

Framing the Cybercrime Law of 2023 in Jordanian News Articles and the Ideologies Behind the Frames

*Na'elah Hasan Naimat and Aseel Zibin**

Abstract

The Cybercrime Law of 2023 was criticized on Jordanian social media. Jordanian online newspapers have shown a range of responses, from support to opposition. This study examines the framing of this law and the underlying ideologies in Jordanian online news articles. Using Entman's (1993) Framing Theory and Fairclough's (2013) Critical Discourse Analysis, we analyze framing devices, tones, and ideologies in news texts from government-owned and privately-owned newspapers from July 2023 to May 2024. An inductive approach was used to identify frames. Significant differences were found between ownership and frame choices, as well as between ownership and frame tone. However, no significant differences were found between ownership and framing devices or in their distribution across different tones. This difference could be attributed to the distinct ideological positions of the two sources. Government-owned texts emphasized national security and promoted compliance with state decisions, which reflects an ideology that prioritizes regulation, stability, and authority. Conversely, privately-owned texts presented a more balanced view, offering equal representation of opposing and supportive viewpoints, which indicates a pragmatic ideology. The findings indicate that the relationship between ownership and ideology plays an important role in how public issues are presented in Jordan, thus influencing public discourse and reinforcing existing ideologies.

Keywords: critical discourse analysis, cybercrime law, framing devices, Jordan

Submitted: 10.04.2025, accepted: 13.09.2025, published online: 12.11.2025

*Na'elah Hasan Naimat: School of Foreign Languages, The University of Jordan, Amman, Jordan, alnaimatnaelah@gmail.com. Aseel Zibin: School of Foreign Languages, The University of Jordan, Amman, Jordan; and Applied Science Private University, Amman, Jordan, a.zabin@ju.edu.jo.

1. Introduction

Jordan's 2023 Cybercrime Law (Law No. 17) replaces the earlier 2015 version, expanding from 15 to 41 articles that address modern technological challenges. The updated legislation introduces new crimes, such as spreading misinformation, publishing immoral content, unauthorized access to networks, and identity theft, with penalties that can reach up to three years in prison and fines of 75,000 JD (Jordan Open Source Association, 2023). Some provisions, particularly Article 15 – which targets “fake news” with unclear definitions – and Articles 13 and 14, which address “public morals” and “hate speech” using vague language, have raised concerns about freedom of expression.

For example, Article 15 states that “[w]hoever intentionally sends, resends, or publishes data or information [...] that includes fake news targeting the national security and community peace, or defames, slanders, or contempt any person shall be imprisoned” (Jordan Open Source Association, 2023). The lack of a clear definition of “fake news” and “community peace” gives authorities broad discretion in interpreting and applying this article, potentially limiting free speech and criticism of the government (see Al-Sarayreh, 2024). Similarly, Article 14 punishes anyone who “uses an information network [...] to facilitate, promote, incite, assist, or exhort prostitution and debauchery, or seduce another person, or expose public morals” with imprisonment (Jordan Open Source Association, 2023). The term “expose public morals” is subjective and could be used to criminalize a wide range of expression deemed offensive by those in power. Article 13 further complicates matters by criminalizing the sending, publishing, or promoting of “pornographic activities or works”, which are not clearly defined, again raising concerns about censorship and the potential for abuse (Jordan Open Source Association, 2023). Such vaguely worded provisions, without clear judicial interpretations to narrow their scope, risk restricting fundamental rights to freedom of expression and potentially impacting journalistic freedom and online activism (see Maghaireh, 2024).

This ambiguity and severe penalties have drawn criticism from human rights organizations, opposition parties, and journalists; they highlighted the need to examine how Jordanian online newspapers frame the law (see Zibin et al., 2024b). This study explores narratives in government-owned and private newspapers; it examines viewpoints surrounding the legislation and ideologies influencing framing choices. It analyzes newspapers published between July 2023 and May 2024 to depict the law, identify dominant framing devices, and assess the ideological positions shaping these frames, guided by Entman's (1993) Framing Theory and Fairclough's (2013) Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). The research aims to contribute to the discourse on media framing, critical discourse analysis, cybercrime, and human rights in the Middle East, particularly in Jordan, where empirical studies are scarce. Findings may offer insights into the media's influence on political judgment and inform policies to balance cybercrime prevention

and human rights protection. Specifically, this paper aims to answer the following research questions:

1. To what extent do Jordanian online newspapers (both government-owned and private) published between July 2023 and May 2024 frame the Cybercrime Law of 2023 differently? What are those frames?
2. What are the dominant and less common framing devices used in Jordanian online newspapers (both government-owned and private) to frame the Cybercrime Law of 2023?
3. In light of Fairclough's (2013) CDA approach, what ideological positions influence frame formation in Jordanian online newspapers?

2. Literature Review

2.1. Framing Theory

Framing Theory, developed by Erving Goffman and expanded by Robert Entman, examines how frames influence communication. Goffman (1974) noted that frames are goal-driven but did not provide a comprehensive communication theory for interactions among journalists, news sources, and audiences. Entman (1993: 51) criticized early frame definitions as a “fractured paradigm”, which D'Angelo (2002) suggested should be viewed from interdisciplinary angles. Reese (2007: 148) highlighted that framing integrates qualitative and quantitative, empirical and interpretive, psychological and sociological elements. Entman proposed a systematic approach to framing research, identifying four functions of frames: defining problems, determining causes, making moral judgments, and suggesting solutions. For example, the “Necessity of Regulation” frame identifies social media misuse as a problem, attributes it to a lack of regulations, emphasizes the ethical need for protection, and proposes legal solutions.

Frames in communication involve the communicator, receiver, culture, and text. Entman suggests identifying frames through keywords and thematic sentences. Gamson and Modigliani described framing devices that create a “media package”, such as catchphrases and metaphors (1989: 3). Entman argues that a frame's power reflects language's ability to highlight certain aspects of reality while obscuring others. Political actors compete for framing in news texts to shape public opinion, and when higher powers restrict perspectives, frames may show consistency at one level but oppose at another. Competing frames may exist without altering overall consistency.

Frames challenging higher power restrictions are less likely to influence policy or audience views. Kahneman and Tversky (1984) found that framing affects responses, often due to low cognitive engagement with social or political issues. Journalists may use

dominant frames that limit independent thought. This study analyzes how newspapers frame Jordan's Cybercrime Law of 2023, affecting journalists' understanding and readers' perceptions. The framing tactics will reveal underlying ideologies, and Entman's theory will assess how aspects of the law are highlighted or minimized in media coverage. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) will uncover hidden meanings and ideologies in the framing.

2.2. Critical Discourse Analysis

Wodak and Krzyzanowski (2008) define CDA as an approach examining how language impacts lives and reflects societal power. Fairclough (2013) highlights its role in revealing both overt and covert messages about power distribution, extending its focus beyond text to include social factors. He categorizes power analysis into "power in discourse" (microanalysis of language) and "power behind discourse" (power distribution). For example, Jordanian mass media, influenced by government policies, impacts narratives available to readers (Husseini, 2019).

Language is a tool that shapes perceptions (Zibin et al., 2024a) and is influenced by social ideas (Meyer, 2001). Fairclough (2013) emphasizes CDA's role in understanding ideology, power, language, and identity, where power inequality is reflected in language. Effective language can create and express power. Van Dijk (1997) argues for a socio-cognitive approach linking discourse to mental models, allowing analysts to uncover hidden meanings through micro and macro analysis. However, interpretations can be subjective. This study adopts Fairclough's approach (1993, 2003, 2013) who proposed a three-dimensional CDA model: description (language features), interpretation (discourse creation and consumption), and explanation (contextualizing within social practice). Figure 1 illustrates this structure (2013, cited in Alnasser, 2023: 2).

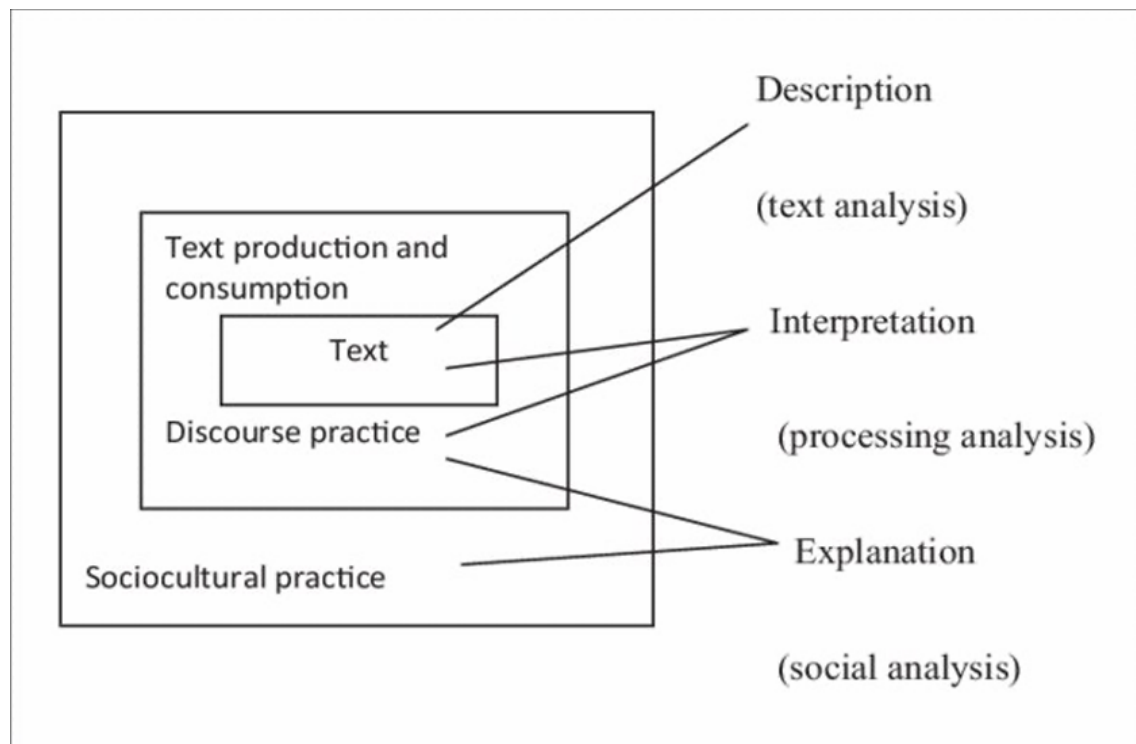


Figure 1: Three-dimensional CDA framework (Fairclough, 2013)

