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Comparing Media Bias in the Coverage of Israeli–Palestinian Conflict: A Quantitative Content Analysis of CNN and BBC

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Abstract

Media especially mainstream television plays an important role, particularly in warzone coverage of events transferring the spectators from the heart of the land of clash which produces straight influence for generating masses judgment worldwide.

The Israel-Palestine conflict has regained public attention from all over the world with various opinions due to the collision of the war being displayed by the international media. The research has revealed the biased media coverage of the mainstream international media focusing on the warfare imposed by Israel in Palestine.

CNN and BBC both the leading international media organizations have deputed teams in GAZA for the coverage of the battleground for the information of the general public. However, this investigative exploration addresses the current divergence of coverage which is found prejudiced and unethical. Influenced journalism highlighted the misery of Israel and Jews rather than explaining the whole circumstances of the warfare. The significance of the study is to explore the baseness of the leading media organizations within the time phase of almost 60 days (8 October to December 08) by focusing on the headlines of web content.

Framing theory allows the researcher to measure or suggest how something is happening that has been framed or presented to the audience. Aiming to check the news content frame by frame, the theory has been used to get more purified results from the research. The fastidious research is full of different news frames utilized through reporting of affairs aired by CNN & BBC with its results.

***Keyword**: Israel – Palestine, Media Coverage, Warzone,*

Introduction

Amongst some of the most long-lasting conflicts Israeli-Palestinian is on the top for its complexity and continuity of the warfare over the landscape of the tertiary. It is claimed by the historian that the baseline of this war is not ethnic but more than that the land which both parties declare for its ownership (Dowty, 2008). A part from all chronological perspectives either it was political, socio-cultural or ethnic unsimilarity, the entire region has sink into the bloodshed. The rise and fall of the war and peace is not permanent but cautiously going on since many years (UN, 2021).

It is about two decades ago when the rift arose after long while which went long from 2008 to 2012 but it was just around the central part of "GAZA" because of forceful displacement of the Palestinians from East Jerusalem. They have launched a mega demonstration on 06th of May 2021 against the Israel's Supreme Court judgment to drive out Palestinian from "Sheikh Jarrah" exist in central "Jerusalem". Within no time the Israeli military forces have attacked over the demonstration and dispersed them immediately from the sight of "Al-Aqsa Mosque" during Ramadan. The tension grow up and the exchange of missiles and fires have began from both sides in GAZA. The Israeli forces fully loaded with artily have made their best to attack on Palestine. Resultantly, heavy causalities of innocent homeless Palestinians been observed in the city (Britannica, 2021).

The current warfare which was been imposed by the Israel on the Palestine drag the concentration of the world and the media of glob played a primary role in disseminating classified framework through which every living life get to know about the happening and real senesce of the event (Hodkinson, 2011).

Review of Literature

The mass media and its outlets have aired reports and news of international conflicts to measuring the perception of the end users about the reality, facts and results of the war, above all to conceive the diplomatic interference on the issue. However, these organizations actually "construct" the news rather "report" which referred news framing. It's a process of "pick and chose" content and highlighted some of its segments through projecting a particular explanation, assessment or resolution on the subject (Entman, 2004, p. 5).

The basic element of the news articles considerably consist of news headline, featured lead and images. Newsmen always work on the generalization of the information rather to summaries the news text or the headline (van Dijk, 1989). So, different stories or the news presented by the various organizations with different meaning and perception at the same time which play or create variant frame of thinking among the people. The relationship between journalists and their organizations shows their belief and concepts on conflictive issues (Dor, 2004).

Media attention and news content can be scrutinize through "Framing" depends on its popularity among the masses and their attention towards any explicit aspect of the issue or conflict. The conflict or the issues discursively practice usually by the journalists to explain the characters and events during the warzone (Evans, 2010).

As far as the objectivity of this particular study is concern, explore the information been shared among the masses by the web content producers direct or indirect happing in Israel-Palestine surroundings. Aiming to extend the readership or viewership reporters, editors may employ "evaluative

appearance, strengthening, immediacy, terminology, and emotional comparison" to make news headlines and featured leads images (Fang, 2001, p.34).

