

COPING WITH COVID-19: GENDER AND THE PRAGMATICS OF HUMOR IN MOROCCAN SOCIAL MEDIA

Zineb El Abboubi¹, Ahmadou Bouylmani², Mohammed Dardar³

Chouaib Doukkali University

Abstract

There is often an upsurge of humor inspired by tragic circumstances. Soon after the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, humorous posts about the pandemic spread massively on social media. This paper explores contemporary gender ideologies as portrayed in social media humor in light of the Coronavirus pandemic. In particular, this paper focuses on how gender stereotypes and ideologies are constructed and sustained through humor built upon gendered representations. The jokes, memes, and news items posted through social media platforms were analyzed using a Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis approach (FCDA) (Lazar, 2007). Data comprised memes and jokes sampled from *Instagram*, *Facebook*, and *Reddit*. The findings reveal a complex configuration of factors, such as prevailing socio-cultural and ideological contexts, which, closely interwoven, form the tapestry of gender order and gender roles in Moroccan society. The analysis revealed that sexist humor propagates baseless generalizations and gender stereotypes. It also amalgamates demeaning language with humor to communicate sexist antagonism. Finally, the study contends that while humor plays a strong role as a coping mechanism during a tragedy, it also enhances the subtle propelling of

¹ ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6539-7393>, Email: elabboubizineb@gmail.com

² Email: bouylmani.a@ucd.ac.ma

³ ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6485-5305>, Email: derdar.m@ucd.ac.ma

gender stereotypes that ultimately contribute to sustaining the current existing gender *status quo*.

Keywords: gender ideologies, humor, Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis, social media, Covid-19

Resumo

Muitas vezes há uma onda de humor inspirada por circunstâncias trágicas. Logo após o início da pandemia de Covid-19, espalharam-se massivamente publicações humorísticas sobre a pandemia nas redes sociais. Este artigo explora as ideologias de gênero contemporâneas conforme retratadas no humor das redes sociais, à luz da pandemia de coronavírus. Em particular, este artigo centra-se em como os estereótipos e ideologias de gênero são construídos e sustentados por meio do humor construído sobre representações de gênero. As piadas, *memes* e notícias publicadas nas redes sociais foram analisadas usando uma abordagem de Análise Crítica do Discurso Feminista (FCDA) (Lazar, 2007). Os dados incluíam *memes* e piadas retiradas do *Instagram*, *Facebook* e *Reddit*. Os resultados revelam uma configuração complexa de fatores, como contextos socioculturais e ideológicos predominantes que, intimamente entrelaçados, formam a tapeçaria da ordem de gênero e dos papéis de gênero na sociedade marroquina. A análise revelou que o humor machista propaga generalizações infundadas e estereótipos de gênero e combina linguagem humilhante com humor para comunicar o antagonismo sexista. Por fim, o estudo permite afirmar que, embora o humor desempenhe um papel importante como mecanismo para enfrentar uma tragédia, também aumenta a dissiminação sutil de estereótipos de gênero que, em última análise, contribuem para sustentar o atual *status quo* de gênero.

Palavras-chave: ideologias de género, humor, Análise Crítica Feminista do Discurso, redes sociais, Covid-19

0. Introduction

Humor can be regarded as one of the most common coping mechanisms. A coping mechanism is a strategy a person often resorts to when faced with stress and/or trauma in order to be able to manage difficult and painful emotions. Living through a pandemic can be considered a trauma, and one that generated a spectrum of emotions people needed to cope with. While many question the appropriateness of humor during crises (Britton, 2003; Barwick, 2012; Kuiper, 2012; Kuiper et al., 2004; Kuiper & Martin, 1998; Zeigler-Hill et al., 2013), it is also relevant to question the nature of humor used when laughing in the face of a global pandemic. Years of studies have confirmed that humor has a positive effect on traumatic or stressful situations (Kuiper & Martin, 1993; Lefcourt & Martin, 1986; Martin & Lefcourt, 1983; Newman & Stone, 1996; Thorson, Powell, Sarmany-Schuller & Hampes, 1997); it helps individuals produce endorphins, decreases the production of Cortisol which is a stress-related hormone, and enhances immunity (Martin, 2001). Humor also reduces affective and physiological arousal that could generate feelings like tension (Abel, 2002). Due to its ability to decrease negative emotions and resolve inner conflict, humor can have a significant impact on cognitive change which plays a major role in developing coping skills (Pietrantonio & Dionigi, 2006).

