

Contested Narratives: Audience Perception, Media Credibility, and Propaganda in the Israel on Palestine Conflict

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the role of propaganda in shaping news reporting on the Israel–Palestine conflict, with a particular focus on its influence on audience values and perceptions of media credibility. In the contemporary media environment, news is frequently framed through selective narratives, agenda-setting, and ideological positioning, which may affect how audiences interpret conflict-related information and determine the trustworthiness of media sources. Adopting a quantitative research design, the study employs a structured survey distributed among young adult media users in Malaysia. The instrument measures key variables including exposure to conflict-related news, perceived presence of propagandistic elements, audience value alignment, and levels of trust in different media platforms. Statistical analyses, including correlation and regression, are conducted to examine the relationships between propaganda exposure and perceived credibility, as well as the extent to which audience values mediate this relationship. The findings indicate that higher exposure to polarised and emotionally framed news content is significantly associated with lower perceived media credibility, particularly among respondents with strong pre-existing value orientations. Additionally, audience values are found to play a mediating role, shaping how individuals interpret and evaluate conflicting narratives. The study also reveals that reliance on social media as a primary news source correlates with increased susceptibility to propagandistic framing. This research contributes to the field of media warfare and perception management by providing empirical evidence on how propaganda

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influences audience trust and interpretation in conflict reporting. The findings offer practical implications for developing effective communication strategies.

Contribution/Originality: This study contributes to the existing literature by empirically demonstrating how propaganda in conflict reporting, social media reliance, and audience value orientations interact to shape perceptions of media credibility and trust among Malaysian youth, offering new evidence for media warfare and perception management research.

1. Introduction

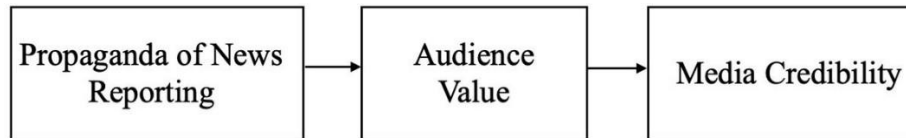
The media plays a crucial role in molding societal perceptions, shaping public opinion, and reflecting a nation's aspirations. In Malaysia, a country characterised by its political and cultural diversity, the issues surrounding media news reporting are particularly pertinent (Azzaakiyyah, 2023). Historically, following independence and during the Malayan Emergency, Malaysian media played a pivotal role in nation-building, promoting nationalistic narratives to foster identity and unity (Cinelli et al., 2022). However, this historical context also facilitated potential overlaps between political and media agendas. Contemporary literature on Malaysian news reporting has yet to capture fully how various forms and tones of reporting influence public trust, belief, and opinion. This lack of clarity presents a gap in understanding the specific cultural, political, and social influences that shape audience perceptions in Malaysia (Walter & Ophir, 2023). Addressing this gap is crucial for comprehending how news reporting tactics influence public sentiment.

In this dynamic media landscape, platforms like TikTok have emerged as influential players in disseminating news and shaping public opinion, especially among younger audiences. TikTok's algorithm-driven content presentation allows for swift dissemination and consumption of news, which can significantly shape societal perceptions and dialogues (Hakim, 2020). This platform's unique format, characterized by short, engaging videos, provides an avenue for both nuanced storytelling and potential misinformation, demanding critical media literacy from its users. Malaysian Muslims, constituting the majority of the population, are particularly receptive to narratives aligning with cultural and religious themes, whether these narratives pertain to political developments, socio-economic issues, or cultural tales. The impact of such news reporting is not uniform and reflects the complexity of the Malaysian media landscape (Janet Steele, 2020). This landscape, influenced increasingly by digital and social media platforms like TikTok, presents varied narratives from those supporting national objectives to counter-narratives championed by independent outlets.

In this fragmented media environment, public trust and belief are continuously re-evaluated. The credibility of media sources is heavily influenced by the nature of news reporting in Malaysia. Narratives that resonate with existing beliefs and community identities have the potential to bolster audience trust (Gautam & Nainwal, 2025). Conversely, perceived biases in news reporting can lead to skepticism, undermining confidence in media sources and raising questions about their objectivity. As digital media continues to grow, platforms like TikTok play a critical role in the landscape of news reporting (Cheng et al., 2025). Additionally, the platform's algorithmic reinforcement mechanisms tend to amplify emotionally charged or polarising content, which can intensify echo chambers and limit exposure to diverse viewpoints. This dynamic not only

shapes individual attitudes but also influences collective discourse, potentially deepening societal divisions. Consequently, understanding how audiences interpret and evaluate such content becomes essential in assessing media credibility and developing effective strategies to counter misinformation and propaganda.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework



Propaganda of News Reporting Conceptual Framework adapted from Source Credibility Model (Serman & Sims, 2022) Figure 1 is a conceptual framework for the Malaysian public views on Malaysia news reporting towards the Israel-Palestine conflict in Shah Alam, Selangor. This concept has been employed in the present study to identify the public views on this ongoing conflict. Therefore, the conceptual framework has been extended by adapting the Source Credibility Model introduced by Hovland and Mandell (Hovland & Mandell, 1952) The extension of the theoretical framework is displayed in figure 2 below.

