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MEDIA FRAMING APPROACH OF ISRAELIS AND PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

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Abstract

The Media takes an active part in the conflict it has responsibility for the raised violence, and play an independent role in the conflict, in order to find a solution or at least mitigate the violence Puddephatt (2006). With regard to the media frames, each TV uses some different frames to build news based on specific concepts related to that TV. Therefore, this study uses the case study of Israel and Palestine conflict to examine the Ma'an news coverage of Israeli's and Palestinian conflict, according to media framing approach. A content analysis was conducted of news broadcasted Ma'an TV. Over the 50 days' war, violent clashes have erupted in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories, with youths taking to the streets to protest against an occupation that has lasted almost half a century. Israel used excessive force in its response toward Palestinian people, this led to many deaths among Palestinians. According to the Ma'an, between July 7 and August 26, 2014, at least 2131 Palestinians were killed in Gaza as a result of Israel's "Operation Protective Edge." Ma'an use Al Mezan Center for Human Rights, as their news source and a total of 2168 Palestinians were killed, while the Palestinian Center for Human Rights (PCHR) put the total number of Palestinian fatalities at 2191 (Peace 2014). Furthermore, the UN said that there were 373,000 children in Gaza strip require specialized psychosocial support. On the other hand, 71 Israelis were killed, including four civilians, and 66 soldiers (Joronen 2016).

Keywords: Media Framing, Content Analysis, Israeli And Palestinian Conflict, Gaza War 2014.

1. Introduction

Prior to the modern era of online and social media, traditional mass media, (radio, television, and newspaper) are the agents of propaganda during wars. For instance, the roles that the traditional mass media play during First and Second world wars are examples of how mass media are used to win wars by holding and withholding information to ensure that the interest parties in the wars are influenced and manipulated to gain supports. Mass media were used as war weapons to feed the world with framed war information in order to seek supports and sympathies for the forces, ideology, or party that the media support. The media involvement in international conflicts or crises is ideological: mass media are under the pretense that they are unbiased umpires and project their roles during crises between the conflicting ends as such (Carruthers 2011).

The world is partitioned not only by geographical boundaries but also by political power, religious differences, cultural, and ideological dominations, economic dominances, as well as information power (media) (Almahallawi & Zanuddin 2017). International conflicts and wars are fought along the partitions with the media at the core of the conflicts. Alyousef and Zanuddin (2017) believed that, before the political and geographical fragmentations of the world into countries, international conflict tolls religious domination and ruling. For instance, geographical boundaries classify the world into countries, regions, and continents with demarcations on land, water, and atmosphere to designate sizes and geographical independence of various countries or regions as reflected in the world map (Ambikapaty & Zanuddin 2017, Watimin & Zanuddin 2017, Zanuddin & Ganjian 2017, Zanuddin & Mukhtar 2017). Differences on geographical boundaries, land disputes, or dispute over control of natural resources are one of the major causes and foundation of international conflicts. Such a case is the conflict over land ownership between Israel and Palestine which has been lingering right from the end of Second World war until now (Halliday 2005).

2. Problem Statement

The conflict, which predated independence of many countries of the world combines geographical disputes with religious inclination and superiority (Ganjian & Zanuddin 2017, Zanuddin &Ambikapaty 2017, Zanuddin & Watimin 2017). Media reports on the issue are almost on daily basis with casualties on increase by the day and oppressions compel attentions. The media reports of the issue vary between local and international media as well as within international mass media depending on the ownership structure of the media (Caplan 2011). This study will only focus on variations in the television coverage of the issues among Ma'an News Agency local media agency. Regarding media framing of conflicts, each of the television stations uses different frames to build news around the issue based on the interest the media are trying to protect. Therefore, this study uses the case study of Ma'an News Agency to examine the extent to which the media differ in their coverage of the conflict. This study will also assess how Ma'an News Agency frames the conflict.

