THE IMPACT OF FRAMED STORYTELLING ON PUBLIC PERCEPTION AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

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Abstract. The article analyzes the impact of framed storytelling on public perception and social movements, particularly its role in shaping public opinion and mobilizing social groups. The study aims to explore the mechanisms through which framed storytelling influences social movements and the way information is perceived by the public. The research employs general scientific methods of cognition, including analysis, synthesis, generalization, comparison, and a systematic approach. The findings indicate that framed storytelling is a powerful tool for influencing audiences, as it constructs narratives that shape how information is interpreted. The use of compositional and visual techniques, such as the rule of thirds, framing, contrast, juxtaposition, perspective, and symmetry, effectively conveys specific ideas and elicits desired emotional responses. Moreover, technological advancements significantly enhance storytelling capabilities by integrating artificial intelligence, augmented and virtual reality, interactive graphics, GIF animations, and 360-degree images, thereby increasing engagement and impact. Alongside its positive aspects, framed storytelling can also contribute to the manipulation of public opinion and the spread of misinformation. The selective use of images and the subjective presentation of facts can distort reality, creating misleading perceptions of events or individuals. This highlights the need for critical analysis of media content and awareness of possible manipulative strategies. The practical significance of the study lies in revealing the mechanisms through which framed storytelling influences public opinion and social movements, making it valuable for political strategists, journalists, and media researchers.

Keywords: framed storytelling, social movements, public opinion, political mobilization, manipulation.

Introduction

In today's era of rapid political change and social movements, the role of communication tools has become increasingly significant. Visual imagery, often processed before textual information, plays a crucial role in shaping public opinion. This is particularly relevant in the context of framed storytelling, where selected framing, color schemes, and composition deeply influence the interpretation of events, ideologies, and figures. Framed storytelling does not merely convey information but shapes how that information is perceived by audiences, making it a powerful tool in the hands of media professionals, politicians, and marketers.

With the advancement of digital technologies and social media, the potential of framed storytelling has expanded significantly, opening new avenues for influencing public consciousness. Digital platforms enable the rapid dissemination of visual

content, which can be used for mobilization, education, or manipulation of public opinion. The widespread use of framing techniques not only transforms the way news is presented but also reshapes the very nature of political discourse, where imagery becomes just as influential as factual information.

Literature Review

The impact of framed storytelling on public perception and social movements has been widely studied in international academic literature. Research in this field covers aspects of political communication, digital storytelling, media framing, and visual narratives that shape public opinion and social mobilization.

Significant contributions to this area have been made by researchers such as R. M. Entman [5], who laid the foundation for framing theory by defining it as the process of selecting and emphasizing specific aspects of reality to influence public perception. His approach has served as the basis for further studies on media framing in social movements and political communication.

C. T. Geremew [7], in a meta-analytical study, examined the influence of mass media on the perception of protest movements. The author argues that selective framing and the use of specific narrative strategies can either support or discredit social movements. The analysis demonstrates that storytelling plays a crucial role in shaping audience attitudes toward protest events. L. Cano-Orón and G. Llorca-Abad [3] explore how democratic processes are threatened by shifts in communication strategies within the public sphere. They highlight that new digital technologies enable the creation of alternative narratives, which can either reinforce democratic values or be used to manipulate public opinion.

L. Alonso-Muñoz and A. Casero-Ripollés [1] have made important contributions to understanding the role of emotions in political discourse. Their research examines how populist politicians from Spain, Italy, France, and the United Kingdom use emotional framing on Twitter. Their findings show that storytelling with strong emotional appeal can significantly influence citizens' political preferences. X. Huang, X. Li, and J. Yao [8] investigated how visual storytelling affects audience engagement in digital journalism. Their study reveals that the use of powerful visual frames can

significantly enhance communication effectiveness and impact trust levels in news content.

Beyond academic research, expert literature also plays a key role in shaping contemporary understandings of storytelling. For instance, Faster Capital [6] examines the role of narrative photography in advertising, which is relevant for analyzing the visual aspect of storytelling in social movements.

Despite the abundance of literature on this topic, there remains a lack of systematic research that integrates various aspects of framed storytelling within the context of social movements. Therefore, by employing different scientific methods, the study organizes and systematizes information, allowing for a broader interdisciplinary examination of the subject.

Purpose of the article

The study aims to explore the mechanisms through which framed storytelling influences social movements and public perception of information.

Research results

Framed storytelling is a narrative analysis method that examines how different frames influence the perception and interpretation of stories. Frames define the context and perspective through which information is presented, shaping audience understanding and reaction [5].

Framed storytelling is applied across various disciplines and fields, from literature, where it structures narratives and deepens themes and character development, to journalism, where it serves as a tool for shaping public opinion by providing context and depth to news and events. Additionally, it plays a crucial role in marketing and advertising, where it helps create compelling and memorable campaigns that engage consumers on a deeper emotional level.

