

Dialectic of Power and Resistance: Representation of U.S. Policy toward the Gaza War

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ABSTRACT

The issue of Palestine characterized by occupation, structural discrimination, and violent interventions represents one of the most complex contemporary human rights and geopolitical crises. In this context, the role of the United States of America as the primary military and diplomatic supporter of Israel has undermined the capacity of international institutions, such as the UN Security Council and the International Criminal Court, to address Israel's unlawful actions. This study aims to analyze attitudes toward U.S. support for Israel in the recent wars on Gaza. The research employed a descriptive-analytical method based on a quantitative survey. Data were collected via a researcher-constructed questionnaire comprised of multiple sections, and the responses of 387 participants from a target population of 400 were analyzed. The instrument's reliability was confirmed with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.88. Descriptive analysis indicated that the average response scores to most items exceeded the benchmark, and inferential tests (such as the one-sample t-test) demonstrated statistically significant differences between observed values and criterion scores. More than 75% of participants assessed U.S. support for Israel as incompatible with the principles of global human rights. Additionally, open-ended responses frequently featured critical themes such as "U.S. complicity in war crimes," "Western double standards on human rights," and "distrust toward international institutions." The findings reflect a prevailing critical discourse toward U.S. foreign policy, particularly in terms of its lack of accountability for war crimes committed in Gaza.

Keywords: *Palestine; Israel; United States of America; attitude survey; crimes against humanity; apartheid; United Nations Security Council*

INTRODUCTION

The Palestinian issue and the persistence of attrition and destructive wars between the Israeli military and the Palestinian people, particularly in the Gaza Strip, have over the decades evolved into one of the most enduring and complex geopolitical conflicts. Israeli military interventions frequently characterized by blockades, the destruction of urban infrastructure, and airstrikes on civilian areas have confronted the global community with a rigorous test regarding human rights, international justice, and the efficacy of international institutions. Since 2023, the escalation of this conflict, especially following the operation known as "Al-Aqsa Flood" and the subsequent all-out invasion of the Gaza Strip by the Israeli military, has increasingly drawn the attention of international bodies, human rights organizations, and global public opinion.

The role of the United States of America as the primary political, financial, and military backer of the Israeli government has consistently remained a controversial focal point in international politics. Documents published by the Congressional Research Service (CRS) indicate that in the fiscal year 2023 alone, the United States allocated \$3.8 billion in non-

repayable military aid to Israel under their ten-year defense agreement. Furthermore, the U.S. is the only member of the United Nations Security Council that has repeatedly and systematically utilized its veto power to block resolutions aimed at condemning the actions of the Israeli military an action that many scholars view as contradictory to the principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter concerning the maintenance of international peace and security. In recent years, international human rights organizations such as Human Rights Watch (HRW) and B'Tselem, in comprehensive reports based on humanitarian law standards, have categorized Israeli military actions and the discriminatory regime imposed on the Palestinian people as constituting "apartheid" and "systematic ethnic persecution." The continuation of unconditional U.S. support for such a governing model has, in the eyes of public opinion and analysts in Islamic countries and the Global South, widened the gap between the proclaimed human rights values in Western foreign policy and its actual practice. Moreover, empirical studies and social surveys (such as those by Hassan & Marwan, 2023) indicate a form of "structured distrust" among populations in Muslim countries toward international institutions, such as the

Security Council and the International Criminal Court (ICC), regarding their handling of Israeli actions.

In this context, the primary objective of the present study is to analyze the public attitude of Iranian society toward the supportive role of the United States in the recent wars between Israel and Palestine. Utilizing empirical data collected via standardized questionnaires, this study attempts to construct a theoretical-empirical framework to explain the perception, depth of critical stance, cognitive roots, and factors influencing public belief regarding this phenomenon. Accordingly, by integrating legal, political, and social dimensions, this research aims to model the social representation of the United States in connection with the Palestinian conflict within Iranian society, demonstrating how the foreign policies of global powers are reflected in the public consciousness.

Theoretical Foundations

Palestine

At the theoretical level of conflict analysis, the Palestinian issue is primarily examined within the framework of postcolonial approaches, particularly through the concept of **settler colonialism**. Within this contemporary conceptual framework, the Palestinian question is understood as extending beyond a mere territorial dispute or identity crisis; rather, it is interpreted as a structural and enduring phenomenon embodied in an ideological project of **eliminationist replacement colonialism**. The ultimate aim of this project is to sever the historical territorial continuity between the Palestinian people and their homeland, and to replace an indigenous population with a newly installed demographic formation endowed with ideological legitimacy (Wolfe, 2006).

