Arab-Israel Normalisation: A content Analysis of Palestinian online news coverage on UAE and Morocco recognition of Israel

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ABSTRACT

This quantitative content analysis examined the local Palestinian outlets coverage of the normalization issue between UAE and Morocco with Israel. The study samples have two periods, the first is regarding UAE's normalization, the samples collected from August 13, 2020, until September 15, 2020. The second period is Morocco's normalization, the samples collected from December 10, 2020, until December 22, 2020.

The object of the study was aimed to compare the three Palestinian outlets' coverage, framing, tone of voice, and sources to define which government, party, and independent sectors' editorial positions either converge with or diverge from one another of the UAE and Morocco normalization.

Findings affirmed that the UAE normalization issue has received extensive media coverage by the three local Palestinian online news outlets. On the contrary, the coverage of Morocco normalization by the three outlets was limited, thus the Palestinian Information Center (PIC) Hamas party news outlet and Wafa government-controlled news outlet had the most attention in coverage of the UAE normalization issue, but their coverage was limited with the Morocco normalization. The data analysis uncovered that in the first and second period, the conflict frame was commonly used by the three outlets.

In addition, the UAE's and Morocco gained the positive coverage from Donia Alwatan, an independent outlet, but the UAE's and Israel received a negative coverage from the Wafa and (PIC) outlets. In the first period, the three news outlets relied on the party operatives' source, but the politician's source was the dominated in the second period.

Keywords: UAE, Morocco, Palestinian conflict, normalization, framing, sources.

1. Introduction

The Palestinian – Israeli conflict, which has raged for more than a century over a small piece of land that Jews name Eretz Israel and Palestinians call Falastin, is one of the world's most intractable conflict (Arqoub & Ozad, 2019; Kriesberg, 2009), occupying the spotlight of international politics and the media (Shamir and Shamir, 2007).

As the historians have disputed over the true beginning of the Palestinian - Israeli conflict regarding the land claims and national nationalism, the solution to this issue seems far-fetched, despite the past testimony of temporary peace periods and bloody violence (Miaari & Calì, 2020).

The Ottoman ruled Palestine about 400 years beginning in the late 19th century (Benny, 2001), which is when the Palestinian-Israeli conflict's roots may be found (Hassenfeld, 2018). However, Rolef and Sela (2002) asserted that the discussion between the Jewish population of Europe and, to a lesser extent, the Middle East regarding immigration to settle the land of Palestine and the re-establishment of the Jewish Nation—which has been a part of Jewish religious thought for more than a millennium—began only between 1859 and the 1880s. Khalidi (2013), on the other hand, suggested that the conflict began as intercommunal violence between Israelis and Palestinians in Mandatory Palestine in 1920 and escalated into full-scale warfare in the 1947–1948 civil war. But Al Jazeera Media Network published a timeline spanning more than two centuries and explained the dramatic chain of events that led to the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine. The timeline noted that the beginning of the Palestinian - Israeli conflict was in 1799 when Napoleon offers Palestine as a homeland to Jews (Al Jazeera, 2015).

In the modern-day, the Palestinian – Israeli conflict is not only based on land claims, instead, its context is also essentially rooted in regional polarizing and complex contemporary politics. Further complicating this matter is the senior level of international interventions by global organizations such as the Security Council or United Nations, and other important players like the United States of America (USA), Iran, Arab countries, and numerous other players (McClellan, 2015).

Newman and Peters (2013) argued that the efforts to resolve the Palestinian – Israeli conflict had featured prominently on the global agenda since its beginning. They described that the international community leaders (e.g., The United Nations and the USA) had consumed a sizable time and energy to bridge the disputes between Israel and the Palestinians. Nevertheless, despite these many efforts, the Palestinian – Israeli conflict continues, with little hope of an end in sight. Some analysts that covered this conflict would include these three headings as follows: the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, the Arab - Israeli conflict, and the Islamic-Jewish conflict, which indicates that it is not only between Palestinian and Israeli in the small piece of land, but Arabs and Muslims are implicated (Inbari, 2018).

The comprehensiveness of this conflict and not confined to the Palestinians (Inbari, 2018), allowing some countries and players to search for unilateral solutions or relations with Israel (such as UAE, Bahrain, Sudan, and Morocco). As the US, Israel, and the United Arab Emirates issued a joint official proclamation on August 13, 2020, stating that Israel and the UAE would begin a political process of the full restoration of relations (US Embassy, 2020). A month later, on September 11, Bahrain followed by Morocco joined the Emiratis by announcing its intention to normalize relations with Israel. Many people in the Middle East were completely unprepared for the timeliness of the so-called Abraham Accords between the three Arab nations and Israel (Guzansky & Marshall, 2020).

