HUMANITARIAN CRISIS AND DIGITAL ADVOCACY: UNPACKING THE ALL EYES ON RAFAH CAMPAIGN

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Abstract: The "All Eyes on Rafah" campaign, featuring an AI-generated image of a refugee tent formation spelling out the campaign's name, has emerged as a pivotal instance of global digital advocacy. This study examines the campaign in the context of Israel's devastating bombing of Palestinian refugee tents in Rafah, which resulted in significant civilian casualties. The research investigates how digital media and AI-generated imagery shape international humanitarian responses. Employing a qualitative, descriptive, and interdisciplinary approach, the study analyzes primary data sources through various theoretical frameworks, including viral images and news reports. The findings illuminate the transformative role of digital advocacy in influencing global perceptions and mobilizing humanitarian action, highlighting the potential of AI in such campaigns. This research contributes valuable insights to the media, political communication, and international relations fields. However, it is limited by its focus on a single case, indicating the necessity for further exploration of AI's broader implications in media and communication.
Keywords: *Humanitarian Crisis; Digital Advocacy; All Eyes on Rafah; Campaign.*

Abstrak: Kampanye "All Eyes on Rafah", yang menampilkan gambar formasi tenda pengungsi yang dibuat dengan AI yang mengeja nama kampanye, telah muncul sebagai contoh penting dari advokasi digital global. Studi ini meneliti kampanye tersebut dalam konteks pemboman Israel yang menghancurkan tenda pengungsi Palestina di Rafah, yang mengakibatkan banyaknya korban sipil. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menyelidiki bagaimana media digital dan citra yang dibuat dengan AI membentuk respons kemanusiaan internasional. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif, deskriptif, dan interdisipliner, studi ini menganalisis sumber data primer, termasuk gambar viral dan laporan berita, melalui berbagai kerangka teoritis. Temuan tersebut menyoroti peran transformatif advokasi digital dalam memengaruhi persepsi global dan memobilisasi aksi kemanusiaan, yang menyoroti potensi AI dalam kampanye tersebut. Penelitian ini memberikan wawasan berharga bagi bidang media komunikasi, komunikasi politik, dan hubungan internasional, meskipun dibatasi oleh fokusnya pada satu kasus, yang menunjukkan perlunya eksplorasi lebih lanjut tentang implikasi AI yang lebih luas dalam media dan komunikasi.
Kata Kunci: Krisis Kemanusiaan; Advokasi Digital; Kampanye All Eyes on Rafah.

INTRODUCTION

Israel's recent bombardment of Palestinian refugee tents, which tragically resulted in the deaths of 55 civilians, has significantly impacted the social conditions in Rafah, Palestine. This tragedy has sparked international outrage and garnered extensive media coverage, particularly fueled by the viral growth of the "All Eyes on Rafah" campaign.[1] The tents have become a powerful symbol of the immense suffering endured by Palestinian refugees, and the campaign seeks to raise awareness and mobilize support for their plight through digital media platforms. This study investigates the interplay between these social facts and digital advocacy,[2] focusing on how the campaign has reshaped global perceptions and actions.[3] Rather than exacerbating conflicts and humanitarian crises, social media and AI can promote peace and suggest solutions.[4] This topic is particularly

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[1] Brianna Tassiello, "Politics and Pop Culture: Timing of Rafah Bombing No Coincidence.," *UWIRE Text*, 2024, 1.

[2] Ghadeer Awwad and Kentaro Toyama, "Digital Repression in Palestine," *Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems - Proceedings*, 2024, https://doi.org/10.1145/3613904.3642422; Ibrahim Horoub, "Understanding Media Empowerment: Citizen Journalism in Palestine," *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications* 10, no. 1 (2023): 32, https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-023-01526-z; Rola Khalid Yousef, "Palestinian Youth Engagement with Online Political Contents Shared by Citizen Journalists—The Case of Save Sheikh Jarrah," *CyberOrient* 16, no. 2 (December 1, 2022): 32–64, https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1002/cyo2.28.

[3] Mohamed Buheji and Dunya Ahmed, "Keeping the Boycott Momentum-from 'WAR on GAZA' Till 'Free-Palestine," *International Journal of Management (IJM)* 14, no. 7 (2023): 205–29; Mohamed Buheji and Aamir Hasan, "Spain's Empathy for Gaza as A Model for The World and the Communities Mechanism," *International Journal of Management (IJM)* 15, no. 3 (2024): 1–15; Anatolii Shestakov and Wajdi Zaghouani, "Analyzing Conflict Through Data: A Dataset on the Digital Framing of Sheikh Jarrah Evictions," in *Proceedings of the Second Workshop on Natural Language Processing for Political Sciences @ LREC-COLING 2024*, ed. Haithem Afli et al. (Torino, Italia: ELRA and ICCL, 2024), 55–67.

