level of investigative production of Aljazeera Media Network can be described as a kind of relative. The "relativism" is due to the significant decrease in investigative production on Aljazeera's digital platforms, in contrast to the significant increase in productivity at the satellite TV channel.

At least there are five cases that show evidence on the high extent of using investigative journalism by Aljazeera Media Network including the diversity of investigative journalism usage in Aljazeera Media Network in many ways and methods. Other cases include allocating a space for investigative journalism among the wide variety of Aljazeera Media Network coverage, the widespread knowledge with high rating of investigative programs (IP) among Arab audience (AA),

the association of investigative programs with the emergence of Aljazeera Media Network in the minds of the audience, and paying attention to research, publications, and awards about IJ in Aljazeera Media Institute (AJMI).

At the level of production, Aljazeera's achievement in the field of investigative production was clearly demonstrated when it could produce an investigative report just three hours after the killing of its correspondent in the West Bank in Palestine, Shireen Abu Aqleh, on 11th May 2022. In its report, Aljazeera used vedio clips from different locations, satellite coordinates, and eyewitness testimonials to prove that its reporter was killed by an Israeli sniper. Regarding publication, AJMN published the smuggled WikiLeaks documents in 2010 and discussed their content along with its leaked contexts by dozens of different programs. Finally, Aljazeera has signed several agreements to finance and publish investigative reports conducted by journalists of an IJ network called Arab Reporters of Investigative Journalism (ARIJ).

This study found a high consistency between Aljazeera's keenness to practice investigative journalism and its tendency to develop its usage of new media through employing social media platforms and citizen journalism tools. The results showed that investigative journalism and new media jointly grant Aljazeera great ability to access information sources, a high possibility to expand audience segments, and excellent opportunities to diversify the contents of press coverage. Besides, both IJ and NM offered Aljazeera a wide arena for using its financial, human, and logistical capabilities in proving its distinction and superiority over other competitive media.

These findings were largely consistent with studies suggesting that Aljazeera news network has a great interest in investigative journalism as one of the most investigative TV channels (Ben Moussa, 2007). The interest of AJMN in investigative journalism is evident in its establishment of

the Investigative Journalism Unit in 2012, whose website (I-Unit) defines its mission as exposing falsification of information and presenting the truth to the public through producing a large number of influential investigative programs (Saba, 2019). It is also reflected in its obtaining of a large number of its productions for international awards in investigative journalism (Al-Najjar, 2021).

The results also agree with studies demonstrating that Aljazeera Network is very interested in new media (Eliades, 2020), social networks (Campbell & Hawk, 2012), and citizen journalism (Khasib, 2015); and that it uses technological media devices such as mobile phones to overcome many of the challenges of journalism in the Arab World related to accessing information sources and reaching the public (Howard & Hussain, 2013).

This study found a remarkable relationship between Aljazeera's investigative journalism practice and new media. These two types of contemporary journalism genres are not just two parallel lines in the performance of Aljazeera Network, but, as the current study shows, the relationship between them demonstrates a mutual functionality whereas new media is employed in favor of investigative journalism and vice versa. In this regard, new media may provide investigative journalism with the sources of information on which it relies; and at the same time, it could provide a platform for disseminating the information offered by investigative journalism. Moreover, new media offers high-level promotion for investigative journalism, at the time that investigative content would be serving as a high-selling commodity that increases the audience exposure to new media platforms. This strong functional relationship between new media and investigative journalism is the key to the success of Aljazeera Network in presenting numerous and good-quality investigative works despite some defects of new media, such as poor reliability and credibility, which affected some media and journalistic productions.

The deep mutual functionality relationship between NM and IJ also contributed to Aljazeera overcoming many of the challenges facing the practice of investigative journalism in the Arab World, to which Aljazeera belongs. Mekki (2020) summarizes these challenges in: saturating the Arab publics with rumors and government propaganda that weaken its ability to distinguish between real investigations and fabricated news, lacking investigations' financial independency, and having great security risks resulting from the absence of a state of law that can protect journalists in the Arab World. These can be added to the wide range of other challenges found in this study such as low professionality of journalists, poor training, lack of funding, etc.

With regard to the first objective of this study, which is to explicate the regional importance of Aljazeera Media Network investigative reporting, it turns out that the usage of investigative journalism by Aljazeera media network is important for four reasons. First, IJ increases the popularity and competitiveness of AJMN in the Arab World by looking for persuading the demanding audiences with the provision of evidences and data. Any media outlet needs to constantly update its journalistic templates to meet the desires of the audiences. The first result of the research shows that practicing IJ provides AJMN increased the level of objectivity, credibility and reliability as an important need for Aljazeera to repel the accusations of opponents and competitors, especially in light of the high political polarization in the Arab World and the recruitment of the media to defend political positions because investigative journalism would provide evidence that supports the content of media message, and this is an important requirement to raise the level of objectivity, credibility and reliability that any media network needs in order to gain the trust of its audience. Moreover, investigative journalism enhances Aljazeera's competitive position with its competing media, especially after the emergence of many press institutions and media networks that match Aljazeera in capabilities power. This situation of competition makes

investigative journalism an arena in which Aljazeera demonstrates its ability to excel over competitors. Second, investigative journalism contributes to giving Aljazeera network a role in influencing public opinion and political changes in the Arab World due to the excitement that investigations raise among the public and because IJ puts Aljazeera as a reference of information for the public and other media. Moreover, IJ helps Aljazeera in practicing a role of social responsibility in educating the publics and providing them with information. Third, Investigative Journalism increases Aljazeera Media Network's ability to use new media technology to access information and news that cannot be accessed due to laws and practices that limit journalists' access to information in non-democratic Arab countries. In this regard, Aljazeera journalistic products including photos, recordings, and data, provide valuable archival information that Aljazeera can use as private property to enhance the content of its investigations. IJ also helps Aljazeera in diversifying the content of news programs, provides it with the ability to make use of the wide variation of capabilities and help the network in keeping pace with the evolution and change of media generations. And fourth, Investigative Journalism increases the ability of Aljazeera Media Network to confront the constraints resulting from the political conditions in the Arab world.

These four factors together represent the regional influence of practicing IJ in Aljazeera covering. It is difficult to claim that there are more important factors in Aljazeera's considerations of investigative journalism than others. This is because each of these factors represents a motive that Aljazeera cannot waive while aiming at maintaining and developing its presence in the media world. It cannot be claimed, for example, that confronting the political constraints is more or less important than increasing the popularity and competitiveness of AJMN in the Arab World.

As for the second objective of the study, which is to identify the factors that contribute to Aljazeera Media Network's use of new media in its investigative journalism, Aljazeera uses new

media as a tool to access information through open sources and social media accounts and to communicate through them with human news sources. AJMN also uses NM to reach the audience, which is becoming more and more inclined to follow new media at the expense of traditional media as the new media serves as an indicator that guides the network to the most common and popular hashtag and trend among the public. In addition, NM gives AJMN an opportunity to compete with other networks in the field of new media. And finally, AJMN uses NM for making use of the affordances of media technology development and achieving the sake of Aljazeera for Innovation.

Regarding the third objective, to explore the influences of new media usage on the practices of Aljazeera Media Network investigative reporting, it can be said that the emergence of new media has greatly expanded investigative journalism and given it many opportunities for development and growth. This expansion was reflected in an increase in the production of investigative work by Aljazeera network and an improvement in its quality. On the other hand, it raised doubts about the reliability of the open sources used in these works

With regard to the fourth objective of this research, which is to explore the challenges of using new media in Aljazeera Media Network investigative reporting. the most important challenges to the use of new media in investigative journalism can be summarized as challenges of political and security conditions, the lack of information, evidence and sources, challenges related to the competence of journalists in terms of expertise and individual capabilities, challenges of reliability and credibility of open sources, challenges related to the lack of institutions that adopt investigative work, impediments to the weak ability to keep pace with the outputs of technological development, challenges of lack of funding and budgets, and societal norms and traditions.

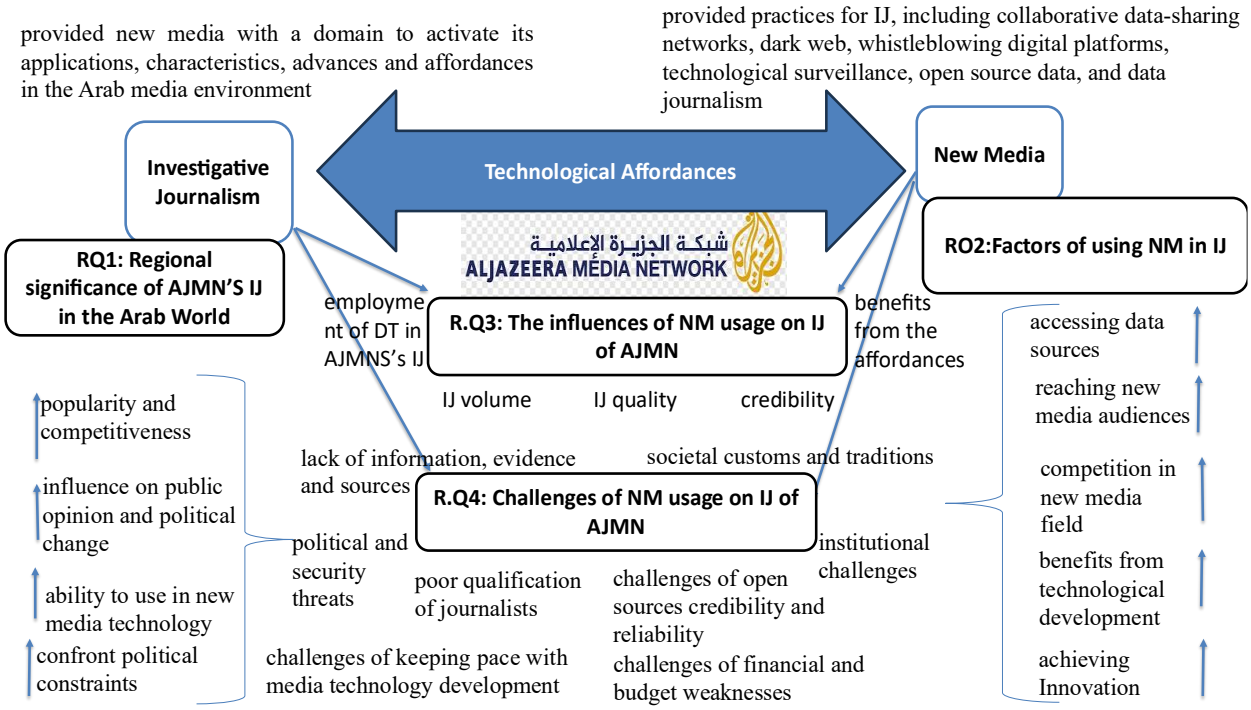
Although some of the challenges of investigative journalism take the form of general challenges that may face any journalistic work and do not necessarily apply to Aljazeera specifically, they might have indirect effects on investigative production of AJMN. For example, the high financial cost of investigative journalism may not be a hindrance to Aljazeera, which enjoys full financial sponsorship from the wealthy State of Qatar (Eliades, 2020), but the network does not allocate all of its expenditures to investigative journalism. Moreover, while Aljazeera attracts the most qualified journalists in the Arab World, the low level of investigative journalism practice in the Arab World makes its chances of employing highly qualified Arab investigative journalists limited. This point in particular is closely related to other challenges of investigative journalism in general, as it is difficult to find brilliant journalists in investigative work in countries whose political systems do not provide freedom for media professionals to conduct journalistic investigations.

All in all, the results explored by this study constituted important incentives for Aljazeera to use NM affordances in practicing investigative journalism. Aljazeera has benefited dramatically from the affordances provided by new media despite its low validity and reliability in expanding and increasing its investigative activity and improving its quality despite many challenges facing the Arab media's practice of investigative journalism.

In general, new media affordances have provided essential practices for investigative journalism, including, for example, collaborative data-sharing networks, dark web, whistleblowing digital platforms, technological surveillance, open source data, and data journalism. This development in technology applications has greatly enriched investigative journalism of Aljazeera, and has accompanied its investigations, starting from capturing the idea, determining its validity and popularity, then providing sources of information, the tools necessary to access these sources,

and the content supporting the investigations, promoting the reports and delivering them to the largest possible audience, and finally receiving feedback from this audience. In contrast, Aljazeera's investigative journalism has provided new media with a domain to activate its applications, characteristics, advances and affordances in the Arab media environment. This is due to the in-depth nature of the investigations and their special needs, which are not usually required by simpler and more direct journalistic coverage. Thus, the findings of this doctoral thesis represent an important step towards integrating into the comprehensive theory of using the perspective of affordances, as a theory of interpretation of media performance, in describing the performative relationship between new media and investigative journalism as illustrated in Figure 5.1.

Figure 5.1: The modal of using NM for improving IJ of AJMN



5.3 Theoretical Implications

This doctoral thesis relied on the theory of technological capabilities to understand the characteristics of new media, as a theory that focuses its hypotheses on research related to media performance and practice (Siegert et al., 2020). Based on the theory, it was necessary for this study to include research on the practices themselves to understand, interpret, and analyze the links between them, and then seek to integrate the interpretations reached within the context of comprehensive theoretical knowledge about the practice of Aljazeera Media Network for investigative journalism in the Arab region in light of the tremendous technological development in the capabilities of new media.

To be fair, this endeavor has faced enormous difficulties related first to the scarcity of theoretical models that simulate the concepts of the study and analyze the relationships among the models in a way that allows them to be simulated to confirm or deny previous results, as most previous studies on new media do not focus on the way in which performance is enabled (Siegertet al, 2020). Thus, one of the limitations was the lack of an investigative model capable of explaining the conditions of the Arab media environment and the conditions of those working in its press (Bebawi, 2021), in addition to the difficulty of differentiating practical frameworks in investigative journalism and other journalistic forms in general, as investigative journalism is considered a part of a whole when it comes to dealing with it as a practice (Cancela et al., 2021).

The implementation of the broad concept of affordances has helped this thesis reach results that answer its four ontological questions to contribute to the literature which forms the cognitive framework that gives the theory additional opportunities for further examination and development and preserves information about it from dispersion and loss, especially since the theory has progressed from the philosophical-psychological framework through the design framework to the

implementation in media technology. This has given it a comprehensive ability to frame theoretical concepts and has given it more flexibility to accommodate more comprehensive interpretations of the concepts strictly defined in the research framework.

The implementation of the theory contributed to understanding the impact of Aljazeera's practice of investigative journalism in the Arab environment, a practice that was widely linked to new media due to the coincidence of its practice by Aljazeera with the development of new media technology. Although the link between the practice of investigative journalism and the concept of affordance seems weak, both are parts of the paradigmatic philosophy of this thesis.

The implementation of affordances concept in the study also provided important explanations that define Aljazeera Network’s starting points in using new media within the second objective. These explanations transfer the descriptive, quantitative nature familiar in research on impact, satisfaction, and measuring response and interactivity to the philosophy of interpretive approach of journalistic practice.

Moreover, the implementation of the theory in the third objective of this thesis provided a lot of explanatory information about the affordances of new media such as visibility, persistence, association, editability, portability, availability, locatability, and multimodality as well as its characteristics such as digital, interactive, hypertextual, globally networked, virtual and based on simulation which contributes to opening new horizons for expanding the conceptual construction of these affordances and the distinctive characteristics of new media based on the outcomes of their impact on journalistic practice.

All in all, the use of the theory opened the door wide to understanding the limits of the influence of the concept of affordances and the shortcomings of its activation in journalistic

practice because it is an influence that is not absolute and is not subject to the subjective determinants of the media institution. This became clear through the implementation of the theory to the fourth objective, which identified the challenges of using new media in investigative journalism for Aljazeera Media Network.

For all the above reasons, the application of the theory of technological affluence led to reaching results that serve as a basis for understanding the components of this research message and then explaining the interconnectedness between such components and the mutual effects of each concept on the other. The application of the theory of affordances also helped in understanding the functional roles of new media in enabling journalistic practice that originally belonged to the era of traditional media through focusing on the case of Aljazeera Media Network.

The results presented by this study are consistent with many of the assumptions of the theory of affordances, a term initially coined by James Gibson in 1977 within his psychological approach before being known in the field of media as the theory of technological affordances by Ian Hutchby in 2001. The hypotheses of this theory explain the increasing trend of media reliance on digital media in many areas based on the specific characteristics of media technology products.

The concept of technology affordances is used to refer to new technologies and tasks that users can perform using the technologies available to them (Hutchby, 2001). The current study showed that communication technology provided Aljazeera with important affordances in many areas, especially in accessing information sources and delivering investigative programs to the audience of new media, especially Generation Z. Ian Hutchby uses the term “technology grants” to describe the physical capabilities of the technology and its specific applications. He said that each of Google Plus and Kindle has its own capabilities; for example, Kindle is used to read books and cannot be used in the same way of using an iPad for instance (Hutchby, 2001). It is also

significantly applicable to the results of this study, which showed, for example, that access to hidden sources of information, that can be used as evidence in investigative journalism, requires the use of specific new media tools such as tracking programs, air navigation applications, and others.

This research provided important insights into the affordances of using new media applications in investigative journalism. Among the most important of these affordances are portability, accessibility, multimodality, and others. The study also presented trends that prompted Aljazeera to use new media in many areas of media coverage, including investigative journalism, as a form of adaptation to the general political conditions experienced by the Arab World. It is clear that open sources, for example, have become an important source of information that Aljazeera relies on in its journalistic coverage and investigative journalism.

5.4 Practical Recommendations

There are a set of recommendations made by this research to Aljazeera Network to develop its investigative journalism including enhancing the use of human resources, raising financial budgets for investigative work, avoiding engaging in political conflicts, increasing reliance on modern technology and establishing a unit specialized in investigative work in the network's digital sector.

5.5 Research Limitations

The preparation of this study faced an important set of barriers and limitations regarding either the topic of the study or the procedure of how it is conducted.

Among the limitations related to the topic is the severe lack of recent content analysis studies related to Arab investigative journalism in general and investigative reporting of Aljazeera

in particular that could provide this research with detailed data on the use of new media in investigative journalism at Aljazeera Network. Difficulties in accessing evidences that can be used as examples for supporting the findings of this study was also among the limitations. Preparing a map of the contents covered by the Aljazeera network's investigative programs may provide these examples, whether in terms of the use of sources or new and traditional media. But the preparation of such a map collides first with the need to analyze a very large number of investigative programs to reach more generalizable results and in order to increase the opportunity for obtaining examples consistent with the results of this research. This requires the availability of all investigative programs on Aljazeera network on permanent viewing platforms. It also needs many hours of watching and transcribing these programs before analysis.

In terms of procedures, the most important challenges are summarized in: the small number of Arab journalists practicing investigative journalism and their distribution to many countries, which makes reaching them for interviews a very difficult issue. This research also faced a very big challenge in data collection whereas part of the journalists who were sent to be interviewers refused to conduct the interviews and others did not respond or even accepted to be interviewed but spent long time to come with their feedbacks. Even though the large number of open questions in this interview provided a great variety and abundance of answers, it also led to the repetition of many general ideas, which consumed a great deal of time and efforts in sorting and analyzing themes.

Another limitation of the study is the difficulty of defining exclusive practical criteria for investigative journalism that separate it from general journalism, given that investigative journalism is part of a comprehensive journalistic practice that is subject to very similar conditions in terms of practical effects. All experienced investigative journalists interviewed in Cancela et al.

(2021) were reported to have either hesitated or had difficulty defining what investigative journalism specifically meant to them. One of them, who is an experienced investigative journalist, even said that in his field, compared to journalists working in other fields, all journalists do more or less the same job.

5.6 Further Studies

This research opens broad prospects for producing more studies on multiple issues related to investigative journalism and new media.