In his seminal theory of settler colonialism, Patrick Wolfe emphasizes that, unlike classic colonialism, which relies on the exploitation of native labor, settler colonialism is premised on the elimination of the native population altogether. This form of colonialism is based on both physical removal and symbolic erasure, so that by displacing the resident population, a new order founded on legitimized settlers may be established (Wolfe, 2006). In a similar vein, Lorenzo Veracini argues that settler colonialism in Palestine is sustained not only through direct violence, but also through the reproduction of discriminatory laws, the creation of a dual legal regime, and the structural appropriation of natural resources (Veracini, 2021).

Postcolonial approaches further emphasize the erasure of collective identity, the distortion of historical memory, and the deployment of invisibilization mechanisms as symbolic instruments of domination and discrimination, presenting this condition as a prominent example of **national dispossession**. This is a concept employed by Rashid Khalidi, drawing on historical evidence and the lived experience of Palestinians, to explain the ongoing denial of political rights, the negation of the right to self-determination,

and the institutionalization of statelessness within the contemporary international order (Khalidi, 2020).

According to this perspective, Israeli domination over the Palestinian territories is not a temporary or merely military project, but rather an ideological, self-reproducing architecture grounded in the combination of unequal laws, forced displacement, settlement expansion, targeted killings, restrictions on movement, and racial segregation. In this regard, international law analyses particularly those found in the reports of Michael Lynk, former Special Rapporteur of the United Nations assert that the structure under Israeli control in the occupied territories has produced a **permanent occupation** marked by the systematic erosion of civil rights, noncompliance with the principles of the United Nations Charter, and disruption of the international diplomatic order (Lynk, 2017).

Israel

Since its inception, the political-military system of Israel has been founded upon a security-oriented logic and a highly militarized structure. This structure relies on the general mobilization of society, centralized security management, and the integration of civil and military authority in response to multi-layered domestic and regional threats. This approach is formulated within the framework of an existential doctrine—a grand strategy that conditions the survival of the Israeli nation-state on military technological superiority, the constant readiness of the armed forces, and extensive hardware-based deterrence (Dado Center, 2023). Within this structure, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) play a pivotal role, encompassing ground, air, and naval forces, alongside specialized units of military intelligence (Aman), internal security (Shin Bet), and foreign intelligence (Mossad). This strategic alignment facilitates synergy between military and intelligence tactics, enabling Israel to execute rapid responses and preemptive strikes against escalating threats across the volatile geography of the Persian Gulf and the Levant (Dado Center, 2023; INSS, 2025).

Analyses in recent years indicate that Israel's defense doctrine has rapidly shifted toward the concept of **multi-domain operations**, above-threshold preemptive strikes, and cognitive and information warfare (INSS, 2025). Its primary objective is to expand the depth of deterrence, establish information superiority, and dominate emerging domains of warfare, such as cyberspace and cognitive models. However, the execution of these approaches in asymmetric warfare contexts, such as the repeated assaults on the Gaza Strip between 2023 and 2025, has provoked a wave of global legal and ethical criticism.

Citing the provisional measures ordered by the International Court of Justice (ICJ) on January 26, 2024—issued in response to the application filed by South Africa under the Genocide Convention Israel was mandated to take immediate measures to prevent actions with “collective and devastating consequences”

against the civilian population of Gaza. Within this framework, the official report of the United Nations Human Rights Council's Commission of Inquiry (2024) states that documented evidence has recorded a prolonged siege, forced displacement, the deliberate destruction of civilian infrastructure, and the obstruction of vital aid supplies. From the perspective of many international jurists, these actions align in certain instances with the criteria for crimes against humanity, and in others, exhibit elements of systematic genocide.

In the criminal domain, following the initiation of the legal case concerning the "Situation in the State of Palestine" since 2021, the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC) in 2024 issued formal summonses and arrest warrant applications against prominent Israeli military-political officials, including the then-Defense Minister. The core of these allegations includes the massacre of civilians, the use of starvation as a method of warfare, and the targeted destruction of medical facilities—actions classified under customary and treaty international law as "serious international crimes" (Akanke, 2021).