Laughter and humor are essential to protecting one's mental well-being and maintaining positive psychological functioning crucial to daily life as well as coping with trauma (Frankl, 1963; Freud, 1928). However, not all humor is positive humor. The timely and appropriate use of humor can be an asset. Likewise, distasteful or disparaging humor

can be a significant liability. When the humor, for instance, only targets women, the whole gender group becomes a target, and such humor can, in fact, undermine women's sense of self-worth, it can also affect men's perceptions of their immediate social surroundings and allow them to feel comfortable with behavioural and linguistic expressions of sexism without the threat of disapproval.

Sexist humor is oftentimes a subtle contextual cue that can insert itself without being detected as sexism. This type of humor can induce a state of self-objectification and a reproduction of rigid gender roles by (1) portraying women in stereotypical gender roles, (2) women's objectification and sexualisation, and (3) depicting specific bias and stereotypes of inferiority (Bemiller & Schneider, 2010; Greenwood & Isbell, 2002). This type of humor has negative social repercussions. It is accompanied by discriminative cues and is often met with a non-critical mindset, since jokes relax the natural response to sexism.

It is worth noting that the investigation of humor presupposes the investigation of a humorous discourse. Undoubtedly, language has the ability to veil certain realities whether permissible or not. In this respect, this study's aim is to investigate the critical issue of sexism in Moroccan cyber humor during the pandemic. The objective is to critically examine the social functioning of humor in this context and attempt to understand its uses and manifestations.

The study uses Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis (FCDA) to highlight the social representation of men and women in a set of electronically-circulated jokes. Feminist linguistics makes use of different approaches to conduct studies. Feminist Pragmatics was first introduced by Christie (2000), while Lazar (2005) developed Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis, which was the approach chosen for this study. Through FCDA, the study focuses on the place of power and context in understanding and analyzing gendered humor. The

analysis also acknowledges the relevance of context in the production of this type of humor. This investigation reflects the ways in which humor can affect attitudes towards issues like sexism.

Hostility and discrimination that cannot be directly expressed can subtly and safely be expressed through humor. Cantor and Zillman (1976) conducted studies where women were often the center of disparaging humor, which was classified as sexist humor. While sexism in discourse is relatively newly looked upon and analyzed, the gender attitudes are constantly shifting alongside language use. Gender attitudes are becoming more complex in nature compared to the ones illustrated in studies conducted in the previous years.

The paper proceeds as follows: The first section presents a brief account of gender and humor in general and reviews previous studies on gender in cyber humor. The second section describes the research methodology and outlines the use of the framework adopted in this study, which combines Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis (FCDA) and Ambivalent Sexism (AS). It also provides information about the data used in this study and the reason for selecting the investigated jokes. The findings are analyzed and discussed in light of FCDA and AS in the last sections. Finally, the conclusion summarises the findings of the study.

1. Review of the Literature

This section highlights studies that have discussed how gender is employed for humorous purposes and sheds light on the previous studies investigating gender and humor in the cyberspace.

1.1 Gender and Humor in Social Context

Humor can be regarded as a delegitimization strategy in interactions. However, passing jokes off as ‘just jokes’ can have serious negative consequences (e.g. denial of rights, discrimination). As previously mentioned, humor has the power to relax the response to certain statements that would be frowned upon if uttered in a non-humorous way. According to Ford and Ferguson (2004), sexist humor encourages the expression of prejudice mainly against women through four propositions of what is termed prejudiced norm theory. What humor primarily does is it activates a rule of levity in communication which switches from the “normal” literal, serious mindset to a noncritical “humor mindset” which trivializes the meaning of jokes (Berlyne, 1972; McGhee, 1972). In this sense, humor that targets a gender category has the ability to communicate subtle implicit messages that may treat sexism and discrimination in a less serious way.

