

ONLINE SEXISM IN THE GERMAN-SPEAKING TWITTER COMMUNITY

Jacqueline Fong Tze Yen, Farhana Muslim Mohd Jalil*, and Noritah Omar

Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication, Universiti Putra Malaysia, Malaysia

ABSTRACT

***Corresponding author:**

Farhana Muslim Mohd Jalil
fafahana@upm.edu.my

Received: 1 July 2024

Revised: 11 October 2024

Accepted: 22 October 2024

Published: 20 December 2024

Citation:

Yen, J. F. T., Jalil, F. M. M., &
Omar, N. (2024). Online sexism
in the German-speaking Twitter
community. *Humanities, Arts and
Social Sciences Studies*, 24(3),
781–795.

The impact of movements that gain momentum worldwide by virtue of hashtags, such as #MeToo, varies across countries owing to linguistic and cultural differences, among others. Nevertheless, online sexism remains a pervasive issue, particularly on social media platforms. This study aimed to examine the prevalence of online sexism in the German-speaking Twitter community based on the hashtag #sexismus from 2020 to 2022 and categorize and analyze the various forms of online sexism in regard to #sexismus during the same period. Employing a mixed-method approach, this study collected and analyzed 8,242 relevant tweets of #sexismus, utilizing quantitative analysis to track tweet volume trends and qualitative thematic analysis to categorize the content into seven key themes: criticism on sexism, calls for changes and actions, personal experiences of sexism and sexual harassment, LGBTQ+, movements related, media representation, and no specification possible. Key findings reveal fluctuations in tweet volume within the criticism on sexism frame, with peaks in early 2022, and highlight that the most prevalent themes included sexism in the media (28% of tweets), sexism at work (19%), and patriarchy (15%). The results suggest that while online activism against sexism exists in the German-speaking community, audience engagement varies over time and across topics. This underscores the need for dedicated efforts to address sexism in various contexts, including media, workplaces, and broader societal structures.

Keywords: German-speaking Twitter community; online sexism; #sexismus; social media

1. INTRODUCTION

The #MeToo movement, began in 2006 with Tarana Burke and gained global prominence in 2017 through Alyssa Milano's viral hashtag, focusing on raising awareness about sexual harassment and assault (Santiago & Criss, 2017). It has been instrumental in fostering a culture of empathy and solidarity among survivors, encouraging individuals to share their experiences and highlighting the pervasive nature of sexual violence across various communities. Five years after the movement's widespread emergence, MeToo International (<https://metoomvmt.org/>) launched a social and political framework in October 2022. This framework seeks to document and disseminate a theory of change that elucidates the interconnectedness between the survivor justice movement and the dismantling of other systems of harm caused by sexual violence (Brown, 2022). Activists have noted remarkable improvements, particularly in workplace accountability for perpetrators and increased support for victims (Brown, 2022; Corbett, 2022).

Online feminism has become deeply intertwined with social media, as evidenced by the global spread of #MeToo and the adoption of various localized hashtags, such as #BalanceTonPorc (which means "expose your pig") in France, #YoTambien (which means "me too") in Spain, #QuellaVolteChe (which translates as "that time when") in Italy, #米兔 (pronounced "mi tu", a homophone for "me too" in Mandarin) in China, and

#WithYou in Korea and Japan (Wei, 2020; Lamensch, 2021; Nielsen, 2018; Tarnopolsky & Etehad, 2018). Despite the astounding global impact of the #MeToo movement, the response of the German-speaking community to it has been rather subdued, owing to cultural factors and the prevalence of German-language hashtags (Kirschbaum, 2018; Wolcke, 2020; d'Europe & Vigo, 2018). The connotations and repercussions differ across languages, cultures and contexts, underscoring the importance of understanding these variations (Gursel & Koc, 2020).

The concept of “hashtag feminism” captures the use of hashtags on various social media platforms, particularly on Twitter, as a means of discussing feminist concerns and advocating feminist activism (Linabary et al., 2020). This digital activism allows individuals to share personal experiences, challenge dominant narratives, and critically analyze cultural figures and institutions (Linabary et al., 2020). Hashtag feminism is regarded as a potent tool for feminist praxis, enabling the dissemination of information and active engagement in both virtual and physical realms (Jackson, 2018). The rise of this digital activism emphasizes the transformative potential of online platforms in fostering collective awareness and community building (Foster et al., 2021).

However, the effectiveness of hashtag feminism is not without its limitations. Linguistic and cultural barriers tend to hinder the reach and inclusivity of these movements (Gramling & Ploschnitzki, 2020; Wegener et al., 2020; Istiadah & Furaida, 2021; Mukhtar, 2023). Language-specific hashtags may limit audience engagement, reducing the impact of campaigns and excluding non-speakers (Scott, 2018; Mahfouz, 2020). Furthermore, research on digital media users and hashtags on platforms such as Facebook suggests language-specific hashtags may not be fully understood or be misinterpreted by the target audience, further delimiting their effectiveness (Tariq et al., 2020). Consequently, hashtags specific to a particular language may inadvertently exclude non-speakers of that language, limiting the inclusivity of the campaign.

Critics have voiced concerns about the constraints associated with online feminist movements, which generally rely on hashtags to address feminist issues and advance activism (Linabary et al., 2020; Kettrey et al., 2021). Some have argued that online discourses often present narrow representations of women, reinforcing the long-standing gender norms (Chiluwa, 2018). In contrast, Eckert (2018) adopted a critical perspective on online feminism in the German-speaking community, suggesting while Internet platforms have facilitated both feminist debate and activity, they have also contributed to the fragmentation and depoliticization of the feminist movement.

This study focuses on the frames of online feminism and manifestations of sexism within the German-speaking community, particularly through the lens of the hashtag *#sexismus*. It presents a comprehensive analysis of online sexist behavior on Twitter. However, a significant research gap exists regarding the impact of the #MeToo movement in the German-speaking Twitter community, particularly concerning the enduring frames associated with the hashtag *#sexismus*. While acknowledging the global impact of #MeToo, this study does not explicitly address its influence on the German-speaking Twitter community. Understanding this gap is crucial, as it limits insights into how the #MeToo movement has shaped discussions on sexism and feminism within the German context, especially given the movement's relatively lower audience engagement and recognition in the German-speaking community owing to language barriers.

2. TWITTER AS A PLATFORM FOR SEXISM DISCOURSE

Sexism is a deeply ingrained social problem that has existed for centuries and is rooted in patriarchal power structures and gender inequality (Thiedeke, 2020; Gill, 2016; Dreßing et al., 2014; Chen et al., 2020; Yue et al., 2019). Women have historically been excluded from the public sphere and political debates. This assertion is corroborated by various scholarly works that explore the historical and structural dimensions of sexism. For instance, Milazzo and Goldstein (2019) argued that traditional patriarchal social structure is at the core of current gender inequalities, where power is unequally distributed, with men traditionally holding authority over women. This systematic imbalance not only perpetuates gender inequality but also reinforces the social acceptance of men's authority over women, as highlighted by Dzinamarira et al. (2024), who discussed how these unequal gender-power relationships contribute to various forms of inequity and violence.

The phenomenon of online sexism has garnered attention over the years. The anonymity and reach of social media platforms, such as Twitter, facilitate the proliferation of such behaviors, often resulting in a hostile environment for women and marginalized groups (Stabile et al., 2021). On Twitter, sexism often emerges through the perpetuation of harmful stereotypes, derogatory language, and the targeting of individuals based on gender (Thiedeke, 2020). It is worth noting that Twitter, per se, is not the cause of sexism but rather the medium through which it can be expressed and propagated (Thiedeke, 2020). This platform essentially reflects the societal attitudes and biases that exist offline. Digital platforms provide forums for feminist activism and the discussion of marginalized topics (Thiedeke, 2020). Twitter in particular has been identified as an

independent discursive forum that facilitates the development of critical positions and the mobilization of larger audiences (Thiedeke, 2020).

