



MEDİAD

Medya ve Din Araştırmaları Dergisi | Journal of Media and Religion Studies

ARAŞTIRMA MAKALESİ | RESEARCH ARTICLE

Kasım/November 2024, Özel Sayı 1/Special Issue 1, 91-122

Geliş: 30.07.2024 | Kabul: 22.10.2024 | Yayın: 28.11.2024

DOI: 10.47951/mediad.1525052

Hate Speech on Social Media in the Axis of Islamophobia: Example of TikTok

Mustafa BÖYÜK*

Abstract

This study focuses on the detection and analysis of Islamophobic hate speech on the TikTok platform. Social media platforms have a great impact in terms of reaching masses and sharing information. However, these platforms can also pave the way for the spread of negative content such as hate speech and discrimination. TikTok draws attention with its short video format, which is especially popular among young people. For this reason, it offers an important area of investigation in terms of the spread of hate speech and discrimination content. In this study, posts containing Islamophobic hate speech on TikTok were identified through the keywords 'Islam', 'Muslim', 'Terrorist', 'Jihad', 'Sharia', 'Radical Islam' and 'Islamist'. These keywords were chosen from the terms that commonly define Islamophobic discourse in the literature. The 10 TikTok posts selected using simple random sampling technique were analysed by critical discourse analysis method. Critical discourse analysis is a method that analyses how texts and speeches gain meaning in the social context and how these meanings reflect social power relations. In the study, linguistic and visual analyses of Islamophobic content on TikTok were conducted. The research was conducted in the first six months of 2024. The data collection process carried out during this period was obtained as a result of the scans carried out on TikTok using the keywords mentioned above. The results of the study show that Islamophobic hate speech is spread linguistically and discursively through posts on TikTok. Islamophobic content reinforces negative stereotypes against Muslims and damages social cohesion. Such content leads to marginalisation, exclusion and violence against Muslims. Islamophobia and hate speech increase social polarisation and create distrust and hostility in society.

Keywords: Social Media, Hate Speech, Tiktok, Islamophobia, Anti-Muslim

İslamofobi Ekseninde Sosyal Medyada Nefret Söylemi: TikTok Örneği

Öz

Bu çalışma, TikTok platformunda İslamofobik nefret söylemlerinin tespiti ve analizine odaklanmaktadır. Sosyal medya platformları, kitlelere ulaşma ve bilgi paylaşımı açısından büyük bir etkiye sahiptir. Ancak bu platformlar nefret söylemi ve ayrımcılık gibi olumsuz içeriklerin yayılmasına da zemin hazırlayabilmektedir. TikTok, özellikle gençler arasında popüler olan kısa video formatıyla dikkat çekmektedir. Bu nedenle nefret söylemi ve ayrımcılık içeriklerinin yayılması açısından önemli bir inceleme alanı sunmaktadır. Çalışmada, TikTok üzerinde İslamofobik nefret söylemi içeren paylaşımlar "İslam", "Müslüman", "Terörist", "Cihat", "Şeriat", "Radikal İslam" ve "İslamcı" anahtar kelimeleri aracılığıyla tespit edilmiştir. Bu anahtar kelimeler literatürde yaygın olarak İslamofobik söylemi tanımlayan terimlerden seçilmiştir. Basit rastgele örnekleme tekniği kullanılarak seçilen 10 TikTok paylaşımı, eleştirel söylem analizi yöntemiyle incelenmiştir. Eleştirel söylem analizi, metinlerin ve konuşmaların toplumsal bağlamda nasıl anlam kazandığını ve bu anlamların toplumsal güç ilişkilerini nasıl yansıttığını inceleyen bir yöntemdir. Çalışmada, TikTok'taki İslamofobik içeriklerin dilsel ve görsel analizleri yapılmıştır. Araştırma, 2024 yılının ilk altı ayında gerçekleştirilmiştir. Bu dönemde yapılan veri toplama süreci, TikTok'ta yukarıda belirtilen anahtar kelimeler kullanılarak gerçekleştirilen taramalar sonucunda elde edilmiştir. Çalışmanın sonuçları, TikTok'ta paylaşımlar üzerinden İslamofobik nefret söylemlerinin dilsel ve söylemsel olarak yayıldığını göstermektedir. İslamofobik içerikler, Müslümanlara yönelik olumsuz stereotipleri pekiştirmekte ve toplumsal uyumu zedelemektedir. Bu tür içerikler, Müslümanların marjinalleşmesine, dışlanmasına ve şiddete maruz kalmasına yol açmaktadır. İslamofobi ve nefret söylemi, toplumsal kutuplaşmayı artırmakta ve toplumda güvensizlik ve düşmanlık oluşturmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sosyal Medya, Nefret Söylemi, Tiktok, İslamofobi, İslam Karşıtlığı

ATIF: Büyük, M. (2024). Hate speech on social media in the axis of Islamophobia: Example of TikTok. *Medya ve Din Araştırmaları Dergisi (MEDİAD)*, Special Issue 1, p. 91-122.

* Lecturer, Dr., Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt University, e-mail: mustafaboyuk@aybu.edu.tr, orcid.org/0000-0002-1010-9048, Ankara, Türkiye

Introduction

Social media platforms have become an integral part of individuals' daily lives and have fundamentally changed the nature of social interactions. These platforms provide users with rapid access to information, the ability to reach large audiences, and the opportunity to express their views on various topics. However, this freedom and ease of access also lead to the rapid spread of negative content such as hate speech and discrimination. Social media has become a space where social norms and values are reshaped, making various social issues more visible.

Islamophobia is a type of discrimination frequently encountered on social media, which can lead to serious social consequences. Islamophobic content targets Muslim individuals and communities, reinforcing prejudices and increasing social polarization. The spread of such content not only creates psychological and social impacts on the targeted individuals but also threatens social peace and the culture of coexistence.

TikTok stands out as a platform where content in short video format is shared and rapidly reaches large audiences. While this platform allows users to produce creative and entertaining content, it also facilitates the rapid spread of hate speech and discriminatory content. TikTok's algorithmic structure enables popular content to gain more visibility and reach wider audiences. This situation causes hate speech content to spread quickly and negatively affect large audiences.

In this study, posts containing Islamophobic hate speech on TikTok were identified through specific keywords and examined using the simple random sampling technique. Within the limitations of the research, the ten most interacted contents on TikTok were analyzed in detail using the critical discourse analysis method. Critical discourse analysis is a method that examines how language reflects and reproduces social power relations. This method helps us better understand the social impacts of hate speech and discriminatory content by revealing their linguistic and discursive structures. Additionally, the interactions these contents received and how they spread were also evaluated. This evaluation is important for understanding the dissemination dynamics of hate speech content on the platform and users' reactions to these contents.

The study aims to reveal the structure and dissemination patterns of anti-Islamic content on the TikTok platform. The results obtained aim to contribute to the development of more effective policies by social media platforms in combating discriminatory and hate content and to increase social awareness. In this context, the findings of the study will help social media users and platform administrators become more aware of hate speech and discrimination and develop more effective strategies to combat them. Furthermore, this study provides important insights into the measures that social media platforms can take to fulfill their social responsibilities and ensure the safety of their users.

In conclusion, the study provides a significant contribution to understanding the social impacts of social media platforms and how to cope with these impacts by addressing the structure and dissemination patterns of Islamophobic hate speech content on the TikTok platform. In this context, it aims to shed light on the efforts of social media platforms to create a safer and more inclusive environment. Social media platforms need to develop more effective policies to ensure the safety of their users and protect social peace.

1. The Social Role of Social Media

Social media has fundamentally transformed communication and interaction patterns since the early twentieth century, reshaping the relationships between individuals, communities, and institutions (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010, p. 59). These platforms have had profound and wide-ranging impacts in cultural, social, political, and economic domains.

Social media transcends cultural boundaries, bringing people from around the world together and merging different media forms and cultures through what (Jenkins, 2011) describes as "media convergence". Users have the opportunity to discover and share content from diverse cultural backgrounds globally, creating an environment for global dialogue and cultural exchange. This new environment enables people to better understand each other's lifestyles, thoughts, and values. However, this cultural exchange can sometimes also facilitate the spread of hate speech and discriminatory content (Allcott & Gentzkow, 2017, p. 213).

Social media platforms can also lead to conflicts arising from misunderstandings and prejudices among individuals from different cultures. For instance, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, and other religious or ethnic-based hate speech can quickly spread through social media, exacerbating social tensions (Matamoros-Fernández, 2017, p. 933). Such content can lead users to develop prejudiced and hostile attitudes towards each other, undermining social cohesion.

Social media has opened new avenues for civic engagement and political mobilization. (Bennett & Segerberg, 2012), concept of "connective action" describes this process, where individuals take a more active role in social and political issues. Users participate in democratic processes by supporting political campaigns, organizing protest events, and becoming informed about public policies. This contributes to increased democratic participation and more transparent government practices. However, the same platforms can also facilitate the spread of hate speech and misinformation, fueling social polarization and discrimination (Howard & Hussain, 2013, p. 115).

