

A War Without Bullets:

How Disinformation Reshapes the Reality of
Palestinian Youth on the Backdrop of a Genocide?



حملة - المركز العربي
لتطوير الإعلام الاجتماعي
7amleh - The Arab Center for
the Advancement of Social Media



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Executive Summary

Young people believe that they are more experienced in detecting disinformation on social media platforms than older users, due to their active and frequent use of electronic devices, but studies reveal that many of them fail to recognize accurate information.¹ Young people are often more vulnerable to disinformation due to their excessive immersion in the digital space, which exposes them to greater amounts of disinformation. In addition, they lack sufficient critical thinking to deal with disinformation and tend to exhibit cognitive and intellectual fragility, especially among adolescents.² In-depth and critical reading of information is being replaced with rapid and random consumption of news in the digital sphere as a result of the abundance of information and immediate updates of news through digital platforms; in particular, those related to conflicts, crises and wars. In addition, young people are increasingly relying on social media for news consumption, a space where mechanisms of supervision, editing, and fact-checking of the information being circulated are largely absent.³

The current position paper monitors the impact of disinformation on Palestinian youth during the Israeli aggression on Gaza, identifying the most prominent tools and patterns of this disinformation. Since October 7th, 2023, Gaza has been subjected to an Israeli war, in which Israel utilized all means and tools to claim victory. Field battles were paralleled with a fierce warfare of disinformation, where political, economic and social players have joined in in the early or later stages; namely: Western governments (The United States specifically), Iran, Arab governments, Hamas, the Palestinian Authority, Tech companies, peoples, newspapers and news agencies.

Each party's contribution to disinformation varies according to the resources and power it possesses. Israel, however, had the lion's share in terms of disinformation production and dissemination. It resorted to the systematic use of disinformation as a strategic tool supporting its military operations, controlling the narrative and justify its crimes to the world, polish its image, mobilize local and global support for the war, dehumanize Palestinians and strengthen internal divisions between Palestinian factions.

In essence, disinformation works to destabilize the trust of Palestinian youth in facts. It also damages epistemic justice and the reliability of the Palestinian narrative, as well as controlling collective consciousness, and mobilizing local and international support for the war. The spread of disinformation threatens the physical safety of Palestinians and might endanger their psychological

¹ Kops, Maxime; Schittenhelm, Catherine & Wachs, Sebastian. (2025). Young people and false information: A scoping review of responses, influential factors, consequences, and prevention programs. **Computers in Human Behaviour**, 108650.

² Irwanto, Irwanto, et al. (2025). Information disorders impact on adolescents: publication trends and recommendations. **Frontiers in Communication**, 10, 1495536.

³ Ismail, Adibah & Zanalhuddin, Zahidah Nazihah. (2025). The Importance and Emotional Impact on Muslim Youth of Consuming News on Social Media about the Palestine-Israel Conflict. **The 9th International Conference on Communication and Media** (i-COME 24). Atlantis Press.

and cognitive stability during the war by generating a disorienting reality in which false narratives intertwine with facts. This confusing reality affects the ability of Palestinian youth to distinguish between reliable information and the information designed to mislead them, which in turn affects their ability to make balanced, rational and informed decisions at crucial moments.

The digital tools relied on by the conflicting parties in the ongoing war to produce and manage disinformation campaigns range from the use of artificial intelligence, sponsored propaganda, cyberattacks, fake accounts, bots, recruiting influencers, manipulation of emotions, destruction of communication infrastructures in Gaza, press censorship, as well as the manipulation of search results and digital algorithms. Disinformation takes many patterns, all of which lead to the formation of a distorted and misrepresented reality of the truth. It is not limited to fabricating stories that did not happen in the first place, or generating fake images and videos using artificial intelligence, rather it resorts to hiding the facts, denying crimes, questioning the suffering of the victims, misleading context, defamation, and creating the delusion of victories.

Facing such reality, the paper asserts the need to develop multi-level strategic interventions, starting from strengthening the capacities of Palestinian youth to detect disinformation through media and critical digital education; continue with amending international and local legal frameworks to hold accountable all those who produce and promote disinformation in conflict contexts, and extend to putting pressure on technology companies to correct their algorithmic biases, ensure the protection of Palestinian digital rights, develop mechanisms to combat disinformation, as well as strengthen cooperation with news verification networks.



Theoretical Background

Digital platforms serve as spaces for the production, exchange, manipulation and control of information⁴ Information infrastructures and digital information impact tools, such as social media, are considered as modern weapons of mass destruction, due to their ability to quickly disseminate and enable consumption of information, while monitoring the mood of the targeted audience immediately, which gives social actors tremendous power to influence, direct and mobilize people.⁵ Therefore, the ability of the conflicting parties to dominate information is considered one of the means to measuring victories in modern conflicts,⁶ while information superiority has become one of the main pillars and vital resources on which the conflicting parties rely to achieve these victories.⁷ As a result, Information Warfare has become the main form of ideological and military conflicts, and is represented by information-oriented attacks intended to temporarily or permanently disrupt the functions or services of the adversary's information infrastructure.⁸

Information warfare can be divided into warfare that rely on information as a tool or weapon for carrying out military operations, and those that are fought over information and consider it an end in itself. With the first order of warfare, the conflicting parties resort to collecting information about the enemy through intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance systems⁹ to be used for military decision-making, identifying targets, directing forces, and coordinating and monitoring military operations while underway. In this context, information warfare is defined as all actions and deeds taken by the conflicting parties to protect their own information infrastructure, in addition to attacking the enemys information infrastructure, in an attempt to destroy, neutralize or exploit the enemys military and intellectual capabilities that depend on information for decision-making and implementation.¹⁰

An individual's awareness of reality is shaped by the information they consume, all of which contribute to shaping the beliefs, attitudes, stands, values, norms and stock of knowledge one has about the world.¹¹ Hence, in the second type of information warfare, the conflicting parties carry out cyber wars aimed at controlling the flow of information¹² in order to manage and alter the perceptions of target audiences. The conflicting parties seek to win the epistemic war by resorting to the greatest amount of disinformation and manipulation of images and facts,¹³ and

4 Brazzoli, Mario Silvino. (2020). Future prospects of information warfare and particularly psychological operations. **South African Army Vision**, 2020, Pp. 217–232.

5 Koshuba, U. V., and Davydenko, I. V. (2023). Social networking sites as a tool of modern information wars. . **Іноземні мови у світовому економіко-правовому просторі**, 275–279.

6 Dunn Cavelti, Myriam, and Andreas Wenger. (2020). Cyber security meets security politics: Complex technology, fragmented politics, and networked science. **Contemporary Security Policy**, 41(1), 5–32.A

7 Brazzoli, Mario Silvino. Ibid.

8 Koshuba, U. V., and I. V. Davydenko. Ibid.

9 Libicki, Martin C. (2021). "The convergence of information warfare." in: Christopher, Whyte & Thrall, A. Trevor & Mazanec, Brian M. (Eds). **Information warfare in the age of cyber conflict**. London & New York: Routledge, 2002. Pp. 15–26.

10 Brazzoli, Mario Silvino. Ibid.

11 Ibid

12 Molander, Roger C. & Riddile, Andrew S. & Wilson, Peter A. (1996). **Strategic information warfare: A new face of war**. Santa Monica: Rand Corporation.

