SOCIAL SCIENCE REVIEW ARCHIVES

Media Portrayals of the Israel-Palestine Conflict: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Al-Jazeera and The New York Times

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Abstract

In this thorough critical discourse analysis, the researcher examines how Al-Jazeera and The New York Times, two major international news sources, present the Israel-Palestine issue. This paper highlights the various thematic, linguistic, and visual framing techniques used by these media behemoths to craft stories that appeal to their target audiences and editorial philosophies. In order to elicit empathy, Al-Jazeera constantly places a high priority on themes of historical injustice and humanitarianism, highlighting the pain and displacement of Palestinians. By employing language and imagery that is security-centric, The New York Times, on the other hand, focuses primarily on geopolitical and security-related subjects, especially Israel's problems. These results emphasize the media's ability to impact and maybe reinforce preexisting opinions or biases, underscoring the powerful role that framing plays in influencing public perception and policy discourse. The study emphasizes how important it is for consumers to have a critical media literacy, saying that in order to gain a comprehensive grasp of complex conflicts, they should recognize framing methods and consult a variety of sources. The purpose of this research is to promote global empathy, peace, and informed debate by adding to the existing discussion about the impact of media framing, especially when it comes to prolonged wars. To build an informed and just global community, it is imperative to comprehend the framing power of the media.

Keywords: The New York Times, Al-Jazeera, Critical Discourse Analysis, Israel- Palestine Conflict, Security and Humanitarian Framings, Geopolitical Narrative, Media Influence.

Introduction

One of the longest-running and most divisive disputes in contemporary history, the Israel-Palestine conflict has profound historical, political, and cultural roots that date back more than a century. The conflict is a topic of ongoing discussion and study because of the substantial attention it has received from the media and the international community. The researcher uses a critical discourse analysis (CDA) in this work to look at how the Israel-Palestine conflict is portrayed in two well-known media outlets: The New York Times and Al-Jazeera.Since its founding in 1996, Al-Jazeera has gained widespread recognition as the most significant and recognizable news network in the Arab world. It has frequently received recognition for providing thorough coverage of world events, especially those pertaining to the Middle East. Al-Jazeera's objectivity in reporting the Israel-Palestine conflict has been called into doubt, though, since the organization has also come under fire. It is frequently accused of displaying a bias favorable to the Palestinian cause.Alternatively, The New York Times, an internationally read American newspaper that was

established in 1851, is a major player in the industry. Numerous people view it as a representation of the highest editorial standards and journalistic honesty. However, there are many who have condemned it for what they see to be an Israel-biased reporting on the conflict between Israel and Palestine. According to these critiques, a number of factors, like as political, cultural, and economic ones, may have an impact on how the war is portrayed in the media.

With an emphasis on these two powerful media outlets' vocabularies, imagery, and narrative techniques, this critical discourse analysis seeks to illuminate how the Israel-Palestine conflict is framed, narrated, and contextualized. This will allow the researcher to investigate any possible effects these media portrayals may have on how their separate audiences and the larger international community perceive the war. In order to critically analyze the underlying power structures, ideologies, and biases that might affect how the Israel-Palestine conflict is portrayed in the media, the researcher will explore the theoretical framework of critical discourse analysis in this study. To find reoccurring patterns and themes in their coverage of the crisis, the researcher will use CDA on a collection of news stories and reports from Al-Jazeera and The New York Times. By doing this, the researcher hopes to further the existing discussion over impartiality, prejudice, and how the media shape's public opinion of intricate international disputes.

This study aims to provide insights into how the media shapes public opinion about the Israel-Palestine conflict and the effects of these representations on peace initiatives, international diplomacy, and the people who are directly impacted by the conflict. The researcher hopes to offer a more nuanced picture of how media outlets deal with this extremely sensitive and divided topic by a careful analysis of the discursive techniques used by Al-Jazeera and The New York Times. Global political discourse and the lives of millions of Palestinians and Israelis have been profoundly impacted by the Israel-Palestine conflict, which continues to be a hot button issue in international affairs. It is impossible to overestimate the influence of the media on how the public views and hears about this conflict. This research investigates how media organizations with different global reach and cultural contexts frame and convey the Israel-Palestine conflict, using The New York Times and Al-Jazeera as sample case studies. The objective of this study is to offer a thorough comprehension of the ways in which political, cultural, and economic elements interact with language, images, and storytelling strategies to shape how this intricate matter is presented and comprehended by a worldwide viewership.

