



# ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN SHAPING ATTITUDES TOWARDS GENDER ROLES AND SEXUALITY

Ayushi Srivastava BA(H) Applied Psychology

Amity university, Lucknow, India

## Abstract

This paper examines the profound influence of social media platforms on shaping contemporary attitudes towards gender roles and sexuality. With the ubiquitous presence of social media in everyday life, individuals are constantly exposed to diverse representations of gender and sexuality. Through a review of existing literature and empirical studies, this paper elucidates the mechanisms by which social media perpetuates and challenges traditional gender norms and sexual orientations. It explores how social media platforms serve as both facilitators and disruptors of gender and sexual discourse, affecting individuals' perceptions, behaviors, and self-identities. Additionally, the paper discusses the potential implications of social media on societal progress towards gender equality and LGBTQ+ rights, as well as the challenges and opportunities for future research in this evolving field. By understanding the multifaceted role of social media in shaping attitudes towards gender roles and sexuality, this paper aims to contribute to a more nuanced understanding of contemporary social dynamics and inform efforts to promote inclusivity and diversity in digital spaces and beyond. Social media platforms promote inclusivity by showcasing diverse gender identities and sexual orientations. They foster community building, education, activism, and activism, while also influencing societal perceptions of beauty, relationships, and sexual norms. However, they also pose challenges like cyberbullying, perpetuating stereotypes, and spreading misinformation, which can negatively impact attitudes towards gender and sexuality.

## Keywords

Social media, Gender Roles, Sexuality, Attitudes, Social Networking Sites, Online Communities Representation, Gender Identity, Sexual Orientation, Influence, Perception, Community Building

## Chapter 1: Introduction

Social media refers to a variety of online resources, programmers, or platforms that highlight online social interaction, teamwork, and artistic expression. Social networking has become an essential tool for preserving social connections, reading news, and finding amusement, especially for young people, as cellphones have been more widely used. Youth who use social media may become more self-objectifying, have biased body images, or struggle with eating disorders. Moreover, the mediating effects of social comparison and self-esteem may lead to unpleasant emotions in teenagers who use social media extensively, like anxiety and depression. Social media plays a

significant role in shaping attitudes towards gender roles and sexuality in contemporary society. It serves as a powerful platform for communication, information sharing, and the expression of diverse perspectives.

Social media facilitates the dissemination of information about gender roles and sexuality, raising awareness about various perspectives, identities, and issues. Educational content, including articles, videos, and infographics, can challenge traditional norms and provide a more inclusive understanding of gender and sexuality. Social media allows for the representation of diverse gender identities and sexual orientations. It gives a platform for individuals to share their stories and perspectives, helping to challenge stereotypes and promote inclusivity. Influencers, celebrities, and activists on social media can have a substantial impact on shaping public opinion and challenging traditional norms. Social media provides a space for challenging and breaking down traditional gender stereotypes. Campaigns and movements on platforms like Twitter and Instagram aim to challenge harmful narratives and promote positive change. Hashtags and viral challenges can amplify messages related to gender equality, breaking down barriers, and encouraging open dialogue.

It is evident that women are underrepresented in a variety of contexts and media. Second, women are frequently portrayed negatively and in narrow ways. Women are frequently sexualized, usually by highlighting them in provocative or skimpy attire. Women are also viewed as inferior in a variety of ways, as seen by their body language, facial expressions, and other characteristics. Lastly, they are portrayed in stereotypically feminine roles. Women are portrayed as stay-at-home moms, wives, parents, and guardians of the sexual realm. While these conclusions are supported by the studies, certain intriguing moderating factors like race are identified. The creation of theory and a corpus of empirical data about the impacts of exposure to underrepresentation of women is recommended as the next course of action. Additionally, there is a dearth of information about how young audiences are affected by exposure to sexualized or stereotypical portrayals. As a last resort, content studies of new media including those made and shared by users are suggested. The conclusion is that, while more women are represented in the media may be beneficial, it is equally important to consider how they are portrayed to prevent the growth of stereotypical or negative representations, which may be especially damaging to viewers.

Even while media have become a significant socialization factor, we still know extraordinarily little about how they affect how young people develop their sexual views and behaviors. There is not much empirical data on the nature and scope of media effects, according to two recent significant reviews on the potential effects of (sexualized) media content. Most studies have concentrated on media exposure while ignoring the fact that teenagers are notorious for actively seeking out media content. Adolescent media preferences should receive more consideration to address their active roles in the choice of the media they choose to be exposed to. While it is obvious from prior research that adolescent boys and girls utilize media differently (e.g., Brown and Pardun 2004), gender concerns were understudied and explanations of gender disparities in media effects were scarce. Hence, this paper provides a commentary regarding the quantitative content analyses of gender roles in media published in the two special issues of Sex Roles. A few themes and some overarching lessons emerge from the wide variety of data presented.

## Chapter 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

### Research Through Innovation

A literature review comprises a thorough analysis and succinct summary of the body of information currently available on a certain subject. It requires gathering data from a variety of sources, such as books, academic articles, and other relevant publications. A literature review's principal goal is to provide a thorough overview of the state of knowledge in relation to a certain subject.

The main theories, notions, and arguments surrounding the subject can be found by reviewing the literature. It aids in comprehending what has already been learned by researchers and where information is still lacking. Reviewing the literature also enables us to expand on prior work and provide fresh perspectives or concepts.

