

Research Article

Narrative and Operational Communication on X: A Content Analysis of the Global Sumud Flotilla's Transnational Activism for Palestine

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Abstract

This study examines the social media used in the Global Sumud Flotilla social movement within the framework of transnational activism. Prior studies have not clearly elucidated the social media used in the Global Sumud Flotilla campaign. This research uses qualitative methods and qualitative content analysis to examine social media content about the Global Sumud Flotilla. Crosstab and word cloud analyses in NVivo 12Plus were used to qualitatively examine primary data from the official X account. The findings reveal a communication duality: 31.58% of the material focused on operational logistics (“Mobilization” and “Update Tracking”), while 68.42% emphasized narrative construction (“Rising Voice” and “Share Information”) to cultivate unity. This illustrates digital “connective action”, where multilingual hashtags and culturally pertinent expressions such as Sumud bypass governmental intermediaries to aggregate knowledge and organize actionable projects. Social media is essential in transforming scattered internet compassion into concrete physical endeavor. This research is constrained by its exclusive focus on textual analysis on a single platform (X), neglecting the algorithmic differences on visual platforms such as Instagram or TikTok. Future investigations should use a multi-faceted methodology that integrates internet ethnography, volunteer interviews, and extensive data analytics.

Keywords: Connective Action, Global Sumud Flotilla, Palestine, Social Media Activism, Transnational Activism

INTRODUCTION

This article explores digital activism in the context of the humanitarian crisis, specifically the Global Sumud Flotilla. Social media is amplifying humanitarian issues, as seen in Gaza and other countries in the Middle East. The blockade of logistics by Israel has made the shipping of medical supplies and volunteers to the Gaza Strip impossible. To challenge this situation, the Global Sumud Flotilla is becoming a massive, civilian-led maritime solidarity movement worldwide to deliver essential humanitarian aid. Originally from the Arabic word Sumud, meaning steadfastness, this independent coalition formed in July 2025 through grassroots

collaboration worldwide (Calibeo, 2024; Nanayakkara et al., 2025; Suhab et al., 2026). With this massive campaign, the Spring 2026 shows the Initiative expanded drastically, involving about 70 vessels carrying over 1,000 diverse participants including volunteers, environmentalists like Greta Thunberg, and international journalists representing more than 70 nations (Al Jazeera, 2026). Setting sail from Mediterranean ports like Barcelona, Marseille, and the Marmara, the flotilla aims to transport critical supplies, such as food, medical supplies, and other necessities, directly to Palestinian sovereignty over the water, with the route from the Mediterranean Sea into Palestine (Al Jazeera, 2026). In another situation, this mission faced several civilian vessels in international waters, with multiple volunteers and journalists from other countries, like Indonesian humanitarian volunteers, triggering widespread global condemnation and intense diplomatic demands for their immediate release (Al Jazeera, 2026).

The Global Sumud Flotilla was born out of global grassroots efforts to challenge the horrific blockade that prevents aid, medical supplies, and volunteers from entering the Gaza Strip. The military interception and boarding of several civilian ships led to the arrest of foreign volunteers and journalists, which provoked worldwide popular anger and impassioned diplomatic demands for their prompt release. The communication information analyzed in this work was generated in real time during the active deployment, transit, and interception of the Spring 2026 mission. A significant case study in current digital activism and connected action paradigms is the campaign's official X account in this vital operational context.

The site created a direct digital public sphere, bypassing traditional media gatekeepers and institutional censorship and allowing users to document human rights atrocities in real time. The account was an important empirical focus as it combined four strategic roles during a crisis: establishing narrative credibility, facilitating rapid information sharing, encouraging global mobilization efforts, and conveying real-time operational notifications, such as vessel locations and emergency alerts. Bibliometric analysis also reveals a high concentration of academic literature on structural politics in the Middle East, but digital activism associated with this maritime movement remains underexplored. This official account is thus critical to understanding how live social media platforms are used to coordinate high-risk physical actions. Figure 1 contains the facts related to the Global Sumud Flotilla.

Figure 1. GLOBAL Sumud Flotilla Ports and Tracking



Source: globalsumudflotilla.org (<https://globalsumudflotilla.org/tracker/>)

The visualization of collective action represents a fundamental paradigm shift in modern social movement scholarship, moving away from classic models of resource mobilization toward “connective action” (Ferré-Pavia & Brown, 2025; Lobera & Portos, 2021; Spann et al., 2022). While traditional modes of collective action relied heavily on formal institutional hierarchies such as labor unions and established advocacy groups that required top-down coordination, strict ideological discipline, and high membership costs, digitally mediated mobilization relies on fluid, peer-to-peer networks. At the core of this transformation are individualized action frames, exemplified by viral hashtags such as #BlackLivesMatter or #FridaysForFuture.

These personalized frames let individuals weave their unique narratives into broader, shared public causes without formal institutional affiliation. By leveraging platforms like X, Instagram, TikTok, and WhatsApp, contemporary movements drastically lower the transaction costs of participation. These digital networks act as decentralized organizational backbones relying on coordinating large-scale public protests without reliance on official leadership or institutional sponsorship. Furthermore, digital public spheres allow marginalized populations and youth-led movements to project their demands globally, bypassing the gatekeeping mechanisms and censorship historically imposed by state-controlled and traditional media outlets (Amoedo, 2021; Ivanenko, 2022; Kim, 2020; Roman, 2020). Consequently, civic participation shifts from passive spectatorship to active, real-time engagement that continuously reshapes the boundaries of public discourse.