Conversely, Mendes et al. (2018) argues that Twitter, as a digital platform, has provided an avenue for women to participate in feminist discourse, transcending the barriers of accessibility and privilege. Understanding the nuances of ambivalent sexism is crucial for developing effective interventions and educational initiatives aimed at promoting gender equality (Mahfouz, 2020). Furthermore, the algorithms that govern visibility can inadvertently perpetuate sexist narratives by amplifying harmful content while suppressing voices advocating for gender equality (Thiedeke, 2020). This underscores the importance of critically examining the underlying logics and processes of social media content moderation through a gendered lens. Gill (2016) highlighted the importance of the critical notion of post-feminism in understanding feminist discourse on Twitter. This suggests that Twitter, as a platform for feminist discourse, shapes how feminism is discussed and understood. Furthermore, Sloan et al.'s (2015) examination of the demographic characteristics of Twitter users provided insights into the diversity and reach of feminist discourse on the platform.

Studying online sexism in the German-speaking community is important because of its pervasive nature and potential negative consequences. Online platforms serve as breeding grounds for sexist attitudes and behaviors, perpetuating gender inequalities (Becker & Wright, 2011). With the use of Twitter by public figures and activists, this visibility exposes women to increased risk of online harassment, as evidenced by the experiences of female journalists who report facing significant levels of abuse on the platform (Rego, 2018). The impact of online sexism on individuals can be profound, leading to psychological distress and a sense of alienation from public discourse (Kempton & Connolly-Ahern, 2022). A study examining online harassment in Germany found that women are disproportionately targeted by sexist and misogynist abuse, which can have detrimental effects on their well-being (Dreßing et al., 2014). The impact of online sexism extends beyond the digital realm, influencing offline behaviors and attitudes (Chen et al., 2020).

Tracing the roots of sexism on Twitter requires a comprehensive examination of societal norms, power dynamics and cultural attitudes toward gender. By addressing the root causes of sexism and promoting gender equality online, this study aimed to create a more inclusive and respectful digital environment for all individuals. Despite previous studies that have described the common topics found in the realm of online feminism and public sentiment about the movement, offered case studies of online feminism in various countries, focused on survivors of sexual harassment and/or assault' stories, and conducted surveys to identify factors affecting individuals' involvement in the movement, there remains a significant gap in the understanding of how online feminist activism combats sexism and gender-based violence in this modern era.

3. METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES

3.1 Research design

This study examined the issues of online sexism in German-speaking online forums on Twitter by conducting quantitative and qualitative analyzes of tweets on sexism from 2020 to 2022. The use of a mixed-methods methodology allowed for an in-depth understanding of the phenomena under investigation. In addition, this study strove to achieve the following research objectives: 1) to quantify the prevalence of online sexism in the German-speaking Twitter community based on the hashtag *#sexismus* (which can be translated as *#sexism* in English) from 2020 to 2022 and 2) to categorize and analyze the different forms of online sexism as the hashtag *#sexismus* progressed from 2020 to 2022.

To investigate and fulfill the research objectives, this study addressed the following questions:

1. What is the proportion of tweets on online sexism in German-speaking Twitter community from 2020 to 2022?
2. What are the frames that appear consistently following the criticism of *#sexismus* hashtag from 2020 to 2022?

There are several limitations concerning the collection of sexist tweet data. The data may provide valuable insights into participants' experiences and perceptions, but relying solely on self-reported data may be subject to biases, such as social desirability bias or the underreporting of sensitive experiences (Symons et al., 2017; Southern & Harmer, 2021). Second, mixed-methods research often involves analyzing a large number of tweets, as seen in Southern and Harmer (2021) and Felmlee et al. (2020). Although this approach enables a broader understanding of the phenomenon, it can be time-consuming and resource-intensive to collect, process, and analyze such large amounts of data. Therefore, the study only includes data from three years from when the COVID-19 pandemic hit the German-speaking community until the post-pandemic year.

3.2 Data collection procedure

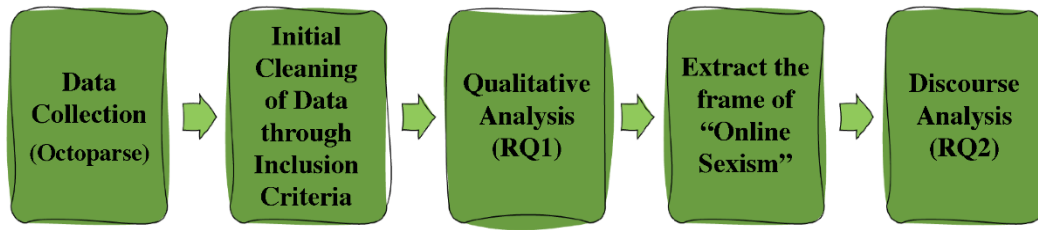


Figure 1: Extraction of the frame “Online Sexism”

The data collection process (Figure 1) involved the use of an online scraping platform called Octoparse, which extracted and filtered tweets based on the hashtag #sexismus. With the help of this tool, we successfully amassed a significant number of data about the subject of sexism on the social media platform Twitter. A total of 22,385 tweets were harvested, with a particular emphasis on content aligning with the keyword #sexismus from 2020 to 2022. The collected tweets were cleaned and processed to remove duplicates, irrelevant content (especially content related to racism and politics), and any identifiable user information to ensure data privacy and anonymity.

While the quantity of data may have initially appeared modest compared to the vast amount of online content encompassing the online feminist movement, it was deemed imperative to consider the study’s temporal scope, spanning an exhaustive three-year period from 2020 to 2022. A quantitative analysis was performed to answer the first research question using a manual review process. Descriptive statistics were then used to summarize and present the quantitative data. The distribution of tweets over time according to context was calculated. This quantitative analysis provided an overview of the patterns of tweets related to sexism during the timeframe under consideration.

Thematic analysis is a qualitative component that was employed to complement the quantitative findings by examining the underlying themes of online sexism in the collected tweets. The tweets were systematically and rigorously examined as part of the thematic analysis. First, the tweets were read and re-read to familiarize the researchers with the content. The inductive approach in this study involved deriving categories directly from the data. This method allowed for a nuanced understanding of the phenomena being studied. The thematic analysis involved a thorough reading of the tweets to familiarize the researchers with the content, leading to the generation of the initial capture of key themes and concepts present in the tweets.

Following rigorous data cleaning, the researchers identified and isolated a selected subset of 8,242 tweets that were deemed pertinent for further analysis. The data cleaning process was performed to exclude any repetitive, vague, or unclear tweets. Thereafter, the selected data were refined and organized into broader themes and subthemes through an interactive process of data synthesis.

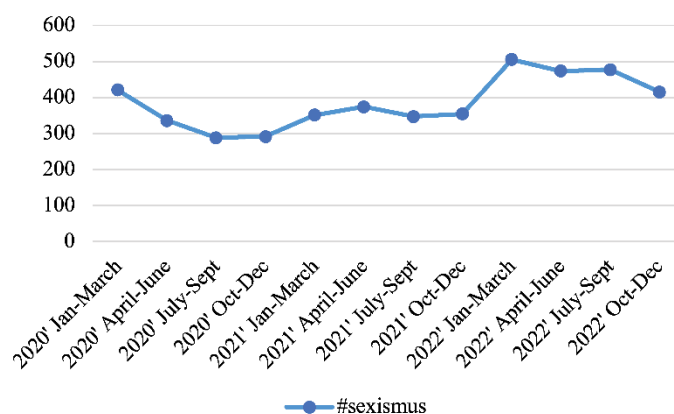


Figure 2: Number of tweets related to #sexismus over time

4. RESULTS

A total of 8,242 tweets were captured for data analysis. Over the three years (January 2020 to December 2022), January to March 2022 yielded the highest number of tweets ($n = 505$) related to the online discussion of sexism on Twitter around the *#sexismus* hashtag.

