



RESEARCH ARTICLE

The Role of Social Media Platforms in Shaping Political Awareness towards the Palestinian Issue among Arab Youth in the Israeli War on Gaza 2023-2024

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Received: Dec 8, 2024	The study aimed to explore the impact of social media platforms on shaping the political awareness of young people in the Arab world regarding the Palestinian cause and to identify the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral effects on those who follow content related to the Israeli war on Gaza from October 7, 2023, to June 2024. This descriptive study employed the media survey method with a sample of 100 parents of young individuals. Data were collected via an online questionnaire, administered between March 17, 2024, and June 15, 2024. The study revealed that Arab youth are following the Israeli war on Gaza through social media platforms. Key findings include: Social media platforms contributed to raising the awareness of Arab youth about the Palestinian cause by sharing content related to the Israeli aggression on Gaza. Social media helped clarify information about the Palestinian issue for the youth. These platforms increased young people's knowledge of the history of the Palestinian cause. Social media nurtured an understanding among youth of the daily suffering of the Palestinian people. Through their follow-up on social media, the youth developed feelings regarding the Israeli aggression.
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INTRODUCTION

Political awareness refers to an individual's understanding of the reality of their society, regional and international surroundings, and knowledge of the political, social, and economic conditions that influence them. It also involves recognizing the key issues of the time and identifying the forces that play a role in decision-making both nationally and globally. Political awareness helps individuals understand their rights and duties in democratic or authoritarian systems; as they need to be informed about the conditions and problems affecting them locally and globally.

Media is one of the tools that shapes political awareness, strengthens values, and promotes political socialization, especially in light of the transformations brought about by technology and changing national and regional political landscapes. This study addresses the extent to which social media platforms contribute to shaping the political awareness of Arab youth about the Palestinian issue during the Israeli aggression on Gaza from October 2023 to 2024, in light of current transformations. It considers the significant influence social media has had on various political issues around the world. This influence has led Palestinian journalists and activists in Gaza, using their smartphones and digital platforms, to rely on social media to communicate the atrocities happening in Gaza against innocent people, particularly as international journalists were not allowed entry into the region.

In the first months of the war on Gaza, the use of social media significantly contributed to documenting and disseminating what was happening in Gaza, making it accessible to the world. Many local and international media outlets relied on videos recorded by activists and journalists in Gaza, which documented the scale of the crimes committed against innocent civilians. Therefore, the study

aims to explore the extent to which social media platforms have influenced the political awareness of Arab youth regarding the Palestinian cause.

PREVIOUS STUDIES:

Sorour (2024) conducted a study aimed at understanding the role of digital media in developing political awareness among students at Matrouh University. The researcher used the descriptive method due to its suitability for the nature of the study and relied on a questionnaire as the primary tool to assess the impact of digital media on the political awareness of the students. The study concluded that digital media has a significant impact on the cognitive, behavioral, and emotional aspects of political awareness. There were statistically significant differences at the level of (0.01) between average scores of male and female students in terms of emotional impact, in favor of females, and at the level of (0.05) in terms of behavioral impact, in favor of males.

El-Sayed Ahmed (2022) emphasized in his study that new media relies heavily on technology and the manipulation of minds. It has contributed to the creation of virtual identities and the clustering of people based on affiliations and preferences. Additionally, new media has played a role in cultural and value-based infiltration in many societies, promoting globalization and becoming one of its effective tools in penetrating the national fabric of numerous communities. Furthermore, it provided a space for socially and politically marginalized groups. Platforms like Facebook have fostered a culture of division between the ruling authority and society, especially the youth, revealing the political system's challenges in accessing information and failing to meet the demands of the public.

The study by Al-Matari et al. (2020) aimed to explore the role of new media in developing political awareness among Omani university students. It found that (Facebook) was the most preferred platform, used by 76.92% of the students. The study also revealed that new media had a moderate cognitive, emotional, and behavioral impact on the students. Moreover, no statistically significant differences were found at a level of less than 0.05 in political motivations or reasons for Omani students' reliance on new media, based on variables such as academic year and college.

Seif El-Din (2020) concluded that digital media is the primary source for adolescents to learn about general and political events, with 64% relying on it. Television ranked second with 32%, while radio came third with 4%. Newspapers did not appear on the list of sources adolescents rely on for news. Social media platforms garnered 56% of adolescents' attention, followed by micro-blogging platforms with 40%, content-sharing sites came third at 36%, and blogs came fourth at 10%.

Al-Omari (2016) explored the role of social media in developing political awareness among students at Sultan Qaboos University. The study aimed to assess how university students used social media and its relationship with their political awareness. Using a descriptive survey method, the study was conducted with a purposive sample of 160 students aged between 18 and 25. A questionnaire was used, revealing high levels of interaction on social media platforms such as Google Plus, Instagram, and Facebook, and varying degrees of attraction towards these platforms and their relationship to political awareness.

Abdullah (2016) aimed to understand the role of modern media in shaping political awareness among youth. Using a media survey method with a sample of 30 individuals and a questionnaire, the study found that 50% of the respondents relied on modern media to obtain political information, especially during crises.

The study by Saleh (2016) found that 100% of Jordanian university students preferred using Facebook, and that social media platforms had a moderate cognitive, emotional, and behavioral impact on them in following political issues. The results also showed that 43% of the students had only one social media account. There was a moderate level of motivation among Jordanian university students for using social media, including for political purposes. The study confirmed that students relied on social media to follow political issues and current events to a moderate degree.

