

Unleashing the 4th Wave: Exploring the Battle against Body Shaming through Feminist Social Media and Action Research in Twitter: A Comprehensive Analysis of Blind Chances and Empowering Outcomes

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ABSTRACT

A posteriori of vulgarization, in the dramatis personae of feminism has eclipsed the world, in general, and Pakistan, in particular. The imminence of social media is epicyclical, as chunking of stimulating and non-stimulating environments regarding fourth (Feminism 4.0) has been done to analyze its manifesto against; sexual assaults, rape culture, and body shaming. This is a redolent study of justice possibilities massive connectivity, mobilization, and collectiveness under the 'Feminist Social Research' and 'Action Research' outlook, keeping social media as a pivot. The conclusive discussion has appraisingly tapped social media, overcoming iniquitous issues by focusing on locutions: 'hypothetical', 'disjunctive', 'problematic', or 'universal' predicated on mainstream ethical modalities. Moreover, the unpretentious approach of social media has been encouraged as an outer hunch to second paralogisms and synthesizing antinomies to stop embittered impartiality in personality; spirituality, animality, and psycho-physiological rationalism.

KEYWORDS

Feminism 4.0, Body Shaming, Action Research, Moral Judgments

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INTRODUCTION

When we embark on a transformative journey by delving into a rich collection of studies that illuminate the profound impact of social media on our society, we find that the advent of social media has revolutionized various aspects of our lives on a global scale. Auxier and Anderson (2021) have presented an authoritative account of the current state of social media use, unraveling the latest trends and unveiling crucial insights. Ismail et al. (2022) delved into the untapped potential of YouTube as an invaluable internet resource for empowering individuals in records management, effectively enhancing knowledge acquisition and job satisfaction within the pharmaceutical domain. Duffy et al. (2021) skillfully dissected the intricate dynamics of creative labor in the realm of social media, meticulously uncovering the multifaceted challenges and precarious nature of this domain. Similarly, Rodgers et al. (2020) ingeniously constructed a biopsychosocial model, intricately weaving together the threads of social media use, body image concerns, disordered eating, and muscle-building behaviors among adolescent girls and boys, leaving no stone unturned in our quest for comprehensive understanding.

In recent studies, Matthews et al. (2022) delved into the fascinating realm of social media leadership, exploring the intricate dynamics of tweets, likes, and subscriptions, and their impact on our evolving perception of leadership. Similarly, Drigas et al. (2023) offered visionary insights into the future, highlighting the transformative potential of mobile technology, digital platforms, empathy, metacognition, self-consciousness, and parental involvement in revolutionizing our educational systems and societies at large. These seminal studies provide a foundation for empowering research and actions that aim to combat the pervasive issue of body shaming in the digital era.

Technological advancements have propelled social media to become a realm where individuals share their personal and professional experiences, shaping the concept of a "space of dispensed intuition" (Thomas, 2020). Feminism's fourth wave has emerged as a product of modernization and increased female education, bringing awareness to various societal issues. However, it is important to note that while movements like #MeToo, Aurat March, Time's Up, and #YouKnowMe have gained traction during times of social unrest, the issue of body shaming has been overshadowed by other concerns such as sexual abuse, gender pay gaps, and patriarchal laws (Gomez, 2019).

Regrettably, social media has become a breeding ground for gender trolling rather than a platform for correction in our stereotypical society. Traits such as height, weight, stature, and complexion receive more criticism than intellectual shortcomings, leading to psychological depression and disorders. Gaffney (2017) has highlighted the correlation between body shaming and eating disorders like bulimic nervosa, particularly among young girls. To address this issue, it is crucial to promote balanced perspectives and encourage outspoken feminists in Pakistan to participate in virtually collaborated efforts that connect us as a collective consciousness.



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The government, with its surveillance and all-circumspection approach, often overrides any attachment to secular, Islamic, democratic, liberal, or social ideals. Similarly, netizens, whether from Western or Eastern cultures, should employ their expressions to dissect contradictions, challenge illusory logic, explore possibilities, and embrace thoughts that foster intuitive unity rather than limiting social discourse with unhelpful negations. Pakistan, with its deep Islamic history and contemporary dynamism, has made notable progress in addressing rights issues that other socialist or capitalist countries have not tackled as successfully. However, a history of political division between secularism and Islamization influences religious and social trends in this patriarchal society, where women are often perceived as the 'second sex' (Serez, 2017). Shockingly, Pakistani women, despite their active involvement in various media platforms and contributions to societal development, continue to be objectified on multiple fronts.

