

Media Ownership and Its Role in Shaping News: Analysing *Republika's* 1999 and 2021 Coverage in Light of the 2024 Gaza Genocide

BENNI SETIAWAN

Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta, Indonesia

PAWITO PAWITO

SRI HASTJARJO

Universitas Sebelas Maret, Indonesia

EKO PRASETYO NUGROHO SAPUTRO

Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta, Indonesia

ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the reporting of the Israeli aggression towards in the Indonesian newspaper *Republika* during the years 1999 and 2021, with a contextual reference to the 2024 Gaza genocide. The reports were selected through purposive sampling, focusing on direct coverage from both 1999 and 2021. Additionally, interviews were conducted with members of *Republika's* editorial team. Using Entman's *framing theory* as well as Shoemaker and Reese's *Hierarchy of Influences* model, the research identifies notable differences in news framing between the two periods. In 1999, the coverage in *Republika* largely emphasised political support from prominent figures, both in Indonesia and internationally, advocating for the defence of Palestine. In contrast, the 2021 coverage highlighted support from civil society, including athletes and celebrities. Differences are also evident across several levels of the Hierarchy of Influences model, with the media routine, organisational, and ideological levels being the most prominent. In 1999, *Republika's* reporting on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in the international section was relatively independent, focusing primarily on political issues. By 2021, however, the reporting followed a compartmentalised model, where one section complemented and connected with others. Despite the differences in time and ownership, *Republika's* stance on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict remained consistent. The newspaper continues to assert that the Palestinian people must be defended, a position shaped by its Muslim readership, who maintain a strong psychological connection with Palestinian Muslims.

Keywords: *Framing, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, media ownership, the influence of mass media hierarchy, Republika.*

INTRODUCTION

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict sparked in May 2021 where BBC news agency described the 11-day conflict as the worst since 2014 ("Israel intensifies attacks", 2021). Through the media, this conflict has become the world's attention, especially in Muslim-majority countries. In Indonesia, the media exposed the issue of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict which became a trending topic for weeks (Garnesia, 2021). This is due to the close relationship between Indonesia and Palestine, causing this issue to escalate (Indonesia Indicator, 2021).

Most recently, in 2024, the conflict escalated to what many describe as a genocide in Gaza. The situation has been marked by extensive military operations, resulting in widespread destruction of infrastructure, significant civilian casualties, and the collapse of essential

services. According to Poole et al. (2024), over 325 attacks on medical facilities have been reported, raising serious concerns about the targeting of healthcare and the worsening humanitarian crisis. The ongoing violence has not only led to immediate physical injuries but has also resulted in long-term psychological trauma among the population, particularly children (Boukari et al., 2024). Reports also indicate that the psychological impact of the conflict is profound, with many individuals suffering from acute stress disorders as a result of exposure to violence and instability (Alah, 2024). As the conflict deepens, media coverage in Indonesia, particularly by *Republika*, continues to resonate with its audience, emphasising solidarity with the Palestinian people and framing the issue through humanitarian and religious lenses. This ongoing conflict, especially the 2024 genocide, further reinforces the patterns of media framing observed in 1999 and 2021, as media outlets like *Republika* continue to highlight the suffering and the calls for international intervention.

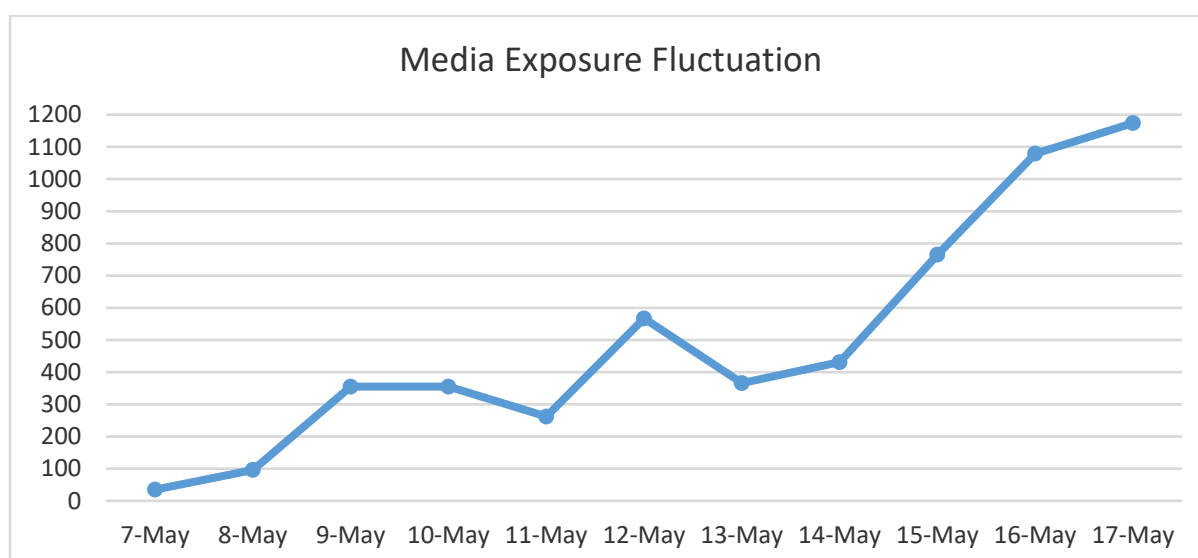


Figure 1: Graph of media exposure fluctuations of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in May 2021