Ameen (2014) highlighted that university-educated youth were the most consistent users of social media, with 83.8% of the sample beginning to use platforms like Facebook after the January 25 Revolution. The study showed that youth felt social media changed their attitudes positively by spreading knowledge about political issues. Social media allowed users to access political information, events, and news, providing them with the freedom to comment on these matters. Among the topics most frequently discussed by youth on social media were political issues. The platforms encouraged free expression, enabling young people to continuously share their thoughts and express opinions either in support of or against the political system.

STUDY THEORY:

The Media Dependency Theory

This theory emerged in the 1920s, when researchers began studying the impact of media on cognitive levels. The theory suggests that differences in individuals' cognitive levels are primarily due to the interaction between variables related to the nature of media and the audience's characteristics. Researcher Sandra Paul Rokeach and her colleagues highlighted the interdependent relationship between media, social systems, and institutions in society, illustrating how media can have cognitive, behavioral, and emotional effects. The theory is important for removing ambiguity, setting priorities, and shaping attitudes and values.

Hypotheses of the Theory:

The theory's hypotheses are summed up in that the means of communication's ability to achieve greater cognitive, emotional, and behavioral influence increases when it effectively transmits information distinctively and intensively. This possibility will increase in strength in the event of structural instability in society due to conflict and change. In addition, the idea of changing the behavior, knowledge, and conscience of the public can become a feedback effect to change both society and the means of communication, and this is the meaning of the trilogy between the means of communication, the public, and society. (Kafi, 2015). The dependency theory is based on several assumptions:

1. The individual relies on media to satisfy his needs by using the medium.
2. The more the medium plays an important role in people's lives, the greater its impact becomes, making its role more significant and central. Thus, a relationship forms between the intensity of dependence and the degree of influence the medium has on individuals.
3. As societies become more complex, individuals' reliance on media increases.

Political Awareness:

Political awareness is defined as a comprehensive understanding that includes political knowledge, values, and attitudes that enable individuals to grasp the conditions of their society and actively participate in political issues. According to Adel (2012), political awareness is the ability to understand and effectively address social and political issues, whether at the family, community, or national level.

From the perspective of political development experts, political awareness relates to changes in the distribution and exchange of power and the effectiveness of institutions, groups, values, and political socialization. It reflects the transition from traditional to more modern political systems and from authoritarian to democratic regimes, requiring open-mindedness and a belief in democracy, both in thought and practice, as noted by Al-Faqih (2008).

Social Media Platforms and Awareness Formation:

Media, in its various forms, plays a key role in shaping public opinion by providing news and acting as a channel for political awareness and the dissemination of ideas. This contributes to fostering a sense of loyalty and national unity by spreading unified values. Media is an integral part of the

political landscape in any country, as its messages reflect the broader opinions and interests of social forces and movements.

Social media platforms have significantly elevated political awareness. These platforms are a prominent phenomenon in today’s world, attracting a large segment of society. A 2011 Arab research study concluded that there were 32 million Arab Facebook users, with a growth rate of 500%. Additionally, around 1.1 million Arab users engaged with Twitter, both active and passive bloggers. These networks now connect millions of users.

Social media has brought about a qualitative leap, not only in communication between individuals and groups but also in the outcomes and impact of this communication. These platforms have influenced social, political, and cultural spheres to such an extent that they have become one of the main drivers of change, both locally and globally. The speed at which information can be disseminated via these platforms has left traditional media unable to match their impact. The recent events in the Arab region stand as clear evidence of the transformative power of social media in shaping societies and enhancing political life. Initially, social media was used for casual chatting and emotional venting, but its role has expanded significantly since then (Ahmed, 2011).

General Findings:

The Field Study Results:

Preface:

The researcher aimed to explore the role of social media in shaping Arab political awareness regarding the Palestinian cause among the youth following the Israeli aggression on Gaza in 2023. This descriptive study employed a media survey method on a sample of 100 parents of young people, with data collected via an electronic questionnaire from March 17, 2024, to June 15, 2024. The findings were as follows:

1. Social media sites on which young people follow the Israeli aggression on Gaza:
 - A- The extent to which young people follow the Israeli aggression on Gaza via (Facebook):

Table (1): The extent to which young people follow the aggression on Gaza via Facebook

Parents The extent of youth following	Fathers		Mothers		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
They follow to a large extent	27	54	34	68	61	61
They follow somewhat	19	38	16	32	35	35
They do not follow	4	8	0	0	4	4
Total	50		50		100	

Chi-Square Value (χ^2) = 5.060, Degrees of Freedom = 2, Contingency Coefficient = 0.080, Non-significant Statistical Value

The table can be interpreted as follows:

- 1) No significant relationship was found between the two types of the sample (parents) and their choices. The Chi-Square value (5.060) is not statistically significant at any level. This indicates that there is no substantial difference between the types of samples (fathers and mothers) and their choices among the three alternatives. There is a similarity in the percentages of choices made by both groups, For example:
 - "Youth follow Facebook to a large extent: 54% of fathers and 68% of mothers selected this option. "Youth somewhat follow the aggression on Gaza via Facebook": 38% of fathers and 32% of mothers chose this option. "Youth do not follow the aggression on Facebook": 8% of fathers selected this, while no mothers did.

These responses from both mothers and fathers highlight that their children (youth) largely follow the Israeli aggression on Gaza via Facebook. This finding is consistent with Saleh's study (2016),

which showed that Facebook was the most preferred platform, with 100% of students using it to follow political issues.

B) Youth's following of the Israeli aggression on Gaza via Twitter (X):

Table (2): Extent to which youth follow the aggression on Gaza through Twitter (X)

Parents The extent of youth following	Fathers		Mothers		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
They follow to a large extent	25	50	23	46	48	48
They follow somewhat	15	30	15	30	30	30
They do not follow	10	20	12	24	22	22
Total	50		50		100	

The value of Chi-square (χ^2) = (0.265) degrees of freedom = (2) value of the compatibility coefficient = (0.876) is not statistically significant.

