

EVENT SPECIFIC BLAME ATTRIBUTION IN THE IRAN-ISRAEL CONFLICT: A QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS OF MEDIA FRAMING ACROSS FOUR MAJOR EVENTS (2023-2025)

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ABSTRACT

This study focuses on how three ideologically differing newspapers apportioned blame for four specific events in the escalation of the Iran-Israel conflict: the October 7 Hamas attack, the Gaza military campaign, the assassination of Ismail Haniyeh, and the assassination of Hassan Nasrallah. Using quantitative content analysis of 677 editorials of three different ideological countries. Haaretz, an Israeli left-wing newspaper; Kayhan, an International state-aligned newspaper; and The Wall Street Journal, a right-wing newspaper. The research examined patterns of blame attribution depending on the type of event or were consistent across many conflict incidents. There were significant differences in blame attribution across events for all three outlets ($p < 0.001$), based on statistical analysis. However, the direction of attribution was consistent across all: while Kayhan International had high levels of aggressor attribution to Israel for all events (range: 95.2%-100%), the Wall Street Journal had zero levels of aggressor attribution to Israel across all events (range: 0%-0%), Haaretz demonstrated moderate variation with event type (range: 8%-25% aggressor attribution to Israel). Chi-square tests of homogeneity, however, revealed that although absolute percentages differed between events, the relative positioning of outlets was stable. The results indicate that media framing of responsibility is highly consistent across different types of events. Even when events varied significantly in their character (attacks, assassinations, sustained military operations), outlets continued to follow their basic framing approaches. This seems to indicate that responsibility framing in conflict coverage is a reflection of systematic editorial policy, rather than an assessment of events.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background and Rationale

Media framing research often looks at general patterns over long time spans and aggregates coverage of a variety of events into general trends.

While such an approach shows systematic patterns, it cannot even tell if media frames different types of events differently. Do outlets vary the attribution of blame based on features of the event that differentiate between attacks,

military campaigns and targeted killings or do outlets adopt a consistent framing regardless of the specifics of the event? This question is of theoretical and practical importance. If a large degree of variation exists in the way blame attribution is performed across different events, it would appear to indicate that the media react to the nature of the events in question when allocating blame. If the attribution is similar for all events, then it suggests that systematic framing strategies are overriding the event-specific factors. A period of Iran-Israel conflict escalation from October 2023-March 2025 offers a chance to explore this question in four different types of events:

October 7 Hamas Attack: Surprise Attack on Israeli territory, killing Civilians

Gaza Military Campaign: Sustained Military operations with high civilian casualties

Haniyeh Assassination: Sniper killing of Hamas political leader in Tehran

Nasrallah Assassination: Assassination of the leader of Hezbollah in Beirut

These events differ in: Actor:

State actors (Israel, Iran) Vs **non-state actors** (Hamas, Hezbollah)

Target: Military vs. civilian, leaders vs. population

Location: Israeli territory - Gaza - Iran - Lebanon

Duration: Single Day attack vs. months-long campaign vs. discrete attacks

If there are significant differences in patterns of attribution of blame across these events, it would suggest that characteristics of events influence framing. If patterns hold stable, then it would support the conclusion that outlets use constant framing strategies across types of events.

1.2 Research Objectives

This research aims to have three main objectives:

Objective 1: To measure blame attribution patterns of four specific events in 3 ideologically distinct outlets.

Objective 2: To test whether there are significant differences in the type of blame attribution based on the type of event within each outlet.

Objective 3: To find out which outlet assigns most blame to which actor is consistent across

events or changes depending on the characteristics of the events.

1.3 Research Questions

RQ1: How did Haaretz, Kayhan International, and Wall Street Journal blame Iran, Israel, and the United States for the October 7 Hamas attack?

RQ2: How did these outlets place blame for the Gaza military campaign?

RQ3: How did these outlets blame the Haniyeh assassination?

RQ4: How did these outlets place blame for the Nasrallah assassination?

RQ5: Does the type of event have a significant effect on patterns of blame attribution within each outlet?

RQ6: Does this relative ranking of outlets based on attribution of blame hold across events?

2 Literature Review

2.1 Event Specific Framing Research

Most framing research looks at aggregate patterns over periods of time. However, there is a smaller literature that examines whether frames differ from one specific event or are consistent. Entman (2004) showed that American media framed the 1991 Gulf War differently than the 1999 Kosovo intervention, which indicates framing is affected by the characteristics of the event. Conversely, in a study by Dimitrova and Stromback (2005), it was found that while magnitude of coverage varied across events, core frames were stable across events. (Norris et al., 2003) investigated framing in various terrorist attacks and discovered that, although the specifics differed, there were patterns of responsibility attribution. The frame could be sticky as they are recognized they kept going across events.

2.2 Framing of Asymmetrical Conflicts

Research on asymmetric conflict framing is on how the media cover conflicts between state and non-state actors. (Dimitrova & Stromback (2009) found differences in framing of state violence vs. non-state violence, towards state actions being framed as necessary responses. (Wolfsfeld et al., 2008) documented that the media in Israel was

showing a different frame on Palestinian attacks and Israel military operations and applied different attribution of responsibility based on the side that took the initiative. However, research has not systematically explored whether these patterns are true when comparing attacks, sustained campaigns and targeted killings.

