

Unmasking Gendered Language Patterns in Social Media Discourse

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Abstract: This study investigates the complex realm of gendered discourse within the social media landscape, with an emphasis on revealing and analyzing language patterns. This research employs content analysis as a research methodology, utilizing Twitter's Application Programming Interface to extract tweets that include the hashtags #womenempowerment, #feminist, #menempowerment, and #malechauvinist for the purpose of this study. The decision to focus on these specific hashtags was deliberate, as they represent the spectrum of gender-related discourse, including emancipation, feminism, men's emancipation, and male chauvinism. The prevalence of these hashtags in online discussions demonstrates the various ways Twitter users interact with and express their views on these critical gender issues. This paper explored the intricacies of language usage, uncovering valuable insights that could be pertinent to discussions surrounding gender representation and equality. The findings provide researchers, practitioners, and society with valuable insights into effectively navigating the constantly changing landscape of gendered discourse on social media.

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Abstrak: Dengan penekanan pada analisis pola bahasa, penelitian ini menyelidiki ranah wacana gender yang rumit dalam interaksi *online* di media sosial. Sebagai metodologi penelitian, penelitian ini menggunakan analisis konten. Untuk melakukan ini, *Twitter's Application Programming Interface* digunakan untuk mengekstrak *tweet* dengan tagar #womenempowerment, #feminist, #menempowerment, dan #malechauvinist. Fokus pada tagar-tagar ini digunakan dengan tujuan khusus karena mereka mewakili berbagai topik terkait gender, seperti emansipasi, feminisme, emansipasi laki-laki, dan chauvinisme laki-laki. Tagar-tagar ini muncul dalam diskusi dan interaksi *online*, menunjukkan berbagai cara pengguna *Twitter* berinteraksi dan menyatakan pendapat mereka tentang isu-isu gender yang penting. Lebih jauh, penelitian ini menemukan berbagai aspek penggunaan bahasa dan memberikan perspektif penting yang sangat relevan dengan pembicaraan tentang representasi gender dan kesetaraan. Hasil ini membantu para peneliti, praktisi, dan masyarakat mengatasi wacana gender di media sosial yang terus berubah.

Kata Kunci:

*Kesetaraan Gender,
Pola Bahasa,
Twitter,
Pemberdayaan Perempuan,
Pemberdayaan Laki-laki,
Feminis,
Chauvinis Laki-laki*

INTRODUCTION

In the digital age, social media platforms have emerged as influential spaces for the exchange of ideas, opinions, and information, transcending physical boundaries and connecting individuals from many different backgrounds (Miladi, 2016). These digital spaces serve as constantly changing spots in which users engage in conversations and share their perspectives on a vast array of topics, from politics and culture to personal experiences and daily life (Zurriyati et al., 2023). In the midst of this digital age, language plays a crucial role in molding the discourse and, more intriguingly, reveals intricacies of the interplay between gender, identity, and communication (Demata et al., 2018)

Gender is a fundamental aspect of individual identity that is intricately intertwined with language in ways that transcend basic communication (Houston, 2015). It shapes the narratives that infiltrate social media platforms and influences how individuals and society perceive them (Park & Liang, 2021). Men and women communicate differently in real life, which is reflected in their social media usage. According to (Hancock & Rubin, 2015), men are more likely than women to use authoritative language and more formal speech, whereas women tend to discuss more intimate issues, such as family and relationship matters. Additionally, women use more emoticons and place

greater emphasis on punctuation, whereas males use "yeah" more explicitly (Farhadytooli, 2022; Koch et al., 2022; Oleszkiewicz et al., 2017). These differences in communication approach can have an impact on how individuals and society perceive them.

Gender ideologies are belief systems about gender that influence how individuals perceive themselves and how society perceives them in every society (Corredor, 2019). Males and females are depicted as "opposites" on a continuum in some gender ideologies, which emphasize differences in personality, abilities, and morality. These ideologies are profoundly ingrained and shaped by culture, and they can vary considerably between societies (Phipps & Blackall, 2023). Understanding how gender ideologies influence language usage is crucial to comprehending how gender is constructed and maintained in various societies.

