

## تحليل عبر الثقافات لتمثيل فينيسيوس جونيور في السرديات الكروية العالمية

**A Cross-Cultural Analysis of Vinícius Júnior Representation in Global Football Narratives**

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This paper tackles the representation of the football player Vinicius Junior in the global media narratives through a cross-cultural analysis. The paper aims to identify and compare the cross-cultural aspects used in representing Vinicius Junior as far as European and South American sports media narratives are concerned. Moreover, it intends to Explore the roles of the racial and cultural aspects in framing Vinícius junior image in different cultural regions. The sample of the study is limited to four extracts selected from two news articles (one article is European and the other one is

from South America). The model adopted involves van Dijk's (2000) polarization framework and Hall's (1997) representation theory. The findings of the study imply that the language used in media narratives implies cultural identity and stereotypes relying on certain lexical choices and framing. Moreover, polarization of cultural identity reinforces the in-group and out-group strategies and racial discrimination portrayed through a focus shift toward personal behavior.

**Keywords:** *Cross-Cultural, football Narratives, representation theory, Vinícius Joiner, racism*

### المخلص

يتناول هذا البحث تمثيل لاعب كرة القدم فينيسيوس جونيور في السرديات الإعلامية العالمية من خلال تحليل عبر الثقافات. يهدف البحث إلى تحديد ومقارنة الجوانب الثقافية المستخدمة في تمثيل فينيسيوس جونيور في السرديات الإعلامية الرياضية الأوروبية والجنوب أمريكية. علاوة على ذلك، يسعى إلى استكشاف أدوار العوامل العرقية والثقافية في تشكيل صورة فينيسيوس جونيور في مناطق ثقافية مختلفة. تقتصر عينة الدراسة على أربعة مقتطفات مختارة من مقالين إخباريين (أحدهما أوروبي والآخر من أمريكا الجنوبية). يستند النموذج المتبنى إلى إطار الاستقطاب لفان دايك (٢٠٠٠) ونظرية التمثيل لهول (١٩٩٧). تشير نتائج الدراسة إلى أن اللغة المستخدمة في السرديات الإعلامية تعكس الهوية الثقافية وتعزز الصور النمطية من خلال الاعتماد على اختيارات معجمية معينة وأساليب التأطير. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، فإن استقطاب الهوية الثقافية يعزز استراتيجيات الانتماء والاستبعاد والتمييز العنصري، الذي يتجلى من خلال التركيز على السلوك الشخصي.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** عبر الثقافات، السرديات الكروية، نظرية التمثيل، فينيسيوس جونيور، العنصرية

## 1.1 Introduction

Football is uniquely positioned in most global regions in constructing social and cultural discourse. It is also a language, culture, and geographical territory-neutral game and is one of the powerful tools for galvanizing societal unity, individual identification as well as cultural diversification. Stars such as Vinícius Júnior are sports personalities and at the same time, cultural influencers, and how the media

paints them contributes to a perception of society. In this environment, the relationship between race, media representation, and sports culture becomes primarily significant (Rowe, 2016). Speaking about the racial abuse cases and the media reaction to it, Vinícius Júnior enhanced that the global relation between racism and football has been highlighted with both progress and inequality at a global level (Cashmore, Cleland , 2016).

It would be subversive not to mention Vinícius Júnior widely regarded as one of the premier current athletes and one of his generation's premier football players as a Brazilian-born Real Madrid and Brazilian national team icon (Robertson, 2007). He has been acclaimed very much for his superior aptitudes, agility, and creativity on the field, placing him among the most important Footballers of today's game (Carrington, 2010). Besides being a sportsman, Vinícius Júnior is the perfect example of determination and purpose, since from his birth, in São Gonçalo, Brazil, he had dreamed of becoming a globally recognized player. Still, his career has also been known for controversial issues most of which surround race and media representation issues that have elicited many questions on his behavior off the pitch (Cashmore, Cleland , 2016).

Media is important in developing these representations of Football Players such as Cristiano Ronaldo, Lionel Messi, Mohamed Salah, and Robert Lewandowski they act as the lens through which the viewer around the world watches the athletes. These representations could be opposite in a cross-cultural scenario depending upon other countries' prejudices, philosophies, or values (Robertson, 2007). Vinícius Júnior realizes that contrasting the portrayal of his story in Brazil against the portrayal in Europe or other parts of the world is useful in elucidating ethnic and cultural factors that predispose media coverage. It becomes very important to understand these representations to dissect Vinícius Júnior's lived experiences but also to reflect on the effects of media bias and stereotyping in cultures of international sports (Cleland and

Cashmore, 2016; Rowe, 2016). This study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. How is Vinicius Júnior portrayed in the European and South American media narratives?
2. What role do racial and cultural stereotypes play in framing Vinicius Junior's image in the media narrative of different regions?