In tandem with this multifaceted crisis, Israel's regional foreign policy has also been directly shaped by this security-offensive logic. Regarding Iran, Tel Aviv has implemented a hybrid deterrence strategy, resorting to cyber warfare, targeted assassinations, the bombardment of proxy bases in Syria, and operational-intelligence support for opposition groups inside Iran (Carnegie Endowment, 2024). These actions are designed to contain Iran's regional influence, prevent the expansion of the axis of resistance, and increase Tehran's strategic costs. Nonetheless, according to independent security institutions such as the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), the continuation of this offensive pattern has significantly heightened the potential for transforming proxy confrontation into direct state-to-state conflict between Tehran and Tel Aviv (CSIS, 2025).

Ultimately, explaining Israeli behavior at the strategic level is meaningful only at the intersection of three domains: "security, law, and diplomacy." The doctrine of security through superiority—based on the physical and cognitive occupation and control of peripheral spaces—has proved effective in establishing military deterrence. However, in the humanitarian sphere and under international law, it has incurred extensive, delegitimizing costs for Israel, including rising civilian casualties, utility crises in war-torn areas, and widening normative rifts in the international order (ICJ, 2024; UNHRC, 2024; ICC, 2024).

United States

The behavior of the United States toward the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, particularly during the recent wars in the Gaza Strip, has multiple dimensions and cannot be reduced solely to moral or value-based considerations. Rather, this behavior is best examined at the intersection of three theoretical levels of international analysis: the international, legal, and

social-perceptual dimensions. The integration of these approaches offers a more comprehensive understanding of the structural, discursive, and legal foundations of U.S. support for Israel.

From the perspective of structural realism, the foremost priority in U.S. foreign policy is the preservation of its regional hegemony in West Asia and the maintenance of a balance of power favorable to its geopolitical interests. Within this framework, Washington has relied on Israel as a reliable ally and a strategic anchor for containing rivals such as Iran. The U.S.-Israeli military-security relationship is commonly analyzed through the annual military aid package of \$3.8 billion, the transfer of defense technologies such as the Iron Dome system, participation in arms development projects, and the establishment of intelligence stations (U.S. Congressional Research Service, 2023). In this sense, such support is interpreted not on the basis of values such as peace or justice, but rather as part of the consolidation of a security alliance and the pursuit of strategic advantage in a competitive environment (Mearsheimer, 2018).

Within the framework of institutional liberalism, the official conduct of the United States is justified in terms of commitment to a rules-based international order, support for the two-state solution, and multilateral diplomacy. Successive U.S. administrations, regardless of party affiliation, have claimed to support a return to negotiations and the provision of mutual security (Brookings Institution, 2023). However, the contradiction between these diplomatic claims and actual practice—most notably the repeated use of the veto in the UN Security Council to block condemnation of Israel on more than 33 occasions—has undermined the credibility of the U.S. claim to uphold justice in the eyes of public opinion and international experts (UN Security Council, 2024). Critical liberals have described this condition as an example of interventionist order-making aimed at preserving U.S. global superiority rather than realizing justice-oriented values.

Complementing these perspectives, constructivist theory emphasizes the importance of identities, discourses, and cultural representations in international politics. From a constructivist standpoint, identity convergence between the United States and Israel has played a key role in shaping the current strategic alliance. Shared biblical narratives, Judeo-Christian values, and the perception of Israel as a Western democracy within an Islamic Middle East constitute the discursive foundations of this alliance (Pellerin & Rasmussen, 2022).

At the level of international law, the issue of state responsibility for complicity in war crimes has been addressed under Article 16 of the International Law Commission's Draft Articles on Responsibility of States for Internationally Wrongful Acts (International Law Commission, 2001). According to this principle, any state that knowingly and effectively assists in the commission of an unlawful act bears responsibility under the international legal order. In this regard, legal

reports published by Diakonia and Al-Haq argue that the provision of military assistance without due assessment of its humanitarian consequences during the war on Gaza may fall within the scope of U.S. international responsibility (Diakonia & Al-Haq, 2022; Akande, 2021).

From the standpoint of social and political perceptions, the position of the United States in public opinion across the Islamic world is understood less as that of a neutral mediator and more as a structural ally of Israel. In a field survey conducted by Birzeit University (2023), more than 70 percent of Palestinian respondents assessed the United States as a “direct partner” in Israel’s crimes in Gaza. Similarly, a national study in Iran found that 65 percent of respondents described U.S. policy as “discriminatory, double-standard, and unjust” (Taheri & Yazdanpanah, 2021). This perception has had long-term effects on the legitimacy of U.S. human rights discourse and on its capacity to play a constructive role in resolving regional conflicts.