The social media is one of the most influential factors on how we perceive men and women, and it fosters unrealistic, stereotypical, and limiting conceptions of gender (Warner-Söderholm et al., 2018). Men, for instance, are frequently portrayed as active, adventurous, powerful, sexually aggressive, and largely uninvolved in human relationships, whereas women are frequently portrayed as sex objects who are typically youthful, thin, beautiful, passive, dependent, and frequently incompetent and stupid (Koch et al., 2022; Kumari, 2021; Velichety, S. & Shrivastava, 2020). These depictions can distort our self-perception and our perceptions of what is normal and desirable for men and women.

This study, therefore explores the vast landscape of gendered discourse in social media, illuminating the profound ways in which language use can both reflect and reinforce gender stereotypes, expectations, and power dynamics (Conetto, 2021). Examining the influence of language in perpetuating or challenging gender norms, biases, and prejudices in online conversations, we delve into the complexities of this topic. Further, this research will investigate how social media platforms have become domains where gender identity and language intersect, entwine, and evolve as we navigate this constantly changing landscape. The goal of this study is not only to reveal the current condition of the landscape of gendered discourse, but also to illuminate possibilities for positive change. By examining the influence of language use in social media, this paper aim to promote a more inclusive and equitable digital world, where diverse voices are heard and understood (Cameron, 2020), and where language becomes an instrument of empowerment rather than restriction.

In this endeavor, this research, further, seek to decode the language of social media and its profound impact on the complex and multifaceted world of gendered discourse. We hope to uncover concealed narratives, challenge preconceived notions, and contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the ever-changing social media landscape through this investigation.

METHOD

This study utilizes content analysis as a method of investigation that entails the systematic investigation and interpretation of textual or visual content (Koch et al., 2022). In this study, tweets containing the hashtags #womenempowerment, #feminist, #menempowerment, and #malechauvinist were extracted through the use of Twitter's Application Programming Interface (API).

The collected data were then subjected to a phase of systematic extraction and organization (Lindgren et al., 2020). This involved eradicating duplicate or irrelevant content to ensure the quality and relevance of the dataset. The information was then meticulously separated and classified in preparation for linguistic and thematic analysis. The decision to concentrate on these particular hashtags was deliberate, as they represent the spectrum of gender-related discourse (Nasri et al., 2018), including themes of emancipation, feminism, men's emancipation, and male chauvinism. The prevalence of these hashtags in online discussions provides a window into the diverse ways Twitter users engage with and express their views on these crucial gender-related topics.

The analysis of the selected hashtags revealed a complex tapestry of gendered discourse (Krippendorff, 2018). Language patterns, thematic threads, and repeated discourses emerged, casting light on how gender roles, stereotypes, and empowerment are articulated on Twitter. Notably, linguistic patterns ranged from supportive and egalitarian expressions advocating women's empowerment and feminism to problematic discourses that reinforce traditional gender norms, as evidenced by male chauvinism. To provide a concrete comprehension of these findings, examples of tweets were chosen to serve as snapshots of the observed discourse patterns. The linguistic and thematic complexities uncovered during this analysis provided a foundation for interpreting these discourses' implications.

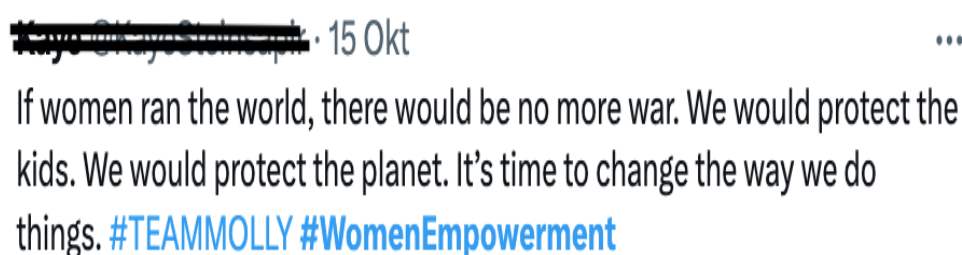
The insights gained from analyzing these hashtags provide a spotlight on the complexities and intricacies of empowerment, feminism, and gender relations in the digital realm. Beyond this, the implications extend into social

