

The Role of TikTok in Disseminating the Palestinian Narrative during the War on Gaza from the Perspective of Palestinian University Students

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Abstract

This study aimed to explore the role of TikTok in disseminating the Palestinian narrative related to the war on Gaza from the perspective of Palestinian university students. The study employed a media audience survey method and was conducted on a sample of 620 students from Palestinian universities in the West Bank. The results showed a high degree of motivation among students to use TikTok to disseminate the Palestinian narrative, with an average response score of 4.33. One of the most prominent motivations was using TikTok to spread accurate facts and information about the war on Gaza and to amplify the Palestinian voice to the world. It was also found that there are positive attitudes towards the content presented on TikTok, as students consider the content to be beneficial in raising global awareness of the Palestinian narrative and characterized by credibility and transparency. Regarding emotional effects, the study showed that students feel proud and in solidarity when watching TikTok content highlighting Palestinian resistance and the violations in Gaza, with an average response score of 4.31.

Keywords

TikTok, Palestinian Narrative, War on Gaza, Palestinian University Students

1. Introduction

In the past two decades, social media has undergone a radical transformation in how news and information are disseminated and how global events are interacted with (Zhang, 2021). These platforms have become an integral part of daily life for many (Li & Li, 2022), offering new and effective ways to convey informa-

tion and raise awareness about various issues (Zhou, 2021). Among these platforms, TikTok stands out as an influential tool for expressing opinions and disseminating information (Ren & Zhou, 2017), including political and humanitarian issues (Xiong, 2020).

Launched in 2016, TikTok has become one of the fastest-growing social media applications, especially among the youth (Wang, 2022). TikTok is distinguished by its ability to share short videos ranging from entertaining to educational (Hu, 2020), making it an ideal platform for expressing ideas and personal experiences (Gong, 2020). In the context of global events, TikTok has demonstrated its capability to effectively and swiftly disseminate news and information (Shi, 2015), making it a powerful tool for shaping public opinion and raising awareness about specific issues.

Among the most prominent of these issues is the Israeli war on Gaza, which has been recurrent over the past two decades and represents one of the most significant humanitarian and political crises in the Middle East (Marianne & Teguh, 2023). These armed conflicts cause widespread suffering, and their impacts extend beyond the region to the global stage (Rebeca & Ana, 2023).

Palestinian university students represent an important segment of Palestinian society (Sabih & Samir, 2018), forming an influential group in disseminating information and shaping public opinion. These students are not only an educated and informed demographic, but they are also active users of social media to express their issues and concerns (Ruba'a, 2019). Through their use of TikTok, Palestinian students can play a prominent role in conveying their messages to a global audience and raising awareness about the Palestinian cause (Bassam, 2018).

Therefore, this study aimed to shed light on the role of TikTok in disseminating the Palestinian narrative related to the war on Gaza from the perspective of Palestinian university students.

2. Problem Study

Alongside the evolution of media, social media platforms like TikTok have become vital tools in shaping public opinion and expanding awareness of global issues (Ririn, 2023). In the context of the recent Israeli aggression on the Gaza Strip, which resulted from the “Al-Aqsa Flood” operation—a response to Israeli violations in the Al-Aqsa Mosque and continuous settler assaults on Palestinian citizens in Jerusalem, West Bank cities, and the occupied interior—the Palestinian resistance launched thousands of rockets towards Israeli settlements. Additionally, there were air, land, and sea incursions by resistance fighters into towns adjacent to the Gaza Strip, known as the “Gaza Envelope.” The resistance managed to take control of several military sites, capture a number of soldiers, and seize a collection of Israeli military vehicles.

As a result of the initiation of the “Al-Aqsa Flood” operation, the Israeli occupation state resorted to a scorched-earth policy, initiating intense bombing on

the Gaza Strip and launching military attacks. The Israeli Defense Minister issued an order to impose a complete blockade on the Strip, preventing the entry of water, electricity, and food, exacerbating the humanitarian situation, and making it difficult to care for the wounded in this war. Despite these violations, the Israeli occupation state also sought to win the propaganda and media battle by leveraging social media platforms to manage its digital propaganda, disseminate its narrative, and wage psychological warfare. Additionally, it aimed to spread false and misleading news through Facebook to distort the Palestinian narrative and promote claims of violations by Al-Qassam Brigades, alleging inhumane treatment of Israeli women, children, and the elderly to justify its war crimes under the guise of defending its citizens.