Digital media infrastructure has fundamentally redefined transnational advocacy networks by eroding geographical boundaries and accelerating cross-border mobilization. Modern literature highlights how user-generated content, localised hashtags, and real-time viral livestreams allow local crises to permeate international consciousness instantly. This hyper-connectivity fosters transnational empathy, creating fast-reaction solidarity networks that can rapidly mobilize resources, crowdsourced funding, and volunteer efforts across borders. By democratizing access to real-time information, digital tools force mainstream news organizations and international governing bodies to acknowledge unfolding humanitarian catastrophes that might otherwise be ignored or suppressed by conventional media gatekeepers. In doing so, transnational digital advocacy actively shifts the “Overton window”, applying persistent reputational pressure on corporations and national governments while cultivating a globalize humanitarian conscience that is increasingly vital for 21st-century social justice initiatives (Dencik & Wilkin, 2020; Wood, 2022).

Low-effort digital actions include sharing a graphic or altering a profile picture. However, this hyper-connected ecosystem introduces profound structural vulnerabilities. Transnational advocacy networks must navigate significant external threats, including state-sponsored disinformation campaigns, algorithmic polarization, and commercial platform mechanics (Odriozola et al., 2022; Spallaccia, 2020). Because platform algorithms frequently prioritize sensationalism and outrage

over nuanced geopolitical context, digital advocacy networks are continually exposed to manipulation, ideological fragmentation, and volatile shifts in public attention.

Scholarship on digital activism around Palestine and Gaza highlights both the transformative, democratizing potential and the severe structural limitations of contemporary online mobilization. Within this context, platforms such as X, Instagram, TikTok, and WhatsApp serve as critical counter-public spheres, enabling local actors and citizens to bypass traditional media gatekeeping and document human rights violations in real time (Banerjee & Kankaria, 2022; Ciszek, 2020). Through strategic deployment of localized hashtags, direct user-generated reporting, and uncensored livestreams, Palestinian activists and global supporters turn localized suffering into unified, international solidarity campaigns. This real-time documentation shifts the broader narrative from passive victimhood to active, decentralized bearing of witness, cultivating an international humanitarian conscience and challenging entrenched political narratives globally.

Nevertheless, digital activism concerning Palestine and Gaza operates within a highly contested and hazardous digital infrastructure. Researchers emphasize that these digital mobilization efforts face acute vulnerabilities, including aggressive platform-level content restrictions, algorithmic suppression, shadow-banning, and state-sponsored digital repression (Carvalho, 2025; Cheng et al., 2024; Volk, 2022). Furthermore, targeted misinformation tactics and state-backed surveillance routinely undermine movement coherence, showing that while digital spaces provide an unprecedented platform for expression, they remain subject to systemic power dynamics and corporate-algorithmic controls.

A central focus of modern social movement literature is the complex, dynamic relationship between online digital communication and material, and offline collective action. Scholars frequently debate the true efficacy of digital dissent, contrasting the perils of "slacktivism" with the genuine capacity for structural political reform (Ferré-Pavia & Brown, 2025; Lobera & Portos, 2021; Spann et al., 2022). Critics argue that low-effort digital actions such as retweeting slogans, altering profile pictures, or sharing infographics often function as performative gestures that satisfy individual moral impulses without requiring personal political risk or achieving concrete systemic change.

Conversely, proponents emphasize that digital networks serve as the indispensable logistical foundation for physical mobilization, directly coordinating actual street demonstrations, economic boycotts, and legal advocacy campaigns. Digital communication accelerates collective consciousness, transforming individual grievances into unified global movements like Black Lives Matter, Iranian women's rights protests, and pro-Palestinian solidarity actions. However, a significant limitation of digitally mediated protest is its difficulty in translating rapid online momentum into long-term institutional negotiation, leadership accountability, or policy lobbying. Because connective action relies heavily on platform algorithms, trending hashtags, and organic sharing, movements are uniquely vulnerable to rapid attention decay and online polarization. Consequently, contemporary literature stresses that while digital platforms democratize initial protest mobilization,

bringing about lasting socio-political change requires hybrid strategies that bridge immediate online connectedness with sustained, long-term offline organizational persistence.

However, social media, with its unprecedented speed, global reach, and viral amplification, depends on digital media and therefore has inherent strategic limitations. Digitally mediated demonstrations often burst into the international scene but may, over time, struggle to build political coherence, leadership responsibility, and sustain institutional negotiation. Because connective action relies on platform algorithms, trending hashtags, and organic peer sharing to maintain momentum, movements are especially susceptible to rapid attention decay, online polarization, and platform-level content restriction or censorship. Digital mobilization has the democratic ability to mobilize collective anger. Still, the path from that instant digital energy to long-term policy change usually requires a hybrid strategy that bridges short-term online connectedness and long-term organizational persistence.

Modern literature critically examines the viability and vulnerabilities of internet-mediated protest, despite the democratic potential of these virtual spaces. Researchers note that these movements often struggle to translate online conversations into long-term policy lobbying or institutional transformation, even though digital communication technologies lower barriers to entry and accelerate mobilization. Additionally, new research highlights the serious external risks that decentralized networks must contend with, such as state-sponsored digital repression, algorithms that encourage polarization, and targeted misinformation tactics intended to undermine movement coherence. As a result, the emphasizes emphasis that although the digital era has democratized the early phases of protest, it also creates intricate structural obstacles to achieve long-lasting socio-political change (Carvalho, 2025; Cheng et al., 2024; Volk, 2022).

