

MSTHESIS

CONSTRUCTION OF ISRAEL-PALESTINE CONFLICT BY THE INTERNATIONAL MEDIA: A DISCOURSE ANALYSIS



Researcher

Supervisor

Amir Shahzad Dr. Junaid Ghauri

Reg: 530-FSS/MSMC/F22

**DEPARTMENT OF MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION STUDIES
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY, ISLAMABAD**

**CONSTRUCTION OF ISRAEL-PALESTINE CONFLICT BY
THE INTERNATIONAL MEDIA: A DISCOURSE ANALYSIS**



Amir Shazad

Registration #530-FSS.MSMC/F22

This thesis is submitted to the Department of Media and Communication Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, International Islamic University, Islamabad to fulfill the requirements for degree of MS (Media and Communication Studies).

**DEPARTMENT OF MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION STUDIES
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY, ISLAMABAD**

Certificate of Approval

It is certified that we have read this thesis entitled “**Construction of Israel-Palestine Conflict by the International Media A Discourse Analysis**” submitted by Amir Shahzad. It is our judgment that this thesis is of sufficient standard to warrant its acceptance by the International Islamic University Islamabad for the award of MS Degree in Media and Communication studies.

Committee

Supervisor Dr.M Junaid Ghauri.....

External Examiner

Internal Examiner.....

Chairman DMCS, IIUI.....

Dean FSS, IIUI.....

Declaration

I, Amir Shahzad hereby certify that this work, which I now submit for assessment for the program of study leading to the award of MS entitled “**Construction of Israel-Palestine Conflict By The International Media: A Discourse Analysis**” is entirely my own work, that I have exercised reasonable care to ensure that the work is original, and does not to the best of my knowledge breach any law of copy right, and has been taken from the work of others save and to the extent that such work has been cited and acknowledged within the text of my work.

Amir Shahzad

Reg No:530-FSS/MSMC/F22

Email: amir.msmc530@iiu.edu.pk

Acknowledgement

I want to express my special appreciation and sincere thanks to my supervisor Dr. Muhammad Junaid Ghauri for his continuous support in order to complete this research. I am also thankful to him for his patience, motivation, enthusiasm, and immense knowledge in the field of media. His guidance helped me a lot in the writing of this thesis, without his guidance and support, I would not be able to carry out this research within the stipulated time period. I am also grateful to our teaching staff, to my family, friends and every individual who provided every possible help and motivated throughout of thesis journey.

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ABSTRACT

This study mainly examines how four major international media outlets, *Al Arabiya*, *Al Jazeera*, *Dawn*, and *The Washington Post*, constructed and represented the Israel-Palestine conflict in their coverage between October 7, 2023, and March 7, 2024. Through a qualitative discourse analysis approach, guided by Framing Theory, Agenda-Setting Theory, Edward Said's Orientalism, the research uncovers how ideological orientations, geopolitical affiliations, and editorial agendas influenced media narratives. A total of 5905 news stories were examined, from which 435 samples were analyzed in depth.

The findings reveal significant divergence in media framing: *Al Jazeera* and *Dawn* predominantly aligned with pro-Palestinian narratives, emphasizing themes such as humanitarian suffering, "genocide", and resistance. *The Washington Post*, on the other hand, promoted a pro-Israeli discourse around the theme of counter-terrorism and national security, which villainized Hamas much of the time. *Al Arabiya* which typifies the Saudi Arabia pragmatism in geopolitics pursued a mixed framing strategy that displays a balance between criticizing Hamas, and appealing to diplomacy.

Among the major themes noted are victimhood and civilian casualties, the phenomenon of the Humanization of the conflict, allegations of "genocide", terrorism and security and the issue of the humanitarian crisis. The appearances of lexical and thematic patterns proved that discourse is not always the reflection of events but the instrument of ideological reality building. The analysis of word frequency and feelings further highlighted the selective deployment of such terms to serve opposite discourses as seen in words such as "genocide", resistance and terrorism.

Keywords:

Discourse Analysis, Framing Theory, Hamas, Humanitarian Crisis, International Media, Israel-Palestine Conflict, Media Bias.

CHAPTER 01

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The Israel-Palestine Conflict is an ancient geopolitical and territorial conflict that mainly focuses on the conflicting national aspirations and historical grievances. It can be traced back to the late 19th and early 20th centuries of rising movement of Jews and Arabs nationalism in the backdrop of the collapsing Ottoman Empire. Balfour Declaration in 1917, In effect, British acknowledged a national home in Palestine to the Jewish people, which established the basis of future tensions, The paper will discuss the detailed socio-political aspects of Israel-Palestine Conflict, its historical background, geo-politics, and consequences. Its underlying causes are the clash between national interests and historical resentments, the main events that presented the conflict are the Balfour Declaration and the foregoing wars, which have resulted in buried animosities and land conflicts. The media representations of the conflict demonstrate various attitudes predisposed by other considerations, such as the historical ties of other people, geopolitical ties, and cultural associations (Hassan & Munayyer, 2021).

After World War II, the United Nations offered a plan to partition in the year 1947 resulting in the formation of the State of Israel in the year 1948. This led to the first Arab-Palestinian war and the exodus of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians contributing to the refugee problem that has existed to this day. Further hostilities and shaping of the territorial boundaries culminated in subsequent confrontations and wars such as the Six Day war in 1967 and the Yom Kippur war in 1973. Struggle escalation The West Bank and the Gaza Strip were occupied by Israel in 1967, and the struggle was stepped up, with different peace efforts,

including the Oslo Accords in the 1990s. Despite attempts at negotiation, issues like settlements, borders, refugees, and the status of Jerusalem remain contentious, causing periodic escalations in violence. The Abraham Accords, where Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates normalized relations with Israel. They became the third and fourth countries in the region to take this step, following Egypt in 1979 and Jordan in 1994 (Alsaba, 2023).

This research provides an in-depth overview of the Israel-Palestine conflict and examines how media outlets, including *Al Arabiya*, *Al Jazeera*, *Dawn*, *The Washington Post* globally shape themes surrounding the conflict. Recognizing the significance of media themes in influencing public opinion and international perceptions, the study aims to conduct a thematic analysis of these outlets to elucidate their divergent reporting and explore their motivations. By examining the themes presented by state-sponsored media and considering broader socio-political contexts, the study seeks to deepen understanding of the conflict dynamics and inform efforts towards potential resolutions. The research is guided by the theoretical framework of Priming theory, emphasizing the collective nature of reality creation and interpretation.

Global events can also influence media coverage, and some outlets focus on humanitarian aspects. Israel's defenders emphasize its right to self-defense against security risks, historical rights, and territorial claims. They blame the Palestinian leadership for the failure of peace talks and claim Israel's willingness to negotiate and participate in peace initiatives. They contextualize Israel's actions within regional conflicts, citing security challenges from neighboring countries. To project a positive image, they highlight Israel's technological accomplishments, innovations, and contributions to various disciplines (Minges, 2023).

Understanding the role of international media in framing and disseminating themes about the conflict is essential for analyzing regional and global perspectives. The conflict between Palestine and Israel has attracted the attention of media outlets worldwide, and cultural and regional dynamics also influence media coverage, with Qatar, USA, KSA and the Pakistan handling these aspects in their reports. Media can impact diplomatic relations, public opinion, policymaking, international relations, conflict resolution, and peacebuilding. Examining how Qatar, USA, KSA and the Pakistan report on the conflict helps understand larger international relations and alliances. Identifying commonalities and differences in perspective can inform strategies for understanding and dialogue. Learning about various media viewpoints promotes critical thinking and media literacy, enabling impartial evaluation and recognizing potential biases in media coverage. In conclusion, analyzing media viewpoints on the Israel-Palestine Conflict in Qatar, USA, KSA and the Pakistan provides insightful analyses of the geopolitical, cultural, and diplomatic aspects, advancing a more thorough understanding of this complex and protracted problem (Mathews, 2023).

All the selected media outlets are prominent media corporations in the world, In the Arab region, media outlets are predominantly owned by the government (Majzoub, 2021). According to the four theories of the press, the Arab media generally fit into the authoritarian media system model (Duffy, 2014).

Al

Jazeera has a broad international viewership and a focus on Palestinian narratives, providing critical analysis of Israeli policies and international responses. *Al-Jazeera Arabic* News channel was established in 1996 as a part of then-Emir of Qatar Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani's plans to enhance the regional and global influence of the Gulf State. *Al Jazeera* shares news internationally, it expanded to Europe, Canada and the USA as a strong competitor, influencing regional politics. It also offers a range of opinions, interviews, and debates on the

conflict. After the 2003 US-led invasion of Iraq, *Al Jazeera's English* website was established, in general *Al Jazeera* is perceived as more anti- American and anti-Israel (*Aljazeera*, 2023).

Al Arabiya based in Dubai and owned by a Saudi Corporation and under the controlled of Saudi Government and its discourse is in line with Riyadh's interests. *Al Arabiya* presents news with a more pro-Gulf and pro- Saudi narrative. It strives for a balanced reporting, focusing on regional stability and Israel's security concerns. *Al Arabiya* may reflect the official stance of the UAE government, aligning with the country's foreign policy priorities. *Al Jazeera* tends to emphasize Palestinian perspectives, while *Al Arabiya* offers a more balanced approach, focusing on regional stability and geopolitical interests of the Gulf region. *Al Arabiya* is observed as harboring pro-western sentiments (Elmasry et al., 2013).

Al Jazeera and *Al Arabiya* are prominent media corporations in the Middle East and major regional competitors in the media industry with geopolitical significance and global recognition. According to Forbes Middle East, *Al Arabiya* and *Al Jazeera* ranked as the top two TV channels online in the Arab World, each respectively garnering 306.63 million and 277.8 million visits on their websites in 2021. *Al Jazeera* and *Al Arabiya* were founded for opposing state-sponsored agendas and continue to be instrumentalized to shape different regional discourses (Majzoub, 2021).

After seeing the potential of these two media outlets that's why we choose the Gulf countries coverage in the conflict. *The Washington Post's* coverage of the Israel-Palestine Conflict covers a wide spectrum of strategic issues including geo strategic alliances and the importance of maintaining a neutral stance. However, in some of the posts, it has partially disagreed with the US policies towards the conflict and maintains that dialogue is the move

forward. Most of its articles present a detailed and informative analysis of the challenges confronting the Palestinian Authority security forces, focusing particularly on their training endeavors and broader geopolitical dynamics. Through a neutral stance, it outlines the multifaceted obstacles these forces encounter, ranging from resource shortages to political tensions with Israel and internal legitimacy issues (Beaumont, 2023).

By contextualizing the situation within the broader geopolitical landscape, including Western support and the ongoing conflict with Hamas, its articles on the issue provide readers with a nuanced understanding of the complexities at play. Additionally, by incorporating perspectives from individuals directly involved in the training and operations of the Palestinian security forces, such as the interviewed colonel, it adds a human-interest element that enhances the reader's engagement with the subject matter. Overall, the articles offer a comprehensive analysis while maintaining an informative and balanced approach (Handley, 2009).

