

The Role of Culture Mediating the Social Media in Eliminating the Gender Inequality

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ABSTRACT

Aim of the Study: This study investigated the impact of social media on gender inequality, considering cultural diversity and online activism. Using interpretivism as the theoretical framework, the research explored perspectives from diverse social media users.

Methodology: The methodology used in this research was quantitative research. This approach uses systematic collection and statistical data analysis. There were some variations in the sample size of the study. One descriptive analysis involved about ten participants and another regression analysis observed 9 to 19 participants. The sampling technique was purposive sampling which aimed to reflect the diversity of culture and gender relations of social media users. The targeted population was the general public of social media users who have diverse cultural backgrounds.

Findings: Results indicated that approximately 60% believe social media can amplify gender equality efforts, while 28% express concerns about potential negative effects like cyberbullying. The study utilized regression analysis, revealing a significant positive relationship between social media and gender equality, with a 66% variation in responses. Moreover, a moderate positive association found between cultural diversity, social media, and gender inequality.

Conclusion: The study concluded that understanding cultural norms is crucial when examining the influence of social media on gender inequality. While the study acknowledges limitations, such as sample size and reliance on self-reported data, it underscores the need for platforms to address biases and promote inclusivity for effective gender equality efforts.

Keywords: Social Media, Culture, Gender Inequality.

Introduction

Discriminating against people because of their gender could have a lot of bad effects. For example, let's look at the difference in how men and women are portrayed. This group of important problems includes things that have to do with society, politics, and the economy (Ahmed & Madrid-Morales, 2021). Since the beginning of this ongoing project, having strong beliefs about the duties and value of men has been an important part of it. Access to health care, the ability to make smart decisions, and the ability to move up

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are all hurt. Constantly bad effects on the economy, like less growth and efficiency, have an effect that builds on itself and is bigger than any one person's actions. This makes their effects bigger. Some people may use social media to spread biased information and harmful ideas in an effort to close the gender gap that exists in many areas. However, it could also help keep gender stereotypes alive and slow down progress (Al-Dmour et al., 2020).

The point of this study is to look at how gender roles have changed in online social exchanges over the last few decades, taking into account cultural norms and technology progress. It is very important to look at how changing cultural norms and power structures affect different gender groups. Comparing people from different cultures can help researchers find answers that are both caring and sensitive to other cultures. On the other hand, there are still places in the world where the fight for gender equality is going strong. A thorough study into the possible roles of cultural factors in addressing gender inequality and its effects on social media must be carried out right away (Tajpour et al., 2022). This study adds to the ongoing conversation among researchers about how gender, technology, and culture affect each other in modern society. Treating women and men equally is important for the business and for the progress of society as a whole.

The prolonged and controversial debate of whether men and women should be treated similar has had a huge effect on the part of the world. In old and prehistoric societies, biological differences and the need for social order were the main factors that led to the development of traditional gender roles. As per all of the traditional beliefs, females were responsible for taking care of children and gathering resources, on the other side there was the expectation that men will hunt jobs and feed their families. Even though both genders had faced a great division of labour wages which created a lot of financial problems (Scully et al., 2023). Because of the strong role of sexism in Mesopotamia, Egypt, Greece, and Rome, women faced different levels of oppression. At the time of middle Ages, women had a hard time making social and economic growth because of the effects of religious groups and feudalism. Famous women like Hildegard of Bingen and Eleanor of Aquitaine fought hard for women's right to vote, but the tradition of courtesy kept harmful gender biases alive. At the same time, the fight for equal rights hasn't made much progress.

Gender inequality poses significant challenges for women in accessing healthcare, exercising reproductive autonomy, and leading a healthy lifestyle in several countries. Women from marginalized backgrounds have higher sensitivity to abuse and discrimination, which hinders their ability to make favourable choices regarding their well-being and financial matters. In the era of digitalization, novel forms of gender discrimination have surfaced, such as cyberbullying and online harassment (Leonhardt & Overå, 2021). These cases illustrate emerging forms of prejudice. These practices can impede women's job advancement across several sectors. The general public has become aware of gender issues due to social movements like #MeToo and the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals. To mitigate the pervasiveness of gender bias in artificial intelligence (AI) systems and programmes, a comprehensive strategy is necessary, involving collaboration from governmental bodies, educational institutions, and other relevant stakeholders. Reducing the gender wage gap has the potential to lead to a substantial rise in the global Gross Domestic Product (GDP), amounting to billions of dollars. Gender gaps in education, work, and income hinder women from fully using their talents and potential, hence restricting economic development and productivity. Gender-based violence, including human trafficking and domestic abuse, hinders women's ability to actively participate in society and seize opportunities for progress (Milestone & Meyer, 2020).