This investigation looks at how the media portrays the Israel-Palestine issue and goes beyond simply criticizing the flaws and prejudices that can appear in reporting. Rather, its objective is to clarify the wider mechanisms through which the media impacts global conflict. Examining the discursive strategies of these two powerful media organizations can help us identify the underlying power structures and narratives that influence public opinion, which in turn affects diplomatic attempts and possible resolutions to the ongoing war. Our goal in conducting this critical discourse analysis is to clarify the difficulties involved in portraying a conflict as complex as the Israel-Palestine conflict in the media and public discourse, as well as to advance the larger discussion about the influence of the media on international conflicts and diplomacy.

Statement of the Problem

Debate and dispute around the Israel-Palestine conflict are continuous. It is a long-standing, extremely controversial issue with far-reaching implications. In this regard, media organizations like The New York Times and Al-Jazeera are crucial in influencing how the general population views and comprehends the conflict. But questions concerning impartiality, potential bias, and the impact of political, cultural, and economic variables on media depictions cast doubt on how impartial and accurate their reporting is. The goal of this study is to examine the topic of how various media channels depict and tell the story of the Israel-Palestine conflict and how their portrayals could affect public opinion and global dialogue on this complex matter.

Research Objectives
1. To investigate the potential implications of media representations of the Israel-Palestine conflict by Al-Jazeera and The New York Times in terms of shaping public understanding and perceptions of the conflict.
2. To investigate framing tactics used by Al-Jazeera and the New York Times in their news stories regarding the Israel-Palestine issue in order to pinpoint their unique approaches.

Research Questions
1. What are the possible effects can these media portrayals have on how the public views the Israel-Palestine?
2. How do Al-Jazeera and The New York Times have framed the Israel-Palestine conflict in their news article?

Significance of the Study
This study provides an important analysis of how the media, especially Al-Jazeera and The New York Times, portrays the Israel-Palestine issue. Through analyzing the language strategies employed by these powerful media organizations, our research deepens our understanding of how media influence's public opinion, diplomatic efforts, and the lives of individuals directly embroiled in the war. The findings of this study have consequences not only for scholars and researchers studying media studies, international relations, and conflict resolution, but also for the general public and policymakers. Their insights illuminated the intricate mechanisms through which media power functions in a war that continues to be a topic of global interest and debate.

Literature Review
Al-Jazeera, as one of the most prominent media outlets in the Arab world, has often been lauded for its comprehensive coverage of global events, particularly in the Middle East. However, it has faced criticism for perceived biases in favor of the Palestinian cause, raising questions about its objectivity (El-Nawawy & Powers, 2010). In contrast, The New York Times, a highly respected American newspaper, has been accused of pro-Israeli bias in its reporting on the Israel-Palestine conflict (Shaheen, 2003). These issues make both media outlets significant case studies for understanding how different outlets with distinct audiences and editorial perspectives frame and narrate the conflict.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and Corpus Linguistics were used in a study by Kandil (2009) to examine language depictions of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in American, Arab, and British media. It exposed the tactics employed by media organizations to manage how conflict actors are portrayed. In another study conducted by Elmasry et al., (2013) analyzes the coverage of the 2008–2009 Gaza crisis by Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya, as well as the subsequent period of quiet. It finds that both networks emphasized Palestinian perspectives and portrayed Palestinians as the victims of Israeli aggression by stressing deaths, mourning, and casualties.

Similarly, in a paper by Amer (2017) by employing critical discourse analysis examined how four international newspapers covered the 2008–2009 Gaza war. It found that the coverage highlighted Palestinian agency in rejecting the ceasefire and Israeli agency in achieving one, both driven by political ideologies and governmental positions. The most frequently represented actors were Hamas members and Israeli officials.

Critical Discourse Analysis, a prominent framework in media and communication studies, focuses on the examination of power structures, ideologies, and the ways language is used in media representations. It provides a valuable lens through which to analyze media content to uncover implicit biases, framing strategies, and the discursive tactics employed by media outlets (Fairclough, 2013). Researchers often employ CDA to explore how media representations can influence public perception and, consequently, shape policy and decision-making (Van Dijk,

2009).

While there is a wealth of literature on media representations of the Israel-Palestine conflict and studies utilizing CDA in media analysis, there is a notable gap in research that directly compares the coverage of this conflict by Al-Jazeera and The New York Times using CDA. This study aims to address this gap by providing an in-depth analysis of the media portrayals of the Israel-Palestine conflict in these two influential outlets and examining their implications for public understanding and international discourse.

Theoretical Framework

When analyzing how the Israel-Palestine conflict is portrayed in the media and applying Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), the "Framing Theory" theoretical framework works very well. According to Entman (1993), framing theory is concerned with how media outlets and other communicators choose, highlight, and portray some parts of a narrative while downplaying or omitting others. This technique shapes the audience's perception of an issue.