[4] S Kate Devitt et al., "Developing a Trusted Human-AI Network for Humanitarian Benefit," *Digital War* 4, no. 1 (2023): 1–17, https://doi.org/10.1057/s42984-023-00063-y; Jane Esberg and Christoph Mikulaschek,

relevant as it explores the impact of AI-generated imagery and social media on humanitarian emergencies.

Previous research on Israeli strikes and media coverage supports this study. Numerous studies have examined media portrayal of Israeli-Palestinian conflicts,[5] the role of online platforms in advocacy,[6] and the influence of visual media on public opinion.[7] While some discussions have raised concerns about AI-generated images being associated with misinformation and posing challenges to democracy, art, journalism, and photography,[8] There has been limited focus on using AI-generated imagery in humanitarian campaigns. Thus, this study aims to fill a critical gap in understanding the specific dynamics of digital advocacy concerning the Rafah situation.

The research objectives are threefold: to examine the role of AI-generated imagery in humanitarian advocacy, to assess the impact of the "All Eyes on Rafah" campaign on global perceptions and actions, and to investigate the broader implications of digital media in international humanitarian efforts. By establishing these objectives, this inquiry explores how digital tools can

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"Digital Technologies , Peace and Security : Challenges and Opportunities for United Nations Peace Operations," *United Nations Peacekeeping* 7 (2021): 1–36; Branka Panic and Paige Arthur, *AI for Peace* (CRC Press, 2024).

[5] Lisa Reid, Didy Button, and Mark Brommeyer, "Challenging the Myth of the Digital Native: A Narrative Review," *Nursing Reports*, 2023, https://doi.org/10.3390/nursrep13020052; Ben Lynfield, "Reporters Sign up for the War Effort," *British Journalism Review* 35, no. 2 (May 21, 2024): 19–24, https://doi.org/10.1177/09564748241256762.

[6] awuor Kokeyo, "Exploring The Dynamics Of Social Media In Shaping Narratives And Perceptions In The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: Preliminary Reflections," *African Journal of Emerging Issues* 5, no. 17 SE-Articles (November 23, 2023): 181–94.

[7] Sima Bhowmik and Jolene Fisher, "Framing the Israel-Palestine Conflict 2021: Investigation of CNN's Coverage from a Peace Journalism Perspective," *Media, Culture & Society* 45, no. 5 (February 18, 2023): 1019–35, https://doi.org/10.1177/01634437231154766; Gregory Gondwe and Carolyn Walcott, "Victims or Villains? How Editorial Cartoons Depict the 2023 Israel – Palestine War," Online Media and Global Communication, 3, no. 1 (2024): 1–26, https://doi.org/doi:10.1515/omgc-2023-0061; Arantza Renteria Vizcarra, "Public Opinion on the Palestinian Question Is More Decisive than Ever," *Journal of Peace and Diplomacy* 2, no. 1 SE-Articles (December 30, 2021): 1–9, https://doi.org/10.59111/JPD.002.01.09; Moran Yarchi and Ami and Ayalon, "Fighting over the Image: The Israeli – Palestinian Conflict in the Gaza Strip 2018 – 19," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 46, no. 2 (February 1, 2023): 123–36, https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2020.1751461; Musharaf Zahoor and Najma Sadiq, "Digital Public Sphere and Palestine-Israel Conflict: A Conceptual Analysis of News Coverage," *Liberal Arts and Social Sciences International Journal (LASSIJ)* 5, no. 1 (2021): 168–81.

[8] Yaniv Benhamou and Ana Andrijevic, "Chapter 10: The Protection of AI-Generated Pictures (Photograph and Painting) under Copyright Law," in *Research Handbook on Intellectual Property and Artificial Intelligence* (Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2022), 198–217, https://doi.org/10.4337/9781800881907.00016; Liv Hausken, "Photorealism versus Photography. AI-Generated Depiction in the Age of Visual Disinformation," *Journal of Aesthetics & Culture* 16, no. 1 (December 31, 2024): 2340787, https://doi.org/10.1080/20004214.2024.2340787; Sarah Kreps and Doug Kriner, "How AI Threatens Democracy," *Journal of Democracy* 34, no. 4 (2023): 122–31.

amplify humanitarian messages and organize assistance effectively. Understanding these relationships is crucial for developing impactful strategies in future advocacy campaigns.

This study proposes that the "All Eyes on Rafah" campaign has substantially influenced global perspectives and actions regarding the Rafah crisis, leveraging innovative uses of AI-generated imagery and social media. It also suggests integrating digital media into humanitarian activism can elicit more immediate and widespread responses. By evaluating these hypotheses, the study seeks to provide insights into the effectiveness of digital activism and its potential to advance humanitarian initiatives.