13 Brazzoli, Mario Silvino. Ibid

sometimes by obstructing communication and the flow of information between individuals,¹⁴ and even resorting to propagandistic influence on human consciousness.¹⁵ Indeed, disinformation and misinformation played a central role in guiding public opinion about the Israeli aggression on Gaza after October 7th, 2023, becoming part of the battle of narratives, which is no less important than military operations, to the extent that The New York Times described what happened immediately after October 7th as «the deluge of online propaganda and disinformation is larger than anything seen before.»¹⁶

The European Commission defines disinformation as fake or misleading content published and circulated with the intent to deceive or achieve economic and political gains.¹⁷ So disinformation is partially or completely deceptive information that performs the function of dilution and deception, which leads to the formation of false beliefs and ideas,¹⁸ or inflict harm or sedition.¹⁹ On the other hand, misinformation is that which results from an unintentional error, negligence, or unconscious bias,²⁰ that is, it usually refers to misleading content that is unintentionally circulated.²¹

Conflict zones often constitute a fertile incubator for the spread of disinformation, as the war at its strategic level revolves around perceptions, awareness and knowledge about it—specifically the information that narrative provides about who is the victim and who is the aggressor.²² This is evident in the fact that all parties seek to control the narratives associated with the conflict.²³ Crises contribute to the generation of what is known as the “infodemic”, that is, pumping information in huge quantities and speed, which makes it difficult to control its distribution, locate accurate information and guidance, assess its importance, trace its sources and verify its validity when necessary.²⁴ That is, this term describes cases in which a few facts are spread, mixed with fear, speculation and rumours, before being amplified and spread rapidly by modern technologies in a way that affects economy, politics and security.²⁵

14 Van Niekerk, Brett; Maharaj, Manoj. (2013). Social media and information conflict. **International Journal of Communication**, 7, 23.

15 Koshuba, U. V., and I. V. Davydenko. Ibid

16 Myers, Steven Lee.& Frenkel, Sheera.(2023, November).In a worldwide war of words,Russia,China and Iran back Hamas. The New York Times.

Retrieved (22/07/2025),from: [Click here](#).

17 European Commission.(2022). Code of Practice on Disinformation. Retrieved from: [Click here](#).

18 Fallis,Don. (2015). What is disinformation? **Library Trends**,63(3), 401–426.

19 Hameleers,Michael.(2023). Disinformation as a context-bound phenomenon: toward a conceptual clarification integrating actors,intentions and techniques of creation and dissemination. **Communication Theory**,33(1), 2.

20 Falli, Don. Ibid

21 Broda,Elena & Strömbäck, Jesper.(2024). Misinformation, disinformation, and fake news: Lessons from an interdisciplinary, systematic literature review. **Annals of the International Communication Association**, 48(2),141.

22 Marelli,Massimo. November 2023. Protecting civilians from disinformation during armed conflict. **International Review of the Red Cross**.

Retrieved (22/07/2025)),from: [Click here](#)

23 No Author. (October(2023. Cooperation in face of Disinformation:The role of fact Checking platforms Misbar and Tahaquq and Sawab in the war on Gaza and southern Lebanon.**Tahaquq**.Retrieved (22/07/2025),from: [Click here](#)

24 Zielinski,Chris.(2021).Infodemics and infodemiology:a short history,a long future.**Revista Panamericana de Salud Publica**,45, e40.

25 Simon,Felix M.;Camargo, Chico Q.(2024).“Infodemic.” in: **Elgar Encyclopaedia of Political Communication** (Accepted pre-print version,forthcoming 2024).



The Human Rights Framework

In its resolution 227/76, the United Nations General Assembly expressed concern about the increasing use of technology for intentionally spreading lies and disinformation, or even amplifying the publication of truths for political, ideological or commercial motives. It also called on tech companies to ensure that their design and development processes, policies and practices are in line with human rights and the guiding principles of the resolution.²⁶

On the other hand, the European Digital Services Act (DSA) stipulates the need to ensure a safe and reliable electronic environment by encouraging the handling of illegal content, including disinformation, and by seeking to reduce the risks that such information and manipulative and exploitative activities impose on marginalized groups. Finally, the law calls on digital platforms to build and implement special emergency protocols aimed at coordinating a rapid response to crises, monitoring the information they store and transmit while searching for facts, especially in times when the dissemination of reliable information is urgent and vital.²⁷

The spread of misinformation and disinformation poses a serious threat to societies' foundations, as its rapid spread threatens the essence of democracy and the ability of individuals to make decisions based on accurate information.²⁸ Countering disinformation is also linked to the effective realization of fundamental human rights and freedoms,²⁹ as it threatens the public's right to freedom of thought, privacy, democratic participation,³⁰ the right to knowledge and to search, receive and share information, and the freedom of expression and opinion. In addition, the spread of disinformation and misinformation harms the reputation of individuals, in addition to inciting violence, discrimination or hostility against vulnerable individuals and groups,³¹ especially during emergencies and conflicts.³²

However, international laws and conventions contain a set of legal loopholes and gaps that obstruct the ability to counter disinformation, starting with the fact that the Digital Services Act (DSA) does not attach a legal definition of the concept of digital disinformation. While the DSA obliges tech giants to remove illegal content, however, not all countries criminalize disinformation under their laws.³³ On the other hand, propaganda or war tricks to overthrow the enemy during battles are not considered problematic under international humanitarian law, which means that disinformation aimed at deceiving the enemy is not prohibited³⁴

Disinformation Tools

²⁶ United Nations General Assembly.(2021).Resolution 227/76 - Countering disinformation for the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms.Retrieved from: [Click here](#)

²⁷ European Union.(2022).**Regulation (EU) 2022/2065 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 October 2022 on a Single Market for Digital Services and amending Directive 2000/31/EC (Digital Services Act)**.Retrieved (22/07/2025), from: [Click here](#)

²⁸ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (n.d.). **Disinformation and misinformation**. Retrieved (22/07/2025), from: [Click here](#).

²⁹ European Union.(2022).Ibid

³⁰ The European Parliament (2021).**The impact of disinformation on democratic processes and human rights in the world**. Retrieved (22/07/2025),from: [Click here](#)

³¹ Rikhter,Andrey.(March 2022).Study on combating disinformation: Good practices and recommendations. **OSCE** Retrieved (22/07/2025), from: [Click here](#).

³² United Nations General Assembly. Ibid.

³³ No author.(2023, November).The Digital Services Act (DSA) and combating disinformation:10 key takeaways. **Chambers**. Retrieved (22/07/2025), from: [Click here](#)

³⁴ Katz, Eian.(2021). War of Lies:Protecting Civilians from Disinformation during Armed Conflict. **SSRN**.Retrieved (22/07/2025), from: [Click here](#)



Artificial Intelligence: The Israeli genocide in Gaza launched a new phase of AI-based disinformation, as Israel and other parties to the conflict resorted to extensive investment in artificial intelligence to serve their propaganda machine and produce content that advances their political and military agendas.³⁵ The danger of artificial intelligence lies in its potential to manipulate text, images, audio and videos. Not only that, but generative AI also has the ability to create new content that resembles previous content without being an exact duplicate of it—a phenomenon known as «Deep Fake».³⁶ The conflicting parties usually resort to exploiting the capabilities of artificial intelligence in generating and producing visuals, as it is one of the most efficient disinformation tools in terms of its impact and effectiveness in seizing the mind of the recipient.³⁷

The weaponization of AI in disinformation warfare poses a challenge due to its ability to generate very realistic images and the difficulty of detecting the materials produced by it.³⁸ In addition, making this technology available for use by any party poses another challenge. It also has, potentially, the capability to facilitate and spread disinformation to wide audiences, with high speed and density, as tech companies rely on artificial intelligence systems to enhance user interaction with their contents.³⁹

Automated fake accounts and bots: In the context of the war, thousands of fake accounts and bots were created, flooding social media platforms with a deluge of disinformation⁴⁰ in different languages and regions.⁴¹ Bots are defined as fully or partially-automated fictitious accounts on social media platforms, designed to communicate and mimic human behaviour online, which gives them a high degree of credibility and reliability, and the ability to spread misleading content effectively, as well as fuelling political conflicts and deceiving audiences.⁴² The Israeli company Cyabra revealed that one in five accounts, which participated in conversations about the October 7th attacks, is a fake account.⁴³ Meanwhile, “Politico” revealed that Israel impersonated US citizens through 600 fake accounts, that were involved in posting pro-Israel comments on the pages of US congressional representatives.⁴⁴

Cyberattacks: Iran, Hamas and Israel have carried out mutual hacking operations, partially

35 Al-Arja, Ahmad). September». (2024 Armed «Artificial intelligence ...is a heavy weight” Guest “on auditing platforms .AI Jazeera Media Institute.

