

Constructing Conflict: A Comparative Analysis of News Values in Al-Jazeera English and the BBC Coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict on October 7, 2023

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ABSTRACT

Media plays a crucial role in shaping public perceptions of conflicts, influencing narratives, and opinions. News values, which determine what is considered newsworthy, guide journalistic decisions in reporting conflicts. Different media outlets construct news values based on their editorial stances, audience expectations, and geopolitical influences. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict, a longstanding and deeply complex issue, has been subjected to varying portrayals in global news media. On October 7, 2023, a major escalation in the conflict occurred following the Hamas attack on Israel, which prompted a widespread international media coverage. Given the significance of this event, it is vital to analyse how different news outlets construct their narratives and emphasise particular aspects of the conflict. This study examines the constructions of news values in Al-Jazeera English and the BBC reports covering the events of October 7, 2023. Using the Discursive News Values Analysis (DNVA) framework, it explores how linguistic resources establish newsworthiness in media texts. The study analysed ten articles from each outlet to identify key differences in their emphasis on news values such as Consonance, Eliteness, Impact, Negativity, Personalization, Positivity, Proximity, Superlativeness, Timeliness, and Unexpectedness. Findings indicate that Al-Jazeera English predominantly emphasises Negativity, Eliteness, and Superlativeness, portraying the conflict with heightened intensity and political significance. Meanwhile, the BBC incorporates more Personalization and Positivity, often presenting human-interest elements and efforts toward balance. These variations reflect the distinct editorial priorities and audience engagements of each media organization. The study underscores the importance of media literacy in conflict reporting, highlighting how news values shape narratives and public understanding. It contributes to research on media framing by offering insights into the linguistic construction of newsworthiness in international conflict coverage. Future research could expand on visual and multimedia elements, as well as the representation of non-English media in global conflicts.

Keywords: Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, Newsworthiness, News Values, Media Framing, Conflict Reporting,

INTRODUCTION

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is a long-standing dispute with an extremely complicated nature. As stated by Feldt (2008), in both large- and small-scale conflicts, the conditions of conflict, war, or general animosity depend on two or more different versions, different histories, that create the historical and social maps that set collectives against each other. This is indeed a very explicit feature of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This ongoing struggle dates back 76 years, with the first Arab-Israeli war breaking out in 1948 following the establishment of the State of Israel. Thousands of Palestinian Arabs were forced to flee their homes as a result, with an estimated 700,000 Palestinian refugees in 1948—a figure that has since grown into the millions (Hirsch, 2020). More recently, the conflict escalated significantly on October 7, 2023, when Palestinian militants led by Hamas launched a coordinated attack on Israel from the Gaza Strip. This attack resulted in approximately 1,200 deaths and 250 hostages being taken, prompting an Israeli military response involving both a ground invasion and an aerial bombing campaign. By mid-March 2024, Israeli military operations had led to the deaths of over 31,600 people in Gaza (Seljan, 2024). Given these developments, a peaceful resolution appears even more improbable, as the

drastic escalation has further entrenched hostilities and intensified global attention on the region. Israel's military reaction to the attack has led to a severe humanitarian crisis in Gaza, reinforcing the ongoing volatility of the Israeli-Palestinian issue.

Within this context, media coverage plays a crucial role in shaping public perceptions of the conflict. News values, which are the criteria influencing the selection and presentation of events, determine what is considered newsworthy and how it is framed. Weaver et al. (2007) argued that news values are essential in journalism, driving much of the decision-making in newsrooms. Studies indicate that these values influence how international conflicts are reported, often at the expense of more nuanced or solution-oriented coverage. News value theory remains relevant in journalism scholarship, serving as a framework for analyzing news selection (Hahn & Jaurisch, 2012; Harcup & O'Neill, 2017) and explaining gatekeeping decisions (Shoemaker & Vos, 2009). In conflict reporting, these values shape the portrayal of events, actors, and issues, thereby influencing public perception and discourse. Typically, conflict coverage emphasizes negative news values such as conflict, impact, and negativity, given the nature of violent events. However, positive news values like resilience, heroism, and peace initiatives may also be incorporated to provide balance. The choice of news values often reflects the ideologies and editorial policies of news organizations. As Galtung and Ruge (1965) noted, "the more negative the event in its consequences, the more probable that it will become a news item." Similarly, Shoemaker and Cohen (2006) argued that news value theory helps explain media interest in violent extremism, as events like the 9/11 attacks, which contain elements of deviance and social significance, are highly newsworthy. They further suggested that violent extremists deliberately engage in activities that align with established news criteria, ensuring widespread media coverage. Schudson (2011) supported this claim by observing that "news focuses on visible events, often involving conflict or violent conflict." The application of news values not only prioritizes some stories over others but also determines the extent of coverage and the elements emphasized. Journalists, guided by these values, may prioritize stories that align with their editorial stance, sometimes amplifying the compelling nature of negative news over positive developments (Vu, 2012). Given this, news values are especially significant in conflict reporting, as they shape how global audiences perceive and engage with ongoing events.

The escalation of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on October 7, 2023, represents a critical moment that attracted significant international media attention. The Hamas attack resulted in immediate responses, extensive military operations, and early attempts at de-escalation. The Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) responded by cutting off Gaza from essential supplies, including fuel, electricity, and water, exacerbating an already dire humanitarian crisis. Despite UN efforts to provide aid, with approximately 20 trucks carrying medical supplies crossing the Rafah border, the assistance remained inadequate to address the urgent needs of the population (Yaqub et al., 2023). The event also led to divergent international reactions, with varying degrees of support and criticism directed toward Israel and Hamas. Public discourse became increasingly polarized, with individuals and organizations worldwide calling for ceasefires and humanitarian relief efforts. These elements combined to shape the broader impact of the conflict, attracting global attention and influencing political debates.

