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ORIGINAL ARTICLE

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Keywords: bulletin, anchor, sexual innuendo, informal idiomatic expression, audience perception

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AI usage declaration

Declaration of generative AI and AI-assisted technologies in the writing process; During the preparation of this work the author (Ali Abdullah Saleh) used Claude AI in order to improve language and readability, with caution. After using this Claude, the author reviewed and edited the content as needed and takes full responsibility for the content of the publication.

Author contribution

The author is responsible for all aspects of this research.

Ethics information

This research has adhered to all ethical considerations, and prior informed consent was obtained from the participants

Data availability statement

All data are securely preserved by the researcher in both online and hard copy formats; they are stored and remain accessible by the researcher at all times.

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Conflict of interest

The authors declare that there is absolutely no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this research.

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Original article?

This research is original.

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1. Introduction

The rapid expansion of the news media sector in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq has significantly transformed the media landscape, enhancing the prominence of television anchors (Osman and Hussien, 2022). These figures have become critical not only in the delivery of information but also in shaping public opinion, framing political discourse, and constructing cultural narratives. This study examines the professional role of Kurdish male television anchor, particularly focusing on how their linguistic choices, specifically the use of sexual innuendo and informal idiomatic expressions, impact audience perceptions.

Language in broadcasting, not only a tool for conveying facts but also a central medium through which meanings are framed and audience engagement is shaped. The effectiveness of news delivery often hinges on the anchor's ability to balance professionalism with relatability. However, in culturally conservative contexts, using informal, witty, or suggestive language can rise ethical concerns. Within the framing-theory framework (Goffman, 1974;

Entman, 1993), this research is situated to explore the implications of such language choices for audience trust, perceived professionalism, and cultural resonance.

This research examines a news bulletin titled “8:00 pm bulletin”. The bulletin is broadcast by Rudaw Media Network; it runs from since 2013 to the present. This research investigates how viewers perceive and react to instances of informal idiomatic expression and sexual innuendo in the bulletin. The examination is conducted through a combination of an audience online questionnaire survey and a qualitative content analysis.

1.1. Research Problem

The main problem is a sharp mismatch between the linguistic style of a male bulletin anchor on Rudaw Television's 8:00 pm bulletin news and the cultural, religious, and professional expectations of his audience is the main problem. The anchor often uses sexual innuendo and culturally-loaded informal idiomatic expressions inside what is otherwise a high-prestige news bulletin during news time.

Two following reasons mark the present study worth studying:

1. No published academic study has examined how audiences perceive sexual innuendo and informal idiomatic expression as deployed specifically by male news anchors, neither in international scholarship, where the closest precedent (Nitz et al., 2007) addresses the visual sexualisation of mostly female journalists, nor in the Kurdish or wider Middle Eastern media context.
2. The bulletin reaches a viewing community whose norms around gender, modesty, religion, and public speech are explicitly conservative, which sharpens the gap between anchor style and audience values.

1.2. Research Question

The study addresses the following research questions:

Q1. How do Kurdish viewers perceive the use of sexual innuendo and informal idiomatic expressions by a male anchor on a flagship “8:00 pm bulletin” Rudaw Media Network news bulletin?

Q2. How do these perceptions affect their judgements of the anchor's credibility, professionalism, and the bulletin's informational value, against the backdrop of Kurdish religious and cultural norms?

These questions can be broken naturally into four sub-questions that map onto the survey instrument:

- I. Do viewers notice such language during the 8:00 pm bulletin?
- II. What sources of discomfort - religion, personal values, beliefs, and Kurdish cultural identity - drive their reactions, and is the family-viewing context an aggravating factor?
- III. Does the presence of innuendo and informal idiomatic expression lower perceived credibility and professionalism, and does it distract from substantive content?
- IV. Do viewers think this kind of language reshapes wider social attitudes toward gender roles?

1.3. Significance of the Study

This study matters academically and socially. It sits in a confirmed gap. The literature search returned no peer-reviewed study on male anchors' use of sexual innuendo in bulletin broadcasts; this is academic significance. Socially, news anchors are, in framing theory terms, primary definers of public discourse. The way a well-known male anchor talks about gender and sexuality shapes what viewers come to treat as normal in everyday speech. Because if viewers connect the language they heard to broader social attitudes about gender roles, the study feeds directly into ongoing public conversations in Kurdistan about media responsibility.