A systematic bibliometric search in Scopus built a foundational map of current academic discourse. Scopus served as the primary source for VOSviewer co-occurrence mapping because of its rigorous peer-review curation standards, comprehensive social science coverage, and standard bibliographic metadata needed for algorithmic cluster visualization. To support a robust, argumentative literature review and avoid single-database bias, this quantitative baseline is complemented throughout the study by qualitative synthesis of interdisciplinary literature across broader academic databases. (TITLE-ABS-KEY (“social movement” OR “Movement” OR “social media activism” OR “digital activism” OR “online activism”) AND TITLE-ABS-KEY (“Middle East conflict” OR “Gaza” OR “Palestine”)) AND PUBYEAR > 2019 AND PUBYEAR < 2027 AND (LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA , “SOCT”)) AND (LIMIT-TO (LANGUAGE , “English”)) AND (LIMIT-TO (DOCTYPE , “ar”)) There are 432 documents found in the Scopus database. Figure 2 explains VOSviewer analysis.

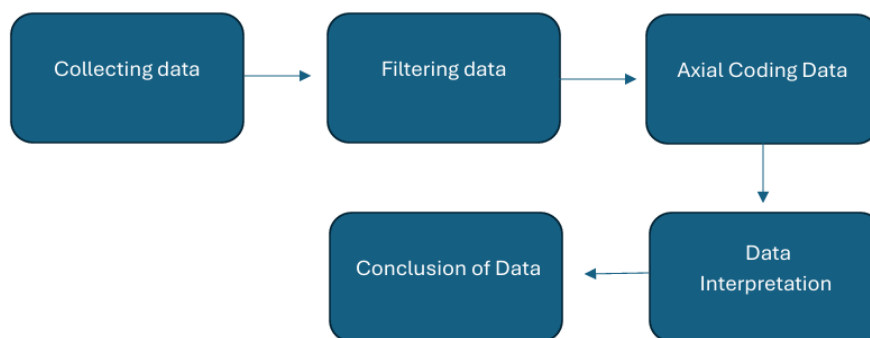
Figure 2. Density Visualization features of VOSviewers Analysis

Based on previous studies in the Scopus database, activism has become a growing research theme in recent years, but research on the Global Sumud Flotilla remains limited. This research analyzes the Global Sumud Flotilla as Social Media Activism in the social media dimension, based on Themes, Narration, content, and the message that drives the movement. This research seeks to answer the following research questions: What communication functions characterize posts published by the official Global Sumud Flotilla X account during the specified study period? What narrative frames, keywords, and multilingual hashtags are used to construct solidarity and encourage mobilization? How do these communication practices reflect the mechanisms of connective action and transnational advocacy?

METHOD

This research uses a qualitative method, focusing on the Global Sumud Flotilla as a social movement in the digital dimension of social media X. It uses social media data as primary data and literature as secondary data. This research uses Computer-Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis (CAQDAS), namely NVivo 12 Plus. The analysis tools used in NVivo 12 Plus are Crosstab Query, Word Cloud Analysis, Map Analysis, and Cluster Analysis (Azeem et al., 2012; Bennett & Segerberg, 2023). This research follows five analysis steps, as shown in Figure 3 (Vignato et al., 2022).

Figure 3. Research Data Analysis Steps



Source: (Vignato et al., 2022)

Primary data were collected from the movement's official X account, @gbsumudflotilla, whose official status was verified by cross-referencing account links published on the movement's primary web domain (globalsumudflotilla.org) with official press releases. A single organizational account was selected as the unit of observation because it functioned as the centralized hub for command, verification, and official broadcasting during active operations. Data collection spanned posts published between March 1, 2026, and April 30, 2026, capturing the critical deployment, maritime transit, and military interception phases of the Spring 2026 mission. We extracted data on May 2, 2026, using N Capture via the NVivo API, yielding a total target corpus of N = 19 original posts. To isolate official organizational rhetoric, we excluded retweets without commentary, automated

replies, external quoted posts, duplicates, and deleted entries. We achieved embedded media files for contextual verification while excluding them from textual word counts. Regarding language handling, we retained non-english texts rather than discarding them. At the same time, post body copy was predominantly English; we retained multilingual hashtags and terms such as the Turkish #ablukayıkır and #sumudfilosunasaldırı, alongside Arabic/Turkish terms like sumud and filistin, in their original form, analyzed at the hashtag/keyword level, and translated for qualitative narrative analysis.

The coding procedure was conducted at the individual post level (N = 19), assigning each post to one of four mutually exclusive operational categories based on its primary communicative function. The Mobilization category (n = 3, 15.79%) included direct calls for offline or online participation, resource gathering, or civic action, excluding passive operational reports. Rising Voice (n = 7, 36.84%) encompassed advocacy, moral framing, ideological solidarity, and human rights testimonies, excluding neutral background reports. Share Information (n = 6, 31.58%) covered contextual background, educational material, and third-party news updates lacking direct calls to action. Update Tracking (n = 3, 15.79%) captured real-time fleet logistics, nautical coordinates, status reports, and safety alerts. Potential conceptual overlap between Share Information and Rising Voice was resolved by assigning posts with mixed content to Rising Voice if value-laden normative framing constituted the dominant structural clause. Two independent coders conducted coding after completing a pilot exercise on a 20% sample of the data (n = 4), achieving high intercoder reliability (Holsti's CR = 0.92), with minor coding discrepancies resolved through consensus consultation with a third senior researcher.

