A Critical Discourse Analysis of Facebook Hate Discourse -Exploiting Ideology in Pakistani Politics.

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Abstract:

This research exploits insight from the proliferation of hate discourse used by the consumers on Facebook Portfolio against rival politicians for the exploitation of political ideology. This agenda became common due to the handicapped political scenario in Pakistani politics which ultimately caused the expression of individuals,' anger for the exploitation of political ideology. due to corruption, unemployment, inflation, and poverty. This research is qualitative in nature and the sampling technique used in this study is non-probability purposive sampling. The data of this research is obtained from the Facebook portfolio in light of the sampling technique. The manipulative discourse framework given by Van Dijk and the social approval theory of Walter both are taken to fulfill the theoretical requirements of political hate discourse ideological exploitation in Pakistani Politics. The findings reveal that the use of political hate discourse in Facebook portfolios has become a common trend for the expression of public anger and it is caused by the handicapped political system, corruption, and powerful dictatorship which is consequently causing the exploitation of political ideology. The exploitation of political ideology is wrapped in hateful epithets, ironical profiles of politicians, and sarcastic metaphors against politicians So, these agendas may sensationalize the mutual unity of the country towards any unexpected circumstances.

Keywords:

CDA, Facebook, Ideology, Politics, Pakistan, Hate Discourse.

Introduction:

Facebook is a social networking system that was launched in 2004 and was founded by Americans (Philips,2007). It expanded gradually and it became accessible to everyone in

September 2006(Carlson,2010). Nowadays the users figure of Facebook has turned into 3.07 billion in 2024. It is considered one of the platforms that provide opportunities to its consumers for freedom of expression which is a basic political and civil right in every community. European Court of Human Rights emphasized it as one of the fundamentals of social and democratic society. However, hate discourse is a special kind of expression that is denied protection (Kapela´nska-Pręgowska, and Pucelj, 2023). Similarly, several human rights organizations have attempted to define and combat hate discourse in an increasingly polarized manner (Rafi and Shafique,2024). The widely cited comprehensive definition of hate discourse is aimed at penetrating the global understanding of pejorative and discriminatory language and it can be inferred that the nature of hate discourse is predominantly contextual.

History has witnessed that in Pakistan the hate discourse is found common for the manipulation of the Public and it is considered a shortcut for well-mannered politicians (Ziccardi, 2020). Emotions and prejudice are manipulated in hateful political discourse for the beneficial consequences of politicians. Social media has transformed into an indispensable communication channel for political discourse around the world (Graham et al., 2013). By putting the comparison of social media with traditional media there are a few benefits for political workers and politicians such as the message is likely to be spread at a large scale, awareness in public about political agenda can be enhanced rapidly and there is encouragement by the social media in the production of dialogue among politicians and consumers (Hong, and Nadler 2012). Finally, social media platforms have an interactive nature which makes them more attractive. The benefits of social are further reinforced by openness that is not restricted by the content, scope, and geography and can cover a wide range of audiences (Sara Enli, and Skogerbø, 2013& Ross, Fountaine, and Comrie, 2015).

CDA is an interdisciplinary approach that is determined to investigate questions like why and how created by the interaction of society. It is a way to expose the power relations in society for the enactment of ideological stance. CDA is "a type of discourse analysis research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in social and political contexts" (van Dijk, 2004, p. 352).CDA either addresses the issues decorated in the language or the context that is produced in power relations ideology, hegemony, and bias (Van Dijk,2009). CDA comprehends the ways of social actors who work for the equities of oppressed groups that not only view the textual structure but also penetrate the contextual and social structure (Mahboob, & Paltridge, 2013). So, finally, the present research is aimed to meet the following objective. CDA tries to highlight language manipulation and legitimation and it describes the strategies for manufacturing the consent of minds discursively for the influence of society. CDA digs out the complexities that are decorated in all the dimensions of discourse such as grammar, pragmatic strategies, semiotics, and schematic organization. The text and talks are platforms for the acquisition, spread, and reproduction of ideologies. There is little systematic attention to the basic role of discourse in the reproduction of ideology (Van Dijk,2009). The social groups and practices shared socio-cognitive fundamentals for the production of ideology by organizing schema in identities, norms, goals, values, and references.

