Media Coverage of the Beirut Port Explosion on Facebook Pages: A Comparative Analytical Study of the Pages of France 24 Arabic and Sky News Arabia

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Received: 09/05/2026; **Revised:** 27/06/2026; **Accepted:** 30/06/2026؛

Abstract: The study aimed to identify the levels of media coverage of the Beirut Port explosion on Facebook pages. The research employed the descriptive approach using content analysis as a tool for data collection. The analytical sample consisted of the Facebook pages of France 24 Arabic and Sky News Arabia. The study found statistically significant differences between the Facebook pages of France 24 Arabic and Sky News Arabia in the levels of media coverage of topics related to the Beirut Port explosion, in favor of the France 24 Arabic page. This indicates that the channel focused on presenting content related to the event in greater depth, including comprehensive details about the port explosion, clarifying the negative consequences resulting from the explosion and possible ways to address them.The results also revealed statistically significant differences between the two pages in the forms of audience interaction with the media coverage of topics related to the Beirut Port explosion, again in favor of the France 24 Arabic page. This may indicate the presence of a specialized writer in Lebanese political affairs who has gained the trust of followers due to the continuous updating of information related to the port explosion presented to the audience through the page. The coverage included detailed presentations of the explosion and its resulting economic, social, and psychological damages across various areas of the Lebanese capital, Beirut.

Keywords: Media coverage, Beirut Port Explosion, Facebook pages.

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Introduction

The tremendous development in the field of media and communication technology has created new spaces for dialogue among different segments of society. Social networking platforms have also helped overcome the limitations of time and place, enabling users to participate and engage in multi-directional communication with various sources.

Among these platforms, Facebook represents a new space utilized by media institutions to cover current events. It has enabled professionals working in newsrooms to produce media content using an integrated digital format, relying on features such as live broadcasting to disseminate news related to ongoing events through text, audio, and images. This development has opened new horizons for interaction between media institutions and their audiences, as well as for the exchange of demands and feedback from platform users.

In particular, the media coverage of the Beirut Port explosion on the Facebook pages of France 24 Arabic and Sky News Arabia reflects this multi-directional communication between sources and users. This has made social media platforms among the most effective means of communicating with audiences and the fastest channels for transmitting news, information, and data directly from the scene of events.

Accordingly, the importance of this topic emerges from the need to examine it from a contemporary perspective. Therefore, this study focuses on media coverage of the Beirut Port explosion on Facebook pages.

Literature Review

Previous studies varied between those that focused on media coverage on digital news platforms and others that examined forms of audience interaction with topics related to current events on these platforms. Through reviewing the studies related to the research topic, it became clear that many studies have emphasized the nature of media coverage of current events on the digital media platform Facebook and the interactivity of these platforms. The studies were arranged in descending order from the most recent to the oldest, as follows:

The study conducted by Mohammed et al. (2025). aimed to explore the impact of discussions within “echo chambers” on political conflicts in regions experiencing wars or unrest, focusing on their role in shaping interpretive narratives of events. The study also examined how active participants within these echo chambers interpret political conflicts. The results revealed that echo chambers have a fundamental impact on media coverage, and that the extent of this impact varies depending on editorial policies, the targeted audience, and the formation of public opinion.

Similarly, the study by Fraxanet et al. (2025). sought to analyze media coverage of current events on Facebook by examining patterns of user interaction with news content published by media institutions. The study also explored users’ ideological affiliations and the quality and credibility of news sources. The results indicated that Facebook’s policies and algorithms play a central role in shaping media coverage of current events, either by highlighting certain issues or limiting the spread

of other content. This, in turn, influences audience awareness and interactions with news in ways that correspond with their political orientations.

The study by Naou (2025). aimed to reveal the methods and mechanisms employed by the Al Jazeera Global Network in presenting its news stories, with a focus on the use of storytelling techniques as a tool for delivering global content in a human and engaging manner. The study also examined the structure of news stories and analyzed their components and narrative elements in order to understand how this technique contributes to influencing audiences and enhancing the quality of news coverage, particularly in contexts that require emotional engagement with events. The findings showed that Al Jazeera effectively employs storytelling techniques, integrating information and events with human and narrative elements that enhance audience engagement and impact.

Another study by Hang and Ngoc (2025). examined how Vietnamese journalism employs live-streaming technology to produce digital content for live news broadcasts by national media institutions to achieve speed and audience interaction. The findings revealed that digital convergence in Vietnamese journalism has contributed to improving media production efficiency and expanding audience reach across multiple platforms. However, several challenges associated with digital transformation were identified, including economic pressures, the need to develop digital skills among media professionals, and issues related to maintaining professional standards in the rapidly evolving digital publishing environment.

The study by Qorib et al. (2025). aimed to identify the contributions of live-streaming features on social media pages of media institutions in developing news distribution methods and enhancing audience interaction in Malang, Indonesia. The results indicated that live streaming is highly effective in expanding the dissemination of news and increasing immediate and direct interaction with audiences, particularly during local crises.

The study conducted by Diaz-Vicente et al. (2024). examined news coverage of political events and health crises on Facebook. The results demonstrated that Facebook pages affiliated with media institutions are highly effective in covering current events and producing and distributing content that adapts to the continuous changes in Facebook's algorithm.

Additionally, the study by Erokhin and Komendantova (2024). analyzed the effectiveness of social media as a tool for disaster risk reduction and as a vital resource for understanding population responses during disasters. The findings showed that social media has revolutionized disaster risk reduction by enabling large-scale real-time data collection and promoting dynamic community engagement.

The study by Amira Gamal (2023, p. 732). explored the nature of news coverage on newspaper Facebook pages, the extent to which subjective language is used in editing and formulating published content, and the relationship between the type of content, the use of subjective language, and audience preferences and interactions with such content. The results showed that the Youm7 Facebook page employed subjective language across its five levels in the published journalistic content. Moreover, a low level of audience interactivity across its four dimensions was

observed with all types of content, along with a strong correlation between the use of subjective language and the level of audience interaction with published journalistic materials.