Retrieved ,2025/07/22 from: [Click here](#)

36 Bontridder, Noémi & Yves Pouillet .(2021).The role of artificial intelligence in disinformation. Data & Policy ,3 ,e32.

37 Al-Arja, Ahmad. Ibid.

38 Klepper ,David). November. (2023 How AI is helping-and hurting-in the fight against misinformation about the Israel-Hamaswar .AP News .Retrieved ,(2025/07/22)from: [Click here](#).

39 Bontridder, Noémi & Pouillet, Yves. Ibid

40 Tahaquq. Ibid.

41 Brazi ,Rafi). June.(2025 A battle without ammunition: How Iran and Israel paint reality with disinformation tools. **Taakad**. Retrieved,(2025/07/22) from: [Click here](#)

42 Bontridder, Noémi & Pouillet, Yves .Ibid

43 Spring ,Marianna. October .(2023 Israel-Hamas :UN warns of humanitarian disaster in Gaza after a week of fighting. BBC News. Retrieved ,(2025/07/24)from: [Click here](#)

44 Brazi, Ravi. Ibid.

for spreading disinformation⁴⁵ For example, Iran hacked Emirati, English and Canadian television channels, during which it broadcasted an AI-created fake news bulletin, featuring,⁴⁶ a fake anchor and showing fabricated scenes of destruction in Gaza.⁴⁷

Algorithmic bias: Tech companies manipulate the contents to which users are exposed through removal, Shadowbanning, and automated visibility restrictions.⁴⁸ This censorship leads to an unbalanced representation of what is actually happening and to the intensification of Israeli propaganda and disinformation campaigns. Moreover, search engines contributed to disinformation operations by manipulating search rankings and preferring Israeli propaganda to the Palestinian narrative. An example of this is the disinformation campaigns against UNRWA - the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees - such that the first result that appears when searching for UNRWA in Google is a link to a propaganda page created by the Israeli government, showing a list of fabricated allegations that accuse UNRWA of cooperating with Hamas.⁴⁹

Search engines are reliable knowledge portals for information, which enables them to mislead public opinion on crucial humanitarian issues, and to restrict user access to diverse perspectives; increasing, as a result, the cases of polarization.⁵⁰ These violations contradict the provisions of the Digital Services Act, which obliges tech companies to be highly responsible in the development and design of their algorithmic systems, especially recommendation and advertising systems.⁵¹

Paid advertisements: Paid ads have become a dominant trend in the management of information warfare, for its power to significantly increase reach and impact.⁵² Indeed, Israel led a massive public relations campaign in which it poured huge sums of money into posting dozens of paid ads online, targeting EU countries with 88 ads during the first 10 days of the war. Israel's investment in Google and YouTube ads amounted to \$7.1 million, and \$6.8 million in Google. In one of these adverts, Israel posted a video claiming to be a filming of an autopsy being done on a corpse of a child burned alive by Hamas, as another video showed the results of the autopsy of an adult who was also burned alive.⁵³ These adverts contradict the provisions of European Digital Service Act stating that tech companies must refrain from generating revenues from illegal information, especially manipulative or misleading ones.⁵⁴

45 Radio Monte Carlo International.(October 2023 Cyberattacks by hacking groups parallel to the military confrontation between Israel and Hamas. Retrieved 24/07/2025,from: [Click here](#)

46 Massad, Marco.(March 2024).Mutual cyber-attacks on the rhythm of the Gaza war. The journal. Retrieved 24/07/2025, from: [Click here](#)

47 Brazi, Rafi. Ibid.

48 Waqas, Ahmed & Rodelo, Nicholas & Grim, Ryan & Hussain, Murtaza. (2025, April). Leaked Data: Israeli censorship requests to Meta aimed to suppress pro-Palestinian content. Drop Site News. Retrieved (24/07/2025), from: [Click here](#).

49 Chang, Ailsa & Mehta, Jonaki & Woods, Jeanette. (August 2024). Israel has been buying Google ads spreading false information about UNRWA. NPR. Retrieved (24/07/2025), from: [Click here](#).

Durmaz, Metehan & Ben Aissa, Mariem. (2024, October). Inside the Israeli occupation's propaganda ad factory. SMEX. Retrieved (24/07/2025), from: [Click here](#)

50 Damião,Íris & Reis, José M.& Almeida, Paulo & Santos, Nuno & Gonçalves-Sá,Joana.(2025, February).Digital Gatekeeping: An Audit of Search Engine Results Shows Tailoring of Queries on the Israel-Palestine Conflict. arXiv. Retrieved (24/07/2025),from: [Click here](#).

51 European Union.(2022).Ibid

52 Hammad,Fatima.(April 2025).An Israeli propaganda network targeting Palestinians with a local accent and misleading messages. Misbar News Network. Retrieved 24/07/ 2025,from: [Click here](#)

53 Sayed, Israa.(November 2023Your guide to Israel's methods of disinformation and media deception. Noon Post. Retrieved 24/07/2025,from: [Click here](#)

54 European Union.(2022) .Ibid

Recruiting influencers and public figures: Israel has actively sought to co-opt or pressure social media influencers and prominent public personalities to cooperate in the dissemination of its disinformation campaigns,⁵⁵ giving the false impression that such narratives emerge organically from grassroots supporters, while in reality, these efforts are orchestrated and directed by the state.⁵⁶ Israel has also exploited the trust and appreciation that audiences have for influencers, which grants them to some extent greater ability to penetrate users, awareness, making it more effective than targeting them through traditional channels. Indeed, there are those who responded to these calls and colluded with Israel in the widespread dissemination of its disinformation,⁵⁷ Arsen Ostrovsky, CEO of the International Legal Forum, for example, who defended Israel claiming that the attacks targeting Israel ought to be seen as anti-Semitic. Others posted images of the bombing in Gaza, in a show of solidarity with Israel; for instance, Canadian pop star Justin Bieber posted a similar photo with the caption «Pray for Israel» before he deleted it⁵⁸

Emotional manipulation: Disinformation that appeals to recipients, emotions is frequently used, as such content tends to spread faster and has a greater impact on the recipients. Emotional responses such as anger, fear, sympathy, or hatred and dislike may influence and weaken people's critical thinking after exposure.⁵⁹ For example, clips from video games or action thrillers were commonly used, along with fabricated news about the killing of Israeli and foreign officers and soldiers during ground battles.⁶⁰

Destruction of infrastructures⁶¹: Within information warfare, conflicting parties seek to protect their information infrastructure, and attack or exploit the enemy's information infrastructure. This infrastructure includes equipment, networks, and other supporting infrastructures, such as electricity and fuel, on which information systems depend for operation.⁶² The occupation army, being aware of the vitality of such infrastructure for residents of the Gaza Strip— and its importance as means to communicate with the outside world and documenting war crimes—has taken actions to destroy these infrastructures with the aim of regulating the dissemination of information from Gaza and to establish information dominance, fully controlling the media sphere,⁶³ which in turn leads to disinformation about what is happening there.

