

New Media and Arab-Israeli Conflict: Dynamics, Impact And Challenges

Ainul Asyraf Lokman,* Mohd Roslan Mohd Nor,** & Faisal @ Ahmad Faisal Abdul Hamid***

Abstract

With the advent of new media 5.0, national and ethnic identities in the Arab-Israeli conflict have been altered, and social media has become a crucial source of communication and information for both factions involved in the conflict. These platforms have raised questions about the influence of social media on the formation of national and ethnic identities during conflict. The objective of this paper is to examine the role of new media especially social media in shaping national and ethnic identities in the Arab-Israeli conflict. This paper will conduct a comprehensive review of existing literature and studies on the topic. The findings of this study revealed that new media has had a significant impact on shaping national and ethnic identities in the Arab-Israeli conflict. Social media platforms have provided a space for people on both sides of the conflict to express their opinions and connect with others who share their views. However, social media has also facilitated the spread of misinformation, propaganda, and hate speech, which has reinforced existing biases and deepened divisions between groups. The paper also highlights the potential of new media in supporting conflict resolution efforts, such as by facilitating dialogue and promoting understanding. The study suggest governments, media practitioners, and civil society players to handle new media concerns in the Arab-Israeli conflict. This involves fighting misinformation and hate speech, encouraging social media responsibility, and using new media to resolve conflicts.

Keywords: social media, Arab-Israeli conflict, national identity, ethnic identity, conflict resolution

Introduction

The Arab-Israeli dispute is a protracted, complicated issue that has deep roots in the history, culture, and politics of the Middle East region. Spanning over several decades, this conflict has had profound implications on the national and ethnic identities of the people involved, often leading to polarization and strife between various groups.¹ The advent of new media 5.0 and the subsequent rise of social media platforms as major sources of information and communication for people on both sides of the conflict has emerged as a new factor that has significantly influenced the dynamics of the Arab-Israeli conflict.² This factor has emerged amidst the ever-evolving nature of the conflict. The rapid development of information and communication technologies has given rise to the widespread use of social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. These platforms have become a primary means for individuals to express their opinions, connect with others who share their views, and access news and information about the conflict.

As a direct consequence of this, new media has arisen as a significant force in molding public debate and perceptions on the Arab-Israeli conflict. It does this by giving a platform on which a variety of voices and points of view can be heard and considered by the international community. However, the usage of social media platforms within the context of the Arab-Israeli conflict has also been laden with difficulties, including the transmission of

* Ainul Asyraf Lokman (corresponding author) PhD Candidate, Department of Islamic History and Civilization, Academy of Islamic Studies, Universiti Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Email: asyraflokman@um.edu.my

** Mohd Roslan Mohd Nor (PhD), Professor and Head of Department, Department of Islamic History and Civilization, Academy of Islamic Studies, Universiti Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Email: m_roslan@um.edu.my

*** Faisal @ Ahmad Faisal Abdul Hamid (PhD), Assistant Professor, Department of Islamic History and Civilization, Academy of Islamic Studies, Universiti Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Email: faisal@um.edu.my

¹ Ben-Yehuda and Mishali-Ram, "The ethnic-state perspective in international crises: A theoretical framework applied to the Arab-Israel conflict 1947-2000." *International Interactions* 29, no. 1 (2003): 1-26. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03050620304596>.

² Arno, Andrew, and Wimal Dissanayake. *The news media in national and international conflict*. Routledge, 2019.

propaganda, hate speech, and false information.³ These negative elements of new media have contributed to the increasing polarization of national and ethnic identities, as well as aggravated existing conflicts between groups. In light of these developments, there is a growing need for a comprehensive understanding of the role that new media plays in shaping national and ethnic identities in the Arab-Israeli conflict and the implications of this role for conflict resolution and peacebuilding efforts.

This study will investigate the role that new media plays in the formation of national and ethnic identities within the context of the Arab-Israeli conflict in order to fill the knowledge gap that has been identified. It will accomplish this by performing a thorough assessment of the existing literature and studies on the subject, analyzing the impact of new media on the establishment and reinforcement of national and ethnic identities in the conflict, and drawing conclusions based on those findings. In this analysis, both the good and negative aspects of social media's influence on identity dynamics will be investigated. These aspects include the potential of new media to amplify voices and viewpoints that are underrepresented, as well as its role in aiding the spread of disinformation, propaganda, and hate speech. Specifically, the potential of new media to amplify underrepresented voices and perspectives will be investigated. In addition, the potential of new media to act as a tool for conflict resolution, discussion, and the promotion of peace in the Arab-Israeli conflict will be investigated in this study. It will also investigate prospective tactics and initiatives that utilize new media in order to facilitate communication, promote understanding, and support efforts to resolve disputes between the parties involved.