From this standpoint, these platforms, particularly TikTok, have had a significant impact in conveying the Palestinian narrative to a wider audience and enhancing international understanding of the Gaza tragedy.

Therefore, the problem of this study lies in understanding the role of TikTok in disseminating the Palestinian narrative during the war on Gaza from the perspective of Palestinian university students.

3. Questions Study

- 1) What are the motivations for Palestinian university students to rely on TikTok in disseminating the Palestinian narrative during the war on Gaza?
- 2) What are the attitudes of Palestinian university students towards the content presented on TikTok in disseminating the Palestinian narrative during the war on Gaza?
- 3) What are the emotional effects of Palestinian university students' reliance on TikTok in disseminating the Palestinian narrative during the war on Gaza?
- 4) What are the cognitive effects of Palestinian university students' reliance on TikTok in disseminating the Palestinian narrative during the war on Gaza?
- 5) What are the behavioral effects of Palestinian university students' reliance on TikTok in disseminating the Palestinian narrative during the war on Gaza?

4. Previous Studies

A study by [7amleh \(2021\)](#) titled "The Attacks on Palestinian Digital Rights" aimed to explore human rights violations on social media platforms during the Israeli attacks on Palestinians in May 2021. The study examined information related to digital campaigns and anti-Palestinian propaganda by analyzing the content of 500 posts on these platforms. The study found that disinformation targeting Palestinians was prevalent on social media platforms. Instagram ranked first among the platforms with the most content violating Palestinian rights, accounting for 50%, followed by Facebook at 35%. The main forms of violation on Instagram were "story deletion" at 45%, followed by "account restriction" at 14%. On Facebook, the primary forms were "account restriction" at 37%, followed by "content deletion" at 31%. The majority of violations on Insta-

gram (46%) occurred without prior warning or notification to users, while the majority of violations on Facebook (47%) occurred without a specific reason.

A study by [Clarke \(2021\)](#) titled “The Propaganda Model and its Application to the Israeli Media” aimed to explore the importance of propaganda in media, its impact on guiding and shaping public opinion and media content, and the extent of the application of the propaganda model in Israeli media and its influence on shaping and controlling the media narrative to achieve political and economic goals. The study concluded that the media model is an evolving entity and cannot be classified as entirely correct or incorrect, leading to the success of the propaganda model in maintaining authority and controlling the Israeli media narrative.

A study by [Sa’id \(2020\)](#) titled “Propaganda Methods in Israeli Discourse Directed at the Palestinian People through Interactive Media” aimed to determine how interactive media is used as a tool to guide propaganda discourse by applying the model of Israeli propaganda discourse directed at the Palestinian people through Facebook. The study used content analysis methodology on 24 posts on the “Coordinator” page during the period from January 1, 2019, to December 31, 2019. The study found that Israeli propaganda focused on the needs and desires of the Palestinian citizen (80%), convincing them that working with the occupation is safe and beneficial. The approach of dialogue and direct discourse with the audience was used (50%) to create an interactive state with the Palestinian audience and lure them into engagement. It was also found that Israeli propaganda directed at Palestinians manipulates the awareness of many, yet at the same time, there are other media efforts in the digital space acting as a front of resistance and deterrence to the occupation and its propaganda methods, helping to expose the occupation’s propaganda.

A study by [Bassam \(2018\)](#) titled “Zionist Propaganda through Social Media” aimed to investigate the impact of Zionist propaganda on Arab and global public opinion and the reality of Zionist propaganda on these platforms. The study used observation and participation tools to gather supplementary and necessary information through continuous use of Israeli social media sites and pages. The study concluded that the appointment of Avichai Adraee as the spokesperson for the Israeli occupation army was not a coincidence. Analysis revealed that Adraee sought to use propaganda to project an idealized and glamorous image of the occupying state to Arab followers, portraying it as more beautiful and organized than their own countries.