METHOD

The qualitative-descriptive research design was chosen for its ability to provide an in-depth and nuanced understanding of complex social phenomena.[9] This approach facilitates a comprehensive examination of the "All Eyes on Rafah" campaign and its impact on global attitudes and behaviors. The multidisciplinary nature of the research, encompassing aspects of media studies, political communication, and international relations, enriches the analysis and offers a holistic viewpoint.

Primary data sources include viral photographs and news articles about Israel's bombing of Rafah refugee tents. These sources provide crucial context for assessing the campaign's impact. The selection process involved identifying the most relevant and widely circulated images and reports, resulting in a representative sample of media coverage. This methodology ensures that the data collected is pertinent and thorough, laying a strong foundation for the research.

Data collection employed various techniques, including documentation, comprehensive reading, note-taking, categorization, annotation, and screenshot acquisition. These strategies facilitated a systematic and thorough analysis of the data. To gain insight into the campaign's impact,

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[9] Mariela Aguayo-González et al., "Exploring Adolescents' Experiences of Continuing to Wear Face Masks during COVID-19: A Qualitative Descriptive Study in Barcelona (Spain)," *Health Expectations* 27, no. 2 (April 1, 2024): e14014, https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1111/hex.14014; Steven Hall and Linda Liebenberg, "Qualitative Description as an Introductory Method to Qualitative Research for Master's-Level Students and Research Trainees," *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 23 (March 25, 2024): 16094069241242264, https://doi.org/10.1177/16094069241242264; Kara Pavone et al., "Exploring the Postoperative Pain Experiences of Individuals with Opioid Use Disorder and the Nurses Providing Care in the USA: A Qualitative Descriptive Study Protocol," *BMJ Open* 13, no. 10 (October 1, 2023): e072187, https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjopen-2023-072187; M C Ramafikeng and E Marshall, "Navigating Language Discordance in Public Health Care in Rural South Africa: A Qualitative Descriptive Study of Occupational Therapists' Perspectives," *BMC Health Services Research* 23, no. 1 (2023): 867, https://doi.org/10.1186/s12913-023-09658-3.

the study utilized Framing Theory by Erving Goffman,[10] the medium is the Message Theory by Marshall McLuhan,[11] and Diffusion of Innovation Theory by Everett Rogers.[12] This interdisciplinary framework provided a robust foundation for data analysis.

Data categorization was executed by grouping similar codes into broader categories, creating a structured framework delineating key themes related to the "All Eyes on Rafah" campaign. This categorization process enhanced the depth of analysis by allowing for a comparative examination of the themes across different data sources.

Finally, data interpretation was conducted, wherein explicit and implicit meanings of the trends and patterns were explored. The entire dataset was meticulously examined within textual and contextual frameworks, facilitating a comprehensive and nuanced analysis.[13] Triangulation was employed to enhance the validity of the findings, incorporating multiple data sources—such as social media posts, images, and celebrity endorsements—thereby corroborating the results and ensuring a well-rounded understanding of the campaign's impact. This study used data analysis tools—Data Restatement, Data Description, and Data Interpretation—to examine the data systematically. This approach aimed to identify the underlying dynamics and ramifications of the "All Eyes on Rafah" campaign.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The analysis employed in the dissection of the principal themes in this research is divided into three principal theories: Framing Theory, Medium is the Message Theory, and Diffusion of Innovation Theory. Framing Theory pertains to humanitarian crises and refers to situations in which significant numbers of people face great hardship due to conflict, natural catastrophes, or other emergencies. The horrific conditions of displaced Palestinians in Rafah, as well as the international response to

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[10] Espen Ytreberg, "Erving Goffman as a Theorist of the Mass Media," *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 19, no. 4 (December 1, 2002): 481–97, https://doi.org/10.1080/07393180216570.

[11] Ellen Balka, "Rethinking 'The Medium Is the Message': Agency and Technology in McLuhan's Writings," *Media International Australia* 94, no. 1 (February 1, 2000): 73–87, https://doi.org/10.1177/1329878X0009400108; Marshall McLuhan, "The Medium Is the Message," in *Communication Theory* (Routledge, 2017), 390–402; Sergio Roncallo-Dow and Carlos A Scolari, "Marshall McLuhan: The Possibility of Re-Reading His Notion of Medium," *Philosophies*, 2016, https://doi.org/10.3390/philosophies1020141.

[12] Everett M Rogers, Arvind Singhal, and Margaret M Quinlan, "Diffusion of Innovations," in *An Integrated Approach to Communication Theory and Research* (Routledge, 2014), 432–48.