### **1.2 The Aims**

This paper aims at:

1. What are the linguistic devices used in the selected articles to portray Vinicius Junior as far as European and South American sports media narratives are concerned?
2. What are the ideological perspectives of the racial and cultural aspects?
3. Identifying and comparing the cross-cultural aspects used in the portrayal of Vinicius Junior as far as European and South American sports media narratives are concerned.
4. Exploring the ideological perspectives of the racial and cultural aspects in the selected articles.

### **1.3 Significance of the Study**

This research has academic, applicative, and social value. Scholarly and academically, it contributes to the growing literature on media representation, the cross-cultural account of blacks, and racism in international games. By adopting a cross-cultural analysis of Vinicius Júnior's case, this paper examines how cultural and racial factors influence the construction of media discourses to fill a gap in the

literature on such comparisons. In a practical sense, the study implications are apparent for media practitioners, sporting bodies, and policymakers since they might inform the formulation of statements for encouraging fairness in representation, inclusion, and equality in sports reporting. Moreover, as the research is built on a cross-cultural framework that increases the understanding of differences in certain cultural patterns as a novel layer to look through at the existing media narratives, it enhances cultural sensitivity in terms of a multicultural sports community.

## **2. Literature Review**

The Literature Review will present an intellectual context for understanding the research's primary concerns media representation, cross-cultural representations, race relations in sport, and the broader sociocultural implications of world football.

### **2.1 Media Representation in Global Sport**

Media play an important role in shaping the impression of players in global sports like football if the players are to be imbued with a positive image. Other learned papers like that of (Rowe, 2016) expound on how sports media construct representations beyond the playing field and in most cases portray the athletes mirroring societal standards or preconceptions. For instance, Rowe avers that prejudice is always reinforced through the media, as African-American players are often portrayed as athletic and undisciplined, while European players are described as being strategic, or intelligent. Referring to football, media discourse often focuses on the personification of proven personalities and the shading of various incidents, regarding Sportsmen as heroes, villains, or victims (Haynes, 2009). Such narratives explain how sportsmen such as Vinícius Júnior are viewed worldwide depending on the occurrence of racism or cultural sore points. Research has focused on reporting of races in main courses of different sports though scarce output is found referring to

cross-cultural comparative analysis of racialized athletes' portrayal across places and means.

## **2.2 Cross-Cultural Narratives in Global Football**

Football is a transnational sport that can be used to tell cultural representations since it is culture in itself. (Robertson, 2007) suggest that football is a cultural sphere of glocalization when the global and local interpenetrate leading to complex processes. This contrast is quite visible in how football players are physically depicted in media sources. (Al-Manaseer, 2024) states that "Cultural discourse analysis is mainly concerned with the representation of culture-specific norms, practices, and values across communities, languages, and other social groups". Accordingly, the construction of the players' identities is shaped by the regional culture and a global orientation emphasizing the economic disposition. Research has indicated that media representation might not be the same across people of different cultures. For instance, (Christensen, 2013) notes that while Southern European media may emphasize a star actor or chief charming man in politics Southern European media, Scandinavian media often portray football players as ordinary and collectivist, likening them to their societies' ethos. Although the reason for those disparities cannot be conclusively identified in this report, undertaking a comparative cross-cultural evaluation of the Vinícius Júnior issue could give an understanding of how social/cultural standards and biases play out regarding media representation.

## **2.3 Racial Dynamics and Stereotyping in Sports Media**

Theme of race is considered as one of the most sensitive topics when it comes to media depiction based on ethnicity. (Carrington, 2010) pointed out that through the lens of race, many sports media portrayed black players as physically violent thus underestimating their skills as smart players as well. Race is when it

comes to media depiction based on ethnicity. (Carrington, 2010) pointed out that through the lens of race, many sports media portrayed black players as physically violent thus underestimating their skills as smart players as well. However, these prejudices contain other implications for broader society and aim to maintain the systemic injustices in our cultural life. Vinícius Júnior this season has had his experiences of racism not only from the stands but also from teammates' salt-throwing incidents and media portrayal of racism on social media. Further, while racist incidents in football are often captured on camera, what dominates the media includes histrionics rather than delving into issues of systematized racialization as defined by (Cashmore, Cleland, 2016). This tendency, therefore, underlines the need for a much closer look at the portrayal of racial relations in the discourses of international football.

