

Pathways to Freedom in the Digital Era
The Impact of News Media Framing on Social Movement Perceptions

Student Name: Maria Isabel de Jongh
Student Number: 492147

Supervisor: Dr. Pieter Tuytens
Second reader: Dr. Markus Haverland

International Master Public Management and Public Policy
Erasmus School of Social and Behavioural Sciences
Erasmus University Rotterdam

Master's Thesis
June 2024
Word count: 11650

Pathways to Freedom in the Digital Era
The Impact of News Media Framing on Social Movement Perceptions

ABSTRACT

The digital era has transformed the landscape for social movement organizations (SMOs), amplifying their ability to organize protests, disseminate information, and mobilize global support. Despite this digitized empowerment, traditional news media, as key information providers in society, continue to wield significant influence in shaping public opinion. For this reason, this thesis is interested in the impact of news media framing on public perceptions of social movements. The focus is on the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement during the salient 2023 Israeli-Hamas conflict, marked by entrenched public stances. Similar to other SMOs, the BDS strategically employs framing techniques to advocate for economic and cultural boycotts, financial divestment, and governmental sanctions against Israel. This is done to enforce compliance with international law and reform policies concerning Palestinians. In parallel, news media also engage in framing, often emphasizing specific actors and perspectives. Considering the news media's power to influence opinions and shape perceptions, this thesis examines whether the alignment or misalignment of news frames with those of social movements like the BDS can significantly affect public opinion. Social movement communicators can leverage these insights to design BDS communication strategies that engage Dutch residents more effectively by aligning with media needs. Further, this research addresses a critical gap in current literature by focusing on how news media messages about social movements are received. Through a vignette survey experiment, news articles were manipulated to present either positive or negative frames of the BDS movement to people residing in the Netherlands. Although moderating effects, such as psychological distance and strength of partisanship, on the reception of news media framing were considered, it was found that news media framing significantly shapes public opinion on BDS, often overriding individual partisan biases. Notably, partisanship introduced complexity into this relationship, with framing effects varying across different demographic groups. Hence, contributing to the academic discourse by shedding light on the nuanced yet crucial interplay between news media framing and public perceptions of social movements. As a result, this thesis provides practical insights for SMOs on leveraging news media to influence public opinion and enhance their mobilization efforts, particularly in contexts of salient conflicts.

KEYWORDS: *Social movement organizations (SMOs), Framing, News Media, BDS movement, Vignette survey experiment, Dutch Residents*

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	4
1.1 Academic Relevance	6
1.2 Societal Relevance.....	7
Literature Review.....	9
2.1 News media framing	9
2.2 News media framing as a mobilization tool	10
2.3 Framing contests within news media	10
Theoretical Framework.....	12
3.1 News media framing of social movements	12
3.2 Frames employed by supporters and opponents of the BDS movement.....	13
3.3 Alignment of news media and SMOs framing	13
3.4 Reception theory: message reception in social movements	14
3.4.1 Strength of partisanship and message reception	15
3.4.2 Construal level theory and message reception.....	15
Figure 1. Conceptual Framework.....	18
Research Design.....	19
4.1 Justification of research design.....	19
4.2 Operationalization.....	19
Table 1. Operationalization of main theoretical concepts.....	21
4.3 Methods	22
4.3.1 Vignettes	23
Table 2. Vignette manipulation for positive (BDS alignment) and negative framing (BDS misalignment).....	23
4.4 Reliability and validity	26
4.5 Ethical considerations	27
Results.....	28
5.1 Data.....	28
Table 3. Descriptive statistics of demographics	29
Table 4. Descriptive statistics of BDS opinion ratings per framing group	30
Table 5. Randomization check for all demographic variables.....	31
Figure 2. Actual vs. estimated population required, with sample per framing group	32
First hypothesis testing	33
Table 6. Mann-Whitney U test for framing effects on BDS opinion	33
Second hypothesis testing	33
Table 7. Kruskal-Wallis test for framing effects on BDS opinion different stance groups	33

Third hypothesis testing	35
Table 8. Interaction effect of framing and psychological distance on BDS opinion PROCESS.....	35
Fourth hypothesis testing	36
Table 9. Interaction effect of framing and strength of partisanship on BDS opinion PROCESS	36
Control variables effects	37
Table 10. ANCOVA (Quade's Test)	37
Table 11. Mann-Whitney U test for BDS opinion comparison (control variable: country of birth)	38
Discussion and Conclusion.....	39
6.1 Discussion	39
6.2 Conclusion	41
References.....	44
Appendix	51
Appendix A – Questionnaire material	51
Appendix B – Scatter Plots with a Linear Fit Line (Assumption of Linearity)	57
Appendix C – The Distribution of Scores for Positive and Negative framing.....	59
Appendix D – Power Test Required Sample Size	60
Appendix E – Process Macro Moderation Analyses including Covariates.....	61
Appendix F – SPSS Output Cronbach’s Alpha.....	63
Appendix G – SPSS Output Screenshots of All Tests (Transformed Tables in Text*)	64

Introduction

Social movement organizations (SMOs) play a crucial role in arranging protests, sharing informational content, and mobilizing people globally (Hitchcock, 2016; Lev-On, 2018). The significance of these organizations was particularly evident during the 2023 Israeli-Hamas war. In this conflict, Social Movement Organizations like the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement, a pro-Palestinian group, demonstrated their real-life impact through their framing of events. Framing shapes how information is presented and influences how people interpret and respond to messages (Goffman, 1974). Moreover, as a global nonviolent protest, BDS uses economic and cultural boycotts, financial divestment, and government sanctions to pressure Israel into complying with international law and revising its policies towards Palestinians (Hitchcock, 2016). This is achieved by carefully arranging how others see the issue through specific framing. In November 2023, BDS urged people to boycott McDonald's, alleging its "open support" for the Israeli military. This campaign by BDS led to McDonald's Malaysia suing BDS for damages caused by BDS' information dissemination (Azhar & Paul, 2024). This incident illustrates how the frames employed by BDS movements can influence perspectives of individuals and drive action (to support their cause). According to Darweish and Rigby (2018), for a movement, such as the BDS, to effectively influence policymakers to enact change, it becomes imperative to inform and mobilize the wider society (Darweish & Rigby, 2018).

Similarly to officials and social movements, news media also engages in framing. Instead of being impartial, news media tends to favour certain actors and perspectives over others (Cooper, 2002). A concept that helps clarify important changes between news media and political communication is media logic. Media logic refers to the assumptions and processes for constructing messages to fit the needs of news media (Altheide, 2004). This crucial step in the causal chain can illustrate how actions by social movements prompt news media framing, subsequently shaping public perception. In this context, the alignment (pro-BDS) or misalignment (anti-BDS) of framing with the social movement's message could influence opinions and mobilization, which, in turn, can catalyze policy changes. Previous literature has acknowledged the influential role news media plays in shaping narratives (Bhowmik & Fisher, 2021; Cooper, 2002; Gahan & Pekarek, 2013). However, it has not yet examined how (mis)alignment of these narratives with a movement's message impacts people's opinions. This thesis focuses on evaluating this specific step within the broader causal argument. As a result, by understanding and

adapting to the news media specific needs, social movements can tailor their communication efforts more effectively to reach and engage their communities. By analyzing the alignment between news and BDS frames and the corresponding receptions by readers, this thesis aims to uncover if news media framing, as manifested in language, perspectives, and narratives (Goffman, 1974; Snow et al., 1986), significantly influences perceptions on the BDS movement.

In addition, there is a lack of research on the reception of news media messages about social movements (Yuliarti et al., 2020). This reception entails the examination of how readers are impacted by news media framing by looking at the different options for decoding a message, particularly in the context of social movements. Although perspectives on social movement have been widely voiced, both on and off the web, there is little to no research on how news media framing related to social movements is processed/decoded by their readers (Yuliarti et al., 2020). For this research, an adaptation of Hall's reception theory (1980) is utilized to illustrate how media's role depends on how readers react to news framing, whether by direct adoption, opposition, or taking a neutral stance.

In addressing the reception of BDS movements in the context of salient conflicts, it is important to consider that individuals often have varying levels of emotional engagement which, as stated by Liberman et al. (2007), results in high or low psychological distance. This psychological distance refers to the emotional gap individuals feel from a presented case, leading them to perceive it more abstractly rather than concretely. For this reason, psychological distance could affect how individuals react to framing, making it an important factor in understanding the impact of media framing on public opinion. Additionally, the strength of partisanship can also play a role in moderating this relationship, as the strength of individuals' existing biases can influence their reception and interpretation of framed messages (Slothuus, 2008). Therefore, these factors are essential to consider in answering the research question of this thesis. In order to test whether distinct frames (positive or negative BDS framing) affect readers' opinion about the BDS movements differently, considering the strength of partisanship and psychological distance, this thesis poses the following research question:

Does news framing affect public opinion on social movements (in the context of salient conflicts)?

Through this analysis, this case study approach aims to fill the gap in the literature by shedding light on the nuanced relationship between news media framing and social movement framing, while simultaneously examining news media's effect on audience's opinion of the BDS movement in the context of salient conflicts.

This research will be the first to examine news media framing during the 2023 Israeli-Hamas war, analyzing how the framing of a specific news article reporting on the BDS movement influences the opinions of readers. In order to delve deeper into individuals' reception of social movements in news media, the thesis will employ a vignette survey experiment. This experiment will test whether people's likelihood of supporting or rejecting a social movement or seeing its actions in a more positive or negative light depends on whether news media frames align with BDS frames or not (positive or negative BDS frames). Data has been collected on the opinions on BDS actions and on potential social movement partaking, through this survey experiment. Following the survey's distribution, the data was analyzed and discussed to not only determine the effect of news media framing on BDS opinion but also the potential (moderating) effects of psychological distance and strength of partisan beliefs on the relationship between news media framing and perceptions. In addition, this thesis employs social movement organization (SMO) frames and themes, derived from studies by Moussa (2013), Bhowmik and Fisher (2021), Brown and Mourão (2021), and Hitchcock (2023), to manipulate news articles that are shown to respondents. These studies predominantly focused on the impact of SMO frames on recipients.

1.1 Academic Relevance

The academic relevance of this thesis lies in its exploration of new avenues within social movements communication. Previous research has delved into how framing of social movements by SMOs aim to shape people's perceptions, mobilizing not only consensus among recipients but also prompting action. While these broad theoretical frameworks prompt researchers to analyze the strategic interactions between social movements, civil society, and corporate actors (de Bakker et al., 2013), most studies often neglect the role of news media in employing social movement-related frames (positive or negative framing). Thus, overlooking the important role news media could play in utilizing specific SMO frames that influence people's perspectives and, as a ripple effect, might impact their opinion on these social movements. In the current landscape of more user-driven media, where mobilization can happen online as well as offline, understanding how

news media outlets utilize SMO frames and influence perspectives (Brown and Mourão, 2021), particularly in the context of salient conflicts, is crucial.

As a result, there is a lack of research on the reception of news media messages related to social movements (Yuliarti et al., 2020). This gap in literature leaves us with an incomplete understanding of how news media influences the public reception of these movements. As mentioned before, recipients of SMO frames can significantly impact policymakers through mobilization, thereby increasing the chances for these officials to enact change (Darweish & Rigby, 2018). However, to holistically understand the impact of SMO frames, it is important to consider the role news media plays in employing respective SMO frames and influencing opinions of people. Thus, by considering news media's strong reach and through Hall's reception theory (1980), this thesis will be the first to explore how news media frames related specifically to the BDS movement are processed by readers. The contribution of this research is manifested in its ability to fill the existing gap in literature, offering new insights into the interaction between news media framing and audience reception in the context of social movements.

1.2 Societal Relevance

Besides addressing a gap in academic research, this study holds significant societal relevance by providing practical insights for social movement organizations. It has been widely established that movements, like BDS, have the power to influence government actions through mobilization of audiences. This is exemplified in how activism can sway policymakers to enact change (Darweish & Rigby, 2018; Paffenholz & Spurk, 2006). For this reason, social movement communication has been focused on developing frames that resonate with the public to mobilize support. However, these efforts must contend with elite groups that also manipulate public opinion through contrasting frames (Pleyers, 2020). For instance, empirical evidence suggests that public opinion is vulnerable to news media framing effects (Goffman, 1974; Snow et al., 1986). Examining whether news media significantly impacts perceptions of social movements, in the context of salient conflicts, helps to understand how traditional news media frames shape public opinion of respective social movements. This knowledge can assist social movement communicators in improving outreach by acknowledging the relevance of news media.

More specifically, if news media play an important role in shaping BDS opinion, understanding this news media logic can be useful for effectively leveraging media coverage to

serve the movement. By comprehending which aspects of a story are more likely to be picked up by news outlets and how these elements are framed to capture audience interest, activists can tailor their messages accordingly. In view of this, strategically meeting news media needs enables social movements to potentially gain more media attention, enhance their visibility and foster increased public support (Leong et al., 2015).

Literature Review

This literature review offers an extensive overview of the ongoing debate surrounding the influence of news framing on public opinion, with a particular focus on its role in shaping perceptions on social movements. It summarizes existing knowledge on this topic while also identifying key questions that remain to be addressed through further research.

2.1 News media framing

Goffman's (1974) framing theory posits that the way in which information is presented, or "framed", affects how people interpret and respond to it. In this manner, media could frame situations in a specific way, which in turn can affect how the general public perceives them (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007). Thus, the way in which news articles' contents are presented to the public, including the topics, sources, and language utilized, is referred to as news media framing (Chong & Druckman, 2007).

Similarly, the agenda-setting theory emphasizes the power that media has to select and shape the topics that the public perceives as being important (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007). Notably, Goffman's framing theory is thought to be "second-level agenda-setting" because frames can significantly affect how people perceive the relative importance of different components of a problem (Kim et al, 2002). Thus, an individual can perceive one component of the BDS movement as more important than the other depending on the agenda that has been set by, for example, news outlets.

Correspondingly, the framing theory, pinpointed by Entman (1993), puts forward that media goes beyond setting an agenda for public discourse. More specifically, the frameworks employed by the media tend to not only influence what people think about but also how they think about it (Entman, 1993). In this manner, the framing utilized in media selects and highlights certain aspects of an issue while underplaying or neglecting others (Goffman, 1974). Within the BDS movement context, news media may concentrate on the benefits of certain social movements, such as protecting human rights of people in Gaza, or it may highlight its negative impacts, such as antisemitism.

