

Critical Analysis of Media Discourse and the Politics of Self-Censorship in Afghanistan

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Abstract : This research examines the role of discursive strategies in the politics of self-censorship in Afghanistan, where political pressure, press freedom, and independent media work together, and language plays a vital role in implementing these strategies. Critical Discourse Analysis was conducted to describe the connection between language usage and the exercise of power by analyzing news stories related to women's rights. This research focuses on 11 months of chronologically collected data from two mainstream television channels in Afghanistan: Tolo News and Ariana News. The findings show that Tolo News sustains and justifies juxtaposition and political critics' discursive strategies to address women's rights issues, criticize government policies, and deal with political pressure. At the same time, Ariana News follows the factual narrative strategy, practices self-censorship, and skips or partially focuses on the objective reporting of sensitive issues. The research concludes that the domestic media in Afghanistan follows the media policy of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan by covering sensitive issues and marginalizing women's rights issues in the media discourse.

Keywords : discursive strategies, Taliban, TV Channel, news stories, self-censorship, women's rights.

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