## **2.4 The Sociocultural Impact of Football Narratives**

Huselid and McCormick said that football representations affect the culture and perception of the wider society besides the game. Talented players are produced and social structures such as sexuality are reinforced, as stated by Miller et al (2001) in thinking about Football as a “cultural institution”. Consequently, the nature of mediated representations of athletes may pose major challenges to discussions of inclusion, ethnicity, and identity. That is what has been done with Vinícius Júnior and that is why particular emphasis has been placed here on the analysis of pamphlets, discussions, and events involving racism. Maybe if we watched these tales from a culturally diverse lens, we could better see how this popular sport of football functions both to subvert and sustain worlds at the same time.

## **2.5 Previous Studies**

“A Cross–Cultural Study of Criticism Strategies: Iraqi and Malay ESL Learners Criticize” (Ali, 2020), analyzed how the two groups of learners criticize. The data was collected both qualitatively and quantitatively through the Discourse Completion Test and Group Interviews with a focus on the Critique Tactics used by peers in their group essays. It was further established that even though the two groups employed the same criticism categories with differences; Iraqi learners tended to employ direct criticism while the Malay learners employed indirect criticism. It raises the question of how culture influences the pragmatic usage of the language and has teaching implications for ESL students.

This paper by (Chen, 2023) entitled "Challenges and Strategies of Western Football Coaches in the Glocalized Context of Chinese Youth Football: An Exploration of “Cross–Cultural Dynamics: An Out of Court View” published in the year 2023 focuses on the issue that Western football coaches face while interacting with Chinese youths. A qualitative research method was adopted for this study; focus group discussion and semi–structured interviews with Western coaches, Chinese youth athletes, a local coach, and a football administrator. The data was related to the challenges in language barriers, conflicting training philosophies and culture, and the need to bring about changes in the coaching strategies and approaches that are appropriate for the Chinese culture. Last, the study underlines the importance of cultural context, joint workshops, and adaptable coaching approaches to the cross–cultural coaching of Chinese youth in football.

The study, titled “The Cross–Cultural Training Needs of Football Coaches” by (Borges, 2023) analyses the perceived need for cross–cultural training among football coaches due to the globalization of sport. In the present study, the researchers interviewed 115 football coaches from different countries and with different levels of experience at the international level by employing open–ended questions to gain rich



data. This analysis revealed that the coaches were almost evenly divided. Some coaches said that cross-cultural training was useful for preparing to address a variety of cultural situations; the other half felt that their previous experience and the fact that sport is the same the world over, there was no need for this kind of training at all. According to the study, there is an importance of integrating cultural training requirements into the coach education curriculum, particularly given the rising number of multinational teams and coaching posts abroad.

The research, "Narratives on the Curricularization of Cross-Cultural Management and Contributions to the Internationalization of Higher Education," published by (Bizarria, 2024) employed a qualitative research approach via narrative synthesis. The data included publications published on Web of Science and Scopus between 2012 and 2024, describing "Cross-Cultural Management." The authors opine that cross-cultural management education is important in preparing students to undertake tasks in the increasingly global society; further, they argue that the curricula must be relevant to the contemporary matter such as; digital enabling and different modes of learning.

The study "Marching to a Different Drummer: A Cross-Cultural Comparison of Young Adolescents Who Challenge Gender Norms" by (Yu, 2024) The study used a qualitative approach that involved interviews of a narrative and or in-depth nature, interviewing 129 teenagers and 109 parents or guardians. The survey established a gradual culture shift where girls are now allowed to perform activities that are pow/was traditionally associated with boys, but not vice versa. Defying masculinity and more so for the boys was often followed by social consequences thus the need for more gender transformative settings.

