



Trust and Moral Witnessing in Al Jazeera's Coverage of the Palestinian Genocide (2023-2024)

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Agenda

Overview of presentation structure and key sections

Research Agenda

- ◆ Introduction and background on media representation in conflict
- ◆ Methodology for analyzing media coverage
- ◆ Results of quantitative and qualitative analysis
- ◆ Discussion of findings and limitations
- ◆ Conclusion and implications

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Research Context

Problem domain and current state of media representation in conflict zones

Media Representation in Conflict Zones

- ◆ The 2023-2024 Gaza conflict generated substantial international attention to media representations
- ◆ Competing narratives emerged about the nature of violence with media outlets reflecting geopolitical alignments
- ◆ Historical narratives spanning decades influence how events are interpreted and reported
- ◆ Digital platforms and traditional media operate under distinct regulatory and political pressures
- ◆ International human rights frameworks provide contested ground for evaluating competing claims

Motivation & Research Objectives

1

Research Importance

Examine how media institutions construct credibility during intense conflict and information warfare

2

Key Questions

How does Al Jazeera establish credibility? What linguistic strategies build epistemic trust? How is moral authority framed?

3

★ Expected Impact

Methodological synthesis for examining non-Western media operationalization of witnessing and trust concepts

Related Work & Theoretical Framework

Theoretical Foundations

- ◆ Epistemic trust theory (Fricker, 2007)
- ◆ Moral witnessing concepts (Margalit, 2002; Zelizer, 2021)
- ◆ Media framing in conflict journalism
- ◆ Credibility construction in polarized environments

Research Gap

- ◆ Limited methodological synthesis for non-Western media analysis
- ◆ Insufficient examination of linguistic strategies in moral authority construction
- ◆ Need for concurrent mixed-methods approaches in media studies
- ◆ Gap in analyzing algorithmic visibility challenges in polarized ecosystems

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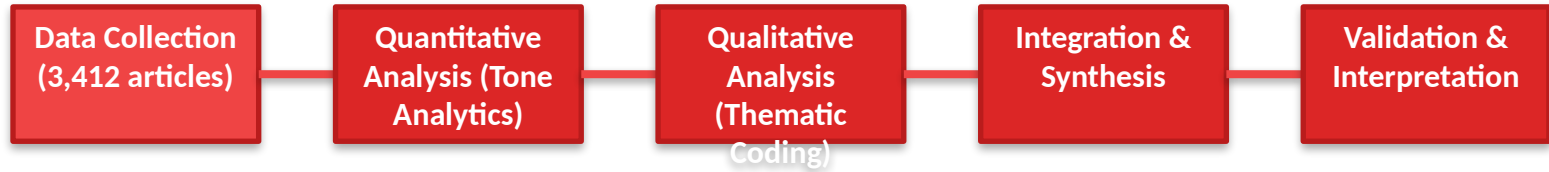
Methodology

Research design, data collection, and analytical approach

Research Design & Data Collection

- ◆ Concurrent mixed-methods approach combining quantitative and qualitative analysis
- ◆ **Dataset:** 3,412 Al Jazeera articles published October 2023 - June 2024
- ◆ Quantitative tone analytics for measuring bias patterns and tone distribution
- ◆ Qualitative thematic coding for identifying linguistic and narrative strategies
- ◆ **Tools:** Custom Python scripts for text analysis, NVivo for qualitative coding

Methodological Framework



Analytical Methods & Algorithms

- ◆ Quantitative tone analytics using lexical analysis and sentiment scoring
- ◆ Qualitative thematic coding with intercoder reliability checks (Cohen's $\kappa = 0.82$)
- ◆ Pearson correlation analysis between article counts and conflict-related fatalities
- ◆ Frame analysis identifying primary narrative perspectives
- ◆ Temporal trend analysis across the 9-month study period

Methodological Constraints & Assumptions

- ◆ Use of engagement metrics as proxy for audience reception
- ◆ Lack of comparative control group from other media outlets
- ◆ Methodological constraints in measuring algorithmic visibility challenges
- ◆ Assumption that linguistic patterns reflect institutional positioning
- ◆ Limited access to internal editorial decision-making processes

