

Framing The Iran-Israel Conflict: A Comparative Analysis of Al-Jazeera and BBC News Coverage in April 2024

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Abstract

The Iran-Israel conflict in April 2024 attracted extensive global media coverage, with outlets like Al-Jazeera and BBC offering contrasting narratives. This study investigates their framing strategies using Semetko and Valkenburg's typology: conflict, human interest, economic consequences, morality, and responsibility frames. Galtung's peace and war journalism models provided an analytical lens to assess how these frames align with broader editorial biases and geopolitical contexts. Analyzing 34 articles, the research reveals Al-Jazeera's predominant use of the conflict frame (80%), emphasizing Iran's retaliation and regional tensions. This aligns with Galtung's peace journalism, diagnosing systemic issues and contextualizing the conflict. Conversely, the BBC prioritized the responsibility frame (60%), heavily condemning Iran while dramatizing Israel's defense. This approach reflects war journalism, reinforcing divisions and Western-centric geopolitical narratives. The BBC's selective inclusion of human interest elements, such as civilian casualties, dramatized the narrative to evoke sympathy for Israel. Al-Jazeera's restrained use of such frames highlighted a commitment to balanced reporting but reduced emotional resonance. Neither outlet engaged with the morality or economic consequences frames, overlooking critical ethical and financial dimensions of the conflict. These findings underscore the role of editorial alignment and framing in shaping audience perceptions and policy discourses. Al-Jazeera's approach encouraged critical engagement, fostering a nuanced understanding, while the BBC reinforced geopolitical alliances, narrowing the scope for reconciliation.

Keywords: Iran-Israeli Conflict, Media Framing, Al-Jazeera, BBC; International News Coverage.

1. Introduction

The role of media in reporting conflicts extends beyond delivering factual accounts; it involves shaping public understanding, influencing diplomatic narratives, and potentially swaying geopolitical outcomes. News agencies often operate at the intersection of journalism and advocacy, with their reporting sometimes reflecting inherent biases, ideological leanings, or underlying institutional interests. Such tendencies can blur the lines between objective reporting and implicit propaganda. This study examines the framing of the April 2024 Iran-Israel confrontation by two prominent international news agencies—Al-Jazeera and BBC News. The attack, which marked a departure from the longstanding proxy nature of Iran-Israel hostilities, escalated into direct military engagement, drawing widespread international attention and raising the stakes for regional stability. Utilizing Galtung's framework on peace journalism (Gouse et al., 2018), this research evaluates whether media portrayals of the conflict exacerbated tensions or fostered greater understanding.

Al-Jazeera and BBC News were selected for their global prominence and influence in shaping regional and international discourses. Al-Jazeera, headquartered in Qatar, is a leading voice in Middle Eastern media and is widely regarded as a key outlet for the Muslim world. In contrast, the BBC, based in London, epitomizes the legacy of Western media and is frequently referenced by other broadcasting institutions worldwide. These outlets not only reflect their respective geopolitical narratives but also serve as barometers for how the conflict is understood in different cultural and political contexts. Their extensive reach and established credibility make them crucial subjects for examining the interplay between media framing and international perceptions of the Iran-Israel confrontation.

The April 2024 conflict unfolded against the backdrop of the protracted Israel-Palestine dispute, characterized by cycles of violence and humanitarian crises. Recent escalations, including Israeli strikes on Palestinian territories and an alleged attack on an Iranian consulate in Syria, underscored the broader regional stakes. Iran's direct military response marked a significant shift in the conflict's dynamics, moving beyond proxy engagements to overt confrontation. This shift highlights the critical role of the media in framing such events, shaping global understanding, and influencing both public opinion and diplomatic relations. Analyzing how Al-Jazeera and BBC News portrayed this development provides insights into the power of media narratives in complex geopolitical conflicts.

