

# Impact of Social Media on Women's Empowerment in Asian Countries

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**Abstract:** This paper explores the multifaceted impact of social media on women's empowerment across diverse Asian countries. It examines how social media platforms are reshaping public discourse, societal norms, and mobilizing women for collective action, while also acknowledging the contextual challenges posed by socio-economic disparities, cultural conservatism, and political repression. Drawing on theoretical frameworks such as social constructivism, feminist theory, and multidimensional empowerment models, the study analyses case studies from countries including India, Japan, Bangladesh, and others to illustrate both the potential and limitations of social media as a tool for women's agency. It delves into the mechanisms of empowerment, including networking, information sharing, and digital activism, while also critically assessing the barriers such as digital divides, cultural stereotypes, and online harassment. The research employs a mixed-method approach, integrating qualitative interviews, surveys, and literature reviews to understand the complex interplay between social media use and women's empowerment in the Asian context. The findings highlight the necessity for nuanced, context-specific analyses and policy interventions to effectively leverage social media for advancing gender equality.

**Keywords:** Social Media, Women's Empowerment, Asia, Digital Activism, Gender Equality, Social Constructivism, Digital Divide

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## I. Introduction

Social media is reshaping the public sphere, societal norms and dynamics in diverse ways across different Asian countries, impacting the state of women's empowerment in these countries. Social media platforms have rapidly proliferated over the last decade, illustrating their transformative potential in shaping contemporary society. In some countries across Asia, social media platforms have become an essential part of modern life. In countries like Indonesia and the Philippines, the majority of internet users access social media through their mobile phones. The use of social media across various Asian countries is diverse and multifaceted. In some countries, social media have started public debates on previously taboo issues such as domestic violence and child marriage. It has also facilitated women's movement and mobilization for collective actions to demand gender equality. Social media enable women to share their diverse stories and raise awareness of other women. They allow an emergence of distinctive and diverse voices from ordinary women, who are otherwise excluded from mainstream media discourse <sup>[1]</sup>. In more politically and culturally conservative countries like China and Malaysia, social media have provided an indirect way to voice feminist views or support for gender equality. Even in repressive contexts like Vietnam, critical news or comments against the status quo benefit from the 'invisibility' of social media, spreading faster than official censorship can effectively control. The access to social media and digital spaces for women in different countries in Asia is contingent on initial socio-economic development, cultural context, linguistic differences, religion and recent political context. It is necessary to address the context of women's empowerment within technology and digital spaces, which are rapidly expanding. In another context, it is useful to generate and disseminate knowledge from research on spatiotemporal differences in social media use in diverse areas of the globe, especially in fast developing Asia. Social media have reshaped the public sphere in diverse ways, and their impact on women's empowerment is complex, multilayered and subdued by the local context <sup>[2]</sup>. While excited about the emancipatory potential of social media as a vehicle for improved gender equality in both the private and public spheres, there are far from democratic and patriarchal states neglect to address the adverse impact. Comparing the state of women's empowerment in five Muslim-majority countries by drawing on recent statistics to understand how social media or digital technology can effectuate changes and to what extent different governments engage with the new challenge <sup>[3]</sup>.

### **1.1. Background and Significance**

Despite modern advancements in technology and education, Asian women often find themselves disempowered and subjugated to their male counterparts. The Asian continent, known for both its economic prosperity and poverty, has always been characterized by cultural representativeness and multi-ethnic contexts. Therefore, the now so-called “Asian Century” must necessarily be characterized not only by social policies for the improvement of the well-being of the people, but also by social policies capable of giving voice to the voiceless and opening up space for the empowerment of those historically marginalized. Especially emphasizing the situation of women. Social policies in favor of women, in a broad sense, have evolved over time as an accessory to broader historical dynamics and were the focus of complex social resistances. It is in such complexity that the empowerment process can be better understood and added to the power that social media can provide to the peoples of the continent. Women's empowerment is always seen as a process whereby women are considered to hold up resources and outline their usage in order to make decisions that will benefit them and their societies. However, for many women in Asian countries, open access to such resources is still a remote reality <sup>[2]</sup>. Researchers and activists have finally pointed out that the empowerment of social media can accentuate these realities and, therefore, women can benefit from their advantages.

