The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict in News Media

By

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Declaration

It is hereby declared that

1. The project submitted is my own original work while completing degree at Brac University.

2. The project does not contain material previously published or written by a third party, except where this is appropriately cited through full and accurate referencing.

3. The project does not contain material, which has been accepted, or submitted, for any other degree or diploma at a university or other institution.

4. I have acknowledged all main sources of help.

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Approval

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Abstract

News media, often known as the news industry, distributes news to the public or a specialized population. News media can be divided into three categories – broadcast, print, and digital. Social media is a type of digital media that enables people to share content, thoughts, and expressions by building and maintaining online groups and networks. News media, including social media, covers a wide range of topics that are pertinent to the world today. This thesis will examine the most relevant ideas and responses from many different articles, journals, and research papers to identify how the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is covered in different forms of news media. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has been described as one of the world's most intractable and enduring conflicts. As a result, there has been numerous news coverage of the conflict. This thesis will explore the different forms of media in modern society, the roles they play, the way they present the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and the influence they exert on the general public. It will do so by employing media framing and agenda-setting theories.

Keywords: news media; social media; media framing; agenda setting

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Mass media can be considered as the primary framework through which people experience and make sense of the society. People's perceptions of society largely depend on information that has been disseminated by news media. This dissemination of knowledge enables individuals to make educated decisions about their personal lives, communities, societies, and governments. Under this conception of media effects, research has often focused on how various events and conflicts are covered in news and how news messages are consumed and processed by the audience. This thesis examines how the different types of news media portray the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and how they influence people's opinions regarding the conflict.

News media refers to the organizations or institutions that are responsible for collecting, processing, and disseminating news and information to the general public. News media consists of three main types, including print media (newspapers and magazines), broadcast media (TV and radio), and digital media (websites and social media). The primary function of news media is to provide the public with accurate and timely information about current events, issues, and trends that are relevant to them. For example- breaking news stories, feature stories, opinion pieces, and so on. In fact, *The New York Times* and *The Guardian* are good examples of news media since they are reputable newspapers that offer both print and digital editions. Moreover, they produce quality journalism, and their experienced reporters and editors ensure that the stories they report on and write about are accurate, unbiased, and balanced. Also, they provide comprehensive analysis and commentary on various topics, ranging from politics and business to sports and entertainment. Broadcast news networks such as CNN and BBC are also examples of news media. The main point is that these networks provide up-to-the-minute coverage of breaking news events and offer in-depth analysis and commentary from experts in various fields.

Besides, they also create documentaries and produce investigative reports that expose wrongdoings or highlight important social issues. For the most part, news media is important because it keeps the public informed and holds those in power accountable.

Social media is considered to be the most mainstream form of digital news media. Social media refers to any online platform that allows users to communicate and interact with each other. As well, it facilitates the sharing and exchanging of ideas as well as the building and maintaining of online communities. Thus, it is becoming increasingly common to use social media as an alternate source of information. In this industrialized society, it is more likely for people to find out breaking news stories from social media platforms like Facebook and YouTube than from other forms of news media. Over and above that, it is common for public sentiment to appear to be more pronounced on social media platforms since users are able to discuss and express their thoughts and opinions. This occurs to a large extend, during the times of social conflict and political unrest. Social media has a substantial amount of influence, and thus, it can even affect the formation of public policy. Therefore, there is no question that the influence of social media is significant.

In the course of history, there has been a significant number of wars, conflicts, and tragedies taking place in various locations across the globe. In the 21st century, one of the most devastating and renowned events that took place in the United States is known as the September 11 (9/11) attacks. The attacks that took place on September 11, 2001 took a severe emotional toll on the citizens of the United States. Despite the fact that the attacks were shocking and horrendous, the majority of Americans claimed that they were unable to tear themselves away from the news coverage of the attacks. It should be kept in mind that television was still the primary source of news at the time. In fact, in a survey following the attacks, 90% of people

stated that they attained most of their news about the terrorist attacks from television, whereas only 5% said they got the news online (Nadeem). The images of death and destruction that were broadcasted on television had a significant impact on people at the time. Although many were horrified and disturbed by the scenes of the attacks that they witnessed on TV, they could not take their eyes off the screen. They wanted to stay up to date on the attacks most likely out of curiosity. In addition, watching the news would allow them to cope with the emotional distress they were experiencing. Thus, the 9/11 attacks prove just how much people relied on traditional forms of broadcast media such as television. It should also be noted that media coverage of the 9/11 attacks has contributed to the rise of Islamophobia in the United States. Both national and international television channels repeatedly showed the planes flying into the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, influencing the general public's view on Muslim communities. Hence, "the attacks of 9/11, and the U.S. government's response known as the "Global War on Terror" that followed, positioned Muslim identity as the focal target of the national security state" (Aziz et al. 145).

Traditional forms of mass media such as television, radio, and newspapers remain influential to this day, but in recent years, the importance of social media has been more noticeable. Social media has played a vital role in how many people access news over the past decade. In the wake of violent events like natural disasters or mass shootings, people often watch or read the news on platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and Twitter. One of the major international conflicts that has been going on for some time now is the Russo-Ukrainian War. Russia launched an offensive and an occupation of Ukrainian territory on February 24, 2022, which marked a significant escalation in the Russo-Ukrainian War, which had begun in 2014 and is still going on. The level of hostility between the two nations rose dramatically as a

direct result of this event. Tens of thousands of people on both sides have lost their lives as a direct result of the invasion, and it has resulted in the most catastrophic refugee crisis that Europe has seen since the end of World War II. By the end of June 2022, nearly 8 million Ukrainians had been uprooted within their own country, and by the beginning of February of the following year, more than 8 million Ukrainians had relocated outside of their country of origin (Neuman and Hurt). Many major international news organizations and institutions around the world have embedded journalists in Ukraine to cover bombings and violence in severely affected towns and cities across broadcast, digital, and print media. Journalists and civilians have also used social media platforms such as TikTok and Twitter to document the cruelties of the war for the people around the world in real time. Thus, newspapers, broadcasts, and now the Internet, allows the global audience to be educated interconnectedly on important events taking place around the world.

