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Crisis Fatigue: Investigating the Psychological Effects of Prolonged Media Exposure to Crisis Coverage on Public Resilience and Coping Mechanisms

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Abstract

This study looks into the psychological effects of prolonged media exposure to crisis coverage, with a focus on public resilience and coping mechanisms in the context of the Gaza war. An online survey of 420 Egyptian participants found a significant correlation between the emotional intensity of crisis media and increased psychological stress. Key findings indicate that younger people and women are especially vulnerable to these effects, with emotion-focused coping mechanisms being widely used. The findings highlight the importance of targeted mental health interventions and media literacy programs for increasing resilience and reducing crisis fatigue. This study helps to understand the complex interplay between media exposure and mental well-being, with practical implications for policymakers, mental health professionals, and media practitioners seeking to foster societal resilience during crises.

Keywords: Crisis Fatigue, Psychological Stress, Transactional Model of Stress and Coping.

Introduction to Crisis Fatigue

Crisis fatigue develops as a psychological response to prolonged exposure to media coverage of crises, potentially leading to decreased interest and engagement with such news, as well as negative mental health outcomes. In recent years, the global media landscape has become increasingly saturated with coverage of crises, ranging from natural disasters like the Beirut port explosion in Lebanon to public health emergencies like the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as geopolitical conflicts like the ongoing war in Yemen, the Syrian civil war, and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Among these crises, the escalation of tensions and outbreaks of war between nations stand out as significant events that have captivated audiences around the world. The proliferation of digital media platforms and 24-hour news cycles ensures that updates and analyses of these conflicts are widely available, often resulting in prolonged public exposure.

This phenomenon of prolonged media exposure to crisis coverage has given rise to the concept of "crisis fatigue", in which people experience a decline in their ability to engage with and respond to ongoing crises such as wars, political instability, economic depressions, pandemics, or natural disasters. While initial reactions to crisis news may be shock, fear, or empathy, prolonged exposure can result in desensitization, apathy, or even psychological distress. The constant barrage of distressing images, alarming headlines, and contradictory narratives can overwhelm people, affecting their mental health and well-being.

Given this context, understanding the psychological effects of prolonged media exposure to crisis news is critical. Specifically, understanding the influence of crisis fatigue on public resilience and coping mechanisms is critical for effectively tackling the issues provided by constant exposure to crisis news. Researchers can develop techniques to boost resilience and decrease the negative consequences of crisis fatigue by studying how people navigate and adjust to the psychological pressures of conflict coverage, in particular.

As a result, the purpose of this study is to investigate the complex relationships between media exposure, psychological stress, resilience, and coping mechanisms in the context of continuous crises, with a specific emphasis on the Gaza war and its psychological consequences for Egyptians. Overall, the body of literature review indicates that exposure to regional political strife and violence may have a negative impact on psychological well-being. The study intends to educate interventions, policies, and media practices that promote mental health and societal resilience in the face of crisis-induced weariness.

Problem Statement and Significance

Egyptians are becoming immersed in a steady stream of painful visuals, storylines, and real-time updates in an era marked by ubiquitous media coverage of catastrophes, such as the ongoing war in Gaza. This constant influx of emotionally charged content across multiple media platforms—such as television, social media, and online news portals—has far-reaching consequences for public mental health and well-being. Continuous exposure to vivid visuals, terrible stories, and breaking news has the potential to overwhelm people, causing increased levels of psychological stress and anxiety.

This persistent exposure can result in "crisis fatigue", a state in which individuals become desensitized to the crises as a result of prolonged exposure, resulting in diminished emotional responses and a reduced ability to effectively process and cope with ongoing traumatic events (Kevany et al., 2022, p. 257). Crisis fatigue not only reduces psychological resilience, but it also impairs individuals' ability to interact with and respond constructively to crisis circumstances (Kuntz, 2021, p. 188). Over time, this can develop to feelings of powerlessness, indifference, or emotional numbness, all of which limit effective coping mechanisms including seeking social support, problem-solving, and self-care.

Despite the prevalence of crisis weariness, there is a considerable lack in study on its psychological implications, particularly how it affects public resilience and coping methods during prolonged crises such as the Gaza war. Existing research frequently focuses on the immediate psychological consequences of crisis situations, such as post-traumatic stress disorder or acute anxiety (Bonanno & Diminich, 2013; Galea et al., 2005; Norris et al., 2002; Pfefferbaum & North, 2020). However, little attention has been paid to understanding how prolonged media exposure to such crises affects people's long-term psychological health and ability to sustain resilience and effectively use coping mechanisms. As a result, this study seeks to close this gap by investigating the psychological effects of continuous media exposure to crisis news on Egyptians, with an emphasis on how it affects their resilience and coping mechanisms over time.

Research Objectives

Understanding the psychological consequences of war is a pressing issue; nonetheless, there has been little on-the-ground investigation of the daily events within and the associated psychological responses to the totalizing experience of war. Using a transactional-based model of stress and coping, the researcher employs a novel method—retrospective diaries—to investigate the changeable,

unpredictable, and stressful nature of life during a major military operation. Understanding the psychological effects of prolonged media exposure to crisis among Egypt's populace is critical in light of the ongoing war in Gaza. The goal of this study is to quantify these impacts, identify demographic characteristics that influence them, and investigate how such exposure affects resilience and coping methods. The following objectives were composed:

1. To quantify the psychological effects of prolonged media exposure to crisis within the Egyptian population during the Gaza war.
2. To identify demographic variables, such as age, gender, and employment status, that influences the psychological effects of crisis media exposure among Egyptians during the Gaza war.
3. To explore how prolonged media exposure to crisis alters resilience and coping strategies among Egyptians during the Gaza war.

By addressing these objectives, the researcher seeks to provide valuable insights into the dynamics of crisis-related psychological responses within the Egyptian context, ultimately informing targeted interventions and support services tailored to the needs of the affected population.

Research Hypotheses

This study proposes several hypotheses that seek to empirically test the relationships and effects posited by the theoretical framework. Each hypothesis is designed to address specific aspects of the interaction between media exposure and individual psychological responses, focusing on the measurable impact of variables such as stress levels, resilience, coping mechanisms, and demographic factors. These hypotheses are crucial for advancing our understanding of the psychological dynamics at play during prolonged exposure to crisis coverage and will guide the empirical investigation in the following manner:

H1: There is a positive correlation between the duration of media exposure to crisis coverage and the levels of psychological stress in individuals.

H2: Coping mechanisms significantly mediate the relationship between prolonged media exposure to crisis coverage and psychological stress levels.

H3: There is a negative correlation between the level of resilience and the psychological impact of media exposure to crisis coverage.

H4: Demographic variables (age, gender, and employment-status) significantly modulate the psychological effects of media exposure to crisis coverage.

H5: There is a significant difference in psychological impact and coping

responses to media coverage of crises between individuals directly affected by the crisis and those not directly affected.

H6: There is a significant relationship between the frequency of media exposure to crisis coverage and the different coping mechanisms employed by individuals.

H7: There is a significant relationship between resilience and the moderation of psychological stress levels due to media exposure to crisis coverage.

H8: There is a significant relationship between age and the moderation of specific coping mechanisms in response to media exposure to crisis coverage.

Theoretical Framework: Transactional Model of Stress and Coping

This study employs the transactional model of stress and coping (TMSC) as its guiding theory, which holds that an individual's perception of external stimuli as stressful leads to coping methods, which in turn result in psychological changes (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; see Figure 1.