Previous research suggests that enjoying jokes that disparage one gender category is linked to pre-existing attitudes, such as sexist attitudes (Hunt & Gonsalkorale, 2014). A number of studies have also demonstrated that individuals with sexist attitudes enjoy disparaging sexist humor more than individuals low in hostile sexism (Greenwood & Isbell, 2002; LaFrance & Woodzicka, 1998; Thomae & Viki, 2013) and are significantly more willing to reproduce female disparaging jokes with other people (Thomas & Esses, 2004).

Sexist humor stereotypes, demeans, victimizes, ridicules, and/or objectifies a person on the basis of their gender (LaFrance & Woodzicka, 1998). Furthermore, while men can be the target of such humor, it is women who are overwhelmingly the target of aggressive and sexual humor (Cantor & Zillmann, 1973). The popularity of sexist humor has increased over the past years in mass media as well as informal social interactions. Internet access has also increased the ease with which such humor can be found and reproduced. The danger of such

humor in these platforms lies in the fact that it communicates derogatory representations of women while trivializing gender discrimination under the veil of innocuous amusement.

Undoubtedly, what stirs laughter in an individual can also leave a bad taste in another individual's mouth (Machan, 1987). Whether an individual appreciates a disparaging joke or not depends on the degree to which they are willing to overlook or excuse the underlying sentiment, if they are aware of it at all. Not surprisingly, more research suggested that men view sexist humor as less offensive and funnier than women do (Chapman & Gadfield, 1976; Mundorf, Bhatia, Zillmann, Lester & Robertson, 1988). Sexist humor also derives its power from the ambivalence of society's attitudes toward women (Ford, Triplett, Woodzicka, Kochersberger, & Holden, 2013).

Nowadays, feminist movements in Morocco have increasingly given way to norms of gender equality and acceptance of women instead of sexist norms. Therefore, these emerging egalitarian norms may create pressure for individuals to appear non-sexist. Hence, sexist people may attempt to conceal or censor their beliefs, and justify or express them through humor because there is a minimal risk of social sanction when it is seen as "just" a joke.

1.2 Gender and Cyber Humor

Dissemination of sexist humor has become a lot easier with the rise of social media. This latter enables users to share different posts on global platforms while also maintaining a certain level of anonymity. The degree of impact of what is shared online is immense since the Internet allows the fast mass circulation of information from one part of the world to another with a single click. Gender discrimination and female targeted sexism is known in the cyber world as "micro aggression". Wing (2010) has distinguished between two types of micro aggression, namely micro-assaults which are explicit and direct in nature, and micro-

invalidations that are quite implicit and subtle forms of discrimination. In this paper, the focus is on micro-invalidations or the more subtle forms of discrimination through virtual cyber humor used in memes and posts.

An Internet meme can be defined as the fast spread of a particular idea in the form of text or images (Williamson et al., 2012); A meme can also be a compilation of pictures, words or a combination of both that are created for the sake of humor (Cannizzaro, 2016). According to Hidayat (2019) memes can be considered a means of communication that takes the form of images, texts or symbols to convey ideas. Oftentimes, however, the messages some memes convey are of sexist stereotypes of women.

2. Methodology

This study used a qualitative method with a feminist perspective. The data of the study were mainly retrieved from Instagram, Facebook and Reddit, and only memes which used certain hashtags were collected. As stated by Burgess (2012) and Yang (2016), hashtags are important in classifying data in social media. It is also important to note that the posting privacy settings of all the compiled jokes were “public”, which means any user has access and can see the posts. The reason this is worth noting is twofold; first, the accessibility of the jokes can increase the effect they may have on society, and second, due to sensitivity and ethical reasons, the reference to the source will be referred to as the name of the application instead of the account source.

The data were collected based on the dates of posting, starting from March 20th, when Morocco imposed strict measures to face the pandemic, including a lockdown, until June 30th when measures started to be lifted. The total number of collected memes, posts and jokes was 140 (Table 1). The jokes were then sorted and selected based on their content

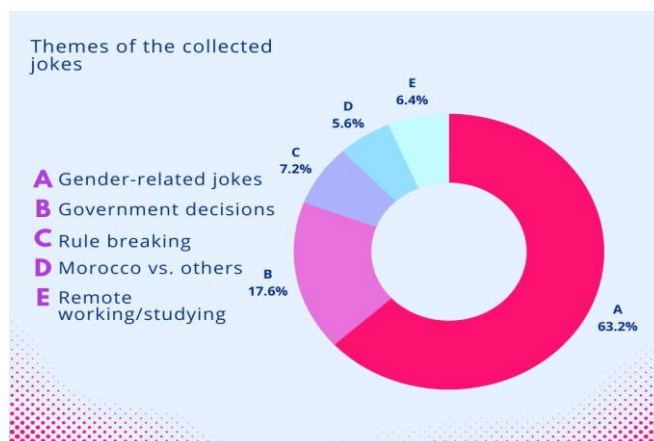
according to the formal purpose of this research, namely disparaging humor towards women or men.