A turning point in Middle East international politics has been reached with the announcement of the restoration of diplomatic ties between Israeli occupation stat and the (UAE), as it represents Israel's first new regional cooperation since its 1994 agreement with Jordan (Fulton & Yellinek, 2021). This watershed moment has caused many events, including many interesting social, cultural, and religious stories, to the attention of local, Arab, regional, Islamic, and international media, but

often complex and tragic, and has carried persistent allegations of media bias among the parties (Stawicki, 2009).

The current study will focus on the local Palestinian media coverage of the normalization issue between UAE and Morocco with Israel, referring to Abraham Accords on August 13, 2020. The study aims to examine the coverage, the frames, the tone of voice, and the identity of sources used by the local Palestinian online outlets of different orientations, namely the government-controlled (Wafa), the Hamas's Islamic party of the Palestinian Information Center (PIC) and the independent Palestinian most popular online outlets (Donia Al-Watan).

1.1 Normalization of Conflict
The term 'normalization' has been used to describe initiatives aimed at recognizing Israel's statehood and establishing 'normal' relations between Israelis and Palestinians since the start of the Oslo peace process in 1993 (Albzour et.al, 2019). While the Palestinian Authority has backed normalization measures, many internal and international critics have claimed that they help to prolong the occupation and its repercussions. However, in 2002, the Arab Peace Initiative proposed that the Arab world normalize relations with Israel in exchange for Israel's complete withdrawal from the occupied territories (including the West Bank, Gaza, the Golan Heights, and Lebanon), and the establishment of a Palestinian state with the capital in East Jerusalem. This study examines how Palestinian local media understand normalization after the Arabs gave up their conditions in establishing a Palestinian state, and to what degree of coverage of 'normalizing' relations with Israel.

The Palestinian - Israeli conflict is a Middle Eastern issue, that also involves Arabs and Jews around the world (Harms and Ferry, 2017). The Palestinian and Arab-Israeli conflict has become a pervasive and often misunderstood- subject of our contemporary culture and political landscape (Lesch, 2018). It is vital to remember as a point of reference that the region's past history has no direct causal impact on the current conflict. The actual focus, however, must be on the era after World War I and up to the current day. Understanding the political events and attempts at a peaceful conclusion to the dispute during a certain period is crucial (Tucker and Roberts, 2008, p4). The focal political events of the Palestinian and Arab-Israeli conflict started when the British foreign secretary, Arthur Balfour, released a declaration on November 2nd, 1917, to establish a national home for the Jewish people in Palestine.

The Balfour Declaration is without a doubt the most divisive declaration in the history of the Palestine–Israel conflict, and it continues to reverberate today (Hourani, 1991, p13).

At the end of World War I (1919), it had been agreed that the Middle East was to be the sphere of influence for Britain and France, but Britain maintained certain areas deemed vital to British interests such as Palestine which was excluded from independence in the letters between Sharif Hussein of Mecca and the British high commissioner in Cairo, Sir Henry McMahon (Harms and Ferry, 2017). In the summer of 1929, the shed violence happened in Jerusalem's holy land between Jews and Palestinian that then spread to other towns. Resulting in the deaths of 133 Jews and 116 Palestinian. Then, from 1936 to 1939 the Palestinian revolt erupted, protesting the British oppression and Jewish immigration to Palestine.

With Germany's invasion of Poland on September 1, 1939, the Second World War began. The next five years witnessed unprecedented levels of damage and bloodshed in the world's history. Increased Jewish immigration was one of the consequences in Palestine. However, the core of the Palestine–Israel conflict occurred between 1947 and 1967 (Smith, 2010). A two-state solution's division plan was approved by the UN in 1947. The Arab leaders rejected the proposal, which was approved by the Jewish leadership, and Britain refused to carry it out. The Jewish Agency for Israel proclaimed the establishment of the State of Israel in accordance with the proposed UN plan on the eve of the final British withdrawal (DiCarlo, 2020).

The war between Arab states and Israel erupted in 1948 after Israel declared independence. The conflict officially began when the British Mandate for Palestine ended on May 14th, 1948. A coalition of Arab states, including Egypt, Jordan, Syria, and expeditionary forces from Iraq, entered Palestine's territory on May 15th. The fighting lasted for ten months and was mainly concentrated in Palestine, the Sinai Peninsula, and southern Lebanon. Israel acquired more territories during the war, which were originally designated as part of the Arab state under the UN plan. However, Palestine and the Arab states rejected this plan (Maoz, 2009).

Tensions escalated when Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal, a critical waterway owned by French and British that connects the Red Sea and the Mediterranean. In 1956, Israel

launched an attack on Egypt, supported by forces from Britain and France. Ships were sunk, and the canal remained closed until 1957 (Murphy and Taylor, 2021). The Six-Day War in 1967 was a catastrophic event for the Arabs, as Israel occupied the West Bank and Gaza Strip, along with the Syrian Golan Heights and the Egyptian Sinai Peninsula (History, 2018).