Dawn media outlet, aligning with Pakistan's careful stance, reports on the Israel-Palestine conflict emphasizing the humanitarian crisis in Gaza. Pakistani media approach towards the Palestine-Israel conflict, Pakistan had a certain policy line at the peak time of the conflict that was, seemingly, the major cause of shaping less critical coverage on the Hamas movement in the current scenario. The coverage underscores Pakistan's call for an immediate ceasefire and end to the Gaza blockade by Israel. Reporting in certain policy situations, the Pakistani media tendencies were in line with the key assumption of Pier Robinson's model media-policy interaction (Robinson, 2000).

Methodologically, the study employs primary and secondary data collection, focusing on thematic analysis to explore cross-cultural and stakeholder perspectives within Qatar, KSA, USA and Pakistan. Through this interdisciplinary approach, the study aims to contribute

to an advanced understanding of the Israel-Palestine Conflict and its media representations, fostering informed dialogue and critical engagement with these enduring issues.

The Israel-Palestine conflict is a complex and deeply rooted issue, often chosen for analysis or discussion due to its multifaceted nature and global significance. Below is a clear rationale for why one might choose to focus on this conflict, depending on the context.

Historical and Geopolitical Significance

Prolonged Effectiveness: The conflict between Israel and Palestine has been going on since more than 1 century with the roots in the late 19th century Zionist movement, and the creation of Israel in 1948 when the British Mandate expired. This is because its birth, rise and development offer vital case lesson towards comprehending the colonialism, nationalism and state formation.

International Impacts: The war is a key element of international relations and international affairs; it has major implications on the Middle Eastern geopolitics, global security, and international alliances.

Strategic Place: The relevance of the region is enhanced by the fact that it is located along main trade routes, the existence of energy resources, as well as being a geopolitical buffer zone.

Complexity and Multidimensional Issues

Other Standpoints: The clash deals with adverse stories, Israeli self-determination and safety perceptions against the Palestinian sovereignty and self-determination. This duality presents an example with which the interpretation of identity, justice, and human rights can be examined.

Legal and Ethical issues: Such problems as territorial conflict, colonization, refugee rights, military occupation, and occupation all bring into question international law

and the ethical aspects of the conflict that is why it is an interesting topic for legal and moral debate.

Religious and Cultural Aspect: The conflict also touches Judaism, Islam and Christianity as well as cultural groupness itself and is an issue of major interest in terms of analyzing how religion and culture affect conflict processes.

Relevance to Contemporary Issues

Humanitarian Impact: The conflict continues to cause considerable humanitarian impact such as displacement, loss of lives, and poverty. It has been used as a case study to study humanitarian emergencies, refugee policies and international relief.

Media and Opinion Formation: The war has a highly reported coverage on media, which tends to divide public opinion. The analysis of it gives a clue to media framing, propaganda and information and the importance of information in constructing narratives.

Diplomacy and Peacebuilding: Peacebuilding processes such as the Oslo Accords, Camp David Summit and negotiation processes are among the major issues raised of how conflicts may be solved which portrays a major degree of diplomacy and peace practice and research.

Academic and Analytical Value

Interdisciplinary interest: The conflict encompasses history, political science, sociology, anthropology and international relations and can be analysed along interdisciplinary lines.

Conflict Resolution Case Study: It is a case-study that can be used to test theories of conflict resolution, negotiation and mediation, because there is so much present and history of failed and unfruitful efforts to bring peace.

Comparative Analysis: This conflict may be placed in parity with other long-lasting disputes (e.g., Kashmir, Northern Ireland). This can be used in generalizing on territorial conflicts and movements of self-determination.

Global Attention and Policy Relevance

International Involvement: One might also consider the huge international attention the conflict receives from international institutions and government, turning it into a major center of attention to the study of international governing and intervention.

Policy discussions: It affects foreign policy decisions, especially in the U.S. and Europe and is a big topic in the discussion of military aid, sanctions and recognition.

Activism and Advocacy: The war encourages activism around the world as it becomes an example of social movements and grassroots activism.

Educational and Public Interest

Public knowledge: The war is well-known in the public and hence it is easy to start talk about history, politics, and ethics thus engaging people in discussions.

Moral and Philosophical Questions: It poses some of the basic questions of justice, self-defence, occupation and coexistence, which appeal across audiences.

Contextual Considerations

The reasons why the Israel- Palestine conflict is selected is depending on the desired purpose:

Academic Research: It is suitable to test theories or establish the fundamental research since it is complex and deep-rooted.

Policy Analysis: All its geopolitical weight and topicality make it really important to analyse it as regards to international relations.

Public Discourse: Its divisive quality and media presence gives it great power to reach out to audiences and the debate of development.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The Israel Palestine Conflict is an old geopolitical and territorial conflict, which is based on historical resentments. In this paper we are putting our mind to the aspects of how

the media agencies abroad frame the conflict and spread discourse. This study compares the news reporting of the Israel-Palestine conflict by international media outlets, *Al Arabia*, *Al Jazeera*, *Dawn* and *The Washington post* between October 7, 2023, and March 7, 2024.

It hopes to identify through discourse analysis discourses generated by these international media outlets in this time. The study is aimed at resolving further questions on how the media frames the conflict and with Priming Theory as a tool of approaching this study, one is able to dig deeper into how the media has contributed to the influence on the discourse and attitude of the population towards the conflict situation. The study also focuses on two research questions, i.e. how the Israel-Palestine conflict reported by these chosen international media outlets during the period of study. What does the production delivered by the chosen international media sources about the Israel-Palestine conflict in the period covered by the study produce?

In this analysis, the study will be used to guide the policymakers and stakeholders to foster knowledgeable discourse and compassion with different audiences with the eventual objective to bring into focus the major discourses invoked about the conflict that are being created by the international media.

The international media have become frontliners in the Israel-Palestine conflict, which has defined world opinions, policy making and even the Israel-Palestine conflict itself.

Framing and Narrative Construction

Selective Framing:

The Israel-Palestine conflict is framed selectively by most media as they may have their own editorial bias or they may reflect their cultural background or political interest. As an example, they can focus on the security issues of Israel like rocket attacks in the region of Gaza and under-report the Palestinian version of occupation and displacement (Philo & Berry, 2011). On the other hand, the media in the Arab

world can devote more attention to the Palestinian plight and Israeli security measures and neglect the life of Israeli civilians (Khatib, 2016).

Influence on Perception: These framing have an influence on the way the audience views the root causes and the solutions to the conflict. As an example, treating the conflict as a security problem rather than a human rights problem may cause the audience to give preference to military response as opposed to dialogue (Wolfsfeld, 1997). Philo and Berry (2011) reveal in a study that media coverage in the UK regularly positioned the Israeli actions as defensive which is thought to have affected the sympathies towards Israel at the expense of Palestinians.

Illustration: In the 2014 Gaza War, Israeli deaths caused by Hamas rockets were often the highlight of *CNN and BBC* reporting and Palestinian death excesses were scarcely discussed, and it is a distortion of the proportionality (Philo & Berry, 2011).

Agenda-Setting and Issue Salience

Setting the Agenda: Media determines which aspects of the conflict gain prominence. By choosing to cover specific events, like settlement expansions or violent clashes, media outlets signal what is important, influencing public and policymaker priorities (McCombs & Shaw, 1993). For instance, extensive coverage of the 2021 Sheikh Jarrah evictions brought global attention to Palestinian displacement, spurring protests and diplomatic responses (Khalidi, 2020).

Selective Attention: The media's focus on dramatic events often overshadows structural issues like the blockade of Gaza or systemic discrimination, leading to a crisis-driven understanding of the conflict (Said, 1992). This can make audiences perceive the conflict as a series of isolated incidents rather than a protracted struggle.

Example: The 2023 escalation in Gaza received intense coverage of Hamas's October 7 attack, but less focus on the preceding decades of occupation, shaping perceptions of

the conflict as a sudden outbreak rather than a historical continuum (United Nations Relief and Works Agency, 2023).

Polarization and Bias

Polarized Coverage: Media outlets often cater to their audiences' preconceptions, reinforcing divisions. In the U.S., conservative outlets like Fox News may depict Israel as a staunch ally against terrorism, while progressive outlets like The Intercept critique Israeli policies as violations of international law (Mearsheimer & Walt, 2007). This polarization deepens global divides in how the conflict is understood.

Impact on Public Opinion: A 2018 Pew Research Centre study found that 46% of Americans viewed Israel favourably, compared to 27% for Palestinians, influenced partly by media portrayals that align with U.S. foreign policy (Pew Research Centre, 2018). In contrast, European media, often critical of Israeli settlements, contribute to more balanced or pro-Palestinian sentiments in countries like the UK and France (Philo & Berry, 2011).

Propaganda and Misinformation: Both sides accuse media of bias, Israelis point to antisemitic tropes in some Arab media, while Palestinians highlight pro-Israel narratives in Western outlets. Misinformation, such as unverified casualty figures or decontextualized images, can further distort perceptions (Finkelstein, 2003).

Global Advocacy and Social Media Amplification

Social Media's Role: Platforms like X amplify media narratives by allowing real-time dissemination of images, videos, and opinions, often outpacing traditional outlets. Hashtags like #FreePalestine or #IsraelUnderAttack trend during escalations, shaping global perceptions through user-generated content (Barghouti, 2011). For example, viral videos of Palestinian evictions in 2021 fuelled global solidarity movements.

Amplification of Advocacy: Media coverage often intersects with advocacy campaigns, such as the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) movement, which gains traction through international outlets covering Israeli policies (Barghouti, 2011). Conversely, pro-Israel groups leverage media to highlight security threats, influencing perceptions in policy circles.

Example: During the 2021 Israel-Gaza conflict, social media posts of airstrikes and protests reached millions, with X posts analysed in 2023 showing 60% of trending content on the conflict originating from non-traditional media sources (Web Source: Middle East Eye, 2023).

Influence on Policy and Diplomacy

Shaping Policy Debates: Media coverage influences foreign policy by pressuring governments to respond to public sentiment. For instance, critical coverage of Israeli settlements in European media has pushed EU states to label settlement products, reflecting public disapproval (United Nations Security Council, 2016).

Diplomatic Narratives: Media shapes diplomatic language, with terms like “apartheid” or “self-defence” gaining traction based on coverage. The UN’s 2022 report on Palestine was influenced by media highlighting humanitarian conditions, prompting stronger language on occupation (United Nations General Assembly, 2022).

Example: U.S. media’s focus on Israel as a strategic ally reinforces bipartisan support for military aid, with 80% of Congress voting for aid packages in 2020, partly due to media-driven public support (Congressional Research Service, 2020).

Challenges and Ethical Considerations

Balance and Objectivity: Achieving balanced reporting is difficult due to the

conflict's emotional weight. Journalists face accusations of bias from both sides, and access restrictions (e.g., Gaza's blockade) limit comprehensive reporting (Tessler, 2009).

Humanitarian Focus: Media's emphasis on violence over structural issues can desensitize audiences or oversimplify solutions. As an example, the 2023 casualties in Gaza are rarely covered on a contextual level with regard the medical effects of the blockade, introducing bias when reporting on the crisis (United Nations Relief and Works Agency, 2023).

Ethical Responsibility: The ethical issues of media are whether by spreading sensationalist notions (graphic image, little contextualization) one is inflaming tensions or dehumanizing the victims in case of conflict zones (Wolfsfeld, 1997).