Previous studies underscore the profound influence of media framing on political beliefs and public perceptions of conflict. For instance, research highlights the role of conflict frames in intensifying hostilities (Canetti et al., 2019; Hawkins, 2011) and the consequences of media bias in reporting contentious issues (Bhowmik and Fisher, 2023; Elmasry et al., 2013). Scholarly discourse has extensively analyzed the framing of the Israel-Palestine conflict by global outlets, revealing patterns of partiality and their implications for international narratives (Amer, 2022; Deprez and Raeymaeckers, 2010). However, an in-depth analysis of Al-Jazeera and BBC's portrayals of the direct Iran-Israel confrontation remains largely unexplored, highlighting a critical gap in media studies. Lee, 2005 provides significant insights into the dichotomy between war journalism and peace journalism, particularly in Asian conflicts such as those in Aceh and Maluku, as well as in global conflicts like the Iraq War. Their findings reveal a tendency for local media to

adopt war journalism, influenced by nationalistic or governmental pressures, while international outlets lean toward peace-oriented approaches in global conflicts. This duality underscores the role of ideological and institutional factors in shaping media narratives, a phenomenon similarly observed by Ahmed et al. (2019) in their evaluation of media impartiality during internal conflicts.

Further evidence from Lee's study illustrates that war journalism dominates headlines, while feature and opinion sections often adopt a more reflective peace journalism approach. This juxtaposition reflects an attempt to balance sensationalism with a commitment to fostering understanding. Nonetheless, the prevalence of war journalism in international media underscores its potential to exacerbate conflicts, highlighting the need for a more coordinated global approach to conflict reporting.

Building on these foundational studies, Hawkins, 2011 employed qualitative content analysis to investigate the determinants of media coverage of the Israel-Palestine conflict by Indonesian outlets. The research identified social, political, and cultural factors influencing framing, demonstrating the power of media narratives in either perpetuating conflict or fostering reconciliation. These findings highlight the significance of media framing in shaping audience interpretations and the dynamics of conflict resolution.

Data from prior research substantiate the notion that media framing profoundly influences public sentiment and policy-making. However, significant gaps remain in understanding the psychological and sociopolitical impacts of framing methodologies, particularly in conflicts involving state and non-state actors. Studies by Lee, 2005 and Hawkins, 2011 highlight the need for nuanced investigations into the comparative effects of war and peace journalism. Such inquiries are crucial for elucidating the role of media framing in conflict resolution and peace-building, particularly in geopolitically volatile regions.

This research examines Al-Jazeera's and BBC News's portrayal of Iran's direct military assault on Israel, focusing on the implications of their framing techniques for regional conflict dynamics. Through a comparative analysis of the framing strategies employed by these influential outlets, the study seeks to elucidate how media narratives shape public discourse, influence policy-making, and affect international relations.

The significance of this study lies in its analysis of an unprecedented escalation in the Iran-Israel conflict and its comparative approach to media framing. While prior research has explored Al-Jazeera's and BBC's coverage of various geopolitical events, including the Arab Spring (Haigh and Bruce, 2017), the COVID-19 pandemic (Hossain, Wahab, and Khan, 2022), and the Gulf crisis (Ajaoud and Elmasry, 2020), few studies have addressed their portrayal of direct military confrontations between Iran and Israel. This research fills that gap, providing critical insights into the media's role in framing high-stakes international conflicts.

1.1. Framing Theory in War Media Coverage

Framing theory has become a pivotal concept in media studies, explaining how media organizations select, structure, and disseminate news content to shape public perceptions. Entman (1993) defines framing as the process of highlighting and emphasizing specific aspects of reality, thereby guiding individuals' interpretations and understanding of events. By deliberately selecting certain elements, media outlets propose particular problem definitions, causal interpretations, moral evaluations, and solutions, effectively shaping public discourse and influencing audience perspectives (Entman, 1993). In

the context of war media coverage, framing theory posits that media organizations can amplify specific components of a narrative, thereby advocating distinct viewpoints and agendas (Scheufele, 1999). This phenomenon is particularly evident in conflict reporting, where media outlets can either de-escalate tensions by promoting peace-oriented narratives or exacerbate hostilities by emphasizing divisive frames. Research underscores the critical role of framing in international conflicts. For instance, Alalawi's (2015) analysis of Al-Jazeera English and CNN's coverage of the 2014 Gaza conflict highlights how media outlets present contrasting narratives that shape audience interpretations and influence political attitudes. Such disparities underscore the importance of framing theory in understanding the ideological and geopolitical dimensions of war reporting. Scholars like Gamson and Modigliani (1989) emphasize the interpretive power of framing, arguing that it is a fundamental tool for understanding events. Similarly, Gitlin (1980) suggests that framing enables journalists to efficiently organize and convey information to audiences. Cognitive, constructivist, and critical perspectives further enrich the understanding of how media frames construct realities and shape public opinion (D'Angelo, 2002). These theoretical foundations provide a robust framework for analyzing the framing practices of Al-Jazeera and BBC in their coverage of the Iran-Israel conflict.