During election periods, disinformation campaigns conducted through social media can heighten social tensions and harm democratic processes. For example, during the 2016 U.S. presidential election, social media platforms played a significant role in the spread of fake news and misleading information (Allcott & Gentzkow, 2017, p. 213). Such content can misinform voters and manipulate democratic processes.

Social media has also brought revolutionary changes to the business world. (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010), discuss the impact of these platforms on functions such as marketing, brand management, and customer relationship management. Companies can directly communicate with consumers, receive feedback, and shape their products or services based on this feedback through social media. This allows for a better understanding of consumer needs and the development of more dynamic strategies to meet them. However, this process can also expose brands and products to hate campaigns (Cheung & Thadani, 2012, p. 461).

Negative campaigns conducted through social media can damage brand image and negatively influence consumer behavior. For instance, negative comments and fake news about a brand's products or services can erode consumer trust and adversely affect sales. This necessitates companies to reassess their social media strategies and develop crisis management plans.

Social media has also led to significant changes in the field of education. (Greenhow & Robelia, 2009), highlight how these platforms have transformed learning processes and expanded the ways students access information. While social media facilitates access to information for students, it also offers teachers opportunities to enrich lesson materials and increase student engagement. However, the spread of hate speech and discriminatory content in educational settings can lead to divisions and social tensions among students (Selwyn, 2012, p. 89).

Discrimination based on gender, race, or religious beliefs can be further entrenched through social media, jeopardizing the integrity of the learning environment. For example, the spread of hate speech messages by one student group against another can lead to serious social tensions and even physical conflicts in the school environment. Such situations require educational institutions to regulate social media use and develop more effective policies to promote tolerance and respect among students.

The negative aspects of social media are not limited to the spread of misinformation and fake news. (Allcott & Gentzkow, 2017), note that these platforms can increase social polarization and have misleading effects on public opinion. Additionally, issues such as social media addiction and privacy violations are serious concerns for users. Hate speech holds a particularly harmful place among these negative effects, as it can lead to the targeting, discrimination, and social exclusion of individuals and groups (Matamoros-Fernández, 2017, p. 933).

Social media platforms must develop more effective policies and regulations to prevent the spread of such content. Major platforms like Facebook, X, and YouTube use algorithms and moderation teams to prevent the spread of hate speech and misinformation. However, these efforts are often insufficient and cannot completely prevent the spread of hate speech content (Gillespie, 2018, p. 257).

In conclusion, the social role of social media is multifaceted and complex. While these platforms offer unique opportunities for global communication and interaction, they also bring new challenges and responsibilities. Understanding and managing the impacts of social media on society requires continuous attention and regulation. Maximizing the opportunities provided by these platforms and minimizing potential risks is an important task for all segments of society. Social media platforms must develop more effective policies and regulations to ensure user safety and protect social cohesion, while users must use these platforms responsibly.

2. Islamophobia and Hate Speech on Social Media

Islamophobia is defined as an irrational fear, hatred, or prejudice against Islam and Muslims. This concept encompasses negative attitudes towards the cultural, religious, and social identities of Muslims. Islamophobia often stems from the association of Muslims with terrorism, the perception of cultural differences as a threat, and the belief that Muslims are difficult to integrate into social life (Allen, 2010, p. 12). In addition to individual prejudices and discrimination, Islamophobia can also manifest itself through institutional policies and practices. Studies on Islamophobia reveal that the concept is multidimensional. For example, Said (1978) emphasises the role of orientalist thought in the formation of prejudices against Islam in the West. In this context, Cesari (2004) draws attention to how secularisation processes in the West feed Islamophobic attitudes. In addition, Bleich (2011) analysed the legal, political and sociological dimensions of Islamophobia and analysed the effects of this concept on social segregation in depth.

Hate speech is defined as expressions that contain hostility, contempt, or discrimination against a particular group. Such speech is often directed at ethnic, religious, sexual, or other identity-based groups and can lead to marginalization, exclusion, or violence against these groups (Perry, 2001, p. 10). Hate speech threatens the safety of individuals and communities and undermines social cohesion.

Social media platforms play a significant role in the spread of Islamophobia and hate speech due to their ability to enable users to create and share content. These platforms allow hate speech to spread rapidly and reach large audiences. Various academic studies have examined the spread of Islamophobia and hate speech on social media and have investigated the social impacts of such speech and methods to combat it. For example, Awan's (2014) study on the dynamics of Islamophobic discourse on Twitter revealed that Islamophobic tweets increase after certain events and spread rapidly to a wide audience. Similarly, Ekman's (2015) study on how Islamophobic groups organise and spread hate speech on Facebook shows that these groups usually form closed communities and spread their hate speech in these communities. However, more recent studies offer new insights into this issue. Vidgen & Yasseri (2020) study focused on identifying weak and strong Islamophobic hate speech on social media and analysed in detail how it spreads at different levels. Furthermore, Gata & Bayhaqy (2020) study analysing the sensitivities towards Islamophobia

on social media after the Christchurch attack reveals how such hate speech resonates in the aftermath of global events.

Historically, Islamophobia reflects the prejudices and fears towards Islam and Muslims in the Western world. During the Crusades in the Middle Ages, Muslims were seen as enemies by the Christian world, and this enmity was propagated through literature and art. During the colonial period in the 19th century, Western powers occupied Muslim countries and spread negative stereotypes about Islam and Muslims, often depicting them as backward, barbaric, and uncivilized (Said, 1978, p. 206).

In the modern era, Islamophobia has gained a new dimension, especially after the attacks in the United States of America on 11 September 2001. These attacks led to the establishment of a direct relationship between Islam and terrorism in the Western world and increased fear and prejudice against Muslims. The media, politicians and some academics have also contributed to the reinforcement of these prejudices by spreading Islamophobic rhetoric (Cesari, 2013, p. 45). In this context, Huntington's (1996) theory of Clashing Civilisations has been a frequently used framework to explain the antagonism between the West and Islam. Huntington argued that such conflicts are inevitable, seeing Islam as the main rival of the West.

In particular, events such as the Charlie Hebdo attack (2015) and the murder of Samuel Paty (2020) have led to the strengthening of Islamophobic discourses in the West and deepened social segregation against Muslims. These events have contributed to the perception of Islam as a 'threat' not only in the media but also in the political arena and social debates. The Turkish literature also draws attention to the impact of these developments and the construction of Islamophobia in the media. Dondurucu (2022) analysed the representation of Islam and the construction of Islamophobia in French newspapers through examples such as *Le Figaro*, *Le Monde* and *L'Opinion* and revealed how these discourses reinforce negative perceptions against Muslims. Similarly, Kilci et al. (2017) analysed videos containing hate speech in the context of Islamophobia in new media environments, especially on YouTube, and showed how digital platforms pave the way for Islamophobia.

Various methods have been developed to combat Islamophobia and hate speech on social media; however, these methods are often simplistic and insufficient. These methods include the development of more effective monitoring mechanisms by platforms, raising user awareness and strengthening legal regulations. Social media platforms have developed various monitoring mechanisms to combat hate speech. These mechanisms include users reporting hate speech content, algorithms detecting hate speech content and removal of such content. For example, Facebook uses artificial intelligence and human moderators to detect and remove hate speech content (Gillespie, 2018, p. 89)

Increasing user awareness is also important in combating hate speech on social media. Users should be informed about the harms of hate speech and trained on how to respond to such content. For example, some civil society organisations organise training programmes and campaigns to combat hate speech on social media (Citron, 2016, p. 112). However, increasing new media literacy is also an important part of this fight. Cahyani (2019), while emphasising the role of new media literacy in preventing the spread of hate speech and disinformation, argued that digital media users should be raised awareness.

Strengthening legal regulations is also critical in combating hate speech. Many countries have enacted laws to prevent the spread of hate speech. For example, Germany's NetzDG law, which came into force in 2017, requires social media platforms to quickly remove hate speech content (Kaye, 2019, p. 56). Stockmann et al. (2023) study on strategies to combat online hate speech in Germany details the effectiveness of social media governance and legal regulations. Furthermore, Udanor & Anyanwu's (2019) study on countering hate speech on Twitter analyses the

challenges of dealing with hate speech in polarised societies on social media and the policies developed in this context.

The spread of Islamophobia and hate speech on social media is a significant issue that threatens social peace. Such rhetoric leads to the marginalization, exclusion, and violence against Muslims. Additionally, Islamophobia and hate speech undermine social cohesion and cause polarization within society.

The spread of Islamophobia and hate speech on social media leads to the marginalization and exclusion of Muslims. Such rhetoric can hinder the integration of Muslims into social life, obstructing their access to essential services such as education, employment, and healthcare. For example, some studies have shown that Islamophobic rhetoric increases the risk of Muslim students being bullied at school.