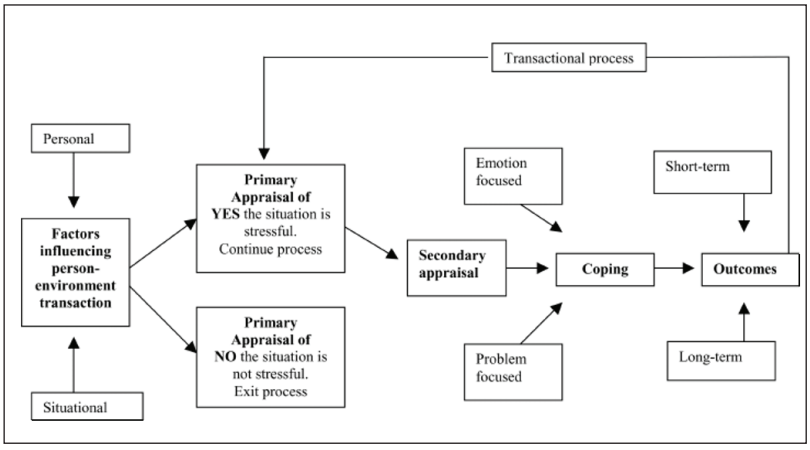

Figure 1.Transactional stress coping model based on the theory developed by Lazarus and Folkman

The transactional model helps understand the complex outcomes resulting from stress and trauma. It is particularly relevant in this research as it emphasizes the cyclical and collective nature of coping under the continuous stress of political violence. Previous studies have utilized TMSC to investigate how people use social media to cope with COVID-19 stress (Sun et al., 2023; Robertson, 2022), showing that it is appropriate for the current research topic. According to TMSC, people will see the Gaza war as stressful, leading to a variety of coping mechanisms via social media, which will then impair their psychological adjustment.

The transactional model's application to crisis settings has been shown to be useful in understanding media exposure to catastrophic occurrences. For example, Smith and Lazarus (2017) discovered that people exposed to constant crisis-related media employ both problem-focused and emotion-focused coping techniques to handle stress. Problem-focused coping entails direct efforts to manage or alter the source of stress, such as seeking information or participating in crisis-related activism, whereas emotion-focused coping focuses on regulating the emotional response to the stressor, such as seeking social support or employing relaxation techniques (Smith and Lazarus, 2017).

Individuals may utilize problem-focused coping strategies during the Gaza war by staying informed and participating in humanitarian or advocacy actions. Emotion-focused coping mechanisms may include receiving emotional support from peers or engaging in activities that divert from upsetting news coverage (Elzubeir et al., 2010). Liu et al. (2019) investigated how Egyptians assess and manage with stressors associated with political upheaval, stressing the role of community support and communal coping strategies in resilience building. Previous research revealed three coping strategies—problem-focused, socioemotional, and mental disengagement—that people use the internet to deal with stressful life situations (Sun et al., 2023). Problem-focused coping entails gathering useful information for future actions (Wolfers & Schneider, 2021), socioemotional coping entails seeking social support online to alleviate stress-related emotions, and mental disengagement entails using the internet to distract oneself from stress (Sun et al., 2023). Research suggests that during crises, people use social media for real-time information and problem-solving tactics to reduce psychological distress (Civelek et al., 2016; Demirtepe-Saygili, 2020). Effective stress management may boost resilience and reduce the risk of mental health issues induced by stress (Sun et al., 2023). It is critical to recognize the dynamic role that internet platforms play in modern crisis management and mental health support, particularly in situations such as the continuing violence in Gaza.

The transactional model provides a solid foundation for understanding how people react to media coverage of situations such as the Gaza war. Examining appraisal processes and coping mechanisms within this paradigm sheds light on how media consumption affects psychological well-being and resilience in crisis-affected populations.

Literature Review

Crisis Fatigue and Psychological Effects of Media Exposure

Crisis fatigue is a psychological condition defined as emotional and mental exhaustion caused by extended exposure to unpleasant events (Figley, 2013). This condition, which has received attention as a result of ongoing media coverage of conflicts, natural catastrophes, and health issues, presents as emotional numbness, decreased empathy, and fatigue (Medical News Today, n.d.). Similarly, burnout is defined as continuous work-related stress that results in emotional weariness, depersonalization, and decreased personal accomplishment (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). Crisis fatigue has similarities to compassion fatigue and burnout, but it is specifically associated with passive media consumption and modern news cycles (Schaufeli & Enzmann, 2020). Continuous media coverage of violent incidents during the Gaza war increases stress and anxiety (Holman et al., 2014; Pfefferbaum et al., 2019), as well as emotional disengagement from news consumption (Schaufeli & Enzmann, 2020). This is especially important in countries like the Middle East, where persistent conflicts and political instability are common, and media coverage of such events is intensive and unwavering (Helbich & Jabr, 2022).

Several studies have emphasized the serious psychological consequences of prolonged media exposure during crises. Ben-Zur et al. (2012) investigated the link between media-mediated terror exposure, coping methods, distress, and secondary traumatization. Their study shed light on how coping mechanisms and resources moderate the psychological impact of media exposure during crises, adding to our understanding of the complex interplay between media consumption habits and mental health consequences. Fekih-Romdhane et al. (2024) conducted research in Arab countries, including Egypt, and found that frequent war-related news exposure elevated levels of anxiety and sadness. Similar studies show that continual exposure to disturbing news content might result in long-term psychological consequences such as Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (Backholm, 2012) and worsen symptoms of earlier trauma (Solomon et al., 2021). People who were exposed to gruesome photographs during the Gaza conflict may have had chronic anxiety, stress, and intrusive thoughts (Al-Maghaireh et al., 2024). These results are consistent with findings from other crisis scenarios, such as terrorist events (Robert et al., 2021).

Duration and Frequency of Media Exposure and Stress Levels

According to empirical studies, extended media exposure to crises is associated with increased psychological discomfort. Fekih-Romdhane et al. (2024) discovered that regular exposure to war-related media coverage enhanced psychological vulnerabilities, resulting in acute stress responses. Longitudinal studies have demonstrated that prolonged exposure to unpleasant content might result in PTSD symptoms and psychological sensitivity (Backholm, 2012; Solomon et al., 2021). Excessive media use during the Gaza war increases anxiety and emotional tiredness (Al-Maghaireh et al., 2024). Melhemallaham (2024) found that visual media material had a significant impact on stress levels, particularly among media students. Furthermore, media exposure has been proven to aggravate mental health concerns such as depression and insomnia, with stress mediating these consequences (Fekih-Romdhane et al., 2024).

In their study, Pahayahay and Khalili-Mahani (2020) investigated how media consumption affected coping during the COVID-19 epidemic. They discovered that the intensity and frequency of media exposure significantly influenced emotional reactions and stress levels. The study found that more frequent and prolonged exposure to unpleasant news content resulted in increased stress and negative emotional responses. Individuals who used media more cautiously or sought out uplifting and encouraging information had lower stress levels. The findings imply that the nature, intensity, and frequency of media exposure might influence how people emotionally respond to crises, validating the notion that media consumption can be both beneficial and detrimental depending on the type and quantity of information ingested.

These findings are consistent with research conducted in other crises. For example, Gurr (2022) investigated the link between media exposure and audience tiredness, whereas Van Aelst et al. (2021) identified modifications in media consumption habits during the COVID-19 pandemic, which are similar to media effects observed in conflict zones like Gaza. This shows broader tendencies in media exposure patterns throughout different crises, as well as the significance of demographic and cultural factors in understanding the psychological effects of prolonged media exposure during crises.

Building on these insights, Al-Jallad and Radwan (2023) explored social media fatigue among youth in the United Arab Emirates, highlighting how continuous exposure to digital content—especially crisis-related or emotionally charged posts—can lead to emotional exhaustion, cognitive overload, and a growing sense of detachment. Their findings emphasize that frequent social media use without emotional regulation or digital boundaries exacerbates stress and diminishes

overall well-being, especially among younger users. The study also noted gender differences, with female respondents reporting higher levels of fatigue, further underscoring the need to consider demographic variables when evaluating media-related stress. These findings expand the understanding of how not just traditional news, but also social media ecosystems, can contribute to psychological strain during ongoing crises.