Textual processing and word-frequency queries were executed within NVivo 12 Plus. Tokenization protocols converted all text to lowercase, stripped standard English and Turkish stop words, removed punctuation and raw URLs, and preserved hashtag strings intact. To prevent artificial data distortion, repeated hashtags within a single post were counted only once per post unit. Rather than treating word clouds or frequency counts as standalone narrative findings the analysis systematically integrated quantitative frequency outputs with Keyword-in-Context (KWIC) procedures, thematic narrative analysis, and qualitative post excerpts to establish contextual and communicative meaning. Ethical protocols followed digital research standards for public social media platforms. Data extraction relied strictly on publicly accessible organizational broadcasts from a verified organizational handle (@gbsumudflotilla), excluding any private personal communications, direct messages, or identifiable individual user replies. All data were collected and stored in full compliance with X Developer Platform Terms of Service. Because we focused exclusively on non-identifiable public organizational statements in the public domain, formal institutional ethics committee (IRB) review was exempt.

The research methodology began with data collection centered on the official X (formerly Twitter) account of the Global Sumud Flotilla. After collection, we systematically refined the exported dataset in the software to produce a clean, highly relevant sample. During this filtering stage, we systematically eliminated irrelevant

entries, duplicate publications, non-English texts, and works outside the Social Sciences discipline.

Next, axial coding was applied to methodically organize raw keywords and open codes into broader conceptual categories. For example, the overarching axis of “Global Advocacy and Solidarity” consolidated related topics such as digital activism, BDS, and social movements, outlining the structural links present across the literature. To interpret these refined datasets, advanced software queries and visualization tools such as co-occurrence density mapping were used to analyze conceptual overlaps between macro-level frameworks (like settler colonialism) and localized conflict nodes (such as Gaza).

Finally, qualitative insights were integrated with bibliometric trends to synthesize the results. The resulting software-generated conceptual clusters provided a rigorous, auditable framework that effectively mapped the current state of academic literature while directly addressing the primary research questions.

ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

Social Media Activism and Connective Action

Social media activism has fundamentally transformed collective action in the contemporary digital landscape, shifting from localized physical initiatives to decentralized, worldwide networks. To mobilize the public, conventional social movement theories such as Resource Mobilization Theory emphasize institutional funding, structured organizations, and centralized authority. Nevertheless, digital-era theories, such as like Connective Action framework proposed by W. Lance Bennett and Alexandra Segeberg, argue that digital platforms enable the rapid spread of tailored, self-organizing networks. Effective hashtags, widespread citizen journalism, and algorithmic dissemination methods reduce barriers to political participation on platforms such as X (formerly Twitter), Instagram, and TikTok (Bennett & Segerberg, 2023). This enables informal, digitally mediated networks to organize real-time opposition, crowdsource global exposure, and contest prevailing institutional narratives without relying on conventional bureaucratic structures (Bennett & Livingston, 2025; Pshenychnykh et al., 2024).

Social media activism serves as an essential mechanism for making distant suffering more relatable and shaping international dialogue, particularly in contentious geopolitical contexts such as the Israel-Palestine conflict and Gaza. Historically, prominent media organizations acted as rigorous information gatekeepers, sometimes excluding perspectives from regions experiencing occupation or embargo. By weaponizing visual culture, digital activism undermines this hierarchical structure; unfiltered smartphone recordings, firsthand testimonies, and infographics bypass traditional censorship and immediately engage a worldwide audience's collective sense of humanity. This small-scale digital effort turns personal moral indignation into large-scale political influence, fostering immediate, emotional cohesion across geographical divides. Consequently, social media platforms operate as vibrant, contentious arenas where disadvantaged groups confront systemic power

disparities, document human rights violations, and swiftly shape international political priorities (Ivanenko, 2022; McInroy & Beer, 2022; Puzo, 2022).

Connective action shows that conventional, centralized structures and inflexible group identities are not essential for political mobilization in the internet era. Unlike conventional collective action, which relies on formal leaders, resource mobilization, and hierarchical management to mobilize individuals for protests, connective action is fueled by technologically facilitated, personalized communication networks. Individuals engage in activism on social media by distributing versatile, personal digital content, such as memes, viral videos, or hashtags, which can be easily altered and shared by others (Kulichkina et al., 2025; Lehoucq & Tarrow, 2020; Rojas-Noa et al., 2026). This enables expansive, dynamic, and broadly distributed protest movements (like the Arab Spring, Black Lives Matter, or global solidarity initiatives) to emerge rapidly, grow organically, and confront power structures entirely on their own terms by transferring the principal organizational efforts from human administrators to technological platforms and algorithms (Alsharairi et al., 2025; He, 2024; Kuhzady et al., 2024).

Transnational Activism

Transnational activism theory emphasizes the collaboration of non-state entities, such as global citizens, civil society groups, and grassroots movements, as they unite across national borders to challenge official power and pursue social or political transformation. The dissertation, meticulously crafted by political scholars Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, introduces the "Boomerang Pattern" as a strategy for local activists to combat domestic oppression (Permana & Rakhmani, 2023). Local entities entirely circumvent their government when local channels for redress are shut off, opting instead to engage with international allies and non-governmental groups (Kang, 2025; Pavan & Rapini, 2022). These transnational networks leverage global public sentiment, foreign administrations, and international entities to exert external pressure on the repressive regime, thereby transforming the understanding of political strife from a solely domestic context to a fluid, international framework where information serves as the primary instrument of influence rather than economic or military power (Leon, 2023; Yang, 2022).

