Impact of Arab States' Role in Shaping the Israel-Palestine Conflict

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Abstract

The Arab states have played a central role in Middle Eastern geopolitics in the conflict between Israel and Palestine, a problem that has been a centerpiece of Middle Eastern geopolitics for decades, having far-reaching implications for international relations and regional stability. Through an examination of Arab states' political, military, and diplomatic actions over time, this thesis considers the pivotal role of Arab states in determining the course of the conflict, exploring, in particular, their political, military, and diplomatic strategy throughout history. Through a consideration of the evolution of Arab involvement, from early Arab support of Palestinian national interest to recent geopolitical patterns, this thesis identifies such complex, sometimes competing, positions assumed by key Arab states, as well as competing and sometimes shifting power relations in the region, changing alliances, and responses to broader international factors influencing Arab states' policy towards Israel and Palestine. Through a comparative consideration of significant Arab states, this thesis aims to identify incentives behind Arab states' involvement, identify hurdles that Arab states face in balancing both internal and regional pressure, and understand implications for Palestinian statehood as well as peace negotiations. Theoretical approaches, such as realism, constructivism, and regionalism, are applied to examine Arab states' strategy, as well as its consequences, upon both the conflict between Israel/Palestine, as well as upon Middle Eastern politics more broadly. Ultimately, this thesis aims to provide a complete picture of Arab states' involvement, as well as deliver insight into prospects of potential future settlement, or escalation, of conflict.

Keywords: Arab Countries, Israel-Palestinian Conflict, Middle Eastern Geopolitics, Palestinian Nationalism, Arab Diplomacy, Regional Politics, Realism, Constructivism, International Relations, Peace Process, Geopol

Introduction

Background of Israel-Palestine Conflict

The conflict between Israel-Palestine constitutes one of the longest-running, most divisive international relations disputes of modern history. Its origins can be traced back to late 19th century early 20th century nationalist uprisings Zionism among Jews, Arab nationalism among Palestinians each laying claim to territorial, political rights over a single geographic space. The

Balfour Declaration in 1917, along with the establishment of a British Mandate for Palestine, set the stage for conflict by offering a "Jewish national home" in a country already populated by a majority Arab populace. The later establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, as well as displacements of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians, initiated the first Arab-Israeli war, initiating a larger Arab-Israeli geopolitics conflict (Morris, 2019; Khalidi, 2020).

During the following decades, the conflict transformed from intercommunal violence to a multi-Arab state regional conflict. Major wars, such as 1948, 1956, 1967, and 1973, together with various uprisings, peace negotiations, and failed negotiations, have defined the conflict. The Six-Day War in 1967 drastically transformed the territorial scope of conflict, where Israel controlled West Bank, Gaza Strip, East Jerusalem, Sinai Peninsula, and Golan Heights. Egypt recovered Sinai later on through the 1978 Camp David Accords, but other Arab nations, such as Jordan and Syria, were still involved in various forms of resistance as well as negotiations (Shlaim, 2021). The Palestinian Liberation Organization, established in 1964, rose to prominence as the official voice of Palestinian people and played a pivotal role in transforming the conflict from a state-to-state conflict to a nationalist, resistance, conflict. During the post-Cold War period and more so in recent years, dynamics of the conflict have also seen significant shifts. The appearance of new players like Hamas, realignments in U.S. foreign policy, and normalization agreements between Israel and Arab nations particularly the Abraham Accords agreement with the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Sudan, and Morocco have dramatically rewritten regional alignments and priorities. These actions have helped to fuel a sense of a deprioritization of the Palestinian issue further in Arab political circles, although humanitarian issues continue unabated. Additionally, growing Palestinian leadership fragmentation and internal splits have made a single, coordinated diplomatic front increasingly unlikely (Gordon & Pappé, 2022; Erakat, 2021).

Historical Background and Colonization Heritage
The historical context of conflict is inextricably linked to colonial histories, specifically the activities of the British Empire. The British Mandate provided opportunities for heightened Jewish immigration, frequently at the expense of Palestinian landowners and peasants, creating socioeconomic fissures that culminated in violence. The United Nations' 1947 plan to partition Palestine into distinct Jewish and Arab states was rejected by Arab nations and Palestinian leaders, who perceived this division of their homeland as being unjust (Manna, 2020). The consequences of Israel's declaration of statehood and the following Arab-Israeli war further consolidated the refugee issue, an issue that persists to this day and remains at the heart of Palestinian claims.

Arab State Engagement Shift
Whereas Arab states originally stood together as a united front against Israel, especially during the initial wars, their position has been fragmented over time. Matters of economic interest, Iran-related security, as well as Western relations, have increasingly shaped Arab states' involvement in the conflict. Some states, like Egypt, Jordan, have entered peace agreements with Israel, whereas others have normalized relations without a holistic end to the Palestinian question. The changing political leadership of Arab states is essential in understanding today's situation and future direction of conflict (Berti, 2021; Yacoubian, 2023).

