

## A Systematic Literature Review of Gender and Politics: Stereotypes of Gender in Political Zone on Social Media

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### Abstract

*Gender stereotypes in political discourse, particularly on social media, have intensified and become pivotal in shaping public perceptions and political engagement. Despite extensive scholarly efforts to examine gender and politics within online platforms, there remains a critical gap in systematically mapping the thematic and conceptual patterns across studies. This research aims to identify dominant trends, recurring stereotypes, and thematic clusters in gender-political discourses on social media. Adopting a qualitative systematic literature review approach, the study analyzes 89 peer-reviewed articles from the Scopus database (2012–2021), with a focus on the social sciences. Data analysis was conducted using NVivo 12 Plus and VOSViewer to generate thematic classifications, density visualizations, and project maps. Key findings reveal an increasing prevalence of topics such as gender and sexuality, female leadership, anti-immigration narratives, and the politicization of identities, including Black, Muslim, and White women. These themes intersect with broader political narratives and reflect persistent digital gender biases. The study identifies three central conceptual propositions—gender, politics, and social media—as mutually reinforcing spheres of discourse. This review not only fills a critical scholarly gap but also contributes to the epistemological understanding of gendered political communication, offering foundational insights for future interdisciplinary inquiry and policy-oriented research.*

**Keywords:** Gender, Politics, Social Media, Stereotype, Systematic Literature Review

### INTRODUCTION

Gender and politics have emerged as a critical intersection in contemporary academic discourse, especially within the rapidly evolving digital landscape. Social media has become an influential space where gender-related political issues are increasingly visible and contested. The rise of digital platforms has facilitated public participation while

simultaneously exposing entrenched gender biases. Research by Åström and Karlsson (2016), Demirhan and Çakir-Demirhan (2015), and Mellon and Prosser (2017) high lights how political ethics, gender styles, and communication patterns are shaped within Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube. Caldeira, De Ridder, and Van Bauwel (2020) further underscore how Instagram has become a vital site for gendered political expression. These studies collectively suggest the growing significance of investigating gendered dynamics within digital political zones.

The convergence of gender and politics within media studies has amplified the relevance of interdisciplinary analysis. In the context of political campaigns and civic engagement, social media is not merely a communication tool but a discursive battlefield. Gilmore (2012) and Darshan and Suresh (2019) show that gender narratives increasingly influence political discourse and representation in the digital public sphere. While the engagement of civil society through platforms like Twitter and Instagram opens new avenues for participation, it also reveals the persistence of gender stereotypes. Bode (2017) and Fernández-Rovira & Villegas-Simón (2019) provide compelling evidence of how digital interactions reinforce or subvert dominant gender ideologies, urging a more nuanced exploration of the phenomenon.

Despite the richness of these studies, there remains a significant gap in the literature. Existing works tend to focus on specific platforms, contexts, or isolated events without offering a comprehensive synthesis of how gender and politics interact across social media. Prior literature lacks systematization in its analysis, often adopting narrative approaches without integrating procedural rigor. The study by Hu and Kearney (2021) offers computational insights but falls short of mapping broader thematic patterns. This review addresses this lacuna by presenting a systematic literature review that categorizes the main themes, focuses, and research approaches concerning gender and politics on social media from 2012 to 2021.

This article adopts a theoretical framework grounded in feminist media studies and critical discourse analysis. These approaches are particularly suited to examining how language, symbols, and representation function within digital political discourse. The review draws on the conceptual insights of Aspers and Corte (2019) and Pedersen et al. (2020) to guide the synthesis of prior literature. By employing NVivo 12 Plus and VOSViewer, the

study systematically classifies themes, identifies research gaps, and uncovers patterns in the portrayal of gendered political content. These tools enable a rigorous and replicable method for analyzing qualitative data across diverse sources and contexts.