1.4. Research Hypothesis

The following five hypotheses of this study, highlighted below:

- H1. Viewers are aware and they notice the language of a male anchor on a flagship "8:00 pm bulletin" Rudaw Media Network news bulletin.
- H2. Viewers feel discomfort with it, and this discomfort is tied to religion, Kurdish culture, personal values, and family viewing.
- H3. Credibility and professionalism: innuendo lowers professional standing of the anchor.

H4. Informal idiomatic expressions distract viewers from the news content precision.

H5. Viewers demand the removal of such language.

2. Literature Review

Although broad bodies of research exist on the sexualization of TV journalists (Nitz et al., 2007), audience perceptions of news anchor credibility (Engstrom and Ferri, 2000; Paul et al., 2022; Greve-Poulsen et al., 2023; Haim and Maurus, 2023), the “conversationalization” of broadcast news (Fairclough, 1992; Kuo, 2007), humour in news delivery (Burgers and Brugman, 2022; Ödmark, 2021), and parasocial interaction with anchors (Horton and Wohl, 1956; Levy, 1979), no published study has examined how viewers perceive sexual innuendo and informal idiomatic expression as deployed specifically by male news anchors.

To study how viewers perceive sexual innuendo and informal idiomatic expressions used by male news anchors, research from media studies, linguistics, sociology, and communication sciences has been brought to this work. Word choice, tone, body language, and cultural expectation is the performance of news anchoring. Audiences often react in ways that go beyond the surface meaning of the words when the anchor uses a suggestive phrase or a familiar idiom. The anchor’s credibility, professionalism, charm, and intent are judged by viewers. News anchors help shape how the public sees current events. Which is why understanding these reactions matters.

2.1. The Role of Language in News Media

The choices that guide what audiences notice and remember are shaping the stories through choices about vocabulary, syntax, and narrative order by journalists (Bell, 1991). Broadcasting language often blends information the formal style of public with casual style of everyday conversation, this is called “Conversationalisation” (Fairclough, 1995). This way makes the anchors seem closer to audiences. Conversationalisation explains that modern anchors often employ idioms, jokes, and personal asides. These elements give the news a welcoming air, but they also make it difficult to distinguish between objective reporting and personally based commentary (Fairclough, 1995).

More recent overview of the “Language of the News” is offered by Conboy (2007). He shows

that the rise of cable news and online video enhanced the move toward casual, audiences-friendly speech. He adds: the viewers put pressure on anchors to use language that signals warmth without losing seriousness. Conboy suggests that this balance is harder for some anchors than others, with gender shaping how audiences interpret it; male anchors are often allowed more playfulness, but can still face backlash when it crosses certain lines.

2.2 Sexual Innuendo in Broadcasting

Indirect language that hints at sexual meaning is sexual innuendo. Roderick Hart (1994), in *Seducing America*, argued that flirtatious and suggestive language is been used for a long in television. Hart warned that by using this style, serious topics are made to feel like spectacle. Innuendo works when audiences recognize the second meaning so that the joke or hint to land, which it comes through shared cultural knowledge. This means that innuendo carries different weight depending on the viewer's background, age, gender, and values. What is considered charming by one viewer may be perceived as inappropriate by another (Cameron and Kulick 2003). Glenn (2003) shows that innuendo tends to draw more attention and complaint during hard news, however, it is more common in lighter segments of the news, such as weather, sports, and feature stories. Audiences judge the anchor's credibility by noticing tone shifts during news broadcast. Trust can be damaged in suggestive aside during a tragic story, at the same time, a similar comment during a soft story can build rapport (Holbert, et al., 2007).

Social media amplifies reactions to on-air innuendo, suggestive phrase in news content often go viral, particularly if the speaker is a well-known anchor. Tewksbury and Rittenberg (2012) showed that selective sharing online can change how the larger public observes a moment, often by uncovering it of context'. This means in this era any innuendo is live and stays available for a much larger and more varied audience, that suggestive language may become a story.