The table is interpreted as follows:

a) There is no relationship between the types of samples and their selections, as the value of (χ^2) (0.265) is not statistically significant at any level of statistical significance. This is because there is a convergence in the rates of selecting answers or response alternatives between the two groups. The alternative "youth follow the aggression on Gaza on Twitter (X) somewhat" was chosen by parents as the first option: fathers (50%) and mothers (46%). Meanwhile, "youth follow the aggression on Gaza on Twitter (X) to a large extent" came in second place, with selections from fathers at (30%) and mothers also at (30%). Additionally, "youth do not follow the aggression on Twitter (X)" ranked third, with fathers at (20%) and mothers at (24%).

- The percentage of youth following the Israeli war on Gaza via Twitter, according to mothers and fathers, was lower than on Facebook. Although older individuals, intellectuals, politicians, and media professionals tend to follow Twitter more, there was still a relatively moderate level of follow-up by youth on the platform X, formerly known as Twitter. This reflects the youth's eagerness to stay updated on news related to Gaza through various social media platforms.

- This aligns with the study by Anna Beeb and others (2018), which showed that using Facebook for political discussions has a significant positive impact on young people's interest in politics, while results indicated that using Twitter does not have a significant effect on political interest among youth.

b) The extent of youth following the Israeli aggression on Gaza via TikTok:

Table (3): Extent of youth following the aggression on Gaza via TikTok.

Parents The extent of youth following	Fathers		Mothers		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
They follow to a large extent	28	56	28	56	56	56
They follow somewhat	16	32	18	36	34	34
They do not follow	6	12	4	8	10	10
Total	50		50		100	

The value of Chi-square (χ^2) = (0.518) degrees of freedom = (2) value of the compatibility coefficient = (0.772) is not statistically significant.

The table is interpreted as follows:

a) There is no relationship between the types of samples and their selections, as the value of (χ^2) (0.518) is not statistically significant at any level of statistical significance. This is because there is a convergence in the rates of selecting answers or response alternatives

between the two groups. The alternative "youth follow the aggression on Gaza on TikTok to a large extent" was chosen by parents as the first option: fathers (56%) and mothers (56%). Meanwhile, "youth somewhat follow the aggression on Gaza on TikTok" came in second place, with selections from fathers at (32%) and mothers at (36%). Additionally, "youth do not follow the aggression on TikTok" ranked third, with fathers at (12%) and mothers at (8%).

The result here shows that youth followed the war in Gaza via TikTok to a large extent.

The extent of youth following the Israeli aggression on Gaza via Instagram:

Table (4): Extent of youth following the aggression on Gaza via Instagram

Parents The extent of youth following	Fathers		Mothers		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
They follow to a large extent	25	50	21	42	46	46
They follow somewhat	21	42	22	44	43	43
They do not follow	4	8	7	14	11	11
Total	50		50		100	

The value of Chi-square (χ^2) = (1.189) degrees of freedom = (2) value of the compatibility coefficient = (0.552) is not statistically significant.

The table is interpreted as follows:

b) There is no relationship between the types of samples and their selections, as the value of (χ^2) (1.189) is not statistically significant at any level of statistical significance. This is because there is a convergence in the rates of selecting answers or response alternatives between the two groups. The alternative "youth somewhat follow the aggression on Gaza on Instagram" was chosen by parents as the first option: fathers (50%) and mothers (42%). Meanwhile, "youth somewhat follow the aggression on Gaza on Instagram" came in second place, with selections from fathers at (42%) and mothers at (44%). Additionally, "youth do not follow the aggression on Instagram" ranked third, with fathers at (8%) and mothers at (14%).

- These percentages of youth following the war in Gaza are attributed to the platform's focus on sharing images more than others. Despite Instagram and Facebook being owned by Meta, which imposed significant restrictions on content related to the war on Gaza during the conflict, youth engagement with both platforms varies due to their need to stay informed about everything related to the war on Gaza across all digital platforms.

c) The extent of youth following the Israeli aggression on Gaza via YouTube:

Table (5): Extent of youth following the aggression on Gaza via YouTube

Parents The extent of youth following	Fathers		Mothers		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
They follow to a large extent	24	48	31	62	55	55
They follow somewhat	19	38	10	20	29	29
They do not follow	7	14	9	18	16	16
Total	50		50		100	

The value of Chi-square (χ^2) = (3.934) degrees of freedom = (2) value of the compatibility coefficient = (0.140) is not statistically significant.

The table is interpreted as follows:

a) There is no relationship between the types of samples and their selections, as the value of (χ^2) (3.934) is not statistically significant at any level of statistical significance. This is because there is a convergence in the rates of selecting answers or response alternatives

between the two groups. The alternative "youth somewhat follow the aggression on Gaza on YouTube" was chosen by parents as the first option: fathers (48%) and mothers (62%). Meanwhile, "youth follow the aggression on Gaza to a large extent on YouTube" came in second place, with selections from fathers at (38%) and mothers at (20%). Additionally, "youth do not follow the aggression on YouTube" ranked third, with fathers at (14%) and mothers at (18%).

- The reliance of youth on following the war in Gaza via YouTube varies between significant and moderate levels due to the clear and comprehensive presentation of content, often focusing on detailed information, statistics, and figures. This makes youth and their families rely heavily on YouTube, with varying degrees of engagement ranging from substantial to moderate across all platforms; as youth need to stay informed about everything happening in Gaza. This aligns with the study by Saif El-Din (2020), which revealed that adolescents rely on digital media sites to understand public and political events by (64%). Additionally, social media accounts for (56%) of adolescents' interest, ranking first among digital media channels, confirming that youth primarily depend on social media for information about the war in Gaza.