1.1. Research Objectives

RO 1: To identify the level of audience's values towards Malaysian news reporting.

RO 2: To measure the effects of audience values on Malaysian news reporting towards Malaysian media credibility.

The Source Credibility Model is frequently linked to research that looks at how a message source's perceived authority and dependability affect its persuasive power. Researchers have examined important aspects of this paradigm and found that a source's high credibility may increase persuasion when positive thoughts are evoked but may decrease persuasion if negative thoughts predominate (Pansoni & Gistri, 2025) Based on this study, The Source Credibility Model will be used to evaluate how public opinion is influenced by the perceived credibility of news outlets in the context of a study comparing Malaysian public perspectives on news reporting about the Israel-Palestinian conflict from Malaysian sources.

The reliability of news sources can affect how audiences interpret the stories they come across on a complicated global problem like the Israel-Palestinian conflict, influencing their opinions and possibly influencing prejudice and alignment with particular viewpoints (Bhowmik & Fisher, 2023). The researcher will be able to investigate how Malaysian audiences choose reliable sources, how these opinions affect their opinions about the conflict, and how media such as television news may be viewed differently depending on credibility by using the Source Credibility Model. Therefore, comprehending the model aids in analysing how audience views and media credibility interact, especially when looking at biases and propaganda in news reporting.

2. Literature Review

2.1. News Reporting in Malaysia

Malaysian news reporting will reach a crossroads in 2024 as a result of a complex interplay of political forces, legislative changes, economic upheavals, and technological advancements (Alsharari & Daniels, 2023). The situation is marked by ongoing threats to press freedom and human rights. This study looks into the diverse nature of news reporting in Malaysia today, focusing on the underlying elements driving the sector and the strategies that news companies take to navigate this shifting environment. One of the most important factors impacting news reporting in Malaysia is press freedom and human rights (Radue, 2022). Malaysia has long been accused for its restrictions on media freedom, with concerns expressed about censorship, government control, and legal constraints on journalists.

These issues remain significant in 2024, as evidenced by Malaysia's impending Universal Periodic Review by the United Nations Human Rights Council. The examination will look at the country's human rights record, including press freedom and transparency (Watson et al., 2024). The Malaysian government has occasionally used legal measures such as the Sedition Act and the Communications and Multimedia Act to stifle dissent and control the narrative. Journalists and media outlets are routinely threatened with legal consequences for reporting on sensitive topics, which can contribute to self-censorship and an unwillingness to address problematic matters (Välvirronen & Saikkonen, 2020). The UPR process allows for global scrutiny and criticism, which may influence Malaysia's government to adopt more progressive policies that protect media freedom.

The regulatory framework and economic policies of Malaysia have a big influence on news coverage. Economic growth, sustainability, and technological innovation are strategically prioritised in the Malaysian government's 2024 budget (Ishak & Thiruchelvam, 2023). Tax incentives for equity crowdfunding and the allocation of funds to encourage entrepreneurship, like the Malaysia Co-Investment Fund, are important initiatives. By encouraging a flourishing entrepreneurial ecosystem, these policies seek to boost investment in startups and small businesses. Additionally, the government's backing of Sustainable and Responsible Investment (SRI) Sukuk and SRI Funds demonstrates its commitment to sustainable development (Rahman et al., 2020). These incentives are encouraging more people to get involved in sustainable finance, which is becoming a much more prominent topic in the news.

In Malaysia, the news industry's digital revolution is still a major trend. The creation, dissemination, and consumption of news have all changed as a result of the rise of digital media (Munger, 2019). Internet news sources are a supplement to traditional print media. Due to this situation, news organisations may now reach a wider range of people and interact with a more diverse audience. Real-time reporting and news transmission are also made possible by digital tools and platforms, which is essential in the fast-paced information environment of today (Agarwal & Narendra Puppala, 2024). Social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter have emerged as vital sources of breaking news. Additionally, news firms can adjust content to better suit the demands of their viewers by using data analytics to gain insights into audience behaviour and preferences.