Social media has permeated nearly every aspect of life, and proper literacy and privacy laws can empower individuals to speak boldly while maintaining a balance between quality, quantity, and the nature of their relationships, fostering robust technological connectivity. The widespread accessibility of websites like Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, and others is undeniable. In fact, social media users in Pakistan reached approximately 71.70 million in January 2023 (Datareportal, 2023). Currently, there are 87.35 million internet users in Pakistan, with a growth of 4.4 million users between 2022 and 2023 (Kepios, 2023). In the past, only 11.7% of females in Pakistan had access to the internet, with 83% facing challenges in finding suitable cyber cafe environments (Shafique and Mahmood, 2009). Considering the cultural, religious, and patriarchal dimensions of Pakistani society, reliance on the internet remains a constant in feminism's diverse purpose (Munro, 2013). Social media, which encompasses various platforms like Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, Snapchat, as well as social networking sites such as Facebook, MySpace, and hi5, holds immense influence in Pakistan (Quan-Hasse & Sloan, 2017). However, the vital issue of body shaming within the fourth wave feminist manifesto requires pragmatic measures to raise awareness among the general population. It is concerning that while there are murmurs, occasional protests, and expressions of anger from different quarters, the passionate collective action witnessed in earlier decades seems absent (Saigol, 2016).

Body shaming affects individuals of all genders and is deeply intertwined with social media in various forms. However, female celebrities, women athletes, and young women, in general, are particularly vulnerable. Celebrities often feel compelled to conform to a certain standard of appearance, perpetuating the "size zero" industry (Express Tribune, 2014). Women athletes in Pakistan also face scrutiny for not meeting ideal beauty standards, as highlighted by Sana Mir, a member of the country's women's cricket team (BBC Sports, 2018).

This research aims to accelerate the addressing of the highly pertinent issue of body shaming in Pakistan's conservative society through the prudent use of social media. The goal is to create awareness and garner support for legal actions that can curb public instances of body shaming in the country. By studying selected cases involving celebrities, influencers, brand advertising campaigns, and social movements, this research will shed light on the importance given to addressing body shaming in Pakistan. It aims to showcase how individuals have used social media platforms to raise their voices, while others have dealt with criticism on their own.

STUDY OBJECTIVES

1. To assess the prevalence and societal impact of body shaming on social media platforms in Pakistan.
2. To explore the role of social media in both perpetuating and mitigating body shaming behaviors in the Pakistani context.
3. To identify the underlying factors and cultural influences that contribute to the manifestation of body shaming on social media.
4. To propose evidence-based strategies and interventions to address and minimize the adverse effects of body shaming on social media platforms in Pakistan.

Social media are web-based services that help individuals and social structures to collaborate, connect, interact, and build community; to create/co-create, modify/share and engage with easily accessed, user-generated content (McCay-Peet, 2016). Data collection comprises messages, posts, statuses, tweets, audio/video clips, and case studies on SNSs (social networking sites) described by Boyd & Ellison (2007) like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc. Moreover, public reaction through online feedback categorization has been also observed to comprehend the issue of 'body shamming'. In light of previous research work of Correa, Hinsley & De Zuniga (2010); Gruzd, Staves & Wilk, 2012; Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; McIntyre, 2014; Otieno & Matoke, 2014; Blackshaw, 2006; Xiang & Gretzel, 2010; Arora, 2012 and Grahl, 2013, following functioning and typologies of social media have been portrayed to discern the research question:

- Q1. To what extent does the issue of body shaming in Pakistan receive attention and discussion on social media platforms?
- Q2. In what ways does social media contribute to the promotion of negative body image and related complexes in Pakistan?
- Q3. How can social media be utilized as a positive tool to raise awareness and combat body shaming, fostering mass awareness among the people of Pakistan?

- Q4. What social and cultural barriers hinder individuals in Pakistan from speaking out against body shaming issues on social media platforms?
- Q5. How can social media platforms be effectively utilized to promote remedial actions and solutions to address the negative impacts of body shaming in Pakistan?

THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

Feminism to Social Media Monitoring:

Feminism is a socio-political movement and theoretical framework that advocates for gender equality and challenges patriarchal systems of power and oppression. It emerged in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and has since evolved into various strands, including liberal feminism, radical feminism, intersectional feminism, and postcolonial feminism. Feminism aims to analyze and critique social, cultural, and political structures to understand and transform gender inequalities.

