Cultural Values in Online Communication: Analyzing Linguistic Trends on Instagram

Shuang He

School of Journalism and Communications, Hubei University, China

heshuang1014@sina.cn

Abstract: This study investigates the relationship between cultural values and linguistic patterns on social media, with a focus on Instagram. The role of social media has evolved from a platform for personal expression to an integral place for cultural, organizational, and business interactions. Acknowledging this change, this research uses Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory as a theoretical framework to gain insight into Instagram user comments on CNN's posts on global issues. Qualitative content analysis determined key themes that illustrate individualism vs. collectivism and power distance in user comments. Users' feedback is revealed to be largely influenced by their cultural backgrounds and their choice is made evident through their acceptance or critique of global topics, including same-sex marriage in Greece, the Israel-Palestine conflict, and reproductive rights. The discussions of Greece's ruling on same-sex marriage feature predominantly cultural acceptance or dissent and the conversation about the Israel-Palestine standoff reveals a powerful majority of empathy or denunciation rooted in cultural background. The reproductive rights discourse takes on a fight for the ideological freedom of women in contrast to cultural norms. This study emphasizes the role of social media in reflecting and also perpetuating cultural values. A detailed understanding of this phenomenon will enable researchers to better understand global communication processes and also anticipate particular global online behaviours. Future research is encouraged to expand this study to additional platforms and in differing contexts, particularly in the global social media platforms.

Keywords: Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions, Instagram User Engagement, Content Analysis of Social Media, Cultural values

1. INTRODUCTION

The advent of online communication, particularly through social media, has dramatically changed the way we communicate, share, and create identity in digital culture (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Social media platforms are not just new channels for personal expression, they are deeply embedded in a complex web of cultural values and norms. They have transformed from a sphere of individual connection to a nexus where organizations and businesses monitor and engage with a critical constituency. It comes as no surprise, then, that academic interest in social media cuts across varied disciplinary boundaries, as researchers investigate user motivations, effects on individual behaviour, and broader

psychological pulls of social media. Scholars have addressed issues such as the import of visual content, the phenomenon of selfies, and the dynamics of both online anonymity and trolling (Buckels et al., 2014). This study investigates the interrelation between cultural values and linguistic patterns observed in social-media-related communication.

1.1 Social Media and Cultural Impact

Instagram, launched in 2010, is particularly significant in this regard. With over a billion monthly active users, it is a major platform in the social media and marketing landscapes, frequently the platform of choice for marketers over and above Facebook (Stelzner, 2019). Several researches have been done on Instagram's capacity to facilitate brand exposure, drive website traffic and cultivate dedicated users (Turner & Lefevre, 2017). That is to say, in the world of Instagram, brand communities thrive (Muniz Jr & O'guinn, 2001). These are specialized, non-geographically bound communities based on the linkage of individuals through brand identification. On Instagram, this form of digital closeness provides consumers with an environment that affords participation in a wide variety of traditional brand-related activities designed to enhance consumer knowledge and brand loyalty (Anderson, 2005). These observations highlight Instagram's capacity as a cultural mirror, reflecting and shaping contemporary consumer culture.

1.2 Instagram and News Dissemination

There has been little empirical work on Instagram and its function in news dissemination despite its pervasiveness (Al-Rawi et al., 2021). Some recent research has begun to consider how Instagram can contribute to journalism, through user engagement with news content and how cultural differences affect the emotions and feelings of the users (Holiday, 2019). Others have compared Instagram with other platforms like Facebook (Larsson, 2018) noting Instagram's attractiveness as a platform with a high proportion of news-related visuals. There is also significant research on Instagram's role in political engagement, showing how it can serve as a political force in arenas of other cultures. Instagram is the preferred social media platform for younger demographics to verify news in several different countries, because of its visual nature. Instagram is not a social media network; rather, it is a tool for sharing news. Instead, it is a significant place for cultural values and storytelling that young viewers actively mould and interact with (Belair-Gagnon, 2015). MySpace which is an early social networking site, serves as a rich example of how users express their