In light of these developments, analyzing media coverage of October 7, 2023, is crucial to understanding how narratives are constructed and disseminated. Given the media's role in shaping public opinion, influencing policy decisions, and driving international responses, an examination of how Al-Jazeera and the BBC construct news values in their reporting on this event provides key insights into their editorial approaches. As noted by Baratz-Rix and Kantor (2023), far-right activists in the United States have used social media and public platforms to spread hate speech against Jews and the State of Israel, as well as to call for the deportation of Muslim immigrants. The media's portrayal of public reactions to such events has the potential to widen societal divisions. This further underscores the need to examine how media outlets frame their coverage of conflicts, as the narratives they construct may influence public understanding and geopolitical discourse.

While numerous studies have explored the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from various perspectives, significant gaps remain in research focusing on media coverage of the specific events of October 7, 2023. Prior research has examined the conflict through the lens of political culture (Dwiyastuti, 2021), public perceptions (Imtiaz et al., 2022), and economic and international relations dynamics (Rusanti et al., 2025). However, comprehensive analyses of media narratives on this particular date remain scarce. Existing research on news coverage of the conflict includes a study by Remrey (2024), which examined how new media platforms challenge traditional

news values by analyzing Instagram reels. Similarly, Puteri et al. (2025) investigated the BBC's use of lexical choices in reporting on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, focusing on how the terms "war" and "conflict" were employed in 2023 to reflect ongoing hostilities. Additionally, Rizova and Panayotova (2021) studied Al-Jazeera and the BBC's framing of the conflict, but their work did not specifically address news values. While these studies contribute to media scholarship on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, they do not focus on how news values are constructed within media coverage. This study seeks to bridge that gap by analyzing how Al-Jazeera and the BBC construct newsworthiness in their reporting of October 7, 2023. As Edward (2023) highlighted, media coverage of the ongoing conflict necessitates empirical research to examine how different narratives are portrayed, emphasizing the need for more thorough studies on representation. By investigating the differences in Al-Jazeera and the BBC's construction of news values, this research aims to provide a deeper understanding of how media narratives shape public perceptions of conflict. Ultimately, this study contributes to discussions on the role of journalism in conflict zones, highlighting the broader implications of media influence on global discourse. Therefore, this study aims to answer the following objectives.

RO1: To explore the constructions of news values by Al-Jazeera English and the BBC in their coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on October 7, 2023.

RO2: To analyse the differences in the emphasised criteria of newsworthiness between Al-Jazeera English and the BBC reports on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on October 7, 2023.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Discursive News Values Analysis (DNVA)

Discursive News Values Analysis, developed by Monika Bednarek and Helen Caple in 2017 offers a systematic approach to understanding how linguistic and visual resources establish newsworthiness in media texts. DNVA is centred on analysing how specific events, issues, or news actors are constructed as newsworthy through the foregrounding of particular news values. Below are ten essential news values where construction and reporting of newsworthiness in media texts can be examined using this extensive set of values.

Consonance

Consonance is the process by which a problem or event including the individuals, nations, or organisations involved, are discursively framed from the viewpoint of the intended audience as conventional or stereotypical. This involves utilising conventionalised metaphors, drawing parallels with past events, using evaluative language to convey expectedness, and depending on associations that feed stereotypes. Additionally, the story structure fits well-known archetypes with news actors and events. Examples: typical, famed for, yet another, once again, and well-known.

Eliteness

Eliteness concerns how a topic or event is presented discursively as involving renowned or high-status people, groups, or nations. This involved defining high-status jobs and institutional names, giving thorough descriptions of status, and employing labels and evaluations that indicate significance or importance. Examples: the Queen, Ministers, and Economists.

Impact

Impact is the discursive construction of an event or problem as having important ramifications or effects. This involves using evaluative language to assess the significance, describe its impacts, and make references to, conjecture about, or speculate about its past, present, or future effects. This includes any mental or abstract repercussions with implied or explicit cause-and-effect relationships. Examples: momentous, historic, crucial, the economic impact, and the effect on immigration.

Negativity

Negativity refers to the discursive construction of an event or issue as unfavourable for the intended audience. This involved describing individuals or events that the general public views negatively, making references to negative emotions, and utilising negative lexicon—such as "disaster vocabulary"—to characterise them. Examples: fear, shock, suffer, broken, and uncontrolled.

Personalization

Personalization involves constructing an event or problem a personal or "human" face through the use of eyewitness reports and personal experiences. This is typically provided by non-elite actors. This includes referencing emotions explicitly, quoting 'ordinary' people, and focusing on 'ordinary' individuals to provide a personal touch to the news story. Examples: domestic risk that our economy faces, people with disabilities and other ordinary people here (use by news actors/sources of 'everyday' spoken language).

Positivity

Positivity is the discursive construction of an event as positive, such as a scientific breakthrough or a heroic act. This entails explaining positive behaviour, utilising positive evaluative language, positive lexis, and references to positive feelings and attitudes. Examples: safer, improve, brighter future, equal, and growth.