attitudes and actions in the real world. The ethical considerations surrounding the use of Twitter data are a crucial component of this investigation. It is crucial to address privacy and informed consent concerns. While conducting this study, the research team took precautions to protect the identity and privacy of Twitter users, ensuring responsible data handling. Future research directions may investigate the tangible impact of social media discourse on gender relations in the real world, thereby enhancing our understanding of the interaction between the digital and physical domains in the context of gender equality and empowerment.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Twitter and other social media platforms have become valuable instruments for expressing ideas, mobilizing social movements, and shaping public discourse in the contemporary digital landscape (Manikonda et al., 2018). Exploration of hashtags related to feminism, gender relations, and empowerment is a topic of particular interest in the current digital age. By examining the use and impact of these hashtags, we gain profound insights into the multifaceted and constantly evolving discussions on gender and empowerment in the digital realm. With the increasing reliance on user-generated data for research, it is essential to address the ethical considerations surrounding Twitter data usage. Throughout the course of this study, our research team has taken precautions to protect the identity and privacy of Twitter users, demonstrating our dedication to the responsible management of this valuable data source.

Figure 1. Data 1 for #womenempowerment hashtag



This vast and idealistic statement "If women ran the world, there would be no more war. We would protect the kids. We would protect the planet. It's time to change the way we do things" suggests a belief in the potential for a more peaceful and nurturing world under female leadership: "It's time to change the way we do things." In order to conduct a content analysis of this statement in the context of the Russia-Ukraine war and the Israel-Palestine

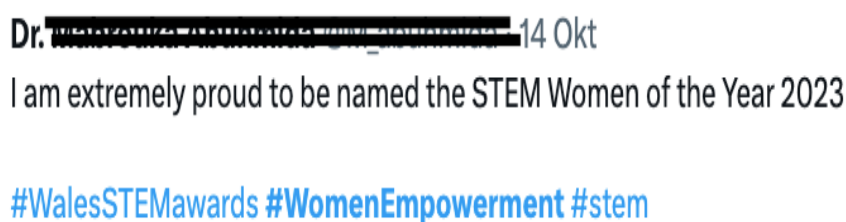
conflict, we must investigate its relationship to these specific conflicts and the broader issues they represent.

The statement implies a gendered perspective, suggesting that women may approach war and conflict-related issues differently than men (Dolan et al., 2020). It is presumed that women are more likely to prioritize peace, child welfare, and environmental protection. This viewpoint is founded on the notion of gender differences in leadership and decision-making. While, in the context of the Russia-Ukraine war, this statement can be interpreted as advocating for a change in leadership that could lead to a more peaceful resolution. It may suggest that female leaders may prioritize diplomacy and avoiding military conflict over aggressive or confrontational approaches.

In the context of the Israel-Palestine conflict, the statement may imply that women in leadership positions should prioritize protecting the rights and well-being of children caught up in the conflict, as well as pursuing environmentally sustainable solutions. This relates to broader concerns regarding human rights, security, and the environment in the region. The statement concludes with a call for changes in how we act, indicating a desire to depart from the current status quo. It suggests that the current approach to conflict resolution and international relations, which is frequently characterized by male-dominated leadership, is insufficient and ought to be re-evaluated.

Noting that the statement is idealistic and ignores the complexities and multifaceted nature of these conflicts is essential. While promoting peace and security is a noble goal, conflict resolution is influenced by a variety of factors beyond gender, such as geopolitical, historical, and sociocultural dynamics. In a nutshell this statement expresses a hope for a more peaceful world under female leadership, but it simplifies the complexities of the Russia-Ukraine war and the Israel-Palestine conflict. Gender alone is not a panacea for conflict resolution; resolving these conflicts requires a nuanced understanding of their unique dynamics and the participation of all relevant parties.

Figure 2. Data 2 for #womenempowerment hashtag



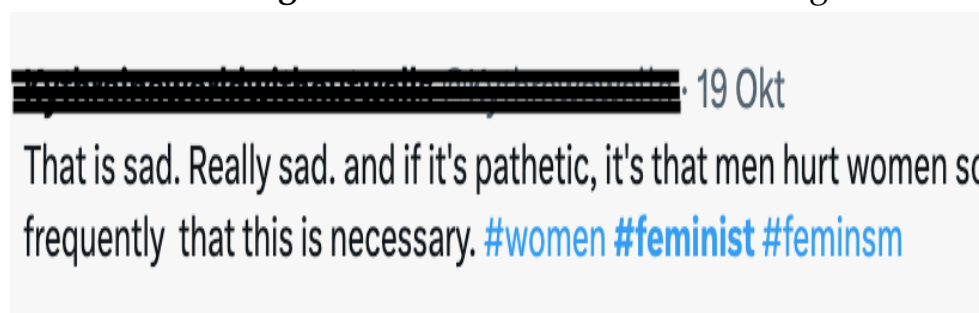
Dr. [redacted] 14 Okt
I am extremely proud to be named the STEM Women of the Year 2023
#WalesSTEMawards #WomenEmpowerment #stem