2.3 Assassination Coverage

In media coverage of political assassinations, there are different patterns of framing. (Liebes, 1997) found that framing of Yitzhak Rabin's assassination focused on political responsibility versus the individual perpetrator. (Weimann Winn, 1994) documented the effects of the media as they framed the assassinations as individual acts or as a result of some systemic factor. Research has not investigated whether attribution of blame for assassinations follows similar patterns to blaming for sustained military operations or attacks, and therefore it is unclear whether type of event modulates framing.

2.4 Civilian Casualty Framing

Events in which there are large numbers of civilian casualties are given particular scrutiny. (Aday, 2010) found that the media coverage focused on civilian casualties was related to the attribution of responsibility for the casualties to the actor responsible for them. Robinson (2004) recorded the "CNN effect" in which graphic imagery of civilian suffering could change the attribution of blame. However, (Entman, 2004) found that similar levels of civilian casualties in different conflicts resulted in different framing, and that therefore, other factors than casualty numbers are at work in the process of attribution. Comparing events that have different profiles of civilian casualties can shed light on the extent to which levels of casualties methodically affect blame attribution.

2.5 Gaza War Coverage Recent

research of 2023-2024 Gaza war coverage provides a background for this study. (Pinker, 2025) found the New York Times covered it in such a way that the majority responsibility was placed on Hamas for beginning the war while it

downplayed Israeli responsibility for civilian casualties. (Gunay, 2025) has made a case for differences between New York Times and Guardian framing, with the Guardian being more ready to assign responsibility to Israeli military decisions. However, this research combined coverage over the entire Gaza campaign without differentiating the attack of October 7 from other military operations. Event-specific analysis can identify differences between the coverage of outlets in framing the initiating attack as opposed to the sustained campaign.

3 Theoretical Framework

3.1 Framing Theory and Event Coverage

Framing theory proposes that media select certain aspect of events to emphasize while minimizing others (Entman, 1993). In specific event coverage frames may operate at two levels.

Event-Specific Frames:

Frames tailored to particular event characteristics "surprise attack" "Humanitarian Crisis" "Targeted operation"

Meta Frames:

Overreaching frames applied across events regardless of specific "Israel defending itself" "Israeli aggression" "regional destabilization."

The question is whether meta frames produce consistent patterns or whether event-specific frames adjust framing based on event characteristics.

3.2 Frame Persistence

Research on frame persistence suggests that once frames are established they tend to persist even when new information arises (Entman, 2004). Applied to event specific coverage this predicts that outlets will maintain framing approaches across events rather than fundamentally revising frame based on event characteristics. However frame persistence is not absolute major events can produce critical framing moments that shift how issues are framed (Wolfsfeld, 2004). The October 7 attack as the precipitating event for the escalation could represent such a moment

potentially producing different framing than subsequent events.

3.3 Responsibility Attribution in Event Sequences

When events explain sequentially “Attack response → counter response” media must decide how to attribute responsibility.

Options are:

1. **Initiating Event Focus:** Attributing primary responsibility to actor who initiated the sequence.
2. **Proportionally Focus:** Evaluating each action independently based of proportionally.
3. **Pattern Focus:** Attributing responsibility based on longer term pattern rather than immediate sequence.

Different outlets may employ different approaches producing varying event specific patterns even when overall framing remains consistent.

4 Methodology

4.1 Sample

Outlets: Haaretz “Israel Liberal” Kayhan International “Iran State Aligned” and The Wall Street Journal “USA Conservative”

Total Editorials: 677

Haaretz: 246

Kayhan International: 266

The Wall Street Journal: 165

Time Period: October 7/2023- March 31/2025

4.2 Event Identification

Editorials are coded for which event “s” they addressed

Event 1: October 7 Hamas Attack

Date: October 7/2023

Editorials addressing: 186 total “Haaretz: 58 Kayhan: 74 WSJ: 54”

Identification: Explicit reference to October 7 attack “Hamas Operation and Israeli casualties.

Event 2

Time: October 8/2023 to March 31/2025

Editorials addressing: 412 total “Haaretz 142 Kyahan 165 WSJ 105”

Identification: Reference to Gaza operations “Israeli military actions in Gaza and Palestinian casualties.

Event 3: Haniyeh Assassination\

Date: July 31/2024

Editorials addressing: 89 total “ Haaretz 25 Kayhan 42 WSJ 22”

Identification: reference to Haniyeh killing “Tehran operation, Hamas leadership targeting.”

Event 4: Nasrallah Assassination\

Date: September 28/2024

Editorials addressing: 76 total “Haaretz 24 Kayhan 31 WSJ 21”

Identification: reference to “Nasrallah killing” “Beirut strike” “Hezbollah leadership targeting.”

Note: some editorials addressed multiple events and were coded for each relevant event.