2.3 Informal Idiomatic Expressions and Their Impact

Fixed Expressions and Idioms in English by Moon (1998) shows that idioms are use more in media texts than other genres, and that broadcast news in particular favors short, vivid expressions that fit naturally into spoken delivery. Idioms serve various purposes in news

broadcasting, to add a touch of personality, signal cultural belonging and for making complicated information easier to grasp. However, many listeners find offensive by idioms especially when it carries hidden meanings. Expressions that include references to gender, race, or sexuality may sound harmless to one group and demeaning to another.

In an informal setting idioms and slang are often used by male anchors. Their aim is to build solidarity with audiences. This makes a male anchor seem approachable and confident, but not in a serious topic, otherwise it can make him too casual and even unprofessional (Coates, 2003).

2.4 Framing Theory

A strong basis for understanding how language choices in news presenting shape audience perception is provided by framing theory. It has roots in communication studies, sociology, and psychology. The theory reset on the idea that people use mental “frames” to organise experience. A frame answers the question, “What is going on here?” and services observers decide how to react. This concept was introduced by Goffman in *Frame Analysis* (1974).

Framing in communication research is the act of selecting certain aspects of a perceived reality and making them more salient in a text (Entman, 1993). Word choice, which is examined in this study, image selection, and story placement and tone make frame in news media. Framing operates at the level of meaning rather than just fact when suggestive idiom is use to introduce a story is, in effect, framing that story as light or playful, even if the underlying facts are serious. This subtle framing can shape how audiences feel about the issue.

3. Methodology

To investigate audience perceptions of linguistic choices in news anchoring, this study adopted a mixed-methods design that combines quantitative and qualitative research methods. A survey was administered to a diverse sample of 627 participants across various demographics, including age, gender, education level, and employment sector. Participants were recruited via social media platforms and university networks to ensure a wide representation.

The survey included both closed and open-ended questions designed to gauge participants’ awareness, acceptance, and interpretation of sexual innuendo and informal idiomatic

expressions used by the news anchor. Questions also explored how such language impacted perceptions of professionalism and credibility, especially in shared family viewing environments. Complementing the survey data, a qualitative analysis was conducted on selected segments from the bulletin, chosen based on viewer engagement and controversy on social media. These segments featured remarks by the anchor that included suggestive or informal idiomatic expression. Viewer reactions were analysed to identify common themes and cultural concerns.

Thematic analysis was employed to interpret qualitative responses, focusing on patterns related to cultural and religious sensitivities, perceived professionalism, and the social acceptability of broadcast language (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

3.1. Data Collection/Sampling

The selection of a representative sample is crucial for understanding audience perceptions of sexual innuendo and informal idiomatic expression in male news anchoring. To analyze these perceptions effectively, it is essential to carefully consider the demographics, cultural backgrounds, and media consumption habits of the audience. This approach allows for a nuanced understanding of how different segments of the audience interpret and react to the use of sexual innuendo and informal idiomatic expressions in news reporting. A survey form has been disseminated convenience sample drawn from social-media followers and university networks. The survey was conducted over a period of four months, from October 2024 to January 2025, to ensure broader participant inclusion, given that the bulletin is broadcast daily using a consistent format and strategy. Participants were asked to answer questions about their experiences with sexual innuendo and idiomatic expressions while viewing the bulletin. The feedback aimed to assess how these elements influence viewer interpretation and engagement with the news content presented. Additionally, participants were encouraged to reflect on specific instances where they felt the use of such language either enhanced or detracted from the credibility of the news being reported.

3.2. Sample Selection of the News Bulletin

The bulletin has been broadcast daily since the establishment of the television network in 2013 (Rudaw Media Network, 2025). Certain segments of the news were selected to exemplify

the terminology used by the anchor to illustrate words and sentences that recur in the bulletin, in order to represent other used words that often used in the bulletin. The analysis aims to shed light on how these segments contribute to the overall perception of male news anchors, particularly in how sexual innuendo and informal idiomatic expressions are received by the audience.