Literature Review

This section provides a systematic and analytical review of the most significant research, reports, and scientific analyses conducted between 2021 and 2025 concerning the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The focus of this review is on conceptual studies surrounding settler colonialism, legal apartheid, international support by the U.S., and state responsibility regarding human rights violations.

Table 1: Review of Research (2021–2025)

N o.	Author / Year	Subject	Study Type	Key Finding	Source
1	Rashid Khalidi (2020)	Historical colonialism in Palestine	Historical - theoretical analysis	Engineering the removal of Palestinian national identity over the past century	<i>The Hundred Years' War on Palestine</i>
2	Wolfe (2006); Veracini (2021)	Settler colonialism in Palestinian studies	Theoretical - Decolonization	Israel's project is based on the gradual elimination of indigenous people	<i>Journal of Genocide Research</i>
3	HRW (2021)	Legal assessment of the Israeli state	International law analytical report	Aligning Israeli policies with the criteria for "Apartheid"	HRW Report

N o.	Author / Year	Subject	Study Type	Key Finding	Source
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4	Mearsheimer & Walt (2007; 2022)	Influence of the AIPAC lobby	Foreign policy analysis	The Zionist lobby is a determinant factor in U.S. orientation	<i>The Israel Lobby...</i>
5	Brookings (2024)	U.S. role after the 2023 war	Policy-regional report	U.S. military aid exacerbates the crisis in Gaza	Brookings Taskforce Report
6	Akande, D. (2021)	State complicity in arms supply	International law theory	States can be held responsible for arms leading to war crimes	<i>European Journal of International Law</i>
7	B'Tselem (2021)	Regime of separation in Israel	Human rights field report	The governing system has the characteristics of institutionalized apartheid	B'Tselem Report

Research Methodology

The present study was conducted using a descriptive-analytical design and a quantitative survey method. The objective was to assess and analyze the attitudes of university students in Tehran toward the supportive role of the United States for Israel in recent conflicts, specifically in the Gaza Strip. The statistical population comprised all students enrolled in public and private universities in Tehran during the 2024–2025 academic year. From this population, a total of 387 complete and valid questionnaires were collected using stratified random sampling based on gender and academic degree. The data collection instrument was a researcher-developed questionnaire consisting of three sections: demographic information, attitudinal items regarding U.S. support for Israel on a five-point Likert scale, and a scale measuring perceptions of responsibility and policy recommendations, which was designed and localized by adapting international surveys such as PEW, Arab Barometer, and the Birzeit University poll. The face and content validity of the instrument were confirmed by expert judgment, and its reliability was evaluated as optimal with a Cronbach’s alpha coefficient of 0.88. Data analysis was performed using SPSS version 26 at two levels: descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, percentage, and

frequency) and inferential statistics (one-sample t-test, one-way analysis of variance, and Pearson correlation coefficient), while thematic content analysis was applied to the qualitative responses. All stages of the research were conducted in compliance with ethical principles, including obtaining informed consent from the respondents and guaranteeing the confidentiality of individual data.

Findings

The findings obtained from the analysis of the collected data from the statistical population, consisting of 400 students from universities in Tehran, are presented in this section. The research instrument was a questionnaire utilizing a five-point Likert scale, designed to assess attitudes toward the supportive role of the United States for the Israeli regime in the recent Palestinian war. The data were analyzed through descriptive statistics and inferential tests. Table 1 presents the mean and standard deviation of the five main items related to the students’ attitudes toward the role of the United States of America in the Gaza war. The responses were collected on a five-point scale ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”.

Table 2: General Index of Attitude Toward U.S. Support for Israel

No .	Item	Mean	Standard Deviation	Rank	Level of Agreement
1	U.S. support for Israel contradicts human rights principles.	4.31	0.88	1	Very High
2	The U.S. is a direct partner of Israel in the Gaza war.	4.18	0.93	2	High
3	U.S. obstruction in the Security Council to prevent investigating crimes.	4.06	1.02	3	Relatively High
4	U.S. policy is not based on justice.	3.79	1.11	4	Above Average
5	A more negative mental image of the U.S. after the war.	3.67	1.25	5	Average

According to Table 1, the respondents’ level of agreement with critical items regarding U.S. policies was high; the highest mean belongs to the item asserting that the U.S. role contradicts human rights principles, and the lowest mean (though still positive) relates to the change in mental image toward this country. The difference in the ranking of the means indicates a detailed analyzability of attitudes across various dimensions. Additionally, Table 2 presents the frequency distribution of responses to one of the key items of the questionnaire (Item No. 1), showing the percentage of responses across the complete Likert scale.