The role of the international media in creating a certain image of the conflict in Israel and Palestine is tremendous, and this process is deeply rooted in the framing, agenda-setting, and amplification. Its selectivity, biases, and engagement with social media establish an ambiguous information environment that may inform and polarize the audiences across the world. How these dynamics unfold helps one critically explore all narratives about the conflict.

1.3 Significance of Study

The value of the given study is based on its multidimensional approach toward the examination of the international media treatment of Israel-Palestine conflict and the original use of Framing Theory to relate the effect media narratives have on developing a certain perception of and discussing the given issue. Being one of the longest lasting and bitterest geopolitical conflicts in the modern history, the Israel-Palestine conflict is being waged both on the ground as well as in the media scene world-wide. The discourse created and promoted

by foreign media sources is important in determining the way people all over the world perceive the causes, participants, ethics, and possible solutions of the conflict.

The paper examines the editorial content of four large media houses, including *Al Arabiya*, *Al Jazeera*, *Dawn*, and *The Washington post*, which are all based in different political, cultural, and ideological contexts. In this way, the study overcomes the boundaries of analysis in one country and provides the comparative cross-regional approach. It goes deeper into language, framing, and word use, as well as thematic focus, how these impact priming of audiences through subtly guiding them to specific interpretations or response, or in some cases, feeling. To give an example, the frequent mention or the use of such terms like terrorism, occupation, “genocide” or resistance, helps to create a certain cerebral structure within which the viewers perceive the conflict.

Of particular relevance in this respect is the use of Priming Theory according to which the exposure due to certain media cues will affect the retrieval and interpretation of the information the individuals access later. The analysis of strategic emphasis that each outlet places upon certain features of the conflict (civilian casualties, military operations, peace talks, etc.) allows the study to see what role the media can play around shaping not just the opinion of the general population but also the official international political discourse, diplomacy, and human rights advocacy.

In addition, the study is important because of its budget to media discourse analysis and the study of conflict communication. It also singles out some major themes of victimhood, terrorism, resistance, border security, and humanitarian crises and places them on the larger ideological framework of nationalism, colonialism, human rights, and international law. The results contribute to informing us better about the issue of agenda-setting by media organizations, which influence circumstances under which particular voices, groups, and truths are enhanced or suppressed through editorial decision-making.

Practically speaking the study is also engaging to journalists, media educators, peacebuilders and policy analysts. It allows us to see the implicit prejudices and editorial frames in the reporting of international media and hence suggest a more equitable, more ethical and inclusive reporting. It raises awareness of the need to be media literate as a global audience and to be more discerning of the news, and particularly in times of crisis when it can very well polarise the situation and escalate a conflict due to misinformation.

Moreover, the study presents new opportunities of interdisciplinary communication combining political science, media studies, conflict resolution, and sociology. It highlights the role of media not just as a mirror of reality but as an active participant in making up of public consciousness, a maker of collective memory and a determinant of the international relations. Through this, this study supplements our insights on how the Israel Palestine conflict is represented, challenged and justified in the international media platform.

Drawing a conclusion, it is necessary to note that the importance of the given research does not only lay in the description of the way media sources refer to the specific and still raging conflict, but in the opportunity to develop a theoretical and empirical model of how such representations can influence the region community talking and policies, or justice and peace seeking.

1.4 Research Objectives

To Explore and analyze the media coverage of the Israel-Palestine conflict in *Al Arabia*, *Al Jazeera*, *Dawn* and *The Washington Post* from October 7, 2023 to March 7, 2024.

To Explore the discourse produced by the selected international media outlets regarding the Israel-Palestine conflict during the time period under study.

1.5 Research Questions

Q1: How did these selected international media outlets: *Al Arabia*, *Al Jazeera*, *Dawn* and *The*

Washington Post cover the Israel-Palestine conflict during October 7, 2023 to March 7, 2024?

Q2: What are the predominant discourses produced by these selected international media outlets regarding the Israel-Palestine conflict during the time period under study?

1.6 Delimitation of Study

The study is delimited by several factors to maintain a focused and discourse analysis of the media coverage provided by *Al Arabia*, *Al Jazeera*, *Dawn* and *The Washington Post* regarding the Israel-Palestine Conflict. Firstly, it confines its temporal scope to the period from October 2023 to the March 2024, aiming to capture recent developments and frames while acknowledging potential limitations in representing long-term trends. The analysis

is centered on the coverage offered by these four international media outlets, omitting perspectives from other global or local sources. Besides, the research mainly focuses on the materials that have been introduced in Arabic, and consideration may be given to materials in English, which means that no analysis of coverage by any other language is conducted. Within the framework of comparative thematic analysis, the research is focused on themes as demonstrated by the state-sponsored media, in particular, *Al Arabia*, *Al Jazeera*, *Dawn* and *The Washington Post* that might underestimate the role of non-state actors including social media or academic discussion.

Notwithstanding such delimitations, the study does not lose its focus by attempting to explain the role played by the state-sponsored media to the shape giving of global themes on the Israel-Palestine. It is a conflict but also one that recognizes the bigger picture, and even the possible limits to its methods of research.

CHAPTER 02

2. LITERATUREREVIEW

2.1 ReviewoftheRelatedLiterature

Conflict coverage in media may have a significant effect on the way people perceive and interpret the situation shaping it in a way that will either increase violence or make a compromise and reduce violence. In one study (Shahzad, F., Qazi, T. A., & Shehzad, R. 2023) the authors analyze the biases and the thematic structures adopted in the coverage of conflicts especially as to how international media represent the Palestinian Israeli conflict. They examine the manner of how the international media covers the conflict between Palestinians and Israel by looking explicitly at bias in reporting and the application of news frames (Shahzad, F., Qazi, T. A., & Shehzad, R., 2023).

The article written by Arikat (2011) focuses on the approaches of major media networks to the coverage of the Israel-Palestine conflict where the issue of biasness is raised.

It also examines the possibility of the media (in the west) subjectively reporting on Palestinians based on the theory of Orientalism provided by Edward Said. This study targets two major happenings involving the Gaza Flotilla raid in the year 2010 and the Palestinian statehood bid at the UN in 2011. The study investigates the portrayal provided by these networks about these events and the Palestinian people by examining the broadcasts they carry out. The results indicate the variance of the coverage, and Al Jazeera can be distinguished by its fact-oriented reporting. The study gives us information about media portrayal of the war and the necessity to evaluate news in media. (Arikat, H., 2011)

Goidel, R. K., Shields, T. G., & Peffley, M. (1997) discuss how contemporary political science research has primarily focused on either priming theory or the Receive, Accept, and Sample (RAS) models, but rarely on both simultaneously. The findings suggest that both media priming and attitude change occurs simultaneously, highlighting the importance of considering both factors in media effects research. This integrated approach offers a more accurate assessment of the total influence of the mass media on individual-level attitudes. (Goidel, R. K., Shields, T. G., & Peffley, M., 1997)

Neureiter (2017) examines media bias in American newspapers, identifying a minor pro-Israel statement bias. However, media coverage bias is more prevalent in countries with Muslim majorities. Factors influencing media bias include ideology, public opinion, and relationships. Additionally, media watchdogs monitor Western media coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. (Neureiter, M., 2017).

Sahhar, M. E. (2015) discusses media bias in the coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, highlighting discrepancies among Western media networks. Factors such as public opinion, demographics, and relationships with Israel explain media bias. Public opinion, demographics, and relationship with Israel explain media bias. Media coverage bias influenced by public opinion and demographic makeup (Sahhar, M. E., 2015).

This thesis critically analyzes the language and images used by international onlinemedia to represent the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in May. It examines 270 online news headlines and featured lead images from *Al Jazeera*, *BBC*, and *CNN*. The study aims to identify framing techniques and analyze coverage scope, guided by theories of agenda-setting, framing, and media representation. Using a framework combining Pan & Kosicki's textual framing analysis with Barthes' method for visual semiotics, the research finds variations in representation patterns across the three outlets. However, overall, the portrayal of the 2021 conflict predominantly revolves around the frame of "war," reflecting the distinct journalistic practices and differences of each media outlet (Rizova & Panayotova, 2021).

The Israel-Palestine Conflict in 2021: A comparative analysis of framing in *The Jakarta Post* and *Gulf News*. In May, considering their country of origin. Analyzing 20 articles using discourse analysis, it finds *Gulf News* leans towards a humanitarian framing, while *The Jakarta Post* adopts a more antagonistic approach. Additionally, the study highlights the influence of political relationships on framing, contributing to understanding the reporting of world media by different countries. (Suwarsono, 2022)

Article by Majzoub, T. (2021) provides an empirical study that focuses on the Twitter coverage of Israel-Palestine conflict by *Al Arabiya* and *Al Jazeera*. It looks at the way such outlets report breaking news about the conflict on Twitter, providing a more detailed analysis of their narratives and biases about the conflict at hand (Majzoub, T., 2021).

The article by Fitri (2023) explores coverage of the data on the ceasefire between Palestine and Israel in May 2022 in *Al Jazeera* and *USA Today*. Based on qualitative research and Van Dijk's theory of social cognition, the text structure, social cognition and social setting of the text is analyzed. The results indicate that headlines of *Al Jazeera* are more neutral and *USA Today* displays some ideological tendencies (Fitri, N. A., 2023).

Kosárová, D. (2020) examines bias in *Al Jazeera* and *Al Arabiya*'s coverage of the non-

conflict related Muslim Summit in December 2019. Through comparative analysis, it finds both outlets align their reporting with the strategic interests of Qatar and Saudi Arabia. This expands Arab media discourse analysis to non-conflict issues, broadening the hypothesis' applicability (Kosárová, D., 2020).

In a study entitled, 'A Critical Discourse Analysis of the Biased Role of Western Media in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict', in 2024, Kareem, A. H., & Najm, Y. M. (2024) give the background of Israel-Palestine conflict roots and why this conflict starts between these, in the research they examine how these countries have conflict and how west cover this conflict. The researcher also defined the media comes from media and media educate the people and inform the people, people keep people update in everywhere around the world, media covers the events conflicts etc., there are types of media like print media, social media, new media, digital media and traditional media the researchers briefly explained all these types of media. The role of media is to educate and inform the people. And the Israeli "genocide" in Iran is continued, the Hamas militant group of Palestine and between Israel these attacks are happening in the past and again start from the 7 October 2023 and 11000 people are killed in Gaza attacked back from Israel, these numbers create the so many tensions in the research groups and academicians' group. And what happens in the past if we see in the past so many attacks are continuing from the past and this is long standing geo political dispute (Hamad, A. H., & Najm, Y. M., 2024).

The research used the critical discourse analysis approach as explained by Van Dijk's notion of "ideological square" categorized by Us vs. them dichotomies using qualitative and quantitative procedures. This model is suitable for the analysis of the sample and reveals the hidden biases of Western Media coverage in Israel-Palestine conflict. They choose texts, and various YouTube channels of various representation of the western media in the conflict.

They collected the representative sample of news articles, opinion pieces and

editorials from major western media outlets like, *The New York Times*, *The Washington post*, *BBC*, *CNN* and YouTube channels covering the conflict during the time period under the study and they also ensured a balanced representation of different media outlets and political to mitigate potential biases(Hamad, A. H., & Najm, Y. M., 2024).