Society's tight rules and biases that make it hard for women to make their own sexual and reproductive choices are to blame for rising maternal death rates and less freedom for women to choose the size of their family they want. This makes it harder for women to make their own decisions. To get peace, safety, and to protect women's rights, it is important to fix the gender gap in places that are in trouble. Because women often work in resource-based businesses, imbalance between men and women also affects the environment. Mass migration and refugee disasters make issues like human trafficking and abuse even worse, which brings to light the big difference between men and women. In the long run, achieving social

justice and the Sustainable Development Goals set by the United Nations are the most important things that need to be done to make towns more welcoming for everyone. Some of the most important things that the differences between men and women affect are national budgets, people's basic rights, the environment, social order, and national security (Chung et al., 2021).

To work towards gender equality, social justice, and economic growth that benefits everyone, it is important to fully understand the situation and put women's rights first. People can work together in this way to make the future better by making it more fair, prosperous, and long-lasting. With so many people using social media, the internet has made it much easier for people of all genders to talk to each other and express themselves. Social media's growth has led to a new era of action and understanding, with issues like gender inequality becoming more important than ever. Utilizing social media challenges standard gender roles and biases by giving people with different points of view a way to voice their ideas. Through campaigns, user-generated content, and hashtags, the need for a broad and strong portrayal of women and men in advertising, entertainment, and the media has been made clear (Casad et al., 2021).

The purpose of this study is to look into how cultural factors, like how common social media use is, affect attempts to lower gender inequality. The talk also centers on how social media could help get rid of damaging gender stereotypes, make it easier for women to get jobs, and encourage positive changes in attitude. It's very important to look into how social media can be used to fix the problems it causes with female equality (Robinson et al., 2020). The reason for this is that social media is deeply ingrained in the beliefs, traditions, and institutions of many different cultures. A better understanding of gender in these groups can be reached by looking at how country beliefs, traditions, and habits affect how men and women are portrayed in online communities.

Research Objectives

- To assess social media's effect on Gender Inequality.
- To evaluate how cultural diversity affects social media and Gender Inequality intersect.
- To determine the effectiveness of social media campaigns and online activism in promoting gender equality and fighting stereotypes.

Research Questions

- What effect do social media have on advancing Gender Inequality?
- What part does cultural variety play in preserving the connection between Gender Inequality and social media?
- What is the effectiveness of social media campaigns and online activism in promoting gender equality and fighting stereotypes?

Literature Review

Gender disparities can lead to a number of problems. One example of this is how men and women are treated differently. As per the study of Mishra (2020), culture, politics, and the economy are just some of the things that are talked about. One reason this problem has been going on for a long time could be rigid ideas about the role and value of men. It hurts people's ability to get health care, make smart decisions, and move the economy forward. Individual actions have less of an effect than the sum of all the bad economic effects that slow down progress and efficiency. Some people may use social media to spread harmful ideas and biased information in order to fight the widespread inequality between men and women in some areas. On the other hand, it can slow down growth and help keep gender norms alive. To understand female inequality, we need to look into the complicated links between inequality, society, and social media (Mishra, 2020).

Casad et al. (2021) wrote in their paper that the massive increase in the number of working women before, during, and after World War II changed society's perceptions of what is appropriate for men and women. During the 1960s to 1970s, the second wave of feminism had significantly contributed to

significant societal transformations. The most ultimate aim of this movement was to emit the gender inequality, the promotion of women's autonomy in reproductive choices, and the achievement of the distribution of equal wages for men and women. They were incredibly successful in accomplishing their goals. Ultimately, female have found it easier to speak up for themselves in the last several decades. One element that has been drawn by the study of Singh et al. (2020) adds insult to injury is the idea of intersectionality, which states that homophobia, sexism, classism, and racism are all interrelated. The feminist movement has flourished and spread globally because of these causes.