Press censorship: Israel imposes strict censorship on the press and on non-military or official sources of information. Israel has restricted free journalistic work by targeting Palestinian journalists in bombing and

55 Rajagopal, Anna. (2023, November 13th). Israeli Propaganda Surges After Attacks on Gaza. **Institute for Palestine Studies**. Retrieved (27/07/2025), from: [Click here](#)

56 Accorsi, Alessandro. (March 2024). How Israel Mastered Information Warfare in Gaza. **Foreign Policy**. Retrieved (24/07/2025), from: [Click here](#)

57 Durmaz, Metehan & Ben Aissa. Ibid

58 Sayed, Israa. Ibid

59 No Author. Tahaqaq. Ibid

60 Abd Al-Haq, Bakr Muhammad. (February 2024). Disruption of information about the Israeli war on Gaza. **Faraa Maai**. Retrieved 24/07/2025, from: [Click here](#)

61 For further reading: 7amleh center. (2024, October 29). 7amleh Center issues a new report on the impact of War on Gaza's Telecommunications Infrastructure. **7amleh - The Arab Center for the Advancement of Social Media**. Retrieved (27/07/2025), from: [Click here](#)

62 Brazzoli, Mario Silvino. Ibid

63 Abd Al-Wahab, Ali. (February 2025). Communications and Internet in Gaza: under the control and destruction of the occupation. Al-Shabaka. Retrieved 24/07/2025, from: [Click here](#)

arrest campaigns, while preventing the entry of foreign journalists into the Gaza Strip since the beginning of the aggression.⁶⁴ During the war with Iran, the Israeli military censor issued an order that prohibits filming missile interceptions and strikes⁶⁵ Israeli police forces even raided field coverage sites, arrested a group of journalists, and confiscated their equipment.⁶⁶

Major Actors

⁶⁴ United Nations News. (June 2025). Communications and education in Gaza are being destroyed and under the control of the occupation. Retrieved 24/07/2025, from: [Click here](#)

⁶⁵ Bryner, Joshua and Cohen, Ido. (June 2025). The strict censorship order requiring a permit to publish rocket landing sites has no legal validity. Haaretz. Retrieved 23/8/2025, from: [Click here](#)

⁶⁶ No Author. (June 2025). Israel investigates the filming of the port of Haifa and raids tv channels offices. Al Jazeera. Retrieved 24/07/2025, from: [Click here](#)

Many parties have played a role in the production and dissemination of disinformation, each according to their financial and technical resources that enable them to engage in information warfare. This section reviews the central players of disinformation since October 7th:

Israel: Since the beginning of the war, Israel and its arms have been active in disinformation campaigns in which the Israeli army, the Israeli media, and various ministries and official institutions participated.⁶⁷ For example, the Israeli army claimed that it was not responsible for the killing of a mother and daughter, who had taken refuge in a church in Gaza in December 2023, and that it had monitored Hamas activity in the vicinity of the church. Later, statements by Catholic officials revealed that the Israeli army killed them, and no activity by Hamas or Palestinians was detected in the area.⁶⁸

Tech companies: algorithmic disinformation is defined as the role that social media algorithms play in the production and spread of disinformation.⁶⁹ Digital platforms participate in disinformation through algorithmic bias in favor of the Israeli narrative, which is manifested by disabling Palestinian accounts and restricting visibility and reach of Palestinian content,⁷⁰ in addition to publishing misleading sponsored ads. For example, on 16/07/2025 «Metras» website announced on its Instagram backup account that Meta had permanently deleted the accounts of «Metras» and «Metras Global» without previous notice.⁷¹

Foreign governments: Some foreign and Western governments colluded with the Israeli side's narrative and contributed to the dissemination of misinformation through their statements to the media and on digital platforms. The most prominent of these cases was when former US President Biden claimed that he saw pictures and videos of Hamas beheading forty children, only for later this story to be revealed as false and that he did not see this.⁷² In addition, many of the world's great powers such as Iran and Russia have sought to exploit the war to promote misinformation serving their interests. For example, Russia has promoted the claim that Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy is supplying Hamas with weapons.⁷³

News platforms and websites: Many news platforms have been involved in the deliberate spread of disinformation.⁷⁴ Including: BBC, The Daily Telegraph, CNN, Associated Press, The New

67 Frenkel, Sheera. (June 2024). Israel Secretly Targets U.S. Lawmakers With Influence Campaign on Gaza War. **The New York Times**. Retrieved (24/07/2025), from: [Click here](#)

68 Ward, E.J. (December 2023). Israeli official brands Gaza church attack (rather strange, as MP's family shelter with 'snipers pointing guns at them'). **LBC News**. Retrieved (24/07/2025), from: [Click here](#)

69 Sun, Haochen. (2022). Regulating algorithmic disinformation. *Columbia Journal of Law & the Arts*, 46, Pp. 367.

70 Human Rights Watch (December 2023). **Meta's Broken Promises: Systemic Censorship of Palestine Content on Instagram and Facebook**. Retrieved (24/07/2025), from: [Click here](#)

71 Metras Website. (July 2025). Post **Instagram**. Retrieved (24/07/2025), from: [Click here](#)

72 Hasan, Mehdi. (May 2024). Which is worse, Israel's lies about Gaza or its western backers who repeat those lies? **The Guardian**. Retrieved (24/07/2025), from: [Click here](#)

73 Shamari, Maria. (2023, December). How Russia uses the Israel-Gaza crisis in its disinformation campaign against the West. **ICCT** Retrieved (24/07/2025), from: [Click here](#)

74 No Author. Tahaquq. ibid.

York Times, The Guardian, Fox News, The Washington Post, and others.⁷⁵ As usual, Israeli media adopted the military narrative of the Israeli army and government, including misleading materials.⁷⁶ Apart from deliberate cases of disinformation, some journalists have fallen inadvertently into the trap of misleading information, as a result of not conducting a thorough examination of the credibility and accuracy of statements and narratives provided by Israeli sources.⁷⁷ News platforms, therefore, provide the public with information and “facts” created by politicians and individuals in positions of authority that shape reality according to their preferences.⁷⁸

Palestinian entities: In contrast to Israel, Hamas, capabilities in disinformation are limited globally due to its lack of technological development and the necessary financial resources. However, it has had a greater ability to disinform in the Arab world due to the support from major Arab news channels such as Al-Jazeera,⁷⁹ which have continued to amplify Hamas's military strength and portray it as superior to the Israeli army, despite lacking real army capabilities, while overlooking significant human and material losses in Gaza.⁸⁰ Supporters of Hamas and the Palestinian cause joined in the disinformation campaigns. Some shared a clip of a Hamas fighter shooting down an Israeli helicopter, which turned out to be footage from the video game «Arma 3».⁸¹ In addition, the Palestinian Authority and Hamas exchanged numerous accusations regarding the aggression on Gaza, the credibility or accuracy of which has not been proven. This exchange reflects an attempt by each side to mobilize public opinion against the other and hold it responsible for the genocide and the general state of national disintegration in Palestine.⁸²

The Arab World: Many Arab countries have concealed their security relations with Israel or their role in the continuation of the genocide on Gaza through misleading statements. For example, Egypt, in an attempt to suppress the widespread popular solidarity with the Palestinians, has worked to demonize the «Sumud Convoy» (Steadfast Convoy) that left Tunisia heading to the Rafah border crossing, through a set of misleading allegations accusing it of disloyalty and treason, and undermining the credibility of the participants.⁸³

Patterns of disinformation

75 Al-Tweissi, Basim. (October 2023). Western media coverage of Israel's 2023 war on Gaza - the war in the post-truth era. Arab Institute for Research and Policy Studies – Doha. Retrieved 24/07/2025, from: [Click here](#)

76 Farah, Maryam. (2023, December). Israeli media and its role in the war: in the creation of consensus. The Palestinian Center for Israeli Studies «Madar». Retrieved 24/07/2025, from: [Click here](#)