This research examines Jordanian online newspapers from July 2023 to May 2024, focusing on the framing of the 2023 Cybercrime law using Entman’s Framing Theory (1993) and Fairclough’s CDA model (2013) to explore dominant ideologies. The study highlights both explicit and implicit media messages, providing a better understanding of the law’s communication in Jordan and its societal implications.

2.3. Media and Framing

In communication research, news partiality is important, given the media’s role in democracy. Hubner (2021) analyzed how *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* framed COVID-19 before its pandemic declaration, finding that initial coverage highlighted the outbreak’s spread and death tolls, later shifting to economic impacts, potentially framing it as a livelihood threat rather than a health crisis. Such frames may reflect journalists’ uncertainties rather than intentional shifts. Sarah Liu (2019) compared media framing of immigration across the U.S., U.K., Hong Kong, and Taiwan, finding predominantly negative portrayals and advocacy for immigrant assimilation, suggesting influences beyond geography, though lacking causal evidence for geographical differences.

Araújo and Prior (2020) examined media coverage during Jair Bolsonaro’s campaign, analyzing 22 editorials that framed him as a populist leader. They found both Brazilian and international media used populist framing, raising concerns about democratic

threats, yet Brazilian media favored Bolsonaro compared to the left-wing candidate. The study needs methodological clarity and struggles to establish causality between media framing and voter behavior. Ashwell and Murray (2020) studied Australia's No Jab No Pay law, analyzing 197 articles that framed the law positively while public response was negative. They suggested media framing impacted parental decisions, in line with Framing Theory, which indicates that assertive media language can cause resistance, while negative coverage is often perceived as more credible.

2.4. Framing in the Jordanian Context

Framing in Jordanian media is a critical area of study, revealing the complexities of political communication. Although literature on this topic is limited, recent research has started to fill the gap. Fairclough (1995: 2) notes that media outlets can influence knowledge and social attitudes. Al-Dabbagh and Amro (2020) examined the framing of the Syrian refugee crisis in Jordanian print media, specifically Al-Ghad, using CDA to analyze 300 news reports from 2012 to 2015. The study reveals how discursive devices in Al-Ghad imply specific meanings and ideologies. Their findings show that journalists selected specific frames; from 2012 to 2013, coverage was generally favorable, but it became biased from 2014 to 2015, reinforcing negative stereotypes about refugees and straining Jordanian-Syrian relations. A shift in public sentiment from support to dissatisfaction with refugees coincided with changes in Al-Ghad's reporting. They also noted that language structures contributed to animosity toward refugees. Zibin (2020) supports this, arguing that metaphors in Jordanian newspapers impact attitudes toward Syrian refugees, using Critical Metaphor Analysis (CMA) to illustrate how metaphor serves as a framing device. It is recognized that media coverage blends objective facts with opinions that promote specific narratives serving powerful interests. However, Al-Dabbagh and Amro's (2020) study did not examine the ideologies shaping the framing of the Syrian refugee issue in Al-Ghad. Investigating the influence of ownership, editorial control, and relationships with political or economic elites on refugee portrayals would be beneficial.

There are few research studies on media as a tool for ideological expression in Jordan. El-Sayed (2020) used framing analysis to explore ideological bias in Arabic and English news reports from four newspapers: Al Jazeera and Al Hayat for Arabic, and *The New York Times* and *The Guardian* for English. Findings show each newspaper designs themes to advance ideological goals, with NYT and TG often publishing biased headlines. Al Hayat's diverse headlines reflect varied stances, while AJ's less informative headlines may indicate bias despite attempts at objectivity. A focused study on a single topic would provide clearer insights.

In summary, frames influence reader interpretation. Frame analysis enhances our understanding of media's impact on public opinion (see Zibin et al., 2024a). Despite numerous studies on frame analysis, limited research combines it with critical analysis. CDA reveals how ideological biases are reflected linguistically through framing, especially in Jordan. Analyzing the 2023 Cybercrime Law in news articles can provide insights into media framing and perspectives. This study aims to fill this gap through analyzing framing and ideological bias in Jordanian newspapers regarding the significant political issue of the 2023 Cybercrime Law. To explain, the law has caused public controversy and debate among lawmakers because of its effects on civil liberties and its wider implications for governance and political discussions in Jordan. As noted by Amnesty International (August, 2024), Jordanian authorities have used this law to suppress freedom of expression, targeting journalists, activists, and others who voice critical opinions online about government policies. The law includes broad and vaguely defined offenses, like “spreading fake news” and “provoking strife”, which have been used to criminalize free expressions of opinion. This has created an atmosphere of self-censorship.

3. Methodology

3.1. Sample

In Jordan, there is a shift toward digital news sources over traditional ones (Statista, 2024). This study collected data from online articles about the *new* Cybercrime Law *enacted* in July 2023, which *replaced* the previous Cybercrime Law of 2015. Data was sourced from four newspapers: two independent (*Al-Ghad* and *Ammon*) and two government-owned (*Al-Rai* and *Ad-Dustour*). Telesto (2023) identifies *Al-Rai*, *Ad-Dustour*, and *Al-Ghad* as the most popular publications. *Al-Rai*, owned 55% by the government, primarily covers government policies (Richter & Kozman, 2021). *Ad-Dustour* became government-owned in 1986 and offers an online edition and archive.

Founded in 2004, *Al-Ghad* is the third most popular newspaper in Jordan (Telesto, 2023) and ranks 10th in the Middle East and North Africa (Amro & Al-Dabbagh, 2020). *Ammon News*, launched in 2006, claims to be the “voice of the silent majority” and is a leading news platform (Telesto, 2023). The selection of diverse newspaper ownership seeks to explore how the framing of the law varies and the potential ideological biases in the news. All four newspapers publish in *Modern Standard Arabic* (MSA), with some articles featuring *Jordanian Arabic* (JA). Zibin (2020) argued that using different Arabic varieties reflects the newspapers' linguistic nature, blending formal and informal elements.

3.2. Data Collection and Corpus Size

This study compiled a corpus of 110,724 words from online articles published by *Al-Ghad*, *Al-Rai*, *Ad-Dustour*, and *Ammon* between July 2023 and May 2024, following the modification of the Cybercrime Law. The corpus is specialized, focusing on specific phenomena (i.e., Zibin, 2020; Ammari & Al-Ahmad, 2023). A pilot sample of 50 Jordanian news articles helped identify frequently used keywords related to the 2023 Cybercrime Law, ensuring broad coverage of the law in the corpus. The corpus was built by searching the online archives of the selected newspapers using specified keywords.

قانون الجرائم الإلكترونية or قانون الجرائم الإلكترونية or قانون الجرائم الإلكترونية

قانون عصري or تشريعات وقوانين or الإصطناعي / الذكاء الاصطناعي or الأمن السيبراني or القانون المعدل or القانون الجديد

Translated, as follows:

Cybercrime Law (with different spellings)

The new law or The modified law or The cyber security or Artificial intelligence or Legislation and laws or A modern law

This study did not address genre and text type, but considered various news formats, including articles, stories, reports, interviews, and opinion pieces. After data collection and corpus building, we manually verified the relevance of texts to the Cybercrime Law of 2023, excluding those that only mentioned keywords without focusing on the law. Table 1 presents that this process produced 109 articles from *Al-Rai* and 25 from *Ad-Dustour*, totaling 134 texts with about 76,542 words from official sources. Additionally, 17 articles from *Al Ghad* and 52 from *Ammon* resulted in 69 articles with around 34,182 words from private sources. In total, 203 articles were collected, classified into government and private news texts.

Table 1: The corpus size, including the number of articles and words in the newspapers

Newspaper	Number of articles	Number of tokens
<i>Al-Rai</i>	109	58463
<i>Ad-Dustour</i>	25	18079
<i>Al Ghad</i>	17	10028
<i>Ammon</i>	52	24154
Total	203	110724

3.3. Methods of Data Analysis

This study employs a mixed-methods approach, integrating qualitative and quantitative data analysis. Quantitative content analysis addresses the first research question about the frequency of framing devices, as noted by Riffe et al. (2005). Meanwhile, qualitative content analysis categorizes texts for better comprehension (Alitavoli, 2019). This study includes a qualitative approach, particularly CDA and framing theory, to investigate

dominant frames in reporting the Cybercrime Law of 2023, addressing the second and third research questions. The data analysis involved three steps: identifying the frequency of framing devices through quantitative content analysis, extracting dominant frames via Entman (1993), and applying CDA to explore language's impact on societal structure.