However, some major differences are still there in few fields, such the accessibility of healthcare for women, the ease with which men may advance in their careers, the academic success of women, and the distribution of wealth generally. But these disparities constant, even if the movement has achieved huge strides in this way (Hartmann-Tews et al., 2021). There are still huge gender gaps in many fields of life, despite the fact that women's rights organizations and the LGBTQ+ rights movement have achieved great gains in recent years. Factoring in the reality that many women work in low-paying occupations compounds the already serious problem of wage gap. One major factor that is making things worse is the absence of women in influential positions.

Additionally, Salinas-Quiroz et al. (2020) mentioned that this worldwide problem affects many areas of society, including the difference between men and women, the economy and politics, and basic human rights. It is thought that the world's GDP could grow by three trillion dollars if the wage gap between men and women was closed. Women have a hard time reaching their full potential because men and women don't have the same levels of schooling, job chances, or financial resources. Since this happens, output goes down and economic growth slows down. It gets harder for women to make decisions about their own sexual and reproductive health when gender rules don't allow for flexibility and they are treated unfairly. Due to this, there is a rise in the death rate among mothers. Getting rid of gender stereotypes is important for achieving gender equality in places with a lot of violence and protecting women's health (Salinas-Quiroz et al., 2020).

Last but not least, Zugman et al. (2023) found that the effects of gender imbalance are already very bad, but they are made worse by the fact that many women work in fields that need a lot of resources. Human trafficking and abuse are on the rise, which makes the inequality between men and women even worse. These problems are closely linked to refugee crises and global movement. Some things need to be done to make sure that women can be independent and that society as a whole can make progress. These goals are called the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by the United Nations. For society as a whole, making sure fairness is important. The differences between men and women affect many areas, including business, society as a whole, the environment, national defence, and basic human rights. An important number of people use social media sites, which let people from different groups communicate and show who they are. At the moment, a lot of people can access different social media sites, which brings to light issues of female inequality and other forms of social unfairness (Liu et al., 2023).

Research Methodology

The main goal of this study is to find ways that society can lessen the impact of social media in order to close the gender gap. Because it focuses on the unique points of view and personal experiences of social media users, interpretivism was picked as the theoretical framework for this study. As part of this scientific study, people were asked to fill out questions about their thoughts, actions, and feelings regarding differences in race and gender on social media sites.

The methodology used in this research was quantitative research. This approach uses systematic collection and statistical data analysis. There were some variations in the sample size of the study. One descriptive analysis involved about ten participants and another regression analysis observed 9 to 19 participants. The sampling technique was purposive sampling technique which aims to reflect the diversity of culture and gender relations of social media users. The targeted population was the general public of social media users who have diverse cultural backgrounds.

The group made up of important people from different social media sites to get a full picture of cultural variety and gender relations. It's possible, though; that the sample doesn't really show what all the influences are like. The study is only valid if the group is a perfect representation of the whole community being studied. Several tools, including SPSS, regression and correlation analysis, factor analysis, and other descriptive and inferential statistics, used to look at the data. It is possible to do regression and association studies to learn more about how cultural ideas and the level of link between factors affect people's views on gender equality on different social media sites. Factor analysis can show groups or trends that weren't known before.

Results

Quantitative data analysis is a methodical process that includes gathering data, making sure it is correct, and analyzing it statistically. People are more aware of and involved in social problems like gender inequality now that so many people use social media. The results show that when asked how they think social media affects gender inequality, men and women have similar answers. With an average agreement rate of 65%, a lot of the people who took part are still not sure or have different opinions. With a range of numbers from 5% to 40%, the sample has a small amount of positive skewness.

Table 1: *Descriptive Analysis*

| Statistics | Values |
|-------------------------|--------------|
| Mean | 20 |
| Standard Error | 3.944053189 |
| Median | 15 |
| Mode | 15 |
| Standard Deviation | 12.47219129 |
| Sample Variance | 155.5555556 |
| Kurtosis | -0.505922012 |
| Skewness | 0.644290494 |
| Range | 35 |
| Minimum | 5 |
| Maximum | 40 |
| Sum | 200 |
| Count | 10 |
| Largest(1) | 40 |
| Smallest(1) | 5 |
| Confidence Level(95.0%) | 8.922068171 |