Using Qualitative and Quantitative procedure, the researchers select six extracts as a sample how the media portrayal the conflict. Through This extract the researchers analyze how the media change the public perception during the “genocide” in the Gaza. They explain the role of media in the “genocide” of Gaza, here are these 6 extracts that researchers analyze.(Henarni, N. H., & Surwandono, S., 2024)

Butcher Biden, Brutal, ugly and messy War, Israeli lobby, “genocide” of Gaza, who pays the costs? And United States stands with Israel. In these extracts they took from the different sites, how media choose the words wisely showing from their coverage Palestinians are dying and the Israeli are killed, and the Israel are defensive and saving them and other hands militants groups are Palestinians.(Henarni, N. H., & Surwandono, S., 2024)

In this extract there are so many things against the different people statement about US president Biden and his continually support of Gaza are being discussed and in many platforms the Israel lobbying are so powerful and their closet country or those who are doing trade they are aligned with them and few of Arab countries they are like pro Palestine. Israel and Palestine are hot topic in the western media and has played a significant role in the creating perception and impact, media biasness are on peak and everything is being portrayed according to the interest, double standard of western media is like us are positive and them are negative as like they are using the keyword of dying for Palestine and Killing for Israeli, and the most common thing and double standard coverage of this conflict. The Media is significantly not changing the perception and minds and building the narrative also put the strong impact on policy makers, this research is very helpful for understanding the conflict

and coverage of western media. (Hamad & Najm, 2024).

This research topic is also similar to my research work, and the methodology discourse analysis is also same with me so it helps me to understanding researcher further more expanded this research not only western media I'm seeing the international media including Pakistan, KSA, Qatar, USA media outlets (Henarni, N. H., & Surwandono, S., 2024).

“*Deutsche Welle's* coverage of Palestine and Israel from December 1st to December 8th 2023: a critical discourse analysis” by Zahirah Soraya Nurromadini and Sonya Puspasari Suganda was published in International Review of Humanities Studies in 2024. The article aims to use to examine and evaluate *Deutsche Welle's* (DW) coverage of the Israel–Palestine conflict as a discourse act. The review summarizes and critiques the articles methodology findings and implications (Nurromadini & Suganda, 2024).

Claim of impartiality in its coverage of Palestine and Israel conflict from December 1 to December 8, 2023 December. They wanted to evaluate How does the choice of nouns and sentence structure in *DW's* report of the events on the first week of December reflect *Deutsche Welle's* ideology of being impartial. They identify a gap in existing research, which often overlooks subtle biases in international news reporting. The data is analyzed with the critical discourse analysis of Norman Fairclough, in particular his framework, this study categorized the research data as qualitative (Nurromadini & Suganda, 2024)..

Discourse Analysis helps in understanding and revealing the discourses and biases in the communication. Therefore, helps to acquire a thorough analysis of language and structural elements. Authors reported the significant findings. Such as the language style and narrative structure used by *Deutsche Welle's* in reporting that can highly influence the viewers understanding of conflict. Furthermore, in the Narrative Technique *Deutsche Welle's* viewpoint is not as true as it would like to report. According to the authors, even if *Deutsche*

Welle's has the intention to stand neutral, some narrative devices may still indirectly affect how the conflict is portrayed. Although *Deutsche Welle's* claimed to be impartial, this research highlights that some form of reporting does not reflect the *Deutsche Welle's* claim of impartiality (Nurromadini & Suganda, 2024)..

The authors argue that the understanding of the conflict by the audience is heavily influenced by the certain biases because the language and narrative choices revealing a more complicated portrait of the Israel-Palestine conflict. One of the articles strengths is its robust methodology. The use of discourse analysis opens up to the descriptions and expressions in discourse analysis media reports, an area that may be of great interest to those who wish to understand the impact of certain discourses. Authors explore linguistic and narrative aspects. This aspect contributes to the work discussed on media bias and representation. The article aims to research and look at the point at which *Deutsche Welle's* claims of impartiality contradict the facts. This explanation adds value in trying to evaluate the *Deutsche Welle's* claims of false impartiality (Nurromadini & Suganda, 2024)..

One of the weaknesses of discourse analysis is that it is more subjective in nature, which may affect how researchers cover *Deutsche Welle's*. As a result, the analysis may not produce results that are fully consistent with the plan. Additionally, the scope of the study is limited to one week of *Deutsche Welle's* media coverage. A more extensive evaluation of *Deutsche Welle's* methodology will be possible with a longer period for media coverage.

The article helps in drawing conclusions about the partiality and independence of various media organizations in the resolution of the Israel-Palestinian conflict. The authors of the study focus on the monitoring of *Deutsche Welle* media content through critical discourse analysis, drawing attention to the ideological aspects that may be present in a network that claims unbiased reporting. Another research topic I am working on, "Construction of Israel-Palestine conflict by the International Media," is ideally aligned with this study's focus on

how the international media affects narratives about the conflict. An analysis of discourse by sticking to the discourse Analysis theme, my research will be more widely focused and not limited to a single week or particular media platform (Zahirah & Sonya, 2023).

Nabila Humairo Henarni, Surwandono Surwandono (2024) framing hamas: a comparative discourse analysis of western and middle eastern media, identify how media of western and middle eastern frame the Hamas, in general after the 9/11 many of western societies especially US considered that Islam gives the birth of “terrorists” organization, and then all the organization those are working for good cause and for humanity for rights and developments they comes in this eye, as “Hamas” from that time western societies believing Hamas as a “terrorist” organization and middle eastern media considering Hamas as a brave or heroic. To understand how media framing influence public perception and how western and middle eastern frame the Hamas, researcher took the Western and middle eastern media platforms, so this research attempts to obtain a framing Hamas from two view points and for making it balance they take balanced amount of news from each media of both sides. From Western Media researcher took *BBC*, *CNN* and *The Guardian* and from Middle eastern Media researcher pick *Al Arabiya*, *Al Jazeera* and *Asharq Al-Awsat* from both media sides 150 stories researcher took and 75 from middle east and 75 from western media.(Henarni & Surwandono, 2024)

A systematic examination of 150 news articles comprising 75 narratives from Western and Middle Eastern media outlets represents the research methodology utilized in this study. The chosen media sources in the Middle Eastern region are *Al-Jazeera*, *Al-Arabiya* and *Asharq Al-Awsat* among others in conducting this research. It is expected that their coverage will provide useful ideas on the local sentiments, historical background, and cultural aspects covering Israel-Hamas conflict. These views are opposite to those presented by the western media including the *BBC*, *CNN* and *The Guardian* that present foreign views of the region.

The coverage of such Western media facilities is likely to reveal international repercussions, foreign relations, as well as international responses to the war. The broad range of media materials used both in the Middle East and in Western states are intended to get a detailed picture of the complex processes of the Israel-Hamas conflict. The primary goal of the analysis is to examine how Hamas was represented in the news posts between October 7, 2023, and December 7, 2023. And then these findings are linked with study helping the researcher in many media outlet's coverage. These are text only and we can find more things with images and other themes(Henarni & Surwandono, 2024).

These literature review offers a thorough overview of how the Israel-Palestine conflict is depicted in international media. Its purpose is to lay the groundwork for a detailed examination of content in the upcoming research project.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

The Theoretical frameworks are vital in helping research by providing lenses through which phenomena are interpreted. In the present study, which aims to explain the construction of the Israel-Palestine conflict by international media outlets, the theoretical foundation is built upon Framing Theory, Agenda-Setting Theory, and Orientalism, supported by Discourse Analysis as a methodological approach.

Framing Theory

The Framing theory was initially introduced by Erving Goffman in 1974 and it was further expanded by Entman (1993), refers to the process by which media select various aspects of reality and make them more salient in a communicating text. Frames influence how audiences understand and interpret issues.

In the context of the Israel–Palestine conflict, media framing plays a pivotal role in shaping public perception by privileging specific narratives—such as victimhood, terrorism,

resistance, or diplomacy—while marginalizing others. As Entman (1993) explains, framing operates through four core functions: problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and treatment recommendation. This study examines how leading media outlets, namely *Al Arabiya*, *Al Jazeera*, *Dawn*, and *The Washington Post*, deploy these framing functions in their coverage of the conflict. Entman (1993) emphasizes that, “*to frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation*” (p. 52).

Framing theory originated in psychology, developed in sociology, and thrived in mass communication (Appelman & Asmara, 2018). Definitions of the frame can be broadly divided into four categories. The first category is represented by the definitions given by Hertog and Mcleod (2001). Framing theory states that how information and the structure of communication impact the perceptions as well as the decision making of the people. And how this structured communication mold and shapes the opinions of the individuals. In nutshell the way of framing the topic can notably shape and mold the interpretation of the people and their reaction towards that information. Framing theory initially introduced by Erving Goffman in 1974 and it is widely used in media studies, sociology and psychology (Chong & Druckman, 2007). Framing is the combination of selection, salience, Interpretation and cultural resonance (Entman, 1993).

1. Starting with selection, in this process we select the specific elements of the information ignore others aspects that are irrelevant. The purpose of selecting specific elements and aspects is to bring them in to focus and to know how audience perceive the topic.
2. Second is salience, in this step certain aspects of the topic are presented more prominently with in the frame in order to know how people perceive, interpret and prioritize different aspects with in the frame so that the certain elements that are being discussed in the frame

can be more memorable and meaningful to audience.

3. Next step is interpretation, under this process context is provided for understanding just like a lens through which audience interpret the issues so in short it gives the context thorough which people understand the information and then respond to it after evaluating that information.
4. Lastly, Cultural resonance it states that those frames are more effective and have huge impact that relates to the values and norms of the audience because people can connect themselves.

According to the research by there are two types of framing. Episodic frames and thematic frames. Episodic frame focuses on individuals and events and cases for example any news reporter is focusing and reporting on family experience after any natural disaster such as flood and earthquake on the other side thematic framing do not focus on particular individual rather it focuses on a broader context and elaborate the in-depth causes of an issue and its long term effect on anything it helps people to have knowledge of the overall context of the issue not just on the specific event or individual (Villota, 2012). Firstly, researchers need to identify what kind of framing techniques media outlets are utilizing either it is episodic or thematic it will help him to understand how media frame topics like politics and social issues(de Vreese, 2005).

Frames identifications in communication are the crucial components of framing theory it helps us identify frames that media outlets are using in their content. According to the study by, framing affects the perception of the people according to the context in which they are presented i.e. Episodic or thematic framing(Boukes, 2022).

Researcher should have an in-depth knowledge of frames so that he may know how the use of particular frames regulates the people perceptions and behaviors. Frames direct the people interpretation about the event by relating them to their cultural and social values

(Gamson, W. A., & Modigliani, A., 1987).

Framing theory also helps in understanding broader perspectives such as the way media portray certain topics it can effect societies and policies according to the research study framing can influence public understanding and policy debates as seen in the analysis of media coverage of stem cell research (Nisbet et al., 2003).

In my research study construction of Israel-Palestine conflict by the international media: a discourse analysis framing theory provides proper lens by applying this theory we can analyze how selected media outlets are reporting and framing the Israel Palestine conflict and how their reporting style is influencing and shaping the perception of the audience. This approach falls under the thematic framing of framing theory because the focus is on broader event and we wanted to know that how different media outlets are portraying the conflict what language they are continuously using to report the conflict.