One of the studies that may be of great importance is the preparation of a semiotic analysis of one or more of the basic investigative programs provided by Aljazeera network, such as “The Hidden is More Immense” program or “Detective” program. It is also possible to conduct comparative analysis studies between the use of open sources provided by new media and the traditional sources that have been used in the media by monitoring the level of use of each type of source in one or more of Aljazeera's famous investigative programs. Other analytical studies also include quantitative studies about the informative value of investigative journalism of Aljazeera. It also includes studies that can be conducted for understanding the influences on audiences for following up Aljazeera’s media investigations.

The great focus of this study on the importance of verifying information provided by open sources of new media makes this research lead case studies about institutions specialized in verifying news and checking information in the Arab world such as (Tayakkan) which means *making sure of*, (Misbar) which means *probe* and (Tahaqaq) that means *verify*. Major Arab institutions of investigative journalism such as Arab Reporters for Investigative Journalism network (ARIJ) is also a candidate to be a part of some case studies on investigative journalism.

Also, this study can provide promising opportunities for conducting research on contemporary issues that are constantly updated, such as content creators adapting to the restrictions of publishing in social media such as Facebook and the role of electronic flies in manipulating collective awareness and forming public opinion.

However, the current study opens wide horizons for new future studies that can pursue the same analysis procedures provided by this research because of the fact that this study managed to apply classical media theories to explain the most modern media phenomena by using major media theories as a modern theoretical framework that can be adopted by variant related future studies. Furthermore, this research can be followed to conduct studies on screen and electronic website analyses which can shed light on the volume of traditional media usage of new media in its investigative reporting. Other future studies that can take advantage of this research are quantitative media studies that focus on the challenges faced by journalists who depend on new media materials as sources of media coverage.

Finally, Dynamic Capabilities Theory, which is an administrative theory, can be used to prepare critical systematic studies for further understanding and expansion in interpreting the administrative behavior of media institutions in dealing with new media technology in their journalistic practices.

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Appendixes

Appendix A Sample of the Translated Email Interviews Transcript in English

Name of the participant: Adel Abdulmughni
Type of interview: Email
Gender: Male
Age: 35 years
Job: Executive Manager of Mansa Foundation for Media and Development Studies
Years of experience: 19 years
Nationality: Yemen

Research Objectives	**Interview Questions**	**Answers of the** research participant
1st Objective		
To explicate the regional importance importance of Aljazeera Media Network investigative reporting.	To what extent does Aljazeera use investigative reporting in its coverage?	Aljazeera Media Network uses investigative journalism by producing televised investigations through the news channel or by channels in other languages, as well as publishing and financing investigative production through Aljazeera Net website in partnership with a large number of correspondents and collaborators in various countries of the world. What reinforces this interest is the establishment of a department specialized in investigative journalism in AJM, which qualified it to win international awards for investigative journalism. However, the investigative output of the Aljazeera network is still insignificant, in my opinion, given the size of the network, its great human, financial and technical capabilities, and its advanced position globally.
	What are the Problems of conducting investigative reporting?	The challenges and problems facing the investigative report conduction vary according to the press environment. In countries of political conflicts, the problems and risks are increasing, but in summary, we can say that the most prominent of these challenges is the absence of accurate information and compelling evidence that a hypothesis cannot be proven without them, especially in light of the prevention and blocking of information practiced by some regimes, and the absence or non-activation of laws on the right to access information. The risks facing investigative work are a major challenge, given that investigative work is based on revealing and exposing many issues of great weight, which often turn into issues of public opinion. Therefore, working on them and preparing a report on them is a work fraught with risks and challenges. Moreover, financial funding is one of the problems and limitations that face the preparation of the investigative report. There are also social limitations in a number of countries to the completion of investigative reports related to issues affecting social customs or religious beliefs. The journalist's lack of knowledge of skills is one of the problems and challenges facing the preparation of the investigative report,

		especially those reports that rely on Google Maps or data journalism and other types that require technical skills.
	How does investigative reporting affect media coverage of Aljazeera Media Network?	Certainly, investigative journalism is one of the most important journalistic arts, if not the most important one at all, as it is more objective and credible, and more influential on public opinion, as well as being one of the means of monitoring institutions, systems, and personalities, and directly contributes to bringing about change. All these advantages and privacy enjoyed by investigative journalism reflected positively on the press coverage of the Aljazeera Media Network, distinguishing it from many other media networks, and placing it in the ranks of the major global media networks. The impact of investigative journalism enhances the position of Aljazeera Media Network, earns it more follow-up and attention, and makes it more credible for the recipient, and more capable of changing societies.
	Why does Aljazeera Media Network use investigative media among its total coverage?	Being aware of the importance that investigative journalism has become, keeping pace with global transformations and competing with major international media outlets, and bypassing traditional media work and moving from merely reporting news to producing in-depth and documented reports that reveal facts and mysteries of public opinion, which makes it among the most reliable media networks around the world.
2nd Objective		
	How do you find the effects of technological factors on the investigative journalism?	Technological development has had a significant positive impact on investigative journalism, whether in terms of the use of tools and mechanisms that assists in checking and verification, or through access to multiple sources and cross-border documents, as well as through the speed and ease of dissemination and interaction. Multimedia has brought about a great leap for investigative journalism, accordingly data journalism and Google Maps have become an integral part of investigative journalism, just as modern media has become an inexhaustible field of information and documents that enabled the investigative journalist to easily access it.
	What are the problems in using new media that affect investigative reporting?	Perhaps one of the problems that the new media poses to investigative journalism is the huge amount of information and documents that the modern media pumps are among the problems created by the new media for investigative journalism" which "makes the investigative journalist's task great to verify and verify their authenticity and not fall into error by relying on incorrect documents, as the new media the new media facilitated the forgery, leakage and dissemination of documents by individuals. The new media has also become huge platforms for the spread of rumors and misleading news, which puts the investigative journalist in front of a great challenge to prevent falling into the error of these rumors, or even not to get involved in campaigns directed by individuals or parties that leaked correct information and documents but with the aim of using them by investigative journalists who may endorsed them for private goals and interests.
	To what extent does Aljazeera use new media in investigative reporting?	To a good extent, Aljazeera used the new media in its investigative journalism, and this was evident in the television investigations produced by the channel, such as the program "What is Hidden Greatest" or "Al-Motahhari" or other programs in which various tools and media were used for the new media, as well as the case

		with written investigations. Produced by Aljazeera Net, which also included multiple media.
	Why does Aljazeera Media Network use new media in its investigative journalism?	Because this has become a necessity in today's world, and in order to prove its leadership among the media networks, as well as the presence of qualified media and technical cadres within the network, which is always striving for modernization.
3rd Objective		
To study the effects of new media use in investigative reporting of Aljazeera Media Network.	How does new media development affect the amount and the quality of investigative reporting of Aljazeera Media Network?	Since its inception, investigative journalism has occupied a great place and importance in Her Majesty's court, and has proven a strong presence and a clear impact on societies, since before the emergence of the new media. However, it required more effort, especially with regard to checking the facts and verifying the authenticity of documents and sources provided today by electronic tools and new media. It was also in the past less widespread due to the limited distribution of paper or television broadcasts. I think that NM greatly influenced the volume of IJ production and pushed Aljazeera to produce cross-border investigative materials and encouraged it to deal with thorny issues that would not have been easy to reach without relying on new media, citizen journalism and media technologies. Many of the advantages of new media, such as interactivity and universality, have greatly affected investigative journalism and created public opinion on many issues. The advantages of new media are undoubtedly reflected in the development of the quality of Aljazeera's investigative work due to the interactive applications that provide supportive and enhanced content, and the simulation and multiple presentations they provide and other advantages provided by the new media.
	How do you evaluate the credibility of information from open-source data in new media?	Open sources provide a large and unlimited amount of information and data, some of which are reliable such as maps and applications for monitoring the movement of ships and aviation, and some of them need to be verified through the use of technical tools and means that enable the journalist to verify the information coming through these sources, especially the upcoming ones from social media. Although reliance on open sources in the production of investigative journalism is still new, the production of open source investigations has increased remarkably during the past few years, especially with regard to complex issues, and a number of open source investigative investigations have achieved great successes and won international awards, which indicates that its reliability and importance.
4th Objective		
To explore the barriers of using new media in investigative reporting in Aljazeera Media Network	What factors affect the abilities of Aljazeera Media Network journalists to use new media in investigative journalism activities?	There are a number of personal factors that control the ability of an investigative journalist in general, most notably the high sense of capturing ideas, the calculated courage to implement them, the ability to work under pressure, the ability to persuade and flexibility in dealing.
	How can Aljazeera Media Network Journalists overcome	Intensifying training courses related to investigative journalism and the use of digital tools.

	the obstacles of using new media in investigative journalism regarding Technological, human resources, political and financial barriers?	Attracting more veteran journalists in the field of investigative journalism. Dealing with the topics that investigative investigations revolve around in a professional and abstract manner, focusing first on investigations that concern societies, such as health, education, children, corruption issues and cross-border crimes. Adopting sufficient budgets to produce in-depth journalistic investigations. Purchasing more modern technologies in the field of digital journalism and training journalists to use them

Name of the participant: Ahmad Hamed Quder
Type of interview: Email
Gender: Male
Age: 40 years
Job: Senior Editor in SANAD News Agency
Years of experience: 17 years
Nationality: Palestine

Research Objectives	**Interview Questions**	**Answers**
1st Objective		
To explicate the regional importance of Aljazeera Media Network investigative reporting.	To what extent does Aljazeera use investigative reporting in its coverage?	It is known that Al-Jazeera has a large number of investigative programs, the most important of which is the Great Hidden Program, and there are many other programs, and therefore it uses investigative journalism to a very large extent.
	What are the Problems of conducting investigative reporting?	There are some drawbacks that I can answer when answering question 12.
	How does investigative reporting affect media coverage of Aljazeera Media Network?	Investigative reporting increases Aljazeera's reach to the audience and enhance its confidentiality.
	Why does Aljazeera Media Network use investigative media among its total coverage?	It is known that in-depth investigations that reveal hidden information and current news that the public opinion was not aware of contribute to distinguishing any media from others, whether it is visual, audio or read, and increases its popularity and presence among the masses. Today, all media outlets participate in reporting news and events, even in regular reports. This is no longer a monopoly on journalists practicing the profession of journalism in light of the existence of social media, which has turned everyone who owns a smart device and an account on one of these sites into a journalist and reporter of the event. In addition, I see that Aljazeera focuses on investigative materials through its various programs as part of its social responsibility in educating the Arab street and informing it of what its illegitimate governments are trying to hide and not inform it of, on the basis of: "The masses have the right to know the truth." Aljazeera considers itself since It was launched in 1996 as the "People's Satellite" which is biased towards the masses and is not on the side of governments.
2nd Objective		
	How do you find the effects of technological factors on the investigative journalism?	Media technology development facilitated Aljazeera Network's access to information and its sources, and increased the spread of its programs through social media platforms.

	What are the problems in using new media that affect investigative reporting?	The main problem is people's lack of trust in social media platforms.
	To what extent does Aljazeera use new media in investigative reporting?	The extent is clear when we consider the level of reliance on information provided by new media instead of human sources which were the only sources of data before the new media era.
	Why does Aljazeera Media Network use new media in its investigative journalism?	Aljazeera's use of new media is part of its keeping pace with media development and its new tools that provide information and news to the Arab viewer in new ways. Thus, not keeping pace with this development means losing a large percentage of Arab viewers, especially the youth segment, which has been using these means extensively during the past decade, in favor of other competing Arab satellite channels.
3rd Research Objective		
To study the effects of new media use in investigative reporting of Aljazeera Media Network.	How does new media development affect the amount and quality of investigative reporting of Aljazeera Media Network?	The new media opened horizons for new topics that first appeared on social networking sites, and were people's preoccupations, and reached the "trend" stage. This interest by the pioneers of social networking sites prompted Aljazeera Network to investigate more and research more about the topic that occupied the minds of the audience of these sites. The new media also increased the number of viewers for this type of investigative journalism and contributed to its reaching greater numbers as a result of the wide spread of social networking sites, whether by “sharing” it or part of it or publishing it on the pages of social networking sites with a wide audience. In addition, the new media gave those in charge of the investigative programs an opportunity to know the opinion of the masses and people and their reaction to what was published in these programs through the comments available on the communication sites, (true feedback), where the media message became carried out by two parties and not by one sending party, Today, there is a role for the recipient of the message by knowing his opinion and accepting or objecting to what was published. The Arab viewer can also follow these investigative programs at the time he deems appropriate, and is no longer forced to "glue" in front of the television screen at the specified broadcast time. The new media has facilitated access to the parties related to the investigative topics, and personal communication with them is no longer a condition for completing the preparation of these programs in light of the existence of modern means of communication. The author of the investigative program may be in one country and one of the relevant parties is in another.
	How do you evaluate the credibility of information from open-source data in new media?	Very weak.
4th Research Objective		

To explore the barriers of using new media in investigative reporting in Aljazeera Media Network	What factors affect the abilities of Aljazeera Media Network journalists to use new media in investigative journalism activities	Despite the expansion and spread of new media in the world, it is still not available to a large extent in many Arab countries that suffer from poverty and the inability to possess such tools and poor infrastructure such as telephone networks, electricity and the Internet. The new media is a wide sea in which there is a lot of news and events in which the true and the false are mixed, and this requires the authors of investigative programs extra effort to sort this news and verify its credibility.
	How can Aljazeera Media Network Journalists overcome the obstacles of using new media in investigative journalism regarding Technological, human resources, political and financial barriers?	

Name of the participant: Anas Radi
Type of interview: Email
Gender: Male
Age: 30 years
Job: Producer in Al Hiwar TV
Years of experience: 7 years
Nationality: Palestinian\ British

Research Objectives	**Interview Questions**	**Answers**
1st Objective		
To explicate the regional importance of Aljazeera Media Network investigative reporting.	To what extent does Aljazeera use investigative reporting in its coverage?	8 out of 10
	What are the Problems of conducting investigative reporting?	Weak introduction with no clear structure and short reports with excessive usage of colors.
	How does investigative reporting affect media coverage of Aljazeera Media Network?	To be honest, I don't know
	Why does Aljazeera Media Network use investigative media among its total coverage?	Investigative reporting is what has brought Aljazeera to the limelight. Aljazeera claims to report stories from underreported regions and that is its selling point.
2nd Objective		
	How do you find the effects of technological factors on the investigative journalism?	The advantage of the technology is to advance propaganda under the guise of news. In addition, the internet has allowed anyone to become an author: Anyone can create a blog and put an opinion out into the world, where it can go viral without any fact-checking or editing.
	What are the problems in using new media that affect investigative reporting?	Even though access to information has become easier, investigations became less credible and don't have the potential for social change.
	To what extent does Aljazeera use new media in investigative reporting?	Aljazeera has a tremendous online presence and huge social network. They tweet all the latest news and update their website very quickly. Moreover, they also have a mobile app and they manage it very well. They engage the audience by quoting their tweets and Facebook messages during shows.
	Why does Aljazeera Media Network use new media in its investigative journalism?	The new media is a strength of Aljazeera. They present a complicated issue in their investigations in a way that is understandable to the audience. They make use of pretty cool methods to produce a story

3rd Research Objective		
To study the effects of new media use in investigative reporting of Aljazeera Media Network.	How does new media development affect the amount and quality of investigative reporting of Aljazeera Media Network?	Aljazeera took advantage of the development of new media in their investigation to overcome the major challenges. Using the new development will increase the level of information literacy and skills of investigative journalists. The traditional ideal of Investigative reporting was for reporters to serve as independent sources, attempting to deliver the information in a fact-based, objective manner.
	How do you evaluate the credibility of information from open-source data in new media?	With its emphasis on raw facts, open-source journalism has an immediacy that is effective at a time when readers all along the ideological spectrum have become skeptical of the news media.
4th Research Objective		
To explore the barriers of using new media in investigative reporting in Aljazeera Media Network	What factors affect the abilities of Aljazeera Media Network journalists to use new media in investigative journalism activities	Aljazeera focuses on training and human development of its employees which make them loyal to the company. They have a network that gives them the liberty to work and grow.
	How can Aljazeera Media Network Journalists overcome the obstacles of using new media in investigative journalism regarding Technological, human resources, political and financial barriers?	I would only comment on the training section and say it's often helpful for the trainers to know how to collect relevant information and interpret it. Also, to have the ability to find relevant facts, such as clues that help investigators understand why something may have occurred, that support or verify a certain belief Also training on specific skills that help investigators analyze cases objectively and avoid assumptions that can hinder their ability to derive factual conclusions. These abilities allow professionals to evaluate circumstances and when making important decisions regarding an investigation, can help them either confirm previous inferences or correctly alter their opinions on a case.

Name of the participant: Aseel Saraih
Type of interview: Email
Gender: Male
Age: 33 years
Job: Investigative Media Director
Years of experience: 8 years
Nationality: Yemen

Research Objectives	**Interview Questions**	
1st Objective		
To explicate the regional importance of Aljazeera Media Network investigative .reporting	To what extent does Aljazeera use investigative reporting in its coverage?	Aljazeera network in general uses investigative reports well and effectively, especially on the TV channel. Unfortunately, the website is not very interested in investigative journalism. The website produces some investigations, but it is still limited compared to the production of some other websites and the capabilities of the Aljazeera network. However, the use of investigations in the TV channel is good, rather more than good, and it reaches very good, despite its limitations. The topics that the channel presents in various programs and in various formats are excellent and employ great capabilities regardless of orientation. In some programs, Aljazeera deviates from objectivity because the film maker himself has a certain orientation, knowing that I am not talking about impartiality in this issue, but I am talking about objectivity.
	What are the Problems of conducting investigative reporting?	There are many problems facing investigative journalism in the Arab world, including the difficulty of obtaining information, the difficulty of communicating with sources, financial difficulties because you know that investigative production consumes a lot of time and therefore requires more financial resources. Moreover, not all Arab journalists have the ability to produce an investigative report. A journalist may receive training, but his field capabilities may be non-existent. This makes the number of investigative journalists very few among Arab journalists. In Egypt, for example, the number of journalists who produced investigations may not exceed 100 investigative journalists out of more than 100 thousand Egyptian journalists. In Yemen, for example, those who produced investigative investigations with "ARIJ" are very few, they may not exceed 10-15 journalists. The security and political conditions in the Arab world where investigative journalists find threats constitute an important obstacle to investigative journalism which aims to reveal big and mysterious information data that are intended not to be revealed, whether they are cases of corruption, human rights violations, or social issues that politicians, rulers and influential people try to bury while the task of the investigative journalist is to dig in order to reveal it, and thus the journalist may be threatened, arrested, kidnapped or even killed. These are direct difficulties and threats facing the investigative journalist in Arab countries, especially those experiencing

		conflicts such as Yemen, Syria, Iraq, Libya and recently Lebanon and Tunisia.
	How does investigative reporting affect media coverage of Aljazeera Media Network?	It certainly has a positive impact on the channel and on its media profile, because Aljazeera has a wide audience in the entire Arab world including those who disagree with its orientation or agenda. The audience whether publics or elites love to diversify media templates, including the investigative template, and Aljazeera knows this diversity in the audience's taste very well, so it produces investigative works in its channels, whether Arabic or English, and this production added a lot to these channels, especially since these programs are described as balanced in quantity, although they are significantly limited on the website, which does not have an investigative unit until today. Thus, Aljazeera knows when to present investigations and when to publish its production or not to publish it in many programs, news, and others.
	Why does Aljazeera Media Network use investigative media among its total coverage?	First, there is a large audience that loves investigations, especially the video, which the audience likes very much, so Aljazeera focuses on the video. Secondly, there are some issues that need investigations, and these require great capabilities that are not available in the Arab world except to Aljazeera, whether they are material, technical or political. Aljazeera can cover them, unlike many other media networks that do not have the capacities available to Aljazeera. Moreover, there are issues that are not useful to go through the traditional treatment methods in the news, so they are covered by investigations.
2nd Objective		
	How do you find the effects of technological factors on the investigative journalism?	As for technological development, it has greatly benefited investigative journalism, today we have open-source investigations and it depends mainly on the great technological development. In the investigation, we cannot document everything, but we have the ability, through modern technology, to document evidence and obtain old photos or things that are not available in traditional systems. Today we have media outlets and international networks that rely solely on open source investigations, which have become 85% integrated. Technological development has also made it easier for journalists to search for documents and information. Through advanced technologies, the journalist can access large libraries of research and media institutions that were previously difficult for the journalist to access previously. This helped us to search for sites that provide research, studies, information and laws that we were looking for in Yemen, for example, we do not find it, but we find it in other research centers outside it. There are also new tools that help in checking facts, documents, information, photos and videos, the role of artificial intelligence has become greater in helping the journalist to establish information, and in the end, it is certain that technological development has benefited investigative journalism.
	What are the problems in using new media that affect investigative reporting?	The number of journalists who know new media techniques and methods is still limited, and their abilities are still mostly limited to written or video investigation, and many of them do not know

		multimedia, cross media, and digital media, and their capabilities are limited in podcasts and others. The main reason for the weakness of these capabilities is the lack of Arab platforms specialized in new media, and my observation that the bulk of Arab media platforms are still traditional or still rely on traditional and do not want to move forward in dealing with new media. Investigative journalism in general is research and proof journalism, whether we use new or traditional media to achieve this proof, and therefore we cannot say that not using the new media may negatively affect investigative journalism, it does not affect negatively, but its use will affect positively because it helps to be brief and brevity. Also, not using the new media does not allow the public to follow the investigative material carefully, because the contemporary public no longer prefers prolongation, especially since it uses mobile phones to follow up on investigative material, and we have to take advantage of that. We have many studies which say that the public can no longer tolerate lengthy material.
	To what extent does Aljazeera use new media in investigative reporting?	Aljazeera network has a trend in journalistic investigation which is investigative videos that are broadcasted on the channel, those are very advanced and have a good impact, use techniques and diversify the material widely, but Aljazeera network still has a problem in providing written investigative products that benefit from the techniques on Aljazeera Net website. Unfortunately, I am talking about the website, Aljazeera.net, where there is no unit specialized in investigative journalism, despite the presence of an in-depth journalism unit. This is very effective, unlike the channel, which has more than one unit, more than one supervisor, and more than one editor whose job is only to produce investigative reports. Therefore, investigative investigations are very limited on Aljazeera Net and very excellent in the channel that carries out very beautiful investigations, but they are not used in the right way, as these programs end with the end of broadcasting and publishing on Aljazeera social, and this is in contrast to the site that does not invest its great potential in producing investigative investigations, I am speaking As one of the supervisors who raised these problems to the administration of Aljazeera Net, our proposal did not resonate with them.
	Why does Aljazeera Media Network use new media in its investigative journalism?	Aljazeera is the largest media network in the Arab world and can be ranked among the three to four largest and most important media networks in the world, and it has created a very large audience. Today, television viewing in general is no longer large, after it retreated in favor of social media and new media, and therefore maintaining the audience of the network, which was built over 20 years, requires it to work in the new media, so Aljazeera launched, for example, the AJ+ service and other media accessories that depend on the development of new media and media technology.

