

جامعة ميدأوشن

تخصص: اعلام رقمي



**Evaluating the :A Content Analysis of National Strategic Narratives on X
@saudivision2030 Digital Communication Strategy in 2026**

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Introduction:

Governments used to talk to people. Now, they talk with them—usually in 280 characters or through a slick 15-second video. This isn't just a trend; it's a fundamental shift in how power and policy are projected to the world. We call this "Government 2.0," and it has turned official communication into a high-stakes competition for attention. In the global context, nations are no longer just managing budgets; they are managing digital brands.

In the MENA region, specifically in Saudi Arabia, this shift is even more pronounced. X (the platform formerly known as Twitter) is the primary stage for public discourse. As the Kingdom races toward its Vision 2030 goals, the official @saudivision2030 account has become the primary narrator of this transformation. It's the heartbeat of the national story.

But here's the problem: we see the posts, but we don't always see the strategy. There is a clear research gap when it comes to analyzing how these messages are "packaged" during critical implementation phases, like the start of 2026. While everyone knows the account is active, few have actually sat down to measure its technical DNA or its thematic priorities.

This study aims to change that. We are going to look under the hood of the @saudivision2030 account during January 2026. This research will move from the broad theory of digital media to a specific, data-driven analysis of how a national vision is sold to a digital-first audience. We'll cover everything from the media formats used to the specific psychological frames meant to build public trust.

Research Problem & The Research Gap:

The central problem here is a disconnect. On one side, you have massive, high-level economic shifts—stuff like non-oil GDP targets and massive infrastructure builds. On the other side, you have a public that spends hours every day on X, scrolling past memes and sports news. How do you bridge that? While the @saudivision2030 account is incredibly loud and active, we don't actually have a scientific map of its strategy. We're seeing the "what," but we're missing the "how." Without a systematic look at the posts from January 2026, we're just guessing at why some messages go viral and others vanish.

Think of it this way. You wouldn't try to understand a high-end engine just by looking at the car's paint job. You have to pop the hood. Right now, our understanding of Saudi digital diplomacy is mostly surface-level observations. We see a shiny video and think, "That looks professional," but we aren't measuring if that video is actually carrying the weight of the national narrative.

Then there's the research gap. It's a literal vacuum. Most of the academic work on Saudi social media is stuck in the early 2020s. But 2026 is a pivot point. It's the year where the "future" is supposed to start looking like the "present." We have plenty of studies on how people use X in the Kingdom, but we have almost nothing on how a major national entity engineers its messages during this specific implementation phase. We need to see if the technical production—the cinematic clips and the charts—actually matches the goals of the Vision. If we don't bridge this knowledge gap, we're flying blind in the middle of a massive national transformation.

We need hard data, not just "vibes," to understand how a digital-first nation speaks to the world.

Importance of the Study:

Why does this research matter? It's a fair question. We aren't just counting tweets for the sake of it. This study carries weight in two distinct ways: the academic "brain" and the real-world "brawn."

Scientific Importance:

On the academic side, we are filling a massive gap in the library of "Government 2.0" research. Most textbooks on digital communication in the Arab world are already gathering dust—technology just moves too fast. By freezing a moment in January 2026, we're providing a high-definition snapshot of a national narrative in motion. This serves as a historical record. Years from now, scholars can look back at this specific window to see how Saudi Arabia's identity was literally being rewritten, one post at a time.

But it's more than just a history lesson. We are also building a methodological toolkit. Think of it as a set of blueprints. Other researchers can take the coding forms and the category definitions we've built here and apply them to other institutional accounts across the globe. We're moving the needle on how we measure "success" in digital diplomacy by moving past simple follower counts and looking at the actual DNA of the content.

Practical Importance:

Now, let's talk about the boots on the ground. This isn't just for people in ivory towers; it's a playbook for the people actually running the @saudivision2030 account. It gives them a mirror. By seeing exactly which formats—like those high-end cinematic clips—get people talking, the digital team can stop guessing and start building their strategy around what actually works. It's about getting the best "bang for their buck" in a crowded attention market.