Table 1. *Total number of jokes based on their sources*

Source	No. of Jokes	Percentage
Instagram	69	49.28%
Facebook	33	23.57%
Reddit	38	27.14%
Total	140	100%

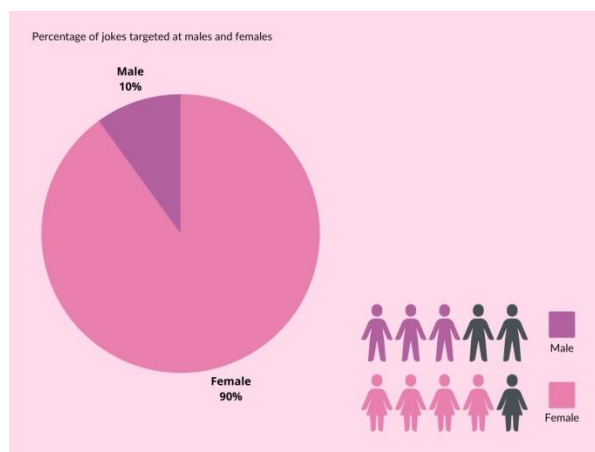
The jokes were then categorized based on the themes they covered. The themes that were most recurring were: gender-related jokes (79 jokes), decisions made by the government (22 jokes), breaking the rules of lockdown (9 jokes), Morocco versus foreign countries dealing with the virus (7 jokes), and challenges of working/studying from home (8 jokes) as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. *Themes of the collected posts*



The primary concern of this study is gender-related jokes. Therefore, the 79 collected gender-related jokes were also categorized into female and male focused jokes. Consequently, the large majority of the jokes targeted women (70 jokes) and only a significantly smaller number of jokes targeted men (9 jokes; Figure 2).

Figure 2. *Percentages of jokes targeted at males and females*



The interpretation of the data was carried out by taking into account the context of the object of the study. The posts were analyzed through a process of repeated reading and observation. A combination of quantitative and qualitative content analysis was also applied for the analysis. The first phase consisted of the analysis of the frequencies of ‘adjectives’ used to represent women in the posts. These were counted in the selected female targeted memes and posts. The second phase focused on a more in-depth qualitative analysis which also called for the interpretation of the pictorial and textual contents of the data.

3. Findings and Discussion

Table 2. *The frequencies of adjectives used to describe women*

<i>Sr.No</i>	<i>Adjectives</i>	<i>Frequencies</i>
1	mriḍa <crazy>	2.85%
2	ḥāzqa <poor>	4.25%
3	qaḥba <b*tch>	21.42%
4	mustāša/mrejja <hairy/masculine>	14.28%
5	gliḍa <fat>	12.85%
6	kofrā / xayba <ugly>	20%

The results of quantitative content analysis provide a general understanding of how sexism is manifested in social media jokes. Table 2 shows that all adjectives used in the jokes

to describe women are derogatory, offensive and have negative connotations. Additionally, the word *qahba* <b*tch> is the adjective that was the most recurring followed by *kofrā / xayba* <ugly>, and leading right behind them was *mustāša/mrejla* <hairy/masculine>. The first adjective is a demeaning insult or slur, usually to attack a woman’s “honor” in Moroccan culture. In addition, *mustāša* which literally translates to ‘a woman who has a mustache’ is used to offend women and to denote that facial hair is a masculine trait that would make them less feminine, and hence unattractive. Furthermore, when accompanied by humor, all of these adjectives are used more comfortably on the Internet to express sexism.