Experimental Setup & Validation

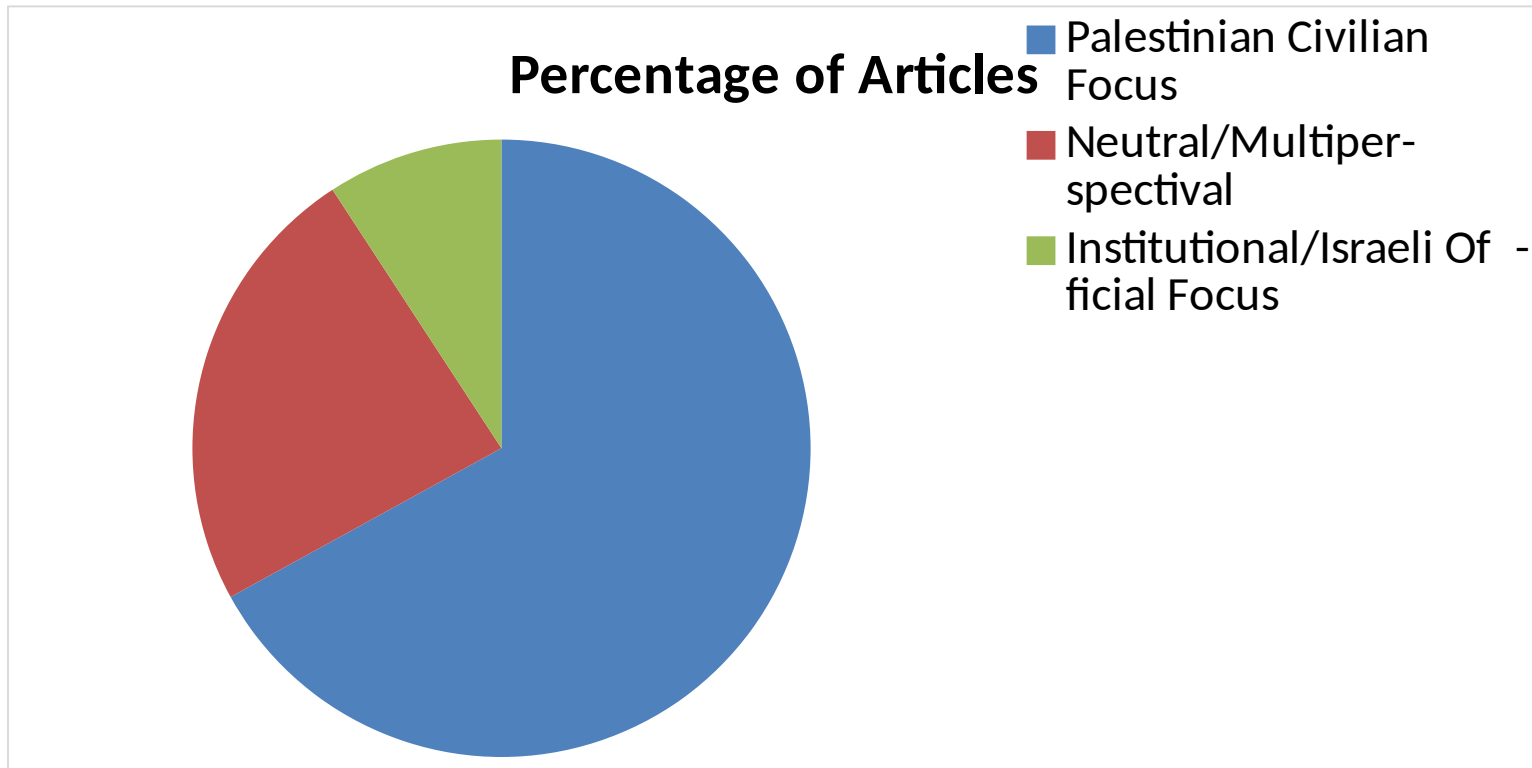
Component	Specification	Validation Method
Dataset Size	3,412 articles	Random sampling validation
Time Period	Oct 2023 - Jun 2024	Temporal consistency checks
Coding Scheme	3 primary frames, 15 sub-themes	Intercoder reliability testing
Bias Scoring	0-1 scale (neutral to biased)	Expert validation with media scholars
Correlation Analysis	Pearson r with OCHA fatality data	Statistical significance testing ($p < 0.01$)