The paper will contribute to the creation of effective strategies for promoting peace and reconciliation by evaluating successful examples and highlighting the lessons learnt from these approaches. The study will emphasize the application of these techniques to the Arab-Israeli conflict and will outline the lessons learned from these approaches. Lastly, this article will analyze the obstacles that are faced by policymakers, media practitioners, and civil society actors in the context of the Arab-Israeli conflict while attempting to solve the issues that are posed by new media. It will provide recommendations for steps to prevent hate speech and misinformation, promote responsible use of social media platforms, and utilize the potential of new media to support efforts to resolve conflicts. In addition, the article will argue that additional study is required to better understand the effects of new media on shaping national and ethnic identities in conflict settings and to find effective tactics for fostering peace and reconciliation. This conclusion will be reached at some point over the course of the paper.

In summary, this study intends to provide a comprehensive analysis of the role that new media plays in forming national and ethnic identities in the Arab-Israeli conflict, as well as its implications for regional stability, diplomacy, and the chances of a peaceful resolution to the conflict. This study also investigates the complex relationship that exists between various forms of new media, such as social networking sites, online news outlets, and digital activism, and the construction of individual and collective identities. This will be accomplished by investigating a number of different types of new media. In addition to this, the article will analyze the influence that new media has had on public opinion, the formation of policy, and international relations in the context of the current conflict. The findings lead to a greater understanding of the role that technology plays in current conflicts and will

³ Safaa Said. "The propaganda in new media," *The Israeli propagandist discourse in digital media toward Arab public in the Middle East*." Master's thesis, Kocaeli University, Institute of Social Sciences, 2020.

inspire tactics for increasing discussion, fostering mutual understanding, and finally attaining a peace that is lasting in the region.

Methodology

In this study, a qualitative research design is employed, focusing on method of reviewing existing literature and studies on the topic of new media and its influence on national and ethnic identities in the Arab-Israeli conflict. This author also embraces an ethnographic approach that involves immersing in the online and offline spaces where the conflict is discussed,⁴ allowing author to observe, document, and analyze interactions and identity-related dynamics. The primary sources consist of online databases, academic journals, books, and digital archives, providing access to diverse perspectives on the issue. The instruments used in this study include analyzing content shared on online spaces such as news, article, blogs, social media content, and other relevant sources to identify themes, discourses, and patterns related to identity formation as well as participant observation in online communities. Thematic analysis that is being used will identify recurring themes, patterns, and variations related to identity formation and the influence of new media. The procedures for conducting the literature review begin with the formulation of clear research questions and objectives. Next, a search strategy is developed, which includes identifying appropriate keywords, search terms, and relevant sources. The researcher manually searches for and selects sources that contribute to the research objectives, critically appraising them for their relevance, credibility, and contribution. Finally, the data extracted from the selected sources are analyzed and synthesized, resulting in a cohesive and comprehensive understanding of the role of new media in shaping national and ethnic identities within the Arab-Israeli conflict and its implications for regional stability and peace. Author acknowledges that identity formation in the Arab-Israeli conflict might be influenced by various factors beyond new media. Historical, political, and cultural factors should also be considered to provide a more comprehensive understanding.

Result And Discussion

Influence of social media on National and Ethnic Identity Dynamics

In the Arab-Israeli conflict, the impact of social media on the dynamics of national and ethnic identity has been a crucial role in shaping perceptions and interactions among the many players.⁵ (El Zein & Abusalem, 2015). Social media platforms have influenced the dynamics of national and ethnic identities in the conflict, with an emphasis on both ways; the positive and the bad sides of this relationship. Interactions on social media have contributed to an escalation of tensions but also helped to create links among the parties involved in the conflict. In order to gain a better understanding of the consequences of social media on the Arab-Israeli conflict can be portrayed from multiple of cases. The role that social media played in the dissemination of information during the Gaza War in 2014 is one illustration of the impact that social media has had on the Arab-Israeli conflict (Ward, 2009). According to Seo (2014), users of social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook were able to exchange real-time updates and photographs from the conflict with one another, which led to an enhanced awareness of the situation among members of the international community. Nevertheless, these platforms also made it easier to distribute biased narratives

⁴ Miriyam Aouragh and Anne Alexander. "The Egyptian experience: Sense and nonsense of the internet revolution." *International Journal of communication* 5 (2011): 15.

