

## Research proposal – A critical discourse analysis of domestic violence during the world cup.

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### Introduction

Domestic violence, also referred to as intimate partner violence, is a very significant issue in contemporary society as it has an impact on so many people's lives, even if you would not suspect it. Not only is domestic violence a sensitive topic and therefore difficult to report on, it is a complex issue that is forever changing across cultures and there is such a lack of education surrounding it. The United Nations defined domestic violence as 'a pattern of behaviour in any relationship that is used to gain or maintain power and control over an intimate partner. Abuse is physical, sexual, emotional, economic or psychological actions or threats of actions that influence another person' (United Nations, 2020). My research will be centred around the 2022 world cup and its relation to domestic violence against women, by analysing UK broadsheet and tabloid news articles during this period, I aim to look into how women and domestic violence was presented. The Crime Survey for England and Wales estimated that '5.0% of adults (6.9% women and 3.0% men) aged 16 years and over experienced domestic abuse in the year ending March 2022' (Office For National Statistics, 2022). These statistics highlight just how important it is to shed light on this topic as that equates to 'an estimated 2.4 million adults', 1.7 million of which are women. Furthermore, due to the nature of this crime, many cases go under reported or under recorded so one could only assume that statistics are significantly higher.

### Literature review

The current state of knowledge on domestic violence against women during the 2022 world cup is limited, hence why I have decided to focus on this area, however research has been conducted into previous world cups. In Café and Brimicombe's 2012 comparative study 'Beware, win or lose: Domestic violence and the World Cup', they 'tested the truth of an official analysis' conducted by the home office in 2006. Their research and findings also emphasised the importance of match outcomes in relation to domestic abuse statistics. This was used to explain why the home office's research was flawed as they did not consider this factor. Their research is beneficial as it conveys how they are adapting on past research to create updated results. The case study conducted by Café and Brimicombe (2012) supports the idea that the world cup and football in general is correlated to a domestic violence increase, and as mentioned, it conveyed how the outcome of the match effected cases too. The control period of their study compared 'the Saturday 2010 match day with the other four Saturdays... on which England was not playing and we took their averages, recorded by 33 police forces'. In terms of the match outcomes they concluded that 'On days when England drew there was no significant increase in the rate of re-ported domestic violence. On days when England either won or lost there was a significant increase.' (Brimicombe and Cafe, 2012,p.3).

The second evaluation on domestic violence against women is 'Perpetration, Victimhood, and Blame: Australian Newspaper Representations of Domestic Violence, 2000–2020', this research consisted of '554 articles from 24 newspapers across Australian states and

territories published between 2000 and 2020 that describe specific instances of domestic violence' (Karageorgos et al., 2023, p.1). Although this research does not investigate the world cup in regards to domestic violence against women, it applies the same method that I am going to employ in my research, critical discourse analysis. In their study they wanted see who was represented as the 'victim' and they also wanted to examine 'whether such violence is framed as a systemic issue or as a collection of individual events'. They achieved this by using a 'combination of quantitative content analysis and discourse analysis, which has been informed by media framing theory' (Karageorgos et al., 2023,p.5), they were then 'analyzed and quantitatively coded for a range of prominent themes and discourses'. The sample of newspapers were found through 'the Proquest Database search using "domestic violence AND convict..." and all 24 newspapers chosen were owned by only 'four media conglomerates' (Karageorgos et al., 2023,p.8). Their sample size of '554 articles' as mentioned, is relatively large so their data was rich. Karageorgos' et al( 2023,pp.8-15) results showed that 'Australians living in different parts of the country are receiving different messages about the causes and consequences of domestic violence' and that 'articles focused disproportionately on physical violence over psychological violence and on homicide over nonlethal violence'. Furthermore, in terms of how domestic violence incidents were framed, it was mainly as 'individual, or episodic, events' and often the male perpetrators were not presented in a negative light, "a significant number of examined articles established the perpetrator as a 'man of good character'" (Tonkin, 2017, as cited in Karageorgos et al., 2023,p.15). A positive to this study is that it is recent, it is dated 2023 so not only is it reliable, it proves that domestic violence is still a key topic that should be researched upon.