The primary objective of this study is to map the landscape of research on gender and politics on social media using a systematic literature review approach. The review seeks to identify dominant themes, methodological trends, and theoretical orientations in prior studies. Specifically, it addresses the following research questions: What are the key issues and stereotypes discussed in gendered political discourse on social media? What conceptual frameworks have guided previous research? How have scholars approached the analysis of gender in political zones online? The significance of these questions lies in their potential to clarify knowledge fragmentation and to propose a coherent structure for future inquiry.

This study posits that cultural ideologies, algorithmic dynamics, and identity politics shape gender discourse in political zones on social media. It hypothesizes that female politicians and gender minorities are frequently subjected to stereotyping and digital marginalization. For instance, keywords such as “young women,” “female leaders,” “Muslim women,” and “LGBT” emerged as dominant terms in the data analysis, revealing intersectional vulnerabilities (Caldeira, 2021; Kuperberg, 2021). This research assumes that the structural affordances of social media platforms often reproduce gender hierarchies even in participatory spaces. This hypothesis is empirically supported through content coding and network analysis using the selected software tools.

The contribution of this research is twofold. First, it offers a structured and data-driven mapping of gender and politics in social media discourse, filling a critical gap in the literature. Second, it provides practical insights for researchers, educators, and policymakers on how gender issues manifest and circulate in digital political arenas. The study also serves as a foundation for future research by proposing conceptual clarity and thematic coherence. By placing gender at the center of political analysis in social media, this review challenges normative assumptions and advances inclusive academic and civic dialogues. Ultimately, this research strengthens the epistemic foundation for feminist engagement in digital political studies.

## DISCUSSION

This section begins by presenting eleven subsections to emphasize these findings. The publications are identified using biometrics from the Academic Scopus Database, including total annual articles, documents by author and publisher, and articles per area. Second, the density of the selected keywords is retrieved, and the subsequent overlay analysis is checked using VOSViewer analysis.

In addition, we also use NVivo 12 Plus to check the pattern and theme of all published articles and the network between nodes and child nodes of each section. Finally, We thoroughly reviewed all publications related to gender and politics on social media to determine their focus and methodology.

### *Yearly Publication*

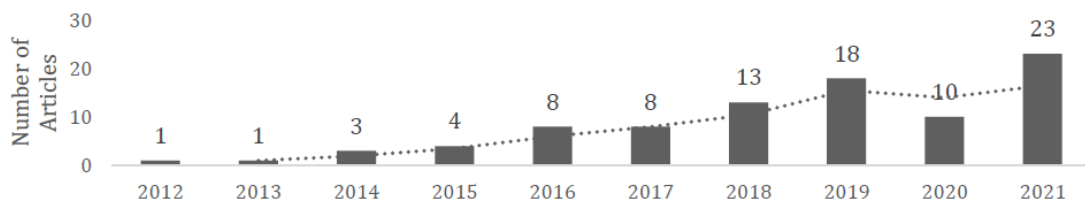


Figure 1. Number of publications per year (2012–2021)  
Source: Academic Scopus Database. Authors' elaboration, 2022.

In recent years, based on annual articles publication, there has been an increase in articles on gender issues in politics on social media. There was a rather striking decline in 2020; however, in the following year, there was a twofold increase from the previous years. During a decade, the highest number of total articles was founded in 2021 with 23 articles, next in 2019 with 18 articles, while for 2018 and 2020, there were 13 and 10 articles respectively. Furthermore, the author impact of their article publication can be seen below.

**Documents by Author**

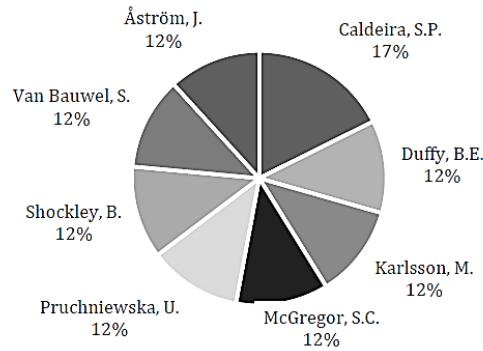


Figure 2. Publication by Authors  
Source: Academic Scopus Database. Authors' elaboration, 2022.