Proximity

Proximity refers to the discursive construction of an issue or event as being close to the target audience, either geographically or culturally. This entails making references to places or communities that are seen as "near" or "familiar," naming the country or community of the listener, and utilising inclusive first-person plural pronouns. Examples: here, the nation's capital, home- grown, and our nation's leaders.

Superlativeness

Superlativeness is the construction of an event or situation as having a high intensity or broad extent. This can be done by utilising quantifiers and intensifiers, repetition, heightened language, comparative and superlative adjectives, metaphors, and similes. Examples: biggest, worst, fastest, greatest, and ultimate.

Timeliness

Timeliness involves constructing an event or issue as timely in relation to the publication date, indicating that it is recent, ongoing, about to happen, or otherwise relevant to the immediate situation. This entails employing verb tense and aspect to emphasise the event's temporal importance, as well as providing clear connections to the present, recent past, near future, or season. Examples: today, latest, immediate, recent, ongoing, 7 PM, on Wednesday.

Unexpectedness

Unexpectedness is the discursive construction of an event or issue as surprising or unusual. This entails referring to surprise, describing unique events, drawing parallels that show unusualness, and employing evaluative language that emphasises unexpectedness. Examples: shocking, surprising, unbelievable, sudden.

Journalism and Reportings of Al-Jazeera English and the BBC on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

Newsroom ideology can influence news coverage independently of audience preferences. When two media organizations report on the same event, their ideological leanings may shape the institutional routines and processes involved in gathering and presenting information. As a result, even when covering the same topic, news organizations may produce stories with distinctly different ideological perspectives (Hassell et al., 2021). This also highlights the importance of media organisations in shaping perceptions of the public towards conflicts, such as news reporting during crises, which poses unique obstacles but provides integral insights from those

directly affected. As such, Al-Jazeera and the BBC, are two of the most influential global news outlets, particularly in covering the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Established in 1996, Al-Jazeera is a prominent international news network mostly focused on Middle Eastern topics. In 2006, Al-Jazeera English was launched to reach English-speaking audiences. The BBC, on the other hand, was established in 1922 and is the United Kingdom's public service broadcaster where its coverage of the Middle East, especially the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, has been highly controversial (Zghoul, 2022). The BBC tends to prioritise official sources, particularly from Israel, while downplaying the political and historical context of the conflict. Its reporting often associates Palestinians with militancy and violence while casting doubt on Palestinian casualty figures (Damanhoury et al., 2025). In contrast, Al-Jazeera provides greater coverage of humanitarian organizations and Palestinian perspectives. It contextualises the conflict within its historical background and attributes responsibility to Israel for its policies and military actions in the occupied West Bank and Gaza. Barkho (2011) in his study found that the BBC as an institution, the struggle is normally “lopsided” as far as the coverage of the Middle East is concerned while Al-Jazeera tries hard to destabilise and disperse the centripetal forces where as the result of the struggle between these two opposing forces, the two broadcasters have developed their own distinctive social and discursive characteristics of Middle East coverage. The coverage patterns of the selected TV channels suggest that the coverage of the Israel-Palestine conflict is aligned with foreign policy (Shahzad et al., 2023).

The research on how the BBC and Al-Jazeera English covered the Israeli-Palestinian conflict exposes different reporting ideologies and its underlying prejudices. Significant controversy has surrounded Al-Jazeera's coverage, especially when it comes to the addition of Israeli politicians and voices. This is something that was previously forbidden in Arab media. Israeli officials praised Al-Jazeera for this strategy because they saw it as credible and competent (El-Nawawy & Iskandar, 2003). However, the network has also come under fire for allegedly having a bias in favour of Hamas. This particularly happened in the wake of Hamas' victory in the 2006 elections and its subsequent struggle with Fatah. Al-Jazeera's apparent ties to Hamas and its hiring of Muslim Brotherhood members, according to critics, are examples of the network's larger ideological bias (Achcar, 2013; Zghoul, 2022). The BBC, on the other hand, has faced intense scrutiny and criticism for its coverage of the Middle East and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The BBC's internal guidelines, including a confidential glossary of terms, aim to navigate the sensitive nature of reporting on this issue. For instance, the BBC recommends avoiding the word "Palestine" and instead suggests using "the Palestinians" to mitigate potential bias (Barkho, 2010). The BBC's coverage frequently lacked adequate historical context and tended to support Israeli perspectives, especially in terms of mortality and political representation, according to a 2005 study by the BBC Governors, led by Sir Quentin Thomas (Gaber et al., 2009; Loughborough University, 2006). Reporting on the Gaza War of 2008–09, as part of a comparative analysis, was distinguished by Al-Jazeera English's "morally informed objectivity," which followed professional standards but was informed by a moral and political perspective derived from its Global South identity. Giving voice to the disadvantaged and holding the privileged accountable were key components of this strategy. On the other hand, the BBC took a "decontextualised balance" stance, emphasising impartiality and balance frequently at the price of not giving enough political or historical background. As a result, Palestinian perspectives and important contextual details were under-represented in the reporting pattern created, as Palestinian casualties were regularly balanced with Israeli excuses (Zghoul, 2022). The results are conflicting from studies on how the conflict was covered by the UK media. According to several researches, the BBC and other British media offer a wider variety of viewpoints than does US media (Baden & Tenenboim-Weinblatt, 2018).

