**Research Proposal**

1. **My research project involves (please select ALL that apply):**

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| Interviews or focus groups | In your research outline, please include information about your participants, how you will recruit them, and where/how the interviews/focus groups will take place (e.g. Zoom, telephone). You will need to produce a draft participant information sheet, consent form and interview guide to discuss with your dissertation supervisor before you begin your project. | ☒ |
| Ethnography (including online ethnography) | In your research outline, please include information about the site of your research, consider whether the location can be considered public or private, and give as much detail as possible about the research activities you intend to carry out there. If the research site is a private one (e.g. a workplace, online group/site), please confirm whether you have secured permission to conduct research in this location, along with a contingency plan if you are yet to secure access. You will need to provide proof of this permission to your allocated dissertation supervisor before you begin your project. | ☒ |
| Analysis of a sample of media material (e.g. newspaper articles) | In your research outline, please clearly describe the nature of the material you will analyse, how you intend to sample it, and the methods you will use to analyse it. | ☒ |
| Analysis of online material (e.g. Twitter hashtag) | In your research outline, please specify the precise nature of the online material your research will focus on, your sampling strategy, and your proposed analytic method. | ☐ |
| An online questionnaire survey | In your research outline, please specify the platform you will use to distribute your questionnaire, the intended participants for your study, and how you intend to recruit them. You will need to produce a draft participant information sheet and draft questionnaire to discuss with your dissertation supervisor before you begin your project. | ☒ |

1. **My research question is:**

How has media played its role in presenting the political situation in Guinea Conakry and how has different media platforms presented the same story of soldiers claiming to have seized power from Alpha Conde’ in Guinea Conakry.

1. **The project aims and objectives (2-3) are:**
2. What is the role of media in presenting the political situation in Guinea Conakry after the power seized by soldiers?
3. How has the story of soldiers claiming to have seized power in Guinea Conakry been recited differently by different media platforms?
4. How has the story been approached and explained differently by social media platforms.
5. **What motivated you to study this particular topic – why is it important and interesting to you? Explain the context of the research, and outline the rationale for the specific focus of the study (approx. 300 words):**

Numerous efforts to overthrow democratically elected governments have been made in African nations, and the overthrow of civilian governments by military forces has become almost routine. In September 2017, there was an attempt at a coup, during which a group of soldiers appeared on National Television and stated that they have resolved the parliament and dismissed the administration of Alpha Conde. Onlookers reported seeing President Alpha Conde seated on a sofa, barefoot and appearing upset while wearing a shirt and vest that were only partially buttoned. The way in which the media played its part in tracking down the narrative and the situation, as well as the way in which it made people aware of the political position at that time, is something that I find to be quite interesting.

The media has always played an important role in quoting tales about the myriad political and non-political concerns that are taking place in the nation. The general people are typically oblivious of the private goings-on in politics; as a result, they look to the media, be it print media or electronic media, as their primary source for gaining an understanding of political affairs. At this point in time, most people have uncomplicated access to many social networking platforms. The use of social media plays an important part in ensuring that people are always up to date on the latest news. However, there is a drawback to it as well. In recent times, a great number of social media platforms have been launched, and these platforms are currently playing an active role in reporting on a variety of issues and mentioning stories. But in the end, each of the platforms cites the same news in their own unique way, despite the fact that the stories are identical.

In this study, a single story will be followed i.e., a group of soldiers claiming to have seized power from Alpha Conde’ in Guinea Conakry and it will be observed that how different media platforms have presented the story in their own way pertaining to different causal factors and political approaches. It fascinates me how several platforms cover the same subject from a variety of perspectives, each of which reveals fresh hypotheses and pieces of evidence. I'm going to seek for the narrative on a variety of platforms and look at it from a number of different perspectives to see how the plot has developed.