The statement "I am extremely proud to be named the STEM Woman of the Year 2023" reflects a sense of accomplishment and pride in receiving this prestigious award. To perform a content analysis, we can dissect the statement into its constituent parts. The statement begins with a proud expression, indicating that the speaker has been recognized for their achievements. They have been named "STEM Woman of the Year 2023," which is a significant accomplishment and a reflection of their contributions to the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) fields.

According to the provided context, the speaker is a senior lecturer, an AI expert, a STEM Ambassador, and the head of a research group. These positions exhibit a high level of knowledge and participation in STEM-related fields, which likely contributed to their selection for the award. The speaker has both a Ph.D. and a postgraduate certificate in teaching in higher education, both of which are notable academic accomplishments. This educational background demonstrates their qualifications and dedication to higher education teaching and research. Mentioning that she was named "STEM Woman of the Year" emphasizes a gender-specific accomplishment. This implies that the speaker is not only recognized for their contributions to STEM but also serves as a pioneer or role model for women in these fields, advocating for gender diversity and inclusivity in STEM. The use of "2023" indicates the exact year in which the award was received, thereby adding a temporal dimension to the accomplishment.

Discursively, the statement conveys the speaker's pride and sense of accomplishment at being named "STEM Woman of the Year 2023." In the context of their contributions to STEM and their role as a STEM Ambassador, it highlights their professional roles, educational credentials, and specific recognitions they have received. This content analysis highlights their accomplishments as well as the significance of gender diversity in STEM fields.

Figure 3. Data 1 for #feminist hashtag

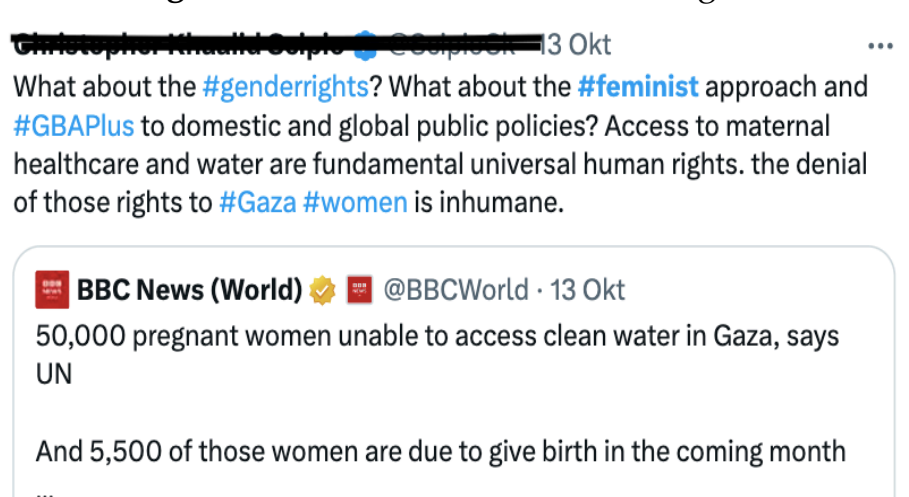


Given the frequency with which men harm women, the given statement expresses sadness and frustration, leading to the perceived need to advocate for women's rights and feminism (Peters & Wolper, 2018). The statement begins with a heartfelt expression of sorrow, emphasizing the emotional significance of the topic at issue. This emotional tone emphasizes the gravity of the issue at hand, which is further illuminated by the statement's criticism of men's propensity to harm women. The repeated use of the word "sad" emphasizes the profundity of the speaker's feelings and conveys the despair caused by the prevalence of gender-based violence. This intensity of feeling serves as a call to action and emphasizes the urgency of addressing this pervasive issue.

The frequency with which men harm women and the use of the word "pathetic" highlight the disturbing reality of gender-based violence and discrimination. Indirectly, the statement criticizes the societal norms and systems that have perpetuated this behaviour, implying that it is a failure of society that men continue to harm women so frequently. The addition of the word "pathetic" indicates strong disapproval of these actions and the conditions that allow them to persist.