[13] Muassomah Muassomah et al., "The Academic Demoralization of Students in Online Learning During the COVID-19 Pandemic," *Frontiers in Education* 7, no. May (2022): 1–11, https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2022.888393; Mufliha Wijayati et al., "Justice Brokers: Women's Experiences with Injustice and Dependence in the Divorce Process," ed. Kevin Cheng, *Cogent Social Sciences* 7, no. 1 (January 1, 2021): 1966208, https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2021.1966208.

their distress, define the situation. This theory was instrumental in analyzing how the "All Eyes on Rafah" campaign framed the narrative around Palestinian suffering, thereby influencing public perception and policy responses. The specific data collected from viral images underscored these framing effects, highlighting how visual representation can shape understanding and elicit empathy.

Humanitarian disasters necessitate rapid and coordinated efforts to provide relief and assistance.[14] In addition, the humanitarian crisis resulting from the Israeli occupation, which has reduced the Palestinian people to a confined space with no autonomy, required an accelerated response to threats to the existence, survival, and local identity of the nation.[15] The data analysis revealed that the media coverage emphasized the urgency of this crisis and showcased the campaign's role in mobilizing support, aligning with the Framing Theory's premise that presenting an issue can significantly affect stakeholder engagement.

The humanitarian crisis in Gaza has resulted in casualties not only among Palestinians but also among aid workers such as those from World Central Kitchen (WCK), leading to material and non-material losses that have worsened the situation.[16] Humanitarian crisis risk management strategies through collaboration with mass media are crucial for effectively reaching crisis stakeholders. The campaign's digital advocacy efforts were shown to effectively convey these messages, positioning the crisis within a broader narrative that emphasizes urgency and collective responsibility as outlined by the framing approach.

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[14] Lior Lehrs, "Conflict and Cooperation in the Age of COVID-19: The Israeli–Palestinian Case," *International Affairs* 97, no. 6 (November 1, 2021): 1843–62, https://doi.org/10.1093/ia/iiab143; James Smith et al., "Violence in Palestine Demands Immediate Resolution of Its Settler Colonial Root Causes," *BMJ Global Health* 8, no. 10 (October 21, 2023): e014269, https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjgh-2023-014269; Alyssa Aidah Solaiman-Balt et al., "COVID-19 Pandemic and Israeli Bombings in Gaza Strip: Double Disaster to a Failing Healthcare System in Palestine," *Asia-Pacific Social Science Review* 22, no. 3 (2022): 9; Muazu Adamu Yakubu and Peter Luke Oyigebe, "The Current Israel-Palestine Conflict and Its Impacts on Israel's Economy and Diplomatic Ties," *Kashere Journal of Politics and International Relations* 2, no. 1 SE-Articles (April 14, 2024): 213–21.
[15] Tariq Dana and Ali Jarbawi, "Whose Autonomy? Conceptualising 'Colonial Extraterritorial Autonomy' in the Occupied Palestinian Territories," *Politics* 43, no. 1 (October 8, 2022): 106–21, https://doi.org/10.1177/02633957221128216; Gadi Hitman, "Israeli and the Palestinian Present: A Temporary Arrangement in the West Bank for Ethnonational Ongoing Conflict," *Cogent Arts & Humanities* 10, no. 1 (December 31, 2023): 2170008, https://doi.org/10.1080/23311983.2023.2170008; Ahmed Saeed Minhas and Farhat Konain Shujahi, "An Analytical Appraisal of Israel-Palestine Crises," *Pakistan Journal of International Affairs* 4, no. 4 (2021).
[16] Alex de Waal, "Famine in Gaza: An Example of the Global Humanitarian Crisis," *The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* 119, no. 6 (June 1, 2024): 1383–85, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ajcnut.2024.04.015.

Understanding these relationships is critical for evaluating the success of lobbying initiatives such as "All Eyes on Rafah." Models of humanitarian disaster response often include immediate assistance operations, followed by longer-term recovery and reconstruction phases.[17] The data indicated that the campaign did not merely call for immediate aid but also aimed to establish a long-lasting dialogue about the needs and rights of the Palestinian population, reinforcing the necessity for sustained advocacy beyond the immediate crisis.

These models emphasize the significance of prompt intervention and coordination among multiple actors, including governments, NGOs, and international organizations.[18] Political issues and ongoing strife have exacerbated the reaction to Rafah. Data from social media interactions demonstrated how the "All Eyes on Rafah" campaign facilitated collaboration among various entities, illustrating the theory's relevance to understanding systemic responses in humanitarian settings.

McLuhan posited that each medium, whether television, radio, books, or the internet, possesses distinctive properties and structural characteristics.[19] These properties influence how information is received and interpreted by the audience. The medium of communication plays a more pivotal role in shaping societal structures and influencing individual perceptions than the content or message conveyed through the medium. The specific choice of digital platforms for the campaign highlights this theory, as engagement metrics showed heightened interaction levels when AI-generated imagery was utilized, directly correlating with increased public awareness and support.

