



# Reclaiming Sovereignty: The Evolution of Decolonization Frames in Kazakhstan's Facebook Discourse Post-Ukraine Invasion

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## Abstract

This study examines the evolution of decolonization-related discourse on Facebook in Kazakhstan before and after the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022. As a post-Soviet state that gained independence in 1991, Kazakhstan has historically maintained close political, economic, and cultural ties with Russia. However, the onset of the war in Ukraine catalyzed a significant shift in public discourse, with social media users increasingly framing issues of national identity, sovereignty, and security in response to the growing threat of Russian imperialism. Utilizing Framing Theory, this research investigates the emergence and evolution of frames related to decolonization, such as sovereignty, territorial integrity, and anti-colonialism, in Facebook posts by journalists, political figures, activists, and academics. A quantitative content analysis is conducted on posts from two distinct time periods: prior to the outbreak of the war and in its aftermath. This analysis provides a detailed examination of the changes in decolonization-related content, focusing on the emergence of new demands on social media—particularly regarding Kazakhstan's independence from Russian influence, the withdrawal from Russian-led organizations like the EEU and CSTO, and the shutdown of Russian propaganda outlets. The findings reveal a marked intensification of decolonization-related discourse after the invasion, with a notable increase in calls for political and cultural sovereignty. This study makes a significant contribution to Framing Theory by demonstrating how external geopolitical events can reshape national narratives, highlighting the powerful role of social media in shaping public opinion and driving political activism in post-Soviet contexts.

**Keywords:** social media framing; Russian imperialism; decolonization discourse; political mobilization; national identity