Resilience and Coping Mechanisms in Response to Media Exposure

Resilience and coping mechanisms are crucial in reducing the psychological impacts of crisis fatigue, especially in situations involving continuous media exposure (Rice & Liu, 2016). Resilience, defined as the ability to recover from stressful experiences, can greatly protect people against the negative consequences of chronic stressors (Bonanno, 2004). According to research, resilient people exhibit lower symptoms of depression and anxiety after traumatic events (Bonanno, 2004; McMahon et al., 2024). Furthermore, those with good social and coping resources are better able to deal with the psychological consequences of crises (Waugh & Fredrickson, 2006).

Thabet et al. (2014) found that resilience reduced psychological distress among people exposed to media coverage of the Gaza conflict. Furthermore, cultural differences influence coping methods, with Fischer et al. (2010) underlining the significance of culturally appropriate interventions in addressing the psychological effects of media exposure in places such as Egypt. Other research, such as Pargament et al. (2011), emphasizes the role of religious coping techniques during crises, which can either bring comfort or worsen stress depending on the individual's feeling of spiritual support.

Coping mechanisms are also important in handling stress caused by crisis media exposure. Coping strategies can be divided into three categories: problem-focused, emotion-focused, and avoidance coping. Problem-focused coping entails taking proactive actions to reduce or eliminate the source of stress, such as gathering information or taking direct action. Emotion-focused coping is controlling the emotional reaction to stress, such as through relaxation techniques or seeking social support. Avoidance coping, on the other hand, entails avoiding the stressor, which can have negative consequences if used excessively (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984).

Fahmy et al. (2024) provide a new perspective on resilience among journalists covering the Gaza war. Their research demonstrated the psychological toll taken by media workers, underlining the importance of adequate coping mechanisms in high-stress workplaces. Furthermore, Buheji's (2024) research on collective

coping mechanisms during the Gaza conflict gives light on community-based resilience fatigue management solutions, providing practical ideas for aiding people affected by crisis media exposure.

Social media can be both a stressor and a tool to build resilience and coping. On the one hand, constant exposure to disturbing content on social media might heighten stress and contribute to crisis fatigue. On the other hand, social media platforms can provide critical support networks and resources that improve resilience. Nguyen et al. (2020) discovered that during the Syrian refugee crisis, social media helped refugees cope by allowing them to obtain information, retain social relationships, and receive emotional support. This dual role of social media emphasizes the significance of increasing media literacy and critical consumption of crisis-related content in order to maximize its advantages while minimizing its negative consequences.

Coping mechanisms are frequently firmly established and very consistent across settings (Folkman & Moskowitz, 2004). While specific settings may influence the employment of various coping techniques, individuals tend to rely on long-term coping routines. Personal qualities, such as personality traits and past experiences, create these patterns, making them resilient to changing conditions (Folkman & Moskowitz, 2004). In their study of how situational aspects and individual qualities influence coping mechanisms, de Ridder and Kerssens (2003) stressed the importance of personal traits in influencing the success of coping techniques in a variety of settings.

Demographic Factors in Crisis Media Exposure

Demographic factors have a considerable impact on people's psychological responses to media exposure during crises. Gender differences, for example, play an important part in stress experiences, with Taylor et al. (2002) finding that women are more likely to report higher degrees of emotional discomfort in reaction to crises. According to the "tend-and-befriend" notion, women manage stress through social ties and nurturing behaviors, as opposed to the more frequent "fight-or-flight" response in men. Furthermore, Aldwin (2011) discussed age differences in coping mechanisms, demonstrating that older people are more likely to use refined coping mechanisms as a result of their life experiences.

Employment status is also a key factor in psychological distress. Sidorchuk et al. (2017) discovered that unemployed people had more distress than employed people, with migratory status complicating matters even more. Migrants, particularly those unemployed, showed heightened distress levels due to the added stress of integrating and adapting to a new cultural and social milieu. Employment served as a buffer against distress by providing stability, routine, and social connections.

Cultural factors influence how people respond to media exposure. Fischer et al. (2010) emphasized the impact of sociopolitical contexts on psychological resilience, particularly in Egypt, where continuous exposure to conflict-related media is prevalent. Furthermore, Fekih-Romdhane et al. (2024) found that Arabs exposed to media coverage of the Gaza war suffered increased levels of psychological discomfort, with insomnia being a common effect.

In comparative research, changes in media exposure patterns across crises reflect larger themes. For example, Van Aelst et al. (2021) identified changes in media consumption habits during the COVID-19 pandemic, which are similar to media effects observed in conflict zones such as Gaza. Understanding the psychological effects of prolonged media exposure during crises requires demographic and cultural considerations, as well as specific measures to support impacted communities.

Brewin et al. (2000) demonstrate in their meta-analysis that more exposure to traumatic events does not always correspond with increased stress levels or the chance of acquiring PTSD. They underline how individual characteristics, such as personality factors, prior trauma exposure, and coping methods, have a considerable impact on psychological responses to trauma. Contextual factors, such as the nature of the traumatic incident and the availability of social support, can also influence how trauma exposure affects psychological outcomes. This complexities highlights the need of taking into account both individual and contextual factors when investigating the link between trauma exposure and stress responses.

Furthermore, Solomon et al. (2021) found that persistent exposure to stressors, such as constant media coverage of crises, might increase levels of stress and psychological distress. Individuals who have experienced trauma or PTSD were especially prone to increased discomfort when exposed to prolonged news consumption during the COVID-19 pandemic. This shows that persistent media exposure to crisis events may increase existing psychological vulnerabilities and lead to long-term stress reactions.

In their study, Fletcher and Sarkar (2013) address the complexity of psychological resilience. They propose that, whereas resilience is frequently regarded as a stress-reducing trait, it may have little influence on the degree or direction of the association between media exposure and psychological stress. Their findings demonstrate that the influence of media exposure on psychological stress can occur regardless of an individual's resilience level, implying that even highly resilient people can experience increased stress as a result of media consumption during a crisis.

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Finally, Charles and Carstensen (2008) discovered that older adults use more sophisticated coping techniques when confronted with unpleasant events than younger people. Their capacity to effectively manage emotions allows older adults to respond to unpleasant stimuli with less distress, implying that as people age, they prioritize emotional objectives and well-being, prompting them to choose coping techniques that improve their emotional health.

Methodology

Research Design

This study uses a quantitative research methodology using online surveys to comprehensively evaluate the psychological impacts of prolonged media exposure to crisis news, with a particular focus on the Gaza war. The study's goal is to obtain numerical data from a large, diverse population by administering a structured survey via digital channels. The quantitative approach enables the efficient and cost-effective investigation of correlations between factors such as media exposure, psychological stress, resilience, and coping mechanisms (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The quantitative approach will also make it easier to employ statistical approaches to test hypotheses and reach broad conclusions about the psychological impact of crisis media on the public (Bryman, 2016).

Survey Instrumentation and Development

A detailed review of the literature and theoretical framework, particularly the Transactional Model of Stress and Coping, served as the foundation for the survey items' construction. The questionnaire was divided into five major sections: demographics, media exposure, psychological impact, resilience, and coping techniques. (Bruyman, 2016).

Demographic Information:

This section gathered basic demographic information such age, gender, and employment status. These variables are critical for understanding how demographic factors influence the psychological effects of media exposure.

Media Exposure:

The items in this section evaluated the degree and nature of participants' media consumption in relation to the Gaza war. Questions included the frequency and duration of exposure to war-related media content in Gaza.