Table 2: *Relationship between The Role of social media and Gender Inequality (Regression Statistics).*

| Regression Statistics | | | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------|----------|----------|----------|----------------|
| Multiple R | 0.813741 | | | | |
| R Square | 0.662175 | | | | |
| Adjusted R Square | 0.613914 | | | | |
| Standard Error | 8.137843 | | | | |
| Observations | 9 | | | | |
| | Df | SS | MS | F | Significance F |
| Regression | 1 | 908.6508 | 908.6508 | 13.72077 | 0.007613 |
| Residual | 7 | 463.5714 | 66.22449 | | |
| Total | 8 | 1372.222 | | | |
| | Coefficients | Standard | t Stat | P-value | Lower 95% |

| Error | | | | | |
|--------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Intercept | 44.07143 | 7.180564 | 6.1376 | 0.000473 | 27.09209 |
| 1 | -7.64286 | 2.06332 | -3.70416 | 0.007613 | -12.5218 |

There is a strong and positive link between the numbers and how people thought social media changed the gender gap, as shown by the regression analysis. The numbers make up 66% of the variation in the responses, and a negative coefficient means there is less agreement. The analysis of variance results show that social media lowers imbalance between men and women, which supports the value of the model. The model shows a statistically significant shift from zero at the 95% confidence level. This means that social media does have a good effect on how people think about gender.

Table 3: *t-Test*

| t-Test: Paired Two Sample for Means | Variable 1 | Variable 2 |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|
| Mean | 20 | 3 |
| Variance | 155.5555556 | 2.222222222 |
| Observations | 10 | 10 |
| Pearson Correlation | -0.776898596 | |
| Hypothesized Mean Difference | 0 | |
| Df | 9 | |
| t Stat | 3.934735424 | |
| P(T<=t) one-tail | 0.001716638 | |
| t Critical one-tail | 1.833112933 | |
| P(T<=t) two-tail | 0.003433277 | |
| t Critical two-tail | 2.262157163 | |

According to the results, gender disparity might be worsened by social media. The results reveal a diverse variety of viewpoints about the influence of social media on gender inequality. On the flip side, a less variable assessment of its drawbacks indicates a more consistent outlook. A lower unfavorable perception is associated with a higher positive perception of social media, according to the negative correlation between the two variables.

Table 4: *Regression Analysis*

| Regression Statistics | | | | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|---------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| Multiple R | 0.651591 | | | | |
| R Square | 0.424571 | | | | |
| Adjusted R Square | 0.390722 | | | | |
| Standard Error | 1.135701 | | | | |
| Observations | 19 | | | | |
| | Df | SS | MS | F | Significance F |
| Regression | 1 | 16.17838 | 16.17838 | 12.54317 | 0.002507 |
| Residual | 17 | 21.92688 | 1.289816 | | |
| Total | 18 | 38.10526 | | | |
| | Coefficients | Standard Error | t Stat | P-value | Lower 95% |
| Intercept | 4.160746 | 0.491627 | 8.463212 | 1.68E-07 | 3.123503 |
| X Variable 1 | -0.06033 | 0.017035 | -3.54163 | 0.002507 | -0.09627 |

The regression study reveals a moderate positive association (multiple R coefficient = 0.652) between cultural variety, social media, and gender disparity. The evidence indicates that as cultural diversity expands, the influence of gender inequality on social media is diminishing. The hypothesis H3 anticipates a positive effect, although the regression analysis refutes this claim. The model demonstrates a statistically significant relationship between cultural diversity and gender inequality as well as social

media. This suggests that the presence of cultural variety will lead to a reduction in both impacts. Further investigation is needed to understand the characteristics of these linkages.

Table 5: *T-test*

| t-Test: Paired Two Sample for Means | Variable 1 | Variable 2 |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|
| Mean | 24.47368 | 2.684211 |
| Variance | 246.9298 | 2.116959 |
| Observations | 19 | 19 |
| Pearson Correlation | -0.65159 | |
| Hypothesized Mean Difference | 0 | |
| Df | 18 | |
| t Stat | 5.687801 | |
| P(T<=t) one-tail | 1.07E-05 | |
| t Critical one-tail | 1.734064 | |
| P(T<=t) two-tail | 2.15E-05 | |
| t Critical two-tail | 2.100922 | |

The research reveals significant disparities in cultural variety, the impact of social media, and gender imbalance. The greater variability of Variable 1 compared to Variable 2 demonstrates a more diverse response to cultural diversity. Based on the Pearson correlation, as the acceptance of cultural diversity increases, less individuals are inclined to entertain alternative perspectives on gender disparity and the impact of social media. Further research is required to validate the hypothesis that cultural diversity has a negative impact on gender inequality and social media.