Following the Six-Day War, there were brief skirmishes that in 1973 turned into a full-fledged conflict. On October 6, a coalition of Arab nations led by Egypt and Syria attacked Israel without warning. Syrian forces entered the Golan Heights, while Egyptian forces crossed the Suez Canal, but the Arab forces were ultimately driven back by an Israeli counteroffensive that was aided by supplies from allies, especially the US.

Less than six weeks after Israel had completely left the Sinai, in 1982, it attacked Lebanon, starting what is known as the First Lebanon War. More than a thousand Lebanese were killed and approximately one million others were displaced during the second Lebanon conflict, which started in July 2006 and lasted 34 days.

In December 1987 the first Palestinian intifada erupted, bringing clashes and protests in the West Bank and Gaza with Israeli forces, followed by the second intifada, or Palestinian uprising in 2000. Clashes continue until 2005, leaving hundreds victims.

Since the Palestinian militant group Hamas wins elections in 2006, Israel launched four devastating wars in the Gaza Strip, in 2008, 2012, 2014, and 2021. This conflict leaves thousands of Palestinians dead and injured in Gaza.

As Miaari & Calì, (2020) noted that the Palestinian and Arab – Israeli conflict witnessed bloody violence that claimed thousands of victims on both sides, but also it testified a major processing and successful attempts to achieve peace. On March 26, 1979, the Camp David Accords, the initial peace agreement between Arab and Jewish nations, were signed by Anwar Sadat, the Egyptian president, and Menachem Begin, the Israeli prime minister. The 30-year war between the two countries finally came to an end due to this accord.

The Norwegian government had invited the Israelis and PLO to secret talks, which had already started. These clandestine discussions were conducted over eight months, and produced what became known as

the Oslo Accords which were signed on September 13, 1993, at the White House, and would become an icon of the twentieth century. The Israel-Jordan peace treaty was officially signed on October 26, 1994, at Arabah, Israel's southern border crossing. After Egypt, Jordan was the second Arab nation to sign a peace treaty with Israel. Following a 16-year period since the Arab-Israeli peace accord at the southern border crossing of Arabah, the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain signed the Abraham Accords with Israel on September 15, 2020, marking the first public normalization of relations between an Arab country and Israel since Jordan in 1994 (Guzansky & Feuer, 2021). On December 22, 2020, Morocco also officially agreed to normalize ties with Israel (Singer, 2021).

The amount of coverage, frames, tone of voice, and the identity of the sources used in the coverage of the normalization issue between UAE and Morocco with Israel will be examined using local Palestinian online news outlets. This research analyses how the Palestinian media attempt to mobilize information events and reframe under its affected by Palestinian parties' ideology. The three local Palestinian online news outlets selected have different political and ideological orientations namely; the government-controlled (Wafa), as a media outlet affiliated with the Palestinian Liberal Party (Fatah), which controls the government in the West Bank, the Palestinian Information Center (PIC), as a media outlet affiliated with the Palestinian Islamic Party (Hamas), which controls the government in the Gaza Strip and the independent Palestinian outlet which the most popular media online in Palestinian Authority (Donia Al-Watan).

This research will look at the coverage from the three online news outlets during two periods; the first is related to UAE from September 15, 2020 (The United Arab Emirates signed a normalization agreement with Israel), and the second is concerned with Morocco from December 22, 2020 (Morocco signed a normalization agreement with Israel).

1.2 Media Coverage and Framing

The Abraham Accords agreement among some Arab countries and Israel sparked a slew of debates and received a lot of media attention both in the region and around the world. Some considered this action as significant in advancing peace forward and alleviating tensions in the region (Allam, 2020). Despite the initial excitement, it seems premature for American and Israeli politicians to expect that the Abraham Accords

will lead to a series of bilateral and regional peace agreements with Israel (Guzansky, & Marshall, 2020).

The Abraham Accords agreement, a component of the long-standing Palestinian and Arab-Israeli conflict, has received significant media coverage. However, the significance of local media in covering political narratives in a conflict situation has often been overlooked (Mac Ginty, 2011). In terms of researching the media-conflict link in political conflicts, researchers have typically approached it from a national or international perspective (El-Nawawy and Elmasry, 2022; Salama, 2021).

Given the importance of local media in documenting a conflict's internal dynamics, it is crucial to look at their role to acquire a more comprehensive view of the media–conflict interaction (Nadaf, 2020). This study will uncover the amount of coverage, the use of news frames, the tone of voice, and the type of news sources used by three Palestinian local media outlets (Wafa Palestinian under government control, the Palestinian Information Center for Hamas Islamic party, and Donia Al-Watan independent Palestinian outlet) in covering the agreement among UAE and Morocco with Israel.

The patterns of media narration in conflict situations vary in hybrid media environments, where media at different levels have an equal impact on shaping perceptions of conflicts (Mac Ginty, 2011). Although several studies have explored the media's role in significant political disputes globally by examining its impact on setting a global agenda (Aday, 2010; Bajraktari and Parajon, 2007; Griffin, 2004), studies concentrating on how global media describe local conflicts appear to be more common. However, Gilboa et al. (2016) have shown the value of comprehending conflict-related media narratives at the local, national, and worldwide levels. In order to better comprehend the relationship between media and conflict in the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Palestinian struggle, it is crucial to examine the role of the local Palestinian media.