Gill's 2007 book, *Gender and the Media*, Today's men and women have extremely complicated lives with many societal duties. Men and women both have careers in business and serve on corporate boards. They also have friends, siblings, and volunteer work. In contrast to the society depicted in the 1950 film *Leave It to Beaver*, in which males served as the primary breadwinners and women served as the homemakers, today's society is more equal. However, several of the 1950s' values are still held dear by society today. Almost half of working mothers (compared to 19% of working fathers) claim to spend more time each day caring for their children than on their employment. Moms spend 3 hours more each day on parenting duties than males do, on average (VTEch, 2011). Advertising has, in fact, clung tenaciously to the stereotype of women as domestic workers.

We frequently picture men and women who are ideal physical specimens when we think about the people who feature in commercials. They are fit, with a six-pack and no signs of cellulite, and they have full heads of lustrous, thick hair. They are young, with flawless skin that is free of acne and wrinkles. Men typically have well-developed upper torsos while women are often slender. This is best illustrated in a Tom Ford fragrance advertisement. Now, we are aware in our minds that these individuals are paid well to maintain themselves as professional models. We also know that photographic faults and imperfections can be miraculously removed thanks to technological advancements. However, many people view these photographs as portraying a level of beauty and fitness that is frequently impossible to achieve, despite attempts being made to do so by buying items.

As old as the cult of the male warrior is the cult of beauty. Think of childhood fairy tales: The Wicked Witch of the West, Cinderella's stepmother, and stepsisters, are just a few examples of how girls and women are frequently portrayed—along with Snow White and Sleeping Beauty—as either good or terrible. The good ladies are typically youthful and attractive, while the terrible women are typically ugly or old (though there are exceptions, like the Snow Queen).

**Development of the Social Media Engagement Scale for Adolescents. Front. Psychol.** Says social media has become an essential tool for young people, with 58% of them reducing their daily time spent on social media due to overwhelming content. This can lead to negative emotions such as self-objectification, body image bias, and eating problems. Previous studies have used objective indicators to examine the effects of social media use on physiology and psychology. However, a recent study on 17,000 adolescents found that the correlation between screen time and well-being was insignificant. This suggests that the primary influencing factor on adolescents could be their engagement on social media, rather than the time spent or frequency of use. To accurately evaluate the psychological impact of social media use, a scientific and effective instrument should be developed to measure engagement in social media.

Previous studies on social media use's effects on physiology and psychology often use objective indicators like internet usage frequency and friends. However, a recent study on 17,000 adolescents found no significant correlation between screen time and well-being. This suggests that the primary influencing factor on adolescents could be their engagement on social media, rather than the time spent or frequency. To accurately evaluate the psychological impact of social media use, a scientific instrument measuring engagement is needed.

**Development of the Gender Role Attitudes Scale (GRAS) amongst young Spanish people García-Cueto et al** reviews that beliefs and attitudes play a significant role in violent conduct in affective interpersonal relationships. These attitudes are influenced by gender roles, which assign roles and responsibilities to men and women in society. These gender roles, which are influenced by factors like age, sex, and education, can lead to discrimination and justify abusive behavior. Hostile sexism, characterized by distrust and adversarial feelings towards partners, can legitimize abuse and blame women for conflict situations. Women's behavior in affective relationships can influence others' attitudes, with men with traditional sexist attitudes often assessing them negatively. Sexist attitudes are often assessed based on discriminatory attitudes towards feminine gender roles, such as Hostility Towards Women Scales, Gender Role Conflict Scale,

Adversarial Heterosexual Beliefs Scale, Rape Myth Acceptance Scale, and Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale. However, there is less research on sexist attitudes towards men, which are based on hostility towards partners or traditional beliefs. Transcendent attitudes, such as those defending equality from an egalitarian perspective, must also be assessed. Instruments like the Attitudes Toward Men Inventory and Ambivalent Sexism Inventory measure inequality between men and women, while the Social Roles Questionnaire assesses equality between sexes based on role characteristics. The aim is to propose a new scale for assessing gender role attitudes using the theoretical perspective of gender equality to modify sexist attitudes.

### **Media and the Development of Gender Role Stereotypes**

**L. Monique Ward<sup>1</sup>, and Petal Gro** reviews that mainstream media portrayals often focus on recognition and respect, with underrepresentation of girls and women. Television programming targeting youth consistently shows boys and men outnumbering girls and women, with boys/men comprising 60% or more of characters. In G-rated movies, family films, and Disney films, male characters outnumber female characters 2.5 to 1. The second issue concerns the representation of genders in a way that reflects their complexity and humanity, or if they are reduced to one-dimensional stereotypes. Stereotypes often focus on beauty, thinness, physical appearance, and sexual appeal, with girls being more influenced by these factors. Television programs show that girls are more attractive, judged, and sexualized than boys. This is particularly evident in music videos, which often objectify women's bodies. Stereotypes in children's programming often focus on gender attributes, with male characters being more physically aggressive and orderly than female characters. Male characters are also more verbally and physically aggressive, while female characters are more family-oriented. Stereotypes also exist regarding roles and occupations, with men often placed in the workplace and women in the home. Men are often depicted as incompetent in domestic tasks, and these stereotypes extend to children's daily activities, with toy commercials featuring only girls and boys in various categories. These stereotypes contribute to the portrayal of gender roles and occupations in children's programming. The cultivation theory, a macrosystems approach to media effects, suggests that exposure to television content that promotes traditional gender stereotypes can lead to increased acceptance of these stereotypes among viewers. This theory, originating in communications, posits that regular exposure to such content leads to the adoption of social attitudes that align with the content. Cultivation research involves content analyses and survey data to assess these effects. Social cognitive theory suggests that viewers' scripts and beliefs are influenced by media content, guiding their behavior. However, exposure alone doesn't guarantee adoption of values or behaviors. Factors like attractiveness, salience of actions, and rewards or punishments for behavior influence the likelihood of learning and modeling specific behaviors, such as similarity or admiration.