However, the digital era raises challenges, such as the spread of misinformation and the need for robust fact-checking procedures. News organisations must invest in training and technology to combat fake news while maintaining the quality and dependability of their reporting (Gupta et al., 2022). Furthermore, the change to digital has economic implications, as media companies seek long-term business models in a climate where advertising revenue is increasingly being transferred to internet behemoths like Google and Facebook. In this dynamic environment, independent media outlets play a crucial role in maintaining journalistic integrity and providing diverse perspectives (Herrero-Beaumont, 2022). Independent news outlets, even those with limited resources, play a crucial role in holding authority accountable and reporting on subjects that mainstream media may overlook.

The development of technology has altered the way news is received and produced, creating both opportunities and challenges for news agencies. Independent media is more important for providing diverse perspectives and holding authorities accountable (Sauerwein & Spencer-Smith, 2020). As Malaysia's media landscape shifts, news companies will adapt to meet the needs of a changing world. The Malaysian media landscape in 2024 faces a number of challenges, including maintaining credibility in an age of misinformation, adapting to rapid technological advancements, and coping with regulatory requirements. To recap, media coverage in Malaysia in 2024 is shaped by a combination of traditional and digital influences, regulatory issues, and technology developments. The ability of media firms to adapt and innovate will be essential in shaping the future of news reporting.

2.2. News Reporting Propaganda in Malaysia

The Israel-Palestine dispute is one of the world's longest-running and most contentious problems. In Malaysia, for example, coverage of the war is not merely a reflection of foreign news, but also a potent propaganda tool that shapes public opinion and political discourse (Chan, 2023). The paper analyses how news coverage of Palestine in Malaysia overlaps with propaganda, examining the historical backdrop, present practices, and implications for public opinion and policy. It delves into news reporting methodology, case studies of major events, and the broader impact on Malaysian society.

Malaysia's position on the Israeli-Palestinian issue is deeply rooted in its historical, political, and cultural contexts (Burton, 2021). Since its independence, Malaysia has been a vocal supporter of Palestinian rights and self-determination. This position is inspired by Malaysia's predominantly Muslim population and the government's desire to align with wider Islamic unity (Olivier, 2019). Malaysia's media landscape has long been shaped by its political landscape. The ruling party, UMNO (United Malays National Organisation), wields great authority in the media, which it uses to promote its policies and opinions. The media has frequently reflected the government's stance on international issues, including the Israel-Palestine conflict, portraying Palestine as the victim of Israeli aggression and occupation.

The media landscape in Malaysia encompasses digital and social media platforms in addition to more conventional media including radio, television, and newspapers (Rosmani et al., 2020). Because they align their coverage with official policy, traditional media outlets such as The Star, Utusan Malaysia, and the state-run RTM are commonly perceived as being pro-government. While expressing significant pro-Palestinian sentiment, digital media outlets like Malaysiakini and The Malaysian Insight offer a wider

range of viewpoints. In this country, traditional media are characterised by ownership structures that are closely linked to political goals (Pickard, 2020). Political interests usually own large media conglomerates, which leads to a propensity for reporting to reflect government opinions. The coverage of the Israel-Palestine conflict, which consistently supports Palestinian demands while denouncing Israeli actions, demonstrates this convergence.

Public opinion and policymaking are significantly impacted by Malaysian media's persistent and fervent coverage of the Palestine issue. The strong public sentiment in favour of Palestine is reflected in Malaysia's diplomatic efforts and foreign policy. The administration supports initiatives in solidarity with Palestine, calls for stricter sanctions against Israel, and consistently criticises Israeli actions in international fora (Shkliarevsky, 2024). Numerous political parties and civil society organisations are

united on the Palestine issue at home. By fostering a sense of shared identity and purpose, it helps to keep Malaysia's many ethnic and religious communities united. For the government to maintain societal cohesiveness and stability, this unity is extremely important.

2.3. News Reporting and Audience Values

The Malaysian government has a lengthy history of using the media to disseminate its message, including its stance on global issues like the war in Palestine. The media's consistent adherence to official statements and policies is indicative of this influence. The public narrative is reinforced by government officials' frequent use of the media to condemn Israeli activities and show support for Palestinians (Hallward & Biygautane, 2024). For instance, Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim has been vocal in his criticism of Israeli actions and policies, often expressing opinions that have been widely reported in Malaysian media. These remarks appeal to the public's strong pro-Palestinian sentiments while simultaneously bolstering the government's foreign policy position.

Malaysian media's pro-Palestinian coverage significantly affects public opinion by strengthening pre-existing anti-Israel sentiments and sympathies (Zhang, S. 2021). This link between audience values and media coverage fosters religious and national unity. The public's strong support for Palestine is demonstrated by the regular demonstrations, charitable endeavours, and vocal support of Palestinian rights. The number of public protests in Malaysia sometimes rises during periods of increasing violence, such as the Gaza conflict in 2023. The public's sense of participation and solidarity is increased by the extensive media coverage of these protests (Ziberi et al., 2024). Large-scale marches in Kuala Lumpur and other major cities, which show Malaysian public support for Palestine, are regularly featured in the news media.

