

Abstract

The Israel-Palestine conflict has long been one of the most sensitive and extensively covered topics by global media. The escalation of conflict after Hamas launched an attack on Israel on 7th October 2023, signified the start of a new circle of hostilities and brought the topic once again to the center of media attention. This study examines the visual representation of the first three weeks of the 2023 Israel-Hamas war across three online media outlets: Al Jazeera, CNN and Proto Thema. More specifically, a quantitative content analysis was conducted to investigate similarities and differences in the way that the three selected media covered the war through photographs and how those media outlets represented different news values such as negativity, personalization, prominence, and proximity in their visual coverage. This study revealed significant differences in their portrayal of the conflict, with Al Jazeera emphasizing more its humanitarian aspects and the news values of negativity and personalization, CNN prioritizing the news value of prominence and specifically the depiction of the US and global diplomatic response, and Proto Thema focusing on the technical side of the war and leaning towards the Israeli perspective. The findings of this research aim to contribute to prior studies that have investigated the approach that media from different cultural and political environments follow in their visual coverage of the war and to fill the research gap of the photographic representation of the Israel-Palestine conflict and the construction of news values through photographs.