Benefits of Reviewing Previous Studies

The review of previous studies related to the topic of the current research has helped identify a contemporary research field on which the present study is based. This field lies in linking Facebook interactivity with content related to the Beirut Port explosion on news pages, as well as examining the mechanisms of news coverage on these pages. Such platforms are considered an important source through which audiences obtain news and information related to current events and form their attitudes toward issues that attract their interest.

The review also contributed to defining the research problem more precisely, clarifying its importance, objectives, questions, methodology, and the process of selecting the study sample in light of the findings of previous research. Furthermore, it helped frame the interpretation of the study's results based on the findings and perspectives presented in earlier studies.

The theoretical frameworks of the reviewed studies are closely related to the topic of the present study, which examines media coverage of the Beirut Port explosion on Facebook pages, specifically comparing the pages of France 24 Arabic and Sky News Arabia. It should be noted that the study will conduct a content analysis of the media coverage of topics related to the Beirut Port explosion on both pages, in addition to monitoring the patterns of audience interaction with this coverage.

Research Problem

Digital media platforms constitute a fertile environment for transmitting news and information related to current events, particularly topics related to the media coverage of the Beirut Port explosion on Facebook platforms. This incident resulted in significant human and economic losses due to the destruction of the port and large parts of the capital city. The explosion caused numerous deaths and injuries, displaced many residents from their homes, and led to the loss of commercial activities and public financial revenues. In addition, vital sectors such as health, education, and the country's cultural heritage were severely affected.

Digital media platforms have enabled their audiences to participate socially and exercise selective freedom in choosing media messages, thereby becoming active participants in the communication process. This participation allows audiences to follow the latest developments related to the port explosion, particularly in light of the crises that the Lebanese state has been experiencing in recent years.

Accordingly, the **research problem** revolves around the following main question:

What are the levels of media coverage of the Beirut Port explosion on Facebook pages?

Significance of the Study

Theoretical Significance

The Beirut Port explosion resulted in the destruction of a significant portion of the city, causing the death of more than (200) people, as well as injuries and displacement of residents in many neighborhoods of the capital. It also led to the destruction of infrastructure and services and caused economic losses amounting to billions of dollars. Examining media coverage of this event helps highlight the ongoing developments surrounding the incident, identify its causes, and present possible solutions for overcoming the crisis. Social dialogue surrounding the media coverage of the Beirut Port explosion remains one of the most effective communication tools on digital platforms.

Practical Significance

The practical importance of this study stems from conducting a comparative analysis of the media coverage of topics related to the Beirut Port explosion on the Facebook pages of France 24 Arabic and Sky News Arabia. The study also monitors patterns of interaction surrounding this coverage without focusing on the specific uses of visitors to each page. Such analysis provides insights into the real-world impact of digital media coverage on society and audience reception.

Objectives of the Study

The current study seeks to achieve the following main objective: To examine the media coverage of the Beirut Port explosion on Facebook pages.

From this main objective, the following sub-objectives emerge:

1. To identify the differences between the Facebook pages of France 24 Arabic and Sky News Arabia in the levels of media coverage of topics related to the Beirut Port explosion.
2. To identify the differences between the Facebook pages of France 24 Arabic and Sky News Arabia in the forms of interaction with media coverage of topics related to the Beirut Port explosion.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

Research Questions

1. What are the **levels of media coverage** of topics related to the Beirut Port explosion addressed by the Facebook pages of **France 24 Arabic** and **Sky News Arabia**?
2. How did the Facebook pages of **France 24 Arabic** and **Sky News Arabia** address topics related to the Beirut Port explosion?
3. What **news formats** were used by the Facebook pages of **France 24 Arabic** and **Sky News Arabia** in addressing topics related to the Beirut Port explosion?
4. What **typographic elements** were used in the treatment of topics related to the Beirut Port explosion on the Facebook pages of **France 24 Arabic** and **Sky News Arabia**?
5. What are the **forms of interaction** with topics related to the Beirut Port explosion on the Facebook pages of **France 24 Arabic** and **Sky News Arabia**?

6. What are the **sources of media coverage** of topics related to the Beirut Port explosion on the Facebook pages of **France 24 Arabic** and **Sky News Arabia**?
7. What is the **direction or tone of media coverage** of topics related to the Beirut Port explosion on the Facebook pages of **France 24 Arabic** and **Sky News Arabia**.

Research Hypotheses

1. There are **statistically significant differences** between the Facebook pages of **France 24 Arabic** and **Sky News Arabia** in the **levels of media coverage** of topics related to the Beirut Port explosion.
2. There are **statistically significant differences** between the Facebook pages of **France 24 Arabic** and **Sky News Arabia** in the **forms of interaction** with media coverage of topics related to the Beirut Port explosion.

Study Sample

The analytical study was conducted on the **media coverage of topics related to the Beirut Port explosion** on the Facebook pages of **France 24 Arabic** and **Sky News Arabia**. The analytical sample was selected based on the results of a **pilot study**.

In selecting the sample, it was considered that these pages belong to **media outlets that provide daily news coverage**. The following section presents a description of the study sample.

Table (1): Description of the Study Sample According to Media Coverage of the Beirut Port Explosion

No.	Categories	France 24 Arabic Page (No.)	%	Sky News Arabia Page (No.)	%	Total (No.)	%
1	Number of news formats, photos, and video clips addressing topics related to the Beirut Port explosion	57	96.61%	41	83.67%	98	90.74%
2	Number of news items presented without multimedia	2	3.39%	8	16.33%	10	9.26%
Total		59	100%	49	100%	108	100%

Interpretation of the Table

The data in the previous table indicate the following:

- According to the number of news posts, formats, images, and video clips addressing Lebanese affairs on the Facebook pages of **France 24 Arabic** and **Sky News Arabia**, the **Sky News Arabia page ranked first in news coverage** of

issues related to Lebanese affairs with **(57) news formats**, presented in different forms including news stories, reports, interviews, articles, cartoons, photographs, and video clips. This compares to **(41) news formats on the France 24 Arabic page.** This suggests that the channel plays an important functional role in society through the news coverage it provides regarding topics related to the Beirut Port explosion. Such coverage presents the events objectively and includes comprehensive details explaining the circumstances that led to the explosion, thereby meeting the information needs of audiences. It also reflects the media institution's editorial style and its development at both local and international levels, aiming to attract a larger audience and maintain a competitive position among media outlets.