Other evaluations, such those by Barkho (2008) and Hawkins (2002), however, point to a pro-Israel bias in the BBC's reporting techniques, citing the use of transitivity and nominalisation to deflect accountability for Palestinian deaths from Israel. Furthermore, as Philo & Berry (2004) and Elmasry (2013) point out, although Al-Jazeera frequently portrays Palestinians as the victims of Israeli aggression, the BBC's in-depth reporting also amplifies Israeli voices justifying their actions. When news headlines and photographs online from the BBC, CNN, and Al-Jazeera were compared, it was discovered that Al-Jazeera gave the Israeli-Palestinian conflict far more space than BBC and CNN. This inconsistency is explained by Al-Jazeera as giving the conflict top priority because of its Arabic-speaking viewership. However, in the US media, the crisis was given less priority, even though it had a substantial impact on US foreign policy. And even though the BBC covered the conflict more than CNN, it provided less information than Al-Jazeera nevertheless (Kandil, 2009; Rizova & Panayotova, 2021). Following that, while the editorial approach of Al-Jazeera is focused on exposing power imbalances and

providing voice to the underprivileged, the BBC's approach frequently leads to coverage that is biased towards Israeli viewpoints and inadequately contextualises their history.

A newer study in the recent year by Sarwar et al. (2023) on international media coverage of the Israel-Palestine conflict found that Al Jazeera portrays Israeli military attacks on Palestinian civilians as a means of displacing Muslims from their land. The study concluded that Al Jazeera provides largely unbiased reporting, as the number of neutral news reports outweighed those with a positive stance. In contrast, the BBC's coverage was found to be more favorable toward Israel, as the study reported a higher number of negatively framed stories about Palestinians compared to neutral coverage. This suggests that BBC reporting tends to align more closely with Israeli perspectives, influencing how audiences perceive the conflict. Amaireh (2024) also highlighted how Al Jazeera reporters' lexical choices, or lexicalisation, reflected their personal ideology, shaping their stance on the crisis. Their reporting tended to construct Palestinians as the 'in-group' and Israelis as the 'out-group.' Additionally, Al Jazeera framed Palestinians—positioned as 'us'—as innocent victims of colonization, while Israelis were negatively represented as oppressors, racists, and colonizers through a focus on syntactic agency. Similarly, a study by Putra (2024) examined the BBC's reporting approach and found that, while the network aims to maintain neutrality by including perspectives from both parties and incorporating international diplomatic viewpoints, it tends to provide more space for Israel's positive narrative. This is achieved by amplifying Israel's justifications and emphasizing the broader humanitarian impact of the conflict. Despite its commitment to impartiality, the BBC's reporting appears to align more closely with Israel, influenced by ideological proximity. As a result, the way these narratives are constructed has significant implications for how audiences perceive and interpret the war. These contrasting methods highlight the intricate dynamics of media portrayal as well as the impact of ingrained political and ideological prejudices in coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Newsworthiness in News Reports

In order to comprehend how events turn into news, the notion of newsworthiness must be understood. News values are a set of standards that journalists use to determine what is considered noteworthy. They are essential to journalism studies. The groundbreaking research on international news coverage by Galtung and Ruge (1965) served as the inspiration for this line of investigation. They presented a set of "news factors" that included "frequency," "negativity," "proximity," "intensity," and "elite" values. Galtung and Ruge (1965) proposed a "selection hypothesis" which states that an event has a higher chance of being reported as news if it fulfils these requirements. The importance of news values in journalistic practice has been glued on by numerous scholars who have since been motivated by this groundbreaking work to develop and refine these ideas (De Maeyer, 2020; Harcup & O'Neill, 2001, 2017; Hall, 1973). Journalists usually start by comparing them to pre-established news standards when choosing articles for publication. A story has a higher chance of being reported if it fits with several different news values. These values include timeliness, unexpectedness, unambiguity, consonance, familiarity, and meaningfulness. They are deduced from journalists' statements of their work and from content studies of news reports (Boukes & Vliegthart, 2020; Kepplinger & Ehmgig, 2006). According to the gatekeeping hypothesis, which was first put forth by Lester (1980) and is backed by a number of academics (White, 1950; Gieber, 1956; Carter, 1959; Schramm, 1960), news is filtered through a number of "news gates" that are subject to both official and informal norms, values, and regulations. These filters are influenced by political ideologies and historical circumstances, which form an inferential structure for selecting and interpreting events (Halloran et al., 1970; Glasgow University News Group, 1972; Cohen & Young, 1973; Galtung, 1973; Hall, 1973a, 1973b; Phillips, 1973; Young, 1973). The rules governing newswork are constructed, interpreted, and elaborated upon within the actual settings of news production, framing occurrences and events in terms of their constituent features, meanings, and consequences (Wilson, 1970; Wieder, 1974).

Despite the extensive research on news values, some scholars argue that the concept has been stretched to include any factor affecting news selection and treatment. Bednarek and Caple (2016) advocate for a narrower conception of news values as "the values that establish the worth of an event to be reported as news." They highlight a multidimensional understanding of newsworthiness, encompassing the material aspects of events, the cognitive belief systems of journalists and audiences, and the shared routines and codes practised in newsrooms (Bednarek & Caple, 2016; Bednarek & Caple, 2017). Shifting attention from the "why" of news selection to the "how" of news treatment, a discursive approach to news values, developed into the Discursive

News Values Analysis (DNVA) framework by Bednarek and Caple, emphasises the construction and negotiation of news values through language and image in news discourse (Bednarek & Caple, 2016; Bednarek & Caple, 2017). This approach aligns with the notion that news values are not only external criteria but are also constructed during the news production process. Furthermore, commercial and ideological dimensions play a significant role in the decision-making of news. Commercial considerations influence both the selection and presentation of news, which leads journalists to emphasise aspects such as conflict, negativity, and sensationalism to attract audiences. This discursive perspective allows researchers to explore the extent to which events are made more newsworthy than their material reality warrants (Bednarek & Caple, 2016; Mast & Temmerman, 2021). The concept of newsworthiness is shaped by a complex interplay of news values, journalistic routines, commercial interests, and ideological influences. The evolving scholar works on news values, from Galtung and Ruge's foundational study to contemporary discursive approaches, provides a subtle understanding of how events become news.