In the contemporary digital age, digital media principles have been integrated into transnational activism theory, transforming how global solidarity is cultivated and sustained. To counteract state-sponsored propaganda, academics emphasize that transnational networks depend on "information politics", the ability to swiftly document, organize, and preserve alternative narratives, and "symbolic politics", which utilizes impactful visual representations to resonate with a shared sense of humanity (Ndlovu & Mandiyanike, 2025; Ondimu et al., 2025). Transnational activism cultivates "affective solidarity" that resonates with diverse global audiences by framing localized concerns within the context of systemic injustice or international human rights. Decentralized networks may rapidly mobilize global consciousness, coordinate physical intervention units, and facilitate worldwide boycotts on platforms like Instagram, X, and TikTok, thereby altering conventional

state sovereignty. These transnational links no longer need resource-heavy, formal organizations to administration them (Amin et al., 2025; Joseph & Bouko, 2025).

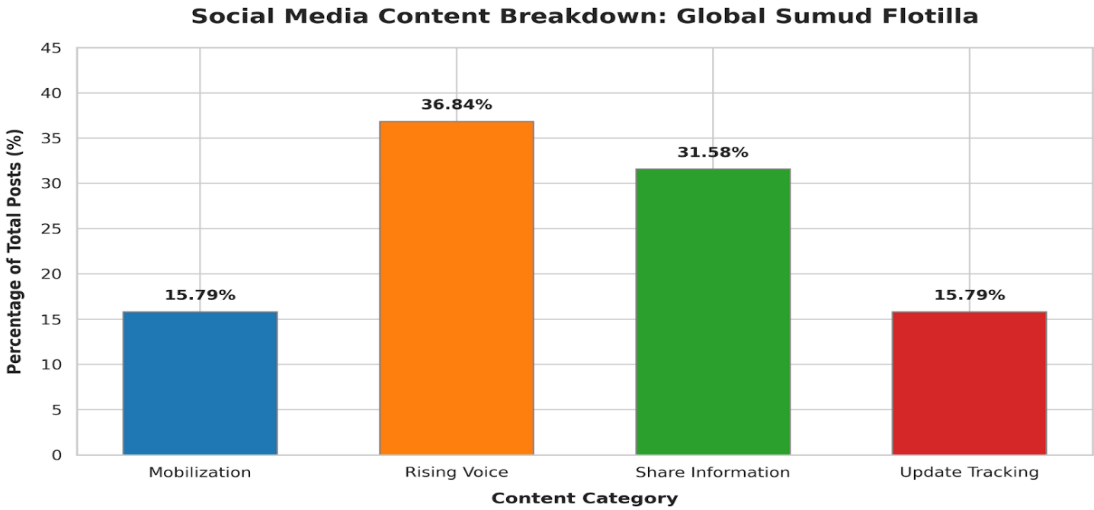
RESULT AND ANALYSIS

This analysis is defined in three main analyses, as follows: First, Content and theme analysis to understand the content and themes on social media X about the Global Sumud Flotilla that is transforming into a connective action on a global scale via social media X. Second, Narrative analysis to explore how social media narration can drive the Palestine issue as a massive humanitarian crisis in a connective action way. Third, Descriptive analysis to understand how social media X helped the Global Sumud Flotilla become a massive large-scale maritime humanitarian mission. The analyses are explained as:

Analysis of Content Dichotomy in Global Sumud Flotilla Case

In this analysis, social media data are used serve as primary data, and cross-tabulation is used to define the Content on social media about the Global Sumud Flotilla. This analysis defines content criteria as four types: Share Information, Mobilization, Rising Voice, and Update Tracking. Figure 4 and Table 1 explain the analysis.

Figure 4. Analysis of Social Media Dichotomy Content on Global Sumud Flotilla via NVivo 12Plus



Source: (NVivo 12Plus Analysis, 2026)

Table 1. Analysis of Social Media Dichotomy Content on Global Sumud Flotilla via NVivo 12Plus

Account	Mobilization	Rising Voice	Share Information	Update Tracking	Total
@gbsumudflotilla	15.79%	36.84%	31.58%	15.79%	100%
Total	15.79%	36.84%	31.58%	15.79%	100%

Source: (NVivo 12Plus Analysis, 2026)

An examination of the social media data reveals a clear content division in the Global Sumud Flotilla (@gbsumudflotilla) digital interactions on X. Digital activism often oscillates between formulating ideological frameworks and orchestrating tactical plans. The distribution of content categories in this dataset clearly illustrates this inequality. To foster a welcoming international community, the organization prioritizes action, educational programs, and emotional engagement. Conversely, it allocates resources to the operational and logistical structures essential to maintaining an activist movement's organization, transparency, and prompt adaptation. This division illustrates a thoughtfully devised strategic balance between succeeding in the "war of ideas" and sustaining active engagement with the local community.

Data suggests that the primary output of the accounts consists of narrative-focused, advocacy-driven content. "Rising Voice", with 36.84% of the whole content strategy, is the most significant category. This category underscores advocacy for marginalized viewpoints, the dissemination of human narratives, and the strengthening of the fundamental ethical obligation underpinning the flotilla's purpose. The "Share Information" category, accounting for 31.58% of the platforms' distribution, is closely linked to this. Together these two categories represent 68.42% of overall communication. This dominance implies that challenging prevailing narratives, educating the public, and situating the wider geopolitical context are the key goals of the Global Sumud Flotillas' digital engagement. The account serves as an alternative media hub, fostering strong, value-based cohesion before advocating direct action, with an emphasis on storytelling and information dissemination.