2. The cognitive, emotional, and behavioral effects of youth following the aggression on Gaza via social media:

Notes:

- a) The scale contained (31) statements, and responses were coded as follows: Agree gives three points, Neutral gives two points, and Disagree gives one point.
- b) The number of scale phrases is (17), with a maximum score of (51) and a minimum of (17).
- c) The degree of adolescents' agreement with the statements was determined by the average scores: an average from (1 to 1.69) indicates disagreement, from (1.70 to 3.39) indicates neutrality, and from (3.40 to 5) indicates agreement.

Table (6): Parents' responses to the statements measuring the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral effects on youth Statements from (1 : 5)

Parents' Responses		Fathers (n)		Mothers (n)		Total (n)		Mean	SD	Direction
		No	%	No.	%	No	%			
Social media enjoys greater popularity in the Arab world compared to traditional media during the Israeli aggression on Gaza.	Strongly Agree	30	60	21	42	51	51	4.36	.772	Supportive
	Agree	16	32	21	42	37	37			
	Neutral	2	4	7	14	9	9			
	Disagree	2	4	1	2	3	3			
Social media contributes to understanding the reality experienced by Palestinians under aggression.	Agree	23	46	22	44	45	45	4.28	.712	Supportive
	Strongly Agree	22	44	20	40	42	42			
	Neutral	4	8	8	16	12	12			
	Disagree	1	2	0	0	1	1			
	Agree	17	34	25	50	42	42	3.86	.954	Supportive

The content provided (video, format, images) on these sites is suitable for youth.	Strongly Agree	16	32	11	22	27	27			
	Neutral	12	24	11	22	23	23			
	Disagree	3	6	3	6	6	6			
	Strongly Disagree	2	4	0	0	2	2			
The content provided (video, format, images) is valuable for youth.	Agree	26	52	25	50	51	51	3.88	.879	Supportive
	Strongly Agree	12	24	11	22	23	23			
	Neutral	6	12	12	24	18	18			
	Disagree	5	10	2	4	7	7			
	Strongly Disagree	1	2	0	0	1	1			
The content (video, format, images) neglects to clarify the news.	Disagree	20	40	19	38	39	39	3.48	.990	Disapprover
	Neutral	13	26	18	36	31	31			
	Strongly Disagree	11	22	3	6	14	14			
	Agree	4	8	9	18	13	13			
	Strongly Agree	2	4	1	2	3	3			
Total Respondents		50		50		100				

Table (7): Parents' answers to the statements measuring the cognitive, emotional and behavioral effects on the youth Phrases from (6:10)

Parents Phrases		Fathers (n)		Mothers (n)		Total (n)		Mean	SD	Direction
		No	%	No	%	No	%			
The content presented regarding the Palestinian issue is trustworthy.	Agree	17	34	31	62	48	48	3.72	.830	Supportive
	Neutral	15	30	13	26	28	28			
	Strongly Agree	11	22	5	10	16	16			
	Disagree	7	14	1	2	8	8			
The content presented regarding the Palestinian issue influences the formation of youth awareness.	Agree	20	40	27	54	47	47	4.22	.719	Supportive
	Strongly Agree	24	48	14	28	38	38			
	Neutral	6	12	8	16	14	14			
	Disagree	0	0	1	2	1	1			
Arab youth rely on social media to follow developments in the Palestinian issue.	Agree	20	40	28	56	48	48	4.16	.748	Supportive
	Strongly Agree	22	44	13	26	35	35			
	Neutral	6	12	9	18	15	15			
	Disagree	2	4	0	0	2	2			
The content presented throughout the period of Israeli aggression on Gaza is clear for youth.	Agree	19	38	23	46	42	42	3.86	.865	Supportive
	Neutral	13	26	14	28	27	27			
	Strongly Agree	12	24	13	26	25	25			
	Disagree	6	12	0	0	6	6			
	Agree	20	40	25	50	45	45	3.95	.857	Supportive

Youth prefer to follow news live regarding the Israeli aggression from within Palestine.	Strongly Agree	19	38	9	18	28	28			
	Neutral	6	12	15	30	21	21			
	Disagree	5	10	1	2	6	6			
Total Respondents		50		50		100				

Table (8): Parents' Responses to the statements measuring the cognitive, emotional and behavioral effects on youth Statements from (11:15)

Parents' Responses		Fathers (n)		Mothers (n)		Total (n)		Mean	SD	Direction
		No	%	No.	%	No	%			
The content provided about the Palestinian issue via social media sites is reliable.	Agree	15	30	23	46	38	38	3.50	.916	Supportive
	Neutral	18	36	19	38	37	37			
	Strongly Agree	8	16	5	10	13	13			
	Disagree	7	14	3	6	10	10			
	Strongly Disagree	2	4	0	0	2	2			
The content provided about the Palestinian issue depends on the personal opinion of the content creator.	Agree	24	48	28	56	52	52	3.76	.878	Supportive
	Neutral	10	20	13	26	23	23			
	Strongly Agree	12	24	5	10	17	17			
	Disagree	3	6	3	6	6	6			
	Strongly Disagree	1	2	1	2	2	2			
Young people feel a sense of national belonging due to the positions adopted by the regimes towards the Palestinian issue.	Agree	17	34	24	48	41	41	3.68	.973	Supportive
	Neutral	14	28	15	30	29	29			
	Strongly Agree	14	28	6	12	20	20			
	Disagree	3	6	4	8	7	7			
	Strongly Disagree	2	4	1	2	3	3			
Young people feel a spirit of Arab unity when they find the sons of sister Arab countries following the issue.	Agree	21	42	25	50	46	46	4.03	.797	Supportive
	Strongly Agree	19	38	11	22	30	30			
	Neutral	7	14	14	28	21	21			
	Disagree	3	6	0	0	3	3			
Social media sites have contributed to raising awareness among Arab youth about the Palestinian issue.	Agree	20	40	26	52	46	46	3.48	.990	Disapprover
	Strongly Agree	20	40	15	30	35	35			
	Neutral	7	14	9	18	16	16			
	Disagree	2	4	0	0	2	2			
	Strongly Disagree	1	2	0	0	1	1			
	Strongly Disagree	1	2	0	0	1	1			
Total Respondents		50		50		100				