Media coverage of tragic events and global humanitarian crises such as the 9/11 attacks and the Russo-Ukrainian war shows that the media can shape public opinion and policy in whichever direction it desires. Although there are many such horrific and controversial events that the media has covered in the 21st century, this paper will focus specifically on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is a subject of attraction to many scholars due to the fact that it is often described as one of the most enduring, intractable, and uncontrollable conflicts in the world.

1.1: Historical Background

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is a long-standing dispute between Israel and the Palestinians over land. The conflict has its roots in the late 19th century when Zionist Jews began immigrating to Palestine in order to establish a Jewish state. Although the local Palestinians and

the Jewish settlers initially had good relations for the most part, their amicable relationship changed once the Jewish population and influence in Palestine grew. According to the book *The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: The People's War*,

> The Zionist project in Palestine was undermining Palestinian Arab rights and livelihoods. The local elite was obviously threatened by the external support that the Zionists seemed to be garnering from important actors such as the Europeans, Russians and Ottoman powers, as well as the internal impact they were having on the fabric of traditional society. (Milton-Edwards 20).

Therefore, the Palestinian Arab population started to feel that their traditional way of life was being disrupted, their livelihoods were being threatened, and their rights and aspirations were being disregarded.

The great turning point of the conflict was in 1948. In 1948, the first war of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict took place. However, it is worth mentioning that this war can be understood in two different ways. For the Israelis, this is the "War of Independence" as Israel was officially declared an independent state in that year. On the other hand, the Palestinians refers to the war as Nakba, or the catastrophe. This is because the outcome of this war was that around 700,000 Palestinians became refugees, and Palestine was essentially wiped off the map (Tov 2). Palestinians were displaced from their homes during the war. About two-thirds of them became refugees in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and the rest escaped to neighboring Arab states. For the Palestinians, "the Palestinian flight was a deliberated "transfer" policy (i.e. ethnic cleansing) authorized by the Jewish–Israeli leadership in order to clean the Jewish state of its Arab local inhabitants" (Tov 2). Thus, the Palestinians have been seeking to regain their land ever since. As a result, the tensions between Israel and Palestine have been escalating since the

middle of the twentieth century. There have been many instances of violence and attacks involving both sides of the conflict. Today, many Palestinians refugees live in the host countries of Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria or in the West Bank or Gaza Strip. They face challenges such as limited freedom of movement and lack of opportunities for economic development. Israelis, on the other hand, live under the constant threat of terrorism and face ongoing tensions with neighboring Arab states. The conflict has also been further complicated by the involvement of external actors, including Arab states, the United States, and various international organizations.

Moreover, it should be understood that Israeli nationalism and Palestinian nationalism are opposing nationalisms that are battling for control of the same region. This means that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is largely defined by competing nationalisms. Since the vast majority of Israelis are Jews and the vast majority of Palestinians are Muslims, the significance of religion as another factor of the conflict should be taken into account. It is possible that a reference to Israel as the land that God promised to the Jewish people and then delivered them with gives the impression that this religious aspect is more important than others. While some Jews do reference religion or the Torah to validate their contemporary claim to the country, this is by no means the case for all Jews. One could conclude that the Palestinians' claim to the land is fundamentally founded on a protracted and historically significant occupation of it. There is a belief that the initial Muslim conquest of Palestine was a sign of divine favor and that once the territory has become part of the Dar-al-Islam (House of Islam), it must be defended as a sacred duty.

Over the years, the Israeli governments and Palestinian authorities have tried to negotiate and come to an understanding to end the decades-long conflict. Numerous attempts have been made including peace talks, ceasefires, and international interventions. However, these attempts

have unfortunately been unsuccessful, so the two parties have yet to reconcile. Some Israelis and Palestinians have advocated for a one-state solution or a confederation of two states, but these proposals have not gained widespread support and remain controversial. Thus, although there have been moments of hope and progress in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict such as the Oslo Accords of 1993, they have always been hampered by mistrust, lack of political support, and ongoing violence. The conflict between Israel and the Palestinian people, as well as the conflict between Israel and a number of Muslim majority states, is seen by a lot of analysts as the most significant obstacle to international peace and stability. Today, there is a widespread consensus that finding a solution should be the top diplomatic priority. Ultimately, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is a reminder of the importance of dialogue, empathy, and respect in resolving even the most entrenched and difficult conflicts.

1.2 Aims and Objectives

As mentioned earlier, the media has a lot of influence and power. News media informs the general public about what is going on around the world, but it should be acknowledged that the information provided by news media is not always accurate and unbiased. As a result of reflecting and reinforcing widespread assumptions, the media plays a crucial role in normalizing prejudice and stoking public animosity against those who are believed to be in the way of progress. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict will be framed as the primary topic of discussion in this thesis, which will look at how the conflict is framed in different types of news media. This dissertation will begin by answering the question of how the conflict is framed differently across news media, and then it will move on to investigate the impact of both traditional media and mainstream media on the formation of public opinion. In order to accomplish this, it will make use of the framing theory and the agenda-setting theory.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The growing role of news media in conflicts and crises is often studied with the goals of identifying possible advantages and disadvantages. The purpose of this chapter is to provide a comprehensive review of studies examining the role of media in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