4.3 Variables

Dependent Variable: Blame attribution for each event

Categories

Aggressor: framed as responsible for initiating or escalating

Non-Aggressor: Mentioned without direct blame]

Neutral: Balanced or minimal reference

Coded as: “Iran” “Israel” “United States” “Hezbollah” also depending on event relevance

4.4 Coding Procedur

Same coding procedures as main study

1 Two Coder: Intercooder reliability $k=0.89$

2 Systematic coding manual

3 Decision rules for ambiguous cases

4.5 Statistical Analysis

Primary Analysis: Chi-square test of homogeneity examining whether blame attribution distribution different across within each outlet.

Secondary Analysis: Chi-square test of independence examining whether blame attribution differs across for each outlet.

Effect size: Cramer’s V for magnitude of difference.

Significance Level: $\alpha=0.05$ with Bonferroni correction for multiple tests.

5 Results

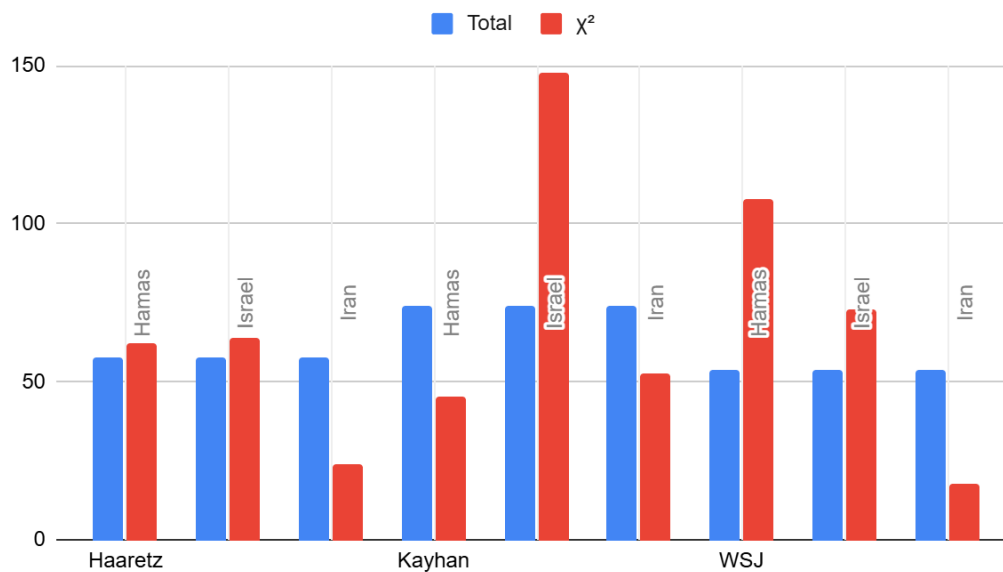
5.1 October 7 Hamas Attack

Table 1: Blame Attribution for October 7 Hamas Attack

Outlet	Actor	Aggressor	Non-Aggressor	Neutral	Total	χ^2	p
Haaretz	Hamas	47 (81.0%)	8 (13.8%)	3 (5.2%)	58	62.38	<0.001
	Israel	5 (8.6%)	48 (82.8%)	5 (8.6%)	58	64.03	<0.001
	Iran	8 (13.8%)	35 (60.3%)	15 (25.9%)	58	23.79	<0.001
Kayhan	Hamas	0 (0%)	52 (70.3%)	22 (29.7%)	74	45.19	<0.001
	Israel	74 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	74	148.00	<0.001
	Iran	0 (0%)	15 (20.3%)	59 (79.7%)	74	52.38	<0.001
WSJ	Hamas	54 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	54	108.00	<0.001
	Israel	0 (0%)	48 (88.9%)	6 (11.1%)	54	72.89	<0.001
	Iran	31 (57.4%)	12 (22.2%)	11 (20.4%)	54	17.89	<0.001

Graphical Presentation

Figure 1



Findings:

Haaretz: Attributed aggressor responsibility primarily to Hamas 81.0% with minimal attribution to Israel 8.6% or Iran 13.8% this represents Haaretz clearest blame to a non state actor opposing Israel.

Kayhan International: attributed zero aggressor responsibility to Hamas instead assigning 100% aggressor attribution to Israel. This framing

characterized the attack as Israel's responsibility despite Hamas carrying it out.

Wall Street Journal: attributed 100% aggressor to Hamas with zero to Israel and 57.4% to Iran as Hamas sponsor, This framing emphasized both direct perpetrators and state sponsors.

Cross outlet Comparison: $\chi^2 = 168.52$, $df = 4$, $p < 0.001$, Cramer's $V = 0.79$ Larger effect.