identity online. More than digital profiles, MySpace is a canvas where millions of young people paint their favourite bands, share party pictures and express their personal details. Sites such as MySpace are changing the global culture of communication and changing the way we express ourselves, how we create, and our political sensibilities. With growing populations and several international counterparts, the world of social media platforms, including MySpace, opens promising venues for the study of cultural expressions and linguistic trends (Liu & Lee, 2010). Instagram is now one of the most used social media platforms, in which users not only post their everyday life pictures but also share their views about global issues. Challenges are inevitable in the presence of technology. Online deception has increased with the rise of social media. It is pervasive in online interactions, posing risks to information security and personal safety. It is thus critical to understanding the influence of cultural values on online behaviour, including deceptive practices. This is especially significant in light of the growing body of research on deception in face-to-face and computer-mediated communication that has paid virtually no attention to its cultural determinants. The current research therefore aims at understanding the cultural values and beliefs of people in the domain of online deception and social issues. How online communication is shaped by social media can be explained by the nature of social media itself. Social media's key features of flexible user-generated content, interactivity, connectivity and the ability to share, from the nature of online communication, allow previous studies to conclude that these characteristic features ensure that "social media reflect and reinforce broader cultural values" (Sajid, 2016). Social media's social interactivity is immediate and the multi-dimensional human-like discourse combined with the dynamic exchange of information and ideas, enables the amplification of cultural subtleties in communications. The connectivity of social media broadens and reinforces the depth of communication networks, and in doing so, the dimensions of cultural exchange. The sharing aspect of social media not only encourages individuals to share cultural artefacts that resonate within their networks of friendship, kinship, collegiality and affinity but also beyond their networks, permitting these objects to diffuse through broader cultural trends (Blatterer, 2014).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Cultural values play a significant role in online interactions, as they shape the perceptions of self, others, and communication preferences. A broader

spectrum of research has been conducted on cultural discrepancies in online communication, emphasizing that cultural values have a great predictive capacity on behaviour. Hofstede's dimensions provide a valuable framework for understanding how culture influences these behaviours, such as preferences for group discussions and individualized interactions (Hofstede, 2016). The literature review for this study shows how social media and cultural values intersect, as can be seen with how power distance and uncertainty avoidance can shape online interactions. Recognizing and understanding these cultural subtleties are critical to effective online communication in the global context. Ting, Ming, de Run, & Choo focus on the widespread platform Instagram (Ting et al., 2015). This digital platform has taken the world by storm. It has a stronghold in modern communication. In recognizing a gap in the literature regarding how Instagram is appealing in emerging markets, e.g. in Malaysia, the authors use the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), to determine the underlying beliefs which drive the use of Instagram. These authors used personal interviews to uncover the beliefs that were influencing the use of Instagram. Different behavioural beliefs, such as wanting personal gratification and seeing the usefulness of features, and normative beliefs can be seen. Which dealt with family, peers, and how social forces can impact the use of social media. This research not only expands our knowledge of Instagram and social networking, it gives us a glimpse into how communication styles and peer networks, lead to product adoption. This has tremendous implications for both scholars and those within the world of online communication. In a recent study, Dutton & Blank investigate the impact of cultural values and beliefs on patterns of internet use (Dutton & Blank, 2015). The authors investigate data from the 2013 Oxford Internet Survey, a nationally representative random sample, to uncover five culturally distinct perspectives on the internet: e-mersives, techno pragmatists, cyber-savvy, cyber moderates, and digital. In uncovering these five cultural groups they find an array of attitudes and behaviors concerning digital environments, yielding critical implications for the use of the internet. The authors uncovered these cultural distinctions as independent of socio-demographics, but rather as ones that were shaped by online experiences and learning dispositions. This study highlights the importance of understanding internet cultures for considerate online stratification. This shows that cultural values play a role in shaping social mobility, skill development, and digital choices. Gupta, Dennehy, Parra, Mäntymäki & Dwivedi investigate the impact of cultural values in online communication by focusing on linguistic trends in the discourse of social

media (Gupta et al., 2023). They indicate that "fake news has been polarizing us as a society: COVID-19, presidential campaigns and other major global events have been followed by thousands of fake news propagation in social networking sites". They reveal a relationship between someone's political beliefs their cultural values, and their susceptibility to consuming false content on social networking sites. Ironically, in the era that social networking sites (SNS) have made us as a society better connected than at any other time in history, SNS have exposed us to false beliefs that make us more ethnic than ever before. This study shows through repeated measures design how much someone's political beliefs and cultural values lead to their believing in fake news. The survey data collected from the US and India indicate that conservatives and collectivists tend to exhibit the highest scores of fake news susceptibility. This study provides evidence of how cultural values are shaping the linguistic trends in today's online communication and how we can prevent fake news in digital spaces. It also demonstrates how people behave when viewing the news. The current study seeks to investigate the beliefs and cultural values of Instagram users about various global news articles featured on CNN's Instagram site (CNN, 2024b). The study by Hallinan et al, investigates how New Year's resolutions work as a narrative expression of cultural values in online communication today by showing the way that this ancient practice has transformed into a social media ritual by charting the current repetition's greater visibility, interactivity, and global reach in the twenty-first century (Hallinan et al., 2023). By examining tweets concerning New Year's resolutions in English and additional languages (German, Italian, Japanese, and Korean) the study systematically assessed the globalization of cultural values through a shared ritual event. Using network analysis and content analysis, the researchers analyzed the discursive patterns, variations in ritual participation, and the values that were negotiated in the resolution process. Their analysis showed that the ritual had several cross-cultural commonalities, but also was marked by language-specific dynamics that problematize reified understandings of Eastern and Western value orientations. Instead, the analysis revealed three underlying tensions self-improvement vs. self-acceptance, public vs. private, and oppositionality vs. conformity which were drawn upon in the resolution of values, and the article closes with a discussion of what these data suggest about the relationship between local contexts and global platform cultures, and how cultural values are negotiated, shared, and contested as part of global communicative practices and norm. García Perdomo, Salaverría, Brown, and Harlow explore the interface of cultural values and online

