**Project 1**

**Is #MeToo movement liberating women or categorizing them as perpetual victims of male desires? : A retrospective analysis from the viewpoints of French Women**

**Introduction**

Catherine Deneuve and 100 other high-profile French women from entertainment, publishing and academic fields signed an open letter, just one day after Hollywood offered a show of support for the #MeToo movement on Golden Globes red carpet and stage, published on 10th January in the French Daily *Le Monde* and translated by the English version of Worldcrunch, a Paris-based digital news magazine. This magazine argued that the ‘#MeToo’ movement, also known as ‘# Balance TonPorc’ or ‘Out Your Pig’ started to spark a legitimate awakening about the sexual assault that women faced particularly in their professional lives. This movement had changed its direction and developed into a witch hunt threatening sexual and artistic freedom. The prominent signatory, Catherine Deneuve, Oscar-nominated actress, was best known internationally for playing a bored housewife who spent her afternoons as a prostitute in Luis Buñuel’s classic 1967 film Belle de Jour and a popular name within the arena of feminism. In this report it would be documented what invention strategies she and other writers adopted to accumulate arguments for refuting the opinions of other feminists who were in favor of #MeToo and establish a distinct concept of sexism.

**Rhetorical Situation**

Rhetorical situation includes an exigency or urgent need to address an issue, the constraints associated with it, a rhetor or orator who is going to address the issue and the intended audience. Anti #MeToo movement is condemnation of #MeToo movement which began in October, 2017, followed soon after the sexual misconduct accusations against Harvey Weinstein, an American former film producer. This open letter ‘Anti #Metoo’ was written and signed by 100 French high profile women including Catherine Deneuve on 10th January, 2018. While #MeToo movement received a plenty of backlash and offered opportunity for the survivors or victims of sexual abuse, particularly for the working women who faced ill-treatment and sexual violence in their professional lives, to speak up about the harassment and doxing, but it went too far by publicly prosecuting private experiences which created an autocratic climate and jeopardized many men’s career not only in Hollywood but also in other sectors such as corporate organizations, media, non-government organization and many more. Among them, several personalities were big names and they were fired or forced to resign because of just mere misconduct or ill-behavior and grouped as ‘sex offenders’. Many times many women took advantage of this movement and falsely accused men for sexual misconduct, which in reality was just touching a knee, trying to steal a kiss or speaking about intimate things at dinner or merely silly messaging with sexual connotations. This torrent of hatred against men and sexes and eventually dictating women about what to say or what not to say, created the need for the French women to write the letter. The purpose of this letter was to persuade the audience about the idea that the so-called freedom to express sexual harassment which was the motto of #MeToo movement, in reality intimidating women or men to speak their minds and closing the door for those who were not falling into the line of that movement and eventually treating those people who refused to bend to the new realities were considered to be complicit and traitors.

The writers primarily wanted to criticize the US system of feminist Puritanism but the letter invited a diverse range of audience. Among them it could be the women who misconstrued the male ‘macho-behavior’ and falsely alleged men, those men who became victim of #MeToo movement and those parents and guardians who were in tremendous anxiety about their sons, either students or professionals from any part of the world.

**The Kairos**

Kairos refers to the propitious or opportune moment to do the right things or to take the right decisions or to say the right words at right or proper place taken into consideration the ‘rhetorical situation’ i.e. the circumstances or situations that opens up favorable and opportune moments. In my opinion, the kairos of this open letter was definitely favorable for the writers as although #MeToo movement was advocated by many people as considered to be long due, but the strong rebel after #MeToo from the accused and others indicated that Ant#MeToo movement was highly desirable in the society. Different social and news media expressed strong remonstrance against #MeToo among them some were more prominent like more than 71 celebrities in USA showed strong protest against this movement and many men from all over the world expressed their apprehensions regarding losing their professional and personal dignity (Almukhtar, Gold & Buchanan, 2018).Also, a Pew report released in a survey called ‘Vox’ on 5th April, 2018, in which Anna North observed that the increased focus on sexual misconduct which was the main agenda of #MeToo movement led to reduced opportunities for women in the workplace, false accusations of sexual assault and harassment for men and categorizing less-serious forms of sexual assault in the more-serious forms of sexual assault. Apart from that, President Donald Trump stated ‘It is a very scary time for young men in America, where you can be guilty of something you may not be guilty of’ (Diamond, 2018). In addition to that Trump said anyone could be accused of anything and that did not necessarily to be a woman and he argued that it was a very difficult time which clearly indicated towards #MeToo movement. So, I believe, the writers wrote the letter when it became the hot topic of discussion among everybody throughout the world.

