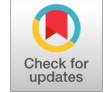# Wrong use of Feminism on Social Media Platforms

Santanu Tanti

Abstract: This work explores the pervasive misappropriation of feminism on social media platforms. It delineates how feminism is often misrepresented, diluted, and commodified for commercial gain, leading to a shallow understanding of its core principles. Furthermore, it discusses the propagation of toxic femininity under the guise of feminism, the polarization of discourse, and the neglect of intersectionality. By examining these issues, the abstract underscores the detrimental impact of the wrong use of feminism on social media, emphasizing the need for critical engagement and inclusive dialogue to reclaim the movement's integrity and effectiveness. A survey has been conducted based on Google form of 50 questions among the common people for the identification of the opinions of people on the negative aspects that social media has on the promotion of feminist theories among the common people. The survey has helped in the identification that to some extent social media is responsible for the misinterpretation of feminist theories among the population. Thus, it is essential to take steps to make just use of the platform for spreading the ideas of feminism and equality among genders.

Keywords: Feminism, Social Media, Pseudo-Feminism, Misinterpretation, Miscommunication.

I. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, social media has become a powerful platform for discourse, activism, and community-building, with feminist movements taking centre stage in online spaces. However, alongside the positive impact of digital platforms on feminist advocacy, there exists a concerning trend of the wrong use of feminism over social media. This misuse manifests in various forms, ranging from performative activism and tokenism to the commodification of feminist ideals for commercial gain. While social media has undoubtedly amplified feminist voices and facilitated important conversations about gender equality, its misuse has also led to the trivialisation of feminist struggles, the perpetuation of harmful stereotypes, and the erosion of genuine feminist activism. This essay will delve into how feminism is wrongly used on social media in the contemporary era, examining the implications of tokenism, consumerism, misinformation, selective representation, and cyberbullying within online feminist discourse. By critically analysing these issues, we can better understand the challenges facing feminist movements in digital spaces and explore strategies for promoting more meaningful and inclusive forms of feminist activism online.

The essence of feminism is sometimes lost in the noise of society as it is quite crucial on the part of the audience so that they can make a clear distinction between genuine advocacy for equality and the misinterpretations of the theories and preachings of the feminist movements. Therefore, the article will shed light on the various wrong uses of feminism over social media followed by a discussion regarding how feminism is wrongly used in social media in misguiding the theories of feminism. In addition, it will also highlight the implications of the wrong use of feminism in online spaces and the importance of fostering genuine, inclusive feminist activism on social media. Additionally, it will also explore the various ways in which feminism is being used on social media which might include performative activism, commodification, misinformation, selective representation and so on. The issue that is being discussed in the research regarding the wrong use of feminism in social media. In contemporary times, the increased popularity of social media greatly impacts the exposure and interpretation of various concepts. Similar was the case of feminism and its theories which have been manipulated over social media. It can be said that conducting the research helps in developing a deeper understanding of the various dynamics of society so that it can address various challenges of the feminist movements so that strategies can promote more authentic and constructive gender discourse based on the use of social media. In the contemporary era, the increasing use of social media is having a positive and negative impact on the promotion

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Various feminist theories have come to the forefront for the intervention and promotion of equality among the genders in contemporary society. It has been evident in the discussion of () it can be identified that one of the most accepted forms of feminism helps in the justification of the aspects of equality within the existing system of society. Liberal feminism stands as one of the foundational ideologies within the broader feminist movement, advocating for gender equality through the lens of liberal political philosophy. This essay aims to delve into the principles, history, and contemporary relevance of liberal feminism, exploring its emphasis on legal reform, individual autonomy, and the pursuit of equality within existing societal structures. At its core, liberal feminism is grounded in individual rights, liberty, and equality (Priyadharshini et al., 2021) [6]. Inspired by Enlightenment ideas, liberal feminists argue that women should have equal access to opportunities and rights as men within the framework of liberal democracy. Central to liberal feminist thought is pursuing legal and policy reforms to eliminate discrimination and ensure equal treatment under the law. A key focus of liberal feminism is the pursuit of legal equality for women.