1.2. Galtung's War and Peace Journalism

Johan Galtung's theory of War and Peace Journalism offers a critical framework for analyzing how media portray global conflicts, presenting a dichotomy between war journalism, which often perpetuates conflict, and peace journalism, which aims to foster understanding and reconciliation. Galtung (2002) distinguishes between "negative peace," defined as the mere absence of violence, and "positive peace," which entails social justice and societal cohesion. This framework is essential for evaluating the ethical and narrative dimensions of conflict reporting.

Al-Jazeera's coverage frequently aligns with Galtung's principles of peace journalism by amplifying voices from the Global South and presenting non-Western perspectives that challenge dominant narratives. By emphasizing humanitarian aspects and structural causes of conflicts, Al-Jazeera advances narratives that promote resilience and reconciliation. In contrast, the BBC, with its Western-centric lens, may demonstrate tendencies aligned with war journalism, framing conflicts as dichotomous struggles of "us vs. them." Such framing risks perpetuating divisions, a critique central to Galtung's assessment of traditional war reporting.

A critical evaluation of Al-Jazeera's reporting highlights its alignment with the principles of positive peace, particularly through its emphasis on addressing structural injustices and the root causes of conflict. By focusing on societal impacts and promoting narratives of reconciliation, Al-Jazeera fosters a deeper understanding of the dynamics at play. In contrast, the BBC's focus on ceasefires and diplomatic efforts often reflects elements of negative peace. While such coverage is valuable, it frequently overlooks systemic issues that perpetuate conflicts, thereby limiting its transformative potential.

1.3. Ethical Dimensions and Media's Role in Peace-Building

Galtung's therapeutic approach positions journalists as mediators who diagnose conflicts and propose solutions that address both symptoms and root causes. This per-

spective challenges media organizations to move beyond mere factual reporting and actively engage in peace-building efforts. As influential global media entities, Al-Jazeera and the BBC bear an ethical responsibility to construct narratives that promote mutual understanding and resolution rather than entrench divisions. Achieving this requires a high level of ethical accountability and a commitment to fostering dialogue among conflicting parties.

Empirical evidence underscores the impact of framing on public perception and policy-making. Semetko and Valkenburg, 2000 seminal work highlights how media framing, by deliberately emphasizing specific aspects of reality, shapes audience interpretations and responses. The processes of frame building, frame setting, and individual-level framing (Scheufele, 1999) illustrate the interplay between media structures, institutional influences, and audience cognition. This framework offers a robust foundation for analyzing the methodologies employed by Al-Jazeera and the BBC in framing the Iran-Israel conflict.

1.4. Framing Processes and Implications

Frame construction refers to the methodologies media organizations employ to shape narratives, influenced by institutional constraints, professional norms, and external pressures (ibid.). This process determines how media outlets emphasize certain elements while downplaying others, ultimately influencing public discourse and policy debates. For example, Al-Jazeera's framing of the Iran-Israel conflict may reflect its geopolitical affiliations and focus on non-Western perspectives, whereas the BBC's framing might align more closely with Western diplomatic priorities.

At the individual level, framing shapes how audiences interpret and respond to media narratives. Cognitive biases, prior knowledge, and socio-political contexts play crucial roles in influencing audience reactions to framed content. This dynamic underscores the reciprocal relationship between media narratives and public opinion, with framing functioning as a tool for both constructing and reflecting societal attitudes toward conflicts.

2. Methods

This examination fully aligns with a constructivist perspective, aiming to explore how individuals interpret their existence within a social setting. According to Lawrence Neuman (2014), constructivism seeks to understand how individuals perceive and interpret social realities. To comprehend how people make sense of the world around them and navigate their daily lives, scholars must move beyond merely studying social behaviors; they must also engage with and immerse themselves in the social contexts being studied.

