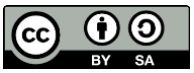
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A Critical Discourse Analysis of Misogynistic Comments on Emmma Watson's Instagram

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Abstract

This research analyzes misogynistic comments on Emma Watson's Instagram posts using Critical Discourse Analysis, focusing on posts related to sexual harassment and women in STEM from January 1st and 3rd, 2022. Employing Fairclough's three-dimensional framework, the study examines 14 selected comments at textual, discursive, and social practice levels, applying Moloney & Love's (2018) categorization framework of superiority-based, oppression-based, and stigma-based misogyny. The selection focused on two specific posts from January 1st and 3rd, 2022, chosen for their direct engagement with feminist topics that typically attract significant misogynistic responses on visual-centric platforms where image-text interactions create unique harassment dynamics. The findings reveal a relatively even distribution of misogynistic discourse types: superiority-based misogyny (35.71%), oppression-based misogyny (35.71%), and stigma-based misogyny (28.57%). Superiority-based comments utilized pseudo-scientific arguments and biological determinism to naturalize gender inequalities, particularly in STEM fields. Oppression-based comments actively attempted to silence Watson's feminist advocacy through aggressive role enforcement and professional delegitimization. Stigma-based comments deployed character assassination, stereotyping, and intersectional discrimination to undermine feminist messaging. The analysis reveals sophisticated patterns of digital misogyny that extend beyond individual harassment to represent systematic efforts to maintain gender hierarchies through linguistic intimidation. Comments frequently exploited Watson's celebrity status to question her intellectual authority, demonstrating how public figures advocating for gender equality face intensified scrutiny designed to discourage continued activism. The research contributes to understanding how visual-centric platforms like Instagram create unique manifestations of gender-based harassment and offers important implications for digital governance, content moderation policies, and feminist media studies. These findings have direct

implications for social media platform governance, suggesting the need for more sophisticated content moderation algorithms that can detect subtle linguistic patterns of systematic harassment beyond explicit hate speech.

1. Introduction

In the contemporary digital landscape, social media platforms have fundamentally transformed the dynamics of public discourse, creating unprecedented opportunities for both connection and conflict. Instagram, as one of the most influential visual-centric platforms, has emerged as a critical space where celebrity voices intersect with social activism, yet simultaneously where gender-based harassment flourishes with alarming intensity. This digital paradox becomes particularly pronounced when examining how female celebrities who advocate for gender equality face systematic online abuse that seeks to silence their progressive messages and maintain traditional power structures.

This study addresses three specific research questions: (1) How do different types of misogynistic discourse manifest linguistically in Instagram comments targeting feminist celebrities? (2) What specific linguistic strategies are employed to delegitimize women's authority in digital activism? (3) In what ways does Instagram's visual-textual interface facilitate specific forms of gender-based harassment against feminist celebrities?

Emma Charlotte Duerre Watson—known globally as Emma Watson—born in Paris in 1990, represents a unique convergence of celebrity influence and feminist activism that makes her an exemplary case study for understanding contemporary online misogyny. Her evolution from child actress portraying Hermione Granger in the Harry Potter series to becoming a prominent UN Women Goodwill Ambassador in 2014 demonstrates how public figures can leverage their platforms for social change. The launch of her HeForShe campaign marked a pivotal transition from entertainment to advocacy, positioning Watson at the forefront of contemporary feminist discourse while simultaneously making her a primary target for those resistant to gender equality initiatives. The selection of January 2022 posts proves particularly significant as this period coincided with renewed discussions about gender equality in STEM fields and workplace harassment, topics that historically trigger intensified misogynistic responses on social media platforms.

Watson's strategic utilization of Instagram as a platform for feminist advocacy creates a particularly compelling research context. Through her millions of followers, she consistently addresses complex issues surrounding feminism, gender equality, and social justice, transforming her social media presence into a vehicle for progressive education. However, this visibility comes at a significant cost: her posts regularly attract misogynistic commentary that reflects broader societal resistance to feminist messaging and women's leadership in social change movements.

The phenomenon of online harassment targeting feminist activists reveals the intersection of digital technology and patriarchal power structures. Watson's experience exemplifies how female public figures who challenge traditional gender norms face intensified scrutiny and abuse designed to delegitimize their authority and discourage their continued activism. This pattern of harassment extends beyond individual attacks to represent systematic efforts to maintain gender hierarchies through digital intimidation and discrediting tactics.

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Recent scholarship (Ging & Siapera, 2018; KhosraviNik & Esposito, 2018; Lewis et al., 2017) has established that online misogyny represents a systematic rather than isolated phenomenon, yet gaps remain in understanding platform-specific manifestations and celebrity-targeted harassment patterns. Several critical dimensions emerge when examining misogynistic discourse directed at Watson's feminist advocacy. First, traditional gender stereotypes are weaponized to undermine her credibility as a social commentator, with attackers frequently reducing her complex advocacy to stereotypical assumptions about female capabilities. Second, rhetorical strategies specifically target her transition from actress to activist, questioning her qualifications to speak on social issues and attempting to confine her identity within entertainment industry boundaries. Third, linguistic patterns reveal deliberate intimidation tactics designed to silence her feminist perspectives and discourage other women from engaging in similar advocacy.

Furthermore, the analysis reveals how misogynistic commentary reflects deeper anxieties about social change and the potential disruption of male privilege. Comments frequently demonstrate fear-based responses to gender equality initiatives, utilizing various forms of objectification and sexualization as tools to diminish Watson's intellectual contributions. The intersectional nature of this harassment becomes evident when examining how misogyny intersects with other forms of discrimination, creating compound barriers to effective feminist communication in digital spaces.