Regarding the humanitarian crisis, it is essential to advocate for peace through diverse media.[20] The shift in humanitarian crisis advocacy in the conventional and digital era has been significant. The

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[17] Reza Zanjirani Farahani et al., "Mass Casualty Management in Disaster Scene: A Systematic Review of OR&MS Research in Humanitarian Operations," *European Journal of Operational Research* 287, no. 3 (2020): 787–819, https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ejor.2020.03.005; Meilinda F N Maghfiroh and Shinya Hanaoka, "Multi-Modal Relief Distribution Model for Disaster Response Operations," *Progress in Disaster Science* 6 (2020): 100095, https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pdisas.2020.100095; Iman Shokr, Fariborz Jolai, and Ali Bozorgi-Amiri, "A Collaborative Humanitarian Relief Chain Design for Disaster Response," *Computers & Industrial Engineering* 172 (2022): 108643, https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cie.2022.108643.

[18] Michal Givoni, "Hope on the Move: Israeli Humanitarians between Resilience and Utopianism," *History and Anthropology* 35, no. 3 (May 26, 2024): 664–85, https://doi.org/10.1080/02757206.2021.1954633; Emma Patricia Keelan and Brendan Ciarán and Browne, "Problematising Resilience: Development Practice and the Case of Palestine," *Development in Practice* 30, no. 4 (May 18, 2020): 459–71, https://doi.org/10.1080/09614524.2020.1724885; Daniela Traub, Cohen Ronen A., and Chen and Kertcher, "Azerbaijan's Dual Foreign Policy Strategy toward Israel: A Realist Alliance and a Neoliberal Knowledge-Based Economy Cooperation, 2011–2022," *Cogent Arts & Humanities* 11, no. 1 (December 31, 2024): 2335763, https://doi.org/10.1080/23311983.2024.2335763.

[19] McLuhan, "The Medium Is the Message."

[20] Panic and Arthur, *AI for Peace*.

digital advocacy movement targets the speed of response in providing solutions in terms of policy and aid agenda in overcoming the crisis. Analysis of the campaign's social media engagement showcased how the rapid dissemination of information fostered a sense of urgency, effectively motivating individual and collective action to address the crisis.

Digital advocacy entails using online platforms and technologies to advance social and political goals. It utilizes the scope and immediacy of digital media to rally support and drive change.[21] In the context of humanitarian disasters, internet advocacy can increase awareness,[22] generate cash,[23] and put pressure on authorities to act.[24] The data illustrated that the "All Eyes on Rafah" campaign mobilized individual contributions and fostered community support for the cause, significantly enhancing its visibility and effectiveness.

Digital advocacy involves four stages: awareness-raising, engagement, mobilization, and action.[25] Each stage builds on the previous one, generating momentum that can lead to actual results. Analysis of the campaign's engagement metrics revealed how each phase flowed seamlessly into the next, demonstrating significant increases in shares, comments, and overall interaction as the campaign progressed.

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[21] David Taras and Richard Davis, *Electoral Campaigns, Media, and the New World of Digital Politics* (University of Michigan Press, 2022); Hadas Zur and Tali Hatuka, "Local–Digital Activism: Place, Social Media, Body, and Violence in Changing Urban Politics," *Social Media+ Society* 9, no. 2 (2023): 20563051231166444.

[22] Buheji And Hasan, "Spain's Empathy For Gaza As A Model For The World And The Communities Mechanism"; Kokeyo, "Exploring The Dynamics Of Social Media In Shaping Narratives And Perceptions In The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: Preliminary Reflections."

[23] Yara M Asi, "Achieving Food Security Through Localisation, Not Aid: 'De-Development' And Food Sovereignty In The Palestinian Territories," *Journal Of Peacebuilding & Development* 15, No. 2 (April 22, 2020): 205–18, Https://Doi.Org/10.1177/1542316620918555; Raed Awashreh, "Palestinian Perspectives On Foreign Aid," *International Journal Of Research—Granthaalayah* 8, No. 6 (2020): 236–51; Tariq Dana, "Crony Capitalism In The Palestinian Authority: A Deal Among Friends," *Third World Quarterly* 41, No. 2 (February 1, 2020): 247–63, Https://Doi.Org/10.1080/01436597.2019.1618705.

[24] Haya H Ayoub, "Assessing Palestinian Public Diplomacy: Realities, Challenges and Opportunities," *Global Media and Communication* 19, no. 2 (June 30, 2023): 207–23, https://doi.org/10.1177/17427665231184681; Syed Rizwan Haider Bukhari et al., "Silenced Voices, Unheeded Pleas: The Plight of Palestinian Human Rights under the Shadow of Israeli Occupation," *Remittances Review* 9, no. 1 (2024): 2240–76; Yakubu and Oyigebe, "The Current Israel-Palestine Conflict and Its Impacts on Israel's Economy and Diplomatic Ties."