3.3.1. Frames Identification Procedures

The process of frame extraction went through many steps. Braun and Clarke (2006) suggested a method in qualitative research that allows identifying, analyzing and interpreting meaning about a phenomenon, namely thematic analysis. This tool of quantitative method offers a systematic yet flexible way to interpret data through repeated coding processes. The following section describes methods of identifying framing devices and frames.

Open Coding

After data collection, a preliminary reading familiarized us with the corpus and examined the Cybercrime Law of 2023. Braun and Clarke (2006) emphasize that qualitative research requires iterative reading for comprehension. This study focuses on written communicational texts, so no time was spent transcribing data, which is usually time-consuming in verbal discourse analysis.

After the preliminary reading, open coding was performed to generate initial codes by noting observations related to the law, including potential biases. Entman (1993) states that frames in texts emerge through linguistic elements called framing devices. Building on this, we identified and quantified these devices in each text. Gamson and Modigliani (1989: 3) identified five devices: “catchphrases, depictions, metaphors, visual images, and exemplars”. We coded only catchphrases, depictions, metaphors, and exemplars, excluding visual images since our focus was on written texts (see Zibin et al., 2024b). Most news pieces featured images of authors rather than those related to the Cybercrime Law of 2023.

The coding of framing devices was guided by the criteria established by Zoch et al. (2008: 3). Their clear categories eliminated ambiguity and facilitated reliable coding. Zoch and colleagues categorized framing devices into the following:

Catchphrase: Phrases or short sentences used to attract audience attention, often using puns or concise language that encapsulates a problem. For example:

“ومن هذا المنطلق جاء قانون الجرائم الالكترونية لتوفير الحماية للحريات العامة”

Translated as: “From this standpoint, the Cybercrime Law came to provide protection for public freedoms.” (Al Rai, 2023)

The phrasing of using the term “الحماية للحريات العامة” (protection of public freedoms) is memorable. It catches the attention by summarizing the benefits of the law to frame it positively in order to align with the broader ideological values.

Depiction: Sentences that create clear or emotional descriptions using sensory, numerical, or testimonial language (Zoch et al., 2008: 3) divided it into three categories:

General descriptions: Sensory-rich language that evokes emotions and imagination. For example:

“أن عدم المعرفة بقانون الجرائم الإلكترونية قد يجعل من مستخدمي الإنترنت ضحية أو يصبحون أمام المساءلة القانونية، محذرا من مغية “
“الوقوع كضحايا من خلال سوء الاستخدام لوسائل “السوشال ميديا

Translated as: “The lack of knowledge of the Cybercrime Act may make Internet users victimized or legally accountable, warning not to be victims through abuse of ‘social media’” (Ad-Dustour, 2024).

Statistics: Using numerical data to illustrate an issue. For example:

“أن عدد قضايا الجرائم الإلكترونية ارتفع بنحو ستة أضعاف على مدار 8 سنوات بين العام 2015 وحتى العام الماضي 2022”

Translated as: “The number of cybercrime cases increased almost six-fold over 8 years between 2015 and last year 2022” (Ad-Dustour, 2023).

Testimony: Reporting situations through statements from third parties. For example:

“قال النائب الرئيسي للمتحدث الرسمي في وزارة الخارجية الأميركية، فيدانت باتل ، أمس الثلاثاء، إن قانون الجرائم الإلكترونية المقترح الذي تم تقديمه للبرلمان يقيد حرية التعبير على الانترنت وخارجه، وقد يؤدي إلى عرقلة الاستثمار المستقبلي في قطاع التكنولوجيا.”

Translated as: “The proposed cybercrime law introduced in parliament restricts freedom of expression online and offline and could deter future investment in the technology sector, said State Department Principal Deputy Spokesperson Vedant Patel” (Al Ghad, 2023).

Exemplar: Using specific real or hypothetical examples to illustrate an issue. For example:

حيث اشار الى حادثة البحر الميت المفجعة ومارافقها من تعليقات وبث الاشاعات وقال: “يجب ان نفرق بين اراء انتقدت الاداء وطالبت “
“بتحديد المسؤوليات وهذا نابع من الحرص وهو مطلوب وبين فئة ممن اساءوا بالشتمات والسخرية بحق ابنائنا وبناتنا الذين فقدناهم

Translated as: “He referred to the tragic Dead Sea incident and the accompanying comments and rumors, saying: ‘We must differentiate between opinions that criticized performance and demanded accountability, which stems from caution, and those who abused, gloating and mocking our lost children’” (Ammon, 2023).

Metaphor/Analogy: A rhetorical device comparing two things using figurative language. For example:

“إن غرامات بعشرات الآلاف على الأفراد -على فرض الوقوع بالخطأ- هي بمثابة إعدام مالي ومهني واجتماعي”

Translated as: “Tens of thousands of fines for individuals – for wrongdoing – are tantamount to financial, professional, and social execution” (Ammon, 2023). The use of “execution” here metaphorically illustrates severe penalties.

Zoch et al. (2008: 3) defined framing devices clearly, but we found it challenging to differentiate between depictions and metaphors due to their close relationship. Both simplify complex ideas, yet they differ in language choices: metaphors use implicit figurative language, while depictions rely on clear, descriptive language. Additionally, metaphors are often limited to words, whereas depictions can span phrases or sentences for fuller descriptions.

In the open coding phase, categories were manually annotated in Word to count word frequencies. We analyzed the frequency of each device in both private and government sources to determine statistical differences, assessing whether language choices were affected by newspaper ownership. To ensure objectivity, we focused solely on the lin-

guistic elements in the texts, following Zoch et al.'s (2008) neutral criteria without personal biases regarding the law. When identifying framing devices, we classified statements based on their linguistic structure rather than personal opinions.

Axial Coding

After generating the initial codes, this phase involves deeper coding of the data. Based on the frame functions suggested by Entman (1993), this phase includes coding the four functions of frames in each text, allowing for the classification of data into similar groups. Identifying these functions aided in determining the dominant frame for each text from the two sources. For each text, we noted how the problem was defined – whether the issue was the cybercrime law itself or the absence of necessary regulations. Additionally, we examined how the cause of the issue was diagnosed, who was held responsible, how the text evaluated the issue, what the moral judgment was, and what the proposed solution entailed.

These individual codes were classified and grouped into broader categories, creating collections of texts that shared consistent patterns regarding the framing functions. For instance, texts that defined the cybercrime law as a tool for societal balance were grouped together, while those that viewed the law as a problematic measure requiring urgent reform formed a separate category.

At this analysis level, the four functions of frames were coded in every text in the corpus according to Entman (1993):

- 1) Problem definition: for example, we examined if the 2023 Cybercrime Law is defined as the core problem in the text, criticizing its ambiguity and the wide penalties it contains.
- 2) Cause diagnosis, e.g. to see if the text attributes the problem to the ambiguity in the legislative process, suggesting that lack of detail in drafting the law may lead to potential misuse.
- 3) Moral judgment or evaluation: The defined problem (the 2023 Cybercrime Law) is viewed as unjust and unacceptable; the law is criticized and judged negatively.
- 4) Solution, e.g. to see if the text suggests that more precision and clarity in drafting new laws will ensure fairness and justice for individuals.

Thematic Analysis

After grouping recurring patterns by framing functions, we conducted a thematic analysis to derive frames from the data, following Entman's (1993) inductive approach. This method allows frames to emerge naturally, which enhances understanding of the law's presentation in government and private sources. The data revealed recurring patterns leading to the grouping of texts with shared framing functions. Grouped texts typically shared more than three functions, with variations not altering the overall frame. Each frame was summarized, offering insights into the narrative, perspective, and focus of each category. To ensure accuracy, we repeatedly revisited and analyzed individual

frames. Some patterns differed by only one framing function while sharing three. For example, a pattern might have the same problem definition, moral evaluation, and responsibility attribution but present different solutions. These were categorized under the same frame but generated different sub-frames, as noted by Braun and Clarke (2006).

Tone of Framing

Different tones of framing reflect varying stances toward the law. After extracting the frames, we analyzed their tones to determine whether they support, oppose, or remain neutral regarding the law. For instance, private sources often linked the cybercrime law to technological advancements, suggesting support for the law. To minimize subjectivity, we designed an online survey for participants to judge each frame's tone. The survey included 27 questions, randomly distributing frames and offering three answer options: positive, negative, or neutral, along with three filler questions (see Zibin, 2020). The survey aimed to capture interpretations, and it conducted with 15 fluent English speakers over 25 years old from an international school in Amman. Brief explanations of each frame were included to reduce bias. Ethical considerations were carefully followed, including voluntary participation, informed consent, and adherence to all relevant guidelines. The survey results showed strong agreement between our judgments and those of participants, allowing for classification of texts by stance in both sources. A statistical analysis was used to calculate the government newspapers' support compared to private ones.