The linguistic strategies employed to justify and normalize misogynistic attitudes in social media contexts reveal sophisticated mechanisms of digital oppression that require scholarly attention and analysis. Despite expanding research on online misogyny through Critical Discourse Analysis frameworks, significant gaps remain in understanding how misogynistic discourse specifically targets feminist activism by female celebrities on visual-centric platforms like Instagram. While existing studies have examined general patterns of online sexism, they often fail to capture the unique manifestations of misogyny directed at public figures advocating for gender equality. Megarry, 2014 demonstrates how digital environments frequently blur boundaries between incivility and harassment, particularly affecting women who challenge dominant gender ideologies. Veletsianos & Houlden, 2020 further illuminate how relational dynamics of online harassment are shaped by power asymmetries, which become especially critical for visible women in activism and educational fields.

Jane, 2017 provides crucial insights into how digital misogyny has evolved into a systematic form of violence against women, particularly targeting those who challenge patriarchal norms in public spaces. Her analysis of "misogyny online" reveals how digital platforms amplify traditional forms of gender-based harassment while creating new mechanisms for silencing women's voices. This research addresses these gaps by focusing on Emma Watson as a paradigmatic case study that intersects celebrity culture, feminist activism, and social media-based harassment. The analysis contributes to growing literature on online misogyny while providing specific insights into how high-profile feminist advocacy attracts systematic digital abuse designed to maintain patriarchal power structures.

Misogyny, as a complex and pervasive phenomenon, has received extensive scholarly attention in recent years, with researchers developing increasingly sophisticated frameworks for understanding its digital manifestations. Banet-Weiser & Miltner, 2016 conceptualize "networked misogyny" as a set of interconnected practices

and discourses that work systematically to maintain male dominance and female subordination in online environments. This framework proves particularly relevant for analyzing how digital platforms facilitate and amplify gender-based harassment through networked connections and algorithmic amplification.

Building on this foundation, Moloney & Love, 2018 provide a comprehensive categorization of misogynistic discourse into three distinct but interconnected manifestations that will guide this analysis. Superiority-based misogyny manifests through discourse positioning women as inherently inferior to men in terms of intelligence, capability, or moral reasoning. This category includes pseudo-scientific arguments, evolutionary psychology claims, and biological determinism used to justify male dominance in various domains. Oppression-based misogyny operates through language that actively seeks to maintain women's subordinate status by restricting their participation to traditional gender roles.

This manifestation includes direct commands to conform to domestic expectations, resistance to women's advancement in male-dominated fields, and systematic efforts to limit women's social and professional mobility. Stigma-based misogyny employs discourse that attaches negative labels and stereotypes to women who deviate from patriarchal expectations. This category encompasses character assassination based on gender, deployment of gendered slurs, infantilization of women's capabilities, and attribution of negative personality traits based solely on gender identity.

The proliferation of online misogyny has been extensively documented across digital platforms. Ging & Siapera, 2018 highlight how misogynistic discourse on social media platforms is often disguised as legitimate differences of opinion and normalized through humor and memes. These digital spaces function as breeding grounds for hateful ideologies, with technology serving to amplify and accelerate the spread of anti-women sentiment. Dragiewicz et al., 2018 emphasize the urgent need for improved understanding of technology-facilitated abuse, particularly in contexts involving celebrity culture and fan interactions where power dynamics become especially complex. Lewis et al., 2017 further demonstrate how online abuse of feminists represents an emerging form of violence against women and girls, with particular intensity directed at public figures who advocate for gender equality. Their research reveals how digital harassment operates as a systematic mechanism for discouraging women's participation in public discourse and maintaining traditional power structures through intimidation and silencing tactics.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) provides the primary analytical framework for this investigation. According to Lutzky & Lawson, 2019, CDA operates as a research program concerned with demonstrating how discourse constructs, maintains, and sometimes contests social inequalities in both online and offline contexts. Tannen et al., 2015 emphasizes that CDA's critical dimension lies in its explicit focus on social problems and power relations, making it particularly suitable for analyzing discriminatory discourse patterns. KhosraviNik & Esposito, 2018 illustrate how CDA proves particularly valuable for analyzing digitally-mediated power abuse manifesting as misogynistic discourse aimed at silencing and marginalizing women's voices, especially focusing on the construction and maintenance of social inequalities through digital discourse.

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Wodak, 2015highlight that CDA's interdisciplinary approach allows researchers to examine how language functions as a tool of power and control in contemporary digital environments. Their methodological framework emphasizes the importance of analyzing discourse at multiple levels to understand how linguistic choices reflect and reinforce broader social inequalities.

In the context of misogyny studies, Critical Discourse Analysis has proven especially valuable for revealing how language maintains patriarchal power structures.Ging & Siapera, 2018demonstrate how CDA helps explain misogynistic discourse not merely as individual expressions of hatred toward women, but as systematic mechanisms for monitoring and enforcing patriarchal norms through digital platforms. They argue that misogyny functions as an enforcement mechanism punishing women who violate patriarchal expectations, with CDA revealing the specific linguistic strategies through which this enforcement occurs.

This analytical approach proves particularly relevant for examining online discourse where misogynistic language serves to maintain traditional gender relationships—where women are expected to provide traditionally feminine-coded goods and services (attention, admiration, sex, and reproductive labor) while men are positioned to receive them. CDA reveals how language choices in digital spaces reflect and reinforce these patriarchal expectations, particularly when women like Emma Watson challenge traditional gender roles through their activism.

Lazar, 2007 positions misogynistic language within "power-structured relationships" where discourse serves to maintain gender hierarchies through various linguistic strategies. This perspective is supported by KhosraviNik & Esposito, 2018, who highlight how misogynistic discourse in social media operates as "digitally-mediated power abuse" seeking to silence and marginalize women's voices. These power dynamics become particularly visible on online platforms where linguistic patterns systematically support gender-based inequalities through both explicit hatred and subtle forms of delegitimization.