1. **Provide a literature review which gives an overview of some of the key existing relevant research on your chosen topic. This does not need to be exhaustive, as you will conduct a more in depth literature review for the main dissertation, but needs to demonstrate that you can identify the main areas of literature you will draw on, and have read some of the key studies in these areas (approx. 1000 words):**

In the past some years, West African democracy and Africa at large has been experiencing a worrisome deterioration across the continent. According to the Democracy Index compiled by the Economic Intelligence Unit (EIU), the level of democracy throughout the world fell in 2019. The mean score for Africa has dropped to its lowest point total in more than a decade, falling from 4.36 in 2018 to that of 4.26 in recent year. According to a report published by Freedom House in the year 2020, West Africa was the region that shown the greatest decrease in political and civil liberties. This occurs in the background of a rise in authoritarianism around the world and a decrease in democratic norms in countries such as the United States.  Faso,  Benin, Guinea, Mali, and Nigeria, and Burkina are just some of the countries in West Africa who saw their scores drop the most out of the 12 countries around the world that saw the highest score drops. Ghana and Cabo Verde are the only two countries in the area that are categorised as free, according to Freedom House's classifications of Free, Partially Free, and Not Free countries. This means that Senegal and Benin have moved from the free category to the partly free category. The present circumstances are worrisome, particularly for a region that was once seen as the vanguard of democratic advancement. A dangerous personalisation of democracy and distortions of institutional politics for the advantage of insiders have actually occurred in Togo, Benin, and Côte d'Ivoire, respectively, according to the information that was supplied in this index, which was quite concerning. Concerns were being voiced in Senegal regarding the direction that Macky Sall's administration was headed, particularly its intolerance for alternate voices and the centralization of state power throughout all three branches of government.

It is possible to sway public opinion in a particular direction using either the public relations industry or the established media. In addition, in order to disseminate its message and exert influence on the thought processes of individuals, the mass media makes use of a diverse range of advertising strategies from which to select. Television has been around since the 1950s, when it was initially produced, and it quickly rose to the position of being the most influential medium for moulding public opinion. In the latter half of the decade 2000, there was a discernible increase in the internet's capacity to serve as a forum for the formation of public opinion. This was a significant development. According to a number of recent surveys, the vast majority of individuals in today's society obtain their news from online news websites and platforms for social media rather than from physical newspapers. A wider variety of news sources are able to contribute to the formation of public opinion as a result of the ease of access that is offered by social media platforms.

BBC stated that an unverified video showed the President of Guinea Conakry Alpha Condé being encircled by soldiers, who announced that they had taken power. They stated that it was currently unknown what will happen to Alpha Condé. The soldier group made an appearance on national television and claimed that they had brought down the government. According to the Defense Ministry, however, the Presidential Guard successfully blocked the attempt to take over the government. This came after hours of intense shooting in the vicinity of the presidential palace in Conakry, the nation's capital. Both the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Antonio Guterres, as well as the African Union issued strong condemnations of what appears to be an attempted coup and have called for President Condé's immediate release. Guinea, located in West Africa, has an abundance of natural resources; nevertheless, due to years of civil strife and bad administration, it is currently considered to be one of the poorest countries in the world. In the television message, nine anonymous soldiers, several of whom were draped in the red, gold, and green national flag, said that they had taken control of the government as a result of widespread corruption, poor administration, and poverty. President Condé, who was 83 years old, was asked by soldiers to affirm that he was unharmed, but he declined to react. He appeared to have no outward signs of injury at all as he sat barefoot on sofa while dressed in pants and a shirt with a pattern on it.

However, the Guardian stated that an elite military force has made the announcement that it has taken control of the government in the West African nation of Guinea, removing the president, Alpha Condé, and instituting a curfew that will last indefinitely. Soldiers made the announcement that the country's leadership had been overthrown after massive gunfire was noticed close to the presidential palace in the nation's capital, Conakry, on Sunday. This political upheaval was the most recent political crisis to befall the mineral-rich but economically depressed nation.

Col. Mamadi Doumbouya, the chief of the unit and presumed leader of the coup, gave a brief address while draped in the flag of the country during a broadcast on Radio Television Guinea, the country's national broadcaster. He stated that the country's constitution and parliament had been suspended, and the borders had been closed.

Though it was a situation of extreme political turmoil where parliament and assemblies were resolved and the country’s president was under the custody of a military group, Al-Jazeera stated that after Conde's capture, there were street celebrations attended by hundreds of Guineans and members of the country's armed forces. These were varying aspects being reported by different media platforms.

