

How Selfie -Taking Activities Reveal and Shape Gender Stereotypes:

A Research Proposal

Introduction

The impacts of selfies on gender culture have been one popular topic. Selfies are self-portrait photos taken by people using smartphones or digital cameras (Calvain, 2017). Rapid advances in digital technologies have shaped young people's strong interests in using selfies to construct their images. There is a broad consensus that selfie-taking activities can promote individuals' efforts to present their identities (Kozinets et al., 2018). This view raises the idea that selfie-taking activities play a vital part in affecting modern people's ways of negotiating and understanding gender roles. One journal points out that by being engaged in producing selfies, many men and women reveal their intent for showcasing their attractiveness and boosting their self-confidence (Boursier & Manna, 2018). From this explanation, one can learn that self-portrait photos shared on social networking platforms can deeply influence people's knowledge of the qualities and traits that separate men from women. Some studies have shown that in recent years, the problem of gender bias has been associated with the prevalence of selfie culture (Adamkolo & Elmi-Nur, 2015). This research result encourages one to think about how the selfie-taking phenomenon can easily lead to online users' prejudiced opinions about men and women. Relevant literature, hence, improves the current idea that investigations of selfies can offer useful messages on the development of gender norms.

The relationship between selfie culture and gender stereotypes has remained one

crucial question in the academic world. In the academic field, one popular view argues that selfie-posting activities have been responsible for shaping online users' overly simplified opinions about gender identities (Caldeira et al., 2018). This view can be seen in numerous studies. One study on 2, 754 selfies shared on Instagram, for example, finds that digital self-portraits do not reduce traditional gender-based bias (Babic et al., 2018). This research result encourages people to see that although selfies have large potentials for challenging gender bias, they have a limited ability to change some fixed ideas about gender roles (Jarreau et al., 2019). Another study discovers that while male Facebook users often rely on their selfies to display their social status, female users tend to use their phones to showcase their emotional traits and states (Tifferet & Vilnai-Yavetz, 2014). This finding strengthens one's comprehension that selfie-posting practices can enhance users' fixed impressions of the differences between genders. Similar perspectives raise a key question about the linkage between selfie culture and the developing trends of public stereotypes about gender identities. Resolving this question undoubtedly requires a careful investigation of concrete examples of activities of producing, sharing, and viewing selfies.

This research aims to give an adequate analysis of the role of selfie culture in shaping the pervasiveness of gender stereotypes. One central purpose of this research, in other words, is offering clear answers to the question about the association between the selfie phenomenon and the public's over-generalized views of gender. Efforts to resolve relevant issues are based on the researcher's knowledge of the context where current scholarship has frequently pointed out the identity-building motivations of

people who take selfies (Barker & Rodriguez, 2019). Three sub-questions asked by the researcher include:

- (1) How do selfie-taking activities affect people's patterns of exploring and presenting their identities?
- (2) What are the differences in identity representation between male selfie-takers and female selfie-takers?
- (3) How does selfie culture influence the public's tendency to categorize men and women and develop their perspectives about gender differences?

Methodology

Data Collection Approaches

This research will rely on online interviews to gather data on selfie culture and gender stereotypes. One primary goal of this research is to examine how selfie production is related to the public's understandings of gender identities. To attain this goal requires a detailed analysis of real-world stories of creating and viewing selfies. As one popular research tool, interviews can often ensure that interviewees elaborate on the meanings of their own experiences and beliefs (King & Horrocks, 2010). This fact indicates that by arranging online interviews, the researcher can collect in-depth information on respondents' perceptions of the nature and impacts of selfie-taking behaviors. Online interviews have been one cost-saving data collection method (Tekinarslan et al., 2019). This advantage fully matches the researcher's aim to use an economic way to acquire rich information about the attitudes of respondents. According

to some analysts, interviewees' concerns about the quality of the online environment may hinder their performances (James & Busher, 2009). This explanation reminds the researcher of the need for learning to flexibly use Skype and other video chatting tools. The researcher's success in constructing comfortable digital space would facilitate respondents' willingness to actively respond to various questions. By extensively using online interviews, the researcher would obtain abundant data about selfie culture and gender stereotyping.