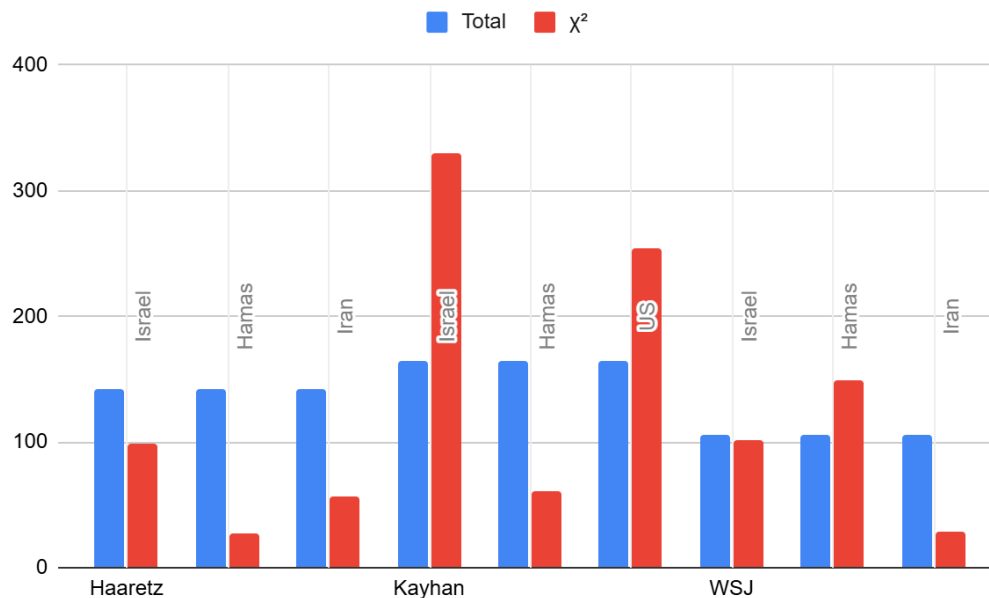
5.2 Gaza Military Campaign

Table 2: Blame Attribution for Gaza Military Campaign

Outlet	Actor	Aggressor	Non-Aggressor	Neutral	Total	χ^2	p
Haaretz	Israel	36 (25.4%)	98 (69.0%)	8 (5.6%)	142	98.96	<0.001
	Hamas	26 (18.3%)	74 (52.1%)	42 (29.6%)	142	27.89	<0.001
	Iran	12 (8.5%)	85 (59.9%)	45 (31.7%)	142	56.62	<0.001
Kayhan	Israel	165 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	165	330.00	<0.001
	Hamas	0 (0%)	118 (71.5%)	47 (28.5%)	165	61.38	<0.001
	US	152 (92.1%)	5 (3.0%)	8 (4.9%)	165	254.76	<0.001
WSJ	Israel	0 (0%)	89 (84.8%)	16 (15.2%)	105	101.51	<0.001
	Hamas	93 (88.6%)	7 (6.7%)	5 (4.8%)	105	149.49	<0.001
	Iran	58 (55.2%)	22 (21.0%)	25 (23.8%)	105	28.43	<0.001

Graphical Presentation

Figure 2



Findings:

Haaretz: Increased aggressiveness toward Israel with 25.4% up from 8.6% for October 7 reflecting focus on civilian casualties and sustained operations, but still attributing responsibility to Hamas 18.3% showing attribution.

Kayhan International: Maintained 100% aggressor to Israel adding 92.1% attribution to the United States. Assigned zero aggressor to

Hamas framing as Israeli and American aggression.

Wall Street Journal: Maintained zero aggressor to Israel and assigned 88.6% to Hamas as attacking party and Iran received 55.2% similar to October 7 framing.

Cross Outlet comparison: $X^2=278.94, df=4, p<0.001$, Cramer's $V=0.82$ Larger effect