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[Fig.1: Liberal Feminism] [6]

(Source: Azizah et al., 2022)

Throughout history, liberal feminists have campaigned for legislative reforms to address gender-based discrimination in areas such as education, employment, and political participation. The achievements include the fight for suffrage, reproductive rights, and anti-discrimination laws. By working within existing legal and political structures, liberal feminists have made significant strides in advancing women's rights and challenging discriminatory practices (Azizah et al., 2022) [1]. Thus, it can be said that liberal feminism remains a significant force within the feminist movement, advocating for gender equality through legal reform, individual autonomy, and inclusivity. While it has made notable progress in advancing women's rights, liberal feminism grapples with critiques and challenges regarding its approach to addressing systemic inequalities. Moving forward, liberal feminists must engage with intersectional perspectives and continue to evolve their strategies to create a more inclusive and equitable society for all genders. The impact of social media is a profound factor that helps influence people regarding the aspects and theories of feminism so that they can reshape the dynamics of advocacy discourse and build communities within the feminist movement (Korteweg et al., 2021) [5].
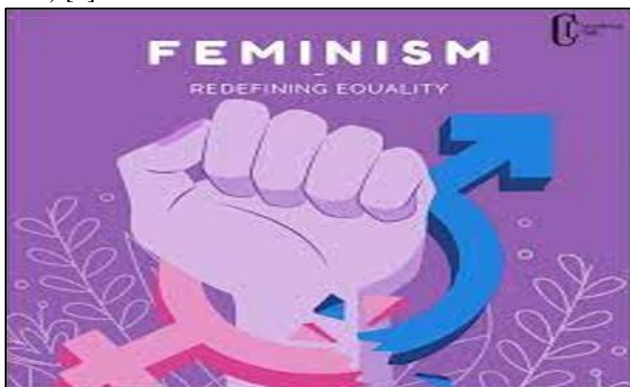
[Fig.2: Redefining Equality] [5]

(Source: Azizah et al., 2022)

It has been identified that the increasing use and importance of social media has emerged as one of the powerful tools that help amplify the voices of feminists so that they can contribute to the evolution of feminist narratives and this influence is observed in various dimensions. One of the primary effects is the democratisation of the discourse of feminism as social media has the power to allow individuals from diverse backgrounds and experiences to share their perspectives based on gender equality. This factor of democratisation helps in fostering enabling voices, and

inclusivity helps in traditionalising media so that they can contribute to broader conservation (Keller, 2019) [3]. This democratisation helps in making the movements more representative, addressing and acknowledging the intersectionality of various kinds of gender issues. The visibility that is being offered by the various social media platforms plays an important role in elevating feminist issues on the global stage. Various feminist movements like MeToo, TimesUp and so on went viral based on the features and openness that are being provided by the platforms. The platforms have helped shed light on persuasive issues like gender-based violence and harassment.

In this context, it can be said that the social media platform does not only provide a platform to the harassers but also helps in raising awareness based on galvanised collective actions, and demonstrations while transforming the potential of the social services in catalysing social change. It can also be said that it helps in facilitating real-time activism so that feminists can swiftly respond to emerging events while sharing information and organising protests and campaigns (Storer et al., 2020) [8]. The fast-paced communication facility that is provided on the part of social media helps in managing adaptive advocacy while ensuring the fact that feminist discussion can relevantly reach the population and responsive strategies can be built to deal with social challenges. The other important aspect that is provided on the use of social media platforms is community building as a digital platform helps in providing a virtual space based on which feminists can connect and share experiences while providing support to each other. These online communities that are formed based on social media platforms help foster a sense of belongingness and solidarity thus breaking all kinds of geographical barriers and creating a global network of activists.