This section outlines the criteria and methods used for selecting the news segments bulletin that feature male anchors, focusing specifically on their use of sexual innuendo and informal idiomatic expression. Segments were chosen from those most viewed and most discussed on social media platforms, which had garnered significant viewer engagement. Three representative samples of news bulletin are presented below diverse viewpoints and contextual relevance.

At eight o'clock in the evening, the bulletin titled (8:00 pm bulletin) news takes center stage by a male anchor. He stands confidently before a vast screen, engaging the audience as he shares the latest updates. With each video tape (VT) or news report, he not only reads the headlines but also sets the scene with thoughtful introductions. The three randomly chosen segments are presented below:

1. A reporter produced a report broadcast in the bulletin, telling the story on how life was returning to normal in Mosul city following the defeat of ISIS. His stand-up segment was filmed at a swimming pool, where he appears half-naked posing in water pretends to swim, symbolizing the recovery of everyday life in the city. Following the report, the news anchor commented, "The Reporter looks sexy," referring to the reporter's appearance during the segment (Anchor A told the reporter, 2017).
2. Anchor reads news: "There have been three weeks electricity cuts, and the hot weather is making life difficult for people in Kurdistan Region. Our reporter has prepared a story on the electricity issues in Erbil... In the report, our correspondent speaks with local residents. One man says, we don't even have water for the air conditioners. My entire family sleeps in one room. There's no space to do anything." Anchor A doesn't stop insulting, 2019). The anchor appears to interpret the man's comment as referring to a lack of privacy, specifically suggesting that the man is unable to have intimate with his wife because the children share the room. However, this interpretation was neither stated explicitly by the interviewee nor

supported by the content of the report. The interviewee did not say that he and his family sleep in the same room.

3. "This news is not good for men and boys. However, it also concerns women. You are probably watching this as a family, but until I finish, ladies better cover your ears. It's scientific" the anchor laughs and continues. "Listen up, men and boys. There's something in your body that gets slightly smaller. So maybe you won't feel proud, you know what I mean! Your genitals. Without exaggeration, you won't lose it, but it is getting smaller. It may somehow become useless" then he mentions the source of the news which is based on research.

3.3. Findings

The analysis of the gender distribution among participants reveals a predominant presence of males, numbering 369 and accounting 58.9% of the overall sample. In contrast, females represented 258 participants, making up 41.1% of the total respondents. These data show a relatively high representation of male individuals within the study.

An examination of the study's demographic data reveals that the predominant age group among participants was that of 26 to 35 years, constituting 36.2% of the total sample size, which corresponds to 227 individuals. The next largest group was respondents aged 36-45, which made up 32.7% of participants, totaling 205 individuals. The respondents aged 18 to 25 represented a significant portion as well, accounting for 22% or 138 participants. Conversely, the older cohorts exhibited markedly lower representation; only 7.7% of the participants, comprising 48 individuals, were aged 46 to 55, while just 1.4% or 9 individuals were aged 56 or older. These statistics suggest that the study predominantly engaged younger to middle-aged adults, indicating a trend in participant age distribution.

An analysis of the educational qualifications among the 627 participants reveals that a significant percentage, 51.5% (equivalent to 323 individuals), possessed a master's degree, thereby establishing it as the most prevalent level of education within the sample. Following this group, diploma holders constituted 19.9% (125 participants), while those with a bachelor's degree represented 16.3% (102 participants). Participants with a PhD comprised 8.6% (54 individuals). Additionally, a minority of the sample had completed secondary high school, accounting for 2.4% (12 individuals), and an even smaller number had only completed

secondary education (0.4%, or 4 participants), primary education (0.3%, or 2 participants), or no formal education whatsoever (0.2%, or 1 participant). These findings highlight a sample characterized by a substantially high educational level, with over 75% of individuals attaining at least a diploma.

The distribution of occupations among the participants reveals that a substantial majority, 53.9% (338 individuals), were employed in the public sector. This highlights a strong representation from public employees in the overall sample. The second most significant group consisted of students, who comprised 26.3% (165 participants), indicating a notable presence from the academic demographic. Self-employed respondents constituted 5.3% (33 participants), while teachers accounted for 2.7% (17 participants) and university lecturers represented 1.6% (10 participants). Additionally, a minor segment of the participants, at 1.8% (11 individuals), reported being unemployed. Collectively, these findings suggest a participant composition largely characterized by individuals affiliated with the public sector and educational institutions.