Reporters frequently portray the conflict in terms of Palestinian victimisation and Israeli brutality (Yarchi & Ayalon, 2020). This is accomplished by picking striking photographs, headlines, and stories that show the devastating impact of Israeli military activities on Palestinian civilians. For example, coverage frequently includes graphic images of wrecked homes, injured children, and mourning families, eliciting strong emotional responses from viewers. The media frequently focuses on Israeli military actions and their impact on Palestinians, while paying little attention to the conflict's complexities, such as internal Palestinian politics or the involvement of militant groups such as Hamas (Brooks,

2021). This selective reporting guarantees that the story reflects their beliefs and the administration's stance, while highlighting the humanitarian aspect of the conflict.

Additionally, social media makes it possible for news stories, images, and videos to be shared quickly, which supports Malaysian users' pro-Palestinian viewpoint (Jozaghi & Jozaghi, 2024). State-owned broadcasters, private media firms, and independent web channels are all part of the Middle East's diverse communication landscape. This variance is a reflection of the varying degrees of journalistic independence and government participation among nations (Humprecht et al., 2022). Notwithstanding these disparities, the coverage of the Palestine problem reflects broad sympathy for the Palestinian cause, which aligns with the values and emotions of the audience. Public opinion in the Middle East is significantly shaped by state-owned media, such as Al Jazeera. The pro-Palestinian views of their governments on the matter are often reflected in these outlets.

Personal accounts of Palestinian suffering are typically used in reports to evoke sympathy and indignation in the reader (Weishut et al., 2024). Audiences in the region who support the Palestinian cause for humanitarian, religious, and cultural reasons find great resonance in this strategy. There is minimal coverage of internal Palestinian politics or the actions of terrorist organisations like Hamas, instead concentrating on Israeli military operations and their effects on Palestinians (Flamer, 2023). The plot is guaranteed to reflect the audience's pro-Palestinian sentiments thanks to this selective reporting. For instance, despite providing minimal coverage of rocket launches from Gaza into Israel, media sources may highlight the destruction inflicted by Israeli airstrikes in Gaza. A certain story that represents the values of the audience is reinforced by this selective reporting.

The way the Palestine conflict is portrayed throughout the Middle East is influenced by the wide variations in the power that governments have over the media. While more independent media environments in certain countries allow for a range of viewpoints, in others, government control over the media ensures that reporting is in line with government priorities (Murschetz, 2020). Al Jazeera's powerful stance gives it the ability to significantly influence popular perception of the Palestine conflict. The commentary highlights Qatar's regional ties and political aspirations while simultaneously endorsing the Palestinian cause. The political and diplomatic goals of the administration are regularly reflected in Saudi media channels (Kharbach, 2020). In contrast to earlier decades, the presentation of the conflict now emphasises diplomatic solutions as a result of recent attempts to normalise relations with Israel.

Middle Eastern media's pro-Palestinian coverage greatly influences public opinion by strengthening preexisting anti-Israel sentiments and sympathies. Regional cohesion and collective identity are fostered when media reporting aligns with the values of its audience. Public protests in the Middle East often rise during periods of intensifying conflict, such the 2021 Sheikh Jarrah evictions or the 2023 Gaza war (Martin et al., 2023). These protests are regularly covered by the media, which increases popular sympathy and involvement. The solidarity and dedication of the local population to the Palestinian cause are often highlighted in the media's coverage of these demonstrations.

2.4. Audience Trust in News Reporting

Government regulation and control have always influenced the media landscape in Malaysia. Through ownership, censorship, and law, the Malaysian government has had

enormous control over the media since gaining independence in 1957 (Croissant, 2022). Historical occurrences like the race riots of 1969 and the Internal Security Act's subsequent enactment reinforced government regulation of the media (Berda, 2020). The degree of public trust in news coverage today has been shaped by this historical background. Radio Televisyen Malaysia (RTM) and the Malaysian National News Agency (Bernama) are two of the primary media outlets owned and run by the Malaysian government. The public often perceives these state-owned media channels as biased and propaganda since they regularly reflect the beliefs and policies of the government.