Islamophobia and hate speech encourage violence and discrimination against Muslims. Hate speech disseminated on social media can incite some individuals to carry out physical attacks or engage in discriminatory behaviors against Muslims. For instance, some studies have shown that Islamophobic rhetoric leads to an increase in hate crimes against Muslims.

Islamophobia and hate speech undermine social cohesion and cause polarization within society. Such rhetoric fosters distrust and hostility among different ethnic and religious groups, threatening social peace. For example, some studies have shown that Islamophobic rhetoric increases polarization within society and undermines social cohesion (Modood, 2013, p. 102).

2.1. Islamophobia, TikTok and Hate Speech

TikTok is a social media platform launched in 2016 by the China-based company ByteDance. Users can share videos from 15 seconds to 3 minutes in length, usually including music, dance, comedy and other entertainment content. However, TikTok's large user base and ease of content creation also paves the way for the spread of hate speech. Especially Islamophobic content can spread rapidly through the platform's algorithms and user interactions.

TikTok's algorithms can increase the visibility of content that users are interested in, leading to the rapid spread of videos containing hate speech. For example, when a user shares an Islamophobic video, this content can quickly reach thousands of people and encourage the production of similar content. Alvarez-Cueva (2023), referring to TikTok's difficulties in combating hate speech, stated that the platform has difficulty in countering the spread of hate speech. Weimann & Masri (2023) also emphasise that the spread of hate speech on TikTok is especially due to the algorithmic structure of the platform and that these discourses reach wider audiences by recommending more content that users are interested in.

However, it should be emphasised that recent research focusing on the TikTok platform occupies an important place in the literature. In particular, Civilia et al. (2023) study sheds light on the relationship between social media and otherness by examining the hashtag #Islamterrorism on TikTok. This study provides important findings on how hate speech is constructed, given the popularity of TikTok among young users. At the same time, González-Esteban et al.'s (2024) research analysed how conversations on TikTok contributed to the intensification of hate speech during the 2023 escalation of the war in the Middle East. In this context, TikTok's interaction with social events and its impact on hate speech is a current research topic. Oboler et al.'s (2024) study analyses the role of TikTok on the spread of Islamophobic discourse by addressing online anti-Muslim hatred and discrimination against Palestinians. These studies are critical to understanding the dynamics of Islamophobic discourses on the TikTok platform.

TikTok's algorithms recommend content based on users' viewing habits. These algorithms may not be effective enough to prevent the spread of videos containing hate speech. For example, when a user watches Islamophobic content, the algorithm may continue to recommend similar content. This contributes to the normalisation and further spread of hate speech (Weimann & Masri, 2023).

Islamophobic hate speech spread on TikTok can have serious negative effects on Muslim communities. These effects can cause psychological harm at the individual level and discrimination and exclusion at the social level. Hate speech can lead to psychological problems such as stress, anxiety and depression in affected individuals. Muslim users may feel insecure and excluded due to the Islamophobic content they encounter on TikTok. This may lead individuals to limit or completely abandon the use of social media (Alvarez-Cueva, 2023).

3. Methodology

This study aims to identify and analyze Islamophobic hate speech on the TikTok platform. The research was conducted using a qualitative research design. Qualitative research methods provide an appropriate framework for the in-depth examination and interpretation of content on social media platforms (Creswell, 2013, p. 45). This section details the research questions, data collection, data analysis, research limitations, and ethical approval processes. The primary research questions of this study are as follows:

- What are the linguistic and discursive structures of content containing Islamophobic hate speech on the TikTok platform?
- What discourse strategies are used in this content?
- How is Islamophobic content disseminated on the TikTok platform, and what interactions does it encounter?
- What are the social impacts of this content?

3.1. Research Design

A qualitative research method was chosen as the research design. Qualitative research is an approach that allows for a deep understanding of social phenomena and reveals the perspectives of participants (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 78). In this study, the linguistic and discursive structures of Islamophobic hate speech on the TikTok platform were examined, and the social impacts and dissemination patterns of this content were analyzed.

The selected content was analyzed using the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) method. Critical Discourse Analysis examines how language reflects and reproduces social power relations (Fairclough, 2013, p. 23). In this context, the linguistic structures, discourse strategies, and social impacts of Islamophobic content on TikTok were analyzed.

During the Critical Discourse Analysis process, the linguistic structures of the content were first examined. This examination aimed to reveal the meanings of the words and expressions used in the content, the context in which these expressions were used, and the social meanings they carried. Linguistic analysis provides a framework for understanding the surface and deep structures of the content (Van Dijk, 2015, p. 472).

Following the linguistic analysis, the discourse strategies of the content were examined. Discourse strategies are linguistic and rhetorical tools used for a specific purpose. These strategies help us understand the intended impact of the content and the social power relations it reflects (Wodak & Meyer, 2009, p. 34). Discourse strategies include polarization, othering, blaming, and legitimization.

3.2. Data Collection Process

During the data collection process, posts containing Islamophobic hate speech on the TikTok platform were identified through specific keywords. These keywords were selected from terms commonly used in the literature to define Islamophobic rhetoric (Allen, 2010, p. 112). Keywords included terms such as "İslam", "Müslüman", "terörist", "cihat", "şeriat" "radikal İslam" and "İslamcı". These terms were identified through searches conducted on the TikTok platform.

Using TikTok's search and explore features, Islamophobic content was identified. From this content, the ten most interacted posts were selected using a simple random sampling method. Simple random sampling is a method where each piece of content has an equal chance of being selected, thereby increasing the representativeness of the sample (Bryman, 2016, p. 89). The selected content was recorded for in-depth analysis in line with the research objectives.

3.3. Data Analysis

In the data analysis process, firstly, the social effects and diffusion patterns of the contents were analysed. This analysis aimed to reveal how the contents spread on the TikTok platform, which interactions they encounter and their social effects. The number of likes, comments and shares received by the content shows how wide an audience these contents reach and what kind of interactions they receive. In addition, by analysing the comments on the content, it was tried to understand how users reacted to these contents and the social meanings of these reactions.

In the data collection process, content was collected using the keywords determined on the TikTok platform in the first six months of 2024. 'Islam,' As a result of searches with keywords such as "İslam", "Müslüman", "terörist", "cihat", "şeriat" "radikal İslam" and "İslamcı" 10 interacted content was selected. The total number of content that could be accessed through this tag search was 150, but the analysis was focused on the 10 content that received engagement. This limitation allowed for a more detailed examination of the overall trends and engagement patterns of the content on the platform.

The comments were analysed qualitatively to gain a deeper understanding of the social meaning of the content, and this analysis revealed the social impact of the content and users' perceptions of the content.

Finally, the social impacts and dissemination patterns of the content were analyzed. This analysis aimed to reveal how the content spread on the TikTok platform, what interactions it encountered, and its social impact. The number of likes, comments, and shares the content received indicated how widely it reached and the type of interaction it garnered. Additionally, the comments on the content were analyzed to understand how users responded to it and the social meanings of these responses.

3.4. Selection of Tags and Reasons

In this study, the keywords and tags used were carefully selected based on their relevance to Islamophobic rhetoric and their frequent appearance in both academic literature and social media platforms. These keywords serve a dual purpose: they define the scope of the content related to Islamophobia and provide a methodological framework for identifying such content in a consistent manner across different posts and user interactions.

Universe and Population: The universe of this research consists of TikTok content, particularly videos and posts that engage with topics related to Islam and Muslims. Given the extensive and global nature of TikTok, the population from which the sample was drawn is highly diverse, covering a broad spectrum of posts from multiple regions, user demographics, and linguistic backgrounds. To manage the scope, specific keywords were utilized to filter and focus on

content that explicitly or implicitly relates to Islamophobic discourse. The choice of these keywords is crucial for narrowing down the universe into a manageable population for content analysis. By applying these tags, a representative sample of Islamophobic content was identified for in-depth analysis.

Selection of Keywords: The keywords and tags used in this study were chosen from terms commonly associated with Islamophobic rhetoric. These terms have been frequently documented in previous research on hate speech and Islamophobia, and they allow for a systematic approach to identifying relevant content. The selection process was guided by both the academic literature and real-time usage patterns on TikTok. Below is a breakdown of the selected terms:

İslam: This term is used to identify content broadly related to the Islamic religion, religious practices, and the portrayal of Islam in both positive and negative contexts.

Müslüman: Focused on posts mentioning Muslim individuals or communities, this term helps identify content that either discusses Muslim identities or targets them in a discriminatory manner.

Terörist: A term often used in Islamophobic narratives to link Muslims with terrorism, reinforcing negative stereotypes. This keyword captures content that perpetuates such harmful associations.

Cihat: Frequently misunderstood or misrepresented, this term is often associated with violence in Islamophobic rhetoric. It was selected to identify content linking Islam with radicalism or violent extremism.

Şeriat: Used to identify content that discusses Islamic law, often in a negative light, focusing on misconceptions about Sharia as oppressive or incompatible with Western values.