Table 1 Frequency of Watching the 8:00 PM bulletin Rudaw News Bulletin

Viewing Frequency	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Frequently	290	46.3
Regularly	133	21.2
Occasionally via social media	115	18.3
Do not watch	89	14.2
Total	627	100.0

The audience engagement survey conducted regarding the 8:00 pm bulletin news bulletin on the Rudaw Media Network, as shown in table 1: 46.3% of the surveyed individuals (290 participants) frequently watch the bulletin, suggesting a strong core audience. Furthermore, 21.2% (133 respondents) reported that they watch the news regularly, while 18.3% (115 respondents) indicated that they consume the segment occasionally through Rudaw's social media platforms. Conversely, a smaller fraction of the respondents, 14.2% (89 participants), stated that they do not watch the 8:00 pm bulletin. Overall, these findings imply that the news bulletin owns a steady viewership, with a significant percentage of the audience also utilizing social media for access.

Table 2 Recognition of Sexual Innuendo in the News Bulletin

Response	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Yes - noticed innuendo	493	91.6
No - did not notice	45	8.4
Total	538	100.0

Table (2). data tells that a significant majority of participants, specifically 91.6% (493 individuals), recognized the existence of sexual innuendo within the news bulletin. In contrast, a much smaller fraction, consisting of 8.4% (45 participants), reported a lack of awareness of such content. This difference underscores a widespread recognition among the viewership of sexually suggestive elements embedded within the broadcast.

The analysis of audience perceptions reveals a significant engagement with the use of sexual innuendo and informal idiomatic expressions, highlighting the need for a careful selection of representative samples to explore these dynamics further.

The collected data reveals shown is figure (1) a distinct trend of discomfort among respondents regarding the blend of sexual innuendo in news bulletin. Specifically, 45% of the participants, totaling 222 individuals, characterized such content as very inconvenient, while an additional 31%, or 153 participants, deemed it inconvenient. This cumulatively results in 76% of the respondents expressing negative sentiments toward this type of content. In contrast, a minimal fraction of the audience found the use of sexual innuendo acceptable, with only 4.3% (21 participants) viewing it as convenient and merely 1% (5 participants) considering it very convenient. Additionally, 18.7% (92 participants) maintained a neutral position on the matter.

These patterns underscore a significant audience disapproval regarding sexual innuendo in news broadcasts, which raises important ethical considerations and suggests potential risks of alienating viewers.