Historical Perspective

The conflict isn't new as it was been maintained by the British in 19th century, allowing Palestinians to reside and grow in the desert. There wasn't even little thought about this conflict but after first World-War (WWI) the British issued the Balfour Declaration and gave the authority to migrated Jews over Palestinians who were settled there since long. The entire land now becomes the state of Israel (Harms and Ferry, 2012).

Initially the Arabs resisted against this unlawful action of the British. After World War II, in 1967 a week long combat between Arab-Israeli was fought for unethical occupation on West Bank, East Jerusalem and GAZA strip. It is considered as very first confrontation between the migrated occupiers Jews and settled Palestinian. (Peterson, 2014, p.26).

From that time to till now the ups and downs in the relations and the rifts even war were started which is now became an open warfare in the territory. Thousands of civilians have been died; millions have been displaced, while living is surviving without food and shelter (Dowty, 2008).

The number of death tolls since 2008 to 2020 as reported by the (UNOCHA) was approximately more than six thousands while about more than 6 millions of Palestinians become homeless into refugees (UNRWA, 2021).

The maximum causalities among the innocent Palestinians because they are residing there while less are occupied Jews. Due to the fact that Jews have fully loaded with resources have established "Jewish settlement program" particularly for their own people not for others. The makeshift arrangements been managed on the roadside in protection of the army men. (Harms and Ferry, 2012) As per UN, the entire action of Israel as an occupier of the land and their stay in Palestinian territory since 1967 is well thought-out as "violation under international law" (UN, 2021).

Figure1

Atlas of Israel-Palestine.



Source: Visualize Palestine (2015)

This series of clashes turn into War between both groups has been grown higher due to the unconditional support of US to Israel since long. The issue can be resolved through negotiation in great favor of the real owners and rulers of the land but unfortunately the strong hold of the Jews in UN with about 84% recognitions of the members in their support while the remaining which little in numbers bit shaky for the vote towards Palestine. About 193 members states in UN in which 162 are against the Palestinian and rest of the states go with the wind. These states are politically or economically rely on Israel, the 30th largest economy of the world lead the globe as per its own way. While the entire Arab region has the only this dispute which not been resolved yet after WWII due to the same political influence (Zayani, 2005, p. 171). The myth of this complex nature conflict is actually based on religious, socio-cultural differences exists in the two parties since long. The mixed ethnic, socio- cultural characteristics provoke them to resist each others. The Christianity and its dominance linked with the "West" and the US, while the Jews considered them elite and above them all (Alshahrani, 2021).

News Viewership of BBC and CNN

While ''both sides of any political conflict have forever stable in its judgment'' Global media '' look into these structural and realistic divergence, and what communal, intellectual, and chronological inspirations may accountable for their manifestation in typical publications'' (Peterson, 2014).

As said by the "Alshahrani 2021" even as media all through the planet increasingly triumph new-fangled elevation in believer unparalleled political sincerity, the excellence of rumor coverage of the US typical media dropping its trustworthiness with the passage of time. It was fact that news preference for any incomplete news attain is much common in U.S. (CNN) as compared to the (BBC) U.K. (Hallin and Macini 2004).

The people driven "two-party or multi-party political system" in US on the far-left and far-right always prefer and rely on partial news sources. In U.S. about 63% people never switch from CNN to Fox News, while rest of 37% have left to watch it. The situation is entirely changed in UK where the viewer tends to prefer neutralize segment of news (Reuters, 2021).

This contention embody various irritating issues in Western social orders' over a wide span of time associations with the Other, bringing about an inclusion that characterized as "vigorously weighed down with imagery, feeling, and soul-looking; and routinely mimicked into an embodiment of the world's concerns". Thus, news on this point addresses many laid out standards, both with regards to inclusion and concerning cultural perspectives, across a large number of networks all over the planet (Segev and Blondheim, 2010, p. 82).

Rationale of Study

Main objective of exploration is sincerely examination and comparison of content either literary or visual talk by amplifying framing on Israeli-Palestinian issue of two media news channels BBC and CNN.