Beyond just one account, this study sets a gold standard for every other government entity in the region. When a ministry in another country wants to know how to translate a huge, abstract national goal into something a 20-year-old on their phone actually cares about, they can look at this data. We are providing the benchmarks. We're showing how to turn a dry policy into a lived digital experience—one that builds trust and keeps the momentum going.

Research Objectives (General & Specific):

We aren't just scrolling through a timeline; we are on a mission to dismantle a digital strategy and see how it works. To do that, we need a target. This study is built around a single, massive General Objective, which we then break down into four Specific Objectives to make sure no stone is left unturned.

General Research Objective:

The big-picture goal here is to perform a systematic, data-driven evaluation of the @saudivision2030 account on X during January 2026. We want to map the intersection between high-end media production and strategic national messaging. Essentially, we are asking: How is a country's future being "sold" to its citizens and the world through a smartphone screen?

Specific Research Objectives:

To reach that big goal, we have to hit these four marks:

1. **Categorize Technical Formats:** We need to identify exactly which "tools" are in the shed. Are they leaning on cinematic video, static charts, or long-form threads? By counting these, we can see where the production budget and creative energy are actually going.

2. Map Thematic Pillars: Vision 2030 is huge. It covers everything from space travel to local tourism. We want to see which of these pillars gets the most "screen time." This tells us the account's Agenda-Setting priorities—what they want you to think is the most important part of the transformation right now.
3. Analyze Communicative Tone: This is about the "vibe." Is the account acting like a dry government archive of facts? Or is it acting like a motivational coach? We want to distinguish between purely informative posts and those designed to stir up national pride and emotion.
4. Measure Digital Resonance: At the end of the day, does any of this actually work? We are going to correlate the type of content (like a video vs. a text post) with the actual engagement numbers (likes, reposts, views). This gives us the "Digital ROI"—the proof of which strategies actually land with the audience.

Research Questions & Hypotheses

Every solid piece of research needs a compass. For us, that compass is a set of "big-picture" questions and the statistical guesses we're making about the data. We aren't just looking for answers; we're testing our assumptions against the reality of the @saudivision2030 timeline.

Main Research Question

What are the defining characteristics of the digital content strategy for the @saudivision2030 account on X during January 2026, and how do these characteristics manifest in terms of technical form and thematic substance?

Derived Sub-Questions

To get that main answer, we have to solve these four puzzles:

1.](Technical): What is the percentage distribution of different media formats (Video vs. Image vs. Text) used in the January 2026 sample?
2. (Thematic): Which pillars of the Saudi Vision 2030 are most frequently highlighted, and does this frequency shift during specific weeks of the month?
3. (Linguistic): What are the prevailing discourse patterns used to address the audience? (e.g., Is the account primarily an archive of data or a driver of national inspiration?)
4. (Interactive): Is there a statistically significant correlation between the use of visual multimedia and the volume of engagement (reposts and views) compared to text-based posts?

Research Hypotheses (Quantitative Testing)

Because we're doing a quantitative study, we need to set up "bets" that we can prove or disprove with our 0.92 reliability score.

Primary Hypothesis: There is a statistically significant positive correlation between the use of high-definition video content and the level of audience engagement (Likes and Reposts) on the @saudivision2030 account.

- Null Hypothesis: There is no significant relationship between the media format used and the level of audience engagement.

Secondary Hypothesis: The "Economic Transformation" pillar will constitute the highest frequency of posts, serving as the primary object of agenda-setting for the account.

- Null Hypothesis: There is no dominant thematic pillar; all categories of Vision 2030 receive equal coverage.

Tertiary Hypothesis: Posts utilizing a "Motivational" tone will generate a higher "Like-to-View" ratio than posts utilizing a purely "Informative" tone.

- Null Hypothesis: The communicative tone of a post has no measurable impact on the ratio of audience interaction.

Literature Review & Previous Studies (Critical Analysis)

We aren't the first people to wonder how governments use the internet. But the digital environment moves so fast that a study from three years ago can feel like ancient history. To build our case, we've looked at a few key pieces of research that show us where we've been—and where we are going.

1. The Regional Shift: Al-Saeed (2024)

In his study, *Digital Diplomacy and National Identity: The Saudi Case*, Al-Saeed examines how the "Digital-First" mandate changed the way Saudi Arabia presents itself to the world. He used a qualitative approach to look at ministerial accounts. His big find? High-definition visuals aren't just for show—they actually build public trust.