communication by looking at the factors that predict when a news story goes viral on social media platforms across the U.S., Brazil and Argentina (García-Perdomo et al., 2018). Comparing shared news content in both traditional and online native media, the content analysis revealed the values and topics that are associated with a story's popularity with the audience. Traditional media's prioritization of government-related news and conflict is not mirrored in the new patterns seen in online native media, and Brazilian news is most likely to be shared, liked, or commented on social media, as opposed to U.S. or Argentina news. The findings combining different news, values and audience user activities (i.e. shares, comments, likes) on the social construction of news might warn about the possible effects of the selection of conflict-driven and sensationalist news in terms of lowering societal agreement on a shared understanding. Media tracking and a company News Whip facilitated the data collection. Vodanovich et al, argue that social media platforms are experiencing an explosive growth rate all over the world, however, their internationalism thrust presents a formidable challenge in terms of incorporating a variety of cultural contexts to use the platforms (Vodanovich et al., 2017). Though a substantial amount of research has tracked culturally specific user behaviours on social media platforms, a gap remains in understanding the broader contextual cultural values embedded within social media platform design. Their study provides a conceptual model that outlines how cultural characteristics might exist in WeChat, which is a Chinese social media platform, and based upon Chinese cultural values they set up a research model in which to test this conceptual model in a field scale replication. This review reiterates this issue of incorporating cultural values into social media platform design and proposes lines of research to start to address this gap. This literature review covers the complex and multifaceted impact of cultural values on online communication, as evidenced by the diversity in research methods and findings. From Ting et al.'s investigation of Instagram use case study in emerging markets to Dutton & Blank's categorization of internet cultures (Dutton & Blank, 2015), and Gupta et al.'s linguistic analysis of susceptibility to fake news to Hallinan et al.'s research on the global expression of New Year's resolutions (Hallinan et al., 2023), each study offers a unique entry point to the ways that cultural values manifest in our digital interactions. And, as illustrated by Chen's discussion of new media in the context of intercultural communication and García-Perdomo et al.'s examination of news content virality, the field is expanding in terms of the medium and contexts under scrutiny (García-Perdomo et al., 2018). Nonetheless, there is still much work to be done. Comprehensive research

is still needed to understand how cultural values play out simultaneously across platforms and around the world: recent concerns over the shuttering of particular social platforms in certain regions and shifts in censorship across numerous global contexts highlight the need for such work. The current research attempted to contribute to the less explored research area. The comments of people on CNN's Instagram posts regarding different global issues are analyzed to study the cultural values and beliefs of people (CNN, 2024a).

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research study employs a qualitative research design, utilizing a qualitative approach to explore the complex interrelationship between cultural values and language patterns in social media communication with a particular focus on Instagram. The theoretical framework that supports this research is Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory (Hofstede, 2016), which is a model for comprehending that each different national culture shapes its member's behaviours and communication styles differently and it is useful to underpin the discussion on how different cultural values affect individual behaviour and communication styles. Especially in cross-cultural online interaction, this theory proposes that cultural differences contribute to behaviour, language use, and communication strategy, and they affect the way people read social media content, that is among members of various cultures. The primary data for this investigation consists of user comments on selected Instagram posts by CNN that discuss global issues (CNN, 2024c). These posts are carefully selected to include topics relevant to cultural values and societal debates. A variety of topics such as same-sex marriage, the Israel-Palestine conflict and the reproductive rights of women ensure the extensiveness of the analysis. The standards of ethical conduct are fundamentally upheld as the comments were collected with great mindfulness towards anonymity and confidentiality. The qualitative phase of the investigation engages in a comprehensive content analysis of the comments which first explains the data based on its nature and cultural implications. An examination of themes related to Hofstede's cultural dimensions (p. 91) hence individualism vs. collectivism and power distance is also investigated in the analysis. This is an important stage in understanding how cultural values materialize in language use and emotional expression A correlational analysis, which is also analysed in this stage, reveals how cultural themes

are linked to linguistic features.Through the adoption of this methodology, one which engages qualitative analysis within the lens of Hofstede's theory, the work is likely to make a significant contribution to the fields of intercultural communication and social media research, by shedding unprecedented light on the manifold ways cultural values intersect within the domain of online discourse. The application of this methodology may thus hope to provide an important and instructive backdrop against which to map the various cultural dynamics at play within digital communication, thereby significantly extending the scope of our knowledge in this area.