Focus of Framing

Frames underwent statistical and qualitative analysis to identify the dominant frame in each source. Qualitative analysis compared frames across sources using Fairclough's CDA approach, revealing ideological differences. For example, government sources framed control positively, suggesting a parental ideology aligned with authoritarianism. The qualitative analysis highlighted ownership's influence on framing, assessing whether government sources were more supportive of the law than private sources. Fairclough's CDA approach involves examining linguistic devices, identifying frames, and linking them to discourse creation while assessing power structures and ideological implications in society.

4. Statistical Analysis

A mixed-methods approach combining qualitative and quantitative methods was employed to analyze the framing of the Cybercrime Law of 2023 between governmental and

private sources. The first quantitative analysis assessed whether the proportions of positive versus negative framing differed significantly between the two sources, categorizing data into supportive, neutral, and critical tones. Frequencies were analyzed using a Chi-square test for independence, revealing the influence of social power on language and addressing the research question on framing differences.

The second analysis examined the distribution of four framing devices across sources to see if language varied by ownership. A significant difference was found, with more tokens in government texts. Normalized frequencies were calculated per 1000 words to account for differing corpus sizes (Biber, 1992). The analysis, using a quantitative approach, focused on tone and specific frames, following Entman (1993). A Chi-square test assessed frame distribution, supporting the hypothesis that ownership influences language choices. Null hypothesis (H_0): ownership and tone of framing are unrelated; proportions of tone values are the same across ownership types. Alternative hypothesis (H_a): ownership and tones of framing are related; proportions of tone values differ across ownership types.

For reliability, an external coder, trained on Zoch et al. (2008) criteria, ensured high agreement on frame accuracy and tone. The research maintained integrity by addressing ethical issues. Data were sourced from publicly accessible materials, eliminating privacy concerns. The analysis was conducted objectively to avoid personal biases, and participants signed consent forms for voluntary participation.

5. Results and Discussion

5.1. Results of Content Analysis

5.1.1. Results of Framing Devices' Frequency (Entman, 1993)

The content analysis indicated similar frequencies of framing devices in government and private sources. Data was categorized by tone as opposing, neutral, or supporting the law, with frequencies counted per 1,000 words for comparability. In government-owned newspapers, depictions were most frequently used to frame the law positively or negatively, while metaphors were most common in neutral reporting. Exemplars were the least used across the three tones, as shown in Table 2.

In private-owned sources, depictions were also the most frequently used across all tones, with exemplars being the least used – appearing twice in supportive texts and once in neutral and opposing texts, as shown in Table 3.

Table 2: Framing devices frequency across tones of framing in government-owned newspapers

Framing device Tone of text	Catchphrase	Depiction	Metaphor	Exemplar
Support Per 1000 words	4	8	5	2
Neutral Per 1000	1	5	6	2
Oppose Per 1000	4	6	4	1

Table 3: Framing devices frequency across tones of framing in private-owned newspapers

Framing device Tone of text	Catchphrase	Depiction	Metaphor	Exemplar
Support Per 1000	4	6	5	2
Neutral Per 1000	3	7	4	1
Oppose Per 1000	5	7	4	1

A chi-square test of independence was used to determine if the distribution of framing devices depends on the tone of the text in the two sources. This test compares observed and expected frequencies under a null hypothesis, which posits that the variables (tone vs. device) are unrelated. Table 4 shows that the chi-square test values for the first two null hypotheses resulted in P-values greater than 0.05 ($p > 0.05$), with $\chi^2_{0.1}$ at $p = 0.841$ and $\chi^2_{0.2}$ at $p = 0.994$. These results indicate that the deviations from the null hypotheses are not statistically significant, so $\chi^2_{0.1}$ and $\chi^2_{0.2}$ are not rejected. Thus, the frequencies of framing devices across different tones are not statistically significant.

Table 4: Chi-square test results of the framing devices and ownership or tone of framing

Test value Null hypothesis (H_0)	Fisher value/ χ^2 Value	P-Value
$H_{0.1}$: Tone of framing and the framing devices used in government-owned sources are not related in the population.	3.110	0.841
$H_{0.2}$: Tone of framing and the framing devices used in private-owned sources are not related in the population.	1.449	0.994
$H_{0.3}$: Ownership and the use of framing devices are not related in the population.	0.767	0.893

Under the same variable of framing devices, the frequency was compared across the government-owned sources and private owned-sources without taking the tone of framing into consideration. In order to answer the first research question that pertains to the dominant framing device in both sources, the frequency of each device was counted and presented in Figure 2.

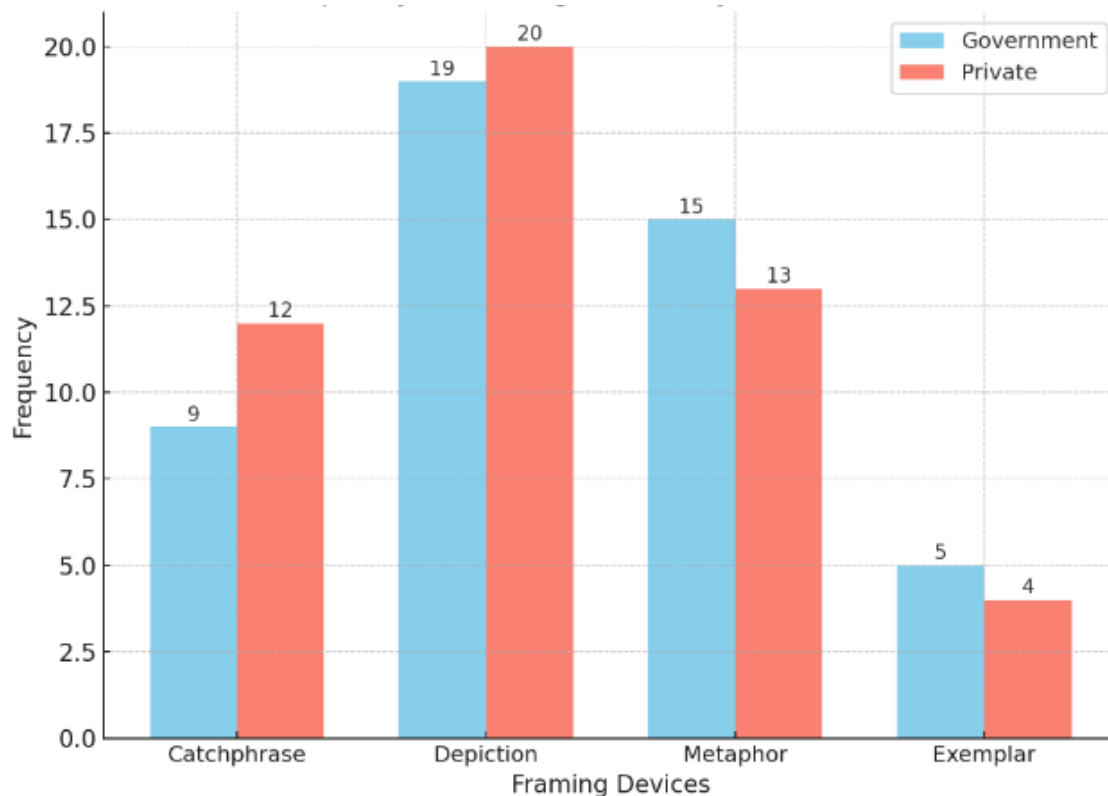


Figure 2: Frequency of framing devices by source of text

Both sources used framing devices at similar frequencies, with depictions being the most common, followed by metaphors, catchphrases, and exemplars the least. This indicates no language preference between the sources in framing the law. A Chi-square test confirmed this, with a p-value greater than 0.05 ($p = 0.893$), indicating that the null hypothesis H_0 is not rejected and there is no statistical significance between the variables.

5.1.2. Results of the Dominant Frames (Entman, 1993)

In order to extract the frames and the dominant frames in the data, the framing functions for each text were determined in light of Entman (1993). The researchers coded the texts in terms of the way the problem definition was provided, who was attributed as a cause for the problem, what the moral judgment was, and what the solution for the problem was. The following sections detail the results of the thematic analysis based on Entman's (1993) framing theory and the frames found in both sources.

Dominant Frames in Government and Private Newspapers

- **Necessity of Regulation:**

This frame has emerged from several texts discussing the Cybercrime Law of 2023, emphasizing the need for enforcement to address social challenges and protect individuals and communities. The rapid advancement of technology necessitates the law to protect the economy and vulnerable groups like women and children. The problem is framed around the misuse of social media and rising cybercrime rates, highlighting the urgent need for legal measures. Statistics and real-life cases of cyber-attacks illustrate this issue (see Al-Tkhayneh, Olowoselu, & Alkrisheh, 2023).

The texts attribute the problem to the lack of strict regulations to prevent harmful online behaviors, establishing a direct link between the absence of laws and societal issues. The moral judgment emphasizes the ethical responsibility to protect innocent individuals from irresponsible online actions and accuses law opponents of perpetuating harm. Many texts present the law as the ideal solution, dismissing alternatives like reduced penalties or amendments. This framing highlights the necessity for regulatory laws, specifically the Cybercrime Law of 2023. For word limitation, we only provide the translated version of the Arabic texts:

Lawyer Dr. Hazem Ali Al-Nsour emphasized that the recent amendments to the Cybercrime Law were introduced to meet societal demands and control harmful actions conducted without oversight. During a session organized by the Jordanian National Commission for Women's Committees, Al-Nsour highlighted that the law aims to regulate electronic space and deter offenders. He stressed the need to understand the law's provisions, especially Articles 11 to 17, to prevent violations and their economic and psychological impacts. He also called for raising public awareness and providing expert explanations to promote legal awareness (Ad-Dostour, 2023).