77 Kenny-al-Shawwa. Ibid.

78 Al-Tweissi, Basim. Ibid.

79 Al-Tweissi, Basim. (July 2025). Gaza Infocide: Disinformation and New Narrative Wars. IEMed – Mediterranean Yearbook. Retrieved (24/07/2025), from: [Click here](#)

80 Ibrash, Ibrahim. (July 2025). Disinformation in allegations of negotiations between Hamas and Israel. Al-Siyasi. Retrieved 24/07/2025, from: [Click here](#)

81 Al-Tweissi, Basim. Ibid

82 Unauthored. (April 2024). The clash of «serious» accusations... Fatah responds to Hamas. Sky News Arabia. Retrieved (08/23/2025), from: [Click here](#)

83 No Author. (June 2025). The "Sumud Flotilla", a victim of Egyptian digital incitement... Disgraceful hashtags and organized disinformation. Palestinian Press Network (PaIPS). Retrieved 24/07/2025, from: [Click here](#)

 Disinformation related to the war on Gaza appears in multiple forms, all of which are distorting and manipulating facts and obscuring the truth. This chapter identifies the most prominent disinformation patterns that have been used since October 7th, 2023:

Suppression of information: The conflicting parties often seek to hide entire facts or important parts of it, which contributes to the formation of false and misleading perceptions of reality.⁸⁴ For example, Israel concealed the fact that Iranian strikes hit military sites, only to announce it after the end of the war with Iran in July 2025.⁸⁵ The Israeli military establishment intentionally hides the scale of its losses and the true numbers of its fallen soldiers in Gaza's or Lebanon's battles. Numerous Israeli media outlets have reported that the actual human losses are significantly higher than the officially released figures.⁸⁶

Fabricated content: One of the common patterns of disinformation was fabricating complete information, absolute falsehoods, and the invention of stories without factual basis.⁸⁷ Perhaps the most controversial example of this is the use of artificial intelligence to fake a picture of a dog being treated in a veterinary clinic as a picture of a beheaded and charred child in the Israeli kibbutz «Kfar Aza» on the seventh of October.⁸⁸

Denial: Israel adopts the method of repeated denial as a means of evading its responsibility for the massacres committed in the Gaza Strip, and it does not hesitate to do so even as Gazans document and post its violations. For example, Israel denied using white phosphorus on 10th and 11th of October 2023 in Lebanon and Gaza, respectively, yet Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International confirmed the reports.⁸⁹ In an interview with Piers Morgan, Israeli army spokesman Jonathan Conricus denied the famine in Gaza, further claiming to have watched many videos of fat Gazans,⁹⁰ which was also echoed by Avichai Adraee in a Facebook post.⁹¹

Doubt-mongering: The mechanism of spreading doubt about the facts and the suffering of the Palestinians works as a means of disinformation that undermines the credibility and reliability of this suffering. The perceived validity of the evidence published by Gazans is determined by the extent to which it is consistent with the beliefs of the people in powerful positions, and the extent to which they are willing to believe it to be true.⁹² Israel and its supporters launched the «Paliwood» campaign to question the war crimes it committed in the Gaza Strip by describing the victims as «Pollywood actors,» and describing these crimes as not real, weaved from the Palestinians' imagination.⁹³

Misleading context: Disinformation is not only based on outright lies but also includes

84 No Author. Tahaquq. Ibid.

85 No Author. (July 2025). Israel admits for the first time that Iran's strikes hit sensitive sites. Sky News Arabia Retrieved 24/07/2025, from: [Click here](#)

86 Revital Hovel, (May 2025). The IDF's manipulation: How many soldiers were really injured in the war? Hamakom Hachi Ham Begehenom.

Retrieved (August 23rd, 2025), from: [Click here](#)

87 No Author. Tahaquq. Ibid.

88 Al-Jazeera.net. (October 2023). Investigation: Israeli accounts promoted the lie of beheading children near Gaza. Al-Jazeera.net. Retrieved

24/07/2025, from: [Click here](#)

89 No author. (October 2023). Fact Sheet: Israel's History of Spreading Disinformation. IMEU. Retrieved (24/07/2025), from: [Click here](#)

90 PiersMorganUnsensored. (June 2025). Youtube [Click here](#)

91 Avichay Adraee. (July 2025). Facebook. [Click here](#)

92 Lockie, Stewart. (2017). Post-truth politics and the social sciences. *Environmental Sociology*, 3(1), 1–5.

93 Bullens, Lara. (November 2023). 'Pollywood propaganda: Pro-Israeli accounts online accuse Palestinians of staging their suffering. FRANCE 24.

Retrieved (24/07/2025), from: [Click here](#)

manipulating the context of the information. This involves the use of accurate information, often old videos, but associating them with unrelated contexts, which can result in wrong conclusions and distorted perceptions of reality.⁹⁴ For example, the widespread circulation of a video claiming that an Israeli woman was being attacked in Gaza, which later turned out to be a video filmed in Guatemala in 2015.⁹⁵

Defamation: One pattern of disinformation is the defamation of the enemies, stereotypically stigmatizing and framing them⁹⁶ as a threat to society or a subhuman entity,⁹⁷ and even accusing them of committing extreme criminal acts, in a method known as «Accusation in a Mirror» (AiM). This framing undermines the right of individuals to freedom, justice and life, and even incites genocide or hate crimes, justifying exploitative and inhumane forms of governance in Israel's dealings with Palestinians.⁹⁸ Indeed, there have been many allegations in which Israel has accused Hamas of killing a pregnant woman and her fetus, as well as of using hospitals as the headquarters of its leadership.⁹⁹

Disinformation campaigns have also targeted all supporters and defenders of Palestinian rights, seeking to de-legitimize their morality, humanity and professionalism. An example of this is the misleading allegations against United Nations Special Rapporteur Francesca Albanese, aimed at removing her and blocking the renewal of her mandate, repeatedly accusing her of violating the principles of neutrality and integrity, and even of communicating with terrorist groups¹⁰⁰. Much of this campaign has been led by organizations such as UN Watch, which accused Albanese of inciting hatred, spreading anti-Semitism, and promoting Hamas propaganda.¹⁰¹ In this context, it is worth noting that the accusations of 'anti-Semitism' have increasingly been used in Israeli and Western discourse as a propaganda and media weapon to discredit anyone who supports Palestinian rights, criticizes Israel, or calls for ending the war. These allegations serve to obscure the human-rights and moral foundations of these demands.¹⁰²

94 No Author. Tahaquq. Ibid.

95 Bond, Shannon. (October 2023). Video game clips and old videos are flooding social media about Israel and Gaza. **NPR**. Retrieved (24/07/2025), from: [Click here](#)

96 United Nations General Assembly. Ibid.

97 O'Brien, Gerald V. (2009). Metaphors and the pejorative framing of marginalized groups: Implications for social work education. **Journal of Social Work Education**, 45(1), 29–46.

98 Łubiński, Piotr. (2017). "Social media incitement to genocide: ECHR countries perspective." In: Marco, Odello & Piotr, Łubiński. (Eds). **The Concept of Genocide in International Criminal Law**. Taylor & Francis.

99 No Author. (2023, October 19th). MediaJustice's statement in solidarity with Palestinian resistance. **MediaJustice**. Retrieved (24/07/2025), from: [Click here](#)

100 The new Arab staff. (2025, July). Italian investigation reveals Israel used digital propaganda to target Francesca Albanese. **The New Arab**. [Click here](#).