⁵ Hatem El Zein and Abusalem Ali. "Social media and war on Gaza: A battle on virtual space to galvanise support and falsify Israel story." *Athens Journal of Mass Media and Communications* 1, no. 2 (2015): 109-120.

and false information, which contributed to the polarization of perspectives regarding the conflict (Badawy & Ferrara, 2018).

On a more upbeat note, the advent of grassroots peacebuilding projects has been facilitated by the potential presented by social media. For instance, in 2012, in reaction to increasing tensions between Israel and Iran, a Facebook campaign called "Israel Loves Iran" was started. This campaign is only one example. Beyond the political hyperbole that so frequently dominates the conversation about the crisis (Karsh, 2010), the goal of the campaign was to encourage communication and understanding between ordinary inhabitants of both countries. This campaign highlights the ability of social media to develop connections among people on opposing sides of the conflict, challenging the old narratives that perpetuate divide in the process.

On the other hand, it is important to recognize the darker side of social media in the context of the Arab-Israeli conflict. While it can serve as a platform for connectivity, social media has also become a breeding ground for hate speech and the incitement of violence. In line with Gordon's research (2016), social media played a significant role in amplifying the voices of extremists and fueling acts of violence during the wave of unrest that swept across Israel and the Palestinian territories in 2015. As highlighted by Berger (2016), the use of hashtags such as #stab and #poisontheknife, alongside the dissemination of disturbing videos and images glorifying attacks, contributed to an atmosphere of fear and animosity within the region. These instances underscore the alarming power of social media to intensify tensions and perpetuate conflict, adding a layer of complexity to the Arab-Israeli dynamic.

Moreover, it is crucial to acknowledge the emergence of "digital resistance" as a significant aspect within the Arab-Israeli conflict. This phenomenon, as highlighted by Kelsch (2022), encompasses the strategic utilization of social media by activists to mobilize protests, disseminate crucial information, and counter prevailing narratives surrounding the war. An illustrative example is the "Great March of Return" demonstrations that unfolded in Gaza in 2018. Activists adeptly employed social media platforms to coordinate rallies, document human rights violations, and garner international attention for the plight of Palestinians (Abusalim, 2018). By harnessing the power of digital platforms, these activists effectively challenge existing power structures and strive to amplify their voices on a global scale. This evolution of digital resistance introduces a new dynamic to the Arab-Israeli conflict, underlining the significance of social media as a tool for advocacy and awareness.

Additionally, it is essential to recognize the extensive use of social media by various parties involved in the Arab-Israeli conflict for strategic communication purposes. As Bjola and Patel (2015) highlight, both Israeli and Palestinian political and military organizations have employed social media platforms to gather intelligence, shape public opinion, and propagate their respective narratives. This phenomenon raises valid concerns about the potential weaponization of social media in the conflict, as it becomes a tool for spreading propaganda and amplifying polarization. The use of social media as a strategic communication tool adds a layer of complexity to the conflict and introduces new challenges to achieving diplomatic solutions (Zeitsoff, 2017).

In conclusion, the dynamics of national and ethnic identities have been significantly altered as a result of the impact that social media has had on the Arab-Israeli conflict. While it has the potential to develop relationships and stimulate discourse among the various stakeholders, it has also played a role in aggravating tensions and polarizing ideas, which is

a shame because it has the potential to do both of those things. It is necessary to encourage digital literacy, establish techniques for counteracting disinformation and hate speech, and create spaces for constructive dialogue among disputing parties in order to harness the power of social media for peacebuilding and conflict resolution.