Fairclough's, 1995 three-dimensional framework provides the methodological structure for this analysis. This framework proves particularly suitable for analyzing social media discourse because it accounts for both micro-level linguistic choices and macro-level social power relations, while the discursive practice level captures the unique dynamics of digital platform interactions that shape how misogynistic content is produced, circulated, and consumed in visual-centric environments like Instagram. His model examines discourse at three interrelated levels: textual analysis (vocabulary, grammar, and text structure), discursive practice (how texts are produced and consumed), and sociocultural practice (the broader social, cultural, and political contexts influencing textual production and interpretation).

The textual analysis component focuses on vocabulary (examining word choice and metaphorical language), grammar (analyzing sentence construction, transitivity, and modality), and text structure (investigating organizational properties and cohesion systems). This micro-level analysis reveals how specific linguistic choices construct and maintain power relations within individual comments.

The selection of Instagram as the analytical platform requires specific theoretical consideration. Tiidenberg & Baym, 2017 argue that Instagram's visual-centric nature and commenting features create unique dynamics for self-presentation and audience

interaction that differ significantly from text-based platforms. These platform-specific affordances shape how misogynistic discourse manifests and spreads, with visual content providing additional contexts for harassment and commentary. Massanari, 2017 contends that the architecture and governance of social media platforms play crucial roles in fostering or mitigating toxic technocultures, including those perpetuating misogyny.

Instagram's corporate policies, algorithmic systems, and content moderation practices directly influence which forms of misogynistic discourse become visible and which are suppressed or removed. Duguay, 2016 demonstrates how Instagram's affordances, including its commenting system, facilitate particular forms of interaction that can either enhance or constrain meaningful dialogue around gender issues. Comments sections often become contested spaces where feminist discourses and misogynistic counter-discourses compete for legitimacy (Banet-Weiser & Miltner, 2016). Carah & Shaul, 2016 highlight how Instagram's corporate ownership by Meta influences its policies around hate speech and harassment, creating tensions between free expression and user safety that directly impact how misogyny manifests and is addressed on the platform. These corporate governance structures ultimately determine what forms of speech are considered acceptable within Instagram's ecosystem, making platform-specific analysis essential for understanding contemporary digital misogyny.

Despite the growing body of research on online misogyny and Critical Discourse Analysis applications to digital harassment, this study addresses three critical gaps that remain underexplored in current scholarship. First, while existing research predominantly examines misogynistic discourse on text-based platforms such as Twitter and Reddit, there is insufficient attention to how visual-centric platforms like Instagram create unique manifestations of gender-based harassment through the intersection of visual content and textual commentary. This study provides the first systematic analysis of misogyny specifically within Instagram's visual-textual interface, revealing how the platform's affordances—particularly its commenting system beneath visual posts—generate distinct dynamics for misogynistic discourse that differ significantly from purely text-based environments. Second, although general patterns of online misogyny have been documented across various contexts, there remains a significant gap in understanding how misogynistic discourse specifically targets female celebrities who engage in feminist activism, particularly examining the intersection of celebrity culture and gender equality advocacy.

This research offers the first comprehensive Critical Discourse Analysis of misogyny directed at a celebrity feminist activist on Instagram, using Emma Watson's dual identity as entertainer and UN Women Goodwill Ambassador to reveal how misogynistic comments exploit the perceived contradiction between celebrity status and intellectual authority in feminist discourse. Third, previous studies often focus on single manifestations of online misogyny or employ binary categorizations that fail to capture the complex, multifaceted nature of digital gender-based harassment.

This study represents the first systematic application of Moloney & Love, 2018 tripartite framework—encompassing superiority-based, oppression-based, and stigma-based misogyny—to Instagram comments using Fairclough's three-dimensional CDA model, providing both theoretical depth and methodological innovation for understanding how different types of misogyny manifest linguistically in digital spaces.

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By addressing these interconnected gaps, this research contributes novel insights into the specific linguistic mechanisms through which gender-based harassment operates in contemporary visual-centric social media environments, particularly when targeting celebrity feminist voices, thereby advancing both feminist media studies and critical discourse analysis applications to digital harassment research.

This comprehensive theoretical and methodological framework provides the foundation for analyzing misogynistic comments on Emma Watson's Instagram posts, revealing how digital platforms facilitate gender-based harassment and how linguistic strategies serve to maintain patriarchal power structures in contemporary online discourse.

2. Method

This study apply a qualitative approach, using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to analyze misogynistic comments on Emma Watson's Instagram posts. Following Fairclough's, 1995 three-dimensional framework implemented in his analysis of gendered cyberhate, this study analyzing discourse at textual (what was written or texted), discursive (the social interaction in which the written messages are texted), and social practice levels.

Participants in this research were misogynistic comments from Emma Watson's Instagram posts on January 1st and 3rd, 2022. The sampling focused on comments demonstrating misogynistic practices across three primary categories: superiority-based, oppression-based, and stigma-based misogyny.

This study acknowledges Instagram's algorithm-mediated visibility and the potential for comment deletion or moderation to affect data availability. The visual-centric nature of Instagram means comments exist in dialogue with visual content, creating interpretive contexts that differ from text-only platforms.