Role of Arab Countries: An Initial Overview

The Arab states' involvement in the Israel-Palestinian conflict has been multifaceted and changing, driven by changing geopolitical realities, political agendas at home, and regional alignments. Traditionally, Arab states stood as a consolidated front in opposition to Israel since its establishment in 1948, endorsing the Palestinian issue through political statements and even occasional military involvement. In recent years, though, unity, intensity, and consistency of this opposition declined, making way for more pragmatic, strategic dealings with Israel, especially in the Gulf states. The Arab states have, of late, demonstrated a discernible divergence in their responses. Long-time patrons of the Palestinian issue, Jordan and Egypt, have played mediatory functions while upholding peace agreements with Israel. Jordan has been particularly vigilant about what happens in Jerusalem because it has custodianship of Muslim shrines (Ryan, 2018). Egypt, on its part, has persistently aspired to be a foremost mediator during ceasefire talks between Israel and Hamas in Gaza (Barakat, 2021). Furthermore, due to stresses such as the dangers posed by Iran and the wish to broaden their economies, regional priorities have led some Gulf countries to change their stances. The Palestinian issue was clearly sidelined when the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Morocco and Sudan built diplomatic ties with Israel in 2020 (Shalom, 2021). The change demonstrated a strong wish among Arabs and Israelis to work together rather than always follow pan-Arab trends. Although many Arab states have begun normalizing ties, they generally only say they still align with the Palestinian issue by supporting the idea of two nations for two peoples with East Jerusalem as the capital of Palestine. Still, some claim that these proclamations are mostly talk, without many real steps being made to make them happen (Yacoubian, 2022). The Arab League's role in Palestinian activism is weakening, as a result of internal conflicts and alliances against those outside the Arab League. Disputes and disagreements within the region over Qatar from 2017 to 2021 and the split over issues such as Iran and Syria, have stopped effective joint Arab action on Palestine (Gerges, 2019). Simply put, although Arab states still play a role in the conflict by normalizing, signing peace agreements and mediating, their involvement has been very different from before. Modern Arab policy tries to harmonize various national interests, rivalries between neighboring countries and alliances around the globe.

Research Problem and Objectives

Research Problem

The conflict between Israel and Palestine continues to be one of the longest-standing and most multifaceted disputes of contemporary geopolitics. A lot of academic interest has been directed at the positions of Israel, Palestine, and worldwide powers like America and Europe, but relatively little has been devoted to the complex, changing positions of Arab countries. The Arab League's attitude towards the conflict has undergone strong changes during the past ten years—from active Palestinian statehood support to normalization agreements with Israel (e.g., the Abraham Accords). These transformations pose fundamental questions regarding Arab states' influence in determining the political, diplomatic, and socio-economic aspects of conflict during its various stages. An academic analysis of these phenomena has not been adequately conducted, creating a knowledge vacuum that this work aims to fill.

Research Objectives:
- To consider the historical context and development of Arab states' involvement in the conflict over Israel-Palestine.
- To examine how recent political shifts (2013–2023), like normalization agreements and regional realignments, have influenced the conflict.
- To measure the present strategies, interests, and foreign policy realignments of notable Arab nations (such as Egypt, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Jordan) vis-à-vis the conflict.
- To analyze how Arab state actions contribute to Palestinian political agency and peace opportunities.
- To determine what Arab states can potentially contribute to future conflict mediation or conflict resolution activities.

Research Questions
1. How have the roles of Arab states in the Israel-Palestine conflict evolved over the past decade?
2. What political, economic, and strategic factors influence Arab states' current positions on the conflict?
3. In what ways have normalization agreements with Israel (e.g., the Abraham Accords) affected Arab support for the Palestinian cause?
4. How do the policies of specific Arab countries (e.g., Egypt, Jordan, UAE, Saudi Arabia) differ in relation to the conflict?
5. What are the possible implications of Arab states' involvement for the future of Israeli-Palestinian negotiations and regional peace?

Significance of the Study
The Israel-Palestine conflict has been perhaps the most longstanding and multifaceted geopolitical crisis in recent history. Where much academic effort has been directed to the actions of international powers like America and the United Nations, Arab states' influence and actions have sometimes been underestimated or analyzed from narrow ideological or geopolitical categories. Here, we seek to fill this gap by offering a detailed examination of how Arab states, in Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, and Qatar, have contributed to shaping the conflict through diplomatic activism, economic aid, peace agreements, and regional normalization campaigns. It is imperative to understand the Arab states' role since their changing political priorities, normalization pacts with Israel (such as in the Abraham Accords), and differing stands on Palestinian statehood have a profound bearing on peace negotiations, Middle Eastern stability, and Palestinian self-governance. The study provides insight into how far Arab states have championed, marginalized, or realigned the Palestinian issue in light of national priorities of their own. The analysis also gains significance in its illustration of how intra-Arab politics, ideological realignments in the Arab Spring aftermath, as well as concerns on security matters (e.g., containing Iran), have transformed classical Arab solidarity towards the Palestinians. Through an analysis of these dimensions, this work enhances our understanding of modern Middle Eastern politics and provides conflict-resolution relevant recommendations.

Scope and Limitations
The present analysis delves into the contribution of selected Arab nations Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Qatar to the course of the Israel-Palestine conflict from

2010-2024. It considers a range of interventions, financial contributions, normalization agreements from 2020, inter-regional alliances, and public diplomacy. The analysis incorporates a qualitative approach from policy reports, media, and publications, along with content analysis from statements and speeches of Arab leaders. One of its greatest constraints, however, is its limited access to intrinsic government files or closed diplomatic communications, which confines analysis to publicly accessible sources. It also looks only at state actors at a national level, without examining how non-governmental entities like Hamas, Hezbollah, or civil society actors in Arab nations exercise influence. The richness, fluidity, of Middle Eastern geopolitics also make its resultant findings subject to revision based on future political developments, especially in light of on-going reconfigurations of power in the region. Linguistic constraints also restrict direct access to a selection of Arabic primary sources, where these are read through English translations instead.