2.2 News media framing as a mobilization tool

Cooper (2002) introduces news media framing as a mobilization tool for social movements, crucial for communicating with the broader public. In order to influence policymakers, movements must mobilize the wider society. This makes news media attention pivotal for mobilization. For this reason, social movements must adapt strategies to align with news media needs. Moreover, both the extent and the content of media coverage influence whether the public develops sympathy for the movement and considers getting involved (Cooper, 2002). For these reasons, media are generally one of the main targets of movements' efforts, and the need to attract news media attention often shapes the social movement's strategy.

Additionally, considering that the media are accustomed to covering established political actors, movements must adapt their strategies to serve the news needs of the media to successfully bring forward their message (Cooper, 2002). Moreover, Brown and Mourão (2021) state that news containing the movement's grievances and social critiques brings protests legitimacy, and this legitimization is the key to increasing public support. In this manner, the news media portrayal of social movements can affect public perception, impacting the movement's legitimacy and public support. Understanding these portrayals helps activism initiatives adjust their framing to achieve desired outcomes and avoid adverse consequences associated with particular frames.

2.3 Framing contests within news media

Social movements, like other political actors, engage in a relentless competition over the interpretation of meaning, aiming to reshape public policy (Pleyers, 2020). This competition is integrated in what is conceptualized as "framing contests", wherein these movements must effectively pit against political authorities to mobilize widespread protest (Cooper, 2002). According to Pleyers (2020), the essence of framing lies in activists' attempts to sway public perceptions regarding the significance of issues, viable solutions, and the rationale behind mobilization efforts. These framing contests comprise four sub-discourses: official, challenger (such as social movement), expert, and general audience media (news media) (Cooper, 2002).

In this context, congruence between challenger and general audience media is seen as a facilitator of movement mobilization, while divergence hinders the process. Thus, as framing is dynamic and subject to change over time, it emerges as a volatile component significantly impacting political opportunities (Cooper, 2002; Gahan & Pekarek, 2013). Hence, the fluctuation

in congruence between news media and SMO framing provides crucial insights into the varying capacities for mobilization over time. For instance, the more aligned the news media framing is with the discourse being disseminated by the social movement, the more power to mobilize audiences the movement possesses.

Theoretical Framework

This theoretical framework first examines the different frames employed by news media and by BDS supporters and opponents. Further, it identifies which framing is used by news media and sheds light on BDS frames to manipulate the vignettes presented to respondents. It also enables us to examine how news media and SMOs construct certain images of the BDS movement and in which ways the (mis)alignment of these frameworks can impact respondents' perception of the movement in question.

3.1 News media framing of social movements

Three main news media frames (negative, positive and neutral) on social movements were identified, by combining the research of Moussa (2013), Bhowmik and Fisher, (2021) and Brown and Mourão (2021), that hold relevance for this thesis. Firstly, the *protest paradigm* (negative) framing delegitimizes collective action with frames emphasizing sensational or disruptive actions. This frame oversimplifies event coverage, magnifying sensational aspects and often portraying “violence” as a threat, sometimes at the expense of the social cause or movement (Brown & Mourão, 2021).

In contrast to the *protest paradigm* (negative framing), *SMO frames* (positive framing) illustrate the benefits of collective action and social movement. Furthermore, Moussa's research (2013) identifies three essential tasks for the *SMO frames*: diagnostic framing (identification of the problem and attribution of blame), prognostic framing (proposed solutions), and motivational framing (reasons for protest action and support). For this research, the focus will be on *SMO frames* that contain the abovementioned tasks.

Thirdly, *peace journalism* (neutral framing) is a specialized approach to conflict reporting that involves providing historical context, presenting diverse voices impartially, and incorporating conflict resolution considerations in media coverage (Bhowmik and Fisher, 2021). It aims to depolarize, by presenting the nuances of all sides, and deescalate, by highlighting peace and conflict resolution efforts, thus fostering a commitment to all actual and potential victims rather than favoring one side. However, this thesis will focus solely on the effects of positive (alignment with SMO frames) and negative (misalignment with SMO frames; *protest paradigm*) framing on the BDS opinion of recipients.

3.2 Frames employed by supporters and opponents of the BDS movement

Hitchcock's research (2023) provides seven illustrations of frame implications that clarify the triggered demands regarding the BDS movement. Firstly, the frame implication regarding 1) *apartheid*, characterizing certain Israeli policies as comparable to the historical apartheid system in South Africa, with a focus on issues of discrimination, segregation, and control over territories, is mentioned. Three additional frame implications are identified: 2) *settler colonialism* - suggesting that the settlement of Jewish communities are seen as displacing and marginalizing the Palestinian population; 3) *ethnic cleansing* - putting forward that Israel has been involved in the forced removal of Palestinians from their homes and land; and 4) *refugee rights* - urging on the principle that Palestinian refugees, prohibited to return to Israel, have the inherent right to return to their homes and properties. As a fifth indication, a frame implication that prompts the need to consider 5) *intersectionality*, by proposing the interconnectedness of different forms of oppression and discrimination, is stated. Additionally, the 6) *joint struggles* frame is also discussed, referring to the importance of solidarity and collaboration among different groups fighting against common sources of oppression. All the aforementioned are in alignment with *SMO frames* and illustrate the BDS movement in a positive light. In contrast, Hitchcock (2023) notes the negative frame implication that encompasses 7) *counterframes*, including anti-BDS counterframing and the pro-Israel charge that the BDS movement is antisemitic (*protest paradigm*).

Similarly, for this thesis, Moussa's framework (2013) of SMO framing will be combined with the frame implications presented by Hitchcock (2023). These frame implications will be used for manipulating the vignettes (positive or negative frame) that will be shown to respondents. Additionally, utilizing vignettes is a highly effective approach for investigating individuals' opinions, as vignettes offer a realistic portrayal of real-world scenarios (Hughes & Huby, 2004). In this manner, emphasizing ideas and actionable aspects of complex issues makes it possible to determine how the public forms an opinion as consequence of being exposed to specific frames (Hansen, 2020).

3.3 Alignment of news media and SMOs framing

Drawing upon established literature, it is widely recognized that the congruence between media and movement framing enhances the empirical credibility and resonance of movement frames (Cooper, 2002). In the realm of social movements, this thesis will analyze the process of frame

alignment/congruence, which refers to the connection between news media interpretive frameworks and those of SMOs to determine its impact on public opinion. Therefore, Carragee and Roefs' congruence theory (2004) will be integrated with Hitchcock's counter-framing theory (2023), categorizing news media framing into two main categories: *frame alignment* (positive framing) and *frame misalignment* (negative framing). By utilizing these theories, we will examine how such alignment or misalignment influences how readers form opinions on the issue at hand.

Nevertheless, Stern (2018) demonstrates how various people may be affected differently by the same frame. This also is because not everyone values frames equally. Frames that are personally relevant, emotionally charged or align with pre-existing beliefs may have a stronger impact on perceptions and decision making (Kim & Cameron, 2011; Stern, 2018). More specifically, emotions have the power to serve as a framing mechanism, wherein consistent association of specific emotions with certain ideas or events influences the way we understand and react to those events (Kim & Cameron, 2011). Therefore, understanding the background of readers and how involved they are in the matter is crucial in determining how frames might affect them. This is because various groups with distinct prominent emotions may be affected very differently by the same frame. By considering individuals' diverse backgrounds, we can better understand how frames might influence specific audiences (Kim & Cameron, 2011). In the next section, the different ways in which readers can respond to these different framing strategies (alignment and misalignment) will be discussed.

3.4 Reception theory: message reception in social movements

Yuliarti et al. (2020) explore the process of message reception by employing Hall's encoding/decoding model, particularly in the decoding phase, highlighting three forms of audience reception. This model is utilized to examine to what extent audiences take over or challenge the messages found in news media. The three decoding options involve: (1) operating within the dominant or hegemonic code, where the audience directly approves the presented media content and fully embraces its ideology without any rejection; (2) applying a negotiable code, wherein the audience blends their interpretation with personal social experiences, acting between adaptation and opposition to media messages; (3) substituting an oppositional code, occurring when the audience opposes the presented representation in a manner different from the offered reading.

While Yuliarti et al.'s (2020) interpretation will be fully adopted for the first dominant code, where the audience fully accepts the message, and for the last oppositional code, where the audience completely rejects the message, an adaptation of Hall et al.'s (1980) framework will be employed for the negotiable code. As a replacement for the negotiable code, recipients can react with a mix of acceptance and rejection, thereby understanding the text but maintaining a neutral stance due to differing opinions on certain parts. Yuliarti's research (2020) emphasizes the significance of these decoding options in understanding how audiences engage with media messages, particularly in the context of social movements. Hence, the aforementioned adapted version of this decoding model will be utilized in this thesis to analyze how readers accept, remain neutral or reject narratives on the BDS movement.

3.4.1 Strength of partisanship and message reception

According to Slothuus (2008), logical processes of message reception depend on who the receiver of the frame is. Moreover, the stronger people feel about the side they have chosen the less of an effect a frame will have on their beliefs (Slothuus, 2008). In other words, the more partisan you are, regardless of the side, the less likely the frame will affect you to sway your opinion to a different one. For this reason, it is expected that the effect of framing is stronger or weaker, depending on the strength of partisanship as a moderating variable (e.g. being strongly partisan by being very sympathetic to the Palestinian or Israeli cause). This phenomenon will be conceptualized as the strength of partisanship, where citizens use partisanship to filter political information and illustrate the strength of their opinion direction (ranging from strongly pro-Palestinian to strongly pro-Israeli). This will be considered when applying the adaptation of Hall's decoding model (1980) to analyze how respondents decode the frames related to BDS (acceptance, neutral stance or rejection). In this case, it is expected that the effect of framing is stronger on individuals with weaker partisan beliefs than on those with stronger partisan beliefs, regardless of the side they prefer. As a result, individuals with stronger partisan beliefs (regardless of the side) would be less affected by framing.

3.4.2 Construal level theory and message reception

The concept of psychological distance is defined within the Construal Level Theory (CLT), illustrating how psychological distance influences individuals' thoughts and behavior (Trope et al. 2007). This theory suggests that people are inclined to think abstractly about psychologically distal

objects or events, and in concrete ways about psychologically close targets (Lucke & Koenigstorfer, 2018). According to the CLT, perceived psychological distance is a central moderator of human opinions. When events are perceived as psychologically distant, they are represented in a fundamentally different way than when they are perceived as psychologically close. Therefore, when individuals feel emotionally distant from a presented case and perceive it more abstractly than concretely, it is easier to sway their opinions on these issues (Liberman et al. 2007).

Moreover, in the case of psychological distance, a high construal mindset is used, while a low construal mindset is used in instances of psychological closeness. This concept determines closeness based on the emotional impact of a conflict on individuals and the extent to which they feel disconnected from the issue (Liberman et al. 2007). It offers a critical perspective on the design of communication strategies for social movements, particularly when addressing issues that may seem psychologically distant to some, such as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Thus, incorporating CLT into the discussion sheds light on how psychological distance can influence the impact of framing (McDonald et al., 2014; Anspach & Draguljić, 2019). In this case, it is expected that the closer an individual feels emotionally and the more connected they are to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the weaker the effect of a frame on their point of view on the BDS movement compared to an individual who feels psychologically more distant. This reasoning is grounded in the principle that framing will have more effect on those who are psychologically distant because there is more scope to sway their opinions (Liberman et al., 2007; Trope & Liberman, 2010). Conversely, the closer individuals feel to the conflict, the harder it is to manipulate their views with a frame. Therefore, the hypothesis posits that individuals who feel psychologically distant from the conflict are more susceptible to the influence of framing, while those who feel psychologically close are less likely to be swayed by framing due to their established viewpoints.

In this manner, it will be examined whether news framing successfully shapes public opinion on the BDS movement. Based on previous literature, there are sufficient reasons to expect that news media framing plays a crucial role in shaping people's opinion. However, this argument hinges on the assumption that the framing of the newspaper is adopted by its readers, a hypothesis that remains uncertain. Therefore, the thesis aims to test whether the (mis)alignment framing of the newspaper with SMO frames translates into differing views or perceptions of the readers. This

involves assessing whether readers oppose it, take it over (adopt), or maintain a neutral stance. Thus, based on Carragee and Roef's congruence theory (2004), the expectation is that the effect of framing alignment between news media and SMO frames on readers opinion of social movements (positive framing of the BDS movement) ultimately relies on people accepting the message (accepting the code and having a positive view on the BDS movement). To examine this effect, two moderating variables, psychological distance and strength of partisan beliefs, will be considered to moderate the influence of framing on opinions regarding the BDS movement. Hence, the following hypotheses are derived for this thesis:

Hypothesis 1a (strong framing effect): Exposure to positive framing results in positive opinions, irrespective of partisanship.

Hypothesis 1b (strong framing effect): Exposure to negative framing results in negative opinions, irrespective of partisanship.

Hypothesis 2a (strong framing effect per group): Exposure to negative framing results in lower support (more negative opinion) – as compared to exposure to positive framing – for those who have pro-Palestinian partisanship.

Hypothesis 2b (strong framing effect per group): Exposure to positive framing results in higher support (more positive opinion) – as compared to exposure to negative framing – for those who have pro-Israel partisanship.