Figure 2 include authors who published at least two articles, with the exception of Sofia P. Caldera who produced three articles. The topics of the articles consist of gender and political issues on social media (Caldeira et al., 2020; Caldeira Van Bauwel, & Ridder, 2021). The authors in figure two include Brooke Erin Duffy (Duffy, 2016; Duffy & Pruchniewska, 2017), Martin Karisson (Åström & Karlsson, 2016; Karlsson & Åström, 2018), Shannon C. McGregor (McGregor, Lawrence, & Cardona, 2017; McGregor & Mourão, 2016), Urszula Pruchniewska (Duffy & Pruchniewska, 2017; Pruchniewska, 2019), Bethany Shockley (Shockley, 2016; Shockley, Lari, El-Maghraby, & Al-Ansari, 2020), Sofie Van Bauwel (Caldeira et al., 2020, 2021), as well as Åström, Joachim (Åström & Karlsson, 2016; Karlsson & Åström, 2018).

**Citation per Document**

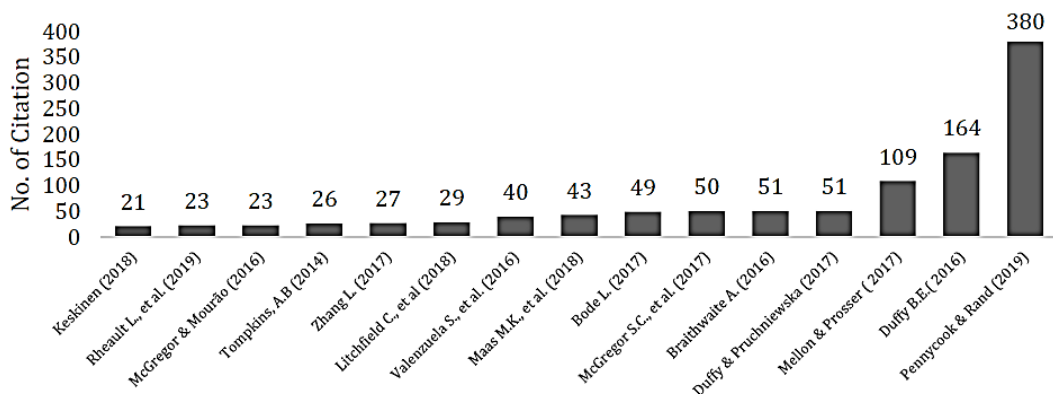


Figure 3. Capturing Citation by Authors Document  
Source: Academic Scopus Database.

Note: documents are selected based on a minimum of 20 citations. Authors' elaboration, 2022.

As mentioned above, there are prominent issues that are highlighted by several scholars with varying numbers of citation. The research by Pennycook and Rand (2019) has 380 citations, which form the highest number of citations. Meanwhile Duffy (2016) is placed in second order with 164 citations, followed by Mellon & Prosser (2017) with 109 citations. On average, the authors in In brief, many scholars included in the Academic Scopus Database obtained a minimum of 20 citations.