		Today we are fully aware that the audience has started to flee from television, as we used to say that the paper press has begun or is almost ending. It is crawling towards new media and social media platforms, especially with the large spread of technical devices, especially mobile phones, I Pads, and others. This change in audience trends forced a large network such as Aljazeera to resort to the new media to maintain its audience, and although it is one of the largest global networks in the world of television, it also succeeded in creating a large audience in the new media as well, and it is at the top of the follow-ups on its account by the public whether they agreed with its policies or those who opposed and disagreed with them. We also do not forget that Aljazeera is one of the first Arab networks that turned to the new media in order to preserve its audience, and this indicates that there are distinguished media researchers in the network who succeeded in planning this matter, but they still failed in some aspects, as Aljazeera Net which is still suffering greatly in the field of Investigative Journalism.
3rd Research Objective		
To study the effects of new media use in investigative reporting of Aljazeera Media Network.	How does new media development affect the amount and quality of investigative reporting of Aljazeera Media Network?	The new media provided a qualitative and significant addition to investigative journalism, due to the creation of real platforms to publish the investigation. As you know, the new media does not recognize space, as was the case in the era of the print press, which restricted the writer to a limited number of words and columns, giving him, for example, half a page or a page. Be well suited to disseminate the investigative product. Today, the new media and electronic platforms have helped the journalist well to publish an integrated article. It is true that today we do not advise the journalist to lengthen his work or write an article of 3,000 or 4,000 words, but we consider that the size of the press material reaches 1500 words as a good thing. Thus, we consider that the new media has added many advantages to investigative journalism. If a journalist does not find a newspaper to publish for him today, he will find 100 platforms in the new media that publish his product, and the number of independent platforms has become very large, and this gave journalists a large space to publish, despite the difference between platforms according to financial accounts, editorial policies, volume of publications, interactivity and other circumstances. So, the new press has expanded the spread of investigative journalism by virtue of it reaching an audience and a larger segment. Previously, the press used to reach specific readers who buy newspapers and keep reading them on a regular basis, but today the investigative reporting can reach the audience via WhatsApp or Messenger, and this is a great opportunity to publish investigative reports. The new media also ensured diversity in the media. In today's press, the material can be multimedia between video, audio, maps, designs, etc., and this reduced dependence on written material in favor of diversity. The new media also added a greater ability for the journalist to publish the evidence he owns. In today's press, the journalist can use a videotape to include it in his investigation even if the

		investigation is written material to prove the hypothesis of the investigative journalism, and this was not available in the era of newspapers and traditional media, but it became available. Today, thanks to the new media. Let's also not forget that watching TV channels has declined compared to the new media, including social media, which is classified as media, and therefore the video spreads on the new media and has more views than it can enjoy on television. Consequently, the new media increased the journalist's freedom to write, ensured good visual diversity, and increased audience access more than it was in the case of traditional media. The quality of the work is good, albeit a little, but the problem with the site lies in the little promotion of investigative productions. Also, Aljazeera network websites are banned in many Arab countries such as Saudi Arabia, Yemen and Egypt, and this has affected the spread of its products. But the quality is excellent, technically and editorially, regardless of the orientation and the agenda. There is a huge quality, even if it is absent from many of them. Objectivity and is governed by the editor's direction, such as some films executed by Jamal Al-Maliky, for example. There is no objectivity because the editor's or supervisor's direction is what appears in the work, unlike the investigations that we worked for Aljazeera, which was the most objective and professional, although not the most powerful.
	How do you evaluate the credibility of information from open-source data in new media?	As we know, today there are investigations that are based entirely on open sources only and no longer rely on documents and documentation, and they are considered as trusted investigations of high quality because they depend on reliable open sources, but the journalist should check his sources in all cases because there are unreliable open sources. We must not forget that the use of open sources has requirements, the most important of which is that the person who relies on them in his investigations has the ability to use these sources and their tools, search, audit and refine information. Open sources for investigative reporting have added a lot because they are documentation journalism and evidence, and in light of the situation of the press in the Arab world, the journalist no longer has the ability to document many things, and therefore he resorts to open sources to document evidence and events. Today, open sources have many tools and reliable global sites that provide verification and documentation services, whether they are free or with fees that have certain limits, and therefore today we find influential investigative reports produced using open sources that can have a positive impact if the journalist has the ability to actually use these sources. In the other direction, today we can find weak investigations in which the open press was used, but the journalist who prepared it is weak and unqualified. Therefore, we have to understand the nature and definition of open sources because not any information available to the public can be dealt with as an open source and suitable for use in an open investigation. Moreover, some investigative reports depend on open sources, but they need documentation from the field. Today, some journalists believe that open source is sufficient and neglect field

		documentation, and this does not serve the investigation. I see that open sources are the most tools that has been added to investigative journalism in recent years, and the existence of institutions that provide training on the use of this type of source in investigative reporting has become very important.
4th Research Objective		
To explore the barriers of using new media in investigative reporting in Aljazeera Media Network	What factors affect the abilities of Aljazeera Media Network journalists to use new media in investigative journalism activities	The most important factor is the channel's orientation. Sometimes the journalist abandons himself in order to work in such large networks. Although I worked on investigations with Aljazeera, we worked on it with objectivity, accuracy and professionalism, but the most important factor the journalist worked on was the channel's orientation. Sometimes we work with media outlets that we know their orientation and we work according to. During our work with Aljazeera Net, we had very important standards of objectivity and professionalism, and therefore we produced very good investigative reports, but sometimes we find investigations on Aljazeera that have great objectivity, but subjectivity is also high. I know colleagues who were having a certain orientation and completely changed after they work with Aljazeera, so that they sometimes publish things they are not convinced of.
	How can Aljazeera Media Network Journalists overcome the obstacles of using new media in investigative journalism regarding Technological, human resources, political and financial barriers?	I do not think that the TV channel faces any obstacles; on the contrary, it has huge potential and important production in investigative journalism. However, on the website, there are major obstacles that must be overcome in several ways, the most important of which is the establishment of a unit specialized in investigative journalism and the provision of good financial support on the site to produce investigative reports because the website's support and budgets are very limited. It is not normal for a large site like Aljazeera Net not to produce large-scale, multi-media investigations. Today, there are journalists who present ideas for investigative production, but as soon as they know the low financial return that they will receive in exchange for implementing these ideas for Aljazeera Net, they leave it and look to work with other sites that pay more than it. This affects the quality of the published investigative reports because the editor will then have to accept inexpensive ideas and these are the most important obstacles. Moreover, Aljazeera has not yet found solutions to the ban imposed on it in some countries such as Egypt, Yemen and Saudi Arabia, which can enjoy high views.

Name of the participant: Khaled Ma'ali
Type of interview: email
Gender: Male
Age: 55 years
Job: columnist and writer in Daily Palestinian Newspapers
Years of experience: 20 years
Nationality: Palestinian

Research Objectives	**Interview Questions**	**Answers** of research participant
1st Objective		
To explicate the regional importance of Aljazeera Media Network investigative reporting.	To what extent does Aljazeera use investigative reporting in its coverage?	To a high extent, it is a large and wide network and its capabilities are high, and it takes all directions in terms of respecting ones opinion and the other opinion, and reaches everyone without bias and in an honest scientific manner, in its most exciting and distinguished topics that the public needs to address a difficult reality, and it is also characterized by a very wide coverage, and an audience which is a conscious, educated, debatable, interested audience which has a rather excellent scientific and cultural balance.
	What are the Problems of conducting investigative reporting?	Too many, the most important is the absence of the appropriate environment of freedom and the repression or the lack of capabilities, or even starting non correctly. It is unreasonable for us to make an investigative report on an issue about which no information is available or information cannot be accessed due to the existence of an oppressive ruling, for example. I personally know Arab media workers who conducted significant investigations about some stories of corruption, violations and manipulation of laws and supported them with several evidences; and published them but in fact noting was changed. And finally we have to remember that there are societal customs and traditions that are consistent with the provisions of the journalism code of ethics such as inadmissibility of publishing pictures of children without the permission of their parents, or publishing pictures of martyrs whose bodies have been mutilated, or announcing the names of those killed in any case before their families formally being informed about their death.
	How does investigative reporting affect media coverage of Aljazeera Media Network?	It gives it credibility and gives it the confidence of the public of different spectra, and contributes to the development of the media in a way that allows a large part of it to be used in scientific research due to its reliability and credibility. Aljazeera's adoption of these procedures increases its stock of a conscious, educated public who follows, watches and evaluates press coverage, and translates investigative journalism into realistic work, as it enjoys high credibility and high quality professionalism, which is what the Arab world and the third world specifically need. Also, Aljazeera media is known for being influential and not a traditional, routine media, but rather a media that is required by the large audience.

		Investigative journalism is the most appropriate form of media coverage to the political situation of the Arab world and the developing countries in general were hiding and manipulating of information are wildly experienced by the authorities and official bodies.
	Why does Aljazeera Media Network use investigative media among its total coverage?	For many reasons, the most important of which is maintaining an advanced position in the face of strong competition from other networks. As well as Aljazeera's urgent need to reach the different and opposite directions from the sources of information on the way to reveal the truth to the public, which require knowing it without frills. Also, the speed of technical development and social networks increases the need for non-routine investigative work, especially since the Arab situation is full of the repeated state's media and the news of ruling party, which doesn't include new and does not keep pace with the times and does not meet the public's need for knowledge". The investigative coverage also earns Aljazeera's audience and network credibility and science, and increases the audience's readiness to cover the rest of the press fields of all kinds, for journalism complements each other. AJMN serves as a source when people search information in its platforms but it serves as a reference when other media use it as a source of information.
2nd Objective		
	How do you find the effects of technological factors on the investigative journalism?	The impact of technological development is very enormous, and it has made investigative journalism much more valuable than it was previously, as it has contributed to increasing the speed of modernization, discovery and development, and building on the correct information that contributes to the development of societies.
	What are the problems in using new media that affect investigative reporting?	The problems are many, but they can be overcome by the same tools because of the speed of the search engine and communication with the competent authorities. I think that the biggest problem here is "buying the journalist", or putting pressure on him, or subjecting him to imprisonment, arrest, prosecution and confiscation of equipment, or his departure from impartiality because of a wrong belief. Therefore, the investigative journalist must be impartial and have a correct understanding of his work, and be loyal to his profession and not to his pocket or any other pressures. We have to realize that the repressive regimes are the biggest obstacle in the way of achieving distinguished and high-quality investigative journalism. A journalist who feels that he is protected produces strong material, but the one who is under pressure finds it difficult to access information that can earn his investigative production high credibility."
	To what extent does Aljazeera use new media in investigative reporting?	To a large extent, the new media has its advantages that fundamentally help in the development of investigative journalism by using the latest new media methods to reach the best result in investigative journalism.
	Why does Aljazeera Media Network use new media in its investigative journalism?	Because the new media has many aspects and important parts, including its large audience, the speed of its spread, the strength of its influence and because it is a mine of information

		and data due to the abundant material published every day on its different platforms. We should not forget that Aljazeera is a global media network, so it is not concerned in covering local events in each country even inside the Arab area. However, content related to local events in each area is great significant to the residents of that area who are part of the entire audience of AGMN. For this region, Aljazeera launched several Facebook pages specialized in the events of each region it concerns such as Aljazeera Palestine, Aljazeera Syria, Aljazeera Iraq, Aljazeera Turkey and others which enable AJMN to take care of the detailed local content of each country without having to allocate space for these event on its central TV space channel or the electronic website. So, the success in dealing with new media lies in the fact that the press institution succeed in outperforming their competitors in making the necessary materials for social media platforms and succeed in having the appropriate platforms for disseminating these materials. It could be hardly seen, and was characterized by little effort and suffering from difficulty in accessing information and lack of credibility. The new media increased the difficulty of falsification, fabrication and pumping inaccurate information due to the speed of examination and knowing its truth with the push of a button and searching in websites and engines with fast accuracy, quantity and type.
3rd Research Objective		
To study the effects of new media use in investigative reporting of Aljazeera Media Network.	How does new media development affect the amount and quality of investigative reporting of Aljazeera Media Network?	New media had a significant positive impact on investigative journalism of Aljazeera, making access to the correct information more quickly, which was reflected in a large volume of information and investigative work. Regarding the quality, it had a very large impact because the quality of investigative journalism dominates the quantity of Aljazeera's works; new is widely used in education and training in techniques, access to business models, use of screen enhancers, and capturing audience evaluation. So, Aljazeera network has succeeded greatly in benefiting from the development of media technology in its various journalistic activities, including investigative journalism". It was one of the first Arab media networks that designed its own applications on Android and IOS systems, and launched the services of Aljazeera magazine on the I Pad for direct access to the audience of tablets, and it was among the first networks that invested in the services of podcasts.
	How do you evaluate the credibility of information from open-source data in new media?	An excellent evaluation, since the sources are clear with no ambiguity to contest them, and their reasonableness is clear, but that does not prevent us from being cautious when taking from open sources, especially if they follow entities that have insufficient confidence.
4th Research Objective		

To explore the barriers of using new media in investigative reporting in Aljazeera Media Network.	What factors affect the abilities of Aljazeera Media Network journalists to use new media in investigative journalism activities	Many factors control the ability of journalists in Aljazeera Media Network to engage in investigative journalistic activity, the most important of which are: the ability to access sources despite the lack of capacity and the low amount of information allowed to be known, as well as the strength of funding, protecting journalists during their access to verified information, not harming them, and employing well-experienced crews. And the use of the latest methods and methods to reach the verified and correct information. Objective conditions such as the level of freedoms, the state of repression and the dictatorial regime in the Arab countries and the third world play a major role in the ability of journalists to access information and the public's right to know. In fact, repressive regimes are the biggest obstacle to accessing distinguished and high-quality investigative journalism. Taking into account that journalists must be protected in all cases, whoever feels that he is protected produces strong material, unlike a journalist who suffers from pressure and who is difficult to access information that can earn his investigative work high credibility. The presence of highly experienced and well-experienced crews is important to achieving the development of using new media in investigative journalism of Aljazeera. In addition, training is a very big problem since An Arab journalist is either a content creator, a text writer, a reporter from the field, an editor in the office, a news producer and reporter, or a television reporter. All of these are traditional journalistic tasks and responsibilities while the practice of journalism, such as the use of multimedia, the implementation of electronic simulation programs, the preparation of animated clips, video graphic productions, and info graphics. So the expert Arab journalists need cognitive training sessions to convince them of the importance of this technical training as a way to the labor market of journalism. However we have to remember that training courses suffers from the high cost, long term courses which consume the time, the need of techniques and tools, qualified trainees, los of training integrity and los of comprehensive training institutions. Financial costs is a main factor in media production and in general there are five element determine the costs of producing media programs: the financial spending capacity of the press institution, the nature of the required media product, the identity of the implementing agency, the level of technical equipments used in production, and the abundance of documents and evidence related to this work.
	How can Aljazeera Media Network Journalists overcome the obstacles of using new media in investigative journalism regarding Technological, human resources, political and financial barriers?	Through a well-thought-out work plan, knowing the surrounding conditions well, and trying to penetrate it if possible. What works or can be done in Lebanon is not like Egypt, and Egypt’s conditions are different from Jordan or occupied Palestine. Every country or region has its complex circumstances that must be dismantled and studied well before Initiate distinguished investigative journalism.

		There are also circumstances related to the strength of funding and the penetration of difficult areas to gain access to information that feeds distinguished investigative journalism. Training: This is the most important thing, and training can be done through available programs that have become easy through the Internet, Zoom websites, and others, so that the participating elements are committed to training, and that the training should be smooth, easy, comfortable and not complicated, and be based on realistic experiences rather than theoretical information. Human resources: many if they are activated within correct standards, and if they are done with training and follow-up on a timely basis and not leave them under circumstances. it is necessary for Aljazeera to search for experienced journalists for improving the usage of new media in its investigative journalist. Political Circumstances: The most complex issue, what is governed in Ramallah, for example, as a special circumstance differs from the circumstance of Cairo or Damascus, the differences between the behaviors and practices of different political bodies should be studied carefully before making the decision of media investigations activity launching. Financial Obstacles: the money is very important to pay the rewarding wages to skilled trainers with experience and competence, and it also contributes to training them in fields of work that require multiple logistical and service expenses. Technical obstacles: Very few in light of the great progress in technology, but they remain an existing obstacle that must be taken into account and not left to chance.