The content of the broadcast media on the conflict within the period specified cover news items on the issue and how they were structured by Ma'an news agency while reporting the issue. The sample content is the news items which reported daily in the online version of Ma'an news agency during the last war between Israeli and Palestine which started on 8 July and continued until 26 August 2014. Therefore, we have 61 news items from Ma'an news. A content analysis will be conducted of news published on Ma'an News Agency. This study will investigate one generic frame (human interest) which proposed by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) and two major frames (thematic and episodic) which proposed by Iyengar (1991), as dependent variables. The news coverage will be the independent variable.

3. Research Questions

This study will analyze the content of news article during the specific time of war to answer these questions:

1- What is the frequency of news coverage of the Israeli and Palestinian conflict?
2- What is the frequency of using thematic and episodic frames, and which are commonly used in their coverage?
3- Do Ma'an news agency focuses on Human interest issues which related to women, children and civilian?

4. Purpose of the Study

This study starts research into the nature of news coverage of the Israeli and Palestinian conflict in a local media agency. The aim of this study is to examine the media coverage of the conflict between Israel and Palestine how are structured in the online version of Ma'an news agency, and how this coverage reflects on the audience understanding and interpretation. Furthermore, this study seeks also to find the frames which used by Ma'an news agency while reporting issues related to this conflict between Israel and Palestine.

The scholar examined 61 news coverage by Ma'an News Agency for the last war between Israel and Palestine, which considered as the most violent in the history of the conflict and known as the 50 days' war from 8 July – 26 August 2014. A quantitative content analysis was employed to examine the news published during the war using one generic frame (human interest) which developed by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000), and two major frames (thematic and episodic) which proposed by Iyengar (1991).

5. Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

The Palestinian and Israeli conflict was started from 1948 up till now, however, it decreases subsequently. The frequency of the attacks between Israel and Palestine increased in the years of 2008 until 2014. Indeed, the 2014 Gaza War was the third major war between them in less than six years (Eilam 2015). This war is considered as the most violent in the history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Indeed,

after 50 days of conflict in Gaza, among the population of 1.8 million, it found that 2143 Palestinians were dead (including 577 children, 263 women and 102 elderly), and 11230 were injured, 10800 buildings had been destroyed and 8000 partially destroyed, 40000 homes had been damaged, and more than 350000 people had been displaced from their homes (Sathar 2014).

According to the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Monitor,(INTERNATIONAL, 2015) issued a comprehensive report about the human and material losses collaboration with the agency for the Palestinian press. The report showed that the Israeli bombing destroyed, 62 mosques completely and 109 partially, one church partially, 10 Muslim graves and one Christian. Israel's losses: there are 64 soldiers and six civilians, including a woman, were killed. Among the dead soldiers holding other nationalities like American, Belgian, French and others. The injured were numbered 720 wounded. This war attracted the attention of local, Arab and International Media. In this study, the researcher will analyze the news coverage of one local web portal for this war, according to the content analysis.

5.1. Research design and Theoretical framework
5.1.1. Media Framing theory

Entman (1993) defines the Media framing theory as a process that influences the audience to act, think and feel by raising the importance of certain ideas and dropping the importance of others, promoting conformity in public thought.

While the element of news framing as reviewed by Entman (1993) point out that the frame will choose an issue that is considered true and will be featured in the form of communication text. Furthermore, framing theory recommends that the mass media do even more than generate saliency. By decide on what to include and what to exclude from a story (An & Gower 2009).

Iyengar (1991) create two types of frames: episodic and thematic. He determines the episodic frames as a news which focuses on particular instances or events. On the other hand, thematic frames examine events/issues over a time. Episodic frames focus on individual aspects of an issue while thematic frames focus on an issue as a whole. Iyengar (1991) recommends that the type of frame used to depict an issue affects the way people view the issue at hand. Thematic frames cause people to view the issue as a major social problem that affects many and continues over a long period of time, but issues presented in an episodic frame appear to affect only a few people and, thus, do not appear to be serious.