James Seale and Daniel Katz are credited with carrying out one of the most important research projects to date on this subject, which was published in 2017. They conducted an analysis of the ways in which *The New York Times* covered the conflict and discovered that Israeli opinions were featured more prominently in the pieces published by the publication. In addition, they discovered that the language that was utilized in the stories had a tendency to frame the issue in a way that favored the Israeli side of the debate. A biased picture of the war was reinforced, for instance, by using terms like "terrorism" to characterize actions carried out by Palestinians but avoiding the use of comparable language to describe actions carried out by Israelis. This demonstrates that media has the power to influence public opinion about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict through the use of language (Seal, J., &Katz, D)

In a similar vein, Stephen M. Croucher and Yeonhee Cho published a study in 2017 that examined how the conflict was covered by the cable news network CNN in the United States. They discovered that CNN's coverage of the conflict tended to place a greater emphasis on Israeli perspectives and activities, whereas Palestinian perspectives and actions were frequently ignored or portrayed in a bad light in the coverage. The study also discovered that the coverage of Israel tended to have a tone that was more sympathetic towards the country (Croucher, S. M., & Cho, Y.)

Another study on the topic was conducted in 2018 by Brian E. Weeks and Michal Shamir. This one looked at how American college students' sentiments towards Israelis and Palestinians were changed by their exposure to news coverage of the conflict. Even among participants who had been neutral in the past, they discovered that exposure to news coverage that was biased towards one side of the dispute led to greater negative opinions towards the opposite side of the conflict.

The article "The Role of the Media in Conflict, Peacebuilding, and International Relations" states that people look to the media for analysis and context on important issues. Not only is the mainstream media disseminating facts, but it is also shaping the public's understanding of them, and it is clear that media can sway how people vote and what they do in response to news stories. The public relies on the media to provide them with information about domestic and international issues, and they expect that this information will be presented without bias. Nonetheless, the mainstream media frequently serves as a mouthpiece for narrow interest groups, skewing coverage to appeal to the viewpoints of those who already share their views. Therefore, "the established media is proving to represent special interests' groups…[It] promotes the interests of select interest groups thus ultimately present issues in a way that appeals to those of special interest groups" (Savrum and Miller 1).

In the book *"External Communication in Social Media during Asymmetric Conflicts"* by Bernd Hirschberger, the first empirical chapter looks at the tactics each side in a conflict employs while talking to the outside world. The empirical investigation into this subject reveals an intriguing pattern in the external communication tactics chosen by the various conflict parties. The Palestinians' public social media campaigns have a primary goal of publicly embarrassing their adversary. In contrast, Israel's official channels are heavily focused on branding, and the

vast majority of their messages have nothing to do with the current conflict. Only at the first phases of a conflict can public shaming become a dominant feature of communication on both sides. Therefore, from the standpoint of commonly held theories and assumptions, the observed selection of communication runs counter to what would be predicted (Hirschberger 169).

Moreover, according to Hirschberger, "the literature on blaming and credit claiming proposes the assumption of a 'negativity bias'. Psychological studies and experiences from daily life have been used by those scholars to demonstrate that humans tend to pay more attention to negative than to positive communication" (34). Negativity bias is essentially cognitive bias. When we process negative and positive information to understand our surroundings, it creates an asymmetry. Negative information is more typically noticed, learned from, and used. Negativity bias skews decision-making towards unfavorable features. Negative information motivates individuals to vote against candidates. We think negative information is more telling than positive information. The Palestinian side, on the other hand, puts a lot of emphasis on shame. This goes against the current trend in marketing and social media, which is to put more emphasis on positive self-promotion.

The article, "Information and dissemination in new media: YouTube and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict" analyzes how YouTube videos inform viewers about global news, issues, and events. Research has produced competing claims of how and to whom information is communicated in an era when new media is increasingly the public's major news source. Twitter and Facebook, according to some research, are useful platforms for political organizing and participation. Yet some argue that these outlets serve as echo chambers, serving to reinforce current worldviews rather than expose people to fresh ideas and perspectives. Investigating the informational function of videos about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, this study identifies and

describes the common features among such clips. The results demonstrate that the factual and visceral methods used to frame information in YouTube videos match to the narratives supported by the uploaders. YouTube videos are viewed by a diverse audience, which suggests they may be able to break through viewers' preconceived notions and introduce them to novel ideas and points of view (Noh & Lee 2012).

During the 1968 presidential election in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, McCombs and Shaw introduced the concept of agenda setting. The majority of research on agenda setting is predicated on two fundamental assumptions: 1. The press and other forms of media do not reflect reality; rather, they only filter and mold it. 2. The public's perception of certain issues as being more significant than other concerns is influenced by the media's attention on a small number of issues and subjects. The theory, which has been studied extensively applied to various forms of media, posits that the media can influence public opinion by choosing which issues receive the most attention (McCombs& Shaw 1972).

Furthermore, the framing theory indicates that audience presentation affects how they perceive information. Sociologist Erving Goffman is often regarded as the intellectual progenitor of framing theory because of his argument that interpretative designs are essential components of cultural belief systems. Frames, as defined by Goffman, are the interpretative designs we employ in our daily lives to make sense of the world. Framing is similar to agenda-setting but expands research by focusing on the issues rather than a specific topic. Framing theory has been employed in several studies of Palestine-Israel media coverage. Some academics believe media framing helps audiences relate and understand complex issues. Media frames can be problematic if they are "used to advance a cultural narrative or promote groupthink that marginalizes a minority" (Steele). One study indicated that Israeli media promoted Israeli dominance in Arab

Awakening to their Hebrew-speaking audiences. The media depicted Israel as a civilization surrounded by Arab barbarians. Gordon discovered that everyday interpretations of the revolutions portrayed them as ethnic and religious conflicts, not mass pro-democracy struggles against authoritarian regimes. Herzog and Shamir examined Arab-Jewish interactions in the Hebrew press from 1949 to 1986. Other research examined how Israeli media portray Arabs as allies or opponents (Steele).