Name of the participant: Mohammad Bin Salem
Type of interview: email
Gender: Male
Age: 50 years
Job: News Presenter at Al-Hiwar Space Channel
Years of experience: 28 years
Nationality: Tunisian

Research Objectives	**Interview Questions**	**Answers**
1st Objective		
To explicate the regional importance of Aljazeera Media Network investigative reporting.	To what extent does Aljazeera use investigative reporting in its coverage?	Compared to other institutions, Aljazeera's use of investigative journalism is still limited in my estimation. But this use is developing and we notice this development in some of the investigative works of AJMN on the Yemeni, Syrian and Gulf crises.
	What are the Problems of conducting investigative reporting?	Access to information, its source and background, its credibility, verification, time pressure, financial budget, follow-up of regulatory agencies (security and others).
	How does investigative reporting affect media coverage of Aljazeera Media Network?	Consolidation of professionalism, consolidation of deep journalistic work, avoidance of simplification and flatness, and consolidation of its position as a media reference.
	Why does Aljazeera Media Network use investigative media among its total coverage?	Aljazeera practices investigative journalism for remaining its situation as a reference of information and news materials in the Arab world, it leads the media works with high level of profisionalism which preserves the depth of journalistic works by practicing IJ
2nd Objective		
	How do you find the effects of technological factors on the investigative journalism?	Technological development has contributed to increasing the speed of search and access to information, smooth and rapid networking between the various elements of work, providing greater and broader possibilities for verification. And investigative reporting pre-new media was slow and exhausting.
	What are the problems in using new media that affect investigative reporting?	The issue of data credibility, the spread of flatness and the prevalence of a culture of ease of publication in the new media. I strongly believe that the success of any press institution in using media technology development is related to the institution's orientation to modernization and development, availability of planning that takes successive updates into consideration in plans, availability of budgets for updating

		programs and tools, and availability of human cadres capable of managing updates optimally.
	To what extent does Aljazeera use new media in investigative reporting?	According to my knowledge and follow-up, Aljazeera's use of new media in its investigative journalism is still limited.
	Why does Aljazeera Media Network use new media in its investigative journalism?	Because it is an essential and reference element in the work.
3rd Research Objective		
To study the effects of new media use in investigative reporting of Aljazeera Media Network.	How does new media development affect the amount and quality of investigative reporting of Aljazeera Media Network?	According to my knowledge and follow-up, I did not notice a significant effect. It also expanded the circle of tributaries and sources of information, and this is good.
	How do you evaluate the credibility of information from open-source data in new media?	Credibility is weak, although it is the most important element to be worked on before the source is approved.
4th Research Objective		
To explore the barriers of using new media in investigative reporting in Aljazeera Media Network	What factors affect the abilities of Aljazeera Media Network journalists to use new media in investigative journalism activities	Subjectively: Passion, skill, good mastery of work tools, patience. Objectively: the institution adopting work, providing credits and capabilities, provides a safety net when needed. I want to focus on training market of the Arab media where Arab press institutions should pay special attention to training. Unfortunately, the Arab training market still focuses on the bright titles of training programs without paying attention to the strong content. Many courses are offered to polish trainers who want to turn into stars in the media sky without real experience in the practical field of work. This trend drains the energies of Arab trainees and training institutions in areas that unfortunately are far from benefiting Arab professionals, especially in modern technical fields, including the new media.
	How can Aljazeera Media Network Journalists overcome the obstacles of using new media in investigative journalism regarding Technological, human resources, political and financial barriers?	

Name of the participant: Mounira Hajlaoui
Type of interview: email
Gender: Female
Age: 35 years
Job: Correspondent at Aljazeera Net Website
Years of experience: 12 years
Nationality: Tunisia

Research Objectives	**Interview Questions**	**Answers**
1st Objective		
To explicate the regional importance of Aljazeera Media Network investigative .reporting	To what extent does Aljazeera use investigative reporting in its coverage?	I believe that Aljazeera Media Network uses investigative work in its journalistic coverage within good limits, whether it is in its investigative programs, news reports or newsletters throughout the day through its research and investigation of facts regardless of their sources and contact with all parties related to the subject matter of the investigation. Aljazeera in general provides a variety of coverage, the most important of which are news programs such as Al-Hassad, in-depth follow-ups such as "Beyond the News", and general knowledge and cultural programs.
	What are the Problems of conducting investigative reporting?	Political conditions, lack of information, lack of training and qualification, and lack of incentives.
	How does investigative reporting affect media coverage of Aljazeera Media Network?	It affects positively, as it adds more credibility and reliability to the press coverage of the network, and increases its lead in viewership and audience approval.
	Why does Aljazeera Media Network use investigative media among its total coverage?	Because of the importance of this type of journalism in building a trusting relationship between the network and the audience, because investigative work is always biased towards the person and the citizen who is looking for a way to talk about his suffering, and to reveal the facts.
2nd Objective		
	How do you find the effects of technological factors on the investigative journalism?	The impact of technological development on investigative journalism is significant because it facilitates the flow and verification of information. There is no doubt that investigations before the era of new media were weak, although there are achievements that can be recorded, but they are less than recent trends in the production of investigative journalism.
	What are the problems in using new media that affect investigative reporting?	The need to keep pace with the continuous technical progress in new media technologies, and to verify what is published in this media. As you know, the development of the benefit of press institutions from the new media includes, in the technical

		aspect, providing information and data collection devices and owning access accounts on open source applications, as well as providing a high ability to deal with auditing applications and verifying information, and keeping pace with modern technical programs which can be used in audio, image and video processing to professional levels of artistic output for investigative work.
	To what extent does Aljazeera use new media in investigative reporting?	The use of new media in the investigative journalism of Aljazeera network can be evaluated as excellent. It makes good use of data journalism and open sources due to its ease and accuracy despite its shorthand and brevity. It also uses it frequently for its rapid spread and its ability to communicate messages to the public.
	Why does Aljazeera Media Network use new media in its investigative journalism?	Because of the strength of the impact of new media on the public, especially with the technological development that accompanied it, the contemporary viewer, reader and listener has become very different from his counterpart from yesterday's audience, today he is educated, cultured, quick-witted and hasty.
3rd Research Objective		
To study the effects of new media use in investigative reporting of Aljazeera Media Network.	How does new media development affect the amount and the quality of investigative reporting of Aljazeera Media Network?	It had a positive impact in terms of quantity and type, so investigative journalism was numerous and varied (visual, audio and written), and the network topped the rates of views, reading and listening, and won awards. The method of producing investigative works is one of the most important things that the new media provided to improve the quality of investigative productions. Actually, NM enriches IJ in terms of the way investigative work is being presented, which is characterized by a quality of movement, suspense and richness, and thus the new media affected investigative journalism positively
	How do you evaluate the credibility of information from open-source data in new media?	The reliability of open sources is good, especially since several governments and international organizations resort to these sources in their discussion of many issues due to their credibility and reliability.
4th Research Objective		
To explore the barriers of using new media in investigative reporting in Aljazeera Media Network	What factors affect the abilities of Aljazeera Media Network journalists to use new media in investigative journalism activities	I think training is the most important factor because despite the general impression of many people about the ease of dealing with social media tools, this does not mean that journalists do not need to be trained in new media techniques that can be used in investigative journalism, in addition senior journalists need for cognitive training aimed at viewing the updates of these tools and the characteristics of their successive publications.
	How can Aljazeera Media Network Journalists overcome the obstacles of using new media in investigative journalism regarding	Have more courage and separate everything that is subjective and all factors from the profession.

	Technological, human resources, political and financial barriers?	

Name of the participant: Qutb Al-Arabi
Type of interview: Email
Gender: Male
Age: 60 years
Job: Al- Sharq TV
Years of experience: 35 years
Nationality: Egypt

Research Objectives	**Interview Questions**	**Answers**
1st Objective		
To explicate the regional importance of Aljazeera Media Network investigative reporting.	To what extent does Aljazeera use investigative reporting in its coverage?	Aljazeera uses the investigative template to a large extent, and it preceded other Arab news channels with its "extremely Secret" program, and now it has investigative programs such as "What is Hidden is Greater" and some other programs. Aljazeera is primarily a news channel, so the majority of its news programs are between news coverage and analytical programs for news and events. In documentaries, whether in the Arabian Peninsula, English, or documentaries, they tend to be investigative
	What are the Problems of conducting investigative reporting?	The problems facing the investigative report are the lack of financial resources that provide ease of movement and communication with the parties to the investigation and to persuade or entice them to participate. There are difficulties related to the refusal of some sources to cooperate with the investigative journalists, as well as difficulties in accessing information that the owners consider private secrets or are afraid to disclose so as not to be subject to legal accountability or security prosecution, or they may endanger their lives by other parties.
	How does investigative reporting affect media coverage of Aljazeera Media Network?	The use of investigative journalism gives Aljazeera or any channel more credibility, and is more persuasive to viewers, but these programs are the most financially costly for any channel.
	Why does Aljazeera Media Network use investigative media among its total coverage?	Aljazeera uses investigative work because it is one of the most influential, most viewed, and most credible forms of journalism that contributes to establishing a positive image about the channel among its peers and the audience.
2nd Objective		
	How do you find the effects of technological	Certainly IJ benefits greatly from the technological development of media and communications which has

	factors on the investigative journalism?	provided it with easy access to human or informational sources, dealing with them, analyzing and matching data, and providing IJ by these data. Modern technologies have also reduced the financial costs of IR, especially those related to travel and accommodation.
	What are the problems in using new media that affect investigative reporting?	Among the problems of the new media that affect investigative journalism, technical manipulation of data and images and the dangers of piracy.
	To what extent does Aljazeera use new media in investigative reporting?	To a very large extent.
	Why does Aljazeera Media Network use new media in its investigative journalism?	Because the new media reaches large segments of the audience who preferred social media over traditional media due to the dynamic features of new media and its interactivity with the audience and because it is easier to correct the error if it occurs in any product.
3rd Research Objective		
To study the effects of new media use in investigative reporting of Aljazeera Media Network.	How does new media development affect the amount and the quality of investigative reporting of Aljazeera Media Network?	Investigative journalism existed even if it did not bear this name, and we used this journalistic art a lot in paper journalism in some journalistic investigations (a model for this is a journalistic investigation of me personally in Al-Shaab newspaper in the mid-nineties about human organ trade in Egypt, in which many parties involved in this crime, the report won the approval and appreciation of many health and regulatory bodies at the time).
	How do you evaluate the credibility of information from open-source data in new media?	Open sources are an informational treasure that does not carry the channel major financial burdens, and ensuring its credibility has become easy through the platforms specialized in auditing, and Aljazeera now has a Sanad agency specialized in this task.
4th Research Objective		
To explore the barriers of using new media in investigative reporting in Aljazeera Media Network	What factors affect the abilities of Aljazeera Media Network journalists to use new media in investigative journalism activities	With regard to subjective factors, i.e. related to the person of the investigator, they may be a lack of investigative skills, absence of motivation and desire for this work, or insufficient time for him to complete his task while he has other assignments at the same time, some may have personal security accounts Personal and family when dealing with some topics. As for the objective factors, they are related to the political, professional and ethical calculations in dealing with some topics, and the pressures exerted by some parties to prevent the handling or publication of some investigations. Perhaps if a specialized unit for investigative journalism was established, it would contribute to producing better and more investigations, as this unit will be concerned with setting its unified professional standards. And by mapping the priorities of its investigations, it will also create a fertile environment for honest competition among its members.
	How can Aljazeera Media Network Journalists overcome the obstacles of	

	using new media in investigative journalism regarding Technological, human resources, political and financial barriers?	

Name of the participant: Said Eminzade
Type of interview: Email
Gender: Male
Age: 35 years
Job: Producer in Alhiwar Space Channel
Years of experience: 10 years
Nationality: Syria

Research Objectives	**Interview Questions**	**The Answers**
1st Objective		
To explicate the regional importance of Aljazeera Media Network investigative reporting.	To what extent does Aljazeera use investigative reporting in its coverage?	To a relatively acceptable extent, it is one of the few media outlets that uses investigative work, but focuses on certain files and neglects others, perhaps according to the nationality of the team working in the network or the type and importance of the event. Aljazeera is known by its other kinds of coverage including News coverage (wars - conflicts - elections - ...) and sports coverage provided by Bein Sport channels (formerly Aljazeera Sports)
	What are the Problems of conducting investigative reporting?	Lack of appropriate documentation, lack of communication with the subject of the story or witnesses, financial problems.
	What procedure do you suggest to be followed by reporters?	Determining the subject and its ambiguities, communicating with witnesses, providing materials and documents necessary to implement the report.
	How does investigative reporting affect media coverage of Aljazeera Media Network?	It gives it more credibility, seriousness and professionalism in conveying and documenting information to the viewer.
	Why does Aljazeera Media Network use investigative media among its total coverage?	The investigative work confirms the reliability and accuracy of the information for audience and public opinion, and that is why Aljazeera uses it in its coverage.
2nd Objective		
To explore the factors of using new media by Aljazeera Media Network in its investigative reporting.	How do you evaluate investigative reporting pre-new media?	It was limited to the elite audience and the educated in general, and lacked a large spread, as is the case now with the wide audience in social media.
	How do you find the effects of technological factors on the investigative journalism?	Technological development has a significant positive impact on investigative journalism, especially with regard to the quality of tools, methods of searching for information, the speed of access to it, and its availability on websites and social media platforms as open information sources.

	What are the problems in using new media that affect investigative reporting?	The abundance of false information, fabricated images, and populist masses.
	To what extent does Aljazeera use new media in investigative reporting?	To an acceptable and often sufficient extent, commensurate with the quality of the subjects targeted in the investigative investigation.
	Why does Aljazeera Media Network use new media in its investigative journalism?	Because of the growing connection of the new media with information at the level of individuals and institutions, and also to reach the largest possible segment of people.
3rd Research Objective		
To study the effects of new media use in investigative reporting of Aljazeera Media Network.	How does new media development affect the amount and quality of investigative reporting of Aljazeera Media Network?	The volume of investigative work has increased remarkably since the increase in demand for new media with all its platforms and levels. The new media has contributed to improving the quality of investigative work in terms of the abundance of information, the quality of materials and documents, as well as the ease of access to human resources. Thus all of these criteria give a more coherent, information-containing, and streamlined investigative material in the presentation, and thus further improves the quality of investigative work.
	How do you evaluate the credibility of information from open-source data in new media?	The most important characteristic of open sources in the means of communication and others is the freeness and abundance of information, but it requires a great effort to verify the reliability and accuracy of the information.
4th Research Objective		
To explore the barriers of using new media in investigative reporting in Aljazeera Media Network.	What factors affect the abilities of Aljazeera Media Network journalists to use new media in investigative journalism activities	Specialization in the subject matter to be investigated in investigative work, appropriate training of the research team, and provision of money to overcome research and investigation challenges.
	How can Aljazeera Media Network Journalists overcome the obstacles of using new media in investigative journalism regarding Technological, human resources, political and financial barriers?	The work team can train on previous investigative work produced by Aljazeera network or others It is important to contract with expert journalists and specialized researchers to carry out investigative work. Attempting to exploit political conditions (wars - conflicts - demonstrations -...) to obtain the required information, with the importance of not exposing the work team to danger. Try to use the available information and rely on open sources, the Internet, volunteers and students if possible. The use of technology is an important element in the improvement of investigative work. In the absence of appropriate equipment such as professional cameras, fast computers, and others, it is possible to work at the minimum level that guarantees the documentation and preservation of

		information, this level of journalistic works allowing the journalistic material to be presented through the use of smart phone applications equipped with the camera and editing software of photos and videos. So I seriously recommend Aljazeera to rely more and more in modern techniques and technological devices

Name of the participant: Sanae Elkouiti
Type of interview: Email
Gender: Female
Age: 39 years
Job: Correspondent to Aljazeera Net
Years of experience: 14 years
Nationality: Morocco

Research Objectives	**Interview Questions**	**Themes**
1st Objective		
To explicate the regional importance of Aljazeera Media Network investigative reporting.	To what extent does Aljazeera use investigative reporting in its coverage?	As it is known with news stories, constructive journalism, interviews, Aljazeera network relies on investigative work in its coverage, especially on the TV channel, but investigative work has a weaker presence on its websites.
	What are the Problems of conducting investigative reporting?	Among the problems faced by those working in investigative journalism is the difficulty of accessing official information and the deliberate concealment of it from the journalist, in addition to obstructing the investigative work by those affected by its results. Moreover, the impact of the investigative report remains limited in the Arab world, if not negative in some cases. In many cases, the journalist finds himself, during the preparation of the investigative report, asking himself about its feasibility and whether its impact will be positive on the victims or worsen their conditions. This is in addition to the lack of a political and legal environment that encourages investigative work, and the failure of media institutions to provide sufficient budgets for investigative work, and sometimes the media institution stops the investigative investigation after it has achieved important strides due to the pressures of lobbies, capital owners, or institutions.
	How does investigative reporting affect media coverage of Aljazeera Media Network?	The investigative report raises the level of audience viewing of Aljazeera Media Network, and sheds light on the ambiguous areas in a number of files and issues that the network deals with in the rest of its media coverage.
	Why does Aljazeera Media Network use investigative media among its total coverage?	To reveal the hidden aspects of the news stories which need a long and in-depth effort to reveal them, and to provide documented accounts of some mysterious events.

2nd Objective		
	How do you find the effects of technological factors on the investigative journalism?	Before the emergence of the new media, a number of obstacles were holding back investigative journalism, and investigations required huge budgets, a large team, and a longer time. However, with the emergence of the new media, new opportunities emerged that helped investigative journalism continue to perform its important role, and to overcome many constraints and obstacles. The development of technology has facilitated investigative journalism, especially with regard to the development of photographic and audio recording equipment. It has also made it possible to quickly collect the required data and information, even if it is remote. It has also facilitated meeting with sources from a distance and obtaining the documents and reports that the journalist needs to achieve their works without the need to go to the source Physically.
	What are the problems in using new media that affect investigative reporting?	The new media has allowed the excessive availability of information and the circulation of inaccurate news, so it is necessary for the investigative journalist to check the facts during the stages of investigative work and to approach various methods of accessing information from its primary sources and not just relying on those available on the Internet.
	To what extent does Aljazeera use new media in investigative reporting?	
	Why does Aljazeera Media Network use new media in its investigative journalism?	Because the use of new media has become important in investigative journalism, especially in cross-border investigative work.
3rd Research Objective		
To study the effects of new media use in investigative reporting of Aljazeera Media Network.	How does new media development affect the amount and quality of investigative reporting of Aljazeera Media Network?	With the emergence of the new media, the volume of investigative work in the network has increased, as it has enabled many businesses to reduce the time allotted for preparing investigative work, and time is the most important thing for media organizations. It also reduced the size of the team that works on each investigative work. There is no doubt that the new media had a positive impact on the quality of the investigative work of Aljazeera network. The available sources enables the strengthening of the investigative work and reducing its cost financially and in time, which leads in an increasing in its quality and the level of mastery of the completed investigations as well. This development prompts the officials in the Aljazeera network to establish the Monitoring and Verification Unit in order to monitor and verify the content provided by open sources, all with the aim of improving investigative work
	How do you evaluate the credibility of information from open-source data in new media?	Open sources gave the journalist access to information that supports his investigative work. However, in view of the multiplicity of open sources, the journalist should have the skill to be able to benefit from these sources and their accuracy, because it is not always accurate especially due to the boom in information and data published on the Internet.