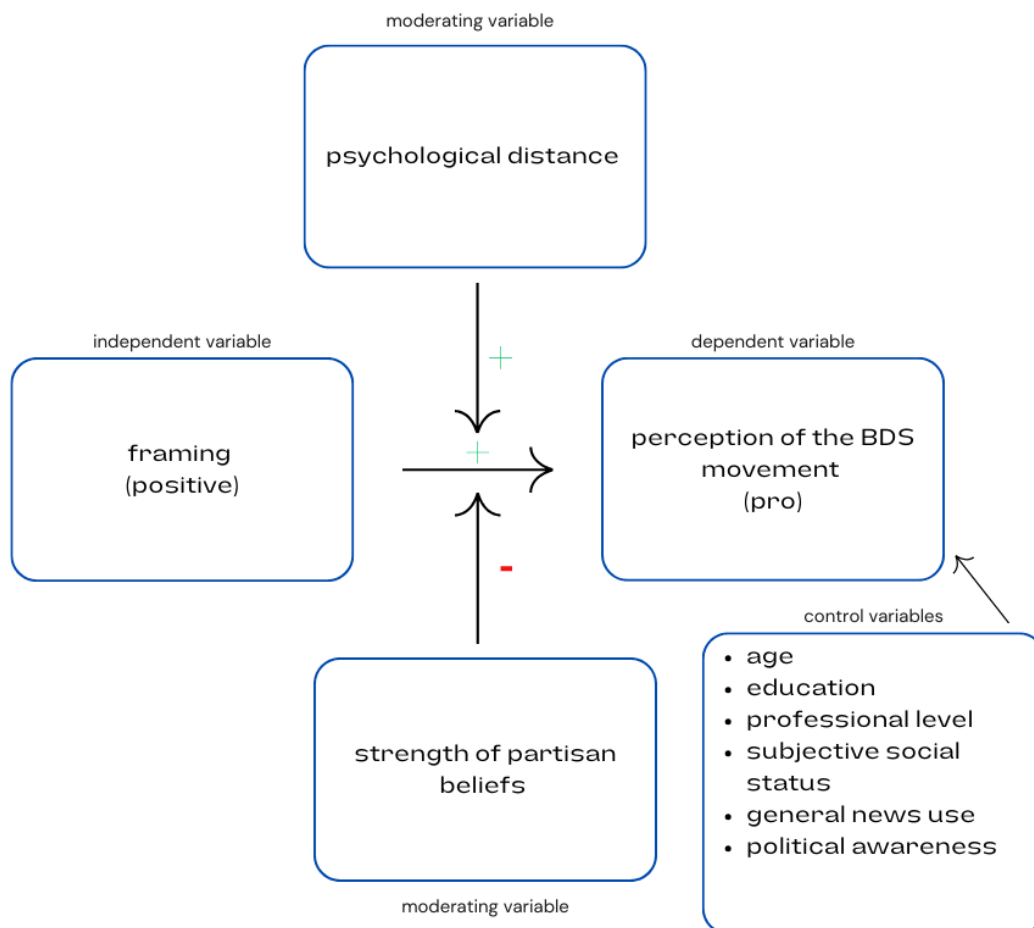
Hypothesis 2c (strong framing effect per group): Exposure to positive framing results in higher support (more positive opinion) – as compared to exposure to negative framing – for those who have a neutral stance.

Hypothesis 3 (psychological distance effect): Individuals who are psychologically distant from the conflict are more likely to be swayed by framing effects, whether positive or negative.

Hypothesis 4 (partisan resistance to framing): Individuals with strong partisanship are less likely to be affected by framing effects, whether positive or negative, due to their established viewpoints.

To answer these questions, short sketches ("vignettes") of a news article will be manipulated and included in survey questionnaires. This is done to determine how respondents accept, remain neutral towards, or reject a message in accordance with the adaptation of Hall's decoding model (1980). The methods employed for this research will be further explained in the next chapter.

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework



Research Design

This section outlines the research design and methodology for this thesis. It starts with a discussion and justification of the design chosen for the analysis. Subsequently, it introduces and operationalizes the dependent and independent variables. This is followed by a description of the data collection process and an explanation of the research population. Lastly, it reviews the reliability and validity of the study and addresses the ethical considerations.

4.1 Justification of research design

Survey experiments provide valuable means to evaluate the impact of specific scenarios (vignettes) on dependent variables like opinions and intentions (Aguinis & Bradley, 2014). This methodology is particularly suitable for this research, which focuses on the opinion of the BDS movement as a key dependent variable. Furthermore, the unique blend of survey and experimental design in survey experiments equips them with advantages such as generalizability, valid causal inference, and both external and internal validity (Aguinis & Bradley, 2014). Aguinis and Bradley (2014) delineate optimal practices for designing and executing experimental vignette methodology studies.

Traditionally, experiments face a trade-off between prioritizing internal validity over external validity, or vice versa, when analyzing causal relationships (Aguinis & Bradley, 2014). However, survey experiments offer a way to navigate these challenges. By presenting respondents with vignettes to assess their opinions while keeping the natural context intact and manipulating independent variables, survey experiments enhance both internal and external validity (Aguinis & Bradley, 2014). Moreover, this approach proves especially beneficial when there is a need to manipulate independent variables to establish causal relationships.

4.2 Operationalization

The following section gives an extensive account of the operationalization of the dependent, independent and moderating variables.

Firstly, the independent variable in this study is the framing of news media articles, which will be varied across vignettes to represent different perspectives on the BDS movement. Framing scenarios will include pro-BDS (alignment) and anti-BDS (misalignment), allowing for a

comprehensive analysis of framing effects. Second, the dependent variable encompassing recipients' overall BDS opinion was measured using a composite score from three 5-point likert scale questions. This computed variable captures recipients' opinion toward how justified they find the BDS movement, the likelihood of supporting the movement and their self-assessed alignment with the movement on the scale. These numeric rating scales are used to prompt participants to express their opinions on whether they see these actions as acceptable forms of activism or unjustifiable actions. As mentioned above, the answers are operationalized into a 5-point likert scale (likert scale options: very unlikely, unlikely, somewhat likely (possible), likely, very likely). This scale's efficiency in questionnaires has been proven and specifically employed by Sen et al. (2001) to assess boycott intentions of consumers.

Thirdly, at the beginning of the survey, the strength of partisan beliefs is assessed by measuring the perceived strength of partisan opinions regarding the Israel-Palestine conflict on a 5-point numeric rating scale. Lastly, to test the 4th hypothesis on the implications of psychological distance on the effects of framing on BDS perception, a 6-point numeric rating scale is used. Participants rate how close or distant they feel to the Israel-Palestine situation, considering both emotional impact and their sense of disconnection from the issue.

All these variables are measured using validated scales and survey questions designed to capture nuanced responses. Through the lens of reception theory, participants' responses will be analyzed to determine whether they adopt, oppose, or remain neutral toward the frames presented to them. As a result, this approach examines how the alignment of news media frames with BDS frames (whether there is congruence or not) affects the opinion of participants. Thereby providing insights into how different new media framing conditions influence audience interpretations and responses in the context of the BDS movement.

Table 1. Operationalization of main theoretical concepts

Theoretical concept	Variable values	Indicators
Congruence theory (Carragee & Roefs, 2004)	Frame alignment BDS	Positive framing (alignment with SMO frames)
	Frame misalignment BDS	Negative framing (misalignment with SMO frames; <i>protest paradigm</i>)
Reception theory (decoding model) (Hall, 1980)	Adopt code	Text-acceptance of frame (when exposed to positive frame, positive BDS opinion; when exposed to negative frame, negative BDS opinion)
	Neutral stance	Remain neutral towards text
	Oppose code	Text-oppositional reading of frame (when exposed to positive frame, negative BDS opinion; when exposed to negative frame, positive BDS opinion)
Construal level theory (psychological distance)	Psychological closeness	The degree to which respondents feel psychologically close to the issue
	Psychological distance	The degree to which respondents feel psychologically distant from the issue

Strength of partisanship	Neutral/Weak	The degree to which respondents' partisanship is neutral/weak
	Strong	The degree to which respondents' partisanship is strong

4.3 Methods

To realize this research, an online survey was designed through Qualtrics and shared with a wide range of participants. The survey was conducted using a snowball sampling technique to ensure a wide range of opinions across various age groups. Initially, individuals from diverse age brackets within my social circle were approached. These participants were then encouraged to extend the survey to their networks. This survey included questions to capture participants' prior knowledge and level of exposure to the BDS movement and the Israel-Palestine conflict. Further, it encompassed a manipulated news article to collect participants' opinions on the BDS movement. More specifically, two different versions of the news article reporting on the BDS movement, one framing the event positively and one negatively, were included. Each respondent was exposed to one of these different versions. These surveys were sent to a sufficiently large group to ensure enough variation in the population, enabling the measurement of framing effects.

In summary, participants first complete a pre-test questionnaire containing demographic information and their involvement with the issue. Subsequently, participants viewed a news article with a manipulated frame, either aligned or misaligned with the BDS frame. After reading the stimuli, participants will complete the posttest questionnaire including their position on the issue. Refer to Appendix A for the questionnaire material. These quantitative methods have been chosen as they are the most suitable to perform an analysis of survey-collected data. The statistics software SPSS was utilized to examine the data. More specifically, to compare the BDS opinion-related answers to different framings, non-parametric tests are employed due to the non-normal distribution of the data. Furthermore, to test the moderating variables, strength of partisan beliefs and psychological distance, non-parametric tests through macro-PROCESS on SPSS have been carried out and interpreted.

4.3.1 Vignettes

The vignettes were constructed based on an article, that reported on the BDS movement and was published by the Spanish radio and news network “Cadena SER” (Cadena SER, 2023), which has been reformulated and joined with an introduction. These manipulated vignettes were purposefully not translated into Dutch to reach a broader audience within the Netherlands, including both native Dutch speakers and international residents. It was anticipated that this decision would not significantly limit the participation of native Dutch individuals, as many Dutch people are fluent in English (van Oostendorp, 2012). The vignette manipulation for anti-BDS (misalignment) and pro-BDS framing (alignment) can be found below in Table 2.

The vignettes have an authentic and informational aspect and are formulated with particular care for readability and text-comprehension, to ensure their effectiveness in framing effects. To enhance experimental credibility, only frames reporting on real-life events were utilized aligning with the expectation that news channels primarily serve to spread impartial information (Lachapelle et al., 2014). This was guaranteed by, first, making both vignettes of the same length, then, using the abovementioned news article as basis and followed, by the framing of BDS actions. Beyond being of similar lengths, the framing conditions both share the same reference point of the BDS event described in the news article.

Table 2. Vignette manipulation for positive (BDS alignment) and negative framing (BDS misalignment)

Basis of vignette: News article about BDS movement	Negative framing	Positive framing
Over a thousand people rallied in Valencia to support Palestine, calling for an end to Israeli occupation and bombings, and advocating for a boycott against what they deem as	“A divisive demonstration...” “...sparking controversy with its slogans.” “Throughout the event, extreme measures such as an	“An empowering demonstration...” “...bringing together various voices in solidarity with Palestine.”

Israeli apartheid in Gaza and throughout Palestine. The demonstration, organized by BDS País Valencia, also denounced the Spanish government and the European Union's alleged complicity, emphasizing the need for international action to address the ongoing conflict.	arms embargo and the rupture of diplomatic and trade relations were demanded, causing concern in various sectors. Many have questioned the legitimacy of these demands, arguing that such actions could exacerbate the conflict rather than promote a peaceful solution. BDS País Valencia has been criticized for its radical approach and alleged association with extremist movements. Its calls for boycott and inflammatory rhetoric have divided Valencian society, with some groups expressing disagreement with the tactics used by the organization.” “...often leading to acts associated to antisemitism.” “...the demonstration has highlighted the deep divisions within Valencian society on this delicate issue and raised questions about the role of boycott activism in resolving	“The organizers have highlighted the importance of this movement...” “In an effort to broaden the reach of the demonstration, various organizations and groups have joined the cause, highlighting the need to end decades of colonialism, racism, and apartheid in the region. The solidarity expressed on the streets of Valencia is a reminder of the importance of collective action in the struggle for justice and human rights in Palestine.”
---	--	--

	the conflict between Israel and Palestine.”	
	Anti-BDS frames (misalignment)	Pro-BDS frames (alignment)
	Antisemitism claims, Counterframes (anti-BDS) (; protest paradigm)	Settler colonialism, Ethnic cleansing, Joint struggles frame, Human rights (refugee rights) frame and Intersectionality (; SMO frames)

Furthermore, utilizing vignettes proves to be an effective method for examining individuals' implicit behaviors, values, and assessments, as vignettes provide a realistic depiction of the real world (Hughes & Huby, 2004). Regarding the experimental design, it is a between-subject design. In this manner, responses to a vignette, framed in one of two different manners (positive and negative) will be compared across the group of respondents. While holding the protest narrative constant, subjects were randomly assigned one of two news frames as part of the experimental treatment. Subsequently, subjects were prompted to express their agreement levels regarding the BDS movements and protests for Gaza. In addition, balance tests were executed to validate the randomization process, ensuring that any observed disparities in perceptions of protests for Palestine stemmed from randomly assigned treatments rather than inherent differences in group composition. This assurance was established through the random allocation of manipulated articles (vignettes) to respondents which was ensured through a randomization check.

4.4 Reliability and validity

When conducting survey experiments it is crucial to ensure the reliability and validity of measurements to uphold the credibility of findings. Moreover, reliability refers to the consistency or stability of measurement tools, while validity concerns the extent to which the tools measure what they are intended to measure (Hajjar, 2018).

To ensure the reliability of the tests used in this research, several key assumptions were verified. The normality of the data was assessed, confirming the need for non-parametric tests. Besides, randomization checks validated the unbiased distribution of treatment conditions. The assumptions for the Kruskal-Wallis H test and Mann-Whitney U test were met, and a power analysis confirmed adequate sample size for detecting significant effects. Lastly, linearity between the dependent variable (BDS opinion) and predictors was confirmed through scatterplots. All these steps collectively enhance the reliability of the analysis by ensuring the use of appropriate tests and accurate interpretation of results. Apart from this, in this research, the dependent variable encompasses recipients' opinions on the BDS. The reliability of the three questions used to measure opinions on the BDS movement were evaluated using Cronbach's α , resulting in a coefficient of 0.902. This high value indicates a strong internal consistency, meaning the items consistently measure the same underlying construct (participants' opinions on the BDS movement). The Cronbach's α calculation retrieved from SPSS is provided in Appendix F.

An important strength of conducting a vignette survey experiment is the strong internal and external validity of the study (Aguinis & Bradley, 2014). Moreover, the framing manipulation in vignettes was designed based on a factual news article to ensure ecological validity and alignment with real-world scenarios (Lachapelle et al., 2014). Besides, content validity was ensured by using established scales from previous research to measure BDS opinions (Sen et al., 2001). Following, construct validity was supported through the operationalization of variables such as psychological distance and strength of partisanship, which align with theoretical frameworks (e.g., construal level theory for psychological distance). By using validated scales and established theoretical concepts, the study aimed to accurately capture respondents' opinions toward BDS in relation to news media framing.

4.5 Ethical considerations

During the questionnaire, participants were not informed about the survey's true nature to ensure the validity of the framing effects. However, no unethical deception took place. This was established by ensuring that the misleading elements did not affect participants' well-being or their decision to participate, given the sensitivity of the conflict. The respondents were informed about the average time needed to complete the survey. They were guaranteed the confidentiality of their answers and assured that their data would be stored only for a limited time. Additionally, they were given the option to withdraw their participation at any point if desired. Once the questionnaire was over, a statement revealed the true purpose of the survey to the participants, namely, to explore the relationship between BDS news media framing, strength of partisan beliefs, psychological distance and BDS opinion. To ensure the respect of both ethical and GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation), this research studies the BDS perceptions of adults only.

Results

5.1 Data

Initially, I personally messaged around 300 individuals through Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp. Thereby, encompassing my social circle, former colleagues from the Municipality of Rotterdam and business owners in Amsterdam. Besides this, reaching the pro-Palestinian audience was facilitated by having more acquaintances with such views, including fellow university students. Additionally, acquaintances distributed the survey to their work colleagues, reaching 130 potential respondents in Dutch insurance companies, financial holding companies and universities of applied sciences.