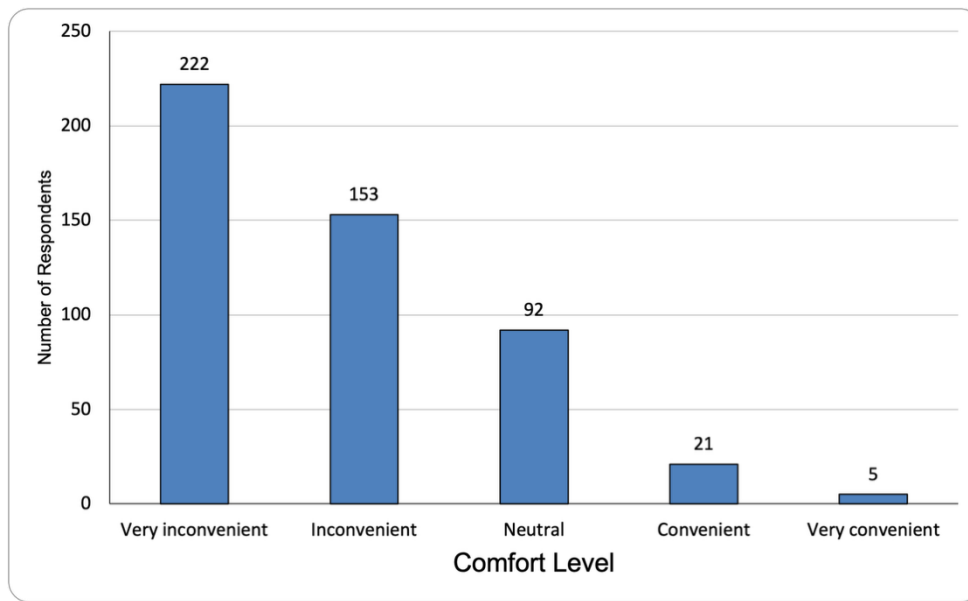


Figure 1 Comfort with Innuendo

Figure (2) shows data of discomfort with sexual innuendo in news bulletin, participants who reported discomfort with sexual innuendo in news broadcasts presented a variety of cultural, religious, and personal justifications for their feelings.

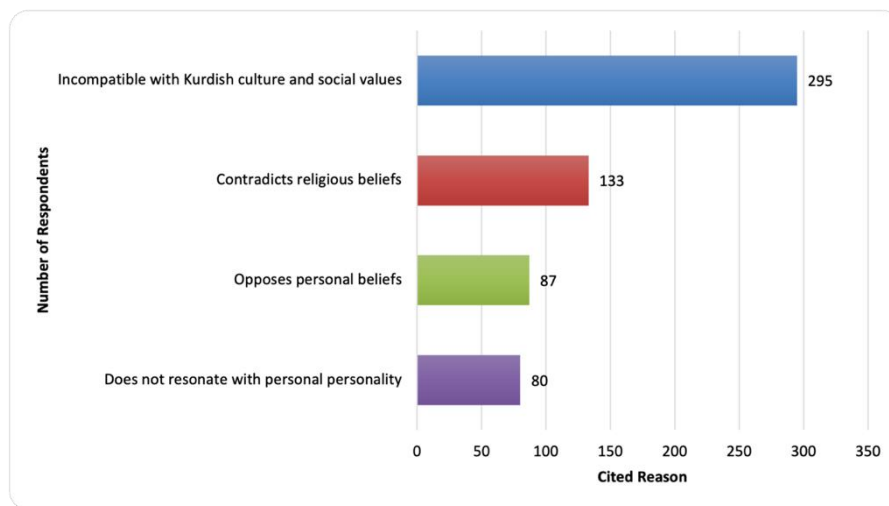


Figure 2 Reasons for discomfort

The predominant concern, highlighted by 78.8% (295 participants), was the incompatibility of such content with Kurdish cultural norms and social values, which signals a profound cultural rejection of these expressions. Furthermore, 35.4% (133 participants) indicated that the

terminology used contradicts their religious beliefs, showcasing the significant impact of religious principles on audience perceptions of media ethics. Additionally, 23.1% (87 participants) expressed that the content conflicted with their personal beliefs, while 21.3% (80 participants) argued that such expressions did not resonate with their individual personalities. These findings reflect that the audience's negative response is fundamentally anchored in cultural identity, religious commitment, and personal values, suggesting that there exists a robust societal expectation for professionalism and propriety in the language employed in televised news discussions.

In examining discomfort with sexual innuendo in news bulletin, a total of 376 participants provided insights on their feelings in this context. A significant percentage of the respondents, totaling 283 individuals or 75.3%, indicated that their discomfort was greatest while watching then with news with family members.

This prevalence underscores the cultural sensitivities associated with sexual content in shared family environments. Furthermore, 81 participants, accounting for 21.5%, expressed discomfort in both solitary and family viewing situations, while only 12 participants, representing 3.2%, experienced discomfort exclusively during solitary viewing. Collectively, these results imply that the social context, especially the presence of family, markedly amplifies the perception of inappropriateness regarding sexual innuendo and informal idiomatic expression in news coverage, thereby illustrating the collective cultural norms prevalent within Kurdish society.