The inclusion of the hashtags #women, #feminist, and #feminism aligns the statement with movements and ideologies that prioritize women's rights and gender equality. This demonstrates a commitment to advocating for empowerment and change. It implies that addressing the root causes of gender-based harm and advocating for the rights and safety of women is not merely a recommendation, but a requirement. In this way, the statement calls for a collective effort to challenge the status quo, raise awareness, and effect positive change in the fight against violence and discrimination based on gender.

Figure 4. Data 2 for #feminist hashtag



The statement contains hashtags such as #genderrights, #feminist, and #GBAPlus, indicating an emphasis on gender-related issues and feminist perspectives. In the context of Gaza, it also highlights the denial of access to maternal healthcare and clean water, which are fundamental human rights.

The declaration begins with the question "What about #genderrights?" This question highlights a concern for the status of gender rights and suggests that the speaker expects these rights to be recognized and protected. Mentioning the "feminist approach" and "GBAPlus" demonstrates an awareness of the significance of gender-based analysis and policies when addressing issues related to maternal healthcare and access to clean water.

Additionally, the statement emphasizes that access to maternal health care and clean water are fundamental universal human rights (Canetto, 2021). This viewpoint is consistent with international human rights principles and is used to emphasize the gravity of the issue. In addition, the conclusion of the statement describes the denial of these rights to "Gaza women" as inhumane. This identifies the situation as a violation of human rights and highlights the problem's urgency and ethical dimension (Peters & Wolper, 2018). In response to the BBC report, the statement echoes and expands on the issue of pregnant women in Gaza lacking access to clean water, providing a gender rights and denial of basic human rights-based perspective. It urges a feminist approach and stresses the significance of gender and a rights-based approach in addressing this crisis.

The content analysis of this statement reveals a strong concern for gender rights and human rights in the context of the reported issue in Gaza, with a focus on maternal healthcare and access to clean water. It calls for ethical and policy considerations that place the welfare and rights of women in this region at the forefront. The statement reaffirms with conviction the fundamental nature of certain human rights, including access to clean water and maternal healthcare. These are rights that transcend borders and circumstances, and it is the responsibility of the global community to ensure that every person, regardless of location, enjoys these fundamental rights. This encapsulates the urgency and ethical significance of the issue at hand, while advocating for a gender-sensitive, rights-based, and humanitarian approach to addressing the critical needs of women in Gaza, specifically maternal healthcare and access to clean water.

Figure 5. Data 1 for #menempowerment hashtag

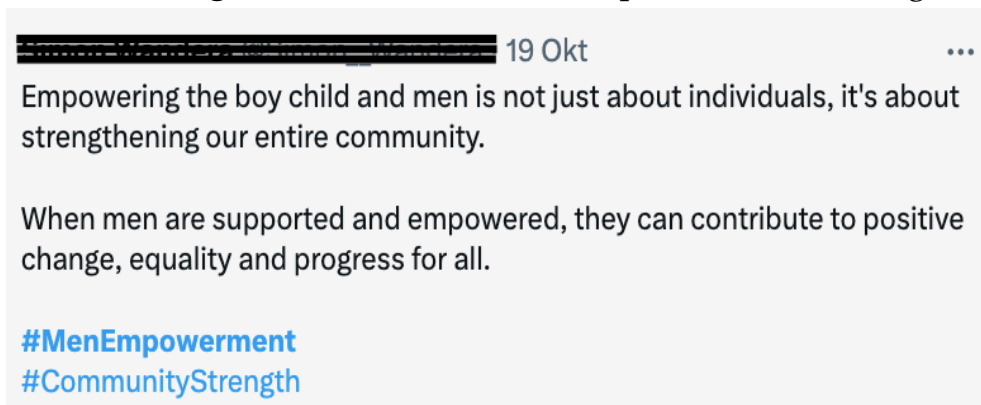
~~Peter Paltos @SocSciHub~~ · 20 Jan 2020
 Indeed lesbians can't give birth without man,
 Biologically.
 #MenEmpowerment

The statement begins with the biological fact that lesbians cannot bear children without a male partner. This assertion derives from the biological understanding of human reproduction, which typically involves the contribution of genetic material from both a male and a female.

