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Examination of Hostility in Critical Media Discourse Analysis

Nawal Fadhil Abbas[1*], Shahad Saad Eidan[2]

[1,2]College of Education for Women, University of Baghdad, Iraq.*

Corresponding Email: [1]nawal.fadhil@coeduw.uobaghdad.edu.iq*

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Abstract: ***This paper provides a review of scholarly research on the depiction of hostility in critical media discourse analysis. The study is intended to analyze how hostility is differently portrayed and manifested in media discourse. The review begins by defining the multifaceted concept of hostility, encompassing cognitive, emotive, and behavioral dimensions. It then outlines the systematic process used to identify, gather and purposely select 30 relevant articles to hostility in media discourse. The method involves selecting 100 initial articles and gradually refining them to 30 articles that specifically address the themes of racism, anger, hate speech, prejudice, and aggression. These articles are sourced from diverse academic journals and platforms, using refined search strategies to ensure relevance and depth. The findings reveal that media outlets, whether through news reporting, entertainment media, or political rhetoric, play a significant role in perpetuating or challenging hostility-related societal attitudes. Subtle forms of racism embedded in media narratives, amplification of anger and hate speech, reinforcement of prejudiced views, and the sentimentalization of aggressive behaviors have all been identified as common strategies employed by the media. This study highlights the media's role in mitigating societal tensions, offering insights into the strategic portrayal of hostility that influences public perception and contributes to broader societal dynamics.***

Keywords: ***Aggression, Anger, Critical Media Discourse, Hate Speech, Hostility, Prejudice.***

1. INTRODUCTION

In today's globalized world, the media plays a very important pivotal role in shaping public perceptions and attitudes through discourse, particularly in the portrayal of conflicts and hostilities. As instruments of both information and influence, media outlets have the power to frame narratives in ways that can either escalate or mitigate tensions. The critical analysis of

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media discourse surrounding hostility is thus of paramount importance for understanding the mechanisms through which societal attitudes are shaped and manipulated. This is no one side. On the other side, hostility is seen as a form of emotionally charged angry behavior. It is believed that there are three dimensions to the multifaceted concept of hostility: cognitive, emotive, and behavioral (Bromberger et al., 1997). Negative attitudes and ideas about other people, such as mistrust and cynicism, are referred to as the cognitive component. The affective component, commonly referred to as anger, is an unpleasant feeling that can range from ringing to irritation and is measurable in terms of frequency, intensity, and target.The behavioral component is an activity intended to do harm to others, either physically or verbally, and is assumed to arise from the affective and attitudinal components (Bromberger et al., 1997).

Traditionally, animosity has been thought of as an attitude. Buss (1961), who sees hostility as an attitude involving the hatred and unfavorable appraisal of others, is frequently credited with developing the mainstream meaning of the term. Similar definitions of hostility have been provided by Spielberger (1988) as "a complex set of feelings and attitudes that motivate aggressive and often vindictive behavior" and Berkowitz (1993) as "a negative attitude toward one or more people that is reflected in a decidedly unfavorable judgment of the target". A cognitive attribute known as "a devaluation of the worth and motives of others, as well as the expectation that others are likely sources of wrongdoing, a relational view of being in opposition towards others, and a desire to inflict harm or see others harmed" is another way that Smith (1994) describes hostility. Furthermore, there is some overlap between hostility and anger. Hostility denotes a negative attitude or assessment of people or things, whereas anger relates to emotions and feelings, or the emotional component of violent action (Ramirez & Andreu, 2006). Anger and hostility are linked to intimate partner violence, and both can result in aggressive behavior. Many diseases, such as anxiety and depressive disorders, intermittent explosive disorder (IED), and PTSD, are intimately linked to hostility and anger (Birkley & Eckhardt, 2015).

Besides, Critical Discourse Analysis (henceforth CDA) is an interdisciplinary field focused on the critical examination and analysis of written and spoken texts. The primary aim of CDA is to uncover and reveal the discursive sources of power, dominance, inequality, and bias that are embedded within these texts. Through this analytical process, CDA seeks to examine how these discursive elements are maintained and reproduced within specific social, political, and historical contexts. (Van Dijk, 1998)

CDA views language as a social practice, recognizing the dialectical relationship between a particular discursive event and the situational, institutional, and structural factors that frame it. In this regard, discourse is understood to be both socially constitutive and socially shaped. CDA specifically considers how language operates within institutional and political discourses, as well as other specialized discourses, to unveil both overt and covert inequalities in social relationships. (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997)

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This paper aims to undertake a comprehensive media discourse analysis review, focusing on the depiction of hostility across a range of media platforms. By reviewing 30 seminal articles, this study will critically analyze how hostility is depicted in media discourse, focusing on themes like racism, anger, hate speech, prejudice, and aggression. The ultimate goal is to unveil the complexities and biases embedded in media narratives, contributing to a more critical consumption and interpretation of news related to conflicts and hostilities.