[25] Emile Badarin, "Politics and Economy of Resilience: EU Resilience-Building in Palestine and Jordan and Its Disciplinary Governance," *European Security* 30, no. 1 (January 2, 2021): 65–84, https://doi.org/10.1080/09662839.2020.1828357; Maia Hallward and Taib Biygautane, "Anti-Normalization, Nonviolent Activism, and Domestic Interests: The Case of Morocco," *Journal of African Conflicts and Peace Studies* 5, no. 2 (2023): 2; Emily Schneider, "Pathways to Global Justice: Turning Points, Media, and Palestine Solidarity among Diaspora Jews," *Arab Media & Society* 32 (2021).

The "All Eyes on Rafah" campaign's stages included the first distribution of the AI-generated image, extensive sharing and discussion on social media, and subsequent actions by individuals and groups. Understanding these stages allows for assessing the campaign's effectiveness and impact. Everett Rogers' diffusion of innovations theory provides a robust framework for understanding how innovations are introduced and adopted in society and the factors that influence this process.[26] By mapping the diffusion process of the campaign, the data confirmed that the use of AI visuals contributed to a quicker acceptance and dissemination of its core humanitarian message.

In the context of advocacy for the humanitarian crisis in Palestine, AI aims to optimize awareness campaigns and address the issue. The "All Eyes on Rafah" campaign is distinguished by its creative use of AI-generated visuals to illustrate Palestinians' suffering in Rafah.[27] This strategy has brought substantial attention to the problem, proving the potential of visual media in humanitarian activism.[28] The data collected reflects a significant increase in online searches and engagement following the release of the AI-generated imagery, illustrating the effectiveness of this innovative approach.

By focusing on a single, striking image, the campaign effectively communicated the crisis's immediacy and scale, generating a global response. This section places the campaign within the larger paradigm of internet advocacy. The "All Eyes on Rafah" campaign has several characteristics, including visual impact, viral diffusion, and the ability to organize support. Analysis of social media analytics confirmed that these characteristics were pivotal in driving its success and highlighted the campaign's ability to mobilize diverse audiences across platforms.

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[26] Rogers, Singhal, and Quinlan, "Diffusion of Innovations."

[27] Nantheera Anantrasirichai and David Bull, "Artificial Intelligence in the Creative Industries: A Review," *Artificial Intelligence Review* 55, no. 1 (2022): 589–656; Sharareh Aris, Borhan Aeini, and Shaghayegh Nosrati, "A Digital Aesthetics? Artificial Intelligence and the Future of the Art," *Journal of Cyberspace Studies* 7, no. 2 (2023): 219–36; Nusrat Jahan Mim et al., "In-between Visuals and Visible: The Impacts of Text-to-Image Generative Ai Tools on Digital Image-Making Practices in the Global South," in *Proceedings of the 2024 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems*, 2024, 1–18; Eric Trozzo, "Participation in Artificial Intelligence: Toward a Tillichian Reading of AI-Produced Images," *Toronto Journal of Theology* 40, no. 1 (May 1, 2024): 16–25, https://doi.org/10.3138/tjt-2023-0050.

[28] Stephane J Baele et al., "AI IR: Charting International Relations in the Age of Artificial Intelligence," *International Studies Review* 26, no. 2 (2024): viae013; Mohendra Roy and Mehul S Raval, "Unmasking DeepFake Visual Content with Generative AI," in *2023 IEEE 11th Region 10 Humanitarian Technology Conference (R10-HTC)*, 2023, 169–76, https://doi.org/10.1109/R10-HTC57504.2023.10461811; Michael Yankoski et al., "Artificial Intelligence for Peace: An Early Warning System for Mass Violence," in *Towards an International Political Economy of Artificial Intelligence*, ed. Tugrul Keskin and Ryan David Kiggins (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2021), 147–75, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-74420-5_7; Pauline Zecchinon and Olivier Standaert, "The War in Ukraine Through the Prism of Visual Disinformation and the Limits of Specialized Fact-Checking. A Case-Study at Le Monde," *Digital Journalism* 13, no. 1 (2025): 61–79.