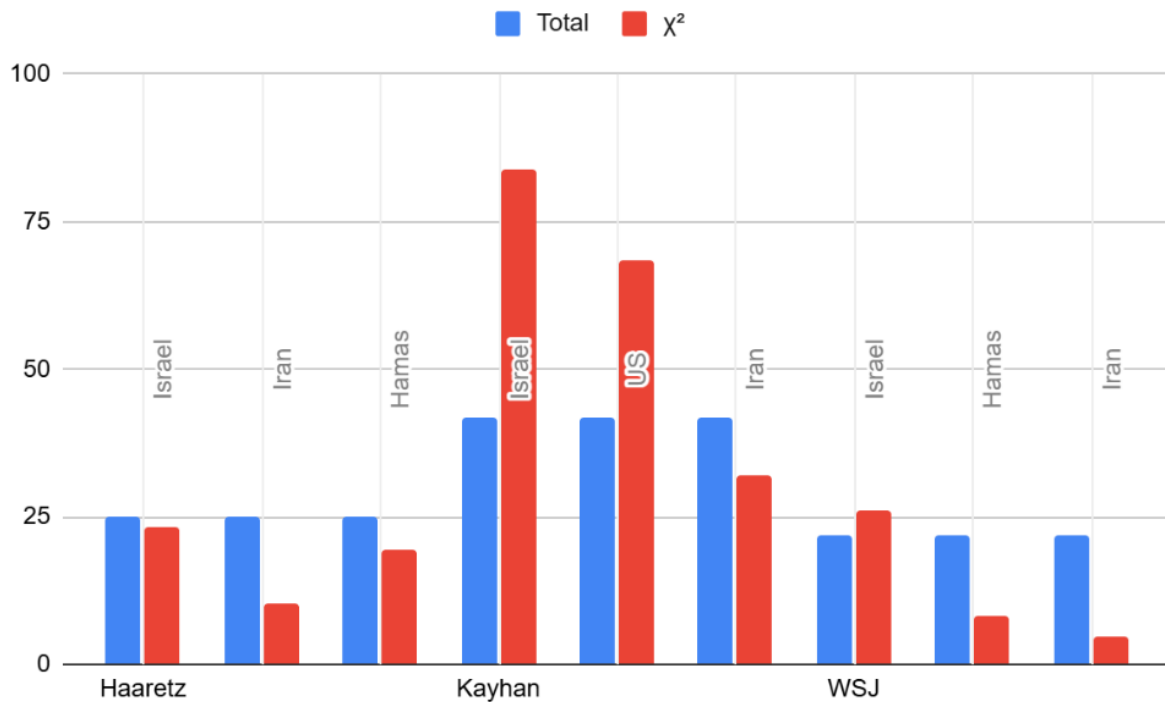
5.3 Haniyeh Assassination

Table 3: Blame Attribution for Haniyeh Assassination

Outlet	Actor	Aggressor	Non-Aggressor	Neutral	Total	χ^2	p
Haaretz	Israel	2 (8.0%)	19 (76.0%)	4 (16.0%)	25	23.12	<0.001
	Iran	3 (12.0%)	15 (60.0%)	7 (28.0%)	25	10.24	0.006
	Hamas	0 (0%)	18 (72.0%)	7 (28.0%)	25	19.36	<0.001
Kayhan	Israel	42 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	42	84.00	<0.001
	US	40 (95.2%)	2 (4.8%)	0 (0%)	42	68.57	<0.001
	Iran	0 (0%)	8 (19.1%)	34 (81.0%)	42	32.10	<0.001
WSJ	Israel	0 (0%)	18 (81.8%)	4 (18.2%)	22	26.00	<0.001
	Hamas	0 (0%)	14 (63.6%)	8 (36.4%)	22	8.18	0.017
	Iran	11 (50.0%)	5 (22.7%)	6 (27.3%)	22	4.55	0.103

Graphical Presentation

Figure 3



Findings:

Haaretz: Blamed minimal to Israel 8.0% showing reluctance to assign blame for targeted killing of Hamas leader despite operation on Iranian Land this is questionable value but did not frame as aggressor.

Kayhan International: Maintained pattern with 100% aggressor to Israel and 95.2% to US

framed assassination as violation of Iranian sovereignty and terrorist act.

Wall Street Journal: Zero aggressor to Israel but also reduced Iran as aggressor with 50.0% framing assassination as legitimate targeting rather than aggression.

Cross outlet Comparison: $X^2=71.28$, $df=4$, $p < 0.0001$, Cramer's $V= 0.73$ large effect