- Regarding the **number of news items presented without multimedia**, the **Sky News Arabia page** was the most frequent in publishing news without media attachments, with **(8) news items**, compared to **(2) news items** on the **France 24 Arabic page**, which relied less on text-only posts. This indicates that the channel sought to explain the details related to the port explosion, which resulted from the detonation of a large quantity of **ammonium nitrate stored in a warehouse at the port**, leading to the death of **at least (190) people**, thousands of injuries, and turning the capital into a **"disaster-stricken city."**

Study Population

The study population consists of the Facebook pages of **France 24 Arabic** and **Sky News Arabia**. Due to the large number of platforms covering current events, the researchers faced difficulty in analyzing all available content. Therefore, a **pilot study** was conducted on a sample of **(12) users** of news channel Facebook pages to identify the most prominent platforms covering current events.

According to the respondents' follow-up patterns, the pages were ranked as follows:

1. **France 24 Arabic**
2. **Sky News Arabia**
3. **Russia Today (RT Arabic)**
4. **Al Jazeera**
5. **Cairo News Channel**

The results indicated that the Facebook pages of France 24 Arabic and Sky News Arabia obtained the highest levels of audience follow-up, which justified selecting them as the study sample.

Study Boundaries

Subject Boundaries

The study focuses on topics related to the Beirut Port explosion on the Facebook pages of France 24 Arabic and Sky News Arabia, specifically:

- Destruction of homes and displacement of residents in Beirut neighborhoods.
- Economic losses resulting from the explosion of the ammonium nitrate shipment stored in the port warehouse.

Temporal Boundaries

The study covers the period during which the research tool was applied, from **September 1, 2020 to December 30, 2020**, as each issue typically has a specific **life cycle associated with a defined time period**.

Type and Methodology of the Study

This study belongs to descriptive research, which primarily relies on the content analysis method. Content analysis is considered an appropriate approach for obtaining both quantitative and qualitative data within research units.

The quantitative analysis involves collecting data based on units such as words and topics, which are fundamental components in numerical measurement used to determine the levels of media coverage of the Beirut Port explosion on the Facebook pages of France 24 Arabic and Sky News Arabia.

Meanwhile, qualitative analysis is used to interpret the numerical results derived from the quantitative analysis conducted on the pages included in the study sample. Researchers using this type of study begin by observing and recording results based on collected data, and then interpret them analytically.

This approach was adopted because it aligns with the study's objective of identifying the levels of interaction with media coverage on the selected Facebook pages. The method allows for analyzing both the form and content of issues related to:

- Economic losses resulting from the explosion of ammonium nitrate at the port warehouse.
- Destruction of homes and displacement of residents in Beirut neighborhoods.

In addition, it allows the researchers to monitor patterns of audience interaction surrounding these issues, which ultimately enables them to determine the levels of interaction with the studied issue on both pages.

Study Variables

- **Independent Variable:** Media coverage of the Beirut Port explosion.
- **Dependent Variable:** Facebook pages.

Concepts of the Study

Media Coverage

Operationally defined as the process of collecting, documenting, producing, and broadcasting news related to current events directly from the scene of the event with accuracy and objectivity, and delivering it to the audience through text, audio, and visual media.

Facebook Pages

Operationally defined as interactive news pages used by individuals and various institutions to produce, publish, and exchange news, allowing users to communicate and interact regarding topics that attract their interest.

Research Instrument

The research instrument consisted of a content analysis form designed by the researchers to measure the levels of media coverage of topics related to the Beirut Port explosion on the Facebook pages of France 24 Arabic and Sky News Arabia, as well as to monitor patterns of audience interaction.

An initial version of the content analysis form was developed and presented to a number of specialized academic reviewers in the field. Based on their feedback, some analytical categories related to the Beirut Port explosion were modified, while others were removed. After implementing the suggested revisions, the form was finalized and prepared for application in a manner that served the objectives of the study.

The form was applied by monitoring topics related to the Beirut Port explosion within the study sample and recording patterns of interaction during the period from September 1, 2020 to December 30, 2020, since each issue typically follows a specific time-bound life cycle.

Definitions of the Content Analysis Categories

The content analysis form included categories related to **content (What was said?)** and categories related to **form (How was it said?)**, as follows:

- **First: Content Categories (What was said?)**

These include two main categories:

a. Media coverage of the Beirut Port explosion on the Facebook pages of **France 24 Arabic** and **Sky News Arabia**, divided into:

- Destruction of homes and displacement of residents in Beirut neighborhoods.
- Economic losses resulting from the explosion of ammonium nitrate stored at the port warehouse.

b. Direction of media coverage of the Beirut Port explosion, divided into: (Negative, Positive, Neutral)

- Second: Form Categories (How was it said?)

These include four subcategories:

1. News formats used in coverage, divided into: (News, Report, Interviews, Article, Cartoon).
2. Typographic elements used in coverage, divided into: (Video clips, Subject-related images, Personal images)
3. Sources of media coverage, divided into:(Newspapers and news agencies on the internet, Reports from France 24 Arabic correspondents and reporters, Reports from Sky News Arabia correspondents and reporters, Official sources, Eyewitnesses and civil society activists, Economic experts, Studio guest interviews)
4. Forms of interaction with the Beirut Port explosion coverage, divided into: (Number of likes, Number of comments, Number of shares)

Conceptual Framework

Media Coverage of Topics Related to the Beirut Port Explosion on Facebook Pages

Media coverage refers to the process of producing, collecting, and formulating news related to current events and broadcasting it to the public through digital platforms directly from the scene of the event using text, audio, and visual formats, in addition to providing mechanisms for immediate interaction and audience participation in sharing content. This process contributes to shaping public opinion toward various issues (Lane et al., 2024).