Radikal İslam: This term captures content discussing radical or extremist groups that claim to represent Islam, often used to generalize about all Muslims.

İslamcı: Refers to content that discusses Islamist political ideologies or movements, which are often conflated with extremism in Islamophobic discourse.

These keywords were not arbitrarily selected; rather, they reflect patterns observed in both academic studies on Islamophobia and the real-world usage of social media platforms like TikTok. The terms were tested on TikTok to ensure they effectively capture the content relevant to the study. This methodological approach ensures that the sample drawn from TikTok is representative of the broader patterns of Islamophobic discourse prevalent on the platform.

Methodological Framework: The selection of these keywords aligns with a systematic content analysis approach, which allows for the identification of patterns in Islamophobic rhetoric. By focusing on specific terms, the research captures the nuances of how hate speech is constructed and propagated on TikTok. The methodology also considers the algorithmic nature of TikTok, where user engagement with certain keywords can amplify the visibility of similar content. This feedback loop makes the choice of keywords crucial for understanding how Islamophobia spreads on the platform (Allen, 2010, p. 112).

3.5. Research Limitations

The limitations of this study include the fact that only the posts on the TikTok platform were analysed and the sample size was limited. TikTok is a platform with millions of users worldwide, so it is not possible to analyse all posts. The research was limited to 10 posts identified through certain keywords. Although this limitation restricts the generalisability of the research findings, the selection of the most engaged posts increases the potential of the findings to reflect the general trends in TikTok.

The data used in the research consists of content obtained in the first six months of 2024. In this period, data were collected in the light of certain events and discussions in which Islamophobic content increased. In addition, the vast majority of the analysed content consists of Turkish posts, which reveals that the findings should be evaluated in a framework that is more oriented towards the user audience in Turkey. While the preference for Turkish content enables the research to better reflect a local social media dynamic, the fact that content in other languages was not analysed means that the findings cannot fully represent Islamophobic discourses at the global level. Therefore, in order to evaluate the research in a broader framework, content in different languages should also be analysed.

4. Anti-Muslim Rhetoric on Social Media: A Study on TikTok

Content 1 Main Elements:

Question Asked: The video begins by asking the viewer whether they would prefer to marry a Muslim or a Christian.

First Choice: The girl in the video selects the "Christian" option.

Reaction and Violence: The girl's mother then reacts violently and uses a derogatory expression, saying, "You stupid girl." The girl submissively responds with, "Okay, mom."

Forced Change of Choice: The girl is then forced to switch to the "Muslim" option.

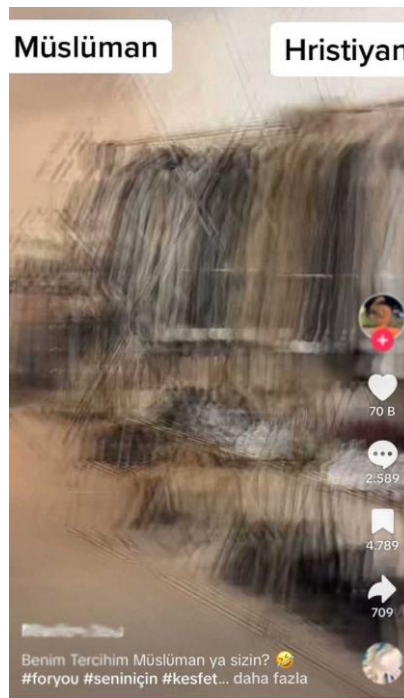


Figure 1. TikTok Screenshot (Tiktok, 2024a)

Analysis:

Representation of Religion:

- The video presents being Muslim or Christian as a binary choice, exhibiting a reductive and polarizing approach.

- The violent reaction of the mother following the "Christian" choice creates a negative image of Muslim families as intolerant and coercive.

Use of Violence:

- The use of physical violence and verbal abuse by the mother reinforces negative stereotypes of Muslim families as oppressive and violent.
- Such a depiction supports Islamophobic narratives, giving the impression that Muslim families do not respect individual choices and enforce religious conformity.

Language and Tone:

- The derogatory language used by the mother ("You stupid girl") is aggressive and belittling, negatively portraying Muslim family dynamics.
- The girl's submissive response ("Okay, mom") and forced change of choice reinforce the stereotype of Muslim women as lacking agency and being under pressure.

Visual and Emotional Impact:

- The forced change of choice by the girl provides a powerful visual representation that can evoke strong emotional reactions from viewers.
- Dramatic elements like the "shaking" effect enhance the intensity of the scene, making the depiction more impactful and memorable.

Evaluation: The video can be criticized for reinforcing Islamophobic stereotypes and hate speech in the following ways:

- Portraying Muslim families as intolerant and violent.
- Reinforcing negative stereotypes of Muslim women as lacking agency and being under pressure.
- Using dramatic and emotional elements to evoke strong negative reactions against Muslim family dynamics.

Content 2 Main Elements:

Timeline: The video begins by comparing the years 2018 and 2021.

2018 Representation: The character in 2018 is labeled as "Muslim" and described with negative terms such as "Hates," and "Loser."

2021 Representation: The character in 2021 is described with positive terms such as "Devil," "Cool and Best," "Respectful and Smart," and is noted to have "Joined," indicating a transformation.



Figure 2. TikTok Screenshot (Tiktok, 2024b)

Analysis:

Representation of Religion:

- The video describes being Muslim with negative and derogatory terms while describing the other state with positive and laudatory terms. This creates a dichotomy where being Muslim is bad, and the other state is good.
- Labeling the Muslim characters as "Hates" and "Loser" creates a negative stereotype that Muslims are hateful and weak.

Change and Transformation:

- The video depicts the Muslim character transitioning to a state labeled as "Devil," presenting this change as a positive development, implying that being Muslim is bad and leaving this state is good.
- The phrase "Joined" implies joining a group or undergoing a transformation, suggesting that being Muslim is a condition to be excluded from.

Language and Tone:

- The language used describes the Muslim character in a belittling and derogatory manner while describing the other state in a laudatory and positive manner. This sends the message to viewers that being Muslim is a bad thing.
- Terms like "Hates" and "Loser" associate the Muslim character with negative traits.

Visual and Emotional Impact:

- The visual transformation in the video can strongly convey the message that being Muslim is bad and leaving this state is good.
- The visual representations of the characters and the expressions used can evoke strong emotional reactions in viewers and foster a negative perspective toward Muslims.

Evaluation: The video can be criticized for reinforcing Islamophobic stereotypes and hate speech in the following ways:

- Defining being Muslim with negative and derogatory terms.
- Presenting the transformation of the Muslim character as a positive development, implying that being Muslim is bad.
- Using dramatic and emotional elements to evoke strong negative reactions against Muslims.

Content 3 Main Elements:

Content and Text: The video shows various K-pop idols' actions and statements that are considered disrespectful to Islam. The texts highlight the idols' negative behaviors and statements towards Islam.

Visuals: The video includes clips from the idols' stage performances and music videos. These clips are presented to the viewer along with the texts.

Text Content:

- "Enhyphen - Jake: For wearing a necklace with 'Allah' written in Arabic."
- "NCT U: For having writings from the Quran in the decorations of the song 'Make a Wish.'"
- "CL: For having religious music backgrounds specific to Muslims in some songs."
- "Jay Park: For having some songs about Islam. And for the line 'Worship me like Allah' in one of his songs."

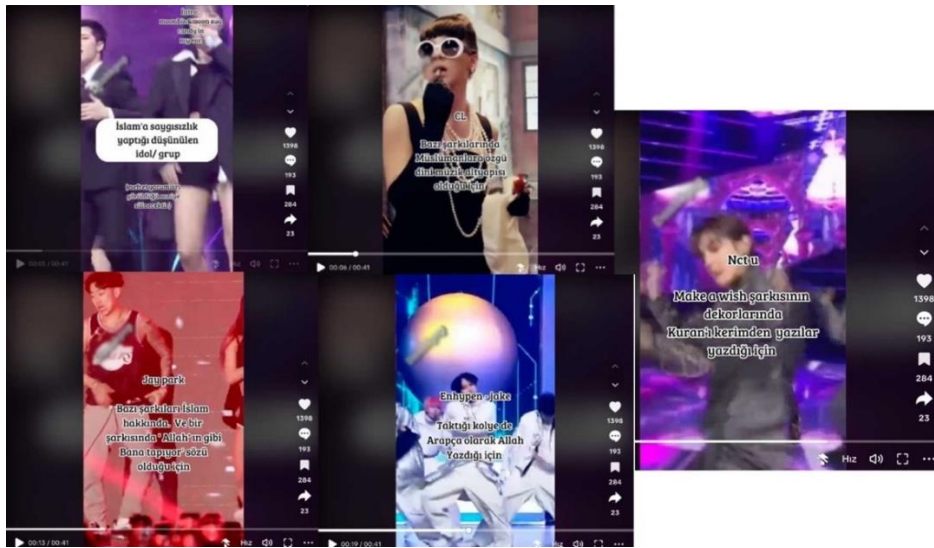


Figure 3. TikTok Screenshot (Tiktok, 2024c)

Analysis:

Representation of Religion:

- The video highlights actions and statements by K-pop idols that are considered disrespectful to Islam. This can present viewers with a negative perspective on Islam.
- The actions and statements of the idols are presented as disrespectful to Islam, which can evoke negative feelings towards Islam among viewers.