Entman (1993) considered that media frames naturally diagnose, evaluate, and prescribe. News frames can diagnose causes and "identify the forces creating the problem," make moral judgments and "evaluate causal agents and their effects," suggest remedies by offering and modifying ways to solve problems and predict their possible effects.

Many types of research have used framing theory to study the media coverage of the Palestine and Israel conflict. Sheafer and Dvir-Gvirsman (2010), examines the effect of media framing on aggregate attitudes and expectations of Israelis toward the Oslo peace process with the Palestinians through a time

period of eight years (1995–2003). As a result of this study, they found that framing effects are stronger on aggregate future expectations compared with their effects on aggregate current attitudes.

Avraham and First (2010), they have used two complementary theories – the representation approach and the framing concept. To examines the portrayal of Israel's Arab population in the Hebrew media, with particular attention to coverage by the national television channels of two violent incidents: events surrounding the first Land Day (30 March 1976) and events of the protests in October 2000, at the start of the Al-Aqsa Intifada. Their purpose is twofold: first, to explore how Israeli Arabs are portrayed during violent conflict and second, to examine the means of presentation in terms of a time frame, in accordance with the view that the presentation process is dynamic.

Noakes and Wilkins (2002) they measure the changes in media access and in how the Palestinian quest for independence was framed in the US news media during the time, they studied the coverage of Palestinian issues in the Associated Press and New York Times from 1984 to 1998. In this study, they choose seven frames to examine shifts in how Palestinian issues were framed in the US news media. Their seven frames are divided into two groups: negative frames and positive frames relative to the Palestinian interests. To analyze the framing of Palestinian issues they first coded each item as to whether the problem described appeared to be caused by Palestinians, Israelis, both or neither. their data indicate that these characterizations appeared frequently in US news media coverage of the Palestinians, and more often than positive characterizations. But the use of such negative frames in news items appears to have declined over time.

Maoz (2006), Studied the effect of news coverage on the evaluation of concessions offered in negotiation. Specifically, it examined the influence of a press report concerning the opponents' reaction to a proposed concession—stating that the opponent has rejected the concession or that the opponent has accepted it—on the evaluation of a concession in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In line with the research hypotheses, the findings demonstrated the operation of a reactive revaluation effect, whereby Israeli-Jewish respondents evaluated a compromise proposal more positively when it was framed in the news press report as rejected by the Palestinians than when the same compromise was framed as having been accepted by the Palestinians. This bias was also found to affect dovish respondents, while hawkish respondents were not affected by the news coverage concerning the opponents' response to a concession.

The previous studies reflect how media framing theory is important to know the way of framing news which related directly with the Israeli and Palestinian conflict in the Media outlets. In this study, the researcher will examine the news coverage of Ma'an News Agency from its web site to the last war between Israel and Palestine which started on 8 July until 26 of August 2014. In addition, the researcher will investigate two major frames (thematic and episodic) which proposed by Iyengar (1991), furthermore one generic frame (human interest) which created by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000). were identified by them as:

- Human Interest: The human-interest frame takes a human side or an emotional side to the presentation of an event, issue, or problem. Neuman, Just et al. (1992) called this as the

"human impact" frame, and, next to conflict, found it to be a communal frame in the news. In human interest terms framing news is one way to reach this. Such a frame mentions to an effort to personalize the news, dramatize the news, in demand to capture audience interest. (Semetko & Valkenburg 2000).

Furthermore, the researcher will investigate two major frames (thematic and episodic) which proposed by Iyengar (1991).

- Episodic frame: according to Iyengar (1991) the episodic news frame focusing on certain individuals or specific events.