Chapter 3: Methodology

The findings of this research study are derived from qualitative information obtained from primary and secondary sources. The research will primarily concentrate on identifying the major and minor disadvantages associated with active participation in both traditional media as well as new media. The purpose of this study is to determine, in a general sense, how different forms of news media depict the Israeli-Palestinian issue and, at the same time, foster opinions about it among their audiences.

This research relies on two theories – media framing and agenda-setting. Both theories are rooted in the broader context of media effects research. According to Robert Entman, framing is best understood as "a fragmented conception," because there is no clear, singular definition (qtd. in Scheufele 103). Yet, it is necessary to try to define the term for this thesis. Generally speaking, framing can be understood as the ways in which meaning is imposed on a particular event, issue, or situation. The way information is presented – its framing – can influence people's feelings, opinions, perceptions as well as their behavior and decision-making. For example, political actors such as candidates, advocates, and officials can present their ideas and perceptions in a certain way to influence public opinion to support or oppose a particular policy. When it comes to media, it is necessary to keep in mind that events and issues are initially selected and prioritized for the audience. Therefore, the media does not simply provide a complete account of the event or issue at hand. On the contrary, journalists often have to report selectively. This means that they might relay some parts while omitting other parts of an event or

issue. Media framing is essentially about "selecting some aspects of a perceived reality and making 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 for the item described" (Entman 52). This means that the news media frame the topic reported by presenting a certain construction of the reality of that topic.

The stories that are told in the media no longer provide an accurate depiction of reality. In fact, it has developed into a revised portrayal of a small portion of reality based on the opinions of various groups of people. It is abundantly clear that the narrators are not intentionally lying or distorting the facts in any way. They are, however, attempting to frame the discussion by concentrating on particular back stories or using only a select few exceptional sources from a particular point of view. As a direct consequence of this, the stories are being pieced together through a process of selection. The frame is the broad viewpoint through which the countless narratives are addressed once they have been reported. While propaganda, also known as gatekeeping, is what defines what a broadcaster will or will not show, the frame is the broad perspective through which it is viewed. This particular method of framing has been appearing more frequently as of late in this day and age of social media. It is possible that the production of frames is influenced by a variety of factors, such as the prevailing philosophies of various civilizations and what can be referred to as "common sense." The media framing concept is so powerful that it can even give rise to hypothetical situations such as the decriminalization of illegal drugs. The term "metacoverage" can be linked to the media framing theory. Metacoverage "refers to news stories where the media provide self-referential reflections on the relationship between professional political strategists and political journalism" (Aalberg et al. 168). De Vreese and Elenbaas are the ones who first described the concept of metacoverage (168).

Media framing and agenda-setting are two related but distinct concepts in the field of media studies. Agenda-setting refers to the media's ability to influence what topics or issues the public thinks about by selecting and emphasizing certain news stories over others. Media framing, on the other hand, refers to the way in which the media presents and contextualizes a particular issue or topic. Agenda-setting focuses on the amount of attention that the media gives to a particular issue, while media framing focuses on the way in which the issue is presented. Agenda-setting involves the media's selection and placement of news stories, which can influence the public's perception of what is important. Media framing, on the other hand, involves the use of language, images, and other media techniques to shape the way in which the public understands and interprets an issue. The outcome of agenda-setting is that the public tends to prioritize issues that the media has given more attention to. The outcome of media framing is that the public's understanding of an issue can be influenced by the way it is presented by the media. Therefore, agenda-setting and media framing are both important concepts in the study of media and its impact on society. While agenda-setting focuses on the media's ability to prioritize certain issues, media framing focuses on how those issues are presented and contextualized. Both concepts highlight the significant influence that the media can have on the public's perceptions and beliefs.

Agenda-setting theory says that the media shape political debates by deciding what issues are the most important and putting them on the news. It says that the media is the main group that decides what news stories to cover and how important they are based on what they think people will care about. Political information delivery is threatened by audience segmentation along political lines. Even the most apolitical were exposed to political material during the broadcast age, often unintentionally or through social media. Prior shows that public exposure to

political information is lower today than in earlier decades because individuals are preferring entertainment over news and are less likely to be accidentally exposed due to greater selectivity. On-demand TV viewing lets viewers skip commercials and nightly news plugs before their favorite shows. This means that fewer people watch the news and fewer get exposed incidentally due to better technology. Thus, the mass media's reach decreases. Inadvertent exposure to political material helps the politically indifferent maintain a modest degree of political awareness, but without it, the information-rich-information-poor difference may persist and even increase (Norris 2001). Policymaking and representative accountability are affected by mass media and public agendas. The policy agenda—the "collection of items or problems to which political authorities... are giving some serious consideration at any one time" (Kingdon 3)—is heavily impacted by public opinion. Mass media shape public opinion by covering certain stories over others (Zaller1992). Research shows that the more the media covers a topic, the more the public will use it to evaluate political leaders (Iyengar & Kinder 2010) . The media cover crucial problems that a responsible public should know about and utilize to evaluate leaders. When the mass media lose their grip on the public agenda due to growing selectivity and audience fragmentation, questions remain concerning the delivery of political information, the public's priorities, and how they hold their elected leaders accountable. Media agenda-setting studies traditionally focus on political campaigns and network news programming (McCombs 2004), institutions that are fast changing and less fundamental to many individuals' lives in the digital age. During the 1980s, network news audiences have steadily declined as individuals increasingly choose television that meets their political and other interests (Prior 2007; Stroud 2011). Online news, entertainment, and social media platforms are expanding in popularity.