The research theoretical framework is based on agenda-setting, media framing, news sources, and their relationship with conflict coverage in the Middle East by online news outlets. Nowadays, most studies confirmed that news media influences individuals' attitudes, cognitions, and behaviors. This entry gives a brief overview of two extensively

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researched theories: agenda-setting, which happens when increased media attention to a topic results in increased perceptions of its salience, and framing, a set of procedures by which news content is created and shapes people's perceptions and behaviors (Moy et al., 2016).

The media coverage has a vital relevance towards the Palestinian and Arab – Israeli conflict, especially the dispute about the normalization with Israel, as a focal role in shaping public opinion, which justifies this research. This helped in detecting the first research question: **What is the extent of coverage published by the three local Palestinian online news outlets (i) Palestinian Wafa, (ii) Palestinian Information Center (PIC), and (iii) Donia Al-Watan regarding the normalization issue among UAE and Morocco with Israel?.**

However, agenda-setting and news-framing strategies shared certain commonalities. Both pay attention to how topics were covered in the media and which news stories were exaggerated or minimized. Agenda-setting chose a specific topic that drew the public's attention to it, according to Price and Tewksbury (1997), whereas framing also highlighted how the news story was presented while focusing on the topic choice.

The media coverage and news framing can be a powerful force in fostering understanding between people and assisting in conflict resolution by providing information that citizens use to understand the world and find their place within it (Berry et al., 2016), understanding this issue is crucial since the media impacts the perception of the public and might affect the bilateral relations between the countries around the world. Thus, it is critical to examine media content to have a better understanding of the media's role in shaping public and political opinions, as well as government policies (Al-Majdhoub, et al. 2021).

According to Gilboa (2002), in a conflict situation, media outlets become a principal tool for the political players and transcend into a 'central arena for political conflicts. However, the media's influential role in shaping and mediating a conflict situation is avoidable. It's also important for journalists to be independent in providing accurate information about the problem, issue, or event and getting up the

opinion of the two sides of the conflict to motivate the public to make the right judgments and take positions (Al-Majdhoub et al. 2013).

Investigating and comprehending the value of local Palestinian online news outlets in framing the conflict situation is the contribution of the current study. Local media's significance has frequently been overlooked in the framing of politics forming public opinion, despite the fact that regional, international, and local media dynamics are all equally significant in a conflict scenario (Gilboa et al., 2016). The second study question, which is stated below, was made possible by the theoretical framework that was previously discussed; **What are the news frames and tone of voice used by the three local Palestinian online news outlets (i) Palestinian Wafa, (ii) Palestinian Information Center (PIC), and (iii) Donia Al-Watan regarding normalization issue among UAE and Morocco with Israel?.**

As was already stated, agenda-setting and framing theory have a close connection, and the connection between framing and news sources is also thought to be unusual. In other words, various news sources are used by different media outlets to support different frames of the issue coverage. (Kim & Jahng, 2015). When covering political issues, news sources play a crucial role in emphasising the views and frames of those stories, reflecting the interests of the reader, according to Pan and Kosicki (1993).

In the conflict situation, supposing the type of news frame used to encourage the protesters to join the protests has directly related to the news party source (Hamdy and Gomaa, 2012). Researchers have studied the phenomenon of framing and news sources in the media, such as the Iraq War, the 9-11 attacks, the 2008 Election, and the Arabian revolutions (Schwalbe, 2006). Others countered that the majority of US media heavily relied on official sources and backed the government in its coverage of terrorism (Oxley, 2017; Kellner, 2004; Levenson, 2004; Ryan, 2004). The theoretical framework discussed above helped in identifying the third research question regarding news sources, which is stated: **What are the news sources used by the three local Palestinian online news outlets (i) Palestinian Wafa, (ii) Palestinian Information Center (PIC), and (iii) Donia Al-Watan regarding normalization issue among UAE and Morocco with Israel?**

2. METHODOLOGY

A quantitative content analysis was conducted for this research method. Content analysis is defined as "the systematic, objective, quantitative analysis of message characteristics" (Neuendorf, 2002). It is also used as an effective instrument to achieve research questions. Entman (1993) stated that content analysis has "the major task of determining textural meaning" and the identity of frames in the media (Entman,1993, p. 57).

This study selected three local Palestinian online news outlets, as virtually all studies of media coverage focus on national news outlets, and they supposed that the local media behave differently in their treatment of international stories (Gartner, 2004). Thus, the local media generally focus on their local communities involvement in reporting on major international stories (Hallin & Gitlin, 1994; Hunt, 1997; Lule, 1991). The three local online news outlets chosen were: (i) Wafa as a local government-controlled, (ii) PIC as the Hamas party news outlet, and (iii) Donia Al-Watan as a Palestinian local independent online outlet.