- Thematic Frame: thematic news frames placing issues and events in general context at the societal or governmental level. Iyengar (1991)

5.2. Research Framework Design

The study is investigating one generic frame (human interest) which proposed by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000), and two major frames (thematic and episodic) which developed by Iyengar (1991), as dependent variables. The news coverage will be the independent variable. Fig1 below determine the relationships between the variables.
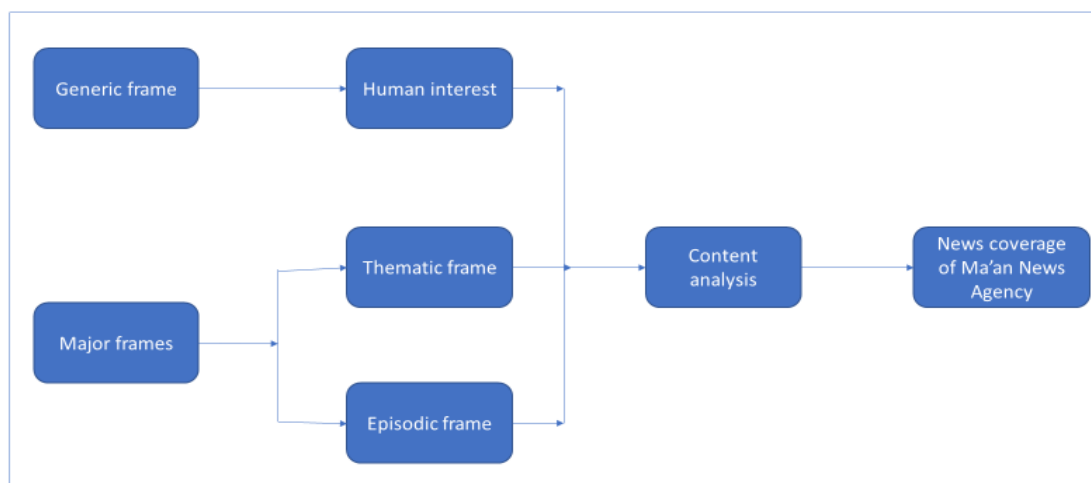

Figure 01. Research Framework Design

6. Research Methods

In this study, the researcher was used quantitative content analysis method for the data collection. Which are widely used by researchers, in such cases (Abdoulaye & Zanuddin 2017, Mudjirin & Zanuddin 2017, Zanuddin & Abdoulaye 2017, Zanuddin & Alyousef 2017, Zanuddin & Mudjirin 2017). Data collection contained news articles which related with the conflict between Israel and Palestine and

published in the online version of Ma'an News Agency. In a specific period of time during the war of 50 days between Israelis and Palestinian from July 8 until August 26, 2014. A total of 61 news articles were collected from the online version of Ma'an News Agency. Examination of the news published in the online version of Ma'an news agency during the war was based on one generic frame developed by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000), (human interest), and two major frames proposed by Iyengar (1991), (thematic and episodic). Coding book and coding sheet were designed as instruments for the research. The coding book has four sections, which is Section A: Basic Information, Section B: Human interest frame, Section C: Thematic frame, Section D: Episodic frame. Coding sheet and Coding Book News were translated into English in before coders examined it using the coding sheet variables. At the same time, coding sheet and coding book instruction were also translated to Arabic and was given to the Arabic coders in order to test for the reliability of the research instrument. For non-Arabic coders, the English set of coding sheet and coding instruction were given to them. Then, Inter-coder reliability test was carried out in order to gauge reliability and validity of research instrument using Hoslti formula as shown below. The Holsti test score showed high agreement between coders and this reflecting a high reliable research instrument with the Holsti CR score 0.98 or 98 per cent agreement among coders.

$$CR = \frac{2M}{N^1 + N^2}$$

where:

CR= Holsti's CR level of agreement

M= observed agreement

N_1= agreement of coder 1

N_2 = agreement of coder 2

$$CR = \frac{2(420)}{850}$$

$$CR = 0.98 \text{ or } 98\%$$

7. Findings

7.1. Ma'an news frequency per month during the war:

A total of 61 news collected from the online version of Ma'an News Agency during the 50 days of the war. The news level regularly increased during the last month of the war. The reason of last month get a higher news coverage of the conflict between the parties is refers to increasing violence in last days of this war, on the other hand, the negotiation for piece started again between parties.