Source: Indonesia Indicator, 2021

Regarding the reporting on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, McTigue (2011) argues that the media cannot be separated from bias due to the location of the media's state and socio-political relations especially in the context of Indonesia with a Muslim majority and Islamic media, such as the *Republika* newspaper. Also, media bias is shaped by several factors that distort news coverage and influence public perception, making it crucial to understand how these factors operate. One key factor is organisational interests. Media outlets often reflect the interests of their owners or sponsors, which can shape their reporting. Jost and Koehler (2018) note that both journalists' biases and media policies play important roles in shaping news. This can lead to certain viewpoints being emphasised or downplayed, such as in the coverage of the Israel-Palestine conflict, where certain narratives may align with the organisation's agenda. Another factor is political and ideological bias. Bhowmik and Fisher (2023) point out that U.S. media, for example, often favours the perspectives of its allies, particularly in international conflicts like Israel-Palestine. This type of bias can shape how the public views the conflict, with certain sides being portrayed more favourably. Additionally, censorship and propaganda contribute to media bias, especially in state-controlled media. Liu and Zhou (2022) explain that governments can manipulate media narratives to serve their

interests, often restricting the flow of unbiased information. In these cases, media reports may be shaped to align with government policies while suppressing alternative perspectives. These biases can shape how the conflict is reported and understood, with outlets like *Republika* being influenced by these dynamics.

The daily newspaper *Republika* emerged as a response to the lack of Islamic-based newspapers in Indonesia during the New Order era. With the largest Muslim community base in the world, Indonesian Muslim readers become a potential target audience. Also, the newspaper can represent the voice of Muslims. *Republika* was published for the first time on 4 January 1993 by the order of BJ Habibie in the Silaknas II ICMI (Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals Association) event on 5 December 1992, managed by PT Abdi Bangsa in which ICMI is the majority shareholder. The tagline is in accordance with the organisation that houses it, namely ICMI which is a group of Muslim intellectuals with the task of educating the life of the nation (Utomo, 2010; Salman et al., 2023). Thus, it is clear that *Republika* was born due to a political process; a politics of empowerment towards Muslims which until the 1980s was eroded by the New Order regime which was cynical about the development of Islamic voices.

However, the 1998 financial crisis hit PT Abdi Bangsa, thus majority shares were bought by the Mahaka Group with Erick Thohir as the new manager of the media. It was from here that *Republika's* political orientation changed to the business (Utomo, 2010). For this reason, the orientation shift and differences in ownership of *Republika* need to be examined in the *Republika* media's framing of reporting on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Studies on the reporting of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict can be grouped into several key themes. The first theme focuses on Western media framing, such as the work of Panayotova and Rizova (2021) on headline framing in Western outlets and Jackson's analysis of coverage in *The New York Times* (2023). These studies highlighted how Western media influenced global perceptions of the conflict. The second theme involves comparative media studies, where research compared framing of the conflict from different outlets. Arrosyid and Halwati (2021) explore differences in media coverage between two outlets, while Bhowmik and Fisher (2023) focused on CNN's reporting. These comparisons revealed how media from different regions or ideologies may present contrasting views of the same conflict. A third theme looks at peacebuilding and political sensibilities. Browne (2021) discussed how media promotes peacebuilding in contexts like Northern Ireland, while Dart (2022) examined how political movements like "Black Lives Matter" influence media framing. These studies provided a broader understanding of how media can shape conflict narratives beyond the Middle East. The fourth theme, opposing media parties, explored how media from opposing sides in a conflict frame their narratives. Gonen et al. (2022) study this polarisation, showing how different ideological perspectives influenced reporting. Finally, studies on media and conflict in Indonesia provided a local perspective where Dulwahab et al. (2021) and Ajaoud & Elmasry (2020) examine how Indonesian media reports conflicts and frames crises, offering insights into how domestic media may handle international issues like the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Republika newspaper is one of the largest media for Indonesian Muslims to seek information on the Israeli-Palestinian situation. With that said, the comparative reporting of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in *Republika* newspapers after the change ownership has not yet to be observed. In doing so, this study can contribute to media studies, framing, and

further insights the Israeli-Palestinian conflict which has now transpired to become genocidal aggression against Palestinians.

LITERATURE REVIEW

a. Framing and Conflict in Media

In reporting, media tend to construct and frame certain angles. Entman (2007) emphasises that consistent patterns in the framing of mediated communication as a bias. Because of that, the media framing tends to contain bias so that the issue is highlighted and attracts the public, especially if an issue involves a conflict in which the community feels close and familiar with it. Then, media reporting offers the public to know the conflict through media framing. In studying media framing, Entman (1991) describes a news text analysis mechanism. In framing, the media seeks to regulate how certain realities are understood (Entman & Usher, 2018). The framing analysis model has four elements, namely: define problems, diagnose causes, make moral judgments, and treatment recommendations. This element of defining problems is a master frame or main frame to go further on how a phenomenon is constructed differently by journalists. From this element, the displayed reality becomes different.

The next element is the diagnosis of causes, which is an explanation of the suspected actor of an event. In this case, the cause can be traced, such as what happened (what), and who is the actor (who). Thus, how an event is understood by determining what and who is considered the source of the problem. For this reason, if a problem is understood differently, the cause of the problem will also be understood differently. So, the causes diagnosis element deals with explanation of who and what is considered the victim and the party to blame in the news.

The third element is making moral judgment which is used to provide justification or argumentation for the issues that have been presented in the framing analysis (Entman, 1993). After identifying the problem and its causes, it is necessary to show the assessor's idea of a problem. In this case, it is usually quoted through statements from the influential figures and parties.

The last element in Entman's framing analysis is treatment recommendation. This element explains the form or intention expected by the news text written by journalists. This element also includes suggestion and problem solving so that this element is very dependent on the definition and causes of the problems raised in the news. The framing of a news report is constructed and can be detected through the choice of words, pictures, images, clauses, and certain sentences that show a meaning from the news text. Images and related dictions (word choices) can provide an overview of how an event is understood and also how one side is emphasised more than the other (Eriyanto, 2002).

