Revealing Misogyny in the Digital Feminist Era as Violence Against Women in Radical Feminist Studies

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Abstract—This article explores the phenomenon of online misogyny (hatred towards women in the online context) in the digital feminist era as a form of violence against women, analysed within the framework of radical feminist studies. Technological advancements, particularly the internet and social media, have facilitated the rapid dissemination of views and ideologies worldwide. While globalization has connected various cultures and values, communication and interactions among individuals and groups have become increasingly crucial. Unfortunately, this has also brought about negative consequences in the form of misogyny, which involves discriminatory and demeaning treatment of women. This article aims to demonstrate that in the digital feminist era, women continue to be targets of online misogyny.

This study uncovers various forms of online misogyny in the context of the Twitter social media platform, with data consisting of dozens of tweets related to feminism and gender equality. This data is analysed within the framework of the concept of radical feminism, which identifies the roles of patriarchy and the hegemony of masculinity. Additionally, the analysis also adopts the concept of explicit and implicit misogyny introduced by Strathern & Pfeffer [1] revealing forms of misogyny that may have gone unnoticed. Research findings indicate that anti-feminist attitudes in Twitter posts represent one of the forms of online misogyny that can be classified as violence against feminist women or women supporting gender equality.

Keywords: *Radical Feminism; Digital Feminism; Online Misogyny*

I. INTRODUCTION

In the modern era, we may think that gender equality has made progress, but misogyny still persists. True civilization is achieved when we recognize the strength and wisdom in every individual, regardless of gender. The digital space is at the core of the fourth wave of the feminist movement [2], but social media can also be a place that reinforces inequality. Amnesty International [3] notes that Twitter is often used to perpetuate inequality, misogyny, and online discrimination against women. Lewis, Rowe & Wiper [4] revealed that 80% of women actively involved in feminist activism on Twitter have experienced harassment.

This research is focused on answering questions about the forms of misogyny in the online or digital realm, especially on the social media platform Twitter. This form of misogyny is of concern because it can correlate with more serious crimes, such as physical and non-physical sexual violence in the real world, threats, and rape against women who support gender equality values. The approach in this research involves key concepts such as the roots of patriarchy, online gender-based violence, radical feminism, and related concepts in the context of new media crimes.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

"The discussion of online misogyny, as a form of violence against women in radical feminist studies, in the era of digital feminism, begins with an explanation of the waves of feminism and digital feminism, as outlined below:"

A. Waves of Feminism and Digital Feminism

Feminism waves refer to a metaphorical term that distinguishes the focus and progression of feminism as a progressive movement. The first wave, with a Marxist perspective, discussed capitalism as the root of inequality; the second wave of feminism had a radical perspective with patriarchy at the center of the issue and the oppression of women. The third wave

introduced post-feminism, which delved further into discussions about patriarchy and the universality of oppression, often characterized by the presence of backlash [5]. The most recent development is the fourth wave.

It is believed that feminism has entered the fourth wave as issues of violence and inequality continue to persist. The systematic use of information technology as a medium for activism signifies this wave, which can be referred to as digital feminism. However, the ease of accessing and encountering feminist activities on the internet today is not without risks.

B. Online Misogyny in the Era of Digital Feminism

Online misogyny is a key concept that can explain the dynamics of behavior related to digital feminism. Misogyny itself can be defined as actions or behaviors that defy patriarchal norms, typically carried out by men, women, or existing social structures against women. In this context, the terms "misogyny" and "sexism" share similarities but differ in scope. Sexism encompasses stereotypes and objectification of women, whereas misogyny includes efforts to 'punish' women perceived as violating patriarchal norms [6]. In some cases, misogyny can also be linked to physical and sexual aggression against women, as well as other demeaning behaviors such as racism, homophobia, transphobia, and ableism [7].

Online misogyny specifically refers to forms of hatred against women that occur in digital spaces. This can manifest as disrespectful, derogatory, and discriminatory attitudes toward women. However, the complexity of misogyny makes it difficult to define precisely. Therefore, in this research, the author employs the misogyny analytical framework developed by Wienke Strathern & Juergen Pfeffer [8]. This framework divides misogyny into two classifications: explicit and implicit misogyny.

Explicit misogyny encompasses several forms, including:
1) Call for Action/Violence, which involves calls for violent actions, often accompanied by physical threats against female targets; 2) Personal Insult, Denigration, aiming to verbally harm with derogatory, demeaning, threatening, or defamatory language; 3) Gendered Personal Attack, which references female stereotypes and is often related to sexual issues; 4) Weakness of Character, intellectual inferiority, attempting to weaken character and negatively judge the moral and intellectual aspects of women. On the other hand, implicit misogyny includes: 1) Cynicism & Sarcasm, expressing derogatory attitudes indirectly; 2) Imputation, involving negative accusations against women, such as being revengeful or seeking attention; 3) Demonstration of Power, indicating the dominance of one gender, namely men, over others

C. Online Misogyny as Violence Against Women in Radical Feminist Studies

Radical feminism highlights its significant role in understanding the oppression of women in the context of online misogyny, especially in social media. They identify violence against women as a result of male supremacy and female inferiority that supports patriarchy.