The selection process aimed to capture the meaning of discriminatory language that differ from typical positive or supportive comments, providing a targeted examination of misogynistic discourse on social media

The data of misogynistic comments collected from Emma Watson's Instagram posts (@emmawatson) on January 1st and January 3rd, 2022. Comments were selected using purposive sampling based on the following criteria:

1. Comments written in English
2. Comments containing explicit or implicit misogynistic content
3. Comments with significant engagement (superiority, oppression, or stigma)
4. Comments posted on posts where Watson discusses feminist issues or activism

Following the methodology for analyzing social media discourse, the data collection process involves the following:

1. Screenshot documentation of selected comments
2. Categorization of comments based on Moloney & Love's framework of misogyny:

- Superiority-based
- Oppression-based
- Stigma-based

3. Calculation of frequency and percentage for each category above
4. Identidying the unit of analysis:

- Vocabulary
- Grammar
- Text structure

5. Grouping based on the three categories above

Analyzing the meaning and function of each element.

Comment categorization was validated through multiple analytical passes, with each comment examined for linguistic markers corresponding to Moloney & Love's (2018) framework. Potential selection bias was addressed by including comments across varying engagement levels and linguistic sophistication to ensure representative analysis of misogynistic discourse patterns

3. Results

Overview of Collected Data

a) Total number of analyzed comments :14

- January 1st Post: 2 comments
- January 3rd Post: 12 comments

This sample size follows qualitative CDA principles where depth of analysis takes precedence over breadth, allowing for comprehensive linguistic examination of each comment across Fairclough's three analytical dimensions. The limited sample enables detailed textual analysis while providing sufficient variety across misogyny categories to establish meaningful patterns.

b) Comments distribution: Various posts related to "sexual harrasment" and "women in STEM" topics

c) Platform: Social media (Instagram Application)

d) Temporal and Contextual Analysis:

The January 1st post addressing sexual harassment generated 2 comments within 24 hours, while the January 3rd post about women in STEM attracted 12 comments over 48 hours, suggesting that STEM-related feminist content triggers more sustained misogynistic responses. Both posts featured professional imagery of Watson in educational or advocacy contexts, with comments specifically targeting the intersection of her celebrity status and intellectual authority.

Table 1. Distribution of Misogynistic Comments

Category of Misogyny	Frequency	Percentage
Superiority-based	5	35.71%
Oppression-based	5	35.71%
Stigma-based	4	28.57%

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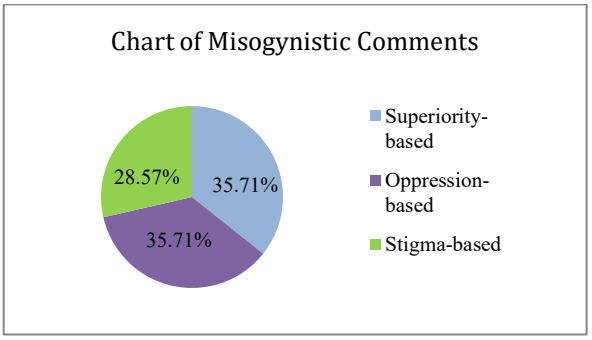


Chart: *MisogynisticComments onEmma Watson's Instagram*

These patterns align with misogynistic discourse documented on Twitter and Reddit (Ging & Siapera, 2018), yet Instagram's visual-textual interface creates unique manifestations where comments explicitly reference Watson's appearance alongside intellectual delegitimization, demonstrating platform-specific harassment dynamics.

4. Discussion

Analysis of Misogynistic Comment Types

The analysis of misogynistic comments on Emma Watson's Instagram posts reveals sophisticated patterns of digital gender-based harassment that align with broader theoretical frameworks of online misogyny. The distribution of superiority-based (35.71%), oppression-based (35.71%), and stigma-based (28.57%) misogyny demonstrates the multifaceted nature of digital discrimination against feminist activists. This relatively even distribution suggests that misogynistic discourse employs diverse strategies to maintain patriarchal power structures, as theorized by Banet-Weiser & Miltner, 2016 in their conceptualization of "*networked misogyny*."

The findings support Jane, 2016 assertion that digital misogyny has evolved into a systematic form of violence against women, particularly targeting those who challenge patriarchal norms in public spaces. The concentrated targeting of Watson's posts about sexual harassment and women in STEM fields indicates that misogynistic responses are not random but strategically deployed against specific feminist messages that threaten existing gender hierarchies.

a) Superiority-based misogyny

Comments that maintain men's superiority over women or women's inherent inferiority constitute 35.71% of the analyzed discourse, revealing how biological determinism and pseudo-scientific arguments are weaponized to naturalize gender inequality. As Moloney & Love, 2018 argue, superiority-based misogyny operates through discourse positioning women as inherently inferior to men in terms of intelligence, capability, or moral reasoning.

The prevalence of this category reflects what Ging & Siapera, 2018 identify as the disguising of misogynistic discourse as legitimate differences of opinion through seemingly rational arguments. Comments employing evolutionary psychology claims and biological determinism exemplify how scientific-sounding rhetoric can mask discriminatory ideologies, creating what KhosraviNik & Esposito, 2018 term "*digitally-*

mediated power abuse" that appears intellectually credible while maintaining oppressive structures.

Key indicators based on research by Jaki et al., 2019 and Krook & Sanín, 2020:

1. Explicit claims of male intellectual or physical superiority.
2. Devaluation of women's professional achievements.
3. Use of evolutionary psychology or biological determinism to justify male dominance.
4. Assertions of male natural leadership abilities.
5. Dismissal of women's expertise in professional fields.

Example 1: Infrastructure Knowledge

Comment by *@dannyp09876*: "Do you even know how to run the infrastructure cause you act like it's that simple like women can just get a good grip of and infrastructure men have learned and mastered for thousand of years"

Misogyny analysis:

This comment regarding infrastructure knowledge demonstrates a manifestation of superiority-based misogyny through its assertion of male dominance in technical domains. By employing phrases such as "*men have learned and mastered for thousand of years*," the commenter constructs a historical narrative that deliberately excludes women's contributions to infrastructure development. This rhetoric serves to naturalize gender disparities in technical fields while simultaneously delegitimizing women's capacity to understand and manage complex systems.