- To Analyze Facebook, Hate Discourse Used for Exploiting Ideology in Pakistani Politics.

Literature Review:

Hate discourse is a message, or communication that is produced to insult groups and individuals based on caste, religion, race, and other features (Schmidt, Wiegand, 2017). Hate discourse is a message or malicious language with flaming comments used to describe various characteristics and violate existing norms. Oxford Constitutional Law (2020) explains that hate discourse is a malicious expression of offensive language used to express opinions based on radical background, stereotypes, and race. In the domain of media studies, sociology, and communication hate speech is reinvigorated through computational methods (Ben- David& Matamoros- Fernandez, 2016: Castano-Pulgarin et al,2021; Chekol et al., 2023; & Parvaresh,2023). It is concluded by the researchers that people are divided, their social cohesion is undermined, and in the worst cases, genocides are triggered by the schemas of hate discourse (Kalmoe & Mason, 2022). The twenty-first century can be called the age of hatred and this is because hatred has turned now into a concept comprehended by collective and personal violence in the discursive domain (O'Mahoney, 2013).

In response to the implication of discrimination applied by extreme-right political parties, hate speech was adopted and used on digital platforms (Ben-David & Matamoros-Fernandez, 2016). In India and Malaysia, laws of hate speech were examined and counter-speech was proposed as a solution. (Sharma,2019). The proliferation of hate discourse is associated with the media and political ecosystem that are characterized by the mediatization of politics and commercialization of media and it either creates systemic conditions of visibility or dissemination of hate discourse. During the past few decades, media organizations introduced participatory journalism enthusiastically by encouraging users to share the content on online platforms (Panagiotidis et al. 2020) but the excessive spread of hate discourse has forced the responsibility of media to tighten the rules and regulations (Hughey and Daniels,2013).

Fairclough (2003) explains ideology and defines it as a representation of various paradigms in the world that help establish, maintain, use, and change the social relations of power, exploitation, and domination. He also exemplifies further that the modality of power is viewed as an ideology. Thompson (1984) expresses ideology as a meaning in the service of power and power utilizes ideology obfuscated and realized in the discourse to get the willingness of people (Wodak, and Mayor, 2009). Hodge and Kress propagate ideology as a socializing tool that serves the interest of particular people and certain privileged groups promote for hidden motives (Fairclough,2001). Apple (1979) explains that ideologies of dominant and powerful groups are maintained in schools. Khan et al. (2017) elucidate CDA as a useful tool to understand the ideology of capitalists. Bhutto and Ramzan (2020) have explained the pacifier collusive stance of media is working for ideology and power. Ramzan and Khan (2019) CDA is a significant tool for the deconstruction of stereotyped ideologies. Ramzan et al (2020) explain the use of speech acts in news headlines discourse is specifically ideology-oriented as well. Ramzan et al. (2021) have confirmed that power abuse is a main concern in CDA. It either examines by manipulating the faith of people how power is abused in discourse or views how the minds and thoughts of less powerful communities are

dominated by the ideology of language. Finally, it is concluded that status, money, force, knowledge, and fame are the accesses to power and ideology. Nawaz et al (2021) explain the striving for the power of positive us and negative them in the way of ideological stance. Rafi and Shafique (2024) studied the role of political hate speech in promoting extreme ideologies and public discourse manipulation for social approval in Pakistan. So finally, it is concluded in light of previous literature that Facebook discourse is not studied in the Pakistani context for ideological purposes and this research will elucidate the following research question.

- Is there any ideological exploitation in the production of Facebook hate discourse?