Table 3 Perceived Credibility of News Containing Sexual Innuendo

Credibility Judgement	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Lower credibility than traditional news	232	47.1
Uncertain	203	41.2
Same credibility as traditional news	58	11.8
Total	493	100.0

In an evaluation of the credibility associated with news bulletin that incorporate sexual innuendo, found that a substantial portion of respondents 47.1% (232 individuals), viewed such content as exhibiting lower credibility in comparison to traditional news bulletin shown in table (3). This perception may point to a potential loss of journalistic integrity and a drop in viewer trust. Furthermore, a notable proportion of respondents, specifically 41.2% (203 individuals), expressed uncertainty regarding the relationship between formal choices and credibility. On the other hand, only 11.8% (58 individuals) endorsed the notion that news imbued with sexual innuendo maintains the same credibility to more conventional forms of news reporting.

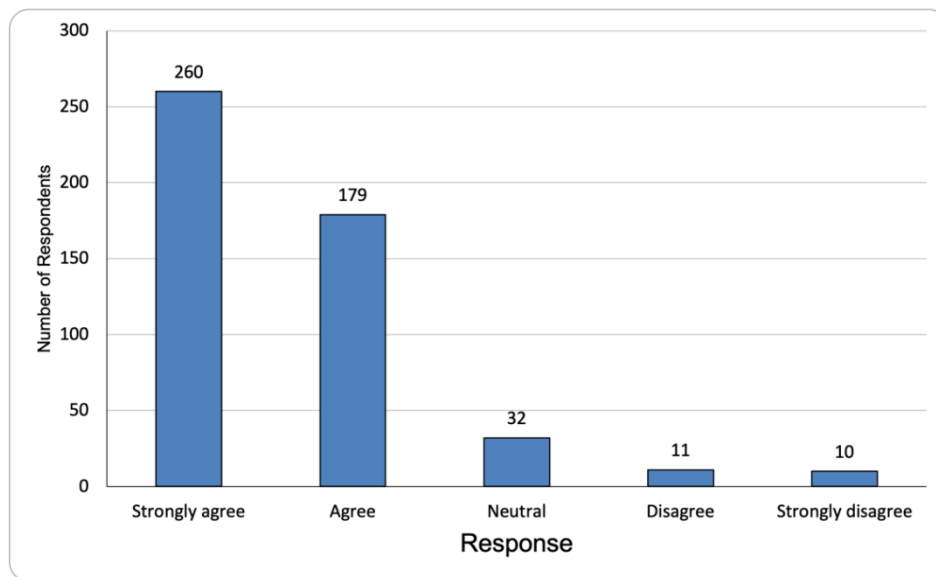


Figure 3 Should news media avoid sexually suggestive language?

Figure (3) shows expressions of participants on whether news media should refrain from employing sexually suggestive language. The results indicate a predominant preference for avoidance, with 52.8% (260 participants) expressing strong agreement and an additional 36.4% (179 participants) indicating general agreement. This cumulative figure accounts for nearly 89.2% of the participants recommending the stance. A mere 6.5% (32 participants) held a neutral position, while only a small fraction disagreed (2.2%, 11 participants) or strongly

disagreed (2%, 10 participants) with the proposition of steering clear of such language.

Participants were questioned regarding their perceptions of professionalism in news sources that utilize sexual language in their reporting. The findings reveal that a significant majority 77.7% (383 participants) do not view such content as professional, reflecting a pronounced disapproval of this practice within the domain of news broadcasting. Furthermore, 18.3% (90 participants) perceived the use of sexual language as somewhat professional, indicating a degree of acceptance. Conversely, a mere 4.1% (20 participants) regarded it as fully professional. These results illustrate a prevailing public sentiment that the incorporation of sexual or suggestive language detracts from the credibility and seriousness of news outlets. This highlights the audience's expectation for journalism that adheres to ethical standards and culturally respectful practices.

Analysis of societal effects on gender norms and cultural values when inquired about the effects of sexually suggestive language in media on society, a substantial majority, amounting to 66.9% (330 respondents), indicated that they believe it has a significant impact on shaping perceptions of gender roles and social values. In contrast, 21.5% (106 respondents) viewed its effect as moderate. Whereas 7.3% (36 respondents) perceived its influence as minimal. A mere 4.3% (21 respondents) asserted that such language does not influence societal attitudes at all. These results underscore a prevailing sentiment that the incorporation of sexual innuendos in media plays a considerable role in influencing public perceptions of gender relations and cultural principles, thus emphasizing the media's influential capacity in molding social standards.