4.1 Twitter trends and engagement related to *#sexismus*

Table 1: Trends and engagement related to *#sexismus* tweets

Theme	Description	Sample tweets	Translated tweets
Criticism on sexism ($n = 3390$)	This frame centers on the critical examination and analysis of sexist attitudes, behaviors, and structures within the society.	Männer sind mehr von Gewalt betroffen als Frauen. Deutschland will jedoch vor allem Frauen vor Gewalt schützen und diese Gewalt bekämpfen. <i>#Sexismus #GenderEmpathyGap</i> Beim Thema <i>#Sexismus</i> sollten wir die Klappe halten & uns schämen. Ich belasse es mal beim Schämen. Das Ergebnis einer frauenverachtenden Äußerung in <i>#TichysEinblick</i> ist, daß Dorothee Bär eine Stiftung verlässt, der <i>#Tichy</i> vorsitzt. Warum muß Tichy nicht gehen? <i>#TeamChebli</i>	Men are more affected by violence than women. Above all, however, Germany wants to protect women from violence and combat this violence. <i>#Sexism #GenderEmpathyGap</i> When it comes to <i>#sexism</i> , we should shut up and be ashamed. I'll leave it at shame. The result of a misogynistic statement in <i>#TichysEinblick</i> is that Dorothee Bär is leaving a foundation that <i>#Tichy</i> chairs. Why doesn't Tichy have to go? <i>#TeamChebli</i>
Calls for changes and actions ($n = 2088$)	This frame focuses on mobilizing individuals and communities to take action against sexism.	<i>#Gleichstellung</i> und <i>#Antidiskriminierung</i> auf allen Ebenen: Ein starkes Gleichstellungspolitisches Rahmenprogramm ist zwar notwendig, aber nicht ausreichend. Gleichstellung ist ein Querschnittsthema und muss in allen gesellschaftlichen Bereichen durchgesetzt werden! <i>#sexismus</i> KONSENS IST SEXY, aber noch viel mehr. Konsens sollte die Grundlage aller menschlichen Beziehungen sein! Wir schwelgen immer noch in Erinnerungen und wollten ein paar davon mit euch teilen. Danke an Karin Moser für die Fotos! <i>#Slutwalk #sexismus #ConsentIsSexy</i>	<i>#Equality</i> and <i>#anti-discrimination</i> at all levels: A strong equality policy framework program is necessary but not sufficient. Equality is a cross-cutting issue and must be enforced in all areas of society! <i>#sexism</i> CONSENT IS SEXY, but so much more. Consent should be the basis of all human relationships! We're still reminiscing and wanted to share a few of them with you. Thanks to Karin Moser for the photos! <i>#Slutwalk #Sexism #ConsentIsSexy</i>
Personal experience of online sexism or sexual harassment ($n = 1034$)	This frame focuses on victims of sexual harassment and assault sharing their experiences.	... mich anzuschreien und sagt mir, ich sollte doch ins Bordell gehen, weil Frauen ja sowieso nur als Prostituierte taugen. Ich war so aufgebracht, dass ich falsch abgebogen bin und einmal um den Block fahren musste. <i>#Sexismus #Berlin #Straßenverkehr #Auto</i> (2/3) Ich bin gerade geschockt 1) über die 15jährigen Jungs, die in der S-Bahn neben mir saßen und ihre Klassenkameradinnen aufs übelste sexistisch beleidigt haben und 2) über mich, weil ich nicht direkt reagiert habe und zu lange sprachlos war. <i>#sexismus #frauenfeindlich</i>	...yelling at me and telling me I should go to the brothel because women are only good as prostitutes anyway. I was so upset that I took a wrong turn and had to drive around the block. <i>#sexism #Berlin #road traffic #car</i> (2/3) I'm just shocked 1) about the 15-year-old boys who sat next to me on the S-Bahn and insulted their classmates in the worst sexist way and 2) about me because I didn't react directly and was speechless for too long. <i>#sexism #misogynist</i>
LGBTQ+ ($n = 905$)	This frame provides insights into the LGBTQ+ society.	<i>#Sexarbeit</i> ist so bunt wie die komplette die <i>#LGBT-Community</i> . Mit Ihrem <i>#Sexismus</i> mir <i>#Sexismus</i> zu unterstellen ist absurd. Mir <i>#Freiertum</i> zu unterstellen ist genauso unhaltbar. <i>#BrunnenVergiften</i> statt Argumente. Feministen: Wir müssen Frauen gleichstellen in Job-Position und Bezahlung. Auch Feministen: Transfrauen machen den Frauensport kaputt, weil sie ganz klar im Vorteil gegenüber echten Frauen sind. Das gehört verboten. <i>#doppelstandards #parasitismus #feminismus #sexismus #LGBTQ</i>	<i>#Sex work</i> is as colorful as the entire <i>#LGBT community</i> . To accuse me of <i>#sexism</i> with your <i>#sexism</i> is absurd. To accuse me of <i>#freedom</i> is just as untenable. <i>#Poisoning wells</i> instead of arguments. Feminists: We must equalize women in job positions and pay. Feminists too: Trans women are destroying women's sports because they have a clear advantage over real women. That should be forbidden. <i>#double standards #parasitism #feminism #sexism #LGBTQ</i>

Table 1: Trends and engagement related to #sexismus tweets (continued)

Theme	Description	Sample tweets	Translated tweets
Movements related (n = 858)	This frame views tweets that are directly related to a specific movement.	<p>29.2.2020 @tsghoffenheim - @FCBayern: Sexistisches Spruchband im Münchener Gästeblock. #ultras #ultrapeinlich #fcb #bayern #münchen #feminismus #sexismus</p> <p>Wenn sich #Patriarchat, #Antifeminismus und #Sexismus wechselseitig auf die Schultern klopfen – wird sich an den Zahlen der Statistiken rein gar nichts ändern. Unser Statement zum heutigen #InternationalerTagGegenGewaltAnFrauen https://asam.noblogs.org/post/2020/11/25/gruswort_tag-gegen-gewalt-an-frauen/...</p>	<p>29.2.2020 @tsghoffenheim - @FC Bayern: Sexist banner in the Munich guest block. #ultras #ultrapeinlich #fcb #bayern #münchen #feminismus #sexism</p> <p>If #patriarchy, #antifeminism, and #sexism pat each other on the back – nothing will change in the statistics. Our statement on today's #InternationalDayOnViolenceAgainstWomen https://asam.noblogs.org/post/2020/11/25/greetingword_tag-on-violence-against-women/...</p>
Media representation (n = 682)	This frame involves various forms of media, including books, podcasts, and videos, representing feminist ideas and activism.	<p>#Leseempfehlung für alle, die davon ausgehen, #Sexismus und #sexuellerMissbrauch beeinflusse nur das Leben weiblicher Personen negativ: das Taschenbuch #KleineHeldeninNot, v.a. in seiner Erstauflage von 1990 aufschlussreich (als solches im Antiquariat erhältlich).</p> <p>Wie bekommt man am besten Karriere & Kinder unter einen Hut – indem man ein Mann ist? Was sagen @Jazzy_Gabert, @PLambertBerlin und @DanielDonskoy? @LauraKarasek_ – #ZartAmLimit, heute zum Thema #Sexismus, ist JETZT ONLINE http://kurz.zdf.de/Pvi/#fckdckpcs</p>	<p>#Recommended reading for everyone who assumes that #sexism and #sexualabuse only harm the lives of female people: the paperback #KleineHeldeninNot, particularly revealing in its first edition from 1990 (available as such in antiquarian shops).</p> <p>What is the best way to balance a career and kids – by being a man? What to say @Jazzy_Gabert, @PLambertBerlin and @DanielDonskoy? @LauraKarasek_ – #ZartAmLimit, today on the topic of #sexism, is NOW ONLINE http://kurz.zdf.de/Pvi/#fckdckpcs</p>
No specification possible (n = 118)	This frame does not provide any specific information.	<p>#frau #freiheit #leben #rechte #iran #iranprotests #politmenu #politikjournalismus #politics #demonstration #feminism #feminismus #sexismus #bildung #berlin #frauenrechte #gleichberechtigung #gleichheit #podcast #podcastdeutsch #podcaster #Gendergaga #cdubpt22 @_FriedrichMerz</p>	<p>#woman #freedom #life #rights #iran #iranprotests #politmenu #political journalism #politics #demonstration #feminism #feminismus #sexism #education #berlin #women's rights #equal rights #equality #podcast #podcastdeutsch #podcaster #Gendergaga #cdubpt22 @_FriedrichMerz</p>

