



CONSTITUTIVE INTERESTS IN CNN MEDIA FRAMING AND INSTAGRAM'S SHADOW BANNING RELATED TO ISRAEL'S AGGRESSION AGAINST PALESTINE 2023-2024*

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[10.15408/sjsbs.v12i1.43861](https://doi.org/10.15408/sjsbs.v12i1.43861)

Abstract

This study aims to explain CNN's media framing and Instagram's shadow-banning censorship policy related to Israel's aggression against Palestine since October 2023 as an action that contains a constitutive construction of interests. Through CNN's media coverage, the situation between Palestine and Israel is not described as an aggression, occupation, or genocide but as a conflict that occurred due to Hamas's attack on Israel. CNN even only uses diction that places Israel as the party being attacked and limits exposure to the loss of life in Palestine caused by Israel's aggression. The international community sympathises and provides their views regarding the developing situation but is hampered by Instagram's censorship policy through shadow banning. By using an interpretive approach to observe CNN's reporting and Instagram's shadow banning, the results of this study show that both contain US-Israeli constitutive interests in manipulating and controlling international perceptions. This refers to the interest in constructing intersubjective understandings related to Israel's positive image, which simultaneously eliminates Palestine's existence as a nation-state.

Keywords: CNN; Instagram; Israel; Knowledge Constitutive Interests; Media Framing; Palestina; Shadow Banning

* Received: January 06, 2025, Revision: February 15, 2025, Published: February 28, 2025.

A. INTRODUCTION

This study aims to describe the influence of mass media and social media in reporting Israeli military aggression against Palestine on the formation of international perceptions. Western mass media have a specific tendency to report Israeli attacks on Palestinian territories. Among them are by using the diction of war, conflict, or the use of the word Hamas to refer to the Palestinian people as the object of attacks carried out by Israel. This is assumed to be an effort to shape the perception of the international community and the construction of new knowledge about the situation in Palestine and Israel. Western mass media avoid using words such as aggression, invasion, genocide or occupation to describe the attack efforts aimed at Israel on Palestine because these are closely related to the direction of interests and foreign policies of Western countries. Meanwhile, social media manipulates information through a shadow-banning policy to limit the visibility of posts about Palestine and control international public attention to the situation that occurs. The construction efforts carried out by mass and social media discussed in this article are described as part of forming constitutive interests through knowledge (knowledge constitutive interests).

In this study, Western mass media is limited to mainstream mass media, such as CNN, which has characteristics in reporting on Israel-Palestine. In contrast, social media includes platforms sponsored by Western powers, such as Instagram, which has restrictions on exposure to the issue of Israel-Palestine. The diction of "conflict" and "war" frames the human tragedy that occurs as part of the inevitable interaction or action that may arise between countries. The Realism Paradigm in International Relations explains conflict as a natural condition between countries because humans have unlimited power and desire to dominate¹. An environment that does not have authority allows humans and countries to be in a state of conflict based on human interests and unwillingness to control themselves². According to the Realist view, conflict is a natural interaction between countries to maintain power and authority; in other words, conflict involves all parties' control and is action-reaction. Etymologically, conflict is a form of active dispute between parties with different opinions or principles.³ In this context, war is part of a conflict between countries or other

¹ Kauppi, M. V., & Viotti, P. R. (2020). Realism: The state and balance of power. In M. V. Kauppi & P. R. Viotti (Eds.), *International relations theory* (6th ed., pp. 21–61). London: Rowman & Littlefield.

² Hobbes, T. (1651). *Leviathan, or the matter, forme, & power, of common-wealth ecclesiasticall and civill*. London.

³ Cambridge Dictionary. (2024, July 7). Conflict. Retrieved from <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/conflict>.

groups in the international system. Attacking each other shows the aggressiveness of the warring parties, and they externalise each other's power⁴.

In addition to the use of the term conflict or war to refer to the current situation of Israel and Palestine, Western media also refer to the Arab Nation or the Middle East rather than referring to Palestine as the party that directly experienced the attack. The depiction of Palestine as the Middle East is an attempt by Western media to avoid the world's focus on the Palestinian Nation specifically. This is what will be described in this article, where the efforts of Western media to refer to the Middle East or the Arab Nations to refer to Palestine are a form of framing that reflects Western interests, especially the United States, England, and their alliances. The choice of diction in describing an event is assumed to be an attempt to form a specific opinion or action for a specific purpose, as per Habermas's concept of knowledge constitutive interest⁵.