This research will also use questionnaires to gather information about respondents' understandings of selfies' implications for public perceptions of gender roles. In order to achieve the aim to develop convincing conclusions on relevant topics, this research must collect data from a big population. Questionnaires, which are one convenient instrument for analyzing a large sample, match the needs of this research (Larrakas, 2008). Questionnaires, as emphasized by some scholars, can often ensure the anonymity of respondents and put less pressure on them (Girija, 2003). This view suggests that in this research, respondents are more likely to give authentic answers in questionnaires when they know that their identities are protected. Another advantage of questionnaires is that they offer respondents few opportunities to express biased opinions (Gratton & Jones, 2010). In other words, once this research uses well-designed questionnaires, it would access to objective data. Some studies contend that one disadvantage of questionnaires is that overly complex questions, or the questions involving ambiguous language, would lead to unreliable answers provided by respondents (Anastas, 2000). This view reminds the researcher of the necessity for

developing clearly-explained questions and using accurate terms and phrases. By introducing a large set of good questions, the researcher would eventually gather high-quality data on respondents' ways of perceiving the role of selfies in influencing gender stereotypes.

Data Analysis Method

To make reliable statements on selfie culture and gender bias requires this research to conduct critical discourse analysis. In order to paint a clear picture of selfie production, this research must give an accurate assessment of the perspectives and experiences of respondents. Attaining this goal calls for the researcher's efforts to critically examine the meanings of the behaviors of respondents. Critical discourse analysis (CDA) assumes that language is a social practice (Wodak, 2001). By approaching communication activities from different angles, CDA, as noted by Christine Anthonissen, "does justice" to the extreme complexities of the contextual and linguistic dimensions of real-life conversations (2017, p.297). This interpretation triggers the idea that through the use of CDA, social scientists can thoroughly understand how psychological activities, situational forces, and ideological factors shape speakers' patterns of expressing thoughts. CDA, hence, supports this research's aim to offer an in-depth investigation of respondents' tendencies to articulate ideas and how these tendencies reflect their assumptions and purposes. When conducting CDA, the researcher will pay close attention to the communication techniques, rhetorical strategies, and body language of all respondents. Only by carefully evaluating the

meanings of these aspects, can the researcher arrive at valid conclusions about respondents' general trends to understand selfie-taking and its association with gender.

Ethical Considerations

This research will focus on making objective claims on the topic and building an equal relationship with respondents. Some critics contend that one problem surrounding discourse analysis is analysts' tendencies to include their biased opinions (Baker et al., 2013). These critics should understand that one well-designed critical approach to analyzing discourses can lead to reasonable interpretations of issues (Wang, 2017). In order to conform to the principle of objectivity, this research will guarantee that all statements about the topic are firmly based on logical analysis and hard facts. What's more, this research will ensure that the personal experiences of the researcher will not affect discussions about the answers and behaviors of respondents. Some researchers have worried that social scientists can easily misuse their power when they collect data from respondents (Baker & Ellece, 2011). For example, they may force respondents to receive interviews at a certain time or require them to recall some unpleasant memories. Fully knowing this fact, the research will try to make sure that all respondents do surveys and provide data at their free will. Before conducting interviews and questionnaires, the researcher will carefully address the concerns and needs of respondents and ensure that every step of dealing with respondents is morally responsible.

Conclusion

This research is aimed at giving adequate answers to the question about why and how selfie-taking behaviors reflect and promote gender stereotypes. The central focus of the researcher is exploring the relationship between digital self-portraits and the public's solutions to understanding gender roles. In order to build convincing arguments on this topic, the researcher will extensively use face-to-face interviews and questionnaires to collect data from a group of respondents. By critically analyzing the comments and behaviors of respondents, the researcher intends to offer a deep insight into selfie-posting activities' trends to inform gender culture and reveal gender stereotypes.

A Timetable for the Research

Time Period	Anticipated Activities
Year One October 2021- December 2021	An investigation of the academic literature: Examine common themes; Take notes on main findings; Identify knowledge gaps.
January 2022-June 2022	Summarize academic studies on relevant topics;

	Work on the first draft of the “Literature Review” section.
Year Two October 2022- December 2022	Design research tools and procedures: Design questionnaires; Design interview questions; Contact with respondents and discuss the details for gathering research data.
January 2023- June 2023	Data Collection: Conduct online interviews; Conduct questionnaires.
Year Three October 2023- December 2023	Data Analysis Attempts: Use CDA to analyze the meanings of research data; Synthesize data analysis results; Report on data analysis results.
January 2024- June 2024	Work on the first draft of the dissertation; Seek advice from tutors;
Year Four	Work on the second draft of the dissertation; Focus on areas of improvements

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