The number of tweets that were posted using the hashtag #sexismus are shown in Table 1, which is based on Figure 2. Table 1 and Figure 2 show trends and engagement related to #sexismus tweets. An examination of the data revealed considerable oscillations within each category throughout the research period, which suggests the multidimensional character of conversations about sexism. Recent studies have suggested that public involvement in sexism-related themes is affected by a wide variety of variables, including events, social movements, media coverage, and individual reporting patterns (Smith et al., 2021; Johnson & Brown, 2022).

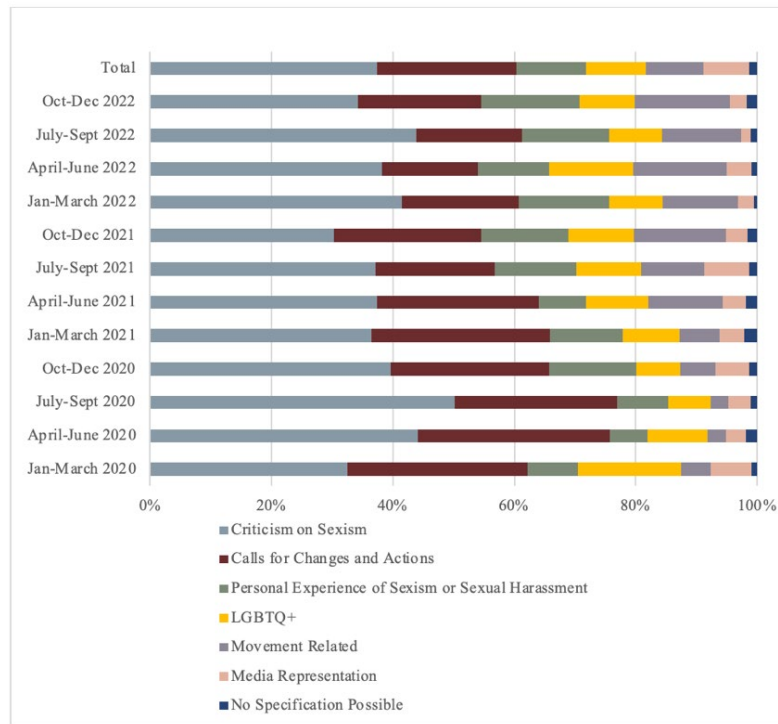


Figure 3: Trends and engagement related to #sexismus tweets

As stated earlier, this study aimed to analyze tweets using the hashtag #sexismus from January 2020 to December 2022. Our analysis identified seven distinct categories of discussion: criticism of sexism, calls for changes and actions, personal experience of sexism or sexual harassment, LGBTQ+ issue, movements related to sexism, media representation, and tweets that could not be specifically categorized. These categories are presented in Table 1 and Figure 3, ordered by the total number of tweets in each category over the study period.

The first category, criticism of sexism, portrays fluctuations, indicating varying levels of engagement and public discourse on the topic. Similar to personal experiences of sexism, the data did not reveal a clear upward or downward trend. However, the peaks in certain quarters, especially the third quarter of 2020, suggest moments of heightened criticism and public condemnation of sexism. As shown in *Berliner Zeitung* posted on October 23, 2020, it is mainly from Germany's then-Finance Minister Christian Lindner, who faced backlash after making controversial comments about women's careers and family life. His remarks sparked widespread debate and criticism, leading to increased public awareness of gender inequality and sexism in politics. Therefore, social media indeed plays a role in amplifying voices and promoting public awareness and condemnation of sexist attitudes and behaviors (Chen et al., 2020; Miller et al., 2023).

The category of calls for changes and actions reflects the influence of broader social movements on discussions of sexism. Fluctuations within this category may coincide with moments of increased activism and collective efforts to challenge existing norms and structures, including abortion rights, gender equality rights, and fighting sexual harassment in the workplace. Peaks were identified in certain quarters, including the first and second quarters of 2022, when the COVID-19 pandemic had just begun. It has been shown that despite being quarantined at home during the pandemic, feminists brought their movements online as they gathered and continued fighting for women's rights. The data highlight the interconnectedness of sexism with other social justice movements, despite the inability of movement members to gather in person. The pandemic has been characterized by a "she-cession," where women, particularly those in sectors such as hospitality, retail, and care, faced significant job losses and economic instability (Buchinger & Schmitt, 2021; Klein & Müller, 2022). This situation was compounded by traditional gender roles that placed the burden of unpaid domestic work on women, further entrenching economic disparities (Buchinger & Schmitt, 2021; Klein & Müller, 2022).

Regarding the third highest category of personal experiences of sexism or sexual harassment (Figure 3), the data exhibited fluctuations throughout the study period without any obvious increasing or decreasing trends. This aligns with recent research that highlights the underreporting of incidents and the impact of personal and contextual factors on disclosure (Morgan, 2020), while the fourth quarter of 2022 recorded the highest number of incidents (124) and the second quarter of 2021 had the lowest count (54).

However, the category LGBTQ+ highlights LGBTQ+ issues, which refers to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transexual, and queer communities, indicating the intersectionality of sexism and discrimination against the LGBTQ+ community. Compared to the previous categories, the LGBTQ+ frame showed a rather consistent trend. The fourth quarter of 2022 reported the highest number (106), whereas the second quarter of 2020 reported the lowest number (73). Despite legal advancements, such as the legalization of same-sex marriage in 2017 and recent reforms allowing for easier legal gender changes, challenges persist. This rise in violence and discrimination underscores the ongoing societal tensions surrounding LGBTQ+ rights in the German-speaking community, particularly against transgender and non-binary individuals who are disproportionately affected by hate crimes and discrimination. Reports indicate a rise in verbal and physical attacks against LGBTQ+ individuals, with estimates suggesting that up to 90% of such incidents go unreported (Camino Group, 2022).

The category of movements related throughout the study period reflected the dynamic nature of social activism and its impact on discussions of sexism. Significant peaks, (118) and (102), were identified in the first and second quarters of 2022, coinciding with the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite physical distancing measures, feminist movements demonstrated resilience by transitioning their activism to online platforms (Talbot & Pownall, 2022). This shift allowed for continued engagement and advocacy for women's rights, even when in-person gatherings were not possible or restricted.

Media representation, the sixth category, focuses on gender-related matters portrayed in various forms such as articles, essays, e-books, podcasts, and videos. This frame has one of the lowest numbers of tweets in total compared with the other frames, comprising only 4.85% of the total tweets included in the study. These fluctuations may suggest that while the topic is critical, it may not be receiving the attention it deserves in public discourse. For instance, studies have found that despite an increase in women's participation in journalism and media, their representation in coverage remains disproportionately low (Holtzman & Sharpe, 2023; Santoniccolo et al., 2023). This reflects ongoing societal challenges regarding gender equality and the need for more inclusive narratives (Holtzman & Sharpe, 2023).