Coverage and exposure of mass and social media influence how much the international community discusses the Israeli-Palestinian issue. The embedding of words that represent the development of the issue in the hashtags accompanying uploads on social media also impacts the global public's understanding of the issue. Unfortunately, because there is a tendency to limit the use of diction on Instagram, exposure to the misery of Palestine and Israeli cruelty is not widely known by the public. Instagram shadow-bans posts that are suspected of containing support or exposure of Israel-Palestine⁶. This has caused various adverse reactions from the international community because it is considered an attempt to obstruct the right to aspire and exposure to what Palestine is experiencing. The restriction of diction carried out by the mass media and in hashtags on social media is a form of effort to direct issues that are full of interest. Given the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories that has been going on for a long time, historically, this issue should not be a new issue that is part of the international political problem. However, the development of the media and their relationship with policymakers has caused this issue to be full of misinformation. In the context of communication in the public domain, misinformation is assumed to be one of the strategies for forming specific interests⁷. Thus, the existence of misinformation is not unintentional but rather part of a strategy for constructing certain understandings and facts. The Israel-Palestine issue is constructed as a conflict and not an attempt at colonisation or

⁴ Mark.V.Kauppi and Paul R.Viotti, *op.cit*

⁵ Habermas, J. (1971). Knowledge and human interests. Toronto: Beacon Press.

⁶ Apodaca, T., & Uzcátegui-Liggett, N. (2024, February 25). How we investigated shadowbanning on Instagram.

⁷ Habermas, J. (1971). Knowledge and human interests. Toronto: Beacon Press.

genocide, even though, in reality, Israel is carrying out massacres against the Palestinian people and violating international law.⁸

Literature Review

Today's global politics is inseparable from the role of mass media and social media as communication and public information dissemination platforms. They shape political discourse and play a significant role in the mobility of social movements of various actors, including transnational ones. At the political level, mass media and social media become instruments of political communication and public political participation.⁹ According to Noam Chomsky and Edward Herman, mass media is a system built to communicate messages or symbols to others.¹⁰ Mass media has a role in providing entertainment and information to the broader community by inserting specific values in its reviews. The process of disseminating information and messages will later form specific institutional structures in society.¹¹

This study defines mass media as an information and communication system that includes television, online news sites, and electronic newspapers. This refers to the development of mass media today, which is no longer in the form of print media but also online. Online news media is a development of print media that utilises digital advances, thus facilitating global access and distribution of information. Conceptually, mass media has indeed changed along with technological developments, including the massive growth of the internet. The shift in media forms from the old, namely in the form of printed newspapers, radio, and television, to multiplatform utilising the development of the internet and the digital world¹². Mass media no longer only conveys information, but expands interaction with the community through social media.

Global political communication no longer only utilises the existence of mass media in exposing events or forming certain understandings in the

⁸ Amnesty International. (2024, May 27). Israel/OPT: Israeli air strikes that killed 44 civilians further evidence of war crimes – new investigation.

⁹ Saaida, M. B. E., & Alhouseini, M. A. M. (2023). The influence of social media on contemporary global politics. *International Journal of Research and Analytical Reviews (IJRAR)*, 10(1), 799–809.

¹⁰ Herman, E. S., & Chomsky, N. (2008). *Manufacturing consent: The political economy of the mass media*. London: The Bodley Head.

¹¹ Herman, E. S., & Chomsky, N. (2008). *Manufacturing consent: The political economy of the mass media*. London: The Bodley Head.