- **The Importance of Balancing Various Interests:**

Many texts agree on the law's efficiency in balancing conflicting societal needs, primarily the tension between maintaining order and respecting freedom of expression. This reflects public concerns about privacy and protection against cybercrimes, with a focus on finding a compromise for diverse groups. The assessment emphasizes equality and fairness in decision-making as ethical standards. The law is portrayed as a solution that respects individual freedoms and security, ensuring no perspective is sacrificed. Public mistrust regarding the law's potential for biased regulation arises from a lack of balance in its formation. An example is provided in the following:

By examining the provisions of the proposed law, we observe that the drafters did not take into account the principle of proportionality between punishment and crime – one of the fundamental principles of criminal justice. This principle aims to ensure that punishment achieves its purpose of deterrence and justice. Instead, the proposed law imposes exorbitant and excessively harsh fines that may hinder the possibility of rehabilitating and reforming the offender after serving their sentence. Therefore, lawmakers must carefully review the provisions of the proposal. However, to be fair, the law does have a positive side, as it criminalizes certain acts that were not previously criminalized under the law currently in effect. Examples include electronic begging, the creation of pages, channels, websites, or applications falsely attributed to a natural or legal person, whether private or public. Additionally, the law increases penalties for certain crimes, such as sexual exploitation, and the exploitation of children and individuals with mental or psychological disabilities (Ammon, 2023).

- **A Critical Stance against the Law:**

Texts critical of the law highlight its lack of clarity, potential for misuse, threats to freedoms, excessive penalties, and need for amendments, framing it as unjust and violating democratic principles and human rights (see Al-Sarayreh, 2024). Causal attribution often blames the law for issues like strict censorship and fear among Jordanians, with some attributing these problems to the government's biased rule and ignorance of human rights. Proposed solutions include amending or waiving the law, raising public awareness of cybercrimes, and reducing harsh penalties (Maghaireh, 2024). This perspective views the legislation as a threat to social progress and individual freedoms, resonating with concerns about freedom loss and government abuse.

The new Cybercrime Law draft, particularly in Articles 15, 16, and 17, represents a severe blow to public freedoms and human rights, especially the right to freedom of expression, criticism of public policies, and scrutiny of official administrations and their officials. It constitutes a complete confiscation of these rights, which are safeguarded by the Jordanian Constitution, international agreements, and treaties. Moreover, it infringes on the fundamental natural rights of humans as free beings, reducing citizens to mere subordinates and submissive followers of the authority and its officials. Under this law, they are deprived of the right to express opinions, voice criticism, or convey opposition or dissatisfaction with any decision, policy, or action of an official, even if their corruption, failure, or negligence in fulfilling their official duties is blatantly evident (Ammon, 2023).

- **Legislative Progress and Community Engagement:**

This frame appeared in the texts by focusing on integrity, inclusivity, and the country's gradual progress. Framing functions emphasized the procedural aspects of the law's approval to highlight transparency and promote cooperation as a pathway to progress. The problem definition in this frame identified previous laws and legislative processes as having gaps needing clarification, framing the 2023 Cybercrime law and its process as a response to these gaps. The moral judgment valued transparency and the democratic approval process, emphasizing trustworthiness and respect for all stakeholders. To demonstrate thorough consideration, the frame defended the use of formal procedures, such as public hearings or parliamentary discussions, to emphasize the law's role as a solution to the existing gap. This structured approach to the law's approval was attributed as the cause of public acceptance and a guarantee of its effectiveness.

He stated that the supreme political will in the Jordanian state, represented by His Majesty King Abdullah II, is keen on promoting human rights alongside the reform and modernization system. He added that the royal directives have resulted in the adoption of the political and economic reform system, the administrative reform system, and the modernization of the public sector. Additionally, the National Center for Human Rights has been directed to study the legislative impact of the Cybercrime Law and to amend the Law on the Right to Access Information to strengthen the human rights framework in Jordan. He explained that the government has approved a package of legislation, policies, and practices that directly contribute to fulfilling its commitments and pledges to international human rights mechanisms, particularly in implementing the recommendations of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) on human rights. These include amendments to the Jordanian Constitution, the Political Parties Law, the Elections Law, and the issuance of the Child Law. Al-Abdallat highlighted that the essential documents

for the review process have been completed, addressing the legal and legislative framework and general issues, in addition to topics related to civil and political rights, economic, social, and cultural rights, and the rights of specific groups, including women, children, persons with disabilities, and refugees. Furthermore, the government has amended the Anti-Human Trafficking Law, issued the Administrative Regulation for Government Communication, and introduced other national legislation and strategies. It has also advanced practices by establishing an electronic platform dedicated to monitoring complaints related to human rights (Ad Dustour, 2024).

- **Understanding and Compliance with the Law:**

The framing functions focused on educating the public on law adherence and understanding. The problem identified was the lack of knowledge and the spread of false beliefs among the Jordanian people, suggesting that misunderstanding the law was a key barrier to compliance. The moral judgment presented legal knowledge and observance as moral obligations of citizens for societal benefit, emphasizing the law's role in maintaining social values and safety while questioning society's commitment to positive reforms. To address public ignorance, the solution proposed awareness campaigns and educational measures to encourage compliance.

This frame attributes the rise in cybercrimes to individuals' lack of awareness rather than intentional wrongdoing, suggesting that addressing legal ignorance could lead to fewer cybercrime incidents. It highlights the importance of education, accessibility, and proactive citizen engagement in understanding and complying with the law, framing adherence as a shared social duty that promotes safety, order, and trust.

The Wa'i Center for Human Rights Training, in collaboration with the Human Rights Unit at the Prime Ministry, organized a specialized training course on 'Enhancing Legal Awareness for Journalists'. The course provided a comprehensive overview of the provisions of the Cybercrime Law related to publishing, with the participation of several journalists and legal experts. Dr. Khalil Al-Abdallat, the Government Coordinator for the Human Rights Unit at the Prime Ministry, presented the government's upcoming plan regarding the implementation of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) recommendations during an interactive meeting with the governmental team responsible for the national report. He emphasized that there is a supreme political will in the Jordanian state, led by His Majesty King Abdullah II, which has resulted in the adoption of the political, economic, and administrative reform system, the modernization of the public sector, and the human rights framework (Al Rai, 2023).

- **Emphasis on the State's Achievements and Roles:**

This frame focuses on presenting the government as a trustworthy institution, emphasizing its legal strategy for growth and stability. Texts repeatedly promote reassurance and the protection of individuals' rights. The problem is defined as the challenges of cybercrimes requiring state intervention. It is not about the law itself but the negative impact of cybercrimes. The state is framed as the sole provider of stability and accountability. This problem is assumed to stem from technological advancements and the lack of censorship on social media platforms. Texts present the government as a capable and honest institution deserving of confidence by highlighting its accomplishments. It emphasizes the government's responsibility to enforce laws and provide protection. This

frame highlights the state's roles, such as implementing the 2023 Cybercrime Law, as necessary remedies for cyber threats, portraying them as effective and beneficial.

We must firmly believe, despite all attempts by the true enemies of reform who are few in number to cast doubt, that the vision for political modernization and its outcomes is neither mere ink on paper nor a smokescreen. Instead, it represents a genuine will desired by the Jordanians themselves, crafted with their own hands, and supported by a true royal will. This royal will was the first to call for the necessity of activating program-based national governments elected by the people, serving Jordanians with their participation. It wholeheartedly ensured the implementation of this vision on the ground, which is evident today in the support given to emerging political parties, as well as those that have existed for some time (Al Rai, 2023).

- **Describing the Law (Showing the Positive Aspects):**

Texts implied that the law had positive implications. The cybercrime law was viewed as a tool for creating societal balance. Problems defined within this frame included internet misuse, the need to protect public safety and privacy, insufficient proactive measures against future crimes, and the necessity of regulating online platforms without restricting public freedoms. These definitions framed the 2023 Cybercrime Law as a solution to many issues faced by the Jordanian people. The law was presented as a direct solution, making compliance morally right, while violation or criticism was deemed morally wrong. This moral judgment legitimized the law and discouraged public dissent, as it was seen as the means to address community problems.

Prime Minister Dr. Bisher Al-Khasawneh stated on Tuesday that the draft Cybercrime Law provides general protection for all Jordanians and for the 'golden triangle' of the throne, the army, and the people, as well as for the state's modernization project across its political, economic, and social tracks. Al-Khasawneh added during a morning session of the Senate to discuss the draft law that the Cybercrime Law does not, in any way, restrict constructive criticism. The protection it offers is general and applies to everyone, not solely to public officials or government employees (Al Ghad, 2023).

- **Describing the Social Environment in Jordan (Showing the Negative Behaviors in the Society):**

This frame criticized the social environment in Jordan; it emphasized the urgent need for regulation. It highlighted how society often followed false rumors without verification, negatively impacting individuals, primarily women and children. The blame shifted from the government for failing to protect privacy and security to society for not adhering to ethical standards. This criticism implied that society required reforms and regulations. Jordanian online behavior was often deemed irresponsible and unethical, necessitating regulation. To address these harmful behaviors, the frame suggested one solution: adherence to laws, particularly the Cybercrime Law of 2023.