While the problem of women's empowerment and the implementation of social media are being extensively discussed in international debates and broadly designed possible programs and interventions, theoretical reflections, and empirical assessments of particular contexts in which a multi-layered thickness of power-knowledge relations is embedded are still missing. Nowadays, the new media, notably social media in its many forms and formats, is seen as potential tools of agency for the empowerment of women. Women are usually at the forefront in many developing countries for whom access to the so-called old media has ceased to exist. In Asia, especially in Central Asian post-Soviet countries, women's use of the traditional media accuses a remarkable detachment of the rural, and often economic segment of the population and implies urbanized, educated, and already emancipated women. However, similar hasty conclusions about women's empowerment and social media as “the new chance” for equality risk to ignore the existing and emerging multiplicities of power, vector effects on the access to and use of social media of the mobile and less endowed population and, consequently, even in applications apparently “good for empowerment”, can reproduce and reinforce the existing asymmetries and imbalances between sexes and among social strata <sup>[1]</sup>.

## **II. Theoretical Frameworks**

Various frameworks have been proposed to understand empowerment, including the individualist framework and the mixed framework; empowerment can be instrumental or constitutive, and can also be measured in terms of structure, agency, and achievements. Women's empowerment occurs when they move from a state of lacking power or decision-making capacity to a state of possessing it. This empowerment may occur individually or collectively, and importantly, may happen within limits fixed externally. Since influence, control or capacity may reside both in the individual and the group, as well as at the macro level, empowerment and disempowerment may result from sources in various constellations. Thus, this multidimensional framework attempts to incorporate the complexity and relationality of power and empowerment <sup>[4]</sup>.

It was explained that the understanding of social networking stood as the springboard of empowerment. Social networking gives an ability to an individual or a group of individuals to cultivate skills, and to be aware of the practices of available resources, and finally to act on the gained knowledge and skills. To amount to these, there is necessary for an involvement, personal contact, mutual cooperation, adaptation, trust, information exchange, and resource sharing. A theory was tested on the mechanism of networking as to how networking unfolds empowerment focusing three different spheres: networking which forges power and agency to an individual or a group of individuals; a structure, which forges power and capital as a result of networking; and an achievement, which directs the networker to the rewarding centers in term of development objectives. Theoretically it was formulated that an active networking practices bring freedom of choice, watering/fertilizer/resource flow, and selective combination in business practices which in turn generate capital in the form of social achievements, social base, information pool, and social strength to a networker.

Theories such as Social Constructivism argue that empirical truths derive from social construction, providing a foundation to examine how women engage with, and benefit from, social media. Furthermore, the predominance of women among marginalized communities highlights the potential roles of women in activism. The importance of embracing intersectionality is crucial for understanding the multi-faceted nature of empowerment. It has been shown that engagement with social media enables female computer professionals to strengthen their advocacy and networking skills while improving their opportunities for employment. With a proliferation of platforms like Facebook and Twitter in South Asia, and the increasing involvement of women as users, understanding how women in the region perceive and use this medium is crucial. Furthermore, the

engagement of women's groups and small NGO's with this new platform, and changes in strategy for empowerment projects driven by social media, suggest this is a timely subject.

This paper positions women's empowerment within such a multidimensional framework, and uses this as a lens to analyze women's engagement with social media for empowerment, raising both the space for and limits to such empowerment. Importantly, a conceptual understanding is developed of women's engagement with social media for empowerment as a form of power, strategy or short term device for change within development projects, and as a form of development approach. This allows analysis of how women's engagement with social media is both constrained and properly understood, and of the implications of that engagement. Consequently, understanding of empowerment is treated not as pillars that need to be built towards a pre-identified goal, but as a complex process.