Disciplining Femininity through Appearance

Thirty three out of the seventy selected Internet jokes manifested the ridicule of women based on their appearance. Although all forms of media exhibit sexist content in this regard and promote traditional notions of femininity (Vashist, 2016), Internet humor sends the exact same message. This study would go as far as to argue that there is more negligence in examining the content of Moroccan Internet humor and the demeaning derogatory expressions of such content. Therefore, Internet humor becomes one of the most “acceptable” forms of sexism (Ford & Gray, 2013). The following meme illustrated in this analysis depicts this form of humor.

Figure 3. *Quarantine Appearance*
Source: Instagram



If we look at the meme's content in Figure 3, it features a Moroccan female singer whose name is Salma Rachid. Her name is relevant in this case since her last name, Rachid, is a typical male name. Therefore, the punch line of the joke is that when she used to look 'attractive' before lockdown she earned the feminine name Salma, and that conversely, during quarantine where she is portrayed at home, not wearing makeup and in pajamas, she is deemed masculine and called Rachid. While there was no meme that ridiculed men in the same manner, it is difficult to imagine a similar attention being paid to the sartorial or grooming practices of men.

The overemphasis of attractiveness diminishes women's credibility and often diverts attention from their skills and accomplishments. The devaluation of women when they do not comply with societal pressures to look a certain way can have negative repercussions on women's mental health (Jha, 2016). Those who do not fit into rigid traditional femininity expectations are also ridiculed and mocked. It seems worth noting that there is a difference in body and appearance evaluation. Women's appearance and the female body have continuously been a battlefield of diverging values, discipline, and regulations. Women's appearance is also the topic of most jokes, because it has long been their most valued aspect in patriarchal societies. They are often regarded as commodities and reduced to their outer appearance. This relationship between media representations of women's appearance and beauty standards have been extensively criticized by gender theorists (Bordo, 1993; Dobson, 2007, 2011, 2014; Orbach, 2009). However, there is a greater need for discussion as to how these representations may affect women at this age of digitized progress. The following figures illustrate the same theme in a different manner.

Figure 4. *Men versus women during quarantine*
Source: Facebook



Figure 5. *Girls during lockdown*
Source: Instagram



If we look at the meme in Figure 4, the text juxtaposes two situations. The text reads: “when barbershops will close down versus when beauty salons will”. The meme proceeds to show that a man would only grow out a beard and that the difference would hardly be noticeable compared to a woman. The meme in Figure 5 is an illustration of the character Snow White edited to look “hairy” with the caption “girls during quarantine”. Different opposing ideas are present in the first joke, namely beautiful versus ugly. Although an analysis of the comments would have added more nuance to the study, it was still observed that the top comment underpinning the same post expressed in agreement that “women morph into questionable creatures”. This type of exaggeration was employed as a logical mechanism that suggests that women become unrecognizable without makeup and grooming. In more than one comment, women were referred to as “creatures” to point out to how drastic the difference is when women wear makeup opposed to when they do not, denoting they look less human without it.

The obsession with the hairless female ideal was the second most recurring theme in Internet jokes. During the last years, women’s face and body hair removal has become strongly normative within contemporary Moroccan culture. Although often trivialized and, to the best of our knowledge, hardly ever the subject of Moroccan academic study, the norm of hairlessness acts as a powerful endorsement to the assumption that women’s bodies would

never be acceptable unless they are altered. The normativity of this matter in cyber humor points to a socio-cultural presumption that the appropriate condition for the “feminine” body is indeed hairlessness. While hair on the head is considered a sign of beauty, youth, vitality and attractiveness (Leach, 1958), hair on the body started to connote being dirty, ugly, unfeminine and animalistic (Lesnik-Oberstein, 2006).

The demand of this one particular body regulation is hardly a century old (Herzig, 2015). It can be argued that in the past couple of decades, hairlessness has become an integral part of Moroccan female beauty standards to the extent that female facial or body hair is ridiculed and seen as a sign of unattractiveness. This research also argues that ideas about choice, agency and power, particularly as to whether Moroccan women conform to or rebel against these social scripts about femininity should be considered.

Gender Roles and Doxa in Cyber Humor

Since the first case of the outbreak of Covid-19 in Morocco, there was a huge surge in the sharing of offensive content often sexist, racist and xenophobic (e.g. humor targeting Chinese eating habits with relation to Covid-19). While the jokes can be seen as ways of coping with a new situation, it did not help some men reorient their expectations towards accepting their new role, especially during lockdown. Early on, Moroccan users of social media remained partly preoccupied with being stuck with women in the same space.