We are ready to engage in a brawl where blood flows freely if another driver honks at us while they have the right of way. And we always throw out the well-known phrase at any critic or advisor: 'Do you even know who you're talking to?' *For a football match or if our team is criticized, we are prepared to incite calls that could lead to a civil war! We are a people who lack the culture of accepting advice or guidance, and any criticism directed at us naturally ends in a massacre! On the other hand, we want to freely throw accusations on social media without accountability! We want to spread rumors that harm the country – and, in turn, harm us before they harm*

the government – under the pretext of freedom! In 2018, His Majesty King Abdullah II wrote an article titled Social Media Platforms or Social Conflict Platforms?, in which His Majesty sounded the alarm, emphasizing, 'The use of social media platforms requires us to take responsibility in how we engage with events happening in the country'. At the time, His Majesty also noted, 'Amid lies, empty slogans, and false heroics, negativity and a sense of despair often spread. Readers are left confused between truth and rumor. Society becomes engulfed in an atmosphere of suspicion, confusion, and pessimism, due to rumors whose only credibility lies in their rapid spread. The virtual world no longer reflects the true image of our noble values, our society, or the reality we live in every day. A rumor can travel around the world before the truth even raises its head (Al Rai, 2023).

Frequencies of Frames and Tones of Framing

Figure 3 compares the extracted frames and their frequencies in government-owned versus private newspapers from July 2023 to May 2024 regarding the Cybercrime Law of 2023. Government-owned newspapers published 134 articles, whereas private newspapers produced only 69, indicating a greater emphasis on political news by government sources. The “necessity of regulation” frame is the most used, comprising 43.28% in government sources and 33.33% in private sources, where it is tied with the “critical stance against the law” frame. The second most frequent frame is “the importance of balancing various interests” at 28.99%. The least frequent frame is “legislative progress and community engagement” at 4.35%.

In government sources, the second most prevalent frame is “emphasis on the state’s achievements and roles” at 23.13%, followed by “describing the social environment in Jordan” (10.45%) and “describing the law” (8.96%). Less common frames include “the importance of balancing various interests” (5.22%), “a critical stance against the law” (4.48%), “understanding and compliance with the law” (3.72%), and “legislative progress and community engagement” (0.75%). Figure 3 illustrates the percentage of frames across both types of newspapers.

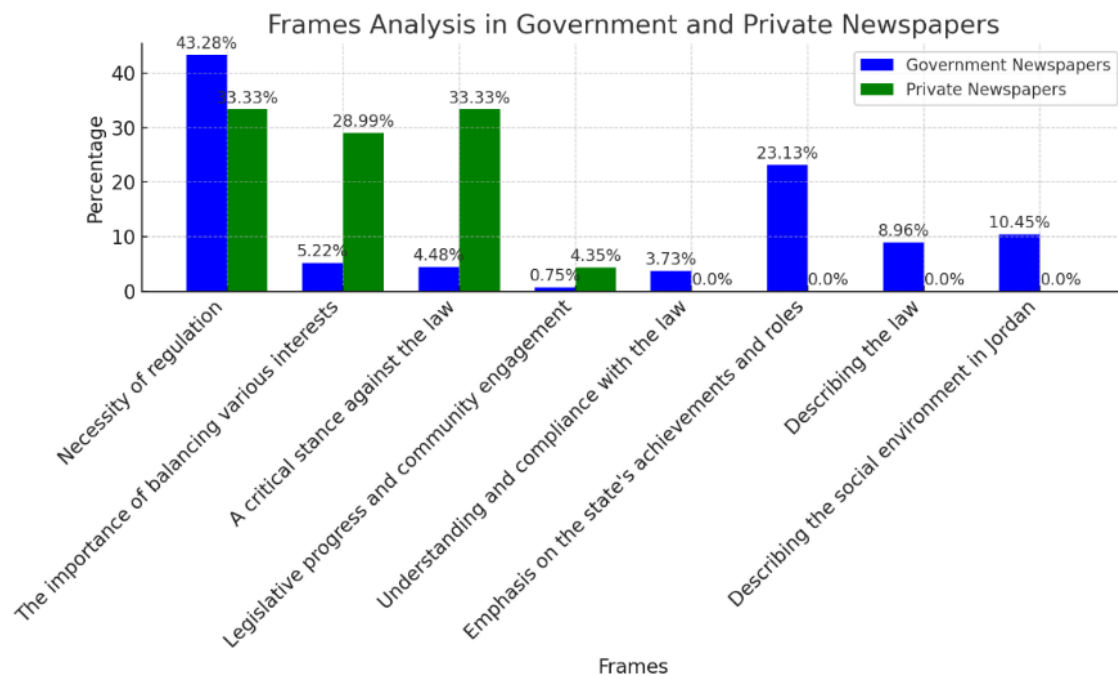


Figure 3: The frequency of frames across government-owned and private newspapers

To determine whether the distribution of frames is dependent or not on the source of the text (the ownership), a chi-square test of independence was employed. As mentioned before, this type of test compares observed frequencies and expected frequencies under a null hypothesis. The null hypothesis for the relationship between the two variables, namely frame vs. ownership, assumes that the variables are not related.

Table 4 shows that the Chi-square test yielded a p-value less than 0.05 ($p = 0.000$ in $H_{0.4}$). This result reveals that the deviations from the first null hypothesis are statistically significant; hence, the null hypothesis $H_{0.4}$ is rejected. In other words, the frequencies of frames across different sources are statistically significant.

Table 4: Chi-square test results of the frames or tones and ownership of the texts

	Test value	Fisher value/ χ^2 Value	P-Value
Null hypothesis (H_0)			
$H_{0.4}$: The dominant frame and source of framing (ownership) are not related in the population.	81.9		0.000
$H_{0.5}$: Tones of frames and source of framing (ownership) are not related in the population.	47.4		0.000

The tone of each text was determined by the implied frame, assessed through a survey of 15 Jordanians. Table 5 shows that 92.5% of government sources supported the Cybercrime Law of 2023, compared to only 49.2% of private sources. Neutral framing was more common in private sources at 17.3%, while government sources had only 2.9%. Additionally, opposing framing was more frequent in private sources (33.3%) than in gov-

ernment sources (2.9%). This indicates that government sources mainly have a supportive tone, whereas private sources display more variation, including a significant proportion of critical tones.

Table 5: The frequency of tones of framing among government and private-owned texts

Tone of Framing	Government Proportion (%)	Private Proportion (%)
Supportive	92.54%	49.28%
Neutral	2.99%	17.39%
Critical	4.48%	33.33%

To determine whether the differences in tones of framing significantly differ between the two sources, the frequency of each tone was counted in both government and privately owned sources and tested using a chi-square test. The Pearson chi-square tests yielded significant results ($p < 0.05$) with a p-value of 0.000. This indicates a strong significance between the tone of framing and the source of the texts. As shown in Table 4, the null hypothesis is rejected, meaning that the observed differences did not occur by chance and are likely due to the influence of ownership on language choices in reporting about the Cybercrime Law of 2023.

In summary, the statistical analysis found no significant differences in the distribution of framing devices across sources or different tones. However, it revealed a significant difference in the positioning of frames within the texts and the tendency of the tone of framing across sources. This indicates that the use of framing devices is similar, but the presentation of frames and tones varies, reflecting different ideological perspectives on framing the law. The next section presents a discussion of the results.

5.2. Discussion of Results

5.2.1. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) of Language and Power

CDA analyzes how discourse constructs meaning and power or challenges social structures, following Fairclough's (2013) model at three levels. The first level, description, examines linguistic elements such as grammar, vocabulary, and literary devices. The second level, interpretation, analyzes the creation and consumption of texts, revealing links between texts and interactions. The third level, explanation, situates the text within society, framing it as a social practice. This research employs Entman's (1993) framework at the description and interpretation levels. Frame analysis reveals contrasting ideologies and communication strategies regarding the Cybercrime Law of 2023. These ideologies demonstrate how each source constructs reality and shapes public perception. The following sub-sections overview the ideological positions of each source:

Ideologies in Government-Owned Texts

Government-owned newspapers often portrayed the law positively, emphasizing its role in maintaining stability and addressing cyber threats. 43.28% of publications framed it as a “Necessity of regulation”, while 23.13% highlighted the “Emphasis on the state’s achievements and roles”, indicating a pro-state perspective. This framing aligns with an ideology prioritizing national security and the collective good over individual rights, depicting the government as a competent guardian of societal values. Frames such as “Describing the law” and “Describing the social environment in Jordan” focus on educating the public about the law’s importance in addressing local issues. Critical perspectives were largely absent, with only 4.48% of publications adopting “A critical stance against the law”. This neglect of dissent reflects an ideology that suppresses challenges to state legitimacy, framing the law as necessary and unquestionable. Top-down communication strategies are employed by authorities to propagate their views, resulting in a one-way flow of information that emphasizes compliance and justifies lawmaking. The lack of public discourse is evident in the minimal criticism of the law in government texts.