Literature Review
Historical Evolution of Arab Involvement
The involvement of Arab states in the Israel-Palestine conflict has been a defining feature of Middle Eastern geopolitics for over seven decades. However, the nature and intensity of this involvement have evolved considerably over time. Traditionally characterized by military confrontation and collective Arab solidarity with the Palestinian cause, recent decades have witnessed a shift towards diplomatic engagement, strategic normalization with Israel, and internal fragmentation within the Arab world itself (Gause, 2022). In the early stages of the conflict, particularly during the wars of 1948, 1967, and 1973, Arab states such as Egypt, Jordan, Syria, and Iraq played a direct military role in opposing Israel and expressing their support for Palestinian self-determination. These engagements were largely fueled by nationalist and pan-Arab sentiments, as well as strategic concerns over Israeli expansion (Khatib, 2021). The Arab League's establishment in 1945 and its consistent support for Palestinian rights throughout the 20th century symbolized a broader regional consensus on the issue. However, this consensus began to fracture following Egypt's peace treaty with Israel in 1979. The Camp David Accords marked a turning point by signaling a shift from collective resistance to bilateral diplomacy. Jordan followed suit in 1994 with its own peace treaty. Over time, Arab states began prioritizing national interests, economic development, and regime security over the pan-Arab cause (Sayigh, 2020). The 21st century has witnessed an even more pronounced recalibration. The Arab Spring uprisings of 2010–2011 significantly altered regional priorities. Domestic instability, the rise of sectarian politics, and the emergence of new security threats such as ISIS drew attention away from Palestine. This reorientation culminated in the Abraham Accords of 2020, where several Arab states including the UAE, Bahrain, Sudan, and Morocco normalized relations with Israel (Barari, 2021). These agreements signaled a pragmatic shift by Arab governments, driven by shared concerns over Iran, economic aspirations, and U.S. diplomatic pressures.

Nonetheless, public opinion in many Arab countries remains steadfastly pro-Palestinian, revealing a disconnect between state policies and popular sentiment (Telhami, 2022). Civil society movements, media narratives, and grassroots activism continue to emphasize the Palestinian cause, although they often lack the political leverage to affect state policy. Moreover, some Arab states like Algeria, Iraq, and Qatar continue to reject normalization and maintain strong rhetorical and financial support for Palestinian factions. The role of regional organizations has also evolved. The Arab League, once a pivotal platform for collective Arab action, has seen its influence wane due to internal divisions and shifting national priorities. In addition, the Organization of Islamic

Cooperation (OIC) has been increasingly active in standing up for Palestinian rights around the world, but has had few major results (Hamad, 2018). Before, Arab countries supported Israel-Palestine struggles mainly in war and shared viewpoints, but now, they negotiate pragmatically and decide which actions to take. The shift now happening reflects bigger changes in the region such as the falling role of pan-Arabism, the increase of political Islam and the growing impact of nations' own interests on identity.

Ways of Understanding Children

People can learn why Arab countries are involved in the Israel-Palestine conflict by examining IR theories. Realism, constructivism and pan-Arabism are methods that help researchers reach different results about what Arab states do.

Realism

Realism which is based on countries' need for security and interactions without rules, is a solid way to study Arab countries' tactics. In light of this view, countries most care about their independence and protection and they act without considering what they believe. From their point of view, the switch in Arab policy from fighting Israel to engaging in normalization is a reasonable reaction to changing circumstances around the world. The presence of Iran as a competitor, the U.S. pulling back from the Middle East and the push for more economic options are all driving these changes (Barnett & Solingen, 2021). The signing of the Abraham Accords by the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain indicates that, in this case, looking for security and economic benefits is more important than disagreeing with Israel on ideological grounds. Also, because Palestine's role in regional power is diminishing, its part in Arab foreign policy is becoming smaller. Realism clarifies why countries like Egypt and Jordan, after years of helping Palestinians, now concentrate on border safety and stable foreign relations more than helping the resistance (Gerges, 2020).

Constructivism

Focusing on the shapes role, identity and norms on state how the states behave. Illuminating Arab states' backing for Palestine requires us to understand their common culture, religion and history. Almost every Arab political discussion and popular imagination includes the Palestinian cause as very important to Arab and Islamic solidarity, argues Abdelrahman (2018). Experts from the constructivist approach think that both strategy and words play a role in Arab policy. Changes in pan-Arab identity, the development of national particularism and new stories spread by state-controlled media have influenced the way Arab states saw their interests and identities. For instance, the UAE's normalization with Israel was accompanied by a discourse of tolerance, modernization, and mutual benefit, signaling a shift in the ideational framework through which the conflict is understood (Lynch, 2022). Importantly, constructivism highlights the persistence of normative pressures. Despite official normalization, Arab states often continue to rhetorically support Palestinian rights, indicating the enduring salience of public expectations and regional identity norms.