Further literature conducted on domestic violence against women found that victim blaming is very common across UK newspapers. In the article 'Smoke and Mirrors: U.K. Newspaper Representations of Intimate Partner Domestic Violence' researchers Lloyd and Ramon(2016) examined how 'discourses of domestic violence are constructed through newspaper representations of victims, predominantly women, and perpetrators, predominantly men'. They applied critical discourse analysis to articles taken from The Sun and The Guardian from the years 2001 to 2002 and 2011 to 2012. The reason they selected these newspapers is because it was 'the biggest-selling national newspaper in the United Kingdom... during April 2013' and the Guardian was selected 'due to its variation with the Sun in terms of being a left-of-center broadsheet'. This research focused mainly on electronic articles and once initial findings were examined, 'Coding frameworks used for analyzing data emerged'. Lloyd and Ramon(2016) found that there were 5 main themes across both newspapers: 'blaming the victim, the "ideal" victim, domestic violence campaigning, sexualizing domestic violence, and scaremongering', the most common being blaming the victim and 'how women are held accountable for the domestic violence they experience'. This study appropriately links to mine as they have employed critical discourse analysis to UK newspapers in relation to domestic violence against women.

Like my study, none of the literature I looked into were audience reception studies, so no samples or participants were considered. Arguably, this is because of the nature of the study, it is a sensitive topic and people may be less willing to come forward and share their stories. Furthermore, in my case, the 2022 world cup is still recent so perhaps too fresh.

### Aims and Objectives

I want to investigate how women were represented in UK newspapers during the 2022 world cup and I will do this by focusing on three main research questions: How did UK newspapers present domestic violence against women during the 2022 world cup? Who was victimised in the papers? What language was used to excuse domestic violence? For example, was the influence of alcohol mentioned.

With my findings I aim to help target newspapers across the UK and change the narrative on domestic violence against women, especially during future world cups and other tournaments.

### Methods

My research proposal design for domestic violence against women during the 2022 World cup incorporates a qualitative design method. I will be applying a critical discourse analysis of several UK newspaper articles that reported on the 2022 world cup. Critical discourse analysis can be defined as 'a way and a means of systematically approaching the relationships between language and social structure' (Fairclough, 2010,p.8). The process will begin with me selecting my articles from the sun and the guardians webpage; I will be focusing on electronic news. I have chosen to take articles from tabloid and broadsheet newspapers because they are at 'divergent ends of the political and social spectrum' (Lloyd and Ramon, 2016) so they will allow me to compare data and come to a greater conclusion. I will then read over the texts and analyse the language used to describe women and domestic violence as a whole, by doing this I hope to come across certain themes and repetitive language so I can form a brief conclusion.

My study will not be an audience reception study so no participants will be needed. Although, in the future I could look into interviewing women about their personal experiences. Critical discourse analysis is an appropriate method as it will allow me to analyse the language used in great detail and it will allow me to reach my aims of finding out how women were presented during the 2022 world cup.

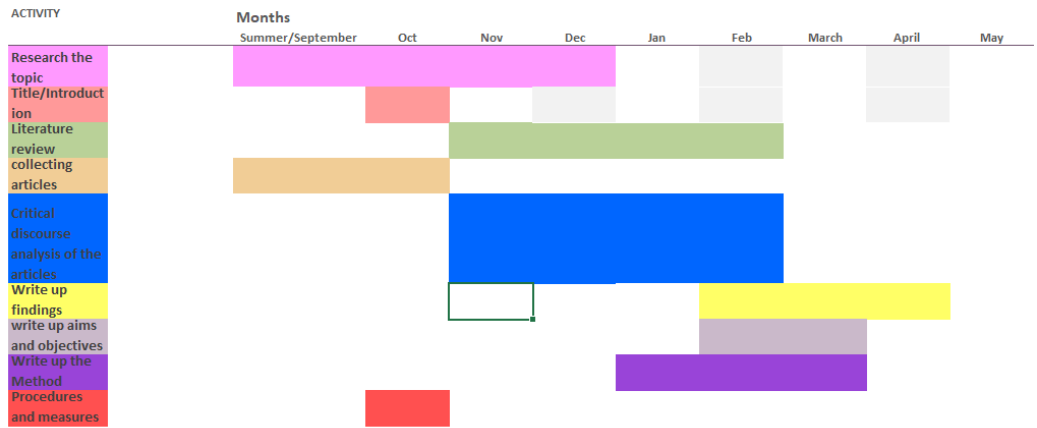
There a limited amount of ethical considerations as I will not be addressing participants. However, I will sign an ethics form to prove all data collected by me is genuine.

### Timetable of activities

I have chosen to display my timescale as a Gantt chart to make it simpler to understand and more visually interesting. My estimated timescale for this project is between Summer of 2023 and May 2024.

# Research project timescale

The coloured blocks indicate the time duration for each task



## Bibliography 123

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