This research utilized purposive sampling to select news articles. Purposive sampling is the process of better matching the sample to the research's goals and objectives, hence boosting the study's rigor and the data and results' reliability (Campbell et. al, 2020).

The study samples have two periods, the first is regarding UAE's normalization with Israel, its samples were collected from August 13, 2020 (when the UAE's minister for foreign affairs Anwar Mohammed Gargash announced that the UAE accepts to sign a normalization agreement with Israel) until September 15, 2020 (when the agreement was signed at the White House). The second period is regarding Morocco's normalization with Israel, the samples were collected from December 10, 2020 (when the US government announced the normalization agreement between Israel and Morocco) until December 22, 2020 (when Meir Ben-Shabbat, Israel's national security advisor, and Jared Kushner, senior adviser to the US president, boarded the first formal flight from Israel to Rabat, Morocco, to sign a joint declaration between the US, Israel, and Morocco).

The agreement with the UAE is the most significant for the two nations Israel and the UAE (Maital & Barzani, 2021), as the UAE, after Egypt (1979) and Jordan (1994), is the third Arab nation to proclaim normal

relations with Israel. But it is regarded as the most significant of the Gulf nations, as a commercial and economic centre in the Arab region. In addition, future bilateral or multilateral alliances between various nations in the area may be facilitated by the economic collaboration between Israel and the UAE. (AlMaashi, 2021). The normalization agreement between Israel and Morocco caused some degree of surprise among experts, as Morocco's governed by an Islamist party. Morocco also got the US formal recognition of Moroccan sovereignty in the disputed West Sahara (Maital & Barzani, 2021).

Each narrative will be downloaded and coded using a variety of frame categories. The news articles were taken from the archives of the different internet news sources using "Normalization, peace agreement, UAE normalization, Morocco normalization, and Israeli – Arabs relationships" as the keyword. All the articles will be selected based on reporting on the normalization issue. However, the sampling will include only news stories that emphasised UAE and Morocco's normalization with Israel.

Our preliminary research has produced a total of 209 news stories to be analysed for UAE coverage and 38 news stories for Morocco coverage after determining what news should be included and what should be excluded. According to the three online outlets, there were the following numbers of news articles about UAE coverage: Wafa 71 relevant stories; PIC 80 were included and Donia Alwatan 58 were relevant articles to be analysis. but the number of Morocco news coverage was less as follows: Wafa resulted 5 relevant stories; PIC only 9 were included in the research; and Donia Alwatan 24 were relevant articles to be analysis.

The extent of coverage was studied from three angles: 1) the number of news stories; 2) the type of news stories (measured by Straight news, Reports, and Opinions); 3) the number of words. The generic frame matrix developed by Semetko & Valkenburg (2000) will be adopted by this research, which comprises "Attribution of Responsibility," "Human interest," "Conflict," "Economic," and "Morality" news frames.

The tone of voice of the news stories will be measured on an ordinal scale of -1 to 1 (negative, neutral, positive) (Peng, 2004). Furthermore, both negative and positive have been divided into four columns, each column examined the tone of voice toward the countries engaged in

the issue which are (Palestine, Israel, USA, UAE, and Morocco) Younus, A. M. (2021).

In addition, the study adopted the concepts of news sources developed by Dimitrova and Stromback (2012), which included four types, namely domestic, party, ordinary, and media sources. Each news source examined in this research comprises several attribute statements based on news sources' concepts with a sample "Yes" or "No" answer selection scale. The identity of each type of news source used in UAE and Morocco news coverage was also uncovered.

Two independent coders from the Mass Communication department of Al- Azhar University in Gaza received training on coding work. The results confirmed the Holsti reliability formula (Holsti, 1969). The intercoder reliability test was carried out to gauge the reliability and validity of the research instrument using the Hoslti formula; 10% of the articles from the whole content body were randomly selected, equal to 25 articles (Hinternesch, 2019). The Holsti assessment score displayed high conformance among coders and resulted in a highly reliable research instrument with the Holsti CR score of 0.97 or 97% among coders.

3.   FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

RQ 1: Amount of Coverage

The results showed that the amount of coverage by the three local Palestinian online outlets in the two time periods was dissimilar. The first period was regarding UAE's normalization with Israel, from August 13, 2020, until September 15, 2020. The amount of coverage for this period yield 209 news stories by the three outlets, but the second period regarding Morocco's normalization with Israel, from December 10, 2020, until December 22, 2020, yielded only 37 news stories by the three outlets.

The significant differences in coverage between the first period and the second appearance, it is also was a gap in coverage among the three outlets in the two periods. Table 1 and Table 2 show that the PIC and Wafa had the most coverage of the UAE normalization issue sequentially (n = 80 news stories, n = 71 news stories), but their coverage was limited with the Morocco normalization with Israel sequentially (n = 8 news stories, n = 5 news stories). Donia Alwatan had

less coverage in the first period (n = 58 news stories), and relatively half of the coverage in the second period (n = 24 news stories).