**Artistic Means**

Artistic means, being parts of the art of rhetoric, are required to be discovered by the rhetor in terms of exploring audience’s reasoning or logical ability (logos), considering emotions of the audience (pathos) and connecting with the audience by emphasizing on the speaker’s morality and fundamental values (ethos). In order to refute arguments of #MeToo movement, the writers resorted to these three sorts of artistic means or artificial proofs.

Throughout this letter the authors heavily relied on emotional appeal. In order to refute the argument of categorizing ‘picking up someone’ and ‘sexual violence’ as same things, the writers played upon the audience’s emotions with stating that today everybody was educated enough to figure out the distinction between those two and everyone was aware that sexual impulses were by nature wild and aggressive. So, here they implied that if people could not make the difference between these two, they were not learned enough and nobody wanted to put themselves into the category of ignorant. In relation to this, they shrewdly referred to Ruwen Ogien’s defending on the freedom to offend as necessary to artistic creation and defended their case by saying that if there was no existence of freedom to bother on the parts of men, then there would not be any freedom for women to refuse that bothering. Furthermore, they emphasized that art of knowing to refuse those bothering was far better than confining oneself into the category of prey resulted from that bothering. So, here the writers by using the word ‘prey’ tried to create anger among the audience as freedom was the inherent nature and fundamental right of human beings and nobody wanted to be subjugated by any means. To intensify the feeling of victimization, the writers compared old witch-hunt days when witches used to be subjugated, burnt, or tortured with today’s enslaving of women at the hands of male desires. Another interesting point made by the writers was that #MeToo movement was dictating women to comply with their principles and snatching the rights of people to differ in opinion. In this regard, the writers said, ‘we are being told what is proper to say and what we must stay silent about- and the women who refuse to fall into lines are considered traitors, accomplices!’ Here, the authors strongly churned the audiences’ emotions by bringing their attentions into the depriving of fundamental rights to opine or differ in opinions. Lastly, the writers mentioned that #MeToo was serving the interests of religious fanatics and Victorian philosophy holders who thought women should be protected always which indicated that women did not have power to protect themselves and they had to always think of themselves as victims. This was a strong appeal particularly for women who in today’s age of feminism no more wanted to be protected by men in the name of religious and societal values.

Another appeal pervasive in this letter was ethos. The writers particularly the main signatories were popular entities like Oscar winners, winners of best researcher and many big names of various sectors, but they did not establish their authorities; rather they used the attributes of ‘phronesis’ which referred to sense of intelligence and capability of doing sagacious judgment and ‘arete’ which indicated towards the speaker’s virtue and righteousness to prove the credibility of their letter. In a paragraph, the writers declared that as women they did not recognize themselves in that feminism which, beyond the denunciation of abuses of power, took the face of hatred of men and sexuality. Here the writers established the fact that they although as women supported feminism, but they were not in that group of women of biased viewpoints who advocated the loathing for men and sexuality. It showed their ability to do sound judgment (phronesis) and their abhorrence for unscrupulous schemes which victimized both women in terms of enslaving them and men who had to face unnecessary consequences by being fired from their jobs, obliged to resign forcefully mentioned in the paragraphs as ‘this summary justice has already its victims……..’ and many industries which had been in stake because of this movement mentioned in the paragraph as ‘the purging wave seems no bounds…..’ proved their moral characters (arete). Another attribute which was associated with goodwill and kindness of the author called ‘eunoia’ was also established by the authors’ distinguishing themselves from that category of feminism which made many people culpable without any proof and it showed that they did not have any vested interest or they could sacrifice that feminism group which they advocated for a long time of their lives. In another paragraph authors also showed their kindness towards the society by stating that they wanted to have that society which would not blame and stigmatize women for doing wrong or taking their own decision.