***Documents distribution by Country or Territory***

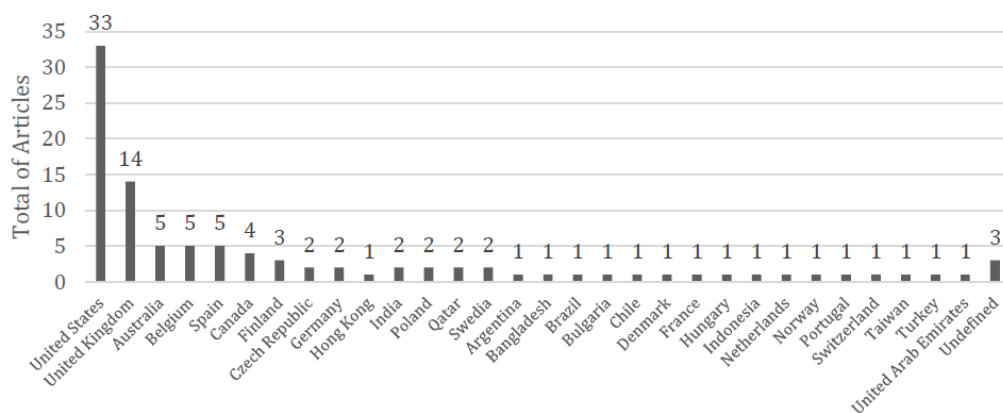


Figure 4. Identification of the Country or Territory from a Total of Articles  
 Source: Academic Scopus Database. Own elaboration, 2022.

In short, studies on gender and political issues on social media have spread to several countries or territories. Overall, the United States published 33 documents, followed by the United Kingdom with 14 articles. The high number of articles published in the United States is not surprising as the United States is the trail blazer in issues related to gender and politics. These two countries were followed by five publications by authors located in Australia, Belgium, and Spain. Other countries are identified as producers of two articles, and they are Czech Republic, Germany, India, Poland, Qatar, and Sweden. Moreover, other articles have one for documents mentioned by country or territory.

Table 1 shows the number of publications per journal publisher, This table include publisher which published at least least two articles. Most articles were published in Information Communication and Society (23.52%), followed by Social Media and Society (17.64%).

**Publication Coverage**

Table 1. Total Articles per Journal Publisher

<b>Publishers</b>	<b>No. of Articles</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Information Communication and Society	8	23.52%
Social Media and Society	6	17.64%
Feminist Media Studies	4	11.76%
Gender Place and Culture	3	8.82%
Women Studies International Forum	3	8.82%
International Journal of Cultural Studies	2	5.88%
Journal of Language Aggression and Conflict	2	5.88%
New Media and Society	2	5.88%
Online Information Review	2	5.88%
Research and Politics	2	5.88%

Source: Academic Scopus Database.

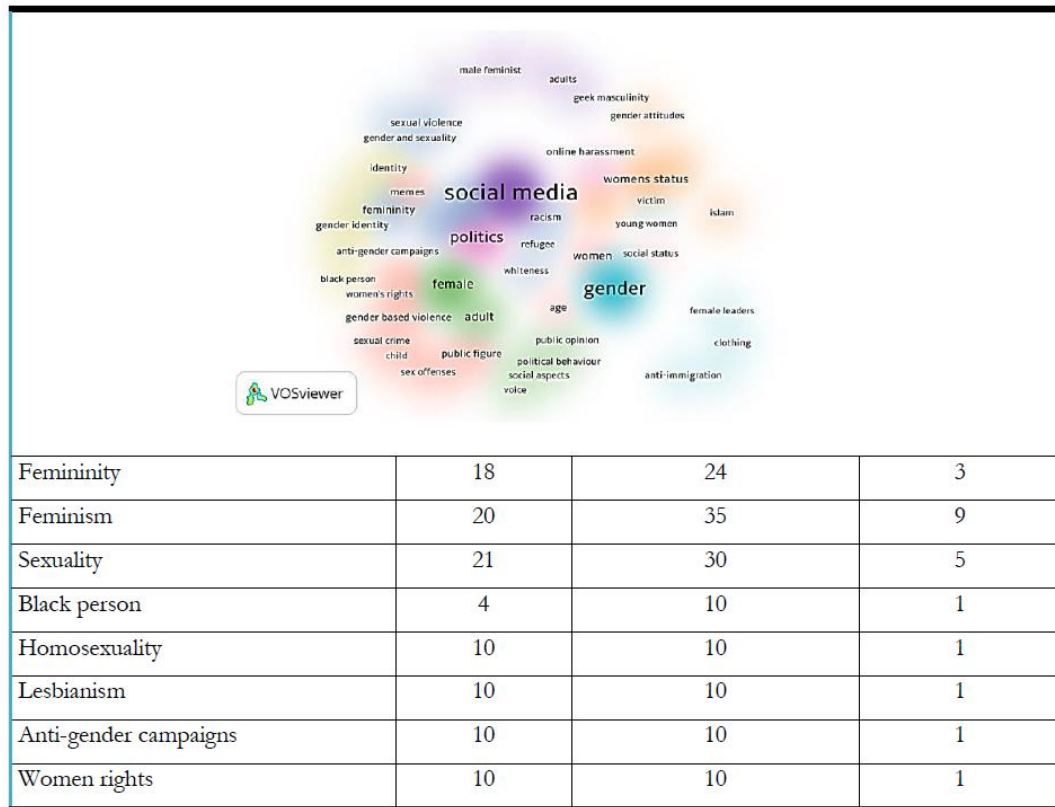
Noted: publishers of at least two articles were selected. Own elaboration, 2022.