The comment exemplifies what Tannen et al., 2015 identifies as the reproduction of social inequalities through discourse, where historical narratives are selectively constructed to justify contemporary discrimination. The temporal framing of "*thousand of years*" creates an artificial legitimacy for male dominance while erasing women's documented contributions to technological and infrastructural development throughout history.

Text analysis:

Vocabulary	Grammar	Text Structure
The comment use strategic linguistic choices that emphasize male expertise through exception and possessive language. Words like "*you*" and "*learned and mastered*" create a power structure linguistic that claim women's incapabilities. The vocabulary intentionally create a narrative of male superiority in technical domains.	The comment (grammatically) used comparative and conditional constructions that implicitly positioning women as technically inferior. The comment's interrogative opening "*Do you even know*" that combined with the personal statement create a grammatical structure that questions women's capabilities. The grammatical structure creates a meaning that male knowledge is absolute.	The text is structured as a challenge that unaccepting women's potential technical expertise. The comment creates a macro-level narrative that naturalizes gender gap in technical fields by using a historical narrative about male mastery. The structure purposefully frames women's potential contributions as incapability and unoriginal.

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Example 2: Military Training Standards

Comment by *@dannyp09876*:"Your all shit at it tho you haven't proved anything plus army training has went down in difficulty cause you guys can't even fuckin complete the training"

Misogyny analysis:

This comment concerning military training standards exemplifies superiority-based misogyny through its explicit questioning of women's physical and tactical capabilities. The claim that training standards have declined due to women's participation represents a common verbal strategy that frames female inclusion as inherently compromising institutional excellence. This comment use unreal claims about performance standards to justify existing gender power structure in military institutions, while con temporary dismissing women's demonstrated achievements in military contexts.

The discourse reflects what Dragiewicz et al., 2018 identify as technology-facilitated abuse that seeks to maintain traditional power structures through systematic delegitimization. The comment's aggressive tone and absolute statements create what Fairclough, 1995 describes as a textual manifestation of social power relations, where linguistic choices serve to reinforce existing hierarchies.

Text analysis:

Vocabulary	Grammar	Text Structure
Aggressive and dismissive lexical choices like "*shit*" and "*can't even fuckin*" indicate a vocabulary designed to abuse and exclude. These words are strategically selected to communicate disrespect and challenge women's physical and professional capabilities in military contexts.	The grammatical structure relies on absolute statements that present opinion as accepted fact. The grammar creates a linguistic environment that eliminates potential counter-arguments about women's military competence by using unqualified language.	The text is structured as a direct assault on institutional inclusivity. The comment's narrative structure frames gender diversity as a threat to institutional integrity by suggesting that training standards have been compromised by women's inclusion.

Example 3: Work Ethic Comparison

Comment by *@nuk_phd*:"@amelia_johnson08 not a job lol women don't want to work like men women can only complain and always complain"

Misogyny analysis:

In this example, the commenter articulates superiority-based misogyny through a direct comparison of gendered work ethics. The statement "*women don't want to work like men*" establishes a false dichotomy between male and female professional capabilities. By reducing women's workplace contributions to complaints, the commenter reinforces harmful stereotypes about gender-based work performance while elevating male labor as the implicit standard of professional achievement. This rhetoric serves to maintain existing workplace hierarchies by questioning women's fundamental capacity for meaningful professional contribution.

This comment demonstrates what Megarry, 2014 identifies as the blurring of boundaries between incivility and harassment in digital environments, where seemingly casual observations mask systematic attempts to delegitimize women's professional contributions. The generalization of women's work behavior reflects broader patterns of

what Powell & Henry, 2019 term technology-facilitated discrimination that maintains gender-based exclusion through seemingly rational workplace assessments.

Text analysis:

Vocabulary	Grammar	Text Structure
Use generalized and stereotypical language that reduces women's professional capabilities to a monolithic characterization. The words "*don't want to work*" and "*always complain"* create a lexical landscape that systematically discredit women's work and professional motivation.	Uses broad grammatical structures that present generalizations as absolute truths. The grammatical structure eliminates individual variation, creating a linguistic mechanism that artificially homogenizes women's work experiences and attitudes.	Structures the text as a dismissive categorical statement, positioning women's professional contributions as less valuable. The structure serves to quickly discredit and dismiss women's workplace potential.

Example 4: Biological Determinism

Comment by *@e04al*: "Because women are interested in people and men are interested in things. Stop tryna force people to change when thats how they are made. You can only offer equal opportunity. To strive for equal outcome is literally social engineering which is messed up as shit."

Misogyny analysis:

This comment represents a sophisticated deployment of superiority-based misogyny through pseudo-scientific argumentation. The assertion that "*women are interested in people and men are interested in things*" employs biological determinism to naturalize gender segregation in technical fields. By framing efforts toward equal representation as "social engineering," the commenter positions gender equality initiatives as unnatural interventions. This demonstrates how scientific-sounding arguments are often utilized to maintain existing gender hierarchies while presenting discrimination as a natural outcome of biological differences.

The discourse exemplifies what Wodak, 2015 identify as the interdisciplinary nature of power abuse, where seemingly academic arguments are employed to justify discriminatory practices. The comment's structure reflects what Lutzky & Lawson, 2019 describe as the sophisticated linguistic strategies employed to naturalize gender inequalities through appeals to biological essentialism that appear intellectually credible while maintaining oppressive structures.