This study has gone through the underpinnings of feminism theory with social media monitoring as in recent years, feminist scholars and activists have recognized the power of social media platforms for feminist discourse, activism, and resistance. Social media monitoring refers to the process of observing, tracking, and analyzing conversations, trends, and user-generated content on various social media platforms. It involves monitoring and collecting data from platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, and others, to gain insights into public sentiment, discussions, and emerging trends. The digital age has provided new opportunities for feminist engagement in voicing marginalized groups, enabling them to challenge traditional power structures and shaping public narratives on the following grounds.

Intersectionality and Inclusivity:

It recognizes that gender intersects with other social categories, such as race, class, sexuality, and disability, to shape individuals' experiences. Social media monitoring allows the exploration of diverse voices and perspectives, providing insights into how intersectionality manifests online and how different identities intersect within feminist conversations.

Online Activism and Grassroots Movements:

Social media as a powerful tool for feminist activism, allows individuals to mobilize, raise awareness, and organize campaigns. Monitoring and analyzing feminist content on social media can offer valuable insights into the strategies, impact, and challenges of online feminist activism, highlighting its potential for effecting social change. According to Tumasjan, et al. (2010), social media monitoring, specifically analyzing Twitter data, could be used to predict political sentiment during elections, showcasing the potential of social media as a data source for understanding public opinion.

Discursive Power and Counter-Narratives:

Feminist theory emphasizes the role of language and discourse in constructing gender norms and perpetuating inequalities while social media monitoring enables the examination of discursive patterns, power dynamics, and the circulation of feminist ideas. This approach helps identify dominant narratives, challenge harmful stereotypes, and amplify counter-narratives that disrupt existing power structures in studying user behavior (Kim & Johnson 2016). Moreover, through social media monitoring, Twitter usage patterns, community dynamics, microblogging, and the formation of online communities can be studied more effectively (Java, et al. 2007).

Online Misogyny and Gendered Harassment:

Moreover, feminist scholars have extensively documented the prevalence of online misogyny and gendered harassment in digital spaces. Social media monitoring provides a means to study and understand the nature, extent, and impact of these forms of online abuse, shedding light on the gendered dynamics of online interactions and informing strategies for combating such harassment. In the proceedings of the 20th International Conference on the World Wide Web, the credibility of information shared on Twitter during real-world events was explored as how social media monitoring techniques were employed to analyze the spread of rumors and false information, highlighting the importance of monitoring and assessing the credibility of social media content (Castillo, Mendoza & Poblete, 2011).

Furthermore, previous studies have shown the diverse applications of social media monitoring, in the areas of community analysis (Hughes & Palen, 2009); crisis management (Culotta, 2010); healthcare (De Choudhury, Counts & Horvitz, 2013); political analysis (Pennacchiotti & Popescu, 2011), and identifying misinformation (Gupta, et al., 2013).

Feminist Action Research:

Body shaming, the act of criticizing or ridiculing individuals based on their physical appearance, has become a pervasive issue in contemporary society, disproportionately affecting women. After the fourth wave (Fem 4.0), feminist scholars and activists have recognized the urgent need to challenge and overcome body shaming, advocating for body positivity, inclusivity, and self-acceptance. At the Women's Studies International Forum highlighting the impact of feminist research on body image and eating disorders, Verma & Ray (2023) examined the effectiveness of participatory action research (PAR) in addressing body image concerns and eating disorders. This study has elaborated on the benefits of involving individuals with lived experiences in the research process and emphasizes the importance of collective action in challenging body shaming. According to Wang, et al. (2021), the role of feminist action research in promoting embodied practices and challenging body

shaming underscores the transformative potential of embodied knowledge, activism, and participatory approaches in empowering individuals to resist societal beauty ideals.

In critical surveying, Toffoletti, Ahmad & Thorpe (2022) highlighted the feminist and social justice orientation toward understanding the uneven impacts of platform engagement for women, particularly those who are socially marginalized. Moreover, Johnston & Taylor (2008) on challenging dominant beauty norms; Martínez-Jiménez (2022) on amplifying marginalized voices by highlighting the collective resistance, critical analysis, and support offered by postfeminist neo-liberalization in promoting self-care and body positivity and Krane, et al. (2001) on the importance of collaboration, dialogue, and empowerment in challenging body shaming, promoting inclusive and diverse forms of physical engagement have demonstrated their researches.