Two legal frameworks that have been utilised to control media content and limit press freedom are the Sedition Act and the Printing Presses and Publications Act (PPPA) (Ahmad Sabri, 2021). However, there have been efforts in recent years to broaden press freedom and alter media rules. Pakatan Harapan pledged media reform and increased transparency in the 2018 election (Nazaruddin & Yusoff, 2023). The deeply ingrained control structures that have historically impacted media trust are nevertheless challenging to fully deconstruct in spite of these efforts. Independent media channels have emerged as substitute news and information sources in reaction to the alleged bias and control of state-owned media. Platforms like Malaysiakini, Free Malaysia Today, and The Malaysian Insight provide more critical and diverse perspectives on national and global topics (Mohd Nizah & Abu Bakar, 2021). These independent publications have achieved a large readership and are frequently perceived as more trustworthy by people seeking alternate perspectives.

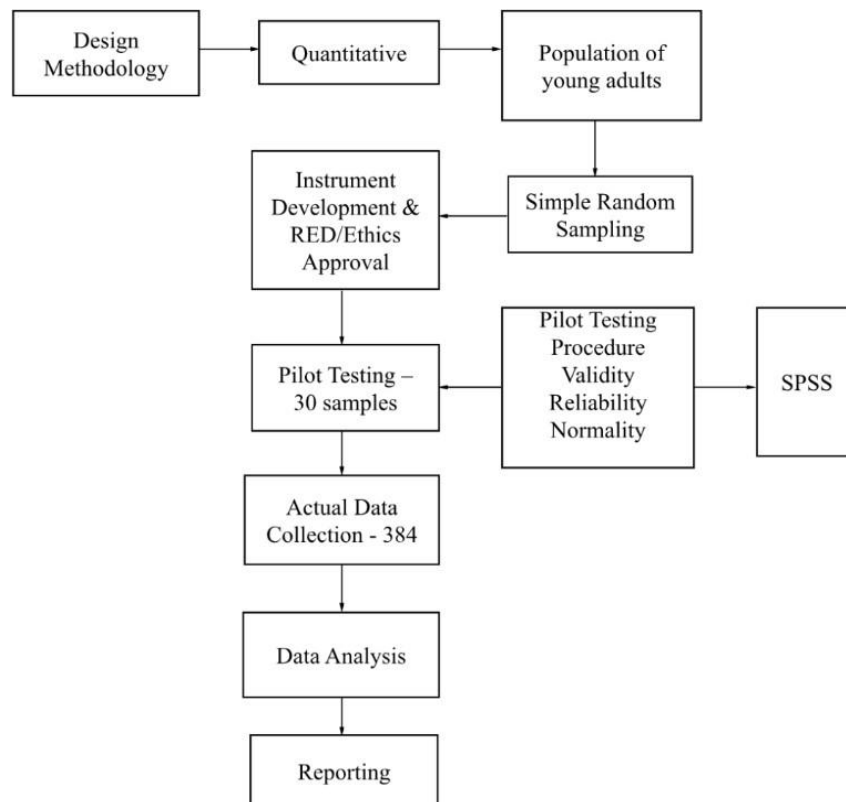
3. Research Methods

3.1. Research Design

The methodological paradigm, research design, and pilot study will all be covered in further detail in this chapter. Supporting research will also be covered in this chapter to help the researcher better grasp the study topic and build a stronger foundation. Young adults in Shah Alam, Selangor were selected as they have more thorough conversations about the public's perceptions of Malaysian news coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (Selvanathan, 2019). The concept and methodology are covered in greater detail in the following section. A five-point Likert scale, with 1 denoting "strongly disagree," 2 "disagree," 3 "neutral," 4 "agree," and 5 "strongly agree," is used by the researcher to design the survey. The target audience, which consists of young adults residing in Shah Alam, Selangor, will then receive the questionnaire. After that, the collected data will be loaded into SPSS Version 29 and examined before a conclusion is drawn. The qualitative thematic analysis's conclusions will provide a comprehensive understanding of the study subject by contextualising and enhancing the quantitative survey results.

This integration guarantees that the study makes use of both approaches' advantages to improve the validity and dependability of the findings (Quintão et al., 2020). By outlining the technique in this way, the story shows how each step of the research process is clearly connected to the others and how they all contribute to the study as a whole. The coherence and continuity of the research strategy are better understood thanks to this clear, organised description. The research design for this study is illustrated in Figure 2

Figure 2: Research Design Flowchart



3.1. Population and Sampling

In order to properly choose and approach eligible participants for surveys conducted using online survey platforms, this type of sampling requires researchers to have prior knowledge about the purpose of their investigations (Almusaed et al., 2025). The form of sampling employed in the current study is probability sampling, and the sample size is determined using stratified random sampling. Probability sampling is a collection of approaches for reducing the danger of bias by guaranteeing that the sample is "representative" of the population characteristics and that the value of these attributes in a sample is "bias". In Shah Alam, Selangor, young adults were chosen as a sample for this study. Stratified Random Sampling is used when conducting research that necessitates access to a particular population. This approach selects survey participants based on their fit with a predetermined profile (Urbanski et al., 2021). The sample size of this study is 384.