**[Fig.3: Stress on Mental Health Due to Social Media] [8]**

(Source:) Azizah et al., 2022

Apart from all the positive aspects that are being provided on the part of social media, certain challenges are found with the use of social media. It has been analysed that one of the contemporary factors of the use of social media is influencer culture in a level of complexity as they can be used in influencing people based on the various feminist activities based on the platform that is being provided by the social media platform (Quan-Haase et al., 2022) [7]. Thus, in this context, it can be said that the media has a great influence on the promotion of the theories of feminism among the population

and it plays a major role in making the audience aware of the various aspects and challenges of gender equality [10]. It has been analysed that various factors are leading to the wrong use of feminism over social media The growing use of social media platforms for education and wearing people is leading to various factors that can cause harm or have a negative effect on the actuarial portrayal of the concept of feminism among the population [11].

In the case of the negative effects that social media is having on the promotion of facts and equality promotions are leading to the distortion of the core principles of the theories and thus affecting the effectiveness of the propaganda among the population [12]. It has been identified that some of the factors that contribute to the wrong use of feminism over social media include performative activism, lack of understanding, selectable application, political opportunism and so on [13]. The desire for social validation can lead to performative activism where individuals engage in feminist expression primarily for public approval rather than genuine commitment to gender equality as this can dilute the authenticity of feminist discourse on social media (Bayfield et al., 2020) [2]. Lack of understanding is another factor that often leads to misuse of the feminist principles. Individuals may adopt feminist language without grasping the complexities of the issues of gender thus leading to misinterpretation and misguiding of the principles of the feminist theories among the population of society. Social media also tends to pressurize social media trends so that they can gain approval ensuring the fact that the theories of feminism are not misused by the individuals of society.
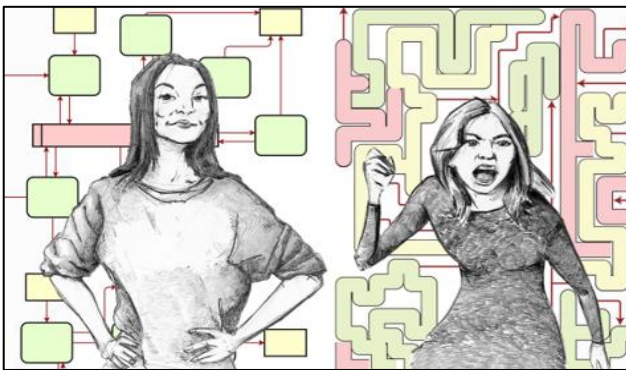
[Fig.4: Pseudo Feminism] [2]

(Source: Azizah et al., 2022)

In certain cases, it has also been analysed that the theories of feminism have also been misused for political gains where the feminist language is used by them strategically for the promotion of gender equality and thus this can be considered as a major wrong use of feminism over social media among the population (Kircaburun et al., 2020) [4]. Some of the other risks that could be faced include dissemination of information on social media thus leading to the spread of wrong and manipulated information or oversimplified narratives about feminism and gender equality among the population. In certain cases, it has been observed that the online platform has been used by people for the conduction of attacks and harassment on individuals while taking advantage of the online discussion forums. Similarly, polarization within the spaces of social media can tend to encourage aggressive or divisive misuse of feminist ideals (Su et al., 2020) [9]. In addition, it can also be mentioned that social media influencers can exploit the minds of individuals by misusing feminist language for their gain and or engagement without any deep commitment to gender equality.

[Fig.5: Feminism and Non-Feminism] [9]

(Source: Azizah et al., 2022)

III. METHODOLOGY

The research approach that will be considered for the research will be deductive while the research design that will be considered is exploratory. In addition, the research philosophy that will be considered is the positivist research philosophy. The data collection method that will be considered is both qualitative and quantitative method and the tool that will be used is survey and interview. The analysis method that will be considered will be content analysis for the quantitative data and frequency analysis of quantitative data that will be collected while the sampling technique will be probability and non-probability sampling.

IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A. What is Your Age?

Particulars	No. of Responses	Percentage of Responses	Total Respondents
15-20 years	20	20	100
21-30 years	28	28	100
31-45 years	40	40	100
45 years and above	12	12	100

Table 1: Age of the Respondents
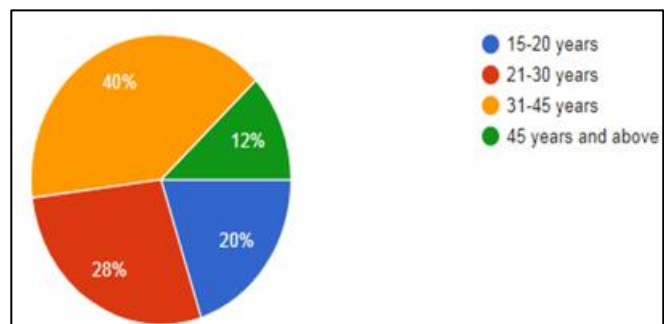
[Fig.6: Age of the Respondents]

As per the data that has been collected, it can be said that people between the ages of 31 and 45 are the ones who are concerned with the core principles of feminism and are yet interested in spreading the concepts of gender equality within society.
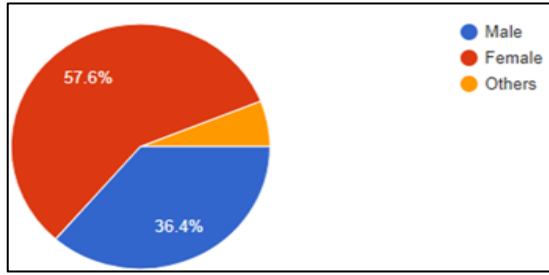
B. What is Your Gender?

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Table 3: Gender of the Respondents

| Particulars	No. of Responses	Percentage of Responses	Total Respondents
Male	36	36	100
Female	58	58	100
Others	6	6	100

[Fig.7: Gender of the Respondents]

In the context of the above graph, it can be said the responses to the questions of the surveys are more female thus the female perspectives for the research will be gained more than male perspectives on understanding the wrong use of feminism over social media. Have you attended any online discussions on awareness of feminist principles?

Table 4: Online Discussions on Awareness of Feminist Principles

| Particulars	No. of Responses	Percentage of Responses	Total Respondents
Yes	50	50	100
No	50	50	100
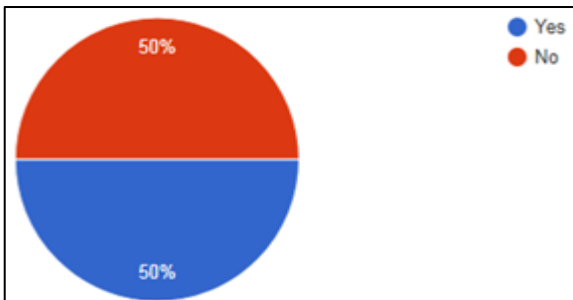
[Fig.8: Online Discussions on Awareness of Feminist Principles]

The above graph suggests that feminists' principles are quite evident on social media pages and that people are aware of the various aspects of feminism Do you believe that feminism is being misinterpreted on social media?

Table 5: Feminism Being Misinterpreted on Social Media

| Particulars	No. of Responses	Percentage of Responses	Total Respondents
Frequently	20	20	100
Occasionally	57	57	100
Always	13	13	100
Not at all	10	10	100
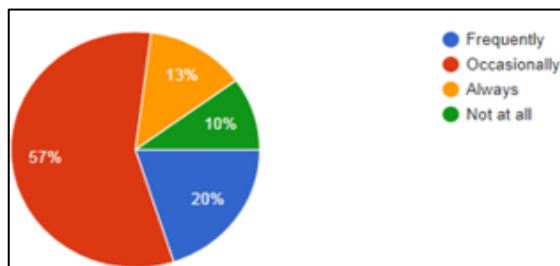
[Fig.9: Feminism Being Misinterpreted on Social Media]

Based on this fact, it can be said that to a certain extent feminism is being over social media in a manner that helps gain personal motivation and opportunities in the various aspects of society.