For the reason, 250 news, featured lead footages accumulated connecting 8th of October to 08th of December 2023. This specific period included conflict escalation and little more ceasefire been observed in the battlefield. The enthusiasm to work in this specific timeframe lies in the researcher's attention to evaluate the salience of media exposure in high and low violent war sessions.

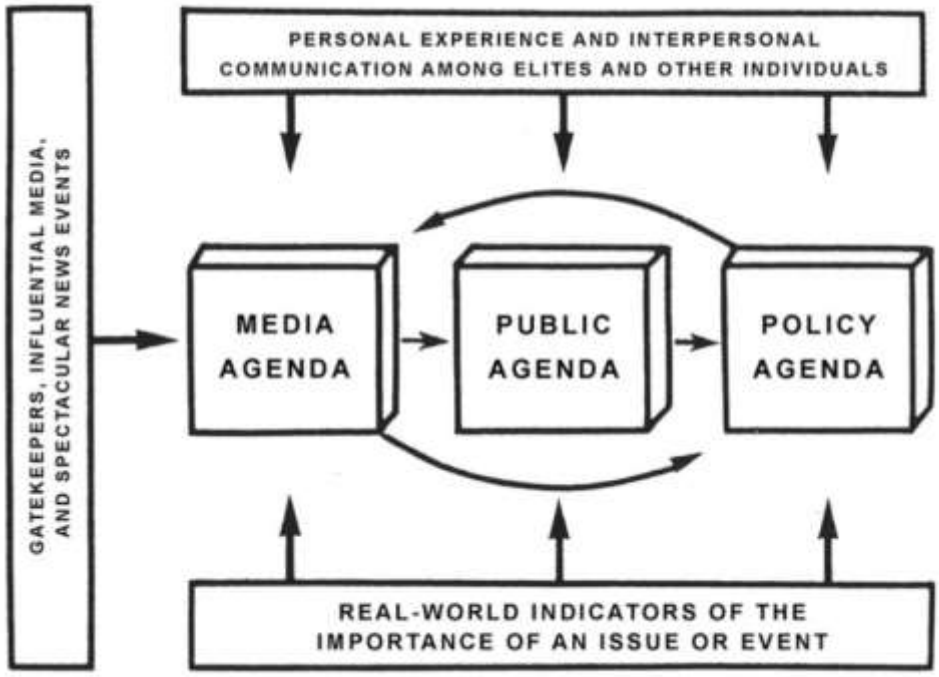
Hypothetical Structure

In theoretical framework will explain the theories relevant to the Mass communication and relevant concepts which depict the layout of the research study. Primarily the idea of agenda-setting with brief of the framing theory comprises of its process and amplification on media outlets.

The conjectural skeleton comprises of perception of agenda-setting, framing and its demonstration. The functional method of research is joint approach of textual framing analysis with method for analyzing news bulletin. (Pan & Kosicki 1993) Through exercising a blend of quantitative and qualitative approaches, the intention of work is to untie the discursive practices in work by newsmen to generate media frames in the illustration of the ongoing quarrel (Barthes 1972).

Figure 2

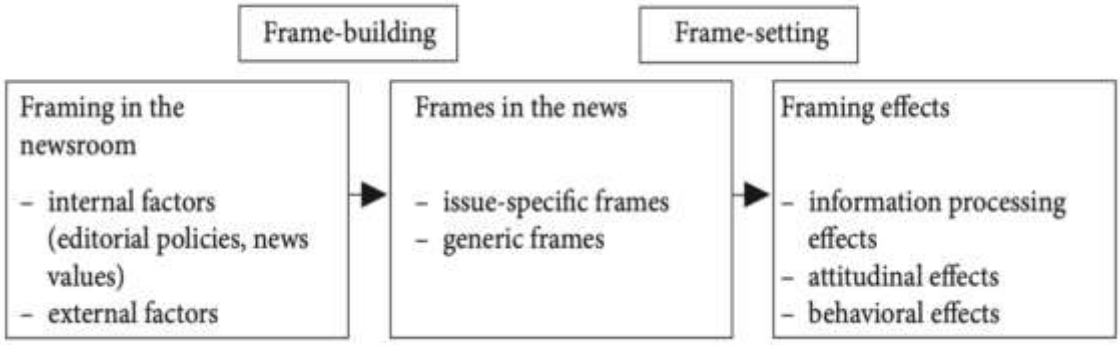
Three Major Mechanism of Dearing & Rogers Theory 1996