Theoretical Underpinnings:

The crucial notion of Critical Discourse Analysis is manipulation and it is found in the triangulation approach of manipulation in van Dijk's (2006) manipulative framework of manipulative discourse. It is defined by van Dijk (2006) that manipulative discourse is the shape of text that is linked to the interest of one individual or party at the expense of another. The illegitimate domination conforming to social inequality is called social manipulation. There is a triangulated approach to manipulation in the form of social power abuse, discursive interaction, and cognitive mind. Manipulation is associated with mind control and social representation e.g. ideology. In social approval theory, it is argued Walther (2022) that hatred-oriented motivation is not basically to antagonize rivals but to get support from the followers for the completion of a certain agenda.

Research Methodology:

By keeping in view the foundations of data, this research is qualitative in nature and the sampling technique used in this study is non-probability purposive sampling. The data of this research is obtained from the Facebook portfolio in light of the sampling technique. The manipulative discourse framework given by Van Dijk and the social approval theory of Walter both are taken to fulfill the theoretical requirements of political hate discourse ideological exploitation in Pakistani Politics. Van Dijk and Walther provide valuable insight into the analysis of discourse for the exploitation of ideological stances. It is cautioned in research such as Rafi (2019) that hate speech can transform the consequences into unexpected circumstances.

Data Analysis:

The growing trends in internet use have made Facebook more accessible to every individual. This trend has made the situation favorable for the media industry and online social media platforms are a cluster of information that provides multidimensional views of people and among these Facebook use has become very common. Gee (2011) has suggested that we need to know about context for making assumptions and drawing inferences. Further, we are required to think about information to make out the real sense of speech by viewing the context of what was said by the speaker.

Excerpt Number 1.
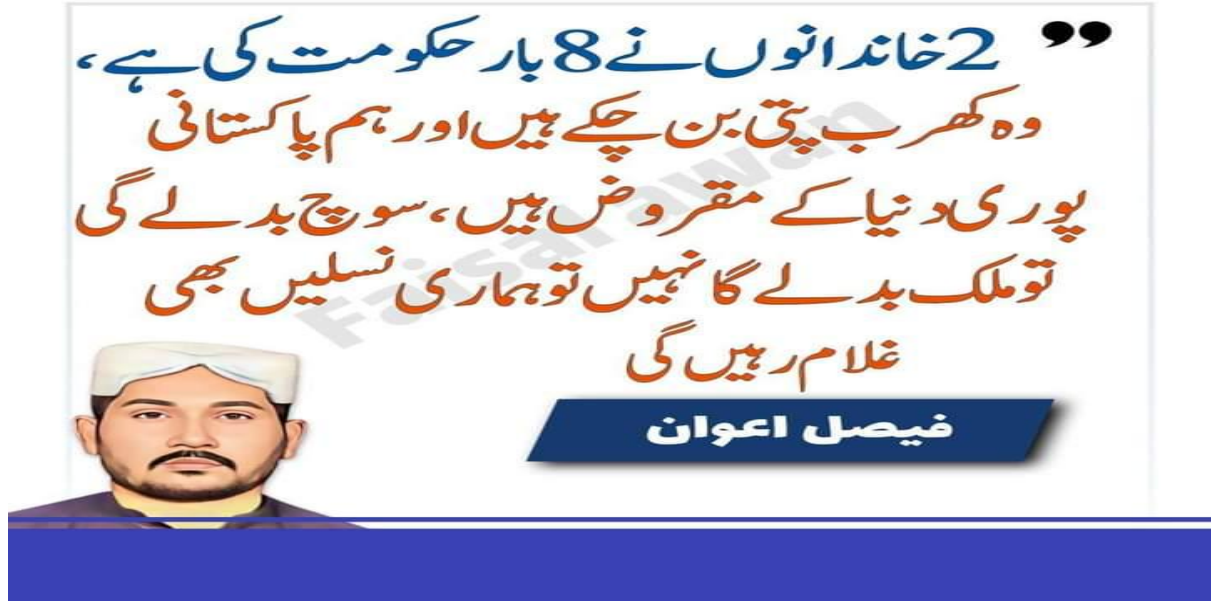
English Translation Excerpt Number 1.