Table 01. Ma'an News frequency per month during war

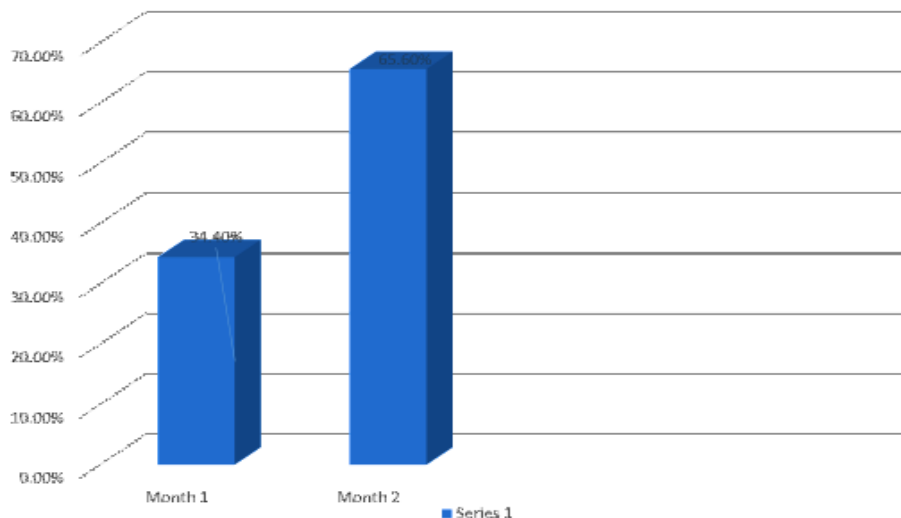| 2014			
Period	**Month no.**	**Frequency**	**Percentage %**
From 08/07 to 31/07	Month 1	21	34.4%
From 01/08 to 26/08	Month 2	40	65.6%
Total	**61**		**100%**

Figure 02. Ma'an Total News Coverage during Palestinian – Israeli Conflict 2014

7.2. Human Interest frame

7.2.1. Civilians issues:

Almost 45 percent of the news focused on civilian issues as seen in Table 3. The result shows that the frequency of news which included information about Palestinian civilian (45.9%) more than the news which included information about Israeli civilian (34.4%)

Table 02. Human Interest frame (Civilians issue)

Variables	yes	percentage	No	Percentage
Does the news article include civilians issue? (Palestinian civilians)	28	45.9%	33	54.1%
Does the news article include civilians issue? (Israeli civilians)	21	34.4%	40	65.6%
Does the news article include civilians issue? (Unknown or other nationality)	-	-	59	96.7%

7.2.2. Women issues:

The news frequencies also included women issues. The results show that the news which related with Palestinian women issues counted as much as 23 percent while the coverage towards the Israeli women issues not included shown in Table 3.

Table 03. Human Interest frame (Civilians issue)

Variables	yes	percentage	No	Percentage
Does the news article reflect the women suffering in this war? Palestinian women	14	23%	47	77%
Does the news article reflect the women suffering in this war? Israeli women	-	-	61	100%
Does the news article reflect the women suffering in this war? Unknown or other nationality	-	-	61	100%

7.2.3. Children issues:

The news frequencies included children issues. The results show that the news which related with Palestinian children issues counted as much as 16.4 percent while the coverage towards the Israeli children issues only at 3.3 percent shown in Table 4.