Radical feminism has four main criteria: recognizing patriarchy, promoting women-only spaces, focusing on violence by men against women, and incorporating pornography and prostitution into their analysis. Women often become the primary targets of online violence, including efforts to degrade and silence them in the digital environment. Violence against women has evolved with the development of the digital world, and this should be acknowledged as a form of silencing women's voices in the online public space. Radical feminism challenges male dominance in patriarchal society and seeks to change gender roles and understand the political implications of different sexual characteristics in society.

III. RESEARCH METHOD

This research is a qualitative study that utilizes secondary data and qualitative methods. Secondary data is obtained from tweets on Twitter related to issues of feminism, misogyny, gender-based violence, as well as from journal articles and other research. Twitter is used as the primary data source because it facilitates activism with features like likes and retweets, enabling information to spread quickly and creating broad conversations.

The author accessed publicly available tweets, making them accessible to the general public. The data used must meet several criteria, including being related to feminist issues, misogyny, and gender equality, regularly or occasionally uploaded by Twitter users, having a high level of interaction such as replies, likes, or retweets, and containing language that is degrading, demeaning, or objectifying towards women.

After data collection, these tweets are analyzed to identify those that contain misogynistic meaning. The data is categorized based on significant events or tweets with high interaction levels and individual tweets unrelated to specific events. The analysis is conducted using the concept of misogyny and its correlation with masculine hegemony on Twitter, as well as radical feminist perspectives.

The goal of the feminist content analysis in this research is to explore awareness of gender issues, gender stratification, power imbalances, and multi-level contextual analysis. A deductive strategy is employed by linking the data findings to pre-existing theories and concepts, particularly radical feminism and the concept of misogyny. Data is classified into two main concepts, explicit misogyny and implicit misogyny, which serve as the basis for coding these tweets. Explicit misogyny encompasses various forms of direct attacks and insults towards women, while implicit misogyny includes sarcasm, imputation, and displays of power.

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

For ease of analysis, the author summarized the data based on indicators in the form of code usage in tweets. The analysis indicators used are listed in Table 1.

Table 1.
Indicators for Analyzing Forms of Misogyny

Types of Misogyny	Indicators for Analyzing Forms of Misogyny	
	Form of Misogyny	Description
Explicit Misogyny	Action / call for violence	Tweets containing incitement or encouragement of violence and punishment. The use of words such as 'jail,' 'beat,' 'fight,' and so on.
	Personal insult, denigration	Tweets containing personal insults with the use of offensive language."
	Gendered personal attack	Tweets containing insults related to gender stigma, prejudice, and stereotypes. For example, the use of words like 'prostitute,' 'slut,' and so on
	Weakness of character, intellectual inferiority	Tweets that reference character assassination and intellectual belittlement."
		Tweets targeting women and feminism itself. Words like 'stupid,' 'nonsense,' are frequently used.
Implicit Misogyny	Cynicism & sarcasm	Tweets containing elements of sarcasm, cynicism, and indirectly derogatory sentences. Words like 'complicated,' 'weird,' 'lazy,' or other words with indirect insinuations."
	Imputation	Tweets containing negative moral judgments towards women, often associated with religious elements such as 'far from religion,' 'sinful,' and so on.
	Demonstration of Power	Tweets containing statements supporting male dominance, patriarchy, or expressing

Types of Misogyny	Indicators for Analyzing Forms of Misogyny	
	Form of Misogyny	Description
		support for gender inequality in relationships.

Interaction data regarding the tweet from the @bebast_ account: On May 1, 2023, a Twitter account named @bebast posted a tweet that invited many people to share their opinions about feminism. The tweet received 339 replies, was retweeted 1,553 times, and received 712 likes. The content of the tweet can be seen in Table 2.

Table 2.
Description of @bebast Account Tweet Data

No.	Description of @bebast Account Tweet Data		
	Account	Example of a tweet interacting with the @bebast_ account	Classification of Misogynistic Forms."
1.	@Nikkontol	The species that need to be avoided.	*Personal Insult, Denigration*
2.	@Ttmerdaa	Prostitutes are the final form of feminists who have reached their ma'rifat: Independent, high-income professions where women's existence far exceeds that of men.	*Gendered Personal Attack*
		Independent Living freely regardless of stigma	
		Men must pay if they want to get their "attention"	
	@ibjela	It's not their fault, but the fault of their guardians. They are women, and if left alone, they will just drift away like that, they are less intelligent. The guardians are at fault for neglecting and letting their female charges drift away, becoming feminists.	*Weakness of character, intellectual inferiority*
	@Ginosptra	Most feminists are born from women who are not interested in taking care of household chores.	*Cynicism, sarcasm*
	@zulkiflipohan_	The reason why followers of the Antichrist (Dajjal) and the inhabitants of hell are mostly women (they might call it misogynistic).	*Imputation*

The @poponkerok account is the non-anonymous Twitter account of the comedian Popon Kerok. On August 24, 2022, Popon Kerok posted a controversial tweet regarding feminist representation, which received 589 retweets, 340 quoted retweets, and 2062 likes. The summary is presented in table 3.