The Impact of Misinformation, Propaganda, and Hate Speech

In recent years, the growth of new media platforms has expedited the distribution of misinformation, propaganda, and hate speech, which has had a substantial impact on the Arab-Israeli conflict. This is due to the fact that misinformation, propaganda, and hate speech are all easily disseminated through new media platforms. These elements have had detrimental effects on the escalation of the conflict as well as the polarization of national and ethnic identities. To begin with, spread of misinformation plays a crucial role in exacerbating tensions within the Arab-Israeli conflict. Misinformation refers to the dissemination of misleading or false information, whether unintentional or deliberate, that can have significant consequences for the conflict dynamics. According to Boler (2008), the propagation of misinformation has been a major element in fueling tensions in the Arab-Israeli conflict. One illustrative case is the Al-Durrah incident in 2000, where initial reports attributed the death of a Palestinian youth to Israeli gunfire. However, subsequent investigations, as highlighted by Yarchi and Ayalon (2020), revealed that the evidence supporting this claim was inconclusive. Unfortunately, by the time the misinformation was debunked, it had already triggered widespread outrage and fueled acts of violence. Instances of misinformation have profound implications, perpetuating grievances and impeding reconciliation efforts. By distorting facts and promoting false narratives, misinformation deepens mistrust, reinforces existing biases, and hampers the possibility of mutual understanding between the parties involved in the conflict. The consequences of misinformation are far-reaching, as it contributes to the entrenchment of divergent perspectives and obstructs the path to constructive dialogue. It fuels a cycle of misinformation and counter-misinformation, making it challenging to build trust and find common ground.

Furthermore, a critical factor contributing to the formation of public opinion and the escalation of the Arab-Israeli conflict is the pervasive use of propaganda. Propaganda, characterized by the manipulation of facts to promote specific political agendas or viewpoints, has played a significant role in shaping narratives and influencing public perception. During the Gaza conflict in 2014, the Israeli government leveraged social media as a tool to disseminate information that emphasized the perceived threat posed by Hamas and justified military actions (Bjola & Patel, 2015). This example highlights how social media platforms were utilized to sway public opinion in support of the Israeli government's perspective. Similarly, Palestinian organizations like Hamas and others have employed similar propaganda strategies to rally support and vilify Israel (Gordon, 2016). These propaganda efforts not only contribute to the polarization of opinions but also create barriers to understanding and dialogue. They reinforce existing biases, foster animosity, and hinder the prospects of peaceful resolutions. It is crucial to recognize the manipulative nature of propaganda and actively promote critical thinking and media literacy to enable individuals to discern and evaluate information in a more informed and objective manner.

Moreover, it is crucial to acknowledge the detrimental impact of hate speech and extremist rhetoric on the Arab-Israeli conflict. Hate speech, which promotes violence and prejudice, has played a significant role in fueling animosity between the Arab and Israeli communities. As highlighted by Badawy and Ferrara (2018), social media platforms have become

breeding grounds for the dissemination of hate speech, providing a platform for extremists to recruit new members and propagate their ideologies. This has allowed far-right nationalist groups like Lehava in Israel to gain prominence by leveraging social media platforms to disseminate their anti-Arab and anti-Muslim views (Berger, 2016). The proliferation of hate speech on social media not only perpetuates divisions but also hinders efforts towards reconciliation and peaceful coexistence. It reinforces stereotypes, deepens mistrust, and contributes to an atmosphere of hostility.

Misinformation, propaganda, and hate speech have had a multitude of repercussions rather than what being explained above, all of which are intertwined and interrelated in the Arab-Israeli conflict. To begin, they incite violence and contribute to the perpetuation of unfavorable stereotypes, both of which are factors that contribute to the escalation of the conflict. The proliferation of false information led to a wave of violent protests and attacks in the instance of the Al-Durrah event, which further inflamed tensions between Israelis and Palestinians (Yarchi & Ayalon, 2020).

Second, the employment of propaganda on both sides of the war has served to further entrench preexisting divisions and has made it significantly more challenging to find a peaceful conclusion to the conflict. According to Bjola and Patel (2015), propaganda is used to legitimize ongoing violence by demonizing the other side and constructing a narrative that only presents one side of the story. This was evident during the conflict in Gaza in 2014, when Israeli and Palestinian factions engaged in a battle of narratives in an effort to influence public opinion and garner support for their respective causes (Eid & Hussein, 2014).

Third, the proliferation of hate speech has been a contributing factor in the polarization of national and ethnic identities, which has resulted in a society that is becoming more divided. According to Badawy and Ferrara (2018), the proliferation of hate speech on social media platforms makes it easier for extremist beliefs to gain traction, which in turn leads to an increase in radicalization and a rise in the number of hate crimes.