## **2.1. Feminist Theory and Empowerment**

As information and communication technology (ICT) use proliferates, it seems timely to reconsider how empowerment is theorized for women in digital spaces. These discussions encourage critical engagement with how women's empowerment and social media are understood. The transformability of social media spaces is highlighted as spaces where women can challenge unequal power structures. Multiple case studies have been examined to demonstrate how women contest norms and behaviours in online spaces. The analysis seeks to encourage critical and creative re-interpretation of existing frameworks, prompting the consideration of how they could be adapted or revised to better understand contemporary digital practices. A further focus is on the implications for development practices, thus underlining the importance of understanding how women encounter and employ digital platforms. Through an examination of women's online narratives and debates about their validity, both theoretical and practical significance is underscored. Limitations of existing frameworks for understanding online engagement are outlined, observing shortcomings in both the academic treatment of this phenomenon and in the practices of organizations working in this field. By applying an analytical framework to online case studies, the case is made for the importance of examining the nuances of individual contexts, and of recognizing the multifaceted nature of women's online encounters <sup>[5]</sup>.

## **III. Methodology**

Given the recent technological advancements, social media across the globe, particularly in Asian developing countries, becomes more popular and greater attention is paid to its impact on people. The study investigates the impact of social media on women's empowerment in four Asian developing countries, including Bangladesh, Malaysia, Philippines, and Pakistan. To gather in-depth insights, the study adopts a qualitative approach that includes interviews as well as a survey focused on social media usage for women and how it could empower women.

In the globalized world, media are playing an important role in women empowerment, particularly in educating people on different socio-economic, cultural, and political matters <sup>[1]</sup>. In Asian countries, the role of media has been more critical for rural people, especially for women empowerment. Even when it is difficult for the mean of the mass media to reach the rural people, social media is now an excellent tool for people in Asian countries to keep them updated and connected to the world. Women in these countries are found to be more engaged in communicating on the Internet than other activities, particularly focus on health, education, and social issues. For these reasons, the researcher is engaged to explore the impact of social media on women's empowerment in Asian countries. The researcher has mainly focused on four developing Asian countries, such as Bangladesh, Malaysia, Philippines, and Pakistan. Semi-structured interviews, as well as a survey, will be conducted to collect the necessary data. Before proceeding to the methodology section, the study provides information concerning the selected countries. Following the methodology, the results of the study will be presented, and lastly, the discussion and conclusion will be drawn.

A mixed methodology both quantitative and qualitative approaches have been employed to collect empirical data on the selected research issue. At first, the central point of the study will be explained. Then, the methodology will be divided into different subsection regarding the study area, data collection methods, study population, sampling, questionnaire development, pilot study, and finally, data analysis. This methodology framework has been undertaken to ensure the reliability and validity of the findings of the study.

## **3.1. Research Design and Data Collection**

Qualitative methods were performed to gain an understanding of the degree to which social media is empowering women in terms of various parameters, the nature of their experience, and what type of message they forward. Participants were selected through a combination of informed contacts, snowball sampling, and social media. Informed contacts provided a diverse range of contacts who are knowledgeable about the social media scenario in the participant country. Women with a range of experiences on empowerment as a result of

using social media were selected and interviewed via Skype or face-to-face. The data collection was conceptualized in two phases. In the first phase, realization came out supporting the preceding understanding of the degree of empowerment, to allow for a more precise understanding of the questions and messages used by respondents on social media. Responses and experience<sup>[6]</sup> provided suggestions for categories of coding empowerment questions; this included the selection of the definition of empowerment and 11 strategies for exploring the category, each question could be asked in many ways and subsequently the definition of empowerment was refined.

That was used to create a semi-structured interview guide, which included the empowerment questions. Questions were asked in a different order and way to check the reliability of the information check. Interviewees were also given the opportunity to provide their responses to the answer. The feminist explanation of power, ways of challenging this power, and reasons for the lack of challenges were also explored.

Detailed conversations in interviews were included in the analysis each issue was an idea with a number of interviewees. There was no rule of ideas to be a part of the analysis before. However, it seems that suggestion that ideas were displayed at 2-3 interviews to be a part of the idea, resulting in conversations from all interviews being included. Two focus groups were conducted, each of 7 women, to identify the messages that women are forwarded. Lists of common messages circulated on social media were probed and discussed in focus groups. The conversations were recorded by hand and wrote up verbatim at the end of each discussion. In the second phase, any analysis was conducted utilizing a coding framework developed from the empowerment. QSR NVivo was used to manage and code the data. Geographical and cultural contexts were considered when analyzing the data on a participant country basis. Ethical consideration and practicality led to a focus on the participant country, though there is an expectation that broader interpretations which are generalizable for the participant country can be drawn. Major analytical challenges were a lack of clarity and diversity in interpretation of empowerment, and the secrecy and coded nature of social media. That's well-established coding strategies were initially used, but these did not adequately address medium-specific nuances, and therefore more inductive methods of categorization were applied.

