Britishness and Community Cohesion in Muslim News Online

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Abstract
The issues of British national identity and social cohesion have become pressing concerns within the multicultural fabric of contemporary British society. The increasing number of immigrants and their offspring, along with the maintenance of their cultural roots, seem to represent a serious defiance to social cohesion and the alleged “purity” of Britishness. A number of race related reports were produced by the official authorities to churn out the necessary steps to be followed by the British (immigrants and host community) in order to keep social stability and community cohesion. Thus, the politics of community cohesion came to the fore as the neologism of contemporary British political discourse. Such new discourse of governance has been digested and processed differently by different mass media. It has been decoded, for instance, preferably by mainstream news agencies like BBC News Online. However, arguably, it is read appositionally or at best negotiated by ethnicity-related news agencies such as Muslim News Online. In this article, attempt has been made to adopt media discourse analysis tools to decipher the ways Muslim News Online decoded and then encoded the hegemonic official discourses of Britishness and community cohesion. A critical and interpretative approach is used to accomplish such study. The corpus of this study is primarily extracted from the website of the Muslim News Online.

Key words: Britishness, community cohesion, multiculturalism, new media, discourse analysis.

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