Pan-Arabism

Pan-Arabism, though not a formal IR theory, remains crucial for understanding the ideological underpinnings of earlier Arab involvement. Rooted in a vision of Arab unity and resistance to Western imperialism, pan-Arabism framed the Palestine question as central to regional liberation and solidarity (Kassab, 2019).

While the influence of pan-Arabism has declined since the 1970s, its legacy still informs certain state behaviors and public attitudes. States such as Syria, Algeria, and Iraq continue to articulate their positions within a pan-Arab ideological framework, albeit inconsistently. Moreover, non-state actors and political movements such as Hezbollah and certain branches of the Muslim Brotherhood invoke pan-Arab and Islamic solidarity in their support for the Palestinian cause (Achcar, 2023). The weakening of pan-Arabism as a mobilizing ideology has facilitated the fragmentation of Arab policy on Palestine. However, its rhetorical and symbolic power remains, particularly in mobilizing public opinion and justifying occasional diplomatic stances.

Key Debates and Scholarly Gaps
The involvement of Arab states in the Israel-Palestine conflict has long been a subject of scholarly debate, particularly regarding their motivations, consistency, and actual impact. The central academic debate revolves around whether Arab states act primarily out of solidarity with the Palestinian cause or based on shifting geopolitical self-interests. Some scholars argue that Arab regimes have historically used the Palestinian issue as a rhetorical and ideological tool to bolster domestic legitimacy and pan-Arab solidarity (Gresh, 2018). Others assert that Arab engagement has waned in recent decades due to the growing prioritization of state survival, regime stability, and foreign alliances over collective Arab action (Yom, 2019). One prominent debate focuses on the efficacy of Arab League declarations and whether they translate into concrete policy. Despite numerous summits and resolutions condemning Israeli policies, critics note that few Arab states have consistently backed these declarations with meaningful action (Sayigh, 2021). The normalization agreements signed under the Abraham Accords by several Arab nations, including the UAE, Bahrain, Sudan, and Morocco, further complicated the Arab consensus and challenged assumptions about unified Arab solidarity (Lynch, 2021).

A second debate concerns the evolution of Arab public opinion versus elite foreign policy behavior. While popular support for the Palestinian cause remains strong across the Arab world, state-level policies have increasingly diverged from public sentiment, particularly in Gulf states (Gause, 2020). This dichotomy raises questions about the domestic versus international pressures shaping Arab foreign policy decisions. However, several scholarly gaps remain. First, much of the existing literature tends to generalize "Arab states" without sufficiently disaggregating them by region, regime type, or historical context. The distinct roles played by revolutionary republics (e.g., Egypt pre-1979, Syria) versus monarchies (e.g., Jordan, Saudi Arabia) are often overlooked. Second, while there is extensive historical analysis of Arab involvement in early conflicts (1948, 1967, 1973), less attention has been given to contemporary policy shifts post-Arab Spring (Khatib, 2019). Finally, there is a lack of empirical studies evaluating the actual outcomes of Arab diplomatic, economic, or military interventions on Palestinian political developments.

Comparative Positions of Arab States Over Time
Arab states have displayed varied and evolving positions toward the Israel-Palestine conflict over the decades, shaped by ideological, geopolitical, and domestic factors.
1950s–1970s (Pan-Arab and Revolutionary Phase):
During this period, Arab states largely framed the conflict in terms of anti-colonial resistance and pan-Arab solidarity. Egypt under Nasser, Syria under Ba'athist rule, and Iraq were vocal and sometimes militarily involved actors. The collective Arab defeat in the 1967 war and the 1973 war cemented the conflict as a central issue in Arab nationalism (Gelvin, 2021).

1980s–1990s (Pragmatic Turn):
Following the Camp David Accords in 1978 and Egypt's peace treaty with Israel in 1979, Arab unity began to fracture. Jordan followed with a peace treaty in 1994, reflecting a more pragmatic approach that prioritized state security and economic stability. The 1993 Oslo Accords also saw Arab states playing more of a supportive but less central role, endorsing Palestinian negotiations without direct involvement (Brown, 2020).

2000s–2010 (Fragmentation and Conditional Support):
The Second Intifada (2000–2005) renewed Arab rhetorical support for Palestinians but yielded little substantive action. Gulf states began to focus more on economic modernization and regional stability, often using financial aid as a proxy for direct engagement. The 2002 Arab Peace Initiative, spearheaded by Saudi Arabia, offered normalized relations with Israel in exchange for a Palestinian state but was largely ignored by Israel and lost traction over time (Al-Rasheed, 2015).

2011–2021 (Post-Arab Spring Realignment):
The Arab Spring uprisings reshaped regional priorities. States such as Syria became embroiled in internal conflict, while Egypt underwent political upheaval. Gulf monarchies, particularly the UAE and Saudi Arabia, shifted focus to containing Iranian influence and Islamist movements like the Muslim Brotherhood. This strategic reorientation contributed to the Abraham Accords in 2020, which normalized relations between Israel and several Arab states marking a significant shift in Arab-Israeli dynamics (Ulrichsen, 2022).