4. DISCUSSION

This section deals with analyzing the primary data collected from Instagram. On the whole, three posts were collected discussing various news updates. The researcher first would discuss the concerned post and then would interpret the comments of various viewers based on their cultural values.

4.1 Responses to Greece's Legalization of Same-Sex Marriage

The first post in this connection contains a post regarding a new law made by the parliament in Greece. The heading of this news states "Greece legalizes same-sex marriage". Under the heading, it is stated that "the law is a landmark victory for human rights in Greece and makes it the first majority Orthodox Christian country to establish marriage equality for all".

Figure 1: Greece Legalized Same-Sex Marriage

It is a statement that leads to varied views from the observers who are interested in the issue. In the selected replies, eight out of ten viewers are in favour of the newly established law. It is evident from the first comment that the viewer supports the law made by the lawmakers. The news states

this decision as "the milestone decision". The news has provided a complete detail of this issue by giving the number of parliamentarians (176/300) who supported this decision. Further, it states that it was a long time-consuming decision that took months to be decided. The news utilizes such a language that has a positive tone. It is stated that finally the decision has been made that was justified by the country's LGBQT+ community. In addition, the second part of this news states that the rights of parents along with children are a basic element of the legislation that will allow same-sex couples to gain parental recognition. Such remarks presented by the post-show that it is acceptable in their culture to develop sexual affairs with individuals of the same sex. Due to this, the news tries to present a positive attitude toward the decision. Due to this positive and accepting manner, the presenter has used words like milestone decision, welcomed, vindication, cornerstone, same-sex couples' recognition etc. The selection of such positive and supporting vocabulary is also a clue that represents the positive attitude of the people of this country toward the decision and to make the decision a part of their culture. The first reply to the news of the decision about same-sex marriage in Greece is also a welcoming note by a viewer. The viewer states that I thought that such practices were prevalent the ancient times. He is not only pleased with the decision made by the parliament but also argues in its favour by stating that equality matters. The choice of words by the viewer in this comment i.e. happy, already a thing and equality matters etc. refers to the positive tone of the observer and the favor of the decision. The second comment in this regard is also of an individual who is in support of the same-sex phenomenon that the parliament in Greece has approved. It asserts that the decision about allowing individuals to have sexual activity with others belonging to the same sex should have been taken some twenty years ago. It is clear from the comment that the viewer seems exaggerated by stating twenty years and is pleased to welcome the decision. It also is evidence that the viewer strongly advocates same-sex marriage and finally shows the satisfaction they got from the decision. The next reply to this news is also in a positive tone. The commentator here is also feeling joyful by the decision and considers it to be good for the residents of Greece. Similarly, the next viewer has just sent the heart that is coloured in black. The black colour heart is copied four times which is a token of a positive attitude towards the decision made by Greece's parliament. The emoji of a black colour heart is used as a symbol of deep feelings, profound love or romantic affection. Thus, along with the use of words that show viewers' favour of same-sex marriage, symbols have also been used to achieve the
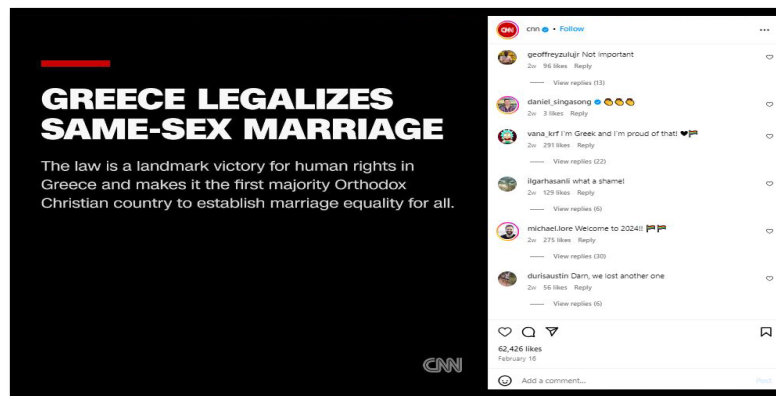
same purpose.