Research Methodology

This study utilizes the process of framing to cram textual and image discourses to signify the Palestinian-Israel brawl. In this segment the researcher has introduced the common perception of "framing method" with its approaches of analyzing the news headlines and bulletin. Furthermore, the procedure of information collection, sampling and distinct set of decisive factors to take the content.

Frames facilitate the people to put- in-order and interpret information aiming to make sense of the world around them. Goffman, E. (1974). It is usually called ''schemata of interpretations'' or ''frame'' let public to place, distinguish, recognize, tag, after this, characterized frames as "persistent selection, emphasis, and exclusion"



Theorist narrates news discourse fabrication that frames permits the media to ''process a lot of data''. One step forward, device and explicate as the ''medial arrange proposal or storyline that offer the meaning'' (Gitlin, 1980 p. 143).

A method allow to generate and interpret news discourse with its own feature of discourse is "Framing". It works on both side of the news or information within a firm context of any particular aspect of issue which publically receive more concentration. Resultantly, the particular frame plays a vital role in inspiring the people for perceiving and taking decision for the issue (Kahneman & Tversky, 1984). Another segment of the framing which works as '' cognitive device used in indoctrination, deciphering, and recovering'' (Pan & Kosicki, 1993).

Research Questions

The intellectual has suggested following these research questions are posed

RQ: How the international Media organizations CNN and BBC represented the Israeli-Palestinian clash?

RQ . What textual frames been used for producing the headline news?

RQ . What visual frames been selected to represent the battlefield?

RQ . What resemblance, variations appeared in the media framing from both CNN & BBC?

Hypothesis

H1. CNN will portray the single sided feature image of the battle field.

H2. BBC will expose the mega representations both Israel-Palestine.

H3. CNN will focus on the special segmentation of news headlines.

H4. BBC will maintain content and footages on the basis of on ground reality.

H5. Both BBC and CNN will have variant aspects of news frames in the phase of battle.

Data Collection

The experiential data selected to examine the study is unruffled of news including headlines and featured lead images been available between specified date's lies on 8th of December 08 2023 the online web news website BBC and CNN. The exact time scale sample cover up the boom of violence including partial span of ceasefire. The impetus to chose of phase lies of researcher interest look into the deep comparison of the salience and type of themes accredited by these news organizations during coverage of the clash.

A collection of 300 web-news, articles and featured images was collected from the BBC and CNN (free-access). The researcher has applied purposive examining strategies to accumulate articles of 2023 Israeli-Palestinian squabble produce within specified time. As to assume the news reports with allusion to the community and position concerned, the researcher selected the query terms - Israel, Israeli(s), Land of Palestine, and Palestinian(s).

Data Analysis

The data is examined into two ladders for which initially the researcher has managed a textual analysis through following by analyzing the featured lead images which exposed off during clash. Here the researcher scholar has applied a mishmash of both qualitative and quantitative approaches to analyze the collected data including relying on miner statistical tests on available statistics.