A study by [Al-Masdar \(2018\)](#) titled “Israeli Cyber Propaganda to Encircle the Palestinian Return Marches” investigated how Israeli propaganda was employed during the Great March of Return events in Gaza and the other propaganda methods that were activated concurrently. The study used content analysis methodology applied to four Israeli Facebook pages: “Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories,” “Israeli Defense Forces Spokesperson’s Page,” “Prime Minister’s Spokesperson for Arab Media,” and “Israel Speaks Arabic,”

during the period from March 28, 2018, to April 30, 2018. The study showed that Israeli propaganda followed a sequential approach, starting with collecting various flaws, then processing them propagandistically to republish them within a new informational framework that serves its narrative. The Israeli pages focused on exploiting visual posts for their persuasive capabilities that surpass those of text, and employed various propaganda techniques such as association and citation.

A study by [Al-Kharabsheh \(2018\)](#) titled “The Media Framework of Israeli Propaganda on Facebook: An Analytical Study of the Israeli Defense Forces Spokesperson’s Page” aimed to analyze the posts of the Israeli Defense Forces spokesperson, Avichai Adraee, on his Facebook page. The study employed content analysis methodology applied to 325 posts on the page. The study found that the strategic framework was the most frequently used framework in Adraee’s posts, accounting for 37%. The “News and Media” category ranked first among the categories of post objectives, at 24.1%. The “Self-Reliance” category was the leading media source referenced by the page, while the engagement rate for the posts varied significantly, with the “Weak Engagement” category ranking first at 39.6%.

A study by [Sabih and Samir \(2018\)](#) titled “Israeli Propaganda Discourse on Social Media: The Case of Avichai Adraee” sought to understand the Israeli propaganda discourse on social media and reveal the underlying meanings within this discourse. The study used content analysis methodology applied to a purposive sample of posts from the official page of Israeli Defense Forces spokesperson Avichai Adraee on Facebook during the period from June 1, 2018, to June 30, 2018. The study concluded that Israeli propaganda does not only target the Palestinian Arab follower but the entire Arab community. It aims to demonstrate constant concern and relies on evoking the emotions of followers by showcasing the aid provided by Israeli soldiers to Palestinian civilians and their care for their safety. Additionally, it focuses on accusing Hamas of terrorism, placing the sole responsibility on it for all resistance factions, and employing emotional appeal techniques to engage its audience.

A study by [7amleh \(2018\)](#) titled “Facebook and Palestinians: Biased or Neutral Content Moderation Policies?” investigated the evolution of Facebook in amplifying the voices of Palestinians and its use as a platform for expressing their views and promoting their cause. The study found a shift in the media and social balance regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, with Facebook emerging as a significant source for news and information related to the conflict. Amid criticisms faced by some traditional media for providing biased or limited coverage, Facebook’s role as an effective tool for conveying and shaping public opinion on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is highlighted. The study demonstrated that the language of hashtags and messages used on Facebook plays a crucial role in directing public opinion and shaping issues, with language often being chosen strategically to influence the audience.

5. Methodology

This study falls under descriptive research, which focuses on describing a specific phenomenon. It involves collecting, classifying, recording, interpreting, and analyzing data related to the phenomenon and deriving reliable conclusions (Thuillier et al., 2015).

The study employs a media audience survey methodology, which is the most suitable method for gathering data on respondents' opinions and perceptions regarding a particular topic or issue (Al-Kasasbeh, 2015), in the context of Palestinian university students in the West Bank.

5.1. Study Population and Sample

The study population consists of Palestinian university students in the West Bank. The sample for the study included students from Bethlehem University, An-Najah National University, and Birzeit University. The justifications for choosing these universities were due to their proximity to the researcher's workplace, and the presence of a network of friends that facilitated the implementation of the study. An available sample of students from these universities was selected, totaling 620 students, who comprised the study sample.

5.2. Data Collection Tool

The tool used for data collection in this study is a questionnaire designed to gather information from the sample participants. This tool was chosen for its ability to provide a scientific and objective methodology without bias. The questionnaire was developed to ensure it met the study's objectives.