(Table 9): Parents' responses to statements measuring cognitive, emotional and behavioral influences on youth Statements from (16:20)

Parents' Responses		Fathers (n)		Mothers (n)		Total (n)		Mean	SD	Direction
		No	%	No.	%	No	%			
Following demonstrations in support of the Palestinian cause around the world via social media has made young people realize the justice of the Palestinian cause.	Agree	15	30	27	54	42	42	4.15	.821	Supportive
	Strongly Agree	26	52	12	24	38	38			
	Neutral	7	14	11	22	18	18			
	Disagree	1	2	0	0	1	1			
	Strongly Disagree	1	2	0	0	1	1			
Sharing social media content related to the Israeli aggression reflects the extent of young people's desire to expose the crimes of the occupation.	Agree	18	36	27	54	45	45	4.11	.875	Supportive
	Strongly Agree	23	46	13	26	36	36			
	Neutral	5	10	10	20	15	15			
	Disagree	2	4	0	0	2	2			
	Strongly Disagree	2	4	0	0	2	2			
Sharing social media content related to the Israeli aggression reflects the extent of young people's desire to support the Palestinians.	Agree	21	42	13	26	34	34	4.06	.851	Supportive
	Strongly Agree	20	40	23	46	43	43			
	Neutral	5	10	13	26	18	18			
	Disagree	4	8	1	2	5	5			
Following social media has awakened the spirit of Arab unity among young people.	Agree	23	46	23	46	46	46	3.95	.892	Supportive
	Strongly Agree	15	30	13	26	28	28			
	Neutral	9	18	12	24	21	21			
	Disagree	2	4	1	2	3	3			
	Strongly Disagree	1	2	1	2	2	2			
Social media enhances young people's interaction skills regarding current events in Palestine.	Agree	22	44	30	60	52	52	4.20	.667	Disapprover
	Strongly Agree	22	44	12	24	34	34			
	Neutral	6	12	8	16	14	14			
Total Respondents		50		50		100				

(Table 10): Parents' responses to statements measuring cognitive, emotional and behavioral influences on youth Statements from (21:25)

Parents' Responses		Fathers (n)		Mothers (n)		Total (n)		Mean	SD	Direction
		No	%	No.	%	No	%			
	Agree	19	38	24	48	43	43	4.02	.899	Supportive

Social media has removed the ambiguity among young people about information about the Palestinian issue.	Strongly Agree	19	38	14	28	33	33			
	Neutral	6	12	12	24	18	18			
	Disagree	5	10	0	0	5	5			
	Strongly Disagree	1	2	0	0	1	1			
Social media has increased the knowledge of young people about the history of the Palestinian cause.	Agree	22	44	27	54	49	49	4.13	.787	Supportive
	Strongly Agree	20	40	14	28	34	34			
	Neutral	5	10	8	16	13	13			
	Disagree	3	6	1	2	4	4			
Social media has increased the knowledge of young people about the daily suffering of the Palestinian people.	Agree	20	40	26	52	46	46	4.20	.804	Supportive
	Strongly Agree	25	50	14	28	39	39			
	Neutral	2	4	10	20	12	12			
	Disagree	2	4	0	0		2			
	Strongly Disagree	1	2	0	0	1	1			
Young people's knowledge of the crimes of the Israeli occupation has increased through social media.	Agree	16	32	26	52	42	42	4.21	.756	Supportive
	Strongly Agree	26	52	14	28	40	40			
	Neutral	7	14	10	20	17	17			
	Disagree	1	2	0	0	1	1			
Young people have learned about the role of resistance in Palestine through social media.	Agree	19	38	28	56	47	47	4.20	.667	Disapprover
	Strongly Agree	24	48	12	24	36	36			
	Neutral	5	10	9	18	14	14			
	Disagree	2	4	1	2	3	3			
Total Respondents		50		50		100				

(Table 11): Parents' responses to statements measuring cognitive, emotional and behavioral influences on Young People Statements from (26:30)

Parents' Responses		Fathers (n)		Mothers (n)		Total (n)		Mean	SD	Direction
		No	%	No.	%	No	%			
The youth became aware of the ways to help the Palestinian people will be through social media.	Agree	19	38	28	56	47	47	3.99	.893	Supportive
	Strongly Agree	20	40	10	20	30	30			
	Neutral	5	10	11	22	16	16			
	Disagree	5	10	1	2	6	6			
	Strongly Disagree	1	2	0	0	1	1			
The youth learned about the attitudes of other countries towards what	Agree	27	54	28	56	55	55	4.16	.677	Supportive
	Strongly Agree	18	36	13	26	31	31			
	Neutral	4	8	9	18	13	13			