The operational and action-based categorization exerts a small, clearly balanced impact on the narrative. "Mobilization" and "Update Tracking" together account for the remaining 31.58% of the data, with each contributing precisely 15.79% of the total. The symmetry highlights the secondary but essential functional dimension of their social media presence. "Mobilization" serves as a concluding call that turns passive compassion into monetary donations, political support, and both tangible and digital protests. Concurrently, "Update Tracking" provides followers with tangible progress reports on the flotilla's trajectory and activities, thereby ensuring the transparency and timely logistics necessary to uphold institutional trust. This allocation suggests that calls to action and operational logistics are deliberately limited, despite their essential role in a movement's sustainability. The information suggests that organizers acknowledge that successful mobilization and oversight can be sustained only through strong, ongoing progress in story development and educational structure.

The intentional equilibrium between narrative construction and functional processes is a defining characteristic of contemporary social media activism, as per an analysis of social media data (Neag & Nainová, 2025; Putra, 2024). Contemporary digital endeavors require a dual communication strategy that balances collective action with fostering societal compassion for success. This occurrence is seen in the Global Sumud Flotilla's (@gbsumudflotilla) digital footprint

on X. The account allocates 68.42% of its output to “Rising Voice” (36.84%) and “Share Information” (31.58%), creating a media environment that challenges prevailing geopolitical narratives and fosters strong, value-oriented unity. The strategy harnesses social media’s viral nature to build an informed, emotionally invested community by prioritizing advocacy and education. This lays the psychological foundation necessary for sustained digital resilience (Kiyak et al., 2026; Núñez Puente et al., 2025).

Conversely, an equitable distribution of resources for direct engagement and transparency fuels the operational mechanism of modern digital activism. The information shows that “Mobilization” and “Update Tracking” account for exactly 15.79% of the total content allocation. These two positions transform passive digital spectators into engaged contributors in social media activism. “Update Tracking” provides the essential real-time logistics and accountability to maintain institutional trust amid rapid disinformation, while “Mobilization” serves as the catalyst for converting online awareness into tangible actions such as physical protests, financial contributions, or targeted digital initiatives (Dobbs, 2025; Ihm, 2024). This structured allocation shows that a movement’s long-term viability depends on a systematic, reliable framework for action, even as engaging narratives attract audiences. The data illustrate that the Global Sumud Flotilla adeptly harmonizes tactical coordination with ideological communication, culminating in a holistic digital strategy in which transparency fosters engagement and narrative inspires action (Ngabaza, 2022; Odriozola et al., 2022).

The Narrative Analysis of Social Media Activism and the Connective Action in the Global Sumud Flotilla

This research uses a word cloud displaying of 30 words with a minimum length of 5 alphabetical characters to investigate the social media narrative surrounding the Global Sumud Flotilla. Figure 5 and Table 2 present an analysis.

Figure 5. Narration Analysis of Social Media Activism and the Connective Action in Global Sumud Flotilla.



Source: (NVivo 12Plus Analysis, 2026)

Table 2. Top 10 Narration Analysis in Social Media Activism of Global Sumud Flotilla

Word	Count
#freepalestine	1117
#globalsumudflotilla	1016
flotilla	408
global	329
sumud	306
#eyesonsumud	257
#ablukayıkır	249
#sumudfilosunasaldırı	249
#openwaytogaza	244
filistin	237

Source: (NVivo 12Plus Analysis, 2026)

A framework of interrelated actions, in which social media serves as the principal catalyst for decentralized global mobilization, exemplified by the online discussions around the Global Sumud Flotilla. The high frequency of influential hashtags like #freepalestine (1,117) and #globalsumudflotilla (1,016), as shown in Figure 4 and Table 2, highlights how customized narrative frameworks spread worldwide without relying on strict institutional structures. These easily spread, technology-enabled action frameworks that link individual identities to a shared objective are crucial to connective action. Digital activists reduced barriers to political engagement by focusing immediate attention on a particular, urgent activist campaign (#globalsumudflotilla) while also contextualizing the narrative within a wider, historically recognized conflict (#freepalestine). A diverse array of international contributors partnered, enhanced, and integrated the movement's message through organizational coherence, skillfully challenging traditional media paradigms by converting personal political viewpoints into a significant, cohesive digital landscape.

A comprehensive examination of the quantitative data reveals a multifaceted narrative strategy that intentionally merges global political cohesion with local cultural fortitude (Amodu et al., 2026; McLean, 2025). Sumud, a traditional Palestinian notion representing steadfastness and resolute commitment, is deeply integrated into the movement's digital infrastructure. It frequently appears as a standalone expression (306 instances) and through specific localized hashtags such as #eyesonsumud (257 instances). The campaign's strong international reach is shown Turkish-language hashtags such as #ablukayıkır (249 instances), which translates to "break the blockade", and #sumudfilosunasaldırı (249 instances), meaning "attack on the sumud fleet". This linguistic division illustrates how online collaboration initiatives can seamlessly transcend national and geographic boundaries. The effort established a collective emotional and political environment by integrating current operational data in many languages with culturally

meaningful symbols of indigenous resistance. This is aligned of localized discontent with a wider international coalition.

The conversation's operational, logistical, and confrontational framework highlights an essential counter-narrative that contests military blockades and state-supported geopolitical monopolies. The information reveals that recurrent terms like "flotilla" (408), "global" (329), "mission" (172), "boats" (134), "vessels" (130), and "fleet" (108) define the concrete, maritime aspect of the activism, depicting it as an active, carefully structured, logistics-driven humanitarian effort rather than a simple passive protest. Nevertheless, instances of conflict and systematic constraints, including interception (187), siege (138), and unlawful activities (totaling 243 events), are promptly contrasted with this practical logistical account. The digital account shifts from basic humanitarian reporting to a robust legal and ethical denunciation, clearly distinguishing peaceful maritime resistance from state forces by characterizing the actions of opposing military groups as illegal, while nothing that the humanitarian mission was forcibly impeded in international waters (133).