This effort can be realised by repeating, giving more prominent placement, and relating to other parts of the news text. In other words, it can be displayed more than other aspects. This requires further study because this research focuses on News Construction related to Media Owners. For this reason, we need to utilise Hierarchical Theory of Mass Media Influence. In addition, as this research seeks to compare the construction of news regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict between the ICMI period in 1999 and Erick Thohir's leadership period in 2021, the influence of media owners and political periods differences needs to be reviewed using the Hierarchical Theory of Mass Media Influence.

b. Hierarchy of Influence on Mass Media

News or content from the mass media presented to the public cannot be separated from the influence of many variables. One of the influences deals with the ownership of the mass media. Thus, the influence of news content created by the mass media needs to be studied thoroughly. For this reason, the hierarchy influence on mass media content from Shoemaker and Reese seems relevant utilised in this research.

The assumption of the Shoemaker and Reese (1999) hierarchy of influence is that this is not a book about the effects of content, but we are assuming that content has important implications for social change. In other words, messages or news presented to the public are influenced by the internal policies of media organisations and related external media.

The internal media factor includes media workers or journalists, editorial board, and media routines that are under the umbrella of media organisations, including media owners. While the external media factors include news sources, advertisers, state government, and media and state ideology (Shoemaker & Reese, 2013).

Shoemaker and Reese (1996) divide the two factors influencing mass media content into five levels, namely: individual level, media routines level, organisational level, extra media level and ideological level. The framing of reporting on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in the *Republika* newspaper with two different media owners needs to be linked to the levels in the hierarchy of influence model.

At the individual level, personal traits of journalists, such as their values, beliefs, and life experiences, play a significant role in influencing news content. For example, Xu & Jin's (2016) study on Chinese online journalists shows that individual factors strongly affect how journalists perceive their professional roles, indicating that personal attributes can shape journalistic decisions and practices. Similarly, research by Dirbaba and O'Donnell (2016) on Ethiopian journalists highlights the influence of family socialisation, suggesting that journalists' personal backgrounds can lead them to prioritise political loyalties over professional ethics in their reporting.

The routine level refers to the standard procedures and norms within news organisations that guide journalists in their day-to-day work. Fatmawati's (2018) research emphasises how media routines impact news production, showing that structured processes within newsrooms significantly influence the final content produced. Additionally, Xu (2022) highlights how these routines can limit journalists' choices, underscoring the importance of understanding these frameworks in news selection and reporting.

At the organisational level, the culture and structure of media organisations shape the way news is produced and shared. Lück et al. (2020) highlight the role of leadership and organisational strategies in fostering diversity in newsrooms, illustrating how internal dynamics influence journalistic practices. Herscovitz's (2020) findings on Brazilian newspapers reveal how the ideological stances of media organisations often align with those of the ruling elites, further demonstrating how organisational structures affect media content.

The extra-media level involves external factors like political, economic, and social pressures that influence media content. For example, Relly and Bustamante (2013) examine how violence and intimidation in Mexico limit journalistic freedom, demonstrating the powerful impact of outside forces on news reporting. Similarly, De Macedo Higgins Joyce et al. (2022) identify spatial dimensions as an important external influence that shapes how journalists in Latin America perceive their roles and responsibilities.

Finally, the ideological level encompasses the broader societal values and beliefs that influence media content. The hierarchical model suggests that ideological factors permeate all other levels, influencing journalists' interpretations of their roles and the stories they cover. Sabri's (2021) study explores how journalists navigate sensitive topics in pluralistic societies, highlighting the importance of ideological considerations in shaping news narratives.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative research approach, utilising case studies focused on the reporting of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in *Republika* newspaper. A purposive sampling technique was used to select 100 reports from *Republika* publications in 1999 and May 2021. The researcher gathered issues of *Republika* Daily from 17 May 2021, to 29 May 2021, as well as from the years 1999 and 2000. News articles derived from interviews or direct field coverage were identified as part of the sampling process.

The purposive sampling aimed to focus on a specific set of reports, selecting seven reports from each of the following periods: 1999, 2000, and May 2021. In total, 154 reports on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict were analyzed: 65 reports from 1999, 54 from 2000, and 35 from May 2021. The criteria for selecting these reports included the presence of direct quotations and the identification of sources through interviews or field reporting. This approach allowed for a concentrated analysis of firsthand news coverage.

The textual data were analyzed using Robert Entman's (1991) framing theory, which includes four framing elements: defining problems, diagnosing causes, making moral judgments, and offering treatment recommendations. Defining problems refers to how a phenomenon is presented in the news, serving as the master frame. Diagnosing causes involves identifying the underlying causes of the issues being reported. Making moral judgments focuses on how the media provides evaluations and arguments regarding the problems. Finally, giving treatment recommendations outlines the solutions or actions proposed by the media in response to the issues.

Additionally, the researcher conducted in-depth interviews with the managing editor and the editor of *Republika*. These interviews were based on the findings from the framing analysis and supplemented with secondary data from books, articles, and other relevant documents. The interviews aimed to explore the differences in media ownership between the ICMI period in 1999 and the Mahaka Group era in 2021, and how these ownership changes may have influenced *Republika's* reporting on the conflict.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The construction of news report on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in the *Republika* is viewed from different media owners, namely *Republika* in 1999 in the ICMI era and *Republika* in 2021 in the era of the Mahaka Group. For this reason, this section discusses textual comparative analysis using Entman's framing analysis and correlates it with the influence hierarchy. The following is a comparison of the framing of news reporting on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in the *Republika* newspaper in 1999 and 2021. Then, the results of the framing comparison are correlated with levels in the hierarchy of influence in the *Republika* newspaper. Data from the media influence hierarchy were obtained from in-depth interviews with Subroto as the managing editor of *Republika* and Teguh Firmansyah as Editor of *Republika*, *Republika's* annual report, and documents related to the hierarchical level of mass media influence.

a. The Comparison of Reporting Framing on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict in 1999 and 2021

The first framing in reporting the Israeli-Palestinian conflict through Entman model is to examine the identification of problems from the related media. The *Republika* newspaper in 1999 identified that the Israeli side had committed violations, acted rigidly and delayed peace negotiations. Meanwhile, the Palestinians are described as victims and continue to be wronged, especially in relation to the Israeli occupation of Palestinian residential land. Also, the Indonesian government must support Palestinian independence and must not open diplomatic relations with Israel.