The digital media platform Facebook has become an important communication medium for covering topics related to current events and transmitting information immediately from the scene of the event, particularly in the coverage of the Beirut Port explosion through text and images. It also plays a role in enhancing social cohesion, solidarity, and broad interactive participation among audiences.

Digital news platforms allow media professionals to contribute to shaping events, reporting them, and commenting on them freely. Many media institutions rely on these platforms to disseminate their news and programs, promote their content, and maintain direct communication with their audiences (Bounajma, 2024, p. 76). These platforms are distinguished by their interactive features, which enable communication and participation between media institutions and users regarding topics that attract public interest.

The Beirut Port Explosion

On August 4, 2020, a massive explosion occurred in a large stockpile of ammonium nitrate stored in one of the warehouses at the Port of Beirut, resulting in widespread destruction in areas surrounding the city. The Port of Beirut is considered one of the most important ports in the eastern Mediterranean basin, due to its strategic geographical location and its strong commercial connections with dozens of international ports (BBC News, 2020).

Causes of the Beirut Port Explosion

The destruction of the Port of Beirut was caused by the explosion of a highly explosive substance known as ammonium nitrate, which had been stored for years without proper adherence to safety and security regulations. This led to the destruction of the port and extensive damage across large areas of the city (Monte Carlo, 2020).

The explosion resulted in several major consequences, including:

1. Destruction of homes and displacement of residents in Beirut neighborhoods.
2. Economic losses resulting from the explosion of the ammonium nitrate shipment stored in the port warehouse.
3. Losses related to economic activities, including the destruction of physical capital, disruption of trade exchanges, and the loss of part of the state's revenues (Asharq Al-Awsat, 2020).
4. The explosion caused severe damage to homes and vehicles located in the Karantina area of Beirut (France 24, 2020).

Interaction with Media Coverage of Topics Related to the Beirut Port Explosion on Facebook

Interaction refers to multi-directional communication and exchange of opinions among participants in the communication process (Mohammed, 2023, p. 366). It is a fundamental feature of digital media platforms that enables audiences to actively participate and engage with news content (Zagorulko & Horska, 2025, pp. 1–18), particularly with topics related to the Beirut Port explosion on Facebook pages.

Digital news platforms allow users to communicate and interact around shared interests and topics at any time and from anywhere in the world (Mohammed, 2023, p. 367).

Forms of Interaction with Media Coverage of the Beirut Port Explosion on Facebook Pages

Interaction with topics related to the Beirut Port explosion on Facebook pages takes several forms, including:

1. Like Interaction: This refers to users expressing approval or agreement with published content (text, images, or videos) by clicking the "Like" button.
2. Comment Interaction: This refers to users engaging with content by exchanging opinions and discussions, which enriches interactive dialogue among users. This feature also allows the addition of links, images, and emojis.
3. Share Interaction: This refers to the ability of users to share content across networks, enabling it to reach a wider audience.

Validity and Reliability Procedures for the Content Analysis Form

To test the validity and reliability of the content analysis form and ensure its ability to achieve the objectives of the study, the form was presented to a number of academic reviewers and specialists in the field. Based on their feedback, several modifications were made to the categories included in the form. The researchers then analyzed the content under study on the Facebook pages of France 24 Arabic and Sky News Arabia, with the assistance of another researcher who possessed similar expertise in content analysis.

The reviewers also provided guidance regarding how to use the form and analyze its categories. To measure the reliability of the analysis, the Holsti formula was used: Reliability=2MN1+N2Reliability = \frac{2M}{N1 + N2}Reliability=N1+N22M

The reliability coefficient between the two coders reached (0.91), which represents a statistically significant correlation, indicating the clarity and suitability of the content analysis form for conducting the analysis.

Statistical Analysis

After completing the data collection for the analytical study, the researchers used the following statistical techniques to analyze the data:

- Percentages and frequency distributions for the questions included in the content analysis form.
- Chi-square test (χ^2) to calculate differences between frequencies.
- Holsti's formula to test the reliability of the analysis across all categories of the form.

Study Results

The analytical study was conducted to analyze the content related to the Beirut Port explosion on the Facebook pages of France 24 Arabic and Sky News Arabia, and to monitor patterns of interaction surrounding this coverage. The following section presents the results of the study.

- **First: Classification of Main Categories According to Content**

Table (2): Category of Topics Related to Media Coverage of the Beirut Port Explosion on the Facebook Pages of France 24 Arabic and Sky News Arabia

No.	Topics Related to the Port Explosion	France 24 Arabic	%	Sky News Arabia	%	Total	%
1	Destruction of homes and displacement of residents in Beirut neighborhoods	24	72.72%	17	60.71%	41	67.21%
2	Economic losses resulting from the explosion of ammonium nitrate stored in the port warehouse	9	27.28%	11	39.29%	20	32.79%
Total		33	100%	28	100%	61	100%

Interpretation of the Table

The data in the table indicates the following:

General Direction of Coverage

- Topics related to the destruction of homes and displacement of residents received the highest proportion of coverage at (67.21%), followed by economic losses resulting from the ammonium nitrate explosion, which accounted for (32.79%).
- **Coverage by Each Page**

1. Destruction of Homes and Displacement of Residents in Beirut Neighborhoods

- The France 24 Arabic Facebook page devoted the highest proportion of coverage to topics related to the destruction of homes and displacement of residents, with (72.72%), compared with the Sky News Arabia page, which addressed the issue to a lesser extent. This indicates that the channel emphasized the humanitarian and social dimensions of the Beirut Port explosion, highlighting the suffering of affected individuals and the direct impact of the disaster on civilians. This approach aimed to increase humanitarian awareness among audiences. This finding is consistent with the study by Mohammed et al. (2025), which found that echo chambers significantly influence media coverage, and that the extent of this influence varies according to editorial policies and target audiences.

2. Economic Losses Resulting from the Explosion

- The Sky News Arabia page devoted a higher proportion of coverage to economic losses resulting from the explosion, with (39.29%), compared with the France 24 Arabic page, which addressed this issue less frequently. This suggests that the channel emphasized the economic dimensions and broader consequences of the event, reflecting its editorial priorities and its focus on intensifying media

coverage of the economic implications of the explosion. These losses were estimated to reach **billions of dollars**, including the destruction of residential and commercial buildings, grain silos, disruption of food supply chains, suspension of port operations, interruption of import and export activities, and a decline in economic output due to the halt of economic activities.