### **Media and the Development of Gender Role Stereotypes**

**L. Monique Ward and Petal Grower** reviews that gender advertisement exists because it makes money for companies that use it. It is that simple. By identifying clear gender roles and marketing products to specific audiences, businesses can target segments of the market they think will be willing to spend money on their products.

This results in absurdities like razors designed just for women, made of pink and purple plastic, when any razor will do to shave your legs. It reinforces gender roles by selling household cleaners to women and sports equipment and pickup trucks to men. This has been changing in recent years. You see a lot more women doing sports, for instance. But they have not made it into the pickup trucks yet. Because market research shows that most women are more interested in safety and practicality when it comes to buying a car. They want to pick the kids up from soccer and fill the trunk with groceries, not go driving off into the sunset raising a plume of dust behind them. Most of them, at any rate. And that is what gender advertisement is based on. Not what does each individual person want, but what appeals to most people of a particular gender most of the time.

But it does not come unexpected, as a plot to make sure people know how to present themselves properly in our gendered society. It emerges from focus groups, surveys, and other forms of market research. It is based on what you click on when you browse the Internet, because market analysts pay attention to that stuff. If gender advertising did not sell products, marketers would do something else.

### **Development and psychometric properties gender role attitudes scale**

**Zeyneloglu, Simge; Terzioglu, Fusun (2011)** reviews that gender roles are cultural duties, accountabilities, and activities assigned to men and women, affecting their communal life. These roles are classified as traditional and egalitarian, with traditional roles involving non-egalitarian accountabilities like domestic affairs and breadwinning, and egalitarian roles involving equal sharing of accountabilities in family, professional, social, and educational life. Studies show that high school and university students generally embrace traditional gender roles, with female students showing less acceptance than male students. Studies show that female university students in Turkey have a more egalitarian view of gender roles than male students. This leads to an inequality model favoring men more, causing negative discrimination towards women in areas such as working/opportunity equality, decision making, health benefits, and career choice. Social status inequalities negatively impact women, hindering their equal access to human rights and sustainable development. Attitudes towards gender roles are crucial for assessing students' perceptions of gender equality. Attitudes are a person's positive or negative predisposition towards an object, situation, or incident. It is important to determine students' attitudes towards gender roles to encourage them to adopt an egalitarian perspective. There are no reliable instruments available in Turkey for this purpose. Identifying students' attitudes towards gender roles can contribute to integrating a more egalitarian view into university education, thus preventing gender inequalities.

### **Benefits and risks of LGBT social media use for sexual and gender minority individuals**

**Randolph C.H. Chan** reviews that individuals are cognizant of their psychosocial demands and actively engage behaviours that are informed by the uses and gratifications paradigm. LGBT people frequently face rejection and struggle to find support in their offline environments, but social media enables them to stay connected with like-minded individuals and forge friendships while expressing their true selves in a safe environment. According to empirical study, using social networking applications like Grindr, Scruff, and Romeo is driven by a desire to learn more about the LGBT community, connect with people who share similar interests, and maintain friendship networks. Fourthly, LGBT social media meets the demand for romantic and sexual relationships. LGBT people can now meet partners for casual sex and hook up via real-time location-based geosocial networking apps like Grindr thanks to the advent of GPS functionality. In addition, past research has shown that LGBT people frequently utilise social networking sites to identify dates and look for permanent, committed partnerships. The last reason for utilising LGBT social media is for fun and amusement. LGBT people frequently use social media to have fun and satisfy their hedonistic cravings.

It is anticipated that emotional involvement in LGBT social media and the incorporation of LGBT social media into daily routines will differ in their relationship to the satisfaction of psychosocial needs and overall wellbeing. According to earlier studies, social media usage that is integrated into daily activities is deemed to be suitable and may improve well-being and positively affect psychosocial factors like community connectivity. Instead, emotional investment in social media is seen as a maladaptive use of the platform that may be linked to worsening wellbeing and unfavourable psychosocial factors like internalised stigma and loneliness.

## Chapter 3: METHODOLOGY

### Statement of the problem

In recent years, social media platforms have become pervasive in modern society, influencing how individuals perceive, construct, and negotiate their gender identities and sexualities. While social media offer opportunities for diverse representation and community building, they also perpetuate stereotypes, norms, and discriminatory behaviours related to gender and sexuality. Despite growing recognition of the influence of social media on attitudes towards gender roles and sexuality, there remains a need for empirical research to comprehensively understand the mechanisms by which social media shape individuals' attitudes, behaviours, and self-identities in this context. Additionally, there is a lack of consensus on the potential implications of social media use for societal progress towards gender equality and LGBTQ+ rights. Therefore, this study seeks to investigate the multifaceted role of social media in shaping attitudes towards gender roles and sexuality, with a focus on exploring the underlying mechanisms, examining the diversity of representations, and assessing the implications for individual well-being and societal change. By addressing these research gaps, this study aims to contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the complex interplay between social media and attitudes towards gender roles and sexuality, and inform efforts to promote inclusivity, diversity, and social justice in digital spaces and beyond.