Figure 6. *Covid-19 symptoms in men*



Figure 6 illustrates a joke about polygamy. The image contains two blue slices of watermelon and is captioned “Covid symptoms, eye exam for men”. Then, two conditions are cited: “if you see the watermelon as: (1) red, then you are a normal person; (2) blue, then you are in need of a second wife”. While the post on its own can seem innocuous, much of the sexism was blatant in the comment section. One user said, “This is a time for change, I need to get a new wife”, while another said, “I cannot afford another one”. In some marriages, it can be understood that some couples can become entrenched in negative feelings towards each other. However, the jokes analyzed were mostly referring to husbands either feeling annoyed with their wives or irritated or bored of them due to spending more time together in lockdown. This simple narrative of substituting one’s wife with a new one reinforces the view of women as commodities.

There is a normalized speech used to joke about polygamy as the post received a significant amount of likes and favourable interactions. Perhaps, the problem that needs to be highlighted is that the institution of marriage can, at times, serve as both a shield for, and weapon of, sexist behaviour. In Morocco, polygamy is often practiced secretly because of the uneasy tension between religious freedom and women’s rights. It is established that polygamy can be a source of oppression for women and is inherently unequal. Sexist norms

tend to shape polygamy in ways that are unfair and harmful to women. Thus, joking about it could potentially fuel sexist attitudes. This pushes the narrative that women are merely to be seen as wives before anything else, which is illustrated in the following posts.

Figure 7. *Be nice to your wife*
Source: Facebook



Figure 8. *My mom wants to see you*
Source: Instagram



In Figure 7, the joke translates to “be nice to your wife because restaurants and coffeeshops are out of business”. Figure 8 is captioned “when you ask her to send a picture because your mother wants to see her” accompanied by images of a girl cooking and posing for pictures. What could be considered harmful about these jokes that promote stereotypical gender stereotypes in a subtle manner is that sexist humor has effects that extend beyond the immediate social context. Sexist humor sets back the progress of women’s movements that seek to establish gender equality and respect of women at the societal level. Making jokes about women going back to the kitchen where they belong were also overwhelmingly present in our data. These particular stereotypes often reinforce the link between women and the domestic role. Therefore, we argue that the complex role of cyber humor enhances the subtle propelling and reinforcement of gender stereotypes and ideologies in Morocco.

Cyber Sexism and Female Sexualization

Figure 9. *The sixth vaccine shot*

Source: *Reddit*



If we look at the content of the meme in Figure 9 above, it features a young man getting a vaccine shot administered by a female nurse whose cleavage is visible, with the text: “Thank God, even the sixth shot went well”. In this case, the inference of the joke is that the man went back six times although not necessary, all because he would get a glimpse of the nurse’s body. Women portrayed in memes of this kind are considered as objects and often only seen as bodies that can be enjoyed by men and are on display for the male gaze. While Reddit as a platform is notorious for being unconventional and controversial with little to no censorship, the comment section on Reddit posts had surprisingly more instances of women criticizing the sexism than Facebook or Instagram. However, the same female users would be criticized and harassed in replies under their comments. This is in line with Penny (2013, p.10) who attested that only a small proportion of Internet users do not harass women. Even in the cyberspace, there is an assumption that if women did not want to be sexualized or harassed, then they should simply go offline.

4. Conclusion

This study has brought forth how cyber humor has played a crucial role in promoting gender stereotypes during the Covid-19 crisis in Morocco. Moroccan women were the butt of 90% of gender jokes and memes while men only made up 10% of the data. Although the

Internet has allowed massive progress for civilization, the fate of women seems to have stepped in the opposite direction in the virtual world.

Stereotypes about appearance, subordination and objectification remain intact in the virtual world. Patriarchal ideologies still occupy the mental structure of Moroccan Internet users. The sexist memes analyzed highlight the legitimacy of the patriarchal culture that positions women as objects that are only valued or devalued based on appearance or their ability to perform house chores. This type of humor undoubtedly takes advantage of the socio-cultural mental structure that surrounds the lives of the Moroccan people. The recurring themes of this ambivalent sexism can be regarded as strengthening male domination in the virtual world. Due to the humorous nature of the content posted on the Internet, individuals usually do not realize the sexism it carries and accept this form of symbolic violence as a norm.