Logos or rational appeal was not that significant in this letter and I believe it could have been applied in a better way. The writers used inductive reasoning (arguing from specific to general, as used in example) by providing many examples of negative effects of #MeToo movement by stating about mass resign and firing of men from their professional lives, dictating women to fall into certain category, staking conditions of many industries and so on and then finally made the generalization that the style of this movement which started as awakening about sexual violence was no longer freeing up voices. So, they wanted to convey that any rational person should not advocate this movement. However, they did not provide any specific proof that the accusations made against those men were completely false, although it indicated towards the report published in New York Times, called ’71 men accused of sexual misconduct and their fall from power’ (Almukhtar, Gold & Buchanan, 2018). So, deductive reasoning (arguing from general to specific, as in case of enthymeme, used an expressed and an implied premise and syllogism, used a major and minor premise) was not established here as the past facts or the implied premise of those accusations were not proved to be false altogether and how this movement was serving the interests of religious fanatics or others was not explicitly explained.

**Topics of Invention**

According to classical rhetoricians, topics, the English translation of the Greek word ‘topoi’, literally mean the ‘place’ or the ‘region’ from where a rhetor or writer or orator finds things to support his or her arguments. In other words, the method by which rhetoricians devised the aid of discovering matter for the three modes of appeal is known as topics. Aristotle (2007) divided topics into two parts such as,

* Common topics (koinoi topoi): Common topics can be defined as general lines of reasoning which are limited in number but can be applied to almost any sort of arguments or subjects.
* Special topics (idioi topoi or eide): Special topics deal with providing specific lines of arguments relevant to a particular kind of oratory or discourse either deliberative or forensic or epideictic.

In this open letter the authors consciously or subconsciously used both kinds of topics in developing their arguments.

**Common topic: Comparison**

The topic of comparison is concerned with demonstrating the relationship or non-relationship among people, things, situations and ideas on the basis of resemblance or likeness, contrast, advantage, supremacy, disadvantage etc. Throughout this letter, this topic of comparison was very prominent in which the writers distinguished the subject ‘picking up someone insistently or clumsily’ from another subject ‘serious sexual assault’ like rape. Another subject that had been distinguished in the letter was the ‘freedom to voice one’s opinion’ from ‘repressing dissenting opinions’. The letter indicated that the fundamental right of human beings was to express own opinions and views, but the #MeToo movement categorized women who had dissenting opinion with #MeToo principles to be almost slaughtered or cornered. One more prominent subject had been pointed out in this letter was that #MeToo campaign classified women as ‘eternal victims’ of male desires like witch-hunt days rather than liberating them from the guilt associated with feminine sexuality. In explaining those above mentioned arguments, sub-topics of comparison such as similarity, difference and degree had been used carefully.

**Sub-topics: Similarity, Difference and Degree**

The subtopic of similarity helps a rhetor to compare things on the basis of resemblances or likenesses of two or more things. The writers used a simile to compare ‘witch-hunt days of Puritanism’ in the paragraph stating ‘Just like in the good old witch-hunt days, what we are once again witnessing here is Puritanism in the name of …………………….. reduce them to defenseless preys of male chauvinist demons’ to the current state of subjugating women as preys and helpless objects of male desires. The witch hunt days referred to that era when witches were tortured, burnt or hanged in the western world in the early modern period around 1450 to 1750 and Puritanism literally referred to censorious moral beliefs about sex indulgence and sex. The authors pointed out that women were not treated as moral agents who had the freedom to disagree, to say no or pursue or enjoy sex or to do wrong like those witches in #MeToo movement as this movement almost dictated women about what to say or what not to say and any deviation from that standing would make the person stigmatized in society. The implied claim was that #MeToo movement was making the women believe that they were the victims of sexual harassment or abuse or any assault at some point of time in their lives rather than making them free of the guilt that happened to them. After all it was up to the woman how she wanted to deal with the sexual harassment or any normal abuse they faced and no one could make them responsible for that mishap or declare them as ‘victims’. Basically, the writers here were condemning the US society of Puritanism as #MeToo movement was quite conspicuous in the United States.

The subtopic of difference is opposite to similarity in the sense that it helps a rhetor to differentiate two or more things on the basis of contrast and the subtopic of degree helps a rhetor to make the audience properly understand to what degree or extent one is better or advantageous than other things or one thing is worse or disadvantageous than other things. In this open letter the writers pointed out how ‘clumsy picking up someone’ differed from ‘sexual violence’ by applying subtopic of difference and implied that if a man was attracted to a woman or a women got complimented by man or some special attentive gestures came from men, what it would be called- ‘sexual violence’ or ‘mere misconduct’ or ‘inappropriate behavior’? #MeToo movement’s broader term of ‘misconduct’ categorized each and every behavior which was not acceptable by individual woman as ‘sexual violence’. So, the authors here clearly differentiated less serious crime from more serious crime. Also, in this regard, the authors emphasized that women were quite aware of the fact that sexual urge was by its nature ‘offensive and primitive’ i.e. wild and aggressive, but they were also shrewd enough not to confuse an awkward attempt to hit on women with a sexual abuse. So, a clear distinction was made regarding the fine line existed between these two subjects.