### Objective of the study

The objective of the study on the role of social media in shaping attitudes towards gender roles and sexuality is to:

1. Investigate the influence of social media platforms on individuals' perceptions, beliefs, and behaviours related to gender roles and sexuality.
2. Examine the mechanisms by which social media perpetuate or challenge traditional gender norms, stereotypes, and sexual identities.
3. Explore the diversity of representations of gender and sexuality on social media and their impact on individuals' self-identities and social interactions.
4. Assess the implications of social media use for societal progress towards gender equality and LGBTQ+ rights, including the potential for promoting inclusivity, diversity, and social justice.
5. Identify factors that mediate or moderate the relationship between social media exposure and attitudes towards gender roles and sexuality, such as age, gender, cultural background, and online engagement patterns.
6. Provide recommendations for policymakers, educators, and digital platform developers to foster more inclusive and equitable online environments that empower individuals to challenge stereotypes, embrace diversity, and advocate for social change.
7. Contribute to theoretical frameworks and methodological approaches for studying the intersection of social media, gender, and sexuality, and stimulate further research in this evolving field.

### Hypothesis

The hypothesis for the study on the role of social media in shaping attitudes towards gender roles and sexuality may include:

**Hypothesis 1:** Increased exposure to diverse representations of gender and sexuality on social media will lead to more progressive attitudes and beliefs, including greater acceptance of non-traditional gender roles and sexual identities.

**Hypothesis 2:** Individuals who engage more frequently with social media content that challenges traditional gender norms and stereotypes will demonstrate more positive attitudes towards gender equality and LGBTQ+ rights.

**Hypothesis 3:** Social media platforms that prioritize inclusive and diverse representations of gender and sexuality will foster greater acceptance and support for marginalized communities.

**Hypothesis 4:** The influence of social media on attitudes towards gender roles and sexuality will vary depending on individual characteristics such as age, gender, cultural background, and level of online engagement.

**Hypothesis 5:** Exposure to discriminatory or harmful content related to gender and sexuality on social media will be associated with negative attitudes and behaviours, including increased levels of prejudice, stereotyping, and online harassment.

### Research type

Surveys and questionnaires are used to gather quantitative data on individuals' attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours regarding gender roles and sexuality in relation to social media use. Researchers design structured surveys to collect demographic information and assess participants' perceptions and experiences.

### Research design

- **Survey Development:** Develop a structured survey instrument to collect quantitative data on participants' social media use, attitudes towards gender roles and sexuality, and demographic characteristics.
- **Sampling:** Use random sampling techniques to recruit a diverse sample of participants from various demographics, including age, gender, sexual orientation, and cultural background.
- **Data Collection:** Administer the survey online to participants, ensuring confidentiality and anonymity. Collect data on social media usage patterns, exposure to different types of content, and attitudes towards gender roles and sexuality.
- **Statistical Analysis:** Analyse survey data using statistical techniques such as regression analysis, ANOVA, or correlation analysis to examine the relationships between social media exposure and attitudes towards gender roles and sexuality. Explore potential moderating variables such as age, gender, and cultural background.

### Sample

Specified sample of individuals aged 18-24 in the study on the role of social media in shaping attitudes towards gender roles and sexuality,

### Sample selection

1. **Random Sampling:** Participants were chosen at random from the population of people in the 18–24 age range. Selection bias is reduced since random sampling makes sure that each member of the population has an equal probability of being chosen for the study. "Flashcards for Research Terminology | Quizlet"
2. **Online Surveys:** Utilise online survey platforms to connect with a wide range of people who use social media on a regular basis, ages 18 to 24. You can utilise platforms like Qualtrics, SurveyMonkey, or Google Forms to send out surveys to a large number of people.
3. **University or College Recruitment:** Worked in conjunction with academic institutions to enlist members from their student body. Reaching out to educational institutions can give access to a large number of people from a variety of backgrounds and age ranges.
4. **Social Media Recruitment:** social media platforms to recruit participants aged 18-24. Advertise the study on popular social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok, targeting users within the specified age range.

## Operational definition of the variables

### Independent Variable - Social Media

**Operationalization:** Social media usage can be operationalized as the frequency and duration of engagement with social media platforms (e.g., hours spent per day on social media, number of social media accounts used).

**Measurement:** Participants were asked to self-report their social media usage habits through survey questions or digital tracking tools. Alternatively, researchers could collect objective data on participants' social media activity through APIs or digital tracking software.

### Dependent Variable - Gender Roles and Sexuality

**Operationalization:** Gender roles and sexuality can encompass a range of attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours related to gender identity, gender roles, sexual orientation, and sexual behaviours.

**Measurement:** Attitudes towards gender roles and sexuality were measured using validated scales or survey items assessing constructs such as gender egalitarianism, acceptance of diverse gender identities and sexual orientations, endorsement of traditional gender norms, attitudes towards LGBTQ+ rights, and support for gender equality initiatives. Participants could rate their agreement with statements or scenarios related to these constructs on Likert-type scales.

## Description of the tools employed.

### Social media engagement scale

A social media engagement scale is a measurement methodology that is commonly used to assess how involved and interactive individuals are with the content on social media platforms. This scale makes it easier to see how well an audience responds to material and how engaged they are with likes, comments, shares, and other interactions. A preliminary set of fifteen questions was answered. Every item was given a Likert scale score of five: 1 denotes "strongly disagree," 2 disagreement, 3 indecision, 4 agreement, and 5 strong agreement.