Based on this research, table 1 shows that the youth in the Petaling district will be selected following high Gross Domestic Product (GDP) according to state (Jabatan Perangkaan Malaysia, 2025) and Shah Alam was selected based on the industrial business in the area. According to the World Population Review the population size in Shah Alam is 481,654. Additionally, the industrial area in Shah Alam district has attracted multinational companies such as Volvo, Nestle and Cadbury to operate their manufacturing in this area as the district is also known as an urban centres (Muhaimin, 2019). Urban centres often have higher economic activities compared to rural areas. Furthermore, this aligns with the broader understanding that industries, especially, rely heavily on the Internet for communication (Cosa, 2023).

Hence, the study will be focusing on the youth population in Shah Alam district. This specific selection enables the study to explore the intricacies of Internet use among the younger generation in an environment that is rich in economic activity and global interconnectedness.

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Table 1: of Sample Size Calculator (Shah Alam)

Confidence level	95%
Margin of Error	5%
Population Proportion	50%
Population Size	481,654
Sample Size	384

The adapted instrument for Malaysian Public Views on Malaysian and Middle Eastern News Reporting Towards Israel-Palestinian Conflict.

Adopting a quantitative research design, the study employs a structured survey distributed among young adult media users in Malaysia. The instrument measures key variables including exposure to conflict-related news, perceived presence of propagandistic elements, audience value alignment, and levels of trust in different media platforms. Statistical analyses, including correlation and regression, are conducted to examine the relationships between propaganda exposure and perceived credibility, as well as the extent to which audience values mediate this relationship.

Table 2: Instrument Development

Variables	Items	Items Code	References
Section A - Demographic	A 1	Gender	
	A 2	Previous Education	
Section B - Malaysia Propaganda News Reporting (MPN)	B 1	Malaysia propaganda news reporting shapes current events to strongly support specified interest	Jalli (2020)
	B 2	Malaysia propaganda news reporting filters current events to strongly support specified interest	
	B 3	Malaysia news outlets have known to show political bias	
	B 4	Propaganda news reporting in Malaysia is framed by their government	

	B 5	News reporting in Malaysia is influenced by their government regulations		
Section C - Malaysian Audience Values towards news reporting in Malaysia (MATM)	C 1	Malaysia news reporting does not propagate negative propaganda on Middle Eastern (Palestine - Israel War)	Al Sh	arafat (2019)
	C 2	Malaysia news reporting displays on humanity sentiment on Middle Eastern (Palestine - Israel War)		
	C 3	Malaysia news reporting does not show political bias on Middle Eastern (Palestine - Israel War)		
	C 4	Malaysia news reporting does not propagate religion sentiment on Middle Eastern (Palestine - Israel War)		
	C 5	Malaysia news reporting perceived transparency of information sources on Middle Eastern (Palestine - Israel War)		
Section D - Malaysian audience view towards Malaysia news reporting on Middle Eastern (Palestine - Israel War) (MAVM)	D 1	Malaysian news reports provide accurate information about events in the Middle East	Heni & Chandra	(2022)
	D2	Malaysian media present balanced viewpoints when covering Middle Eastern political or social issues		
	D 3	I trust Malaysian news sources to report reliably on Middle Eastern affairs		
	D 4	The Malaysian media's reporting on Middle Eastern issues is free from political or ideological bias		
	D 5	Malaysian news outlets provide sufficient coverage of Middle Eastern topics that matter to the public.		
Section E - Media credibility in Malaysia (MCM)	E 1	Malaysian media coverage of events in the Middle East is accurate	Martin & Hassan	(2020)
	E 2	Malaysian media are unbiased in their reporting on Middle Eastern issues		
	E 3	I trust Malaysian media's reporting on the Middle East.		
	E 4	Malaysian media coverage of the Middle East is more reliable and in-depth compared to international media.		

E 5 Malaysian media need significant improvements to enhance their credibility when reporting on Middle Eastern news.