Second: In Terms of Form

Table (3): News Formats Used in Media Coverage of the Beirut Port Explosion on the Facebook Pages of France 24 Arabic and Sky News Arabia

News Formats	France 24 Arabic – Destruction of Homes & Displacement	France 24 Arabic – Economic Losses	Total	Sky News Arabia – Destruction of Homes & Displacement	Sky News Arabia – Economic Losses	Total
News	7	6	13	4	1	5
%	53.84%	46.16%	100%	80%	20%	100%
Report	2	4	6	1	3	4
%	33.33%	66.67%	100%	25%	75%	100%
Interviews / Talks	2	1	3	1	7	8
%	66.66%	33.34%	100%	12.5%	87.5%	100%
Article	5	2	7	1	3	4
%	71.42%	28.58%	100%	25%	75%	100%

Interpretation of Table (3)

A. News, The Sky News Arabia Facebook page showed a higher proportion of news formats addressing the destruction of homes and displacement of residents in Beirut neighborhoods, reaching (80%), compared with (53.84%) on the France 24 Arabic page. This indicates that the channel focused on highlighting the consequences of the ammonium nitrate explosion, which led to the destruction of the port and large areas of the capital and the displacement of residents. This reflects the channel's tendency to present news coverage that emphasizes the scale of material losses and their social and economic implications for the affected population. This finding aligns with the study conducted by Fraxanet et al. (2025), which emphasized that Facebook's policies and algorithms play a pivotal role in shaping media coverage of current events by highlighting certain issues or limiting the spread of other content, thereby influencing audience awareness and interaction with news in ways that correspond with their political orientations.

Regarding news coverage of economic losses resulting from the explosion of ammonium nitrate stored in the port warehouse, the France 24 Arabic page showed a higher proportion (46.16%) compared with the Sky News Arabia page (20%). This indicates that the channel highlighted the economic dimension of the disaster,

emphasizing the magnitude of losses caused by the port explosion, including the destruction of residential and commercial properties, restaurants, and hotels, as well as its impact on the Lebanese economy.

B. Reports, The France 24 Arabic page showed a higher proportion of reports addressing the destruction of homes and displacement of residents, with (33.33%), compared with (25%) on the Sky News Arabia page. This suggests that the channel devoted attention to the humanitarian and social consequences of the Beirut Port explosion, aiming to deepen public awareness of the scale of social suffering caused by the disaster. The explosion destroyed thousands of homes and educational infrastructure and resulted in significant social and psychological damage to residents. This finding is consistent with the study conducted by Naou (2025), which indicated that Al Jazeera employs storytelling techniques effectively by integrating information with human narratives, thereby enhancing audience engagement and emotional impact.

Regarding reports related to economic losses resulting from the explosion, the Sky News Arabia page showed a higher proportion (75%) compared with (66.67%) on the France 24 Arabic page. This indicates that the channel adopted an analytical economic perspective to highlight the economic consequences of the explosion and its effects on the country's economic structure.

C. Interviews / Talks, The France 24 Arabic page showed a higher proportion of interviews addressing the destruction of homes and displacement of residents, reaching (66.66%), compared with (12.5%), on the Sky News Arabia page. This indicates that the channel highlighted the suffering of thousands of displaced residents following the explosion, which destroyed tens of thousands of residential buildings and increased levels of psychological distress, depression, and anxiety among residents.

Regarding interviews related to economic losses resulting from the ammonium nitrate explosion, the Sky News Arabia page showed a higher proportion (87.5%) compared with (33.34%) on the France 24 Arabic page. This indicates that the channel focused on the broader consequences of the explosion, including the destruction of grain silos and warehouses, which threatened food security, as well as rising unemployment and poverty rates following the destruction of thousands of commercial institutions.

D. Articles, The France 24 Arabic page showed a higher proportion of articles addressing the destruction of homes and displacement of residents, reaching (71.42%,), compared with (25%), on the Sky News Arabia page. This indicates that the channel highlighted the efforts undertaken by the Lebanese Army to secure the explosion site, enabling investigation teams from the Internal Security Forces and the Higher Relief Commission to assess damage in the affected areas and conduct forensic examinations to determine the causes of the explosion and search for missing persons.

Regarding articles related to economic losses resulting from the ammonium nitrate explosion, the Sky News Arabia page showed a slightly higher proportion (75%) compared with (71.42%), on the France 24 Arabic page. This indicates that the channel focused on reports issued by the World

Bank, international organizations, and the European Union, which emphasized that Lebanon requires urgent assistance to recover from the economic damage caused by the port explosion. These losses included the destruction of physical capital, particularly in the health, transport, housing, and cultural heritage sectors.

- Cartoons, Cartoons were absent from the media coverage of the issues under study on both pages, receiving 0% representation. This indicates a limitation in the media treatment of the issues related to the Beirut Port explosion.

Table (4): Typographic Elements Used in the Media Coverage of the Beirut Port Explosion on the Facebook Pages of France 24 Arabic and Sky News Arabia

Typographic Elements	France 24 Arabic – Destruction of Homes & Displacement	France 24 Arabic – Economic Losses from the Ammonium Nitrate Explosion	Total	Sky News Arabia – Destruction of Homes & Displacement	Sky News Arabia – Economic Losses	Total
Video clips	7	11	18	5	6	11
%	38.88%	61.12%	100%	45.45%	54.55%	100%
Topical images	2	4	6	1	3	4
%	33.33%	66.67%	100%	25%	75%	100%
Portrait images	1	1	2	1	1	2
%	50%	50%	100%	50%	50%	100%

Interpretation of Table (4)

B. Video Clips, The France 24 Arabic Facebook page showed a higher use of video clips related to the economic losses resulting from the ammonium nitrate explosion in the port warehouse, reaching (6.12%), 1compared with (54.55%) on the Sky News Arabia page. This indicates that the channel provided space for presenting the latest developments related to the incident, which resulted from the explosion of approximately (2,750) tons of ammonium nitrate that had been stored unsafely in one of the port warehouses. The explosion led to the complete destruction of the port dock area and the displacement of nearly 300,000 people, leaving them temporarily homeless. It also caused many casualties and injuries and resulted in economic losses

to state institutions estimated at approximately 15 billion US dollars. This finding is consistent with the study conducted by Diaz-Vicente et al. (2024), which demonstrated that Facebook platforms operated by media institutions are highly effective in covering current events and producing and distributing content in ways that adapt to continuous changes in Facebook's algorithm.