### Gender Roles Attitude Scale

A 5-point Likert scale was used as the instrument to gauge university students' opinions regarding gender roles. Five points were awarded for "completely agree," four points for "agree," three points for "undecided," two points for "disagree," and one point for "absolutely disagree" in the students' egalitarian attitude statements about gender roles. In contrast to the positive statements, the traditional attitude statements about gender roles were given a score of one point for "completely agree," two points for "agree," three points for "undecided," four points for "disagree," and five points for "absolutely disagree." The greatest possible score from the scale was 190 and the lowest was thirty-eight according to this scoring scale. ("Traditional gender roles attitude and romantic partner conflict among ...") The higher scores from the scale indicated that the students had more egalitarian attitudes towards gender roles and the lower scores showed that the students' attitudes were more traditional.

### Attitudes Toward Sexuality Scale

The ATSS consists of thirteen statements related to topics such as nudity, abortion, contraception, premarital sex, pornography, prostitution, sexual orientation, and sexually transmitted diseases. The 5-point Likert response format ranges from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. The original scale contained fourteen items, but one of the items contributed so little to the total score variance that it was dropped from the scale. Several of the terms used in the scale have dropped out of usage since its development. The exhibit indicates the newer terminology that researchers would wish to use, with the original terms indicated in brackets. ("Attitudes Toward Sexuality Scale - PSYCHOLOGICAL SCALES")



### Inclusive criterion

To ensure inclusivity in the research study on the role of social media in shaping attitudes towards gender roles and sexuality, the following criteria could be considered:

- **Demographic Diversity:** participants from diverse demographic backgrounds, including but not limited to age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, and geographical location. This ensures that the study captures a broad range of perspectives and experiences related to gender and sexuality.
- **Accessibility:** research materials, such as surveys, interviews, and recruitment advertisements, are accessible to individuals with disabilities. Provide alternative formats or accommodations as needed to facilitate participation from diverse populations.
- **Language and Cultural Sensitivity:** inclusive language and culturally sensitive approaches in research materials and interactions with participants. Consider cultural nuances and sensitivities related to gender and sexuality when designing survey questions, conducting interviews, and analysing data.
- **Privacy and Confidentiality:** Respected participants' privacy and confidentiality by implementing robust data protection measures. Obtain informed consent from participants before collecting any personal information and ensure that data storage and handling comply with ethical and legal standards.
- **Participant Comfort and Safety:** Created a supportive and safe research environment where participants feel comfortable sharing their perspectives and experiences. Provide opportunities for participants to opt out or withdraw from the study at any time without consequences.
- **Intersectionality:** Acknowledged and explored the intersectionality of gender, sexuality, and other social identities (e.g., race, ethnicity, disability) in the research design and analysis. Consider how multiple dimensions of identity intersect to shape individuals' experiences and attitudes towards gender roles and sexuality.

### Exclusive criterion

To ensure the exclusivity of the research study on the role of social media in shaping attitudes towards gender roles and sexuality, the following criteria could be considered:

- **Exclusion of Biased Content:** Excluded social media content that promotes hate speech, discrimination, or harmful stereotypes related to gender roles and sexuality from the analysis. Focus on content that contributes to constructive dialogue and understanding rather than perpetuating harmful narratives.
- **Exclusion of Biased Participants:** Excluded individuals who demonstrate extreme bias or prejudice towards certain gender identities or sexual orientations from the participant pool. Ensure that the research sample consists of individuals who are open-minded and willing to engage in respectful discussions about gender and sexuality.
- **Avoidance of Leading Questions:** Designed survey questions and interview prompts in a neutral and unbiased manner to avoid leading participants towards certain responses. Ensure that research instruments do not inadvertently reinforce existing biases or stereotypes related to gender roles and sexuality.

- **Balanced Representation:** Strived for balanced representation of diverse perspectives and experiences related to gender and sexuality in the research sample. Avoid overrepresentation of certain demographic groups or viewpoints that may skew the findings and limit the generalizability of the results.
- **Avoidance of Harmful Assumptions:** Refrained from making assumptions about individuals' gender identity or sexual orientation based on external characteristics or stereotypes. Respect participants' self-identified gender identities and sexual orientations and avoid imposing restrictive labels or categories.
- **Transparency and Accountability:** Maintained transparency in the research process and disclose any potential conflicts of interest or biases that may influence the study outcomes. Hold researchers accountable for upholding ethical standards and ensuring the integrity of the research findings.

### Procedure

The study explores the impact of social media on attitudes towards gender roles and sexuality. It begins with defining research objectives and hypotheses, followed by a literature review, selecting a research design, defining the target population, developing research instruments, and obtaining ethical approval. Data collection is executed, and the results are analyzed using statistical or qualitative techniques. The findings are then disseminated through academic publications and presentations, advancing our understanding of the complex relationship between social media and attitudes towards gender roles and sexuality.

### Statistical analysis

The study used descriptive statistics to calculate mean, median, standard deviation, and range for each variable, correlation analysis to examine relationships between variables. Correlation analysis and ANOVA tests are used to analyze age-related variables like social media usage, gender roles, and sexuality, and to identify significant differences across age groups.