4th Research Objective		
To explore the barriers of using new media in investigative reporting in Aljazeera Media Network (9)	What factors affect the abilities of Aljazeera Media Network journalists to use new media in investigative journalism activities	Several factors control the ability of Aljazeera network journalists to practice investigative work, among them higher training in investigative journalism and new media, owning the tools of investigative journalism and keeping pace with technological development and the possibilities it provides to carry out investigative work. In addition to providing financial capabilities, i.e. sufficient budget, allocating sufficient time and appropriate working conditions to get the work done.
	How can Aljazeera Media Network Journalists overcome the obstacles of using new media in investigative journalism regarding Technological, human resources, political and financial barriers?	-Training? Constant training and keeping pace with technological development - HR? Working in cross-border teams -Political conditions? Physical obstacles? Providing budgets for investigative journalism Technical barriers

Name of the participant: Suhaib Al-Falahi
Type of interview: Email
Gender: Male
Age: 42 years
Job: Executive Manager of Times 24 for Digital Marketing
Years of experience: 19 years
Nationality: Iraq

Research Objectives	Interview Questions	Answers
1st Objective		
To explicate the regional importance of Aljazeera Media Network investigative reporting.	To what extent does Aljazeera use investigative reporting in its coverage?	I think that Aljazeera Media Network particularly Aljazeera TV are among the first networks which used investigative journalism in their television work, and investigative television work is perhaps one of the most difficult media production because of the evidence that are required by the screen to prove what the journalist says in the very sensitive topics he involved in. Therefore, the investigative work is like an accusation file prepared by the journalist and submitted to the public prosecutor, which therefore needs investigation and proof. We must know that the investigative journalism work on Aljazeera began early through programs such as "What is Hidden is Greater" and "The Zero Distance" and some of the investigations that were published separately, and the previous works of the well known journalist Asaad Taha, who appeared during the emergence of Aljazeera and the height of its power in programs that are mainly investigative programs.
	What are the Problems of conducting investigative reporting?	I am assuming here that the investigative report is one of the most difficult types of journalistic work, and not every journalist can do an investigative report, and many journalists are not good at doing investigative reports because of the problems arising from the investigative work from the beginning of the idea until the publication of the report. Therefore, I think that the problems are many and very big, first related to the approval of the issue by the editorial department, secondly, the journalist's courage to do this work or not, thirdly the need for large financial support and a good budget. In many works, the investigative journalist needs many details different from the details of traditional journalistic work including photographing, transmission, recording and montage. In order to understand the extent of these problems, we must realize that we are talking about the investigative journalist's entry into dangerous spaces, and his exposure to problems related to his security and physical and professional safety. If he was not able to prove with great evidence that what he did is correct or that what was revealed is a public opinion issue that is kept silent, because he is often subjected to pressure from the party targeted by the report and sometimes from the state.

		It is very important to note here that governments in many regions are under the influence of undeclared agreements between institutions, gangs, drug dealers and those who carry out illegal acts, and the state turns a blind eye to them for unknown reasons, and perhaps these reasons are related to cooperation between members of the state's security services with these parties through interests between them, and this exposes the journalist to major problems that he must know before he goes to the work of the investigative report.
	How does investigative reporting affect media coverage of Aljazeera Media Network?	
	Why does Aljazeera Media Network use investigative media among its total coverage?	Certainly, Aljazeera network in general use investigative work in their coverage of a large number of goals, the first is the presence of very important rich television material that provides real benefit to the audience, and here we see the extent of competition sometimes between channels in this field. As a result, the screen is looking for high quality programs, and the investigative work is one of the most high-quality programs and this was evident in the early days of Aljazeera programs such as Asaad Taha programs and the lengthy investigative programs from different countries such as "Under the Microscope" and "It is said that" and others, and this helps the channel to achieve Real superiority first and then superiority over the rest of the competitors. I also believe that providing the viewer with the correct information is another benefit, and it is a goal that Aljazeera seeks. Therefore, it is interested in investigative programs because the investigative programs achieve public opinion, and this excitement always puts the channel in the bright spot. To understand this point, notice with me that viewers always talk about the subject which appeared on the channel, and therefore this noise and reactions may not appear on the traditional reports of regular reporters, but it appears clearly in the investigative programs. Sometimes the goal of excitement is not just excitement, but it leads to building other consequences that we can call "brand industry" and therefore the brand of Aljazeera is clear, famous and very strong, not because it was launched from regular programs like many Arab satellite channels, but because it focused on controversial programs The Arab community was not familiar with it on many Arab televisions or even in the world's televisions, but Aljazeera was able to create this excitement, present this information, exert this pressure, form the reaction and the uproar. There is no doubt that investigative programs are at the heart of this issue.
2nd Objective		
	How do you find the effects of technological	Certainly, the impact of technological development in a very large and positive way on investigative journalism, whether it is in the field of work of the journalist himself and his works

	factors on the investigative journalism?	in the press report through audio recordings and secret video recordings (which are not visible to the interviewer) and many other technical details that were able to play an important and sensitive role in the field of collecting Information for investigative journalism. Even this technological development included the stage after the completion of the press report, such as the use of tools to verify information, verify the authenticity of photos and videos, and determine whether what the journalist did was correct or not. All these technical details are important for those who follow the journalist's work and for the journalist himself who can check his material very well. Therefore, technological development is very important, especially in the field of audio and video recordings and small or micro equipments.
	What are the problems in using new media that affect investigative reporting?	Privacy violation is the first problem. Privacy in the new media is mostly minimal. The journalist's work may deviate from focusing on the journalistic material he is doing to focusing on people and their privacy, and this may be one of the most important approaches that affect the outcomes of investigative work. The journalist may have produced good press material, but he invaded the privacy of the opposite party and these privacy were published in the new media, and this is what exposes the journalist to legal prosecutions, and therefore personal privacy is one of the most important issues that must be taken into account when using the new media in Investigative Journalism.
	To what extent does Aljazeera use new media in investigative reporting?	In a very large way, the daily, periodic, or seasonal programs that appear on the screen are very good at using new media, whether within the report itself or after the report is presented. Therefore, I evaluate Aljazeera's use of new media very well.
	Why does Aljazeera Media Network use new media in its investigative journalism?	New media has certainly outperformed traditional media today. Therefore, the failure of a network such as Aljazeera Media Network to use the new media will be a very big weakness for it, whether in the field of investigative journalism or others. That is why we see that Aljazeera or the network in general uses the new media in a very wide and very strong and perhaps competitive way for every other network in the world. This use aims to reach a large audience and new followers at the global level that regular screen programs do not reach. Thus, Aljazeera uses new media in its investigative journalism to reach a very large audience that the normal screen does not reach.
3rd Research Objective		
To study the effects of new media use in investigative reporting of Aljazeera Media Network.	How does new media development affect the amount and quality of investigative reporting of Aljazeera Media Network?	The new media is certainly an important detail in the field of journalism in general and in investigative journalism in particular. Before the digital media or before the new media, investigative journalism was mainly dependent on television through satellite or even local channels, even if it relied mainly on satellite channels. The channels were the ones who could or first decide whether to deal with the investigative material or not. The decisions of these media departments put many journalists under the scissors of the censor, because these

		channels are mainly subject to the scissors of the censor of the administration or the state censor, and as a result, the situation of investigative journalism before the new media was weak or subject to restrictions. Our vision of the suffering that investigative journalism faced with censorship increased after the emergence of new media, as the topics covered in investigative journalism changed in a very large way. Blogs, social media, private newspapers, podcasts and video blogs began publishing and broadcasting the productions of investigative journalists away from narrow censorship, and all these changes gave so great space for investigative journalism.
	How do you evaluate the credibility of information from open-source data in new media?	Open sources are certainly one of the most important sources that an investigative journalist or others refer to in his sources. In investigative journalism, there are also very valuable and very rich open sources. If the journalist can access them, they are open, but access to them may be difficult. Access to the reliability of open sources often requires good verification from the journalist, especially in the field of investigative journalism, because there is a clear accusation directed at one party. Therefore, relying on open sources only without strong evidence supporting the sources is a major weakness of the journalist, who may be prosecuted and cases filed against him for using open sources without documentation. Therefore, despite the importance of open sources, there must be a auxiliary and other evidence in which the journalist can prove the information he relied on, away from relying only on open sources. We say this despite our awareness of the weakness of other sources of information (non-open sources), especially in our Arab region, where information is not available to everyone and is not easily accessible, especially sensitive information. But despite all this, the journalist must take into account the reliability of open sources.
4th Research Objective		
To explore the barriers of using new media in investigative reporting in Aljazeera Media Network	What factors affect the abilities of Aljazeera Media Network journalists to use new media in investigative journalism activities	
	How can Aljazeera Media Network Journalists overcome the obstacles of using new media in investigative journalism regarding Technological, human resources, political and financial barriers?	

Appendix B Sample of the Translated Face-to-face Interviews Transcript in English

Name of the participant: Nidal Salah
Type of interview: Face-to-face
Gender: Male
Age: 46 years
Position/ Description: Media Researcher with PhD from Middle East University/ Cyprus
Years of experience: 19 years
Place: Turkey

Research Objectives	Interview Questions	Answers
1st Objective		
To explicate the regional importance of Aljazeera Media Network investigative reporting.	To what extent does Aljazeera use investigative reporting in its coverage?	Of course, you know that Aljazeera is one of the largest Arab media networks operating in the modern era, and therefore it is concerned or keen to reach the largest possible number of Arab or non-Arab audiences. But since most of the investigative programs it works on are in Arabic, and I am not aware of whether Aljazeera prepares investigative programs in English or other languages, but according to my knowledge, Aljazeera focuses its investigative production on the Arab audience as a basic audience for the network and maintaining it is an important motive for Aljazeera to produce this programs. Here we are talking about two parts, the first of which is that the Arab public is already a curious audience, and therefore Aljazeera is trying to satisfy the curiosity of the Arab public, and secondly, it is trying to extrapolate what this audience wants and what it likes of programs, and therefore it deliberately works in mysterious files through which it reveals strange stories fulfills the curiosity of the Arab viewer. Investigative programs, by their nature, are programs that reveal ambiguities and play on the chord of unknowns and question marks generated in people's minds, so I summarize Aljazeera's motives for working in the investigative field with the motive of reaching the largest number of audiences.
	What are the Problems of conducting investigative reporting?	I believe that the obstacles to using new media in investigative journalism stem from the dangers of investigative journalism itself. Because the worlds of this press are dark worlds, and entering them in itself is digging into a hornet's nest. When you enter any vague place run by a certain system, you are considered a foreign body to this system, and therefore the doors of viewing may not open before you or you may be exposed to danger. Especially when you are looking into serious issues such as gangs and high-risk cases. In the Arab world, the practice of investigative journalism is difficult, even if journalists are able to do so. However, what plays an important role here is the level of relations enjoyed

		by the journalist, the influence of the institution for which he works, and many other factors. Thus, in our Arab world, investigative journalism is classified as dangerous journalism, and its practice is like playing with fire. Many Arab journalists who practiced this journalism were either assassinated, liquidated, or prevented from working. There are many witnesses in Iraq, Palestine, Egypt, and others. I believe that most of the Arab journalists who practiced investigative journalism did not deal with political issues or serious files, as much as they follow simple events in a medical clinic or school without getting into really deep and important issues because that is a prelude to the grave. However, there are journalists who practiced distinguished and high-quality investigative journalism and were able to reach sensitive results and information through the use of foreign journalists or under the umbrellas of influential people to ensure the safety of their work.
	How does investigative reporting affect media coverage of Aljazeera Media Network?	I also believe that, by focusing on investigative journalism, Aljazeera wants to tell its viewers and followers that it does not provide fake information, but rather it has evidence-based information based on a clear investigative approach, which is the investigative journalism approach, and this matter raises Aljazeera's reliability and credibility in front of its audience and followers.
	Why does Aljazeera Media Network use investigative media among its total coverage?	There is a very important motive that we must understand from the perspective of uses and gratifications, which is one of the largest and most important known theories in the field of media and the most consistent with the advantages of media in the modern era. Why? Because you can connect your mobile device to the whole world, and therefore this makes it shameful for any media network, even if it is small, to not reach the audience through the simple tools available in its hands, and therefore the audience likes to use the tools available in its hands to satisfy its needs and desires with knowledge. Therefore, Aljazeera network works on this aspect.
2nd Objective		
	How do you find the effects of technological factors on the investigative journalism?	New media is distinguished by its rapid reach, widespread spread, and cheap price. Its material cost to the poor and rich alike is simple and affordable. Today, the new media has become the easiest way to reach all segments of society, as it is not limited, for example, to the educated class alone, the rich, or adults alone. Today, children in schools use social media and the platforms available on phones, computers, and school computers. The merchant uses this network for marketing, and the citizen uses it on the street to reach the news wherever he is. Therefore, Aljazeera, as part of the complete global media, is forced to keep pace with the requirements of the times by creating platforms that reach out to marginalized segments who are unable to have a lot of money, and this is what social media provides, which is cheap, simple and easy to access.
	What are the problems in using new media that affect investigative reporting?	Some of the obstacles are the requirements of keeping up with technology in the modern era, why? Because employing technology sometimes requires high costs. For example, obtaining certain confidential information may force you to

		pay huge amounts of money and use some illegal methods to access it. This in itself is one of the obstacles that are taken into account because it requires special circumstances, skills and capabilities. The spread of Aljazeera journalists, its great reputation and its relations open the door for it to access the information it wants.
	To what extent does Aljazeera use new media in investigative reporting?	To a very large extent, of course.
	Why does Aljazeera Media Network use new media in its investigative journalism?	It reminds me here that we were in childhood when we went to public libraries to read, looking for magazines that published stories with some pictures. They were illustrated stories with text tags, and most of the stories that appealed to us during that period were detective stories full of action. What hurt us most psychologically was when the story reached a teaser ending that said the sequel in the next issue. This type is pictures in magazines that lead you to a high stage of integration and harmony, let alone the modern media, which has come to provide this atmosphere with montage, video, high technologies, and modern means that have entered this atmosphere with sound, images, and direct commentary. Thus, you no longer need to read as much as you need to get along with the presenter. When you follow an investigative broadcaster like Tamer Al-Mishal, who directs the camera to places hidden from people's eyes in mysterious and secret worlds to reach strange details, this brings you into the world of the story, whether the research is in the world of drugs, organizations and political movements, or the world of human organ trade, or others. This is a world that people would not have seen had it not been for Aljazeera, with its investigative journalism, to enter these details with cameras, sound and images into the real worlds. This is an important feature that the new media provided to Aljazeera investigative journalism to present to the public. These advantages introduce the viewer into the same psychological state that he used to enter in the past when he was following the images in the printed detective stories. The new media put the entire world on the screen in front of the viewer, satisfying his curiosity for knowledge and learning in very modern ways by using the highest levels of media technology.
3rd Research Objective		
To study the effects of new media use in investigative reporting of Aljazeera Media Network.	How does new media development affect the amount and quality of investigative reporting of Aljazeera Media Network?	There are many things that only the human element can do. For example, you may need to access information stored on a person's computer. Technology will help you as a tool to access this information, but there is no substitute for human effort in identifying this person just like access. to the field source. Thus, human effort cannot be dispensed with, and this means that it is wrong to say that the human element has weakened its role in investigative journalism. Rather, his role has been strengthened, because the investigation is like a snowball in which the journalist keeps piling one piece of information on top of another until he

		reaches the critical point in his investigation in a sequential manner that may last for a long time.
	How do you evaluate the credibility of information from open-source data in new media?	New media, despite its enrichment of the contents of investigative journalism, requires a great deal of caution in dealing with the media with those contents that may undermine reliability and credibility.
4th Research Objective		
To explore the barriers of using new media in investigative reporting in Aljazeera Media Network	What factors affect the abilities of Aljazeera Media Network journalists to use new media in investigative journalism activities	Since investigative journalism is fact-exposing journalism, the basis for its success is access to sources, and this requires it to enjoy open relationships that ensure that the doors are not closed to its research teams working in investigative journalism. In my estimation, this can only happen if Aljazeera succeeds in practicing the highest degree of professionalism and not taking sides with one party at the expense of another, especially in the Arab world, which is experiencing the height of political and ideological polarization.
	How can Aljazeera Media Network Journalists overcome the obstacles of using new media in investigative journalism regarding Technological, human resources, political and financial barriers?	By training. I followed many training courses, especially at Aljazeera Training Institute, and all of them are excellent courses in this field. However, one course is not enough to develop the journalist as much as he needs integrated programs to develop knowledge, experience and skills in order to be able to practice investigative journalism with high quality. Here, I refer to a report by Aljazeera on careful journalism several years ago, which I believe was the starting point of its work in investigative journalism, given that careful journalism is part of the investigative journalism that Aljazeera paid great attention to. I think that all the courses stemmed from the needs of the journalists who were practicing this journalism. Training is a crucial factor because it develops human capabilities and humans exist mainly in the analytical side, which is a very important aspect in investigative journalism. You may find a large amount of information and materials, and there are applications that put you in front of important classifications of your information needs, but you cannot do without human effort to analyze these abstracts.

Name of the participant: Sulaiman Bsharat
Type of interview: Face-to-face
Gender: Male
Age: 41 years
Position/ Description: Media Researcher in Yabous for Consulting and Strategic Studies
Years of experience: 18 years
Place: Palestine

Research Objectives	**Interview Questions**	**Answers**
1st Objective		
To explicate the regional importance importance of Aljazeera Media Network investigative reporting.	To what extent does Aljazeera use investigative reporting in its coverage?	To a very large extent, Aljazeera has been practicing investigative journalism since its inception, and it has many successful programs in this regard, such as What is Hidden is Greater.
	What are the Problems of conducting investigative reporting?	Since its inception, the media has constituted an important source of knowledge, and for this reason it has been able to make its way towards gaining trust within the various levels of society, the elites, the masses, the general public, and the intellectuals. This may have been an important motivator for the media in its endeavor to provide information to those looking for it with the aim of preserving its audience or acquiring more segments of society. This also reinforced two things; The first: is to start testing skills and tools that enhance the media, with the aim of enhancing the knowledge it provides in terms of quantity and quality. Second; Pushing it to promote the principle of competition and the motivation to maintain the audience, using either templates, paradigms, or multiple cognitive style. And the third starting point is the transformation from a mere carrier of information or knowledge to re-analyzing it and building contents through it, which is what was later termed as the media content industry. Newspapers and magazines emerged among the first media outlets that included different media templates through their pages, from news to report and investigation, but the magazines were taking a deep nature in presenting the contents, for this reason, magazines began to be famous for their in-depth investigations and reports, unlike newspapers, radio and television in their early days. Radio and television were focusing on the elements of highlighting through sound effects, moving images and colors, while magazines and newspapers were facing a challenge to prove their presence in front of the state of dazzling that was available with the development of the radio and television industry. For this reason, newspapers and fields began to rely on depth in the contents and issues raised. The same situation was repeated with radio and television after moving from traditional terrestrial broadcasting to satellite broadcasting, and then switching to digital broadcasting. With each case and station, the media faced a set of dilemmas:

		First: the dilemma of audience preservation. Second: the dilemma of credibility in the contents presented and protecting itself as a reference. Third: The dilemma of technological development, which is now driving the competitiveness of tools, channels of access to the public, wide spread, speed of access, multiplicity of templates, and other successive developments.
	How does investigative reporting affect media coverage of Aljazeera Media Network?	Based on the foregoing, we can talk about the motives or reasons that made Aljazeera Network allocate investigative reports within its coverage, which can be based on a set of determinants: First: The determinant of competition in light of the density of the number of media in different forms, templates and interests. This determinant is based on the rule of who can stay until the end of the race, or who can keep himself present among the momentum in the media that is now covering the space. Second: The emergence and emergence of Aljazeera is linked to the major Arab and regional issues, starting with the war on Afghanistan, then the war on Iraq, the second Palestinian Intifada, the wars on the Gaza Strip, the war on southern Lebanon, then the Arab revolutions, and other major issues. two things; The first is having a huge archive library of information, events, and people. Secondly, the diversity of experiences enriches the workers and those in charge of them, which opens horizons by transcending the function of the media outlet from a mere conveyor of the event to a maker, an analyst, or an in-depth person in it. Third: The umbrella for the intellectual, academic and professional elites. Aljazeera was able to attract a large segment of the elites, and this polarization raises the level of awareness of the importance of media in the beginning, and the second thing is to raise the level of content, and the third is the level of goals it seeks to achieve.
	Why does Aljazeera Media Network use investigative media among its total coverage?	First: The experience of the media staff, which intersects between working in international stations such as the BBC and CNN articles, with the Arab media experience, generating a state of marriage of skill and experience with the richness of the field with issues that deserve to be turned into investigations. Second: The richness of the Arab situation in its political, social and economic dimensions with issues that are likely to be a basic material for journalistic investigations, and these areas are still virgin and no one has previously knocked on their door, either due to lack of experience, or as a result of fear of the political situation. Third: Providing political and professional cover, as it is known that in the Arab reality, the media outlet needs a sovereign extension for it so that it can take steps that may constitute a state of pressure on it, and thus provide cover by the political level in Qatar, and then move away from subjectivity in reviewing issues, but rather Opening the door to all viewpoints made it easier for them to delve into the smallest details and search for information that constitutes an important ground for journalistic investigations. Fourth: Material and logistical capabilities, which can facilitate the process of accessing technical and technical capabilities as

		well, which are important determinants in promoting deep media work. Fifth: public confidence; This is perhaps one of the important dimensions that Aljazeera was able to obtain compared to the rest of the Arab and international media, as even those who oppose the channel follow it, and therefore this pushes two directions. The first is to maintain this confidence through diversification in templates and contents. Secondly: the challenge of presenting the information that the masses crave, which is mostly information that is missing or that no one can talk about, but in journalistic investigations, there are those who can provide it or reveal it. Sixth: Aljazeera is one of the first news media stations that cares about political content on the Arab and Islamic level, and it was able to make a shift in the nature of media work. In the sense that there are sources of information that seek to present it to the channel instead of the channel searching for it, and this in itself is an important matter, and increases the rate of obtaining information that is hidden from the rest of the means.
2nd Objective		
	How do you find the effects of technological factors on the investigative journalism?	I believe that the new media imposed itself within the digital revolution in the world of media, in the sense that it became one of the media tools accompanying the media industry and media contents, and the media of all kinds had no choice in the matter of integrating this type within their stations. For this reason, some media organizations have been able to keep pace with this digital development since the beginning of the emergence of electronic news sites, then forums, communication stations, etc., and there are those who remain shy in using them within the minimum, and I believe there are many factors that can make Aljazeera network push towards this rapid use For new media: First: As a distinct and unique media model in the Arab case, it was therefore imperative to keep pace with the digitization of the media and to engage with the new media. Second: Deviating from the traditional pattern in the new media, in the sense of not being dependent on a situation or template and continuing on it. For this reason, there is a process of technical and technical modernization that parallels the modernization of the contents, and all this thing played a role in going to the new media that meets the desire to search for development and non-traditionalism. Third: The state of thirst in the Arab world for the concept of emancipation from the official media, or the contents of the traditional template, and the search for platforms to communicate their voices and their message. This coincides with the transformation of Aljazeera as a media network that serves as a platform for everyone, and many have come to believe that it is the one that communicates their voice to all levels. Fourth: Attracting youth competencies, and this may distinguish Aljazeera in its ability to attract youth competencies from all nationalities and countries, all of which become distinguished models that deviate from the familiar traditional framework of the new media.

