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Digital Public Relations Strategies in Managing Public Image During International Conflicts: An Analytical Study of the U.S.–Israeli War against Iran (*)

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Abstract

This study aimed to investigate the communicative mechanisms employed by the official accounts of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of the United States, Israel, and Iran on the X platform in managing their public image during periods of international tension. The analysis focused on the media frames and patterns of digital discourse, as well as the digital public relations strategies used to influence public opinion and construct specific narratives surrounding the conflict in the digital sphere.

The study relied on the media survey method and content analysis of a sample of posts and tweets published by the official accounts under investigation. It was theoretically grounded in Framing Theory, which served as an analytical framework to understand how digital discourse is strategically employed to construct particular meanings and interpretations of the conflict.

The findings of the study revealed several significant results, including the following:

- The News Strategy ranked first among the communication strategies employed, accounting for 30% of the total strategies identified. It was the most frequently used strategy with 45 occurrences, with the U.S. Department of State leading its use with 20 occurrences. This indicates a reliance on presenting events in a news-oriented format, which enhances communicative credibility and gives the messages an appearance of neutrality or objective reporting of facts.
- The Mobilization Strategy ranked second with 25.3%, with the Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs emerging as the most prominent user of this strategy with 23 occurrences, reflecting a clear tendency toward mobilizing and activating audiences through persuasive and emotionally charged discourse during the conflict.
- The Persuasion Strategy came in third place with 24.6%. The Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs accounts demonstrated a relatively balanced use of this strategy with 12 occurrences, indicating an ongoing effort to construct logical and emotional justifications for Israeli policies. This approach was particularly evident through communication channels such as

(*)The Paper was received on May 13, 2026, and accepted for publication on 30 September, 2026.

“Israel in Arabic,” which aim to establish a connection with Arab audiences and provide strategic justification directed at this audience.

- The Defensive Strategy ranked fourth with 16.7%, and was mainly used to respond to accusations or to reframe political positions in a manner that protects the image of the state.

Regarding media frames, the results showed the following:

- The Escalation Frame dominated the discourse of the three countries, ranking first with 45.26%, reflecting the nature of communication in a context characterized by political tension and conflict.

- The Legitimacy Frame ranked second with 31.57%, where official accounts sought to emphasize the legitimacy of their political and diplomatic positions.

- The Satire Frame came in third place with 23.15%, functioning as a rhetorical tool used to undermine opponents’ positions or challenge the credibility of competing narratives.

With regard to the thematic orientation of discourse, the Security Frame ranked first with 63.15%, indicating the dominance of security and military dimensions in digital diplomatic communication during periods of tension.

The Political Frame ranked second with 26.31%, while the Humanitarian Frame came in third with 10.52%, reflecting the relatively limited use of humanitarian discourse compared to security and political framing in the communication strategies of the accounts examined in the study.

Keywords: Digital Public Relations, Image, International Conflicts.