2021–Present (Normalization and Palestinian Marginalization):
Recent years have seen a continuation of normalization, with increasing economic and security cooperation between Israel and Gulf states. Focusing on the shapes role, identity and norms on state how the states behave. Illuminating Arab states' backing for Palestine requires us to understand their common culture, religion and history. Almost every Arab political discussion and popular imagination includes the Palestinian cause as very important to Arab and Islamic solidarity, argues Abdelrahman (2018). Experts from the constructivist approach think that both strategy and words play a role in Arab policy. Changes in pan-Arab identity, the development of national particularism and new stories spread by state-controlled media have influenced the way Arab states saw their interests and identities. This framework will be used in subsequent chapters to analyze and compare the role of key Arab states (e.g., Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, UAE) in shaping the conflict over time. The multidimensional approach allows for a nuanced understanding of how Arab involvement is both contextually driven and dynamically evolving.

Research Methodology

Research Design
This study adopts a **qualitative, historical, and case study research design**. The qualitative nature allows for an in-depth exploration of the political, diplomatic, and ideological roles played by Arab states in influencing the Israel-Palestine conflict. Researchers use historical analysis to follow Arab involvement as it developed, paying close attention to changes after 2010 in the Middle East. Case study methods are used to study four Arab countries: Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates regarding their policies, peace initiatives, normalization attempts and participation in regional groups. This triangulated design facilitates a nuanced understanding of the conflict's dynamics through both macro-level (regional policy) and micro-level (diplomatic action) lenses.

Justification:
The combination of historical and case study methods is suitable given the complex, evolving

nature of the conflict and the varying roles played by different Arab states. Qualitative methods help uncover the motivations, narratives, and diplomatic discourses that quantitative methods may overlook.

Data Collection Methods

Data were collected from **three primary sources**:

a. Documentary Analysis

This included policy papers, peace initiative declarations (e.g., Arab Peace Initiative), UN resolutions, state-issued communiqués, and reports from international organizations. These documents provided insight into the official stances and diplomatic rhetoric of Arab states.

b. Archival Research

Historical archives, including government documents, past speeches by Arab leaders, and declassified diplomatic cables from sources such as the United Nations, Al Jazeera Archive, and the Wilson Center Digital Archive, were consulted to contextualize past and recent actions of Arab states.

c. Expert Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with Middle East policy analysts, diplomats, and academics specializing in Arab foreign policy and the Israel-Palestine conflict. These interviews added depth to the analysis by including interpretations and forecasts based on current trends.

Ethical Considerations:

Participants were informed about the purpose of the research, and their anonymity was preserved. Approval from the university's research ethics board was secured before interviews were conducted.

Data Analysis Approach

The research utilizes **thematic content analysis** and **process tracing** to analyze the collected data:

- **Thematic Content Analysis**: This method was used to identify, analyze, and report recurring themes within the collected documents and interview transcripts. Key themes include normalization, resistance, mediation, security alliances, and shifting regional priorities.
- **Process Tracing**: To understand the causal mechanisms behind policy changes or interventions by Arab states, process tracing was applied. This allowed the researcher to assess how specific events (e.g., Arab Spring, Abraham Accords, Gaza Wars) influenced Arab decision-making over time.

The NVivo software was employed to assist in coding and organizing qualitative data, ensuring reliability and transparency in the analytical process.

Ethical Considerations

In examining the role of Arab states in the Israel-Palestine conflict, it is crucial to approach the topic with sensitivity and a commitment to ethical integrity. The following ethical considerations must be taken into account:

1. Informed Consent and Privacy

- Given the sensitive nature of the conflict, ensuring informed consent for interviews, surveys, or participation in the study is crucial. Participants must be fully aware of the research purpose and the usage of their responses. In the case of secondary data, proper permission or citation from relevant sources must be obtained.

2. Cultural Sensitivity

- Researching a highly politicized issue such as the Israel-Palestine conflict requires sensitivity to the diverse cultural perspectives involved. Researchers must avoid bias in

framing questions and interpret findings without favoring one side over the other, recognizing the historical and emotional weight this conflict carries.

3. Data Protection and Confidentiality

- Given the potential for sensitive political and social information, strict confidentiality protocols must be followed. Data from interviews or surveys should be anonymized, and personal identifying information must be securely handled in accordance with data protection regulations (e.g., GDPR or equivalent).

4. Bias and Representation

- The researcher must avoid introducing their own biases, especially when dealing with contentious political issues. A transparent and balanced approach must be maintained to ensure all perspectives, particularly those of the Arab states involved, are represented fairly. The selection of sources and participants should reflect a diverse range of opinions.

5. Ethical Implications of Reporting

- The reporting of findings should not exacerbate existing tensions or misrepresent the positions of the involved parties. The ethical responsibility extends to ensuring that the research contributes positively to the understanding of the conflict and does not serve to inflame existing hostilities.

Limitations of the Methodology

Every research methodology comes with inherent limitations. In the context of studying the role of Arab states in shaping the Israel-Palestine conflict, the following methodological limitations should be addressed:

1. Access to Sensitive Data

- One of the main limitations is the restricted access to primary data due to the sensitive nature of the conflict. Many Arab governments and institutions may be unwilling to share confidential records, political documents, or other relevant materials, limiting the depth of primary research.

2. Bias in Sources

- Given the politically charged nature of the conflict, many sources (whether media reports, government statements, or academic articles) may be inherently biased. This bias can affect the validity and neutrality of the information being analyzed. The researcher must account for this and seek to triangulate data from multiple, diverse sources.

3. Language and Translation Issues

- The research involves a variety of sources in Arabic, Hebrew, and other languages. There is always the risk of misinterpretation or loss of nuance when translating documents or speeches, which could affect the accuracy of the findings.