The present study has focused paradigm of feminism to address pertinent issues of fem 4.0, in patriarchy, unfair role/value of women defined as equity in Pakistani society (Tracy, 2019) to create awareness and support legal actions to curb physical mortification on social media prudently to further understand the cultural and religious constraints/compatibilities. Recent studies have demonstrated the transformative potential of feminist action research in combating body shaming by engaging in participatory approaches. The negative and positive role of social media has also been analyzed, proselytizing effective criticism on Tweets analysis (Chew & Eysenbach 2010); sentiment analysis (Rustam, et al. 2020); Twitter monitoring (Radzikowski, et al. 2016); social media monitoring and infodemic (Apuke & Omar 2021); public opinion and sentiment in crisis communication dynamics (Mahdikhani 2022) along with rumor control on social media (Yu, Sun & Yang 2023).

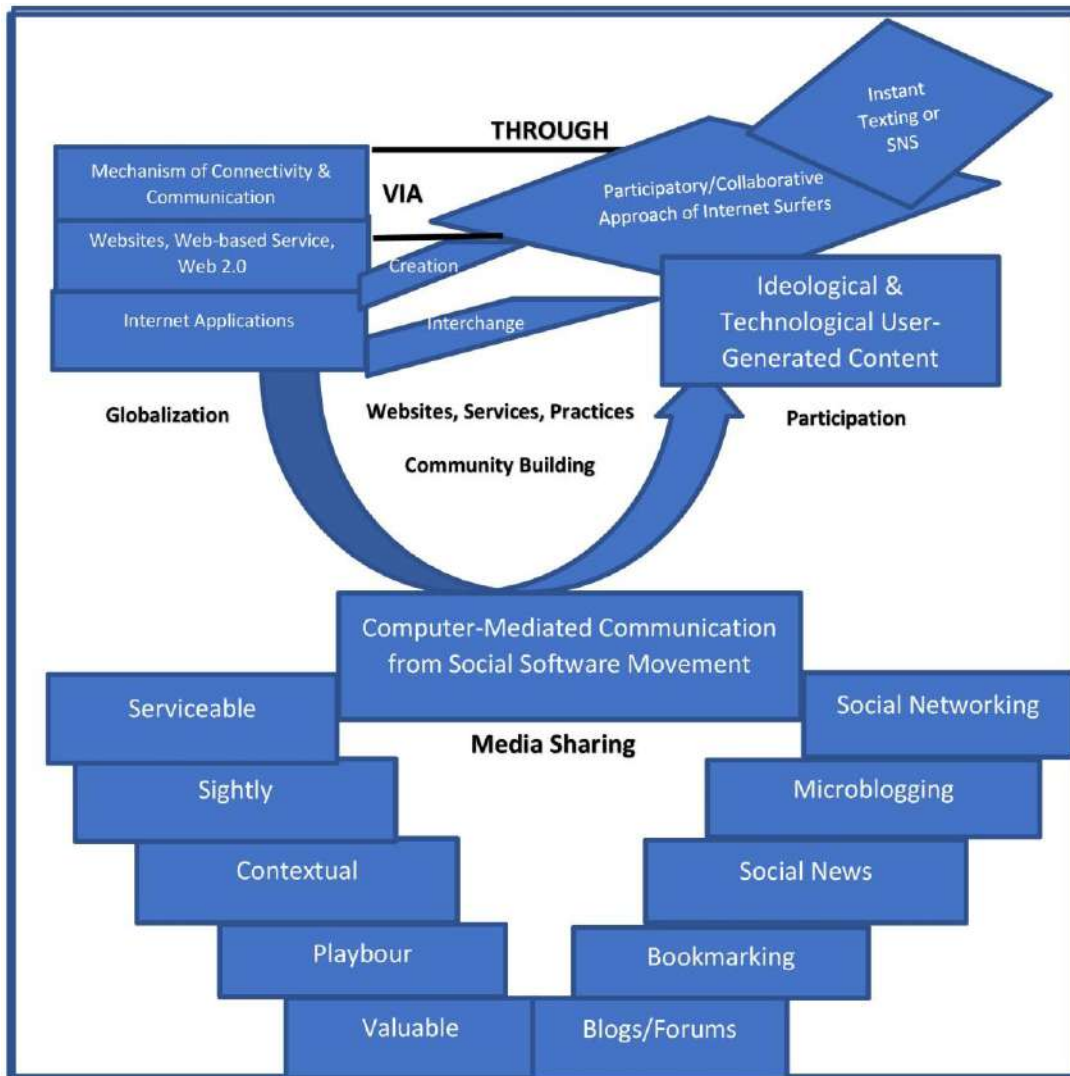


Figure 1. Social Media Web-Based Services

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Sample

In order to address the issue of body shaming on social media in Pakistan, a sample of 14 case studies was carefully chosen using purposive sampling techniques. These case studies represent a diverse range of instances involving body shaming on various social media platforms within the Pakistani context. The selection criteria were based on the cases' relevance, significance, and ability to provide valuable insights into the phenomenon of body shaming.

Population

The population of interest in this study comprises individuals in Pakistan who have experienced body shaming on social media platforms. This includes both men and women from different age groups, socio-economic backgrounds, and geographical regions. The focus is on individuals who have either been directly targeted by body shaming or have witnessed and engaged with body shaming incidents on social media. Moreover, the selected sample aims to capture the diversity and complexity of body shaming experiences in Pakistan. These case studies will contribute to a comprehensive understanding of the issue and help in identifying patterns, impacts, and potential strategies for addressing body shaming on social media in the Pakistani context.

Under four scenarios following cases have been discussed in the given table. Firstly, the positive impact of social media to shun body shaming; secondly positive campaigns led to negative outcomes, which also put into the limelight certain cultural and societal pressures, people and 'affirmative action' campaigns face in Pakistan. Thirdly, the Negative impact on affectees of body shaming who were able to use social media toolkit to convert negativity into positivity, and lastly, the fourth scenario considers the cases where social media has only had a negative impact to shun body shaming.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Body Shaming Cases in Pakistan