Figure 2: Greece Legalized Same-Sex Marriage

The 4th comment is also of a person who supports same-sex marriage. The viewer, after the decision in favour of same-sex marriage, has praised the country of Greece and its people. Along with praising Greece and its people, the observer wants to go to Greece which is evidence of his strong support of the phenomenon of the same sex. The 5th reply to the news in our collected data is of an individual who refuses the decision. Being a member of the Muslim community, he asks that instead of legalizing such inhuman and immoral acts, why don't you treat them? The selection of words that convey negative connotations by the viewer like inhuman and immoral behavior refers to the harsh and hateful attitude of the viewer. This is because it is not allowed from the Islamic cultural and religious point of view to develop sexual relations with individuals belonging to the same sex. Another viewer replies that it is not a matter of importance. Besides, another observer feels proud of his being from Greece. This comment has been ended with an exclamation mark and a heart coloured in black. The use of an exclamation mark is a sign that the viewer feels joy and supports the decision made by the parliament.
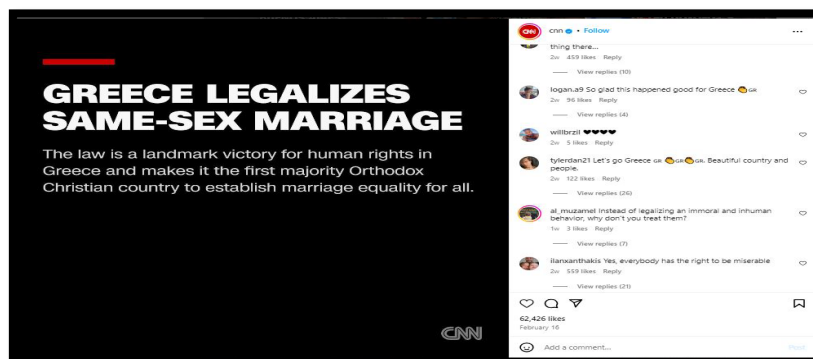

Figure 3: Greece Legalized Same-Sex Marriage

The final comment is also of an individual who is against the passed law.

He condemns it by sending shame on the news. This reply also ends with an exclamation mark that is a token of the feelings of hatred. In the primary data analysis of Instagram, the researcher coded viewers' comments relevant to the news story. This particular post dealt with the story of Greece legalizing same-sex marriage. Based on their cultural value, the researcher interpreted the comments as predominately positive and in favour of the law. Many of the viewers expressed happiness, support, and a feeling of pride in Greece for their decision. They used positive language and symbols like hearts to indicate their acceptance. However, there were voices of dissent from individuals who based on their name appeared to be Muslim too, expressing condemnation and refusal, reflecting their cultural and religious values against same-sex relationships. This shows the virtual interaction of the online with the culture in the interaction over a sensitive social issue.
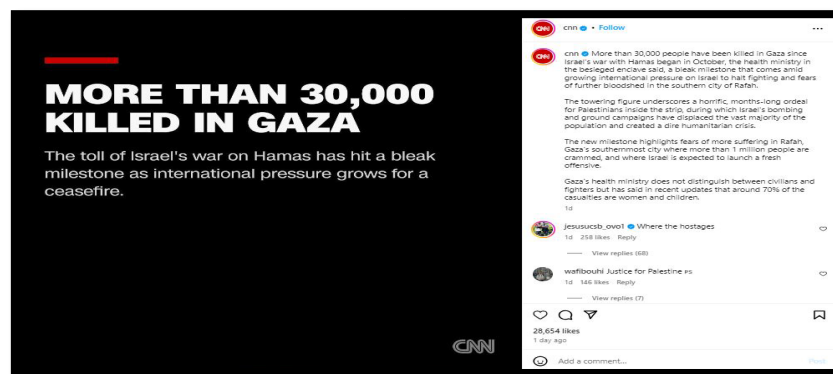
4.2 Responses to the Israel-Palestine Conflict

Figure 4: More Than 30,000 Killed in Gaza

The second post from Instagram also contains news of the Israel-Palestine conflict. In the headline, it states that more than 30,000 people have been killed in Gaza. The detailed news contains information about the number of people killed in Israel's attacks in October. The health department is besieged. A bleak milestone comes amid the growing international pressure on Israel to halt the fight and fears of further bloodshed in the southern city of Rafah. The second part of the post further explains the situation by stating that the towering figure underscores a horrific, months-long ordeal for Palestinians inside the strip. During this period, the vast majority of the Palestinian population has been displaced due to Israel's inhumane bombing. This situation has resulted in a dire humanitarian crisis. The new advance in the conflict highlights fears of more suffering in Rafah, where more than one million citizens have been