In 1999, the news about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that was covered seemed to revolve around the unfinished negotiation process. The defining problems presented are evident from news headlines such as "UN Approves Resolution for Evaluation of Israeli Violations", 11 February 1999, and "Barak Promises to Stop Jewish Settlements, Palestinians Doubt", 9 December 1999. However, the tendency to side with Palestine can be seen from the diction of 'transgression' which is brought closer to 'Israel' and also the promises of Israeli leaders that seem dubious to Palestine.

Apart from that, the news frame also deals with Indonesia's relations with the Israeli and Palestinian conflicts, for example "Yasser Arafat Stopped by in Jakarta for about 2 Hours", 9 April 1999, "Relations with Israel Hurt the Feelings of the Muslim", 11 June 1999., "Minister of Religion Malik Fadjar: The West Also Assesses Israel's Occupation", 14 June 1999, and "RI will not open diplomatic relations with Israel", 26 October 1999. The *Republika* daily media packs an impression that the Indonesian government should defend Palestine and not establish any cooperation with Israel which is considered as an occupier.

Meanwhile in 2021, *Republika* identified the problem being raised, namely: Israeli missiles continued to fall even when Palestinians were praying. From this, an interfaith movement emerged criticising Israel's actions. Also, it was shown that the health system in Gaza was overwhelmed. Finally, both individuals and institutions in Indonesia carried out solidarity for Palestine, such as the Baitul Maal Hidayatullah which suggested alms to Palestinians through the Alms Forum (FOZ). Then, there was a solidarity march to support Palestine, and mosques initiative to gather donations for Palestinians.

For this reason, the *Republika* in 2021 still provided its support for the Palestinian side. However, the framing of the issue of the Israeli and Palestinian conflicts was presented by displaying Israeli attacks that have harmed Palestine, such as "Missile Falls When We Prostrate", 17 May 2021, and "Gaza Health System Overwhelmed", 21 May 2021. Conditions of conflict in Gaza was mixed with the rampant Covid-19 pandemic, making the situation for Palestine to be in a very bad and suffering state.

Therefore, other news coverage is also framed by the existence of aid and defense movements for the Palestinian people including "Cross Religion Condemns Israeli Violence", 19 May 2021, "FOZ-Hidayatullah Urges People to Help Palestine", 22 May 2021, "Support for Palestine Continues", 24 May 2021, "Palestine Must Be Defended", 28 May 2021, and "The Spirit of Helping Palestinian Mosques is Appreciated", 29 May 2021. The element of defining the problems and giving treatment recommendations can be viewed from how the efforts provide real assistance to the Palestinian people because of Israeli atrocities.

The diagnose of the problem in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, *Republika* in 1999, show that in general the negotiations between Israel-Palestine were violated by Israel, Palestinian land was confiscated, and there was a discourse of opening diplomatic relations between Indonesia and Israel.

In 2021, *Republika's* diagnosis of the cause showed that initially Palestinians were attacked by Israel at Al-Aqsha Mosque. Even, hospitals were attacked and destroyed. In this case, Palestine belongs to the poor because of the continuous humanitarian crises and conflicts. Therefore, the Indonesian give their alms to Palestinians.

Making a moral judgment in 1999, *Republika* seemed to emphasise that in general, Israel should no longer disturb settlements in Gaza and East Jerusalem, the Indonesian government supports Palestinian independence, and may not open diplomatic relations with Israel because it could hurt the feelings of Muslims.

In 2021, *Republika* presented the actual condition in which the Israeli attack was not a reaction to the Hamas attack, but the opportunity the Israelis had been waiting for. Due to the deteriorating situation in Gaza, alms can be distributed during the ceasefire. Finally, international humanitarian solidarity which was not based on identity changed the situation.

The last framing was the treatment recommendation in 1999 which showed that *Republika* provide suggestions and views regarding the issues being reported such as the United Nations should ask Israel to stop development in the Palestinian area, a conference is needed to accelerate peace negotiations, the US should encourage the peace process, and Israel's image needs to be repaired first in the eyes of Muslims by showing it is serious about Middle East peace.

In 2021, *Republika* sought to provide several suggestions, namely: while the Covid-19 pandemic is still attacking, more medical assistance needs to be distributed. Then, the UN Human Rights Council must intervene and carry out diplomatic actions related to the conflict so that it ends soon. Apart from that, the Covid-19 vaccination must be carried out continuously and WHO needs to provide medical assistance for Palestine.

In Indonesian society, donations and support and diplomacy must be given so that the conflict ends soon. Baznas raises funds for Palestine, even administrators of each mosque need to make announcements to collect donations for Palestine.

The framing of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in *Republika* during 1999 and 2021 revealed deeper ideological and contextual differences beyond mere technical aspects. In 1999, during the ICMI era, *Republika's* reporting highlighted the victimisation of Palestinians in a way that aligned with the broader Islamic political agenda. This is reflected in the use of terms such as "violations" and "occupation," presenting Israel as the oppressor and Palestine as the oppressed, while urging Indonesia to diplomatically support Palestinian independence. Headlines like "UN Approves Resolution for Evaluation of Israeli Violations" (1999) emphasise this stance.