The statement assumes a traditional or heteronormative view of reproduction, which is based on the notion that reproduction requires the participation of both a man and a woman. This viewpoint may not take into account the various ways in which individuals, including lesbian couples, can become parents, such as through adoption or assisted reproductive technologies. Advances in assisted reproductive technologies, such as in vitro fertilization (IVF) and the use of donor sperm, allow same-sex couples, including lesbian couples, to have biological children without engaging in sexual relations with a man. This omission highlights the need to acknowledge the changing family planning and parenting landscape.

The statement raises broader concerns regarding societal norms and cultural expectations regarding the family and reproduction. It emphasizes the significance of recognizing the variety of family structures and reproductive options that exist in today's society and reformulating the discourse to be inclusive and respectful of all routes to parenthood.

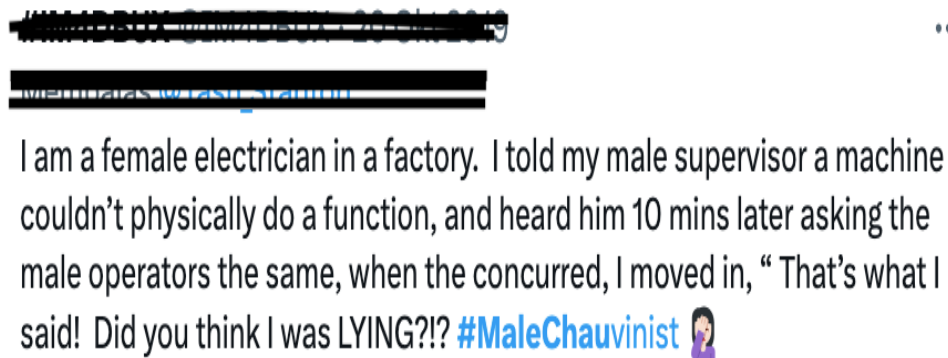
In conclusion, the statement emphasizes the role of both sexes in traditional procreation from the perspective of the biological aspects of human reproduction. It disregards, however, the modern opportunities and assisted reproductive technologies that allow same-sex couples to have biological children. It encourages a more inclusive and respectful approach to recognizing the diverse paths to parenthood in the contemporary world.

Figure 6. Data 2 for #menempowerment hashtag

The statement emphasizes a community-centered approach to gender empowerment, asserting that empowering the boy child and men is not an isolated effort, but one that has far-reaching consequences for the entire community. This viewpoint acknowledges that communities flourish when all their members are supported, encouraged, and empowered to reach their full potential. The emphasis on the community suggests a holistic perspective on empowerment, where it is not only about individual success but also about fostering an environment in which everyone can flourish.

In addition, the statement emphasizes the transformative potential of male empowerment. When men are provided with the resources, opportunities, and encouragement to become active participants in promoting equality and progress, the community as a whole benefits. It emphasizes that empowered men can contribute to positive change, equality, and progress, implying that their roles are not restricted to traditional gender roles but also include being agents of societal transformation.

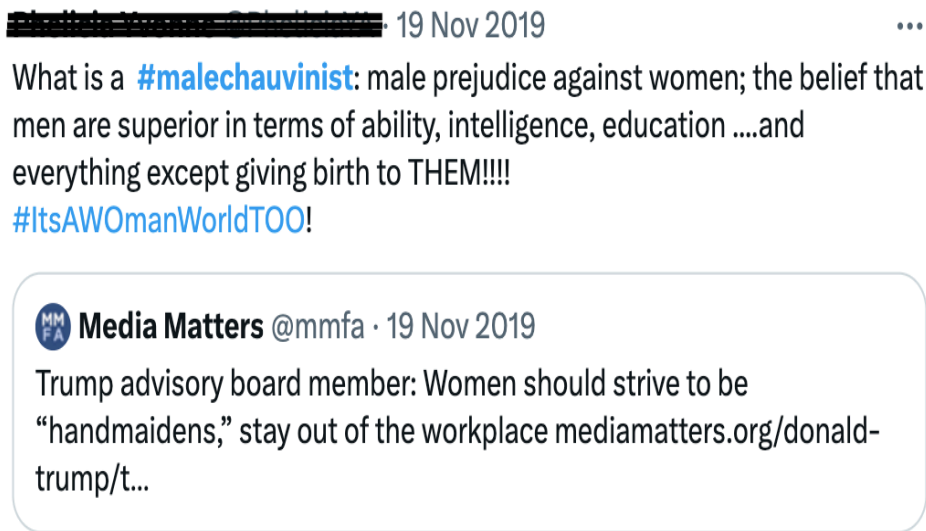
The inclusion of hashtags such as #MenEmpowerment and #CommunityStrength demonstrates that the statement aligns with social movements and discussions centered on gender equality and community development. These hashtags serve as a means of raising awareness and promoting discussion about the crucial relationship between men's empowerment and the overall strength and well-being of communities (Matud et al., 2019). They indicate their intent to engage in a broader dialogue about the crucial role that men can play in constructing more equitable and prosperous communities.