		Fifth: The expansion of freedom and space for work in the digital space, and the availability of this within broad publishing policies, which have achieved high follow-up and various models, all of which fall within the framework of the concept of openness and the provision of information. Sixth: There is a state of realization of the importance of new media in parallel with the traditional media work, and therefore this is a motivator for all the network staff to be present on all platforms, and for this reason we find that the presenters of the programs and the most prominent workers in the channel have pages on the communication sites, one of the pages that are most followed and attended and touch all the concerns of masses. Seventh: The need to raise the level of freedom of opinion and other opinion, and this is a slogan that the network has relied on since its inception and sought for, and it is distinguished from other competing media outlets.
	What are the problems in using new media that affect investigative reporting?	There may be several obstacles, but the most important ones are: Fear of the source and accuracy of the information; As we said, the source of information in the new media has become unclear in many events, and therefore this may constitute an obstacle to benefiting from all that it offers. The obstacle in reaching the public, in the sense of Arab societies in general, despite the wide spread of the Internet and the high rates of education, but the economic reality may prevent permanent communication via the Internet, and this in itself represents an obstacle for the Aljazeera network or the media in reaching the largest possible number of segments the society. impeding laws, legislation and political positions; This is the result of a culture of closure on which Arab political systems are based in preventing access to the public, or preventing the public from accessing channels and their contents, so websites are blocked, broadcasts are banned, or institutions' offices are closed..etc. Obstructing society's culture, customs and traditions, and what is associated with them, and this may add determinants to the content that is broadcast through the new media.
	To what extent does Aljazeera use new media in investigative reporting?	I think that measuring this use is difficult in view of the intensity of coverage practiced by Aljazeera on various issues and events, but I think that Aljazeera is one of the most Arab media networks that uses new media in its reports and investigative materials.
	Why does Aljazeera Media Network use new media in its investigative journalism?	There is no doubt that the new media has formed many additions, which can be represented in excitement in promoting content, as Aljazeera was able to reach the largest audience base through its use of social platforms to promote its investigative programmes, and obtained very high viewership rates compared to other programmes. The program What is Hidden is Greater reaps millions of views within a short hour.
3rd Research Objective		
To study the effects of new media use in investigative	How does new media development affect the amount and quality of	- The ability to combine information, its power, and artistic aspects. For example, during episodes of What is Hidden is Greater, it shows how techniques, sounds, lighting, and colors

reporting of Aljazeera Media Network.	investigative reporting of Aljazeera Media Network?	are employed, all of which fall within the concept of multimedia that constitutes a process of attracting the viewer, which are factors that the new media contributed to in its ability to integrate. The new media added information, social networks and the new media in general created what was known as the citizen journalist, and thus injected an amount of information that became present through Aljazeera or the rest of the media channels. The new media somehow imposes agendas for issues of concern and priority, for example, the incident of the Moroccan child falling into the well, how did it contribute to placing his case in the spotlight on the agenda of the various media outlets. The same applies to the Palestinian cause and its daily developments, how events emerged and increased their presence, and many other issues.
	How do you evaluate the credibility of information from open-source data in new media?	There is a general belief that social media platforms as a form of new media provide information whose validity and quality can be challenged, as we said in the response to the sixth question.
4th Research Objective		
To explore the barriers of using new media in investigative reporting in Aljazeera Media Network	What factors affect the abilities of Aljazeera Media Network journalists to use new media in investigative journalism activities	Technology development has a significant positive impact on investigative journalism, and it can enhance it and develop its performance, in addition to the possibility of benefiting from what modern technology provides, either to access information, or in how it is published and communicated and the templates through which it can be presented. The same applies to human resources that have a positive impact on investigative journalism. Although talking about artificial intelligence and digital can take up a large part of the human effort, the media industry in particular cannot ignore the human presence. In addition, modern technologies and keeping pace with them can create much more models, templates, and job opportunities than previous opportunities. This also makes the challenge even greater in developing human resources to keep pace with these needs. Training also has a positive impact, because the process of developing the cadres based on the media content industry, whether through developing skills, or developing how to use what modern technologies provide, would provide the media in general and investigative journalism in particular with more development, and could enhance its presence in the mass media. massive media.
	How can Aljazeera Media Network Journalists overcome the obstacles of using new media in investigative journalism regarding Technological, human resources, political and financial barriers?	This can be done by adapting technology and employing the most qualified human resources, as well as opening the door for training to develop the capabilities of the human cadre to produce good investigative journalism.

Name of the participant: Wasef Qadah
Type of interview: Face-to-face
Gender: Male
Age: 38 years
Position/ Description: Media Researcher with PhD from Arel University / Turkey
Years of experience: 15 years
Place: Turkey

Research Objectives	Interview Questions	Answers
1st Objective		
To explicate the regional importance importance of Aljazeera Media Network investigative reporting.	To what extent does Aljazeera use investigative reporting in its coverage?	Aljazeera is a vanguard network in the Arab world in particular and in the world in general, and it is at the forefront of the media in what it provides of reports of a reference nature in the sources and in several other fields of journalism such as its employment of opinion and other opinion, so it is looking to maintain its primacy through this form of journalism, that is, investigative journalism. In addition, investigative journalism contributes to enhancing the public's attraction to the media content provided by the network, and we are talking about important groups of the large audience distributed over the seven investigative programs of Aljazeera, and the Aljazeera Network addresses countries through these programs. Likewise, Aljazeera increases the confidence of its audience in the accuracy of the information it provides to this audience when presenting investigative programs.
	What are the Problems of conducting investigative reporting?	Investigation requires skilled hands, money, relationships, and audacity, and whoever misses this fails in investigative work, and this requires strengthening investigative journalists and investigative platforms at Aljazeera Media Network.
	How does investigative reporting affect media coverage of Aljazeera Media Network?	The nature of the relationship between Aljazeera and its competitors requires it to always provide the audience with something new in order to remain closely attached to it, and this new thing requires access to high-quality journalistic work such as investigative journalism that enhances competition in the media arena.
	Why does Aljazeera Media Network use investigative media among its total coverage?	Aljazeera has great financial potential and it spends generously on various journalistic activities, and we know that investigative journalism in particular is expensive journalism for many reasons, so I believe that the most important way to develop investigative journalism is to allocate large budgets for this type of journalism.
2nd Objective		
	How do you find the effects of technological factors on the investigative journalism?	Certainly, Aljazeera needs new media because a very large percentage of the public follows the new media that has evolved with generations, and this keeping pace requires Aljazeera 's use of new media as a natural development in keeping pace with the development of communication technology in tools and in the opportunities and advantages it provides.

	What are the problems in using new media that affect investigative reporting?	We do not forget that the poor training of journalists on new media and investigative journalism affects the scarcity of journalists qualified to use communication technology to search for and verify information, but this does not include Aljazeera journalists who undergo training experiences that were intensively prepared by the network.
	To what extent does Aljazeera use new media in investigative reporting?	Aljazeera already interacts in its coverage with Mega Trends on social media, and this enhances its presence in the world of media and intensifies the audience's tendency to follow its programs due to the interest of this audience in the issues of programs stemming from its interest, but the sustainability of investment in that requires continuing to keep pace with these topics and raising the level of interaction between What the network and the audience offer, and this ensures the divergence that increases the audience's loyalty to the network and builds a broader audience, and this is what put Aljazeera at the forefront of Arab media networks. Aljazeera was also distinguished in employing new media towards building a great reputation for investigative journalism, because the tendency of digital media in general to reduce information made it difficult for some segments of the public to adapt to this type of media, but Aljazeera was able to develop digital content with contents of investigative journalism that raised the level of public trust in digital media.
	Why does Aljazeera Media Network use new media in its investigative journalism?	New media, such as Facebook, is easy to access information, easy to communicate and communicate, and reduces costs. Any of the materials published in the new media are easily transferred to the traditional media as a foregone conclusion. This created a bridge between the large media networks, making it easier for them to access the sources on the one hand, and it also reduced the budgets that were Pay for it on the other hand. However, these advantages provided by the new media do not reduce the seriousness of the side problems related to it, especially with regard to the need for media organizations to verify the contents they provide, which may include falsification and forgery.
3rd Research Objective		
To study the effects of new media use in investigative reporting of Aljazeera Media Network.	How does new media development affect the amount and quality of investigative reporting of Aljazeera Media Network?	New media addresses specific groups and not a general audience, so you find in Aljazeera platforms of new media directed to each country itself, and this accommodates the presentation of programs specific to each country that are not suitable for the general public. This specialization gives the network high control in reaching the local audience through detailed programs that deal with delicate local issues with capabilities that exceed the capabilities of the local media, which is originally obligated to deal with these issues. Thus, the new media has enabled the traditional media to reach the target audience with high accuracy. For example, the program What is Hidden is Greater presented by Aljazeera covers remarkable topics for young people and non-youth and enters into issues that were hidden from it, so you find wide audience interactions with this program in the social media accounts.

		We also do not forget that the new media made it easy for the public to follow the investigative programs that Aljazeera shows on its satellite screen, to the extent that we may find that the audience's level of follow-up to a program that is hidden is greater, for example, through live broadcasting on Aljazeera's Facebook application, is higher than the level of follow-up to the same program on the TV screen. Because the new media has begun to deliver the program to the audience at the center of its interest and satisfy its curiosity in specific aspects. On the other hand, I believe that the new media has enriched the content of Aljazeera's investigative programs and expanded its reach to a larger audience. Also, I read a research article about information and digital journalism, which was built entirely on open sources, which are part of the new media. This means that the open sources created by the development of technology have become one of the most important inputs for building knowledge.
	How do you evaluate the credibility of information from open-source data in new media?	This is related to the source itself, there are reliable and weak sources.
4th Research Objective		
To explore the barriers of using new media in investigative reporting in Aljazeera Media Network	What factors affect the abilities of Aljazeera Media Network journalists to use new media in investigative journalism activities	There are many factors, the most important are the competence of the journalist and his attainment of qualitative training.
	How can Aljazeera Media Network Journalists overcome the obstacles of using new media in investigative journalism regarding Technological, human resources, political and financial barriers?	It is required to raise the competence of the journalist to understand the capabilities of the tools used in investigative journalism, whether they are software or analytical tools, such as raising his ability to use investigative analysis programs that analyze hashtags and data. Therefore, an experienced journalist should continue to develop his abilities in understanding the tools and the audience as well, as well as publishing platforms and sources of information. Thus, we are talking about a whole process to develop the journalist's ability to manage and understand the content.

Name of the participant: Yusuf Al-Junaidy
Type of interview: Face-to-face
Gender: Male
Age: 40 years
Position/ Description: Media Researcher with PhD from University Putra Malaysia (UPM)/ Malaysia
Years of experience: 17 years
Place: Turkey

Research Objectives	**Interview Questions**	**Answers**
1st Objective		
To explicate the regional importance importance of Aljazeera Media Network investigative reporting.	To what extent does Aljazeera use investigative reporting in its coverage?	Aljazeera is an international channel that has a great imprint in the Arab world and has a footprint even at the level of the English Channel, although the content of the English Channel is completely different from the content of the Arab channel due to the difference in the audience, of course, but the two channels share a focus on investigative programs such as the 101 program presented by Aljazeera English, The investigative orientation of Aljazeera English is known and active in the East and South Asia region and focuses on countries such as the Maldives, Indonesia and the Philippines. Among its latest productions is a special program on Malaysia, as a result of which the Aljazeera office in Kuala Lumpur was closed, so Aljazeera has many tools and it uses more than one tool to reach different audiences. Through multiple contents, including investigative programs.
	What are the Problems of conducting investigative reporting?	There is no doubt that Aljazeera paid a heavy price for its presence in terms of the safety and security of its crews. One day we visited Sami Al-Hajj, the famous Aljazeera correspondent who was arrested by the American forces after their invasion of Afghanistan and detained in Guantanamo Bay, famous for his harsh reputation. Sami Al-Hajj's story is known, as he was arrested by mistake and quickly transferred to Guantanamo, and the Americans realized after three years that they had arrested the wrong person, but getting him out of prison was not easy, so he spent eight years in Guantanamo, so the Aljazeera crews paid the price of their years in prison, and there are those who paid with their lives like Sherine Abu Aqleh, whose arrest was a blow from the occupation The Israeli coverage of the channel's network in the Palestinian file.
	How does investigative reporting affect media coverage of Aljazeera Media Network?	I believe that every country has its own standards that affect the activity of journalists in it. For example, the journalist Mahmoud Hussein is still in prisons in Egypt due to his journalistic work. I think that the matter also depends on the role of the journalist and his position in the media work community, the strength of his presence, the level of his influence and his relations in the ruling political environment in every country. In Turkey, for example, you find that Aljazeera journalists enjoy protection and ideal conditions for work due to the nature of the state's dealings with the network and its high regard for it, and by virtue of the existence of a democratic

		system of government linked to good relations with Qatar, to which Aljazeera belongs, in contrast to Egypt, which was in deep disagreement with Qatar. Thus, we are talking about relative conditions that we cannot fully relate to freedoms, as there are basically no freedoms in the Arab world, and even if the Arab journalist succeeds in producing an investigative film, he may pay with his life for that after days and perhaps months, and this remains an obstacle for the Arab journalist to enter the investigative work because the price is his soul, even if he has a secondary role as a technician or photographer. We know many of the dead who died because of their journalistic work, we mention the correspondents because we know them from behind the screens such as Tariq Ayoub and Sherine Abu Aqelah, but there are names that we do not know, such as the Qatari photographer who was killed in Libya, and the pressures are not limited to targeting the life of the journalist, but may It extends to closing offices, confiscating equipment, and other measures, but there are journalists who have the courage and courage and love the challenge. They enter this door knowing its repercussions on a personal level or on the level of their families, including killing, arrest, or material damage.
	Why does Aljazeera Media Network use investigative media among its total coverage?	There are many motives that are difficult to enumerate for the use of the Aljazeera network for investigative journalism. We try to sum them up in a number of motives, the most prominent of which is that Aljazeera was one of the first channels established in the Arab world and remained under the rule of this media for a long period of time, but after more than 20 years ago, it became facing competitors from other channels such as Al-Arabiya or Al-Arabi channel in Qatar, and this made it search for distinction from these competitors in a group of programs in order to preserve its own brand, which it established and maintained its reputation as the oldest media brand in the Arab region, and therefore it resorts to these programs To maintain the presence of its name among the Arab TV channels and to remain in the field of competition for No. 1 among its audience. Also, one of the most important motives is to serve the state's policies that sponsor the Aljazeera network, and it is no secret that Aljazeera played a major role in the political crisis between Qatar and its opponents from the Arab Gulf states, especially Saudi Arabia. Even old stories have been covered by history and have not been opened before, and therefore Aljazeera has turned into one of the tools that Qatar uses in its conflict with its neighbors and opponents, and Aljazeera implements a policy compatible with its host country, Qatar, which funds Aljazeera with about one billion dollars annually from the budget of its Ministry of Foreign Affairs. As for the third motive, it is that Aljazeera is trying to tell its audience that it is able to bring new things in sensitive files that affect the Arab situation, such as files that are opened by some hidden program, and thus it maintains providing real content to the public in special files that are difficult for other channels or programs to reach**.**
2nd Objective		

	How do you find the effects of technological factors on the investigative journalism?	In my opinion, Aljazeera was one of the first channels that became aware of the issue of new media early in terms of renewing its shape, distinctive themes for its content, and renovating its studios. The audience was directly connected to the news studios on Aljazeera, and this made it closer to the audience. Aljazeera today boasts that its videos are watched by hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions, through social media, and it has become comparable in this reach to reality television, after traditional television has become at stake in terms of viewers.
	What are the problems in using new media that affect investigative reporting?	We must not forget that Aljazeera opened accounts on the new media to follow the events in each country separately, to satisfy its audience directly through these accounts, such as Aljazeera Tunisia, Aljazeera Egypt, Aljazeera Jordan and Aljazeera Turkey, so Aljazeera is now using the new media in an attempt to reach its audience in any A geographical location commensurate with the nature and interest of the viewer, and this guarantees engagement or audience interaction with the content you provide on social media accounts such as Twitter and Facebook.
	To what extent does Aljazeera use new media in investigative reporting?	The programs themselves on Aljazeera have become interactive programs, such as the Nashratcom program, which relies on what the audience originally shows on its social media accounts, and full broadcast hours are devoted to displaying the content produced by the audience, and this is all with the aim of satisfying the audience's desire to interact and attend the network's programs and give them the ability to reach the audience in its location, and this enabled it to maintain its natural audience, which was following it on the tools of its traditional media, and to add to it a new audience, the audience of the new media.
	Why does Aljazeera Media Network use new media in its investigative journalism?	We have a lot of factors, for example, Aljazeera's coverage of the coup in Egypt in 2013, when Aljazeera was banned from working in Egypt, but it was reporting on social media what the activists broadcast, and other media outlets started transmitting from Aljazeera the videos it broadcast, and therefore there is a common interest Between the audience and the network in this field, the network needs the content that the audience broadcasts in order to remain in the event, while the audience wants the network as a tool to deliver the content it produces to a wider audience, and thus the role of the network has shifted from a content producer to a linking tool between the producing audience and the audience receiving the content. This in itself is an important incentive for social media institutions to support Aljazeera's investigative, intellectual and other programs. The more these programs are strengthened, the more the audience will be exposed to them, and thus the more this audience will follow social media. The matter is similar to the role of the YouTube platform, which is a platform that does not produce content, but displays what the producers present and wins the audience based on the momentum of these shows. That is, the intersection of interests between content producers, media brokerage companies, and major broadcasting networks such as Aljazeera is all in the field of strengthening these three parties to each other to

		maximize the audience and the views and the consequent benefits for each party. The product presents the content and the island expands the audience and the intermediary companies increase the value of their advertising and publicity returns, and all of this requires meeting the audience's desires.
3rd Research Objective		
To study the effects of new media use in investigative reporting of Aljazeera Media Network.	How does new media development affect the amount and quality of investigative reporting of Aljazeera Media Network?	There is no doubt that the new media greatly facilitated media production processes. For example, even Aljazeera is now discussing the value of a comprehensive journalist who is proficient in production, photography, writer, and editor. Even Aljazeera courses focus on mobile journalism, which films the event, writes the material, produces it, and sends it ready for the network. This is an important development, especially in light of Wars and crises in which the capabilities are weak, such as the provision of direct broadcasting, satellite services, etc., Even mobile technology today includes tools that help media networks meet their technical needs to prepare television programs with content that achieves quick access and speed of presenting the event and displaying its first images, regardless of their quality, which is sometimes poor, but it provides a direct connection between the audience and the event. Also, mobile programs have become providing primary services for montage, such as checking and commenting on photos, making Zoom In and Zoom Out, and this is available even in new media applications such as Tik Tok, Snapchat, and Instagram, meaning that it is not only limited to TV channels.
	How do you evaluate the credibility of information from open-source data in new media?	There is no dispute that the young generation has desires and needs that media networks are trying to meet by adapting their programs to the requirements and tendencies of this generation, and this explains Aljazeera 's tendency to deal with often absurd issues in order to reach this audience and maintain contact with it. I believe that Aljazeera faces a major challenge in combining the sobriety of its intellectual, cultural and cognitive content on the one hand, and its ability to provide programs of an attractive nature to the young generation, which are programs most related to entertainment content or even trivial issues on the other hand. For example, you find this generation interested in watching videos of a Russian soldier being pursued by planes. Drones in Ukraine are more than interested in knowledge about the Russian-Ukrainian war and its details and repercussions, and this requires Aljazeera to go down to the level that attracts this type of followers through new content that is different from its sober content.
4th Research Objective		
To explore the barriers of using new media in investigative reporting in	What factors affect the abilities of Aljazeera Media Network journalists to use new media in investigative journalism activities	I had previously worked as an Outsource on the production of a television program for Aljazeera about Malaysia. It required visiting the Malaysian National Archives, filming in it and conducting interviews inside it, and this was impossible for us as foreign journalists until after the network management sent