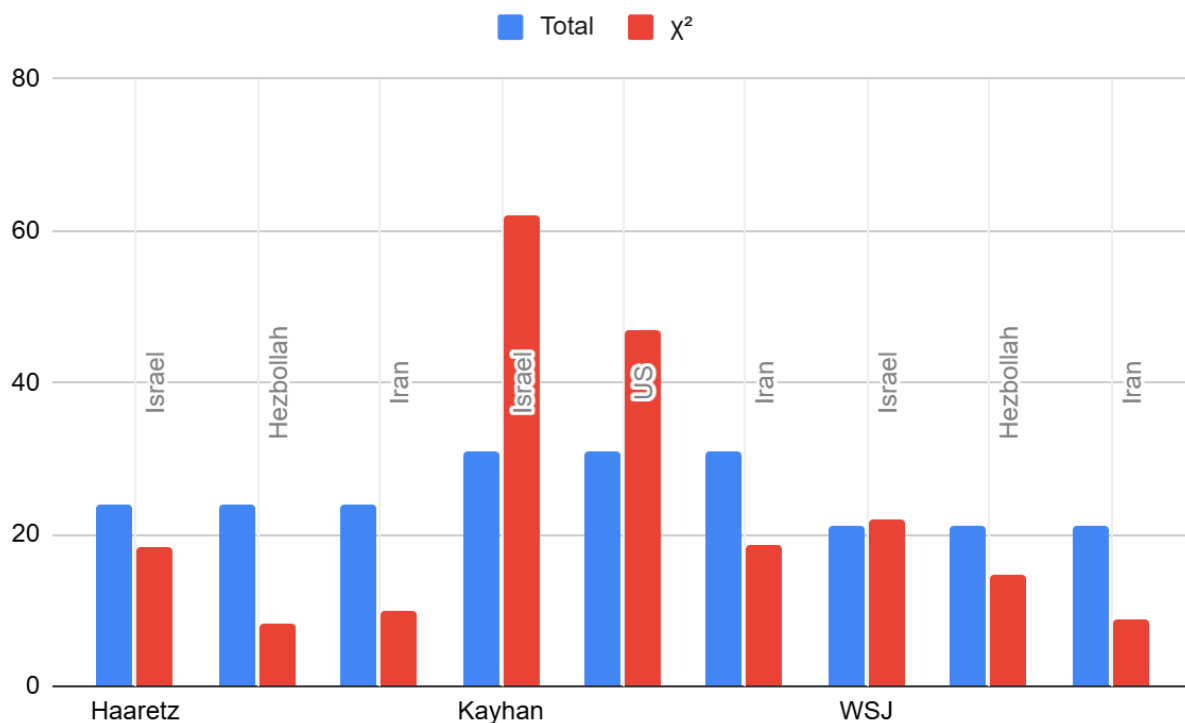
5.2 Nasrallah Assassination

Table 4: Blame Attribution for Nasrallah Assassination

Outlet	Actor	Aggressor	Non-Aggressor	Neutral	Total	χ^2	p
Haaretz	Israel	3 (12.5%)	17 (70.8%)	4 (16.7%)	24	18.25	<0.001
	Hezbollah	5 (20.8%)	13 (54.2%)	6 (25.0%)	24	8.25	0.016
	Iran	2 (8.3%)	14 (58.3%)	8 (33.3%)	24	10.00	0.007
Kayhan	Israel	31 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	31	62.00	<0.001
	US	29 (93.6%)	2 (6.5%)	0 (0%)	31	46.94	<0.001
	Iran	0 (0%)	7 (22.6%)	24 (77.4%)	31	18.61	<0.001
WSJ	Israel	0 (0%)	18 (85.7%)	3 (14.3%)	21	21.86	<0.001
	Hezbollah	14 (66.7%)	4 (19.1%)	3 (14.3%)	21	14.57	<0.001
	Iran	12 (57.1%)	5 (23.8%)	4 (19.1%)	21	8.86	0.012

Graphical presentation

Figure 4



Findings:

Haaretz: To some extent increased attribution to Israel 12.5% compared to Haniyeh attributed some responsibility to Hezbollah 20.8% for escalation this is pattern of questioning Israeli strategy while not strongly condemning action

Kayhan International: 100% aggressor to Israel with 93.6% US and framed assassination as terrorism and violation of sovereignty.

Wall Street Journal: Zero aggressor to Israel attributed 66.7% aggressor responsibility to Hezbollah for initiating conflict with Israel 57.1% to Iran as sponsor and framed as legitimate targeting.

Cross outlet Comparison: $\chi^2 = 65.43$, $df = 4$,
 $p < 0.0001$, Cramer's $V = 0.71$

5.4 Within Outlet Event Comparison

Table 5: Israel Aggressor Attribution Across Events by Outlet

Outlet	Oct 7 (Hamas)	Gaza (Hamas)	Nasrallah (Hezbollah)	χ^2	p	Cramér's V	Outlet
Haaretz	8.6%	25.4%	8.0%	12.5%	12.45	0.006	0.23
Kayhan	100%	100%	100%	100%	0.00	1.000	0.00
WSJ	0%	0%	0%	0%	0.00	1.000	0.00

Graphical presentation
Figure 5

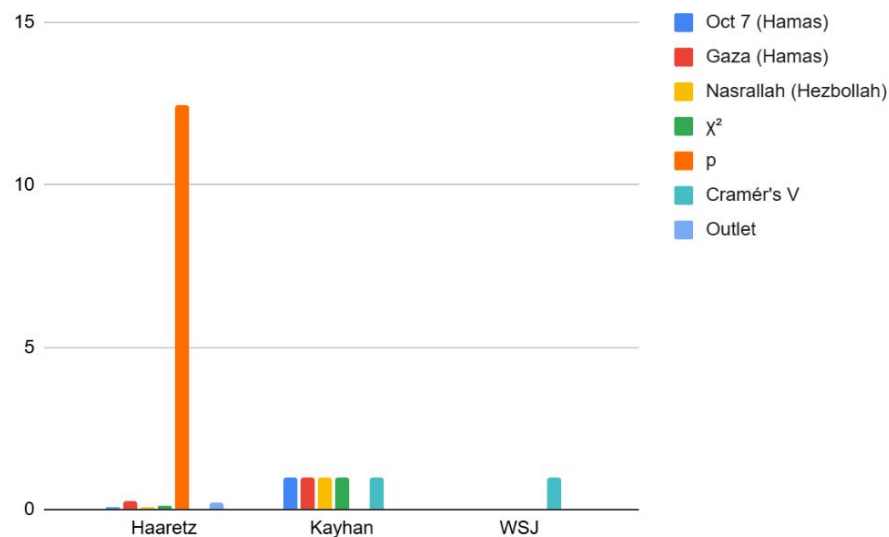
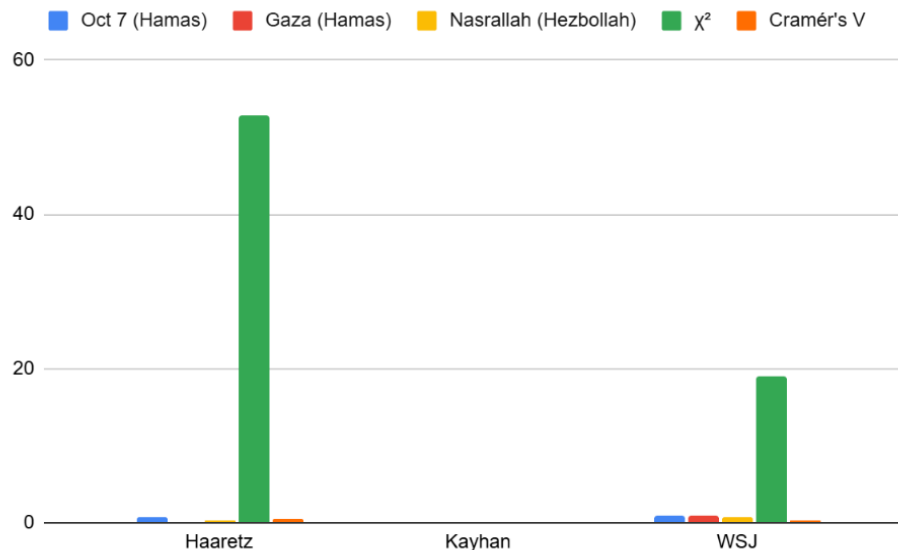