4. Discussion

The results highlight significant cultural, ethical, and professional concerns among viewers regarding the incorporation of sexual innuendo in television news bulletin. Analysis of the demographic information suggests that a large portion of respondents consisted of public sector employees, a considerable proportion of whom held postgraduate degrees: more than half of the participants held master's or PhD degree. Furthermore, the majority of respondents fell within the 26-45 age demographic, indicating an audience that is both knowledgeable and actively engaged in professional environments with news media. The gender distribution

reveals male majority, alongside a notable frequency in the viewership of the 8:00 pm bulletin, particularly through traditional broadcasting and social media platforms.

A significant proportion of participants more than nine in ten, shows they observed sexual innuendo in the bulletin, suggesting that such language is both present and noticeable to viewers. Three quarters of the participants considered it inappropriate, selecting either “very inconvenient” or “inconvenient”. This disapproval appears to stem from firmly held cultural and moral beliefs, as a large number of participants expressed that this type of language is at odds with Kurdish cultural and social norms, with religious values. These findings indicate that the use of sexually suggestive language is viewed not just as unprofessional, but also as culturally offensive.

The social environment in which news is consumed has a considerable impact on audience discomfort. Among the participants who responded to the relevant question, Participants reported feeling discomfort while viewing with family. This discomfort influences views on credibility and professionalism.

Respondents viewed news with sexual innuendo as less credible and as unprofessional. They are expressed strong agreement with the proposition that news sources should refrain from employing such language entirely. Furthermore, results indicate a significant loss of trust in and respect for news sources that departed from culturally accepted standards of journalistic practice. A significant number of participants expressed the opinion that the use of sexually suggestive language in news bulletins significantly influences societal attitudes regarding gender roles and values.

In summary, the data indicate that while audiences are highly engaged with televised news, particularly the 8:00 pm bulletin, there is strong and widespread opposition to the use of sexual innuendo in journalistic content. The discomfort is not merely personal but deeply cultural, tied to values of professionalism, religion, and family respect.

5. Directions for Future Research

Although this research offers insights into audience views regarding sexually suggestive content within Kurdish news bulletin, there are a number of directions along which future research may be taken. First, subsequent studies could examine journalists' attitude and

motivations behind the use of suggestive wording when reporting news. Establishing whether this linguistic strategy is intentional, or culturally unexamined would contribute to a richer explanation of why and how such content is embedded within news reporting. Second, cross-regional comparison between Kurdish-speaking regions or between news channels could highlight differences between journalistic practices and audience sensitivities. Such a comparison would situate the reported discomfort within a broader perspective clarify whether it is region-specific. Third, this research investigated audience perceptions but further qualitative work, such as focus groups or in-depth interviews could produce further insights into emotional, psychological, and cultural drives behind respondents' answers, particularly for questions of family viewing practices and religious values. Fourth, since a large proportion of audiences watch news through social media platforms, further research could consider whether the tone and word choices of news content differ between traditional broadcast and digital formats, and how these platforms contribute to shaping or shifting public values.

6. Conclusion

This study provides critical insights into the perceptions of Kurdish news audiences regarding the use of sexual innuendo in televised news bulletin. The findings demonstrate that a majority of respondents are not only aware of such language being used in news broadcasts but also overwhelmingly disapprove of it. The discomfort is largely rooted in cultural, religious, and family values, with many participants reporting that such language does not align with Kurdish social norms or personal beliefs.

The use of suggestive language has also been shown to significantly impact perceptions of credibility and professionalism. Most respondents consider news content featuring sexual innuendo as less trustworthy and unprofessional, and a strong majority believe that news outlets should avoid such language entirely. Moreover, the inclusion of this type of content is widely believed to affect societal attitudes toward gender roles and moral values, raising broader concerns about the ethical responsibilities of media institutions.

Overall, the data reveal a clear mismatch between the language used in news segments and the expectations of the audience. This disconnect has implications not only for individual media outlets but also for the wider trust in journalism and its role in shaping public discourse

in Kurdish society in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq.

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