The digital network created an effective structure to transform online awareness into practical support and real social influence, rather than merely symbolic political protests. Expressions with considerable influence, such as #openwaytogaza (244 instances), share (164 instances), humanitarian (123 instances), and offer (120 instances), demonstrate that the connective action framework was both articulate and exceptionally practical. Notwithstanding the widespread disparagement of social media activism as mere "slacktivism", the data suggests a deliberate and organized endeavor to promote direct resource mobilization and civic engagement (Blum & Uldam, 2025; Gonsalves et al., 2024). The network converted passive observers into active contributors; Sumud, a traditional Palestinian notion of perseverance and steadfast resilience, is deeply integrated into the movement's digital infrastructure. It frequently appears as a standalone term (306 instances) and through specific localized hashtags such as #eyesonsumud (257 instances). The campaign's strong international reach is shown by Turkish-language hashtags such as #ablukayıkır (249 instances), which translates to "break the blockade", and #sumudfilosunasaldırı (249 instances), meaning "attack on the sumud fleet". This linguistic division illustrates how online collaboration initiatives can seamlessly transcend national and geographic boundaries. The effort established a collective emotional and political environment by integrating current operational data in many languages with culturally meaningful symbols of indigenous resistance. This aligned localized discontent with a wider international coalition.

The conversation's operational, logistical, and confrontational framework highlights an essential counter-narrative that contests military blockades and state-sanctioned geopolitical monopolies. The information reveals that recurrently appearing terms like "flotilla" (408), "global" (329), "mission" (172), "boats" (134), "vessels" (130), and "fleet" (108) define the concrete, maritime aspect of the activism, depicting it as an active, systematically structured, logistics-driven humanitarian

effort rather than a simple passive protest. Nevertheless, instances of conflict and systematic constraints, including interception (187), siege (138), and unlawful activities (totaling 243 events), are promptly contrasted with this practical logistical account. The digital account shifts from basic humanitarian reporting to a robust legal and ethical denunciation, clearly distinguishing peaceful maritime resistance from state forces by characterizing the actions of opposing military groups as illegal, while nothing that the humanitarian mission was forcibly impeded in international waters (133).

The digital network created an effective structure to transform online awareness into practical support and real social influence, rather than merely symbolic political protests. Expressions with considerable influence, such as #openwaytogaza (244 instances), share (164 instances), humanitarian (123 instances), and offer (120 instances), demonstrate that the connective action framework was both articulate and exceptionally pragmatic. Notwithstanding the prevalent criticism that social media activism has regressed into mere "slacktivism", the data suggests a deliberate and organized initiative to promote direct resource mobilization and civic engagement through clear calls for financial support (donate) and collaborative online sharing (share) in conjunction with timely information about the maritime blockade. This tactical combination ensured that prompt public outrage is quickly translated into sustained financial support by funding the fleet's operational expenses and maintaining the humanitarian mission's continuity.

In the end, the Global Sumud Flotilla's narrative analysis highlights the significant development of contemporary digital solidarity, in which narrative-building serves as a global movement's main tool and shield. By depriving localized state actors of their customary capacity to manage information in isolation, the frequent use of universalizing phrases like international (189) and world (155) democratizes the struggle (Woodard, 2022; Yeh, 2025). Through a decentralized network of linked hashtags and shared vocabulary, activists can bypass traditional media gatekeepers and present an unfiltered, up-to-date account of maritime resistance to a worldwide audience. The data essentially illustrates how digital networks use communicative flexibility to maintain political momentum in the face of severe physical interdiction. The campaign is a prime example of how connected action can crowdsource a cogent, potent counter-narrative that overcomes structural barriers on the high seas and in the digital sphere.

Social media role turns the Global Sumud Flotilla Movement into a Maritime Humanitarian Mission.

A significant case study in the evolving architecture of modern digital connective action, the Global Sumud Flotilla illustrates the movement's extraordinary evolution from a modest online protest effort into a well-coordinated, concrete multinational maritime humanitarian project. Digital activism faces significant critique in modern political sociology for its inherent superficiality. Some call it "slacktivism" because it often fails to connect online awareness to real-world action. Empirical research suggests that a well-organized, distributed digital story

can establish the intellectual and logistical foundation needed for complex maritime operations. Social media goes beyond passive interaction; it serves as an essential platform for worldwide mobilization. Through this digital infrastructure, a broad coalition of autonomous global citizens and NGOs could coordinate a substantial armada of ships, circumventing conventional state-centric diplomatic. By deliberately employing these fundamental digital structures, obstacles to political participation are significantly reduced worldwide through the creation of a uniform, readily shareable lexicon. Thus, this structural alignment shows that digital narratives can coordinate complex physical actions by turning fragmented online cohesion into a consolidated, robust basis for genuine humanitarian initiatives at sea.

The intentional development of deep cultural and linguistic ties, designed to promote a transnational collective consciousness, is crucial to this successful shift from virtual interaction to concrete maritime initiatives. The campaign's central conceptual tenet of is the repeated use of the term sumud. This culturally important Palestinian concept embodies resilience, strength, and unwavering perseverance (de Mesa et al., 2021; Li et al., 2026). Digital coordinators effectively anchored a global initiative in a genuine indigenous movement. This case study in the evolving architecture of modern digital connective action, the Global Sumud Flotilla's evolution from a modest online protest effort into a well-coordinated, concrete multinational maritime humanitarian project. Digital activism faces significant critique in modern political sociology for its inherent superficiality. It is sometimes called "slacktivism" because it does not effectively connect online awareness to real-world action. Empirical research suggests that a meticulously organised, distributed digital story can establish the intellectual and logistical foundation needed for complex maritime operations. Social media goes beyond passive interaction; it serves as an essential platform for worldwide mobilization. A broad coalition of autonomous global citizens and NGOs could coordinate a substantial armada of ships, circumventing conventional state-centric diplomatic channels. By deliberately employing these fundamental digital structures, obstacles to political participation are significantly reduced worldwide through the creation of a uniform, readily shareable lexicon. Thus, this structural alignment shows that digital narratives can coordinate complex physical actions by turning fragmented online cohesion into a consolidated, robust basis for genuine humanitarian initiatives at sea.