Language and Tone:

- The language used presents the actions and statements of the idols in a critical manner. This conveys the message to viewers that disrespect towards Islam is being shown.
- The expressions used in the texts describe the actions and statements of the idols negatively, which can evoke negative feelings toward Islam among viewers.

Visual and Emotional Impact:

- The visuals in the video include clips from the idols' stage performances and music videos. These clips, presented alongside the texts, can evoke strong emotional reactions from viewers.
- By using texts and visuals together, the message that disrespect towards Islam is being shown is strongly conveyed to viewers.

Evaluation: The video can be criticized for reinforcing Islamophobic stereotypes and hate speech in the following ways:

- Presenting the actions and statements of K-pop idols as disrespectful to Islam.
- Describing the actions and statements of the idols negatively, thereby evoking negative feelings towards Islam among viewers.
- Using dramatic and emotional elements to evoke strong negative reactions towards Islam among viewers.

Content 4 Main Elements:

Voiceover Text: "It is said that a person who dies as a child will go to heaven. If the purpose of this life is truly a test, then no child should die. Because for someone who came for a test to go directly to heaven without taking the test is as unjust as some students passing the exam directly because there are no exam papers left."

Visuals: The video depicts a child who died in a traffic accident ascending to heaven. The child is shown rising to heaven with angel wings.



Figure 4. TikTok Screenshot (Tiktok, 2024d)

Analysis:

Representation of Religion:

- The video questions religious beliefs through the concepts of justice and testing. The death of children and their ascension to heaven is presented as contradictory to the notion of justice in religious beliefs.
- Such questioning can give the impression that religious beliefs are irrational or unjust and may evoke negative feelings towards religious beliefs among viewers.

Language and Tone:

- The language used presents religious beliefs in a questioning and critical tone. Terms like "injustice" and "test" convey the message that religious beliefs are irrational.
- The voiceover text suggests to viewers that the justice of religious beliefs should be questioned.

Visual and Emotional Impact:

- The visuals in the video, depicting the death of a child and their ascension to heaven, can evoke strong emotional reactions. Such visuals can evoke strong emotional responses toward religious beliefs among viewers.
- The depiction of the child ascending to heaven with angel wings visually supports the questioning of the justice of religious beliefs.

Evaluation: The video, by presenting content that questions and criticizes religious beliefs, can evoke negative feelings towards religious beliefs among viewers. Such content can give the impression that religious beliefs are irrational or unjust and may evoke negative feelings towards religious beliefs among viewers. Therefore, such content should be critically examined and addressed to promote a more respectful and nuanced understanding of religious and cultural beliefs.

Content 5 Main Elements:

Text and Visuals: The video compares desert and green nature landscapes with the phrases "Lands Honored with Islam" and "Godless Lands." The top visual, labeled "Lands Honored with Islam," shows a desert landscape. The bottom visual, labeled "Godless Lands," shows a green and fertile natural landscape.

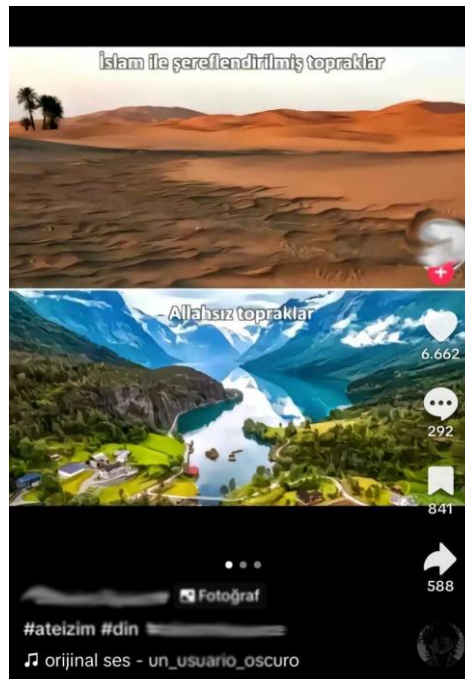


Figure 5. TikTok Screenshot (Tiktok, 2024e)

Analysis:

Representation of Religion:

- The video associates places where Islam is present with deserts and aridity, while places without Islam are associated with greenery and fertility. This conveys the message that places with Islam are negative, while places without Islam are positive.
- The phrase "Lands Honored with Islam" creates the impression that places with Islam are in worse condition. This can present a negative perspective on Islam and create an Islamophobic narrative.

Language and Tone:

- The language used describes Islam negatively while describing places without Islam positively. This conveys the message to viewers that Islam has negative effects.
- Terms like "Honored" and "Godless" present the effects of religious beliefs in a questioning and critical tone.

Visual and Emotional Impact:

- The visuals in the video can evoke strong emotional reactions from viewers. The desert landscape is associated with aridity and negativity, while the green natural landscape is associated with fertility and positive feelings.
- Such visual comparisons can evoke negative feelings toward Islam among viewers and reinforce an Islamophobic narrative.

Evaluation: The video can be criticized for reinforcing Islamophobic stereotypes and hate speech in the following ways:

- Depicting places with Islam as negative and arid, while places without Islam are depicted as positive and fertile.
- Describing Islam negatively, thereby evoking negative feelings towards Islam among viewers.
- Using visual and emotional elements to evoke strong negative reactions towards Islam among viewers.

Content 6 Main Elements:

Symbols and Signs: The visual includes three different religious symbols (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam) and a pencil symbol. These symbols are represented by a star, a cross, and a crescent, respectively. The pencil symbol is placed next to the other three symbols, with a checkbox marked underneath it.

Text and Hashtags: The visual is accompanied by hashtags such as "#turkiye #bilimsel #fyp #ateizm #müslüman #din #deizm #agnostikateist #allah."

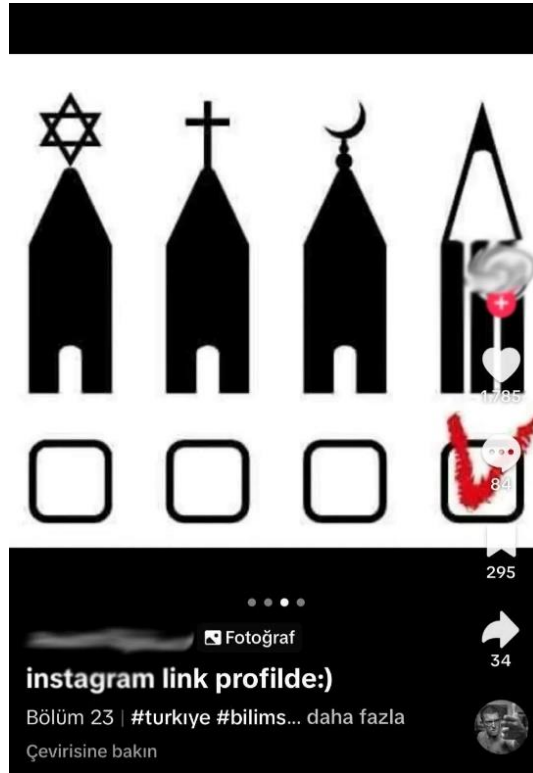


Figure 6. TikTok Screenshot (Tiktok, 2024f)

Analysis:

Representation of Religion:

- The visual includes symbols of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam alongside a pencil symbol. The checkbox under the pencil symbol is marked, while the checkboxes under the other symbols are left blank. This conveys the message that science and rationality (represented by the pencil) should be preferred over religions (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam).
- Such representation can create the impression that religions are in conflict with science and rationality and are less valuable. This can present a particularly negative perspective on Islam and create an Islamophobic narrative.

Language and Tone:

- The hashtags used indicate that the content supports atheism and scientific thinking while criticizing religious beliefs. Hashtags like "#ateizm" and "#bilimsel" convey the message to viewers that religious beliefs conflict with scientific thinking.
- Such expressions convey the message to viewers that religious beliefs are irrational and that scientific thinking is superior, reinforcing an Islamophobic narrative.
- Visual and Emotional Impact:
 - The symbols and signs in the visual can evoke strong emotional reactions from viewers. Preferring the pencil symbol over religious symbols can convey the message that religious beliefs are worthless.
 - The combined use of visuals and texts strongly conveys the message to viewers that religious beliefs conflict with science and rationality.

Evaluation: The visual can be criticized for reinforcing Islamophobic stereotypes and hate speech in the following ways:

- Depicting religions as conflicting with science and rationality and as less valuable.
- Describing Islam and other religions in a belittling and derogatory manner.
- Using visual and emotional elements to evoke strong negative reactions toward religious beliefs among viewers.