crammed. In this locality, Israel is expected to launch a new attack. The last part of the news reveals the facts that the health department has affirmed that about 70% of the casualties are women and children. Of the top ten replies commented on by viewers, only one is in a negative tone. The rest of the nine replies show solidarity with Palestinians and are against such inhuman and immoral attacks by Israel. The tone of the nine comments shows that the viewers are in favour of the innocent people of Palestine. Words selected by the viewers that show unity and solidarity with Palestinians include senseless murders, innocent people, genocide, collective punishment, unethical, immoral, heartlessly, starving, cruelty, barbarism justice for Palestine etc. The first three comments on this news are simple and short. The first reply poses a rhetorical question simply stating "Where are the hostages" That is a clue to showing solidarity with the people of Palestine. Secondly, the viewer in the second comment also stresses the heartless butchery of the Palestinians by stating "Justice for Palestine". The third view is also a sort of rhetorical question where the viewer poses the question by asking "So is Hamazz still the bad guy?". In this question, the viewer has repeated 'z' three times which shows the viewer's anger and stress. The fourth comment asserts that collective punishment is immoral and unethical. The viewer shows his solidarity with the people of Palestine who have been killed and exposed to Israeli attacks heartlessly by asserting that thousands have been murdered and hundreds of thousands have been forced from their homes in Gaza. He further shows his feeling by anger that people are starving and yet nothing could justify such cruel and barbaric treatment of innocent civilians.
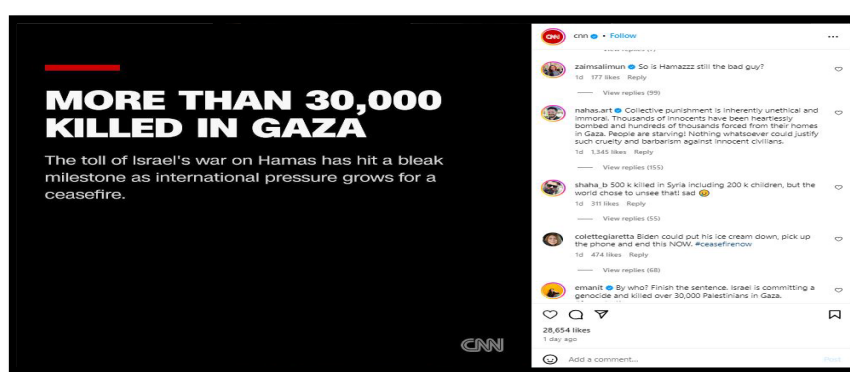
Figure 5: More Than 30,000 Killed in Gaza

The fifth reply to this news gives another direction by pointing to the 500 thousand people killed in Syria including 200 thousand children but the world neglected them. It is sad. This view contains an exclamation mark along with a sad emoji. The sixth reply is an idiomatic expression where the viewer states "Biden could put his ice cream down, pick up the phone

and end this Now". In this statement, the viewer indirectly blames Biden for the barbaric manner in Israel bombing Palestine mercilessly. He stresses the point that Biden should end this game right now. Since he stresses 'now', therefore, 'NOW' has been capitalized. The next reply also shows the solidarity of the viewer who states that they finish the sentence. The viewer here asserts that Israel is committing genocide and killed more than 30,000 Palestinians in Gaza. Similarly, the next comment just states GENOCIDE followed by repeated exclamation marks showing the viewer's anger and sorrow on the situation.

Figure 6: More Than 30,000 Killed in Gaza

The only comment in the selected data blames Hamas for the number of people that have been killed. The reply asks a question about Hamas have they never been honest about anything? This view is clear evidence that the commentator is against the news and has enmity and no solidarity with the innocent Palestinians. Finally, the last view also shows the viewer's sense of solidarity with Palestinians and wants to free Palestine. So, in the second category, the viewers have put into words their comments regarding the Israel-Palestine issue by adopting various linguistic strategies.

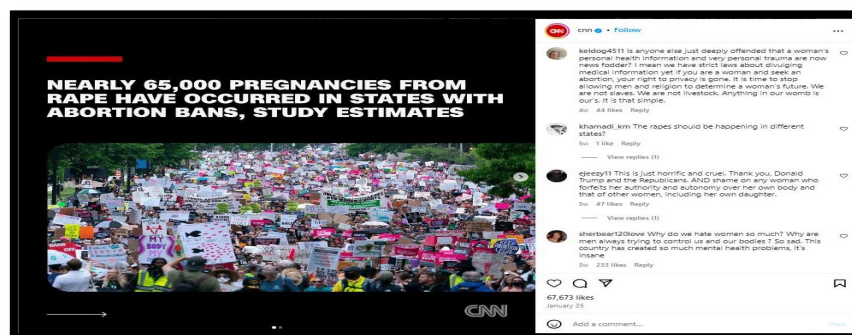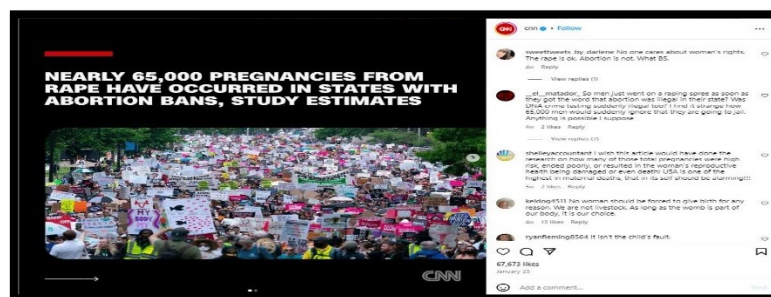4.3 Responses on Reproductive Rights: Pregnancies Resulting from Rape