Aljazeera Media Network		an official e-mail from the headquarters in Doha to the archive management that opened it after that's in front of us, Therefore, there is no doubt that the name of the institution, such as the Aljazeera network, is a decisive factor in the world's dealings with it. There are those who accept interviews only because they are with Aljazeera, and there are of course those who refuse to conduct interviews only because they are Aljazeera, and this means that the identity of the network is a basic title for its production. Here I give you other examples, such as the Malaysian train network and Tool Smart, who welcomed us because we work for the benefit of Aljazeera, and this means that the report will contribute to spreading a good picture of the country. This name may not be owned by many small and new press networks, or even local ones that may close important doors to production. Program and media because it does not have a big name in the field of media like Aljazeera. Here, the role of content production companies appears, which may help emerging press institutions to build their names by carrying out valuable work for their benefit, but this mainly requires money, as even small channels that have money can reach large limits through the money that is spent in many aspects, for example. Paying some personalities to appear and speak on screens as important witnesses and sources.
	How can Aljazeera Media Network Journalists overcome the obstacles of using new media in investigative journalism regarding Technological, human resources, political and financial barriers?	I believe that the difficulty of using new media tools increases among advanced journalists in traditional media work, and these face a great challenge, either to be referred to retirement or to cooperate with teams of young journalists who master the skills of dealing with technology. Aljazeera journalists, I believe, are qualified for general technical work such as recording sounds, preliminary montage, filming, and commentary, but there are more complex opportunities than that provided by technology, such as changing the voice, blurring features, and muzzling faces. These are skills that are difficult to provide for the central journalist at work, and therefore they are compensated through teams that include photographers, Producers and experts in audio, lighting, visual panels, drones, cloud technology, satellite and GPS services.

Name of the participant: Zaher Elbek
Type of interview: Face-to-face
Gender: Male
Age: 44 years
Position/ Description: Media Researcher with PhD from Ankara University/ Turkey
Years of experience: 20 years
Place: Turkey

Research Objectives	**Interview Questions**	**Answers**
1st Objective		
To explicate the regional importance importance of Aljazeera Media Network investigative reporting.	To what extent does Aljazeera use investigative reporting in its coverage?	Personally, I think that Aljazeera uses investigative journalism to a very large extent, and this seems evident in the multiplicity of investigative programs it has produced since it appeared**.**
	What are the Problems of conducting investigative reporting?	I do not think that Aljazeera has any real obstacles in carrying out the investigative activity, otherwise we would not have seen the large volume of investigative reports on its screen.
	How does investigative reporting affect media coverage of Aljazeera Media Network?	There is no doubt that investigative journalism raises the presence of Aljazeera Network among the audience and increases its ability to convince followers of the truthfulness of the information it provides.
	Why does Aljazeera Media Network use investigative media among its total coverage?	There are principled motives and self-interest motives related to the network itself. Of course, the first motive is based on the values of the Aljazeera network, for which it was established as an independent Arab media that sheds light on Arab issues. Even governments are criticized directly in it, as everyone knows, and therefore the first motive is to shed light on the problems of Arab society and its various economic, political, security, social and other issues. In addition, these are very sensitive issues in this context. If you notice, investigative journalism is not new in Aljazeera, but it appeared since the beginning of the establishment of the network, that is, since a top secret program appeared at that time, and these programs continued in their various forms after that with the aim of shedding light on problems, issues and phenomena that deserve investigation in order to address and solve these Problems, because highlighting these issues by the media leads to trying to find solutions or embarrassing the party causing these problems. There are other goals related to the fact that Aljazeera, being a network that is predominantly political in nature - because news is predominantly political in nature - resorts to diversification in its programs and its various activities in the network as a whole. Hence, investigative programs always look at hidden aspects and are not declared, as in other political and news programs, and this diversification is important to break the routine of events and other political news. There is also an important goal, which is to gain the public base. When Aljazeera presents various news or political programs, it presents the same programs offered by other channels, but when it presents investigative programs, this

		contains excitement, which brings the large audience base of viewers to Aljazeera Network. The fourth motive is the endeavor to be unique, distinguished, and appear as a distinct network from others through exclusivity in these programs, not only because it broadcasts investigative programs, but also due to the nature of the very bold issues that accuse Arab and Western governments, especially the government of Israel. This distinction and uniqueness constitute a motive in itself for the work of the survey programs, and this provides an added value to the public in general.
2nd Objective		
	How do you find the effects of technological factors on the investigative journalism?	We have different effects. We are mainly in the era of digital media. This is the age now. Whoever turns away from it loses a lot. Aljazeera, with its large fan base, has new media accounts followed by millions, so why not use these accounts? And it reaches these millions of followers through its multiple and different accounts on YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, and others. They are certified accounts, so if you have existing tools to reach the masses, why not use them? There is also a basic incentive represented by the fact that television as a media medium has become declining in terms of the mass base and no longer dominates the media as it was in the past. The written and visual press, television and radio are in great decline, and therefore seeking to reach the largest number of followers requires the use of new media. This in itself is a primary goal to reach Generation Z, which is the generation under the age of 25, a generation that does not follow television and does not have the patience to sit in front of long programs. It is a generation that is always on the move and follows events through the smart phone in the means of transportation and wherever it is and reduces the use of television. This young generation has accounts in the new media, so reaching it through the new media is important as it is an active factor in shaping the future. When Generation Z learns about the important and thorny issues and dangerous phenomena that Aljazeera Network highlights in its investigative journalism, it builds its ideas based on it, and this is socially beneficial. The ability to reach this generation also expands the follow-up base for the various programs offered by Aljazeera. Aljazeera also invests in the characteristics of new media or digital media that are distinguished by multimedia and superior flexibility, spread, and other features that are commensurate with broadcasting clips of investigative programs.
	What are the problems in using new media that affect investigative reporting?	I do not see that there are significant obstacles to Aljazeera's use of new media in its investigative journalism. On the contrary, new media is a very important addition and working through it is very easy. Therefore, I find no obstacles except what is limited to the ease of cutting some contents and thus taking some materials out of context or distorting them by followers and the public. As well

		as attempts to hack the pages and accounts of Aljazeera and other Arab media networks. Also, there are no specific and fixed laws related to the use of new media. Governments set censorship laws, but they are laws that are difficult to control, and therefore this may cause Aljazeera and others to have problems with those governments or authorities in any place that is targeted by a specific investigative program. However, Aljazeera network, with its strength and wide audience, is aware of this issue and has qualified technical and legal staff to overcome these obstacles.
	To what extent does Aljazeera use new media in investigative reporting?	I think I touched on this issue very clearly in my answer to the fifth question.
	Why does Aljazeera Media Network use new media in its investigative journalism?	When we talk about new media in investigative journalism, Aljazeera Network is distinguished from the rest of the Arab networks in this regard, its capabilities are greater than others, and its human competencies are distinguished from all workers in other media networks. Therefore, Aljazeera Network is following, moment by moment, all developments in the field of information and communication technology through specialized technical teams in this aspect, especially with regard to data journalism, in which Al-Jazeera is also distinguished. This certainly leaves a very significant impact on the development of its investigative journalism through the sources of information that it accesses and also through the video clips it displays that it obtains. This is an important part because the new media helped Aljazeera obtain very important audio and video clips as evidence in broadcasting its investigative programs, and this is all thanks to the development of communication and information technology.
3rd Research Objective		
To study the effects of new media use in investigative reporting of Aljazeera Media Network.	How does new media development affect the amount and quality of investigative reporting of Aljazeera Media Network?	The feedback, comments, and participation are all features added by the new media to investigative journalism, and all of these were not available in the traditional media, through which it was difficult to reach the audience's impression or judgment on the programs presented and the information they contained. However, in social media, the public can comment on all kinds of investigative programs, and thus the network knows the impressions of the audience and extracts its opinion. Therefore, this is a very important point because the network benefits from these comments, whether they are negative or positive, or provides additional information or corrects information that may have been received. The new media also increased the level of circulation of investigative programs through the feature of participation and knowing the level of views accurately by number, which are important additions to the new media in investigative journalism.
	How do you evaluate the credibility of information	It is generally weak and the public does not trust it, but subjecting it to manipulations by large and discreet media networks such as Aljazeera raises its quality, because the

	from open-source data in new media?	content it provides is scrutinized and verified according to scientific and technical rules.
4th Research Objective		
To explore the barriers of using new media in investigative reporting in Aljazeera Media Network	What factors affect the abilities of Aljazeera Media Network journalists to use new media in investigative journalism activities	I think training is a crucial factor. Aljazeera already has the Aljazeera Media Center, which is a specialized in training. It always has courses related to investigative journalism, investigations, and investigative programs in general, data journalism, checking sources, media in wars and crises, and these courses help journalists who produce investigative programs to produce the best programs.
	How can Aljazeera Media Network Journalists overcome the obstacles of using new media in investigative journalism regarding Technological, human resources, political and financial barriers?	Aljazeera network has the Aljazeera Net website, which is an important and most popular site among the Arab websites, but unlike Aljazeera, it does not produce much journalistic investigations, but rather has a limited and little production, although it is on the Internet and is easy to follow through smart phones. This happens despite the fact that an important part of Aljazeera's audience visits the network's various platforms, such as documentaries, news, Aljazeera Net, the Center for Studies, and the like from smart phones. Do not forget that Aljazeera Documentary broadcasts many programs, part of which is investigative, and there is AJ +, which also sheds light on investigative issues. So, I strongly believe that finding a specialized unit of investigative journalism in the digital sector of Aljazeera will significantly affect its investigative journalism positively. Moreover, human resources is the most important part of all of the above, because without the people present in the investigative programs, all the technical capabilities, new media, and others are useless. Thus, if we divide the human elements into teams working on the investigation, including journalists, technicians, and logistical management, or the elements involved in the investigation of eyewitnesses, victims, or perpetrators, these are all important matters that serve investigative journalism. It is clear that Aljazeera network benefits greatly from it and takes advantage of new media and social networking sites to access and benefit from these elements.

Appendix C Translated Transcript of the FGDs in English

Type of interview: Focus Group Discussion
Place: Kovano Business Center - Istanbul \ Turkey
Number of Participants: 5 Arab journalists living in Turkey
Participants information:

1 Huthayfah Jarrar 29 years old, Master's Degree Al-Quds University / Palestine Journalism
2 Samed Dwaikat 42 years old, Bachelor's degree An-Najah National University / Palestine Communications
3 Omar Fayyad 33 years old, Master's degree Ataturk University/ Turkey Media Studies.
4 Muhammad Fares 40 years old, Master's degree University of Islamic Sciences (USIM)/ Malaysia communications
5 Mustafa Swelim 41 years old, Master's degree Middle East University/ Cyprus Media Studies

Research Objectives	**Interview Questions**	**Answers**
1st Objective		
To explicate the regional importance importance of Aljazeera Media Network investigative reporting.	To what extent does Aljazeera use investigative reporting in its coverage?	**Samed:** There is no doubt that , regardless of the level of effectiveness of its investigative production, is, in my opinion, is the most Arab media interested in investigative journalism. **Mustafa:** Yes, that's right. I think that the initial assessment of the level of 's investigative reporting is good, even if we disagree on the details. **Muhammad:** Undoubtedly, investigative journalism is an important feature of the network. **Omar:** I agree with what colleagues have said that has a good output of investigative journalism, both in quantity and quality. **Hudhayfa:** I also think that is distinguished in its investigative work.
	What are the Problems of conducting investigative reporting?	**Muhammad:** The political aspect is the most important obstacle. Tamer Al-Mishal, for example, is banned from entering many Arab countries, and he is blocked because he "has problems" in parentheses - with a laugh - because some of the programs he presented created problems within some countries. This is a problem that may exist in some countries. For example, there was a problem in Qatar's relationship with Saudi Arabia. Can anyone from Aljazeera go to do an investigative program in Saudi Arabia?? In the end, the political dimension is a very important factor. Other factors may be the ability to access information and the price paid for obtaining this information, I mean when Aljazeera discloses a source of its information, this source may pay a heavy price. **Hudhayfa:** The three main barriers to implementing investigative journalism are money, time, and risk to people. If the availability of money can solve the problem of time, the journalist can work for a year or two in an investigative investigation in order to present the result, such as the investigation carried out by Aljazeera on the execution in the hole in Syria, where the information reached Aljazeera through a videotape that took two full years to study. During these two years, financial budgets were paid to continue the process of research and investigation into the video.

		As for the danger to people, as Muhammad prefers, the danger affects those who conduct the interviews and those who assist him, because the investigative investigation does not depend on one person, but rather on a team mainly. This team includes more than one person and more than one institution seeking to collect information from more than one place, and all of them are at risk that may amount to killing. **Omar:** The scarcity of information and the difficulty of accessing sources are among the most important obstacles facing investigative investigations in order to complete the investigation, in addition to the restrictions imposed by institutions and the lack of cooperation of the authorities related to the subject of the investigation, whether political or security, with the party preparing the investigation. **Hudhayfa:** The financial dimension can contribute to solving the problems of accessing sources, and therefore the financial aspect is not an obstacle for Aljazeera, which can pay local journalists to join investigation teams and gain access to its sources. **Samed:** The issue of money is not an obstacle for Aljazeera, but the main obstacle, I think, lies in the influence of the foreign policy of the State of Qatar on the Aljazeera network. Practically, Aljazeera entered into political disputes as it favors brotherhood, as is the case in the Gulf crisis. I know of four investigative programs that Aljazeera practices. It is the other side, the interview, the rest of the story, what is hidden is greater. It mostly goes to neutral cases, meaning that it does not include investigations in countries whose political relations with Qatar are improving. And vice versa, when a country's relationship with Qatar worsens, Aljazeera carries out investigative investigations about the performance of this country. This explains the focus of investigative journalism in Aljazeera on the Palestinian issue, for example in programs such as What is Hidden is Greater, where Israeli speakers accept to appear on Aljazeera screen, talk and provide evidence in exchange for hosting fees, even though the presenter of the program is a Palestinian from Gaza. Therefore, the main obstacle to conducting investigative work on the island is the political one, not the financial one. **Mustafa:** I also believe that the dominance of the political side over any other side is the most important obstacle to investigative journalism on the island. Everyone knows that the Aljazeera network does not deviate from the determinants of Qatari politics, whether it is in support of some parties or against others. As for the rest of the obstacles, they are traditional ones, including the lack of response of the various parties to Aljazeera, and the dissatisfaction of the security services with these Aljazeera investigations in some countries. In the end, the relations that Aljazeera possesses are the gateway to carrying out its investigative investigations. Wherever the relations are available, it succeeds in the investigation, and when it lacks relations in a country, it is difficult for it to carry out investigative work in it.
	How does investigative reporting affect media coverage of Aljazeera	**Samed:** Undoubtedly, investigative journalism is one of the areas that has taken Aljazeera's coverage global. **Omar:** Investigative journalism has increased the level of reliability of the content that Aljazeera provides to its audience.