Agenda-Setting Theory

Proposed by McCombs and Shaw (1972), Agenda-Setting Theory posits that the media may not tell the public what to think, but it is stunningly successful at telling its audiences what to think about. This theory underscores the media's ability to shape public discourse by prioritizing certain topics. In this study, agenda-setting is relevant for understanding how international media organizations determine the prominence and frequency of coverage related to the Israel-Palestine conflict. For example, how often certain violent events, humanitarian crises, or diplomatic negotiations are reported, and which side's narratives dominate the headlines (McCombs, 2004; McCombs, Shaw, & Weaver, 2014).

As per the framing theory different media outlets are not reporting Israel-Palestine conflict in a pure and neutral they are highlighting some points and ignoring other as per there agenda such as *Al-Arabiya* and *Al Jazeera* might focus on the violation of human right of

Palestine, *The Washington Post* may focus on the security of the Isreal and *The Dawn* might emphasize the political implication of the conflict in Pakistan. In conclusion each outlet is reporting and framing conflict in a different way how the audience attentions are being shaped (Carter, 2013).

It means importance and value which each outlet is giving on a particular part of an issue and shaping the perception of the people as per the framing theory it will highlights how out audience are interpreting the conflict such as *Al Arabiya* may focus on highlighting the struggles of Palestinian and emphasizing the value of valuable lives of human. On the other side *The Washington Post* might prioritize the security concerns and the global impact of the conflict.

Under framing theory frames provide a context that guides the interpretation of the audience regarding the issue (Chong & Druckman, 2007). Keeping this in view it is important to analyze how different outlets of media are framing the Israel- Palestine conflict in the different ways.

While *AlJazeera* may have presented the violence as part of a broader Palestinianstruggle for independence, *The Washington Post*may have presented the incident as a similarIsraeli policy of protecting itself from harm.

These different framings affect howviewers understand the causes,responsibilities,and solutions to the conflict.

By incorporating the above points framing theory helps us in identifying, analyzing and evaluating the reporting of Israel-Palestine conflict by different media outlets.

Framing theory research has been popular in mass communication. It is widely used in mass communication (Scheufele, 2004). In mass communication research, scholars focused on how different frames can affect audiences' sentiments, attitudes, and behavior. In this case, thecontentfromtheselectedchannelsprovidesreaders/viewerswithinformationaboutthechallenge

s in terms of Israel-Palestine conflict, issue of war crimes, strategic misplacements, Palestinian security forces, including resource shortages, political tensions, and internal legitimacy issues.

By analyzing how media themes prime individuals to interpret information, can gain insight into the impact of media coverage on public discourse and framing of the conflict. Additionally, the human-interest element, such as the perspectives of individuals directly involved in the training, could prime readers to empathize with the challenges faced by these.

Orientalism (Edward Said)

Edward Said's (1978) theory of Orientalism is vital in understanding Western media representations of the East, particularly Arabs and Muslims. Orientalism suggests that Western discourse often constructs the East as exotic, backward, uncivilized, and inherently violent. This binary serves political and ideological purposes by legitimizing Western intervention and dominance.

In the case of the Israel-Palestine conflict, Western outlets like *The Washington Post* may inadvertently reproduce orientalist discourses by depicting Palestinians as aggressors or "terrorist"s, while presenting Israeli actions as defensive or legitimate. Said's perspective helps uncover ideological bias in media discourse.

Discourse Analysis

Although Discourse Analysis is a methodology, it also provides a theoretical orientation rooted in Foucault's theories of power and knowledge. According to Fairclough (1995), Discourse Analysis aims to reveal the hidden ideologies and power structures embedded in media texts.

This discourse analysis demonstrates that language plays a central role in shaping public perception of the Israel–Palestine conflict. Competing narratives of *security vs.*

“genocide” and *terrorism vs. resistance* reveal the political power of words. By analysing these discourses, researchers can uncover how global media, political actors, and humanitarian organizations construct and contest the meaning of war.

Future research could employ computational methods large-scale text mining of news headlines and social media posts to complement this qualitative approach and provide a broader view of discursive shifts during the conflict.

Discourse Analysis allows this study to critically analyse how linguistic and rhetorical choices, such as labelling, passive voice, modality, and lexical selection, construct realities about the Israel-Palestine conflict. It also helps explore how discourses differ across media from the Global North and Global South.

Discourse analysis is well-suited for this study because it examines how language constructs and reflects social and political realities. It goes beyond surface meanings to uncover implicit ideologies, power relations, and framing strategies embedded in texts (Fairclough, 1995; Van Dijk, 2008). Unlike purely quantitative or descriptive methods, discourse analysis allows researchers to link linguistic choices with broader socio-political contexts, making it especially useful for understanding how narratives shape public perception and policy debates (Wodak & Meyer, 2015).

Primary theory

Iyengar and Kinder (1987) describe priming as the process by which repeated media emphasis influences the standards audiences use to evaluate political actors. For example, the constant Western priming of “terrorism” leads audiences to evaluate Hamas primarily through a security lens, while Arab media’s priming of “resistance” fosters judgments based on liberation and justice.

Integration of Theories into the Study

Table 2.1: Each theory contributes uniquely to the study's objectives	
Theory/Framework	Contribution to Study
Framing Theory	Identifies narrative strategies and discursive patterns.
Agenda-Setting	Explains prominence and salience of coverage.
Orientalism	Deconstructs ideological biases, especially in Western media.
Discourse Analysis	Provides tools for linguistic and discursive analysis of text.
Priming	Evaluation criteria, shows how repeated narratives affect public perception of legitimacy and morality.

Table 1 uniquely to the study's objectives

The integration of Framing Theory, Agenda-Setting, Orientalism, and Discourse Analysis offers a robust and multidimensional theoretical lens for analysing international media coverage of the Israel-Palestine conflict. These frameworks ensure the study goes beyond surface-level reporting to uncover the deeper power relations, ideologies, and narrative constructions at play.

The field of studies has abundantly examined the role of international media in shaping the perception of people on the Israel-Palestine conflict. Previous researchers have

shown unanimously that coverage of the media can hardly be objective, but it is highly infiltrated with politics and ideologies as well as regional interests. In the present synthesis, the earlier research is relied upon to bring to light the major themes, trends, and shortcomings that guide and justify the current research project.

Media Bias and Framing of the Israel–Palestine Conflict

Among the most heated results of the previous research, the following results proved to be staying: the media framing bias persistence. Other scholars such as Philo and Berry (2011) and Finkelstein (2003) have pointed out the fact that Western media, especially media in the United States and Europe, is more pro-Israel, with many situations involving Palestinians perpetrating aggressive acts and Israeli retaliations as self-defences. On the other hand, the press in the Arab region of the world, like *Al Arabiya* and *Al Jazeera* is found to be pro-Palestinian with a culture of victimization, occupation, and resistance (Barghouti, 2011; Said, 1992).

This phenomenon, which is also reflected in the works of Tessler (2009) and Gelvin (2014), has shown that Western media often uses the language that discredits Palestinian political movements by specifically linking them with terrorism, whereas attempts by Israeli to state to act are placed in the framework of national security discourses. This biased coverage serves to create disproportionate representation as well as to misrepresent international audiences to widen power inequity between nations in the process of rhetoric communication.

This study adheres to ethical research standards by ensuring transparency and accountability in the interpretation of texts. Since the analysis involves publicly available media sources, no personal or confidential data is used, thereby minimizing risks of harm. Nevertheless, the researcher remains aware of potential biases in interpreting politically

sensitive material and takes care to present findings fairly, avoiding misrepresentation of individuals or groups (Silverman, 2013; Wodak & Meyer, 2015).

Application of Priming Theory in Conflict Reporting

Priming Theory has become the subject of a proliferating body of literature with the aim of explaining how media exposure to certain stories or themes repeatedly shapes media audiences to have a certain perspective. As Iyengar and Kinder (1987) explained, and an extension of this study made by McCombs and Ghanem (2001), each time a media highlights some factors about a conflict (e.g. terrorism, losses, ceasefire), it conditions the audience to think of such factors as being significant in their interpretation of the conflict.

This was seen in the common use of such loaded language as the term “terrorist”, militant, occupation, or martyr in terms of the Israel-Palestine conflict (Khalidi, 2020). According to research by Shlaim (2001) and Barak (2005), not only does media priming influence the opinion of the people, it may also influence policies and diplomatic alignment especially in U.S. and Europe.

The Role of Cultural and Regional Contexts

Media coverage has no consistency; it is determined by the institutional and cultural and political divergence between the station. Armstrong (1996) and Mearsheimer & Walt (2007) comment on national interest, religious affiliations and alliance in foreign policies as defining editorial priorities. For instance, *Al Jazeera*, operating from Qatar, tends to emphasize narratives of resistance and humanitarian suffering, whereas *The Washington Post*, aligned with U.S. foreign policy interests, prioritizes narratives of Israeli security and legitimacy.

Studies have also highlighted how editorial framing is influenced by language choices, headlines, image selection, and source credibility. Said (1992) and Pappé (2006)

argue that these editorial mechanisms function not only to inform but to legitimize or delegitimize specific actors in the conflict, thereby contributing to the construction of dominant global narratives.

Gaps in Existing Research

While prior research provides valuable insights into media framing and bias, there are several gaps that this study seeks to address:

- Comparative editorial discourse analysis across both Western and non-Western outlets remains limited.
- Few studies have applied Priming Theory to a systematic sample of editorial texts over a defined time period.
- The role of qualitative word frequency and framing indicators in understanding priming effects is underexplored.
- Most existing literature focuses on either Western or Arab media in isolation, without cross-regional synthesis.

CHAPTER 03

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This qualitative study utilizes discourse analysis to explore media coverage of the Israel-Palestine conflict by *Al Arabia*, *Al Jazeera*, *Dawn* and *The Washington Post* from October 7, 2023, to the 7 March 2024. Discourse analysis involves keywords and analysis to identify recurring patterns and discourse in the coverage, providing insight into how the conflict is framed by these media outlets (Safdar, 2019).

To strengthen the credibility of the findings, intercoder reliability will be established by having multiple researchers independently analyse a sample of the texts and then compare coding decisions (Lombard, Snyder-Duch, & Bracken, 2002). Any discrepancies will be discussed and resolved to ensure consistency in interpretation. In addition, researcher reflexivity will be maintained to minimize bias by keeping an audit trail of coding decisions and acknowledging how personal perspectives may influence analysis (Meyer, 2001). Triangulation through cross-checking with existing literature and alternative interpretations will further enhance validity (Wodak & Meyer, 2015).

3.2 Sampling

To ensure equal representation and minimize researcher bias, a systematic sampling method was employed. Systematic sampling is a form of probability sampling where every Kth unit is selected from a list after arranging the data chronologically.

During the data cleansing process, the researcher found that out of **5905** editorial stories, **4361** news stories were relevant to the research objectives.

Since 435 editorial stories were available from each newspaper, the researcher selected 435 out of from each. To select 10 news stories per outlet, the researcher employed a **systematic sampling method** using the **Kth method** (K stands for King), where:

$$K = N/n,$$

N = total number of editorials per newspaper,

n = number of required samples per newspaper.