Furthermore, closer acquaintances provided 136 responses, while the organization StandWithUs NL and the Liberal Jewish Community of Utrecht contributed to approximately 60 responses. Through other contacts the survey circled in synagogue's and a Christian church's group chat, reaching approximately 120 individuals. Since the Dutch population consists of a large Jewish population, this facilitated acquiring a balanced sample. Nonetheless, this support is not limited to Jews but also includes religious communities who view Israel as the promised land, despite potential consequences such as war. In addition to these persistent pro-Israeli beliefs, there is also substantial support for Palestine within the Dutch population, as evidenced by widespread protests. This diversity in viewpoints makes the Dutch population a suitable sample, ensuring an equal representation of both pro-Israeli, pro-Palestinian and neutral respondents. Moreover, a particular emphasis was put on engaging older age groups who could offer unique perspectives by proactively seeking out older relatives and acquaintances requesting them to distribute the survey to their social circles. This assisted in expanding the overall reach within this age demographic. Overall, this sampling approach deliberately considered age categories, professional levels, educational backgrounds, political awareness and general news use as control variables, aiming to achieve a comprehensive and varied dataset.

In summary, the survey was sent out to over 730 people residing in the Netherlands, including the cities of Rotterdam, Amsterdam, Utrecht, Maastricht, Wageningen, and Groningen, with a response rate of 29%. The data collection period took place from the 29th of April 2024 until the 18th of May 2024. I started with 247 responses recorded at the end of the survey collection period. As part of the data cleaning process, incomplete participations as well as subjects with total

survey durations under 4 minutes or above 100 minutes (about 1 and a half hours) have been removed, to exclude both too swift and inactive respondents. First, 6 participants are removed from being too swift and 27 are removed due to survey incompleteness. Beyond the efficacy of data selection, asking demographic questions at the beginning of the survey allows for more respondent engagement, as they are familiar with these questions, they become more comfortable and likely to finish the survey (compared to asking them at the end and obtaining inconsistent answers due to loss of motivation or attention). After the data cleaning process, 214 out of the 247 recorded responses are validated. Before conducting analyses, a closer look should be given to the sample population of this study. The mean age of the subjects studied is about 38 years old. The sample population consists of 214 respondents residing in the Netherlands. Among them, 57% are native Dutch, while 43% are non-native Dutch residents. Regarding their stance on the Israel-Palestine issue, 29% are in favor of Israel, 35% support Palestine, and the remaining 36% maintain a neutral stance.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics of demographics

Variable	Mean	Obs.
<u>Age</u>		
	2.59 (38 years)	214
Variable	Percentage	Obs.
<u>Country of birth</u>		
Non-native Dutch	0.43	93
Native Dutch	0.57	121
Variable	Percentage	Obs.
<u>Stance on the conflict</u>		
Pro-Israel	0.29	61
Pro-Palestine	0.35	75
Neutral	0.36	78

Table 4. Descriptive statistics of BDS opinion ratings per framing group

Variable	Obs.	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Positive_O	114	2.77	0.522	1	5
Negative_O	100	2.58	0.498	1	5

The letter “O” in each variable refers to the BDS opinion linked to each framing condition.

In this section, the reliability of the analysis is ensured by examining several key aspects of the data and methodology. First, the normality of the data is assessed, followed by a randomization check, and verification of the assumptions necessary for using the Mann-Whitney U test. Finally, a power analysis is conducted to confirm that the sample size is sufficient to detect statistically significant effects. As aforementioned, this thorough approach is designed to validate the methodology and support the reliability of the findings.

To begin, a Shapiro-Wilk test to assess the normality of the data for all dependent and control variables was conducted. The results indicated that all p-values were less than 0.001, signifying that the data significantly deviated from normality. To address this, I attempted various transformations, including logarithmic, square root, inversion, and Box-Cox transformations. Despite these efforts, the p-values remained less than 0.001. Consequently, the decision was made to proceed with non-parametric tests.

In order to assess the success of the randomization process, Mann-Whitney U tests were conducted to compare the distribution of demographic variables between the two framing groups. If the p-value is greater than 0.05, it indicates no significant difference between the groups for that demographic variable, suggesting successful randomization. The P-values for country of birth, age group, educational degree, subjective social status, familiarity with the topic (political awareness) and general news use are 0.90, 0.44, 0.89, 0.96, 0.24, 0.38. Since all p-values are above the 0.05 statistical significance level, this suggests that the framing groups are comparable with respect to demographic variables, it can be concluded that the randomization process has been successful. This adapted randomization check using Mann-Whitney U tests ensures the comparability of groups without assuming normality of the data, suitable for non-parametric tests.

Table 5. Randomization check for all demographic variables

Variable	Obs.	Mean	Obs.	Mean	Mann-Whitney U	Z	Sig.
Country of birth	100	107.99	114	107.07	5651.000	-0.126	0.900
Age	100	110.89	114	104.53	5361.000	-0.770	0.441
Educational degree	100	106.92	114	108.01	5642.000	-0.136	0.891
Subjective social status	100	107.73	114	107.3	5677.000	-0.053	0.958
Familiarity with the topic	100	112.64	114	103.00	5186.500	-1.184	0.236
General news use	100	111.38	114	104.10	5312.500	-0.887	0.375

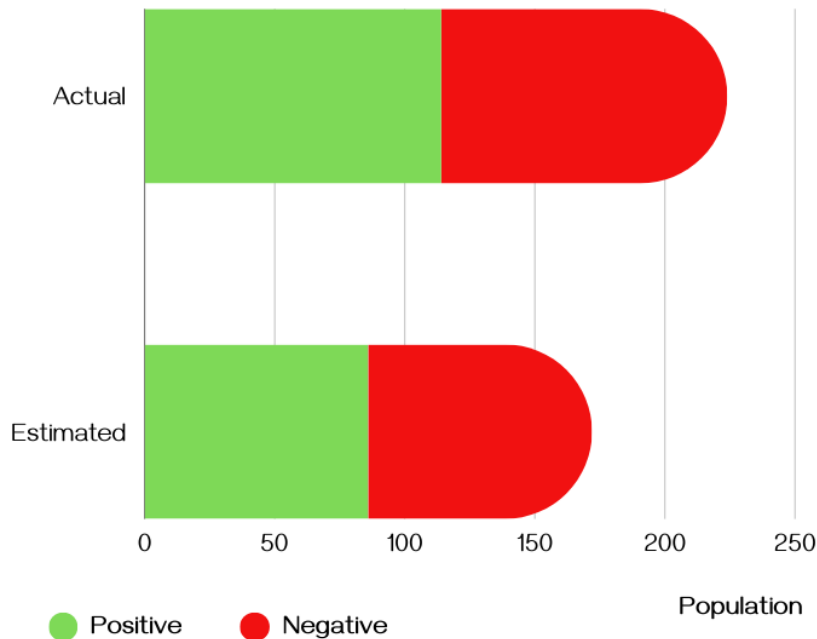
Following, when choosing to analyze hypothesis data using a Mann-Whitney U test (or a Kruskal-Wallis H), it is essential to ensure that your data meets the four assumptions required for the test to yield a valid result. Firstly, the dependent variable (opinion) should be measured at the ordinal or continuous level. In this case, it is an ordinal variable, including likert items (ranging from against BDS to pro-BDS). Secondly, the independent variable should consist of two categorical, independent groups. In this instance, the independent variable meets this criterion as it includes framing (two groups: positive or negative). Thirdly, the independence of observations must be ensured, meaning there is no relationship between observations within or between groups. Each group must have different participants, with no individual appearing in more than one group. To test this assumption in SPSS, I identified and removed any duplicate cases from the dataset. The

dataset consists of 214 valid cases, all of which are unique with no missing data. Therefore, the assumption of independence of observations for the Mann-Whitney U test has been met.

Besides, a Mann-Whitney U test can be used when two variables are not normally distributed. However, to interpret the results correctly, it must be determined whether the two distributions (e.g., the distribution of scores for positive and negative framing) have the same shape. Considering the similar shape of the two distributions, a Mann-Whitney U test can be employed to compare the medians of the dependent variable (e.g., opinion) for the two groups (e.g., positive and negative framing) of the independent variable of interest. The graphs are provided in Appendix C.

Finally, to ensure that the population studied is large enough to observe statistically significant effects, I conducted a power test to establish the required sample sizes. The estimated required population is 171 with 86 subjects per group, and the collected sample has a population of 214, with 100 to 114 subjects per framing group. Based on the power analysis at the conventional power level of 90%, this study meets the population threshold requirements. The power test appears in Appendix D.

Figure 2. Actual vs. estimated population required, with sample per framing group



First hypothesis testing

Table 6. Mann-Whitney U test for framing effects on BDS opinion

Variable	Mean	Mann-Whitney U	Z	Sig.
Positive_O	119.59	4322.000	-3.126	0.002
Negative_O	93.72	4322.000	-3.126	0.002

For the first hypothesis, which examines the (strong) framing effect of positive and negative framing on opinions about BDS, a Mann-Whitney U test was conducted due to the non-normal distribution of the data. The BDS opinion was measured using a composite score from three 5-point likert scale questions. The results showed a significant difference between the positive and negative framing groups ($U = 4322$, $Z = -3.126$, $p < 0.002$). With a p-value of 0.002, these results are statistically significant as they are below the 0.05 threshold. Participants exposed to positive framing had a higher mean rank (119.59) compared to those exposed to negative framing (93.72). These findings support Hypothesis 1a, indicating that positive framing leads to more positive opinions about BDS, and Hypothesis 1b, showing that negative framing results in more negative opinions. This suggests a strong framing effect, irrespective of partisanship.

Second hypothesis testing

Table 7. Kruskal-Wallis test for framing effects on BDS opinion different stance groups

Variable per stance group	Mean	Kruskal-Wallis H	df	Sig.
Positive_O		31.979	2	<0.0001
Pro-Israel	33.23			
Pro-Palestine	76.87			
Neutral	55.46			
Negative_O		23.854	2	<0.001
Pro-Israel	34.34			
Pro-Palestine	68.17			
Neutral	48.22			

The second hypothesis examines the framing effects on different stance groups regarding BDS. Hypothesis 2a predicted that exposure to negative framing would result in lower support (more negative opinion) for those with pro-Palestinian partisanship, while Hypothesis 2b suggested that exposure to positive framing would lead to higher support (more positive opinion) for those with pro-Israel partisanship. Hypothesis 2c proposed that exposure to positive framing would result in higher support for those with a neutral stance. Due to the non-normal distribution of the data and the categorical nature of the independent variable (framing condition), two separate Kruskal-Wallis H tests were conducted to examine the impact of framing on opinion scores among different stance groups.

The results of the Kruskal-Wallis H test for the negative framing condition indicated a significant difference in opinion scores among stance groups ($H = 23.85$, $df = 2$, $p < 0.001$). Post-hoc comparisons revealed that the pro-Palestinian group and neutral stance group had significantly lower opinion mean scores compared to the pro-Israel when exposed to negative framing (in comparison to when exposed to positive framing). Similarly, the Kruskal-Wallis H test for the positive framing condition yielded a significant difference in opinion scores among stance groups ($H = 31.98$, $df = 2$, $p < 0.001$). However, post-hoc analyses indicated that the pro-Israel group had significantly lower opinion scores compared to the pro-Palestinian and neutral stance groups when exposed to positive framing (pro Palestinian mean: 68.17, pro-Israel mean: 34.34 and neutral: 48.22). These findings suggest that the framing effect varies across different stance groups. So, pro-Palestinian and neutral stance individuals show lower support for BDS under negative framing, supporting hypotheses 2a and 2c. Simultaneously, pro-Israel individuals demonstrate lower support under positive framing (pro Palestinian mean: 76.87, pro-Israel mean: 33.23 and neutral: 55.46). Based on the observed outcomes, Hypothesis 2b is not supported. Instead, the findings suggest that exposure to positive framing results in lower support (more negative opinion; an oppositional effect from the pro-Israel group) for BDS among individuals with pro-Israel partisanship. Thereby, showing a weak framing effect on the pro-Israel group.

To test hypotheses 3 and 4, the PROCESS macro by Andrew Hayes was employed in SPSS. According to Hayes (2012), there is no way to directly check the assumptions within PROCESS. Hence, normality and homoscedasticity are not assumed in the analysis because bootstrapping is

used. Furthermore, heteroscedasticity-consistent inference was made using HC4 (Cribari-Neto) adjustments (Hayes & Cai, 2007; Hayes & Preacher, 2014; Preacher et al., 2007). For this reason, only the bootstrapped results from the output have been reported.

Additionally, the assumption of linearity must be considered, which means that the relationship between the outcome and the predictors is linear. Ernst and Albers (2017) suggest that the linearity assumption can easily be checked using scatter plots with a linear fit line. Hence, a scatter plot was employed by plotting the response variable (opinion BDS) and the independent variable (frames), illustrating that data points do not form a curve or other non-linear shape. Moreover, scatter plots for the continuous predictor variables (psychological distance and strength of partisanship) were created. These plots, specifically residual plots of unstandardized residuals versus the log-transformed predictors, showed that the points were somewhat scattered without any obvious curvature or systematic pattern deviating from the linear line. Thus, the linearity assumption between the dependent variable and all independent variables is reasonable and met. All abovementioned plots are provided in Appendix B.

Third hypothesis testing

Table 8. Interaction effect of framing and psychological distance on BDS opinion PROCESS

Variable	Coeff	R ²	SE	CI	df	F (HC4)	Sig.
Interaction _strength framingfr aming	0.0490	0.0039	0.495	95.000	1	0.9511	0.3306

To examine Hypothesis 3, which posits that individuals who are psychologically distant from the conflict are more susceptible to framing effects while those who are psychologically close are less influenced, a moderation analysis was conducted. This was done using Hayes' PROCESS macro in SPSS with bootstrapping to examine the interaction effect of framing and psychological distance on BDS opinion scores. However, the interaction effect was not statistically significant ($p = 0.33$).

This suggests that the relationship between framing and BDS opinion scores did not vary significantly depending on the level of psychological distance. Moreover, the positive coefficient

(0.05) for the interaction term indicates that as the level of psychological distance decreases (the closer individuals feel to the issue), the effect of framing on BDS opinion scores also increases slightly. This means that individuals who are more psychologically close to the conflict might show a slightly stronger reaction to framing in their BDS opinion scores. Regardless, the lack of statistical significance indicates that this relationship is not strong enough to be considered meaningful in this analysis. Therefore, we fail to reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is no significant moderation effect of psychological distance on the relationship between framing and BDS opinion scores.