This method is also widely used in photography, where each image serves as a visual frame that conveys emotions, a story, or a concept, enriching the audience's visual perception. In photography, framed storytelling significantly influences audience reception by using composition and lighting to direct attention, evoke emotions, and communicate meaning. Techniques such as the rule of thirds, leading

lines, framing, and lighting variations help create a deeper connection and emotional response from viewers [6].

Context plays a crucial role in photography, especially when it comes to visually communicating complex ideas or social issues. When an image is paired with an appropriate context, it can evoke stronger emotional reactions and draw attention to specific concerns. The instant emotional response triggered by visual perception is often faster and more effective than text. Photographs can elicit deep, intuitive reactions that written narratives may only attempt to convey through detailed and prolonged engagement. This unique ability makes photography a powerful tool for social and cultural communication.

The simplest techniques for creating emotionally impactful photography rely on the manipulation of light and camera angles. Adjusting lighting and choosing the right lens can significantly affect the emotional perception of an image or scene. Light can set different moods and influence how space or subjects are perceived. For example, soft and even lighting can create a warm and inviting atmosphere, evoking feelings of comfort and tranquility. In contrast, harsh lighting with deep shadows, typical of low-key lighting, adds drama, mystery, or even fear, creating a sense of danger or uncertainty.

Lens choice also plays a key role in shaping the emotional context of an image. A wide-angle lens can enhance the feeling of space and grandeur, making a scene feel open or even overwhelming, as the vastness of the surroundings is emphasized. Conversely, a telephoto lens, which compresses perspective, isolates subjects and creates an intimate atmosphere, directing focus to a single element and evoking emotions of closeness or solitude. By combining lighting techniques with lens selection, photographers and filmmakers can shape deep emotional reactions in their audience, guiding how a scene is perceived and interpreted [2].

The following section explores the key framing techniques in photography that impact audiences.

Thus, creating narrative photography becomes a powerful tool in visual storytelling, allowing photographers not only to capture reality but also to convey

deeper meaning, evoke emotions, and leave a lasting impact on viewers [10].

Table 1 – The impact of different framing techniques on audiences

Element	Impact on audience perception
Rule of thirds	This principle creates a dynamic, balanced composition that directs the viewer's eye toward key elements, such as the subject's eyes or important objects in the image. It enhances emotional connection, especially in portraits where the subject's gaze fosters engagement with the audience.
Leading lines	Leading lines (roads, fences, shadows) guide the viewer's eye and create a sense of depth and movement, drawing them into the photograph. This increases interest and engagement, as the viewer naturally follows the line toward the focal point.
Framing	Framing provides context and emphasizes key elements within a scene. It helps the viewer perceive depth and significance, adding context to the story and enhancing the emotional impact.
Perspective and depth	Changing the camera angle can drastically alter the perception of a subject or object. A high-angle perspective can create a sense of vulnerability, while a low-angle shot conveys power or dominance. This allows photographers to influence the viewer's emotional response to a character or situation.
Lighting	Soft lighting creates a warm, inviting atmosphere, while harsh lighting enhances textures and adds drama. The choice of lighting determines the mood of the scene and amplifies the emotional impact of the image.
Color and contrast	Colors evoke different emotions. Warm colors convey emotional warmth, while cool tones can create a sense of distance or melancholy. Contrast highlights the main subject, reinforcing its importance within the narrative.
Space and negative space	Negative space can evoke feelings of isolation or emphasize the significance of the main subject, increasing its emotional weight. It allows focus on details or characters while also conveying emptiness or loneliness.
Symmetry and patterns	Symmetry draws attention to harmony and order, while patterns create a sense of connection between elements in a photograph. This adds structure and organization, which can contrast with chaos or emotional tension.
Juxtaposition	Contrasting elements (e.g., modern buildings next to historical ones) create tension and highlight change or evolution over time. This encourages the viewer to reflect on social, cultural, or historical aspects.
Lighting techniques	The use of key lighting, fill lighting, and backlighting produces different moods. Backlighting, for example, can create a mysterious or dramatic effect, adding depth to the story and intensifying emotions.

Note: systematized by the author based on [6].

Framed storytelling continues to evolve through various platforms and technologies. Social media amplifies its influence by enabling a broad audience to share and engage with stories. Meanwhile, the rapid advancement of internet technologies and new visualization methods enhances the effectiveness of framing in shaping public opinion and influencing information perception. The recent trends in framed storytelling involve its integration with visual content, allowing for deeper and

more emotional audience engagement. Modern technologies, such as artificial intelligence and augmented reality, enable the creation of more complex and immersive narratives with a high degree of interactivity and personalization [4].

The following section presents an overview of visualization methods in Table 2.