Ideologies in Private-Owned Texts

Private sources framed the law within four main frames, with two dominant ones: “A critical stance against the law” and “necessity of regulation”, each receiving 33.33% of the focus. This combination reflects private newspapers’ tendency to foster debate by acknowledging the law’s necessity for combating cybercrimes while also expressing concerns about potential restrictions on freedoms. This suggests a cautious pragmatism that favors incremental reforms over revolutionary changes (see Heywood, 2021).

Additionally, 28.99% of private texts highlighted the importance of balancing diverse interests. This calls for an equitable policymaking approach that addresses both state and societal needs. In contrast, the least frequent frame, “legislative progress and community engagement”, which highlights transparency and public inclusivity in lawmaking, appeared only 4.35% of the time, indicating a relative disregard for these aspects in favor of other narratives.

Entman (1993) posits that the presence or absence of frames reflects ideologies. The absence of frames like “Understanding and compliance with the law”, “Emphasis on the state’s achievements and roles”, and “Describing the social environment in Jordan” in private sources suggests selective omission. The lack of frames promoting compliance or positive aspects of the law indicates a reluctance to align with governmental narratives. Moreover, the absence of frames that appraise the government suggests private sources see themselves as watchdogs rather than promoters of governmental success. This may also indicate underlying skepticism, as the lack of discussion about Jordan’s social environment reflects a refusal to contextualize the law within societies, opting instead for critiques of the law itself.

Power Dynamics in Jordan

The interactions between predefined frames in Jordanian society reveal a complex balance of power and ideology. Government texts promote state hegemony, portraying the government as a protector of societal values while downplaying dissenting narratives. This framing supports ideological control and limits public discourse. Private sources challenge government dominance with opposing narratives but also present positive portrayals of the law.

The absence of certain frames in private sources, analyzed through CDA, reflects the power structure in Jordan. This avoidance of pro-government narratives indicates resistance to government hegemony, constrained by a hierarchical power structure that prioritizes state interests. Consequently, private sources operate within strict parameters imposed by the state, often publishing content aligned with government interests. Although there is limited freedom of expression, it remains restricted compared to Western contexts. Thus, private sources display a degree of impartiality and self-control, evidenced by the lack of frames that fully trust state-led projects.

5.2.2. Framing Implications on Public Discourse

Framing occurs at four points in communication: the communicator, the receiver, the culture, and the text (Entman, 1993). Frames reflect the perspectives of their publishers and influence audience perceptions. Framing in government sources portrays the law as a proactive measure that maintains stability and protects social values in Jordan, suggesting that the government deserves public trust and compliance. This framing likely encourages support for the law, as the audience encountered little negative framing. In contrast, private sources present competing frames, allowing for diverse perspectives and debates about the law's necessity versus potential government overreach. This dual framing may lead to varied public opinion, from cautious support to disapproval.

Although this study touches on media frames' potential impact on public opinion, this discussion is not a primary objective. It requires further evidence through analysis of Jordanians' reactions to the law. The influence of frames depends on factors like public awareness, engagement with newspapers, and trust in news outlets. Zibin et al. (2024b) provide insights into Jordanians' perceptions of the 2023 Cybercrime Law, revealing it is viewed negatively, depicted as a "silencer", "barbed wires", and "handcuffs". This suggests strong feelings of distrust and fear towards the law, seen as a threat to freedom. Their findings highlight a conflict between government control and public skepticism, reflecting Jordan's power structure. The portrayal of Jordanians as "potential criminals" aligns with government framing that depicts the state as a benevolent authority protecting the community.

5.2.3. Analysis of Research Questions

An analysis using Entman (1993) framework was conducted to examine news framing in government-owned and private-owned texts regarding the 2023 Cybercrime Law. Results indicated significant differences in framing, with government-owned newspapers presenting the law positively, focusing on “Necessity of regulation” and “Emphasis on the State’s Achievements”, reflecting a pro-state agenda. In contrast, private-owned newspapers exhibited a more balanced perspective, presenting both critical and supportive views.

Regarding framing devices, no major differences were found between sources, but depictions and metaphors were the most frequently used devices (see Zibin et al., 2024a). Depictions dominated both supportive and opposing texts in government sources and all tones in private sources, suggesting their effectiveness in emphasizing aspects of the law. Metaphors followed in frequency, particularly in neutral tones in government texts, while in private texts, they were second most frequent except in opposing texts, where they ranked third after catchphrases. Exemplars were the least common due to their specificity, limiting interpretative flexibility.

The ideological positions of Jordanian mass media reflect differing frames of the 2023 Cybercrime Law, influenced by ownership. Government sources align with state-centric perspectives, emphasizing control and stability, while private sources adopt a pluralistic approach that encourages societal debate. The absence of certain frames in private sources highlights the power structure in Jordan. In summary, government texts advocate state dominance, while private sources cautiously promote pluralistic debate, impacting public discourse and limiting opportunities for genuine criticism.

5.2.4. Comparison with Previous Research

Comparing results of this research with previous studies provides insights into how political incidents have been framed in Jordanian media and the ideologies underpinning those frames. It helps in situating this research with the wider context of political discourse in Jordan. As stated earlier, Zibin et al.’s (2024b) study examines the attitudes of the Jordanian citizens toward the Cybercrime Law of 2023 (see also Alhadidi et al., 2024). Their findings revealed an opposition tone toward the law among Jordanians. This may contradict the expectations of the positive framing of government sources and the pragmatic framing of private sources in our study, but their results may indicate the level of awareness among Jordanians by which frames have a limited impact on them. Moreover, Zibin et al.’s (2024b) study found that Jordanians may feel that the law depicts them as possible criminals in society, which aligns with the findings in this study that some sources (government ones) presented the law as a reaction to widespread criminal activities among Jordanians.

Drawing a comparison between two studies that focus on different media types (visual and textual) can help in demonstrating the role of media type and ownership in understanding the discussion around the Cybercrime Law of 2023 in Jordan. This study

highlights the framing of the law and the ideological positions in textual discourse in institutional media, but Zibin et al. (2024b) emphasize the role of visual representations in rejecting such ideologies. Similarly, Zibin (2020) investigated the representation of the Syrian refugees in two Jordanian outlets namely, *Al Ghad* and *Al Rai*. Her analysis revealed that both newspapers followed the same pattern in the use of metaphors when reporting about the Syrian refugees. Despite *Al Rai* being a right-wing newspaper and *Al Ghad* left-wing one, both of them showed a similar use of metaphors. The limited diversity in the newspaper's coverage suggests that news coverage in Jordan may be subject to control. This finding aligns with this study's observation of a narrow framing of the 2023 Cybercrime Law.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

This study has examined the language used in news articles to extract the frames in reporting on the Cybercrime Law of 2023 in Jordan. A comparison between government-owned and privately-owned sources assessed differences in focus or tone, indicating the ideological stances of each source and how power is exerted in the Jordanian context. The analysis integrated Entman's (1993) Framing Theory and Fairclough's (2013) Critical Discourse Analysis. A content analysis was conducted to extract framing devices based on Zoch et al. (2008). The researchers examined the corpus to identify instances where the text downplayed or emphasized specific issues related to the law. Following Entman's framing functions, the researchers coded these functions and grouped similar codes to identify similarities and explore framing choices. The data were analyzed statistically for significance.

The study identified several frames, with the "Necessity of regulation" frame being most prevalent in government-owned texts. In privately-owned texts, two dominant frames emerged: "necessity of regulation" and "critical stance against the law". Statistical analysis indicated a significant correlation between framing and text ownership, attributed to different editorial priorities. The results highlighted significant differences in tone between the two sources.

This study offers theoretical, methodological, and practical contributions. It enhances methodology through the combined application of Entman's Framing Theory and Fairclough's CDA to examine politics in media discourse. This integration contributes to the discussion on the influence of media ownership on framing strategies and addresses a gap in the literature, as prior studies have not investigated the framing of the 2023 Cybercrime Law with an emphasis on the ideological positions of publishers. Practically, the study encourages power-dominant institutions to provide more balanced reporting on the law and other political news. It highlights the state of freedom in

Jordan and emphasizes the importance of promoting greater space for discussion and diverse opinions.

Future work may analyze how different frames are perceived by the public. Some studies examined audience attitudes toward the law in Jordan, but no study has explored the perceptions and attitudes of online newspaper readers. Such data can be collected from comments sections of online newspapers. Additionally, future research can compare political systems in different Middle Eastern countries with those in Jordan or other Western countries to provide a cross-cultural view of media representations.