¹² Meifitri, M., & Susanto, E. (2020). Perubahan dari media lama ke media baru: Telaah transformasi platform multimedia. *Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi*, 9(3), 302–311.

international community. The existence of international news media is an integral part of the dynamics of global politics, which, on the one hand, provides information and, on the other hand, becomes an instrument in constructing certain policies. The construction of opinions on specific policies will not be enough just through reporting in the mass media; issue penetration also needs to be carried out continuously to reach the logic of society. To accommodate the interests of exposure as well as attracting public interest in accessing certain news, social media is now present. Social media not only functions to disseminate information or news but also influences public opinion.¹³ Currently, social media is inseparable from the need for community interaction, so exposure to social media significantly impacts individual lifestyles, attitudes, thoughts, and behaviour. According to Kietzman, this is one of the functional forms of social media, which creates interconnectedness between users in sharing information and communication and externalising their identities in the process.¹⁴ Social media provides different experiences for its users, but social media generally has implications for changing users' mindsets and behaviours. Therefore, social media is beneficial for conveying information and communication and as a medium for constructing particular interests.

In the context of International Relations, mass media and social media have implications for the constellation of international politics. Both forms of media are tools for international actors, both state and non-state, to interact and form specific issues or opinions to gain attention from the global community. Social and mass media become instruments of political communication, political mobilisation, and even propaganda that can change the dimensions of international relations issues and government policies.¹⁵ In this study, mass media such as CNN not only provide exposure to Israel-Palestine through their conventional news but also use social media such as Instagram to voice opinions and exposures based on their point of view. In addition, social media such as Instagram also have policies that lead to political censorship efforts against diction or exposures that are considered not under their interests, in the form of shadow banning policies. Therefore, this study will describe how the West,

¹³ Meifitri, M., & Susanto, E. (2020). *Perubahan dari media lama ke media baru: Telaah transformasi platform multimedia*. *Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi*, 9(3), 302–311.

¹⁴ Kietzmann, J. H., Hermkens, K., McCarthy, I. P., & Silvestre, B. S. (2011). Social media? Get serious! Understanding the functional building blocks of social media. *Business Horizon*, 54, 241–251.

¹⁵ Saaida, M. B. E., & Alhouseini, M. A. M. (2023). The influence of social media on contemporary global politics. *International Journal of Research and Analytical Reviews (IJRAR)*, 10(1), 799–809.

through mass and social media, constructs the understanding of the international community through reporting on the Israel-Palestine issue.

Jurgen Habermas, referring to knowledge-constitutive interest, argued that knowledge is pragmatically built on interests that eventually become part of human life. Habermas identified three forms of interests that will reconstruct knowledge, including technical or instrumental interests that refer to manipulation and control of external conditions, practical interests that refer to intersubjective understanding, and emancipatory interests that refer to interests to free oneself from domination, coercive actions, or specific social relations.¹⁶ The efforts of mass media and social communication in this study are assumed to be an effort to reconstruct public knowledge about the Israeli-Palestinian issue. Among the three interests classified by Habermas, the author describes that Western mass media coverage has instrumental and practical interests in conveying information about Israel-Palestine. Meanwhile, Instagram, as a social media that enforces shadow banning on uploads that refer to the liberation and defence of Palestine, reflects the instrumental interests of the West towards the international community in responding to the Israeli-Palestinian issue.

Shadow banning is a policy implemented by social media to limit the reach and visibility of content users can access. Chen and Zaman identified the functions and purposes of shadow banning, including controlling the content they create and upload, both in terms of visibility and reach. Second, this policy functions as a method to create a healthy media discourse by limiting offensive (bot-like) behaviour.¹⁷ However, shadow banning that keeps secret the efforts of restrictions made by social media platforms against users can be considered to manipulate users. This point will be discussed in this article, where the shadow banning implemented by Instagram during the Israeli aggression against Palestine since October 2023 means manipulating information and knowledge of the international community regarding the occupation and genocide carried out by Israel against the Palestinian people. Efforts to construct constitutive interests can also be done through framing. In various International Relations studies, framing is a concept that is not widely developed, although framing practices can be found in efforts to manipulate politics and foreign policy analysis. Political manipulation is usually related to a country's national interests, so they need to influence the behaviour and attitudes of other actors.

¹⁶ Pensky, M. (2014). Historical and intellectual contexts. In B. Fultner (Ed.), Jürgen Habermas: Key concepts (pp. 13–32). New York: Routledge.

¹⁷ Chen, Y.-S., & Zaman, T. (2024). Shaping opinions in social networks with shadow banning. PLOS ONE, 19(3), e0299977.