This research published by (Bartecka, 2024) as "The Impact of Social Media and Socio-Cultural Attitudes Toward Body Image on the Risk of Orthorexia among

Female Football Players of Different Nationalities,” examined the influence of sociocultural factors, social networks, and orthorexia Nervosa risk on female footballers from Poland, Turkey, and India. The qualitative data were gathered through a computerized online interview involving 142 female football players between the ages of 16 and 36 years 56 Applying both closed and open-ended questions, researchers got to know the participants’ demographics, their health details, basic socio-cultural attitudes (SATAQ-3), and ON trends (Duesseldorf Orthorexia Scale). A significant ON prevalence was identified in this investigation, affecting Indian athletes significantly. It found a correlation between ON risk and factors like age, restricted diet, and social networking sites. Unfortunately, there was no significant correlation between socio-cultural view and ON risk implying that such factors might not be very important in the cause of ON. It has also been apparent that ON risk is an equal game of sociocultural influences/media usage and psychological variables/individual actions suggesting the necessity of specific teaching and support to young athletes.

The paper “Flexible Action Learning Management Process to Promote Cross-cultural Literacy of Junior High School Students” by (Mangkhang, 2024). As a research strategy and method of data collection, this action research employed document analysis, unstructured interviews, and the quality evaluation of the learning management process to collect qualitative and quantitative data. Such data includes details from essential papers, data collected from Social Studies teachers and faculties, and the evaluation of proposed learning methods from professionals. The study showed that the use of the specific, flexible Plan, Learn, Practice, Progress action learning such as the Model realized in the present research enhances junior high pupils’ cross-cultural literacy and contributes to creating sustainable citizens to face a future globalized world.

### 3. Research Methodology

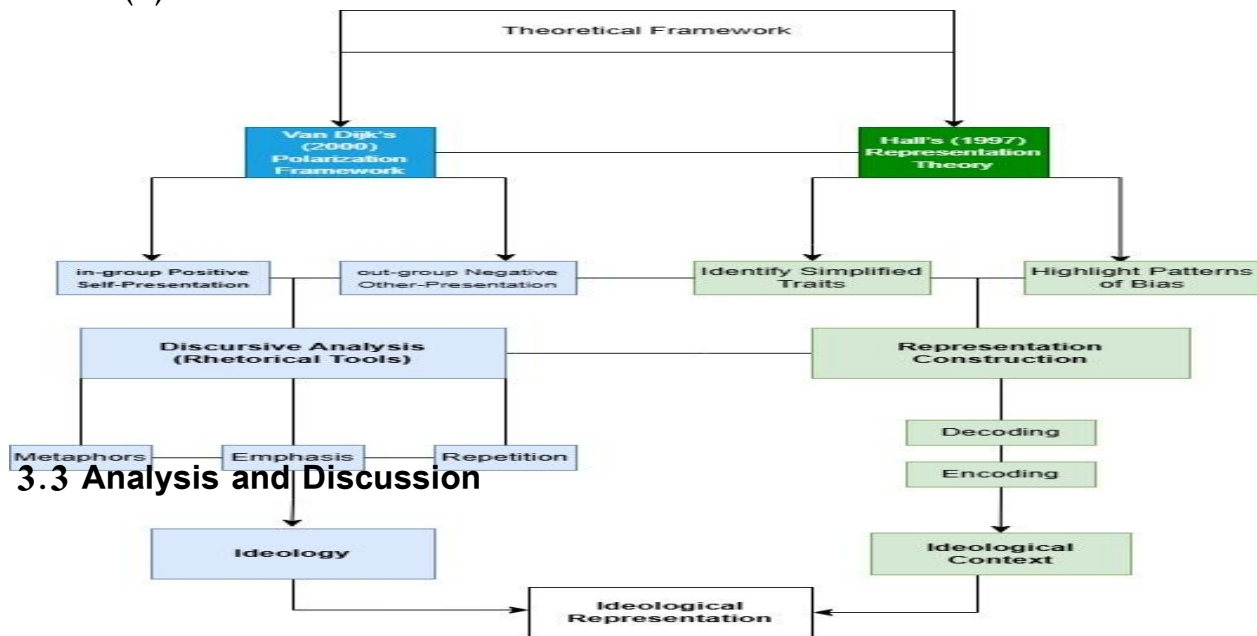
#### 3.1 Sample of the Study

The data is limited to four extracts selected from two significant journals to confirm the cross-cultural perspectives. Two extracts from The Rio Times (Caldero, 2024) in the title "Breaking Ground: Vinicius Junior's experience with racism in European football and his stance against it. It focuses on the events that concern race relations in European football, such as fighting racism, where Vinicius Junior was offended for the first time by racist abuse in football. The second journal is called: 'Him Against the World' – how Vinicius Jr's Fight Goes Beyond Football includes two extracts from BBC Sport (Alves, 2024), it examines Vinicius Junior's journey fighting such obstacles inside and outside football, concentrating on his activism and achievements. These extracts were selected with the intent of showing an equivalency between the South American and European perceptions of global football regarding Vinicius Junior.