5.3. Validity of the Study Tool

The researcher verified the validity of the study tool by presenting it to a panel of experts with relevant knowledge and expertise. The panel provided feedback and suggestions, which were incorporated into the final version of the study tool.

5.4. Reliability of the Study Tool

The reliability of the study tool was assessed by examining the internal consistency of the questionnaire items using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient. The reliability value was found to be 0.96, indicating a high degree of reliability for the tool.

6. Data Analysis

6.1. Personal Data of the Respondents

It is observed from the previous **Table 1** that the percentage of females is higher than that of males, with females accounting for 63.7%. The percentage of males is 36.3%. Regarding age, the highest percentage is for those aged 20 - 22 years, at 34.5%, followed by those under 20 years old at 30.5%. Next are those aged 23 - 25 years, with a percentage of 19.8%, and the smallest group is those aged 26

years and over, with a percentage of 15.2%. Concerning the university where the respondents are studying, the highest percentage is for students at Bethlehem University, at 66.0%, followed by those at Birzeit University, with a percentage of 22.9%. The lowest percentage is for students at An-Najah National University, at 15.2%.

Table 1. Personal data of the respondents.

Variable	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Participants' Gender	Male	225	36.30%
	Female	395	63.70%
Age	Under 20 years	189	30.50%
	20 - 22 years	214	34.50%
	23 - 25 years	123	19.80%
	26 years and over	94	15.20%
University	Bethlehem University	409	66.00%
	Birzeit University	142	22.90%
	An-Najah National University	69	11.10%
Total		620	100%

6.2. Data Analysis

Section One: Motivations for Palestinian University Students' Use of TikTok to Spread the Palestinian Narrative in the Gaza War

It is observed from the previous **Table 2** that there is a high level of motivation among Palestinian university students to use TikTok for spreading the Palestinian narrative about the Gaza war, with an overall mean score of (4.33) and a standard deviation of (0.60). The highest mean score was for the statement "I use TikTok to spread accurate facts and information about the war in Gaza," with a mean score of (4.35). This was followed by the statement "I believe TikTok is an effective tool for conveying the voices of Palestinians to the world," with a mean score of (4.33), and then "I share videos on TikTok to raise awareness about the violations occurring in Gaza," with a mean score of (4.30). The statement "I find that TikTok helps in disseminating news more quickly and effectively than traditional media" had a mean score of (4.29), followed by "I use TikTok to correct misconceptions about the Palestinian issue" with a mean score of (4.28). The lowest mean score was for the statement "I feel a responsibility to raise awareness about the war in Gaza through TikTok," with a mean score of (4.27).

Section Two: Attitudes of Palestinian University Students Towards Content Provided on TikTok for Spreading the Palestinian Narrative in the Gaza War:

It is observed from the previous **Table 3** that there is a high degree of Palestinian university students' attitudes toward the content provided on TikTok in

Table 2. Descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) of motivations for Palestinian University Students' use of TikTok to spread the Palestinian narrative in the Gaza War.

The Aspects	Mean	Standard Deviation	Grade
I use TikTok to spread accurate facts and information about the war in Gaza.	4.35	0.59	Large
I believe TikTok is an effective tool for conveying the voices of Palestinians to the world.	4.33	0.6	Large
I share videos on TikTok to raise awareness about the violations occurring in Gaza.	4.3	0.63	Large
I find that TikTok helps in disseminating news more quickly and effectively than traditional media.	4.29	0.64	Large
I use TikTok to correct misconceptions about the Palestinian issue.	4.28	0.65	Large
I believe TikTok can change the world's perception of the Palestinian cause.	4.32	0.62	Large
I share videos on TikTok to raise awareness about the violations occurring in Gaza.	4.31	0.61	Large
I feel a responsibility to raise awareness about the war in Gaza through TikTok.	4.27	0.67	Large
Total	4.33	0.6	Large

Table 3. Descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) of Palestinian University students' attitudes towards content provided on TikTok for spreading the Palestinian narrative in the Gaza War.