101 Eid, Rabea. (2025, April 1st). An incitement campaign against the UN rapporteur Francesca Albanese for not renewing her mandate in Palestine. Alaraby Al-Jadeed. Retrieved 27/07/2025, from: [Click here](#)

102 Insan media – research department. (2024, September 17th). «Toufan Al-Aqsa» and the fall of the Western media into the trap of the Zionist narrative. Insan Center for Studies and Research. Retrieved (27/07/2025), from: [Click here](#)

Fabricating victories: Conflicting parties create and promote fabricated victories as AI-generated videos of purported «decisive strikes» by Israel and Iran have been widely circulated by both parties. Examples include: Israel's destruction of Iranian facilities,¹⁰³ Israeli high-rises collapsing,¹⁰⁴ and Iran shooting down two Israeli F-35 aircrafts and capturing the pilots.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰³ Brazî, Rafi. Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Baraka, Abd Al-Latif. (2025, June 15th). Artificial intelligence is the "biggest star" in the war between Iran and Israel. **Hebapress**. Retrieved 24/07/2025, from: [Click here](#)

¹⁰⁵ Brazî, Rafi. Ibid.



Strategic Objectives of Disinformation

Parties behind the spread of misinformation often seek to advance objectives that serve their interests, deriving both symbolic and material benefits. This section reviews the strategic objectives of disinformation since October 7th, 2023:

Dehumanization: Through disinformation, Israel seeks to dehumanize Palestinians and portray them as “savages” and “dangerous” by nature. This is done by demonizing them and systematically linking them to stereotypes that frame them as existential threats, repeatedly describing them as Nazis, terrorists and ISIS.¹⁰⁶ Nurturing the hostile imagination serves as a tool of inciting genocide,¹⁰⁷ and justifying the violence and the bloody war Israel is waging against the Palestinians.¹⁰⁸

Legitimizing War: Disinformation campaigns are considered an essential tool for justifying war crimes by creating false «moral» justifications behind the aggression on Gaza and portraying it as a necessary defensive measure or a just war for humanitarian purposes, while amplifying the danger posed by the target party. For example, Israel has repeatedly claimed that Palestinian factions in Gaza use civilians as human shields and even employ hospital infrastructure as headquarters for their operations. These claims are utilized to legitimize the repeated Israeli attacks on hospitals, clinics, ambulances, medical aid centers, medical staff and patients in Gaza. In doing so, Israel questioned the eligibility of the Palestinian health system to the protection guaranteed under international humanitarian law.¹⁰⁹

Mobilizing local support: Israeli media played a key role in misleading the Israeli public¹¹⁰ for various reasons, including: rallying and recruiting its citizens for the war,¹¹¹ raising the morale of soldiers on the front lines, preventing public dissent against the political and military leadership, minimizing the impact of losses on the Israeli public,¹¹² and mobilizing and uplifting public morale.¹¹³

¹⁰⁶ Kenny-al-Shawwa. Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Łubiński, Piotr. Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ MediaJustice. Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Kenny-al-Shawwa. Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Farah, Maryam. Ibid.

¹¹¹ No Author. Tahaquq. Ibid.

¹¹² Al-Adam, Mahmoud. (January 2024). The occupation army's losses...this is how it hides them and for these reasons. Al Jazeera Net. Retrieved (24/07/2025), from: [Click here](#)

¹¹³ Brazi, Rafi. Ibid.

Inflaming internal divisions: Disinformation is used to fuel internal divisions and tensions in societies. It targets internal fault lines of the enemy, whether its sectarian, national, partisan or political differences, with the aim of undermining social stability and dismantling social ties.¹¹⁴ In Lebanon, Israel has worked to incite domestic opinion against Hezbollah, especially among groups raising the banner «Lebanon does not want war.»¹¹⁵

Influencing public opinion: The conflicting parties seek to shape international, regional and local public opinion in a way that serves their interests by mobilizing people to support their cause in misleading ways, primarily by controlling the media narrative and directing it towards their own agendas.¹¹⁶

Controlling the narrative: Disinformation campaigns are part of a comprehensive media strategy aimed at dominating the media sphere¹¹⁷ and hindering public access to the truth. Such strategies enable the responsible party to shape and manage the narrative—particularly the narrative of the battle—potentially steering it to their own advantage¹¹⁸ while mobilizing global opinion against the targeted side. These Israeli policies, along with algorithmic disinformation, are categorized as digital suppression and actual obliteration of the Palestinian narrative,¹¹⁹ further eroding the public's awareness and ability to access accurate and unbiased information.¹²⁰

Polishing the image of the occupation: Israel relies on disinformation as a tool to beautify its image and polish its reputation in front of the world, replacing its image as an aggressor with its image as a saviour. For that purpose, it resorted to broadcasting AI-generated photos and videos of an Israeli soldier holding two babies in his hands, claiming to have rescued them from the grip of Hamas,¹²¹ and another rescuing children from a closet in which they were stuck in Gaza.¹²²

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Al-Asmar, Judy. (July 2024). Israel's psychological war on Lebanon... is it about to catch fire? **Journal**. Retrieved 24/07/2025, from: [Click here](#)

¹¹⁶ No Author. Tahaquq. Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Abd Al-Wahab, Ali. Ibid.

¹¹⁸ No Author. Tahaquq. Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Abu Yahya, Afnan. (2023, October 12th). From cutting off communications to targeting journalists: How Israel is destroying Gaza's digital infrastructure? **SMEX**. Retrieved (24/07/2025), from: [Click here](#)

¹²⁰ Kawash, Ameera. (February 2024). 7amleh Releases Position Paper on AI Technologies Impact On Palestinian Lives and Narratives. 7amleh. Retrieved 24/07/2025, from: [Click here](#)

¹²¹ Al-Araja, Ahmed. The same reference.

¹²² CPDS - Gaza. (2025, February). The role of «artificial intelligence» weapons in the war on Gaza. Palestinian Center for Strategic Studies. Retrieved 24/07/2025, from: [Click here](#)



The impact of disinformation on Palestinian youth

Impact on physical safety: Disinformation can have a devastating effect during armed conflicts, as uncertainty resulting from the spread of it may lead individuals to make ill-considered decisions that further endanger their safety.¹²³ In the Palestinian context, misinformation misleads Palestinians about safe spaces, pushes them to withdraw through dangerous routes, or hinders their access to basic services or humanitarian aid.¹²⁴ For example, Israel has resorted multiple times to declaring safe zones in Gaza, to which civilians can flee, only to surprise them later by bombing these areas.¹²⁵ Moreover, the Israeli army used Quadcopter drones to lure Palestinians by making the sounds of children crying or screaming for help, and then shooting at them.¹²⁶

In addition, the mechanism of defaming Palestinians' reputation serve to legitimise the continuation of war crimes against Gazans,¹²⁷ and even sieging, storming and bombing hospitals—actions that have disproportionately harmed sick civilians and medical personnel, far exceeding any alleged or unproven threat.¹²⁸ In addition, false accusations against UNRWA have limited its ability to provide assistance to the displaced and starving people in Gaza.¹²⁹

Impact on political decision-making: Disinformation leads policymakers in human rights and international forums to make decisions based on inaccurate grounds—decisions that often serve the powerful, as they are the ones capable of manipulating information.¹³⁰ Indeed, numerous reports asserted that Israel and pro-Israel lobbying groups (such as AIPAC) have sought to influence US policy to recruit US funding and raise support for the aggression on Gaza. Israel's Ministry of Diaspora Affairs reportedly led a \$2 million disinformation campaign to sway US legislators, views, by creating fake news sites and hundreds of fake accounts on X, Instagram and Facebook. In particular, the campaign targeted Black Democratic lawmakers, such as Rep. Hakeem Jeffries, Rep. Richie Torres, and Senator Rafael Warnock.¹³¹