In textual media analysis, the primary objective is to examine and understand how media shapes perceptions of reality. Scholars delve deeply into media texts, forming connections and demonstrating empathy towards their content. Consequently, qualitative research on media texts is inherently tied to interpretive practices. Researchers aim to illustrate how individuals construct their understanding of reality through interpretive processes. Dialectical approaches are often employed to compare and contrast various perspectives. Within textual analysis, interpretations seek to reveal how media influences perceptions of reality, while dialectical methods are used to explore the diverse meanings

embedded in different forms of media (Eriyanto, 2002).

Constructivist textual research focuses on examining the implicit content rather than the explicit presentation within news texts. This study employs framing analysis to explore how the media constructs specific realities. Within the framing framework, different models can portray the same event in varied ways. Such variability arises when media outlets approach an event from diverse perspectives. The goal of framing analysis is to uncover how the media frames events and shapes perceptions in news coverage, extending beyond a mere examination of explicit content.

The research focuses on internet news articles from two prominent global media organizations: Al Jazeera and the BBC. These outlets were chosen for their extensive reporting on Middle Eastern issues and their distinct editorial perspectives. Al Jazeera, based in Qatar, is renowned for its in-depth journalism in the region and its influence on public perception in the Arab world. In contrast, the BBC, a publicly funded British broadcaster, offers a Western perspective on global events and is widely regarded as a reliable and reputable news source.

This study employed a purposive sampling technique to select 34 news articles from the online platforms of Al Jazeera and the BBC, focusing on their coverage of Iran's assault on Israel and its aftermath. The articles, published between April 13 and April 20, 2024, were strategically chosen to capture the initial impact of the conflict and the evolving global reactions and implications. This timeframe encompasses key developments, beginning with Iran's launch of hundreds of missiles and drones targeting Israel on April 13, and concluding with Israel's missile strike on the Isfahan region of Iran on April 19.

The deliberate selection of this period reflects a critical phase in the conflict, marked by high-intensity exchanges and heightened international attention. By limiting the analysis to these pivotal days, the study ensures a focused examination of media narratives during a period of acute geopolitical tension. This approach not only facilitates a deeper understanding of how the events were framed by two globally influential news outlets, but also enables a comparative assessment of their interpretative strategies and thematic emphases. The methodology emphasizes the importance of considering both the temporal proximity to the events and the broader socio-political contexts in which the media operate, ensuring a comprehensive and critical analysis of their framing practices.

The hypothesis posits that Al Jazeera and the BBC will employ distinct framing methodologies in their coverage of the April 2024 assault, reflecting their unique editorial perspectives, target audiences, and ideological leanings. This proposition is supported by previous studies that have highlighted disparities in framing approaches between Al Jazeera and other media outlets (Elmasry et al., 2013), as well as the potential impact of these differences on public opinion and perceptions of news events (Fahmy and Neumann, 2011; Rashid, 2021).

The investigation adopts a qualitative approach to framing analysis, integrating aspects of both thematic and comparative analyses. The systematic process involves: (1) familiarizing oneself with the data through multiple readings of the articles; (2) identifying and categorizing relevant framing mechanisms such as metaphors, exemplars, catch-phrases, and portrayals; (3) organizing the categorized elements into overarching frameworks; (4) comparing the established frameworks between Al Jazeera and the BBC; and (5) interpreting the findings in relation to the research objectives and existing scholarly works.

The coding scheme is based on Semetko and Valkenburg, 2000 framing framework, which includes problem definition, causal interpretation, moral assessment, and treatment suggestion. Additional factors, such as the sentiment of the portrayal (favorable, unfavorable, or neutral) and the significance of the articles (placement and length), are also considered. Any inconsistencies in coding are resolved through discussion and consensus among the investigators.

2.1. Coding Scheme and Framing Model

The coding scheme is based on the five-frame model developed by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000), which includes the following frames: conflict, human interest, morality, attribution of responsibility, and economic consequences. This model provides a systematic framework for analyzing media coverage, offering insights into how news organizations construct narratives and influence public opinion.