Psychological Impact:

To measure the psychological impact of media exposure, validated scales were employed. Participants' levels of psychological stress were assessed using the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS). This scale consists of ten items that ask respondents about their feelings and thoughts over the previous month, scored on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "never" to "always" (Cohen et al., 1983). The PSS is well-known for its ability to capture the sense of stress, which is an important factor in evaluating the psychological impact of media exposure to crisis news. Media content.

Resilience

Validated scales were used to measure the resilience to media exposure. The survey includes the Brief Resilience Scale (BRS), which is a six-item questionnaire designed to assess an individual's ability to recover from stress and adversity. Participants rated their agreement with each statement using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree" (Smith et al., 2008). This scale is especially useful for evaluating how resilience reduces the psychological effects of prolonged media exposure.

Coping Mechanisms:

To measure Coping Mechanisms to media exposure, validated instruments were employed. The Coping Strategies Inventory (CSI) was used to measure individuals' coping mechanisms in response to stress from media exposure. The CSI consists of 12 items that divide coping strategies into problem-focused and emotion-focused coping, offering a thorough assessment of how people manage stress (Tobin et al., 1989). Participants utilize a 5-point scale from "never" to "always" to indicate how frequently they use particular coping strategies.

Measurement of Variables and Operational Definitions

To successfully test the hypotheses, each variable must be clearly defined and operationalized. Table 1, "Classification of Study Variables and Measurement Tools," lists the independent, dependent, mediating, and moderating variables, along with their roles and measurement tools (MacKinnon et al., 2002; Chen et al., 2018).

Table 1.Classification of Study Variables and Measurement Tools

Variable	Operational Definition	Measurement Tool
Independent Variables		
Duration of Media Exposure	The total amount of time an individual spends consuming media content related to war in Gaza. .Measured in hours per week	Self-reported data collected that asks respondents to estimate the average number of hours per week they spend .exposed to war news
Dependent Variables		
Levels of Psychological Stress	The degree of psychological stress experienced by individuals, characterized by symptoms such as anxiety, irritability, and .difficulty concentrating	Perceived Stress Scale (PSS): A psychological instrument measuring the perception of stress. It assesses feelings and thoughts during the last month of conducting the survey, with responses .(ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (always
Variable	**Operational Definition**	**Measurement Tool**
Psychological Impact of Media Exposure	The influence that media exposure to war scenes has on an individual's mental health and .emotional state	Combination of scales such as the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) and additional items assessing feelings of hopelessness or despair related to media .consumption
Mediating Variables		
Coping Mechanisms	Strategies employed by individuals to manage, tolerate, reduce, or minimize stressful circumstances or the emotions .associated with them	Coping Strategies Inventory (CSI) Categorizes coping strategies into problem-focused and emotion-focused .coping
Moderating Variables		
Level of Resilience	The capacity of an individual to withstand or recover quickly from difficult conditions such as .stress and adversity	Brief Resilience Scale (BRS): Measures .the ability to bounce back from stress
Demographic Variables	Characteristics of the study population which may influence how individuals are affected by media exposure. Includes age, .gender, and employment-status	Demographic section in the survey collecting data on age, gender, and .employment-status

Validation and Pilot Testing

To ensure content reliability and validity, the questions had a Cronbach's alpha of.839, indicating good internal consistency throughout the survey items. The initial questionnaire was also examined by three specialists in psychology and media studies to confirm its correctness and relevance. A pilot test with 20 participants was undertaken to refine the questions, with minor changes made for clarity and coherence. The final survey, which was sent online using Google Forms, comprised a combination of Likert scale and multiple-choice questions. Participants were recruited via social media and community networks, with a response rate of 98.4 percent. Ethical considerations were gaining informed permission and maintaining confidentiality.

Sampling Method and Recruitment Process

This study's sampling method used a non-probability convenience sampling technique, with the survey link distributed via social media platforms such as Facebook and instant messaging applications through the researcher's personal network, and friends encouraged to participate and share further. In addition, the link was sent via WhatsApp private messaging, taking advantage of the platform's high engagement. This method proved appropriate for capturing participant insights due to its rapid, cost-effective distribution and broad reach (Ellison et al., 2007; Church & de Oliveira, 2013; Etikan et al., 2016). The recruiting method targeted Egyptian people aged 18 to 65, with the goal of including a diverse demographic representative of society in order to capture diverse opinions and experiences among Egyptians. This technique allowed for the inclusion of a diverse group of participants, reflecting varied socioeconomic backgrounds and ensuring a thorough knowledge of the psychological effects of prolonged media exposure to crisis news during the Gaza war.

Data Collection Period

The data collection period lasted two months, from June until the end of August 2024. This time period was chosen to capture the immediate and ongoing psychological consequences of media exposure during the peak of the Gaza war coverage.

Statistics and Data Analysis Procedures

The data in this study was analyzed using a variety of statistical methodologies. Pearson Correlation was used to examine the links between media exposure, psychological stress, and resilience. The Mediation Analysis investigated whether coping mechanisms mediated the relationship between media exposure and stress. Multiple Regression looked at how demographic characteristics influenced psychological consequences, whereas ANOVA found disparities in psychological impact and coping techniques between those directly affected by the crisis and those who were not. These strategies provided a clear grasp of the important relationships in the study.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were prioritized throughout the research process. Participants were clearly informed of the study's goal and nature, and all responders provided informed permission. Confidentiality and anonymity were assured, guaranteeing that no personal information was revealed and that replies were used purely for academic purposes.

Results

Hypothesis Testing

The study intends to measure the psychological consequences of media coverage of the Gaza war, uncover demographic determinants, and investigate how exposure affects resilience and coping mechanisms. It is critical to experimentally evaluate these linkages before making focused treatments or policy decisions.

Demographic profile of participants

This study shows diverse representation based on age, gender, and employment status. Out of 420 respondents, the largest age group was those aged 25-34, accounting for 34% of the total, followed by 35-44-year-olds at 28.8%. Gender distribution indicated that 60% of respondents were female and 40% were male. Regarding employment, 63.3% of participants were full-time employees, 16.4% were students, 6.2% worked part-time, and 4.5% were unemployed. A lower proportion classified as retired (3.8%) or in other occupations (5.7%). This demographic diversity enables a complete examination of the impacts of media exposure across many society segments.

Hypothesis 1: Duration of Media Exposure and Psychological Stress

(H1): There is a positive correlation between the duration of media exposure to crisis coverage and the levels of psychological stress in individuals.

This hypothesis predicts a direct linear relationship in which more time spent viewing crisis-related media leads to higher stress levels. The results for Hypothesis 1, which looked at the relationship between the duration of media exposure to crisis news and psychological stress, showed a Pearson correlation of -0.078 with a significance level of 0.111. This suggests a modest and statistically insignificant negative association between the length of media exposure and psychological stress levels. In other words, increasing respondents' exposure to media coverage of the Gaza conflict does not significantly increase psychological stress.

Interestingly, 62.4% of participants reported spending less than 30 minutes per day following news on the Gaza war, compared to 6.4% and 6.2% who spent 1 to 2 hours and more than 2 hours, respectively. Despite these disparities in exposure levels, questions about psychological stress found that the majority of respondents felt the impact of the news "fairly often" or "always." For example, 62.9% of participants were upset by war-related news events (How often have you been upset by war-related news events in Gaza?), and 49.8% frequently felt angered by developments beyond their control. This shows that, while exposure length may not have a substantial correlation with stress, the substance and emotional aspect of the news are likely to contribute to increased psychological stress, even with short exposure times. As a result, the emotional toll appears to be driven more by the intensity of the news coverage than by the length of time exposed.

Hypothesis 2: Coping Mechanisms as Mediators between prolonged media exposure to crisis coverage and psychological stress

(H2): Coping mechanisms significantly mediate the relationship between prolonged media exposure to crisis coverage and psychological stress levels.