123 No Author. Tahaquq. Ibid.

124 Joelle Rizk. (May 2024). As war extends to the information space: the impact of disinformation and hate speech in armed conflicts. **Gzo Brazil**. Retrieved (26/07/2025), from: [Click here](#)

125 Gorani, Hala & Sowden, Briony. (April 2024). NBC News investigation reveals Israel strikes on Gaza areas it said were safe. **NBC News**. Retrieved (23/08/2025), from: [Click here](#)

126 Abu al-Rub, Osama. (April 2025). The call of death... How does Israel use the voice of Quad Captur to kill Palestinians? **Al-Jazeera**. Retrieved 26/07/2025, from: [Click here](#)

127 No Author. (October 2023). Ibid

128 Loveluck, Louisa; Hill, Evan; Baran, Jonathan; Ley, Jarrett; & Nakashima, Ellen. (2023, December). The case of Al-Shifa: Investigating the assault on Gaza's largest hospital. **The Washington Post**. Retrieved (26/07/2025) from: [Click here](#)

129 Metehan Durmaz & Mariem Ben Aissa. Ibid

130 O'Brien, Gerald V. Ibid

131 Carver, Edward. (2024, June 5th). Israeli Government Funded Covert Influence Campaign Targeting US Lawmakers: NYT. «Common Dreams». Retrieved 27/07/2025, from: [Click here](#)

Moreover, through disinformation campaigns, Israel succeeded in cutting funding to UNRWA after accusing it of being an accomplice in the October 7th attack, although no evidence of this claim has been issued.¹³² Also, the United States relied on false allegations to justify its imposed sanctions on Francesca Albanese, which in itself constitutes a direct attack on the United Nations and its mechanisms and poses a threat to the autonomy of the work carried out by the rapporteurs.¹³³

For Israel, influencing public policies in Europe and America is viewed as an existential issue for maintaining its presence in the region, sustaining its economy, and ensuring continued financial, military, and diplomatic support from the United States and Western allies.¹³⁴ Moreover, the decision to participate in a particular war depends largely on the extent to which the public is willing to engage in it, which is what the disinformation seeks to achieve by presenting the battle as a necessary means to maintain the security of the country.¹³⁵ Social media platforms and disinformation campaigns contribute to the creation of so-called echo chambers: the reinforcing of individuals, opinions and attitudes by exposing them predominantly to news and information aligned with their existing beliefs, while limiting their access to alternative viewpoints.¹³⁶ The continuous exposure of Israelis to misleading, biased and distorted information about Palestinians and reality, feeds their extremist tendencies, and thus their support for war crimes against Palestinians.

Psychological defeat of the enemy: One of the objectives of disinformation is to influence the mental state, emotions and logical thinking of individuals for military purposes.¹³⁷ By promoting imaginary victories or claims of military superiority in the current war, the conflicting parties seek to raise the morale of supporters on the one hand, and to oppress and terrorize the targeted side on the other - even to muddle its political and military calculations.¹³⁸ The announcement of inflated numbers of victims aims to boost the morale and fighting spirit of the fighters, reinforce Israel's stated reputation regarding its military capabilities, both domestically and internationally, and sustain the perception that the Israeli army is among the most powerful armed forces in the world.¹³⁹

Furthermore, disinformation relies on exploiting negative emotions, such as fear, anger, and distrust to manipulate individuals.¹⁴⁰ It may even cause direct psychological harm and affect the mental health of civilians by provoking fear, grief, or intense distress. Disinformation can foster paranoia or promote conspiratorial thinking among Palestinian youth, potentially causing them to question their ability to meet basic needs or to fear that friends and relatives have been, or may become, subject to harm.¹⁴¹ For example, in 2024, Eddie Cohen, a prominent Media personality

¹³² Hasan, Mehdi. Ibid

¹³³ The new Arab staff. Ibid.

¹³⁴ Durmaz, Metehan & Ben Aïssa, Mariem. Ibid.

¹³⁵ O'Brien, Gerald V. Ibid

¹³⁶ Bontridder, Noémi & Pouillet, Yves. Ibid.

¹³⁷ Brazzoli, Mario Silvino.

¹³⁸ Brazi, Rafi. Ibid.

¹³⁹ Al-Adam, Mahmoud. Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Kovalenko, Oleksandra. (2023, December 7th). The harmful effects of disinformation and how to combat them. HURIDOCs. Retrieved 27/07/2025, from: [Click here](#)

¹⁴¹ Katz, Eian. Ibid.

and political analyst, in conjunction with a fake Reuters story, kept claiming Israel would invade Lebanon within 48 hours, leading to the rise of panic and anxiety attacks among civilians.¹⁴²

Cognitive confusion: Disinformation sows doubt in one's perceptions of reality and truth, driving people to live in a chronic state of fear,¹⁴³ instability and anxiety caused by not knowing what is real in times of war and crisis. The panic generated by warfare—combined with the consumption of significant amounts of disinformation, can drive Palestinian youth to react hastily, impulsively, and irrationally, which in turn contribute to a broader state of chaos.¹⁴⁴

Undermining trust: The widespread circulation of disinformation has led Palestinian youth and public to lose trust in official media outlets, which were expected to report the facts and hold the authorities accountable.¹⁴⁵ It has also undermined confidence in Tech companies, governments, politicians, human rights institutions and Palestinian leaders. In addition to undermining trust among Palestinians themselves, especially by impeding their ability to effectively exchange information among themselves,¹⁴⁶ that disinformation thrives in an environment of uncertainty.¹⁴⁷

The impact on informed decision-making: Limited access to information, alongside the widespread reach of disinformation and algorithmic disinformation undermine the ability of Palestinian youth to make free and informed decisions about their political reality. Possessing an accurate understanding of the facts and access to reliable knowledge is essential for fostering intellectual autonomy.¹⁴⁸ Therefore, disinformation damages their ability to make valid decisions and conclusions about reality,¹⁴⁹ or even participate in a free and open collective democratic debate.¹⁵⁰

Impact on morale: The delusion of false victories leads to feelings of frustration and despair among Palestinian youth once the truth is revealed.¹⁵¹ This has been repeated on multiple occasions, such as when Iran created misleading impressions about its military capabilities or Israel's losses,¹⁵² or when it referred to Hamas's confrontations with the Israeli army as demonstrations of victory and resilience—all in complete disregard of the tragic human reality in Gaza,¹⁵³ with more than 59,000 martyrs and 142,000 Injured as of the 21st of July 2025.¹⁵⁴ This disinformation is reflected in the use of artificial intelligence by supporters of the Palestinian cause to generate a picture of Dr. Muhammad Abu Salmiya, director of the Al-Shifa medical Complex in Gaza, raising the victory sign

¹⁴² Al-Asmar, Judy. Ibid.

¹⁴³ Green, Linda. (1994). Fear as a Way of Life. *Cultural Anthropology*, 9(2), 227–256.

¹⁴⁴ No Author. Tahaquq. Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶ Fallis, Don. Ibid

¹⁴⁷ Kovalenko, Oleksandra. Ibid

¹⁴⁸ Bontridder, Noémi & Yves Poullet. Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ No Author. Tahaquq. Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ OECD (n.d.). Mis- and disinformation. OECD Retrieved 5 August 2025, from: Click.

¹⁵¹ Abdul Haq, Bakr Muhammad. Ibid.

¹⁵² Baraka, Abd al-Latif. Ibid.

¹⁵³ Al-Azza, Muhannad. (January 2025). Stopping Israel's crimes and Hamas's continued disinformation. Amman net. Retrieved (05/08/2025), from: [Click here](#)

¹⁵⁴ Abd Al-Salam, Fayez. (July 2025). The death toll of the Israeli genocide in Gaza rose to 59,029. Anadolu Agency. Retrieved (05/08/2025), from: [Click here](#)

in front of the ruins of one of the buildings,¹⁵⁵ presenting it as a sign of Gazans, resilience .