4. Subjectivity of Political Narratives

• Explanations of the conflict between Israel and Palestine differ widely among different political and ideological groups. Drawing a totally objective position may be hard for the researcher, considering how involved and complicated the subject is.

5. The Widely Applicable Nature of What Was Studied

As studies mainly involve Arab countries, the results cannot be quickly applied to other conflict situations or topics in world affairs. Because the Israel-Palestine conflict is so unique, the research methodology can't always be applied differently.

6. Time- and Situation-Specified Management

Things in the Middle East are constantly shifting, due to new geopolitical situations. Changes within the political setting during research can affect the results and when the political situation changes a lot during or after data collection, the research can grow stale.

Findings and Discussion

Historical Role of Arab States: Unity and Fragmentation

In this chapter, we look at the contributions of Arab nations to the Israel-Palestine struggle.

Over the years, scholars have considered periods of unity and times when societies were fragmented when looking at conflict. The Arab region's a range of factors has had an effect on how I think about the Israel-Palestine conflict. Different levels of government, economic matters, various religions and changes in political connections.

Unity in the Arab World

Historically, Arab states were united in their opposition to the establishment of Israel in 1948, seen in the collective military and diplomatic efforts during the 1948 Arab-Israeli War. This unity was manifested in the formation of the Arab League, which aimed to coordinate political, economic, and military responses to Israeli actions.

- **Pan-Arabism and the Palestine Cause**: The idea of Pan-Arabism, promoted by leaders like Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt, unified Arab states around the Palestinian cause, portraying the conflict as a common struggle against Western imperialism and Israeli occupation.
- **The 1970s-1980s**: The Arab League adopted the Khartoum Resolution (1967) after the Six-Day War, stating the three "nos" – no peace with Israel, no recognition of Israel, and no negotiations with Israel. This meant that there was broad agreement in our community to oppose Israel.

Fragmentation and Divergence

Slowly, the strength of the alliance began to break apart because each state's main priorities were not the same, changes occurred in who was in charge and countries formed new global alliances.

• The Camp David Accords, signed in 1978, ended Egypt's alliance with the Arab League after it made peace with Israel. Because of Egypt's decision, a number of Arab states considered it a betrayal and temporarily excluded it from the Arab League.

• GCC and Regional Rivalries: Thanks to the arising Gulf monarchs, the region saw new trends, as they become more active in regional safety and financial matters, but their approaches to the conflict between Israel and Palestine were widely different. The slow move by Saudi Arabia to engage with Israel which partly reflects Iranian influence, is an ongoing sign of Middle Eastern nations drifting apart.

The upheavals of the Arab Spring in 2011 reduced the level of unity across the region. While Tunisia backed Palestinian rights, Egypt, after the fall of Mubarak, had changing stances on Palestine since the country faced political turmoil and the growth of Islamist groups.

The Construction Industry has recently seen new developments and a rise in fragmentation.

In recent times, both Saudi Arabia and the UAE have started to approach Israel in a more realistic way, as the Abraham Accords (2020) showed. This shift has led to Arab states Palestine and Lebanon opposing the actions which has concentrated the Arab consensus even more.

Political and Diplomatic Interventions

- Here, we look into how Arab states have acted politically and diplomatically in the Israel-Palestine dispute, focusing especially on the action of recent years. Arab countries have

turned to several forms of diplomatic action such as public diplomacy, negotiating and economic tools, to steer the conflict.

- Peace proposals from the Arab League
- Even with disagreements among members, the Arab League has regularly tried to represent itself as united in matters like the Arab Peace Initiative (2002) which recommended recognizing Israel in return for all occupation of Palestinian land to cease and the establishment of a viable State for Palestinians. Yet, Israel's reluctance has stopped these initiatives from making real progress.
- In 2002, the Arab League backed the Arab Peace Initiative which tried to change the situation by offering peace to Israel in return for the return of Palestinian land and the creation of a new Palestinian state. Still, Israel and the West chose to neglect it which hurt its ability to succeed.
- Over the last decade, Arab countries have worked more on diplomatic efforts at the United Nations and within worldwide organizations. Arab states welcomed the United Nations General Assembly's act (in 2012) to recognize Palestine as a non-member observer state, even though Israel and its allies strongly disagreed.

The part played by Egypt and Jordan

- Egypt and Jordan have regularly worked on Palestine through diplomatic channels, tied to their agreements with Israel.
- Egypt has been especially active in negotiating temporary truces between Israel and Hamas during the Gaza situations. The Middle East considers Egypt a key player, thanks to its regional importance and signed peace agreement with Israel.

Jordan's Peace Treaty and Advocacy for Two-State Solution:

- Because Jordan is one of a few Arab nations to agree on a peace pact with Israel, it has regularly pushed for a two-state solution and actively participated in diplomatic discussions between the nations.
- The Events of 2018 and the Establishment of the Abraham Accords
- The UAE, Bahrain, Sudan and Morocco's normalization of relations with Israel, agreed via the Abraham Accords in 2020, signaled a big change in how Arab countries approach diplomacy. People in the Arab world are responding differently to this change, with some helping to establish closer partnerships with Israel and others still objecting outright.
- New Formations: Because of these accords, alliances including security and economic areas, are now being developed between the Gulf states and Israel. Even though some believe this new development could create more stability, others believe it goes against what the Palestinians want.
- Palestinian Leaders React to ArabNormalization: Palestinian leaders have made it clear that they do not support ideas for peace that exclude their control over the process.