## Chapter 4: RESULTS

### Table 1: Anova: Single Factor for gender roles and sexuality

- ✚ *Source of Variation:* This column lists the sources of variation being analyzed. In this case, it's between groups and within groups.
- ✚ *SS (Sum of Squares):* This column shows the sum of squares for each source of variation. It represents the total variability in the data attributable to each source.
- ✚ *df (Degrees of Freedom):* Degrees of freedom represent the number of values in the final calculation of a statistic that are free to vary.
- ✚ *MS (Mean Square):* Mean Square is the sum of squares divided by its respective degrees of freedom. It represents the average variability in the data for each source.
- ✚ *F (F-value):* The F-value is the ratio of two variances. It's calculated by dividing the mean square between groups by the mean square within groups.
- ✚ *P-value:* The p-value is the probability of observing a test statistic as extreme as the one calculated from the sample data, assuming that the null hypothesis is true.
- ✚ *F crit (Critical F-value):* The critical F-value is the value from the F-distribution table corresponding to a chosen significance level (usually 0.05) and the degrees of freedom for the groups and the error.

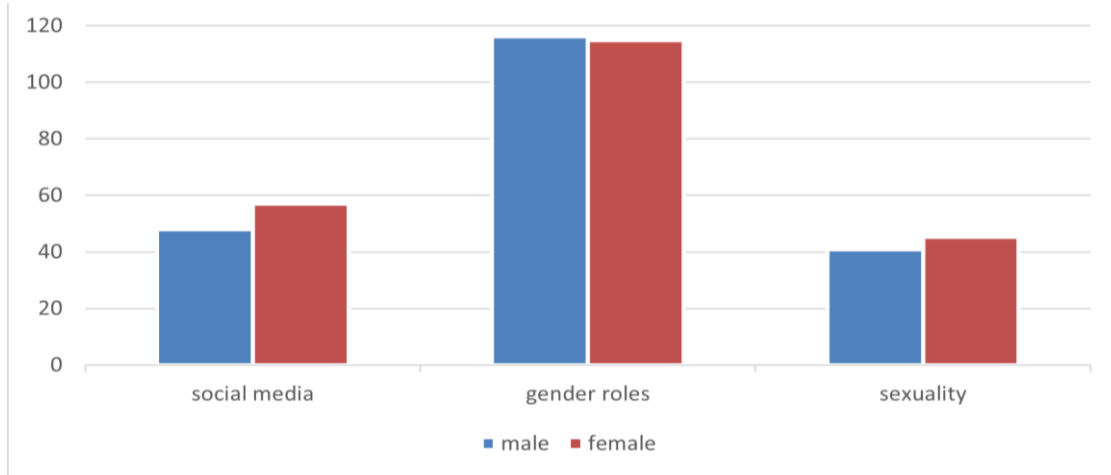
SUMMARY						
Groups	Count	Sum	Average	Variance		
gender roles of low social media consumption	30	3503	116.766667	59.2195402		
gender roles avg social media consumption	30	3520	117.333333	26.9195402		
gender roles high social media consumption	30	3454	115.133333	179.016092		
ANOVA						
Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	Fcrit
Between Groups	78.2888889	2	39.1444444	0.44288532	0.64362055	3.10129576
Within Groups	7689.5	87	88.3850575			
Total	7767.78889	89				

SUMMARY						
Groups	Count	Sum	Average	Variance		
sexuality low social media consumption	30	1239	41.3	73.5275862		
sexuality avg social media consumption	30	1276	42.5333333	89.8436782		
sexuality high social media consumption	30	1269	42.3	90.3551724		
ANOVA						
Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	Fcrit
Between Groups	25.7555556	2	12.8777778	0.15226373	0.85899012	3.10129576
Within Groups	7358.06667	87	84.5754789			
Total	7383.82222	89				



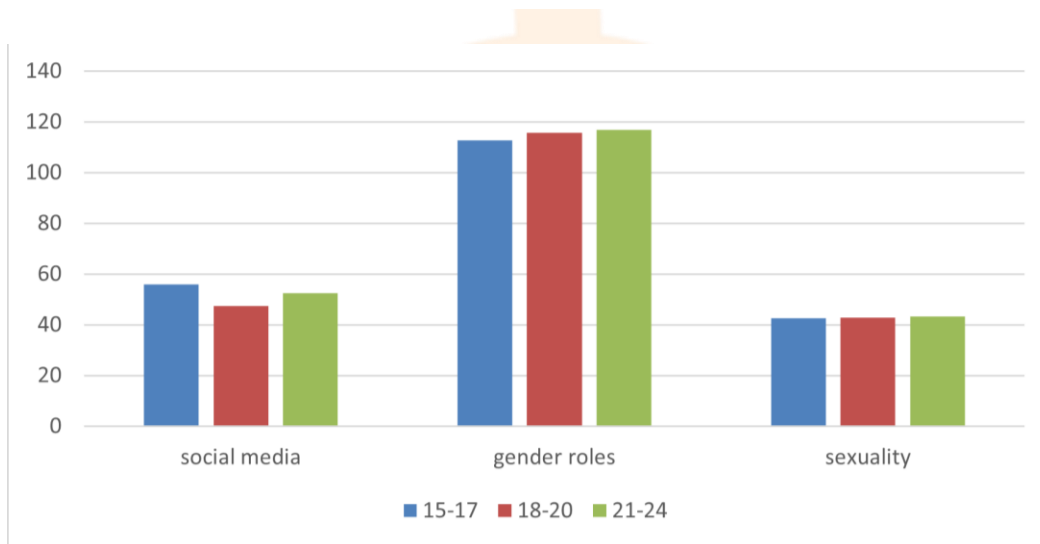
**Table 2: comparison on basis of gender**

Gender	Avg Score Social Media	Avg Score Gender Roles	Avg Score Sexuality
Male	47.9	116.14	40.86
Female	57.1	114.82	45.24