Did you observe any instances in online discussions and posts where feminism is being misinterpreted?

Table 6: Instances in Online Discussions and Posts Where Feminism is Being Misinterpreted

| Particulars	No. of Responses	Percentage of Responses	Total Respondents
Very frequently	25	25	100
Somewhat frequently	45	45	100
Rarely	19	19	100
Never	11	11	100
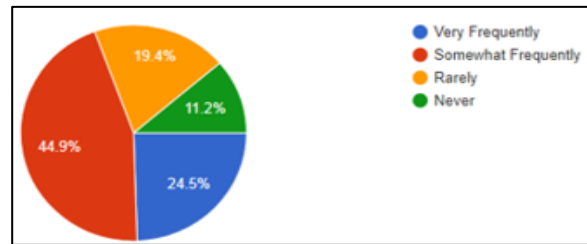
[Fig.10: Instances in Online Discussions and Posts Where Feminism is Being Misinterpreted]

Based on the above graphical representation, it can be said that there are various misconceptions regarding the interpretation of feminism over social media as the presence. This might have a negative promotion of the core principles of feminism among the people of the society.

In your opinion, which of the following are the most common misconceptions about feminism that you see on social media?

Table 7: The Most Common Misconceptions About Feminism That you see on Social Media

Particulars	No. of Responses	Percentage of Responses	Total Respondents
Feminism is anti-men	17	17	100
Feminism is only for women	26	26	100
Feminists hate traditional rules	22	22	100
All of the above	35	35	100
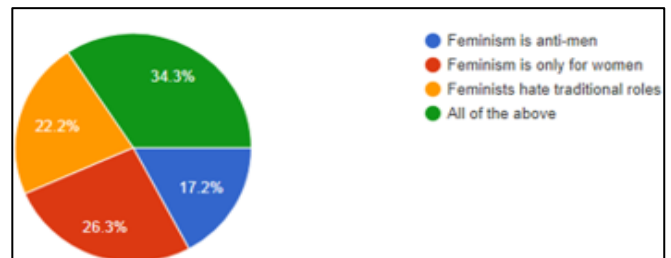
[Fig.11: The Most Common Misconceptions About Feminism That you see on Social Media]

In the context of the above-presented graph, it can be said in this context that there are various misconceptions regarding the interpretation of feminism over social media as the presence and this might have

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a negative promotion of the core principles of feminism among the people of the society.

Which social media platform has mostly affected you with misconceptions about feminism on social media platforms?

Table 8: Social Media Platform that has Mostly Affected People with any Kind of Misconceptions About Feminism on Social Media Platforms

| Particulars	No. of Responses	Percentage of Responses	Total Respondents
Facebook	20	20	100
Instagram	31	31	100
Twitter	33	33	100
LinkedIn	16	16	100
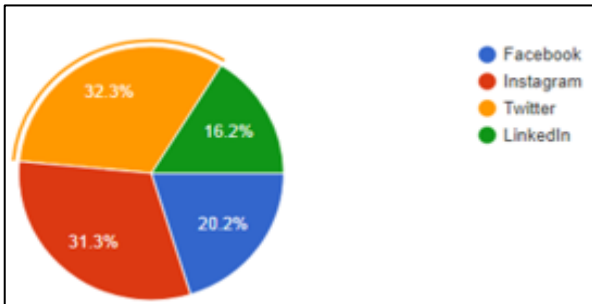
[Fig.12: Social Media Platform that has Mostly Affected People with any Kind of Misconceptions About Feminism on Social Media Platforms]

Based on the graph it has been identified that Twitter has been playing a major role in misinterpreting the roles of the feminist theories for the people of society thus posing a negative impact on the people of the society.