Descriptive Statistics:

This hypothesis suggests that the degree and direction of the relationship between media exposure and stress levels are influenced by an individual's strategies for coping. The majority of participants (62.4%) spent less than 30 minutes daily consuming information about the war in Gaza, while 25% spent 30 minutes to an hour. A smaller percentage (6.4% and 6.2%) reported spending 1-2 hours and more than 2 hours, respectively.

The psychological stress levels showed that 62.9% of respondents were "always upset" as a result of war-related news items, with 41.9% experiencing frequent nervousness and stress. Stress signs such as difficulty controlling emotions and feeling overwhelmed were also relatively high (mean scores ranged from (3.48 to 4.34).

Coping mechanisms varied, but the most common were seeking spiritual support (mean = 3.51) and accepting emotional impact (mean = 3.28). In contrast, activities like humor and substance abuse were less common.

Mediation Model

A parallel mediation analysis was conducted to identify if coping mechanisms mediate the relationship between media exposure and psychological stress. The final hypothesized model (Fig. 2)

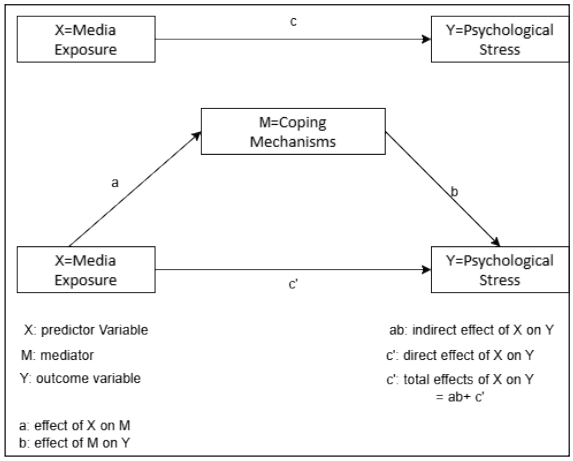

Figure 2. The hypothesized mediation model of coping mechanisms as mediators to media exposure and psychological stress relationship.

Relationship between X (Media Exposure) and M (Coping Mechanisms)

The results showed that media exposure did not significantly explain differences in coping mechanisms ($R^2 = 0.0009$, $p = 0.5483$).The unstandardized coefficient for the direct effect of media exposure on coping mechanisms was 0.1477, which was statistically insignificant ($p = 0.5483$).

Relationship between M (Coping Mechanisms) and Y (Psychological Stress)

Coping mechanisms may explain 1.5% of the variance in psychological stress levels ($R^2 = 0.0152$, $p = 0.0408$). There was a statistically significant association between coping mechanisms and psychological stress, with an unstandardized coefficient of -0.1479 ($p = 0.0495$). This negative coefficient shows that increased coping mechanisms are connected with lower levels of psychological stress. The total Effect of X on Y which is the overall effect of media exposure on psychological stress (excluding coping mechanisms) was -0.6041, which was not statistically significant ($p = 0.1114$). While the direct Effect of X on Y controlling for M (coping mechanisms), the direct effect of media exposure on psychological stress was -0.5823 ($p = 0.1238$), which was not significant.

Indirect Effect ($X \rightarrow M \rightarrow Y$)

The indirect effect of media exposure on psychological stress through coping mechanisms was -0.0218, with a confidence interval of [-0.0723, 0.0002]. The fact that the confidence interval is so close to 0 suggests partial mediation.

The findings partially support (H2). While coping mechanisms have a substantial influence on psychological stress levels ($p = 0.0495$), the mediation effect of media exposure and stress via coping mechanisms was limited and borderline inconsequential. As a result, coping mechanisms may moderate but not completely mitigate the effect of media exposure on stress.

Hypothesis 3: Resilience and Psychological Impact

(H3): There is a negative correlation between the level of resilience and the psychological impact of media exposure to crisis coverage.

This hypothesis posits that individuals with higher resilience will experience a lesser psychological impact from exposure to crisis media, indicating a protective effect of resilience.

Psychological Stress:

High levels of psychological stress are evident, with 62.9% of participants reporting constant distress as a result of news events relating to the Gaza war (mean score of 4.34). Furthermore, 39.3% felt unable to control the emotional impact of the conflict at all times, with an additional 28.3% feeling this way on sometimes, indicating widespread stress and emotional issues. Surprisingly, 35% of participants consistently felt overwhelmed, with a mean score of 3.66, showing significant distress across participants.

Resilience:

Lower resilience, with just 6.2% strongly agreeing that they generally bounce back quickly, and a comparatively low mean score of 2.66. This shows that the majority of participants do not feel very resilient. Recovery from emotional impacts reveals a similarly poor resilience, as 33.6% disagreed that they recover quickly, with a mean of 2.49, indicating that participants generally struggle to recover from emotional setbacks caused by the crisis. Items like "I tend to recover quickly from emotional setbacks caused by news about the war in Gaza" and "I usually come through emotional challenges related to the war in Gaza with little difficulty", which also assess resilience (quick recovery), show 30.2% and 26.9% disagreement with their ability to recover, reinforcing the idea of diminished resilience.

High Psychological Stress & Low Resilience: The data confirm the hypothesis that weaker resilience is associated with increased psychological stress. For example, those who regularly felt overwhelmed (35%) had lower resilience scores. This implies a clear link: those experiencing stress tend to report lesser resilience.

Moderate Negative Correlation (Pearson 0.537): The Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.537** ($p < 0.001$) indicates a moderate to strong negative association. This supports the hypothesis that as resilience improves, psychological stress diminishes. This is also consistent with the fact that participants who reported significant psychological stress on items such as feeling upset or overwhelmed reported lesser resilience on things such as bouncing back quickly.

Variance in Responses: While the overall trend is one of high stress and low resilience, certain items (for example, being able to control irritations caused by news about the war in Gaza, which has a lower agreement for always being in control of irritations) show more variability, indicating that some people are better able to manage stress despite overall low resilience. However, this group appears to be a minority, as evidenced by the prevalence of higher psychological stress and lower resilience scores across the study.

The results of (H3) show that people who experience more psychological stress, particularly emotions of being overwhelmed or unable to manage, report lesser resilience. This supports the concept that increased resilience serves as a buffer against the psychological effects of media exposure to crisis circumstances. The moderate-to-strong negative correlation reinforces this relationship, demonstrating that resilience can reduce the emotional impact of crisis media exposure.

Hypothesis 4: Influence of Demographic Variables to modulate the psychological effects of media exposure to crisis coverage

(H4): Demographic variables (age, gender, and employment-status) significantly modulate the psychological effects of media exposure to crisis coverage.

H4 predicts that demographics such as age, gender, and employment status will considerably influence the psychological impact of crisis media exposure. This hypothesis is tested using multiple regression analysis to see if these variables influence the degree of psychological stress felt by participants. The regression analysis reveals that age has only a minimal effect on psychological stress ($F = 1.700$, $p = 0.120$). Although the finding is not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$), the partial eta squared value (0.026) indicates that age accounts for only a small proportion of the variance in psychological stress.

Gender also approaches statistical significance ($F = 3.707$, $p = 0.055$), implying that gender differences may have an impact on how people perceive psychological stress, with females potentially being more affected than males.

Employment status has no significant effect on psychological stress ($F = 0.990$, $p = 0.424$), indicating that job status has no discernible impact on stress levels in reaction to media coverage. Table 2 depicts the interactions between the various demographic variables and their impact on psychological stress levels. As can be observed, none of the interactions between age, gender, and employment level have a statistically significant impact on the psychological impacts of media exposure.