#### 3.2 Theoretical Framework

This research employs Van Dijk's (2000) Polarization Framework and Hall's (1997) Representation Theory as a framework for the analysis of how Vinícius Júnior is represented in the narratives of global football. Van Dijk's framework also pays attention to, 'us' and 'them', power relations, emphasizing macrostructures, ideologies, and other discourse techniques that exclude or include certain individuals in society. At the same time, Hall's Representation Theory examines the semiotic process of meaning construction that is language, symbols, and cultures, to determine how identities are represented and reproduced in culture. These models offer a broad analysis of Vinícius Júnior's representation in cross-cultural contexts, it demonstrates structural binaries and cultural implications.

Figure (1): Conceptual Framework



### 3.3 Analysis and Discussion

#### Article (1) *Breaking Ground: Vinicius Junior and the Fight Against Racism in Football*

##### A.Extract one (Caldero, 2024)

*"A significant moment arrived recently when La Liga reported that three Valencia fans received eight-month prison sentences for racially abusing Vinicius during a match. This landmark case marks Spain's first criminal conviction for racism in the sport. Vinicius took to social media to declare his stance. He is not a victim, he said, but a force against racism."*

This extract is an example of separation, "us" (anti-racist) versus "them" (racists/performers of racial violence). The story of Vinicius Junior shows him as an active anti-racist agent, as part of the 'in-group' that values justice and equal rights. In this extract, there remains a clear division between the overwhelming 'us' (the anti-racists) and the resilient 'them' (the racists and perpetrators of racial violence). Vinicius Junior identified in the story is a member of the "in-group" that tries to promote justice against racism and for equal rights. The term "landmark case" also draws attention to the event's character, and progress in the fight against racism in sports. Additionally, soldiers portray Valencia supporters as criminals, as they represent the 'out-group.' But they're described, separated as offenders of a systemic problem, by their punishment, 'eight-month prison sentences.' The extract opens by associating these individuals openly with a larger issue of sports in terms of racism, which draws the wider social gap between those who stand for equality and those who would continue to perpetuate prejudice.

According to Hall, this extract encodes and decodes Vinicius Junior's construction of race as well as the broader racism discourse. With 'Vinicius took to social media to declare his stance' the statement makes him seem like an active person who would promote a more positive image different than the cliché of powerless passives. The story tells Vinicius as a being who is not a victim, but a force against racism, saying, 'He is not a victim, but a force against racism.' The encoding of this demonstrates an explicit effort to defile customary enemies and stories and depict Vinicius as strong and resistant.

Also, Vinicius, being construed as "a force against racism" reinforces Hall's notion of ideological context. Besides being personal, he held the symbolic office of a man who demanded change in systems not only in football but in other spheres as well. How he framed his social media post is to assume leadership by making

changes in the kind of conversation that surrounds racism while presenting a coded message for viewers to see him both as a leader fighting against racism and an entity that has suffered the vice. Using the theories of Van Dijk and Hall, the extract reveals two typical mechanisms of representation and polarization in the construction of Vinicius Junior's narrative of a racial justice activist.

**B.Extract two (Mason, 2024) *Vinicius Junior Rises to the Top of World Football.***

***“Vinicius Junior, Real Madrid’s dynamic winger, has claimed FIFA’s Best Men’s Player award for 2024. The 24-year-old Brazilian received this honor in Doha, Qatar, on the eve of Real Madrid’s Intercontinental Cup final against Pachuca. Vinicius Junior, Real Madrid’s dynamic winger, has claimed FIFA’s Best Men’s Player award for 2024. The 24-year-old Brazilian received this honor in Doha, Qatar, on the eve of Real Madrid’s Intercontinental Cup final against Pachuca.”***

This extract regards the contrast between success in the football career, as well as the personal and professional life of Vinicius Junior, and external racism, which the player fights against. It points to being a member of the global club of well-known athletes through his victory in the FIFA Best Men's Player award. Such a victory wins on the grounds of the tenacity and meritocracy that the 'football in-group' espouses, in contrast to the racists whom the 'out-group' purport to tarnish his achievement.