Regarding video clips related to the destruction of homes and the displacement of residents in Beirut neighborhoods, the Sky News Arabia page showed a higher proportion (45.45%) compared with 38.88% on the France 24 Arabic page. This suggests that the channel emphasized the economic damage caused by the explosion, which resulted in the destruction of road networks and essential infrastructure, including energy facilities, water supply systems, sanitation networks, and other public services. The coverage also highlighted the psychological impact on residents living near the explosion site, many of whom lost their loved ones, homes, and sources of livelihood.

B. Topical Images, The France 24 Arabic page displayed a higher proportion of topical images related to the destruction of homes and displacement in Beirut neighborhoods, reaching (33.33%), compared with (25%) on the Sky News Arabia page. This indicates that the channel shed light on the suffering of affected families following the port explosion, some of whom were forced to send their children to work instead of school to secure basic living necessities. Additionally, some families expressed fear of sending their children to school via public transportation due to concerns about another potential disaster.

Regarding topical images related to the economic losses resulting from the ammonium nitrate explosion, the Sky News Arabia page showed a higher proportion (75%) compared with (66.67%), on the France 24 Arabic page. This indicates that the channel focused on presenting statements made by the economic analyst Basel Al-Khatib, who emphasized that the shutdown of the port represented a major catastrophe for the Lebanese economy, resulting in billions of dollars in losses due to the disruption of import and export activities, in addition to its impact on the customs sector.

C. Portrait Images, Portrait images related to economic losses caused by the ammonium nitrate explosion and the destruction of homes and displacement of residents in Beirut neighborhoods appeared with equal proportions (50%) on both pages. This indicates that both pages showed equal interest in presenting portrait images that highlight the economic and social consequences of the Beirut Port explosion, reflecting a similarity in visual coverage priorities when addressing both the humanitarian and economic dimensions of the incident.

Table (5): Sources of Media Coverage of the Beirut Port Explosion on the Facebook Pages of France 24 Arabic and Sky News Arabia

No.	Sources of Media Coverage	France 24 Arabic (Frequency)	%	Sky News Arabia (Frequency)	%
1	International newspapers and online news agencies	16	27.11%	15	30.61%
2	Reports from correspondents and field reporters of France 24 Arabic	24	40.67%	–	–
3	Reports from correspondents and field reporters of Sky News Arabia	–	–	19	38.77%
4	Official sources	7	11.86%	5	10.20%
5	Eyewitnesses and civil society activists	3	5.09%	4	8.16%
6	Economic experts and studio guest interviews	9	15.27%	6	12.24%
Total		59	100%	49	100%

Interpretation of Table (5)

- Sources of Media Coverage on the France 24 Arabic Page, The France 24 Arabic page relied primarily on reports from its correspondents and field reporters as the main source of information regarding the Beirut Port explosion, accounting for (40.67%). This reflects the channel's emphasis on direct on-site coverage of events. This was followed by international newspapers and online news agencies at (27.11%), then eyewitnesses and civil society activists at (15.27%), followed by official sources at 11.86%, and finally economic experts and studio guest interviews at (5.09%). This indicates that the channel largely depended on its own network of correspondents and field reporters located across different parts of the world, while also drawing on a variety of supplementary information sources.
- Sources of Media Coverage on the Sky News Arabia Page, On the Sky News Arabia Facebook page, reports from correspondents and field reporters represented the largest share, accounting for (38.77%). This was followed by international newspapers and online news agencies at (30.61%), then economic experts and studio guest interviews at (12.24%), followed by official sources at (10.20%), and

finally eyewitnesses and civil society activists at (8.16%). This indicates that the channel relied on a balanced combination of direct field coverage and external information sources, supported by its extensive global network of correspondents. The diversity of sources contributed to increasing the level and richness of media coverage of the Beirut Port explosion.

Table (6): Forms of Interaction with Content Related to the Beirut Port Explosion on the Facebook Pages of France 24 Arabic and Sky News Arabia

Forms of Interaction	France 24 Arabic – Destruction of Homes & Displacement	France 24 Arabic – Economic Losses	Total	Sky News Arabia – Destruction of Homes & Displacement	Sky News Arabia – Economic Losses	Total
Number of Likes	749	706	1455	559	595	1154
%	51.47%	48.52%	100%	48.44%	51.56%	100%
Number of Comments	751	695	1446	730	605	1335
%	51.93%	48.07%	100%	54.68%	45.32%	100%
Number of Shares	631	529	1160	401	569	970
%	54.39%	45.61%	100%	41.34%	58.66%	100%

Interpretation of Table (6)

A. Interaction Through Likes, The France 24 Arabic Facebook page achieved a higher level of likes for posts related to the destruction of homes and displacement of residents in Beirut neighborhoods, reaching (51.47%), compared with (48.44%), on the Sky News Arabia page. This reflects the continuous updating of news content on these pages, which is one of the key advantages of social media platforms, as they allow audiences to express their opinions about published content positively or negatively. This also aligns with statements made by the Director General of the Lebanese General Security Directorate, Major General Abbas Ibrahim, who confirmed that the material responsible for the explosion was a shipment of ammonium nitrate that had been stored in one of the Beirut Port warehouses for approximately six years. He also stated that rescue teams continued searching for survivors under the rubble following the devastating explosion, which destroyed large parts of the capital and its residential neighborhoods.