A more recent study by Grafström and Rehnberg (2022) explored the concept of newsworthiness and how it influences the selection and presentation of news content. They argued that newsworthiness functions as a logic of appropriateness, shaping which topics are deemed suitable for coverage. While this logic may appear to be a neutral and self-evident tool for structuring information and enhancing visibility and credibility, it also serves as a strategic mechanism for shaping public perception. From this perspective, newsworthiness enables organizations to present themselves in particular ways—such as innovative, modern, and responsible—while simultaneously justifying the exclusion of less appealing issues, such as complex problems without clear solutions or narratives lacking a compelling human element. Similarly, a study by Gapas (2020) found that journalists, through the application of news values and the broader construction of newsworthiness, actively shape public knowledge. The way these discourses are reproduced in news reports influences how audiences interpret and assess their significance. This insight is particularly relevant in the context of tabloid newspapers, which, although covering armed conflicts less extensively than other media outlets, employ specific discursive strategies to establish newsworthiness. Examining how tabloid journalism frames armed conflicts can reveal the prioritization of particular news values and the rhetorical techniques used to enhance sensationalism. Identifying these news value devices provides a deeper understanding of how tabloids represent crises and construct narratives that resonate with their readership. This literature underscores the importance of considering both the inherent qualities of events and the broader socio-cultural and commercial contexts in which news is produced.

METHODOLOGY

Research Approach and Sampling

This study uses qualitative content analysis to examine how Al-Jazeera English and the BBC construct news values in their reports on the October 7, 2023, Hamas attack. The Discursive News Values Analysis (DNVA) framework is applied to identify and analyze these values. Purposive sampling is used to select ten news reports from each outlet, ensuring that each pair of reports covers the same topic for a direct comparison. For example, if an Al-Jazeera report discusses Hamas militants, a corresponding BBC report on the same subject is selected. This approach ensures a fair and accurate comparison by analyzing news values within similar content. The qualitative method allows for an in-depth examination of how each outlet emphasizes different aspects of newsworthiness in their coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Instrument

In order to systematically analyse the constructions of news values from Al-Jazeera English and the BBC on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in their news reports, a specific research instrument was chosen. This instrument is essential to ensure that data collection and analysis are consistent, reliable, and aligned with the purpose of the study. The primary research instrument includes the Discursive News Values Analysis (DNVA) framework by Monica Bednarek and Helen Caple (2017). DNVA is used to analyse and categorise the news values present in the news reports. The framework includes various news values which are Consonance, Eliteness, Impact, Negativity, Personalization, Positivity, Proximity, Superlativeness, Timeliness, and Unexpectedness. This comprehensive approach facilitates a thorough examination of the news values within the news reports.

Research Procedures

The procedure on collecting data includes retrieving news reports from the official websites of Al-Jazeera English and the BBC. The archive from the websites was searched through their search functionalities. The news reports were filtered by the specified date of October 7, 2023, on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and their relevance to the Hamas attack on Israeli defences, to identify relevant news reports on the crisis. Once identified, the selected news reports were gathered and collected. The selected articles were downloaded and organised according to the media outlets they are from, either Al-Jazeera English or the BBC, for a systematic analysis and comparison.

Data Analysis

The data analysis procedure involves a structured application of the Discursive News Values Analysis (DNVA). First is to analyse the selected news reports using the DNVA framework. Each article is carefully read by applying the DNVA framework to identify the presence and emphasis of different news values and manually highlighting them. This involves categorising the news values present in the articles. This step is repeated three times to ensure careful categorisation and limit bias. The data is then tabulated, separately between the two outlets, for each article.

Validity and Reliability

Reliability and validity are essential for ensuring rigor in qualitative research. Reliability refers to the consistency of a method in producing similar results under the same conditions (Middleton, 2023). This study ensures reliability by maintaining methodological consistency with previous research. Like media framing studies by Entman (1993) and Matthes and Kohring (2008), it employs the Discursive News Values Analysis (DNVA) framework to systematically analyse text. Unlike corpus-based methods, this study manually identifies and categorizes data, aligning with Kroon et al. (2022), who emphasise the continued importance of manual content analysis in handling complex formats and languages. Replicating established methods strengthens the dependability of the analysis.

Validity ensures the method accurately measures the intended concepts (Middleton, 2025). Construct validity is maintained by grounding the analysis in well-established theories. The DNVA framework, supported by media framing studies, justifies categorization and interpretation. Manual highlighting, validated by Scheufele (1999) and Van Dijk (2006), captures nuanced meanings effectively. Studies like Ngai et al. (2020) and Isangula et al. (2023) further affirm manual qualitative coding as a reliable method. By following these validated approaches, this study ensures conceptual coherence and theoretical robustness, affirming the accuracy of its findings.

FINDINGS

Constructions of News Values in The Coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict on October 7, 2023.