Two families have ruled eight times. They have become billionaires and we Pakistanis are indebted to the whole world—If the thinking changes, the country will change, otherwise, our generations will remain slaves. **Faisal Awan**

The above hate speech is against two political families in the Pakistani domain. It is ideologically focusing on the poor political system of Pakistan. There is the elucidation of the political system that is limited to the two families i.e. Zardari and Shareef who have governed eight times in Pakistan on the turn by turn and pushed the country into debt which has enhanced the danger of solidarity in the country. The aim of this text is twofold 1. To justify the perceptions and attribution of the community that the public is well aware of the situation that is endeavored by the politicians to manipulate. 2. The speaker of excerpt one is trying to establish relationships through hate discourse between political practitioners and political beneficiaries that is unilateral as a whole by viewing the situation. In excerpt one, the use of present tense reflects the attempt to naturalize for the sake of the assumptions and predictions of the public in front of politicians. By viewing the context (Gee,2011) there are certain uncertainties and upheavals in the political scenarios of Pakistani which have been intensified after 9 May 2023. This uncertainty is power-oriented and has created resistance along with domination in the political scenario. Secondly, Ramzan et al. (2021) have explained that the model verbs indicate moods to perform the role of renowned persuasive strategies. Obligations, possibilities, permission, ability, and uncertainty are expressed in model verbs. Cameron (2017) explained that model verbs permit people to make claims, speculations, and hypotheses, similarly in the above-given statement there is a claim. پوری دنیا کے مقروض ہیں.Further, there are speculations and hypotheses.

ہما ری نسلیں بھی غلا م رہیں گے سوچ بدلے گی تو نظا م بدلے گا ۔

Excerpt Number 2.

English Translation Excerpt Number 2:

So many cases of Nawaz Shareef have ended, not any judge said that is innocent, everyone knows he is completely illegal.

Gee (2011) has said that language is not only used to say things but also to do things and be the things. So, in excerpt 2 the sender of the discourse from the Facebook portfolio is determined to stand against the corrupt political system and representatives. Simultaneously, the users of Facebook have directed their identities as straightforward natives of the Pakistani nation. They are either raising their voices against a judicial system or trying to warn political leaders of the country through the address of Mian Nawaz Shareef. The users of Facebook are

trying to expose the power of their agenda that no one is free from the trial of corruption in front judiciary. Secondly, excerpt 2 describes hate by the use of sarcastic words. It is visible that sarcastic discourse is a hybridization of humor and sarcasm. Such kind of sarcastic discourse is freely being used on Facebook Portfolio against politicians to demystify the agenda in their politics simultaneously the sarcastic expressions are giving glimpses these strategies are being used to manipulate the ideology of politics. It either establishes the discoursal social disapproval of Pakistani politics or indicates the corrupt and unlawful political system of Pakistan. The second segment of this excerpt justifies the hatefulness in the use of language for the enhancement of polarization. There is also ideological influence and van Dijk (2000) has explained the terms us and them in the context of strategic agenda where the behaviors of individuals are emphasized as a group's behavior. Further, there is the involvement of two impacts i.e. positive and negative. The term us is associated with the positive behavior of individuals and or groups and negative things are them-oriented. Similarly, there is a conflict between positive us and negative them in the given statement, Pakistan Tehreek e Insaf is a positive us, and Pakistan Muslim League is a negative them. The second excerpt also advocates that there is a strategy of Pakistan Tehreek e Insaf to call workers for the achievement of political goals through the strategy of violence. There is an intertextual reference to foreign invasion in the Pakistani government regime as well.

Excerpt Number 3.

English Translation Excerpt Number 3.

Wood Digest, Iron Digest, Corruption Digest, Panamy Digest.