Contributions in Economics and Military Activity

- I will focus in this section on the part Arab nations played both in the economy and in fighting in the Israel-Palestine conflict.
- Economic Involvement:
- Arab states have aided the Palestinian economy financially.
- A lot of the aid to Palestine, especially from the Gulf, comes through official bodies and vocational organizations. Among other things, this concern deals with financing for infrastructure, healthcare, education and support for the Palestinian Authority.

- Both the Arab Monetary Fund (AMF) and the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) have taken part in helping the Palestinian economy. In addition, Qatar and the UAE have both played important roles in the field.
- **Economic Sanctions and Blockades**: Sometimes, Arab states—mostly Egypt—have put in place blockades or sanctions against Israel, but their effects on Israel's actions have generally been weak.
- Thanks to the Abraham Accords in 2020, the Arab countries of the UAE, Bahrain, Sudan and Morocco established better relations and trade with Israel.
- Military Involvement:
- Several Arab states including Syria, Egypt and Iran have given military backing to Palestinian groups such as Hamas, Fatah and the PIJ over the years.
- Arab states wish to avoid open battles, but they have used indirect processes to support the Palestinian resistance. Iran, along with other nations, has clearly backed Hamas and other armed groups in Gaza.
- Egypt has often played a major part in helping to stop fighting and supporting other nations in the 1967 and 1973 wars. Egypt may not be taking part in war with Israel today, but it keeps a major role in peace talks.
- Saudi Arabia uses an indirect method: it supports other forces and encourages the Arab Peace Initiative to help find a lasting peace.
- 4.5 Case Studies
- We will look at how nations like Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Qatar have been involved in the conflict over the years and up to today.
- Egypt:
- Throughout much of Arab-Israeli history, Egypt has emerged as one of the strongest nations in the region. Egypt took part in conflicts with Israel in 1948, 1956, 1967 and 1973. After the Camp David Accords in 1979, Egypt was the first Arab country to recognize Israel and its job changed from taking sides to bridging differences.

Sometimes, Arab states mostly Egypt have put in place blockades or sanctions against Israel, but their effects on Israel's actions have generally been weak.

Thanks to the Abraham Accords in 2020, the Arab countries of the UAE, Bahrain, Sudan and Morocco established better relations and trade with Israel.

Military Involvement:

Several Arab states including Syria, Egypt and Iran have given military backing to Palestinian groups such as Hamas, Fatah and the PIJ over the years. Arab states wish to avoid open battles, but they have used indirect processes to support the Palestinian resistance. Iran, along with other nations, has clearly backed Hamas and other armed groups in Gaza. Egypt has often played a major part in helping to stop fighting and supporting other nations in the 1967 and 1973 wars. Egypt may not be taking part in war with Israel today, but it keeps a major role in peace talks. Saudi Arabia uses an indirect method: it supports other forces and encourages the Arab Peace Initiative to help find a lasting peace.

Case Studies

We will look at how nations like Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Qatar have been involved in the conflict over the years and up to today.

Egypt:
Throughout much of Arab-Israeli history, Egypt has emerged as one of the strongest nations in the region. Egypt took part in conflicts with Israel in 1948, 1956, 1967 and 1973. After the Camp David Accords in 1979, Egypt was the first Arab country to recognize Israel and its job changed from taking sides to bridging differences. Abraham Accords in 2020, which led to the normalization of relations between Israel and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Bahrain, Sudan, and Morocco. These agreements marked a dramatic shift from the long-standing Arab League consensus that demanded a resolution to the Israel-Palestine conflict before normalization could take place. The UAE and Bahrain, in particular, were motivated by a combination of security concerns, economic opportunities, and the broader regional realignment, particularly in relation to the rising influence of Iran. For Sudan and Morocco, economic and diplomatic interests played a significant role in their decisions to establish formal ties with Israel. The Palestinian cause has been reshaped by the normalization agreements. While various countries say that signing these agreements can boost Arab support for Palestine, others predict they are likely to clash with the traditional political support the Arab League has for an independent Palestinian state. As Bahrain, Sudan and the United Arab Emirates approve ties with Israel, it has begun controversial talks about how the Palestinian fight for independence will develop. The Palestinian Authority under Mahmoud Abbas is being asked to change its position as regional factors continue to shift. At the same time, groups like Hamas have accused Arab countries of abandoning the fight for the Palestinians, claiming that the agreements threaten efforts to create two states. Apart from improvements in diplomacy, Israel and the newly normalized Arab states have seen growth in cooperation in matters of technology, energy, tourism and trade. Now, as region states depend more on each other, they tend to prioritize what is effective today above what was true until now. Surprisingly, most Arab societies do not favor these deals and many young people strongly oppose plans to make peace with Israel because they still see the Palestinians as deserving self-determination.