The findings described more analysis of the extent of coverage. Thus, the style of news stories (hard news) was the majority used by the three online outlets (n = 180 news article) for the first period, and (n = 31 news stories) for the second period compared to 20 reported news for the first period, and only 3 reported news for the second period, but the use of opinion news stories was only 9 articles for the first period and 3 articles for the second period. These results noted that the use of in-depth news styles such as reports and opinions was limited compared with the hard news styles by the three news outlets.

Table 1: Percentages of news coverage according to the three online news outlets

Amount of Coverage UAE	Donia Alwatan (N=58)		Wafa Palestine (N=71)		PIC (N=80)	
	Frequency*	%	Frequency*	%	Frequency*	%
Hard News	51	87.9	66	93.0	63	78.8
Report	7	12.1	5	7.0	8	10.0
Opinion	0	0.0	0	0.0	9	11.3

Table 2: Percentages of news coverage according to the three online news outlets

Amount of Coverage Morocco	Donia Alwatan (N=24)		Wafa Palestine (N=5)		PIC (N=8)	
	Frequency*	%	Frequency*	%	Frequency*	%
Hard News	23	95.8	4	80.0	4	50.0
Report	1	4.2	1	20.0	1	12.5
Opinion	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	37.5

RQ 2: **Descriptive Analysis of the News Frames**

The current study examined five types of news frames namely; the attribution of responsibility, human interest, conflict, economic consequences, and morality frames. Table 3 shows the frames used by three outlets in the first period which uncovered that the conflict frame was commonly used by the three online news outlets as found in (181 news stories), thus the PIC outlets were the most using this frame (92%) followed by Wafa (90%) and Donia Alwatan (74%). The attribution frame was the second most commonly used by the three outlets (116 news stories), as Wafa was the most used (70%) followed by PIC (57%) and Donia Alwatan (34%). The economic frame was the third most commonly used (42 news stories), as Donia Alwatan was the most used (51%) followed by PIC (11%) and Wafa (4%). The morality frame was the fourth most commonly used (31 news stories), thus the PIC was the most used (28%) followed by Wafa (9%) and Donia Alwatan (1%).

Table 3: Percentages of news frames according to the three online news outlets in the first period

News frames UAE	Donia Alwatan (N=58)		Wafa Palestine (N=71)		PIC (N=80)	
	Frequency*	%	Frequency*	%	Frequency*	%
Attribution	20	34.5%	50	70.4%	46	57.5%
Human Interest	0	0.0%	1	1.4%	1	1.3%
Conflict	43	74.1%	64	90.1%	74	92.5%
Economic	30	51.7%	3	4.2%	9	11.3%
Morality	1	1.7%	7	9.9%	23	28.8%

Table 4 indicates the news frames used by three outlets in the second period which showed that the conflict frame was commonly used by the three Palestinian outlets as found in (26 news articles), thus we found this frame in all stories published by Wafa and PIC, while Donia Alwatan used it by 54%. The economic frame was the second most commonly used (14 news articles), the Donia Alwatan was the most used in this frame (54%) followed by PIC (12%) while it was non-existent in Wafa.

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The morality frame was the third most commonly used (10 news articles), as Wafa used it the most (60%) followed by PIC (37%) and Donia Alwatan (16%). Finally, the attribution responsibility frame was the third frame used (9 news articles), as Donia Alwatan the most (29%) followed by PIC (25%) while it was non-existent in Wafa.

Table 4: Percentages of news frames according to the three online news outlets in the second period

News frames Morocco	Donia Alwatan (N=24)		Wafa Palestine (N=5)		PIC (N=8)	
	Frequency*	%	Frequency*	%	Frequency*	%
Attribution	7	29.2%	0	0.0%	2	25.0%
Human Interest	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Conflict	13	54.2%	5	100.0%	8	100.0%
Economic	13	54.2%	0	0.0%	1	12.5%
Morality	4	16.7%	3	60.0%	3	37.5%

RQ 2: Descriptive Analysis of the Tone of Voice

A positive story was defined as having a general tone or reoccurring themes that tend to promote a good perception of a particular nation. Table 5 demonstrates that the positive tone of voice toward the four countries regarding the normalization issue coverage was variously used by the three news outlets of the first period. The UAE gained the most positive coverage by Donia Alwatan independent outlets (36 news stories, 62%), while Israel obtained the second most positive coverage by Donia Alwatan (29 news stories, 50%), followed by the USA (8 news articles, 13%) and Palestine (4 news stories, 6.9%). The positive coverage by the Wafa government outlet was the most toward Palestine (9 news stories, 12%), followed by UAE (2 news stories, 2.8), while the positive tone toward Israel and USA disappeared. The coverage of PIC opposition outlets tend to view Palestine positively the most (15 news stories, 18%), while Israel and UAE gained equally positive coverage (2 news stories, 2.5%)