In excerpt three, there is a sarcastic picture of Mian Muhammad Nawaz Shareef along with a description of discourse about corruption, corruption digest, and other criminal deeds. The most significant hate discourse presented in the portrait of Pakistani Prime Minister Mian Muhammad Nawaz Shareef is the use of sarcastic and ironical metaphors which are

employed in three ways by provoking the public towards deeds of Mian Muhammad Nawaz Shareef, the public is presented as handicapped, inferior and helpless against the power of Mian Muhammad Nawaz Shareef, and the violent attitude of Mian Nawaz Shareef against the public by pushing them into lawlessness commonalities. Metaphors are either used to dehumanize the public or there might be incitement strategies for the eruption of revolution similarly case is visible against Mian Nawaz Shareef in above selected statement. Further, online hate discourse is distinguished by metaphorical invasion from other discourse (Iztok, & Vehovary,2022). There is another aspect of discoursal strategy that is known as motivation which is either power-oriented or associated with power abuse. The second entity is called domination and it is linked with the exercise of illegitimate influence of meanings of discourse. Manipulation works in the favour of the manipulator and against the best interest of the manipulated (Van Dijk,1998). There is a similar case in excerpt number 3 that might be the link to manipulate hate against Nawaz Shareef and a strategy to neutralize the anger of the public against Nawaz Shareef.

Discussion and Findings:

The study was started by the assumption that there is ideological exploitation in the hate discourse produced by Facebook's portfolio against political leaders which is analyzable linguistically. However, the assumptions lead us towards further linguistic strategies that are decorated in the Facebook hate discourse and there is an extensive proliferation in such discourse creation. The findings of this research are as under.

- There is great confusion in the Pakistani public due to the inherited political system.
- Corruption and nepotism have penetrated the solid foundations of Pakistan which have produced consequences of bankruptcy in the country which has developed inflation as well.
- People are socially demoralized by the deeds of bureaucracy and politicians and they have started thinking that they will remain slaves perpetually for generations.
- There is a very weak situation of law and order in the whole state and the judiciary has lost it will power to decide independently. Further, it looks very visible from the discourse that the judiciary in the country is working under any power abuse.
- The hate discourse produced on Facebook's portfolio justifies that political polarization, political violence, and offensive abuse are touching its climax in the country.
- There is lawlessness and political tussle in the country which gives birth to the provoking political language, sarcastic slogans, and offensive metaphors in political discourse on Facebook produced by the masses for the satisfaction of their anger.
- Finally, due to the above reasons, Facebook hate discourse has exploited political ideology in Pakistani Politics for their hidden agenda. Although, there is permission for every citizen to the freedom of speech this right is limited to morality and values.

The data propagates about negativity and incivility. The insulting remarks articulated by the public on Facebook portfolio have transformed into a habitual phenomenon that is the cause of exploitation in Pakistani political ideology. Further, it is producing political conflict that may consequently cause unexpected circumstances. Contextual and

intertextual meanings are suggested in the repertoire of metaphorical language. ElSherief (2018) suggests that hate is produced by the directed and generalized features in the discourse. Name articulation in direct speech has become a customary strategy in the hate-oriented discourse. This study is aligned with Parvaresh (2023) who highlighted the covert hate speech linked with Afgan migrants. Further, there is the role of political hate speech in the promotion of extreme ideologies and manipulation of public discourse for social approval in Pakistan explored by Rafi and Shafique (2024) that either contradicts or supports this study. Finally, the data elucidates that Pakistan Tehreek e Insaf is linked with an enterprising political agenda that reveals the exploitation of political ideology. There is the decoration of various cultural and contextual layers to obtain hidden agendas and exploit political ideology (Ziccardi).

Conclusion:

This research aimed to explore the ideological exploitation in Pakistani politics through hate speech discourse. It is concluded that hate speech is a dangerous and harmful strategy that is being used in the exploitation of political ideology and various linguistic strategies are used in discourse to undermine the political victims. The rival politicians are sensationalizing hatred for their own and hidden motives. The study has found that there is an implementation of self-regulated discourse for the destruction of social harmony in language. There is an extreme diversion in the political scenario of Pakistan.

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