Body shaming is very common in Pakistan. According to Bushra Askari, a psychologist working in a rehabilitation center, body shaming can cause such an effect on an individual's mind that the victim may suffer from "low self-esteem, lack of confidence, social anxiety, inability to work in real life and even phobias may develop along with panic attacks" (Fayyaz, 2019).

Around twelve cases of famous celebrities and influencers (Aima Baig, Rubya Chaudhry, Zehra Husain, Faiza Saleem, Hareem Farooq, Zara Noor Abbas, Yumna Zaid, Sana Fakhar, Sana Mir, Asim Azhar, Zainab Chughtai and Shireen Mazari) related to body shaming in Pakistan, a movement namely Aurat March with its hashtag slogan (#merajismmerimarzi), and three digital media campaigns by famous brands Generation (#GreaterThanFear), Gul Ahmed (#meinperfecthoon) and Dalda (#MeriAwaz) are thoroughly studied, discussed, interpreted and analyzed in order to extract loopholes not given much attention in Pakistani society. The time frame chosen for the selection of data is from 2009-2019. Female celebrities and influencers have been chosen to highlight feminist social trends in Pakistani society. The details of the cases are discussed below:

Case Studies:

- Case Study 1: "Melodies and Misjudgments: Unmasking Body Shaming in the Spotlight through Aima Baig's Case Study" Insights from [IMG_20210420_191027-570x956-1.jpg \(570x956\) \(style.pk\)](https://img.20210420.191027-570x956-1.jpg).
- Case Study 2: "Unveiling Body Shaming and Mental Health Challenges: A Case Study of Zehra Hussain's Journey in Pakistani Society" Insights from Zehra's Facebook page (@Theofficialxera), Instagram pages (@xeracurvyco and @zehraordinaire) and YouTube channel (Zehra Husain and Dawn News Channel). Facebook page (@Theofficialxera), Instagram pages (@xeracurvyco and @zehraordinaire), and YouTube channel (Zehra Husain and Dawn News Channel).
- Case Study 3: "Breaking Stereotypes with Laughter: Exploring Faiza Saleem's Journey from Law to Comedy in Pakistani Society" Insights from the Instagram account of the Lulusar brand (@lulusaronline), YouTube channels (Faiza Saleem Official and MovieShoovy) and Facebook page of the clothing brand (Lulusar).
- Case Study 4: "Inspiring Change through Stardom: Unraveling Hareem Farooq's Influence on Feminist Social Trends in Pakistani Society" Insights from the Facebook page (@Hareem Farooq Official) and videos posted on YouTube channels (MangoBaaz, Parhlo, and CUTACUT).
- Case Study 5: "Fierce Feminism on the Silver Screen: Analyzing Zara Noor Abbas's Impact on Feminist Discourse in the Pakistani Entertainment Industry" Insights from YouTube channel (BBC Asian Network) and Zara's Instagram page (@zaranoorabbas. Official).
- Case Study 6: "Navigating the Shadows: Exploring the Impact of Social Media Criticism on Yumna Zaid as an Indirect Public Figure in the Influencer Sphere" Insights from Instagram page (@yumnahalit) and Zaid's Twitter account (@Za1d).
- Case Study 7: "From Silver Screen to Cultural Icon: Unmasking the Evolution of Sana Fakhar in the Pakistani Entertainment Industry" Insights from Facebook page (@sana.fakhar.pk) and Instagram page (@sana_fakhar).