In contrast, *Republika's* 2021 reporting, under the Mahaka Group, retained its pro-Palestinian stance but shifted focus to humanitarian issues exacerbated by the Israeli attacks and the Covid-19 pandemic. Articles such as "Missile Falls When We Prostrate" (2021) and "Gaza Health System Overwhelmed" (2021) demonstrate the newspaper's emphasis on Palestinian suffering, not just through the lens of political conflict but also through civil society solidarity and global humanitarian efforts.

b. The Comparison of Hierarchies of Influence on Republika Reporting in 1999 and 2021

The difference between the owners of *Republika* media in influencing reporting on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in 1999 and 2021 needs to be viewed from the hierarchy of influence using Shoemaker and Reese (1996) model. This study aims to explain the influence of *Republika* owners in reporting. Therefore, several levels are highlighted, such as the routine level of the

media, the level of media organisation and the level of ideology. The following further describes each level of influence of reporting on the *Republika* in 1999 and 2021.

Factors at the level of individual journalists influence deal with background which includes education, characteristics, and beliefs. Related to reporting in the international section, the educational background of a journalist is of great concern to *Republika*. The issue of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is included in the international rubric so that this individual level determines the content of reporting on the Israeli and Palestinian conflicts in both 1999 and 2021. The journalists are individuals who have expertise in English and Arabic, and are very familiar with the history of the conflict. One of the differences is that writers and editors in 1999 were displayed with their initials, while in 2021 they were displayed with their full names. Teguh Firmansyah, the Editor of *Republika*, explained that the religious background and qualifications of journalists are not considered barriers at the publication, which is open to candidates from any religious or educational background. He acknowledged that many of the journalists employed happen to be Muslim, but emphasised that *Republika* welcomes journalists from all religious backgrounds, including non-Muslims. He clarified that certain divisions are staffed by Muslims to ensure accurate and relevant coverage. Firmansyah further stated that *Republika* does not consider the religious affiliation of employees or journalists as a factor in the recruitment process, focusing instead on their abilities and skills. For specific reporting channels, however, journalists of a particular religious background may be required to ensure appropriate coverage, which he noted was not a form of discrimination, but rather a measure to assign journalists appropriately to their roles.

The next level is the media routines. At the media routine level, the management of *Republika's* International Rubik in 1999 was relatively independent. This makes reporting on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which is included in the International rubric, completely separate from other rubrics. While the international rubric in *Republika* Daily has changed to a compartment since 2019. Thus, reporting on the Israeli and Palestinian conflict in May 2021 is also included in this compartment mechanism. This model allows International rubrics to join and complement each other with other rubrics.

This is why reporting on the conflict between Israel and Palestine in 1999 seemed to be separate from other news. Reporting in that year was more directed at political issues. Meanwhile, reporting on the Israeli and Palestinian conflicts in 2021 can be presented in a flexible manner by reporting on various other sections, such as the Sports rubric, the Khazanah rubric, the Main Friends rubric, the Public rubric, the Muhammadiyah for the Nation rubric, and the cover of the *Republika* daily.

The next level is the media organisations. In this study, this level includes ownership of *Republika* media. Based on the interview with Subroto as the Managing Editor of *Republika*, the ownership change in *Republika* media from ICMI to Erick Thohir and the Mahaka group certainly had an impact, but not significant. Moreover, regarding the reporting of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, there were no ideological differences when *Republika* was under the ownership of the Mahaka group. Emphasis on sports issues such as football and basketball intervened in reporting. However, there has never been any special reporting on the conflict between Israel and Palestine.

Based on this explanation, when Erick Thohir and the Mahaka group bought *Republika* shares, they stated that they would not change the ideology of the newspaper. This seems to be realised by the Mahaka group because *Republika's* position as a newspaper for Muslim readers is very strong, so it just need to be maximised in the business sectors. Utomo (2010)

reveal that the presence of Erick Thohir encouraged the overall news content improvement to suit the target market and changes in business orientation. At the same time, revenue from advertising escalated. On this side, there is also the influence of the Mahaka group, but not on reporting on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The next influence from outside the *Republika* media organisation that influences reporting on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was the media's readership or market share. As the first Muslim media in Indonesia, *Republika* has not changed the orientation of its market share, even though it has become business-oriented. For this reason, one of the references for *Republika's* daily reporting in finding news is by exploring the needs of its market, namely Muslims. Moreover, the majority of Indonesia's population is Muslim. In addition, the conflict between Israel and Palestine is considered to correlate with the conflict between Judaism and Islam.

In the context of reporting on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in the May 2021 edition, the use of internet technology has become widespread in Indonesian society. With a large number of internet users, Indonesia ranks as the sixth-largest internet user base in the world, according to kominfo.go.id (November 24, 2014). Despite this, print media remains in use, though *Republika* also offers an e-paper version in PDF format, available for purchase by readers. As media convergence has progressed, *Republika* has had to adapt to these changes. News from the print edition is also made available on *Republika* Online, an online platform accessible at www.republika.co.id. This shift has resulted in a narrower market share for the print edition, as many readers have transitioned to the online version. Nevertheless, the *Republika* daily continues to serve its loyal audience through both the epaper and print formats.

Besides, *Republika* Daily readers are not just ordinary readers, but they are very loyal customers. This includes the level outside the media organisation. For this reason, *Republika's* market share of customers is already emotionally attached to the issue of the Israeli and Palestinian conflict through *Republika*. Because of that, when *Republika* opened donations to help victims in Gaza, many people gave their support. Thus, *Republika* is not only influenced by market share, but also its readers that can be influenced by reading *Republika*. However, this does not mean that reporting on the Gaza conflict was not exploited to generate donations, but reporting and donations were two different and separate things.