Misinformation, propaganda, and hate speech have had a significant impact on the Arab-Israeli conflict, as a result, which is both profound and far-reaching. Not only have these elements contributed to the escalation of tensions and bloodshed, but they have also played a role in the fracturing of national and ethnic identities. It is vital to address these challenges in order to foster peace, reconciliation, and cohabitation between Israelis and Palestinians as the conflict continues to evolve in this age of digital technology.

The Role of New media in Amplifying Voices and Perspectives

The role that new media has played in amplifying voices and viewpoints in the Arab-Israeli conflict has been revolutionary. New media has provided a forum for voices and perspectives that have been underrepresented, allowing them to be heard. Individuals have been given the opportunity to communicate their perspectives and experiences in relation to the war through the use of social media and other digital platforms, which has had the effect of influencing public opinion and policy decisions about the conflict. The new media have had a big effect in that they have made the dissemination of information more democratic. Throughout most of its history, the Arab-Israeli conflict has typically been covered by a single narrative that was dominated by traditional media sources. The monopoly of traditional media has been broken thanks to social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube, which have enabled individuals to contribute their personal narratives, experiences, and perspectives on the war (Arafa & Armstrong, 2016). This transformation has made it possible for perspectives that have been underrepresented in the

past to be heard, which has resulted in a more thorough understanding of the complexity of the war as well as a more humanizing impact of the conflict on individuals and communities (Stein, 2012).

For instance, the "My Voice" initiative is an example of a social media campaign that was started by young people on both sides of the conflict with the intention of providing a forum for young people to discuss their perspectives and experiences on the war. This program gave participants the opportunity to voice their thoughts on themes such as politics, religion, and culture, so promoting conversation and an increased level of understanding among individuals who hold a variety of points of view. The project helped contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the conflict and its effects on a variety of stakeholders by giving these voices a larger platform to be heard.

The extensive use of citizen journalism during the Gaza War in 2014 provides additional evidence of the function that new media plays in amplifying voices and perspectives. According to Arafa and Armstrong (2016), regular residents, often armed with nothing more than their smartphones, documented the developing events and shared their experiences with the rest of the globe via social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook. This method of reporting gave up-to-the-minute information on the battle and humanized its effects by drawing attention to the predicament of people who were caught in the crossfire. During the Gaza War, the use of citizen journalism challenged the dominant narratives of traditional media, which generally concentrated on the military and political components of the conflict (Hamdy, 2010). This brought attention to the humanitarian situation that was being faced by regular citizens.

One notable example of the role of new media in amplifying voices and perspectives in the Arab-Israeli conflict is the "Humans of Palestine" and "Humans of Israel" social media initiatives. Inspired by the "Humans of New York" project, these platforms aim to humanize the conflict by sharing personal stories and experiences of individuals living in the region (Mitchell, 2019). Through compelling photographs and interviews, the "Humans of Palestine" and "Humans of Israel" initiatives provide a glimpse into the lives, hopes, and struggles of people from diverse backgrounds. These platforms shed light on the individual narratives often overlooked in mainstream media coverage, giving voice to the complexities and humanity of those affected by the conflict. By sharing personal stories on social media, these initiatives foster empathy, challenge stereotypes, and encourage dialogue between different communities. They serve as a bridge for understanding and create opportunities for individuals to connect, engage, and learn from one another's perspectives. These initiatives exemplify how new media platforms can provide a space for individuals to express their voices, share their experiences, and contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the Arab-Israeli conflict. They demonstrate the power of storytelling and personal narratives in fostering empathy and promoting dialogue, ultimately playing a role in humanizing the conflict and encouraging mutual understanding.

In addition to this, new media has been helpful in facilitating communication and increasing levels of comprehension amongst individuals and communities that have been impacted by the Arab-Israeli conflict. (Eickelman, 2005) Initiatives such as "Peace Factory" and "YaLa Young Leaders" have utilized social media platforms to establish virtual places for people from the region, including Israelis, Palestinians, and others, to engage in conversation and share their experiences. (Peace Factory, 2013; YaLa Young Leaders, 2013) These platforms have made it easier for people to share their thoughts and viewpoints with one another, which

has increased participants' capacity for empathy and understanding and contributed to the establishment of grassroots initiatives aimed at fostering peace.