Table 6: Hamas and Hezbollah Aggressor Attribution Across Events by Outlets

Outlet	Oct 7 (Hamas)	Gaza (Hamas)	Nasrallah (Hezbollah)	χ^2	p	Cramér's V	Outlet
Haaretz	81.0%	18.3%	20.8%	52.78	<0.001	0.49	Haaretz
Kayhan	0%	0%	0%	0.00	1.000	0.00	Kayhan
WSJ	100%	88.6%	66.7%	18.92	<0.001	0.31	WSJ

Graphical presentation
Figure 6



Finding:

Haaretz: Showed significant variations by event

1. Israel attribution varied from 8.0% to 25.4% with Gaza campaign highest.
2. Hamas attribution varied from 18.3% to 81.0% with October 7 highest.
3. Pattern suggest event responsive framing adjusting to event characteristics.

Kayhan International: Zero variations

1. 100% aggressor attribution to Israel across all events.
2. 0% aggressor attribution to Hamas and Hezbollah across all events
3. Perfect consistent indicates systematic unresponsive to event differences.

Wall Street Journal:

1. 0% aggressor to Israel across all events.
2. Varied attribution to Hamas and Hezbollah from 66.7 to 100% with October 7 highest.
3. Consistency on Israel some variations on non state actors.

5.5 Hypothesis Testing

H1 Event consistency

Partially supported because each outlet maintained directional consistency Kayhan always blamed Israel and WSJ never blamed Israel, Haaretz shows mixed patterns, but degree varied significantly for Haaretz and partially for WSJ and Kayhan showed perfect consistency

H2 Outlet Positioning

Supported Kayhan attributed blame to Israel in all events. WSJ attributed zero blame to Israel in all events. Haaretz showed intermediate patterns in all events

H3 Event Moderation

Partially supported because Gaza campaign “high civilian casualties sustained showed highest variation in Haaretz framing “25.4% vs 8-12% for other events” discrete events showed more consistent framing Kayhan and WSJ no response to event characteristics.

6 Discussion

6.1 Event Specific Variation Patterns

The most striking is the divergence in how outlets responded to different events.

Kayhan International

Demonstrated perfect frame stability with zero variation in Israel attribution 100% across all events or Hamas/Hezbollah attribution 0% across all events. This indicates that framing operated completely independently of event characteristics. Whether the event was surprise attack killing civilians a sustained military campaign or targeted assassinations made no difference to how Kayhan framed responsibility.

Wall Street Journal

Showed perfect stability on Israel 0% across all events but some variation on Hamas/ Hezbollah 100% for October 7 declining to 67% for Nasrallah. This suggest the WSJ Maintained absolute consistency on protecting Israel from blame while allowing some modulation based on non-state actor actions.

Haaretz

Demonstrated event responsive framing with Israel attribution ranging from 8% Haniyeh to 25% Gaza and Hamas attribution ranging from 18% Gaza to 81% October 7.

This pattern suggest Haaretz adjusted framing based on event characteristics particularly civilian casualty profiles and event duration.

6.2 Implications for Frame Theory Frame Stability

The results show that stability in frames differs depending on the type of an outlet. The State-congruent media, i.e. the media aligned with the state, such as the media of Kayhan and highly ideological media, i.e. the media of WSJ on Israel, exhibit almost flawless frame stability whereas the independent critical media, i.e. the media of Haaretz exhibit event-sensitive framing. It is an indication that the stability of frames does not exist evenly and is instead influenced by institutional and ideological aspects.

Event Characteristics

The Gaza campaign with high levels of civilians dead and the protracted period created most changes in Haarets farming 25-8-12% vs discrete events. This confirms the hypothesis that framing

can be moderated by humanitarian aspects of events but only in the case of outlets that do not exist in the context of strict ideological regulations.

Mera Frames vs Events Frames

The statistics indicate that Kayhan and WSJ mainly worked with meta frames which are overreaching narratives concerning who is responsible without taking into consideration event specifics. Haaretz used meta frame and event specific frames where emphasis is moved depending on the nature of the event as well as an understandable overall view.