**Table 3: comparison on basis of age**

Age	Avg Score Social Media	Avg Score Gender Roles	Avg Score Sexuality
15-17	56	112.7	42.6
18-20	47.5	115.6	42.8
21-24	52.4	116.9	43.3



## Chapter 5: Discussion

In this study, the impact of social media was studied on attitude towards gender roles and sexuality. Social media platforms have become powerful agents in shaping contemporary attitudes towards gender roles and sexuality. Through their pervasive presence in everyday life, social media offer a platform for diverse representations and narratives surrounding gender and sexuality. On one hand, they challenge traditional norms and stereotypes by providing visibility to marginalized voices and identities, fostering inclusive communities, and empowering individuals to explore and express their gender identity or sexual orientation freely. On the other hand, social media can perpetuate narrow and idealized portrayals of masculinity and femininity, reinforce harmful stereotypes, and contribute to the normalization of gendered expectations. Influencer culture further amplifies these dynamics, as individuals project curated images and lifestyles that may either challenge or conform to societal norms. Additionally, social media can serve as both a source of support and a site of cyberbullying and harassment based on gender identity or sexual orientation, highlighting the need for platform policies to mitigate harm and promote safety. Moreover, algorithms governing content distribution on social media platforms can introduce biases that perpetuate existing inequalities, further complicating the landscape of gender and sexuality online. In essence, social media's influence on attitudes towards gender roles and sexuality is complex, reflecting the intersections of identity, power dynamics, and digital culture in shaping contemporary social norms and perceptions.

In *table 1*, the F-value is 0.4429, and the corresponding p-value is 0.6436. Since the p-value is greater than the typical significance level of 0.05, we fail to reject the null hypothesis. This suggests that there is no statistically significant difference between the means of the groups based on social media consumption levels concerning gender roles. The critical F-value at a significance level of 0.05 and degrees of freedom (2, 87) is 3.1013. Since the calculated F-value is less than the critical value, we again fail to reject the null hypothesis. For sexuality, The F-value is 0.1523, and the corresponding p-value is 0.8590. Since the p-value is greater than the typical significance level of 0.05, we fail to reject the null hypothesis. This suggests that there is no statistically significant difference between the means of the groups based on social media consumption levels concerning sexuality. The critical F-value at a significance level of 0.05 and degrees of freedom (2, 87) is 3.1013. Since the calculated F-value is less than the critical value, we again fail to reject the null hypothesis.

In *table 2*, On average, females (57.1) have a higher score for social media usage compared to males (47.9). This suggests that females may generally engage more actively with social media platforms compared to males. The average score for gender roles is higher among males (116.14) compared to females (114.82). This indicates that males may hold slightly more traditional or stereotypical views regarding gender roles compared to females. Females (45.24) have a higher average score for sexuality compared to males (40.86). This suggests that females may have a more open or positive attitude towards sexuality compared to males.

In summary, Females tend to have higher average scores for social media usage and sexuality, indicating potentially greater engagement with social media and more positive attitudes towards sexuality. Males, on the other hand, have slightly higher average scores for gender roles, suggesting a tendency towards more traditional or stereotypical views in this aspect.

In *table 3*, The average score for social media usage appears to peak in the 15-17 age group, with a score of 56, then decreases in the 18-20 age group (47.5), before increasing slightly again in the 21-24 age group (52.4). This pattern suggests that social media engagement might be highest among younger adolescents (15-17) and then slightly declines as individuals move into their late teens and early twenties before potentially stabilizing or slightly increasing in the early twenties. The average scores for gender roles are relatively consistent across the age groups, with a slight increase from 112.7 in the 15-17 age group to 116.9 in the 21-24 age group. This indicates that perceptions of gender roles may not change significantly across these age groups, remaining relatively stable or even slightly increasing as individuals transition from adolescence to early adulthood. The average scores for sexuality show minimal variation across the age groups, ranging from 42.6 to 43.3. This suggests that attitudes towards sexuality remain relatively consistent across the different age groups represented in the data.

## Chapter 6: Conclusion

In conclusion, social media exerts a profound influence on shaping attitudes towards gender roles and sexuality in contemporary society. Through its ubiquitous presence and diverse array of representations, social media platforms challenge traditional norms and stereotypes while offering visibility to marginalized voices and identities.

Social media is a crucial tool for young people, promoting social interaction, teamwork, and artistic expression. However, it can also lead to self-objectification, biased body images, and issues like anxiety and depression. Social media also plays a significant role in shaping attitudes towards gender roles and sexuality, as it facilitates the dissemination of information about these topics. It allows for the representation of diverse gender identities and sexual orientations, and can be used to challenge stereotypes and promote inclusivity.

This study examines the impact of social media on attitudes towards gender roles and sexuality. Social media platforms have become powerful agents in shaping contemporary attitudes towards these topics, providing visibility to marginalized voices and fostering inclusive communities. However, they can also perpetuate narrow portrayals of masculinity and femininity, reinforce harmful stereotypes, and contribute to the normalization of gendered expectations. Influencer culture further amplifies these dynamics, as individuals project curated images and lifestyles that may either challenge or conform to societal norms. Social media can serve as both a source of support and a site of cyberbullying and harassment based on gender identity or sexual orientation, highlighting the need for platform policies to mitigate harm and promote safety. Additionally, algorithms governing content distribution on social media platforms can introduce biases that perpetuate existing inequalities.

The study found that females tend to have higher average scores for social media usage and sexuality, indicating potentially greater engagement with social media and more positive attitudes towards sexuality. Males, on the other hand, have slightly higher average scores for gender roles, suggesting a tendency towards more traditional or stereotypical views.