Digital media choice often results in personalized information and news (Tewksbury and Rittenberg 2012).

Chapter 4: News Media

4.1: The Role of News Media

The news media is deemed to have a pivotal function in contemporary society as it furnishes information and evaluation on a diverse array of topics and occurrences. The function of the news media can be succinctly encapsulated as follows:

Firstly, the dissemination of information to the general public is a fundamental function of the news media, whereby they provide updates and coverage on current events and pertinent matters occurring within their vicinity. The aforementioned encompasses the dissemination of information pertaining to events and developments at the local, national, and global levels, alongside furnishing comprehensive examination of significant matters. The news media plays a crucial role in providing individuals with a comprehensive understanding of their surroundings, enabling them to make informed decisions that impact their lives.

Secondly, the news media plays a crucial role in ensuring the accountability of individuals in positions of power by reporting on their actions. This entails conducting inquiries into government officials, corporations, and other entities with the aim of uncovering instances of

malfeasance, corruption, and the misuse of authority. The news media can play a crucial role in preventing abuses of power and fostering transparency and accountability by covering such issues.

Thirdly, the news media serves as a means for facilitating public discourse by affording individuals the opportunity to articulate their viewpoints and perspectives on a diverse array of topics. Facilitating a well-informed and actively involved citizenry can have a positive impact on promoting democracy, as it enables individuals to engage in the political process.

Besides, the mass distribution of knowledge to the general public can be facilitated by the news media, which can serve as an educational platform for a diverse array of subjects, including but not limited to science, technology, health, and the environment. The news media has the potential to enable individuals to make informed decisions about their lives and the world by elucidating intricate issues.

Although not the principal function of the news media, several outlets also offer entertainment by covering cultural events, sports, and other trendy subjects. This approach has the potential to enhance audience engagement and broaden the accessibility of news content to a diverse demographic.

The news media has been considered to have a crucial function in contemporary society as it furnishes information, scrutiny, and a forum for communal deliberation and discourse. The news media plays a crucial role in disseminating information to the public, enabling them to make informed decisions, and ensuring that those in positions of authority are answerable to the public. Additionally, the media fosters transparency, democratic values, and civic participation.

4.2: News Media's Presentation of Global Conflicts

The presentation of global conflicts by news media is contingent upon contextual factors, the gravity of the conflict, and the intended viewership. The following are instances of how the news media has portrayed worldwide conflicts:

In the initial stages of a conflict, the media typically presents it as breaking news and provides subsequent updates as the situation progresses. In May 2021, during the escalation of the conflict between Israel and Hamas, various news outlets offered timely and comprehensive coverage of the ongoing rocket attacks, air strikes, and resulting casualties.

During the course of a conflict, media sources frequently offer analysis and commentary in order to aid their audience in comprehending the context and ramifications of the unfolding events. During the Syrian conflict, various news outlets conducted comprehensive analyses of the political, economic, and social determinants that propelled the conflict, alongside the resultant humanitarian crisis.

Opinion pieces are a common means for journalists, experts, and opinion leaders to express their viewpoints on global conflicts. These articles offer a personal perspective on the conflict at hand. In 2021, during the U.S. military withdrawal from Afghanistan, various news outlets published opinion pieces that analyzed the decision's implications, the U.S.'s role in the region, and the potential impact on the Afghan populace.

Photojournalism is a practice employed by news organizations to effectively communicate the effects of worldwide conflicts through the use of visual imagery. During the Syrian refugee crisis, various news outlets presented impactful visuals depicting the plight of displaced families, demolished residences, and endeavors to provide humanitarian assistance.

The utilization of social media has become increasingly prevalent in news reporting, with news outlets utilizing platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram to cover worldwide conflicts and interact with their audience. During the 2021 conflict between Israel and Hamas, news outlets disseminated real-time information and critical evaluation via social media platforms, in addition to disseminating user-generated content originating from the region.

Documentary films are a medium through which news media outlets can portray global conflicts. The aforementioned films provide a more profound analysis of the conflict and its underlying origins. The 2020 documentary "For Sama" provided a primary source narrative of the Syrian civil war through the lens of a youthful mother.

In general, the news media employs a range of methods to present global conflicts, including breaking news, analysis, commentary, opinion pieces, photojournalism, social media, and documentary films, in order to furnish viewers with a comprehensive comprehension of the conflict and its ramifications.

5. Global news coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is a topic of news coverage in the United States, with a notable emphasis on Israel's security concerns and the potential for terrorism from Palestinian factions. In the early 2000s, subsequent to a series of Palestinian suicide bombings, the American media often portrayed the conflict as a struggle against terrorism. The conservative news organization, Fox News, has faced criticism for its partial coverage of the conflict, exhibiting a pro-Israel bias while minimizing the challenges faced by the Palestinian population. In addition, the conflict has been portrayed by various news media outlets, including CNN and MSNBC, through a range of perspectives, which frequently align with the political inclinations of the respective outlet. The

discourse surrounding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has been multifaceted, with some emphasizing the security concerns of Israel and the potential for terrorism from Palestinian factions, while others have underscored the human rights violations experienced by Palestinians and the imperative for a political resolution to the conflict.