The no-specification-possible framework acknowledges the limitations and complexities of categorizing and capturing nuanced experiences related to sexism. It highlights instances in which the available data do not provide specific information or fall outside the predefined categories. This framework underscores the need for further research and exploration to better understand and address these unclassified instances and ensure a more comprehensive understanding of sexism and its various manifestations.

In conclusion, the data reveal the multifaceted and complex nature of sexism and its various manifestations in contemporary society. While personal experiences of sexism and sexual harassment show no clear trend, they emphasize the persistent challenges in reporting and addressing such incidents. The fluctuations in criticism of sexism highlight the power of specific events and social media in driving public discourse and awareness. Movements related to sexism demonstrate the resilience and adaptability of activism, particularly in the face of external challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic, which intensified existing inequalities and spurred online mobilization. The consistent trends in LGBTQ+ issues reflect ongoing societal tensions and the intersectionality of discrimination, emphasizing the need for sustained advocacy and legal reforms. Media representation remains an area of concern, with gender-related matters not receiving the attention they deserve, further perpetuating gender inequalities. Finally, the no-specification-possible framework underlines the need for more comprehensive research to capture the full spectrum of sexism's impact. Together, these insights call for continued vigilance, robust public engagement, and targeted policy interventions to address the entrenched structures that perpetuate sexism and inequality.

4.2 The frames of criticism on sexism based on #sexismus

To align with the second research question, the data from "criticism on sexism" (January 2020 to December 2022) were specially extracted, with a total of 3,390 tweets related to the progression of sexism on Twitter, specifically focusing the #sexismus hashtag.

Table 2: Frames of criticism on sexism based on #sexismus

Theme	Description	Sample tweets	Translated tweets
Sexism in the media (n = 952)	This frame refers to the presence of sexist attitudes, stereotypes, and biased portrayals of women in various forms of media, especially in the advertising industry.	Junge Mädchen und Frauen die auf Instagram Werbung für ein altbackenes und traditionelles „Rollenverständnis“ des weiblichen Daseins machen: Traditionelles Rollenverständnis, nein Danke #sexismus	Young girls and women who advertise on Instagram for a stale and traditional "role understanding" of female existence: The traditional understanding of roles, no thanks #sexism

Table 2: Frames of criticism on sexism based on #sexismus (continued)

Theme	Description	Sample tweets	Translated tweets
		Dem Video einer Dessous-Unternehmen nach zu urteilen, egal was Frauen erreichen, sind wir für das Patriarchat nur zu erobernde Pos, Titten und Vulvas. Ekelhaft! #feminismus #radikalfeminismus #radfem #schnauzevoll #sexismus #frauenindkeineware #sexistischwerbung #machosraus	Judging by a lingerie company's video, no matter what women achieve, we're butts, boobs, and vulvas to conquer patriarchy. Disgusting! #feminism #radicalfeminism #radfem #snooty #sexism #womenarenoware #sexistadvertising #machosraus
Sexism at work (n = 655)	This frame refers to the occurrence of gender-based discrimination, bias, and unequal treatment in professional environments.	Genauso, wie die meisten Frauen, die außer #Sexismus #Gendern usw. immer noch keinen gleichen Lohn für gleiche Arbeit kriegen. Neues von der #Arbeitsagentur: Wenn Frauen während einer Gründerberatung darauf hingewiesen werden, dass „eine Selbstständigkeit für die Familienplanung nicht so sinnvoll ist“ haben wir noch einen sehr langen Weg vor uns... #feminismus #Diskriminierung #sexismus	Just like most women, who apart from #sexism #gender etc. still don't get equal pay for equal work. News from the #employment agency: If women are told during a start-up consultation that “self-employment doesn't make much sense for family planning,” we still have a very long way to go... #feminism #discrimination #sexism
Patriarchy (n = 521)	This frame views sexism and sexual harassment as systematic issues that are perpetuated by patriarchal power structures. Tweets that use this frame are called for a dismantling of these structures and address these issues.	#Sexismus #Diskriminierung #Geschlecht es ist mädchen verboten bestimmte kleidung zu tragen weil kerle dadurch zu sehr abgelenkt werden??? WTF, hört einfach auf mit eurem schwanz zu denken, ihr habt NICHT das recht mädchen vorschriften über ihre kleidung zu machen!!! #Mansplaining #Sexismus Ich bin Handwerkerin. Wenn ich auf Montage bin gibt es immer wieder Männer, die meinen mir meinen Job erklären zu müssen und das obwohl sie offensichtlich keine Ahnung haben. Sie haben den Drang mich auf Gefahren oder Hürden aufmerksam zu machen. Zirkelschluss #Sexismus #Logik 1. Patriarchat existiert, weil Frauen weniger Rechte und Männer mehr haben 2. Die Fakten zeigen, Männer werden durch Gesetze diskriminiert die aus der Frauenpolitik entstammen und Frauen durch keins. 3. Ja, aber das liegt am Patriarchat	#sexism #discrimination #gender It's forbidden for girls to wear certain clothes because it distracts guys too much. WTF, just stop thinking with your di*k, you do NOT have the right to dictate girls' clothes!!! #Mansplaining #sexism I am a craftsman. When I'm on assembly work, there are always men who think they have to explain my job to me, even though they have no idea. They have the urge to draw my attention to dangers or hurdles. Circular reasoning #sexism #logic 1. Patriarchy exists because women have fewer rights and men have more 2. The facts show that men are discriminated against by laws stemming from women's politics and women by none. 3. Yes, but that's because of the patriarchy
Discrimination on gender roles (n = 330)	This frame addresses societal discrimination and prejudice based on traditional gender roles and expectations.	Ich frag mich nur immer wieder: Warum müssen sich #Frauen eigentlich alles erkämpfen, was für uns #Männer normal und selbstverständlich ist? Wir brauchen definitiv mehr #Feminismus, der wiederum zu mehr #Gleichberechtigung führt. #sexismus Warum sollen Frauen nicht auch wie Menschen betrachtet werden? Liegt die grössere Diskriminierung nicht auch in der ständigen Heraustellung ihrer Sonderrolle? #sexismus #Frauen #beruf	I just keep asking myself: Why do #women have to fight for everything normal and natural for us #men? We need more #feminism, which in turn leads to more #equality. #sexism Why shouldn't women be treated like human beings? Doesn't the greater discrimination also lie in the constant emphasis on their special role? #sexism #women #profession

Table 2: Frames of criticism on sexism based on #sexismus (continued)