#### **IV. Social Media And Women's Empowerment: A Literature Review**

Social media platforms continue to grow in popularity globally, enabling increased digital connectivity, community building, and the sharing of personal narratives that might not be shared otherwise. Social media has primarily been regarded as a way for enterprising women to close the gap between themselves and male entrepreneurs in a variety of sectors. Yet, social media can open the door for increasing women's empowerment throughout Asia by connecting women, regardless of their occupation—or non-occupational status—for increased social support and sharing of ideas and their narratives. This review of relevant literature is an effort to analyze the mechanisms through which social media can lead to increased women's empowerment and critique existing research in order to understand what gaps warrant further research. Through synthesizing the current literature, this review aims to paint a holistic picture of the current state of knowledge on the relationship between social media and women's empowerment. These findings theorize possible explanations for the controversial nature of the link between social media and women's empowerment and call for nuanced analysis of the various contexts in which social media can be considered empowering, or disempowering to women. The advent of digital activism has imbued many women—even those that do not identify as activists—with feelings of empowerment, through these validated networks of support. A project utilized the crowdsourced contributions of women around the world to build a space where personal experiences of oppression could be shared, rather the medium is accepted or not. The sharing of these personal narratives did not revolutionize these women's circumstances, but the collective action facilitated by such storytelling has been shown in the past to encourage substantive change.

##### **4.1. Key Concepts and Definitions**

The advent of social media has revolutionized the global connectivity and discourse of information exchange. Social media can empower, and this empowerment can occur only by filling up the gaps of digital divide. Although there are also significant challenges and setbacks to this empowerment process. The scopes and limitations of social media are therefore to be illuminated. There is an evolving need for analysis and understanding not only of social media but several fundamental and underlying subjects such as content, access, and literacy, underpinning the dynamics and possibility of social media uses and impacts. An understanding of the dynamic scope of the various definitions, experiences, and discussions of media and social media regarding the empowerment of women, as well as various aspects and notions inherent to the digital experiences of women, is required for further analysis and better policy implications.

Empowerment, here, implies 'capability'. Thus, empowerment is a multidimensional complex process that may occur at individual, collective, and structural levels. In the digital spaces, empowerment often takes

place in a limited and selective manner, particularly on behalf of women. Women empowerment, here, mostly refers to the increasing role of social media in enhancing the ability of women, individually or collectively, to express their voices and demand in the digital spaces <sup>[6]</sup>. Meanwhile, social media provides a wide range of online platforms available for people to share and create information whether via blogs writing, uploading pictures, video and articles, and posting comments thoughts. Hence, it is vital to first refine the list to only a few major SNS rather than blogs, forums, wikis, and other social media to have a more focused comparative. In order for women to take advantage of the opportunities offered by social media, several things are needed to increase feminist digital literacy, as well as to increase access to the internet. Feminist digital skills are abilities and knowledge related to the use of ICT and the internet to access information, create content and communicate in the digital world. Meanwhile, the idea of access should be understood beyond the issue of availability and technologies. Simply put, the conceptualization of access and literacy has clear implications for participation. There is an enormous gap of theoretical knowledge and theoretical framework in the area study of social media on women's empowerment. Additionally, the insights generated from a comparison of three different platforms are anticipated to contribute more widely and further of the debate and discussion on the complex roles of social media in the lives and empowerment of women <sup>[1]</sup>.