Conversely, the Arab world's media portrayal of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict frequently centers on the violations of human rights experienced by Palestinians, in addition to the conflict's historical and religious origins. Al Jazeera, a prominent Qatari news organization with a substantial viewership in the Arab region, has garnered acclaim for its comprehensive reporting on the conflict, frequently emphasizing the viewpoints of average Palestinians. In the Middle East region, media organizations such as Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya have frequently portrayed the conflict with a pro-Palestinian stance. The authors have directed their attention towards the ramifications of Israeli settlements in the West Bank and Gaza, the violations of human rights endured by the Palestinian people, and the significance of the Palestinian people's entitlement to self-determination.

Within the European context, media coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is characterized by a more equitable and impartial approach, which scrutinizes the actions and positions of both parties involved. The coverage of the conflict by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), a publicly-funded broadcaster in the United Kingdom, has been subject to criticism from both Israelis and Palestinians. Some view the coverage as excessively critical of Israel, while others perceive it as overly sympathetic to Israel. The conflict has been covered by various news media outlets, including The Guardian and Der Spiegel. These sources have been noted for their impartiality, as they have provided a comprehensive analysis of the situation, highlighting the shortcomings of both parties involved. The discourse has centered around the necessity of a

political resolution to the ongoing conflict, the significance of upholding human rights, and the ramifications of the conflict on non-combatant populations on either side.

4.4 The Influence of News Media

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has recently taken a more violent appearance. According to the UN News report, on April 5th, 2023, Israeli forces stormed Al-Aqsa Mosque, also commonly known as al-Qibli mosque, overnight, arresting more than 350 people ("Israel-Palestine: UN Calls"). The raids continued into Wednesday morning. In response, Palestinian militants in the Gaza Strip fired rockets at Israel. Al-Qibli mosque is situated on Temple Mount, which is sacred to Jews. Violent clashes took place there two years ago as well, sparking 11 days of deadly conflict between Israel and Palestinian armed groups in Gaza. In response to the raids that took place in April of this year, Tor Wennesland, the UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, issued a statement saying he was appalled by the images of violence inside the mosque. He said "I am disturbed by the apparent beating of Palestinians by Israeli security forces and large number of arrests. I also strongly reject the stockpiling and use of fireworks and rocks by Palestinians inside the mosque" (Magid). Moreover, while briefing journalists at UN Headquarters, UN Spokesperson Stéphane Dujarric, said Secretary-General António Guterres had been "shocked and appalled by the images" he had seen of the violence and beating by Israeli security forces inside the al-Qibli mosque.

In the already violent conflict, media sometimes play a negative role since it can contribute to the incitement of even more violence. Selection and framing of news stories that focus on violence and death instead of constructive efforts to find solutions can exacerbate tensions, reinforce stereotypes, and widen the divide between the two sides of the conflict. It can also feed into the cycle of violence. Over the past few decades, both Israeli and Palestinian

leaders and journalists have been said to incite violence against the other party through the use of media. This has caused the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to become more politicized and polarized. In order to avoid inciting more violence and bias, media outlets need to exercise more care in their coverage of the conflict.

One of the most striking examples of media bias in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is the use of language. The words used in media coverage of the conflict can be divisive, and lead to the dehumanization of one group or the other. For instance, some media outlets have described the Palestinians as terrorists, while others have labeled the Israelis as oppressors. Such labeling not only perpetuate violence between the two groups but also influences how the audiences perceive the conflict. One specific example of the use of language to create tensions and incite violence is a statement made by Avigdor Liberman, the former Defense Minister of Israel. Liberman asserted, "Those who are against us, there's nothing to be done – we need to pick up an ax and cut off his head…Otherwise we won't survive here" ("Lieberman"). This statement was quoted and disseminated by various Israeli and foreign news sources. For example, *Haaretz*, an Israeli newspaper, had a headline titled "Liberman: Disloyal Israeli Arabs Should be Beheaded" ("Lieberman"). *The Washington Post*, an American daily newspaper, also picked up a headline titled "Israeli Foreign Minister Says Disloyal Arabs Should Be Beheaded" (Tharoor). Hence, language in the media plays an important role in shaping public opinion and inciting violence. This is true for all forms of news media – broadcast, print, and digital.

Furthermore, media coverage can also incite violence through the use of graphic and disturbing images and footages. Images and footages of wounded civilians, slain bodies, ruined buildings, bloodshed, and other violent scenes can create a sense of outrage and anger among both Israelis and Palestinians. It may be difficult to look at some images and footages, but it may

also be difficult to look away. This emotional response can escalate the situation since people may start to feel that violence may be necessary for them to defend their side or to avenge those who have been wounded or killed. For instance, the 2014 Gaza war beach bombing led to the death of four boys who were playing at a beach. *The New York Times* published an article titled "Boys Drawn to Gaza Beach, and Into Center of Mideast Strife" (Barnard). The article includes an image taken by the photojournalist Tyler Hicks. The image shows a man carrying a child as another lies dead after two explosions on a beach. The caption on the image states "The aftermath of an airstrike on a beach in Gaza City on Wednesday. Four young Palestinian boys, all cousins, were killed" (Barnard). There is also another image that shows the moments immediately after the explosions. These images remind people of the senseless cycle of bloodshed and the innocent lives that are caught in the middle of it all. They evoke anger, sadness, and distress in the viewers.

Moreover, the way in which media coverage frames the conflict can also incite violence. For example, media outlets have the tendency to frame the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as a religious or ideological conflict. In doing so, they pit the Jews against the Muslims or the Israelis against the Arabs. By framing the conflict in this way, news media reinforces existing prejudices and stereotypes, and creates a sense of religious or ideological superiority on both sides. This, in turn, can fuel violence and aggression as both sides feel justified in their actions.