2. RELATED WORKS

Hostility has been studied in various ways. For instance, Krantz (2019) examines the linguistic and stylistic features of political memes through Critical Discourse Analysis and Visual Description. The study aims to evaluate how meme creators utilize hostility in their language against political opponents, focusing on 24 image macros from both liberal and conservative perspectives. Krantz's analysis reveals that conservative memes demonstrate a more pronounced use of hostile stylistic elements such as sarcasm, offensiveness, and aggression compared to their liberal counterparts. Similarly, Sandberg et al. (2023) examine the portrayal of Muslims on online platforms across eight European countries, testing the online hostility hypothesis that suggests greater hostility toward minority groups in social media compared to traditional media. Their findings indicate that while negative representations exist in both media forms, social media platforms generate significantly more attention toward Muslims and Islam, fostering an overall environment of online hostility. In contrast, Asquith (2013) analyzes 99,797 hate crime case files from the London Metropolitan Police (2003-2007) to assess the role of verbal-textual hostility (VTH) in hate crimes. The study finds that VTH incidents are less likely to escalate into violence when threats are involved. Additionally, it notes that certain hate crimes, like homophobic incidents, show a lower incidence of recorded VTH, highlighting the influence of language on victims' perceptions and police responses. Musolff (2018) explores hostile attitudes toward multilingualism and multiculturalism in immigration debates using data from the BBC's "Have Your Say" forum and various press sources. Through critical discourse analysis, he identifies narrative patterns that legitimize xenophobic views on immigrants' language use. His findings highlight that discussions often reinforce entrenched language myths, depicting multilingualism as a threat to British culture and education. Finally, Rost and Stahel (2022) investigate hostile-emotional excess of zeal in public social media, analyzing a petition with 305,122 signatures. Their study focuses on how perceived norm violations are expressed in online comments and their connection to hostile emotional responses. They find that comments driven by excessive zeal are notably more likely to contain hostile-emotional content.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Searching and Screening of Articles

Finding and gathering articles from websites is a crucial task. The researchers have employed a rigorous and systematic approach to identify, gather, and refine the relevant articles for this

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critical review on the depiction of hostility in media discourse. The process began with defining a clear research question to guide the literature search.

Next, the researchers carefully selected appropriate keywords to use in their search strategy. These keywords included terms like "hostility," "media discourse analysis," "racism," "anger," "hate speech," "prejudice," and "aggression." By using a combination of these keywords, the researchers were able to cast a wide net and capture a large initial pool of potentially relevant articles. The researchers then utilized a variety of academic databases and search engines to conduct their literature search, including Google Scholar, Academia, Research Gate, and several prominent academic journals such as LSP International Journal, Journal of Media Critiques [JMC], and Arab World English Journal. This multi-pronged approach ensured that the researchers accessed articles from diverse sources and academic disciplines.

After the initial search, the researchers carefully reviewed the titles and abstracts of 100 articles gathered to assess their relevance to the review's focus on hostility in media discourse. The articles about hostility in adult life and childhood were removed, leaving 85 articles. Then, articles about hostility in schools were removed, reducing the total to 75 articles. After that, articles about hostility in families were removed, bringing the number down to 50. Next, articles about hostility in different cultures and nations were removed, resulting in 40 articles. Finally, articles about hostility in public spaces were excluded, leaving only 30 articles that specifically discuss hostility in media discourse. Throughout this screening process, the researchers maintained a meticulous record of the number of articles at each stage, as shown in the table provided in the review. This transparent documentation of the article selection procedure enhances the rigor and credibility of the review.

The researchers' systematic and multi-step approach to searching and screening the literature ensured that the final 30 articles selected were highly relevant and directly address the key themes and objectives of the critical review. By casting a wide net, applying clear inclusion and exclusion criteria, and carefully documenting the selection process, the researchers have established a robust methodological foundation for their in-depth analysis of hostility in media discourse.

