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Always picture-ready

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Proceedings of the 13th Conference of the Media Psychology Division (DGPs)

Inclusion and Diversity in Media Psychology

André Melzer and Gary Lee Wagener



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Psychology Division (DGPs)**

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ply transplant in the digitally networked space. Research suggests a sexist bias against women who visibly engage in politics, resulting in incivility and harassment. The backlash against female politicians (Rheault et al., 2019) and journalists (Gardiner, 2018) sanctions women's visible political self-disclosure to emphasize politics as a masculine space (Harrison & Munn, 2007). Relying on the theory of normative social behavior (TNSB, Rimal & Real, 2005), we assume the microcosmos of online discussions enforces social rules of political participation. For one, questioning and attacking women in online political discussions displays a descriptive social norm of the medium (Flanagin, 2017). Additionally, such public harassment suggest that women have to expect consequences when voicing their opinions (injunctive norms). Our first research question is whether there is a role-model effect of visible female politicians. Secondly, we ask whether the sexist backlash against visible women in political discussions has a silencing effect on female readers of political news online.

We present a preregistered study (https://osf.io/s79ya/?view_only=f7cde7241b3d414dac47810c476adea1) investigating the impact of sexist comments under political news postings on social networking sites on female readers' political engagement online (n = 500). We implemented a repeated-measure design using randomized treatment and stimuli presentation using six randomized social media posts from the leading legacy news show in Germany (Tagesschau) and the customary comment sections. Single item measurements were used for all outcomes. A power analysis was conducted as a simulation study, showing sufficient power to detect small average treatment effects under the assumption of limited effect heterogeneity at the stimulus level.

Political discussions / gender gap / sexism / social norms / harassment / online participation

Always picture-ready: Adolescents' experiences of social media pressures around body ideals and body projects

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Previous research has demonstrated that both passive and active social media usage may have a detrimental impact on people's body image and satisfaction (Faelens et al., 2021; Fioravanti et al., 2022). Moreover, particularly the editing affordances of social media platforms highlight the apparent malleability inherent to contemporary conceptualizations of bodies as projects (cf. Shilling, 2003). Considering this, it is unsurprising that recent studies found a relation between (selfie) editing and a greater acceptance of – and

a higher intention to undergo – cosmetic procedures (Hermans et al., 2022; Wang et al., 2022).

Whereas many quantitative studies have examined the link between social media usage, body (dis)satisfaction, and (intended) body projects, fewer qualitative projects have been executed. It is particularly important to focus on adolescents as they are both avid users of social media and adolescents' self-concept is particularly vulnerable to external influence; moreover, current adolescents have grown up with an unprecedented normalized view of particular body projects, including cosmetic procedures (Ching & Xu, 2019).

In light of the above, this study explored the question of how Dutch adolescents perceive and negotiate body ideals and body 'projects' encountered on social media. We particularly focused on attitudes towards cosmetic procedures. To answer the research question, 13 focus groups were conducted with a total of 42 adolescents (aged 14-19), across the Netherlands. Participants were recruited at schools and youth councils around the country to account for national and regional differences. Moreover, we included a diverse group of adolescents with different educational attainment levels. Considering the potentially sensitive nature of the study, we recruited friendship groups for our small focus groups (approximately four participants per group). As Allen (2006, p. 164) has argued, focus groups can be helpful when researching sensitive topics as they may "increase the likelihood of people sharing personal experiences".

Adolescents / social media usage / body ideal / body project / qualitative focus groups

Online Incel Speech on incels.is: A content analysis

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Theoretical Background: The worldview of involuntarily celibate men (incels) is known to involve a distorted view of reality which can lead to harmful behavior including gendered hate speech. Incels form online communities in which they "often bemoan their lack of a loving relationship with a woman while simultaneously dehumanizing women and calling for misogynistic violence" (Glance et al., 2021, p. 288). However, not all online comments from incels contain misogyny or gendered hate speech, and some of the problematic comments address depression, self-harm, or the reasons why someone became an incel. To get a deeper understanding of the incel phenomenon, it could be better not to only focus on the misogynistic and hateful comments. Thus, this study employed the framing theory (Entman, 1991) to investigate the general comments and the hybrid masculinities model (Glance et al., 2021) to investigate the misogynistic comments from incels.