Fourth hypothesis testing

Table 9. Interaction effect of framing and strength of partisanship on BDS opinion PROCESS

Variable	Coeff	R²	SE	CI	df	F (HC4)	Sig.
Interaction _strength framingfr aming	0.0129	0.0002	0.0593	95.000	1	0.0446	0.8329

To examine Hypothesis 4, which posits that individuals with strong partisanship are less likely to be affected/swayed by framing effects, a moderation analysis was conducted using the PROCESS macro in SPSS. Here, bootstrapping was also employed to examine the interaction effect of framing and the strength of partisanship on BDS opinion scores. Therefore, no assumptions of normality or homoscedasticity were assumed in the analysis.

However, the interaction effect was not statistically significant ($p = 0.83$). The positive coefficient (0.01) for the interaction term indicates that as the strength of partisanship increases, the effect of framing on BDS opinion scores increases slightly. However, the small magnitude of this coefficient (0.01) suggests that the change in the effect is minimal. This suggests that the relationship between framing and BDS opinion scores did not vary significantly depending on the strength of partisanship. Therefore, we reject hypothesis 4 and interpret the result as showing no significant moderation effect of partisanship on the relationship between framing and BDS opinion scores.

Control variables effects

Moreover, all control variables were included as covariates in both moderation analyses conducted using PROCESS. The output appears in Appendix E. As a result, two of these variables (age and country of birth) showed significant effects. Age had a significant p-value of 0.00, with coefficients of -0.10 (interaction of framing and psychological distance) and -0.09 (interaction of framing and partisanship). This indicates that older individuals have lower BDS opinion scores. Country of birth also had a significant p-value of 0.02, with a coefficient of -0.15 in both interaction models. This suggests that native individuals have lower BDS opinion scores compared to non-natives. Thus, both older age and being a native are associated with decreased BDS opinion scores, regardless of the interaction effects studied.

Table 10. ANCOVA (Quade's Test)

Control variables as covariates	B	SE	t	Sig.
Age	-17.47	7.744	-2.256	0.03
Country of birth	-10.73	3.140	-3.417	< 0.001
Educational degree	6.412	3.372	1.902	0.059
Subjective social status	-3.381	3.063	-1.104	0.271
Familiarity with the topic	-2.348	4.964	-4.73	0.637
General news use	3.470	3.935	0.882	0.379

Note. R^2 adjusted = 0.190

To further examine this significance and check these results, Cangür et al. (2018) state that a rank-based ANCOVA (Quade's Test) is considered a robust method for incorporating covariates in non-parametric analysis. It allows for the control of additional variables and is suitable for testing whether control variables have a significant effect on the dependent variable while considering the non-parametric nature of the data. Therefore, this test has been run in order to examine whether the control variables have a significant moderating effect on the dependent variable.

First, the dependent variable (opinion on BDS) was ranked within the levels of the control variables and interaction terms (the moderating variables psychological distance and partisan strength) were included to run the analysis. The results revealed significant effects for both age group and country of birth. Age group demonstrated a significant effect ($B = -17.47, p = 0.03$), indicating that younger participants tended to have higher opinion/support compared to older participants. Similarly, country of birth showed a significant effect ($B = -10.73, p < 0.001$), suggesting that opinion/support varied among participants from different countries of birth.

Table 11. Mann-Whitney U test for BDS opinion comparison (control variable: country of birth)

Country of birth	Mean	Mann-Whitney U	Z	Sig.
Non-native Dutch	118.14	4612.000	-2.316	0.021
Native Dutch	99.12	4612.000	-2.316	0.021

Furthermore, a Mann-Whitney U test revealed a significant difference in opinion means between non-native Dutch and native Dutch participants ($U = 4612, Z = -2.316, p = 0.02$). Non-native Dutch participants (mean rank: 118.41) showed higher opinion scores compared to native Dutch participants (mean rank: 99.12), indicating a potential influence of country of birth on opinions regarding BDS.

Discussion and Conclusion

6.1 Discussion

The findings of this study provide valuable insights into the influence of news media framing on public opinion regarding the BDS movement. The first hypothesis underscores the significant effect of framing on BDS opinion by highlighting its crucial role in shaping public attitudes when it comes to a salient conflict such as the Israeli-Palestinian issue. It is specifically focused on how people view the protests to boycott Israel. The results showed that participants exposed to positive framing expressed significantly more positive opinions about BDS, whereas those exposed to negative framing held more negative opinions, indicating a strong framing effect. These findings suggest that framing plays a crucial role in shaping public opinion on BDS, overriding individual partisan biases. This aligns with previous research by Goffman (1974) and Brown and Mourão (2021), emphasizing the powerful impact of news media strategies in influencing public attitudes, regardless of pre-existing political alignments.

Furthermore, the second hypothesis has also partially been accepted and illustrates how framing is received differently by different groups. This demonstrates that pre-assumptions, such as prior knowledge and partisan beliefs, as outlined by Slothuus (2008), also cause framing effects to differ. Thereby, simultaneously weakening the effect of news media framing. This is significant and visible throughout the different groups. First, for negative framing, both pro-Palestinian and neutral stance individuals had significantly lower opinion scores compared to the pro-Israel group, supporting Hypothesis 2a and 2c. Moreover, for positive framing, the pro-Israel group had significantly lower opinion scores compared to the pro-Palestinian and neutral stance groups, contrary to Hypothesis 2b. This suggests that while pro-Palestinian and neutral individuals are influenced by framing in expected ways (strong framing effect per group), pro-Israel partisans react oppositely to positive framing (weak framing effect), possibly due to a defensive response to perceived threats or challenges to their viewpoints.

This result for Hypothesis 2b indicates the complexity of partisan responses and suggests that framing might trigger counter-arguing among strongly partisan individuals (weak framing effect). According to Slothuus and Vreese (2010), if a frame is sponsored by an entity recipients believe in, motivated reasoning (ensured by a reader's partisan support) should lead them to pay closer attention to the frame content and assess it more favorably. In contrast, if people have strong

negative feelings towards a sponsored entity, they will discount, ignore, or even engage in counterarguing the interpretations in the frame. Thus, when forming opinions, people are more likely to rely on considerations emphasized in a frame if it is sponsored by their “own” partisanship than otherwise. For example, in the case of the pro-Israel group, those who hold strong negative sentiments toward the Palestinian cause will likely discount, ignore, or counterargue any frame that casts the Palestinian cause in a positive light. It is worth noting that the sample might have contained a stronger partisan Israel group compared to the pro-Palestinian and neutral groups. This disparity in the sample could have led to heavier reactions from the pro-Israel group, thereby influencing the results. Hence, a larger sample size might have provided a more accurate representation of each group's responses, considering a more varied intensity of reactions.

Additionally, when looking at psychological distance as a moderator, it did not significantly influence opinions about BDS. However, the findings revealed that individuals who are psychologically closer to the conflict might show slightly stronger reaction to framing in their BDS opinion scores. These results, illustrating that individuals who feel psychologically closer to the conflict are more influenced by framing than those who feel distant, contradict the original hypothesis. According to Desrosiers (2012), emotional engagement could possibly explain this. Moreover, individuals who feel psychologically close to the conflict may have higher emotional engagement with the issue. As a result, framing could amplify their existing sentiments regarding the conflict and serve as a motivation function to consider all perspectives and information on the topic more holistically, resulting in framing to have a stronger impact on their opinions (Desrosiers, 2012). This possible explanation could be a basis for future research to test this opposite direction (unexpected pattern). Nevertheless, the lack of statistical significance indicates that this relation is not strong enough to be considered meaningful.

Besides, and contrary to Hypothesis 4, the relationship between framing and BDS opinion scores did not vary significantly depending on the strength of partisanship. While the positive coefficient suggests an inverse relationship between the moderator and the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable, the lack of statistical significance indicates that this relationship is not strong enough to be considered meaningful. Regardless, these results suggest that strong partisanship does not necessarily result in resistance to framing effects. Instead, individuals with strong partisanship may have more intense reactions to framing. As mentioned by Slothuus and Vreese (2010) this is a possibility because their established viewpoints intensify their

responses to information that aligns with or opposes their beliefs. This challenges the notion that strong partisanship inherently provides a buffer against framing effects. For instance, individuals with strong partisanship may have more intense and polarized beliefs, making them more reactive to framing. As a result, positive framing might reinforce their existing positive views, while negative framing might provoke a stronger oppositional response. Regardless, this relation is not strong enough to be considered meaningful in the analysis.

6.2 Conclusion

In conclusion, the research question, "Does news framing affect public opinion on social movements (in the context of salient conflicts)?" is affirmed by the findings of this study. Framing significantly influences public opinion on BDS, overriding individual partisan biases. However, it seems to be modulated by factors such as partisan beliefs, country of birth, and age. Regardless, the main argument of this thesis hinged on the assumption that the news media's framing would be adopted by its readers, and this hypothesis was accepted. These results underscore the powerful role of news media framing in shaping public attitudes toward social movements, even in the presence of strong partisan biases. For this reason, social movement communicators should consider these findings when developing communication strategies to ensure their messaging resonates with diverse news media needs (media logic) if they want to increase their audience reach. Nonetheless, other factors also play a role and present several limitations to this study that future research could address.

Firstly, the study's sample, primarily composed of highly educated individuals, may not be representative of the general population. Correspondingly, highly educated individuals, who formed most of the sample, may overestimate their knowledge and have less awareness of the topic than they assume. This overestimation could increase their susceptibility to framing, potentially making them more vulnerable to framing effects. Thus, even those who perceive themselves as well-informed can be significantly influenced by framing, irrespective of their actual knowledge level. This observation may help to explain the lack of statistical significance observed in the moderating variables. Future research could consider the role of perceived versus actual knowledge in framing effects and include a more diverse sample to enhance the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, the use of articles depicting protests in Valencia rather than the

Netherlands may have influenced the results. Future research should consider local events to examine if proximity affects framing susceptibility.

Second, the study included three different groups (pro-Israel, pro-Palestine, and neutral), but it is plausible that the sample size within each category was insufficient to yield significant differences among the groups. This limitation underscores the need for future research to consider larger sample sizes within each category. Larger samples enhance the ability to detect statistically significant effects and provide more reliable estimates of population parameters (Leppink et al., 2016). Also, facilitating the identification of genuine differences, thereby reducing the likelihood that observed results are merely due to random variation.

Lastly, two control variables, country of birth and age, emerged as significant moderators for the effect of framing on BDS opinion. These findings add a layer of complexity to our understanding of how individual characteristics shape responses to framing. Non-native Dutch participants expressed higher support for BDS compared to native Dutch participants, suggesting a potential influence of cultural background on opinions about the conflict. Following, age demonstrated a significant effect, suggesting that generational differences may play a role in shaping opinions on contentious issues, with younger individuals exhibiting more favorable attitudes toward BDS. Nonetheless, future research is warranted to explore these potential interactions and their implications.

Beyond addressing these limitations, this research has also raised new questions that need to be answered. By leveraging the impact of the employed BDS frames, future studies may conduct more extensive research, perhaps through interviews or qualitative data methods, to ascertain how individuals perceive and understand social movement communication (Jost et al., 2018). This can help identify universal frames that resonate with recipients of social movement communication and provide insights on how these frames shape their perception of the topic. Besides, longitudinal studies could provide insights into how the impact of framing on public opinion changes over time. While this thesis provides a snapshot of framing effects, longitudinal research would allow for examining the long-term impact of framing on public opinion. Such an approach can reveal whether the initial impact of framing persists, diminishes, or intensifies, providing deeper insights into the lasting influence of news media framing on BDS opinion. Lastly, given the rise of social media as a primary news source, future research could explore its unique framing dynamics and its influence on public opinion. In specific, social media's unique dynamics, such as algorithm-

driven content delivery and user-generated content, could influence public opinion differently. Future research could investigate how these factors interact with framing effects to shape public opinion on social movement.

By addressing these limitations and exploring new research avenues, future studies can build on the insights gained from this research to enhance our understanding of the complex dynamics underlying public opinion formation. Thereby allowing us to comprehend how specific framing strategies of social movements shape the opinion of different groups. This will help in developing more effective communication strategies for social movements.

References

- Aguinis, H., & Bradley, K. J. (2014). Best Practice Recommendations for Designing and Implementing Experimental Vignette Methodology Studies. *Organizational Research Methods*, 17(4), 351-371. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1094428114547952>
- Altheide, D. L. (2004). Media logic and political communication. *Political Communication*, 21(3), 293-296. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119011071.iemp0227>
- Anspach, N.M., & Draguljić, G. (2019). Effective advocacy: the psychological mechanisms of environmental issue framing. *Environmental Politics*, 28, 615 - 638. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09644016.2019.1565468>
- Azhar D. & Paul, S. (2024, January 2). *McDonald's Malaysia sues Israel boycott movement for \$1 million in damages*. Reuters. <https://www.reuters.com/world/mcdonalds-malaysia-sues-israel-boycott-movement-1-mln-damages-2023-12-30/>
- de Bakker, F. G., den Hond, F., King, B., & Weber, K. (2013). Social movements, civil society and corporations: Taking stock and looking ahead. *Organization Studies*, 34(5–6), 573–593. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0170840613479222>
- Bhowmik, S., & Fisher, J. (2023). Framing the israel-palestine conflict 2021: Investigation of CNN's coverage from a peace journalism perspective. *Media, Culture & Society*, 45(5), 1019–1035. <https://doi.org/10.1177/01634437231154766>
- Brown, D. K., & Mourão, R. R. (2021). Protest coverage matters: How media framing and visual communication affects support for Black Civil Rights protests. *Mass Communication and Society*, 24(4), 576–596. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15205436.2021.1884724>
- Cadena SER (2023, October). *Una manifestación recorre el centro de València "contra el 'apartheid' israelí en Gaza y en toda Palestina"*. Agencia EFE, Cadena SER. <https://cadenaser.com/comunitat-valenciana/2023/10/29/una-manifestacion-recorre-el-centro-de-valencia-contra-el-apartheid-israeli-en-gaza-y-en-toda-palestina-radio-valencia/>