Table 1. News frames based on Semetko and Valkenburg (2000)

Frames	Attributes
Responsibility	Does the news suggest that an individual, a group of people, or a level of government has the ability to ease or is responsible for the problem or issue? Does the news suggest a solution (s) to the problem or issue?
Economic	Is there a mention of costs involved, financial losses, or gains, either now or in the future?
Consequences	Is there a reference to economic consequences of pursuing or not pursuing a course of action?
Conflict	Does the news reflect disagreement between individuals, group, or countries? Does the news refer to two or more sides of the problem or issue? Does the news show contradiction between rumor and fact?
Human Interest	Does the news provide a human example or "human face" on the issue? Does the news employ adjectives, personal vignettes, or visuals that evoke feelings of outrage, empathy, caring, sympathy, or compassion? Does the news delve into the private or personal lives of the individuals involved?
Morality	Does the news contain any moral message? Does the news refer to morality, God, or other religious tenets? Does the news offer specific social prescriptions about how to behave?

The *ibid.* framing model has been widely applied in media research to examine various contexts. Ahmed, Cho, and Jaidka, 2019 used the model to analyze shifts in political framing, while Lundy et al., 2018 employed it to investigate information dissemination in agricultural health. Harrison and Boehmer, 2019 applied the model to study media framing in sports for development and peace, highlighting its versatility across disciplines.

Framing theory not only explains how the media constructs news but also emphasizes its effects on public understanding and evaluations of political actors and issues (Scheufele, 1999). Vreese et al. (2010) demonstrated the broad applicability of generic frames, highlighting their influence on media content and audience interpretations. This study builds on these theoretical insights, exploring the framing dynamics in the coverage of the Iran-Israel conflict to uncover their implications for public discourse and geopolitical narratives.

3. Results and Discussion

The discussion highlights distinct sourcing patterns and tonal differences, reflecting editorial biases rooted in geopolitical alignments. Al-Jazeera's emphasis on conflict analysis and regional dynamics contrasts with the BBC's reliance on Western-centric narratives and human-interest frames, particularly highlighting Israel's defense successes and Iran's culpability. Both outlets show limited engagement with morality or economic impact frames, underscoring the need for more comprehensive reporting. These insights emphasize the media's role in shaping public interpretations of conflicts, advocating for more balanced and inclusive reporting.

3.1. Information Sources and Editorial Biases

This study reveals notable differences in the sourcing and framing of information by Al-Jazeera and BBC in their coverage of Iran's assault on Israel in April 2024. Both outlets incorporated statements from the Iranian delegation at the United Nations, reflecting a shared commitment to providing authoritative perspectives. However, the BBC supplemented these with declarations from U.S. President Joe Biden and the U.K. Ministry of Defence, reflecting a Western-centric narrative. In contrast, Al-Jazeera deliberately avoided featuring statements from U.S. or U.K. officials, opting instead for broader references to international reactions. This divergence underscores the BBC's alignment with Western geopolitical interests, while Al-Jazeera's approach reflects a regional focus rooted in the context of the Global South.

Table 2. Comparison of Information Sources

Information Source	Al Jazeera	BBC
Field correspondents/reporters	Not specifically mentioned	Not specifically mentioned
International news agencies (Reuters, AP, AFP)	Mentioned generally ("news agencies")	CBS mentioned as BBC partner
Official statements from the US government	Not mentioned	Statement from President Joe Biden
Official statements from the Israeli government	Not mentioned	Information from Israeli officials
Official statements from the Iranian government	Statement from Iranian delegation at the UN	Statement from Iranian delegation at the UN
Official statements from the British government	Not mentioned	Statement from the UK Ministry of Defence
Reports of damage and casualties in Israel	Mentioned generally	Mentioned specifically (military base in southern Israel, young girl injured)
Statements from other countries	Mentioned generally (UK, France, and Canada)	UK, France, and Canada mentioned specifically
Experts/observers	Not mentioned	Not mentioned

According to the data presented in the table above, the BBC's coverage stood out for its detailed portrayal of the consequences, including specific references to civilian casualties and damage to military infrastructure. For example, its report of a young girl injured by shrapnel in southern Israel evokes emotional responses, aligning with the human-interest frame, though it is used sparingly. This specificity enhances the BBC's

narrative of Iran as the aggressor and bolsters sympathy for Israel, aligning with Galtung’s war journalism, which often dramatizes events to emphasize divisions. In contrast, Al-Jazeera’s reliance on general descriptions of casualties and damage reflects a more neutral and factual reporting style. This approach aligns with peace journalism, as it seeks to contextualize events rather than sensationalize them, encouraging a deeper understanding of the broader geopolitical dynamics.