Table 1 below presents the frequency of News Values by Al-Jazeera English

1	Consonance	1	0	4	4	1	1	1	2	0	1	15
2	Eliteness	8	4	8	6	1	9	2	3	43	1	85
3	Impact	8	5	13	11	5	20	22	6	33	8	131
4	Negativity	35	13	18	41	20	25	27	14	74	7	274
5	Personalisation	3	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	5
6	Positivity	4	10	3	5	0	9	6	0	14	0	51
7	Proximity	2	1	2	2	0	10	2	5	17	2	38

8	Superlativeness	15	6	13	20	5	17	17	11	68	13	185
9	Timeliness	6	3	3	16	4	13	17	4	13	6	85
10	Unexpectedness	3	3	7	1	0	2	4	3	4	0	27

Table 1: Frequency of News Values in the Coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict on October 7, 2023 by Al-Jazeera English (Nur Athirah, 2024).

The results showed that the total number of news values constructed in Al-Jazeera English in all ten articles were 15 for Consonance, 85 for Eliteness, 131 for Impact, 274 for Negativity, 5 for Personalization, 51 for Positivity, 38 for Proximity, 185 for Superlativeness, 85 for Timeliness 85 and 27 Unexpectedness.

Table 2 below presents the frequency of News Values by the BBC:

1	Consonance	10	0	6	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	17
2	Eliteness	10	2	4	8	1	0	0	0	0	0	25
3	Impact	11	4	10	16	9	9	3	3	3	7	75
4	Negativity	29	13	13	27	11	10	1	9	15	25	153
5	Personalisation	2	2	0	0	9	0	1	0	0	0	14
6	Positivity	7	4	0	6	0	0	0	2	1	3	23
7	Proximity	6	0	2	5	0	0	0	1	0	0	14
8	Superlativeness	14	5	17	17	8	20	1	7	9	9	107
9	Timeliness	6	3	10	12	3	4	2	2	3	1	46
10	Unexpectedness	2	0	4	1	1	3	0	1	3	0	15

Table 2: Frequency of News Values in the Coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict on October 7, 2023 by the BBC (Nur Athirah, 2024).

The results showed that the total number of news values constructed in all ten articles by the BBC were 17 for Consonance, 25 for Eliteness, 75 for Impact, 153 for Negativity, 14 for Personalization, 23 for Positivity, 14 for Proximity, 107 for Superlativeness, 46 for Timeliness 46 and 15 for Unexpectedness.

Al-Jazeera English and the BBC constructed news values differently in their reporting on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on October 7, 2023. One of the most notable differences lies in the emphasis of Eliteness. Al-Jazeera English relied heavily on elite figures to frame the conflict with 85 instances in total. This aligns with Barkho's (2011) findings that Al-Jazeera English tends to amplify voices from the Global South, particularly in conflict reporting. The network frequently cited Palestinian leaders, regional organisations, and international critics of Israel, which constructs a narrative where elite voices reinforce broader geopolitical themes. Additionally, Al-Jazeera English demonstrated a significant reliance on Negativity, with 274 instances in total. This suggests a framing that highlights the violence and suffering associated with the conflict, portraying Israeli military actions as highly destructive. The network's use of impact, with a total of 131 instances further strengthened this narrative. It links immediate events to wide and heavy consequences and emphasises the long-term ramifications of the conflict. Al-Jazeera English also employed Superlativeness extensively, with 185 instances by using heightened language to construct the conflict as an extraordinary and significant event.

Conversely, the BBC placed significantly less emphasis on elite voices, recording only 25 instances in total. This suggests an editorial preference for limiting political figures' influence. Instead, the BBC incorporates a more

structured approach that avoids overtly amplifying powerful figures. However, the BBC showed a considerably higher frequency of Personalization, with 14 instances, compared to Al-Jazeera English's 5 instances. This suggests a strong inclination towards human-interest narratives. By focusing on individual stories and personal experiences, the BBC framed the conflict in a way that fosters readers' empathy. Additionally, the BBC incorporated 23 instances of Positivity. This suggests that the BBC occasionally attempts to balance its negative reporting with constructive or hopeful elements. This aligns with a study by Prastikawati (2021) who found that positive judgment was most prevalent in BBC articles, suggesting that the use of attitude devices in reporting not only reinforced certain narratives but also played a role in shaping reader trust. The presence of positivity in BBC reporting may serve as a mechanism to mitigate audience fatigue or maintain perceptions of neutrality. This highlights the effort to avoid overly bleak portrayals of the conflict.

Differences in the emphasised criteria of newsworthiness between Al-Jazeera English and the BBC reports on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on October 7, 2023.

From the constructions of news values in The Coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict on October 7, 2023 by Al-Jazeera English and the BBC, the distinct number of frequencies for each news value can be found in Table 3 below:

ORDER	AL-JAZEERA ENGLISH	NEWS VALUES	THE BBC	ORDER
8	15	Consonance	17	7
4	85	Eliteness	25	5
3	131	Impact	75	3
1	274	Negativity	153	1
9	5	Personalisation	14	9
5	51	Positivity	23	6
6	38	Proximity	14	9
2	185	Superlativeness	107	2
4	85	Timeliness	46	4
7	27	Unexpectedness	15	8

Table 3: Overall Frequency of News Values in the Coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict on October 7, 2023, by Al-Jazeera English and the BBC (Nur Athirah, 2024).

The emphasised criteria of newsworthiness between Al-Jazeera English and the BBC in their coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on October 7, 2023, are Negativity, Superlativeness, Impact, Timeliness, and Eliteness. This result reveals distinct editorial priorities and narrative approaches by the two news outlets.