Text analysis:

Vocabulary	Grammar	Text Structure
Utilizes pseudo-scientific terminology that appears objective while maintaining inherently discriminatory assumptions. Phrases like "interested in people" and "interested in things" create a veneer of scientific legitimacy to naturalize gender segregation.	Constructs grammatically complex sentences that embed discriminatory assertions within seemingly rational arguments. The grammatical structure allows discriminatory ideas to be presented as logical, neutral observations.	Develops a macro-narrative that frames gender equality as an unnatural intervention. The text is structured to present discrimination as a rational, scientifically-grounded perspective rather than a biased viewpoint.

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Example 5: Economic Achievement Attribution

Comment by *@dannyp09876*:"@nirodha_samadhi lol clown the reason you have money a house a job clothes food water is because of men"

Misogyny analysis:

This comment attributing modern comforts to male achievement exemplifies superiority-based misogyny through historical revisionism. By claiming that basic necessities exist "*because of men*," the commenter engages in systematic erasure of women's historical and contemporary contributions to economic and social development. This rhetoric serves to construct a narrative of male supremacy by simplifying complex historical processes into gendered achievements, thereby reinforcing contemporary power structures through selective historical interpretation.

The comment demonstrates what Massanari, 2017 identifies as how digital platforms can support toxic technocultures through algorithmic amplification of discriminatory content. The reductive attribution of civilizational progress exclusively to male achievement reflects broader patterns of historical erasure that maintain contemporary gender inequalities through selective narratives about social development.

Text analysis:

Vocabulary	Grammar	Text Structure
Use possessive and rejection language that associate with social progress only to male achievement. Words like "*you have*" and "*because of men*" create a linguistic framework that erases women's historical and contemporary contributions.	Uses reductive grammatical structures that simplify complex historical processes into simplistic gendered narratives, that eliminate meaning and systemic complexity.	The text structure serves to strengthen contemporary power dynamics through selective historical interpretation. Positioning men as the only economic and social architects.

b) Oppression-based misogyny

Comments that seek to maintain or justify the oppression of women represent 35.71% of the analyzed discourse, revealing how digital platforms facilitate active attempts to restrict women's social and professional mobility. This category aligns with what Lewis et al., 2017 identify as an emerging form of violence against women and girls, where online abuse operates as a systematic mechanism for discouraging women's participation in public discourse.

The prevalence of oppression-based misogyny in responses to Watson's feminist advocacy demonstrates how digital harassment functions as what Veletsianos & Houlden, 2020 describe as relational dynamics shaped by power asymmetries. These comments reveal sophisticated mechanisms of social control that extend beyond individual harassment to represent systematic efforts to maintain patriarchal structures through intimidation and silencing tactics.

Key indicators based on research by Powell & Henry, 2019 and Moloney & Love, 2018:

1. Attempts to enforce traditional gender roles.
2. Active resistance to women's advancement in male-dominated fields.
3. Normalization of discriminatory practices through systemic barriers.

4. Explicit calls for limiting women's social/professional mobility.
5. Use of institutional power to maintain gender hierarchies.

Example 1: Domestic Role Enforcement

Comment by *@jammer245*:"OR YOU COULD BE QUIET AND MAKE SOME FOOD!! @emmawatson"

Misogyny analysis:

This comment represents oppression-based misogyny through its aggressive enforcement of traditional gender roles. The use of capital letters and exclamation marks emphasizes the forceful nature of this attempt to silence women's public voice. This rhetoric exemplifies how oppression-based misogyny often combines domestic role enforcement with attempts to limit women's participation in broader social discourse.

The comment demonstrates what Tiidenberg & Baym, 2017 identify as the unique dynamics of visual-centric platforms where harassment can be both personal and public. The aggressive tone reflects what Duguay, 2016 describes as how platform affordances can be manipulated to create hostile environments for marginalized voices, transforming social media spaces into mechanisms of social control.

Text analysis:

Vocabulary	Grammar	Text Structure
Uses aggressive and capitalized language that pretend shouting, using linguistic abuse to force dominance. The vocabulary is designed to intimidate and silence.	Creating a grammatical structure that commands submission and forces traditional gender roles useing imperative mood with forceful punctuation. The grammatical construction transforms a statement into a forceful order.	The text structures as a direct assault on women's public participation using minimal linguistic resources to maximum oppressive effect. The structure apply the message of control and subordination.

Example 2: Biological Disrespect

Comment by *@_rss_bjp_lover*:"Just give the testosterone"

Misogyny analysis:

This comment demonstrates oppression-based misogyny through its reductive biological determinism. By suggesting that female success requires male hormones, the commenter attempts to maintain gender-based oppression through biological essentialism. This rhetoric frames women's natural state as inherently insufficient for achievement, thereby justifying systematic exclusion from certain domains.

The discourse reflects what Drakett et al., 2018 identify as the deployment of pseudo-scientific arguments to naturalize gender inequalities. The comment's brevity masks its sophisticated oppressive function, demonstrating how minimal linguistic resources can be employed to maximum discriminatory effect in digital environments.

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Text analysis:

Vocabulary	Grammar	Text Structure
The vocabulary strips away individual complexity by presenting women as fundamentally deficient, and reduces women to biological characteristics through minimalist language.	Uses an extremely compress grammatical structure that implies women's incapability. The shortness suggests that women's achievement need biological "correction".	Constructs a text that suggests biological intervention as the solution to discover female incapability by creating a systemic exclusion narrative.

Example 3: Traditional Values Promotion

Comment by *@conallross01*:"Reject modernity embrace masculinity"

Misogyny analysis:

This comment reflects oppression-based misogyny through its explicit rejection of social progress. By positioning masculinity in opposition to modernity, the commenter advocates for a return to traditional gender hierarchies. This rhetoric frames gender equality as a modern corruption of natural order, thereby justifying continued oppression through appeals to traditional values.