Regarding likes on posts related to the economic losses resulting from the ammonium nitrate explosion, the Sky News Arabia page achieved a higher level of interaction (51.56%) compared with (48.52%), on the France 24 Arabic page. This indicates that the channel relied on direct news presentations that included figures,

material losses, and their impact on the economy and daily living conditions, which resonates strongly with its audience and encourages greater engagement. In addition, the coverage emphasized the legal dimensions of the crisis, highlighting decisions by Lebanese authorities to place officials responsible for the storage of ammonium nitrate at Beirut Port under house arrest pending the completion of investigations aimed at holding those responsible accountable for the human and economic losses. This finding is consistent with the study by Gamal (2023), which revealed a strong correlation between the use of subjective language and the level of audience interaction with published journalistic content.

B. Interaction Through Comments

- The Sky News Arabia page recorded a higher level of comments on posts related to the destruction of homes and displacement of residents in Beirut neighborhoods, reaching (54.68%), compared with (51.93%), on the France 24 Arabic page. This suggests that the channel emphasized the humanitarian dimension of the disaster through impactful images and direct narrative reporting, which helped stimulate audience empathy and encouraged more active interaction with content related to the Beirut Port explosion. The explosion destroyed buildings near the port and caused extensive damage across other neighborhoods in the capital, while hospitals were overwhelmed with victims and injured individuals. Regarding comments on posts addressing economic losses resulting from the ammonium nitrate explosion, the France 24 Arabic page achieved a higher level of interaction (51.93%) compared with (45.32%), on the Sky News Arabia page.

This indicates that the channel focused on highlighting the human and social dimensions of the disaster by presenting testimonies and experiences of affected individuals, thereby encouraging audiences to engage in discussions and express their opinions through comments. This occurred in the context of the worsening economic crisis following the port explosion, which contributed to the collapse of the healthcare sector, the deterioration of medical services, and the rise in poverty rates affecting more than half of the population. This finding is consistent with the study conducted by Qorib et al. (2025), which revealed the significant effectiveness of live broadcasting in expanding the reach of news and increasing immediate audience engagement, particularly during local crises.

C. Interaction Through Shares, The Sky News Arabia page achieved the highest level of sharing interaction for posts related to economic losses resulting from the ammonium nitrate explosion, reaching (58.66%), compared with (45.61%), on the France 24 Arabic page. This indicates that the channel highlighted statements made by the United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator in Lebanon, Najat Rochdi, who confirmed that the scale of losses and damage resulting from the explosion remains extremely significant. She also emphasized that United Nations agencies were working to provide comprehensive support, including health relief assistance, medical supplies, water and sanitation services, and psychological support for affected individuals. The coverage also emphasized developmental aspects related to reconstruction efforts, including initiatives to restore and rehabilitate cultural centers and schools.

Regarding shares related to the destruction of homes and displacement of residents, the France 24 Arabic page achieved a higher proportion (54.39%) compared with (41.34%), on the Sky News Arabia page. This indicates that the channel highlighted statements issued by Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International, which called on Lebanese authorities to conduct a comprehensive and transparent investigation into the causes of the explosion and hold those responsible accountable at both local and international levels. This coverage also coincided with the Lebanese Council of Ministers' decision to place officials responsible for managing Beirut Port under house arrest under the supervision of the Lebanese Army, as a precautionary measure to ensure the integrity of ongoing judicial investigations related to the explosion.

Table (7): Direction of Media Coverage of Topics Related to the Beirut Port Explosion on the Facebook Pages of France 24 Arabic and Sky News Arabia

Direction of Coverage	France 24 Arabic – Destruction of Homes & Displacement	France 24 Arabic – Economic Losses	Total	Sky News Arabia – Destruction of Homes & Displacement	Sky News Arabia – Economic Losses	Total
Negative	0	0	0	0	0	0
%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%
Positive	21	36	57	19	30	49
%	36.84%	63.15%	100%	38.77%	61.22%	100%
Neutral	1	1	2	0	0	0
%	50%	50%	100%	0%	0%	100%

Interpretation of Table (7)

A. Positive Direction, The France 24 Arabic page showed a higher proportion of positive coverage related to the economic losses resulting from the ammonium nitrate explosion, reaching (63.15%), compared with (61.22%), on the Sky News Arabia page. This result confirms that the positive orientation was the dominant direction of coverage. It indicates that the channel highlighted France's role as a key international actor in addressing the repercussions of the Lebanese crisis, both at the humanitarian and political levels. This coverage coincided with the visit of the French President to Lebanon, during which he inspected the affected areas, communicated directly with victims, and announced financial and medical assistance for those affected. France also sent three aircraft to assist in search-and-rescue operations, provided a mobile medical clinic to treat the injured, and participated in organizing the Emergency Paris Conference to Support Lebanon, jointly initiated by France and the United Nations. The conference resulted in pledges of approximately €253 million in short-term aid from participating countries and organizations to support the Lebanese population. Participants also called on Lebanese authorities to accelerate necessary reforms to

address the ongoing crisis.This finding is consistent with the study by Erokhin and Komendantova (2024), which demonstrated that social media platforms have revolutionized disaster risk reduction by enabling large-scale real-time data collection and enhancing dynamic community interaction.

Regarding positive coverage of topics related to the destruction of homes and displacement of residents, the Sky News Arabia page showed a slightly higher proportion (38.77%) compared with (36.84%) on the France 24 Arabic page.

This indicates that the channel focused on statements made by the **Lebanese** Minister of Justice, Adel Nassar, who confirmed that obstacles hindering the investigation into the port explosion had been removed and emphasized the ongoing efforts to hold those responsible for the crime accountable, regardless of their positions or affiliations.

B. Neutral Direction, The France 24 Arabic page showed a higher proportion of neutral coverage related to both economic losses and the destruction of homes and displacement of residents, with an equal percentage of (50%) for each category. This indicates that the page focused on presenting facts and official statements without adding evaluative or emotional dimensions, reflecting a commitment to balanced and professional reporting on politically and humanitarianly sensitive issues. In contrast, the Sky News Arabia page recorded no neutral coverage (0%), indicating a limitation in the neutral treatment of the issues examined.

Negative Direction, Neither page recorded any negative direction of coverage (0%), which indicates a lack of negative framing within the analyzed coverage of the issues under study.