The amplification of voices and opinions through new media does not come without difficulties, however. According to Garrett (2009), the huge amount of information that is exchanged on social media platforms can contribute to the development of *echo chambers*. In these environments, users only interact with content that serves to validate their existing worldviews. In addition, according to Badawy and Ferrara (2018), the proliferation of false information, propaganda, and hate speech on social media platforms can increase tensions and further polarize people as well as communities.

As a conclusion, we can say that the Arab-Israeli conflict's dynamics have been profoundly impacted by the new media since it has amplified voices and perspectives that were previously underrepresented. Individuals have been given the ability, through the use of social media platforms and citizen journalism, to express their personal experiences and viewpoints in relation to the conflict. This has the effect of contradicting the narratives presented by traditional media while also building debate and understanding among a variety of stakeholders. However, the potential for *echo chambers* and the dissemination of misinformation remains major difficulties that has been addressed before in order to ensure that new media continues to contribute constructively to the discourse surrounding the Arab-Israeli conflict. The solutions for these challenges need to be addressed in order to guarantee that new media continues to contribute positively to the discourse surrounding the Arab-Israeli conflict.

New media as a Tool for Conflict Resolution, Dialogue, and Promoting Peace

Within the context of the Arab-Israeli conflict, new media has been an essential factor in the facilitation of communication, the promotion of mutual comprehension, and the support of attempts to resolve the conflict. It may have been hard for individuals and organizations to communicate across borders, build relationships, and engage in dialogues if they had to rely on traditional methods of communication; however, with the advent of social media platforms and other forms of new media, these activities have become possible. Thus, it is important for us to understand the potential of new media to play a role in promoting peace and reconciliation between competing parties in the Arab-Israeli conflict. There are a various effective initiatives that has been executed and can be useful if we outline the lessons that can be gained from these kinds of strategies.

The Peace Factory is a non-profit organization that uses the power of social media to build connections between Israelis and Palestinians, as well as people from other conflict zones ("The Peace Factory", n.d.). The Peace Factory is an example of an organization that has been successful. In 2012, The Peace Factory launched the viral campaign "Israel Loves Iran," which urged people from both nations to upload images of themselves carrying signs with messages of love and peace. The signs were created by The Peace Factory. This initiative attracted the attention of people all over the world and proved the power of new media in terms of its ability to bring people living in crisis zones closer together. ("Iran Loves Israel and Palestine", n.d.)

YaLa Young Leaders is an online platform that unites young people from the Middle East and North Africa, offering them opportunities for debate, learning, and cooperation (Daemberg, 2012). This is another effort that is utilizing new media to promote peace in the Arab-Israeli conflict. Young people take part in virtual workshops, conferences, and training sessions to develop their abilities in areas such as leadership, conflict resolution, and digital

media through a variety of programs offered by YaLa. These programs include the YaLa Academy and the YaLa Citizen Journalism program. These programs not only provide the participants more agency, but they also provide a forum in which young Israelis and Palestinians may talk about their lives and better comprehend each other's perspectives.

Individual acts of digital activism have, in addition to these organization-led activities, played a vital role in encouraging discourse and understanding in the Arab-Israeli conflict. For instance, during the conflict between Gaza and Israel in 2014, citizen journalists from Gaza used Twitter to communicate their experiences and points of view, which contributed to a more nuanced picture of the situation for audiences all over the world (Mtchedlidze, 2019). These citizen journalists supplied alternate narratives and humanized the dispute, which can help build empathy and inspire conversation between the sides that are at odds with one another. However, it is vital to recognize the difficulties and constraints of utilizing new media as a weapon for the resolution of conflicts and the promotion of peace. According to the findings of prior investigations, the very same platforms that promote communication and mutual understanding can also serve as fertile ground for the spread of propaganda, false information, and hate speech. Additionally, the phenomena of *echo chambers*, which occurs when individuals are exposed to material that reinforces their pre-existing opinions, may limit the potential of new media for fostering conversation and understanding (Garrett, 2009).

In spite of these obstacles, there is no denying that new media has the capacity to promote peace, conflict resolution, and conversation in the Arab-Israeli conflict, all of which are essential for resolving the conflict. In order to take advantage of this potential, one can employ a number of different tactics and programs. To begin, individuals and organizations that are participating in attempts to establish peace should make use of the power of storytelling in order to humanize the conflict by sharing their own personal experiences and narratives. This method has the potential to cultivate empathy and enable discussion between groups that are at odds with one another (Lindsay, 2020). Second, in order to build on the achievements of programs like the Peace Factory and YaLa Young Leaders, more work needs to be put into the development of online platforms that promote communication, open up chances for individuals in conflict zones to improve their skills and work together, and make these programs accessible to a wider audience. These platforms ought to place an emphasis on inclusivity, making certain that voices of those who are marginalized and underrepresented are heard and taken part in the conversation.