6.3 October 7 as Initiating Event.

October 7 produced distinctive patterns in two ways

First

Haaretz blamed Hamas on October 7 81% over the events after the situation 18-21% on Hamas/Hezbollah. This implies that Haaretz was able to frame the initiating attack as being more of the responsibility of Hamas but to spread responsibility to further military operations.

Second

WSJ had Hams at 100% aggressor responsibility regarding the highest rate of October 7 of all events. This framing put Hamas in the position of the starting aggressor that had to provoke Israeli reactions in further framing.

Third

Kayhan held 100 percent aggressor responsibility on Israel even in October 7 framing not Hamas attack though Israeli policies and actions were the main cause of October 7 framing. This illustrate how outlets are able to put event initiating events into perspective as a reaction to previous grievances. Such contradicting framing of the event that starts the coverage set the groundwork framing of the later coverage with both Haaretz and WSJ framing October 7 as the moment when the event happened and Kayhan denying this point entirely.

6.4 Assassination Framing

Both assassination Haniyeh, Nasrallah generated lower Israel aggressor attribution in Haaretz 8%, 12.5% than comprehensive operations that impacted the civilian population.

These could be the reason behind this.

1. The actions directed toward military/political leaders can be considered more legitimate than the ones directed to civilians.

2. Assassinations are single incidences that involve a military target and long-term campaigns accrue civilian deaths.

3. The international law differentiates between the attacks on combatants and those that pose threats to civilians.

WSJ framing of assassinations as legitimate operations "0% Israel aggressor attributions" aligns with the interpretations while Kayhan consistent 100% attribution regardless of target type demonstrates rejection of such distinctions.

6.5 Practical Implications

Information Environment Fragmentations

The divergent event specific patterns mean that audiences consuming different outlet received not just overall narratives but different understandings of specific events. Kayhan reader would understand October 7 as Israeli caused while a WSJ reader would understand it as Hamas aggression. These fundamentally incompatible event interpretations create separate factual realities not just different opinions.

Predictability of Coverage

The ideal uniformity of the framing of Kayhan and WSJ on Israel implies that viewers can be entirely accurate on how these sources will frame any new event. Such predictability, on the one hand, can decrease credibility to those readers who desire event responsive analysis but increase loyalty by those who wish to receive validation of previously held beliefs.

Critical Media Positioning

Haaretz event responsive framing is different to both, Kayhan and WSJ. Through multiple blame attribution of varying blame allocation between 8% and 25% depending on the nature of events

Haaretz attracts independent evaluation of character over a priori framing. This can make this interesting to the audience that might want to be critically analyzed but can also create a feeling of discrepancy.

6.6 Limitations

Event Selections

This study examined four events selected for their significance and variations in characteristics. Other events during the period might show different patterns these selections focused on high-profile incidents potentially missing patterns in coverage of smaller scale events.

Event Boundaries

Some events overlapped temporally "Gaza campaign continued during assassinations" making complete separations difficult. Editorials sometimes addressed multiple events requiring judgment about primary focus.

7 Conclusion

This study examined blame attribution across four specific events in the Iran-Israel conflict escalations the October 7 "Hamas attack" "Gaza military campaign" "Haniyeh assassination" and Nasrallah assassinations. Quantitative analysis of 677 editorials from three ideologically distinct outlet revealed significant differences in how responded to event variation.

Kayhan International demonstrated perfect frame stability maintaining 100% aggressor attributions to Israel and 0% Hamas/Hezbollah across all events regardless of characteristics. The Wall Street Journal showed near perfect stability on Israel "0% across all events" with some variations on non-state actors. Haaretz demonstrated event responsive framing varying Israel attribution from 8% to 25% and Hamas attribution from 18% to 81% based on event characteristics.

These trends suggest that frame stability is not a homogenous factor that relies on outlet type and ideological peculiarities but is modified by outlets that are critical respecting the event peculiarities especially the profile of civilian casualties and humanitarian aspects. The results can be used to formulate framing theory as the article showed

that the characteristics of the events can moderate the process of framing in one outlet and zero in the other. They disclose that meta frame may entirely repress event specific considerations on ideologically committed outlets and event responsive outlets use overarching frames and event specific adaptations.

To gain knowledge on conflict coverage, the findings reveal that divergent event specific framing invents irreconcilable interpretations not only of who is the general responsibility but also of what occurred in particular events. Such an atomization of the interpretation of events offers difficulties to conflict resolutions processes which suppose parties are in some fundamental factual understanding despite their disagreements over larger matters.

Future studies need to look into event specific framing in more conflicts and outlets study the language process where event responsive framing occurs and determine whether the patterns found here are stable features of various types of outlets or unique to this particular conflict and that period.

Ethical Considerations:

This research was done under the ethics provided by the Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan and Advanced Studies and Research Board (ASRB) of The Islamia University of Bahawalpur. The Departmental Ethics Committee of Media and Communication Studies gave this research ethical approval.

Conflict of interest:

The authors do not claim that they have any conflict of interest with the research or the authorship and publication of this manuscript.

Data availability:

The editorial data and framing analysis applied in this study were based on the publicly available newspaper archives. The data set that was used to derive these findings can be found in the hands of the respective author on a reasonable request.

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