Figure 7: Nearly 65,000 Pregnancies from Rape Have Occurred in States with Abortion Bans, Study Estimates

The next post that the researcher has considered here contains an

estimate of the pregnancies from rape. Its heading states that "Nearly 65,000 pregnancies from rape have occurred in states with abortion bans". The selected views on this news vary which depicts the cultural values of the viewers. The first reply in this regard posits that a woman's personal health information and her traumas are news fodder. The viewer suggests that we should have strict rules for divulging medical information about a woman. He further states that a woman has right about losing her pregnancy but he views that it does not happen due to the fear of losing her privacy. The viewer thinks that it is the right time to stop male members and religious practices to force and determine a woman's future. Women are not obliged to be treated like cattle as like other human beings, women are also free. Their wombs are their own and that's why it is their own right to act as they like. The words' selection of the viewer displays his cultural values towards the issue of women who are raped and become pregnant. The last sentence of the reply states that it is that simple which means that there should be no controversy in this issue and women should be allowed to lose their unwanted pregnancies if they wish. The second reply to this post assumes such practices as cruel and shocking. This response cantinas ironic appreciation to Donald Trump and the Republicans, indirectly blaming them for stimulating such illicit actions. Along with such an ironic statement, the viewer also curses women who forfeit and considers it her authority to be free and autonomous and use their bodies in ways where they could find their satisfaction. He further states that such women are not only involved in such practices by themselves but they also propel other women including their daughters. The negative tone and words of the viewer determine his attitude towards illegal sexual relations of women with men. Besides, the comment also shows that the viewer strongly opposes such practices and points to the fact that such women are not only involved by themselves but are also a source of motivation for others as well. Thus, the overall comment showcases that cultural values and norms do not accept such practices.

Figure 8: Nearly 65,000 Pregnancies from Rape Have Occurred in States with Abortion Bans, Study Estimates

The third comment is of a woman who poses open questions by asking why we (the women folk) are subjugated to men and why women are treated with that much hatred. After posing such questions, she displays her feelings of grief. She also indirectly refers to men with mental health problems and states that such behaviour with miserable women is insane. In this comment, it is evident that the commentator is a woman, she wants female members of society not to be dependent on men and thus, they should be free from the control of men. The fourth response is also from a female viewer. She also feels sad about the cruel treatment and injustice of women. She asserts that no one cares about women's rights. She criticizes society by stating that developing illicit sexual relations with women is ok but abortion is not. At the end of her comment, she writes the abbreviated form of bullshit (BS) in the capital that shows her anger and dissatisfaction with the subjugation of women.
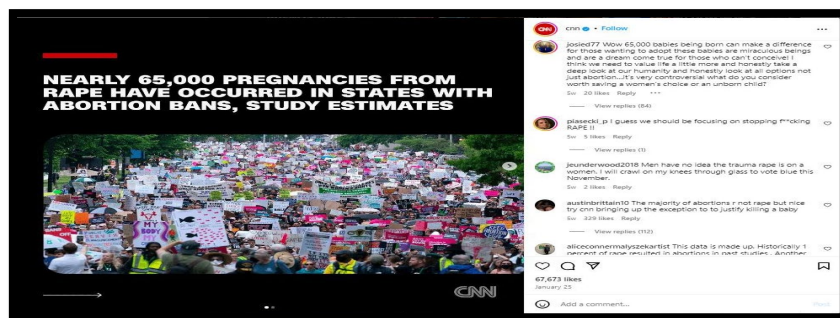
Figure 9: Nearly 65,000 Pregnancies from Rape Have Occurred in States with Abortion Bans, Study Estimates