The effort is to minimise the undesirable and opposite results of a decision-making process¹⁸. Framing in manipulation politics involves state actors and non-state actors, such as the mass media. One study that shows that media framing influences the attitudes and behavior of the international community is Emine Arslan's writing, which states that media framing related to the Turkish conflict influences changes in global perceptions of Turkey¹⁹. In her writing, Arslan explains that international perceptions formed due to media framing should be part of the state's conflict resolution efforts and strategy formulation. This is because the international community's understanding of a conflict is greatly influenced by how the media reviews and frames the news they convey²⁰. So, it is clear that framing is carried out to form certain perceptions in the international community, in the interests of the media or other actors behind the mass media. The mass media uses framing techniques to emphasise which information they want to convey compared to other information.²¹. The framing of CNN's reporting on the Palestine-Israel issue was carried out to convey information that was in the interests of certain parties, especially the US and Israel as its allies.

This article explains how CNN's news coverage and Instagram's shadow-banning policy are a series of framing and manipulation efforts to shape perceptions and knowledge about the reality of the Palestinian-Israeli conditions. Through CNN's news media and restrictions on visibility on social media, the US and Israel are trying to shape new knowledge that suits their interests, namely controlling the Palestinian region. Manipulation of information and framing of events in the news will construct the international community's understanding of what is happening between Palestine and Israel. Limiting the spotlight and exposure to Palestine will construct facts about how large and broad Palestine is known as a nation and sovereign state in the international system. The mention of Hamas, which is not a state actor, and Israel, which is a state, obscures the fact that those involved in the aggression are states and countries, not countries with specific organisations. In other words, the mass media and social media are

¹⁸ Maoz, Z. (1990). Framing the national interest: The manipulation of foreign policy decisions in group settings. *World Politics*, 43(1), 77–110.

¹⁹ Arslan, E. (2024). Media framing of conflict: Exploring its influence on international perception in Turkey. *Journal of International Relations*, 4(2), 56–67.

²⁰ Arslan, E. (2024). *Media framing of conflict: Exploring its influence on international perception in Turkey*. *Journal of International Relations*, 4(2), 56–67.

²¹ Hoyt, P. D., & Garrison, J. A. (1997). Political manipulation within the small group: Foreign policy advisers in the Carter administration. In P. 't Hart, E. Stern, & B. Sundelius (Eds.), *Beyond groupthink: Political group dynamics and foreign policy-making* (pp. 77–110). Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

trying to manipulate the fact that Palestine exists in the international system as a sovereign state. Of the three constitutive interests, technical/instrumental, practical, and emancipatory, CNN's media framing and Instagram's shadow banning are construction efforts that reflect the technical/instrumental and pragmatic interests of the United States and Israel.

B. METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach based on the interpretive paradigm. In explaining the reality of reporting on the Israel-Palestine issue carried out by Western mass media such as CNN and the shadow banning carried out by Instagram, the interpretive approach focuses on meaning and social reality as reciprocal and dynamic constructions.²² An interpretive approach is needed in this study because issues related to Palestine and Israel are subjective realities, socially constructed, and very diverse. This study relies on observation to understand the current developing phenomenon of Palestine-Israel news. Data were obtained through literature studies using discourse analysis methods to help describe how news discourse is published in the international community.²³

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Palestine-Israel issue has become an international reality reported by various mass media. The news carried by each media tends to have a particular point of view, influencing the international community's knowledge about the issues that occur. Most of the media, especially those owned by Western powers through CNN, conveys exposure to the attacks that occurred by involving political interests. This can be seen through the efforts of depiction, writing sentences, and choice of words, which show the West's bias in the Israel-Palestine issue. Based on the search, CNN media reported on the launch of a rocket from the Gaza region aimed at Israel on October 7, 2023, at 12:31 local time²⁴. Before that, CNN media had reported on the victims who fell in Israel due to rockets from the Gaza region; at least there were more than fifteen articles highlighting the impact felt by Israel due to the attack from the Gaza region on the date

²² Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Sage Publications, Inc.

²³ Kelsey, D., & Way, L. (2021). *Analysing news discourse*. In K. B. Jensen (Ed.), *A handbook of media and communication research: Qualitative and quantitative methodologies* (pp. 112–135). Oxon: Routledge.