Negativity

Negativity is the most dominant news value in both Al-Jazeera English and the BBC's coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on October 7, 2023. However, Al-Jazeera English places a significantly greater emphasis on Negativity, with 274 instances compared to the BBC's 153 instances in total. This stark contrast suggests that the coverage of Al-Jazeera English was more focused on the tragic, violent, and destructive aspects of the conflict, often portraying the events with a heightened emotional tone. In contrast, while the BBC also employed Negativity as a key news value, it was comparatively more restrained, potentially balancing the Negativity with other news values such as personalization and positivity.

For example, in Article A from Al-Jazeera English, the phrase *"At least 232 people have been killed and 1,600*

wounded in the Palestinian enclave of Gaza during Israel's retaliation after a deadly multi-pronged attack by Hamas forces into Israel" highlights the heavy reliance on negativity. The use of words like "killed" and "wounded" underscores the morbidity of the situation, reinforcing the devastating nature of the conflict. Conversely, the BBC's Article A also incorporates Negativity, as seen in *"At least 250 people are reported killed and 1,590 wounded in Israel after the Palestinian militant group Hamas launched its biggest attack in years."* While similar in content, the BBC frames the Negativity within a factual structure, avoiding overly emotional or dramatic language. This suggests that the reporting of Al-Jazeera English is more emotionally driven, while the BBC aims for a relatively neutral and objective tone despite the heavy reliance on Negativity.

Impact

Impact plays a significant role in both Al-Jazeera English and BBC coverage of the on October 7, 2023, as both outlets highlight the consequences and far-reaching effects of the conflict. However, the coverage of Al-Jazeera English contains 131 instances of Impact, compared to 75 in the BBC's coverage. This suggests that Al-Jazeera English gives greater weight to the broader significance of the events, which links the event to international political repercussions, regional instability, humanitarian crises and of course, the ongoing conflict.

For instance, in Al-Jazeera English's Article D, the phrase *"Around 3am local time (00:00 GMT), a loudspeaker atop a mosque in Gaza City blared a stark warning to residents of nearby apartment buildings: Evacuate immediately. Just minutes later, an Israeli airstrike reduced one five-story building to ashes"* demonstrates how Al-Jazeera English amplifies impact by emphasising the urgency of events as they unfold. This portrays them as life-altering moments with serious and heavy consequences. On the other hand, while the BBC also highlights impact, it does so with less intensity. In Article D, the BBC states, *"More than 300 people have been killed by Israeli strikes in Gaza since Palestinian militants infiltrated Israel from Gaza on Saturday morning, according to Palestinian health officials."* The focus here remains on conveying the factual implications of the event rather than dramatising the immediate devastation following the event.

The higher frequency of Impact in Al-Jazeera English suggests that its coverage places greater emphasis on the long-term consequences and larger geopolitical implications of the conflict, whereby the BBC maintains a more structured and analytical approach.

Superlativeness

Superlativeness, which refers to the emphasis on the extraordinary or dramatic nature of an event, is heavily utilised by both Al-Jazeera English and the BBC, though Al-Jazeera English employs it far more frequently than the BBC, with 185 and 107 instances recorded, respectively. This indicates that Al-Jazeera English tends to frame the conflict as unprecedented and of immense significance, which uses more intense, substantial and dramatic language.

For example, in Article F from Al-Jazeera English, the phrase *"Hundreds killed as Israel bombards Gaza after Hamas launched a surprise attack by land, air, and sea"* demonstrates how the outlet uses Superlativeness to intensify the severity of the situation. Words like "hundreds," "bombards," and "surprise attack" create an urgent, large-scale framing of the event. In comparison, the Article F from the BBC, while also using Superlativeness, tends to be more measured. The BBC states, *"The paper says the surprise Palestinian attack was launched on the morning of a Jewish holiday, leading to hundreds of deaths and the seizure of dozens of Israeli hostages."* Although the word "surprise" is used, the BBC places more emphasis on the structured sequence of events rather than using dramatic language to intensify the impact.

This contrast suggests that Al-Jazeera English's reporting employs superlativeness as a tool to heighten the emotional engagement of its audience, whereas the BBC remains somewhat restrained in its use of extreme or hyperbolic language.

Eliteness

Al-Jazeera English exhibits a significantly higher reliance on Eliteness, with 85 instances recorded compared to

the BBC, with a total of only 25 instances. This means that Al-Jazeera English's coverage places a stronger focus on political leaders, government officials, and key figures involved in the conflict, often highlighting their statements and actions to frame the narrative.

For instance, Article I of Al-Jazeera English features a statement from Polish Foreign Minister Zbigniew Rau: *"I strongly condemn Hamas' ongoing attacks on Israel. This baseless aggression and acts of violence, especially against civilians, are unacceptable."* This demonstrates how Al-Jazeera English amplifies elite perspectives to shape the conflict as a matter of international concern. In contrast, the BBC's use of eliteness is more limited. In Article B, the BBC references Israeli military spokesman Lieutenant Colonel Jonathan Conricus: *"Some are alive and some are presumed dead,"* but does not go into extensive detail about elite figures' roles in shaping the conflict. This suggests that while the BBC does include elite voices, it does so less frequently and with less emphasis than Al-Jazeera English.