These characteristics demonstrate the varied nature of digital activism and its ability to effect change.[29] The study aims to investigate how the campaign affects attitudes and actions by looking at these factors. This investigation will shed light on the broader implications of digital media in humanitarian endeavors.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In an increasingly digital age, campaigns and artificial intelligence (AI) applications have become essential tools in managing humanitarian crises, including those in Palestine. The ongoing conflict in the region has created many complex humanitarian issues, ranging from the urgent need for medical care to providing essential resources such as food and clean water. AI technology offers innovative solutions to these problems through rapid and accurate data analysis, mapping affected areas, and efficient coordination of aid distribution. By processing large amounts of information and generating deep insights, AI is helping humanitarian organizations respond more effectively to crises and ensure that aid reaches those in need. The use of AI in this scenario represents not only a technological advancement but also a global effort to bring hope and practical solutions to the beleaguered Palestinian people.
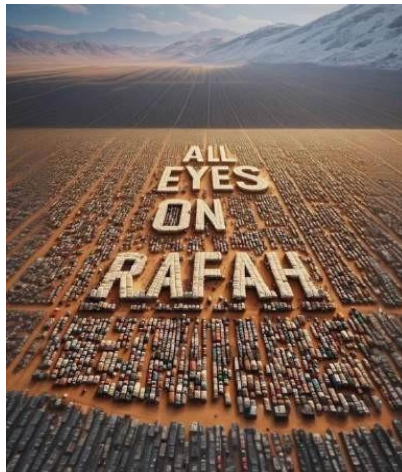
Picture 1. Digital Advocacy Campaign on Rafah

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[29] Dejan Grba, "Deep Else: A Critical Framework for AI Art," *Digital*, 2022, https://doi.org/10.3390/digital2010001; Ehsan-Ul Haq et al., "History in Making: Political Campaigns in the Era of Artificial Intelligence-Generated Content," in *Companion Proceedings of the ACM Web Conference 2024*, WWW '24 (New York, NY, USA: Association for Computing Machinery, 2024), 1115–1118, https://doi.org/10.1145/3589335.3652000; Hausken, "Photorealism versus Photography. AI-Generated Depiction in the Age of Visual Disinformation."

Humanitarian Crisis and Digital Advocacy Through Framing

Framing is a way of looking at how reality is shaped and constructed by the media. The process of framing and constructing reality results in certain parts of reality that are more prominent and easily recognized. Several famous personalities have expressed their support for Palestine in the face of Israel's indiscriminate actions based on information obtained from the media. While effective in raising awareness, this framing can also simplify complex geopolitical issues into digestible narratives, potentially misrepresenting the multifaceted nature of the conflict.

Table 1. Public reaction to the Rafah catastrophe

Paramore, American Rock Band	Pedro Pascal	Bella Hadid	Ariana Grande
Nicola Coughlan	Jenna Ortega	Kehlani	Mark Ruffalo

This study collected data from social media posts and viral news items related to Israel's bombing of refugee tents in Rafah. Prominent public figures such as Paramore, Pedro Pascal, Bella Hadid, and Ariana Grande, among others, played a critical role in disseminating AI-generated images that fueled the *All Eyes on Rafah* campaign. Their large followings significantly amplified the campaign's reach. While celebrity involvement increased visibility and engagement, it also raised concerns about whether such attention overshadowed the voices of local advocates directly affected by the crisis. The campaign's viral momentum was further strengthened by expressions of solidarity from these figures, attracting global media coverage and enhancing international awareness.

The emotionally charged imagery shared—particularly those depicting burning tents—provoked widespread public reaction, characterized by empathy, anger, and calls for action. Using Erving Goffman's framing theory, the study examined how such visuals were constructed to elicit global emotional responses. While effective in generating support, the images also raised ethical concerns regarding the commodification of suffering and the risk of reducing complex humanitarian issues into simplified, sensational content. Social media reactions, though largely sympathetic, revealed the dual role of digital media in both mobilizing support and potentially limiting deeper, contextual engagement with the Palestinian struggle.

Data analysis indicated that the *All Eyes on Rafah* campaign effectively shaped global perceptions through strategic use of AI-generated visuals and social media dissemination. The campaign showcased how digital tools—when framed powerfully—can shift narratives and prompt global attention. However, questions remain about the sustainability of this form of advocacy and whether emotional engagement translates into long-term action. While celebrity support amplified impact, it is essential to balance visibility with authenticity and inclusivity. Overall, the findings underscore the transformative potential of digital media in humanitarian advocacy, while calling for ethical reflection on its use in shaping narratives of crisis.

Humanitarian Crisis and Digital Advocacy through Medium is the Message

Table 2. The humanitarian campaigning medium of social media

Meisya Siregar and Bebi Romeo	Oki Setiana Dewi	Rosie O'Donnell	Melissa Barrera

The *All Eyes on Rafah* campaign demonstrated the strategic use of social media as a primary channel for disseminating humanitarian messages rapidly and on a global scale. An AI-generated image depicting burning refugee tents in Rafah went viral, being shared over 39 million times within days. High-profile individuals such as Meisya Siregar, Bebi Romeo, Oki Setiana Dewi, Rosie O'Donnell, and Melissa Barrera played a key role in amplifying the campaign's visibility. The emotionally evocative nature of the image effectively captured global attention and highlighted the severity of the humanitarian crisis. However, the rapid spread also introduced potential risks, including the dilution or sensationalization of the original message.