Textual Analysis

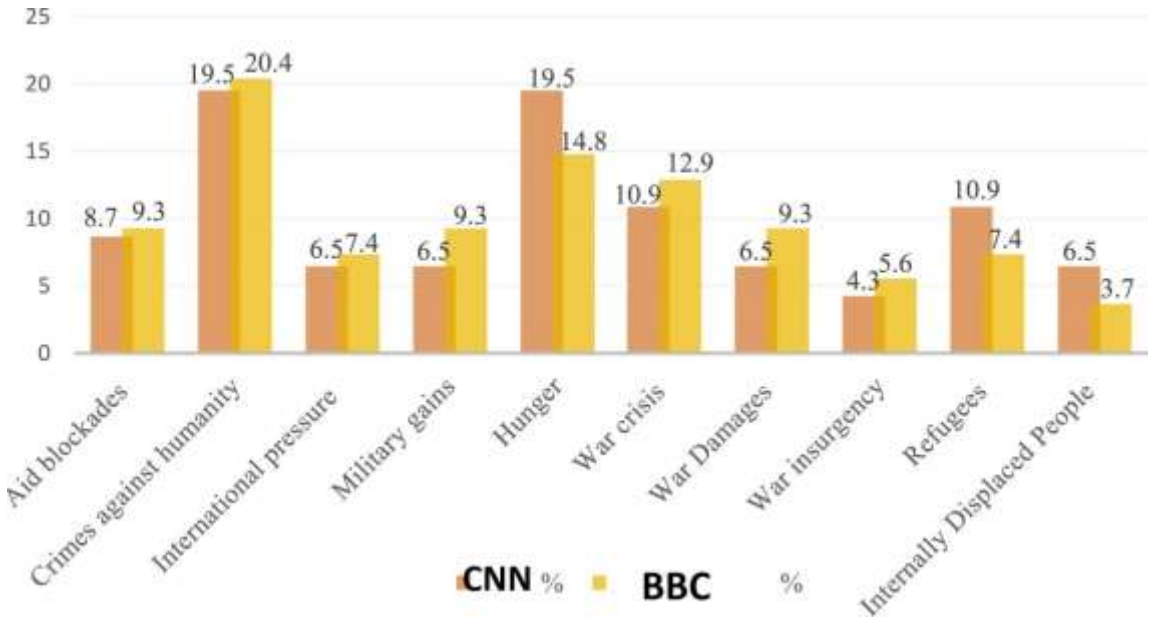
The researcher has also explored the linguistic test in the headlines via same technique to unearth that how finicky nouns, descriptive words, action words, and syntactic designs contributed in forming frames of coverage during the battle.

Table 1

Sr. NO	Textual Analysis of Cable News Network (CNN)
1.	Hamas says US sending carrier strike group is "aggression against Palestinian people" https://edition.cnn.com/middleeast/live-news/israel-hamas-gaza- attack-10-08-23/index.html
2.	Israeli officer dies in militant attack near Lebanon border
3.	Up to 150 hostages in Gaza as Israel aims to "obliterate Hamas terrorist capabilities," UN envoy says https://edition.cnn.com/middleeast/live-news/israel-hamas-gaza-attack-10-09-23/index.html
4.	More than 330,000 people have been displaced in Gaza since Israel began its bombardment, UN says
5.	Biden administration official clarifies president, admin have not seen pictures or verified reports of children beheaded by Hamas. **https://edition.cnn.com/middleeast/live-news/israel-hamas-war-gaza-10-11-23/index.html**
6.	Israel says no electricity, water or fuel to Gaza until Hamas returns hostages
7.	Blinken arrives in Tel Aviv for meetings with Israeli, Palestinian officials**https://edition.cnn.com/middleeast/live-news/israel-news-hamas-war-10-12-23/h_a699f25d96ae2f0053d7bcdffda914a0**
8.	Biden spoke with families of missing Americans for about 45 minutes, father tells CNN
9.	Israeli military strikes Hezbollah target in southern Lebanon after infiltration and fire on IDF drone https://edition.cnn.com/middleeast/live-news/israel-news-hamas-war-10-13-23/index.html
10.	11. US announces deployment of fighter jets to the Middle Easthttps://edition.cnn.com/middleeast/live-news/israel-news-hamas-war-10-14-23/index.html

Table 2

Sr. No.	Textual Analysis of British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC)
	Israel-Gaza war: Palestinians who fled to Rafah fear Israeli assault
	Gaza residents surviving off animal feed and rice as food dwindles https://www.bbc.com/news/world/middle_east
	BBC reporter in Gaza: People here are traumatised and exhausted https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-67643746
	'I'm helpless' - Gaza doctor tells of desperate situation https://www.bbc.com/news/av/world-middle-east-67644334
	Fears for displaced Gazans as winter approaches and diseases spread https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-67573065
	Eight Israeli hostages freed by Hamas in Gaza https://www.bbc.com/news/live/world-middle-east-67562488
	Untreated diseases could kill more than bombings in Gaza, WHO warns https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-67554394
	Israel-Hamas truce in Gaza extended for two days, Qatar says https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-67542209
	Netanyahu says Israel 'not successful' at minimising Gaza casualties but blames Hamas https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-67449383
	Al-Shifa Hospital director in Gaza says no water or oxygen left https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-67442045