The stories were arranged **chronologically (date-wise)** from top to bottom, and every **Kth** story was selected for analysis. This process was repeated for each newspaper.

Selection of the Newspapers

Four prominent international media outlets are selected for analysis: *Al Arabia*, *Al Jazeera*, *Dawn* and *The Washington Post*. These outlets are chosen based on their significant readership and influence in reporting on global affairs, including the Israel-Palestine conflict.

Time Frame

The analysis examined media content from October 7, 2023, to March 7, 2024, capturing six months of coverage to assess recent developments and trends in media portrayal of the conflict.

Rationale for Selecting the Newspaper

All these selected media outlets from four different countries are prominent media corporations in the world.

Al Arabiya

Al Arabiya media outlet that many people watch. It talks about news in the Middle East and shares opinions. It was started in Dubai in 2003 by the leaders of Saudi Arabia. *Al Arabiya* based in

Dubai and owned by a Saudi Corporation and under the controlled of Saudi Government and its discourse is in line with Riyadh's interests. Researcher chose to study *Al Arabiya* because it presents news with a more pro-Gulf and pro- Saudi narrative. It strives for a balanced reporting, focusing on regional stability and Israel's security concerns.

Al Jazeera

Al Jazeera has a broad international viewership and a focus on Palestinian narratives, providing critical analysis of Israeli policies and international responses. *Al-*

Jazeera Arabic News channel was established in 1996 as a part of then-Emir of Qatar Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani's plans to enhance the regional and global influence to the Gulf State.

Dawn

Dawn is a Pakistani media outlet was started in 1947; It tells people about what's happening in Pakistan and around the world. It's one of the oldest and most important news sources in Pakistan, and it has a long history of providing news to the people.

Dawn media outlet, aligning with Pakistan's fearful stance, reports on the Israel-Palestine Conflict emphasizing the humanitarian crisis in Gaza. Pakistani media approach towards the Palestine-Israel conflict, Pakistan had a certain policy line at the peak time of the conflict that was, seemingly, the major cause of shaping less critical coverage on the Hamas movement in the current scenario.

The Washington Post

The Washington Post is a well-known newspaper in the United States. It tells people about news and events in the U.S. and around the world. It was started in Washington

D.C. in 1877. The leaders at that time wanted to make sure people had accurate information about what was happening in the country's capital and beyond. I choose to study *The Washington Post* because it is one of the oldest and most respected newspaper in the U.S., and it has a long history

of providing news to the people.

3.3 Operational Definitions

Following is the operational definition of key terms:

Hamasization

The process by which discussions and analyses of the Israel-Palestine conflict become overly focused on Hamas (Harakat al-Muqawama al-Islamiyya). This focus often comes at the expense of understanding the wider political, social, and historical context of the conflict. The term criticizes the tendency to reduce a complex situation to a simple narrative, usually framed as "**Israel vs. Hamas**," which overlooks the diversity of Palestinian political actors and the broader factors shaping the conflict.

How Palestinians Have Been Killed

The portrayal and documentation of Palestinian civilian and militant deaths resulting from Israeli military operations or conflict-related violence.

Operationalization: Count the number of articles that use passive language ("were killed") vs. active language ("Israel killed"), distinguish between combatant vs. civilian deaths, and note if sources name victims or quantify them.

"genocide" / Terrorism

The Extreme framing of violence through labels such as "'genocide'" or "terrorism," depending on the actor being described.

Operationalization: Frequency and context of the use of the term "'genocide'" to describe Israeli actions and "terrorism" to describe Palestinian actions. Evaluate whether these terms are applied selectively, and who is cited as using them (e.g., UN, state actors, media).

Security Concerns and Terrorism / Attacks, Rocket Fire

The justification of military actions on the grounds of national security, particularly referencing rocket attacks by Palestinian groups.

Operationalization: Count how often Israeli operations are framed as "response to rocket fire" or "security measure." Identify the framing of rockets as "indiscriminate," "unprovoked."

Border Security

Israeli control over access points, walls, and checkpoints justified for national security.

Operationalization: Count articles referring to the “security barrier,” “border wall,” or “fence” and their link to terror prevention vs. movement restriction. Analyze framing: security vs. occupation.

Resistance

Palestinian efforts to challenge Israeli control, through armed or unarmed means.

Operationalization: Examine whether resistance is labeled as “terrorism,” “militancy,” “intifada,” “legitimate struggle,” or “defense.” Look for contextual framing, are causes or consequences explained?

Humanitarian Crisis and Gaza Blockade

The socio-economic and health-related consequences of the blockade imposed on Gaza since 2007.

Operationalization: Measure the frequency of coverage on lack of food, medicine, fuel, electricity, and hospital access. Track usage of terms like “siege,” “blockade,” “collective punishment,” and “humanitarian aid.”

Siege on Gaza / Casualties / Humanitarian Aid

The comprehensive impact of movement restrictions, import limitations, and military action on the population of Gaza.

Operationalization: Analyze the framing of humanitarian aid deliveries (e.g., “allowed by Israel” vs. “necessitated by blockade”). Count reports on deaths, injuries, and destroyed infrastructure.

3.4 Data Collection

The analysis examined media content from October 7, 2023, to March 7, 2024, international media outlets how many contents produce by the selected international media outlets, after that we will apply systematic sampling technique, we will see the equal size of all the four outlets.

3.5 DataAnalysis

Thematic Analysis is a widely used method in qualitative research for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data. It provides a flexible yet systematic approach to interpreting textual, visual, or audio data by organizing it into meaningful themes.

Key Steps in Thematic Analysis

Familiarization with the Data

Read and re-read the data (transcripts, field notes, documents) to gain deep familiarity.

Take initial notes on interesting or significant observations.

Generating Initial Codes

Code interesting features systematically across the dataset.

Codes are labels that summarize key concepts (e.g., "fear of failure," "financial stress").

Searching for Themes

Group related codes into potential themes.

Organize data extracts under each theme to see if they form a coherent pattern.

Reviewing Themes

Check if themes work in relation to the coded extracts and the entire dataset.

Refine themes by merging, splitting, or discarding them as needed.

Defining and Naming Themes

Clearly define what each theme represents.

Choose concise and informative names for themes (e.g., "Barriers to Education").

Producing the Report

Write up the analysis, using vivid examples (quotes, narratives) to illustrate themes.

- Relate findings back to the research question and literature.

Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis gained popularity in social sciences in 1980. It is a qualitative research method in social sciences that focuses on the language and it uses in different

context. Discourse analysis analyzes both kind of communication i.e written and verbal the purpose of discourse analysis is to analyze ways in which language creates reality, communicates ideas, and supports or violates social norms. The core principle of discourse analysis is that the main form of social practice is language which shapes ideologies and structure of the society. Another core element of discourse analysis is context there is a close relationship between discourse and its context. Discourse defines its context, and context helps to understand the meaning of what is said within the discourse. It is examined in two main ways (Foucault, 1972; Fairclough, 1992).

These are socio-political approaches (often critical discourse analysis) and methods of language use (also known as socially situated text and speaking). Discourse analysis includes an analytical framework predicated on the idea that discourse affects both global politics and society. In order to understand the function and potential outcomes of discourse, It seeks to identify linguistic mechanisms and processes within the socio-political context in which they are produced and received. Discourse analysis uses identities, norms, and concepts all of which have both explicit and implicit dimensions as the basic building blocks of social behavior. Discourse analysis provides some tools and approaches for conducting empirical research on these processes. It differs from other text analysis techniques because of the applicable implementation. This adaptation presents both an advantage and a challenge.

While flexibility allows researchers to create specific strategies for each project, it also required that they determine which tools are most appropriate for each research question, for example, empirically and methodology through a literature review. As a result, discourse analysis methodological recommendations alternate between broad steps for organizing the data. Researchers are encouraged to read and reread the material after mapping the context (visual, textual, socio-historical, narrative) in which the textual material is analyzed or obtained and Initial analysis is to focus on clear dimensions of the text (eg, what is the text

about?). This continuous process allows researchers to identify trends or patterns within the material (eg, certain sounds are emitted, certain phenomena are justified) before attempting to explore techniques that would enable researchers to provide empirical evidence of these mechanisms to an audience.

After identifying the tools, the researchers conduct a methodological analysis of the corpus, drawing on existing research on contrasting mechanisms and contextual aspects to support their interpretation. By doing so, it supports in-depth analysis, but the methodology is time-consuming, often leading to the examination of smaller corpora due to feasibility. In conclusion discourse analysis is a best tool for analyzing and understanding the social importance of language. It provides insights on both kind of communication like verbal and written and how the language style shapes the ideologies and structure of the society. Discourse analysis helps show how people create their own realities, express their identities, and interact with or violate social norms by examining language in a larger social context Audrey Alejandro, Longxuan Zhao (2023). In this study the researcher will explore and analyze the discourse produced by the selected media outlets.

CHAPTER 04

4. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

4.1 Findings

The study conducted a comparative discourse analysis of international media coverage concerning the Israel-Palestine conflict between October 7, 2023, and March 7, 2024. The media outlets analysed include *Al Arabiya*, *Al Jazeera*, *Dawn* and *The Washington Post*. A total of 5905 news stories were collected, out of which 4361 were found relevant, forming a sample of 435 stories for detailed discourse analysis.

To analyse the complex and multifaceted media narratives surrounding the Israel-Palestine conflict, a qualitative data analysis approach was employed, utilizing two leading Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software (CAQDAS) tools: **NVivo** and **ATLAS.ti**. These platforms enabled the systematic organization, coding, and thematic analysis of a large corpus of textual data, including news articles, editorials, and transcripts from selected international media outlets.

Parallel analysis was conducted using **ATLAS.ti**, which provided enhanced support for memo writing, network visualization, and code co-occurrence analysis. This platform was particularly useful in mapping out the relationships between themes, ideologies, and actors (e.g., Hamas, Israeli government, civilians), helping to uncover deeper layers of media discourse and interpretive framing.

Representation and Sentiment Bias

The sentiment and ideological bias analysis of the media outlets revealed four distinct orientations:

Dawn: Strong pro-Palestine sentiment, emphasizing themes of victimhood and anti-Israel narratives.

Al Jazeera: Strongly pro-Palestine, framing the conflict around structural oppression and humanitarian suffering.

Al Arabiya: Reflected a mixed sentiment, balancing anti-Hamas narratives with calls for diplomacy.

The Washington Post: Predominantly pro-Israel, using frames of counterterrorism and security.

This demonstrates a clear polarization in international media framing, shaped by editorial policies, geopolitical alignments, and regional ideologies.

Word Frequency and Thematic Dominance

The word frequency analysis highlights the prominence of recurring themes across the four media outlets:

Theme High Frequency Media Interpretation Hamas All (esp. *The Washington Post*) Central actor, portrayed differently terror group (*Washing Post*), resistance (*Dawn*, AJ).

Palestinian Casualties: *Dawn*, *Al Jazeera* Humansuffering, civilian deaths emphasized.

“genocide”: *Al Jazeera*, *Dawn* Accusations against Israel; minimized in *Washington Post*.

Terrorism: *Washington Post* Used more to label Hamas actions.

Resistance: *Dawn*, *Al Jazeera* Framed as legitimate struggle.

Siege on Gaza: *Dawn*, *Al Jazeera* Focused on humanitarian crisis.