Content 7 Main Elements:

Text: "I am about to part the sea. After the invention of the camera; no ant has spoken, no sea or planet has split in two, no staff has turned into a serpent, no tribe has been punished, no one has lived for 900 years, and no one has encountered flying horses."

Visual: A scene depicting a figure of Moses about to part the sea.



Figure 7. TikTok Screenshot (TikTok, 2024g)

Analysis:

Representation of Religion:

- The text implies that religious miracles and events are not real and that such events do not occur in the modern age. This includes a discourse questioning the validity of religious beliefs and miracles.
- Such representation can create the impression that religious beliefs are irrational and unrealistic. This can present a particularly negative perspective on Islam and create an Islamophobic narrative.

Language and Tone:

- The language used presents religious miracles in a belittling and mocking tone. Phrases like "no ant has spoken," and "no sea or planet has split in two" convey the message that religious beliefs and miracles are not real.
- Such expressions convey the message to viewers that religious beliefs are irrational and conflict with modern science, reinforcing an Islamophobic narrative.

Visual and Emotional Impact:

- The visual includes a scene depicting a figure about to part the sea. Such visuals can evoke strong emotional reactions from viewers and make religious beliefs a subject of mockery.
- The combined use of visuals and texts strongly conveys the message to viewers that religious beliefs and miracles are not real.

Evaluation: The visual can be criticized for reinforcing Islamophobic stereotypes and hate speech in the following ways:

- Describing religious miracles and beliefs in a mocking and belittling manner.
- Describing Islam and other religions in a derogatory and belittling manner.
- Using visual and emotional elements to evoke strong negative reactions toward religious beliefs among viewers.

Content 8 Main Elements:

Text: "Prayers are useless. Because, like thousands of other gods, Allah was also invented by humans..."

Map: The map shows two regions:

- Green and fertile areas are labeled as "Countries without Allah."
- Desert and arid areas are labeled as "Countries praying to Allah for rain."



Figure 8. TikTok Screenshot (Tiktok, 2024h)

Analysis:

Representation of Religion:

- The text claims that prayers and belief in Allah are useless and that Allah was invented by humans. This conveys the message that religious beliefs are invalid and irrational.
- The map shows countries praying to Allah as arid and desert, while countries without Allah are shown as green and fertile. This creates the impression that religious beliefs have negative effects and that scientific thinking is superior.

Language and Tone:

- The language used presents religious beliefs in a belittling and critical tone. Phrases like "Prayers are useless" and "Allah was also invented by humans" convey the message that religious beliefs are invalid and irrational.
- Such expressions convey the message to viewers that religious beliefs are irrational and conflict with modern science, reinforcing an Islamophobic narrative.

Visual and Emotional Impact:

- The map shows countries praying to Allah as arid and desert, while countries without Allah are shown as green and fertile. Such visuals can evoke strong emotional reactions from viewers and lead to a negative perception of religious beliefs.
- The combined use of visuals and texts strongly conveys the message to viewers that religious beliefs and prayers are useless.

Evaluation: The visual can be criticized for reinforcing Islamophobic stereotypes and hate speech in the following ways:

- Depicting religious beliefs and prayers as invalid and irrational.
- Describing Islam and other religions in a derogatory and belittling manner.
- Using visual and emotional elements to evoke strong negative reactions toward religious beliefs among viewers.

Content 9 Main Elements:

Text: "Remember, religion is only for the poor. So they can be grateful and not make noise..."

Visual: Saudi Princess Ameera Al-Taweel and a person identified as an Arab billionaire.



Figure 9. TikTok Screenshot (TikTok, 2024i)

Analysis:

Representation of Religion:

- The text conveys the message that religion is only for the poor, so they can be grateful and remain silent. This can create the impression that religion is used as an oppressive and manipulative tool.
- The visual implies that wealthy and powerful individuals use religion to control the poor. This can lead to a negative representation of Islam and other religions.

Language and Tone:

- The language used presents religion in a belittling and critical tone. Phrases like "only for the poor" and "so they can be grateful and not make noise" convey the message that religion is used as a manipulative and oppressive tool.
- Such expressions convey the message to viewers that religion is something negative and oppressive, reinforcing an Islamophobic narrative.

Visual and Emotional Impact:

- The visual implies that wealthy and powerful individuals use religion to control the poor. This can evoke strong emotional reactions from viewers and lead to a negative perception of religion.
- The combined use of visuals and texts strongly conveys the message to viewers that religion is an oppressive and manipulative tool.

Evaluation: The visual can be criticized for reinforcing Islamophobic stereotypes and hate speech in the following ways:

- Depicting religion as an oppressive and manipulative tool used to control the poor.
- Describing Islam and other religions in a derogatory and belittling manner.
- Using visual and emotional elements to evoke strong negative reactions toward religious beliefs among viewers.

Content 10 Main Elements:

Text and Visuals:

- A visual labeled "Real World."
- A visual labeled "World as Described in the Quran," depicts a flat world with water spilling over the edges.
- The phrase "With just one picture."

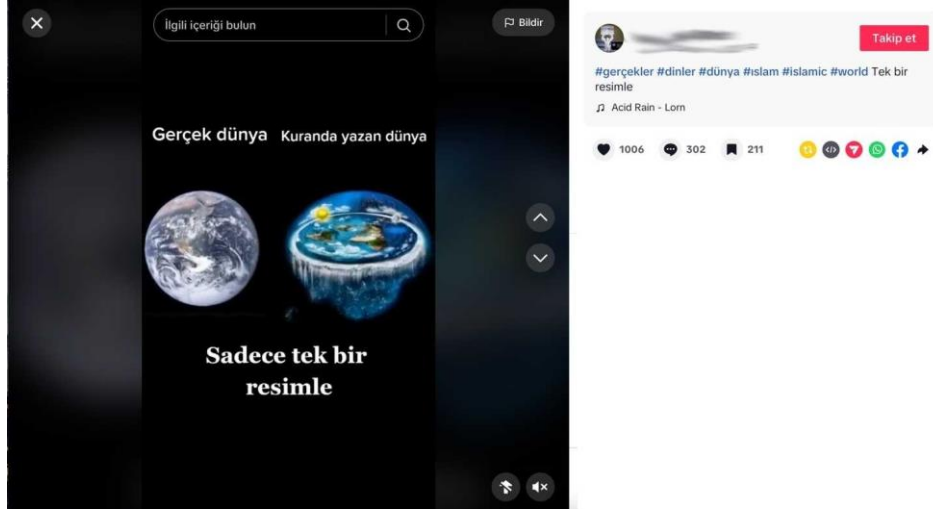


Figure 10. TikTok Screenshot (TikTok, 2024j)

Analysis:

Representation of Religion:

- The visual implies that the Quran describes the world as flat. This conveys the message that Islam contradicts scientific facts.
- The phrases "Real World" and "World as Described in the Quran" create the impression that Islam is incompatible with scientific facts. This can present a negative perspective on Islam and create an Islamophobic narrative.

Language and Tone:

- The language used presents Islam in a belittling and critical tone. The phrase "With just one picture" mockingly conveys the message that Islam contradicts scientific facts.
- Such expressions convey the message to viewers that Islam is irrational and conflicts with modern science, reinforcing an Islamophobic narrative.

Visual and Emotional Impact:

- The visuals can evoke strong emotional reactions from viewers. The visual of a flat world labeled "World as Described in the Quran" strongly conveys the message that Islam contradicts scientific facts.
- The combined use of visuals and texts strongly conveys the message to viewers that Islam is irrational and conflicts with scientific facts.

Evaluation: The visual can be criticized for reinforcing Islamophobic stereotypes and hate speech in the following ways:

- Conveying the message that Islam contradicts scientific facts and is irrational.
- Describing Islam in a belittling and derogatory manner.
- Using visual and emotional elements to evoke strong negative reactions towards Islam among viewers.

Conclusion

This study aims to analyze the spread of Islamophobic hate speech on the TikTok platform and its social effects in depth. The study adopted a qualitative approach to understanding the effects of social media on social dynamics and analyzed the linguistic and discursive structures and social effects of Islamophobic content on TikTok. The findings reveal the impact of social media, especially TikTok, on hate speech and Islamophobia.

Spread of Islamophobic Content on TikTok: Content analysis on TikTok revealed that Islamophobic discourses often increase after certain events or social debates. In the content identified through specific keywords, it was seen that users reinforced negative stereotypes against Muslims and that this content spread rapidly. For example, studies such as Awan (2014) and Ekman (2015) reveal how Islamophobic discourses are organised and spread on social media platforms. This demonstrates the impact of social media - especially TikTok - on hate speech and Islamophobia.

However, while these previous studies focussed more on social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook, more recent studies on TikTok show that the dynamics of the spread of hate speech are more rapid and far-reaching. For example, Weimann & Masri (2023) state that the viralisation of hate speech on TikTok is more effective than on other social media platforms, thanks to the ability of the platform's algorithms to quickly recommend content.