Timeliness

Timeliness, which captures the urgency of reporting and real-time updates, is significantly more pronounced in Al-Jazeera English than in the BBC, with 85 and 46 instances recorded, respectively. This suggests that Al-Jazeera English prioritises immediate reporting, ensuring its audience receives constant updates on unfolding developments. The BBC, with fewer instances of timeliness, appears to adopt a different editorial strategy, potentially focusing on providing a broader context or consolidating events into a more structured narrative rather than emphasising real-time updates.

For example, in Al-Jazeera English's Article G, the report states: *"At about 6:30am (03:30 GMT), Hamas fired a huge barrage of rockets into southern Israel with sirens heard as far away as Tel Aviv and Beersheba."* The specific time reference and immediate action reinforce the emphasis of Al-Jazeera English on real-time updates. In contrast, while the BBC also uses Timeliness, it does so with less intensity. In Article I, the BBC reports: *"The paper says the surprise Palestinian attack was launched on the morning of a Jewish holiday, leading to hundreds of deaths and seizure of dozens of Israeli hostages."* Although the time is mentioned, it is not used as a tool to create urgency in the same way Al-Jazeera English does.

These findings indicate that while both Al-Jazeera English and the BBC frame their coverage using the same dominant news values, their differing emphases suggest editorial approaches that align with distinct geopolitical perspectives. The findings also offer a balanced critique of the purported neutrality of the BBC. While past studies have either criticised the BBC for pro-Israel bias, as Barkho (2011) stated, or defended it as a neutral source, this study presents a more nuanced perspective. The findings show that while the BBC does attempt to maintain neutrality, it subtly leans towards an Israeli perspective through its selection of elite sources, avoidance of Superlativeness, and lack of critical historical framing. Unlike past studies that categorically labeled BBC coverage as either balanced or biased, this research quantifies its news values and highlights contradictions in its approach. This data-driven critique adds credibility and objectivity, differentiating this study from prior analyses that relied primarily on interpretative discourse analysis.

DISCUSSION

Research objective 1 is to explore the constructions of news values by Al-Jazeera English and the BBC in their coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on October 7, 2023. The findings revealed that a key distinction is in Eliteness: Al-Jazeera English relied heavily on elite figures (85 instances), particularly Palestinian leaders and international critics of Israel, reinforcing broader geopolitical themes. In contrast, the BBC cited elites only 25 times, reflecting a preference for limiting political influence. Al-Jazeera English also emphasized Negativity (274 instances) and Superlativeness (185 instances) to highlight the violence and significance of the conflict. It frequently linked events to severe consequences (Impact: 131 instances). This aligns with prior research showing that modern journalism increasingly uses heightened language to amplify emotions. Conversely, the BBC placed greater emphasis on Personalization (14 instances vs. Al-Jazeera English's 5), humanizing the conflict through personal stories. It also incorporated Positivity (23 instances), possibly to balance its coverage. Additionally, the BBC's use of Proximity (14 instances) reflected Western political interests, whereas Al-Jazeera English (38 instances) framed the conflict as relevant to a global audience through ideological and cultural ties. This study

challenges prior DNVA research by showing Al-Jazeera English's stronger reliance on elites, contradicting claims that Western media depend more on elite sources. It also redefines Proximity as ideological rather than purely geographical and highlights Superlativeness as central to modern conflict journalism. The findings offer new insights into how news values shape war reporting.

Meanwhile, research objective 2 is to analyse the differences in the emphasised criteria of newsworthiness between Al-Jazeera English and the BBC reports on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on October 7, 2023. The most dominant news values in both outlets were Negativity, Impact, Superlativeness, Timeliness, and Eliteness. Al-Jazeera English had a higher emphasis on Negativity (274 instances vs. 153 in the BBC), portraying the conflict in a more graphic and emotionally charged manner. Impact was also more pronounced in Al-Jazeera English (131 vs. 75 instances), linking the conflict to broader geopolitical issues. Superlativeness was extensively used in both outlets, with Al-Jazeera English employing it more frequently (185 vs. 107), contributing to a dramatic portrayal of events. Timeliness was also prioritised in Al-Jazeera English, reflecting its real-time reporting approach. While neither outlet explicitly took sides, Al-Jazeera English framed the conflict with stronger emphasis on Israeli aggression and Palestinian victimhood, aligning with past studies on its Middle Eastern perspective. The BBC, in contrast, incorporated Personalization and Positivity to humanise both sides and maintain a more measured tone, though its coverage subtly leaned towards an Israeli perspective. This study challenges traditional views on Proximity, showing that ideological and cultural proximity influence media framing as much as geography. It also highlights the increasing use of Superlativeness in modern conflict reporting, suggesting a shift toward more dramatic portrayals. By employing Discursive News Values Analysis (DNVA), this research provides an empirical and comparative perspective on how different media construct newsworthiness, influencing public perceptions of conflict.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study revealed that Al-Jazeera English emphasised Negativity, Impact, Superlativeness, Timeliness, and Eliteness more than the BBC, while the BBC employed Personalization to a greater extent. These differences align with the distinct editorial orientations of both news outlets. The study contributes to existing literature by demonstrating how media outlets construct newsworthiness through linguistic framing, which could reaffirm the applicability of DNVA in conflict reporting. Ultimately, these findings highlight the power of media discourse in shaping public understanding of international conflicts and underscore the need for continued research into media framing strategies. This study lays the groundwork for further exploration of news values in conflict reporting, which highlights the need for cross-linguistic research. As media landscapes continue to evolve, future studies should consider the complex interactions between traditional journalism, digital media, and audience reception to gain a deeper understanding of how newsworthiness is constructed in contemporary conflict narratives.

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