While reporting on the Israeli and Palestinian conflict in 1999, advertising products were less in number. This probably because *Republika* at that time was a medium for ICMI votes, it was not owned by a businessman, like Erick Thohir. Whether there were advertisements or not, *Republika* Daily still has loyal customers.

The last level is the ideological level. In this case, ideology refers to the ideology adopted by the relevant media institution. This is because the activities of journalists must be in accordance with the ideology adopted by an institution or company, including in making news. In the context of the *Republika*, the ideology can be viewed from the vision and mission as well as the various activities behind the emergence of the *Republika*.

Republika was founded because of a political process under the ICMI, a politics of empowerment towards Muslims which until the 1980s was eroded by the New Order regime and was cynical about the development of Islamic voices. The establishment of ICMI united the intellectual forces of Islam which had previously been scattered. From this situation, the daily newspaper of *Republika* was published to represent the voice of Islam with a critical position on Suharto's rule and support the reform process.

After the ownership of shares in *Republika* was changed from the majority of Abdi Bangsa Foundation to the Mahaka Group, *Republika's* political orientation changed to the business orientation. This is relevant to Muhammad Lutfi statement, "since we took over the management, *Republika* changed its orientation from politics to business, we are market oriented" (Utomo, 2010).

Even though it has changed its orientation, it does not mean that *Republika* has left the market for Islamic society. This is because *Republika's* origins as a people's newspaper have never changed. However, the presentation is different as Erick Thohir said that "we make politics a part of the lifestyle of the Islamic community" (Utomo, 2010).

Since then, strategic steps were taken, such as downsizing the company's organisation. In addition, Erick Thohir, who became the new manager, took various efficiency measures to cut operational costs, such as reducing the number of employees. Overall news content was also improved to suit the target market and changes to business-oriented. At the same time, revenue from advertising was escalating (Utomo, 2010).

Republika as an Islamic daily newspaper has completely changed its own business entity. The basic principles of business management are applied according to the character and culture of the company. However, the nature as an Islamic newspaper and a Muslim community newspaper is maintained (Utomo, 2010). For this reason, *Republika* focuses on two areas, namely the existing business sector and the Islamic political sector which continues to exist to form public opinion.

Ideologically, *Republika* has indeed shifted its views not only because of ownership, but also because of the different socio-political context of Indonesia, namely 1999 (authoritarian New Order) and 2021 (democracy). However, *Republika* daily continues to serve its largest market share, namely Muslims as an effort to provide reading for the Indonesian Muslim community. This ideology can only be viewed from several practical elements in *Republika* daily such as reporters or journalists as media workers who make news, editors and managing editors. Directly or indirectly, this ideological mechanism has had an impact on reporting on the Israeli and Palestinian conflicts in 1999 and 2021.

Teguh Firmansyah, Editor of *Republika* Online, elaborated on this approach by stating that *Republika* maintains a specific vision and mission, along with a targeted readership. As such, the newspaper avoids publishing content that is obscene, uses harsh language, or contains vulgarity. He emphasised that language must be moderated in line with the publication's identity as a platform for moderate Muslim readers. From both an ideological and journalistic perspective, *Republika* upholds these values, ensuring that its reporting does not endorse or incite violence.

Based on the results and discussion of the framing analysis above, the reporting on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in the *Republika* newspapers in 1999 and 2021 shows differences. In 1999, reporting on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict tended to be about negotiations that had not yet been completed. The framing in the news highlights the Palestinians as victims of discrimination. Here, the Indonesian government is encouraged to defend Palestine diplomatically.

Meanwhile, reporting on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in the *Republika* newspaper in 2021 tends to support the Palestinian side. However, the framing of the conflict issue is presented by presenting Israeli attacks that have caused so much suffering to Palestine. Moreover, the conflict is mixed with the Covid-19 pandemic so that the situation in Palestine is described as very bad that encourage direct aid movements.

This year, the news is framed by the international civil solidarity movement to help and defend the Palestinian people. In Indonesia itself, there are many donation openings and interfaith movements. This is different from the context in 1999 where the partiality of Palestine was shown more by the political encouragement of big figures from both Indonesia and other countries.

In 2021, civil society, athletes, and celebrities are constructed to vote for Palestine. This context makes the difference in the framing of *Republika* newspapers in 1999 and 2021. In the comparison of the influence hierarchies, several levels show differences. The media routine level, the media organisation level and the ideological level are the most prominent. In 1999, the news on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in the International section was relatively independent so that it was separated from other sections and was more focused on political issues.

Meanwhile, in 2021, reporting was arranged in a compartmental model, namely one rubric can be connected and complement other rubrics. This is why reporting on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict can appear in various rubrics, sports rubrics, public rubrics, treasure rubrics, main theme rubrics, Muhammadiyah for the Nation rubric, even on the cover of *Republika*. In addition, because of the Covid-19 pandemic, the editorial work was held from home (work from home).

The level of media organisation including media ownership in a organisational structure is different. In 1999, *Republika* under the ICMI became a channel for Islamic voices so that political nuances appeared to defend Palestine. Meanwhile, in 2021, the Mahaka Group and Erick Thohir focused more on the media business. However, regarding the reporting of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the intervention from media owners was not significant. Erick Thohir was more inclined to provide direction on sports news. Apart from Thohir being the former president of the Inter Milan club and the owner of several basketball clubs, *Republika's* reader base and market share are Muslims. For this reason, the owner of *Republika* think that the editorial board is more knowledgeable about this issue.

At the ideological level, it is clearly different from the beginning of ICMI to empower the voices of Muslims. Now, it has entered the business stage in the Mahaka Group. Although this orientation shift does not change *Republika's* nature as an Islamic newspaper and Muslim community. Thus, ideologically, *Republika* has indeed shifted its views. However, *Republika* daily continues to serve its largest market share, namely Muslims as the effort to provide reading for the Indonesian Muslim community.