## **V. Case Studies Of Social Media Initiatives For Women's Empowerment In Asian Countries**

Through various case studies in different Asian countries, the complexity of experiences and strategies and the need to account for contextual factors in how social media is understood as a tool for women's empowerment has been shown. Furthermore, by showing the wide range of initiatives that have used social media as a tool for change, the capacity of communities to engage with social media as a means of activism has been illustrated. This practice-based comparison will not only enable a better understanding of the mechanisms of empowerment through social media, but will also provide valuable insights for future initiatives. Social media and online platforms are increasingly used as a space for women's voices and feminist activism, since the barriers to enter this kind of activism are relatively low compared to the "real world". This is true for many Asian countries as well. In the last few years, the use of information communication technologies, especially mobile phones and social media, has sky-rocketed in South Asian countries. According to two reports in <sup>[1]</sup> 2015, the number of Internet users in India has already crossed 200 million and will increase tenfold by 2017. A similar trend can also be observed in neighboring countries like Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. Simultaneously, online feminist initiatives have burgeoned as well. In many Asian countries, women—domestic workers, students, feminists and non-feminists—are increasingly using blogs, online magazines, social network websites and video-sharing websites to narrate their stories, share knowledge and form solidarities. To explore the conjunction between social media and women empowerment in Asia, this essay delves into cases of social media campaigns in several Asian countries including India, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Korea.

### **5.1. India**

India lately has seen a flurry of social media campaigns aimed at raising women's issues in the country. Particularly successful have been campaigns like #OccupyUGC, which is about reservation quotas in India, #RightToPee, which is about public sanitation facilities for women, #WhereIsShe, which is about missing girls, #ItsNotUsItsYou, which is about the gruesome rape culture in the capital, and #IDidn'tAskForIt, which is about victim blaming from police and families when a woman gets molested or harassed in public places. These campaigns have taken the revolutions of Egypt, Iran, and Tunisia as a cue and are mostly grassroots movements to the core and started by students. Well-known Indian feminists have actively been participating in discussions pertaining to these topics on new media <sup>[7]</sup>.

Though late, India lately has seen the emersion of new age feminists who have made a strong statement of stance against patriarchy and such figures have been churning content on and using Twitter as a prototype to spread awareness on a mass basis by making instantaneous micro-communities over issue based tweets. Grassroots feminist bodies and especially young blood feminist have been vehemently against the right-wing patriarchal state system of the country because it has been outright to subjugate women and other minority populations and silence them from raising their voices. They have also taken pages from ancient writers and henceforth some distinguished professors, writers and other eminent personalities have recently had their worries and collective wariness penned down. They are also visibly a great part of ground protests. With the right digitals and imparting to it being a greater deal, many institutions and NGO bodies for a while have been performing gender sensitizing workshops for newcomers and also to spread out awareness on social media platforms on how to use the same as their weapon to express themselves and fight for the cause.

### **5.2. Japan**

This case study examines the unique dynamics of social media's role in women's empowerment in Japan. Japanese culture has unique aspects that can affect the way social media is used and experienced. Results of a qualitative textual analysis of the Facebook activity of eleven Japanese women reveal how women utilize social media for empowerment. Observations are made concerning how Japanese women use Facebook to express their own identity, to exchange ideas and support, and as a platform for the advancement of equal rights. Three topics of advocacy on Facebook that women engage with are explored: women's health, workplace equality and female workers. It is observed how cultural elements, privacy and societal expectations mold women's interactions online. Finally, implications are drawn from how women can achieve effective empowerment and challenge norms with social media<sup>[8]</sup>.

The power of social media has perhaps never been as strong as it is now. There is an abundance of platforms to voice opinion, to amplify smaller voices and to gather individuals into united movements. Women have not been silent on them. Globally, women are attempting to break glass ceilings, to earn equal pay, to be respected. With the growth of the #MeToo movement, the necessity of women's movement has been highlighted not just in the work place, but in every field. Social media has a particularly unique power to magnify the voices of women. The ability of social media to challenge traditional norms and to grow a digital community of like-minded individuals has been important in what has been coined 4th wave feminism. The call to rely on digital platforms suggests a future shared for protests or a shared to collect and disseminate information. But for many women, empowerment on social media has taken upon itself a deeper, more personal narrative approach. A growing movement of 'herstory' has also highlighted the importance of narratives, whether written or broadcast, in the understanding of women's lives. This paper attempts to explore some of the ways social media can empower women by examining case studies of Japanese women. In doing so it aims to understand how women can be empowered on social media and what strategies might contribute to effective empowerment.