In analyzing this, the writers also made use of subtopic of degree and stated to what extent ‘just touching a woman’s knee or trying to steal a kiss’ would be considered as ‘sexual violence’. Under the heading of ‘The essential freedom to offend’, the questions put forward by the authors was if ‘picking up someone’ was more harmful than ‘rape’ or if it was more beneficial for both men or women to ‘freedom to bother’. In establishing this issue , Aristotle’s some set of criteria regarding the subtopic of degree in Book 1, Chapter 7 of his Rhetoric were quite relevant . Aristotle said that ‘what a person of practical wisdom would choose is a greater good than what an ignorant person would choose’. In this letter the authors referred Philosopher Ruwen Ogien and the way he defended the freedom to offend as essential to artistic creation, they also defended a freedom to bother as indispensable to sexual freedom. Here the writers established the authority of Ruwen Ogien as he was a famous French philosopher and a researcher at the French National Centre for Scientific Research, and defended their issue by indicating that everyone had to accept that if men were prevented from bothering women then women also would lose freedom to refuse. So, the writers tried to justify that it was even worse for women to confine oneself in the role of victim rather than bothered by men. In short, it implied that it was more important if men got attracted to women and complimented them, was she allowed to say no or not.

**Common Topic: Relationship**

Common topic relationship deals with what causes an effect, what has given rise to cause, what precedes a consequence, and what relations are there between similar kinds of things or different kinds of things. It has four subtopics such as ‘cause and effect’, ‘antecedent-consequence’, ‘contraries’ and ‘contradictories’. The writers made use of some of the subtopics of relationship.

**Sub-topics: Cause and Effect and Antecedent and Consequence**

In cause and effect relationship, cause basically is the producer of an effect whereas an effect is produced by a cause. In this letter the writers used ‘cause and effect’ intelligibly to persuade the audience. Here, they mainly pointed out the issue “‘sending the ‘pigs’” and inferring the cause about it they mentioned that the sexual scandal of Harvey Weinstein gave rise to the #MeToo movement. Then they kept on summarizing the effects caused by that such as forced resignations of many people, employee firing without asking for any explanations, movie banning like ‘Blow-Up’, poster censoring of Egon Schiele, Taking off Balthus painting from a museum and so on and they exclaimed that many more were to come by indicating towards the movies like ‘The Searchers’ and ‘The Abduction of the Sabine Women’.

In further giving an account of effects, use of sub-topic ‘antecedent and consequence’ was implicit in this letter. In antecedent-consequence relationship what follows as consequence may not be caused by what preceded it, but will naturally ensue from those earlier situations. In talking about the consequences that could naturally follow the #MeToo movement, the writers directed the audience’s attentions to the fact that it would eventually confine the women in the categories of victims and sufferers as there would not be any say on the parts of women and they would be told to conform to the ideologies of ‘calling out the pigs’ and indirectly it would be serving the interests of religious fanatics, reactionaries and those who advocated Victorian philosophy to keep the women protected. That meant women would no more have any freedom to take their decisions regarding what constituted a sexual violence and what was just mere compliments or messages or gestures with sexual connotation and would be considered responsible for the action they would take regarding their lives.

**Sub-topic: Contraries**

In contraries a rhetor considers opposite or incompatible things in order to make or show a connection between them that are of same kind i.e. those things share same nature or character or classified together because they have traits in common. After making a distinction between two subjects i.e. ‘rape’ and ‘clumsy picking someone up’, the writers asserted that if rape was a crime, it did not necessarily mean that picking up someone clumsily or persistently or showing gallantry was also a crime because if the audience got convinced about the fact that ‘gallantry is not an attack of machismo’ or special attention towards women was not an indication of showing masculine pride, then there was no need to prove that ‘clumsy picking up’ was not a serious crime like ‘rape’.