Palestine is exposed to through social media.	Disagree	1	2	0	0	1	1			
Through social media, the youth's knowledge of the role of journalists and correspondents in conveying events from inside the occupied territories grew.	Agree	22	44	27	54	49	49	4.16	.825	Supportive
	Strongly Agree	21	42	15	30	36	36			
	Neutral	4	8	8	16	12	12			
	Disagree	1	2	0	0	1	1			
	Strongly Disagree	2	4	0	0	2	2			
The youth learned about the position of celebrities towards the current events in Palestine through social media.	Agree	19	38	27	54	46	46	4.22	.746	Supportive
	Strongly Agree	24	48	15	30	39	39			
	Neutral	5	10	8	16	13	13			
	Disagree	2	4	0	0	2	2			
The youth feel sad when they see the numbers of Palestinian dead through social media.	Strongly Agree	34	68	18	36	52	52	4.37	.747	Neutral
	Agree	11	22	23	46	34	34			
	Neutral	4	8	9	18	13	13			
	Disagree	1	2	0	0	1	1			
Total Respondents		50		50		100				

(Table 12): Parents' responses to statements measuring cognitive, emotional and behavioral influences on Young People Statements from (31:35)

Parents' Responses		Fathers (n)		Mothers (n)		Total (n)		Mean	SD	Direction
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%			
Young people feel depressed when they follow politicians' statements about what is happening in Palestine on social media.	Agree	14	28	23	46	37	37	4.00	.865	Supportive
	Strongly Agree	23	46	10	20	33	33			
	Neutral	11	22	17	34	28	28			
	Disagree	1	2	0	0	1	1			
	Strongly Disagree	1	2	0	0	1	1			
Young people fear for the future of the cause when they	Strongly Agree	27	54	16	32	43	43	4.12	.946	Supportive
	Agree	14	28	19	38	33	33			
	Neutral	5	10	13	26	18	18			

see Arab inaction towards Palestine.	Disagree	3	6	2	4	5	5			
	Strongly Disagree	1	2	0	0	1	1			
Young people panic when they see social media posts about the Palestinian cause daily.	Agree	17	34	25	50	42	42	3.87	.884	Supportive
	Strongly Agree	18	36	8	16	26	26			
	Neutral	10	20	15	30	25	25			
	Disagree	5	10	2	4	7	7			
Young people are shocked by the global silence on violations of Palestinian children's rights.	Strongly Agree	28	56	17	34	45	45	4.22	.836	Supportive
	Agree	12	24	23	46	35	35			
	Neutral	7	14	10	20	17	17			
	Disagree	3	6	0	0	3	3			
Young people feel frustrated because of the inability of Palestine's neighbors to provide any form of support.	Strongly Agree	28	56	13	26	41	41	4.16	.838	Neutral
	Agree	13	26	24	48	37	37			
	Neutral	7	14	12	24	19	19			
	Disagree	2	4	1	2	3	3			
Total Respondents		50		50		100				

Table (13): Parents' responses to statements measuring cognitive, emotional and behavioral effects on Young People Statements from (36:40)

Parents' Responses		Fathers (n)		Mothers (n)		Total (n)		Mean	SD	Direction
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%			
Young people feel helpless because they are unable to do anything for the Palestinians.	Agree	13	26	28	56	41	41	4.14	.865	Supportive
	Strongly Agree	28	56	11	22	39	39			
	Neutral	6	12	10	20	16	16			
	Disagree	3	6	0	0	3	3			
	Strongly Disagree	0	0	1	2	1	1			
Young people feel ashamed of the official Arab position towards the Palestinian cause.	Strongly Agree	29	58	15	30	44	44	4.18	.869	Supportive
	Agree	12	24	21	42	33	33			
	Neutral	8	16	13	26	21	21			
	Disagree	1	2	0	0	1	1			
	Strongly Disagree	0	0	1	2	1	1			

Young people feel proud of the steadfastness of the Palestinian people.	Strongly Agree	32	64	16	32	48	48	4.29	.795	Supportive
	Agree	11	22	24	48	35	35			
	Neutral	6	12	9	18	15	15			
	Disagree	1	2	1	2	2	2			
Young people are keen to follow the events moment by moment to know the successive developments in the conflict in Gaza.	Agree	26	52	26	52	52	52	4.09	.712	Supportive
	Strongly Agree	16	32	13	26	29	29			
	Neutral	7	14	11	22	18	18			
	Disagree	1	2	0	0	1	1			
Young people have stopped publishing any special content except for clips of the Israeli aggression in Palestine.	Agree	16	32	23	46	39	39	3.57	1.027	Supportive
	Neutral	12	24	17	34	29	29			
	Strongly Agree	13	26	5	10	18	18			
	Disagree	6	12	4	8	10	10			
	Strongly Disagree	3	6	1	2	4	4			
Total Respondents		50		50		100				

Table (14): Parents' responses to statements measuring cognitive, emotional and behavioral effects on Young People Statements from (41:45)

Parents' Responses		Fathers (n)		Mothers (n)		Total (n)		Mean	SD	Direction
		No	%	No.	%	No	%			
The youth boycotted all products that support Israel.	Agree	21	42	26	52	47	47	3.89	.852	Supportive
	Strongly Agree	14	28	10	20	24	24			
	Neutral	11	22	13	26	24	24			
	Disagree	3	6	1	2	4	4			
	Strongly Disagree	1	2	0	0	1	1			
The youth expressed solidarity with the demonstrations supporting the Palestinian cause.	Strongly Agree	23	46	26	52	49	49	4.03	.810	Supportive
	Agree	17	34	12	24	29	29			
	Neutral	7	14	12	24	19	19			
	Disagree	2	4	0	0	2	2			
	Strongly Disagree	1	2	0	1	1	1			
The youth discussed all the social media posts about the Gaza war with each other.	Agree	20	40	28	56	48	48	3.91	.830	Supportive
	Strongly Agree	13	26	11	22	24	24			
	Neutral	13	26	11	22	24	24			