- Cangür, Ş., Sungur, M. A., & Ankaralı, H. (2018). The Methods Used in Nonparametric Covariance Analysis. *Duzce Medical Journal*, 20(1), 1-6. <https://doi.org/10.18678/dtfd.424774>
- Carragee, K. M., & Roefs, W. (2004). The neglect of power in recent framing research. *Journal of Communication*, 54(2), 214–233. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1460-2466.2004.tb02625.x>
- Chong, D., & Druckman, J. N. (2007). *Framing theory*. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 10, 103-126. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.polisci.10.072805.103054>
- Cooper, A. H. (2002). Media framing and Social Movement Mobilization: German peace protest against INF missiles, the Gulf War, and NATO peace enforcement in Bosnia. *European Journal of Political Research*, 41(1), 37–80. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1475-6765.00003>
- Darweish, M., & Rigby, A. (2018). The internationalisation of nonviolent resistance: the case of the BDS campaign. *Journal of Resistance Studies*, 4(1), 45-71. <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/The-internationalisation-of-nonviolent-resistance%3A-Darweish-Rigby/c4a17cd181b75ce8b5bc1c92a4275a12d5a9cdd5>
- Desrosiers, M.-E. (2012). Reframing Frame Analysis: Key Contributions to Conflict Studies. *Ethnopolitics*, 11(1), 1–23. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17449057.2011.567840>
- Entman, R. M. (1993). Framing: Toward clarification of a fractured paradigm. *Journal of Communication*, 43(4), 51-58. https://www.academia.edu/download/33549924/entman_Framing.pdf
- Ernst, A. F., & Albers, C. J. (2017). Regression assumptions in clinical psychology research practice-a systematic review of common misconceptions. *PeerJ*, 5, e3323. <https://doi.org/10.7717/peerj.3323>
- Gahan, P., & Pekarek, A. (2012). Social Movement theory, Collective Action Frames and Union Theory: A Critique and extension. *British Journal of Industrial Relations*, 51(4), 754–776. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8543.2012.00912.x>

- Goffman, E. (1974). *Frame analysis: An essay on the organization of experience*. Northeastern University Press. https://urup.or.id/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Erving_Goffman_Bennett_Berger_Frame_Analysis_BookFi.pdf
- Hajjar, S. T. (2018). Statistical analysis: Internal-consistency reliability and construct validity. *International Journal of Quantitative and Qualitative Research Methods*, 6(1), 27-38. <https://www.eajournals.org/wp-content/uploads/Statistical-Analysis-Internal-Consistency-Reliability-and-Construct-Validity.pdf>
- Hall, S. W. (1980). Encoding/Decoding. In S. Hall, D. Hobson, A. Lowe, & P. Willis (Eds.), *Culture, Media, Language: Working Papers in Cultural Studies* (pp. 63-87). London: Hutchinson. <https://spstudentenhancement.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/stuart-hall-1980.pdf>
- Hansen, T. (2020). Media framing of Copenhagen tourism: A new approach to public opinion about tourists. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 84, Article 102975. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2020.102975>
- Hayes, A.F., Cai, L. Using heteroskedasticity-consistent standard error estimators in OLS regression: An introduction and software implementation. *Behavior Research Methods* 39, 709–722 (2007). <https://doi.org/10.3758/BF03192961>
- Hitchcock, J. (2016). Social media rhetoric of the transnational Palestinian-led Boycott, divestment, and sanctions movement. *Social Media + Society*, 2(1), 205630511663436. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2056305116634367>
- Hitchcock, J. (2023). Framing Palestinian rights: A rhetorical frame analysis of Vernacular Boycott, divestment, sanctions (BDS) movement discourse. *Rhetoric Society Quarterly*, 53(2), 87–103. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02773945.2022.2095422>

- Hughes, R., & Huby, M. (2004). The construction and interpretation of vignettes in social research. *Social Work and Social Sciences Review*, 11(1), 36-51. <https://doi.org/10.1921/swssr.v11i1.428>
- Jost, J. T., Barberá, P., Bonneau, R., Langer, M., Metzger, M., Nagler, J., Sterling, J., & Tucker, J. A. (2018). How social media facilitates political protest: Information, motivation, and social networks. *Political Psychology*, 39(S1), 85–118. <https://doi.org/10.1111/pops.12478>
- Kim, S. H., Scheufele, D. A., & Shanahan, J. (2002). Think about it this way: Attribute agenda-setting function of the press and the public's evaluation of a local issue. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 79(1), 7–25. <https://doi.org/10.1177/107769900207900102>
- Kim, H. J., & Cameron, G. T. (2011). Emotions matter in crisis: The role of anger and sadness in the publics' response to crisis news framing and corporate crisis response. *Communication Research*, 38(6), 826-855. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0093650210385813>
- Lachapelle, E., Montpetit, É., & Gauvin, J. P. (2014). Public perceptions of expert credibility on policy issues: The role of expert framing and political worldviews. *Policy Studies Journal*, 42(4), 674-697. <https://doi.org/10.1111/psj.12073>
- Leppink, J., Winston, K., & O'Sullivan, P. (2016). Statistical significance does not imply a real effect. *Perspectives on medical education*, 5, 122-124. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40037-016-0256-6>
- Lev-On, A. (2018). The anti-social network? framing social media in wartime. *Social Media + Society*, 4(3), 205630511880031. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2056305118800311>
- Leong, C., Pan, S. L., Bahri, S., & Fauzi, A. (2018). Social Media Empowerment in social movements: Power activation and power accrual in digital activism. *European Journal of Information Systems*, 28(2), 173–204. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0960085x.2018.1512944>
- Liberman, N., Trope, Y., & Stephan, E. (2007). Psychological distance. *Social psychology: Handbook of basic principles*, 2(2), 353-383. Guilford Press.

- Lucke, S., & Koenigstorfer, J. (2018). Construal-Level Perspective on Consumers' Donation Preferences in Relation to the Environment and Health. *Marketing ZFP*, 40(1), 21–34. <https://doi.org/10.15358/0344-1369-2018-1-21>
- McDonald, R.I., Chai, H.Y., & Newell, B.R. (2015). Personal experience and the 'psychological distance' of climate change: An integrative review. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 44, 109-118. <https://doi.org/10.1016/J.JENVP.2015.10.003>
- Moussa, M. B. (2013). Online Mobilization in Times of Conflict: A Framing-Analysis Perspective. *Arab and Media Society*, 17, 1-24. https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Mohamed-Ben-Moussa/publication/332343814_Online_Mobilization_in_Times_of_Conflict_A_Framing-Analysis_Perspective/links/5caeec164585156cd78f6ecc/Online-Mobilization-in-Times-of-Conflict-A-Framing-Analysis-Perspective.pdf
- Pleyers, G. (2020). The pandemic is a battlefield. Social movements in the COVID-19 lockdown. *Journal of Civil Society*, 16(4), 295–312. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17448689.2020.1794398>
- Preacher, K. J., Rucker, D. D., & Hayes, A. F. (2007). Addressing moderated mediation hypotheses: Theory, methods, and prescriptions. *Multivariate Behavioral Research*, 42(1), 185–227. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00273170701341316>
- Scheufele, D. A., & Tewksbury, D. (2007). Framing, agenda setting, and priming: The evolution of three media effects models. *Journal of communication*, 57(1), 9-20. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1460-2466.2006.00326.5.x>
- Sen, S., Gürhan-Canli, Z., & Morwitz, V. (2001). Withholding Consumption: A Social Dilemma Perspective on Consumer Boycotts. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 28(3), 399–417. <https://doi.org/10.1086/323729>

- Slothuus, R. (2008). More than Weighting Cognitive Importance: A Dual-Process Model of Issue Framing Effects. *Political Psychology*, 29(1), 1–28. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9221.2007.00610.x>
- Slothuus, R., & de Vreese, C. H. (2010). Political Parties, Motivated Reasoning, and Issue Framing Effects. *The Journal of Politics*, 72(3), 630–645. <https://doi.org/10.1017/s002238161000006x>
- Snow, D. A., Rochford, E. B., Worden, S. K., & Benford, R. D. (1986). Frame Alignment Processes, Micromobilization, and Movement Participation. *American Sociological Review*, 51(4), 464–481. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2095581>
- Stern, M. J. (2018). *Social science theory for environmental sustainability: A practical guide*. Oxford University Press. https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Marc-Stern-4/publication/326468129_Social_Science_Theory_for_Environmental_Sustainability_A_Practical_Guide/links/5b4f86d1aca27217ffa1fb68/Social-Science-Theory-for-Environmental-Sustainability-A-Practical-Guide.pdf
- Trope, Y., Liberman, N., & Wakslak, C. (2007). Construal levels and psychological distance: Effects on representation, prediction, evaluation, and behavior. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 17(2), 83-95. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S1057-7408\(07\)70013-X](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1057-7408(07)70013-X)
- Trope, Y., & Liberman, N. (2010). Construal-Level Theory of Psychological Distance. *Psychological Review*, 117(2), 440-463. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0018963>
- van Oostendorp, M. (2012). Bilingualism versus multilingualism in the Netherlands. *Language Problems and Language Planning*, 36(3), 252-272. <https://doi.org/10.1075/lplp.36.3.04van>

Yuliarti, M. S., Siagian, M., & Wardaningtyas, A. K. (2020). Network Society and Social Movement: Message reception among Instagram users. *Jurnal Komunikasi Ikatan Sarjana Komunikasi Indonesia*, 5(2). <https://doi.org/10.25008/jkiski.v5i2.382>

Appendix

Appendix A – Questionnaire material

Thank you for participating in this survey. My name is Maria de Jongh, this study is part of my master thesis at Erasmus University Rotterdam and explores perceptions related to the Israel-Palestine conflict. The survey should take between 8 and 10 minutes to complete. Your answers are anonymized and used solely for academic purposes. By pursuing, you acknowledge this and will do your best to answer honestly. For any further inquiries, you can reach out to 492147mj@student.eur.nl.

Q1: How old are you?

- 1: 18-24 years
- 2: 25-34 years
- 3: 35-49 years
- 4: 50-65 years
- 5: 65+

Q2: Country of Birth?

- 1: Non-native Dutch
- 2: Native Dutch

Q3: What is your educational degree?

- 1: No degree
- 2: High school diploma or equivalent
- 3: Apprenticeship training
- 4: University of applied sciences (bachelor's degree or master's degree)
- 5: University (bachelor's degree or master's degree)
- 6: Doctorate degree

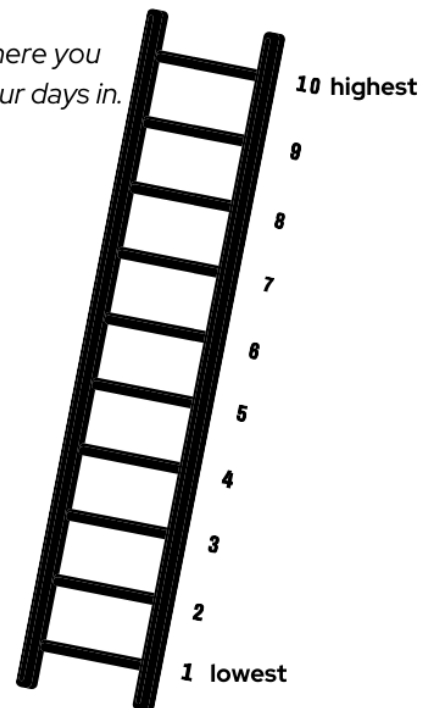
Q4:

Think of this ladder as showing where people stand in your country of residence.

By your country of residence I mean the country where you have a home and normally spend the majority of your days in.

At the top of the ladder are people who are the best off- those who have the most money, the best education, and the most respected jobs. At the bottom of the ladder are the people who are the worst off- who have the least money, least education and the least respected job or no job.

The higher up you are on this ladder, the closer you are to the people at the top; the lower you are, the closer you are to the bottom.



Where would you place yourself on the ladder in relation to other people in your country of residence? Please tick the box for the rung where you think you stand at this time in your life relative to other people in your country of residence.

Tick the box for the rung where you think you stand:

- 1: 1
- 2: 2
- 3: 3
- 4: 4
- 5: 5
- 6: 6
- 7: 7
- 8: 8
- 9: 9
- 10: 10

Q5: On a scale of 1 to 5, how many hours a day do you typically engage with general news sources (e.g. tv, newspapers, social media news coverage, article on FB wall)?

1: I usually don't follow the news

2: 10 minutes

3: 30 minutes

4: an hour

5: more than an hour

Q6: On a scale of 1 to 5, how familiar are you with key events, historical context, and current developments related to the Israel-Palestine conflict?

1: Not familiar at all

2: Slightly familiar

3: Moderately familiar

4: Familiar

5: Very familiar

Q7: In the context of the Israel-Palestine conflict, which stance do you find yourself most aligned with?

1: In favor of Israel

2: In support of Palestine

3: Maintaining a neutral stance

Explanation: this question aims to discern participants' partisan beliefs, which may influence how different frames on the conflict resonate with them.

Q8: Do you consider yourself to have a firm/strong opinion regarding the Israel-Palestine situation?

1: Definitely not - I have no strong opinions on this issue

2: Not really - I have some thoughts but they're not particularly strong

3: Slightly strong - I have somewhat a firm opinion but open to new information and willing to adjust my views

4: Moderately strong - I have a fairly strong opinion on this issue

5: Definitely yes – I have a very strong opinion on this issue

Q9: On a scale of 1 to 6, how close or distant do you feel to the Israel-Palestine situation, considering closeness in terms of how the conflict affects you emotionally and the degree to which you feel disconnected from the issue?

1: Distant

2: Moderately distant

3: More distant than close

4: More close than distant

5: Moderately close

6: Close

(one of the following vignettes is then displayed, at random)

Article 1: Positive Perspective on BDS

An empowering demonstration marches through the center of Valencia “in solidarity against Israeli ‘apartheid’ in Gaza and throughout Palestine”

More than a thousand people gathered in Valencia on Sunday to express their strong support for the Palestinian people in a march advocating an end to the occupation, the cessation of Israeli bombings, and a call for a boycott against what they call the “genocide perpetrated by Israeli apartheid in Gaza and throughout Palestine.” Called by BDS País Valencià, the demonstration moved from the Plaza de la Reina to the Plaza del Temple, where the Government Delegation is located, bringing together various voices in solidarity with Palestine. During the event, there was a call for an arms embargo, the rupture of diplomatic and trade relations, and an end to what they perceive as the complicity of the Spanish government and the European Union with Israeli apartheid. This protest marks the fourth concentration in Valencia in support of the Palestinian people, reflecting growing concern about the situation in the region. The organizers have highlighted the importance of this movement, stating that “we are living in a crucial moment in history, where international solidarity is fundamental”. BDS País Valencià has emphasized the urgency of acting against what they consider a “crime against humanity,” emphasizing reports documenting human losses in Gaza and the classification of the Israeli regime as apartheid by international organizations and recognized human rights NGOs. In an effort to broaden the reach of the demonstration, various organizations and groups have joined the cause, highlighting the need to end decades of colonialism, racism, and apartheid in the region. The solidarity expressed on the streets of Valencia is a reminder of the importance of collective action in the struggle for justice and human rights in Palestine.