Table 2.Interaction Effects of Age, Gender, and Employment Status on Psychological Stress in Response to Crisis Media Exposure

Interaction Effects	F-Value	p-Value	Significance	Effect Size (Partial Eta (Squared
Age	1.700	0.120	Not significant	0.026
Gender	3.707	0.055	Approaching significance	0.010
Employment	0.990	0.424	Not significant	0.013
Age * Gender	0.187	0.980	Not significant	0.003
Age * Employment	0.949	0.505	Not significant	0.034
Gender * Employment	1.102	0.359	Not significant	0.014
Age * Gender * Employment	0.724	0.630	Not significant	0.011

The regression model explains only 3.7% of the variance in psychological stress (adjusted R-squared = 0.037), indicating that demographic variables (age, gender, and employment position) have little influence on the psychological impact of crisis media exposure. Other factors, such as personal coping mechanisms, the intensity of media exposure, and the specific content consumed, are likely to have a greater impact on stress levels.

While demographic characteristics such as age and gender have the ability to modulate the psychological impacts of media exposure, their impact is neither strong nor consistent across the sample. The findings indicate that factors other than demographics may be more important in shaping how people respond to crisis media coverage. Gender differences are particularly worth investigating, as females may experience slightly higher levels of psychological stress than males, although the data only marginally support the premise that demographic variables considerably influence the psychological impact of media exposure.

Hypothesis 5: Psychological Impact and Coping Responses Based on Exposure Levels

(H5): There is a significant difference in psychological impact and coping responses to media coverage of crises between individuals with different levels of exposure.

Table 3 presents the ANOVA results for psychological stress and coping mechanisms in relation to the frequency of crisis media coverage. It demonstrates that exposure frequency has a considerable impact on psychological stress, but not on coping methods.

Table 3.Psychological Impact and Coping Responses Based on Different Exposure Levels

Measure	Exposure Frequency	N	Mean	Std. .Dev	Sum of Squares	df	F	.Sig
Psychological Stress	Weekly	26	24.46	7.106	Between Groups	554.504	4	3.138
	Less than once a week	42	26.40	7.532	Within Groups	18334.458	415	
	Several times a week	85	23.36	6.264	Total	18888.962	419	
	Daily	161	23.48	6.607				
	Multiple times a day	106	22.22	6.522				
	Total	**420**	**23.49**	**6.714**				
Coping Mechanisms	Weekly	26	36.27	4.341	Between Groups	52.015	4	0.686
	Less than once a week	42	36.17	4.828	Within Groups	7869.976	415	
	Several times a week	85	36.84	3.955	Total	7921.990	419	
	Daily	161	37.18	4.462				
	Multiple times a day	106	36.59	4.302				
	Total	**420**	**36.80**	**4.348**				

The study found a significant difference in psychological stress levels between groups depending on media exposure frequency, with a p-value of 0.015 ($p < 0.05$). This suggests that exposure frequency has a significant effect on psychological stress. The group that is exposed to crisis media less than once a week had the highest mean psychological stress score (26.40), whereas those exposed many times a day have the lowest stress levels (22.22). This pattern indicates that infrequent exposure to crisis media may result in increased stress, whereas frequent exposure may have a desensitizing or coping impact. This data lends support to the concept that individuals with differing levels of exposure have diverse psychological effects. However, it contradicts the widely held belief that increased exposure correlates directly with higher stress levels. Instead, it appears that intermittent exposure may produce higher psychological stress, maybe because these people have less opportunity to adjust or build coping methods than those who are exposed more regularly.

The ANOVA analysis of coping mechanisms shows no statistically significant differences between the groups based on exposure frequency (p-value = 0.602; $p > 0.05$). This demonstrates that the frequency with which people are exposed to crisis media has no significant impact on their coping skills. The coping techniques scores are extremely consistent across exposure groups, with mean values ranging from 36.17 (less than once a week) to 37.18 (daily).

There is no significant difference between the groups, demonstrating that coping mechanisms are essentially constant regardless of how frequently a person is exposed to crisis media. The lack of significant variation in coping techniques may indicate that these strategies are innate and not heavily influenced by exposure frequency. Individuals may respond in comparable ways regardless of how frequently they encounter crisis media content, maybe depending on pre-existing coping mechanisms that are triggered in stressful times regardless of media consumption patterns.

Hypothesis 6: Relationship between Frequency of Media Exposure and Coping Mechanisms

(H6): There is a significant relationship between the frequency of media exposure to crisis coverage and the different coping mechanisms employed by individuals.

The analysis of Hypothesis 6, which tests the relationship between the frequency of media exposure to crisis coverage and the coping mechanisms used by individuals, is based on a Pearson Correlation, and the ANOVA results show a non-significant difference in psychological stress across different media exposure groups, with a p-value of 0.444 ($p>0.05$). This shows that there is no

substantial link between how much time people are exposed to crisis media and their psychological stress levels. Individuals exposed for less than 30 minutes had an average psychological stress score of 23.83. Those exposed for 30 minutes to an hour reported a somewhat lower mean score of 23.30.

While longer exposure to crisis media may appear to cause more psychological stress, the results show that stress levels are fairly consistent across different exposure durations. The group exposed for 1 to 2 hours has a mean score of 22.19, while the group exposed for more than 2 hours has the lowest mean score of 22.23. The differences between the groups are minimal, indicating that longer exposure does not significantly increase stress levels.

The results for coping mechanisms show no significant difference between exposure groups (p-value = 0.840, $p > 0.05$). This suggests that there is no substantial association between the amount of time spent on crisis media exposure and the coping techniques that people use. Individuals who consume crisis media for less than 30 minutes have an average coping mechanism score of 36.73. Those exposed for 30 minutes to an hour had a significantly higher average score of 36.90. The mean score for the 1 to 2 hour group is 36.52, while those exposed for more than 2 hours have the highest mean coping score of 37.46. Again, the variations in mean scores are minor, implying that coping mechanisms remain generally consistent independent of media exposure frequency. Regardless of how much time people spend viewing crisis media, their coping techniques remain quite constant. This shows that people can acquire consistent coping techniques over time that are unaffected by their frequency of exposure to crisis news. Personal factors, such as personality qualities, past experiences, or psychological resilience, may have a greater impact on coping than media consumption patterns.

The findings show that the frequency of media exposure has no significant effect on psychological stress or coping mechanisms. This finding shows that people use consistent coping mechanisms independent of their exposure to crisis media, and that other factors may play a larger role in determining psychological stress levels. The hypothesis that there is a strong link between exposure frequency and coping mechanisms is thus unsupported.

Hypothesis 7: Resilience as a Moderator of Psychological Stress Levels from Media Exposure to Crisis Coverage

(H7): There is a significant relationship between resilience and the moderation of psychological stress levels due to media exposure to crisis coverage.

Hypothesis 7 proposes that resilience moderates the association between media exposure to crisis coverage and psychological stress. To test this hypothesis, the data was analyzed with a moderation model.

The findings show that resilience does not significantly modify the connection between media exposure and psychological stress (p =.9064). The non-significant standardized coefficient for resilience (-.0049) reinforces the lack of moderation. Media exposure has a substantial direct effect on psychological stress (p <.001), with a normalized coefficient of.5363, indicating a robust link between the two variables, regardless of resilience. This suggests that, whereas media exposure to crisis coverage increases psychological stress, resilience does not significantly modify or buffer this link, according to the current dataset.

The indirect effect of resilience on psychological stress was found to be non-significant, with a confidence interval containing zero (-.0147 to.0129). The cumulative effect of media exposure on psychological stress is considerable, with a large effect size (R-squared =.2884), indicating that media exposure alone explains 28.84% of the variance in psychological stress levels, regardless of resilience.

The results reject. Hypothesis 7. Resilience did not significantly modify the association between media exposure and psychological distress. This shows that, while media exposure has a significant impact on stress levels, resilience alone may not be adequate to protect against the psychological effects of prolonged exposure to crisis news.