1. **Provide a detailed project outline, which describes the main steps involved in your data collection. This will include information about the site or focus of your research, details of any participants involved, your approach to recruitment and/or sampling, and your plans for data storage. Remember to provide a rationale for these choices, supported with relevant literature. (approx. 1000 words):**

My research will be comprised of following parts:

* Abstract
* Table of contents
* Introduction
* Literature Review
* Data Analysis
* Conclusion

The objectives of the investigation, as well as what the study aims to explain, will be included in the abstract. This will also cover the primary emphasis of the research, and the technique that was applied will be described in detail here. In addition, a succinct conclusion will be mentioned in this section.

The introduction part will contain definitions of some key factors and I will explain some history of Guinea Conakry facing coup attempts and how this particular incident of group of soldiers appearing on National television claiming to have seized power form the president Alpha Conde` was followed by different media platforms. The research aims and objectives will be stated here clearly, also discussing the significance of this study. Limitations to the study will also be explained here and how would those be addressed in the study will be explained thoroughly.

**Data Collection:**

I will identify the scholarly articles that may be found on the internet, and then I will read those articles in order to determine which ones are the most relevant to my topic. In order to extract the material, a variety of well-known and reputable journal publications as well as items from the media will be mentioned. The use of media platforms that are not trusted will be discouraged in favor of platforms that are trusted, such as the BBC, The Guardian, and Al-Jazeera.

**Literature Review:**

A comprehensive literature review, which will serve as support for my research, will be provided. The events that transpired in Guinea Conakry during the attempted coup that took place in September 2017 will serve as the foundation for this section of the literature review that you are going to read. For the purpose of enhancing the credibility of the research and ensuring that no errors were made, only reputable articles and publications will be considered for evaluation in this sector. In order to better organize the facts that have been quoted, in-text citations will be added to this section. At the conclusion of the study proposal, you will find the list of references.

This basically refers to how I will organize my study and work, as well as how I will present the facts that I have gathered. It will demonstrate the process that I went through in order to obtain the data (whether by interviews, focus groups, groups interviews, surveys; online or physical surveys, observations, documents and records, case studies, etc.) For the purpose of this investigation, I will be consulting case studies in addition to archival materials and recordings from various forms of media (that which have been studied by other researchers before now).

**Analytical Section:**

On the basis of the gathered information, a qualitative content analysis will be carried out, and the facts will be examined. In this section, we will present evidence and logical justifications for the facts that were discussed in the previous section (the literature review). This is the piece that will allow me to draw my own conclusions about the matter. Content analysis is going to be a method that I utilize while sampling and contrasting various types of media coverage. Content analysis refers to a methodology for determining the existence of specific words, topics, or ideas in qualitative data. Individuals performing the research can analyze and quantify the existence, significance, and correlations of specific words, concepts, or ideas using content analysis.

**References and Citations:**

References will be provided at the end of research from where I collected all the data quoted in the research. These references will be provided according to the APA referencing style. In-text citations will also be provided in between the text.

In the course of this study, I will be concentrating primarily on conducting a study of articles that have already been published on the topic of the story of a group of soldiers who appeared on national television in Guinea Conakry and claimed that they had overthrown the government of Alpha Conde. The vast majority of this body of work will be founded on articles that have been published on Google Scholars or on a range of other media platforms that are sufficient in terms of their reliability and credibility. Along with a small number of other news organizations, it's possible that these media outlets used information from the BBC, Al Jazeera, and The Guardian. This particular piece of literature will be studied and assimilated to a significant degree, after which facts and numbers will be extrapolated from this piece of literature and utilized in the process of reaching a conclusion.

1. **Explain the methods you intend to use analyse your data and present your findings, including any steps you will take to anonymize data where relevant. Again, remember to provide a rationale for these choices, supported with relevant literature (approx. 500 words):**

The examination of previously published works is going to be the primary focus of my investigation. As a result, the method of analysis that I will be utilizing in my investigation will be content analysis, which is dependent on the application of subjective assessment to assess a prospect on the basis of non-quantifiable information.