Article 2: Negative Perspective on BDS

A divisive demonstration sparks controversy in the center of Valencia with slogans against Israel's administration of territories in Gaza and throughout Palestine

This Sunday, more than a thousand people gathered in Valencia in a march called by BDS País Valencià, sparking controversy with its slogans attacking Israel's occupation in Gaza and throughout Palestine. The demonstration, which ran from the Plaza de la Reina to the Plaza del Temple, was marked by calls for boycott and criticism of the Spanish government and the European Union for their alleged complicity with Israel. Throughout the event, extreme measures such as an arms embargo and the rupture of diplomatic and trade relations were demanded, causing concern in various sectors. Many have questioned the legitimacy of these demands, arguing that such actions could exacerbate the conflict rather than promote a peaceful solution.

BDS País Valencià has been criticized for its radical approach and alleged association with extremist movements. Its calls for boycott and inflammatory rhetoric have divided Valencian society, with some groups expressing disagreement with the tactics used by the organization.

The controversy surrounding the demonstration reflects the complexities of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the different perspectives that exist on how to address it. While some see BDS as a legitimate advocate for Palestinian rights, others perceive it as a group that promotes division and extremism that could lead to acts associated to anti-semitism. Ultimately, the demonstration has highlighted the deep divisions within Valencian society on this delicate issue and raised questions about the role of boycott activism in resolving the conflict between Israel and Palestine.

Q10: Do you agree with the content of the article and find its tone and manner of expression acceptable?

- 1: Strongly disagree
- 2: Disagree
- 3: Somewhat disagree
- 4: Neither agree nor disagree
- 5: Somewhat agree
- 6: Agree
- 7: Strongly agree

Explanation: Here, participants are asked to evaluate their agreement with the content of a provided article discussing the Israel-Palestine situation. Additionally, they are prompted to assess the tone and manner of expression used in the article, determining whether they find it acceptable or not. This is done to determine if they accept, oppose or remain neutral toward the message they receive.

Q11: On a scale of 1 to 5, to what extent do you find the BDS protests (boycotting Israel and supporting Palestine) justified?

- 1: Not justified at all
- 2: Slightly justified
- 3: Moderately justified
- 4: Justified
- 5: Very justified

Explanation: This question seeks participants' opinions on the acceptability of protests supporting Palestine and advocating for the boycott of Israel. It aims to discover whether participants view these actions as acceptable forms of activism or as unjustifiable actions.

Q12: How likely are you to participate in the BDS movement in any form, from reposting supportive content to public demonstrations (simply going out on the street, no violence)? (e.g. you decide not to consume some products that are directly linked to Israel in order to boycott them and support the BDS movement) Even if you are very willing to participate in only one of these forms, please select “Very likely”.

- 1: Very unlikely
- 2: Unlikely
- 3: Somewhat likely (possible)
- 4: Likely
- 5: Very likely

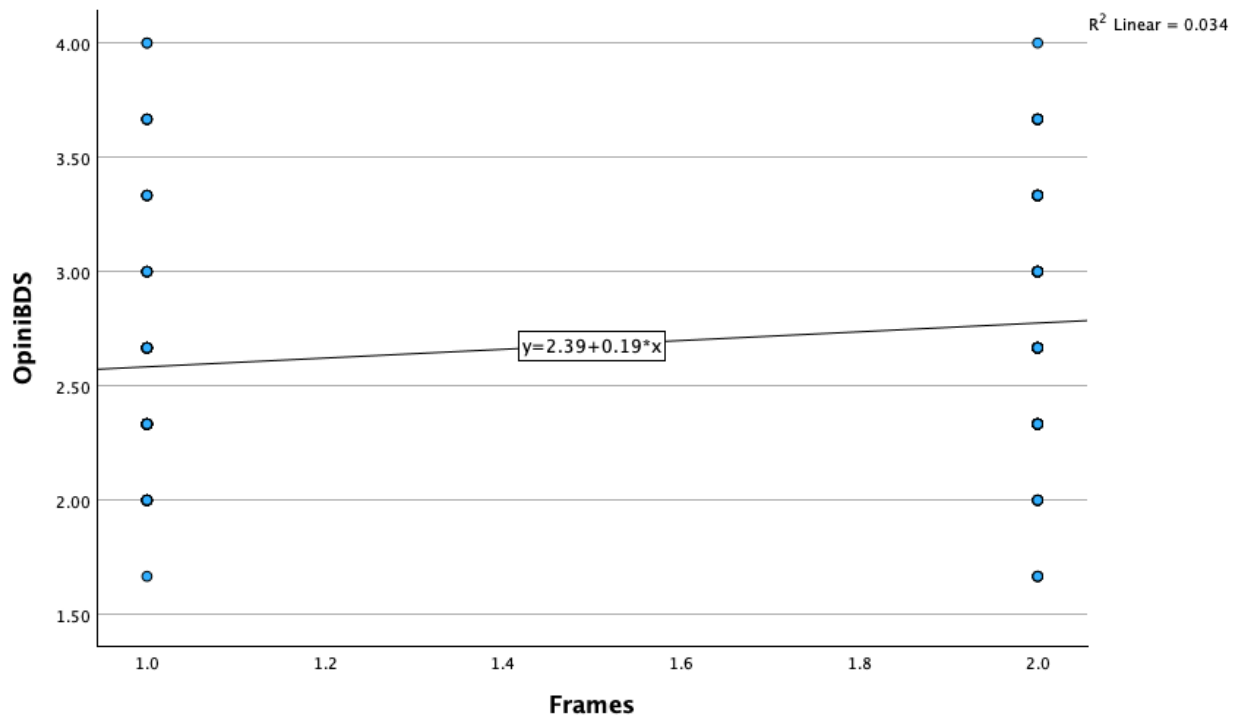
Q13: In the context of the BDS movement, which stance do you find yourself most aligned with?

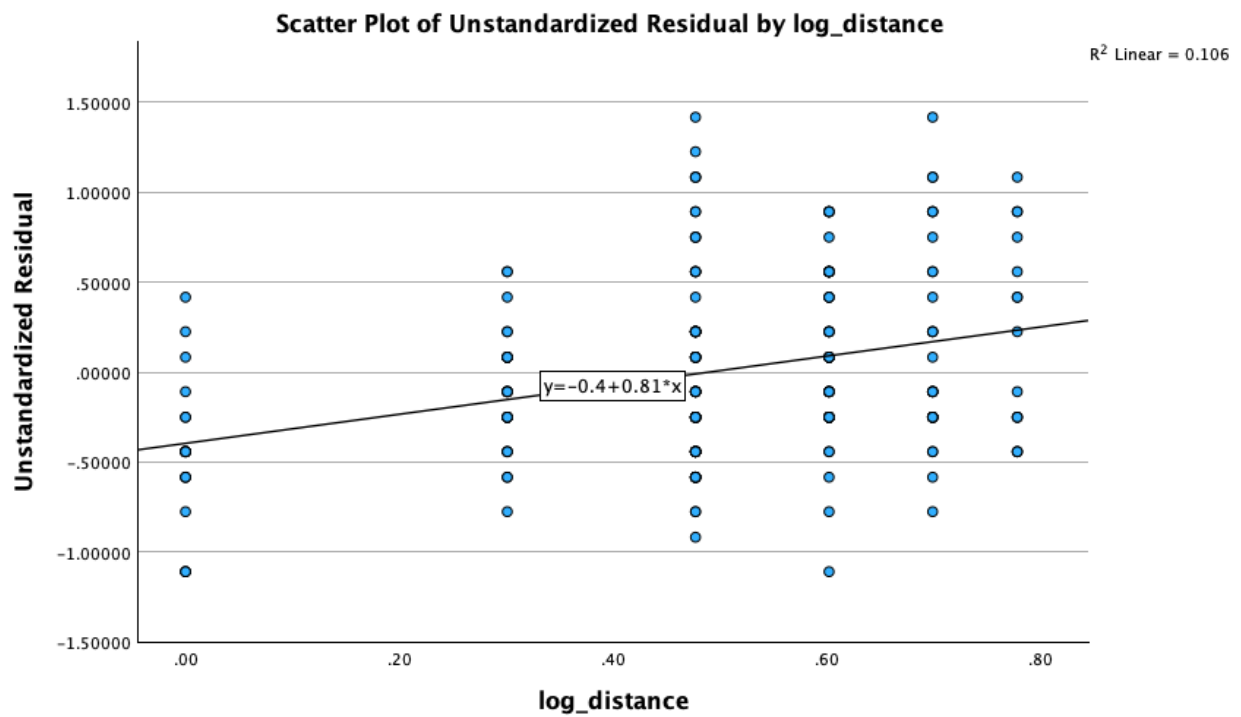
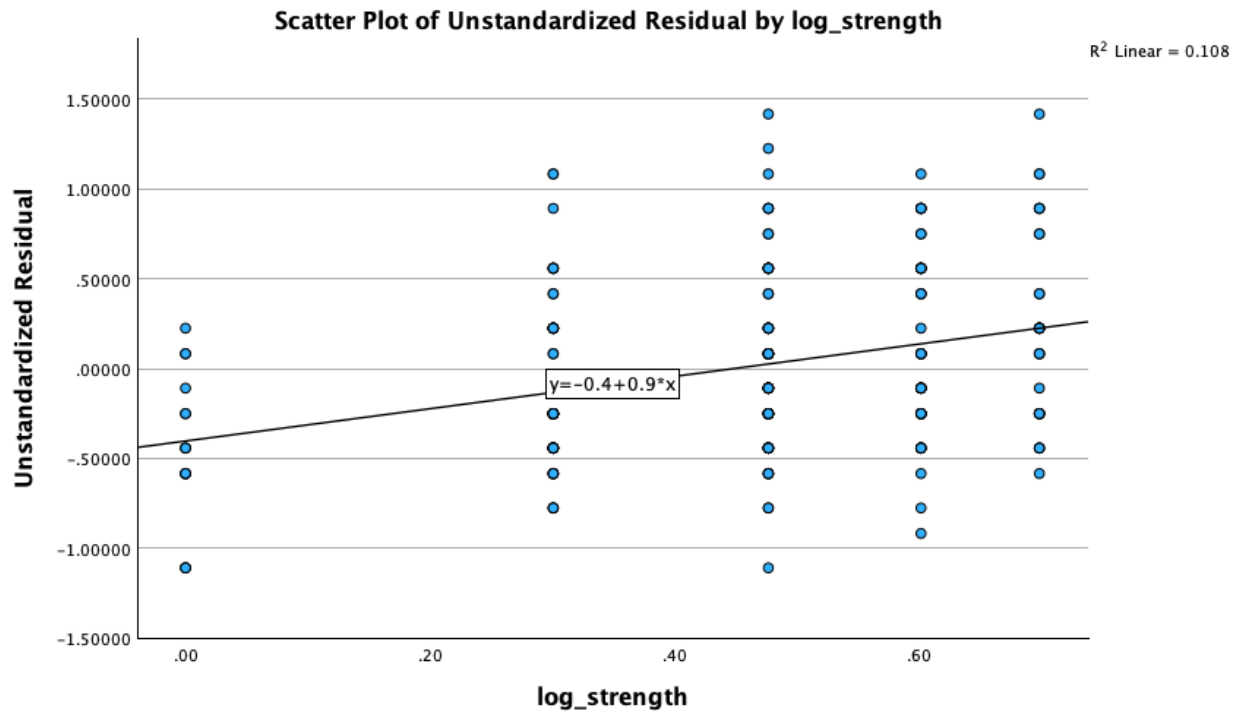
- 1: Pro BDS movement
- 2: Somewhat pro BDS movement
- 3: Neutral
- 4: Somewhat against BDS movement
- 5: Against BDS movement

Explanation: this question aims to discern participants' level of acceptance of the frame and determine whether they accept, oppose or remain neutral to the message they receive.

Thank you for your participation! This study explored the relationship between framing effects, boycott perceptions, partisan beliefs and psychological distance. It is thus disclosed that the message you've read was designed for the purpose of this survey.

Appendix B – Scatter Plots with a Linear Fit Line (Assumption of Linearity)



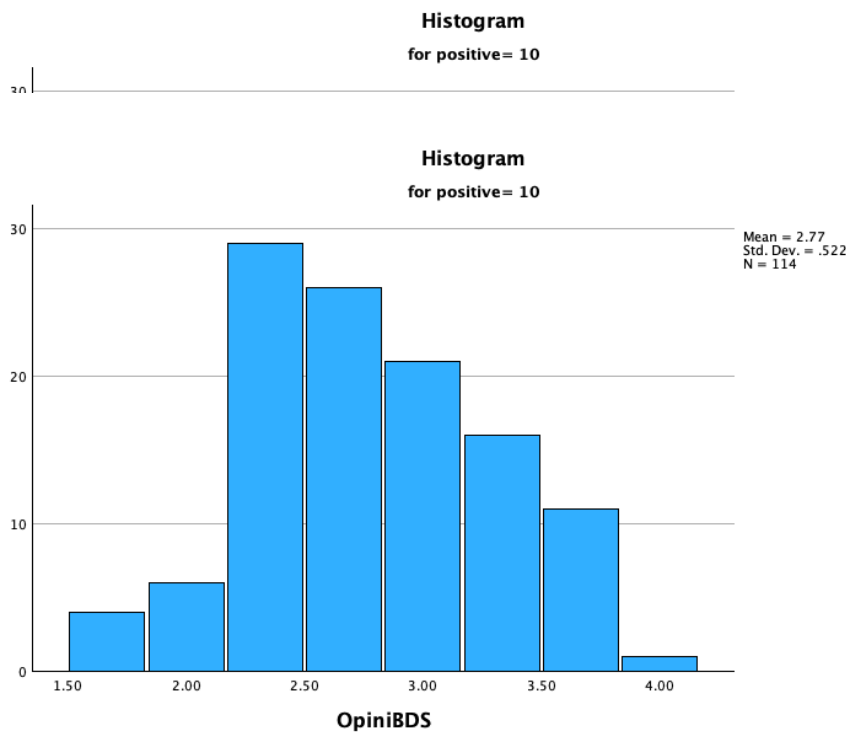
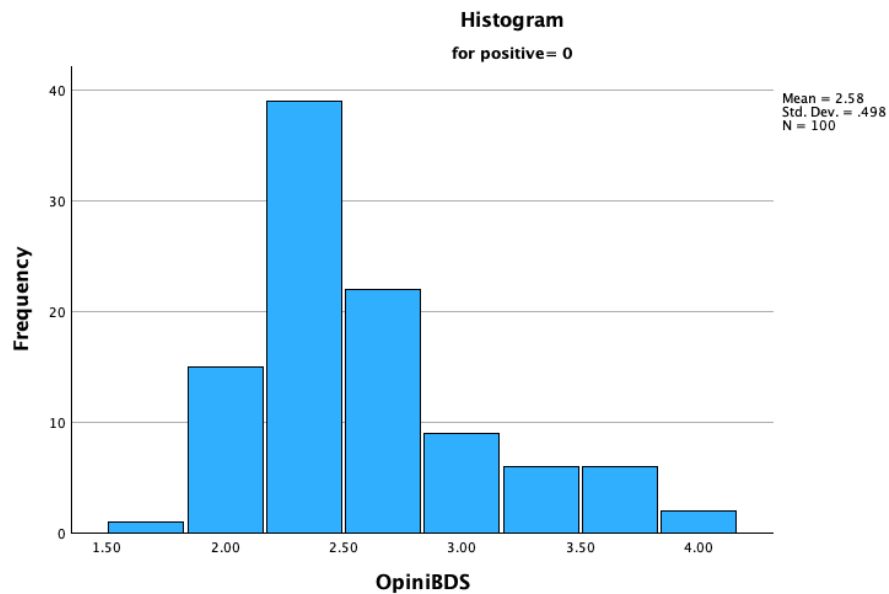