- Case Study 8: "Body Shaming in the Music Industry: Analyzing the Case of Asim Azhar's Experience" Insights from Instagram page (@asimazhar).
- Case Study 9: "Challenging Body Shaming in Politics: Analyzing the Shireen Mazari Incident in Pakistan's Parliament" Insights from Saleem (2016) "Pakistanis slammed the act on social media and veteran journalist Hamid Mir used his Facebook page to condemn the comments and demanded an apology".
- Case Study 10: "Bully Proof: Combating Body Shaming in Pakistan" Insights from Zainab Chughtai's Facebook Campaign" Insights from 'Bully Proof' on Facebook (BBC, 2016).
- Case Study 11: "Beyond the Boundary: Exploring the Journey of Sana Mir as a Trailblazing Captain in Pakistani Women's Cricket" Insights from Facebook page (sana-mir.fb).
- Case Study 12: "Exploring Body Standards in Pakistan's Fashion Industry: A Case Study of Rubya Chaudhry's Influence on Social Media" Insights from the Instagram account (@rubychaudhry).
- Case Study 13: Campaign Dalda Foods _ "Nourishing Lives: Exploring the Dalda Campaign's Impact on Health Consciousness and Cultural Connotations in Pakistan's Food Industry" Insights from YouTube channel (Dalda Foods), Instagram pages of the brand and various fashion magazines (@daldafoods, @talkingpointpk, Paparazzi Magazine, and @desiweddingsdiaries.pk) and brand's official Facebook page (Dalda).
- Case Study 14: Campaign Generation _ "Threads of Tradition Unraveled: Decoding Generation's Fashion Campaign's Cultural Influence on Pakistani Clothing Trends and Consumer Phenomenon" Insights from the brand's official Instagram (@generation_pk) and Facebook page (Generation).
- Case Study 15: Gul Ahmed _ "The Fabric of Elegance: Exploring Gul Ahmed's Fashion Campaign and its Influence on Pakistani Textile Trends and Consumer Engagement" Insights from Twitter Account (@GulahmedFashion) and Instagram pages (@gulahmedfashion).
- Case Study 16: Movement Aurat March _ "Fighting for Equality: Analyzing the Aurat March Movement in Pakistan's Struggle for Women's Rights and Social Justice" Insights from Instagram pages with hashtag posts (#merajismmerimarzi) and Facebook accounts of celebrities Mahira Khan and Fariha Aziz which cited material supporting the movement's cause.
- Moreover, the online newspaper websites consulted to attain relevant data are Pakistan Today, Dawn, Dailytimes, Nation, The News, BBC News, Express Tribune, and 360NewsMag.

Table 1. Social Media Body-Shaming Cases in Pakistan

Comment	Celebrity/PR Campaign	Categorization
"When I was five, my family immigrated to Canada and in a picture of me at age 10, growing up, caught me in this victimization." "I was never made to feel 'fat or dark' because my family and the people around me were open-minded, they never felt that way. Canada's cultural environment promotes a non-judgmental attitude, valuing individuals based on their actions rather than their appearance, ethnicity, or social background (Pakistan Today, 2018)"	Yumna Zaid	Body shaming
"I reached a point in my journey where I had to remind myself to cease the self-criticism and fully accept and embrace who I am, including my imperfections, regardless of my body size." (Dawn, 2019)"	Zara Noor Abbas	Slut-Shaming
"Make her voice more feminine"	Shireen Mazari	Body Shaming/ Reputation Damage
"I hated who I was, I wanted to be every woman that was more desirable than I was." "	Zainab Chughtai	Body Shaming
"For the longest time I had people telling me I was too big or too fat to be in the media and especially in front of the camera," she posted on her Instagram account	Hareem Farooq	Body Shaming
"Fatties with Love".	Faiza Saleem	Body Shaming