²⁴ Dahman, I., Gold, H., Tal, A., & Atay, H. (2023, October 7). *Multiple rockets fired from Gaza towards Israel: CNN producer*.

above²⁵. CNN's reporting on October 7, 2023, showed a tendency that Israel was the victim of the attack, and the incident triggered retaliatory actions taken by Israel afterwards. This form of construction carried out by the news media shaped the international community's knowledge about Israel-Palestine. The international community obtained information that the first to experience the attack and the victims were Israel, so this became the justification for Israel's subsequent attacks on Palestine.

CNN described Israel as the first party to be targeted by the Hamas group and suffered losses in terms of lives and infrastructure. In the news published on October 7, CNN did not place Palestine as another party that was also affected by the conflict between the Hamas group and Israel. CNN focused on reporting on the damage to Israeli infrastructure, the loss of life among Israeli civilians, the declaration of war by Israel in response to the attack, and even one news article wrote that the events that occurred were a repeat of the Yom Kippur War²⁶. Placing Israel as the object of attack in CNN's reporting constructs the understanding that Israel is the victim of the attacks carried out by Hamas. In addition, the news stating that "Israel declared war" constructs public knowledge that Israel deserves to counterattack to fight the Hamas group. The existence of Hamas is considered a trigger for tensions between Israel and Palestine, and this is a justification for Israel to attack the Gaza region. This is one of the pieces of information that has become knowledge for the international community regarding the Israeli-Palestinian relationship so far.

CNN's sympathy and tendentious focus on rocket attacks experienced by Israel are characteristics of CNN's reporting style regarding Palestine-Israel relations. Suzan Alkalliny, Ain Shams University, in her article examining the framing forms of CNN and FOX, said that both news media are always biased in presenting the Palestine-Israel situation. The study found that all aspects, including coverage, handling of events, reliable sources, and even the selection of images and videos, are all biased towards one party, namely Israel²⁷. If the study highlights the attacks in 2014 and 2017, and the findings are consistent in CNN's reporting as has been concluded, it is clear that CNN's reporting has its discourse in creating knowledge in society. CNN has technical or instrumental interests in the context of controlling what is known and being sought by the

²⁵ "CNN," accessed May 8, 2024, <https://edition.cnn.com/middleeast/live-news/al-aqsa-storm-militants-infiltrate-israel-after-gaza-rockets-10-07-intl-hnk/index.html>

²⁶ CNN. (2024, August 8). CNN. Retrieved from <https://edition.cnn.com/middleeast/live-news/al-aqsa-storm-militants-infiltrate-israel-after-gaza-rockets-10-07-intl-hnk/index.html>.

²⁷ Alkalliny, S. (2017). Framing of media coverage of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in CNN and FoxNews. *International Journal of English Literature and Social Sciences (IJELS)*, 2(4), 161–165.

international community regarding Israel's aggression against Palestine. This interest is not far from the interests of CNN's supporting countries, such as the United States, which also has a diplomatic closeness with Israel. US sympathy for Israel is given in the form of support for Israel amidst the aggression carried out under the pretext of self-defence against Hamas attacks; the US even encouraged Israel to change its military strategy to attack Hamas. Both countries see Hamas as a terrorist that must be fought; this is in line with US national interests regarding the war on terror.²⁸

The interests of the US, Israel, and their allied countries can be seen from media exposure. As Habermas stated in his book *Knowledge and Human Interest*, there is an effort to establish truth or knowledge in every interest, and vice versa.²⁹ CNN's tendency to report from Israel's perspective has the meaning of conveying US interests in supporting Israel as an allied country. Publications related to the number of Israeli casualties ignore the fact that Israeli aggression also resulted in more deaths on the Palestinian side³⁰. This shows the strategic interests of the US and Israel in shaping international opinion and the actions of the global community against the Israeli-Palestinian occupation. In Habermas's view, information is intended to convey or form opinions and can also be used to secure or control actions (cognitive interests)³¹. The cognitive interests referred to in this article are shown by Western media, such as CNN, in managing the social environment through the news that is presented, and the news automatically also forms a different general meaning related to the phenomenon that is happening. The general sense of the phenomenon of Israeli aggression against Palestine today is developing far differently from the reality that occurred previously. Although historically, the location and position of Palestine, the position of Israel, and so on have been written a lot, what is happening now is a new object in the formation of empirical knowledge about the situation of the two countries.