A negative story, on the other hand, referred to the overall tone or dominant elements in the story that indicate critical, illegal, cruelty, boycott, and inflame sentiments, which tend to contribute to a negative image of the country. Thus, the Wafa outlet was the most to use negative tone in its framing coverage toward UAE (69 news stories, 97%), followed by PIC (70 news stories, 87%), while the Donia Alwatan outlet was the less to use the negative tone toward UAE (5 news stories, 8%). However, the negative tone of voice toward Israel has a significant gap in the three news outlets framing of the normalization issue coverage. The PIC occupied the first in using a negative tone of voice toward Israel (58 news stories, 72%), followed by Wafa (46 news stories, 64%) and Donia Alwatan (5 news stories, 8%). In addition, the negative coverage toward the USA was the most by PIC (22 news stories, 27%), followed by Wafa (18 news stories, 25%) and Donia Alwatan (2 news stories, 3%).

Table 5: Percentages of the tone of voice according to the three online news outlets in the first period

Tone of voice UAE		Donia Alwatan (N=58)		Wafa Palestine (N=71)		PIC (N=80)	
		Frequency*	%	Frequency*	%	Frequency*	%
Positive	Palestine	4	6.9%	9	12.7%	15	18.8%
	Israel	29	50.0%	0	0.0%	2	2.5%
	USA	8	13.8%	0	0.0%	1	1.3%
	UAE	36	62.1%	2	2.8%	2	2.5%
Neutral	-----	15	25.9%	0	0.0%	6	7.5%
Negative	Palestine	4	6.9%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	Israel	5	8.6%	46	64.8%	58	72.5%
	USA	2	3.4%	18	25.4%	22	27.5%
	UAE	5	8.6%	69	97.1%	70	87.5%

Table 6 of the second period showed a significant difference in the tone of voice coverage, the positive coverage by Donia Alwatan was the most commonly used toward Israel (22 news stories, 91%), followed by Morocco (18 news stories, 75%), and Palestine (3 news stories, 12%), USA (2 news stories, 8%). The positive tone by Wafa focused on Palestine (5 news stories, 100%) and Morocco (4 news stories, 80%), while it disappeared toward Israel and USA. The data analysis found that the positive coverage toward Palestine was the most by PIC, while USA and Morocco gained equally positive coverage (1 news story, 12%).

On the contrary, the negative tone toward Israel was the most commonly used by the three outlets, PIC (87%) followed by Wafa (60%) and Donia Alwatan (12%). In addition, the negative coverage toward the USA was focused only by PIC (75%), while Morocco gained less negative coverage by the PIC (12%) and Donia Alwatan (12%) while non-exist in Wafa.

Additionally, the data analysis produced a neutral narrative, which denotes that the story's dominant elements or overall tone are balanced between positive and negative aspects or both. Donia Alwatan outlets were the most to use this type, followed by PIC in the first period. On the other hand, it disappeared in the second period Younus, A. M. (2021).

Table 6: Percentages of the tone of voice according to the three online news outlets in the second period

Tone of voice Morocco		Donia Alwatan (N=24)		Wafa Palestine (N=5)		PIC (N=8)	
		Frequency*	%	Frequency*	%	Frequency*	%
	Palestine	3	12.5%	5	100.0%	4	50.0%
Positive	Israel	22	91.7%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	USA	2	8.3%	0	0.0%	1	12.5%
	Morocco	18	75.0%	4	80.0%	1	12.5%
Neutral	-----	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Negative	Palestine	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%

Israel	3	12.5%	3	60.0%	7	87.5%
USA	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	6	75.0%
Morocco	3	12.5%	0	0.0%	1	12.5%

RQ 3: **Descriptive Analysis of the News Sources**

The data analysis illustrates the different usage of news sources by the three Palestinian public news outlets of the first period. Table 7 shows that the three online news outlets relied on framing their news stories on the party operatives' source, which includes famous figures such as consultants, pollsters, party managers, or party officials. Thus, the party source was the most commonly used by the three news outlets which were found in (116 news stories) as PIC used it (63 times, 78%), Wafa (46 times, 64%), and Donia Alwatan (7 times, 12%). The use of domestic politician sources such as officials, candidates running for office, politicians holding governmental positions, and civil servants was the second most common by the three news outlets (65 news stories) as used the most by Donia Alwatan (33 times, 56%) followed by Wafa (23 times, 32%) and PIC (9 times, 11%), but the media analysis source was the third commonly used (29 news stories). Finally, the ordinary citizens' source was the less used (2 stories) Younus, A. M., & Younis, H. (2021).