The binary construction of modernity versus masculinity demonstrates what Ging & Siapera, 2018 identify as the sophisticated linguistic strategies employed to naturalize oppressive ideologies. The comment reflects broader anxieties about social change and represents what Jane, 2016 describes as systematic efforts to maintain patriarchal norms through digital intimidation.

Text analysis:

Vocabulary	Grammar	Text Structure
The vocabulary frames gender equality as a threat to traditional power structures by using filled terms that create a binary opposition between "*modernity*" and "*masculinity*".	The grammatical structure eliminates meaning and presents a oppressive perspective by utilizes a brief crucial structure that presents an oppressive view of gender roles.	Develops a macro-narrative that positions traditional masculinity as a refusal strategy against social progress, creating a text that maintain gender-based oppression.

Example 4: Male Dominance Claim

Comment by *@hogsqueezer6969*:"MEN MEN MEN!"

Misogyny analysis:

The repetitive word "*MEN MEN MEN!*" represents oppression-based misogyny through its attempt to dominate social space. The comment's aggressive repetition serves to assert male supremacy while simultaneously attempting to exclude women from discourse. This demonstrates how linguistic strategies can be employed to maintain oppressive structures through territorial claims in social spaces.

The comment exemplifies what KhosraviNik & Esposito, 2018 describe as digitally-mediated power abuse that seeks to silence and marginalize women's voices through aggressive territorial claims. The repetitive structure transforms a simple word into a weapon of social control, demonstrating how minimal linguistic resources can be weaponized for maximum oppressive impact.

Text analysis:

Vocabulary	Grammar	Text Structure
The vocabulary is complexity exposed by focusing on pure claim of male presence using repetitive and aggressive terminology that serves as a linguistic tool of domination.	Uses repetition as a grammatical strategy of linguistic occupation by transforming a simple phrase into a social space claiming act.	Structures the text as a rhythmic order of male supremacy by using minimal linguistic resources to maximum performative effect.

Example 5: Professional Discrimination

Comment by *@saint_catherines_sword*: "Yet, here you are...an actress."

Misogyny analysis:

This comment demonstrates oppression-based misogyny through professional devaluation. By emphasizing the subject's profession as an actress, the commenter attempts to delegitimize her intellectual contributions. This rhetoric demonstrates how professional discrimination operates to maintain oppressive structures by questioning women's authority to speak on matters beyond their stereotypical domains.

The ellipsis and dismissive tone reflect what Krook & Sanín, 2020 identify as the sophisticated linguistic strategies employed to delegitimize women's political and social contributions. The comment exemplifies how seemingly neutral professional observations can function as mechanisms of oppression when deployed to restrict women's participation in public discourse.

Text analysis:

Vocabulary	Grammar	Text Structure
Misuses professional titles to reduce intellectual credibility through gendered language.	The grammar creates a subtle mechanism of discredit. Constructs a grammatically minimal statement that questions women's credibility through implied critique.	Develops a text that systematically attempts to restrict women's intellectual contribution by reducing their identity to a stereotypical professional role.

c) Stigma-based:

Comments that extend negative stereotypes about women constitute 28.57% of the analyzed discourse, revealing how digital platforms facilitate the deployment of gendered slurs, character assassination, and systematic efforts to attach negative labels to women who deviate from patriarchal expectations. This category demonstrates what Ging & Siapera, 2018 identify as the normalization of discriminatory discourse through humor, sarcasm, and seemingly casual observations that mask systematic attempts to stigmatize feminist advocacy.

The prevalence of stigma-based misogyny reflects broader patterns of what Drakett et al., 2018 describe as the construction of gender in internet culture through discriminatory memes and casual sexism. These comments reveal how digital environments can amplify traditional forms of gender-based harassment while creating new mechanisms for character assassination and social stigmatization.

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Key indicatorsbased on researchby Ging & Siapera, 2018 and Drakett et al., 2018):

1. Use of gendered slurs and derogatory language.
2. Deployment of negative gender stereotypes.
3. Character assassination based on gender.
4. Infantilization of women's capabilities.
5. Attribution of negative personality traits based on gender.

Example 1: Career Dismissal

Comment by *@o.pinkyway.o*: "Your career?"

Misogyny analysis:

This comment shows stigma-based misogyny through its implicit questioning of Emma Watson's professional. The short and sarcastic tone of the comment serve to discredit Emma Watson's career aspirations and achievements. This rhetoric exemplifies how subtle linguistic strategies can be used to maintain negative stereotypes about women's professional capabilities.

The comment reflects what Megarry, 2014) identifies as the blurring of boundaries between incivility and harassment in digital environments, where seemingly innocent questions function as mechanisms of professional delegitimization. The interrogative structure allows the commenter to express dismissal while maintaining plausible deniability about discriminatory intent.

Text analysis:

Vocabulary	Grammar	Text Structure
Uses minimalist and sarcastic language that transforms a short question into a weapon of discredit. The vocabulary strengthen linguistic (word/phrase) shortness to challenge professional credibility.	The grammatical construction creates meaning through what is unsaid rather than explicitly stated by utilized an interrogative structure that implies dismissal through grammatical economy.	Structures the text as a micro-aggressive challenge by using minimal linguistic resources to maximum stigmatizing effect.

Example 2: STEM Stereotype

Comment by *@joblakelisbon*: "do women need rainbows and butterflies to take an interest in STEM? I find that phenomenally patronising."

Misogyny analysis:

The comment "*rainbows and butterflies*" in STEM represents stigma-based misogyny by suggesting that women require special aesthetic considerations to engage with technical fields, the commenter maintain stereotypes about women's intellectual capabilities. This show how seemingly concerned criticism can mask underlying discriminatory perceptions about gender-based learning preferences.