Appendix C – The Distribution of Scores for Positive and Negative framing

Range	2.50	
Interquartile Range	.75	
Skewness	.121	.226
Kurtosis	-.550	.449

OpiniBDS

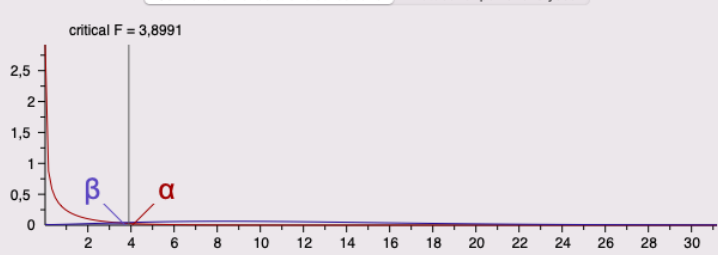
Histograms



Appendix D – Power Test Required Sample Size

Origin G*Power 3.1

Central and noncentral distributions Protocol of power analyses



critical F = 3,8991

Test family: F tests

Statistical test: ANCOVA: Fixed effects, main effects and interactions

Type of power analysis: A priori: Compute required sample size – given α , power, and effect size

Input parameters

Determine

Effect size f: 0,25

α err prob: 0,05

Power (1- β err prob): 0,9

Numerator df: 1

Number of groups: 2

Number of covariates: 6

Output parameters

Noncentrality parameter λ : 10,6875000

Critical F: 3,8991424

Denominator df: 163

Total sample size: 171

Actual power: 0,9014554

From Variances

Variance explained by special effect: 1

Error variance: 1

Direct

Partial η^2 : 0,5

Calculate

Effect size f

Calculate and transfer to main window

Close effect size drawer

X-Y plot for a range of values Calculate

Appendix E – Process Macro Moderation Analyses including Covariates

positive	.0171	.1757	.0975	.9224	-.3293	.3636
Q9	.0436	.0811	.5379	.5912	-.1163	.2035
Int_1	.0490	.0502	.9752	.3306	-.0500	.1480
Q1	-.0987	.0297	-3.3264	.0010	-.1572	-.0402
Q2	-.1495	.0633	-2.3623	.0191	-.2742	-.0247
Q3	.0557	.0290	1.9194	.0563	-.0015	.1130
Q4	-.0222	.0282	-.7900	.4304	-.0777	.0333
Q5	.0396	.0355	1.1155	.2659	-.0304	.1097
Q6	-.0278	.0435	-.6397	.5231	-.1135	.0579

Product terms key:

Int_1 : positive x Q9

Test(s) of highest order unconditional interaction(s):

	R2-chng	F(HC4)	df1	df2	p
X*W	.0039	.9511	1.0000	204.0000	.3306

***** BOOTSTRAP RESULTS FOR REGRESSION MODEL PARAMETERS *****

OUTCOME VARIABLE:

OpiniBDS

	Coeff	BootMean	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
constant	2.6315	2.6313	.3933	1.8607	3.4218
positive	.0171	.0207	.1718	-.3177	.3634
Q9	.0436	.0443	.0800	-.1114	.2079
Int_1	.0490	.0487	.0495	-.0497	.1452
Q1	-.0987	-.0986	.0290	-.1565	-.0424
Q2	-.1495	-.1513	.0619	-.2709	-.0288
Q3	.0557	.0570	.0280	.0026	.1124
Q4	-.0222	-.0236	.0268	-.0767	.0280
Q5	.0396	.0405	.0343	-.0238	.1095
Q6	-.0278	-.0286	.0425	-.1122	.0563

***** ANALYSIS NOTES AND ERRORS *****

Level of confidence for all confidence intervals in output:

95.0000

Number of bootstrap samples for percentile bootstrap confidence intervals:

5000

NOTE: A heteroscedasticity consistent standard error and covariance matrix estimator was used.

----- END MATRIX -----

```

Model
  coeff    se(HC4)      t      p      LLCI      ULCI
constant  2.5045    .3883    6.4492  .0000    1.7388    3.2702
positive  .1544    .1936    .7974    .4261   -.2273    .5361
Q8        .1229    .0936    1.3130    .1907   -.0617    .3075
Int_1     .0129    .0611    .2113    .8329   -.1076    .1334
Q1        -.0940    .0300   -3.1328    .0020   -.1531   -.0348
Q2        -.1529    .0642   -2.3830    .0181   -.2795   -.0264
Q3        .0345    .0293    1.1769    .2406   -.0233    .0924
Q4        -.0271    .0304   -.8920    .3734   -.0870    .0328
Q5        .0442    .0357    1.2375    .2173   -.0262    .1145
Q6        -.0346    .0477   -.7248    .4694   -.1286    .0595

Product terms key:
Int_1 :      positive x      Q8

Test(s) of highest order unconditional interaction(s):
      R2-chng    F(HC4)      df1      df2      p
X**W      .0002      .0446      1.0000    204.0000    .8329

***** BOOTSTRAP RESULTS FOR REGRESSION MODEL PARAMETERS *****

OUTCOME VARIABLE:
OpiniBDS

      Coeff    BootMean    BootSE    BootLLCI    BootULCI
constant  2.5045    2.4995    .3878    1.7387    3.2734
positive  .1544    .1612    .1883   -.1885    .5318
Q8        .1229    .1258    .0921   -.0503    .3081
Int_1     .0129    .0110    .0593   -.1051    .1259
Q1        -.0940   -.0937    .0294   -.1509   -.0349
Q2        -.1529   -.1539    .0636   -.2791   -.0297
Q3        .0345    .0365    .0284   -.0184    .0934
Q4        -.0271   -.0289    .0292   -.0882    .0290
Q5        .0442    .0456    .0339   -.0194    .1132
Q6        -.0346   -.0360    .0458   -.1296    .0515

***** ANALYSIS NOTES AND ERRORS *****

Level of confidence for all confidence intervals in output:
95.0000

Number of bootstrap samples for percentile bootstrap confidence intervals:
5000

NOTE: A heteroscedasticity consistent standard error and covariance matrix estimator was used.

----- END MATRIX -----

```

Appendix F – SPSS Output Cronbach's Alpha

➔ Reliability

Scale: ALL VARIABLES

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	214	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	214	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.902	3

Appendix G – SPSS Output Screenshots of All Tests (Transformed Tables in Text*)

NPar Tests

Mann-Whitney Test

		Ranks		
	positive	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Country of birth?	0	100	107.99	10799.00
	10	114	107.07	12206.00
	Total	214		

Test Statistics^a

	Country of birth?
Mann-Whitney U	5651.000
Wilcoxon W	12206.000
Z	-.126
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.900

a. Grouping Variable: positive

NPar Tests

Mann-Whitney Test

		Ranks		
	positive	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
What is your educational degree?	0	100	106.92	10692.00
	10	114	108.01	12313.00
	Total	214		

Test Statistics^a

	What is your educational degree?
Mann-Whitney U	5642.000
Wilcoxon W	10692.000
Z	-.136
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.891

a. Grouping Variable: positive

NPar Tests

Mann-Whitney Test

		Ranks		
	positive	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
On a scale of 1 to 5, how familiar are you with key events, historical context, and current developments related to the Israel–Palestine conflict?	0	100	112.64	11263.50
	10	114	103.00	11741.50
	Total	214		

Test Statistics^a

On a scale of 1 to 5, how familiar are you with key events, historical context, and current developments related to the Israel-Palestine conflict?

Mann-Whitney U	5186.500
Wilcoxon W	11741.500
Z	-1.184
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.236

a. Grouping Variable: positive

➔ NPar Tests

Mann-Whitney Test

NPar Tests

Mann-Whitney Test

Ranks		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
	positive			
Tick the box for the rung where you think you stand:	0	100	107.73	10773.00
	10	114	107.30	12232.00
	Total	214		

Test Statistics^a

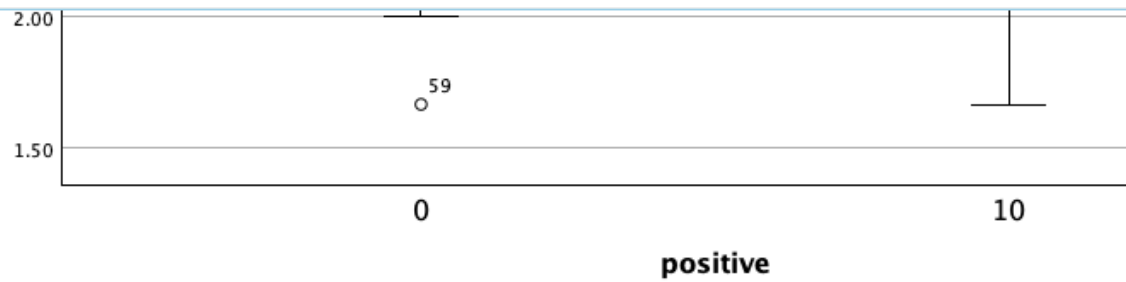
Tick the box for the rung where you think you stand:

Mann-Whitney U	5677.000
Wilcoxon W	12232.000
Z	-.053
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.958

a. Grouping Variable: pc Double-click to activate

NPar Tests

Mann-Whitney Test



NPar Tests

[DataSet1] /Users/Maria/Downloads/Untitled4.sav

Mann-Whitney Test

		Ranks		
positive		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
How old are you?	0	100	110.89	11089.00
	10	114	104.53	11916.00
	Total	214		

Test Statistics^a

How old are you?	
Mann-Whitney U	5361.000
Wilcoxon W	11916.000
Z	-.770
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.441

a. Grouping Variable: positive

NPar Tests

100

OpiniBDS

<.001

b. Grouping Variable: In

most aligned with?

Kruskal–Wallis Test

Ranks

114

OpiniBDS

<.001

a. Grouping Variable: positive

NPar Tests

Mann-Whitney Test

		Ranks		
	positive	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
On a scale of 1 to 5, how many hours a day do you typically engage with general news sources (e.g. tv, newspapers, social media news coverage, article on FB wall)?	0	100	111.38	11137.50
	10	114	104.10	11867.50
	Total	214		

Test Statistics^a

On a scale of 1 to 5, how many hours a day do you typically engage with general news sources (e.g. tv, newspapers, social media news coverage, article on FB wall)?

Mann-Whitney U	5312.500
Wilcoxon W	11867.500
Z	-.887
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.375

a. Grouping Variable: positive

NPar Tests

➔ **NPar Tests**

Mann-Whitney Test

		Ranks		
positive		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
OpiniBDS	0	100	93.72	9372.00
	10	114	119.59	13633.00
	Total	214		

Test Statistics^a

	OpiniBDS
Mann-Whitney U	4322.000
Wilcoxon W	9372.000
Z	-3.126
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.002

a. Grouping Variable: positive

strengthgroup + positive *
psychdisgroup + Q1 + Q2 + Q3 +
Q4 + Q5 + Q6

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: Rank of OpiniBDS

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	177022.345 ^a	10	17702.235	5.990	<.001
Intercept	36732.590	1	36732.590	12.429	<.001
positive * strengthgroup	14057.922	2	7028.961	2.378	.095
positive * psychdisgroup	14131.894	2	7065.947	2.391	.094
Q1	34498.320	1	34498.320	11.673	<.001
Q2	15042.188	1	15042.188	5.090	.025
Q3	10688.016	1	10688.016	3.617	.059
Q4	3599.937	1	3599.937	1.218	.271
Q5	2299.161	1	2299.161	.778	.379
Q6	661.042	1	661.042	.224	.637
Error	599923.155	203	2955.286		
Total	3249983.000	214			
Corrected Total	776945.500	213			

a. R Squared = .228 (Adjusted R Squared = .190)

Parameter Estimates

Dependent Variable: Rank of OpiniBDS

Parameter	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Intercept	93.226	26.443	3.526	<.001	41.088	145.364
[positive=1] * strengthgroup	23.177	11.977	1.935	.054	-.439	46.793
[positive=2] * strengthgroup	20.958	13.189	1.589	.114	-5.048	46.963
[positive=1] * psychdisgroup	8.293	12.054	.688	.492	-15.473	32.060
[positive=2] * psychdisgroup	27.414	12.812	2.140	.034	2.153	52.676
Q1	-10.727	3.140	-3.417	<.001	-16.917	-4.536
Q2	-17.471	7.744	-2.256	.025	-32.739	-2.202
Q3	6.412	3.372	1.902	.059	-.236	13.059
Q4	-3.381	3.063	-1.104	.271	-9.421	2.659
Q5	3.470	3.935	.882	.379	-4.288	11.229
Q6	-2.348	4.964	-.473	.637	-12.135	7.440

between
er Estim
alysis

Country of birth?

-Subje
ive Stat
Test o
Between
er Estim
ric Test

→ NPar Tests

Mann-Whitney Test

		Ranks		
	Country of birth?	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
OpiniBDS	Non-native Dutch	93	118.41	11012.00
	Native Dutch	121	99.12	11993.00
	Total	214		

Test Statistics^a

OpiniBDS	
Mann-Whitney U	4612.000
Wilcoxon W	11993.000
Z	-2.316
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.021

a. Grouping Variable: Country of birth?

sis Tes
dent-Si

niBDS a
Title
Indepe
Indepe
ius Fiel
cal Fiel

hitney
:
ke