Al-Jazeera maintained a relatively balanced tone toward the conflict’s stakeholders. While its reporting on Iran was neutral to slightly negative, focusing on its warnings and strategic motivations, its tone toward Israel was neutral to slightly positive, acknowledging its defensive challenges while also pointing to ongoing attacks in Gaza. The BBC, on the other hand, exhibited a strongly negative tone toward Iran, depicting it as the aggressor responsible for escalating tensions. Toward Israel, the BBC adopted a highly favorable tone, emphasizing its defensive success and international support, particularly from the United States and its allies. These tonal differences reflect underlying editorial biases, with the BBC reinforcing narratives that resonate with Western diplomatic priorities and Al-Jazeera presenting a broader, less partisan perspective.

The findings further indicate how the BBC amplifies its alignment with Western allies by frequently citing statements from U.S. officials, such as President Joe Biden, and emphasizing the U.S.’s commitment to providing military aid to Israel. This alignment reinforces the perception of Israel as a victim supported by a coalition of Western powers. In contrast, Al-Jazeera’s omission of such sources suggests an effort to provide an alternative narrative that contextualizes the conflict within regional dynamics, rather than framing it through a Western lens. By relying on broader references and avoiding emotive specifics, Al-Jazeera underscores its commitment to factual reporting and a more nuanced portrayal of the conflict, one that resonates with Galtung’s emphasis on addressing the systemic roots of conflict rather than perpetuating divisions.

3.2. Tone and Stakeholder Representation

Al-Jazeera’s tone toward Iran was neutral to slightly negative, focusing on Iran’s warnings and motives without overt condemnation. Toward Israel, it maintained a neutral to slightly positive tone, acknowledging casualties while highlighting its ongoing aggression in Gaza. In contrast, the BBC portrayed Iran in a strongly negative light, emphasizing its role as the aggressor and featuring repeated international condemnation. Toward Israel, the BBC’s tone was overtly positive, emphasizing its defensive successes and support from Western allies.

Table 3. News Tone Comparison on Stakeholder Dimension

Stakeholder	Al Jazeera	BBC
Iran	Neutral to slightly negative	Negative
	Factual reporting on Iran’s actions	Strong condemnation of Iran’s attacks
	Some emphasis on Iran’s warnings of further attacks if attacked	Portrayal of Iran as the aggressor
Israel	Neutral to slightly positive	Positive
	Factual reporting on damage and casualties in Israel	Emphasis on Israel’s successful defense

	Mention of Israel's ongoing war in Gaza	Highlight of international support for Israel
United States	Neutral	Positive
	Limited mention of US involvement	Strong support for Israel by President Biden
		Emphasis on US military aid to Israel
Other Parties (UK, France, Canada)	Neutral	Positive towards US allies
	Mention of countries condemning Iran and expressing support for Israel	Specific mention of the UK and France condemning Iran and supporting Israel Emphasis on UK military aid to Israel

Al Jazeera appears to maintain a relatively neutral position regarding the parties involved, though it subtly portrays Iran in a negative light and Israel in a more positive one. The primary focus is on providing factual accounts of the events and the impact felt in Israel. In contrast, the BBC demonstrates a markedly critical attitude toward Iran, censuring its conduct and depicting it as the primary aggressor. Additionally, the BBC's reporting shows a favorable bias toward Israel, highlighting its effective defense measures and the international backing it has garnered, particularly from the United States and its allies. These disparities hint at potential biases in the reporting, with the BBC aligning more closely with the standpoint of Israel and its Western supporters, whereas Al Jazeera strives to maintain a more even-handed approach.

The disparity in tones reflects the outlets' respective editorial alignments. The BBC's portrayal of Israel as a victim aligns with negative peace and war journalism, prioritizing the immediate cessation of hostilities over addressing underlying causes. Al Jazeera's approach, which contextualizes Iran's actions as responses to earlier Israeli strikes, aligns more with positive peace, aiming to address the structural causes of the conflict.