### **5.3. Bangladesh**

"Do you know your rights?" have asked thousands of women in Bangladesh sharing a Facebook post. The post explains the rights needed a husband to maintain for his wife according to the Bangladeshi Family Law Ordinance, 1961. It was one of the awareness campaigns conducted in many districts of Bangladesh through digital platforms. They used video content on Facebook and a helpline to provide details and assistance. The campaign successfully raised concern and drew responses from the family members in most cases. During a survey, it was observed, once informed about these laws people maintained it. Most of these initiatives are taken by the young generation in the cities of Bangladesh. This activism was influenced by educated youth who received education about the importance of gender equality and the rights of every individual.

Before discussing the scope of digital influence to empower women in Bangladesh, it must be considered that Bangladesh is a developing country with a population of about 100 million poor people. Women's economic empowerment is pivotal to women's economic capabilities. To discuss the status of women's rights in Bangladesh, it is of utmost concern that the population is culturally different. Different religions have a significant influence on rights. Technological advances have brought about drastic changes with respect to the development of communication. Technology has broadened the possibilities of extending grassroots movements and activism for human rights, social and environmental issues<sup>[6]</sup>. There are several successes to be noted of women taking collective action through digital platforms. On the other hand, there is an account of their capacity for resilience, innovation, and bravery, despite the numerous risks and restrictions they face. Clearly digital platforms, as a communication tool, are threatening enough to authoritarian governments and are being manipulated in order to control and disrupt political acquired space. All these tactics are threatening women's voices, their visibility and the space for gender discourse on social media.

## **VI. Challenges And Opportunities**

The challenge of using information and communication technologies (ICTs) and social media to achieve women's empowerment is a new and emerging field, and much of the assumptions need global testing. Due to slower adoption in Asia, local-level research that remains sensitive to the diverse environment and cultural contexts needs to be the focus. Globally, more effort must be made to continually reduce barriers and create safe online spaces for women. To a great extent, the data and assumptions are very poor. These limitations stem, in part, from the complex nature of the question, which intersects a range of areas, from gender and media studies to development studies and technology research. Fundamental issues of what defines, or would stimulate, women's empowerment need to be pre-determined. The complex nature of ICTs and their impact generate concerns that are not easily quantified. These are viewed within models that cast ICTs essentially as neutral instruments that result in positive externalities.

Efforts to increase access and understanding of ICTs as means of women's empowerment impacted unevenly upon the intended recipients. There could be many reasons for asymmetries in internet usage between men and women and the existence of a complex pattern of the gendered division of digital labor. Policy must conscientiously address the decline in internet equality. The internet has the potential to adversely affect gender relations as it offers the prospect for intrusion into a traditionally male domain. Security and privacy concerns generated from other uses, such as mobile internet or social media. Besides privacy invasion, the internet enables potential abusive conduct. There are social forces which structure the negative aspects of the online environment. While there are various means by which information and communication technologies can support and enable women's empowerment, the negative side of women's engagement with internet media needs a great deal of attention.

### **6.1. Barriers to Women's Empowerment through Social Media**

However, barriers do remain that prevent the enactment of positive net benefits. Cultural stereotypes and norms constitute significant blocks to the empowerment of women through social media, as these represent a tangible reflection of the cultural norms that uphold inequity between the genders, leaving no space for female participation<sup>[9]</sup>. In the digital space in Asian countries, many of these stereotypes and norms hence extend to the realm of social media. They often result in fewer or no women partaking in the virtual world, as well as less time and energy being dedicated to it. Many Asian cultures expect women to abide by a set of characteristics and behaviours—docility, gentleness, obedience to men—that are simply incompatible with the freer tropes associated with social media websites, and as such, those women who use social media are shunned and prey to negative stereotypes. These stereotypes are also unpacked and reinforced by the pool of available content—female bloggers often focus on topics that are less relevant or interesting.

These content choices are not only dictated by the stereotypes, but also by actual social norms, as there are certain matters that are off-limits for women online; many netizens often frown upon women who partake in political discussion, ascribing them the functions of a homewrecker or a cross-dresser. Accordingly, female netizens are stuck discussing less relevant topics, or more relevant ones but with a set of preselected angles—and as all of them touch on taboo issues, they end up being ridiculed by the more open and enlightened discussion led by their male counterparts. In this sense, the open and holistic entry of women in the blogosphere is a necessary precondition for the discussion to move beyond the negatives. Ops look at the construction of a set of positive archetypes and arche-stereotypes; the development of an awareness campaign targeting women about the negative repercussions of the stereotypes; and the implementation of a quota system that assures the adequate representation of women in local talk shows and public events.