**Common Topic: Circumstance**

The common topic circumstance mainly deals with two sub-topics namely ‘the possible and the impossible’ and ‘past fact and future fact’.

**Sub-topic: Possible and Impossible**

The sub-topic ‘possible and impossible’ is used to either motivate or dissuade the audience to take up or not take up an action by indicating towards the mean and end of that action. In this open letter while talking about impact of #MeToo movement, in one paragraph, the writers sarcastically communicated that if in Sweden a bill presented that called for explicit consent before any sexual relations was possible, then one day it might have been possible too to have a smartphone app that would check which sex acts were accepted or not accepted by the adults who wanted to make relationship. The writers wanted to indicate towards the loss of freedom to pursue sex of one’s choice that could be hampered if this movement would continue to go on like this and to reinstate that statement the writers made use of ‘past and future fact’. Throughout this letter it was also insinuated that if ‘calling out your pigs’ could happen, then one day as a consequence to that ‘calling out your whore’ could also come into picture.

**Sub-topic: Past Fact and Future Fact**

Past fact and future fact deal with whether something has or has not taken place in the past and what probability is there for one event to happen in the future. So, regarding loss of freedom of women, the writers indicated in one paragraph that women were already getting blamed if they were not conforming to the ideology of #MeToo which was a past fact, and if it was not handled now in a proper way, then in future women would be continued to be indicted and frightened in the society.

**Common topic: Definition**

Definition as a topic of invention serves as to discover the exact meaning, nature or scope of a subject and give a clear idea about a subject or issue which is at dispute or needs to be investigated. Throughout this letter topic of Definition had also been used in some places. The writers tried to explain the nature of ‘sending the pigs’, ‘picking up someone’ and ‘inner freedom of women’ in different stages of the letter. For that the use of sub-topics genus and division was clearly visible.

**Sub-topics: Genus and Division**

Genus acts as to establish the reasoning and thought pattern a rhetor uses to make a specific issue or point to convince audience rather than just making the issue clear and comprehensible. In division, a rhetor persuades the audience about a subject by considering all probabilities and prospects of that subject and can go on removing those probabilities one by one by refuting one point and demonstrating the truth of another point.

So, the writers first brought the attention of audience to the fact of ‘inner freedom of women’ which could be considered as genus and they intended to state that by classifying women into a broad category of victims, #MeToo movement tried to define freedom as ‘calling out your pigs’ but it only took into consideration the bodily part of women. Then describing the division of that subject, the writers defined that in reality, however, freedom had nothing to do with body, it had connection to soul (inner connotation) and no men or any violence could shake or even touch the soul, no matter how severe the assault could be. If a woman was categorized as ‘victims’ due to any sexual assault, in reality, it was actually snatching the freedom of women and continuously made them realize that assault and guilt associated with that. So, the writers pointed out the exact nature of ‘inner freedom’ and ‘calling out your pigs’.

In distinguishing ‘picking someone up’ and ‘sexual assault’ the writers defined the term ‘monolith’ which could be considered as ‘genus’ and they divided into small parts to clarify it. They said that women could in the same day lead a professional team and enjoyed being a man’s sexual object without being promiscuous or vile associate of the patriarchal society and they could earn equal to men ignoring the trauma of getting rubbed by someone in the subway. So, in clarifying the definition of monolith i.e. indivisible and uniform, the writers proved that women were not monoliths and they could be divided into different roles neglecting the male inappropriate behaviors as ‘non-events’ or ‘great sexual deprivations’. Here the writers by cleverly considering the mere touching or rubbing against women’s body as non-event, refuted the claim that ‘picking up someone’ could be considered as ‘serious sexual assault’.

**Branches of Rhetoric and Related Special Topics**

There are three branches of rhetoric, namely deliberative, forensic and epideictic according to the classical rhetoricians.