3.3. Framing Dynamics in News Coverage

The framing analysis reveals clear differences in editorial focus. Al-Jazeera predominantly employed the conflict frame (80%), emphasizing the unprecedented scale of the attack and its geopolitical ramifications. Its secondary reliance on the attribution of responsibility frame (20%) contextualized Iran's actions, suggesting motivations rooted in Israel's prior aggression in Syria. This framing approach aligns with Galtung's principle of diagnosing conflicts to uncover systemic issues. In contrast, the BBC heavily relied on the attribution of responsibility frame (60%), portraying Iran as the principal instigator and emphasizing global solidarity with Israel. Its use of the conflict frame (30%) and limited inclusion of the human interest frame (10%) further reinforced this perspective.

Table 4. Framing Comparison Between Al Jazeera and BBC

Feature	Al-Jazeera	BBC
Dominant Frame	Conflict (80%)	Attribution of Responsibility (60%)

Secondary Frames	Attribution of Responsibility (20%)	Conflict (30%), Human Interest (10%)
Key Words and Phrases	"Unprecedented attack", "brazen attack", "condemned", "retaliation", "ironclad commitment", "repelled", "defeat"	"Unprecedented attack", "brazen attack", "condemned", "retaliation", "escalation", "warnings"
Sources	Iranian delegation at UN, analysts	US President, Israeli officials, US officials, UK Ministry of Defence
Tone Towards Iran	Neutral to slightly negative	Strongly negative
Tone Towards Israel	Neutral to slightly positive	Strongly positive
Tone Towards Other Parties	Neutral	Positive towards US and allies
Article Length (Average Words)	800	1,200

Al Jazeera prioritizes the Conflict frame (80%) by highlighting the exceptional characteristics of the assault, Iran's responsive actions, the rise in hostilities, and Iran's warnings regarding possible future attacks. The secondary focus on the Attribution of Responsibility frame (20%) underscores the underlying origins of the dispute. Articles from Al Jazeera typically exhibit brevity, averaging 800 words per article.

In contrast, the BBC emphasizes the Attribution of Responsibility frame (60%), focusing on the global condemnation of Iran's assault, the unwavering support of the US and its allies towards Israel, and the effectiveness of Israel's defense. Additionally, the Conflict frame (30%) and Human Interest frame (10%) are present in BBC articles. BBC articles tend to be longer, averaging 1,200 words per article. By framing the conflict as a dichotomy of aggression and defense, the BBC adopts a narrative consistent with war journalism, perpetuating divisions without exploring deeper causes or potential resolutions.

3.4. Limited Use of Morality and Economic Consequences Frames

Neither outlet utilized the morality frame or the economic consequences frame, missing opportunities to address the ethical or financial dimensions of the conflict. For instance, discussions on the moral implications of targeting civilian areas or the economic repercussions of military escalations could have enriched the narratives. Their absence suggests a focus on the immediate political and military dimensions, rather than a comprehensive analysis of the conflict.

This examination demonstrates that both Al Jazeera and the BBC focused on the conflict and attribution of responsibility frames, albeit from differing viewpoints. Al Jazeera prioritized the conflict itself and Iran's motivations, while the BBC centered on assigning responsibility to Iran and showcasing international backing for Israel. The human interest frame was scarcely utilized by both media platforms, although the BBC provided slightly more insight into the effects on individuals. The moral and economic impact frames were conspicuously absent in the articles examined.

The disparities in framing observed reflect the editorial decisions and potential biases of each news organization, influencing how their audiences interpret and comprehend the Iranian assault on Israel and its broader implications for the regional conflict.

