
Understanding the dynamics of online misogyny

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Abstract

Is social media safe and equal for people of all genders? How many of us feel comfortable sharing our opinions online? Social media like Twitter is often the platform for online misogyny. Even though they promote free speech- instead of strengthening women's voices, the violence and abuse many women experience on the platforms lead women to self-censor what they post, limit their interactions, and may drive them away from there.

In my research, I focus on understanding the dynamics of online misogyny and how posting strong opinions online might trigger differential behavior for women, as compared to their male (/other genders) counterparts. To what extent are influential women who express their political opinion through social media platforms, targeted by online incivility? Is it worse if it is on a controversial or a less popular opinion? What types of online speech trigger online misogyny? Is that prompted by any external event(/s), political or otherwise? Is this more/less problematic for women in the Global South? Analyzing the social media metadata could help us draw inferences about the extent of online misogyny and more. Not only will it help us answer these questions, but also discover connections prompting the abuse online.

A challenge while doing that is having a clear understanding on what accounts as public and private in the accessible data, which is often contested depending on the research, hence it inevitably falls within the area of tension of research ethics. Hence, one of the key tasks I will be performing is using appropriate metadata to describe my data following the DDI standards, to make it adhere to the FAIR data management principles. Through my work, I aim to create a safer digital space for women, and to ensure that they can freely share their views in digital space.

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