Do you think that certain specific influencers or channels misinterpret feminism over social media platforms?

Table 9: Specific Influencers or Channels Misinterpret Feminism Over Social Media Platforms

| Particulars	No. of Responses	Percentage of Responses	Total Respondents
To a great extent	23	23	100
To some extent	26	26	100
To no extent	51	51	100
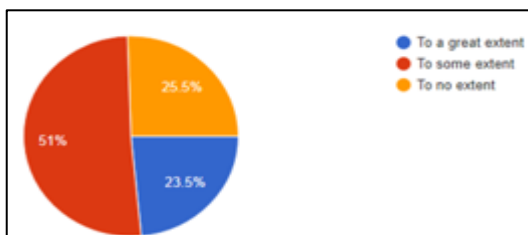
[Fig.10: Specific Influencers or Channels Misinterpret Feminism Over Social Media Platforms]

The above graph highlights the fact that there are certain influencers and social media channels that misinterpret feminist principles over the various social media platforms. It has been identified that there are certain instances where incorrect concepts regarding feminist theories are being promoted which are having a negative impact on the people of the society.

What according to you can be an incorrect use of feminism in social media posts or discussions?

Table 10: Incorrect use of Feminism in Social Media Posts or Discussions

| Particulars	No. of Responses	Percentage of Responses	Total Respondents
Promotion of anti-men aspects	19	19	100
Promotion of feminists' principle for individual satisfaction	28	28	100
Promotion of gender equality aspects	23	23	100
B and C	30	30	100
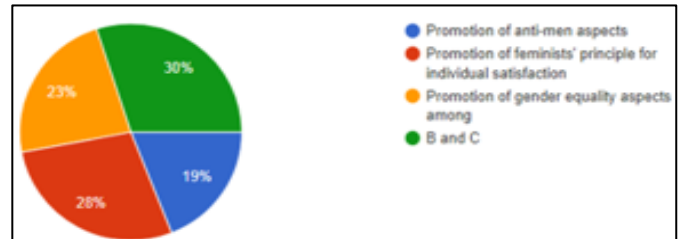
[Fig.11: Incorrect use of Feminism in Social Media Posts or Discussions]

It has been identified based on the above graph that there have been instances that ahs been identified by the participants over social media where the feminist principles have been used for the satisfaction of the individual needs of women and thus they need to be restricted.

Do you feel that there is a need for better education and awareness regarding feminist principles in online communities?

Table 11: Need For Better Education and Awareness Regarding Feminist Principles in Online Communities

Particulars	No. of Responses	Percentage of Responses	Total Respondents
To a great extent	34	34	100
To some extent	41	41	100
To no extent	25	25	100
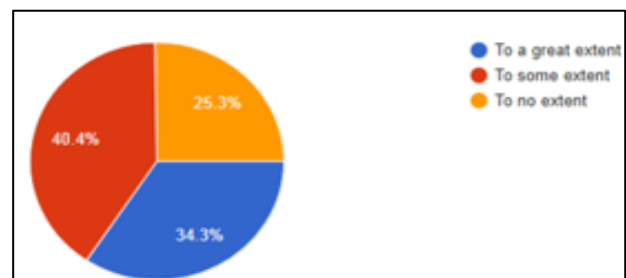
[Fig.12: Need for Better Education and Awareness Regarding Feminist Principles in Online Communities]

Based on the above graph it can be identified that there is a need for better education and awareness among the people of the society based on feminist principles with the help of online communities as social media platforms have become one of t eh inevitable aspects in the life of the people which can better influence the thoughts and decision-making of the people.

Which of the following according to you would be the best method to address the misinterpretation of feminism over social media?