Van Dijk's idea of self-presentation is shown in his allusion to his 'outspoken stance against racism in football'. In addition to being a great athlete, Vinicius is also introduced here as a symbol of social opposition, a dual identity that elevates Vinicius within the group. That stance made him effectively at odds with racists who wanted to

lessen his influence because his stance was consistent with larger social principles about justice and equality.

The role of Hall's theory of representation in the examination of Vinicius' identity construction both as a football player and a football advocate can be seen. Throughout his career, his physical superiority is encoded as 'Real Madrid's dynamic winger.' This presentation of Vinicius as someone who managed to succeed on his own and as the mouthpiece of underrepresented groups helps ruin other cliches for black athletes.

He's also referenced as a change agent in the new role who had an 'outspoken stance against racism in football.' This encoding allowed the story to not only see him as a football player, but as a leader who cares about society. This makes it seem that more than just the field, his public persona couldn't have gone without the support of his people. The vagueness of Hall's notions of representation and ideological background is supplemented with Van Dijk's theories of polarization and self-presentation, which are effectively combined by this extract. He shows how his fight against racism protects his career story by intertwining his activism and achievements.

## **Article (2) 'Him Against the World' – how Vinicius Jr's fight goes beyond football**

### **C.Extract one: (Alves, 2024)**

*“Since he became a key player in Real's team, La Liga has referred 21 racist incidents involving the superstar to local prosecutors, as a result of regular abuse from the stands, monkey chants, and an effigy hung from a bridge being directed his way. In June, three Valencia fans were sentenced to eight months in*

***prison for hate crimes against Vinicius, in the first conviction for racism-related cases in Spanish football stadiums. "I'm not a victim of racism. I'm the tormentor of racists," the 24-year-old posted on social media afterward. "May other racists be afraid, ashamed, and hide in the shadows. Otherwise, I'll be here to get you."***

The extract depicts the polarized dynamic between two social groups: Vinicius Junior and his supporters, or 'in-group', and racists in football, or 'out-group'. The propositions that were made last season – "regular abuse from the stands, monkey chants, an effigy hung from a bridge" – show that racism is part and parcel of sports. The above description widens the gap between those who fight for equality and those who engage in discriminative practices.

La Liga recorded "21 racist incidents" Such a problem shows that it is the structure of organizations that needs to find solutions to fix it. When these occurrences are reported to judicial authorities, La Liga connects itself to the "in-group" that is actively waging the campaign against racism. However, the three Valencia fans sentenced to eight months in prison are a sub-group of the 'out-group' who have been made to pay for it. This legal intervention highlights racism increasing institutional reporting as a crime, and how it fits with in-group justice theory.

It also reflects Van Dijk 's 'self-presentation'. For that reason, the statement "I am not a victim of racism I am the terminator of racism". Vinicius negates what he said before. He intentionally reframes himself as an active actor against racism and nausea, instead of a passive person, so we don't observe the different aspects of helplessness. This reframe helps both the in-group posture of resilience and determination in the face of structural injustice.



The theory that Hall presents explains how the extract encodes and decodes images of Vinicius and also racism in football. “Monkey chants and an effigy hung from a bridge”, create an emotional response and speak out against injustice and racism. It so desires that the viewers should sympathize and become angry with Vinicius and the cause against racism. Vinicius's social media statement: "I am not a victim of racism. “I’m the tormentor of racism”, constructs a new view of racists and counters the existing stereotypical image of those who are victims of racism. Still, the given encoding represents him as a power and rebellion, which fights for both the offenders and racist cultural norms. Because of its ability to directly speak to racists, the second constructing the phrase ‘may other racists be afraid, ashamed, and hide in the shadows,’ the fragment carries an intellectual message of defiance. This was analyzed to decode power relations, suggesting a change that more subscribed people do not assume defeat and become submits but are rather able to confront oppression.

Ideological background is also executed in the passage proposed by Hall. This approach refutes racism in football as a one-off incident, but it is a social problem, which needs change in structures. To kind of balance this, Vinicius is presented as the loud activist character who underlines the link between affliction and advocacy more than anyone else. His refusal also is a political one toward making racism acceptable, encouraging people to become involved in combating prejudice.