Table 1Stages of Studies Selection for the Review

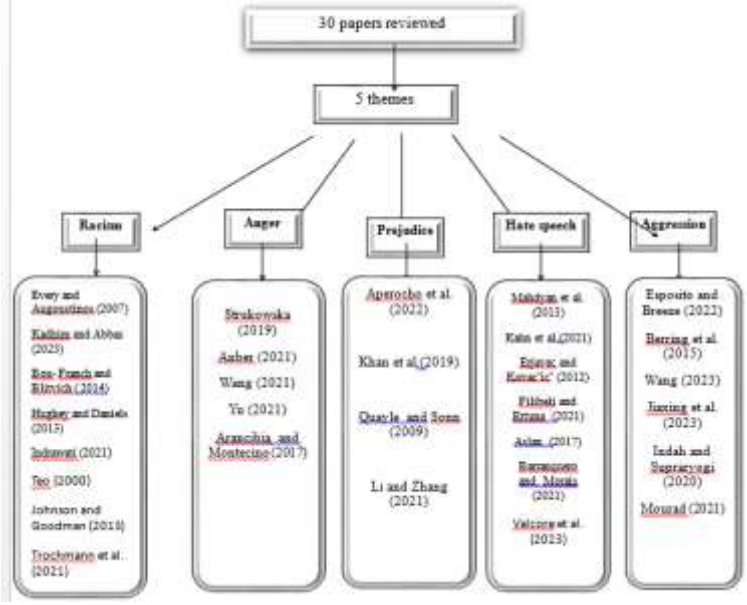
No.	Stage	No. of Articles
1.	Initial collection	100
2.	Excluding hostility in adult life and childhood	85
3.	Excluding hostility in schools	75
4.	Excluding hostility in families	50
5.	Excluding hostility in different cultures and nations	40
6.	Excluding hostility in public spaces	30
7.	Finally hostility in media discourse	30

The 30 papers reviewed are examined in light of the following 5 themes shown in Table 2 below:

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Table 2 Screening and Classifying the Selected Papers for Review



4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The researchers gathered a total of 30 articles from various databases and academic journals which, according to Table 2, were then divided into five thematic groups: racism, anger, hate speech, prejudice, and aggression. For each thematic group, the researchers examined several studies with similar findings and discussed the principal results of these studies. The analysis across the five thematic groups reveals that media outlets, through their coverage and framing, play a significant role in either perpetuating or challenging societal attitudes related to hostility. The researchers identified several common strategies employed by the media in depicting hostility, including subtle forms of racism embedded in media narratives, the amplification of anger and hate speech, and the sentimentalization of aggressive behaviors. The in-depth examination of the 30 articles within the five thematic groups allows the researchers to provide a comprehensive analysis of how hostility is framed across different contexts and events, shedding light on the media's role in shaping public perception and discourse. The findings highlight the importance of critical analysis of media discourse to unveil the complexities and biases embedded in news narratives, enabling a more critical consumption and interpretation of information related to conflicts and hostilities.

4.1 Hostility in Relation to Racism

Every and Augoustinos (2007) highlight how political debates serve as a platform for subtle racism. They analyze how parliamentary discussions utilize language that may not overtly seem racist but systematically marginalize asylum seekers through policy and rhetoric. Also, racism in entertainment and commercial media is studied; Kadhim and Abbas (2023) provide an analysis of how children's cartoon films can embed racist stereotypes through characters and narratives that reinforce racial hierarchies. This form of racism is particularly insidious as it targets young, impressionable audiences, shaping their perceptions of race from an early

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age. Moreover, Indrawati (2021) examines how commercial entities like Adidas address racism publicly. Unlike the passive reinforcement seen in cartoons, Adidas attempts to combat racism by actively promoting solidarity and inclusivity. This proactive approach in commercial media showcases a contrasting method to the often-subtle perpetuation of racism in entertainment media.