Impact on Epistemic justice: The term «epistemic injustice» denotes situations where the voices of certain groups, particularly those marginalized or oppressed, are unfairly deprived of credibility due to prejudice or stereotypical assumptions. This undermines their capacity to produce and transmit knowledge, ultimately resulting in the exclusion of specific epistemic perspectives or voices.¹⁵⁶ Studies show that disinformation is able to deepen epistemic injustice because it affects how individuals perceive reality, the credibility of information sources, and who controls the production and framing of knowledge related to that reality— often in a biased way. At the same time, it restricts voices raised against such bias,¹⁵⁷ as seen in the way social media algorithms handle Palestinian content. A similar pattern occurred in the targeting of Francesca Albanese, seeking to undermine her credibility as an independent, rights-based and international source of knowledge, which further perpetuates Israel's dominance over the narrative in international forums.

Search engines enhanced by artificial intelligence exhibit a bias toward misleading information consistent with the Israeli narrative. This results in a heightened erosion of public awareness and epistemic knowledge, diminishing individuals' capacity to obtain accurate and balanced information.¹⁵⁸ In turn, this allows knowledge produced by Israel to dominate over that produced by Palestinian youth. Epistemic injustice in the digital era has led to a crisis of truth in the context of armed conflicts. This situation necessitates that youth proactively fight for reclaiming their agency over the Palestinian narrative and their lived experiences.

Undermining the reliability of the Palestinian narrative: Disinformation spread by supporters of the Palestinian cause harms the reliability of the Palestinian narrative, especially since these cases may be used as evidence to confirm the claim that Palestinians are falsifying their death and suffering. In addition, social media platforms and news outlets are full of facts and evidence that Israel and its agents have violated human rights and committed genocide against Palestinians, and there is no need to resort to disinformation to prove this.

Economic Impact: Disinformation exacerbates economic uncertainty in conflict zones, as misleading reports about the availability or shortage of goods lead to unjustifiably high prices. Some parties have used the humanitarian crisis in Gaza as an opportunity to collect donations and funds in the name of aid— clear exploitation of the escalating emotional reactions that make individuals more vulnerable to deception. For example, cybersecurity researchers uncovered a cyberattack targeting 212 people to raise funds allegedly intended to provide vital support to Palestinian families in Gaza.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁵ Fact checking service. (July 2024). Fact checking: The photo of the director of Al-Shifa Hospital in Gaza raising the sign of victory after his release was produced using artificial intelligence. Retrieved (05/08/2025), from: [Click here](#)

¹⁵⁶ McKinnon, Rachel. (2016). Epistemic injustice. *Philosophy Compass*, 11(8), 437–446.

¹⁵⁷ Sugeng, Sugeng; Annisa; Fitria, and Selam; Bastomi. (2024). Epistemic Injustice and Digital Disinformation: Addressing Knowledge Inequities in the Digital Age. *DISKURSUS-Jurnal Filsafat dan Teologi STF Driyarkara*, 20(1), 135–169.

¹⁵⁸ Kawash, Ameera. *Ibid*.

¹⁵⁹ Mascellino, Alessandro. (2023). Criminals Exploit Gaza Crisis with Fake Charity Scam. *Infosecurity Magazine*. Retrieved (7/07/2025), from: [Click here](#)



Recommendations

Digital Rights Organizations:

1. Develop training programs for Palestinian youth, including: digital literacy, media education, and disinformation detection.
2. Launch public awareness campaigns through social media platforms to counter disinformation.
3. Form a regional and international alliance with fact-checking platforms to strengthen information-verifying capabilities and detect cross-border disinformation campaigns.
4. Develop training programs on digital fact-checking and monitoring tools for journalists, digital activists, and human rights institutions whose work depends on the production or consumption and circulation of information.
5. Write and publish simplified digital awareness guides about methods of disinformation used in wars, and how individuals can protect themselves from them.

Local and international human rights organizations:

1. Develop the international laws on disinformation and acknowledge it as a human rights violation, and a tool used to incite hatred and preparation for genocide.
2. Pursue and hold accountable those responsible for using disinformation to justify crimes against the Palestinians.
3. Encourage international media institutions and outlets to rely on Palestinian sources and even employ Palestinian journalists to report on events in Gaza.

States, legislative and executive authorities:

1. Enact and formulate legislations criminalizing systematic disinformation campaigns, especially within conflict contexts.
2. Require tech companies to operate in accordance with local laws.
3. Require state agencies and its media bodies to independently verify the accuracy of information before publishing.
4. Refrain from formal and informal disinformation and misleading statements.
5. Develop internal accountability mechanisms to hold government officials involved in the dissemination of disinformation accountable.

Tech companies:

1. Review and correct algorithmic biases that restrict and hinder Palestinian content.
2. Strengthen cooperation with independent human rights organizations and fact-checking initiatives, to ensure fair moderation policies, and promote access to reliable sources of information, especially during conflicts.

3. Develop internal tools to monitor and identify AI-coordinated disinformation campaigns and to restrict the activity of accounts behind them.
4. Ensure the transparency and fairness of the mechanism in content removal appeals, by providing an independent and impartial review of deleted content.
5. Refrain from profiting from misleading, inflammatory or dehumanizing advertisements targeting victims.
6. Guarantee greater transparency in fact-checking mechanisms, including disclosure of the entities conducting the check, their evaluation criteria, and the decision-making process.
7. Provide effective mechanisms for collective reports of misleading content while ensuring the protection of the accounts of Palestinians and human rights institutions from arbitrary removal.

Media platforms and journalists:

1. Promote the principles of responsible journalism based on accuracy and fact checking.
2. Launch long term training programs for journalists and communications students on methods of detecting disinformation during conflicts, with a focus on examining information issued by military authorities.
3. Prioritize Palestinian sources in news coverage and rely on local correspondent networks.



Conclusion

The paper reveals how disinformation has become, under the frame of the aggression on Gaza, one of the most dangerous tools for controlling and managing collective awareness. In the face of this massive volume of misleading reports, fake images and distorted narratives, Palestinians are left facing a turbulent reality, in which the truth is recast daily. Disinformation not only undermines Palestinians, political awareness but also affects their physical safety, mental security, perception of reality, and ability to make informed decisions about their present and future. Amid these threats, youth are the most affected by the mental and cognitive damage of disinformation, as they are the most frequent users of digital devices and platforms.

Israel has utilized disinformation in its war on Gaza to perpetuate oppression, justify the war, polish its image, legitimize the genocide in Gaza and influence political decisions regarding support in its ongoing genocide—decisions that affect Palestinian youth, just like it affect the rest of the Palestinian population. At the same time, Israel undermined the ability of Palestinian youth to challenge this disinformation through the systematic destruction of infrastructure and algorithmic disinformation, hindering their right to tell their story, share their experiences, make their voices heard and shape international publics' epistemic frameworks. Digital disinformation also plays a pivotal role in eroding young people's confidence and certainty in institutions, leaders and society at large, even in their own sense of belonging.

In conclusion, the war on the ground cannot be separated from the war on narrative and truth, as liberation from occupation is impossible without challenging its hegemony and control over information flow, production and dissemination systems. protecting Palestinians today also means protecting their voices, their right to narrate their reality, and to be recognized as a credible source of truth. Accordingly, protecting Palestinian youth from disinformation requires investment in media training and education, in the production of free, independent and indigenous knowledge, and in technical and financial support for tools and initiatives to detect fabricated materials – because whoever controls the information controls the imagination, and whoever distorts the narrative paves the way for the legitimizing war crimes. The international community must also recognize that disinformation in times of armed conflict poses a direct threat to human rights, the safety of civilians, and the credibility of the international human rights system itself.



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