In addition, the study by Gata & Bayhaqy (2020) reveals that the spread of hate speech on new generation social media platforms such as TikTok occurs much faster after certain events. Especially after the Christchurch attack, it was stated that Islamophobic content increased rapidly on TikTok and these contents were shared intensively by users. This finding supports more recent studies that TikTok accelerates the spread of hate speech through user interactions.

In addition, Vidgen & Yasserli (2020) presented an analysis of how weak and strong Islamophobic hate speech can be detected on TikTok and emphasised that these discourses are prevalent among certain user groups. This study reveals that TikTok's content management policies cannot sufficiently prevent the spread of hate speech and that the faster spread of hate speech on the platform is related to users' community building practices as well as algorithms.

In sum, more recent studies on the dynamics of the spread of Islamophobic content on TikTok support previous research on how social media platforms increase hate speech, but reveal that the spread of hate speech is much faster and more effective due to TikTok's algorithmic structure. TikTok's special algorithms and user interactions contribute to the viralisation of hate speech on the platform, leading to serious negative social effects.

Linguistic and Discursive Structures: In the analyzed content, it has been observed that Muslims are generally defined in negative and derogatory terms, while other groups are represented positively. This stands out as a discourse strategy that leads to the marginalization and exclusion of Muslims. The language used in the content generally carries a polarizing and marginalizing tone. For example, negative adjectives attached to the word "Muslim" are an important factor affecting how these individuals are perceived in society. Such content leads to further discrimination and exclusion of Muslims in social life.

Social Impacts: Islamophobic content on TikTok has serious negative impacts on Muslim communities. Research has shown that such content causes psychological problems such as stress, anxiety and depression in individuals. It was also found that it can make it difficult for Muslims to integrate into social life and hinder their access to basic services such as education, employment and health. This leads to further discrimination and exclusion of Muslim individuals in public life. For

example, some studies show that Islamophobic discourses increase the risk of Muslim students being bullied at school.

The Role of Algorithms: TikTok's algorithms offer content recommendations based on users' viewing habits, causing videos containing hate speech to gain more visibility. This situation contributes to the normalization and spread of hate speech and causes users to become desensitized to such content. Algorithms may not be effective enough to prevent the spread of hate speech. Exposure to hate speech content has been found to desensitize users to such content.

Countering Strategies: Social media platforms need to develop more effective control mechanisms to combat hate speech. Raising awareness and educating users plays an important role in combating hate speech. In addition, strengthening legal regulations is critical to prevent the dissemination of hate speech. For example, legal regulations such as Germany's NetzDG law require social media platforms to quickly remove hate speech content. Such legislation can help social media platforms play a more responsible and effective role in combating hate speech.

Thanks to its large user base and ease of content creation, TikTok creates a platform for the spread of hate speech. The ability of users to create and share content allows Islamophobia and hate speech to spread rapidly. Islamophobic content spread on this platform reinforces negative stereotypes of Muslims and undermines social cohesion. TikTok's algorithms contribute to the normalization of such content by causing hate speech content to gain more visibility.

Islamophobic content on social media increases social polarization and creates mistrust and hostility between different ethnic and religious groups. Such content leads to the marginalization and exclusion of Muslims, undermining social cohesion and polarizing society. For example, some studies show that Islamophobic discourses increase polarization in society and undermine social cohesion. This leads to further discrimination and exclusion of Muslim individuals in social life.

Social media platforms such as TikTok are widely used among young users and this plays an important role in shaping their worldviews. The impact of Islamophobic content on young people can lead them to develop negative attitudes towards Muslims, which can manifest as discrimination in daily life. For example, Muslim students may be bullied at school or face discrimination in the workplace. This calls for educational institutions to develop more effective policies to regulate the use of social media and promote tolerance and respect among students.

In conclusion, TikTok and similar social media platforms play an important role in the spread of Islamophobia and hate speech. Thanks to the ability of users to create and share content, these platforms enable the rapid spread of hate speech. This leads to the marginalization, exclusion and violence against Muslim communities. Social media platforms need to develop more effective policies and regulations to prevent the spread of hate speech and misinformation. Furthermore, raising awareness and educating users is critical in combating hate speech.

This study emphasizes the need for further research and policy development to understand and deal with the social impacts of social media. Social media platforms need to adopt a more responsible approach to maintain social peace and harmony, and users need to use these platforms responsibly. In this way, the social role of social media can be shaped more positively and constructively.

Future research should also examine different social media platforms to provide a broader perspective on hate speech and Islamophobia on social media platforms. Furthermore, long-term studies are recommended to better understand the social impact of such content. In this context, quantitative as well as qualitative research should be conducted to understand the experiences and perceptions of social media users. Such studies can help social media platforms develop more effective strategies to combat hate speech.

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MEDİAD

Medya ve Din Araştırmaları Dergisi | Journal of Media and Religion Studies

ARAŞTIRMA MAKALESİ | RESEARCH ARTICLE

Kasım/November 2024, Özel Sayı 1/Special Issue 1, 91-122

Geliş: 30.07.2024 | Kabul: 22.10.2024 | Yayın: 28.11.2024

DOI: 10.47951/mediad.1525052

İslamofobi Ekseninde Sosyal Medyada Nefret Söylemi: TikTok Örneği

Mustafa BÖYÜK*

Genişletilmiş Özet

Giriş

Sosyal medya platformları, yirminci yüzyılın sonlarından itibaren bireylerin günlük yaşamlarının ayrılmaz bir parçası haline gelmiş ve toplumsal etkileşimlerin doğasını köklü bir şekilde değiştirmiştir. Bu platformlar, bilgiye hızlı erişim, geniş kitlelere ulaşma ve çeşitli konularda görüşlerini ifade etme imkanı sunmaktadır. Ancak, bu özgürlük ve erişim kolaylığı, nefret söylemi ve ayrımcılık gibi olumsuz içeriklerin de hızla yayılmasına neden olmaktadır. İslamofobi, sosyal medyada sıkça karşılaşılan ve ciddi toplumsal sonuçlara yol açabilen bir ayrımcılık türüdür. TikTok, kısa video formatında içeriklerin paylaşıldığı ve hızla geniş kitlelere ulaştığı bir platform olarak öne çıkmaktadır. Bu çalışmada, TikTok üzerinde yapılan İslamofobik nefret söylemi içeren paylaşımlar, belirli anahtar kelimeler aracılığıyla tespit edilerek basit rastgele örnekleme tekniğiyle incelenmiştir.

Araştırmanın Amacı ve Önemi

Bu çalışmanın temel amacı, TikTok üzerinde İslamofobik nefret söylemi içeren paylaşımları tespit etmek ve bu içeriklerin dilsel ve görsel analizlerini yaparak, nefret söyleminin nasıl yapılandırıldığını ve hangi temalar etrafında şekillendiğini ortaya koymaktır. İslamofobi, Müslümanlara karşı duyulan korku, nefret veya ayrımcılığı ifade eden bir terimdir ve bu tür içeriklerin sosyal medya platformlarında yayılması, toplumsal uyumu zedelemekte ve Müslümanların marjinalleşmesine yol açmaktadır. Bu bağlamda, TikTok gibi platformlarda yayılan İslamofobik içeriklerin analizi, toplumsal etkilerini anlamak ve bu tür içeriklerin yayılmasını önlemek için stratejiler geliştirmek açısından büyük bir önem taşımaktadır.

Sosyal Medyanın Toplumsal Rolü

Sosyal medya, yirminci yüzyılın başlarından itibaren iletişim ve etkileşim biçimlerini köklü bir şekilde dönüştürerek bireylerin, toplulukların ve kurumların birbirleriyle olan ilişkilerini yeniden şekillendirmiştir. Bu platformlar, kültürel, sosyal, politik ve ekonomik alanlarda derin ve geniş kapsamlı etkiler oluşturmuştur. Sosyal medya, bireylerin bilgiye hızlı erişimini sağlamakta, geniş kitlelere ulaşma imkanı sunmakta ve çeşitli konularda görüşlerini ifade etme fırsatı tanımaktadır.

* Öğr. Gör. Dr., Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt Üniversitesi, e-mail: mustafaboyuk@aybu.edu.tr, orcid.org/0000-0002-1010-9048, Ankara, Türkiye

Ancak, sosyal medya platformları, farklı kültürlerden gelen bireyler arasında yanlış anlamalar ve önyargılar nedeniyle çatışmaların ortaya çıkmasına da neden olabilir. Sosyal medya, sivil katılım ve politik mobilizasyon için yeni alanlar açmıştır. Ancak, aynı platformlar, nefret söylemi ve yanıltıcı bilgilerin yayılmasına da olanak tanıyarak toplumsal kutuplaşmayı ve ayrımcılığı körükleyebilmektedir.