3.2. Pilot Test

Table 3 below shows the Reliability of the Instrument for the Malaysian public views on Malaysian and Middle Eastern news reporting towards Israel - Palestine Conflict in Shah Alam, Selangor. Among 4 sections (excluding section A Demographic), all sections obtain Acceptable. presents the reliability analysis for various sections of the survey instrument used to assess Malaysian public views on news reporting related to the Israel–Palestine conflict. Reliability is measured using Cronbach's Alpha, a statistical coefficient that evaluates the internal consistency of the items within each section—essentially assessing how well the items collectively measure the underlying construct. In the table, four key sections are evaluated: Propaganda News Reporting (Section B), Audience Values towards News Reporting in Malaysia (Section C), Audience View towards Middle Eastern News Reporting on Malaysia (Section D), and Media Credibility in Malaysia (Section E). Each section consists of 5 items. The Cronbach's Alpha values for these sections range from 0.719 to 0.837, with all values exceeding the commonly accepted threshold of 0.7, indicating that the items within each section consistently measure the intended constructs. The reliability results for all sections are classified as "Acceptable," suggesting that the survey instrument is methodologically sound and suitable for further analysis. This reliability assessment supports the validity of subsequent findings by ensuring that the measurement tool consistently captures respondents' perceptions and attitudes across key thematic areas of the study. The Reliability of Instrument for the Malaysian Public Views on Malaysian and Middle Eastern News Reporting Towards the Israel - Palestine Conflict in Shah Alam, Selangor.

Table 3 below shows the Reliability of the Instrument for the Malaysian public views on Malaysian and Middle Eastern news reporting towards Israel - Palestine Conflict in Shah Alam, Selangor. Among 4 sections (excluding section A Demographic), all sections obtain Acceptable. presents the reliability analysis for various sections of the survey instrument used to assess Malaysian public views on news reporting related to the Israel–Palestine conflict.

Table 3: Summary Table of Reliability Instrument

Section	Item	Cronbach Alpha	N of Items	Reliability Results
Section B	Malaysia PropagandaNews Reporting	0.790	5	Acceptable
Section C	Malaysian Audience Values towards news reporting in Malaysia	0.812	5	Acceptable
Section D	Malaysian audience view towards Middle Eastern news reporting on Malaysia	0.837	5	Acceptable
Section E	Media credibility in Malaysia	0.719	5	Acceptable

4. Results

Based on the study, table 4 shows the hypothesis on The Malaysian Public Views on Malaysian and Middle Eastern News Reporting Towards Israel - Palestinian Conflict. An examination of hypotheses surrounding Malaysian public perspectives on news reporting in Malaysia and the Middle East, with a focus on the Israel-Palestinian conflict. According to the first hypothesis, there is a huge gap in audience trust in propagandist news reporting between the Middle East and Malaysia. In the context of the hypothesis examined, the value obtained $r = 0.412$ refers specifically to the Pearson correlation coefficient. This statistical measure is used to assess the strength and direction of the linear relationship between two variables. Within this study, the correlation coefficient indicates the extent to which exposure to propagandist news reporting from the Middle East is associated with levels of trust among Malaysian audiences. The second hypothesis is, there is a huge disparity in audience attitudes towards propagandist news reporting between the Middle East and Malaysia. The hypothesis gain $r = -0.036$, indicating a modest negative association close to zero. The hypothesis is accepted, although the link is nearly trivial, implying a small change in beliefs.

The third hypothesis is that there is a major difference in audience attitudes towards propagandist news reporting in the Middle East and Malaysia. The hypothesis obtained is -0.120 , which is weak and indicates a negative association. Although the hypothesis is accepted, propagandist news reporting has a weakly negative influence on audience views. The fourth hypothesis is that there is a major difference in Malaysian audience trust in propagandist news reporting in Malaysia. The hypothesis obtained is $r=0.566$, which is a reasonably significant positive association. The hypothesis is supported, indicating that Malaysian propagandist news reporting has a greater favourable influence on audience trust. The fifth

hypothesis is that there is a major difference in Malaysian audience attitudes towards propagandist news reporting in Malaysia. The hypothesis's value is $r=0.790$, indicating a significant positive association. The hypothesis is accepted, showing that Malaysian propagandist news reporting has a significant favourable impact on audience beliefs.

Hypothesis six states that there is a major difference in Malaysian audience attitudes towards propagandist news reporting in Malaysia. The hypothesis gained is $r= -0.114$, indicating a weak negative association. The hypothesis is accepted, but the relationship is weakly negative, suggesting a minimal negative effect on views. The seventh hypothesis holds that there is a major disparity between Malaysian audience trust and media credibility in the Middle East. The hypothesis's value is $r= 0.524$. The hypothesis was accepted, demonstrating a moderately favourable relationship between trust and media credibility. The eighth hypothesis concerns Malaysian audience beliefs and Middle Eastern media credibility. The hypothesis is $r=0.561$, indicating a moderate positive association. There is a moderately positive relationship between Malaysian audience beliefs and perceptions of Middle Eastern media credibility.