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Table 12: The Best Method to Address the Misinterpretation of Feminism Over Social Media

| Particulars	No. of Responses	Percentage of Responses	Total Respondents
Education campaigns and inclusive discussion forums	25	25	100
Moderation policies	26	26	100
Promotion of diverse voices	28	28	100
All of the above	21	21	100
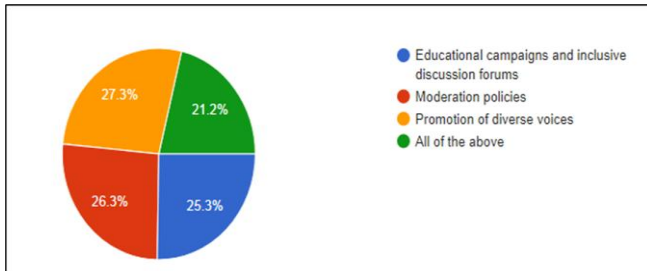
[Fig.13: The Best Method to Address the Misinterpretation of Feminism Over Social Media]

The above-presented graph helps identify the fact that factors like educational campaigns and moderation policies are some of the prominent factors that can help address the misinterpretation of feminism over social media. How do discussions about feminism differ over online and offline platforms?

Table 13: Feminism Differs Between Online and Offline Platforms

| Particulars	No. of Responses	Percentage of Responses	Total Respondents
More polarised online	19	19	100
Both are similar	26	26	100
Less respectful online	32	32	100
Connectivity is more in offline sessions	23	23	100
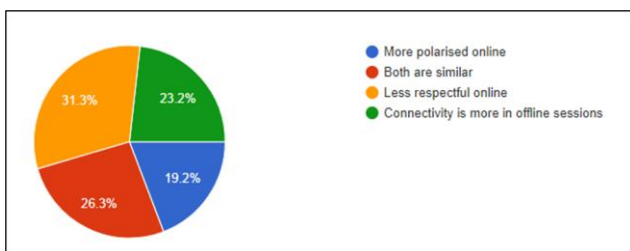
[Fig.14: Feminism Differs Between Online and Offline Platforms]

The graphs help highlight the fact that there is a difference between the discussion of the theories of feminism over online and offline platforms. It has been identified here that the offline platform is more feasible, comfortable and convincing for the discussion and promotion of the theories of feminism among the people of society.

Does feminism have to be absolute from the female gender only?

Table 14: Does Feminism Have to be Absolute from the Female Gender Only

| Particulars	No. of Responses	Percentage of Responses	Total Respondents
Yes	24	24	100
No	46	46	100
Maybe	30	30	100
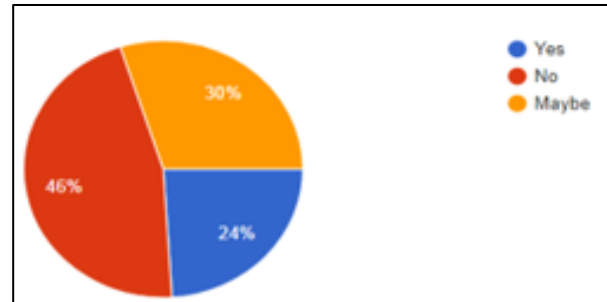
[Fig.15: Does Feminism Have to be Absolute from the Female Gender Only]

Based on the graph it can be concluded that the promotion of the theories of feminism and gender equality in the existing society is not a form for the female gender and 46% of the participants agreed to the fact that the principles of feminism are not only for the female genders but can be promoted by all the genders.

Do you think the women's movement generally has a good impact on society regarding the maintenance of gender equality?