The influence of media ownership and organisational structure on *Republika's* reporting in 1999 and 2021 shows notable differences. In 1999, under ICMI's ownership, *Republika* served as a channel for Islamic political activism, which shaped its coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The media routine level at that time maintained a clear separation between the International Rubric and other sections, allowing for more focused political reporting.

By 2021, under the Mahaka Group, *Republika* adopted a more business-oriented approach, yet its Islamic ideological identity remained intact. The reporting was integrated across different sections, such as the Sports and Khazanah rubrics, due to the adoption of a compartmental model. This allowed for more interdisciplinary reporting on the conflict, incorporating humanitarian aid and solidarity movements alongside traditional political narratives. Despite the shift towards a business model, *Republika's* ideological commitment to its Muslim readership persisted, as reflected in its ongoing support for Palestine.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that that different year (1999 and 2021) and different ownership do not change *Republika's* view of the Israeli and Palestinian conflict. *Republika* when it was owned by ICMI and the Mahaka Group (Erick Thohir) saw Israel as the occupier of the Palestinian nation. The suffering of the Palestinian people is sad for the world's population, especially among Muslims.

This research criticises the classical theory pioneered by functional Maxists which states that media ownership influences news content. This research reveals that media ownership does not affect news content, because media owners understand that the market for media readers is quite dominant and in accordance with news content. In the context of *Republika*, loyal readers of this media are Muslims, and reporting on the Israeli and Israeli conflict is very close to the psychology of Indonesian Muslims.

BIODATA

Benni Setiawan (Corresponding author) is a lecturer at the Department of Communication Science, Faculty of Social Sciences, Law, and Political Sciences Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta. Email: bennisetiawan@uny.ac.id

Pawito Pawito is a professor and Head of Doctoral Program in Communication Studies, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Universitas Sebelas Maret, Indonesia. Email: pawito_palimin@staff.uns.ac.id

Sri Hastjarjo is a lecturer at the Communication Department, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Universitas Sebelas Maret, Indonesia. Email: sri.hastjarjo@staff.uns.ac.id

Eko Prasetyo Nugroho Saputro is a lecturer at the Department of Communication Science, Faculty of Social Sciences, Law, and Political Sciences Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta, Indonesia. Email: ekoprasetyo@uny.ac.id

REFERENCES

- Ajaoud, S., & Elmasry, M. H. (2020). When news is the crisis: Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya framing of the 2017 Gulf conflict. *Global Media and Communication*, 16(2), 227–242. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1742766520921880>
- Alah, M. A. (2024). Echoes of conflict: The enduring mental health struggle of Gaza's healthcare workers. *Conflict and Health*, 18, 21. <https://doi.org/nj9p>
- Arrosyid, H., & Halwati, U. (2021). Media framing on the Palestine-Israel conflict. *Komunika: Jurnal Dakwah dan Komunikasi*, 15(2), 217-224. <https://doi.org/nj9q>
- BBC News. (2021, May 20). Israel intensifies attacks in Gaza as conflict enters fifth day. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-57110368>
- 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>
- Browne, B. C. (2021). Promoting Northern Ireland's peacebuilding experience in Palestine-Israel: Normalising the status quo. *Third World Quarterly*, 42(7), 1625-1643. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2021.1903310>
- Boukari, Y., Kadir, A., Waterston, T., Jarrett, P., Harkensee, C., Dexter, E., Cinar, E. N., Blackett, K., Nacer, H., Stevens, A., & Devakumar, D. (2024). Gaza, armed conflict and child health. *BMJ Paediatrics Open*, 8(1), e002407. <https://doi.org/nj9r>
- Dart, J. (2022). From Ferguson to Gaza. Sport, political sensibility, and the Israel/Palestine conflict in the age of Black Lives Matter. *European Journal for Sport and Society*, 19(2) 151-169. <https://doi.org/10.1080/16138171.2021.1917183>
- De Macedo Higgins Joyce, V., Harlow, S., Weiss, A. S., & Alves, R. C. (2022). Spatial dimensions within hierarchy of influences: How re-conceived notions of space in networked societies impact Latin American journalists. *International Communication Gazette*, 85(6), 498–519. <https://doi.org/10.1177/17480485221130908>
- Dirbaba, B., & O'Donnell, P. (2016). Silent censor: The influence of authoritarian family socialisation on professional journalism in Ethiopia. *Journalism*, 17(7), 915–933. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1464884915585961>
- Dulwahab, E., Abdullah, A., Maryani, E., & Muhtadi, A. S. (2021). Media strategy in covering religious conflicts: A case study of Ahmadiyah conflict in West Java, Indonesia. *Jurnal Komunikasi: Malaysian Journal of Communication*, 37(2), 98-110. <https://doi.org/hj4j>
- Entman, R. M. (1991). Framing U.S. coverage of international news: Contrasts in narratives of the KAL and Iran Air incidents. *Journal of Communication*, 41(4), 6-27. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1460-2466.1991.tb02328.x>
- Entman, R. M. (1993). Framing: Toward clarification of a fractured paradigm. *Journal of Communication*, 43(4), 51-58. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1460-2466.1993.tb01304.x>
- Entman, R. M. (2007). Framing bias: Media in the distribution of power. *Journal of Communication*, 57(1), 163-173. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1460-2466.2006.00336.x>
- Entman, R. M., & Usher, N. (2018). Framing in a fractured democracy: Impacts of digital technology on ideology, Power and cascading network activation. *Journal of Communication*, 68, 298-308. <https://doi.org/10.1093/joc/jqx019>
- Eriyanto. (2002). *Analisis framing: Konstruksi, ideologi, dan politik media*. LKiS.
- Fatmawati, F. (2018). Analisis produksi program berita Indonesia Morning Show di news and entertainment television. *Profetik Jurnal Komunikasi*, 11(2). <https://doi.org/nj9s>