The intentional development of deep cultural and linguistic ties, designed to promote a transnational collective consciousness, is crucial to this successful shift from virtual interaction to concrete maritime initiatives. The campaign's central tenet is the repeated use of the term sumud, a culturally important Palestinian concept that embodies resilience, strength, and unwavering perseverance and recounts historical defiance, intentionally merging this idea with localized digital interfaces. Extensive, multilingual hashtags and specific vocabulary deliberately link this geographical context to broader international audiences. This language and cultural duality show how the movement transcends geographical boundaries, creating a global collective arena in which international observers see the seafaring

initiative as a shared ethical duty rather than an external act of charity. The initiative aligns local political sentiments with a broader global agreement by integrating many languages into a cohesive digital framework, generating the substantial international momentum necessary to deploy an armada (Akfirat et al., 2021; Colligan & Sharren, 2020).

The extensive application of specific operational and nautical language in online discussions further shows the concrete transition from a social media exhibition to an authentic maritime endeavor. Terminology such as "flotilla", "global", "mission", "boats", "vessels", and "fleet", which are practical and operationally oriented, constitutes the essence of the online discourse. This heavy use of logistical language suggests that the web framework was deliberately designed for practical execution from the start, portraying the campaign as a genuine, carefully orchestrated maritime venture rather than merely a speculative ideological discussion. Social media serves as an effective real-time command-and-control and public communication platform by emphasizing the practical aspects of the voyage, such as identifying specific vessels, mapping global maritime routes, assessing weather conditions, and sharing operational successes. This methodical transformation of political unity into maritime logistics prepares a worldwide audience to closely observe, support, and protect the humanitarian fleet's authentic endeavors. This substantially transforms the public's perception from a passive media audience to that of active participants in a maritime endeavor.

Moreover, the movement's rhetoric skillfully crafts a compelling ethical and legal counter-narrative that frames the marine venture as a legitimate international response to unlawful state-sponsored blockades. In describing state activities, rhetoric that is very aggressive and legally defensive, such as "intercepted", "siege", "illegal", and "illegally", is starkly contrasted with the fleet's practical logistical language. The geopolitical narrative of the crisis is profoundly transformed when internet platforms repeatedly announce that humanitarian aid vessels are navigating international waters to confront a blockade. The digital community subverts the conventional power of state actors by denouncing the aggressive tactics of opposing military factions as fundamentally illegitimate, while exposing the violent obstruction of the humanitarian convoy. Using social media to mobilize global public opinion as an international court assessing the legitimacy of maritime blockades, this clever presentation reframes the flotilla as an active, globally monitored legal dispute that demands international attention (Aouragh, 2026; Greer et al., 2026; Lünenborg & Backes, 2025).

Ultimately, the digital network creates an efficient framework that prevents a slide into passive slacktivism by quickly converting broad online awareness into the concrete backing needed to sustain a maritime force. The conversation employs concrete goals and directives such as "share", "humanitarian", and "donate", suggesting that the digital campaign aims to increase regular physical engagement. The network effectively converts passive internet viewers into active contributors by quickly integrating appeals for financial assistance and digital improvements with real-time operational information from the ocean. These financial contributions

must cover the high operational costs linked to sustaining a maritime mission, such as fueling vessels, procuring supplies, and ensuring compliance with maritime regulations under challenging circumstances. Ultimately, this shows how social media can transform a digital campaign into a substantial maritime undertaking by consolidating the material, legal, and ethical resources needed to mobilize civilian humanitarian action at sea.

CONCLUSION

This research discerned two overarching communicative roles within the Global Sumud Flotilla's official X account: narrative construction, advocacy, and information dissemination, which constituted 68.42% of total output ("Rising Voice" at 36.84% and "Share Information" at 31.58%), while mobilization appeals and operational updates represented 31.58% ("Mobilization" at 15.79% and "Update Tracking" at 15.79%). Empirical content analysis reveals a dual-textual approach that combines prevalent global hashtags (#freepalestine, #globalsumudflotilla) with localized, multilingual expressions, showing how digital content is organized through connective action to align value-oriented solidarity with functional coordination. It is a reasonable deduction that these hashtags reduced entry obstacles and that cross-lingual expressions connected cultural stories in opposition to government-imposed restrictions; however, the assertion that digital communication converted a localized online protest into a tangible transnational naval operation is an unsubstantiated statement that necessitates additional proof, since text-based social media data cannot demonstrate causation or direct offline action.

The study is methodologically constrained by its reliance on a single official narrative, which engenders organizational self-presentation bias, as well as ambiguous sampling coverage, inconsistent treatment of non-English materials, exclusion of visual and video content, and the absence of data on audience reception, network dynamics, engagement, or comparative cases. To move beyond qualitative text analysis with NVivo 12Plus and better assess socio-political ramifications, future studies should use multi-platform comparative frameworks and integrate big-data network analytics with empirical field methods, such as digital ethnography and direct interviews with fleet volunteers and journalists.

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