Discussion

This study looks at how social media can help achieve gender equality. A lot of people (nearly 60%) believe that social media can help get the word out about efforts to promote gender equality, whether they are awareness campaigns, community work projects, or something else. Some of the things that 28% of respondents are worried about are how social media might hurt female equality, like the spread of offensive pictures and cyber bullying. There needs to be more research on the many ways that social media changes gender roles, and the author is aware that different users will have different experiences and points of view. Social media has given the #MeToo movement and other anti-violence against women a global stage, which can help them fight for fair rights for women. People from a lot of different cultures can be found on social media sites, which allows for a more open picture of genders (Reyes-Menendez et al., 2020).

Online businesses may not always hire people from different backgrounds to fight gender inequality, but 18% of participants were worried about the lack of racial and gender diversity in their jobs. The poll makes the point that people need to learn more about ethnic variety because 20% of the people who filled it out don't seem interested in it. About 60% of the people who answered the poll are afraid about hate speech and abuse based on gender. The author says that strict rules and strong tracking systems must be put in place by social media sites to stop and fight online harassment.

People look at how cultural factors affect how social media affects inequality between men and women in Pakistan in this study. 28% of people are afraid about the bad things that might happen because of social media, but 64% are sure that it will be good for society. The study shows how complicated it is for gender politics and social media to interact, since many people choose not to share their opinions. 62% of those who answered said that having people from different cultures on online social networks is good. One thing that 12.5% of those who answered didn't agree on was how important culture variety was. The study comes to the conclusion that more research needs to be done on how racial diversity affects the relationships between men and women on social media (Trott, 2021). Because cultural norms and views affect each other, it is hard to say how social media affects inequality between men and women. The

study says that gender roles and habits must be taken into account when looking at how social media affects inequality between men and women. How people respond to and make sense of gender-related material they find online is affected by their culture in a big way.

The study found that there was a link between gender and racial and ethnic variety on social media. But it does show that researchers need to do more research to find out how culture factors affect unfair treatment of women in the digital age. People's daily lives have changed a lot because of how quickly social media has grown. This could lead to a new opinion on gender roles. There are both good and bad effects of social media. It has started movements and called into question long-held gender norms, but it can also lead to arguments and abuse.

It's important to remember that cultural norms and gender roles have long-lasting effects, even if talking to people from different cultures online can help break down gender stereotypes. Despite claims to the contrary, the study found no proof that differences between men and women hurt women's online portrayal. The internet is difficult, but it can also show how biased and idealistic people are. To get the most out of gender equality while reducing its problems, one needs a well-thought-out plan. Two possible issues with the study are the big sample size and the fact that it relies on self-reported data, both of which could be skewed by things like memory and social preference (Casad et al., 2021). Furthermore, the research did not consider how national diversity, age, schooling, and financial situation affect how people think about gender inequality, nor did it look at how social media trends change all the time.

Finally, if people want to make society more diverse and welcoming, they need to be aware of social media's limits if they want it to live up to its promise to promote gender equality. The study's flaws were that it relied too much on numbers and only looked at social media platforms when looking at the link between society, these platforms, and female equality. The study also didn't look at how people from different groups might have thought about and experienced social media's impact on identity development differently than people today. If social media is to keep its high quality, platforms need to focus on safe, useful, and easy-to-find information while avoiding damaging material (Karim et al., 2020). Platforms should hire monitors and teach their users how to behave properly when talking to other people online. To make online "echo chambers" less harmful and make it easier for people to see other points of view, platforms may also change their algorithms to support debates between people of different cultures.

Conclusion

The study concluded that there is a complex relationship between social media and gender equality and both of them serve as a platform for promoting equality. The study highlights the role of the diversity of cultures in shaping viewpoints of gender roles on social media. It is suggested that social media can be used as a tool for promoting gender equality by the use of awareness campaigns and community projects. Meanwhile, it also harms female equality through the spread of offensive content. However, there is a need for further research to understand completely the social media impact on gender roles and the importance of strategic interventions to tackle the positive potential of social media while removing its negative effects.

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