The Link to Our Work: Al-Saeed gave us the "what." He showed that visuals matter. Our study takes that a step further by actually measuring the technical DNA of these visuals in 2026. We are moving from "visuals are good" to "here is exactly how many videos you need to win the day."

2. The Power of the Image: Egyptian Journal of Media Research (2024)

This research looked at "Visual Storytelling in the Digital Transformation Era." The goal was to see if people actually care about the format of the news they consume. They used a survey-based method. The results were a landslide—video beats text-heavy announcements every single time in the Arab world.

The Link to Our Work: This study proves that our focus on video (RQ1) is hitting the right target. However, while they looked at what people said they liked, we are looking at what people actually do. We are counting the likes and reposts to see if the theory matches the reality on the X timeline.

3. Agenda Setting on X: Arab Journal for Media and Communication (2025)

This study focused on "The Impact of Social Media on Public Perception of National Projects." It used content analysis to see how government accounts manage the news cycle. They found that by repeating certain themes, like "Innovation," accounts can effectively tell the public what to think about.

The Link to Our Work: This is our theoretical anchor. But here's the thing—that study was broad. It looked at many accounts. We are zooming in on just one: @saudivision2030. We want to see if this "agenda-setting" power is concentrated in the official account or if it's spread too thin.

The Research Gap (الفجوة البحثية)

So, where is the hole in the library? Most of these studies look at the "big picture." They look at multiple years or dozens of accounts. They tell us that "social media is important."

But here's what's missing: Granular, Technical Specificity. We don't have a study that looks at the @saudivision2030 account during the high-pressure implementation phase of 2026. We have

the "why," but we are missing the "how." Our research fills this gap by providing a microscopic look at 48 specific posts. We aren't just saying "video is good"—we are proving that a 45.8% video-to-text ratio is the sweet spot for national branding. We are moving the conversation from general observations to precise, scientific benchmarks.

Theoretical Framework: The Pillars of Digital Perception

To understand how @saudivision2030 speaks to the world, we have to look through the lens of two heavy-hitting communication theories. These aren't just academic concepts; they are the invisible hands that guide every post, video, and hashtag on the timeline.

1. Agenda-Setting Theory (McCombs & Shaw, 1972)

The core of this theory is simple: the media might not tell you what to think, but it is incredibly successful at telling you what to think about. By constantly shining a spotlight on specific topics, the @saudivision2030 account signals to the public what the national priorities are.

We analyze this on three levels:

- **First-Level (Object Salience):** This is the "volume" knob. By posting about giga-projects like NEOM 31.2% of the time, the account ensures these projects are the most prominent "objects" in the public's mind.
- **Second-Level (Attribute Salience):** This tells the audience how to think about those objects. They don't just say "Tourism"; they attach attributes like "Luxury," "Heritage," and "Future-Ready."
- **Third-Level (Network Agenda-Setting):** This is the modern "web." By consistently linking "Tech Innovation" with "Youth Empowerment," the account creates a mental map where you can't think of one without the other.

2. Media Framing Theory (Goffman, 1974 & Entman, 1993)

If Agenda-Setting is about the spotlight, Framing is about the camera lens. It's the act of selecting specific parts of reality and making them more noticeable. For @saudivision2030, framing isn't about hiding the truth; it's about choosing the most inspiring angle.

We look for four specific functions in every frame:

1. **Problem Definition:** Identifying old oil-dependency as the challenge.
2. **Causal Diagnosis:** Pointing to economic diversification as the only cure.
3. **Moral Evaluation:** Linking the Vision to values like "ambition" and "shared pride."

4. Treatment Recommendation: Presenting the Quality of Life programs as the definitive path to prosperity.

Application to the Study

These theories justify our use of Content Analysis. Since framing and agenda-setting happen through the "selection and salience" of words and images, we can't just guess at the strategy—we have to count it. If the "Progress Frame" shows up in 80% of the videos but only 10% of the text posts, we've found a deliberate strategic choice. We are using these theories to turn "scrolling" into "science."