"This breaks my heart so much. I have been mocked and slapped for being the plump kid since childhood. This needs to STOP", "moti –bhag-gayi" (fat girl ran away), "Growing up, my confidence had been shattered. I worked on it little by reminding myself every single day that I am worthy, beautiful, and confident."	Zehra Hussain	Body Shaming
"Why do we persistently apply double standards? Why must we assign numerical values to define and judge individuals based on their size, whether it's zero, 4, 6, or any other number? Why do we feel compelled to do so... SANA (@sana_fakhar) on Instagram	Sana Fakhar	Body Shaming
"Bahi bohat saara gaana gaane ko bola tha...bohat ssra khana khane ko nahi bola tha"	Asim Azhar	Body Shaming
"Is it really necessary to completely tear someone down with comments like 'Are you about to disappear? So fragile,' 'Why are your legs so thin?' or 'Why are you so lean?' Do these words define a person's worth? It's disheartening to see such judgmental remarks like 'a doll worth 10 rupees' or 'I may not know much, but I do know that I admire you.' It's quite strange how we find it acceptable to make derogatory comments about someone's appearance. Let's reflect on our own selves before passing judgment on others."	Aima Baig	Body Shaming/ Reputation Damage
#greaterthanfear, #stepoutside, "Am I too big to wear something like this?", "Will others like this color on me?", "Am I too old or too young for this cut?", "Mirrors show us what we look like not who we really are", "Nothing can dim the light that shines from within", "Rang bikheray bahaar (spread colors outside)", "Who wears these clothes?", #FaceOfGeneration	Generation Campaign	Body Shaming
#MeriAwaz, "Don't let negative voices rule you, "no to body shaming", "ammi (mother) on my side"	Dalada Campaign	Body Shaming
#MeinPerfectHoon, "Meri Skin Tone is Unfair to Others."	Gul Ahmed	Body Shaming
"Mera Jism Meri Merzi"	Aurat March	Body Shaming
"Make no mistake: you need strong arms, not smooth arms, on a sports field", "Undoubtedly talent is more important than skin texture."	Sana Mir	Body Shaming/Reputation Damage
"Models often face pressure to conform to an internalized standard that is imposed upon them. Certain designers openly express their expectations in this regard. I recall a particular incident when a designer suggested that I should strive to lose even more weight, which struck me as odd since I was already quite thin at that time."	Rubya Chaudhary	Body Shaming

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Social media has emerged as a significant platform to address the issue of body shaming, particularly in Pakistan. Celebrities, advertisement campaigns, and hashtag movements have played a vital role in raising awareness about body shaming and advocating for women's security. These efforts have garnered positive feedback and brought the issue to the forefront of public discourse. The discussions surrounding body shaming on social media have had a positive impact on women's self-worth and self-consciousness. It has encouraged women to value themselves based on their abilities rather than their looks and has helped them navigate a multidimensional world with greater confidence. This shift in perspective promotes the ideals of the fourth wave of feminism, empowering women to embrace their true selves and reject objectification. The freedom of expression facilitated by social media has also allowed society to gain a deeper understanding of the sensitivity of the topic of body shaming.

However, the negative side of social media's influence is also evident in Pakistani society, which tends to prioritize women's appearances over their abilities, talents, and skills. The analysis reveals that the general public lacks awareness of the mental health and psychological impact inflicted on victims of body shaming. Women face various challenges, including

trolling, defamation, marginalization, threats, and exposure. Nevertheless, the fact that these issues are now in the spotlight offers some consolation.

To combat body shaming effectively, it is important to bring such acts into the public eye through social media platforms. Sharing personal experiences publicly has shown to garner positive support and encouragement from society, helping women regain their lost morale, confidence, and self-esteem. By using social media sensibly, society can gradually minimize body shaming, even if complete eradication may be a long-term goal. The data reveals that body shaming exists in various forms, including deliberate and unintentional acts. Unintentional body shaming often stems from societal stereotypes. Many women face criticism and remarks about their physical appearance, which are considered normal in society but have serious psychological impacts on the victims. Thus, there is a dire need for awareness to prevent such actions. Creating Instagram and Facebook groups and pages dedicated to exposing and discussing body shaming can be an effective way to educate the public about the mental health and psychological impacts inflicted on victims.