Visual Analysis

The visual edges perceived while camera work changed power which should be investigated by the analysts and researchers. It is essential because images play a vital role in attractive the recipient's mind and their sentiments which relate to the pictorial work (Barthes, 1972). While in the semiological perusing of visual signs/pictures bolt deciphering, explaining, analyzing, and briefing the significance of photo in the symbolic representation as an integral feature of the research. The process exemplifies a symbolic interaction of denotative and connotative meanings in research. The pictorial structure comprises of two real-time messages: one lacking code; which signify, second with code that is being connoted. Diagramed icons that frame an item within depth of its cultural relations are also covert structures of meaning (Livingstone, 2005).

Figure 1

Examples of sensational images used on CNN.

Source: CNN



Figure 2

Examples of Sensational Images on BBC.Source: BBC



Figure 3

Example of Portrayal of Airstrikes on CNN.



Source: CNN

Figure 4

Example of Portrayals of Airstrikes on BBC.

Source: BBC



Figure 5

Example Portrays of Israeli Authorities and Palestinian Nationals.



Figure 6
Examples of Israeli Authorities and Palestinian Demostrants on CNN.
Source: CNN



Figure 7
Example of Israeli Authorities and Palestinian Militants on BBC.
Source: BBC



Figure 8
Example of Portrayals of Destruction on CNN.
Source: CNN



Figure 09
Source: BBC
Examples of Portrayals of Women and Children.

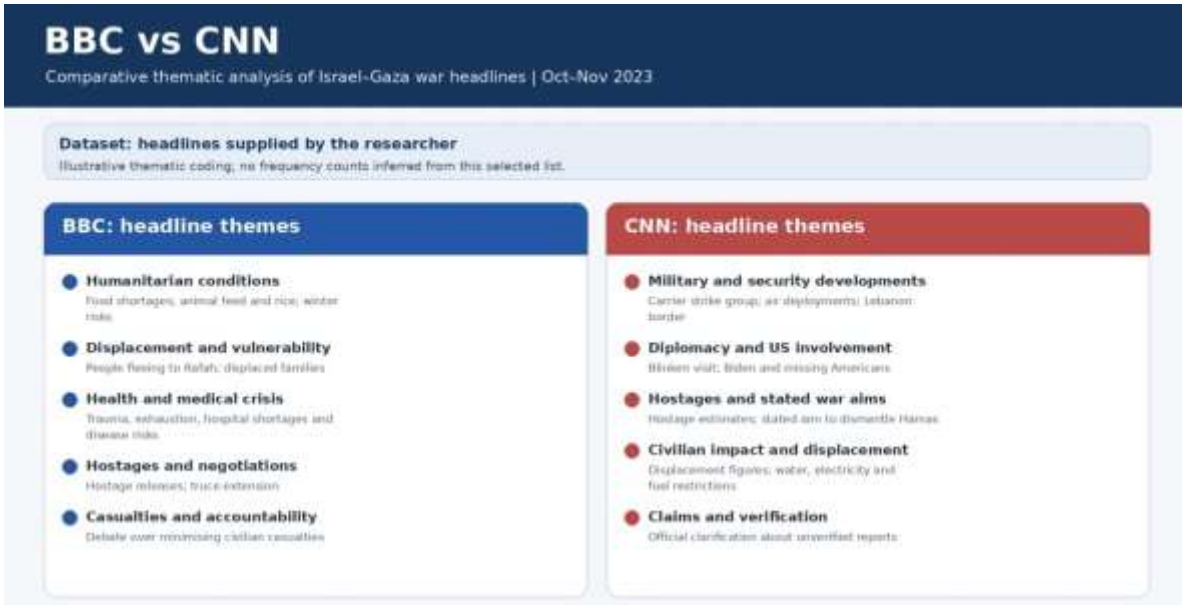


Figure 10
Examples of Images of Negotiations between Israeli and American Politicians.