Border Security: *Washington Post*, *Al Arabiya* Emphasized Israeli security narrative.

These keywords reflect the dominant themes through which media framed the conflict.

4.2 Thematic Analysis

Based on the framing and language patterns, the following key themes were identified across the media discourse:

Theme 1: Hamasization of the Conflict

Definition: The reduction of the Palestinian cause to the activities of Hamas.

PositiveFraming: *Dawn*- resistance operations, political actor.

NegativeFraming: *The Washington Post* – Hamas as a terror network.

NeutralFraming: *Al Arabiya* and *Al Jazeera* mixed use, occasionally describing tactics as controversial.

Interpretation: This theme is used to either legitimize or delegitimize Palestinian actions.

Theme 2: Victimhood and Civilian Suffering

Focus: Deaths of civilians, destruction in Gaza, displacement.

Positive Framing:*Al Jazeera* and *Dawn* used terms like “martyrs of occupation”, “innocent civilians”.

Negative Framing:*The Washington Post* framed deaths as “Hamas war casualties”, implying responsibility.

Interpretation: This theme creates emotional engagement, often used to mobilize sympathy or justify military actions.

Theme 3: “genocide” and Legal Allegations

Narrative: *Al Jazeera* and *Dawn* used terms like “Israeli “genocide”” and “plausible “genocide” case”.

Contrast: *The Washington Post* labelled these as “disputed claims”.

Interpretation: Legal framing attempts to influence global opinion and potential intervention.

Theme 4: Security and Terrorism

Positive Framing (WP): Focus on Israel’s “right to self-defences”, terms like “rocket fire”, “border security”.

Negative/Counter-Framing (*Al Jazeera*,*Dawn*): Use terms like “military onslaught”, “Israeli aggression”.

Interpretation: A clear divide in whether violence is framed as defence or aggression.

Theme 5: Resistance vs. Extremism

Framing:

Positive: *Al Jazeera* and *Dawn*– “legitimate struggle”, “armed resistance”.

Negative: *The Washington Post*– “militant groups”, “violent extremism”.

Interpretation: Reflects how narrative control can define actors either as freedom fighters or “terrorist”s.

Theme 6: Humanitarian Crisis and Blockade

Key Phrases: “siege on Gaza”, “civilian toll”, “conflict fatalities”.

Framing: *Dawn* and *Al Jazeera* highlighted crisis; *Al Arabiya* and *The Washington Post* downplayed it.

Interpretation: Use of humanitarian lens to critique or justify intervention policies.

4.3 Analysis

Table 4.1: News Stories (Oct 7, 2023 - Mar 7, 2024)				
Media Outlets	Total News Stories	Total Relevant News Stories	Percentage	Sample Number
<i>Al Arabiya</i>	3315	2585	78%	258
<i>Al Jazeera</i>	515	453	88%	45
<i>Dawn</i>	985	778	79%	78
<i>The Washington Post</i>	790	545	69%	54
Collective News Stories	5905	4361	74%	435

Table 2 News Stories (Oct 7, 2023 - Mar 7, 2024)

Definition & Description:

Total News Stories: The total number of articles published by each outlet during the selected timeframe.

Relevant News Stories: Stories directly related to the Israel–Palestine conflict.

Percentage: Shows how much of the outlet's total coverage was conflict-related.

Sample Number: Using *systematic sampling (Kth method)*, this is the number of news stories selected for qualitative discourse analysis from each outlet.

Interpretation: *Al Jazeera* had the highest percentage (88%) of relevant stories, showing strong editorial focus on the conflict. The largest volume of stories came from *Al Arabiya*.

Table 4.2: Sentiment Summary		
MediaOutlets	Sentiment	Bias
<i>Al Arabiya</i>	Mixed	Anti-Hamas, pro-diplomacy
<i>Al Jazeera</i>	Pro-Palestine	Structural oppression
<i>Dawn</i>	Pro-Palestine	Victimhood, anti-Israel
<i>The Washington Post</i>	Pro-Israel	Counterterrorism, security

Table 3Sentiment Summary

Definition & Description:

- **Sentiment:**The emotional or ideological tone of the media coverage.

Bias:The underlying perspective or alignment shown consistently in reporting.

Interpretation: *Al Jazeera* and *Dawn* lean towards Pro-Palestine narratives, emphasizing oppression and victimization, while *The Washington Post* strongly supports the Israeli point of view under themes of security and terrorism. *Al Arabiya* maintains a mixed stance.

Table 4.3: Word Frequency				
Themes	<i>Al Arabiya</i>	<i>Al Jazeera</i>	<i>Dawn</i>	<i>The Washington Post</i>
Hamas	620	680	420	850
Palestinian Casualties	290	540	380	220
“genocide”	50	240	110	35
Terrorism	180	70	45	320
Attacks	450	300	210	380
Rocket fire	270	190	160	210
Border security	230	90	60	190
Resistance	130	220	280	65
Siege on Gaza	160	510	340	120
Humanitarian Aid	150	470	220	110
Casualties	320	410	310	290

Table 4 Word Frequency

Definition & Description:

Word Frequency: Number of times key terms/themes appear in the news articles from each outlet.

Interpretation:

Hamas and Terrorism are emphasized most by *The Washington Post*, reinforcing a security narrative.

Al Jazeera and Dawn focus more on Palestinian casualties, siege, and humanitarian aid, reflecting a victim-centric frame.

Al Arabiya presents a balanced use of terms, showing both military conflict and diplomatic elements.

Table 4.4: Framing International Media Outlets Discourse

Main Content Category	Themes	Positive Framing	Negative Framing	Neutral Framing	Words/Phrases/Sentences to Identify Framing
Hamasization	Hamasization	<i>Dawn</i>	<i>The Washington Post</i>	<i>Al Arabiya & Al Jazeera</i>	Resistance operations, Controversial tactics, Terror network
	How Palestinians have been killed	<i>Al Jazeera & Dawn</i>	<i>The Washington Post</i>	<i>Al Arabiya</i>	Martyrs of occupation, Innocent civilians, Conflict casualties, Hamas war casualties
	“genocide”, Terrorism	<i>The Washington Post</i>	<i>Al Jazeera & Dawn</i>	<i>Al Arabiya</i>	Israeli “genocide”, Plausible “genocide” case, Allegations, Disputed claims
Security Concerns and Terrorism	Attacks, Rocket Fire	<i>The Washington Post</i>	<i>Al Jazeera & Dawn</i>	<i>Al Arabiya</i>	Israeli aggression, Military onslaught, Clashes, Hamas-led attacks
	Border Security	<i>The Washington Post</i>	<i>Al Jazeera & Dawn</i>	<i>Al Arabiya</i>	Occupation forces, Military perimeter, National security, Defensive barrier
	Resistance	<i>Al Jazeera & Dawn</i>	<i>The Washington Post</i>	<i>Al Arabiya</i>	Legitimate struggle, Armed resistance, Militant groups, Violent

	extremism				
Humanitarian Crisis and Gaza Blockade	Siege on Gaza, Humanitarian aid, - Causalities	<i>AlJazeera& Dawn</i>	<i>Al Arabiya&The Washington Post</i>	Israeli massacres, Civilian toll, War deaths, Conflict fatalities	

Table 5 Framing International Media outlets Discourse

Definition & Description:

Framing: The way a media outlet presents and contextualizes an issue or actor (e.g., Hamas, Israel).

Positive Framing: Depicting in a favourable or justified light.

Negative Framing: Portraying as unjust, violent, or morally wrong.

Neutral Framing: Presenting without explicit judgment.

Interpretation:

The Washington Post frames Hamas and Palestinian actions as terrorism.

Al Jazeera and Dawn emphasize resistance, victimhood, and “genocide” narratives.

Al Arabiya often presents content neutrally, using less emotionally charged vocabulary.

This media discourse analysis shows clear editorial biases and framing techniques across international media:

Western outlets like *The Washington Post* emphasize Israeli security and label Palestinian resistance as terrorism.

Arab and regional outlets like *Al Jazeera and Dawn* focus on Palestinian suffering, siege, and oppression.

Al Arabiya tends to balance diplomatic and neutral discourse, avoiding overt support for either side.

Word Cloud

A word cloud also known as a tag cloud is a visual representation of text data, where the size of each word indicates its frequency or importance within a given dataset.



Dominant Terms (High Frequency)

These indicate the most discussed entities and actors in the reporting.

Terms like “attack,” “killed,” “military,” “raid,” “assault,” “death,” “strike,” “toll,” “genocide,” “war” imply a negative sentiment and emphasize violence and suffering.

Humanitarian and Political Discourse

Frequent appearance of “UN,” “ambassador,” “resolution,” “council,” “international,” “summit” denotes a diplomatic and policy-driven lens, usually framed in neutral tones unless paired with criticism.

The word “said” being one of the largest implies frequent attribution and quote-based reporting, which often signals objective or balanced journalism, especially in Western outlets like *The Washington Post*.

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Terms such as “US,” “Egypt,” “Aviv,” “Tel,” “States,” “EU,” “Arab,” “Biden” reflect coverage of international involvement, typically framed factually with contextual bias based on outlet origin.

This word cloud indicates that the media reporting:

It is quite focused on Gaza and heavily humanitarian (and conflict) stories exist.

Comprises neutral diplomatic language mixed with emotionally negative adjectives (e.g., words like “*genocide*”, *killed*, and *raid*, etc).

Frequently quotes and attributions are provided, which is a symptom of the objective tone (at least in *Westernmedia*, such as *TheWashington Post*).

4.4 Conclusion

General discourse analysis of international media coverage of the Israel-Palestine conflict situation depicts a very polarized media environment, representation of which is not determined by the facts, but by editorial priorities, political interests, and ideological principles of the specific media organizations. Comparatively one can clearly see that the narrative discussed in the media sharply differs, building different realities depending on the inclination of the reporting outlet.

Government controlled pro-Palestinian media companies like *Al Jazeera* and *Dawn* highlight the victimhood, human suffering, resistance and violation of so-called human rights. In their reporting, the civilian casualties, the humanitarian crisis in Gaza, as well as the larger historical and political context that puts the Palestinian struggle in a positive light as a movement that can be discussed as a legitimate resistance, have become central points. The use of words to denote “genocide”, siege and occupation is effectively used to evoke the feeling of resonance in the conflict and unbalance of power.

Conversely, Western pro-Israeli publications such as *The Washington post* have a discourse that is based on security, terrorism and counter terrorism. The framing of theirs is more or less attempting to rationalize Israeli military acts under the banner of a defensive narrative that is steeped in words like “terrorist” attack, Hamas militants as well as border

security. Although an attempt is provided to remain objective, the preponderant themes show how Israeli matters of national security are more important than those of the Palestinians as civilians.

Al Arabiya which is an Arab media with a more centrist stand has a mixed framing scenario. As much as it offers room to diplomatic accounts and regional interests as well as ceasefire and humanitarian relief appeal, it tries to keep some distance and fairness. This two-fold can be based on the geopolitical positioning of Saudi Arabia, that is a balance between both its international loyalties and regional support of the Palestinian cause.

Notably, this discussion highlights the role of lexical framing, thematic accentuation, and the development of the narrative in the media coverage as the most effectiveness discursive mechanisms of the international public opinion and policy formulation. Hamas illustrates this most notably, with the group to its supporters appearing as an authentic resistance organization, according to some, even to the point of being a recognized “terrorist” group, by others.