Hypothesis 8: Age as a Moderator of Coping Mechanisms in Response to Media Exposure to Crisis Coverage

(H8): There is a significant relationship between age and the moderation of specific coping mechanisms in response to media exposure to crisis coverage.

Hypothesis 8 asserts that there is a substantial association between age and the moderation of specific coping mechanisms in response to media exposure to crisis coverage. Another moderation analysis was used to see if coping mechanisms buffer the association between age and people's reactions to media exposure to crisis coverage. The predictor variable was age, the mediator was coping mechanisms, and the outcome variable was the reaction to media exposure.

The association between age and coping mechanisms was substantial. Age was found to be a positive predictor of coping techniques (B =.0779, SE =.0351, p =.0272; see Table 4). This finding suggests that older people report greater or more developed coping strategies when exposed to media coverage of crisis occurrences. The standardized coefficient for age was.1078, indicating a small but significant positive connection between age and coping mechanisms.

Table 4.Regression Analysis of Age Predicting Coping Mechanisms

(Outcome Variable: (Coping Mechanisms	B	SE	t	p-value	LLCI	ULCI
Age	0.0779	0.0351	2.2171	0.0272	0.0088	0.1469
R^2 = .0116, F(1, 418) = 4.9157, p = .0272						

Thus, the first part of the hypothesis, suggesting a relationship between age and coping mechanisms, is supported.

The direct effect of age on responses to media exposure was not statistically significant (B = -0.3290, SE = 0.1781, p =.0654, Table 5). The p-value approached significance (p =.0654), but did not satisfy the customary criterion of p <.05, indicating that the direct effect of age is not substantiated.

Table 5.Regression Analysis of Age and Coping Mechanisms Predicting Response to Media Exposure

Outcome Variable:(Response to Media (Exposure	B	SE	t	p-value	LLCI	ULCI
Age	-0.3290	0.1781	-1.8474	0.0654	-0.6791	0.0211
Coping Mechanisms	0.1968	0.2466	0.7982	0.4252	-0.2879	0.6815
R^2 = .0090, F(2, 417) = 1.8880, p = .1527						

The direct relationship between age and response to media exposure was negative, suggesting that older people may have less significant psychological reactions to media coverage of emergencies. However, because this effect was not statistically significant, we reject the notion of a direct link between age and media exposure response.

The mediation analysis revealed that the indirect effect of age on responses to media exposure via coping mechanisms was not significant (indirect effect = .0153, BootSE = .0240, BootLLCI = -0.0317, BootULCI = 0.0677, see Table 6). The confidence interval for this indirect effect included zero, indicating that coping mechanisms do not significantly mediate the relationship between age and coping mechanisms.

Table 6.Indirect Effect of Age on Response to Media Exposure via Coping Mechanisms

Indirect Effect of Age on Coping Mechanisms	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
Coping Mechanisms	0.0153	0.0240	-0.0317	0.0677

Thus, the hypothesis proposing that coping mechanisms mediate the relationship between age and media exposure response is not supported.

Hypothesis 8 is partially supported. Age was found to strongly predict coping methods in response to media exposure, implying that older people may have better evolved coping mechanisms. However, there was no significant direct or indirect influence of age on coping mechanisms in response to media exposure. As a result, while there is evidence that age changes coping mechanisms, there is not

enough evidence to support the notion that age modifies the link between coping mechanisms and media exposure response. This implies that, while age influences how people cope, it does not directly regulate the psychological reaction to crisis media exposure, as previously suggested.

Discussion

The discussion of this study emphasizes the complex interaction between continuous media exposure to crisis events, such as the Gaza conflict, and the psychological consequences observed in participants. The findings challenge and expand on previous research, providing subtle insights into how exposure intensity, individual resilience, and coping mechanisms interact to shape psychological stress.

The slight negative link between media exposure time and stress differs from previous research that found a linear relationship between longer exposure and higher stress (Solomon et al., 2021). Instead, this study is more in line with Holman et al. (2014), who stressed that the intensity and emotional content of the media, rather than mere exposure time, increases psychological stress. Participants exhibited substantial emotional responses despite limited exposure, indicating that graphic or emotionally charged content, as stated by Pfefferbaum et al. (2019), is more important than exposure duration. This demonstrates the power of crisis media in causing psychological anguish, even in brief viewing durations.

Furthermore, behavioral adaptations have a role in moderating stress reactions, regardless of the severity of exposure. The findings are consistent with Smith and Lazarus (2017), who observed that people use a variety of coping mechanisms to deal with the stress associated with media use. Even while exposure time had no significant correlation with stress levels, emotional responses were still significant, implying that adaptive behaviors such as disengagement or distraction may assist alleviate stress in specific situations.

The variability in participant reactions, which is impacted by personal factors such as baseline stress levels and coping mechanisms (McMahon et al., 2024), adds another degree of complexity. This variation lends credence to the idea that how people react to distressing media content is shaped by individual differences, emphasizing the significance of taking personal aspects into account when studying exposure effects.

Coping mechanisms identified as an important element in lowering psychological stress, supporting Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) idea that proactive coping strategies might reduce stress. Participants who engaged in spiritual

support or emotional acceptance reported lower stress levels, which supports Pargament et al.'s (2011) findings on the efficacy of religious and spiritual coping during crises. However, the study also discovered that coping techniques may not vary considerably across different exposure frequencies, implying that these strategies are relatively stable and controlled by individual attributes rather than the situational intensity of media exposure (Folkman & Moskowitz, 2004).

Interestingly, the lack of significant relationship between media exposure and coping mechanisms contradicts some previous research. Bonanno (2004) discovered that media exposure can influence coping mechanisms, potentially increasing reliance on certain mechanisms. In this study, however, external factors such as social support or pre-existing resilience may have had a greater influence on coping practices, explaining the lack of a notable mediating effect of media exposure on coping.

Resilience emerged as a significant protective factor, with a moderate-to-strong negative connection between resilience and stress, in line with Bonanno (2004) and Waugh and Fredrickson (2006). Higher resilience was connected with decreased stress, indicating that resilient people can recover from emotional adversity more efficiently. However, resilience's non-significant moderating effect suggests that, while it is important for general psychological well-being, it may not have a major impact on the direct association between media exposure and stress. This data supports Fletcher and Sarkar's (2013) notion that resilience does not necessarily serve as a buffer, but rather interacts with other variables such as individual coping mechanisms or external support systems.

The marginal influence of age on stress responses supports Aldwin's (2011) finding that, while age might alter stress responses, the effect may be subtle. Similarly, the near-significant gender differences in stress, with females potentially experiencing higher degrees of distress (Taylor et al., 2002), point to gender-specific emotional processing patterns, even though the study's p-value is not statistically significant. These findings highlight the need for more research into how demographic characteristics such as age and gender influence psychological stress in crisis situations.

In contrast, employment status had no significant effect on stress levels, replicating the findings of Sidorchuk et al. (2017). This shows that, while employment can have an impact on stress in specific situations, it may not be as important in the setting of media exposure to crises, with other factors—such as personal resilience and external support—playing a larger role in predicting psychological effects.

An unexpected finding was the considerable variation in psychological stress levels based on media exposure frequency. In contrast to certain literature, such as Solomon et al. (2021), which claims that frequent exposure increases stress, the current study found that participants who were exposed less frequently had higher stress levels. This could be explained by the assumption that sporadic exposure allows for less opportunities to acclimate or establish efficient coping strategies. This is supported by Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) model of stress, which states that stress occurs when coping mechanisms and situational demands do not match, which can be exacerbated by irregular exposure patterns.

In conclusion, while this study validates some of the previously documented links between media exposure, stress, and coping, it also presents additional nuances that call common beliefs into question. The data show that media content intensity, individual resilience, and coping mechanisms are more important in predicting psychological effects than exposure time. These findings add to the expanding corpus of research on media-induced psychological stress, emphasizing the significance of gaining a more nuanced knowledge of how people process and react to crisis coverage.