The types of stereotypes in gender issues and politics on social media can be seen on the dissemination of density (table 2). The tables shows topics that attract the attention of several scholars who work in the field of gender issues in politics.

**Density Visualization Analysis**

Table 2. Dissemination of Density for Gender Issues and Politics from 89 Articles Keywords

<b>Issues</b>	<b>Links</b>	<b>Total Link Strength</b>	<b>Occurrences</b>
Masculinity	18	23	3
Rape	11	11	1
Sex offenses	11	11	1
Sexual assault	11	11	1
Sexual crime	11	11	1
Adult	19	35	5
Female	34	65	8
Male	34	65	8



Source: Density Visualization, VOSViewer, 2022.

Noted: selected keywords and a minimum of 10 for total link strength.

A keyword frequency query (table 2) was used to determine the most prevalent study subjects in the field. First, we ran a keyword search in VOSViewer, emphasizing the most frequently cited terms in the sample, and then assembled the words into an overlay visualization based on their frequency.

### ***Overlay Network Visualization***

Overlay network visualization was performed using VOSViewer again, and the research trend was added (Figure 5). The basis of the visualization is the articles' contents. It is noteworthy that some keywords emerged for new research trends between 2012 and 2021, such as gender and sexuality, female leaders, anti-immigration voice, young women, and LGBT.



		(2017); Cohler, (2017); Braithwaite, (2016); Dhrodia, (2018); Kirsten Zeiter et al. (2019); Munt, (2017); Grove, (2015); Demirhan et al. (2015); Karatzogianni, (2015); Barness, (2015); Johnson, (2014); Haghghat, (2014); Tompkins (2014);
	Interviews	Rodriguez, C. et al. (2021); Caldeira et al. (2021); Caldeira, (2021); Almenara-Niebla et al. (2020); Pruchniewska, (2019); Duffy et al. (2017); Zhang,
	Survey	Sullivan, (2021); Molnár et al. (2020); Sylvia, (2021); Shockley et al. (2020); Bonart et al. (2020); Lilleker et al. (2021); Hruska et al. (2020); Akter et al. (2019); Pennycook et al. (2019); Rheault et al. (2019); Garrett, (2019); Mellon, et al. (2017); McGregor et al. (2017); Åström et al (2016); Bode, (2017); Vochocová et al. (2016); Kirsten Zeiter et al. (2019); Karlsson et al. (2018); McGregor et al. (2016); Cook, (2016); Shockley, (2016); Arriagada et al. (2016); Gilmore, (2012);
Theoretical studies	Literature review	Darshan et al. (2019);
	Conceptual model/ Framework	Hu et al. (2021); Beltran et al. (2021); Fangen et al. (2021); Theocharis et al. (2020); Bonart, et al. (2020); Hynnä, et al. (2019); Romeiro, et al. (2018); Lee, (2013);

Source: Authors Analysis, 2022.