Table 3.
"Description of Tweet Interaction Data for the @poponkerok Account."

No.	Description of @bebast Account Tweet Data		
	Account	Example of a tweet interacting with the @bebast_ account	Classification of Misogynistic Forms."
1.	@poponkerok	"Maneeee sini SJW udeh lama nihh gak ribuuttt 😂😂"	***Call for Action/Violence***

No.	Description of @bebast Account Tweet Data		
	Account	Example of a tweet interacting with the @bebast_ account	Classification of Misogynistic Forms."
2.	@adityapngstuu	"Tp emang bener kata popon, feminis emang kaya gitu kok. Kaya kontol"	*Personal Insult, Denigration*
3.	@datukpedir	"Feminis babi lonte ga laku"	*Gendered Personal Attack*
4.	@undur2_somalia	"Feminis itu adalah cewek2 dongo yg sering ditipu oleh pria yg ngaku anggota tentara / polisi di FB"	*Weakness of character, intellectual inferiority*
5.	@razor_rahendra	"Udah males, ribet terus nganggur laki, jadinya ya sjw feminis pon"	*Cynicism, sarcasm*

The result of this research, which underwent a process of secondary data collection, is as follows:

A. Online Misogyny Manifested in Anti-Feminist Attitudes

The previous paragraph discussed various forms of online misogyny that manifest in anti-feminist attitudes. This attitude often takes the form of modern misogyny, which views feminists as women who hate men or believe that gender equality has already been achieved. Modern misogyny redirects attention from systemic issues to men's feelings about feminism. Digital feminist activism on social media, such as Twitter, also reflects modern misogyny by assuming that gender equality is unnecessary and that feminists are only seeking revenge [9].

Online misogyny can be divided into explicit and implicit misogyny. Explicit misogyny includes calls for violence, personal insults, and verbal attacks on feminists. This includes vulgar and derogatory language such as "whore" or "prostitute." Men who support feminism can also become targets with the use of homophobic slurs. Explicit misogyny also includes belittling the moral and intellectual values of women who support gender equality.

Implicit misogyny includes sarcasm, cynicism, and insinuations. It involves comments that belittle feminism without using explicit derogatory language. Implicit misogyny can also involve moral judgments against women who support gender equality, especially concerning religion. Power demonstrations are a form of implicit misogyny that reflects power dynamics between men and women.

Explicit and implicit misogyny forms are often interconnected, with more overt violence elements in explicit misogyny and subtler expressions in implicit misogyny. All these forms of misogyny collectively create an environment that degrades women who support gender equality and feminism.

B. Online Misogyny as a Form of Violence Against Women

Online misogyny as a form of violence against women manifests itself in efforts to marginalize and silence women's voices, especially those diverging from patriarchal norms in the digital realm. Radical feminism highlights structural violence and women's experiences in the private domain that undermine their power and autonomy. Some forms of online misogyny are rooted in traditional gender role discourses, categorizing women who do not conform to patriarchal norms as "abnormal." Anti-feminist men tend to seek to maintain traditional gender role divisions that benefit them.

Patriarchy creates an imbalance between men and women, with women's subordination creating conditions for violence against women. Online misogyny attempts to constrain women and keep them under male control. The idea that women should be submissive and obedient becomes internalized within misogynistic attitudes, even by some women themselves. This is reflected in negative opinions about feminism both online and offline.

Radical feminism identifies men as the dominant party in efforts to maintain male superiority and traditional gender role divisions. These misogynistic attitudes have adapted to the digital world, creating new techniques to control and discipline women [10]. Anti-feminist attitudes also downplay the experiences of violence victims and situations of gender inequality that disproportionately harm women.

V. CONCLUTION

The activities of the feminist movement are categorized into several phases known as 'waves of feminism.' In the fourth wave of feminism, marked by digitization, there has been a significant influence on the construction and anti-feminist attitudes. This article further elaborates on the forms of online misogyny on the social media platform Twitter. Data was collected from Twitter users' tweets and analyzed using the concepts of explicit and implicit misogyny as reconceptualized by Strathern & Juergen Pfeffer [11]. Explicit misogyny consists of Call for Action/Violence, Personal Insult & Denigration, Gendered Personal Attack, Weakness of Character & Intellectual Inferiority. Implicit misogyny includes Cynicism & Sarcasm, Imputation, and finally, Demonstration of Power.

The conclusion drawn from this article titled "Unveiling Online Misogyny in the Era of Digital Feminism as Violence Against Women in Radical Feminist Studies" is that it explains the challenges associated with online misogyny, encompassing online harassment, insults towards women, and the use of vulgar language. Misogyny towards feminist women or women who support gender equality is internalized through the rejection of the feminist movement itself. This attitude is considered a form of violence against women fueled by hatred facilitated by the Twitter social media platform.
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