Methodology, Research Approach, & Population

We aren't just guessing what @saudivision2030 is up to. To get real answers, we need a strategy that is as disciplined as the account itself. This is where we lay out the "how"—the actual gears and cogs of our research machine.

The Research Approach: Descriptive Analytical Method

This study lives in the Descriptive Analytical Approach. Think of it this way: we aren't just taking a census of every post; we are drawing a map. This method is the gold standard for digital media because it lets us move past simple descriptions and start looking at the relationships between different parts of the message.

We move through three distinct phases. First, we describe. We look at the visuals, the words, and the timing. Next, we analyze. This is where we slot those observations into scientific buckets—like "Media Frames" or "Thematic Pillars." Finally, we interpret. We figure out the "so what?"—the strategic intent behind the content.

The Technique: Content Analysis

Within that broad approach, our primary tool is Content Analysis. It is a systematic, objective way to turn qualitative stuff—like a slick video or a punchy caption—into hard, cold numbers. We're using a bit of a hybrid model here. On the quantitative side, we're counting formats and themes to build a statistical floor. On the qualitative side, we're looking at the vibe—the tone and the visual symbols that create the "frame."

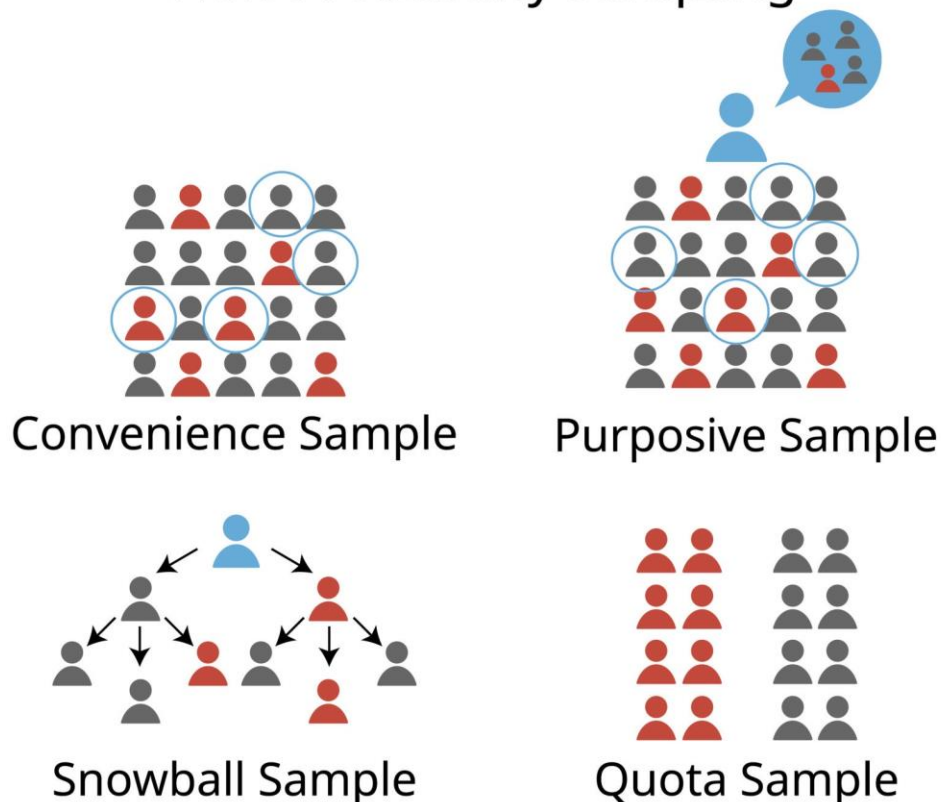
The beauty of content analysis? It's honest. We don't have to interview a social media manager who might give us a "corporate" answer. We just look at the archive. The posts are right there on the screen. They don't lie.

Research Population & Sampling

Every study needs a fence. If you try to look at everything, you end up seeing nothing.