Bou- Franch and Blitvich (2014), on the other hand, discuss how political groups such as the British National Party manipulate media narratives to frame themselves as victims of reverse racism. This strategy is highlighted as a means to justify their racially motivated policies and to garner support by playing on the fears of the majority. Similarly, Hughey and Daniels (2013) utilize a discourse analysis approach to examine the prevalence and nature of racist comments on online news platforms. The aim is to explore the methodological challenges that researchers encounter when studying racism in the context of comment moderation and online discourse. They discover that many mainstream news sites have adopted stringent moderation policies that frequently sanitize or eliminate overtly racist comments, resulting in a "whitewashed" representation of public discourse. While, Teo (2000) employs CDA approach to investigate the ideological construction of racism in Australia. The focus is on news articles concerning the 5T gang, a Vietnamese group involved in drug-related activities. The study aims to uncover how newspaper discourse reflects and reinforces the marginalization of Vietnamese migrants. The main findings indicate systematic "othering" and stereotyping of the Vietnamese community by the dominant white majority, revealing an asymmetrical power dynamic between ethnic lawbreakers and white law enforcers, ultimately perpetuating racist ideologies within the media.

Johnson and Goodman (2013) present a study on the topic of reversing racism and the concept of an elite conspiracy. They employ a discourse analysis approach to examine the strategies used by Nick Griffin, the leader of the British National Party (BNP), in response to hostile media appearances. The study aims to explore how Griffin rebrands the BNP and positions its members as victims of anti-white racism while attributing societal issues to a nebulous the main findings reveal that Griffin employs two interconnected strategies: portraying indigenous British people as victims of racism and attributing this perceived racism to the actions of a political elite. Finally, Trochmann et al. (2021) present a study employing Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to examine racism and anti-Blackness within public administration scholarship. They utilize Mullet's General Analytical Framework for CDA to investigate how public administration journals either resist or reinforce systemic racism through their symposium calls over a 20-year period. The main findings reveal that, while there is an increasing trend toward racial consciousness in symposium calls, significant barriers remain in achieving genuine power-sharing and addressing anti-Blackness within the field.

4.2 Hostility in Relation to Anger

Strukowska (2019) examines how anger is expressed and managed in the formal setting of UK parliamentary debates. He highlights how strategic expressions of anger can influence policy discussions and public perception, revealing a nuanced understanding of how emotion

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serves both rhetorical and pragmatic functions in high-stakes political environments. In contrast, Anber (2021) analyzes the use of anger in the Presidential debates in the United States. This paper focuses on how both candidates managed and leveraged expressions of anger to appeal to voters, defend policies, and attack opponents. The American context starkly contrasts the British parliamentary setting, where personal attacks and overt displays of anger might be more restrained due to different cultural and institutional norms.

Wang (2021) explores how anger and frustration are portrayed in the media coverage of COVID-19. The analysis reveals differences in how anger is channeled and reported in Chinese versus American media, with each reflecting distinct governmental and cultural approaches to the crisis. This article shows how media can act as a conduit for collective emotions, potentially influencing public sentiment and national responses to global events. Yu (2021) discusses how Chinese media outlets express and manage nationalistic anger against perceived foreign hostility during the pandemic. This study provides insights into how state-controlled media can utilize anger to foster a unified national stance and counteract foreign narratives, which often put a spotlight on the strategic use of media in controlling public emotions. Moreover, Chile, Arancibia and Montecino (2017) examine the public's response to the social elite's behavior, focusing on how expressions of anger reflect broader societal discontent. This analysis highlights how public anger can reflect deeper social and economic disparities, which contrasts with the more institutionalized settings of media and parliamentary debates.

4.3 Hostility in Relation to Prejudice

Aperocho et al. (2022) examine how the former U.S. President Donald Trump utilized prejudiced rhetoric to characterize illegal immigrants, particularly from Latin America. This analysis highlights how political figures can use language to create and reinforce societal prejudices, framing immigrants as threats to social and economic stability. In contrast, Khan et al.(2019) explore another facet of Trump's prejudicial rhetoric, focusing on his statements about Muslims. This article delves into how Trump's discourse contributes to the construction of Muslims as the 'other,' enhancing societal divisions and justifying restrictive policies based on religious and ethnic identities.

Quayle and Sonn (2009) analyze how Australian media portrays Muslims, often reinforcing stereotypes and prejudices. This study illustrates how media plays a critical role in shaping public perceptions, effectively marginalizing Muslim communities by depicting them as fundamentally different and not assimilating into the mainstream culture. Li and Zhang (2021) offer a broader look at how American media portrays Islam and Muslims. Similar to the Australian context, this analysis reveals systemic patterns of prejudice where media representations tend to emphasize themes of violence and extremism associated with Islam, contributing to a skewed public understanding and increased prejudice. These articles collectively underscore the significant role of both political rhetoric and media in cultivating and perpetuating prejudice against specific groups-immigrants and Muslims, in particular. By consistently framing Muslims in the context of security threats or cultural clashes, the media reinforces a narrative of 'us versus them,' deepening societal divides.

