Analytical model for cultural perception around the world of hate crime in North America during Covid-19 pandemic

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Abstract.

The world has been hit hard by the coronavirus pandemic that started early in 2020. Hate crime and racism in the US accelerated during the pandemic. The origin of the Covid-19 virus is attributed to China, but without verifiable substance. Additionally, racist incidents like the unfortunate death of George Floyd in 2020 has given rise to Black Lives Matter and other movements. This study focuses on global citizens' attitudes towards US hate crime and racism in social media, namely Twitter, during the pandemic. We compare attitudes from two Asian subcontinents (South and East) and the European continent to North America (US) during this time. Additionally, we study the underlying emotions when people use social media to express views of hate crime and racism in these regions. We study the negativity of the overall sentiment and dig into the dominant emotions. Our analysis uses North America as a baseline, and controls for subjectivity as a moderator. We find that Europeans and South Asians express more personal opinions than factual (5% more subjectivity) compared to North Americans. All regions are more negative in expression than North America, with South Asia being the most negative (16% more polarity). The surprising result is that East Asia is “happier” and “surprised” simultaneously, reflecting mixed political ideologies. Europeans are “angrier” in consonance with the moderating subjectivity factor. Lastly, South Asia is “sad” and “fearful” indicating this region is anxious due to the prevalence of hate crime in the developed nations.

Keywords: Covid-19, hate crime, racism, NLP, subjectivity, polarity, emotions on Books, 2004. Print.