Understanding how Al-Jazeera and The New York Times frame and narrate the Israel- Palestine conflict in their news articles and reports is the main objective of this research, and framing theory fits in well with that purpose. It offers a prism through which to examine how these media channels shape public perception and knowledge of the war by choosing particular subjects, using particular language, and utilizing imagery.

Figure 1: Source adapted from

https://journal.ikipsiliwangi.ac.id/index.php/jler/article/download/4865/1611

In figure 1 the factor that frames who is regarded as an actor in an event is the root of the issue. Here, the term "cause" might refer to either person or what. Defining Problems highlights the way journalists interpret events. When anything goes wrong, how is it perceived as a problem or issue? Selecting morally sound choices is a framing device used to support or offer justifications for the definition of the problem that has been raised. The issue has been identified, its root cause has been established, and the notion requires compelling evidence to be backed up. To determine what the journalist wants, therapy recommendations are considered. Which route was selected to address the issue? Of course, how the incident is viewed and who is blamed for the issue will determine the remedy.

Research Methodology

The first step in the research technique was gathering primary data, which involved carefully choosing news stories and reports from The New York Times and Al-Jazeera. A purposive sampling strategy was used to choose articles and reports covering significant events and developments

linked to the Israel-Palestine conflict that were published between 2015 and 2020 in order to guarantee a thorough and representative dataset.

Acorpus comprising the chosen dataset was assembled for analysis. A thorough screening process was used to every item to guarantee that it was relevant to the goals of the research. A final corpus of 100 papers was produced by incorporating a total of 50 pieces from each media outlet.

Critical Discourse Analysis was the main methodological strategy used in this study (Fairclough, 2013). The goal of the analysis was to identify the underlying ideologies, power structures, and discursive techniques used in Al-Jazeera and The New York Times' media portrayals of the Israel-Palestine conflict.

Framing analysis, in line with Entman's (1993) framing theory, was used within the context of CDA to examine the ways in which media sources presented and explained the conflict. The subjects chosen, the language employed, and the narrative techniques that molded the conflict depictions were all given careful consideration. To find reoccurring themes, language patterns, and framing strategies in the corpus, a methodical coding procedure was used. Software for analyzing qualitative data was used to speed up the coding procedure. To further understand how Al-Jazeera and The New York Times covered the Israel-Palestine conflict, themes and trends that appeared in the data were further examined. To look at the ways that the two media channels framed the conflict differently and similarly, a comparative analysis was done. This required determining the points where their coverage converged and diverged and evaluating the degree of objectivity or bias in their portrayals. A portion of the corpus was independently coded by many researchers to increase the analysis's dependability. Using accepted methods, the inter-coder reliability was evaluated, and disagreements were settled by consensus and debate. This study complied with ethical norms and requirements. The researchers made sure that the fair use and copyright laws were followed while using any of the chosen publications. A few drawbacks are acknowledged in the study, such as the time-bound nature of the dataset and the possibility of subjectivity in coding. Furthermore, the research was limited to print media and excluded content from other media platforms including television and the internet.

Data Analysis and Discussion

Utilizing a purposive sample approach, the research was conducted with great care in the beginning stages. For this, news articles and reports from The New York Times and Al-Jazeera, two well-known media organizations, had to be carefully chosen. An intentional sampling technique was used to guarantee that important events and developments were included in order to accomplish the goal of giving a snapshot of the Israel-Palestine conflict. Given that the dataset's temporal scope covered the years 2015 through 2020, the acquired data was more apt and relevant. The theory of framing, as established by Entman (1993), suggests that media sources highlight and choose which parts of a narrative to highlight while underplaying others, thereby influencing the audience's perception of the issue. When generating narratives and shaping public awareness of the Israel-Palestine conflict, media framing is crucial. The three primary types of framing that were the focus of the analysis were visual, verbal, and thematic.

Thematic Structure

The Prioritization of Themes

Based on the data, it was found that Al-Jazeera and The New York Times prioritized themes quite differently. Every time they covered the conflict, Al-Jazeera brought attention to its humanitarian dimensions, emphasizing the suffering and displacement of the Palestinian people. A piece published in 2015 by Al-Jazeera, for instance, discussed the pain and vulnerability of Palestinian children throughout the conflict (Al-Jazeera, 2015a). Likewise, an Al-Jazeera report from 2018 (Al-Jazeera, 2018a) went into great detail about how the siege of Gaza affects

Palestinian people' day-to-day existence.