The use of AI-generated imagery marked a new phase in digital humanitarian advocacy. Drawing on Marshall McLuhan's theory of *the medium is the message*, the campaign revealed that social media functions not merely as a communication tool but also shapes the meaning and reception of the message itself. The emotional and visual power of the content was crucial in mobilizing public sentiment. This campaign demonstrated how social media can reframe the understanding and dissemination of humanitarian crises, while also contributing to increased international pressure and calls for action.

Data analysis confirmed that social media served as an effective agent in advancing humanitarian concerns during the campaign. The participation of public figures further reinforced the message, suggesting that celebrity involvement can enhance the impact of digital advocacy. Nevertheless, the campaign raises important questions about the sustainability of such mobilization—whether it generates long-term commitment or merely triggers momentary sympathy. Ultimately, this study underscores the transformative potential of digital platforms in shaping humanitarian narratives and influencing global action, while also calling for ethical reflection in the use of AI-generated content in future advocacy efforts.

Digital Technology In Humanitarian Crisis Response Campaigns

The humanitarian crisis in Palestine must be promptly and effectively advocated through digital technology, encompassing social media, the internet, and mass media. This advocacy should be directed towards engaging the global community in addressing the crisis, encompassing providing assistance, formulating policies, and allocating attention to the issue.

Table 3. The humanitarian campaigning medium of social media

The Guardian	BBC	The Washington Post
CNN	Aljazeera	Der Spiegel

Le Monde	India.com	Arab News

This study explores the use of AI-generated imagery in humanitarian advocacy, focusing on the "All Eyes on Rafah" campaign as a case study. The findings reveal that the emotionally charged image at the center of the campaign was highly effective in raising global awareness of the Rafah crisis. Disseminated widely through social media and amplified by endorsements from influential figures such as artists, politicians, and athletes, the campaign demonstrated the power of digital media in mobilizing public sentiment. Drawing on Erving Goffman's framing theory, the study shows how visual and narrative strategies were employed to construct a compelling humanitarian message capable of evoking strong emotional responses and driving immediate action.

However, the use of AI-generated images raises significant ethical concerns. While such visuals can provoke empathy and engagement, they also risk distorting reality, sensationalizing suffering, and contributing to desensitization. The campaign prompted public debate about the line between awareness-raising and emotional manipulation, highlighting the need for ethical guidelines in digital

advocacy. Additionally, the study applies Marshall McLuhan's "medium is the message" theory to argue that the platform itself—social media—shapes how humanitarian crises are perceived and engaged with. While the campaign succeeded in influencing global perceptions, it also underscored the limitations of relying on celebrity influence and viral content for sustained engagement.

In broader terms, this research contributes to a growing body of work on digital humanitarian advocacy by demonstrating the potential—and the risks—of AI and social media as advocacy tools. Compared to earlier research that focused primarily on storytelling and narrative framing, this study introduces a novel approach by analyzing the impact of synthetic imagery in advocacy efforts. The involvement of high-profile figures amplified the campaign's reach, but also raised questions about the depth and authenticity of public engagement. The findings emphasize the importance of balancing technological innovation with ethical responsibility, truthfulness, and representational integrity in humanitarian communication. Future research should examine long-term impacts and explore comparative case studies to develop more sustainable, ethical, and globally responsive advocacy strategies.

CONCLUSION

The "All Eyes on Rafah" campaign significantly influenced global awareness of the humanitarian crisis in Rafah, demonstrating the power of digital media in contemporary advocacy. A striking aspect of the campaign was the use of AI-generated imagery to deliver a strong humanitarian message. Its rapid spread—amplified by celebrity endorsements and widespread social media sharing— highlights how digital platforms can mobilize public sentiment and drive political attention. This case illustrates an important shift in how humanitarian narratives are constructed and disseminated in the digital age.

From a theoretical perspective, this study bridges the fields of technology, media, and humanitarian advocacy. The integration of AI-generated content with activism exemplifies a new model of digital engagement. Using Erving Goffman's framing theory, the campaign shows how digital tools can shape emotionally compelling narratives that resonate globally. Marshall McLuhan's "the medium is the message" further explains how social media functions not only as a communication tool but also as a transformative force in shaping public discourse. However, the study acknowledges its limited generalizability, as findings drawn from a single campaign may not fully reflect dynamics in other sociopolitical contexts.

While the study advances theoretical understanding and offers practical insights for digital advocacy, it is not without limitations. Its reliance on social media metrics may overlook deeper public sentiment, and the analysis is focused mainly on the campaign's immediate effects. Future research should explore long-term impacts and conduct comparative studies across multiple campaigns and regions. Examining sustainability and effectiveness across various sociopolitical contexts would help refine digital advocacy strategies and enhance their relevance and impact in global humanitarian efforts.

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