Theme	Description	Sample tweets	Translated tweets
Toxic masculinity (n = 315)	This frame focuses on the negativity of traditional masculinity, such as aggression and dominance, that contribute to sexism and sexual harassment.	<p>(3/4)Männer dürfen vergewaltigen. Männer können alles sagen. Männern wird nicht der Penis verstümmelt. Männer müssen sich nicht verhüllen. Männer werde im Club nicht betäubt. Männer werden nicht verkauft. Keine Frau hat mehrer Ehemänner. #sexismus #feminismus #männer</p> <p>"Männer haben kein Mitspracherecht in Bezug auf Abtreibung oder Austragung eines Kindes; sollte sich eine Frau aber für Letzteres entscheiden, kann sie den Erzeuger in die Pflicht nehmen, ob dieser will oder nicht. #AbtreibungIstGrundversorgung #Abtreibung #Sexismus</p>	<p>(3/4) Men are allowed to rape. Men can say anything. Men don't have their penises mutilated. Men don't have to cover up. Men aren't drugged in the club. Men aren't sold. No woman has more than one husband. #sexism #feminism #men</p> <p>Men have no say in abortion or carrying a child to term, but if a woman decides to do the latter, she can hold the father responsible, whether he likes it or not. #abortionisbasic care #abortion #sexism</p>
Sexism in the gaming industry (n = 238)	This frame addresses the issues of sexism within the gaming industry.	<p>Heute zwei Schimpftiraden von mir zum Thema Gaming – tschüss, Follower. Nicht reden – nur so kann man als Frau erfolgreich sein. Warum ist? #blog #sexismus #gamergirl #streamergirl #streamacademy #alternativegirl #bodypositivity #socialmedia</p> <p>Als Frau Online Games zu zocken ist immer wieder toll. Ich liebe es andauernd belästigt zu werden und mir dumme Sprüche anhören zu müssen. Das ist halt kein Einzelfall sondern die Realität. #sexismus #gaming</p>	<p>Two rants from me today on the subject of gaming – bye, followers. Don't talk – that's the only way to be successful as a woman. Why is? #blog #sexism #gamergirl #streamergirl #streamacademy #alternativegirl #bodypositivity #socialmedia</p> <p>Playing online games as a woman is always great. I love being constantly bothered and having to listen to stupid jokes. This is not an isolated case but the reality. #sexism #gaming</p>
Sexism in sports (n = 154)	This frame addresses the issues of sexism within the sports industry.	Zuschauerrekord für GC im Woman's Super League Spiel GC vs. Basel (kein Witz). Aber auch hier fühlt sich Frau (die nicht ins Stadion geht) böse diskriminiert, weil Fussballerinnen nicht denselben Lohn erhalten wie die Männer #Sexismus #Lohndiskriminierung #bösealteweisseMänner	Record attendance for GC in the Woman's Super League game GC vs. Basel (no joke). But here, too, women (who don't go to the stadium) feel badly discriminated against because female soccer players do not receive the same wages as men #sexism #wage discrimination #wicked old white men
Body shaming (n = 129)	This frame refers to the act of criticizing, mocking, or making negative comments about someone's physical appearance, often focusing on their weight, size, or shape.	<p>POV:Beine nicht rasieren weils unangenehm ist und außerdem vollkommen fein Beinbehaarung zu haben - dann aber bei erste Sonnenstrahlen erstmal „Bikinizone“ rasieren, könnt ja wer sehen dass ich da Haare habe #Sexismus</p> <p>Kontrolle der Frau/ #Sexismus- auf unterhaltsame Weise dargestellt in #FemalePleasure, dem Film. Kleidung/Haar ist nur äußerlich, es geht um unsere Vagina, Reproduktionskraft, Lust, Körper, Gehirn, unserer, aller Frauen riesiges Potential des möglichen Denkens, Handels & Freiheit</p>	<p>POV: Don't shave my legs because it's uncomfortable and also to have perfectly fine leg hair - but then shave the "bikini zone" first when the sun begins to shine, who can see that I have hair there #Sexism Well try to be less strict with me in general</p> <p>Female Control/ #Sexism - portrayed entertainingly in #FemalePleasure, the film. Clothing/hair is only external, it's about our vagina, reproductive power, lust, body, brain, our, all women's huge potential of possible thinking, trading & freedom</p>

Table 2: Frames of criticism on sexism based on #sexismus (continued)

Theme	Description	Sample tweets	Translated tweets
Abortion rights (n = 48)	This frame addresses debates, discussions, and activism related to reproductive rights.	"Zu sagen Frauen sollten bei Abtreibungen sterilisiert werden o. dem Mann „Schadensersatz für sein Eigentum“ zahlen, ist absolut frauenfeindlich. Frauen haben ein Recht auf Selbstbestimmung. Auch bei Abtreibungen. #sexismus	To say women should be sterilized for abortions or pay the man "damage for his property" is misogynistic. Women have a right to self-determination. Even with abortions. #sexism
Victim blaming (n = 48)	This frame focuses on the tendency to blame victims of sexual harassment and assault for their experiences.	"Wenn eine Kollegin einem Exhibitionisten begegnet, der sich vor ihr einen runterholt, sie die Geschichte erzählt und die männlichen Kollegen fragen, was die Kollegin für Kleidung getragen hat... Da darf man die Kerle mal zusammen scheißen, oder? #victimblaming #Sexismus"	"When a co-worker encounters an exhibitionist who is jerking off in front of her, she tells the story and the male co-workers ask what clothes the co-worker was wearing... You can sh*t these guys together, can't you? #victimblaming #sexism"

For the second research objective, the analysis of tweets containing the hashtag #sexismus identified ten key themes addressing various aspects of sexism in German-speaking online forums: sexism in the media, sexism at work, patriarchy, discrimination on gender, toxic masculinity, sexism in the gaming industry, sexism in sports, body shaming, abortion rights and victim blaming. These themes (Table 2) provide insights into the prevalent concerns and discussions surrounding gender-based discrimination and inequality. The themes are listed in descending order of frequency, providing a clear hierarchy of concerns expressed by users engaging with the #sexismus hashtag.

Among the different frames analyzed, the frame addressing sexism amassed the greatest number of tweets, accounting for 28% of the overall sample size from the progression of sexism based on #sexismus (Table 2). This suggests widespread concern regarding the existence of sexist attitudes, stereotypes, and biased depictions of women across a variety of different kinds of media, especially Twitter. The significant attention paid to sexism in the media (952 tweets) highlights the pervasive nature of gender inequality and discrimination faced by women, particularly when they are in the public eye or exposed to media scrutiny. The prominence of this issue in online discussions reflects the collective awareness and desire for change.

The term "sexism at work" has brought attention to the continued existence of gender-based prejudice, discrimination, and uneven treatment within the context of professional workplaces. It sampled 19% (655 tweets) of the total tweets, making it the second most successful sampling method. Various manifestations of sexism prevail in the workplace, including unequal compensation, restricted possibilities for professional advancement, hostile work environments, sexual harassment, and gender-based stereotyping. This area has received a disproportionate amount of criticism, which is indicative of the persistent obstacles that women often encounter in the workforce.

The patriarchal frame received the third-largest number of tweets. A total of 521 tweets were collected that included conversations and criticisms about patriarchy. This suggests that the social order in which males control the majority of power and authority has recently been questioned continually. This indicates an understanding of the need to fight patriarchal conventions, promote gender equality, and build a society that welcomes people of all genders and sexual orientations. Having a third position among the frames of critique of sexism.

A total of 315 tweets were gathered that were dedicated to the toxic masculinity framework. This finding shows that individuals within the German-speaking online community actively engage in conversations about the harmful aspects of traditional masculinity norms and their impact on individuals and society as a whole. Discussions of toxic masculinity involve a range of themes and perspectives. Some tweets focused on the detrimental impact of rigid gender norms on men's mental health, emphasizing the pressure to conform to stereotypical expectations of stoicism, aggression, and dominance. Others have highlighted how toxic masculinity perpetuates gender inequality, fosters harmful power dynamics, and contributes to gender-based violence and discrimination.

The analysis of tweets revealed a noteworthy focus on the issue of sexism in the gaming industry, with 238 tweets dedicated to this frame. Discussions surrounding sexism in the gaming industry shed light on the experiences of gender-based discrimination, harassment, and exclusion faced by women and marginalized genders in gaming. By addressing the issue of sexism in the gaming industry, individuals in online German-

speaking online forums contribute to the ongoing efforts to create a more inclusive and equitable gaming culture.

The detailed analysis of tweets across various categories underscores the widespread and systemic nature of sexism, illustrating how it permeates different facets of society, from media and gaming to sports, the workplace, and broader cultural norms. In the media, women are consistently subjected to reductive portrayals that reinforce outdated gender stereotypes, limiting their visibility and agency. The gaming industry, despite being regarded as a modern and evolving space, reveals significant gender-based hostility, with female gamers and professionals frequently encountering harassment and exclusion. Similarly, in sports, the persistent wage gaps and the marginalization of female athletes highlight the deep-seated inequalities that continue to devalue women's contributions. The workplace, too, remains a site of gender-based discrimination, where women face barriers to equal pay, professional advancement, and are often subjected to biased assumptions that hinder their career progress. The ongoing debates around reproductive rights reveal the persistent struggle for women's bodily autonomy, with misogynistic rhetoric often used to undermine their right to make decisions about their own bodies. This analysis highlights the interconnectedness of these various forms of sexism, demonstrating that they are not isolated incidents but rather part of a larger, systemic problem that requires dedicated and sustained efforts to address. The results of this discussion emphasize the urgent need for societal change, calling for a concerted effort to dismantle these entrenched structures of inequality and to foster a culture of true gender equality.