The next reply also poses questions. The observer asks in reply whether men just splurge as they become aware that abortion is illegal in their state. The viewer asks another question was the DNA crime test also illegal? The comment further states that it seems strange how such a large number of men can suddenly ignore that they are going to jail. Finally, the viewer suggests that anything is possible to prevent such practices of injustice. The observer in the next reply adopts a systematic approach by suggesting proper research on the number of high-risk pregnancies, those that ended in a miserable and poor condition, and those that resulted in damage to the women's reproductive system and resulted in death. The viewer assumes the USA to be one of those regions where the maternal death ratio is high and that is alarming. The following comment is also of a woman. She also strongly disagrees with the procedures made by men. She states that we are not livestock and as long as the womb is part of a woman's body, they have their own choice. The commentator advocating women's rights opines that we should not be forced as we have our own choice and freedom whether

to give birth to babies or lose them. Similarly, the next viewer's linguistic choices show that his culture allows adopting and raising children. The viewer assumes that we need to value life with honesty and we need to look at humanity. Moreover, another comment is also of a woman who also seems advocating women's rights. She states that we should work to stop raping women. She ends her remarks with double exclamation marks which is a clue of her strong desire and stress on the issue. It is evident from the remarks of the viewers that almost all female viewers are strongly advocating for women's rights and are against the bad treatment of women. The rest of the commentators hold different views and thus adopt various linguistic choices to favour or oppose the issue of unwanted pregnancies and illicit sexuality with women following their cultural values and practices. The comments in a post about pregnancies from rape are a clear reflection of how viewers feel about women's rights and autonomy. There are comments ranging from those who believe women should have the right to make decisions about their own bodies, and that any babies that result from this illegal act cannot help but be innocent, to words castigating the act that led to the pregnancy in the first place. Female commenters in particular spoke of how this does not allow for women's agency, how this is another example of women being subject to men, and how despicable it is that they are being mistreated. One can feel the profound anger, heartbreak and passion these words are written with. The tone of the language can be followed like this to the core beliefs about gender equality and the safety and protection of women that they come from. The comments capture the ongoing cultural and societal conversation and struggle around the dignity and worth of the lives of women.

5. CONCLUSION

In this work, the researcher was interested in sorting out the cultural values as reflected in viewers' comments to the selected news post on social media by applying various linguistic strategies. After the careful analysis of the selected comments, the researcher concluded that the observers, on coming across various posts on various platforms of social media, either approve or disagreed with the stuff as recognized by their cultural values and practices. Thus, they reacted to the communication on social media accordingly. For this purpose, individuals utilized various linguistic tendencies like the selection of words, figurative language, rhetorical questions and various punctuation marks.

The first set of replies, in this connection, includes comments on the law made by Greece that legalizes same-sex marriage. The majority of the comments (8/10) show that the viewers are in favour of this phenomenon. Through their word choice and positive tone, they are pleased and are welcoming this newly made law. Along with the positive tone and word selection showing their positive attitude towards same-sex marriage, the researcher also sorted out symbols like the black colour heart that has been used five times. Phrases like "Let's go Greece", "beautiful country and people" and "I'm Greek and I'm proud of that" also determine their positive attitude towards establishing sexual relations with individuals of the same sex. The only two replies display the fact that the viewers are not supporting this law made by the Greece parliament as is obvious in the comments "immoral and inhuman behaviour" and "what a shame". Such words determine that such practice is not allowed in the culture of these two viewers.

The second group contains comments that are posed by the viewers to news about the killings in Palestine by Israel. Here also the viewers have adopted different linguistic strategies like posing questions and symbols of sad emojis etc. Words i.e. NOW and GENOCIDE have been capitalized to emphasize what the viewers want to convey. In addition, exclamation and question marks have been repeated to serve the same purpose. Words selected by the viewers like genocide, innocent people, collective punishment, immoral, unethical, heartless, senseless murder, bomb forced, cruelty, barbarism etc. show the empathy of the viewers with the people of Palestine. Moreover, it is evident from the comments on the problem of illegal sexual relations with women and unwanted pregnancies that female viewers are strongly advocating for female independence. They strongly disagree with male dominance over them and want to become free like men. It is clear from their vocabulary like livestock, our own wombs, our own choice etc. that they are not independent in their choice as it is not recognized by their culture. Similarly, other views contain the remarks of those who are men and are against women's rape following their cultural values. For this purpose, they use various linguistic strategies like ironic statements, capitalization, abbreviations, open questions and metaphors i.e. insane, slaves, news fodder, livestock etc. to present their ideas. Moreover, exclamation marks have been used to convey the idea of anger, sadness warning and stress. Besides, viewers have also used extreme adjectives like horrific, alarming, cruel etc. to communicate the desired feelings.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Future research in the field should further explore the complex relationship between cultural values and online behaviours in a new insight into global social media platforms to get a more comprehensive view of the factors affecting global communication. AI, machine learning, and other emerging technological influences that license and delimit the languages of their users will continue to shape discursive and cultural expressions. Longitudinal studies of the cultural values present in online communication will be useful in figuring out how they change as this medium of communication changes. Likewise, more work can be done on understanding what happens to cultural values during socio-political upheavals.

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