When analyzed using Van Dijk's Polarization Framework and Hall's Representation Theory, the extract reveals the narrative's dual forces: the binary of racists and anti-racists fighting against oppression. Focusing simultaneously on the extant institutional and human dimensions of the struggle against racism in football, the work reveals a much broader narrative of defiance, responsibility, and change within the sport and culture at large.

**D.Extract two (Alves, 2024)**

***“Even growing up in Sao Goncalo, a city outside Rio de Janeiro controlled by drug gangs and where you simply cannot move freely, did not prepare Vinicius for what he would face in Spain following his move in 2018 from Flamengo to Real Madrid, aged 18. Despite being reduced to tears in a press conference as he admitted the toll the situation has had on him, Vinicius has not backed down in his mission and has become the leading black voice in challenging racism in football.”***

The extract divides Vinicius Junior's life experiences into two opposing categories: the racial struggles that arose from his subsequent maturation in Spain, and the hard environment of his childhood home in São Gonçalo. Compared to São Gonçalo, the exterior 'out-group' area, characterized by structural problems like social unrest and violence, which often block the social ladder for people of underprivileged groups, São Gonçalo is portrayed as an exterior 'out-group' area. However, this narrative also points out that, although repressive, this setting was not able to equip him with the ferocity of the racial abuse he endured in Spain.

According to Van Dijk's 'them' vs 'us' idea, this change in the difficulties is also expected. Together with the extract, the implication is precise that, if anything, the racists in Spain become the outgroup that is conducting the discriminating behavior. But it situates him into the in-group of being a warrior against racism; thus, he becomes the voice of activity and perseverance. Because of the allusion to pressure, the audience grows more compassion for him, as well as the strong contrast between the evil out-group against the righteous in-group is evoked.

Hall constructs Vinicius' character with the help of showing layers of advocacy, tenacity, and struggle. Writing his childhood in São Gonçalo, he is made to look like a person who rises above obstacles, and that simply does not match stereotypical notions of people from similar places. São Gonçalo is portrayed as a place 'where you simply cannot move freely', and largely under the control of drug gangs, and Vinicius' journey reads as an incredible act of tenacity.

They then move the extract back to Spain where his experiences with racism shape his part as the main protagonist of justice. In this case, the media's representation of him breaking down during a news conference is an example of an encoded vulnerability that does not conform to standard stereotypical depictions of black sportsmen as aggressively muscular or viscerally unyielding. However, it encodes a complex, subtle image of someone who is both vulnerable and strong within a single and uniform 'crip' identity. The text is therefore encoding an ideological setting in which to describe him as 'the leading black voice in challenging racism in football', not just a footballer but one of resistance in society.

While Van Dijk's polarization paradigm for the article prescribes the societal split on which the action is performed, Hall's representation theory points out the ideological encoding of his many folded roles. These models depict how Vinicius' life goes beyond football developing him into an icon that represents the fight against racism.

#### **4. Conclusion**

This paper considered Van Dijk's (2000) Polarization Framework and Hall's (1997) Representation Theory to highlight how Vinícius Júnior is represented in discourse about football across cultures. In more detail, the study shows how myths surrounding Vinícius Júnior constitute knowledge and destabilize the anti-Black, intellectual, social, and cultural codes of race and identity within sports. The approach of Van Dijk made football an interface for the broader society division especially when it comes to racial discrimination where concepts such as in-groups and out-groups were applicable. Vinícius escaped prejudice by saying openly, "I am not a victim of racism." "I'm the tormentor of racists" is a very empowering position from victim to power and the power dynamics associated with racism in sports. Along this line, Hall's Representation Theory extended the formulation by providing the ability of how language, visuals, and social settings are coded, stored, and then de-coded to generate meaning. The portrayal of Vinícius as a strong man overcomes racism and portrays a rebellious and victorious story. His public statements and actions constitute an anti-essentialist discourse that challenges not only racists but also racism of practices, structures, and cultures. It also highlighted which professions for systematic racism comprise a growing structure of institutional responses, even including league referrals to local prosecutors like La Liga. Ultimately though, Vinícius Júnior's fight against racism isn't just bound to his battle on the pitch—he's a strong example of how sports can be used as a place to discuss societal injustices and force this new conversation. For these narratives are necessary to stoke the fires of social change and prop accountable to societal values of equality and justice in the global age, this undertaking marks the need to preserve the scholarly lens considering race, sports, and representation in media.

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