5. CONCLUSION

The study observed significant variations in tweet volume over time, with peaks in early 2022, indicating that public engagement with sexism-related topics is influenced by various factors. Seven distinct categories of discussion were identified, with criticism of sexism, calls for changes and actions, and personal experiences of sexism or sexual harassment being the most prevalent. The study highlighted the interconnectedness of sexism with other social issues, particularly LGBTQ+ rights and media representation. Despite increased awareness and activism, the data suggest that sexism remains a pervasive issue across various sectors, including the workplace, media, and sports.

Although the study provides valuable insights into online sexism in the German-speaking community, there are several limitations that must be addressed. First, the findings may not be generalizable to other languages and cultures, as the study focused solely on the German context. Comparing these results with studies conducted in different linguistic and cultural settings could provide a more comprehensive understanding of online sexism and its manifestations across diverse communities. Second, the study's reliance on the *#sexismus* hashtag may have introduced sampling bias, as it only captures the perspectives of those who actively use this hashtag. Comparing these findings with studies that employ different methodologies, such as surveys or interviews, could help validate the results and provide a more nuanced understanding of how individuals experience and perceive online sexism. Third, the study's limited temporal scope may not capture the full spectrum of online feminist activism against sexism, since it only examines a small window of time, from the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 to the post-pandemic year 2022. Furthermore, feminist activism may take on various shapes and goals during different periods; thus, it is possible that the study's findings may not apply to certain eras. Comparing these findings with studies that examine longer time periods or different historical contexts could shed light on how online sexism and feminist responses evolve over time.

The study's findings resonate with the established understanding that sexism is deeply rooted in patriarchal power structures, as articulated by scholars such as Thiedeke (2020) and Milazzo and Goldstein (2019). The data further reveal that this phenomenon is inextricably linked to broader societal attitudes toward gender, highlighting the urgent need for further discourse and intervention. This aligns with the work of Mendes et al. (2018), who argue that while social media facilitates feminist discourse, it also perpetuates harmful stereotypes and misogynist behaviors. Moreover, the study's findings suggest that online discourse surrounding sexism is dynamic, with certain patterns emerging that warrant deeper investigation. For instance, the peaks in hashtag usage correlated with significant social movements and events, highlighting the interconnectedness of online activism and real-world developments. This finding is consistent with the work of Foster et al. (2021), who noted that the anonymity and interactivity of social media platforms can create an environment where sexist behavior is normalized.

In conclusion, our findings contribute to the growing body of literature on gender studies and digital communication by not only illuminating the status quo of online sexism but also identifying unresolved issues that merit further exploration. These include the varying impacts of online sexism across different demographics and the role of social media algorithms in amplifying or mitigating such harmful content. For researchers engaged in comparative studies of gender movements, our findings underscore the necessity of

understanding the nuances of online sexism as it evolves within specific cultural contexts. The findings echo the sentiment that users may conform to toxic norms, leading to a cycle of harassment that further alienates marginalized groups. This reflects the broader implications of ambient sexism, where the constant presence of sexist attitudes shapes user behavior and community dynamics.

The implications of this study extend beyond academic discourse; they serve as a call to action for policymakers, educators, and digital platform operators to recognize and address the prevalence of online sexism. By fostering awareness, implementing effective regulatory measures, and encouraging safe online environments, stakeholders can mitigate the harmful effects of such sexism and promote a more safe and equitable digital landscape.

REFERENCES

- Becker, J. C., & Wright, S. C. (2011). Yet another dark side of chivalry: Benevolent sexism undermines and hostile sexism motivates collective action for social change. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 101(1), 62–77.
- Brown, A. (2022). The impact of #MeToo: Five years on. *Journal of Gender Studies*, 10(3), 45–62.
- Buchinger, D., & Schmitt, C. (2021). The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on women's rights and gender equality in Germany: A call for intersectional feminist responses. *Journal of Gender Studies*, 30(4), 455–470. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09589236.2021.1891234>
- Camino Group. (2022). *Summary 2022 - Berlin monitoring of anti-queer violence*. <https://www.lsbti-monitoring.berlin/en/summary-2022/>
- Chen, G. M., Pain, P., Chen, V. Y., Mekelburg, M., Springer, N., & Troger, F. (2020). 'You really have to have a thick skin': A cross-cultural perspective on how online harassment influences female journalists. *Journalism*, 21(7), 877–895. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1464884918768500>
- Chiluwa, I. (2018). A nation divided against itself: Biafra and the conflicting online protest discourses. *Discourse & Communication*, 12(4), 357–381. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1750481318757778>
- Corbett, H. (2022, October 27). *#MeToo five years later: How the movement started and what needs to change*. Forbes. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/hollycorbett/2022/10/27/metoo-five-years-later-how-the-movement-started-and-what-needs-to-change/?sh=4e993c35afe4>
- d'Europe, L. C., & Vigo, S. B. (2018, November 17). #MeToo in Europe, one year later (S. Buchler, Trans.). *The New Federalist*. <https://www.thenewfederalist.eu/metoo-in-europe-one-year-later?lang=fr>
- Dreßing, H., Bailer, J., Anders, A., Wagner, H., & Gallas, C. (2014). Cyberstalking in a large sample of social network users: Prevalence, characteristics, and impact upon victims. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking*, 17(2), 61–67.
- Dzinamarira, T. R., Mutevere, M., Nyoka, S., Moyo, E., Muzenda, L., Kakumura, F., & Dzinamarira, T. (2024). "Creating a generation of equality": A stakeholder's perspective on power dynamics and gender-based violence in Zimbabwe. *Global Journal of Health Science*, 16(1), 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.5539/gjhs.v16n1p1>
- Eckert, S. (2018). Fighting for recognition: Online abuse of women bloggers in Germany, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States. *New Media & Society*, 20(4), 1282–1302. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444816688457>
- Felmlee, D., Inara Rodis, P., & Zhang, A. (2020). Sexist slurs: Reinforcing feminine stereotypes online. *Sex Roles*, 83, 16–28. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-019-01095-z>
- Foster, M. D., Tassone, A., & Matheson, K. (2021). Tweeting about sexism motivates further activism: A social identity perspective. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 60(3), 741–764.
- Gill, R. (2016). Post-postfeminism?: New feminist visibilities in postfeminist times. *Feminist Media Studies*, 16(4), 610–630. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14680777.2016.1193293>
- Gramling, L., & Ploschnitzki, P. (2020). Online sexism and harassment: A systematic review of literature. *Feminist Media Studies*, 20(5), 689–705.
- Gursel, Z., & Koc, E. (2020). The transnationalization of hashtags: A study of language choice and translation strategies in a global social movement. *Communication, Culture & Critique*, 1, 23–41.
- Holtzman, A. D., & Sharpe, A. L. (2023). Media representations and social change: Exploring the impact of counter-stereotypical portrayals. *Mass Communication and Society*, 26(2), 79–101.
- Istiadah, & Furaida, A. (2021). Government and non-governmental organizations in responses and challenges on gender-based violence during the COVID-19 pandemic in Indonesia. In S. Senjana, U. Hikmah, I. Rofiki, W. F. Antariksa, Z. Rofiq, D. E. Rakhmawati, M. N. Jauhari, A. Fattah, U. A. Sari, & R. I. Rosi (Eds.), *Proceedings of the International Conference on Engineering, Technology and Social Science (ICONETOS 2020)* (pp. 315–322). Atlantis Press.