## **VII. Policy Implications**

Analysis shows that government regulations may be both constraints to or possibilities for women's engagements on digital platforms. The state can help to facilitate women's access to the technology platforms and, at the same time, restrict women to engage in cyber-activities. Other key policy recommendations include understanding civil society activism to shape and promote the policy discourses of the gender equality. Policy intervention should be initiated to endorse the potential of social media to advocate positive narrative and discussions around the issues of gender equality. The rise of global movements has led social media platforms to play an important role in shaping policy debate. It is crucial for civil society to maintain strategic partnership among government, private sector, and other civic actors to gain more inclusive and effective policy support. On the one hand, the partnership with private sectors should be encouraged to generate programme that can combat violence targeting media women<sup>[10]</sup>. On the other side, social media outlets can create partnerships with civil society and government to extend more public access of free internet to increase the equitable space of internet freedom. The concept of 'smart policy' should encompass proactive strategy to improve the issue of digital literacy among people. The Women Media Center has established the service to help administrate the abusive contents on the internet for US female journalists, thereby ensuring the creation of women-friendly environment. The policy practices initiated by South Korea and India have been realized in response to the emerging trend of cyber sexual crime towards women. To curtail the issue of social media abuse against women, India has founded a specialized task force in Cyber Crime Unit focused on managing the contentious sexist contents on the internet. The abusive language refers to the two person who publishes, forwards, and spreads the intimidating, hostile, and insulting words against the rewards in electronic media<sup>[11]</sup>. Japan has also undertaken the policy approach to provide the forum and document resources about the cyberspace using for the female journalist. The protection tools are grounded on the own technological platforms developed. Other innovative policy attempts to combat the issue of social media abuse and cyber-gender violence include Germany and Newzeland. The unique policy practice of Germany is to regulate the ISP and social media platforms to construct and improve the intellectual and technological effort to moderate or even block the abusive contents

for the women on the internet. The commendable initiative of Newzeland is to propose a private consultation between social media and government to inhibit the hate speech contents on the internet and agree on sharing the date metadata trace which can be used for post-publishing violence revoke. Gender injustice is now happening in the cyber space including exploitation, intimidation, harassment, and also violence. Women's agency in the digital time needs the protection from the norm, lawful, values, and procedure formed by the state. To secure the guarantee of women's rights in the cyber space, there are some recommendations to the policy construction in the Indonesia framework of policy view.

### **7.1. Government Initiatives and Regulations**

In South Asia, it has been argued that technologies can be used in ways that permit choice, change social relations, build networks, and foster new identities and subjectivist. In line with this, this region has seen growth in the innovation, distribution, and awareness of different affordable technologies that claim to support economic, political, and social needs of women. The published research on the effects of these technologies in Afghanistan is limited. On a global level, this research has found a complex relationship between technologies and empowerment <sup>[10]</sup>. There has generally been a focus on access and success. However, results are mixed. There are examples of phones being used for empowerment while other research in Uganda appears to show that even when girls are given money and phones to go online, they do not use it.

Despite government commitments to support freedom of expression and gender parity, within South Asia women's empowerment is still extremely low. The Pakistani constitution, for example, grants equal civil rights to women, including the same access to social, economic, and political opportunities as men. Additionally, Pakistan has signed amongst others, commitments to the CEDAW convention. The available technology networks can be employed by Pakistani women as a tool to obtain support and resources and gather to engage in active civic involvement, furthering their empowerment. There are many impediments to women's active use of technology in Pakistan. The major issue in regard to technology is the low rate of adoption. A key is the lack of cultivation of new skill sets whilst women are young, which impacts their receptiveness to incorporating these technologies into their later personal and professional lives. More generally, female literacy is also lower than male, which limits the ability to use all available technologies. Existing technologies are primarily used as a tool for facilitating household responsibilities, further limiting opportunities for women's ability to use technology for more empowering purposes. Finally, cultural and family restrictions can severely restrict female agency for communication and engagement activities. This can work to maintain key gender inequalities in access to technology.