I will use content analysis since the study mainly is focused upon the literature review. This is a qualitative data collection hence content analysis will be the one most appropriate to analyze this data.

I am using this technique for analysis because by the help of content analysis, a big amount of data can be divided and categorized in a way that is much simpler to understand. This is one of the main reasons that this technique will be useful for me.

In this content analysis, I will be following some steps which are listed below:

* I will first specify that at what level I will analyze my collected data
* I will create a group of categories and ideas which will be pre-defined and interactive.
* Deciding in what manner I will be differentiating in my concepts
* Developing set of rules in order to code the text
* Omitting out the irrelevant information
* Properly coding the text and performing an in-depth analysis
* Drawing the conclusion

I shall examine the approach known as content analysis: This is a method of study that allows for the subjective content analysis of textual data through the use of a systematic categorization procedure that entails coding and the identification of themes or patterns. (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005: 1278)

1. **Identify any ethical issues arising from your proposed research, and outline how you intend to address them. If your research takes place in an online context, or uses online data, you will need to demonstrate that you have engaged with the Association of Internet Researchers guidelines on ethical online research. Also reflect on your own position as a researcher, and how that may affect your project (approx. 400 words)**

Since my research is based mainly upon literature review, I won't have any trouble concealing the identity of the participants or keeping the results of their responses confidential because the entirety of my investigation will consist of nothing more than a summary of the work that has already been done. As a direct consequence of this, there won't be any significant ethical concerns pertaining to my research. Studies that use focus groups frequently come into issues with maintaining the anonymity of the participants, issues which need to be addressed in the appropriate manner in order to be resolved. But in the case of a research project that is based on a literature review, these kinds of concerns almost never come up, and as a consequence, the research project won't deal with any ethical problems of its kind at any point in its duration.

An issue that may arise, however, is the fact that the relevant data for the study will be obtained through the utilisation of the internet, more specifically, a Google form, on which a number of questions pertinent to the study will be asked. The collection of data will be carried out through the utilisation of various forms of media in order to satisfy the needs of the study (the internet). This will shine an even brighter light on how essential it is to have freedom of the media, which is something that is hampered in nations where the military maintains its grip on political power.

The research will include quotations from a variety of online news sources; in the event that these sources are not suitably attributed and referenced, an ethical dilemma relating to copywriting may result. As a result, providing accurate references to the sources from which information is obtained will be of the utmost importance.

1. **Identify any potential hazards posed by your proposed research, and any aspects of your data collection that may not be possible in the event of further Covid-related restrictions. If relevant, please outline the measures you propose to take to control or mitigate the level of risk, along with any contingency plans if your preferred data collection methods become impossible:**

The work being done on this research project wills not in any way pose a risk to the researcher or to anybody else, for that matter; neither will it pose a risk to the community. This is because the study is mainly based upon the review of literature and its thematic analysis; not involving any active participants or focus groups. This will make my research completely exclusive to the protocols of Covid and will not be affected or affect any person or individual.

1. **Identify the key research activities you will need to undertake to carry out your research and write your dissertation, and provide a timeline for when you intend to do these tasks. Remember to include time for reviewing literature, developing any research tools, recruitment, data collection, analysis, dissertation writing, obtaining feedback and proof reading your work:**

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| --- | --- |
| Before the start of the Dissertationmodule | In the time leading up to the beginning of the dissertation module, I will be focusing on the framework of my proposal. This time frame would be put to use in the process of acquiring background knowledge on the research topic of my choice and presenting it for approval. |
| May 2022 | I will use this time to collect relevant and useful resources for my study topic. This section will be devoted to introduction, or the detailed description of the study's history, research topic, research aim and objectives, and its limits. |
| June 2022 | The all of this time would be spent conducting literature reviews. I will start by gathering information by reading the works of other researchers whose work is related to my research topic. From there, I will structure my own. |
| July 2022 | This time frame will be utilised for the approach of my investigation. I will be working on tasks including the acquisition of data, the sampling of data, and the analysis of data. |
| August 2022 | I plan to make use of this time to present my findings, discuss whether or not my findings match with the aim and objectives of my study, come to a conclusion, proofread, and receive feedback on my work. |