The above is similar to how most people currently know the situation of Israel and Palestine, as international entities that do not have an equal level. This means that the international community considers Israel as a country, while Palestine is regarded as the PLO (Palestine Liberation Organization). The identity

²⁸ Zanotti, J. (2024). Israel: Major issues and U.S. relations. US Congressional Research Service.

²⁹ Habermas, J. (1971). *Knowledge and human interests*. Toronto: Beacon Press.

³⁰ Alkalliny, S. (2017). Framing of media coverage of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in CNN and FoxNews. *International Journal of English Literature and Social Sciences (IJELS)*, 2(4), 161–165.

³¹ Held, D. (1980). *Introduction to critical theory: Horkheimer to Habermas*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

of the two countries, which then becomes information and knowledge for the international community, is formed through media framing of the developing phenomenon. How history is constructed, discussed, and studied from generation to generation cannot be separated from the role of humans and their interests³²Research on Israel-Palestine uses many media construction perspectives, media framing, and agenda-setting theories. However, this article assumes that the framing plays a major role and influences the formation of general knowledge about the situation between Israel and Palestine. In the news reported by CNN at the end of 2023, especially in October, the mention of Israel in various headlines exceeded the percentage of mentions of Palestine.

Word	Length	Count	Weighted Percentage (%)
forces	6	4	4.26
israeli	7	4	4.26
israel	6	3	3.19
affairs	7	2	2.13
civilian	8	2	2.13
civilians	9	2	2.13
deliberately	12	2	2.13
gaza	4	2	2.13
health	6	2	2.13
palestinian	11	2	2.13

Table 1: processed from CNN news, 2023

The table shows the percentage of mentions of Israel by CNN media in various headlines, greater than Gaza and Palestine. The more excellent mention of the word Israel in CNN news will affect the amount of exposure to Israel and Palestine. Western media tends to mention Israel clearly, while Palestine is not mentioned much and is replaced with Hamas, Gaza, and others. This is related to their interests in preventing the independence and sovereignty of Palestine as a country. For the international community, what is happening now is the conflict between Israel and Hamas; there is no Palestinian nation that is widely discussed. The existence of Palestine in the information published by the media is only a group of people who are victims of the Israel-Hamas conflict.

The mass media is interested in conveying events, both practically, technically, and emancipatory. Technically, Western mass media such as CNN

³² Habermas, J. (1971). Knowledge and human interests. Toronto: Beacon Press.

construct truth/knowledge through reporting by involving elements of language whose purpose is to manipulate the international system. As explained in the table above, the use and avoidance of mass media against specific diction refer to the interests of the West, which is reluctant to recognise Palestine as a sovereign country and nation. News coverage that places Israel as the object of attack and Hamas as the trigger of the conflict is technically an attempt to manipulate public knowledge about what is happening. The media does have the power to manipulate the public and construct a person's behaviour. Individuals exposed to manipulative information have the impression that they are behaving according to their ideas and interests, when, in fact they are behaving based on what they capture or take from the information they read³³Other manipulations carried out by the media include the use of hashtags on social media and shadow banning carried out by Instagram.

Meta, the company that houses Instagram, systematically censors public efforts to voice or disseminate information that carries the words Palestine, Gaza, and the like³⁴. These efforts are attempts to manipulate and control the behaviour of the international public in responding to Israel's aggression against Palestine. Human Rights Watch noted that as many as 1049 posts containing support for Palestine were censored and removed by Instagram, while only 1 post supporting Israel was censored.³⁵ Efforts to manipulate and control the environment through shadow banning aim to manipulate the international community to find out the reality of the occurring aggression or conflict. Instagram makes efforts to intervene in the dissemination of information in the process of communication between communities globally, to narrow the space for international public support for the Palestinian people. The use of the terms genocide, aggression, colonization, and others is limited by social media as a form of manipulation and construction of public responses to the phenomena that occur.

Shadow banning is carried out by limiting the visibility of posts by Instagram users who are considered affiliated with defending Palestine or who show sympathy for the aggression that is occurring. Human Rights Watch shows data on several dictions in restricted posts, such as the slogans "From the River

³³ Galanton, D. (2019). The manipulation through media, from concept to practical application. *International Journal of Communication Research*, 9(1), 17–22.