	Disagree	3	6	0	0	3	3			
	Strongly Disagree	1	2	0	0	1	1			
The youth drew the Israeli flag on the ground to step on it.	Agree	17	34	22	44	39	39	3.60	.865	Supportive
	Neutral	18	36	20	40	38	38			
	Strongly Agree	10	20	5	10	15	15			
	Disagree	4	8	3	6	7	7			
	Strongly Disagree	1	2	0	0	1	1			
The youth wrote posts on their social media accounts condemning the crimes of the occupation in Gaza.	Agree	30	60	26	52	56	56	4.06	.664	Supportive
	Strongly Agree	14	28	11	22	25	25			
	Neutral	6	12	13	26	19	19			
Total Respondents		50		50		100				

From the above, it is clear that:

a. Parents of youth agreed on all the statements in the scale except for the statement regarding the content (video, format, images) neglecting to clarify the news. This was confirmed by the average of the statements and their standard deviations. Parents observed that youth exhibit all the characteristics that the researcher inquired about, and they supported the existence of all these traits that measure cognitive, emotional, and behavioral effects. Among the most significant cognitive effects that parents confirmed regarding youth awareness are the following:

- Social media has contributed to raising awareness among Arab youth about the Palestinian issue by allowing them to follow pro-Palestinian demonstrations worldwide through social media platforms. They shared content related to the Israeli aggression on Gaza, clarifying information about the Palestinian issue and increasing their knowledge of the historical context of the Palestinian struggle. Social media has also enhanced youth awareness of the daily suffering of the Palestinian people and their understanding of the crimes committed by the Israeli occupation against Palestinians. They became more aware of the role of resistance in Palestine and learned how to assist the Palestinian people. Through social media, they also understood the positions of various countries towards Palestine and the role of journalists and correspondents in reporting events from the occupied territories. Youth learned about the stances of celebrities regarding the situation in Palestine, and social media helped them grasp the justice of the Palestinian cause. This has reflected on the awareness of Arab youth, who are now more knowledgeable and actively seek truths about the Palestinian issue, sharing their knowledge across social media platforms.

Attached is a video of a 14-year-old Egyptian boy named Abdel Salam, who shares historical and national information about Palestine, affirming the Palestinian right to the land.

[Watch the video here] (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pnABJBSGCTw>)

Among the most significant emotional effects are the following:

Youth felt a sense of belonging to the Palestinian cause through their observation of the Israeli aggression on Gaza, influenced by the positions taken by various regimes towards this issue. They experienced a sense of Arab unity manifested through the supportive stance of citizens from Arab countries toward Palestine. Youth also felt sadness from what they saw on social media, leading to feelings of depression due to the harsh events experienced by the Palestinian people. They expressed

fear for the future of the cause due to the inaction of some Arab states regarding the Palestinian issue. Additionally, youth were horrified by the scale and nature of the crimes committed against the Palestinian people and felt shock and frustration due to the global silence and inability of neighboring countries to provide any form of support. At the same time, they felt pride in the resilience of the Palestinian people, though they also felt shame and helplessness for not being able to assist in stopping the aggression or cease fire.

Attached is a video reflecting these cognitive and emotional effects, where Kuwaiti youth express their solidarity with Palestine, with some crying due to the pain they see on social media. The video shows a child crying and others discussing Palestine with awareness, confirming the profound impact of the events in Palestine on them emotionally, cognitively, and behaviorally.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0illkvZhR5I>

Parents of youth and various media outlets document the positions of youth that reflect their awareness, solidarity, and support for the Palestinian people and the Palestinian cause, confirming an Arab stance that has become clearer in favor of the Palestinian cause, especially following the Israeli aggression on the Gaza Strip from October 2023, which continued until June 2024, the time of conducting this research; where the genocide against the children of Gaza was ongoing.

Among the most significant behavioral effects are the following:

Arab youth shared content related to the Israeli aggression on Gaza through social media platforms, reflecting their desire to expose the crimes of the Israeli occupation and their willingness to support Palestinians. Social media has also enhanced interaction among youth regarding ongoing events in Palestine. However, a significant percentage of youth stopped posting any content unrelated to the clips of the Israeli aggression on Gaza, focusing instead on sharing everything related to Palestine. They boycotted all products supporting Israel and joined protests supporting the Palestinian cause. Youth even drew the Israeli flag on the ground to stomp on it as a sign of their anger towards the practices of the Israeli occupation against the Palestinian people. They wrote posts on their social media accounts condemning the crimes of the occupation in Gaza and discussed all posts related to the Gaza War among themselves.

Attached is a video of youth calling for a boycott of all products that support Israel, in reference to their support for Palestine and their rejection of the genocide being committed by the Israeli occupation against the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

[Link to TikTok video]

<https://www.tiktok.com/@ahmed.khalil241/video/7348537952693275909?r=1&t=8msr1t5HQ A5>

The study also agrees with Qadri's study (2017), which suggests that the technological advancement witnessed in the world today, along with the presence of multiple media outlets and their diverse content, has made political socialization a topic of interest for these outlets. These outlets have gained significant importance through their ability to influence individuals' attitudes and positions, contributing to the formation of their political beliefs.

Second- The Study Hypotheses:

A- There are statistically significant differences between the parents of youth on the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral impact scale, attributed to their demographic variables (gender, age, education levels, and place of residence).

- 1) There is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the parents of youth on the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral impact scale, attributed to gender.