Interpretation in Light of the Transactional Model of Stress and Coping

The Transactional Model of Stress and Coping, developed by Lazarus and Folkman, views stress as the result of a dynamic interaction between an individual and their surroundings. Stress occurs when people believe that the demands of a circumstance exceed their coping abilities. The concept focuses on two essential processes: primary appraisal (the individual's assessment of the stressor) and secondary appraisal (the evaluation of available coping strategies). Based on this paradigm, the results of your study can be understood as follows:

1. **Primary Appraisal: Emotional Content over Duration**: According to the transactional model, how people assess the emotional weight and threat of media material impacts their stress reaction. The study discovered that the emotional intensity of crisis media had a bigger influence on psychological stress than the time of exposure. This shows that individuals' primary appraisal of media content (seen as dangerous, disturbing, or overpowering) had a greater influence on eliciting stress than the duration of exposure. This is consistent with the model's notion that stress is not solely caused by objective external stimuli (such as media exposure time), but also by subjective perceptions and assessments of media content.
2. **Secondary Appraisal: Role of Resilience and Coping**: In the transactional model, secondary appraisal involves evaluating one's coping capabilities in reaction to a perceived danger. In this study, resilience was used as a personal

coping mechanisms, and the results revealed a strong negative association between resilience and stress. Individuals with higher resilience perceived themselves as having more internal resources to deal with stress, resulting in less psychological suffering. However, the fact that resilience did not significantly attenuate the connection between media exposure and stress implies that resilience alone may not be sufficient to guard against the stress induced by emotionally charged media. This suggests that resilience is only one component of the larger coping strategy that people employ in response to crisis media.

3. Coping Mechanisms and Stress Response: The coping mechanisms, particularly spiritual support and emotional acceptance, are indicative of emotion-focused coping, in which individuals attempt to manage emotional responses rather than changing the external circumstance (i.e., the crisis media). The transactional model employs coping techniques depending on the perceived controllability of the circumstance. Individuals are more prone to utilize emotion-focused coping when they have little influence over media coverage or the events being covered (such as the Gaza war). The consistency of coping techniques across varying degrees of media exposure demonstrates the stability of individual coping processes, as people tend to rely on habitual strategies when dealing with uncontrollable stressors such as media exposure during crises.

4. Demographic Variations and Individual Differences: The study found age and gender differences, which underscore the transactional model's emphasis on individual differences in the stress-coping process. Older people who use more adaptive coping mechanisms may have more life experience or emotional control abilities, making them better prepared to deal with stress from crisis media. Gender disparities in psychological stress levels, with females possibly suffering more stress, could be attributed to societal roles, emotional responses, or differing assessments of the same media content.

5. Reevaluation of Coping Over Time: The result that individuals who use media less regularly report higher levels of stress suggests that those who are less exposed may not have the opportunity to engage in constant reevaluation (or reappraisal) of media material. Continuous exposure may enable some people to better assimilate information, use coping mechanisms, or even become desensitized to the emotional intensity of the media over time, as part of the secondary evaluation process.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the study's findings provide vital insights into the psychological effects of continuous media exposure to the Gaza conflict, indicating complicated links between exposure intensity, resilience, coping mechanisms, and psychological stress. According to the study, the emotional intensity and nature of the material have a substantial impact on stress levels, rather than the duration of media exposure alone. This observation is consistent with current literature, which suggests that the emotional impact of crisis media may surpass the effects of exposure length.

The findings also highlight resilience's beneficial effect in alleviating psychological stress, as there is a strong negative association between the two. However, the moderating and mediating effects of resilience on the association between media exposure and stress were not significant, implying that other personal factors, such as coping mechanisms or external support, may be more important. Coping mechanisms, notably spiritual support and emotional acceptance, were found to significantly lower stress, albeit their stability across different degrees of media exposure shows that people rely on established techniques rather than responding to exposure frequency. This suggests that coping methods are more consistent and influenced by human characteristics rather than media consumption habits.

Furthermore, the study discovered that demographic factors such as age and gender can influence stress and coping mechanisms, while the effects are moderate. The substantial link between age and coping methods shows that older people may be better able to deal with crisis-related stress thanks to more established coping strategies. Meanwhile, gender became relevant, with females perhaps feeling higher levels of stress, necessitating further investigation.

Overall, the study calls into question prevalent beliefs regarding the direct relationship between frequent media exposure and increased stress, arguing that content intensity and personal resilience are more important. These findings highlight the need for additional research into individual differences and coping mechanisms in order to better understand how people handle psychological stress in the face of crisis media coverage.

These findings highlight **The Emotional Weight of Media,** which emphasizes that the emotional intensity of media content is more important to stress responses than mere exposure time, implying that news and crisis coverage should be evaluated for psychological impact based on content rather than frequency. **The Importance of Resilience**, while resilience remains an important element in stress reduction, its limited moderating effect implies that it works in tandem with both personal and external factors to reduce psychological discomfort. **Coping**

Stability, or the consistency of coping techniques across varying degrees of media exposure, demonstrates that people rely on innate coping processes that are unaffected by how frequently they encounter disturbing media. **Individual Differences**, the study emphasizes the importance of individual variations, such as age, gender, and personal resilience, in affecting psychological responses to crisis media, with implications for targeted interventions and support mechanisms. These findings help to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how crisis media affects psychological well-being and stress, particularly in the setting of extended media exposure to unpleasant events such as war.

The study's findings lend support to the Transactional Model of Stress and Coping by demonstrating that the psychological effects of media exposure are shaped by individuals' subjective appraisals of the media content (emotional intensity over time) as well as their available coping mechanisms. Emotional content, not exposure duration, causes stress, and coping methods like emotional acceptance and spiritual support can help people deal with stressful media. This emphasizes the significance of both appraisal processes (how people evaluate media content) and coping methods in controlling stress caused by crisis media exposure.

Implications for Understanding Crisis Fatigue

The study's findings have significant implications for media regulation, mental health, and public resilience. The strong link between emotional intensity in crisis media and psychological stress recommends that media outlets should exercise caution when presenting crisis occurrences. Policymakers might establish criteria to control the emotional tone of reporting, and mental health initiatives should focus on resilience-building programs to lessen stress from media exposure.

Younger individuals and women were shown to be more prone to stress, highlighting the importance of specialized mental health support. Media literacy programs can assist the public in critically engaging with intense crisis coverage, potentially reducing stress. Furthermore, the widespread use of emotion-focused coping mechanism indicates a need for readily available options that enhance emotional resilience, such as therapy or community support.

The study's findings have significant implications for media regulation, mental health, and public resilience. The strong link between emotional intensity in crisis media and psychological stress recommends that media outlets should exercise caution when presenting crisis occurrences. Policymakers might establish criteria to control the emotional tone of reporting, and mental health initiatives should focus on resilience-building programs to lessen stress from media exposure.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

Several limitations affect this study. The inclusion of self-reported data introduces response bias, and the cross-sectional design limits causal inference. Future research should use objective stress assessments and a longitudinal approach to better track changes over time. The study's focus on the Gaza conflict may limit its applicability to future situations. Furthermore, the study of coping mechanisms was limited, concentrating mostly on resilience and emotional coping rather than completely investigating problem-focused coping.

Future research should use longitudinal designs to examine how psychological reactions change with continued crisis exposure. Comparative studies of various crises may reveal disparities in psychological impact. The influence of various media channels on stress levels should also be investigated. Cross-cultural study can shed information on how different civilizations deal with media-related stress. Finally, intervention-based research should look into the effectiveness of resilience-building programs and media literacy initiatives, supplementing self-reports with psychophysiological measurements.

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