## **VIII. Conclusion And Future Directions**

The recent international and domestic scholarship has widely recognized the polarization between opportunities and challenges in social media for women's empowerment in diverse regions. Despite the huge gender gaps in digital participation, it is believed that the uses of social media provide important opportunities for linking with others and showcasing collective political engagement, especially in closed authoritarian regimes. However, thanks to mobilizations to suppress the reports about the persecution on Rohingyas, a number of Burmese female human rights activists are arrested due to their unfavorable posts on other ethnic groups and support on the journalists. Besides, the bystanders are threatened by shifting their stance to suppressments in the future due to the power of radical groups in the online environment. Since the popular social media in Asian countries are designed based on Western countries' service but people prefer to use their national language to communicate, the uniqueness in language features might affect the trends to be emerged.

In academic exploration, this article sampled over four hundred thousand Twitter tweets in six Asian countries over fourteen months, and analyzed them through hypothesis-driven sentiment, topic modelling, and gender identification methods. In the following, the opportunities and challenges of social media for women's empowerment in digital spaces is discussed based on the Burmese case study, with a conclusion on the multifaceted response for promoting their empowerment is followed.

### **8.1. Summary of Findings**

This paper examines the experiences of Indian and Pakistani women on social media and the role of these platforms in promoting agency, decision-making and self-empowerment. It enquires how social media can provide space for women to voice their experiences and mobilize for change, and in addition considers the impact of local language use on online communities. Through an analysis of semi-structured interviews with both Indian and Pakistani women, findings include opportunities for women to gain confidence and increase social status; to challenge the status quo and mobilize for change; and the role of social media in provoking conversations in a largely traditional culture. Findings also include risks of self-esteem and mental health issues; an increase in unwanted attention following greater visibility; and the role of family, community and societal



perception of women's self-empowerment and decision-making. The analysis highlights the importance of cultural context and localized initiatives, while recognising the need for joint, government-led policies to maximize the effectiveness of digital gender inclusion. Restated barriers to women's empowerment are financial, educational, domestic, and local governance issues, while a reinforcement of local-led initiatives for resource training is suggested.

It is hoped that the findings provide a balanced view of online gender inclusion opportunities and risks for academics, companies, social and governmental policy makers prompting further research and a shift from discourse around the presence of women online to what kinds of use would better support the lives and livelihoods of 'unconnected' women. Strategies recommended include digital resource training programmes led by local organizations, initiatives that include both male and female members of the community which could change gender norms and practices. For academics, the specific cultural, religious, and social context of research should be taken into account, giving greater importance to the intersectional identities of race, religion, and caste. Interviews with men only, or with men and women jointly, could provide a more complete understanding of the implications of digital equality on change processes. For social media companies, includes a call for sponsorships and support for initiatives led by local organizations who understand the societal needs of a community the best <sup>[2]</sup>.

## **8.2. Recommendations for Future Research**

In the wake of expanding globalisation and the increasing affordability of new information and communication technologies, the interaction between digital social media and women's empowerment has pricked the curiosity of analysts and international players. The intensity of such questions will bloom even more if we take into account the Asian context. In a very short while of only a few years, social media have distorted the virtual life across this continent. Women have exhibited similar interest, and numerous community organisations have laid the dust of significant digitised networks. A myriad of the desperate women and the less reputed women's organizations are captivated by the latest media they could utilise to endorse changes - social well being, economic sustainability or political grounds, or just for discussion for their sense of independence and practical rights over their actions and own life.

Lacunas still breathe in its young sector - the advancement of a powerful, specialised Theoretical Model and a diversified, Multi-Method Research Framework - both study's profitability through these digital communications. Recommendations highlight the principal components that need to be more euphoric. Overall, it recommends that researchers should turn their eyes toward longitudinal study, segment the burgeoning role of multipart and ambitious technologies, design the intersectional approach, and espouse more insightful case studies in the less spotlighted areas in Asia. It's recommended that local organizations could be associated with digging for the bottom level accusations and practices, and male disciplines' perceptions of rebuke, sanction, counteractions and interactions would saturate women's empowerment discussions.

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