* Deliberative (political, legislative, hortatory, advisory)
* Forensic (legal, judicial)
* Epideictic (demonstrative, declamatory, panegyrical, ceremonial)

According to Corbett and Connor’s definition in ‘Classical rhetoric for the modern student’, deliberative rhetoric deals with the convincing people in a specific direction and eventually makes them adopt a specific course of action. Therefore, the means to persuade the audience taken here are ‘exhortation’ i.e. pushing forward someone to take some action for their good and ‘dehortation or dissuasion’ i.e. discouraging someone to take certain actions as those actions can be harmful. Throughout this open letter the writer(s) tried to persuade the audience what one should choose and what one should avoid for the greater good of the society. Regarding this, the writers pointed out that arousing a solidarity among the victims particularly women and encouraging them to raise their voices against unethical sexual behavior particularly in the workplace, #MeToo movement created a diverse approach where any woman from any parts of the world could share their opinion, but the consequence, as it was thought to be, in reality instead of freeing up the views of women, forced them to be in certain boundaries in which women holding different viewpoints were treated as complicit and betrayer. Besides, in another paragraph, the letter mentioned that instead of giving authority or power to women, this #Metoo movement actually was working for the interests of sexual independence, religious fanatics or those conservatives who believed that women should be treated as ‘separate’ entities, children with the appearance of adults. So, the writers doubted here if this preconceived notions and prejudices had anything to do with the overall liberation of the women or not and it could be considered as ‘worthy’ and ‘advantageous’ for both the women and society in the name of women liberalization. To be precise, whether this idea should be accepted or avoided. Here special topics of deliberative rhetoric such as ‘worthy or good’ and ‘advantageous or expedient’ were used very skillfully. The ‘worthy’ or good is concerned with whether a particular thing or attribute of a person is accepted as good from the perspective of society and ethical dimension and is capable of following or taking up. On the other hand, the ‘expedient’ or ‘advantageous’ is concerned with whether a particular course of action is beneficial or convenient or practical and the ‘inexpedient’ is concerned with whether a particular course of action is harmful or impractical or inconvenient. The letter kept on indicating in another paragraph about the wide negative impact of #MeToo movement on various industries and domains and how Egon Schiele nude poster was highly criticized or the movie ‘Blow-Up’ by Michelangelo Antonioni was categorized as ‘misogynist’ and ‘unacceptable’ which indicated towards the ‘inexpedient’ or ‘disadvantageous’ special topic. The writers of this open letter presented their arguments from the past i.e. the backlash of #MeToo campaign and predicted towards future outcomes by stating that if girls were not properly educated and allowed to lead their lives without being terrorized and condemned, it would not be sagacious or wise for the people, who wanted to have their families and for overall society. Here, the persuasion was towards the dissuasion of the audience from #MeToo and acceptance of the idea of liberation of women from any sort of subjugation.

The writers maintained that #MeToo movement had developed a campaign of public accusations that had placed undeserving individuals in the same category of grave sex offenders without hearing their point of view. That accelerated justice compelled many people to resign or fired them without any investigation where the only offence of those persons were that they were just martinets in their workplace or tried to be over-friendly with women or showed polite and special attention and so on. In this above arguments forensic oratory had been used skillfully.

According to Aristotle, Forensic rhetoric which is commonly known as ‘legal’ or ‘judicial’ discourse considers fairness or unfairness of a particular allegation or charge. The special topics of forensic oratory are ‘justice’ which is about deciding the equity of judgment and ‘injustice’ which refers to the extent the judgment is partial and unfair. So, here the letter implied if the accusation made against those individuals was just or not and if minor ‘hitting on’ could be justified as grave crime like ‘rape’ or not. In March, Ms. Deneuve found one such case of Roman Polanski who was pleaded guilty in 1977 for having sex with a 13-year old girl and was accused by two other women of forcing himself on them when they were under age. But, with proper investigation she got to know that there were agreements between Roman Polanski and those women. With connection to that reference and many others, this letter stated that many people particularly men had to get tormented and imputed for the offence of ‘inappropriate behavior’ that had been executed 10, 20 or 30 years back without any proof or being allowed to defend themselves. So, the question arises here if those accusation really existed in the past or not and if yes, then to what extent it could be considered as ‘a grave crime’. Also, indictments for those individuals without hearing their justification can be referred to as ‘injustice’ as the judgment was partial and unfair. As the means associated with this oratory are ‘accusation’ which was used to incriminate someone or impute a case and ‘defense’ which helped to vindicate a person or statement, the writers questioned about the equity of judgment regarding those public accusations and imputations against those individuals. The writers in this open letter indicated towards past events and consequences of #MeToo movement and tried to defend their case with suitable proofs and examples.