Figure 7. Data 1 for #malechauvinist hashtag

The statement provides a compelling narrative of gender bias in the workplace. The experience of the female electrician illustrates a common obstacle faced by women in male-dominated fields, where their professional opinions or expertise may be questioned or disregarded on the basis of their gender. The narrative describes an incident in which her supervisor appeared to be seeking validation from male co-workers, raising concerns about gender bias and an apparent lack of confidence in her professional judgment.

Notable is the emotional tone of the statement, in which the speaker expresses frustration and a feeling of being undervalued. This emotional intensity highlights the significance of the experience and the perceived inequity of having one's professional competence questioned solely on the basis of gender. The phrase "Did you think I was lying?!?" is an exclamation of outrage that emphasizes the speaker's shock at the situation and her desire to be taken seriously in her professional capacity.

The inclusion of #MaleChauvinist is indicative of the speaker's willingness to label and criticize the supervisor's behavior as chauvinism. This hashtag not only draws attention to the specific incident, but also connects it to larger conversations about gender inequality and workplace discrimination. It indicates a call for collective recognition and a desire to engage in a broader conversation about the challenges women continue to face in male-dominated professions, encouraging support and solidarity among those who have experienced similar gender bias.

Figure 8. Data 2 for #malechauvinist hashtag

The statement begins by defining "male chauvinist" as male prejudice against women (Mansbridge & Flaster, 2007). This definition provides the basis for comprehending the term and its implications. It indicates that male chauvinism is rooted in men's discriminatory attitudes toward women, which can manifest in a variety of ways.

Following the definition, the statement lists several characteristics of male chauvinism, such as the belief in male superiority in areas such as intelligence, education, and ability. Male chauvinism is portrayed as a comprehensive belief system that reinforces the perception of male dominance across multiple domains by virtue of these characteristics. This demonstrates the ingrained nature of this prejudice and its potential to manifest itself in various societal contexts.

Men believe they are superior in "everything except giving birth to THEM!!!!" This exclamation emphasizes the absurdity of such beliefs by highlighting the inherent biological differences between the sexes and the illogic of using childbearing as a measure of superiority. The purpose of this analysis is to challenge and question the logic underlying male chauvinism.

The entire statement can be interpreted as a critique of male chauvinism, depicting it as a prejudicial belief system that is fundamentally flawed and based on unfounded claims of superiority. It may serve as a call to question and challenge these beliefs and encourage conversations about gender equality and the negative effects of such prejudices.

CONCLUSION

In the contemporary digital age, our investigation has uncovered subtle nuances that shed light on larger discussions regarding gender representation, equality, and digital communication. By meticulously analyzing the linguistic patterns in social media conversations, we have contributed to a growing body of knowledge regarding the manifestations of gender movement publicly.

The findings highlight the significance of recognizing the influence of language on gender and social interactions on social media platforms. Contemporary conversations and cultural norms are heavily influenced by the online world. Understanding the nuances of language usage in gendered discourse is therefore essential for fostering a more equitable and inclusive digital environment.

This article encourages researchers, practitioners, and the general public to consider the multifaceted nature of language in online conversations. As we navigate the ever-changing landscape of social media, we must be cognizant of the impact of our words and recognize that language can be a tool for both progress and change, affording us the opportunity to promote greater gender representation and equality in digital spaces. The findings of this study not only contribute to the academic community but also have practical implications for professionals, policymakers, and society as a whole. They offer a road map for enhancing our understanding of how language influences perceptions and interactions in the digital realm, paving the way for more inclusive and equitable online spaces.

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