By comparison, articles in The New York Times usually focused on geopolitical and security-related subjects, often emphasizing Israel's security concerns. The Iron Dome defense system and its function in shielding Israeli citizens from Palestinian rocket strikes were highlighted in a 2016 New York Times report, which underscored Israel's security interests (The New York Times, 2016a). Furthermore, in 2019, The New York Times published an opinion piece that examined the danger that Israeli citizens faced from Palestinian rocket assaults, presenting the conflict from a security perspective (The New York Times, 2019a). Al-Jazeera continuously highlighted the humanitarian dimensions of the conflict, emphasizing the pain and displacement experienced by the Palestinian people. As an illustration, a well-known piece from Al-Jazeera from 2017 addressed in detail the difficulties Palestinian refugees in Gaza endure (Al-Jazeera, 2017).

On the other hand, articles in The New York Times usually focused on geopolitical and security-related topics, often emphasizing Israel's security concerns. An op-ed published in The New York Times in 2018 that addressed the conflict's strategic ramifications for Israel in light of the country's ongoing tensions with Hamas serves as an exemplary example.

Table 1: Thematic Framing

Media Outlet	Thematic Prioritization	Example
Al-Jazeera	Humanitarian, Palestinian Suffering	2015 - Article on Palestinian Children
Al-Jazeera	Humanitarian, Palestinian Suffering	2018 - Article on Gaza Blockade
Al-Jazeera	Humanitarian, Gaza Siege	2017 - Article on Gaza Siege
Al-Jazeera	Humanitarian, Palestinian Refugees	2017 - Article on Palestinian Refugees
Al-Jazeera	Humanitarian, Historical Injustice	2018 - Article on Gaza Blockade
The New York Times	Geopolitical, Israel's Security	2016 - Report on Iron Dome
The New York Times	Geopolitical, Israel's Security	2018 - Op-Ed on Israel's Strategic Nightmare
The New York Times	Geopolitical, Security Concerns	2019 - Op-Ed on Threat of Palestinian Rockets

The New York Times and Al-Jazeera's thematic priority of the Israel-Palestine issue is outlined in this table 1, which also includes particular examples for each subject.

Linguistic Framing

There was clear linguistic framing in the employment of particular vocabulary choices and rhetorical strategies. Al-Jazeera regularly used poetic language to highlight Palestinian hardship.

Words like "occupation," "displacement," and "blockade" were frequently used to describe the suffering that Palestinians endured. Al-Jazeera, for instance, used the term "blockade" to describe the restrictions on the flow of people and products in Gaza in a 2017 report, which sparked feelings

of shared suffering (Al-Jazeera, 2017a). In a different case, Al-Jazeera (2019b) stressed the image of a population enduring constraints and oppression by referring to the situation in Gaza as a "siege." Al-Jazeera regularly utilized emotive language to portray the difficulties Palestinians experienced, using terminology like "occupation," "displacement," and "blockade" to stress the sufferings they encountered. Al-Jazeera (2018) highlighted the collective suffering of Palestinians and used the term "siege" to describe the situation in Gaza in one of its reports.

On the other hand, security concerns were a regular feature of reportage from The New York Times. Words like "threat," "terrorist," and "rockets" were frequently used. An article published in 2018 in The New York Times framed the conflict via a security-oriented lens, portraying Palestinian rocket assaults as a "threat" to Israeli people' safety (The New York Times, 2018a). To further emphasize the conflict's security aspects, The New York Times 2020a highlighted it as a "terrorist threat" in a report. In their reporting, words like "rockets," "threat," and "terrorist" frequently appeared. A 2017 news item framed the conflict through a security lens, characterizing Palestinian rocket launches as a "threat to Israeli civilians" (The New York Times, 2017).

Table2: Linguistic Framing

Media Outlet	Linguistic Devices Used	Example
Al-Jazeera	Emotive Language (e.g., "occupation," "displacement," "blockade")	2017 - Use of "blockade" in Gaza Coverage`
Al-Jazeera	Emotive Language (e.g., "occupation," "displacement," "siege")	2019 - Use of "siege" in Gaza Coverage
The New York Times	Security-centric Language (e.g., "rockets," "threat," "terrorist")	2018 - Framing Palestinian Rockets as a "Threat"
The New York Times	Security-centric Language (e.g., "terrorist threat")	2020 - Emphasizing the "Terrorist Threat"

The table 2 above lists the main language framing techniques used by The New York Times and Al-Jazeera in their reporting on the Israel-Palestine conflict, along with particular instances of each technique.