Chapter 5: Social Media as the Most Mainstream Form of News Media

5.1.: The Role of Social Media

As previously mentioned, there are several different types of news media such as broadcast media, print media, and digital media. The previous chapter mainly focused on broadcast media

and print media, two traditional forms of media. However, this chapter focuses solely on social media, the most mainstream form of digital media. The analysis of social media's presentation of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has a chapter of its own because out of all the different types of media, social media plays the most important role in modern society, with billions of people around the world using various platforms to connect, share information, and express themselves. Here are some of the key roles that social media plays:

At First, social media provides an instant and convenient way for people to communicate with each other, regardless of location or time zone. Social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram allow people to share messages, photos, videos, and other content with their friends, family, and followers. Messaging apps like WhatsApp and WeChat also enable real-time conversations between individuals and groups.

Similarly, social media platforms facilitate the dissemination and retrieval of information on a diverse array of subjects, encompassing current affairs, news, pastimes, and personal preferences. Social media platforms have emerged as a significant channel for individuals to access news and information, with numerous news organizations leveraging these platforms to disseminate their content and interact with their viewership.

Furthermore, social media platforms facilitate the process of community building by enabling individuals to establish and engage with groups of individuals who share similar interests and values. This phenomenon can prove to be especially advantageous for individuals residing in remote or underprivileged areas, as it facilitates their ability to establish connections with like-minded individuals who possess similar interests and backgrounds.

Next, social media has emerged as a crucial instrument for businesses and marketers to effectively communicate with their intended audience and advertise their merchandise and services. Popular platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn are utilized for this purpose. The utilization of social media advertising enables businesses to attain a high degree of precision in targeting their desired demographics and interests.

Consequently, social media has emerged as a crucial tool for political engagement, facilitating the dissemination of political views and opinions on public policy matters. Twitter and Facebook are prominent platforms that have enabled individuals to express their political perspectives. Social media has been utilized as a means of coordinating and galvanizing political movements and demonstrations.

Therefore, social media serves as a means of entertainment, as exemplified by the availability of platforms such as TikTok and Instagram, which enable users to disseminate videos, music, and other forms of innovative content. In recent times, social media influencers have emerged as a noteworthy component of the entertainment sector, garnering a substantial following of individuals who seek inspiration and amusement from their preferred influencers.

To sum up, social media is widely recognized as a crucial component of contemporary society, affording individuals a convenient and easily accessible means of communication, information sharing, community building, commercial transactions, political participation, and leisure pursuits. Notwithstanding its advantages, social media, like any other technology, has its drawbacks, such as the possibility of cyberbullying, dissemination of false information, and dependency.

5.2: Social Media's Presentation of Global Conflicts

Social media has become an increasingly important platform for presenting global conflicts. With billions of users around the world, social media platforms like Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram offer an opportunity to report on conflicts in real-time, share perspectives from multiple sources, and provide a space for discussion and debate. Here are some examples of how social media has presented global conflicts:

The emergence of citizen journalism has been facilitated by social media platforms, which have provided an avenue for individuals without professional training in journalism to report on real-time events. In the context of the Arab Spring uprisings in 2011, individuals in Tunisia, Egypt, and other nations utilized social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook to disseminate visual media, photographs, and personal narratives pertaining to the demonstrations and subsequent government responses (Lasorsa, D. L., Lewis, S. C., & Holton, A. E. 2012).

The utilization of hashtags as a means of categorizing content and initiating discussions around specific subjects has been popularized by social media platforms such as Twitter and Instagram. The hashtag #RefugeesWelcome was utilized during the Syrian refugee crisis to promote the interests of refugees and to urge for more empathetic policies (Aouragh, M., & Alexander, A. 2018).

The advent of social media platforms has facilitated the production and dissemination of user-generated content, encompassing a diverse range of media forms such as videos, photographs, and memes. In the context of the 2014 hostilities between Israel and Gaza, social media users from both sides disseminated visual content, including images and videos, that presented varying viewpoints on the conflict.

Live streaming has been incorporated by social media platforms such as Facebook and Periscope to enable users to share events instantaneously. In the context of the 2016 coup attempt in Turkey, it was observed that social media users resorted to live video streaming on various platforms to provide a firsthand and real-time account of the events that were unfolding (Dogruel, L., & Richardson, J. E. 2019).

The utilization of memes as a means of expressing opinions and commenting on current events has been popularized through social media. In the context of the 2020 Nagorno-Karabakh conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan, it was observed that certain individuals on social media platforms generated and disseminated memes that employed comedic and satirical elements to comment on the situation (Milner, R. M. 2016).

Social media influencers, possessing substantial followings on social media platforms such as Instagram and TikTok, have also taken part in the coverage of worldwide conflicts. In the context of the 2021 hostilities between Israel and Hamas, social media influencers utilized their online presence to disseminate their viewpoints and increase public consciousness regarding the ramifications of the conflict on non-combatants.

In recent times, social media has assumed a significant role in the representation of global conflicts, providing a platform for citizen journalism, user-generated content, hashtags, live streaming, memes, and influencers. Social media has garnered criticism for its role in disseminating false information, perpetuating online harassment, and exacerbating polarization. This underscores the importance of exercising responsible social media usage when reporting on global conflicts.

5.3: The Influence of Social Media on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

Social media has played a significant role in shaping the narrative around the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, allowing individuals from across the globe to share their perspectives and opinions on the issue. However, social media has also been criticized for its role in spreading misinformation, promoting biased views, and allowing hate speech and incitement of violence on its platforms. In the past decade, there has been numerous reports of social media platforms being used to spread hate speech and incitement of violence against both Israelis and Palestinians.