Recommendations

Harnessing the power and influence of social media is crucial in promoting a healthy body image and combating body shaming in Pakistan. By utilizing social media platforms to encourage women to value themselves based on their abilities, talents, and accomplishments rather than their physical appearance, we should promote the idea that women should not be objectified or reduced to mere commodities in a patriarchal society. There is a need to highlight the importance of self-worth and confidence independent of societal beauty standards. Steps should be taken to ban content on social media platforms that portray fat or plus-size individuals as misfits or propagate harmful body image ideals. Brands, designers, and celebrities should support women of all body types and sizes, embracing diversity and inclusivity in fashion and advertising by launching inclusive fashion campaigns that cater to the diverse population, including heavy females, so that they do not feel alienated.

Moreover, providing guidelines to food and fitness brands on social media to promote healthy eating habits and maintaining a normal Body Mass Index (BMI) that will encourage the celebration of a healthy body rather than focusing on unrealistic weight, shape, or size goals. Celebrities and influencers should use their platforms to share their own healthy habits and routines, promoting a positive body image. To set standards for positive content can establish strict regulations for posting positive and authentic images and content on social media platforms to grow a more realistic portrayal of life and outlook, free from filters and heavy editing. By showcasing unfiltered and unedited images that celebrate natural looks and beauty, society can be inspired to embrace all body types, sizes, and complexions. Models can play a crucial role in promoting these values by embracing their own imperfections and flaws.

Furthermore, we should raise awareness and empathy to create awareness campaigns through social media to educate the public about the detrimental effects of body shaming and the importance of mental health. Encourage individuals, especially women, to share their personal stories and experiences related to body shaming. By highlighting their victories and recoveries, they can inspire others and contribute to a more empathetic and supportive society.

Since a large population of social media users comprises youth, it is crucial for the older generation to set an example by raising and nurturing them with self-confidence and self-belief. Negative influences related to body image should be eradicated, and young girls should be encouraged to follow women who have focused on their abilities and achieved success. People should be educated that confidence, skills, and talent are the keys to excelling in life, rather than adhering to glamorized body standards. Compliments related to a female's bravery, strength, intelligence, confidence, humor, and nature should take precedence over comments about her physical appearance. Embracing imperfections should be promoted, as everyone is beautiful in their own way. To address the issue comprehensively, it is necessary to provide internet access, awareness, and education to a majority of women in Pakistan. This will empower them to address these issues publicly and express themselves freely. Extensive awareness campaigns and improved education quality, even in suburban areas, are essential. Women should receive specialized training through videos, apps, and workshops to effectively utilize social media as a platform to share personal and professional experiences and find solutions to the challenges they face. This will not only create awareness at the government level but also prompt legal action against body shaming practices, similar to measures taken against sexual harassment, cyberbullying, acid attacks, and rape. Mainstream media and civil society should also support this cause and raise their voices on a larger scale.

Limitations

It is important to note that while social media has a significant influence, there are limitations to its reach. This study primarily focuses on celebrities and influencers so future cases on a local level should also be considered to investigate the level of body shaming and social media trolling in Pakistan.

Future Implications

Further research is needed to explore the comparison between awareness and action taken on body shaming in Pakistan with other social ills, such as cyberbullying, sexual harassment, and rape. The role of social media in influencing the Pakistani government to establish laws or legislation against these social crimes should also be studied. Additionally, efforts should be made to provide internet access and social media usage to a majority of females in Pakistan, enabling them to raise

their voices against injustices and social crimes. Furthermore, studying the psychological and social impact of curbing body shaming through positive social media campaigns would provide valuable insights.

In conclusion, social media has emerged as a crucial platform to address and discuss body shaming in Pakistan. By utilizing social media sensibly, promoting body positivity, and raising awareness, the issue can be minimized. It is important to grant internet access, improve education quality, and provide specialized training to women, empowering them to address these issues publicly. This will lead to greater awareness at the government level and encourage legal measures against body shaming. Mainstream media and civil society should join forces in support of this cause. While limitations exist, social media's influence cannot be ignored, and further research should be conducted to explore and address related concerns.

CREDIT AUTHOR STATEMENT

Farasat Rasool: Supervision, Conceptualization. **Maliha Ameen and Bishama Khan:** Methodology, Writing- Original draft preparation, Reviewing, and Editing.

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