The data shows that social media usage peaked in the 15-17 age group, then decreased in the 18-20 age group and slightly increased in the 21-24 age group. Gender roles and sexuality scores showed minimal variation across age groups, suggesting that perceptions of these aspects remain stable or slightly increasing as individuals transition from adolescence to early adulthood.

In summary, while social media may play a role in shaping attitudes towards gender roles and sexuality, its influence appears to be nuanced and moderated by factors such as gender and age. Future research could further explore the mechanisms through which social media interacts with individual characteristics and societal norms to influence attitudes towards gender and sexuality, contributing to a deeper understanding of the complex dynamics at play in digital environments.

### Implications

The results of the statistical analyses shown in Tables 1, 2, and 3 have a wide range of consequences for different stakeholders, such as social media platforms, academics, legislators, and educators.

**Research Implications:** Taking into account variables like gender, age, and cultural background, researchers should keep examining the complex interaction between social media use and attitudes regarding gender roles and sexuality. Subsequent research endeavours may utilise longitudinal designs to investigate the temporal progression of attitudes in reaction to social media exposure and additional contextual factors.

**2. Implications for Policy:** - Lawmakers ought to think about enacting rules and laws to encourage inclusive and varied depictions of gender and sexuality on social media.

- Efforts should be made to address cyberbullying and online harassment based on gender identity or sexual orientation, ensuring the safety and well-being of all users.

### 3. Educational Implications:

- Teachers can assist students in navigating and critically analysing the representations of gender and sexuality they come across on social media by including media literacy and critical thinking skills into their curricula.

- Diverse gender identities and sexual orientations should be accepted and celebrated through school-based programmes and activities that foster diversity and inclusivity.

**4. Platform Design Implications:** - To reduce biases and guarantee fair coverage of different viewpoints, social media companies should place a high priority on algorithmic fairness and transparency.

- It is important to incorporate design elements that encourage constructive relationships and create safe spaces for people who are experimenting with their gender identity or sexual orientation.

### 5. Community and Advocacy Implications:

- Advocacy organisations and community groups have the ability to utilise social media as a means of promoting gender equality and LGBTQ+ rights, as well as creating awareness of these issues. Social media community organising and collective action can elevate the voices of the marginalised and spur social change initiatives.

### Limitation

While social media undoubtedly influences attitudes towards gender roles and sexuality, it's important to acknowledge several limitations in understanding this complex relationship:

- 1. Sample Bias:** A lot of research use convenience sample techniques, which might not fairly reflect the range of people's experiences with and opinions about gender and sexuality on social media. This may restrict the findings' ability to be applied to larger populations.
- 2. Self-Report Bias:** Self-report measures, which are prone to biases like social desirability bias or recollection bias, are frequently used in research. Participants might give answers that they feel are appropriate in social situations, or they might not remember or report their attitudes or usage of social media in an authentic manner.
- 3. Cross-Sectional Design:** Cross-sectional designs, which offer an overview of attitudes and behaviours at a certain point in time, are used in a large portion of the research that is now available. To comprehend how social media affects perceptions of gender roles and sexuality across time, longitudinal research is required.

4. **Complexity of Social Media Use:** Using social media involves a variety of platforms, interactions, and content kinds. It is a dynamic and diverse activity. Research frequently lumps social media use into generalised categories, which may miss the subtle ways in which people interact with and are impacted by social media.
5. **Algorithmic Bias:** Users may confront a lack of diversity and representation in the gender and sexuality-related content they come across because of social media platforms' algorithms prioritising particular kinds of information or amplifying preexisting biases.

### Suggestions for future research

Future research in the domain of social media's impact on attitudes towards gender roles and sexuality could explore several avenues to deepen our understanding and address existing gaps. Here are some suggestions:

1. **Longitudinal research:** Monitor attitudes about gender roles and sexuality over time as a result of social media exposure by conducting longitudinal research. This would shed light on the trajectory and long-term impacts of social media use on attitudes.
2. **Cross-Cultural Comparisons:** Examine ideas on gender roles and sexuality on social media in various cultural contexts to see how opinions and speech are shaped by cultural norms and values. This can entail looking at how social media simultaneously supports and undermines cultural norms and prejudices.
3. **Intersectionality:** Examine how social media affects perceptions of gender and sexuality through intersectional dynamics. Examine the ways in which gender, sexuality, and other characteristics interact with race, ethnicity, financial status, and disability to influence people's experiences and views on social media.
4. **Content Analysis:** Investigate how gender roles and sexuality are portrayed in various kinds of content (e.g., text, videos, and photographs) by conducting in-depth content studies of social media platforms. This would provide light on the stereotypes, popular narratives, and counter-narratives that exist in online environments.
5. **Algorithmic Bias and Platform Design** The present study aims to examine the influence of algorithms and platform design on the visibility and circulation of content that pertains to gender roles and sexuality. Examine the ways in which existing biases and inequalities in online discourse may be amplified or lessened by algorithmic biases.
6. **Impact on Behaviour and Well-being:** Increase the amount of study done to investigate the behavioural and psychological effects of social media exposure to gender-related content. Examine how social media views on gender roles and sexuality affect offline behaviours and mental health consequences.



**7. Educational Interventions:** Provide and assess educational initiatives that encourage positive attitudes towards gender diversity and sexual health as well as critical media literacy among social media users. Evaluate how well interventions are working to lessen the harmful impacts of harmful content and promoting inclusive online environments.

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