Social media has provided a platform for individuals from across the globe to share their perspectives on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. However, the use of biased commentary, misinformation, and hate speech has also highlighted the challenges of using social media as a tool for promoting peace and understanding. One example of social media's impact on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is the controversy surrounding American model Bella Hadid. In May 2021, Hadid, who is of both Dutch and Palestinian descent, posted a series of Instagram stories criticizing Israel's actions in Gaza and showing support for Palestine. Her posts sparked widespread debate and controversy, with some accusing Hadid of spreading misinformation and promoting anti-Semitic views. In fact, after Hadid attended pro-Palestine protests in Los Angeles that same year, Israel's state Twitter account "accused her of advocating for 'throwing Jews into the sea'" ("Info Wars").

> The Israeli government's tweet accusing Bella Hadid of violent antisemitism was mocked, Twitter ratio'd, and meme-d en masse – but the cyber-attack showed the tyranny of a state that targets and brazenly lies about a young Palestinian woman for daring to speak out, subjecting her to widespread backlash and threats, as well as a panicked

attempt at shifting the narrative away from the pursuit of Palestinian freedom. ("Info

Wars")

On one hand, this shows that social media can cause antagonism to break out between the

supporters of Israelis and the supporters of Palestinians. Also, since posts on social media are

often opinion-based, not fact-checked, and not verified as legitimate, it can lead to people

arguing about who is right and who is wrong. On the other hand, this shows that social media

allows people with completely different views to communicate and interact. Although, it should

be mentioned that the communications and interactions are not always friendly and positive.

Moreover, one of the key ways in which social media has influenced the presentation of

the conflict is through the use of hashtags. During periods of heightened violence, hashtags such

as #GazaUnderAttack, #IsraelUnderFire, and #SavePalestine are used to share news and updates

about the conflict. These hashtags often become trending topics on Twitter and other platforms,

amplifying the voices of those on both sides of the conflict. By using these hashtags, people can

express their voice and show their support to Israel or Palestine. However, when people who

support opposing sides come across each other's posts on social media platforms, it can lead to

hate speech. Although the use of language to incite violence has been discussed in the previous

chapter, it is worth mentioning that language can also be used to spread awareness and promote

peace.

In addition, social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram have also

been used to share images and videos from the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, providing a powerful

visual representation of the violence and its impact on civilians. However, these images and

videos are often accompanied by biased commentary or misinformation, which can further

inflame tensions and deepen divisions between opposing sides. On May 31, 2010, Israeli naval

commando soldiers boarded the six ships in international waters of the Mediterranean, but faced resistance from the activists on board the MV Mavi Marmara. In June 2010, Israel's media strategy was further implemented in the events that unfolded after the Israel Defense Forces' (IDF) raid on a flotilla of six ships carrying activists and humanitarian assistance to Gaza. A violent struggle unfolded, leaving nine activists dead and 10 soldiers wounded. The IDF detained the passengers and confiscated all cameras and footage obtained from the activists on board. As with the media blackout during Operation Cast Lead, the IDF posted a video on its official YouTube channel, claimed to be taken by the soldiers on board, to serve as evidence that the soldiers were forced to shoot in self-defense because the activists were armed and prepared for battle (David 5).

Chapter 6: Conclusion

In conclusion, the Palestine-Israel Conflict is a subject of great interest for many scholars describing it as one of the most intractable, ungovernable and uncontrollable conflicts in the twentieth century. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has been going on for a very long time and has received a large amount of attention from media outlets all around the world. It is impossible to understate how much the news and social media play a part in determining how we feel about the conflict. The coverage of the conflict in mainstream media has frequently been criticized for being biased and lacking in objectivity, with both sides accusing the other of unfair representation of their stance in the conflict.

The use of social media as a tool that enables individuals to obtain information and viewpoints from a wide variety of sources has been increasingly common in recent years. On the other hand, technology has also been utilized to disseminate false information, propaganda, and hate speech, which has contributed to the further polarization of viewpoints towards the conflict. It is impossible to overlook the influence of media coverage on the formation of our ideas towards the conflict. It has the capacity to influence our views, attitudes, and behaviors in relation to the parties that are involved. It is the job of the media to offer coverage of the conflict that is truthful and objective, avoiding sensationalism while yet fostering an atmosphere of understanding. As users of traditional and social media, it is our duty to critically assess the information that is provided to us and to look for different points of view. If we do this, we will be able to develop a more nuanced awareness of the issue and contribute to a discussion that is more informed and productive. Even if the news and social media have the ability to mold our perspectives on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, we must remain watchful and assess the information that is brought to our attention in a critical manner. In order to find a peaceful solution to this protracted and intricate issue, we need to actively seek out different points of view, engage in productive conversation, and work towards resolving the conflict peacefully.

The manner in which the media reports on the conflict can also have an effect on the perspective that policymakers take of the situation. For instance, if the dispute is portrayed as a one-sided war by the media, policymakers may be more inclined to support the side that is regarded as being the victim of the conflict. This can result in measures that are not in either side's best interests and can make the conflict much worse if it is allowed to continue. In spite of the critiques levelled against it, the media continues to play an important part in informing the general people about the conflict. If it were not for the media, a great number of people would

not be aware of the ongoing conflict and violence in that region. However, it is essential for the media to give an objective and nuanced assessment of the issue rather than continue to perpetuate prejudices and biases in their coverage of the story.

The manner in which the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is portrayed in the media has the potential to significantly impact the viewers' opinions of the situation as well as their level of comprehension of it. On the other hand, the way in which the dispute has been portrayed in the media has been roundly criticized for being one-sided and biased. It is necessary for the media to be upfront about its biases and for viewers to critically examine the information they receive in order to achieve a more balanced and nuanced view of the conflict. Transparency and critical evaluation are key to achieving this goal. In the end, having a clearer and more complete picture of the problem is one of the most important factors that can assist pave the road for a peaceful conclusion.

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