The Aspects	Mean	Standard Deviation	Grade
I find the content related to the war in Gaza on TikTok useful for raising global awareness of the Palestinian narrative.	4.37	0.66	Large
I believe the content posted on TikTok reflects the true situation in Gaza.	4.36	0.64	Large
I consider the videos posted on TikTok about the Gaza war to be characterized by credibility and transparency.	4.35	0.69	Large
I believe the content on TikTok helps increase international awareness of the Palestinian issue.	4.33	0.64	Large
I feel that the content related to Gaza on TikTok enhances my solidarity with the Palestinian people.	4.27	0.72	Large
I find that TikTok provides an effective platform for conveying the personal stories of Palestinians in Gaza.	4.25	0.73	Large
Total	4.32	0.65	Large

disseminating the Palestinian narrative about the war on Gaza. The overall mean score for this dimension is (4.32), with a standard deviation of (0.65). The highest mean score was for the statement “I find content related to the Gaza war on TikTok useful for raising global awareness of the Palestinian narrative,” with a mean score of (4.37). This was followed by “I believe the content posted on TikTok reflects the true situation in Gaza,” with a mean score of (4.36), then “I consider that the videos posted on TikTok about the Gaza war are characterized by credibility and transparency,” with a mean score of (4.35). The statement “I believe the content on TikTok helps increase international awareness of the Palestinian issue” had a mean score of (4.33), followed by “I feel that the content related to Gaza on TikTok enhances my solidarity with the Palestinian people,” with a mean score of (4.27). The lowest mean score was for “I find that TikTok provides an effective platform for conveying personal stories of Palestinians in Gaza,” with a mean score of (4.25).

Section three: Emotional Effects of Palestinian University Students’ Use of TikTok in Disseminating the Palestinian Narrative about the War on Gaza:

Table 4. Mean scores and standard deviations of the emotional effects of Palestinian University students’ use of TikTok in disseminating the Palestinian narrative about the War on Gaza

The Aspects	Mean	Standard Deviation	Grade
I feel proud when I see videos highlighting Palestinian resistance and steadfastness on TikTok.	4.38	0.68	Large
I find that watching TikTok content related to the Gaza war makes me feel solidarity with my people.	4.35	0.66	Large
I feel angry when I watch videos depicting Israeli violations in Gaza on TikTok.	4.33	0.68	Large
I believe that following content related to Gaza on TikTok increases my sense of responsibility towards my national cause.	4.31	0.7	Large
I find that sharing content related to the Palestinian issue on TikTok gives me a sense of accomplishment and active participation.	4.25	0.72	Large
I feel sadness when watching the painful human stories of Gaza’s residents on TikTok.	4.22	0.71	Large
Total	4.31	0.7	Large

It is observed from the previous **Table 4** that there is a high degree of emotional impact from Palestinian university students’ use of TikTok in disseminating the Palestinian narrative about the Gaza war. The overall mean score for this dimension was (4.31), with a standard deviation of (0.70). The statement with the highest mean score was “I feel proud when I see videos highlighting Palestinian resistance and resilience on TikTok,” with a mean score of (4.38). This

was followed by the statement “I find that watching TikTok content related to the Gaza war makes me feel solidarity with my people,” with a mean score of (4.35), and then “I feel angry when I watch videos depicting Israeli violations in Gaza on TikTok,” with a mean score of (4.33). The statement “I believe that following content related to Gaza on TikTok increases my sense of responsibility towards my national cause” came next, with a mean score of (4.31). The statement “I find that sharing content related to the Palestinian issue on TikTok gives me a sense of accomplishment and active participation” had a mean score of (4.25), while the statement with the lowest mean score was “I feel sadness when watching the painful human stories of Gaza’s residents on TikTok,” with a mean score of (4.22).

Section Four: Cognitive Effects of Palestinian University Students’ Use of TikTok in Disseminating the Palestinian Narrative about the Gaza War:

Table 5. Mean scores and standard deviations for the cognitive effects of Palestinian University students’ use of TikTok in disseminating the Palestinian narrative about the Gaza War.