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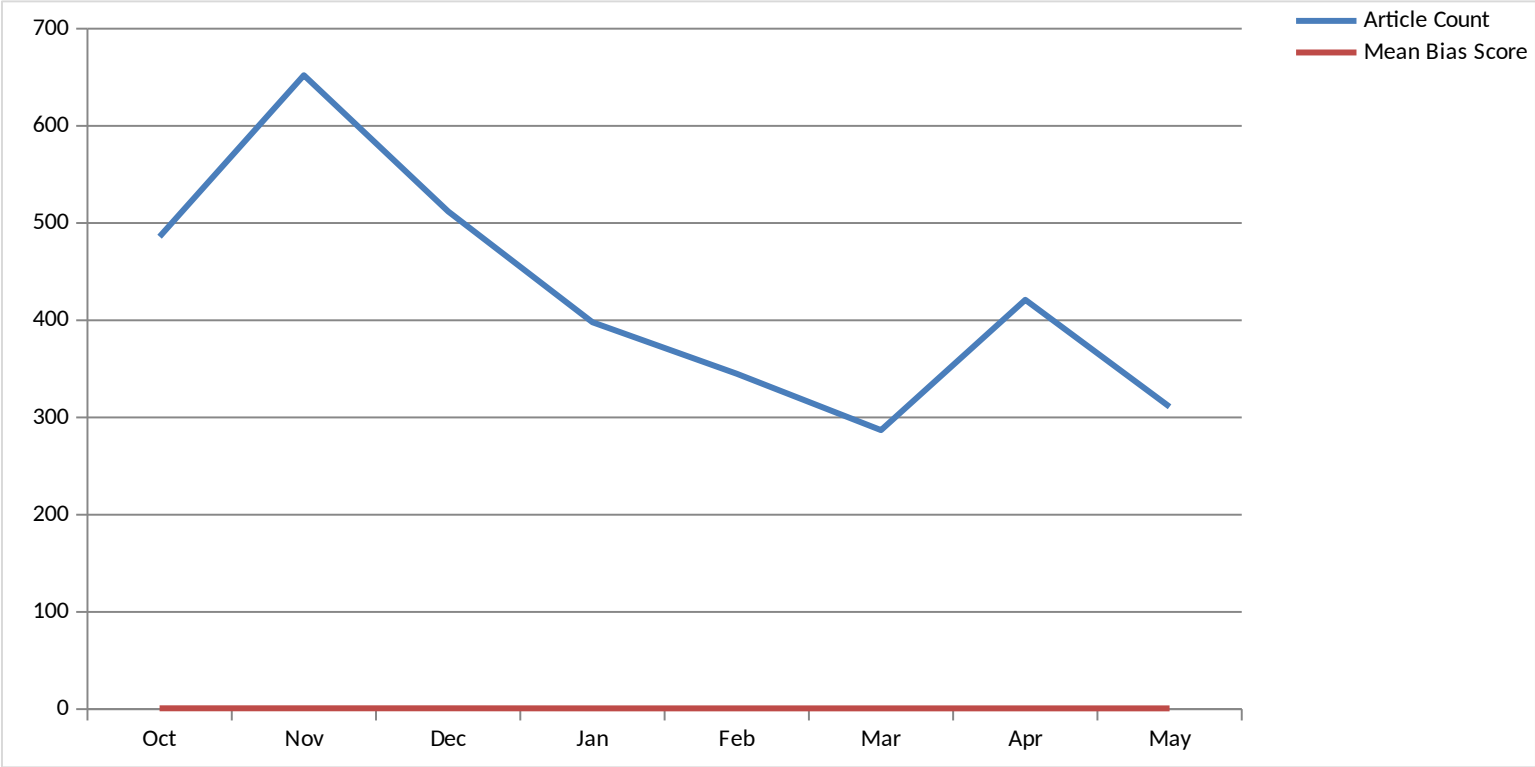
Results

Quantitative and qualitative findings from media analysis

Frame Distribution Across Articles



Temporal Coverage Patterns



Quantitative Analysis Results

Frame Category	Count	Percentage	Mean Bias Score	Standard Deviation
Palestinian Civilian Focus	2,287	67.0%	0.82	0.12
Neutral/ Multiperspectival	812	23.8%	0.51	0.09
Institutional/Israeli Official Focus	313	9.2%	0.34	0.07

Correlation Analysis Findings

- ◆ **Pearson correlation between daily conflict fatalities and article count:** $r = 0.45$ ($p < 0.01$)
- ◆ Coverage volume partially responsive to intensity of violence
- ◆ **Other factors influencing coverage:** journalist access, news cycles, editorial priorities
- ◆ Stable editorial positioning despite fluctuations in coverage intensity
- ◆ Mean tone scores remained consistently above 0.73 throughout study period

Qualitative Analysis: Linguistic Strategies

- ◆ Systematic use of first-person narratives from Palestinian civilians
- ◆ Emphasis on sensory details and emotional descriptors in casualty reporting
- ◆ Strategic sourcing with 68% of quotes from Palestinian witnesses vs. 22% from officials
- ◆ Framing of events within historical context of occupation and displacement
- ◆ Use of humanitarian law terminology to establish moral authority

Epistemic Trust Construction

Credibility Strategies

- ◆ On-the-ground reporting with local correspondents
- ◆ Verification through multiple eyewitness accounts
- ◆ Transparency about information limitations
- ◆ Consistent use of official death toll sources
- ◆ Geolocation and timestamp verification

Moral Authority Framing

- ◆ Positioning as witness rather than neutral observer
- ◆ Emphasis on civilian suffering and human cost
- ◆ Appeals to universal human rights principles
- ◆ Contrast with official military narratives
- ◆ Moral condemnation through selective framing