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4.4 Hostility in Relation to Hate Speech

Mahdyan et al. (2013) analyze the challenges of translating political speeches that contain hate speech. This research highlights the translator's role in mitigating or amplifying the effect of hate speech depending on their interpretation and choices, demonstrating the complexities of cross-cultural communication in a political context. In their studies, Kahn et al.(2021) delve into Donald Trump's Use of social media to Spread hate speech, particularly targeting Muslims. These studies underscore how Trump's rhetoric not only fuels Islamophobia but also general societal divisiveness, utilizing platforms with massive reach to influence public sentiments. Also, Erjavec and Kovac˘ic˘ (2012) examine how online comment sections on news websites become battlegrounds for hate speech. This analysis points out the anonymity and lack of accountability in digital spaces that allow hate speech to flourish, affecting public discourse and contributing to polarized environments. Filibeli and Ertuna (2021) explore how sarcasm and humor are used as veils for hate speech in comments about Syrian refugees on social media. This nuanced approach reveals how seemingly benign comments can perpetuate stereotypes and hostility, complicating efforts to moderate hate speech on popular platforms. However, Aslan (2017) investigates the specific targeting of Syrian refugees in online discourse. This paper illustrates the specific narratives and stereotypes leveraged in hate speech, contributing to an environment of exclusion and hostility towards refugees. Barranquero and Morais (2021) discuss how online platforms, specifically forums and discussion groups, serve as echo chambers for hate speech, amplifying and normalizing such discourse. This analysis highlights the role of digital communities in fostering and sustaining hate-based interactions. Finally, Valcore et al. (2023) conducted a study titled "We're Led by Stupid People": Exploring Trump's use of denigrating and deprecating speech to promote hatred and violence, which was published online on February 9, 2023. They employed a Verbal-Textual Hostility (VTH) framework to analyze Donald Trump's campaign speeches. The study aims to investigate the relationship between Trump's hostile rhetoric and its potential connection to hate crimes and violence. The main findings identify three categories of verbal hostility: deprecation, denigration, and domination.

4.5 Hostility in Relation to Aggression

Esposito and Breeze (2022) analyze how gender-based aggression manifests in the digital space, particularly targeting female politicians. This study illustrates the unique challenges faced by women in politics, where aggression often includes sexist remarks and threats, contributing to an exclusionary environment. Berring et al. (2015) discuss how aggression is documented and communicated within forensic mental health. This analysis provides insight into how aggression is perceived, managed, and narratively constructed in clinical settings, affecting treatment approaches and public perceptions of mental health issues. Also, both Wang (2023) and Jiaxing et al. (2023) examine the media-driven aggression between China and the US concerning the COVID-19 pandemic. These studies reveal how nationalistic and defensive postures in media coverage can escalate into aggressive discourse, impacting international relations and public sentiments. Indah and Supraryogi (2020) delve their research into how former President Donald Trump's speeches often use aggressive rhetoric to depict international relations, particularly with Iran. This rhetoric influenced U.S. foreign

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policy perceptions and heightened tensions between the nations. Mourad (2021) xplores the aggressive rhetoric employed by American politicians against China during the pandemic. This article highlights how political discourse can fuel xenophobia and aggressive policies, exacerbating diplomatic tensions.

5. CONCLUSION

This review paper has provided a deep exploration into the difficult portrayal of hostility within various media forms. By categorizing the 30 studies into five key themes racism, anger, hate speech, prejudice, and aggression, the review has uncovered the complex and multifaceted ways in which the media frames and shapes public perceptions of hostility. The findings indicate that media outlets, whether through news reporting, entertainment media, or political rhetoric, can embed subtle forms of racism, amplify expressions of anger and hate speech, reinforce prejudiced views, and sensationalize aggressive behaviors. The critical media discourse analysis review conducted here highlights the urgent need for enhanced media literacy to enable audiences to critically assess and interpret media representations of hostility. Moving forward, it is essential for media practitioners and policymakers to consider the implications of their portrayals of hostility and strive for a balanced discourse that promotes understanding rather than division. Further research should also be done to investigate the direct effects of these media portrayals on public attitudes and behaviors, aiming to contribute to a more informed and empathetic global society.

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