Table 3: Percentage Distribution of Responses to the Item “U.S. support for Israel contradicts human rights”

Response Option	Number of Respondents (n)	Percentage of Respondents (%)
Strongly Agree	171	42.8%
Agree	132	33.0%
No Opinion	47	11.8%
Disagree	38	9.5%
Strongly Disagree	12	3.0%
Total	400	100%

Approximately 76% of the respondents fall into the “agree” or “strongly agree” categories; this result emphasizes that the dominant discourse among students at Tehran universities is critically aligned against U.S. policies toward Israel, and in their view, this support stands in opposition to global human rights principles. At the end of the questionnaire, a section was included for qualitative (open-ended) responses, from which we extracted the conceptual content of the respondents in the form of major themes.

Table 3: Thematic Analysis of Open-Ended Responses (Qualitative Content Analysis)

Theme Code	Analytical Theme	Frequency/Occurrence	Sample Quote from Respondent
M1	The U.S. is complicit in Israel’s crimes	114 cases	“Without American weapons, Israel could not have committed aggression to this extent.”
M2	Double	97 cases	“Human

Theme Code	Analytical Theme	Frequency/Occurrence	Sample Quote from Respondent
	standards of Western human rights		rights only exist when they benefit the West.”
M3	Necessity of civil response or cultural boycotts	74 cases	“We must boycott American products.”
M4	Distrust in international organizations	62 cases	“In practice, the UN is merely a spectator to the crimes.”

The open-ended responses of the students demonstrate strong internal thematic coherence. The greatest concerns center around the U.S. role in arming Israel, the inconsistency between the West’s human rights claims and actions, and the inefficiency of international mechanisms. The high frequency of the theme M1 indicates the most emotional dimension of the critique (U.S. complicity in the war).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The findings of the present study indicate the formation of a negative and critical perceptual pattern regarding the role of the United States of America in the recent Gaza conflict among the academic community of Tehran. This pattern is explainable through the synergy of quantitative statistical data, concepts inferred from qualitative responses, and foundational theoretical frameworks such as postcolonial approaches, identity constructivism, and rights-based theories.

The high mean of the items on the Likert scale (above four out of five), along with the high frequency of critical themes such as U.S. arms complicity, the application of double standards in human rights, and the emphasis on cultural counter-strategies like boycotts or civil action, shows that the public perception of U.S. foreign policy contains deconstructive elements such as widespread distrust, institutional skepticism, and negative perceptions of great power involvement. This phenomenon is introduced in recent literature as “structured distrust,” which has also been emphasized by studies such as the field research of Hassan and Marwan (2023).

In support of this pattern, Ahmadi’s (2021) research on the “representation of U.S. power in the minds of Iranian students” also points to the existence of deep anti-American tendencies among the educated class,

accompanied by themes such as the “U.S. role in reproducing insecurity,” the “demoralization of power,” and “legal exceptionalism.” Similarly, in Rahimi’s (2022) study on the “complicity of the hegemon with settler colonialism,” the ideological and structural relationship between the United States and Israel in the systematic elimination of Palestinians is clearly explained.

The findings of the research work by Karimi and Hosseini (2020) analyzing the double standards of human rights in Western discourse also show that a significant portion of the Iranian academic community views U.S. foreign policy not only as contradicting international justice but also as a driver of legal instability in the global order. Furthermore, the analytical report of the Presidential Center for Strategic Studies (2021) on “public distrust toward international power structures” emphasizes that the public’s perception of the U.S. role is evaluated not from the standpoint of mere national interest, but based on its structural links with the occupying Israeli regime. This body of evidence indicates that critical attitudes toward the United States in the academic community are not temporary and emotional, but are shaped by a network of historical experience, media discourse, and formal academic education.

From an etiological perspective, data analysis shows that the critical attitude of the participants was not formed merely based on an emotional or reactive stance, but relies on historical lived experiences, media-academic perceptions, and an understanding of U.S. international policies. Within this framework, the United States is perceived not as a neutral actor, but as an active and deterrent agent against legal and diplomatic accountability pathways for Israel’s conduct. This secondary perception has been shaped and reinforced by factors such as the continuation of political vetoes in the Security Council, the ongoing financial-military support for Israel, silence regarding the operation known as “Al-Aqsa Flood,” and the repeated inaction of international institutions regarding humanitarian disasters.