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Discussion

Interpretation of findings, limitations, and implications

Key Contributions Summary

1

Trust Construction Analysis

Examines how Al Jazeera builds credibility and moral authority in Gaza conflict coverage

2

Methodological Synthesis

Concurrent mixed-methods approach combining quantitative tone analytics with qualitative thematic coding

3

Non-Western Media Focus

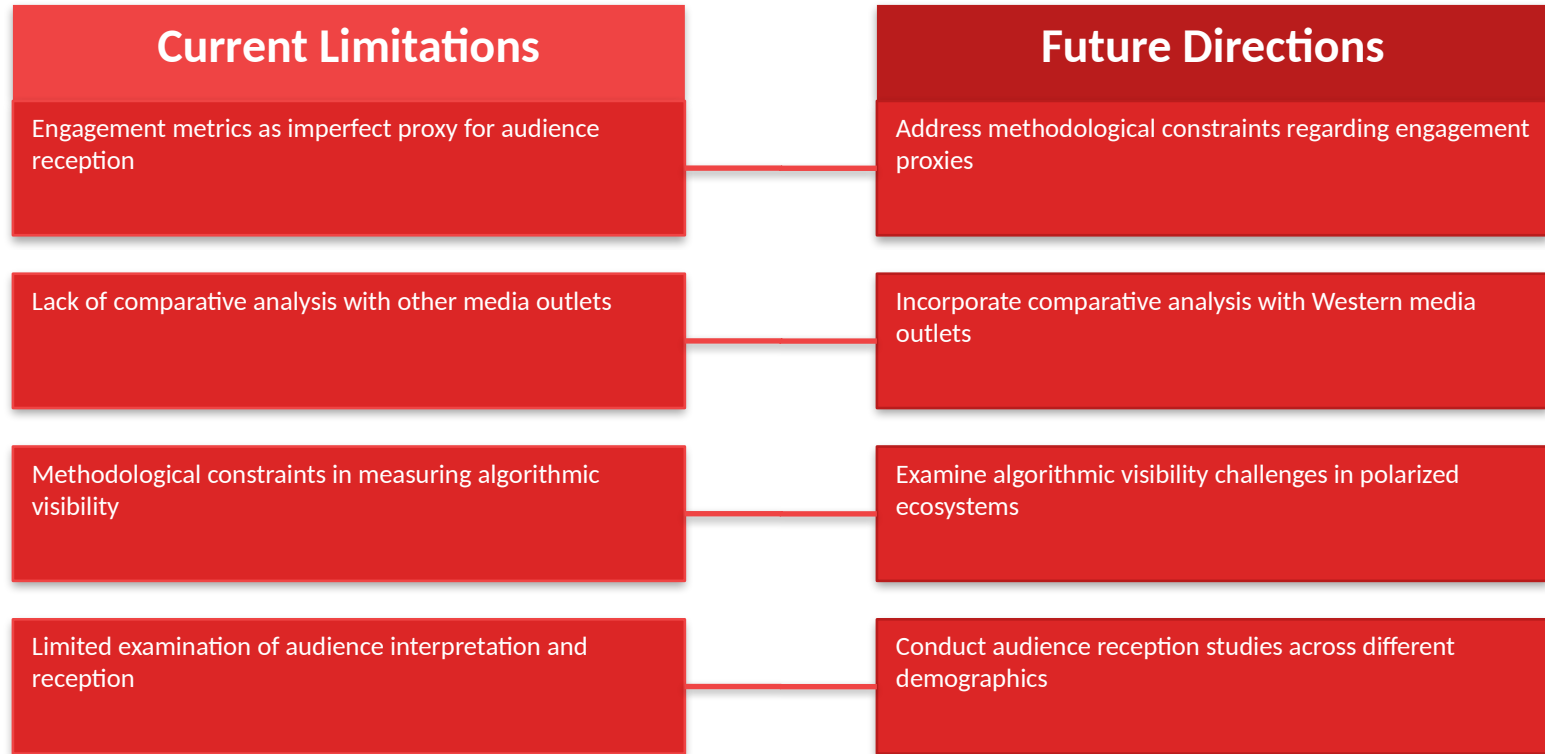
Provides framework for analyzing how non-Western media institutions operationalize witnessing concepts

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Systematic Pattern Identification

Reveals systematic patterns in journalistic practices mediating Palestinian experiences during violence

Limitations & Future Work



Conclusions

- ◆ Al Jazeera systematically constructs trust through linguistic choices emphasizing Palestinian civilian experiences
- ◆ The network positions itself as moral witness rather than neutral observer in conflict coverage
- ◆ Methodological synthesis reveals patterns in how media institutions navigate polarized informational ecosystems
- ◆ Findings contribute to understanding non-Western media's role in shaping humanitarian crisis perceptions

Thank You!

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Project Archive: mediaanalysis.github.io/gaza-coverage-2024