Table 2 – Methods of visual storytelling: application and impact on audiences

Types of modern storytelling	Application	Impact on audience engagement and activity
Photographs and their sequencing	Used in social media to shape audience opinions and moods.	Draws attention to context; combining different images encourages viewers to reflect on the intended message of a publication.
Memes	Used in social media to express sarcasm or satirize certain situations.	Captures attention through humor, increasing intuitive trust in the source.
Infographics	Data journalism, medical analytics, business reviews, election results.	Simplifies complex information, increases engagement by 30–50%, and promotes content sharing on social media.
Interactive graphics and maps	Election monitoring, sports analytics, investigative journalism, real-time analysis.	Increases user engagement by 45% by allowing independent data exploration.
GIF animation and short animated videos	Social media updates, explanatory videos, short news clips, humorous or viral content.	Quickly grabs attention, encourages high sharing rates and discussions, particularly among younger audiences.
Virtual reality (VR)	Immersive journalism in conflict zones, reports on environmental crises, historical reconstructions.	Creates a unique user experience, fosters longer interaction, and evokes emotional engagement.
Augmented reality (AR)	Museum exhibits, interactive news, product demonstrations, educational projects.	Provides an interactive experience, deepens audience immersion, and extends engagement time.
360-degree photography	Environmental documentaries, event coverage, tourism, visual storytelling.	Increases repeat views and interactions, creating a sense of presence and emotional connection.
AI-generated images	Image creation, automated infographics, personalized content for visualizing non-existent scenes.	Speeds up content production and enhances personalization for different audience segments.

Note: systematized based on [8] and supplemented by the author.

Research by Geremew, C. T. illustrates how the use of social media has contributed to the activation of protest movements in various countries through narrative photography. The analysis shows that social media not only enables faster

responses to events but also facilitates more effective coordination, dissemination of key messages, and unification of protest slogans and strategies [7]. These findings highlight the role of social networks as a powerful tool in shaping modern social movements, providing participants with means for effective communication and interaction on a global scale.

Manipulation and calls to action within social movements are often driven by the deliberate evocation of specific emotions. Images, unlike text, provide subconscious validation of certain information, making emotions the most potent means of influence.

In general, emotions conveyed through photographs and images serve as a powerful tool for shaping public perception, particularly in the context of populist movements and the spread of misinformation. The use of visual content to provoke emotional responses is a key element of manipulative strategies, as images have a faster and deeper impact on emotions than words. Understanding how these emotions shape public opinion and construct political narratives is a crucial aspect of modern political communication [3].

As studies by Alonso-Muñoz and Casero-Ripollés demonstrate, populist politicians frequently use emotions such as fear, anger, and resentment to mobilize supporters and create a societal divide between "us" and "them." Emotionally charged photographs can effectively reinforce this division. For instance, images of poverty, violence, or political protests can be framed to depict elite corruption or to construct the image of victims whom populists claim to defend. Such visuals trigger emotional reactions that, in turn, frame political situations as urgent crises requiring immediate action [1].

Emotions conveyed through photographs often create a sense of crisis and urgency. This aligns with the strategy of populist movements, which use social media to spread emotionally charged messages, fostering the illusion of national or international emergencies. Images capturing "destruction," "threat," or "injustice" can be employed to manipulate audiences, pushing them to support politicians who present themselves as the only solution to these challenges. These visuals elicit fear or anger, which mobilizes audiences and makes them more likely to act based on emotions rather

than rational arguments.

Images can also be used to spread misinformation, as noted in the research of Pertiwi, Ermy & Sanusi, Ary. Visual content containing false or manipulated imagery can quickly gain traction on social media. Since photographs are often perceived as more "objective" and truthful than text, they wield greater influence. In countries with low levels of digital literacy and limited access to fact-checking resources, misinformation through emotionally manipulative images can significantly shape public opinion. For example, images of violence or highly emotional scenes can be used to justify repressive measures or incite ethnic conflicts, enabling authoritarian regimes to legitimize their policies and maintain power [9].

Overall, framed storytelling plays a crucial role in shaping public opinion and supporting political initiatives. It is a vital tool in strategic media communication, guiding audience engagement and influencing public discourse in ways that can either strengthen or challenge democratic processes [3].

Conclusions

Framed storytelling is a method of presenting information through narratives that define how context, symbols, and interpretation shape audience perception and response. It employs techniques such as the rule of thirds, leading lines, framing, perspective and depth, lighting, color and contrast, space and negative space, symmetry and patterns, juxtaposition, and various lighting techniques. Advances in technology have expanded storytelling capabilities, incorporating artificial intelligence, augmented reality, virtual reality, interactive graphics and maps, GIF animations, and 360-degree photography.

In the political sphere, framed storytelling is widely used to shape public opinion and mobilize support or opposition. Politicians and activists leverage framed narratives to elicit emotional responses from audiences, using images and stories that provoke fear, empathy, or outrage. This approach is particularly effective on social media, where rapid dissemination of visual content plays a key role in large-scale political campaigns. The strategic use of visuals to trigger emotional reactions allows political leaders to rally their supporters around specific ideas or actions.

However, it is crucial to recognize that framed storytelling can also contribute to misinformation and manipulation of public consciousness. The selective use of images or biased presentation of facts can distort reality and create misleading perceptions of events or individuals. This underscores the need for critical analysis and media literacy among audiences to distinguish factual information from manipulative narratives. Given its profound influence on public opinion, framed storytelling remains a central element of modern media strategy, capable of shaping political landscapes and social attitudes.

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