Selecting Visible Framing Pictures
When choosing the photos to go with the articles, visual framing was seen. Images of Palestinian citizens, especially youngsters, in upsetting circumstances like protests or amidst the debris of demolished buildings were a regular fixture on Al-Jazeera. These pictures were meant to provoke compassion and draw attention to how the fighting has affected people on a personal level. In 2019, for instance, an Al-Jazeera piece featured a picture of a Palestinian child crying in the wake of an airstrike, evoking strong feelings in the viewer (Al-Jazeera, 2019a). A 2017 Al-Jazeera photo featuring Palestinian youngsters participating in a protest highlighted the demonstrators' youth and vulnerability (Al-Jazeera, 2017b).On the other hand, The New York Times frequently highlighted pictures of Israeli military hardware or security personnel, highlighting Israel's security worries. An illustration of Israeli soldiers policing the Gaza border was featured in a 2017 New York Times article, which
contributed to the conflict's security-centric narrative (The New York Times, 2017a). Similar to this, The New York Times highlighted Israel's security measures in 2018 by publishing an image of Israeli military soldiers and a defense system in place (The New York Times, 2018b). The

choice of images used to accompany articles was found to exhibit visual framing. Images of Palestinian citizens—especially children—in traumatic contexts, including protests or among the debris of demolished structures, were regularly broadcast by Al-Jazeera. In addition to highlighting the conflict's effects on people, these pictures tried to inspire empathy. Al-Jazeera (2019) published a piece featuring a photo of a distraught Palestinian youngster following an airstrike. To highlight Israel's security worries, however, The New York Times frequently ran pictures of Israeli military hardware or security personnel. The New York Times (2018) published an article with a photograph of Israeli soldiers monitoring the Gaza border, which contributed to the conflict's security-centric narrative.

Table 3: Visual Framing

Media Outlet	Imagery Selection	Example
Al-Jazeera	Images of Palestinian citizens, especially children, in distressing situations (e.g., protests, amidst debris)	2019 - Image of a Palestinian child in tears after an airstrike
Al-Jazeera	Images of Palestinian children participating in protests, emphasizing youth and vulnerability	2017 - Image of Palestinian children protesting
Al-Jazeera	Images of Palestinian citizens, especially children, in distressing situations (e.g., protests, amidst debris)	2019 - Image of a Palestinian child in tears after an airstrike
The New York Times	Images of Israeli military hardware and security personnel, highlighting Israel's security Concerns	2017 - Image of Israeli soldiers patrolling Gaza border
The New York Times	Images of Israeli military personnel and defense systems, emphasizing security measures	2018 - Image of Israeli military soldiers and defense system

The visual framing tactics used by Al-Jazeera and The New York Times in their coverage of the Israel-Palestine conflict are summarized in the above table 3, which also includes specific examples for each form of imagery.

Discussion

The results show that Al-Jazeera and The New York Times used quite different framing techniques when covering the Israel-Palestine issue. Al-Jazeera has continuously given humanitarian issues and themes of historical injustice top priority, highlighting the pain and displacement experienced by the Palestinian people. This strategy attempted to evoke empathy in the audience by illustrating the individual and societal suffering endured by Palestinians. The New York Times, on the other hand, usually highlighted Israel's security concerns and concentrated mostly on geopolitical and security-related issues. Israel's need to defend its inhabitants was emphasized via the use of language and imagery focused on security.

These framing techniques are a reflection of the intended audiences and editorial viewpoints of the individual media outlets. While readers concerned with geopolitics and security may be drawn to The New York Times, with its security-centric approach, Al-Jazeera's emphasis on humanitarian topics is likely to appeal to an audience interested in human rights and historical

justice concerns.

Conclusion

The portrayal of the Israel-Palestine conflict in Al-Jazeera and The New York Times, as well as the critical discourse analysis that followed, highlight the significant influence that media framing has on the development of public perceptions and narratives surrounding tricky subjects. Human rights and historical justice-minded viewers were drawn to Al-Jazeera's constant emphasis on humanitarian and themes of historical injustice, which evoked empathy and highlighted Palestinian suffering. The New York Times, on the other hand, spoke to readers who were interested in geopolitical and security-related issues while highlighting Israel's security worries. Diverse framing tactics demonstrate the media's ability to shape public opinion and policy discourse, as well as the editorial opinions and target demographics of the respective channels. It emphasizes how crucial critical media literacy is for consumers, asking them to identify framing techniques and draw from a variety of sources in order to have a thorough grasp of intricate conflicts. This study adds to the discourse on media framing by highlighting the function of media in promoting communication, harmony, and international understanding throughout prolonged conflicts. Promoting an informed and equitable global community requires an understanding of the framing power of the media.

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