First Hypothesis

The first hypothesis states that**:**

H1. There are statistically significant differences between the Facebook pages of France 24 Arabic and Sky News Arabia regarding the levels of media coverage of topics related to the Beirut Port explosion**.**

Table (8): Significance of Differences Between the Facebook Pages of France 24 Arabic and Sky News Arabia in the Levels of Media Coverage of Topics Related to the Beirut Port Explosion

Pages	Frequency	Calculated Chi-Square	Tabulated Chi-Square	Significance Level	Significance Level
France 24 Arabic Page	49	4.56**	3.84	0.05	0.01
Sky News Arabia Page	30				

* Significant at the **0.05 level** ** Significant at the **0.01 level**

Interpretation of Table (8)

Using the Chi-square test, the results revealed statistically significant differences between the Facebook pages of France 24 Arabic and Sky News Arabia in the levels of media coverage of topics related to the Beirut Port explosion, in favor of

the France 24 Arabic page. The observed frequencies reached (**49 and 30)** respectively, while the calculated value was (**4.56)**, which exceeds the tabulated value of (**3.84)**, indicating statistical significance.

This suggests that France 24 Arabic focused on presenting coverage of the event in greater depth, providing detailed information about the port explosion and highlighting its humanitarian and economic consequences. Such coverage contributes to shaping audience awareness and perception regarding the severity of the crisis and its broader implications.

This finding is consistent with the study by Hang and Ngoc (2025), which demonstrated that digital convergence in Vietnamese journalism enhanced media production efficiency and expanded audience reach across multiple platforms.

Second Hypothesis

The second hypothesis states that:

H2. There are statistically significant differences between the Facebook pages of France 24 Arabic and Sky News Arabia in the forms of interaction with media coverage of topics related to the Beirut Port explosion.

Table (9): Significance of Differences Between the Facebook Pages of France 24 Arabic and Sky News Arabia in Forms of Interaction with Media Coverage of the Beirut Port Explosion

Beirut Port Explosion	Page	Frequency	Calculated Chi-Square	Tabulated Chi-Square	Significance Level	Significance Level
	France 24 Arabic Page	4061	48.18**	3.84	0.05	0.01
	Sky News Arabia Page	3459				

* Significant at the **0.05 level** ** Significant at the **0.01 level**

Interpretation of Table (9)

Using the Chi-square test, the findings indicated the presence of statistically significant differences between the Facebook pages of France 24 Arabic and Sky News Arabia in the forms of audience interaction with media coverage related to the Beirut Port explosion, in favor of the France 24 Arabic page. The observed frequencies reached (4061 and 3459) respectively, with a calculated Chi-square value of (48.18), which exceeds the tabulated value of (3.84), confirming statistical significance.

This result may be interpreted by the fact that the channel highlighted statements issued by the Governor of Beirut, Marwan Abboud, who confirmed that the damage caused by the explosions ranged between three and five billion US dollars,

affecting sectors such as transportation, healthcare, education, and cultural heritage. The explosion also resulted in dozens of deaths, thousands of injuries, widespread destruction of homes, and the displacement of residents across large areas of the capital Beirut.

The researchers also attribute the higher interaction rates on the France 24 Arabic page to the presence of a more aware and engaged audience interested in issues related to the port explosion, in addition to the presence of a specialized writer in Lebanese political affairs who enjoys the trust of followers.

Research Proposals

Future studies may address the following topics:

- Media framing of economic development issues.
- **Coverage of the Russian Ukrainian crisis on digital media platforms.**

Conclusion

The influence of **digital media platforms** has significantly increased in shaping public attitudes toward issues related to current events that attract public interest.

In this context, France 24 Arabic achieved a notable level of journalistic competitiveness and audience attraction, surpassing the Sky News Arabia page. This success can be attributed to its professional capabilities, technological resources, and experienced media personnel, which enable it to cover global events comprehensively and attract a wider audience. The study also found that the dominant orientation of coverage was positive, particularly in light of France's early condemnation of the Beirut Port explosion and its announcement of full support for the Lebanese people in confronting the crisis caused by the explosion of ammonium nitrate stored in one of the port warehouses.

The explosion resulted in widespread destruction of homes and displacement of residents across large areas of Beirut, in addition to economic losses estimated at approximately 15 billion US dollars. These developments raised questions regarding the role of France 24 Arabic and its relationship with France, which played a political and economic role in the aftermath of the disaster, particularly through President Emmanuel Macron's visit to Lebanon, aimed at investigating the causes of the explosion and providing humanitarian assistance and support.

Accordingly, the researchers sought to identify the differences between the Facebook pages of France 24 Arabic and Sky News Arabia in terms of the levels of media coverage of the Beirut Port explosion and the forms of interaction with such coverage.

The study reached several key findings, most notably:

- The existence of statistically significant differences between the Facebook pages of France 24 Arabic and Sky News Arabia in the levels of media coverage related to the Beirut Port explosion, in favor of the France 24 Arabic page, indicating that the channel provided more in-depth coverage **including detailed explanations of the explosion, its consequences, and possible solutions**.

- The existence of statistically significant differences between the two pages in terms of audience interaction with media coverage, also in favor of the France 24 Arabic page, which may be attributed to the presence of a specialized writer on Lebanese political affairs who enjoys audience trust, as well as the continuous updating of information related to the explosion and its consequences, including the economic, social, and psychological damage **across Beirut**.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the researchers propose the following recommendations:

1. Enhancing the role of social media platforms in covering current events, ensuring rapid updates and continuous monitoring of developments. Media institutions should host experts and specialists in Lebanese political affairs to analyze the causes of the incident and discuss its implications scientifically and professionally, while also proposing practical solutions rather than limiting coverage to basic news reporting.
2. Strengthening cooperation and coordination among different media institutions to provide more comprehensive and integrated coverage, while adhering to standards of accuracy, clarity, and neutrality in presenting information to enhance media credibility and public trust.
3. Investing in the training and qualifications of professional journalists capable of addressing issues related to current events with high professional standards, while allocating greater space for in-depth analytical media coverage of such topics.

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