The Aspects	Mean	Standard Deviation	Grade
I believe that following content on TikTok has increased my knowledge of the current events in Gaza	4.4	0.61	Large
I feel that TikTok provides accurate and up-to-date information about the Gaza war	4.37	0.63	Large
I find that TikTok helps me understand the political and humanitarian dimensions of the conflict in Gaza	4.33	0.66	Large
I believe that the content provided through TikTok enhances my awareness of the Palestinian cause and its history	4.32	0.67	Large
I see that TikTok contributes to improving my understanding of the living conditions of Palestinians in Gaza	4.31	0.68	Large
I feel that I learned a lot about Palestinian culture and society through TikTok	4.3	0.69	Large
Total	4.34	0.66	Large

It is noted from the previous **Table 5** that there is a high degree of cognitive impact associated with Palestinian university students’ use of TikTok in promoting the Palestinian narrative regarding the Gaza conflict. The overall mean score for this dimension was (4.34) with a standard deviation of (0.66). The statement with the highest mean score was “I believe that following content on TikTok has increased my knowledge of the current events in Gaza,” with a mean of (4.40). This was followed by “I feel that TikTok provides accurate and up-to-date information about the Gaza war,” with a mean of (4.37), and “I find that TikTok helps me understand the political and humanitarian dimensions of the conflict in Gaza,” with a mean of (4.33). The statement “I believe that the con-

tent provided through TikTok enhances my awareness of the Palestinian cause and its history” had a mean of (4.32), while “I see that TikTok contributes to improving my understanding of the living conditions of Palestinians in Gaza” had a mean of (4.31). The statement with the lowest mean score was “I feel that I learn a lot about Palestinian culture and society through TikTok,” with a mean of (4.30).

Section Five: Behavioral Effects of Palestinian University Students’ Use of TikTok in Promoting the Palestinian Narrative in the Gaza War:

Table 6. Means and standard deviations of the behavioral effects of Palestinian University students’ use of TikTok in promoting the Palestinian narrative in the Gaza War

The Aspects	Mean	Standard Deviation	Grade
I regularly share videos on TikTok to highlight events in Gaza.	4.26	0.7	Large
I follow accounts that post content supportive of the Palestinian cause on TikTok.	4.22	0.75	Large
I comment on videos related to the Gaza war to help raise awareness.	4.21	0.71	Large
I use TikTok to organize digital campaigns in support of Gaza.	4.2	0.77	Large
I encourage my friends and family to follow and share Palestinian content on TikTok.	4.18	0.78	Large
I have created my own content on TikTok that expresses my support for the Palestinian cause.	4.16	0.79	Large
Total	4.21	0.71	Large

It is observed from the previous **Table 6** that there is a high degree of behavioral effects associated with Palestinian university students’ use of TikTok in promoting the Palestinian narrative in the Gaza war, with an overall mean score of (4.21) and a standard deviation of (0.71). The statement with the highest mean score is “I regularly share videos on TikTok to highlight the events in Gaza,” with a mean score of (4.26). This is followed by “I follow accounts that post content supporting the Palestinian cause on TikTok,” with a mean score of (4.22), and “I comment on videos related to the Gaza war to contribute to raising awareness,” with a mean score of (4.21). Next is “I use TikTok to organize digital campaigns to support Gaza,” with a mean score of (4.20), followed by “I encourage my friends and family to follow and share Palestinian content on TikTok,” with a mean score of (4.18). The statement with the lowest mean score is “I have created my own content on TikTok expressing my support for the Palestinian cause,” with a mean score of (4.16).

7. Conclusion

The study demonstrated TikTok’s role in promoting the Palestinian narrative

related to the Gaza war from the perspective of Palestinian university students and revealed the impact of this platform on students' motivations, attitudes, psychological, cognitive, and behavioral effects. The results indicate a high level of motivation among students to use TikTok for disseminating the Palestinian narrative, with an overall mean score of (4.33) and a standard deviation of (0.60). The findings highlight that students use TikTok to share accurate facts and information about the Gaza war and view the platform as an effective means for amplifying the Palestinian voice to the world. Among the statements with the highest mean scores were "I use TikTok to share accurate facts and information about the Gaza war" (4.35) and "I believe TikTok is an effective means to convey the Palestinian voice to the world" (4.33). It is noteworthy that the statement "I feel a responsibility to raise awareness about the Gaza war through TikTok" recorded the lowest mean score (4.27), indicating that the sense of responsibility may be less prominent compared to other motivations.