Table (15): (T-test) to indicate the significance of the differences between the average scores of (fathers - mothers) on the scale of cognitive, emotional and behavioral influences

Parents of Youth	No.	Type	No.	Average	SD	T Value	Degree of freedom	Significance level	Significance
Cognitive, effective and behavioral effects	100	Fathers	50	184.30	26.414	1.310	98	.233	Insignificant
		Mothers	50	177.86	22.588				

The table explains the following:

A) The hypothesis proved to be invalid; there was no statistically significant difference between the mean scores of fathers and mothers on the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral impact scale due to gender. This was demonstrated by the T-value (1.310), which is not statistically significant. This is further supported by the similarity in their responses and agreement on the influences they both observed in the behavior of the youth after following social media. The researcher attributes this to the fact that the interaction of youth with the Palestinian cause across the Arab world is almost identical, and the aggression against Gaza is universally met with the same level of condemnation and rejection. What is happening to the children and people of Gaza is unacceptable to anyone at any time, which is why the results are similar for both fathers and mothers.

2) There is a statistically significant difference between mean scores of the parents of youth on the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral impact scale attributed to their age groups.

Table (16): One-way ANOVA test for the significance of the differences between the age groups of the parents of youth on the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral impact scale

Age groups of parents of adolescents	No.	Source of variance	Sum of squares	Degrees of freedom	Means of squares	Value (F)	Level of significance	Significance
Scale of Cognitive, affective and behavioral effects	100	Between groups	1931.821	2	965.910	1.607	.206	Not significant
		Within groups	58291.539	97	600.944			
		Total	60223.360	99				

3) The hypothesis proved to be invalid; there was no statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the parents of youth on the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral effects scale attributed to their age groups. The F-value (1.607) was not statistically significant, indicating that the age levels of the parents did not lead to any notable differences in their children's responses to social media posts about the Israeli aggression on Gaza. The researcher believes that the age levels of the parents did not affect their children's interaction with social media posts about the Israeli aggression on Gaza. This confirms that all parents, regardless of age, had their children influenced and engaged with the content on social media, whether cognitively, emotionally, or behaviorally, regarding what is happening in Palestine, particularly in Gaza.

4) There is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the parents of youth on the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral impact scale attributed to their educational levels.

Table (17): One-way ANOVA test for the significance of the differences between the types of academic specializations of parents of youth on the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral effects scale.

Education levels of parents of young people	No.	Source of variance	Sum of squares	Degrees of freedom	Means of squares	Squares Value (F)	Level of significance	Significance
Scale of Cognitive, effective and behavioral effects	100	Between groups	785.913	2	392.957	.641	.529	Not Significant
		Within groups	59437.447	97	612.757			
		Total	60223.360	99				

The table can be interpreted as follows:

5) The hypothesis proved to be invalid; there was no statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the parents of youth on the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral effect scale attributed to their educational levels. The F-value (.641) was not statistically significant, indicating that the educational levels of the parents, whether Bachelor’s, Master’s, or Ph.D. did not affect the responses or attitudes of their children. Their reactions were similar to the aggression on Gaza, and they exhibited nearly identical cognitive, emotional, and behavioral responses to social media posts about the aggression on Gaza.

6) There is a statistically significant relationship between the place of residence of the parents of youth and their scores on the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral effect scale.

Table (18): Pearson's test for the relationship between the place of residence of the parents of youth and their scores on the scale of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral effect

Variables	scores of parents of adolescents on the scale of cognitive, emotional and behavioral effects			
	No.	Correlation coefficient (R)	Significance level	Type of significance
Place of residence	100	.096	.344	Not significant

A) The hypothesis proved to be invalid; there was no statistically significant relationship between the place of residence of the parents of youth and their scores on the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral effect scale. This was indicated by the correlation coefficient value (.096), which was not significant. The researcher interprets this by noting that the reaction and influence of youth across the Arab world to the aggression on Gaza were similar and homogeneous. The demographic variables of their families did not affect their interaction with or response to the aggression or the influence of social media posts on their cognitive, emotional, and behavioral responses.

Attached is a video documented by an Emirati family of their child refusing to celebrate his birthday in solidarity with the Palestinian people, impacted by what is happening in Palestine. This confirms that Arab youth have been cognitively, emotionally, and behaviorally affected by the events in Gaza and the horrific scenes they witness on social media, reflecting the brutal Israeli aggression on Gaza. Their reactions were unaffected by the official positions of their countries, which announced diplomatic and trade relations with Israel. This highlights that Arab youth's awareness of the Palestinian cause has significantly increased following the Israeli aggression on Gaza, regardless of the different demographic characteristics of the sample.

<https://www.tiktok.com/@hamsalmash3er/video/7303094874826476808? r=1& t=8mrVF1L7XMQ>

Key Findings:

- The youth follow the Israeli aggression on Gaza through social media platforms to a large extent, with Facebook at 68%, TikTok at 56%, Instagram at 44%, X (formerly Twitter) at 30%, and YouTube at 20%.
- Social media platforms have contributed to raising awareness among Arab youth about the Palestinian cause by allowing them to follow pro-Palestinian demonstrations worldwide, share content related to the Israeli aggression on Gaza, and clarify information about the Palestinian cause. Social media has increased their knowledge of the history of the Palestinian cause and deepened their understanding of the daily suffering of the Palestinian people.
- The hypotheses proved to be invalid; there were no statistically significant differences between the average scores of parents' age, educational level, or place of residence on the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral effect scale among youth in following the Israeli aggression on Gaza through social media platforms.

Recommendations:

Based on the results of the field study, the researcher offers a set of recommendations for traditional and digital media institutions and parents, including:

1. Media institutions should focus on producing awareness content about the Palestinian cause through traditional and digital Arab media outlets.
2. Study the nature of the content directed at youth before publishing it on Arab digital media platforms.
3. Produce targeted content for Arab youth on digital media platforms that matches their cultural level, awareness, and age group to ensure they understand the content.
4. Create content about the Palestinian cause through Palestinian and Arab digital media platforms and aim to reach youth through the platforms they follow most frequently.

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