- Garnesia, I. (2021, June 9). Adakah bias di pemberitaan media Indonesia soal Israel-Palestina? *Tirto.id*. <https://tirto.id/adakah-bias-di-pemberitaan-media-indonesia-soal-israel-palestina-ggBK>
- Gonen, Y., Tenenboim-Weinblatt, K., & Kampf, Z. (2022). Mediating the opponent's news: A study of inter-media citations in the Israeli–Palestinian conflict. *Media, War & Conflict*, 15(3), 334–352. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1750635220953656>
- Herscovitz, H. G. (2020). Leading newspapers in Brazil as political actors (1994–present). *Deleted Journal*, 30(2), 93–122. <https://doi.org/10.61490/eial.v30i2.1629>
- Indonesia Indicator*. (2021). Konflik Palestina & Israel dalam ragam angle dan cuitan.
- Jackson, H. M. (2023). The New York Times distorts the Palestinian struggle: A case study of anti-Palestinian bias in US news coverage of the First and Second Palestinian Intifadas. *Media, War & Conflict*, 17(1), 116–135. <https://doi.org/10.1177/17506352231178148>
- Jaramaya, R. (2021, May 21). Sistem kesehatan Gaza kewalahan. *Republika*.
- Jost, P., & Koehler, C. (2018). Who shapes the news? Analyzing journalists' and organizational interests as competing influences on biased coverage. *Journalism*, 22(2), 484–500. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1464884918788270>
- Liu, L., & Zhou, C. (2022). Global media bias caused by propaganda and censorship. *SSRN Electronic Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4286600>
- Lück, J., Schultz, T., Simon, F., Borchardt, A., & Kieslich, S. (2020). Diversity in British, Swedish, and German newsrooms: Problem awareness, measures, and achievements. *Journalism Practice*, 16(4), 561–581. <https://doi.org/nj9x>
- Mahaka Media*. (2021). Annual report Mahaka Media 2021. <https://www.mahakax.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/2021-Annual-Report-PT-Mahaka-Media-Tbk.pdf>
- McTigue, G. (2011). Media bias in covering the Israeli-Palestinian conflict: With a case study of BBC coverage and its foundation of impartiality (Honors Capstone Projects, Renée Crown University). *Surface*. https://surface.syr.edu/honors_capstone/300
- Mukhtar, U. (2021, May 28). Palestina harus dibela. *Republika*.
- Panayotova, M., & Rizova, H. (2021). *Online news media framing of the 2021 Israeli-Palestinian conflict by Al Jazeera, BBC and CNN* (Master's Thesis, School of Arts & Communication, Malmö University).
- Permana, F. E. (2021, May 19). Lintas agama kecam kekerasan Israel. *Republika*.
- Permana, F. E. (2021, May 22). FOZ-Hidayatullah imbau umat bantu Palestina. *Republika*.
- Permana, F. E. (2021, May 29). Semangat masjid bantu palestina diapresiasi. *Republika*.
- Poole, D. N., Andersen, D., Raymond, N. A., Grace, R., Smith, T., Khoshnood, K., & Mowafi, H. (2024). Damage to medical complexes in the Israel– Hamas war: A geospatial analysis. *BMJ Global Health*, 9(2), e014768. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjgh-2023-014768>
- Relly, J. E., & De Bustamante, C. G. (2013). Silencing Mexico. *The International Journal of Press/Politics*, 19(1), 108–131. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1940161213509285>
- Republika*. (1999, February 11). PBB setuju resolusi untuk evaluasi pelanggaran Israel.
- Republika*. (1999, April 9). Yasser Arafat mampir di Jakarta sekitar 2 jam.
- Republika*. (1999, June 11). Hubungan dengan Israel melukai perasaan umat Islam.
- Republika*. (1999, June 14). Menag Malik Fadjar: Barat pun menilai Israel penjajah.
- Republika*. (1999, September 28). Israel serobot tanah di tepi Barat.
- Republika*. (1999, October 26). RI tak akan membuka hubungan diplomatik dengan Israel.
- Republika*. (1999, December 9). Barak janji hentikan pemukiman Yahudi, Palestina ragu.

- Sabri, S. A. (2021). Allah versus God! Influences of news reporting on contents. *Al-i'lam - Journal of Contemporary Islamic Communication and Media*, 1(1), 144–151. <https://doi.org/10.33102/jicom.vol1no1.10>
- Salman, D., Purwasito, A., & Rais, W. A. (2023). How media remembered the past: Framing analysis of the May 1998 tragedy in Indonesian print newspapers (1999-2008). *Jurnal Komunikasi: Malaysian Journal of Communication*, 39(2), 312-324. <https://doi.org/10.17576/JKMJC-2023-3902-17>
- Satria, L., & Febrian, F. (2021, May 24). Dukungan untuk Palestina berlanjut. *Republika*.
- Shoemaker, P. J., & Reese, S. D. (1996). *Mediating the message: Theories of influence on mass media content*. Longman Publisher.
- Shoemaker, P. J., & Reese, S. D. (2013). *Mediating the message in the 21st century: A media sociology perspective*. Routledge.
- Utomo, A. P. (2010). Republika 17 tahun melintas zaman. *Republika*.
- Xu, N. (2022). Is there any news left after gatekeeping? A journalistic perspective from Beijing on the multi-level of analysis. *Galactica Media Journal of Media Studies*, 4(1), 15–34. <https://doi.org/10.46539/gmd.v4i1.166>
- Xu, Y., & Jin, J. (2016). The hierarchy of influences on professional role perceptions among Chinese online journalists. *Digital Journalism*, 5(2), 194–212. <https://doi.org/ghq7bk>
- Zamzami, F. (2021, May 17). Rudal jatuh saat kami bersujud. *Republika*.