A joke surely communicates something about the teller, and what they think is acceptable to a certain extent. Behind the words “it is just a joke” lies the idea that sexist talk is not to be taken seriously. This implication trivializes the burden of disrespect and incivility. Disparaging sexist statements are in no way less serious or dangerous in the form of a joke. Asking any individual, man or woman, to lighten up about sexism, should be considered another round of sexist behaviour. Ultimately, sexist jokes have unfunny consequences.

Declarations

There is no conflict of interest.

This research has not received any funding.

Data material is available.

Authors' contributions: All authors have contributed to this research equally.

Acknowledgements: We would like to acknowledge the support of the co-authors for their support, scientific consultancy and guidance.

References

- Abel, M. H. (2002). Humor, stress, and coping strategies. *Humor: International Journal of Humor Research*, 15(4), 365–381.
- Barwick, N. (2012). Looking on the bright side of life: Some thoughts on developmental and defensive uses of humor. *Psychodynamic Practice* 18, 163-179.
- Bemiller, M. L., & Schneider, R. Z. (2010). It's not just a joke. *Sociological Spectrum*, 30 (4), 459-479.
- Berlyne, D. E. (1972). *Humor and its kin*. In J. H. Goldstein & P. E. McGhee (Eds.), *The psychology of humor* (pp. 43–80). New York: Academic Press.
- Bordo, S. (1993). *Unbearable Weight: Feminism, Western Culture and the Body*. University of California Press: Berkeley.
- Britton, R. (2003). Sex, death, and the superego: Experiences in psychoanalysis. London: Karnac.
- Burgess, J. (2012). Researching news discussion on twitter. *Journalism Studies*, 13(5–6).
- Cannizzaro, S. (2016). Internet memes as internet signs: A semiotic view of digital culture. *Sign Systems Studies*, 44(4), 562-586.
- Chapman, A. J., & Gadfield, N.J. (1976). Is sexual humor sexist? *Journal of Communication*, 26, 141-153.
- Christie, C. (2005). *Gender and Language: towards a Feminist Pragmatics*. Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press.
- Dobson, A.S. (2014). Performative shamelessness on young women's social network sites: Shielding the self and resisting gender melancholia. *Feminism & Psychology*; 24 (1): 97–114.
- Ford, T. E., Triplett, S. R., Woodzicka, J. A., Kochersberger, A. O., & Holden, C. (2013). Differential vulnerability of social groups to the prejudice releasing effects of disparagement humor. *Group Processes and Intergroup Relations*.

- Frankl, V. E. (1963). *Man's search for meaning: An introduction to logotherapy* (Newly rev. and enl. ed.). Washington Square Press.
- Freud, S. (1928). On humor. *The Psychoanalytic Review* (1913–1957), 15, 85.
- Greenwood, D., & Isbell, L. M. (2002). Ambivalent sexism and the dumb blonde: men's and women's reactions to sexist jokes. *Psychology of Women Quarterly* 26, 341-50.
- Herzig, R. (2015). *Plucked: A History of Hair Removal*, New York and London: New York University Press.
- Hidayat, H. (2019). Folklore in meme: Minangkabau folklore survival form in the digital world. *Proceedings of the Proceedings of the 2nd International Conference on Local Wisdom, INCOLWIS 2019, August 29-30, 2019, Padang, West Sumatera, Indonesia.*
- Hunt, C. J., & Gonsalkorale, K. (2014). Who cares what she thinks, what does he say? Links between masculinity, in-group bonding and gender harassment. *Sex Roles: A Journal of Research*, 70(1-2), 14–27.
- Jha, M. R. (2016). *The Global Beauty Industry: Racism, Colorism and the National Body*. New York: Routledge.
- Kuiper, N. A. (2012). Humor and resiliency: Towards a process model of coping and growth. *Europe's Journal of Psychology*, 8, 475-491.
- Kuiper, N. A., Grimshaw, M., Leite, C., & Kirsh, G. (2004). Humor is not always the best medicine: Specific components of sense of humor and psychological well-being. *Humor*, 17(1/2), 135-168.
- Kuiper, N. A., & Martin, R. (1998). Is sense of humor a positive personality characteristic? In W. Ruch (Ed.), *The sense of humor: Explorations of a personality characteristic* (pp. 159- 178). New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