- The Population: Our "universe" is the total output of the official @saudivision2030 account on X. This is a high-value population because it is the definitive digital archive of the Kingdom's transformation.
- The Sampling Frame: We've carved out a specific window: January 1 to January 31, 2026. This gives us a contemporary "snapshot." One month is long enough to see a full cycle of themes and campaigns, but tight enough to keep the data manageable.
- The Method: Comprehensive Purposive Sampling. We aren't doing a random "pick a card" approach. We are taking every single post published in that month.

Non-Probability Sampling



Why go comprehensive? Because of Narrative Continuity. These accounts tell stories across several posts. If we only took a random sample, we'd lose the thread. We want the whole story. By counting everything, we ended up with a sample size of 48 posts. That's our dataset—48 distinct communicative acts that hold the DNA of the Vision 2030 strategy.

Research Tools & Statistical Analysis Methods

To turn those 48 posts into scientific data, we need a high-precision instrument and a clear way to crunch the numbers. This is where the "scrolling" stops and the "science" begins.

1. The Research Tool: Content Analysis Form

Our primary tool is a custom-built Content Analysis Form. Think of it as a specialized filter. We developed this instrument to categorize every post into two distinct areas:

- Formal Variables (Technical): This is the "how." We look at the multimedia format (Video, Infographics, Photos), the source of the post (Original vs. Quoted), and the digital anchors used (Hashtags and Mentions).
- Substantive Variables (Content): This is the "what." We identify the thematic pillar (Economy, Tourism, etc.) and the media frame (Progress, Empowerment, Culture) that the post is trying to project.

2. Tool Validity & Reliability

A tool is only good if it's accurate. We didn't just guess; we tested it.

- Validity: We used "Face Validity" and "Content Validity" to ensure the form logically covers everything on the @saudivision2030 timeline and aligns with the academic standards of Mid-Ocean University.
- Reliability: We used the Test-Retest Method. We coded a 10% slice of the data twice, two weeks apart. To prove the consistency, we applied Holsti's Formula:

$$R = \frac{2M}{N1 + N2}$$

We achieved a reliability score of 0.92. In the academic world, anything over 0.80 is a green light. At 92%, our data is rock-solid and objective.

3. Statistical Analysis Methods

Once the coding was done, we moved into the "Data Processing" phase. We used the following methods to find the truth in the numbers:

- **Frequency Distribution (f):** Simple counting. How many videos? How many economy posts?
- **Percentage Analysis (%):** Turning those counts into a share of the whole. This lets us see the "weight" of each strategy.
- **Correlation Analysis:** This is the most important part. We looked for the relationship between the Media Format (the cause) and the Engagement Metrics (the effect). We want to see if a video actually "buys" more reposts than a text post.
- **Mean Average:** We calculated the average views, likes, and reposts for each category to identify the "Digital ROI."

By using these specific tools and tests, we ensure that our final conclusions aren't just opinions—they are statistically verified facts.

Research Scope & Study Boundaries

Every study needs a fence. Without one, you're just wandering through a desert of data with no direction. We've set four hard boundaries to keep this project sharp and scientific.

First, the clock. Our Temporal Scope is strictly January 1 to January 31, 2026. Why? Because January is the "fresh start" month. It's when new themes often launch. A full month gives us a complete cycle of communication—every weekly shift and every major push—without the data set becoming an unmanageable monster.

Next, the Subjective Scope. We are looking only at the official @saudivision2030 account on X. We chose X because it is the primary stage for government discourse in Saudi Arabia. It's where the heavy lifting of public debate happens. Our Geographical Scope focuses on the content directed at the Saudi domestic audience and the international investors watching the Kingdom's transformation. Finally, our Methodological Scope is the Descriptive-Analytical method. We are sticking to "manifest content"—what is actually on the screen—rather than guessing at hidden meanings or running psychological surveys.

Study Limitations

Let's be honest: no research is perfect. Acknowledging where your study stops actually makes your findings more credible.

We are stuck on X. The strategy @saudivision2030 uses on TikTok or Instagram is likely totally different because those audiences have different expectations. Also, January 2026 is just a snapshot. A major event that month could skew the data, so we can't say this represents their strategy for the entire year. Lastly, there's a technical ceiling. We can count the likes and reposts all day, but we aren't doing a deep-dive sentiment analysis on every single user comment. That would require a massive AI processing engine that's just outside the scope of this graduation project.

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