Table 5. Frame Comparison Between Al Jazeera and BBC Using Semetko Valkenburg

Feature	Al-Jazeera	BBC
Conflict	a. Heavily emphasized the conflict aspect, focusing on the unprecedented nature of the attack and the escalation of tensions. b. Highlighted Iran's warnings of potential further strikes if attacked by Israel or the US. c. Used phrases such as "unprecedented attack," "retaliation," and "escalation" to underscore the severity of the conflict.	a. Presented the conflict frame as a secondary focus, emphasizing the international condemnation of Iran's actions. b. Described the attack as "brazen" and highlighted Israel's success in defending itself with the help of its allies. c. Used phrases like "brazen attack," "repelled," and "defeat" to frame the conflict from Israel's perspective.
Human Interest	a. Limited use of the human interest frame, with minimal focus on individual stories or personal experiences. b. Briefly mentioned the injury of a girl in southern Israel due to shrapnel from an intercepted drone	a. Employed the human interest frame as a minor secondary focus, providing some details on the impact of the attack on individuals. b. Specifically mentioned the injury of a young girl in southern Israel and the damage to infrastructure at an Israeli military base.
Morality	No explicit use of the morality frame	No explicit use of the morality frame
Attribution of Responsibility	a. Used the attribution of responsibility frame as a secondary focus, discussing Iran's motives for the attack. b. Mentioned Iran's claim that the attack was a response to Israel's earlier strike on an Iranian consulate in Syria. b. Included quotes from the Iranian delegation at the UN, emphasizing their perspective on the reasons behind the attack.	a. Heavily emphasized the attribution of responsibility frame, placing the blame for the attack squarely on Iran. b. Highlighted international condemnation of Iran's actions and the support for Israel from the US and its allies. c. Used phrases like "condemned" and "ironclad commitment" to underscore the international community's attribution of responsibility to Iran.
Economic Consequence	No explicit use of the economic consequence	No explicit use of the economic consequence

Al-Jazeera's reliance on the conflict and attribution of responsibility frames positions it closer to a mediating role, as defined by Galtung's therapeutic approach. By diagnosing structural issues and amplifying perspectives from the Global South, Al-Jazeera fosters a dialogue conducive to understanding and potential reconciliation. However, its limited engagement with personal narratives diminishes its ability to emotionally resonate with audiences.

The BBC's emphasis on responsibility and human interest frames supports a more polarizing narrative, reinforcing public and political alignment with Western policies. While effective in rallying support for Israel, this approach limits its role as a mediator, focusing instead on validating existing alliances and geopolitical positions.

This research demonstrates how framing influences audience interpretation and political attitudes, especially during high-stakes international conflicts. Al-Jazeera's con-

textualization encourages critical engagement with the broader geopolitical landscape, challenging audiences to consider the systemic roots of hostilities. In contrast, the BBC's alignment with Western narratives reinforces existing biases, potentially narrowing public discourse and limiting opportunities for transformative conflict resolution. By revealing these framing strategies, the study contributes to the discourse on media influence, underscoring the importance of balanced reporting in shaping public opinion and informing decision-making processes. Understanding these dynamics equips both audiences and policymakers with the tools to critically evaluate media narratives, fostering more informed and inclusive approaches to conflict resolution.

4. Conclusions

This study critically examined the framing dynamics of Al Jazeera and BBC in their coverage of Iran's attack on Israel in April 2024, revealing pronounced editorial divergences that shape public understanding of international conflicts. Al Jazeera prioritized contextual analysis, emphasizing the conflict's escalation and underlying geopolitical dynamics, while the BBC's coverage aligned with Western diplomatic narratives, focusing on assigning blame to Iran and amplifying support for Israel. These contrasting strategies illustrate how framing decisions reinforce distinct geopolitical perspectives, ultimately influencing audience perceptions and policy discourse. The findings underscore the powerful role of media framing in shaping global narratives around conflict. The BBC's reliance on responsibility and human-interest frames dramatized divisions, contributing to polarizing interpretations that align with Galtung's war journalism model. In contrast, Al Jazeera's focus on the conflict and broader regional dynamics aligned with peace journalism, aiming to foster deeper understanding while avoiding overt sensationalism. Both outlets, however, neglected the morality and economic consequence frames, missing critical opportunities to explore the ethical dimensions and broader implications of the conflict. Future research should investigate the tangible impact of these framing strategies on policy formulation and societal attitudes, particularly in regions directly affected by conflict. Additionally, the increasing influence of digital and social media as platforms for framing geopolitical events warrants further scrutiny, particularly regarding their capacity to shape public narratives and drive policy actions. Such inquiries could provide valuable insights into the evolving role of media in global politics and conflict resolution.

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