Figure 11
Example of Images of Joe Biden on CNN.
Source: CNN





Discussion and Conclusion

The scale of this meticulous research essentially restricted to CNN, BBC to demonstrate the ''Western'' perspective rather to introduce the representation of local point of view, even though the work domain allow to capture all other frames of study related to the topic which off-course demands extra more effort with maximum time and concentration which defiantly drags the attention of the research scholars for further exercise and work on the similar issue till the end of the battle.

As far as the studies' findings is concern, the researcher has made its best to explore in depth to find out the result which been explained in its hypothesis of the study. The news and image intensity been portrayed using various frame of references as per the agenda or say influence of any kind.

Apart from all above the core responsibility of the international media is to inform the masses either in east or west, north or south but what the end came out after the exploration of the entire work is as same what was expected and assumed in the study.

The research study verified that illustrative formation can decrease or increase strength of the message sent to the masses on mega scale. The majority of the snapshots intensify the message connoted through the written words utilized in the headlines. Similarly, prominent and vulnerable pictorial communication which news networks creates, claimed numerous of them can supersede the content of communication through a news headline. (Messaris & Abrahams 2001)

Leading news-media outlets including CNN & BBC make its best to convey the information not only in written form but imposingly using the image which impact far better than the headline or simple news.

During the study it was revealed that the two frames were recognized in both headlines and supporting visuals. The headlines-news and associated pictures initially discovered that discourse in the subject of the dispute is primarily composed of war frame including of visuals and headlines representing a broad range of subject coming from warfare, brutal acts, casualties, and death toll. A thrilling depiction

in the news of the conflict is the word used by each media to refer to the conflict that is 'Israel - Palestine conflict', while the BBC named it the 'Israel Gaza conflict'.

CNN angled news and its relevant content for its own specific and focused viewers who have their own frame of reference relate to the Jews, considered as the most miserable resident of the GAZA. As revealed in the study through measuring one the frame that partial and controversial news which relate to the symbolic perception of the western audience been diffused among them.

As a matter of fact, CNN bit more reluctant to portray the death and casualties of the innocent Palestinians while endorse it with the specific organization which is practically in the field of service there in the Palestine. While such frame of reference also describe that BBC has made and produced live session of conversation from both parties been involved in the war.

When looking at the militants it was also been revealed that some of the news precisely used the name of the organization while the CNN always pursue even a minor movement of this specific team of militants. BBC keep it in little manageable way and release the information after confirmation being existing part of the live reporting at the territory.

News-Frame of war revealed on CNN & BBC wasn't as versatile as it represented through reports of current affairs (ex. a tower collapsing). Both media network keep up with almost 74 types of factual and impartial method of production during the conflict. Snapshot portrayed personal loss and expression of pain wasn't heavily implemented nor mentioned in headlines. It can be concluded that the war frame on the two networks appeared in a style of more neutral event reporting rather than in a more personal and possibly sensational approach.

The frame exclusively named and presented like demonstration, negotiation, solidarity or ceasefire been in used both CNN & BBC during the research time frame. But CNN usually related it with U.S presence and participation till now and may be till the end of the war. BBC expressed all these elements with complete versions from entire aspects of the happenings rather to make it more sensational for its viewers.

The research has discovered that the subject or the theme presented in it is the demonstrations, consultation, foreign arbitration and solidarity with various fatalities of the conflict which is still continued. Next, the study revealed structural differences in the demonstration been utilized in adopting the news-headlines and its relevant imagery which issued and aired predominantly in English language. Third, found little more stick to formal reporting approach focused on exclusive information of the reader's influence. It is fact that the CNN never cross its limit which is predefined as per formulation of its policy while BBC performed with its own multi-featured accessibilities and formulations. Last which is actually the base line of the research observations that the results shows and proved the disparity with variations in the news patterns mainly reflects and respond to each media organization's social and political assumptions and practices.

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