Table 15: Women's Movement Generally Has a Good Impact on Society Regarding the Maintenance of Gender Equality

| Particulars	No. of Responses	Percentage of Responses	Total Respondents
Yes, certainly	47	47	100
Maybe	33	33	100
Not at all	20	20	100
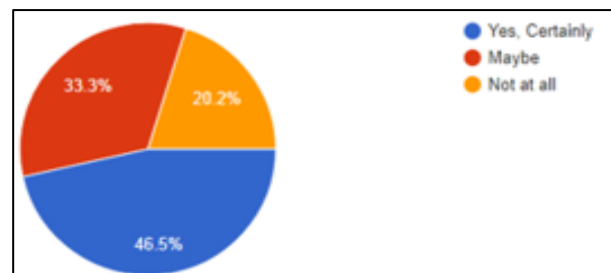
[Fig.16: Women's Movement Generally Has a Good Impact on Society Regarding the Maintenance of Gender Equality]

The graph that has been presented above sheds light on the positive impact that women's movements have on society in maintaining gender equality. It has been observed that a maximum number of participants in the survey have presented that women's movements tend to have a positive impact on society regarding the maintenance of gender equality in society.

Do you think that men and women have equal rights in belonging to feminist movements and promote feminist principles?

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Table 16: Men and Women Have Equal Rights in Belonging to Feminist Movements and Promote Feminist Principles

Particulars	No. of Responses	Percentage of Responses	Total Respondents
Yes	48	48	100
Maybe	38	38	100
No	14	14	100
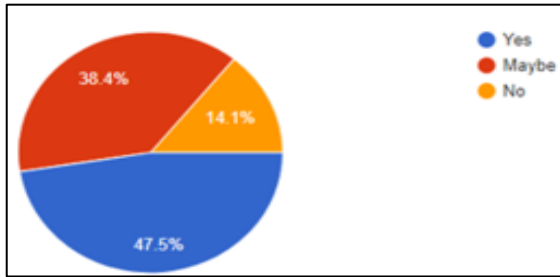
[Fig.17: Men and Women Have Equal Rights in Belonging to Feminist Movements and Promoting Feminist Principles]

Based on the above graph and the answers that have been reflected in the graph it can be concluded that both women and men have the right to promote equality among all genders in the existing societal environment. As this is for the common good of society thus all genders have equal rights in promoting equality.

V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Based on the above results of the survey it can be assumed that the people of the county are aware of the fact that there is increasing aware of the fact that social media is being used for wrong management and portrayal of feminist theories for the betterment of the equality among the genders in the existing society. It has been analysed based on the survey that some people in society believe in the fact that social media platforms have been increasingly used for the wrong interpretation of feminist theories and at the same time they believe the fact that discussion forums and online discussion sessions are important for the spreading of the theories among the common people. In the opinion of most of the participants, it has been analysed that people believe the fact that these discussion forums and online posts have a positive impact on the nature and the running of the system of society. Thus, it can be concluded that there have been various aspects that have been that the wrong use of feminism on social media platforms poses significant challenges to the integrity and effectiveness of the movement. From misrepresentation and the spread of toxic femininity to the polarization of discourse and neglect of intersectionality, these issues undermine the transformative potential of feminism. It is essential to address these challenges, it is crucial to promote critical media literacy and foster inclusive feminist spaces online. By engaging in nuanced discussions, centering marginalized voices, and challenging toxic dynamics, social media can become a more empowering platform for feminist activism. Ultimately, by upholding the principles of feminism with integrity and accountability, we can strive towards a more just and equitable society for all genders.

DECLARATION STATEMENT

I must verify the accuracy of the following information as the article's author.

- **Conflicts of Interest/ Competing Interests:** Based on my understanding, this article has no conflicts of interest.
- **Funding Support:** This article has not been funded by any organizations or agencies. This independence ensures that the research is conducted with objectivity and without any external influence.
- **Ethical Approval and Consent to Participate:** The content of this article does not necessitate ethical approval or consent to participate with supporting documentation.
- **Data Access Statement and Material Availability:** The adequate resources of this article are publicly accessible.
- **Authors Contributions:** The authorship of this article is contributed solely.

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