References

- Ad-Dustour (n.d.). Ad-Dustour Newspaper. Available at addustour.com/ (accessed 12 August 2024).
- Al-Dabbagh, Ula M. K. & Hiba S. Amro (2020). Reconciliation or alienation: The representation of the Syrian refugee crisis in the Jordanian print media: Al-Ghad newspaper as a case study. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 10(5), 612–621. DOI: [10.17507/tpls.1005.16](https://doi.org/10.17507/tpls.1005.16).
- Al-Ghad (n.d.). Al-Ghad Newspaper. Available at alghad.com (accessed 12 August 2024).
- Alhadidi, Ismaeel; Aman, Nweiran & Ghofran, Hilal (2024). The influence of cybercrime and legal awareness on the behavior of University of Jordan students. *Heliyon*, 10(12), e32371. DOI: [10.1016/j.heliyon.2024.e32371](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2024.e32371).
- Alitavoli, Rayekeh (2019). Framing the news on the Syrian war: A comparative study of antiwar.com and cnn.com editorials. *Media, War & Conflict*, 13(4), 487–505. DOI: [10.1177/1750635219850326](https://doi.org/10.1177/1750635219850326).
- Alnasser, Aljawhara Abdulrahman M. (2023). Argumentation and Persuasion in Saudi TEDx Talks: A Political Discourse Analysis Approach (Doctoral dissertation, University of Leeds).
- Al-Rai (n.d.). Al-Rai Newspaper. Available at alrai.com (accessed 12 August 2024).
- Al-Sarayreh, Riyadh Mahmoud (2024). Jordanian cybercrime law No.(17) of 2023 between regulating social media sites and restricting freedom of opinion. *Scholars International Journal of Law, Crime and Justice*, 7(09), 339–351. DOI: [10.36348/sijlcj.2024.v07i09.002](https://doi.org/10.36348/sijlcj.2024.v07i09.002).
- Al-Tkhayneh, Khawlah M.; Abdulrasheed Olowoselu & Mohammad Amin Alkrisheh (2023). The crime in metaverse (the future scenarios for crime patterns and the prospective legal challenges). In 2023 Tenth International Conference on Social Networks Analysis, Management and Security (SNAMS) (pp. 1–6). *IEEE*.
- Ammari, Raeda & Wajed Al-Ahmad (2023). A corpus-based study of English synonyms: Small, little, tiny, and petite. *Jordan Journal of Applied Science-Humanities Series*, 36(2), 1–20. DOI: [10.35192/jjoas-h.v36i2.542](https://doi.org/10.35192/jjoas-h.v36i2.542).
- Ammon News (n.d.). Ammon News Agency. Available at ammonnews.net (accessed 12 August 2024).
- Amnesty International (August, 2024). Jordan: New Cybercrimes Law stifling freedom of expression one year on. Available at [amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/08/jordan-new-cybercrimes-law-stifling-freedom-of-expression-one-year-on/](https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/08/jordan-new-cybercrimes-law-stifling-freedom-of-expression-one-year-on/) - ~:text=Cybercrimes Law instrumentalized to silence,peaceful protests and public strikes (accessed 12 August 2024).
- Araújo, Bruno & Hélder, Prior (2020). Framing political populism: The role of media in framing the election of Jair Bolsonaro. *Journalism Practice*, 15(2), 226–242. DOI: [10.1080/17512786.2019.1709881](https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2019.1709881).
- Ashwell, Douglas & Murray, Niki (2020). When being positive might be negative: An analysis of Australian and New Zealand newspaper framing of vaccination post Australia's No Jab No Pay legislation. *Vaccine*, 38(35), 5627–5633. DOI: [10.1016/j.vaccine.2020.06.070](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.vaccine.2020.06.070).

- Biber, Douglas (1992). On the complexity of discourse complexity: A multidimensional analysis. *Discourse Processes*, 15(2), 133–163. DOI: [10.1080/01638539209544806](https://doi.org/10.1080/01638539209544806).
- Braun, Virginia & Clarke, Victoria (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101. DOI: [10.1191/1478088706qp0630a](https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp0630a).
- D'Angelo, Paul (2002). News framing as a multiparadigmatic research program: A response to Entman. *Journal of Communication*, 52(4), 870–888. DOI: [10.1111/j.1460-2466.2002.tb02578.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1460-2466.2002.tb02578.x).
- El-Sayed, Wesam Ali (2020). You've been framed!: Thematization and ideological bias in Arabic and English news reports. *Journal of Languages and Translation*, 7(1), 97–125. DOI: [10.21608/jltmin.2020.143462](https://doi.org/10.21608/jltmin.2020.143462).
- Entman, Robert M. (1993). Framing: Toward clarification of a fractured paradigm. *Journal of Communication*, 43(4), 51–58. DOI: [10.1111/j.1460-2466.1993.tb01304.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1460-2466.1993.tb01304.x).
- Fairclough, Norman (1993). Critical discourse analysis and the marketization of public discourse: The universities. *Discourse & Society*, 4(2), 133–168. DOI: [10.1177/0957926593004002002](https://doi.org/10.1177/0957926593004002002).
- Fairclough, Norman (1995). *Media Discourse*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Fairclough, Norman (2003). *Analyzing Discourse: Textual Analysis for Social Research*. London & New York: Routledge.
- Fairclough, Norman (2013). *Language and Power*. London: Routledge.
- Gamson, William A. & Modigliani, Andre (1989). Media discourse and public opinion on nuclear power: A constructionist approach. *American Journal of Sociology*, 95(1), 1–37.
- Goffman, Erving (1974). *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience*. New York: Free Press.
- Heywood, Andrew (2021). *Political Ideologies: An Introduction*. Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Hubner, Austin (2021). How did we get here? A framing and source analysis of early COVID-19 media coverage. *Communication Research Reports*, 38(2), 112–120. DOI: [10.1080/08824096.2021.1894112](https://doi.org/10.1080/08824096.2021.1894112).
- Husseini, Rana (2019). Media watchdog report finds self-censorship prevalent. *Jordan Times*. Available at jordantimes.com/news/local/media-watchdog-report-finds-self-censorship-prevalent (accessed 14 June 2024).
- Jordan Open Source Association (2023). Full Text in English of the Cybercrime Law of 2023. Available at josa.ngo/publications/33 (accessed 24 May 2024).
- Kahneman, Daniel & Tversky, Amos (1984). Choice, values, and frames. *American Psychologist*, 39, 341–350.
- Maghaireh, Alaeldin Mansour (2024). Cybercrime laws in Jordan and freedom of expression: a critical examination of the electronic crimes act 2023. *International Journal of Cyber Criminology*, 18(1), 15–36. DOI: [10.5281/zenodo.4766802](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.4766802).
- Meyer, Michael (2001). Between theory, method, and politics: Positioning of the approaches to CDA. In Wodak & Meyer (Eds.), *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis* (pp. 14–31). SAGE Publications.
- Reese, Stephen D. (2007). The framing project: A bridging model for media research revisited. *Journal of Communication*, 57(1), 148–154. DOI: [10.1111/j.1460-2466.2006.00334.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1460-2466.2006.00334.x).
- Richter, Carola & Kozman, Claudia (2021). *Arab Media Systems*. Open Book Publishers.
- Riffe, Daniel; Lacy, Stephen & Fico, Frederick (2005). *Analyzing Media Messages: Using Quantitative Content Analysis in Research* (2nd ed.). Routledge. DOI: [10.4324/9781410613424](https://doi.org/10.4324/9781410613424).
- Sarah Liu, Shan-Jan (2019). Framing immigration: A content analysis of newspapers in Hong Kong, Taiwan, the United Kingdom, and the United States. *Politics, Groups, and Identities*, 9(4), 759–783. DOI: [10.1080/21565503.2019.1674162](https://doi.org/10.1080/21565503.2019.1674162).
- Statista (2024). Digital newspapers and magazines – Jordan: Market insights & forecast. *Statista*. Available at statista.com/outlook/amo/media/newspapers-magazines/digital-newspapers-magazines/jordan (accessed November 11, 2024).
- Telesto (2023). Media in Jordan. The MENA Chronicle | Fanack. Available at fanack.com/jordan/media-in-jordan/ (accessed 17 October 2024).
- Van Dijk, Teun A. (1997). What is political discourse analysis. *Belgian Journal of Linguistics*, 11(1), 11–52.
- Wodak, Ruth & Krzyzanowski, Michal (2008). *Qualitative Discourse Analysis in the Social Sciences*. Palgrave Macmillan.

- Zibin, Aseel; Altakhaine, Abdel Rahman Mitib & Jarrah, Marwan (2024a). Compound nouns as linguistic framing devices in Arabic news headlines in the context of the Israel-Gaza conflict. *Russian Journal of Linguistics*, 28(3), 535–558. DOI: [10.22363/2687-0088-39562](https://doi.org/10.22363/2687-0088-39562).
- Zibin, Aseel; Altakhaine, Abdel Rahman Mitib; Abuanzeh, Amal & Kabbaha, Ahmad Ali (2024b). Jordanians' perceptions and attitudes toward the amended cyber crime law in Jordan: A visual and multimodal analysis. *International Journal for the Semiotics of Law-Revue Internationale de Sémiotique Juridique*, 37(7), 2175–2191. DOI: [10.1007/s11196-024-10169-5](https://doi.org/10.1007/s11196-024-10169-5).
- Zibin, Aseel (2020). A corpus-based study of metaphors used to describe Syrian refugees in Jordanian politico-economic discourse: A critical metaphor analysis approach. *Pragmatics and Society*, 11(4), 640–663. DOI: [10.1075/ps.17037.zib](https://doi.org/10.1075/ps.17037.zib).
- Zoch, Lynn M.; Collins, Erik L.; Fussell Sisco, Hilary & Supa, Dustin (2008). Empowering the activist: Using framing devices on activist organizations' web sites. *Public Relations Review*, 34(4), 351–358. DOI: [10.1016/j.pubrev.2008.07.005](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2008.07.005).

Note: JLL and its contents are Open Access publications under the [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).



Copyright remains with the authors. You are free to share and adapt for any purpose if you give appropriate credit, include a link to the license, and indicate if changes were made.

Publishing Open Access is free, supports a greater global exchange of knowledge and improves your visibility.