Finding out the direction and strength of the correlation coefficient is the only way to figure out how the study's variables are related. There is a moderate positive correlation ($r = 0.468$) between how Malaysian audiences feel about Middle Eastern media and how they rate its credibility. This means that people who think it is more credible tend to have good opinions. There is a strong positive link ($r = 0.701$) between what Malaysian audiences think and how trustworthy Malaysian media is. People who believe in

Malaysian media more are more likely to think it is reliable. When one measure goes up, the other goes down, which is a negative correlation. This means that the two variables are related in a way that is opposite to what you might think. There is a weak, moderate, or strong correlation between the two variables that shows how they are related. A stronger correlation means that the relationship is clearer or stays the same. Researchers can learn about a relationship and how it affects things like media impact, audience trust, and credibility assessments. These ideas say that positive associations make people more likely to trust and believe things that seem credible, while negative associations make things seem less credible and trustworthy. These results are important for media professionals and government agencies that want to build trust and credibility in all types of media.

Based on the study, table 4 shows the hypothesis on The Malaysian Public Views on Malaysian and Middle Eastern News Reporting Towards Israel - Palestinian Conflict. An examination of hypotheses surrounding Malaysian public perspectives on news reporting in Malaysia and the Middle East, with a focus on the Israel-Palestinian conflict.

Table 4: Hypothesis on The Malaysian Public Views on Malaysian and Middle Eastern News Reporting Towards Israel - Palestinian Conflict.

Section	Hypothesis	Pearson Correlation (r)	Status	Relationship
H4	There are significant differences between propaganda news reporting in Malaysia towards Malaysian audience trust.	0.566	Accept	+ (Positive)
H5	There are significant differences between propaganda news reporting in Malaysia towards Malaysian audience belief.	0.790	Accept	+ (Positive)
H6	There are significant differences between propaganda news reporting in Malaysia towards Malaysian audience view.	-0.114	Accept	- (Negative)
H7	There are significant differences between Malaysian audience trust and media credibility in the Middle Eastern.	0.524	Accept	+ (Positive)
H8	There are significant differences between Malaysian audience beliefs and media credibility in the Middle Eastern.	0.561	Accept	+ (Positive)
H9	There are significant differences between Malaysian audience views and media credibility in the Middle Eastern.	0.468	Accept	+ (Positive)
H10	There are significant differences between Malaysian audience trust and media credibility in Malaysia.	0.163	Accept	+ (Positive)

H11	There are significant differences between Malaysian audience beliefs and media credibility in Malaysia.	0.701	Accept	+ (Positive)
H12	There are significant differences between Malaysian audience views and media credibility in Malaysia.	0.548	Accept	+ (Positive)

5. Conclusion

This study investigated the correlations among propaganda news reporting, media credibility, and Malaysian audience perceptions—particularly trust, belief, and attitudes—regarding the coverage of the Israel–Palestinian conflict. The results provide substantial insights into audience understanding and responses to media content. The findings indicate a robust correlation between propaganda news reporting and audience trust and belief, as evidenced by H4 ($r = 0.566$) and H5 ($r = 0.790$). The moderate to strong positive correlations imply that exposure to propaganda-related content may alter individuals' trust and beliefs. The pronounced correlation in H5 indicates that belief formation is significantly affected by the nature and framing of news content, likely due to the persuasive techniques prevalent in propaganda, such as emotional appeal, repetition, and selective information presentation.

On the other hand, the results for H6 show that reporting news in a biased way makes people see things in a bad way ($r = -0.114$). Although the strength of the correlation is weak, it suggests that propaganda does not necessarily lead to favorable audience perspectives. This indicates that Malaysian audiences may exhibit a degree of critical evaluation when forming their views, even if their trust and beliefs are influenced. Such a pattern reflects the possibility that audiences differentiate between accepting information and forming personal viewpoints. Furthermore, the study highlights the significant role of media credibility in shaping audience perceptions. For the Middle Eastern context (H7–H9), all relationships between audience trust, belief, and views with media credibility are positive, with correlation values ranging from 0.468 to 0.561. These results suggest that trustworthy media sources have a moderate impact on individuals' understanding of global matters.

The results suggest that propaganda can shape how much people trust and believe what they see online, but the level of trust people have in the news overall has an even bigger impact on how they interpret and judge information. This study shows that the way news is reported, along with how credible people think the media is, plays a big role in shaping how Malaysians view the Israel–Palestinian conflict. Rather than simply accepting everything they see or hear, Malaysians seem to think critically about the information they come across before forming their own opinions. These results show how important it is to help people become more media literate and to encourage journalists to report the news honestly and fairly.

Ethics Approval and Consent to Participate

The present study has obtained Ethic Approval from Research Ethics Committee Universiti Teknologi MARA, REC approval no: REC/06/2025. All procedures performed in this study involving human participants were conducted in accordance with the ethical

standards of the institutional research committee. Informed consent was obtained from all participants according to the Declaration of Helsinki.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors reported no conflicts of interest for this work and declare that there is no potential conflict of interest with respect to the research, authorship, or publication of this article.

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