Regarding students' attitudes towards the content provided on TikTok, the study revealed a high degree in this domain, with an overall mean score of (4.32) and a standard deviation of (0.65). Students confirmed that the content related to the Gaza war on TikTok is beneficial for raising global awareness of the Palestinian narrative, with the statement "I find the content related to the Gaza war on TikTok useful in raising global awareness of the Palestinian narrative" leading with a mean score of (4.37). They also noted that the published content reflects the true reality of the situation in Gaza, with a mean score of (4.36). However, the statement "I find that TikTok provides an effective platform for conveying personal stories of Palestinians in Gaza" recorded the lowest mean score of (4.25), indicating some challenges in using the platform to convey personal stories.

The emotional effects of students' reliance on TikTok for disseminating the Palestinian narrative also reflect a high degree, with an overall mean score of (4.31) and a standard deviation of (0.70). The study highlighted that students feel proud when viewing videos showcasing Palestinian resistance on TikTok, with the statement "I feel proud when I see videos highlighting Palestinian resistance and resilience on TikTok" achieving the highest mean score of (4.38). They also experience solidarity with their people and feel anger when viewing Israeli violations. On the other hand, the statement "I feel sad when watching the painful human stories of Gaza residents on TikTok" recorded the lowest mean score of (4.22), indicating the profound emotional impact of distressing content.

Regarding the cognitive effects, the study also revealed a high degree, with an overall mean score of (4.34) and a standard deviation of (0.66). Students reported that following content on TikTok increased their knowledge of the current events in Gaza, with the highest mean score recorded for the statement "I believe that following content on TikTok has increased my knowledge of the details of the current events in Gaza" (4.40). However, the statement "I feel that I learn a lot about Palestinian culture" had the lowest mean score, indicating room for improvement in cultural knowledge.

Finally, with respect to behavioral effects, the study also showed a high degree, with an overall mean score of (4.21) and a standard deviation of (0.71). Students indicated that they regularly share videos to highlight events in Gaza and follow accounts that support the Palestinian cause. However, the lowest mean score was recorded for the statement “I have created my own content on TikTok expressing support for the Palestinian cause” (4.16), suggesting that creating personal content may be less common compared to engaging with and interacting with existing content.

Thus, these results highlight TikTok’s prominent role as an effective tool for disseminating the Palestinian narrative and enhancing global awareness about the Gaza issue. They also reflect the importance of optimizing the use of the platform to achieve a greater impact across all the mentioned areas.

8. Recommendations

Based on the study’s results, which emphasize TikTok’s significant role in disseminating the Palestinian narrative and enhancing awareness of the Palestinian cause among Palestinian university students, several recommendations can be made to improve the platform’s effectiveness and maximize its impact.

First, it is recommended to enhance training programs and workshops for students on how to create impactful and reliable digital content. This will help them improve the quality and credibility of the messages they publish.

Second, strategies should be developed to address misinformation and ensure the accuracy of facts before publication to avoid the spread of inaccurate news that could harm the Palestinian cause.

Third, students should be encouraged to build networks with activists and international organizations to support their digital efforts and achieve a broader global impact.

Fourth, cultural and historical awareness among students should be promoted by providing comprehensive educational resources on the Palestinian cause, enabling them to produce richer and more in-depth content.

Fifth, greater attention should be given to TikTok content that narrates the personal stories of Palestinians in Gaza, as this can contribute to conveying human experiences effectively and fostering greater international solidarity.

Sixth, academic institutions and civil society organizations should encourage students to actively participate in digital campaigns and provide the necessary support for organizing and managing these campaigns.

Finally, future studies should be conducted to examine the impact of TikTok content on international narratives about Palestine and explore new ways to enhance the platform’s effectiveness in raising awareness of global humanitarian and political issues.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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