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ORIGINAL ARTICLE

News Framing Analysis of Al Jazeera's Coverage: A Case Study of Gaza Reports in the Aftermath of Operation Al-Aqsa Storm

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Interdiction:

This study examines Al Jazeera's news framing of the Gaza events following the Al-Aqsa Flood operation, with particular attention to how the network constructs counter-hegemonic and narrative-driven coverage of the conflict after October 7, 2023. By identifying the dominant frames employed in Al Jazeera's news reports, the research investigates the editorial biases and framing strategies that shape the network's portrayal of the conflict. The overarching aim is to

understand how Al Jazeera frames events, actors, and narratives surrounding Gaza, with emphasis on its role in challenging prevailing global media discourses and foregrounding specific themes—including human suffering, resistance, and attribution of responsibility.

Method:

This study adopts a qualitative content analysis approach to examine the framing techniques utilized in Al Jazeera's coverage of Gaza subsequent to the Al-Aqsa Flood operation. The research sample comprises five news reports broadcast by Al Jazeera Television, purposively selected from critical phases of the conflict, encompassing the initial days of the war beginning October 7, 2023, as well as other significant high-news junctures. Selection criteria prioritized reports that were representative of the network's coverage during pivotal moments of the conflict. The analytical framework is grounded in framing theory, categorizing the reports into both generic frames (e.g., attribution of responsibility, human interest) and conflict-specific frames (e.g., war, counter-hegemony). Each report was systematically coded to identify recurring themes, narratives, and perspectives, with particular attention to how Al Jazeera constructs its stories to reflect its editorial stance and ideological orientation.

Findings:

The findings indicate that Al Jazeera predominantly employed several key frameworks in its coverage of the Gaza conflict, collectively reinforcing a distinct narrative of the dispute. These frameworks include "attribution of responsibility," "human interest," and conflict-related frames such as "counter-hegemony" and "war." Through the "human interest" frame, Al Jazeera consistently underscores the human toll of the conflict, portraying Gaza's residents as the primary victims of relentless Israeli military operations. The network emphasizes civilian suffering, widespread destruction, and the escalating humanitarian crisis, utilizing vivid imagery and emotionally resonant narratives to intensify audience engagement. This approach foregrounds the ethical and human dimensions of the war, exposing viewers to the tangible consequences of violence.

Within the "attribution of responsibility" frame, Al Jazeera assigns culpability for the violence to Israeli military actions, depicting Israel as the principal aggressor. In this narrative, Israel is characterized as an oppressive and dominant force, while Palestinians are positioned either as victims or as the axis of resistance. This framing unequivocally reflects the network's editorial inclination to challenge the dominant narratives advanced by Western media outlets.

The "counter-hegemony" frame illustrates Al Jazeera's deliberate effort to contest Western media narratives by offering an alternative perspective that amplifies Palestinian voices and critiques global power asymmetries. This approach serves to support marginalized viewpoints and presents a representation distinct from that typically disseminated in international media. Concurrently, the "war" frame is utilized to cover Israeli military actions and offensives, with the network highlighting destruction and hostilities while simultaneously reinforcing the broader "conflict" frame, within which competing narratives are juxtaposed. Furthermore, the analysis reveals that Al Jazeera also employs a "moral consequences" frame to accentuate the ethical and humanitarian implications of the war. Collectively, these framing strategies align with Al Jazeera's overarching editorial policy of shaping public opinion and advancing a specific narrative of the conflict.

Conclusions:

In sum, the examination of Al Jazeera's news coverage of the Gaza war following the Al-Aqsa Flood operation indicates that the network has strategically deployed a combination of news frames to influence public perception. The utilization of the "attribution of responsibility," "human interest," "conflict," and "counter-hegemony" frames constituted Al Jazeera's principal instruments for profoundly shaping audience understanding of the war. This approach—particularly through its emphasis on civilian suffering and its attribution of responsibility to Israel—has succeeded in presenting an alternative narrative to the dominant global media discourse, portraying Palestine as both the axis of resistance and a victimized entity. By foregrounding the human and ethical dimensions of the conflict, the network has played a significant role in molding public opinion regarding this protracted dispute.

Data Availability Statement

Data available on request from the authors.

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Ethical considerations

Not applicable.

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Conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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