Table 04. Human Interest frame (Civilians issue)

Variables	yes	percentage	No	Percentage
Does the news article reflect the children suffering in this war? Palestinian children	10	16.4%	51	83.6%
Does the news article reflect the children suffering in this war? Israeli children	2	3.3%	59	96.7%
Does the news article reflect the children suffering in this war? Unknown or other nationality	-	-	61	100%

7.3. Thematic frame

Table 5, show that more than 37% of news structured as thematic frames. 55.7% of news placing issues and events in general context at the societal or governmental level. Almost 37.7 percent of news articles focus on trends over time. More than 55.7 percent of the news articles include the public (the surrounding environment, public institutions. The news coverage stressed more than 59 percent in their coverage to give emphasis on the articles considered the audience as citizens.

Table 05. Thematic frame

Variables	Yes	percentage	No	Percentage
Does the article place issues and events in general context at the societal or governmental level?	34	55.7%	27	44.3%
Does the article focus on trends over time?	23	37.7%	38	62.3%
Does the article include the public (the surrounding environment, public institutions)?	34	55.7%	27	44.3%

Does the article highlight how to fix the conditions that led to the problem?	14	23%	47	77%
Does the article consider the audience as citizens?	36	59%	22	36.1%
Does the article ask for better policies?	19	13.1%	42	68.9%
Does the article identify shortcomings at the community or systems level that have contributed to the problem?	9	14.8%	52	85.2%

7.4. Episodic frame:

Table 6, show that an around 12.8% of news structured as episodic frames. 37.7% of news focus on an individual or specific event. Almost 13.1% percent of news articles reduce life to a series of disconnected episodic, random events or case studies.

Table 06. Episodic frame

Variables	yes	percentage	No	Percentage
Does the article focus on an individual or specific event?	23	37.7%	38	62.3%
Does the article focus on the private realm (an individuals' psychology, or behaviors within in a family)?	4	6.6%	57	93.4%
Does the article highlight how to fix the person experiencing a problem?	-	-	61	100%
Does the article would more likely approach the audience as consumers ("news you can use")?	4	6.6%	57	93.4%
Does the article reduce life to a series of disconnected episodes, random events or case studies?	8	13.1%	53	86.9%

8. Conclusion

During the time the Israeli and Palestinian conflict, considered as an important issue in the world for decades. This case attracted the attention from local and international Media. From the detailed content analysis of conflict issue coverage, it can be concluded that news coverage related to this specific conflict between Israel and Palestine in 2014 has been increased in the last week from 18/08 to 26/08/2014. Therefore, Ma'an News Agency used thematic frames more than episodic frames in their news coverage of the 50 days' war between Israeli and Palestinian. However, human interest frame for specific issues like (civilians, women, and children) contributed significantly as the voice for the Palestinian.

Framing effects are stronger on aggregate future expectations compared with their effects on aggregate current attitudes, Sheafer and Dvir-Gvirsman (2010) stated that when they did their study on the Israel society. In 2002 (Noakes and Wilkins) measured the changes in media access and in how the

Palestinian quest for independence was framed in the US news media during the time, they studied the coverage of Palestinian issues in the Associated Press and New York Times from 1984 to 1998. In this study, they choose seven frames to examine shifts in how Palestinian issues were framed in the US news media. Their seven frames are divided into two groups: negative frames and positive frames relative to the Palestinian interests. To analyze the framing of Palestinian issues they first coded each item as to whether the problem described appeared to be caused by Palestinians, Israelis, both or neither. their data indicate that these characterizations appeared frequently in US news media coverage of the Palestinians, and more often than positive characterizations. But the use of such negative frames in news items appears to have declined over time. In conclusion, the author agrees with the previous studies which stated that the media outlet in Arab world find their way to support Palestinian people, by highlighting their issue and give them a longer time to express their suffering. In contrast, American and Western media play the same role with the Israelis. As the researcher found that most of the previous studies focused on the foreign media, whether Arab, American or others when discussed the media coverage of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. In contrast, a few studies have examined the local Palestinian or Israeli Media.

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