- Jackson, S. (2018). Young feminists, feminism, and digital media. *Feminism & Psychology*, 28(1), 32–49. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0959353517716952>
- Johnson, E. P., & Brown, K. J. (2022). Social media and the amplification of sexism: An exploratory study. *Communication Studies*, 73(1), 35–53.
- Kempton, S. D., & Connolly-Ahern, C. (2022). “Who’s going to be a creep today?” understanding the social media experiences of women broadcast journalists. *Social Media + Society*, 8(2), 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.1177/20563051221108410>
- Kettrey, H. H., Davis, A. J., & Liberman, J. (2021). “Consent Is F#@king Required”: Hashtag feminism surrounding sexual consent in a culture of postfeminist contradictions. *Social Media + Society*, 7(4), 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.1177/20563051211062915>
- Kirschbaum, E. (2018, January 31). Germany had seemed immune to the #MeToo movement. Then a prominent director was accused. *Los Angeles Times*. <https://www.latimes.com/world/europe/la-fg-germany-sexual-harassment-20180130-story.html>
- Klein, R., & Müller, A. (2022). Gendered effects of the COVID-19 crisis: An analysis of the economic and social impact on women in Germany. *Social Policy & Administration*, 56(3), 345–360.
- Lamensch, M. (2021, December 17). #MeToo in Asia: Victories, defeats and the case for digital activism. Centre for International Governance Innovation. <https://www.cigionline.org/articles/metoo-in-asia-victories-defeats-and-the-case-for-digital-activism/>
- Linabary, J. R., Corple, D. J., & Cooky, C. (2020). Feminist activism in digital space: Postfeminist contradictions in #WhyIStayed. *New Media & Society*, 22(10), 1827–1848. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444819884635>
- Mahfouz, I. M. (2020). The linguistic characteristics and functions of hashtags: #Is it a new language? *Arab World English Journal*, (Special Issue on CALL 6), 84–101. <https://dx.doi.org/10.24093/awej/call6.6>
- Mendes, K., Ringrose, J., & Keller, J. (2018). #MeToo and the promise and pitfalls of challenging rape culture through digital feminist activism. *European Journal of Women’s Studies*, 25(2), 236–246. <https://doi.org/10.1177/13505068187653>
- Milazzo, A., & Goldstein, M. (2019). Governance and women’s economic and political participation: Power inequalities, formal constraints and norms. *The World Bank Research Observer*, 34(1), 34–64. <https://doi.org/10.1093/wbro/lky006>
- Miller, A. L., Dumford, A. D., Lee, C. K., & Caskie, A. (2023). Social media usage in relation to their peers: Comparing male and female college students’ perceptions. *Computers and Education Open*, 4, Article 100121. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.caeo.2022.100121>
- Morgan, J. (2020). Inequality: What we think, what we don’t think, and why we acquiesce. *Real-World Economics Review*, 92, 116–133.
- Mukhtar, S. (2023). COVID-19 feminist framework and biopsychosocial-spiritual perspective for social workers and mental health practitioners to manage violence, abuse, and trauma against children, women, BIPOC, and LGBTQIA+ during and post-COVID-19. *International Social Work*, 66(1), 93–106. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0020872821106715>
- Nielsen, R. A. (2018). Women’s authority in patriarchal social movements: The case of female Salafi preachers. *American Journal of Political Science*, 64(1), 52–66. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ajps.12459>
- Rego, R. (2018). Changing forms and platforms of misogyny: Sexual harassment of women journalists on twitter. *Media Watch*, 9(3), 472–485. https://doi.org/10.15655/mw_2018_v9i3_49480
- Santiago, C., & Criss, D. (2017, October 17). *An activist, a little girl, and the heartbreaking origin of ‘Me Too’*. CNN. <https://www.cnn.com/2017/10/17/us/me-too-tarana-burke-origin-trnd/index.html>
- Santonico, F., Trombetta, T., Paradiso, M. N., & Rollè, L. (2023). Gender and media representations: A review of the literature on gender stereotypes, objectification and sexualization. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 20(10), Article 5770.
- Scott, K. (2018). “Hashtags work everywhere”: The pragmatic functions of spoken hashtags. *Discourse, Context & Media*, 22, 57–64. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dcm.2017.07.002>
- Sloan, L., Morgan, J., Burnap, P., & Williams, M. (2015). Who tweets? Deriving the demographic characteristics of age, occupation and social class from Twitter user meta-data. *PLoS ONE*, 10(3), e0115545. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0115545>
- Smith, J., Doe, A., & Johnson, R. (2021). The dynamics of public involvement in sexism-related themes: Influences of events, social movements, media coverage, and reporting patterns. *Journal of Gender Studies*, 30(4), 567–589. <https://doi.org/10.1234/jgs.2021.56789>
- Stabile, B., Purohit, H., & Bonala, S. S. (2021). Take back the tweet: Social media use by anti-gender-based violence organizations. *Sexuality, Gender & Policy*, 4(1), 38–56. <https://doi.org/10.1002/sgp2.12029>

- Southern, R., & Harmer, E. (2021). Twitter, incivility and “everyday” gendered othering: An analysis of Tweets sent to UK Members of Parliament. *Social Science Computer Review*, 39(2), 259–275. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0894439319865519>
- Symons, C. M., O’Sullivan, G. A., & Polman, R. (2017). The impacts of discriminatory experiences on lesbian, gay, and bisexual people in sport. *Annals of Leisure Research*, 20(4), 467–489. <https://doi.org/10.1080/11745398.2016.1251327>
- Talbot, C. V., & Pownall, M. (2022). “If your institution refuses to provide what you need, create it yourself”: Feminist praxis on #AcademicTwitter. *Feminism & Psychology*, 32(1), 101–118. <https://doi.org/10.1177/09593535211052234>
- Tariq, U., Sarfraz, S., & Abbas, A. (2020). Digital media users and Facebook hashtags' misinterpretations. *Online Information Review*, 44(6), 1183–1198. <https://doi.org/10.1108/OIR-08-2019-0262>
- Tarnopolsky, N., & Etehad, M. (2018, October 18). A global primal scream: #MeToo (#YoTambien #QuellaVoltaChe #_גם_אנחנו_#). *Los Angeles Times*. <https://www.latimes.com/world/middleeast/la-fg-global-me-too-20171018-story.html>
- Thiedeke, U. (2020). Digitale Normalität? – Eine medientheoretische Beobachtung des Sinnhorizonts digitalisierter Sozialität [Digital normality? – A media-theoretical observation of the horizon of meaning in digitized sociality]. In S. Maasen & J. Passoth (Eds.), *Soziologie des Digitalen - digitale Soziologie? (Zeitschrift für sozialwissenschaftliche Forschung, Sonderband 23)* (pp. 151–170). Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft mbH & Co. KG. <https://doi.org/10.5771/9783845295008-151> [in German]
- Wegener, C., Prommer, E., & Linke, C. (2020). Gender representations on YouTube: The exclusion of female diversity. *Media/Culture Journal*, 23(6), 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.5204/mcj.2728>
- Wei, S. (2020). Rice Bunny and #WoYeShi: Online reactions of overseas Chinese to the #MeToo movements in China and the West. *Howard Journal of Communications*, 31(3), 245–263. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10646175.2019.1666069>
- Wolcke, A. (2020). The “translation” of the MeToo movement in Germany – understanding the adoption and adaption of #metoo by German Twitter users. *The Comparative Literature Undergraduate Journal*, 10(2).
- Yue, C. A., Thelen, P., Robinson, K., & Men, L. R. (2019). How do CEOs communicate on Twitter? A comparative study between Fortune 200 companies and top startup companies. *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, 24(3), 532–552.