Lastly, it is essential to work towards increasing the level of digital literacy and critical thinking abilities possessed by users of new media in order to reduce the problems caused by the spread of misinformation, propaganda, and hate speech. This can be accomplished through education and awareness-raising efforts that stress the significance of checking one's sources and critically analyzing material before posting it online. In addition, platforms for social media should make investments in the development of technologies and regulations that prevent the spread of harmful content and encourage users to make responsible use of their services. The Arab-Israeli conflict and other conflicts across the world could benefit greatly from the continued use of new media as a potent weapon for conflict resolution, conversation, and the promotion of peace if certain steps are taken.

Challenges and Recommendations

The new media provides a number of issues, the most significant of which is the propagation of propaganda and false information. The proliferation of false information and rumors,

which may spread rapidly throughout the internet and have a substantial effect on public opinion, has been made possible by the platforms provided by social media. In the context of the Arab-Israeli conflict, the dissemination of incorrect information has the potential to escalate tensions and deepen divisions between groups, making it more difficult to reach a peaceful resolution. For instance, during the crisis in Gaza in 2014, misleading information spread on social media, including bogus photographs and videos alleging to show Israeli bombings on civilian targets (Abokhodair et al., 2015). These allegations were based on the fact that social media is a public forum. These false claims contributed to the growth of anti-Israeli sentiment, which in turn helped to accelerate the escalation of the conflict (Stein, 2021).

Within the framework of the Arab-Israeli conflict, the proliferation of hate speech presents yet another difficulty brought about by new media (Lev-On, 2018). Individuals are now able to voice their opinions and participate in conversations regarding the war thanks to the venues provided by social media. But in addition to that, they have made it easier for people to engage in hate speech, which can further polarize and split communities. Hate speech, when applied to the context of the conflict between Arabs and Israelis, can serve to intensify enmity and make it more difficult to reach a peaceful resolution. For instance, during the crisis in Gaza in 2014, social media platforms were used to promote hate speech. People on both sides of the conflict used offensive language to disparage the other group (Lev-On, 2016).

In order to solve these difficulties, governments, media professionals, and actors from civil society need to take action to counteract the spread of hate speech and inaccurate information on social media platforms. Increasing people's familiarity with various forms of media is one technique. Individuals can improve their ability to discriminate between fact and fiction, recognize propaganda and recognize false information with the assistance of programs that teach media literacy (Bawden & Robinson, 2009). These programs can also help individuals become more critical consumers of the content produced by the media, which has the potential to curb the dissemination of incorrect information and hate speech.

Increasing the accountability of social media platforms is yet another way that might be used (Lievrouw, 2023). The corporations that run social media platforms need to be more open about the inner workings of their algorithms and the processes they use to respond to accusations of offensive content and disinformation. They also need to take more proactive actions to remove misleading information and hate speech from their platforms, as well as take measures to prevent the spread of such content in the first place. In addition, firms that operate social media platforms should work together with governments, organizations that represent civil society, and other stakeholders to devise and put into action efficient measures to counteract the dissemination of false information and speech that promotes hatred on their respective platforms.

In addition to preventing the dissemination of incorrect information and inciting hate speech, new media can be used to further attempts to find a peaceful resolution to the conflict between Israel and the Arab world. Platforms for social media and other types of new media can be utilized to help encourage conversation, advance mutual comprehension, and construct bridges across different populations. In order to advance activities aimed at conflict resolution that make use of new media, policymakers, media practitioners, and actors from civil society need to create and put into practice effective methods that make use of the potential offered by new media. One strategy is to provide assistance for activities that encourage communication and mutual understanding across different cultures. For

instance, there are a number of efforts that can be supported to enhance conversation and understanding by politicians, media practitioners, and actors from civil society. These include fostering interfaith dialogue and exchange programs, sponsoring community-led initiatives that bring together individuals from different communities to debate issues relating to the conflict, and funding collaborative media projects between Israeli and Palestinian media organizations to be carried out by Israeli and Palestinian media organizations. For instance, in 2017, a group of Israeli and Palestinian activists came together to start the "Combatants for Peace" program. This effort brings together former Israeli soldiers and Palestinian fighters in order to promote peace and reconciliation through the use of joint activities and events (Combatants for Peace, n.d.). This endeavor has proven fruitful in promoting communication and mutual comprehension between the two populations, and it has garnered backing from a variety of organizations and governments.