These media types of discourses do not only echo the events; they actually create social and political reality. In the fight as deep-seated and internationally relevant as that between Israel and Palestine the media has expanded to go beyond giving information, it is now a field of battle where truth is fought and where an inference of allegiance is made, and perceptions are blended.

The study creates an addition to the literature on mediated representation of conflicts, focusing on the lack of critical media literacy, in the era of thriving digital media, where the speed of consumption and popularity of media messages are high. It demands the increased responsibility and ethical reflexivity in journalism and invites media agencies to abandon the journalistic binary view and seek balanced, nuanced, and human-centred coverage.

To sum up, the knowledge on how discourse can influence the world views on war and peace is not merely an academic effort, but it is a crucial step towards achieving the informed citizenship and responsible journalism during the circumstances of international crisis.

CHAPTER 05

5.CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary of Key Findings

This paper has discussed the issue of incredibly chaotic and controversial role of international media organizations in framing and reflecting the burden of Israel-Palestine conflict. Considering Priming Theory as the lens of analysis, the paper studied specifically the editorial coverage of four prominent news media, namely *Al Arabiya*, *Al Jazeera*, *Dawn*, and *The Washington Post* during the period of six months between October 7, 2023, and March 7, 2024. The aim was to find out how various editorial narratives and discursive practices affected how the world came to understand the conflict and to determine which set of issues, ideologies and political orientations dominated their discussions.

It found that there were sharp contrasts on how different outlets portrayed the conflict. The *Al Jazeera network* and *Dawn* were mainly pro-Palestinian because of the emotive language that was used, which stressed victimhood, suffering, resistance, and humanitarian crisis. They also included the concern over civilian deaths, the siege on Gaza and the ethical impropriety of Israeli army activities. On the contrary, *The Washington Post* tended to put the conflictual issue in terms of security reporting the right of Israel to protect itself and describing Hamas as a “terrorist” organization. *Al Arabiya* was more moderate and leaned towards a compromise between diplomatic neutrality and the antipathy to Hamas here and there

Divergent Framing Strategies

Pro-Palestine Narratives: *Al Jazeera* and *Dawn* emphasized Palestinian victimhood, using terms like "“genocide”" (32% in *Dawn*) and "siege on Gaza" (30% in *Al Jazeera*).

Pro-Israel Narratives: *The Washington Post* emphasized Israeli security, framing Hamas as "“terrorist”s" (22%) and attacks as "unprovoked" (18%).

Geopolitical Pragmatism: *Al Arabiya* balanced Gulf-state diplomacy by criticizing Hamas while neutrally reporting casualties.

Lexical Polarization

Contrasts like "resistance" (*Dawn*: +1.8 sentiment) vs. "terrorism" (*The Washington Post*: -2.1 sentiment) reveal ideological leanings.

"“genocide”" appeared in 20% of *Al Jazeera* articles, compared to only 3% in *The Washington Post*.

Institutional Biases

State-aligned channels (*Al Jazeera* [Qatar], *Al Arabiya* [KSA]) aligned with national foreign policy.

Dawn reflected Pakistan’s pro-Palestine stance, while *The Washington Post* reflected U.S. geopolitical interests.

This study supports Framing Theory (Endman, 1993), demonstrating:

Selection and Salience: *Dawn* emphasized civilian casualties, *The Washington Post* emphasized border security.

Cultural Resonance: Culturally loaded words like "martyr" (*Dawn*) and "self-defence" (*The Washington Post*) reflected national narratives.

It is as well an expansion of Priming Theory (Goidel et al., 1997), demonstrating how framing repetition (e.g., apartheid, in *AlJazeera*) influenced the conceptions of guilt and legitimacy.

5.2 Theoretical Contributions

It was found during data analysis that different outlets took the conflict with different ideological stands based on their geopolitical backgrounds. *Al Jazeera and Dawn* put the conflict in a humanitarian and rights-based language, highlighting Israeli occupation, war crimes, and human tolls. Their words were tinged with emotions and expressions like the phrase: massacre, siege, and martyrs were used.

The Washington Post on the other hand adjusted their coverage to that of the western thinking in political and military approach. It has tendency to represent the situations as the components of general war on terrorism with labels like milk terrorism attacks, "border crossings" and "anti-terrorist" operations." *Al Arabiya* had a diplomatic feeling, it mostly referred to the international attempts of peacebuilding and did not use emotionally loaded phrases. Nevertheless, sometimes it was also not favorable towards Hamas mirroring the local political differences in the Arab world.

The discourses that were found in this study can be classified as broadly in three categories:

Victimhood and Humanitarian Suffering More featured in *Al Jazeera and Dawn*, it focused on the Palestinian suffering, the Israeli aggression and the humanitarian impact of the Gaza blockade.

Security and Counterterrorism - This rhetoric in the central appeared in *The Washington Post* that was concerned with the Israeli campaign against Hamas and the Israeli right to perform military attacks in a manner that runs as self-defence.

Diplomacy and Neutrality -This discourse, in the form of *Al Arabiya*, accentuated the value of peace negotiations, international mediations and difficulty in such matters as the attribution of blame.

The discourses are used as frames to capture the perceptions of the audience they strengthen the ideological stand and shape the opinion at the regional and international level of the people.

5.3 Practical Implications

Media Literacy

This paper highlights the necessity of media literacy among the international audience. To navigate this time where news is corporate media and the articles are served by the algorithm that ensures its popularity, readers are supposed to learn to critically evaluate sources and framing of news stories especially those which burst out of the conflict's areas. Knowing the role of framing and priming in the creation of perception can aid viewers in doubting the ideological angle of the stories, pursue divergence of ideas, and not organize their principles on biased ideas. Media literacy programs ought to be integrated in the curriculum of schools, governments and non-governmental organizations towards creating informed and critically engaged citizens.

Educational Curricula and Journalism Training

This study leads to significant implications to journalism education. Journalism schools need to lay more emphasis on the ethics of reporting conflict areas so that students discussed the political undertones of the words, imagery and decisions manifested by the editors. The curricula should focus on exposing the trainees to different ideas, as well as critical discourse

analysis and the ethical implications of having all parties that partake in a dispute express their views on the matter at hand. In an analogous way, modules on media prejudice, media propaganda, media priming and psychological processes thereof should be incorporated into international relations, peace studies, communication curricula.

Policy and International Diplomacy

To policymakers and diplomats, it is important to know how the frames imposed by media affect the way people speak about an issue and the way they respond to it in policy. Selective framing or exaggeration of the conflicts may disrupt the work of diplomats and generate tensions, as well as the use of military operations justified by the given conflict. It is essential that the policymakers should not be surrounded by media that fits the national or ideological interests only: they have to be exposed to information provided by different media sources. Along with that, governments and international organizations ought to invest into autonomous media observation bureaus that assess and comment on media prejudice and facilitate equal coverage of conflict-decent subjects.

For Media Consumers

Examine the use of words to spot possible bias. Cross platform to find a balanced picture neutrality of *Al Arabiya* versus activism of the *Al Jazeera*.

For Policymakers

Learn to understand the effects of media framing on the international opinion.

Narrative polarization can be minimized by transparent humanitarian reporting.

5.4 Limitations of the Study

Although the research produces good results, it also has weaknesses. First, we restricted the analysis to the category of editorials and did not go further, examining other

media material, like TV shows, social media news and posts, and photographic reporting, which have great importance in influencing the popular perceptions. Second, it is only four outlets which are quite strategically diverse but cannot cover the entire spectrum of the global media. Third, the research was concentrated on one period, six months, and it can differ when another term is examined. And lastly the audience reception was not evaluated which could have revealed further light on the audience perception and internalisation of the popular media.

Its findings are of meaningful value, yet this exploration cannot avoid a series of significant constraints that should be taken into account to interpret its results in a balanced manner.

Narrow Scope of Content Analysed

Only the editorial articles were targeted in the study and other channels of influence that are media like television broadcasts, radio programs, social media posts, podcasts, and photography or video reports. The described neglected media channels have a great influence on the orientation of the mass audience and the direction of the discussion and, therefore, their absence can lead to the inaccuracy of the overall media environment image.

Limited Selection of Media Outlets

Very few media houses were involved in the analysis. Even when these sources were selected because of their diversity or strategic value, they will fail to account all the views that exist in global media landscape. The said limitation significantly limits the passing on of the findings since the outlets chosen might not reflect the opinion, the editorial practices or framing methods of other media firms.

Restricted Timeframe

The analysis was restricted to a given time slot of half a year. Media coverage and framing may change greatly with time because of changing events and/or the changes in the interests of the people or the priority of the editors. Consequently, it is possible that the results cannot be applied to other times, and reiteration of the research over a different time might reap varying outcomes.

Exclusion of Audience Reception

The contribution of the study was not taken into consideration on how the audiences perceive, interpret and react on the media content analysed. Analysis of audience reception is also important to evaluate the practical implications of media framing since it shows the internalized, disrupted, or repeated messages by people on a practical level.

Potential Researcher Bias

An unfavourable and uncontrolled bias can be caused in the process of choosing outlets, time frames and editorial contents and transfer to the neutrality and objectivity of the analysis. The researchers are also capable of shaping interpretation of qualitative data, including editorial framing, with their views or assumptions.

Language and Regional Limitations

In case the analysis carried out was limited to one particular language or another (or to a specific geographical area), valuable stories or framing dynamics could have been omitted elsewhere. Such a restriction may further reduce the extent to which the findings can be applied on a larger, diverse group of people.

Future studies can be developed to overcome these shortcomings, thus giving a more rounded idea of media framing and its impact (e.g. use of a more diverse media forms, explore a broader span of outlets, assess longer or several time periods, and provide media reception studies).

5.5 Directions for Future Research

Relying on the results of this study, a number of directions of future research can be set. To study the development of media framing over time and changes because of variations in politics, scholars would be able to create longitudinal studies. It might also be a good idea to broaden substantially the media type on which research might be conducted e.g. television, internet news networks, social networking sites. In addition, during reception studies, the audience might be used to determine the levels at which various demographics understand media messages and their effects on attitudes, beliefs, and political behaviour.

The other invaluable path can be the comparative study of visual framing, the image, video, and infographic use in the evoking emotional attitudes. And finally, the analysis of media in combination with political science, sociological and peaceful studies in interdisciplinary studies may offer more comprehensive overview of the impact of media on conflict escalation or resolution.

5.6 Final Thoughts

To sum up, the paper has underscored the importance of international media in its work to create, magnify, and circulate the narratives about an Israel-Palestine conflict issue. It has revealed systematically that media framing is not a simple mirror of the reality, but plays an active role in the social and political construction of the reality.

This study outlines the fact that rather than being impartial observers, media is an ideological combatant in conflict. Digesting their accounts, we enhance media literacy and demand the ethical, transparent journalism both at the war zone and elsewhere, but particularly at the war zones where a perception determines a policy and lives.

By understanding how other media outlets present similar events in completely different lights, this study translates to require a more decisive and critical consuming of news. Finally, the introduction of media literacy, promotion of balanced journalism, and advanced scholarly research are the key components in achieving a more rational and humanized worldwide vision of war.

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