Table 7: Percentages of news sources according to the three online news outlets in the first period

News sources UAE	Donia Alwatan (N=58)		Wafa Palestine (N=71)		PIC (N=80)	
	Frequency*	%	Frequency*	%	Frequency*	%
Politician	33	56.9%	23	32.4%	9	11.3%
Party	7	12.1%	46	64.8%	63	78.8%
Ordinary	0	0.0%	1	1.4%	1	1.3%
Media	21	%36.2	2	%2.8	6	7.5%

On the other hand, the data analysis uncovered the different usage of news sources by the three Palestinian public news outlets of the second period. Table 8 shows that the three online news outlets relied on the politician source were found in (23 news stories) as used the most by Wafa (4 times, 80%), followed by Donia Alwatan (15 times, 62%), and PIC (4 times, 50%). The use of media analysis sources was the second most common by the three news outlets (16 news stories) as used the most by Donia Alwatan (14 times, 58%) followed by PIC (2 times, 25%) but it disappeared in Wafa. The party source was the third most commonly used (9 news stories) as Wafa used it the most (3 times, 60%) followed by PIC (4 times, 50%) and Donia Alwatan (2 times, 8%). Finally, the ordinary citizens' source was not found.

Table 7: Percentages of news sources according to the three online news outlets in the second period

News sources Morocco	Donia Alwatan (N=24)		Wafa Palestine (N=5)		PIC (N=8)	
	Frequency*	%	Frequency*	%	Frequency*	%
Politician	15	62.5%	4	80.0%	4	50.0%
Party	2	8.3%	3	60.0%	4	50.0%
Ordinary	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Media	14	%58.3	0	%0.0	2	25.0%

In addition, the current study investigated the identity of the news sources used by the three Palestinian outlets in both periods, the first period concerning the UAE normalization with Israel, the data analysis finds out that the local Palestinian source was the most commonly used by the PIC (56 times) and Wafa (50 times) but it was the less in Donia Alwatan (2 times). The second news source identity used was the UAE which was used the most by Donia Alwatan (27 times), but it was absent in Wafa and PIC. The third news source's identity used was Israeli sources, thus the Donia Alwatan was relied on the most (18 times), followed by PIC (4 times), but it was non-existent in Wafa. On the other hand, the results were different in the second period compared with the first period. The data analysis uncovered that the Morocco source

identity was the most used by the three outlets in the second period, Wafa online was the most used Morocco source (5 times, 100%), followed by PIC (5 times, 62.5%) and Donia Alwatan (11 times, 45,8%). Furthermore, the reliance on Israeli sources was only used by Donia Alwatan (13 times, 54%), but Wafa used Palestinian source identity (2 times, 40%) while PIC used it (3 times, 37%).

4. CONCLUSION

The focus of the study was to understand the relationship between issues and parties with media framing within local Palestinian outlets in a conflict situation during normalization between the UAE and Morocco with Israel. The media identity and political affiliation of news outlets in Palestine have played a significant role to effect on the media framing and select the identity of news sources (Gilboa et al. 2016), as well as the tone of voice and extent of coverage are affected by the political relationship between the parties that own the outlets and the countries are targeted by the media coverage Younus, A. M., & Zaidan, M. N. (2022).

The study uncovered that the Palestinian local media gave more attention to covering the UAE normalization with Israel and its coverage tended to have a negative tone against such an act. This shows that the tense political relationship between the Palestinian Authority, which owns Wafa outlets, and Hamas movement, which owns PIC, with the UAE, was reflected negatively in the media coverage. On the other hand, the warm political relations between the Palestinian Authority and Hamas with Morocco were positively reflected in the media coverage of Wafa and the PIC Younus, A. M., Tarazi, R., Younis, H., & Abumandil, M. (2022).

The media coverage and news framing can be a powerful force in fostering understanding between people (Berry et al., 2016) and might affect the bilateral relations between countries around the world (Al-Majdhoub, et al. 2021). The current study asserted that the media coverage was affected by the Palestinian local media policy, and the identity of media outlets was a crucial factor in framing news stories.

The patterns of media narrativization in conflict circumstances vary (Mac Ginty, 2011). The intensive media coverage and framing of news stories of the normalization issue lead to increased perceptions of the salience of that issue among Palestinian people and shape individuals'

perceptions and behaviors (Moy et al., 2016). It can be concluded that the media coverage regarding the UAE normalization was notable from August 13, 2020, until September 15, 2020, but the media coverage concerning the Morocco normalization was limited from December 10, 2020, until December 22, 2020.

The study discovered that the conflict frame was the most used by the three Palestinian local outlets (Wafa, PIC, and Donia Alwatan) in both periods. However, it was followed by the attribution frame and the economic frame in the first period regarding UAE normalization, and in the second period concerning Morocco's normalization, the study found that it was followed by the economic frame and the morality frame Younus, A. M., & Abumandil, M. (2021).

Furthermore, in the first period, the three Palestinian local outlets relied mostly on the party operatives' sources followed by domestic politician sources. However, the three online outlets relied on the politician source the most in the second period, followed by the media analysis source and the party operatives' source.

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