In addition, governments, media professionals, and actors in civil society should provide their support to projects that encourage the appropriate utilization of social media platforms. The development and implementation of media literacy programs that place an emphasis on the responsible use of various social media platforms is one method. These programs can assist individuals in being more discriminating against viewers of content produced by the media and in better comprehending how their actions affect the lives of those around them. The use of social media platforms for constructive goals, such as fostering conversation and understanding, as opposed to negative purposes, such as propagating incorrect information and hate speech, is another way that can be used. This can be accomplished by public campaigns and social media initiatives that encourage users of social media platforms to use those channels in a responsible manner.

In conclusion, the struggle between Arabs and Israelis has been marked by a substantial influence from new media on the formation of national and ethnic identities. Social media platforms have enabled people on both sides of the conflict to express their opinions and connect with others who share their views. However, they have also facilitated the spread of misinformation, propaganda, and hate speech, which has reinforced existing biases and deepened divisions between groups. While social media platforms have enabled people to connect with others who share their views and express their opinions, they have also facilitated the spread of misinformation, propaganda, and hate speech. In order to address these difficulties, policymakers, media practitioners, and actors from civil society need to take measures to counteract the spread of disinformation and hate speech on social media platforms, while also capitalizing on the potential of new media to encourage efforts to resolve conflicts. It may be possible to further the cause of peace and reconciliation in the region through the implementation of programs that encourage communication and mutual comprehension amongst communities, as well as the responsible use of social media platforms.

Conclusion

The Arab-Israeli conflict is a multifaceted and protracted issue that has been shaped and influenced by a variety of variables, including national and ethnic identities. This conflict has been going on for a very long time. The introduction of new media, especially social media platforms, in recent years has had a huge impact, both positively and negatively, on the dynamics of this conflict. This impact has been felt on both sides of the dispute. Social media has both worsened and exacerbated tensions and built ties among the people involved in the conflict. Even though social media has the ability to make tensions worse, it also has the potential to play a big role in forging relationships between people who are on opposing sides

of a conflict. Despite that, new media encourages the propagation of hate speech, propaganda, and false information. It then become important to address these concerns as it was addressed how they lead to the escalation of conflicts as well as the polarization of identities. The decision-makers, members of the media, and members of civil society all needed to take action in order to battle these concerns and encourage appropriate usage of social media platforms. On the bright side, new media plays important role by boosting different voices and points of view in Arab-Israeli conflict.

There a multiple ways in which new media has provided a platform for voices and viewpoints that have been underrepresented, making it possible for individuals to communicate their opinions and experiences in relation to the conflict. This shown that new media has the ability to play a significant role in moulding public opinion and encouraging apprehension. In addition, social media platforms and other types of new media may be able to increase understanding, help foster discourse, and lend support to efforts to resolve the conflict. Campaign such as YaLa Young Leaders and “Humans of Palestine” make use of new media to promote peace and reconciliation between opposing parties, researching successful examples and outlining the lessons learnt from these different approaches. New media has the potential to be an effective tool for encouraging initiatives to promote conflict resolution and peacebuilding, but the effectiveness of new media is contingent on how it is used and executed.

There are also some difficulties that were encountered by policymakers, media practitioners, and civil society actors while attempting to address the issues that were brought up by new media. A strong measure must be taken to prevent hate speech and misinformation, promote responsible use of social media platforms, and make use of the potential of new media to support efforts to resolve conflicts. In order to achieve it, it is important to have a good collaboration amongst a variety of stakeholders in order to successfully handle these difficulties. In conclusion, despite the fact that new media has the capability of exacerbating existing tensions, it also has the capacity to significantly contribute to the formation of connections, the advancement of mutual comprehension, and the support of attempts to resolve conflicts. To effectively harness the promise of new media, governments, media practitioners, and actors from civil society need to collaborate to address the problems posed by hate speech, propaganda, and misinformation, and to promote the responsible use of social media platforms.

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