Sosyal Medyada İslamofobi ve Nefret Söylemi

İslamofobi, İslam'a ve Müslümanlara karşı duyulan irrasyonel korku, nefret veya önyargı olarak tanımlanmaktadır. Nefret söylemi ise belirli bir gruba karşı düşmanlık, aşağılama veya ayrımcılık içeren ifadeler olarak tanımlanmaktadır. Sosyal medya platformları, kullanıcıların içerik oluşturma ve paylaşma yetenekleri sayesinde, İslamofobi ve nefret söyleminin yayılmasında önemli bir rol oynamaktadır. Bu platformlar, nefret söyleminin hızla yayılmasına ve geniş kitlelere ulaşmasına olanak tanımaktadır. İslamofobi, sosyal medyada sıkça karşılaşılan ve ciddi toplumsal sonuçlara yol açabilen bir ayrımcılık türüdür. TikTok, kısa video formatında içeriklerin paylaşıldığı ve hızla geniş kitlelere ulaştığı bir platform olarak öne çıkmaktadır. Bu çalışmada, TikTok üzerinde yapılan İslamofobik nefret söylemi içeren paylaşımlar, belirli anahtar kelimeler aracılığıyla tespit edilerek basit rastgele örnekleme tekniğiyle incelenmiştir.

Yöntem

Bu çalışmada, TikTok platformunda yer alan İslamofobik nefret söylemlerinin tespiti ve analizi amaçlanmıştır. Araştırma, nitel bir araştırma deseni kullanılarak gerçekleştirilmiştir. Eleştirel söylem analizi, bu çalışmanın temel yöntemidir. Bu yöntem, metinlerin ve konuşmaların toplumsal bağlamda nasıl anlam kazandığını ve bu anlamların toplumsal güç ilişkilerini nasıl yansıttığını incelemektedir. Veri toplama sürecinde, 2024 yılının ilk altı ayında TikTok platformunda İslamofobik nefret söylemi içeren paylaşımlar "İslam", "Müslüman", "Terörist", "Cihat", "Şeriat", "Radikal İslam" ve "İslamcı" anahtar kelimeleri aracılığıyla tespit edilmiştir. Basit rastgele örnekleme yöntemi kullanılarak 10 içerik seçilmiştir. Seçilen içerikler, eleştirel söylem analizi (CDA) yöntemiyle incelenmiştir. Bu yöntem, dilin toplumsal güç ilişkilerini nasıl yansıttığını ve yeniden ürettiğini anlamak için kullanılır. Eleştirel söylem analizi, dilin ideolojik ve toplumsal bağlamını inceleyerek, nefret söyleminin nasıl yapılandırıldığını ve yayıldığını ortaya koyar.

Bulgular

Araştırma bulguları, TikTok'ta yayılan İslamofobik nefret söylemlerinin dilsel ve söylemsel yapılarının, bu içeriklerin toplumsal etkilerini ve yayılma biçimlerini anlamamıza yardımcı olmuştur. TikTok'ta tespit edilen İslamofobik içerikler, belirli temalar etrafında şekillenmektedir. Bu temalar arasında, Müslümanların terörizmle ilişkilendirilmesi, kültürel farklılıkların vurgulanması ve Müslümanların toplumda bir tehdit olarak gösterilmesi yer almaktadır. Bu içerikler, izleyiciler üzerinde olumsuz bir etki yaratarak, Müslümanlara karşı duyulan önyargıları pekiştirmektedir. İslamofobik içerikler, Müslümanlara yönelik olumsuz stereotipleri pekiştirmekte ve toplumsal uyumu zedelemektedir. TikTok'ta yayılan İslamofobik nefret söylemi, belirli bir dil ve görsel estetik ile yapılandırılmaktadır. İçeriklerde kullanılan dil, genellikle saldırgan ve küçümseyici bir üslup taşımaktadır. Bu dil, izleyiciler üzerinde güçlü bir etki yaratarak, Müslümanlara karşı olumsuz bir algı oluşturmakta ve bu algının pekişmesine neden olmaktadır. Görsel unsurlar ise, içeriklerin etkisini artırmakta ve izleyicilerin dikkatini çekmektedir. Örneğin, bazı içeriklerde Müslümanların

sembollerinin (örneğin, başörtüsü) olumsuz bir şekilde temsil edilmesi, bu gruba karşı duyulan nefretin pekişmesine yol açmaktadır. Bu tür içerikler, Müslümanların marjinalleşmesine, dışlanmasına ve şiddete maruz kalmasına yol açmaktadır. Ayrıca, İslamofobi ve nefret söylemi, toplumsal kutuplaşmayı artırmakta ve toplumda güvensizlik ve düşmanlık oluşturmaktadır. TikTok'ta yayılan İslamofobik nefret söylemleri, genellikle Müslümanların terörizmle ilişkilendirilmesi, kültürel ve dini pratiklerinin aşağılanması ve Müslüman kadınların başörtüsü gibi dini sembollerinin hedef alınması şeklinde ortaya çıkmaktadır. Bu tür içerikler, Müslümanların toplumda marjinalleşmesine ve dışlanmasına yol açmakta, toplumsal uyumu zedelemekte ve güvensizlik ortamı yaratmaktadır.

Sonuç

İslamofobi, son yıllarda dünya genelinde artan bir sorun haline gelmiştir. Müslümanlara yönelik olumsuz stereotipler, medya ve sosyal medya aracılığıyla yayılmakta ve bu durum, toplumsal kutuplaşmayı artırmaktadır. Nefret söylemi, belirli bir grup veya bireye karşı düşmanlık, nefret veya ayrımcılık içeren ifadeleri kapsar. Bu tür söylemler, sosyal medya platformlarında hızla yayılabilmekte ve geniş kitlelere ulaşabilmektedir. TikTok gibi platformlar, kullanıcıların içerik üretme ve paylaşma özgürlüğüne sahip olduğu yerlerdir, ancak bu özgürlük, nefret söylemi ve ayrımcılık gibi olumsuz içeriklerin yayılmasına da olanak tanımaktadır.

Sosyal medyada İslamofobi ve nefret söylemiyle mücadele etmek için platformların daha etkili denetim mekanizmaları geliştirmesi, kullanıcıların bilinçlendirilmesi ve hukuki düzenlemelerin güçlendirilmesi gerekmektedir. Sosyal medya platformları, nefret söylemiyle mücadele etmek için çeşitli denetim mekanizmaları geliştirmiştir, ancak bu çabalar genellikle yetersiz kalmaktadır. Kullanıcıların bilinçlendirilmesi ve eğitilmesi, nefret söylemiyle mücadelede önemli bir rol oynamaktadır. Ayrıca, hukuki düzenlemelerin güçlendirilmesi, nefret söylemi içeren içeriklerin yayılmasını engellemek için kritik öneme sahiptir. Sosyal medya platformları, kullanıcıların güvenliğini sağlamak ve toplumsal uyumu korumak için daha etkin politikalar ve düzenlemeler geliştirmeli; kullanıcılar ise bu platformları sorumlu bir şekilde kullanmalıdır.

Sonuç olarak, sosyal medyanın toplumsal rolü çok yönlü ve karmaşıktır. Bu platformlar, küresel iletişim ve etkileşim için benzersiz fırsatlar sunarken, aynı zamanda yeni tür zorluklar ve sorumluluklar da getirmektedir. Sosyal medyanın toplum üzerindeki etkilerini anlamak ve yönetmek sürekli bir dikkat ve düzenleme gerektirir. Bu platformların sağladığı fırsatları maksimize etmek ve potansiyel riskleri minimize etmek, toplumun tüm kesimleri için önemli bir görevdir. Sosyal medya platformları, kullanıcıların güvenliğini sağlamak ve toplumsal uyumu korumak için daha etkin politikalar ve düzenlemeler geliştirmeli; kullanıcılar ise bu platformları sorumlu bir şekilde kullanmalıdır. Sosyal medya, bireylerin bilgiye hızlı erişimini sağlamakta, geniş kitlelere ulaşma imkanı sunmakta ve çeşitli konularda görüşlerini ifade etme fırsatı tanımaktadır. Ancak, sosyal medya platformları, farklı kültürlerden gelen bireyler arasında yanlış anlamalar ve önyargılar nedeniyle çatışmaların ortaya çıkmasına da neden olabilir. Sosyal medya, sivil katılım ve politik mobilizasyon için yeni alanlar açmıştır. Ancak, aynı platformlar, nefret söylemi ve yanıltıcı bilgilerin yayılmasına da olanak tanıyarak toplumsal kutuplaşmayı ve ayrımcılığı körükleyebilmektedir.

Arařtırmacıların Katkı Oranı Beyanı/ Contribution of Authors

Arařtırma tek bir yazar tarafından yürütölmüřtür.

The research was conducted by a single author.

Çıkar Çatıřması Beyanı / Conflict of Interest

Çalıřma kapsamında herhangi bir kurum veya kiři ile çıkar çatıřması bulunmamaktadır.

There is no conflict of interest with any institution or person within the scope of the study.

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