As the primary intension of this open letter was to convince people about the drawbacks of #MeToo and judge the equity or inequity of accusations made against some big names in film industry or others, I believe, epideictic rhetoric was not used in this regard as epideictic rhetoric did not deal with compelling or convincing others to take up certain actions but it was mainly associated with praising or blaming someone, marked by its flowery language and mostly used in funeral oratory, encouragement in crisis, literature, celebrations, letters of recommendation etc marked by formality.

**The Thesis and the Strategies**

A thesis can be defined as the logically reasoned writing in which ideas and thoughts of a researcher or writer are combined together in order to persuade the reader. In order to make their case, the writers in the beginning of the letter defined the problem area i.e. putting ‘clumsy or persistent picking someone up’ and ‘rape’ in the same category and kept on adding supporting ideas to prove that how ‘picking up someone’ and serious sexual violence was different, how putting these together in the same category ruined many innocent people’s career without giving them a chance to defend themselves, how this issue instead of making women liberated repressing them to conform to a set ideology and make them feel culpable and how unnecessarily many industries were falling into the prey of this problem.

For that the writers certainly adopted some strategies most probably subconsciously at some point in this letter to strengthen their case. Catherine Deneuve, the primary signatory of this open letter and other women who are from film industries, research sectors and other corporate sectors might not be formally aware of stasis theory in which a rhetor or orator identifies the point of disagreement about an issue in debate with the opposing party and both the parties agree to disagree. This theory comprises of four questions: conjecture or whether an issue at dispute exists (an sit), definition or what this is all about (quid sit), quality or what kind of thing it is (quale sit) and policy or what should one do about that issue.

In this regard, the authors subconsciously identified the stasis i.e. the point of disagreement and it could be proved by the statement that exclaimed as women they did not recognize themselves in that feminism which embraced only the hatred of men and sexual orientation or preference beyond the public condemnation of misuses of power. As #MeToo movement was all about protesting about sexual harassment especially in the workplace, and accusing men publicly who were involved with some kind of misconduct with women, the writers first tried to establish whether this harassment existed or not, if existed then what harassment it was it i.e. was it physical, verbal or mental, and if it was physical then what kind of harassment it was i.e. was it a rape or just mere touching a knee or rubbing with women’s bodies in the subway. In relation to the existence of the harassment, the authors claimed that the term ‘harassment’ was associated with making the women feel ‘victims’ in the hands of masculine power in #MeToo but no harassment could touch the inner selves of women. By defining the term ‘inner freedom of women’ the authors proved that harassment could not exist if women did not allow them in their lives and considered it as ‘non event’. Regarding the quality of #MeToo movement’s agenda i.e. was it more desirable or less desirable to send out the ‘pigs’, the writers expressed that it was less desirable as instead of empowering women, it was working in favor of religious extremists, the reactionaries or those with Victorian moral outlook who thought that women were separate entities, children appearing as adults and who needed to be protected which was quite contradicting to #MeToo movement. The writers although did not explicitly pointed out what needed to be done in this regard but implicitly in a paragraph caught the audiences’ attentions to the fact that those who wanted to have family should think about bringing their daughters in an environment where they could lead their lives with dignity without being frightened or indicted for not conforming to the ideas of #MeToo.

Although the writers did not mention any direct source of obtaining information regarding the topic, but their relevant and meaningful argumentations showed that they made a deep research on this topic and being the part of feminism for a long time they judged this sensitive matter not only through the eyes of women, but from the perspective of humanity and welfare of the society.

**Conclusion**

Catherine Deneuve and other writers made use of various artificial proofs or artistic means, particularly pathos and ethos in this letter and used different topics to discover arguments for those artistic means in order to disclose the dark side of #MeToo movement in front of the audience. From the very beginning of the letter it could be seen that more than one topic to produce one argument, more than one argument to produce one topic and a topic to strengthen and augment a single argument were used in a skillful way either consciously or subconsciously. The authors perhaps did not organize the letter consciously, but it clearly gave us an idea of the motto of #MeToo movement, its present negative impacts on both individuals and society and future effects on female liberation and this letter could be an example of using both common topics and special topics as invention strategies of gathering arguments to strengthen one’s case. At first glance it might seem that it was a mere catfight between two groups of feminists but in its root there was deeper intellectual and ideological rift existed between them. In France bothering from men had been welcomed since time immemorial and was considered to be essential for making sexual choices. From this perspective I believe the letter was no doubt effective in its purpose and was driven by the writer’s own experiences and ideologies in life.

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