³⁴ "Meta's Broken Promises Systemic Censorship of Palestine Content on Instagram and Facebook," Human Rights Watch, last modified December 21, 2023, <https://www.hrw.org/report/2023/12/21/metas-broken-promises/systemic-censorship-palestine-content-instagram-and>

³⁵ "Meta's Broken Promises Systemic Censorship of Palestine Content on Instagram and Facebook," Human Rights Watch.

to the Sea", "Ceasefire now", "Free Palestine", or posts that embed the Palestinian Flag emoji censored by Instagram³⁶. Users do not clearly know that their accounts are censored, but they admit that there is a decrease in views on their posts or that their posts are not displayed unilaterally by Meta³⁷. This policy is implemented not solely to avoid massive messages or posts that lead to violence nor simply for reasons of protection from virtual violence. The censorship carried out by Meta through Instagram shadow banning reflects their technical interests in limiting the spread of information that supports Palestine and condemns the aggression carried out by Israel. Human Rights Watch also proves that Meta's censorship policy is based on the security policy implemented by the United States. Meta implements the DOI (Dangerous Organizations and Individuals) policy, which is closely affiliated with the United States' anti-terror policy.³⁸

The political manipulation of the United States through the DOI policy implemented by Meta in carrying out shadow banning refers to the US interest in limiting the movement of the Palestinian people and their supporters. This is closely related to the US national interest in identifying parties considered terrorists and how to restrict their movements so that they do not pose a threat. The US controls external conditions, in this case, the knowledge and understanding of the international community regarding Israel's aggression against Palestine, as well as the conflictual situation in parts of the Middle East. The framing of mass media news and censorship by social media reflect the practical interests of the US and its allies in constructing an intersubjective understanding of Israel-Palestine. As partners, the US and Israel need to form an intersubjective perspective and understanding of Israel's existence in Palestinian land. The existence of AIPAC (*American Israel Public Affairs Committee*) is a concrete form of US and Israeli interests in maintaining Israel's existence³⁹. Interest groups use various methods to ensure that the discourse and depiction of Israel in the public eye is always positive, including exposure of the Israeli side in the current situation with Palestine. Therefore, CNN's reporting and US-formed social media policies, such as Instagram, must contribute to the construction of a global understanding of Israel.

³⁶ Human Rights Watch. (2023, December 21). Meta's broken promises: Systemic censorship of Palestine content on Instagram and Facebook.

³⁷ *Human Rights Watch. (2023, December 21). Meta's broken promises: Systemic censorship of Palestine content on Instagram and Facebook.*

³⁸ *Human Rights Watch. (2023, December 21). Meta's broken promises: Systemic censorship of Palestine content on Instagram and Facebook.*

³⁹ Solomon, M. S. (1993). *The agenda and political techniques of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC)*. Washington D.C: The Industrial College of the Armed Forces, National Defense University.

D. CONCLUSION

CNN's mass media framing of the news and Instagram's shadow-banning censorship policy related to Israeli aggression posts against Palestine since October 2023 is an effort to construct constitutive knowledge. CNN's reporting uses the word Hamas, which refers to the Palestinian side, while Israel is still referred to as Israel. The distinction between the two conflicting parties positions Israel as a country, while Palestine is not mentioned because the West does not recognise Palestinian sovereignty as a country. The use of this diction is a framing that has technical interests from Israel and the United States as allies in manipulating and controlling information about Israel in the international community. The US and Israel need to ensure that Israel's image in the global community is well maintained, one of which is through the media. CNN's reporting can form an intersubjective understanding of Israel's identity and the current situation that is happening, that the situation is not a form of aggression or occupation carried out by Israel but rather a conflict between Hamas and Israel. In addition, the Meta-censorship policy that underlies Instagram's shadow-banning actions against posts that support Palestine and condemn Israel shows the US's technical/instrumental interests in fighting terror in their definition. The US, as Israel's partner, controls Israel's image in the international community by sorting out posts that could harm Israel's image or support Palestinian sovereignty. Mass media and social media, in the case of Israeli aggression against Palestine, do not play much of a role in conveying emancipatory interests and only become instrumental and intersubjective knowledge construction instruments about Israel and the absence of Palestine in the international system.

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