The discourse exemplifies what Powell & Henry, 2019identify as the sophisticated mechanisms through which technology-facilitated discrimination operates, where concern for women's dignity becomes a vehicle for maintaining exclusionary practices. The comment reflects broader patterns of what Moloney & Love, 2018 describe as the

deployment of seemingly protective rhetoric to justify continued gender-based discrimination.

Text analysis:

Vocabulary	Grammar	Text Structure
The vocabulary creates a patronizing linguistic landscape uses humiliate metaphorical language "*rainbows and butterflies*" that reduces women's intellectual engagement to childlike terms.	The grammatical structure allows discrimination to be presented as objective observation. Constructs a rhetorical question that masks discriminatory behind a cover of disturbed critique.	Develops a text that contemporary appears supportive while fundamentally reduce women's intellectual capabilities in STEM fields.

Example 3: Gender Identity Questioning

Comment by *@gender.critical.lesbian*: "Do you even know what woman is?"

Misogyny analysis:

This comment indicate stigma-based misogyny by questioning the definition of woman, the commenter attempts to reduce broader feminist advocacy. This comment demonstrates how gender-critical arguments can be used to weaken collective efforts toward gender equality through divisive identity politics.

The comment reflects what identify as emerging forms of violence against women that operate through systematic attempts to undermine feminist solidarity and collective action. The questioning of basic identity categories represents what describe as technology-facilitated coercive control that seeks to fragment feminist movements through internal disputes.

Text analysis:

Vocabulary	Grammar	Text Structure
The vocabulary creates linguistic boundaries designed to question and limit gender identity by using discriminatory language that question about female's basic identity structure.	The grammatical structure uses a direct construction seeks to weaken identity claims interrogative structure that transforms a question into a tool of "*historically adaptable*".	The text structures as a guard/protecting mechanism that attempts to describe and limit the parameters of gender identity.

Example 4: Intersectional Discrimination

Comment by *@alessandra_zubovich*: "What's woman? So you want women in STEM fields unless it's a man who wishes he was a woman? Only ultra privileged wealthy people can be vested in the contradictory gender blender trans ideology, because it doesn't affect them, other than giving them woke virtue signaling points."

Misogyny analysis:

This comment combining transphobia with misogynyk represents complex stigma-based discrimination. The commenter attempts to delegitimize both transgender rights and women's advancement in STEM fields by characterizing gender equality efforts as "*virtue signaling*" by individuals privileged. This comment demonstrates how multiple forms of discrimination can intersect to create comprehensive barriers to gender equality initiatives.

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The comment also exemplifies what Ging & Siapera (2018) identify as "sophisticated linguistic strategies" used in online misogyny, where complex rhetorical devices mask hate speech as reasoned critique. By framing the rejection of trans rights and women in STEM as a stance against "woke virtue signaling," the commenter deploys coded language to obscure overt bigotry. Additionally, the post illustrates what KhosraviNik & Esposito (2018) term "digitally-mediated power abuse", as social media platforms become spaces where discriminatory ideologies are amplified under the guise of free expression. Through this comment, the user exercises discursive power to invalidate marginalized identities while reinforcing dominant narratives under a pseudo-intellectual facade.

Text analysis:

Vocabulary	Grammar	Text Structure
The vocabulary creates a pragmatic linguistic mechanism of rejection by using complex and intersectional discrimination language that blend multiple oppressive narratives.	The grammatical structure implied the meaning forms of stigmatization by constructing compound and complex sentences that set multiple layers of discrimination.	Develop a broad text that contemporary attacks transgender rights and women's professional progress, creating a multi-layered mechanism of oppression.

5. Conclusion

This research reveals sophisticated patterns of digital gender-based harassment that function as systematic mechanisms for maintaining patriarchal power structures. The even distribution of superiority-based (35.71%), oppression-based (35.71%), and stigma-based (28.57%) misogyny demonstrates that online harassment operates through multifaceted strategies rather than random individual hostility.

The analysis shows how seemingly casual comments function as weapons of social control through strategic linguistic choices. Superiority-based comments weaponized pseudo-scientific rhetoric to naturalize gender inequalities, while oppression-based comments aggressively enforced traditional gender roles by questioning Watson's transition from actress to activist. Stigma-based comments employed character assassination and intersectional discrimination to delegitimize feminist messaging through normalized discriminatory discourse.

Watson's dual identity as entertainer and UN Women Goodwill Ambassador makes her particularly vulnerable to discrediting practices that exploit perceived contradictions between celebrity status and intellectual authority. Instagram's visual-centric platform creates unique manifestations of harassment through the intersection of visual content and textual commentary, transforming social media spaces into mechanisms of social control.

These findings highlight the inadequacy of current content moderation approaches for addressing systematic gender-based discrimination that operates through seemingly legitimate discourse, and suggest specific recommendations for Instagram's governance framework: (1) developing machine learning algorithms trained to detect subtle linguistic patterns of systematic harassment, (2) implementing context-aware moderation that considers cumulative harassment effects rather than isolated comments, and (3) investigating and addressing how Instagram's visual-textual interface—through the interaction of images, captions, and comments—facilitates specific forms of gender-based

harassment targeting feminist celebrities, and incorporating these insights into platform moderation and design policies.

The research calls for more nuanced digital governance policies and comprehensive approaches to counter sophisticated linguistic strategies that maintain oppressive structures while appearing as acceptable public discourse. Future research should examine multiple public figures and develop effective strategies for countering online misogyny to create more inclusive digital environments supporting feminist advocacy. Specifically, comparative studies across different social media platforms, analysis of misogynistic discourse targeting celebrities from diverse racial and cultural backgrounds, and longitudinal studies tracking how harassment patterns evolve in response to platform policy changes would significantly advance understanding of digital gender-based violence. Additionally, research examining effective counter-speech strategies and community-based resistance to online misogyny could inform both platform design and activist strategies.

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