1. **Provide a brief reflection on what you have learned from the experience of developing your research proposal, and any areas where you feel you may need to develop your understanding – you may wish to draw on the research exercises in your research diary, or texts that you have read over the course of the module (approx. 500 words):**

In developing this research proposal, I got to know the facts about facts that I had never heard of before, and my first thought upon hearing the story was that it was a fairly informative one. During the course of my investigation for this particular research endeavour, I came to the realisation that the story consisted of a great number of distinct aspects, each of which was interpreted in a unique manner by a distinct media outlet and was brought to the notice of the general public. As a result of my study proposal, I now have a greater grasp of how diverse forms of media can relate the same story in such a way that leads to the display of data and information that is unique to that type of media.

As I continued my research into the particulars of putting together this proposal, I saw that my interest in the tale as a whole heightened as a result of what I was discovering. I was able to gain a multiplicity of facts regarding politics and military coups by reading a considerable amount of literature publications and research pieces that were devoted to the subject. In addition to this, I was made aware of the fact that military coups d'état are more commonplace in the countries of Sub-Saharan Africa than they are in other parts of the world. This information was sent to me by a source.

My interest in the research work has grown over the course of time, which is one of the things that I consider to be particularly relevant to bring up at this particular point in time since it has evolved over the course of time. The endeavour of research has always struck me as one that is one that is both difficult and one that is a hardship to accomplish. This perception has remained consistent throughout my life. But as I was putting together this study proposal, my excitement about the subject grew, and ever since I started this job, I have been fairly committed to it. I have gotten myself acquainted with the relevant body of literature and have given a variety of research methods and approaches to analysis a cursory glance.

Throughout the course of completing this task, I was able to increase my knowledge on how to properly provide references. I learned the APA style of formatting because such a significant number of assignments require and demand APA format as their primary referencing style. Because of this, I found that learning the APA style of formatting was of great use to me because of the fact that I would be employing it in my study.

The analytical component was the one that I personally found to be the most challenging. Due to the fact that there are not many research publications being published on the subject in question, arriving at a conclusion will be quite challenging for me. Nevertheless, I plan to work on it and figure out a solution.

1. **Please indicate the documents that you intend to submit to the Dissertation module Blackboard site:**

**UREC2 checklist *NB – ALL projects require an ethics checklist*☐**

Participant information sheet ☒

Consent form ☒

Draft questionnaire ☒

Draft interview guide ☒

Permission letter for use of material not in the public domain ☒

Permission letter for access to site of research ☐

1. **Finally, please provide a full bibliography for your proposal, ensuring this is presented according to APA referencing conventions. This is not included in your word count.**

Waddington, C. (2013). Guinea's potential mineral wealth a double-edged sword-domestic security and stability risks linked to the Simandou project. *Africa Conflict Monthly Monitor*, *2013*(11), 50-54.

Sacko, M. M., Sawatkaew, N., & Wangbenmad, C. (2018). Perception toward President Alpha Conde Political Leadership System from 2010-2018: A Study of Guinean Living in Thailand. *Economics and Business Administration Journal Thaksin University*, *10*(2), 55-76.

Benedikter, R., & Barry, S. (2021). An interview with pro-democracy leader Sadio Barry on Guinea’s coup and prospects for democracy. *Africa at LSE*.

Clarke, P. (2021). Guinea: The History of the Military as a Political Actor. In *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics*.

Guinea coup attempt: Soldiers claim to seize power from Alpha Condé - BBC News. (n.d.). BBC News; www.bbc.com. Retrieved June 7, 2022, from <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-58453778>

Akinwotu, E. (2021, September 6). Guinean soldiers claim to have seized power in coup attempt | Guinea | The Guardian. The Guardian; www.theguardian.com. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/sep/05/guinean-soldiers-claim-to-have-seized-power-in-coup-attempt>

In Pictures: Many Guineans celebrate as soldiers seize power. (20216, September 6). Many Guineans Celebrate as Soldiers Seize Power | Gallery News | Al Jazeera; www.aljazeera.com. <https://www.aljazeera.com/gallery/2021/9/6/many-guineans-celebrate-as-soldiers-seize-power>