- LaFrance, M., & Woodzicka, J. A. (1998). No laughing matter: Women's verbal and nonverbal reactions to sexist humor. In J. K. Swim & C. Stangor (Eds.), *Prejudice: The target's perspective* (pp. 61–80). Academic Press.
- Lazar, M. M. (2007) (ed.). *Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis: Gender, Power and Ideology in Discourse*. Basingstoke: Palgrave.
- Leach, E. R. (1958). 'Magical hair', *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, 88: 2, pp. 147–64.
- Lesnik-Oberstein, K. (ed.) (2006). *The Last Taboo: Women and Body Hair*, Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press.
- Machan, D. (1987). What's black and blue and floats in the Monongahela River? *Forbes*, 140, 216-220.
- Martin, R. A. (2001). Humor, laughter, and physical health: Methodological issues and research findings. *Psychological Bulletin*, 127(4), 504–519.
- Martin, R. A., & Lefcourt, H. M. (1983). Sense of humor as a moderator of the relation between stressors and moods. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 6, 1313-1324.
- Martin, R. A., & Lefcourt, H. M. (1984). Situational Humor Response Questionnaire: Quantitative measure of sense of humor. *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology*, 47, 145-155.
- Martin, R. A., Kuiper, N. A., Olinger, L. J., & Dance, K. A. (1993). Humor, coping with stress, self-concept, and psychological well-being. *Humor*, 6, 89-104.
- Mundorf, N., Bhatia, A., Zillman, D., Lester, P., & Robertson, S. (1988). Gender differences in humor appreciation. *Humor: International Journal of Humor Research*, 1, 231-243.
- Newman, M. G., & Stone, A. A. (1996). Does humor moderate the effects of experimentally induced stress? *Annals of Behavioral Medicine*, 18(2), 101-109.
- Orbach, S. (2009). *Bodies*. Profile Books: London.
- Penny, L. (2013). *Cybersexism: Sex, gender and power on the internet*. Bloomsbury Publishing.

- Pietrantoni, L., & Dionigi, A. (2006). "Quando ridere fa male": La relazione tra eventi di vita, stili umoristici e disagio psicologico [When laughing is harmful: The relationship between life events, humoristic styles and symptoms of psychological discomfort]. *Psicoterapia Cognitiva e Comportamentale*, 12(3), 301–316.
- Thomae, M. & Viki, G. T. (2013). Why did the woman cross the road? The effect of sexist humor on men's rape proclivity. *Journal of Social, Evolutionary, and Cultural Psychology*, 7(3), 250–269.
- Thomas, C. A., & Esses, V. M. (2004). Individual Differences in Reactions to Sexist Humor. *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations*, 7(1), 89–100.
- Thorson, J. A., Powell, F. C., Sarmany-Schuller, I., & Hampes, W. P. (1997). Psychological health and sense of humor. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 53(6), 605–619.
- Vashist, N. (2015). The Effect of Misogynistic Humor on Millennials' Perception of Women. *The Pegasus Review: UCF Undergraduate Research Journal (URJ)*. Vol. 8:Iss. 1, Article 3.
- Williamson, L. E. A., Sangster, S. L., & Lawson, K. L. (2012). Hey girl ...?": The effect of ryan gosling feminist memes on feminist identification and endorsement of feminist beliefs. Saskatoon.
- Wing, S.D. (2010). *Microaggressions in everyday life: Race, gender, and sexual orientation*. Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons.
- Yang, G. (2016). Narrative agency in hashtag activism: The case of #blacklivesmatter. *Media and Communication*, 4(4), 13-17.
- Zeigler-Hill, V., Besser, A., & Jett, S. E. (2013). Laughing at the looking glass: Does humor style serve as an interpersonal signal. *Evolutionary Psychology*, 11(1), 201-226.
- Zillmann, D., & Cantor, J. R. (1976). A disposition theory of humour and mirth. In A. J. Chapman & H. C. Foot (Eds.), *Humor and laughter: Theory, research, and applications* (pp. 93–115). Transaction Publishers.