	Media Network?	**Mustafa:** Investigative journalism has also enhanced Aljazeera's ability to reach new audiences beyond the traditional, familiar audience. **Muhammad:** That's right, especially the heavy audience looking for deep topics. **Hudhayfa:** The most important benefit is that it made Aljazeera overcome obstacles in accessing information sources.
	Why does Aljazeera Media Network use investigative media among its total coverage?	**Samed:** In the digital age, keeping up with the new media for the news has become greater than keeping pace with television, whose role in transmitting news has declined, and television has become in need of new forms of programs to attract the audience to it, including investigative templates and programs that cover the news in a different way from the familiar traditional way, such as programs behind the news and programs that It aims to enhance and deepen the public's knowledge of the issues and news being circulated. Therefore, the new media has a real impact on the way television programs are designed, their objectives, and how they interact with the audience, and this requires considering the nature of the cadres working in television, qualifying them, training them, and developing them, and we have begun to see new forms of work being presented in this context. In addition, large networks have become focused on the detailed local dimensions of some issues in order to invest their ability to access information because they sometimes have higher capabilities than local media in accessing local information, and this makes investigative work important to attract the local audience. Aljazeera in particular had an important contribution to the transformation attempts that Arab societies witnessed during the Arab Spring period, and it worked in this aspect in a qualitative manner in a deeper way than just reporting news and focused on deepening knowledge of the political change taking place in the Arab world. **Mustafa:** I have three points. First, we have not witnessed this type of investigative work for a long time. Aljazeera, as a large network, has been concerned with preserving this type of program so that it does not disappear from the Arab environment. Secondly, Aljazeera resorted to survey programs to maintain audience satisfaction and attract new audiences who do not watch regular programs on television, especially since people may not be interested in watching full programs as much as they are interested in following specific parts of these programs. This mainly concerns the new generation or the social media generation that does not He watches full episodes on television and cannot spend an hour, for example, watching a program that may not interest him much, but he is interested in a specific part of these programs, such as the programs presented by Aljazeera on the "Saif Al-Quds" war. Third: Delivering information in a way different from the news style. Recently, people, by virtue of the amount of information flowing through social media and television, have created boredom among the audience. Therefore, investigative programs have become more capable of delivering news information in other ways that are accepted by the public. **Omar:** Frankly, I see that broadcasting investigative programs on television is a new form of television programs, and investigative work was previously concentrated in newspapers, written tools, and the like. Therefore, Aljazeera made a quantum leap in bringing investigative journalism out of newspapers

		to the screen. Especially since the general public and the Arab public were not aware of this type of journalism, unlike journalists and those interested in investigative journalism, its importance and role. I believe that Aljazeera, through these programs, improves the level of public awareness of the importance of this type of investigations and opens the door to the diversity of these programs and the groups targeted by the investigations, in addition to touching on important new topics for the public by providing information and secrets of what is going on around them behind the scenes and in closed rooms. Thus, investigative journalism has informed people about the subtleties and broadened their horizons about what is going on around them, and I believe that the transfer of these works to television will open the doors wider for further development in investigative journalism in the coming period, especially as they cover issues that are not known or previously familiar to the public. **Hudhayfa:** First of all, I think that Aljazeera's goal in directing these programs is high competitiveness. Previously, Aljazeera was alone working in the field of Arab media. Now there are international, Arab, or even local channels, but they care about the Arab dimension, such as Syria TV. These channels advanced, developed, and expanded the area of competition with Aljazeera, which is now looking for new spaces through which it can prove itself due to its financial ability, expansion of its reach, and its ability to carry out this type of investigative work that requires very high costs. The second point, which, in my opinion, is also very important. After the Arab Spring, Aljazeera began to see itself as an institution capable of working in the Arab world by presenting new things, so it tried to highlight its role more by providing solutions to some issues and shedding light on them. For many people, the island became classified as being with or against a class. Thus, it played a major role, and was even part of the recent Gulf crisis, as the closure of Aljazeera was one of the basic conditions for the four Arab countries that imposed the blockade on the State of Qatar, and this is due to Aljazeera's important role in guiding public opinion in the Arab world. Third: Public interest and excitement. The public today is looking for something exciting. Previously, newspapers and television were more immersed in investigative work, but now, with the development of social media and social media, the public is living in a world of speed. I am one of the people who do not watch television in my home. I follow the events via YouTube or through Facebook clips. Therefore, Aljazeera searched for programs that would compensate the audience for the news scenes they were watching on its screen, with programs that would attract the audience to its accounts on social media. Aljazeera has its own social media style, which is characterized as a diverse cultural youth style that includes economy, money, business and satirical comedy. However, in investigative work, Aljazeera is now targeting larger groups of the more advanced generation of the young generation. Therefore, I believe that the availability of financial capabilities is the most important part of Aljazeera's approach to investigative journalism, which requires large expenditures on the financial coverage of correspondents and their assistants, travel costs, and the purchase of some documents and evidence. **Muhammad:** The first point is that Aljazeera, since its inception, was the first to start working in Arab investigative journalism before other Arab satellite channels appeared, and it had well-known programs such as The Black Box, The Beginnings of Yousry Fouda, and others. Therefore, the continuation of

		Aljazeera in this path, that is, the investigative work, does not aim mainly at competition as much as it aims to prove the presence with the competitors that already exist, to prove the presence of the public and the competing channels that they are able to access the deep and accurate information and present it to the public in a distinctive way. We are talking about more than one point in Aljazeera's motives for producing investigative reports, including the added value that Aljazeera provides to the Arab viewer, and the visual material in which we got out of the framework of competition for the press scoop in light of the development of technology and its availability in all media institutions. In the end, when you present deep material, you prove to the viewer that you are able to access the depth and uniqueness of the information, and this requires employing the capabilities of Aljazeera to reach people financially and security, and Aljazeera programs have proven that they have a superior ability to access deep information and present it to the public in a visually attractive and productive way. Finally, Aljazeera's high ability to use modern technology to reach the audience by employing graphics and visual techniques that were not only used to reach the elite audience, but also to the general public and the social media audience, which is called the light audience, who follows these programs, attracted to visual productions. **Omar:** In light of the political and ideological alignments, the major media outlets are subjected to media campaigns and propaganda by competitors who always try to describe their coverage as biased, partial, and far from the truth. This happened with Aljazeera in more than one case. Therefore, I believe that the more investigative programs she produces, the more she proves to viewers her objectivity and accuracy. This raises the level of reliability it enjoys in the Arab street. **Mustafa:** Yes, that's right. I also believe that reliability is one of the most important goals that Aljazeera seeks to achieve with its investigative journalism.
2nd Objective		
To identify the factors that contribute to Aljazeera Media Network's use of new media in its investigative journalism.	How do you find the effects of technological factors on the investigative journalism?	**Hudhayfa:** We must realize that Aljazeera operates within the understanding of the decline of television and traditional media with the emergence of a new generation of audience that has grown up with the development of communication technologies and social media tools. This pushes Aljazeera to go to the spaces where the audience is present to provide information for the new future, which requires a specific type of news coverage that facilitates the new audience's access to Aljazeera's coverage and compensates for the audience's distance from television. **Muhammad:** There is no escape from the forced drift towards modernity. Social media has become the basis, and therefore the AJ+ platform has become the basis of Aljazeera, not the satellite channel. Today few people watch TV, I personally follow her on YouTube. The situation has become reversed in the sense that the media organization is no longer required to create sub-social media platforms with the aim of reaching people, but television has become the subsidiary despite all the expenses spent on it, while social media has become the basis. Therefore, we see satellite channels today competing in terms of viewership, follow-up, and level of interaction. **Hudhayfa:**

		The ease of obtaining information and the low financial cost are two important incentives for the media to turn to the new media. Instead of operating studios, teams, lighting, and sound engineering in order to issue information, now you can, through a short video, with the lowest capabilities and costs, make the news and broadcast it with pictures. **Muhammad:** Do not forget the importance of reusing materials and reproducing any molding processes. When you prepare a film, for example, you can, in social media, prepare it, divide it into parts, distribute it in different ways, and reproduce it based on clips in proportion to the audience of each social media tool that has its own characteristics and advantages. This is an important added value to social media, because it gives the media producer the ability to craft the message in accordance with the tool and the nature of the receiving audience. **Samed:** As we said, during the past ten years, viewers moved from the world of television to the world of smart phones. And the smart phone is the world of applications that connect it to the media circle without the need to be in a specific place, such as home, for example. This pattern must be followed because the pattern of waiting to return home or a place of residence and watch the screen has ended and the world of the smart phone has entered, which moves with a person anywhere and gives him the ability to enter any world he wants to know about. (With laughter) By the way, the generation of smartphones is no longer a young generation. There are old people who own and deal with it. Let's not forget that today's measurement tool for views has become Facebook, for example, and other applications. And satellite channels resort to broadcasting their programs through new media networks. Aljazeera's YouTube and Facebook do not stop broadcasting their productions, and this reflects the influence of these networks. These huge media machines, whose budgets are estimated at billions, resort in their efforts to reach the audience to social networks that are cheap or generally free. Therefore, social media gave the layman the opportunity to equalize the huge media institutions, even if the impact remains different as a result of the quality of the materials, the nature of obtaining information and access to it, the availability of funding and unfair opportunities in the availability of budgets that give opportunities to journalistic institutions at the expense of individuals in investing in social networks. **Omar:** We do not forget that the new media provides the opportunity to archive and classify programs so that the audience can choose the appropriate time for exposure to any program they want, in contrast to what was the case in the fixed dates of programs on television, and this increased the number of viewers in general for programs on Numedia. **Mustaf** I can also access previous episodes of any work produced by Aljazeera by searching for it in its electronic accounts. Previously, this was available on websites, but in a weaker way, less storage space, and greater difficulty in accessing. But now, with any keyword, you can access the content of Aljazeera, which has converted even videos into texts whose links are easily accessible through keywords.
	What are the problems in	**Hudhayfa:**

	using new media that affect investigative reporting?	It is important here to agree on the concept of investigative journalism at its minimum, which is to reveal something unknown to people and present it in a clear way. This is an area that is not easy to enter the Aljazeera network, and the large financial capabilities are not sufficient to access information and sources, and this is what makes the investigative work careful, and the implementing agency cannot provide it periodically, quickly and time-related, but rather it is linked to the ability to provide qualitative work. **Omar:** Validating information is one of the important obstacles. Sometimes you get information that may be unreal or realistic, such as the investigation prepared by Aljazeera Network on the conditions of refugees in Europe. **Hudhayfa:** Although Aljazeera is one of the pioneers of investigative work, as Mohammed said, investigative journalism as a type of journalism is still new to us in the Arab world. Investigative journalism is more present in Europe and exposes corruption and very large societal issues. We are trying to benefit from this experience in Western countries and imitate it in our Arab media reality, but the challenge remains the extent of our success in that. **Mustafa:** Investigative information in Western media can be presented as part of a news bulletin in which new information is presented or a hidden issue is revealed, and not as an integrated program that is prepared from A to Z and aims to gather the audience and provide it with promotional advertisements. **Hudhayfa:** Therefore, we said about the obstacles that it is not right for the investigative program to be linked to a fixed publishing time. A reporter may work for three or four years to provide one investigative material, but its value covers the cost of his work during the entire period. Time is a very important issue in this context. **Muhammad:** Among the obstacles in general, we must not forget the state of freedoms for journalistic work in the Arab world. The low level of freedoms greatly limits the quality of investigative work, and the journalists' audacity to present materials that may entail paying a high price. **Mustafa:** There is another point in the obstacles. As long as we are talking about Aljazeera broadcasting more than five or six programs simultaneously, this means that there are no obstacles that prevent its implementation of investigative work, in the sense that we understand. Aljazeera is able to reach, push, and produce, and the evidence is that it produces four or five investigative programs in the same week, on a regular basis. Other journalism networks that do not have the ability to put in the same effort and expense may not have this potential. **Hudhayfa:** Colleagues may agree with me that investigative journalism has become, in the last ten years, the focus of attention of many journalists, media professionals, and even ordinary people interested in this field. This interest from the public motivates journalists to train and qualify, but the form and method of our understanding of this journalism is still emerging and has not reached the mature stage in understanding the essence of investigative journalism.

		Rather, we focus on hype and excitement, attracting attention, and achieving excellence and stardom for the journalist who presents investigative work, without understanding the controls of work in this type of media. There are societal issues that touch the needs of certain groups of people, but they are not important to the general public, and this is different from making reports that cause uproar at the public level and can topple a minister or an official of an institution or large companies. We should not forget the administrative obstacles related to publishing policies. It is possible for a journalist to present investigative production that the publisher does not like, so he refuses to publish it, and the journalist's effort is in vain.
	To what extent does Aljazeera use new media in investigative reporting?	**Muhammad:** I think that the issue is related to the production agencies more than it is related to the platforms, because the producers are more interested in the details of the investigative work than the publishers. Much of the investigative work published by Aljazeera channel, for example, is produced by third parties through contracts with producing companies in which Aljazeera is a supervising producer and publisher, and external sources are the implementing agencies. This is related to the technical and financial capabilities of the producing companies and the level of development of their teams, which is reflected in the quality and competitiveness of the reports. It is also related to the abundance of executive production companies operating in the field, which compete to produce high-quality investigative works that persuade publishers to pay for their publication. This amount of production is not directly related to the new media when viewed from a quantitative angle. **Omar**: However, this had a positive effect on targeting the audience. Social media determines the category that you want your investigative product to reach, such as determining the number of men, how many women, and the age or professional group. Also, funded advertising on social media gives you an opportunity to target a very precise segment in the spatial and age geography that you want the investigative report to reach, unlike what was the case on television. For example, some feminist organizations that produce investigative reports with the aim of raising awareness of gender issues marginalize men from the audience and target women exclusively within the age group precisely defined by the publisher. Thus, social media has enhanced the ability of investigative producers to accurately reach those they target with their productions. **Mustafa:** This point can be a double-edged sword, because in social media you cannot control the content. For example, a 10-year-old child with a Facebook account can see a survey program directed at women or another group. Therefore, one must beware that social media presents a wide, uncontrolled world. As for the investigations, social media has weakened their credibility, why? Because anyone can do an investigative report and publish it on unreliable social media accounts. Here, Aljazeera platforms can be dealt with as a reliable party because its sources are documented, but when you access the videos on Facebook, you will find a thousand people who have produced reports on Ukraine, the war in it, and various global events in an investigative style, but is the information provided reliable? Is it real or not? Consequently, social media contributed to the chaos of information dissemination, and these are among the negatives and frightening caveats.

	Why does Aljazeera Media Network use new media in its investigative journalism?	**Hudhayfa:** The most important impact of the new media is that it opened investigative programs to the world. You no longer need a journalistic platform to present your material to the public, especially when a press institution cannot bear the consequences of producing the material. Social media bears that, and thus it breaks the gatekeeper. **Omar:** The new media gave investigative journalism the opportunity to benefit from unsystematic publishing by individuals and citizens, or what can be called citizen journalism, which now provides pillars of evidence and visual evidence for investigative journalism.
3rd Research Objective		
To explore the influences of new media usage on the practices of Aljazeera Media Network investigative reporting.	How does new media development affect the amount and quality of investigative reporting of Aljazeera Media Network?	**Mustafa** Social media expanded investigative journalism by virtue of the availability of the archive, which gave journalists the ability to recall previous speeches of personalities that contradicted their current discourse, that is, by playing on the contradictory positions of the same person from time to time, which fed satirical media with abundant content. The new media also provides information, pictures, data and video recordings about any person or event that the journalist is looking for, and you can visit his Facebook account in order to know his personal and family data, his tendencies and trends. Previously, access to this data required great effort and high follow-up, but it has become easy and available with the development of the digital age. **Muhammad:** There are two opposite aspects here, the first is that the new media widened the door to the abundance of information, and its openness to everyone, but in the second aspect it narrowed the door to the content by fighting the content practiced by some platforms for political or ideological reasons and preventing them from publishing some productions for those considerations. Thus, this has become an entry point for the practice of voluntary self-censorship by producers who may refrain from producing some media productions when they realize that social media administrations may restrict the accounts of publishing platforms if they are published on them. **Omar:** New media platforms' acceptance of the content presented on the major media network such as Aljazeera and others is different from its acceptance on the pages and accounts of the general public. I mean that Facebook, for example, may delete a person's account for publishing a post that is considered inciting within Facebook's criteria, but it does not delete this account when it relates to Aljazeera, for example, because it realizes that it is dealing with a large media network that serves professional, not inflammatory, goals. **Samed:** Historically, the world of media suffered from a crisis in measuring feedback, but social media today provides a good opportunity for the media to measure impact and calculate feedback from audience interaction with what is being produced and criticizing or even objecting to the content presented in it, and this is a positive point. Also, social media has made the audience a partner of the media organization in the production process. Every person who shares any material published on his personal accounts transmits it to his followers and thus allows to expand access to it and interact with it in a spirally expanded manner, and this is a great positive for investigative work.

		Omar: Social media also opened the door to new investigative work, seeing that the public is also able to submit ideas, suggestions and complaints to the media openly in order to launch investigative work on them. **Hudhayfa:** The most important pillar of investigative journalism is information. Social media has become a source of information for investigative journalism, regardless of how it is portrayed and presented. An entire investigation may be based on a few moments captured by an amateur mobile camera, and this is the value of citizen journalism. Sometimes this information is not ordinary information as much as it is sensitive information about cases of corruption and violations that require the launch of extensive investigations.
	How do you evaluate the credibility of information from open-source data in new media?	**Samed:** Wars are among the most important examples of the use of communication networks in propaganda, as is the case with the Russian-Ukrainian war, from which many videos spread that promote the victory of one party over another or its exposure to setbacks by the other party. In the verification process, we face the problem of exposure to a huge amount of incorrect information, so social networks, despite the ease of transmission through them, have weakened the credibility of the content today, or at least they require more verification of the credibility of the above information and news. This is firstly because it is easy to use in political advertising. Secondly, because the carrier is often an unknown entity or an entity that does not care about its journalistic reputation, unlike what media organizations do. We do not forget that social media created a pattern of building the audience and creating fame without submitting to journalistic standards, and therefore this pattern adopts the principle of exploiting crises to build fame, which is a well-known pattern in the new media. Hence, the new media networks, despite breaking the monopoly of the traditional networks of news and the speed of its transmission of information, turned into a fertile field for information of unknown origin, and this made it less credible due to the low price that the transmitter of the information could pay from his journalistic reputation. **Muhammad:** Technology is really a double-edged sword. The first relates to the ease of forgery, fabrication, and fabrication of information. The second is related to the abundance of technological tools and information that have become easier for journalists to access information and the use of hidden cameras, which the journalist can use to facilitate his investigation. In the first aspect, we have seen forgery by imitating voices, installing pictures of faces in other than their real places, and other uses of fabrication. **Hudhayfa:** Technology has created verification applications for us, going back to the times of displaying and publishing images, and this was not available before the development of communication technology. Technology provided opportunities for researchers and stakeholders to verify, and thus technological development created tools to combat false content, albeit with less effectiveness than the spread of this content. **Omar:** Verifying the credibility of social media content has become a fantasy, due to the amount and diversity of content pumping into social media platforms, especially after this pumping has become programmed through militarization and the establishment of electronic armies that are managed by states and security and political systems.

4th Research Objective		
To explore the challenges of using new media in Aljazeera Media Network investigative reporting.	What factors affect the abilities of Aljazeera Media Network journalists to use new media in investigative journalism activities	**Mustafa:** This depends on the capabilities of the institution itself. In the case of Aljazeera, whether the journalist is an advanced or a beginner, Aljazeera turns him into a part of a fully moving system. Evidence that some workers in Aljazeera, when they move to other institutions, we notice that their performance appears much lower than it was during their work in Aljazeera, which has high potentials that fuse the capabilities of individuals in the crucible of the institution, including its activity in the new media. Aljazeera did not join the social media, but was one of the first networks to develop social media, and all the programs that we see today in the various Arab networks started from Aljazeera. **Hudhayfa:** The password is the team, that is, we return to the human factor. This journalist needs a team of assistants of young journalists who are proficient in using technology for filming, protecting accounts, and collecting data from different accounts in a better way than him. **Omar:** Motivation is essential in developing the work of journalists and their benefit from development programs. **Hudhayfa:** The tools before motivation, the old tools, are different from today's advanced journalism tools. **Muhammad:** In light of the tremendous technological development, the successful journalist has become the comprehensive journalist, who has all the skills. The time of the single-skilled journalist has ended and we have become in the world of the multi-skilled journalist. Therefore, we see that the largest percentage of the staff working in investigative programs are young people, but the veteran journalist is the mastermind behind them. Follow the program What is Hidden Greater You will find that it is based on a team of young journalists. **Hudhayfa:** There is a typical case for Aljazeera in aj+. They trained each team of content makers to make montages using ready-made templates, which they resort to with strict instructions in the absence of a montage or producer. This work with templates provided a high percentage of the network's need for montage.
	How can Aljazeera Media Network Journalists overcome the obstacles of using new media in investigative journalism regarding Technological, human resources, political and	**Muhammad:** Here Aljazeera has a special case, as it has a training institute that allows all employees of the organization free, periodic courses that they choose according to their desire and need. These courses are available to all workers at different job levels and ages, and Aljazeera is considered an exception in this field, as most other press institutions carry out external training for their employees, which is costly and has consequences in time and so on. **Omar:** the absence of a specialized investigative journalist within the digital sector of the Aljazeera network represents one of the striking shortcomings in 's investigative journalism. Therefore, the establishment of this specialized body will provide a lot of assistance to Aljazeera Network in investigative production. **Mustafa:** Since we are in the digital age, I believe that Aljazeera's greater reliance on technology can contribute to the development of its investigative journalism. Today, media technology is no longer just platforms, screens, or

	financial barriers?	communication, interaction and presentation tools, but rather a mixture of all of those affordances. If Aljazeera succeeds in employing this mix in its works it will make its investigative journalism even bigger. **Hudhayfa:** Preserving the source and the sequence of knowledge are very important as basic skills for the investigative journalist so that he is not exposed to the reactions of the parties he is investigating before producing his report, and this may push them to further conceal their information. **Samed:** Money is the backbone of the media. I believe that Aljazeera should provide large budgets to investigative journalism agencies in order to obtain effective products and high-quality work. **Muhammad:** I believe that Aljazeera should develop its human cadre to the highest possible extent and intensify the training of its journalists in the field of investigative journalism. **Omar**: Let us not forget the impact of integrated training in the development of investigative work. By integrated training, I mean that this training should be inclusive of all the skills that an investigative journalist should possess, on the one hand, such as verifying news, tracking sources, and cooperation between Aljazeera Training Center with specialized international press institutions and organizations. In training on investigative journalism, such as ARIJ on the other hand.