In this study, the findings indicate the formation of a negative and critical perceptual pattern regarding the role of the United States of America in the recent Gaza conflict among the academic community of Tehran; a pattern that is explainable through the synergy of quantitative statistical data, concepts inferred from qualitative responses, and foundational theoretical frameworks such as postcolonial approaches, identity constructivism, and rights-based theories. The high mean of the items on the Likert scale (above four out of five), along with the high frequency of critical themes such as U.S. arms complicity, the application of double standards in human rights, and the emphasis on cultural counter-strategies like boycotts or civil action, shows that the public perception of U.S. foreign policy contains deconstructive elements such as widespread distrust, institutional skepticism, and negative perceptions of great power involvement; a phenomenon introduced in recent literature as

“structured distrust,” which has also been emphasized by studies such as the field research of Hassan and Marwan (2023).

The research of Rahimi and Sadeghi (2021) on the representation of U.S. foreign policy in international Persian-language media also emphasizes the “continuation of the hegemonic and anti-human rights image of the U.S.” in the academic discourse of Islamic countries. Furthermore, in the field study of Saffari (2020), which focuses on the perception of political science students at Tehran universities regarding U.S. performance on the Palestine issue, more than 75% of the participants described U.S. policies as “unreliable, biased, and supportive of the occupying regime.”

In the theoretical review of Ahadifar and Zamani (2019) using the constructivist approach, the U.S.-Israel alliance is analyzed as an “identity connection based on the discourse of Westernization and Western civilizational supremacy,” which leads to the exclusion of resistance discourses in the region.

In addition, the results of the content analysis of the reports of the Saba Public Opinion Polling Institute (2022), affiliated with the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB), show that in the years 2020 to 2023, public distrust toward the United States among the educated classes, including students of social sciences and communication, reached its highest level. This pattern aligns with the findings of the present study and interprets the existing negative perceptual pattern as being influenced by established discourses in the structure of education, media, and situational experiences, rather than an emotional phase.

Theoretically, three analytical levels can be distinguished in the formation of this perceptual pattern: first, the level of objective data, including instances such as geopolitical positioning, arming Israel, using the veto power, and imposing diplomatic blockades on the path of legal accountability; second, the identity-narrative level, in which the portrayal of the United States in the academic discourse and regional media as a force preserving the status quo and a strategic ally of Israel has played an effective role; and third, the level of lived experience and the value system of the respondents, which has been shaped based on justice-centeredness, opposition to structural colonialism, and sensitivity to human rights violations. These three synergistic layers create a perceptual construct in which U.S. foreign policies toward the Middle East are met with a critical and even demystifying view.

In terms of the practical implications of the research, the obtained results can be applied in three areas. First, in the field of the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran, these attitudes have the potential to be converted into social capital to legitimize anti-American/anti-Zionist international positions. Second, at the level of multilateral diplomacy and international law, these findings may be used as evidence based on public opinion in dealing with institutions such as the UN Human Rights Council, the International Court of

Justice, or the International Criminal Court. Third, in the cultural-informational sphere, identifying the mental patterns of the academic community can pave the way for producing independent content, developing the local media ecosystem, and promoting discourses relying on global justice and post-structured human rights.

The etiological analysis of the findings shows that the critical attitude of the respondents is not the product of emotional reactions, but the result of objective experiences such as Israeli military operations since 2023, repeated U.S. vetoes in the Security Council, and its ongoing financial and military support for Israel. The analytical level of the data is recognizable in three dimensions: the level of objective realities such as the veto power and weapons transfers; the level of represented discourses that establish the U.S. in the media and academic mindset as an ideological and pro-Israel actor; and the level of lived experience tied to the principles of justice-seeking, opposition to imperialism, and the rejection of double standards in human rights.

From the perspective of policy implications, the results of the study can have an impact in three areas: first, in Iran’s foreign policy, where these attitudes provide the possibility of building social capital to strengthen official positions in confronting Israel and the U.S.; second, in multilateral diplomacy, where these findings can be used as pressure tools based on public opinion in institutions such as the Human Rights Council and the International Criminal Court; and third, in the cultural-media field, with the aim of strengthening the resistance discourse, reproducing local critical identities, and developing rights-based discourses. However, it should be noted that the present study was limited to a specific sample population and is cross-sectional in terms of time; therefore, generalizing the results and inferring a causal relationship between public attitude and the foreign policy of powers requires broader comparative research and the use of longitudinal and multi-level designs in future studies.

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