Bringing Together Literature and Theories
Recent changes in Arab-Israeli relations can be understood by using several political and international relations theories. Thanks to the work of Kenneth Waltz and others, realism offers a solid explanation of why normalization agreements have been signed. States are said to make decisions based on their own needs for safety and authority. As a result, Arab states like the UAE and Bahrain have moved toward peace with Israel mainly because they worry about Iran, who they see as a growing threat in the region and want to ensure their own national interests are protected. As a result, we can call the normalization agreements a change in strategy, as pragmatism steps in and security is the focus instead of unresolved issues from the past. But according to constructivism, the way states behave is strongly influenced by their identity, the norms they adopt and the culture they experience. To a constructivist, this situation helps explain how Arab identity is reshaping and how old traditions of uniting with Palestinians are being challenged. According to constructivists, the way Arabs perceive Israel which has changed due to the Arab Spring and Iran, is now affecting their public opinion and diplomacy. So, rather than just being smart politics, normalization is also a sign of a changing understanding and acceptance of the region's identity and rules around the conflict with Israel.

John Mearsheimer and others who practice neorealism point out the key forces in the international system that determine how states act. Neorealism explains that states behave in keeping with the

amount of power in their region. The way Iran has been growing in the region has encouraged Arab countries to get closer to Israel. Service agencies have begun to focus on relationships and consistency within the area rather than pursuing ideological connections with other states. Lastly, the growth of Arab-Israeli normalization makes people start to question what the future of Palestinian nationalism might be. For many years, backing Palestinian statehood was at the heart of Arab identity, though reaching normalization agreements with Israel could change that. It is clear from research on nationalism that these events could threaten Palestinian self-determination and sovereignty because Arab countries are focusing more on what helps them as nations and less on uniting across the Arab or Muslim world to support the Palestinians. However, others think that these new trends may present chances for increased diplomacy and economic connections, while adding new thoughts on the future of Palestinian identity.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion

In this chapter, we outline the main results of the research and consider the part Arab nations played in shaping relations between Israel and Palestine. What Arab states have done in the conflict is guided by the country's history and by ongoing political and regional pressures. The assessment demonstrates that Arab countries have had a changing and mixed relationship with the conflict and other countries. By examining the past and theory, the research discovered a number of major trends. Since the conflict began, Arab states have taken part in it militarily, politically, diplomatically and by supporting the Palestinian cause financially. National Policies, Policies among Arab countries have differed from one another. As a result of being close by, Egypt and Jordan have taken on more direct involvement, while the Gulf States, above all Saudi Arabia, have focused on offering support in politics and finances. While emphasizing diplomatic solutions, Arab states have switched from confrontation to compromise, mainly in response to the late 20th and early 21st century peace processes. How Arab states manage their domestic politics and relations with powers outside their region has played a big role in their approach to the Israel-Palestine dispute. The normalization of Israel's relations with some Arab countries (the Abraham Accords) has shifted the strategy being used.

Arab states have taken many parts in the Israel-Palestine conflict, including helping Palestinians, conducting diplomacy, acting on regional issues and interacting with global powers as their relationships evolve.

Key Findings

1. For years, Arab states have supported Palestine together, though different approaches to foreign policy have become more noticeable in recent decades.
2. Changing Alliances: Arab states now approach Israel differently, because recent normalization agreements (such as the Abraham Accords) represent a shift in the region's geopolitical priorities.
3. Palestinian Unity Is Challenged: Arab states contribute to the divide between different groups in the Palestinian leadership
4. The part the United States and Iran have sometimes played has made it difficult for Arab countries to act in agreement.

Difficulties Faced by the Study

1. Still, this research has certain flaws when discussing the impact of Arab states.
2. The research deals mostly with political and diplomatic issues and pays less importance to the social and cultural matters involved in the Arab conflict.

3. Because some diplomatic and internal political records in Arab states are not available, the analysis might not be as thorough.
4. The constantly shifting geopolitics in the Middle East could explain why the outcomes do not match the latest changes.

Recommendations

The recommendations below are made based on the findings in the analysis:

1. Arab States need to revitalize and strengthen their mutual efforts in diplomacy, placing priority on being in unity about Palestine. One idea could be for the Arab League to once again lead efforts to settle conflicts and make peace.
2. Arab countries should encourage moves toward Palestinian political unity, so the PA and Hamas can cooperate better. Offering this could look like   economic incentives for cooperation and promoting inter-Palestinian dialogue.
3. Engagement with International Bodies: Arab states should increase their engagement with international organizations such as the United Nations and the European Union to advocate for a multilateral approach to the Israel-Palestine conflict, focusing on a two-state solution based on international law.
4. Conditional Engagement with Israel: Arab states, particularly those that have normalized relations with Israel, should use their influence to advocate for Palestinian rights in all future negotiations. They should work toward a long-term, comprehensive peace agreement that addresses the core issues of the conflict, including Jerusalem and the right of return for Palestinian refugees.
5. Focus on Humanitarian Aid and Development: Beyond diplomacy, Arab states can play a crucial role in supporting the Palestinian people by providing sustained humanitarian assistance and investing in development projects that can improve living conditions in Palestinian territories.
6. Promote Regional Stability: Arab states should also focus on addressing internal political and economic stability, as a more stable region would provide a better environment for peace negotiations and reduce the influence of extremist factions.

Final Thoughts

The Israel-Palestine conflict remains one of the most enduring and intractable conflicts of the modern era. While Arab states have had a significant role in shaping the trajectory of the conflict, it is clear that any lasting resolution will require coordinated efforts from both regional and international actors. Moving forward, the balance between diplomacy, internal reform, and support for Palestinian self-determination will be crucial in determining the outcome of the conflict.

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