The design findings of 89 papers were reported in the research. They consist of empirical investigation, which yielded 53 articles for case studies, eight articles for interview techniques, and 23 articles for a survey approach. Meanwhile, gender and political studies appear in the theoretical research portion, 8-articles clustered in conceptual model/framework; and one article appears in the literature review section. In shorth, within gender and political studies, articles that use empirical study methodologies and case study procedures are in high proportion. In contrast, a few articles adopt a theoretical approach, which there is one article for past studies conducting literature review from all scholars, but it only used the narrative method for political communication in India and this particular study does not explore procedural approaches with a systematic literature review to look for patterns and themes about gender issues in the political zone on social media.

**Content Issues in Gender and Politics on Social Media**

Using the NVIVO data analysis tool, we reviewed the content section of all articles and we found at least 15 main topics related to gender and politics on social media in each article. Figure 6 shows that Young Women became the featured content, followed by Women Politicians and Female Politicians.

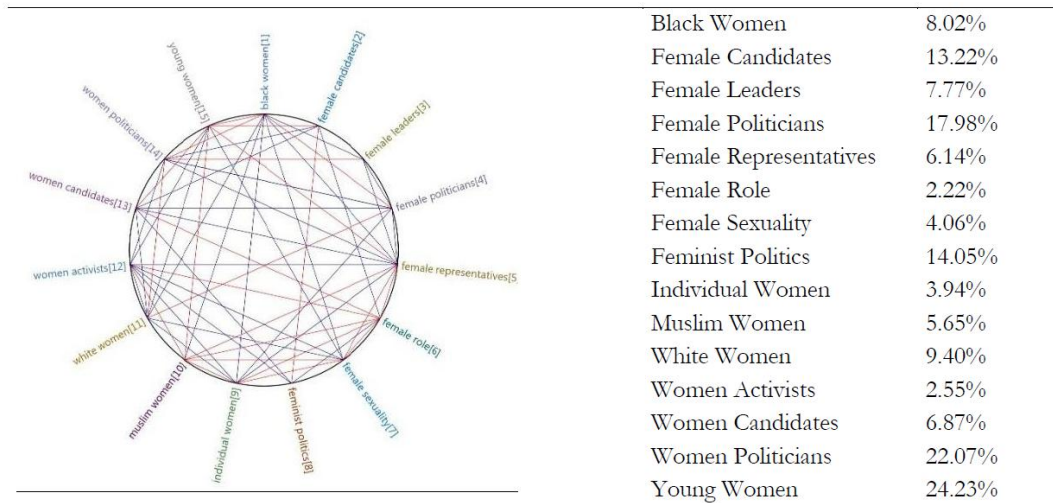


Figure 6. Emerging Issues for Gender and Politics - From 38 Documents  
Source: NVivo 12 plus, Authors.

Figure 6 reflects salient points for some issues related to gender and politics on social media, with young women receiving the highest score (12 articles) and female politicians receiving the second-highest score (11 articles). It shows that gender and political studies on social media are associated with young women's involvement in discussions of gender and politics on social media, with some research on young women's daily experiences on social media eclipsed by more significant cultural and political issues around gender representation (Caldeira, 2021). Consequently, many young women have a strong understanding of gender-based violence, such as the anti-gender movement (Darakchi, 2019).

The second highest score is pertinent to female politicians. In many contexts, female politicians often spark anger on social media due to the stereotypes that deem female politician incapable (Kuperberg, 2021). Female politicians have different communication style on social media, compare to that of male politicians. Many are aware of the stereotypes, or even anger against them. Since female politicians want to avoid verbal attack and discriminatory language in the social media, they tend to tread carefully (Beltran et al., 2021).

Saluja & Thilaka (2020) found that the social media contents about women's leadership in politics mirror the discourse of women's politicians in real life which is often derogatory.

***Selection Issues under Nodes and Articles***

There are topics on gender and politics on social media which many consider sensitive. They include Black Women, Muslim Women, and White Women. Figure 7 show which articles delve into those issues.

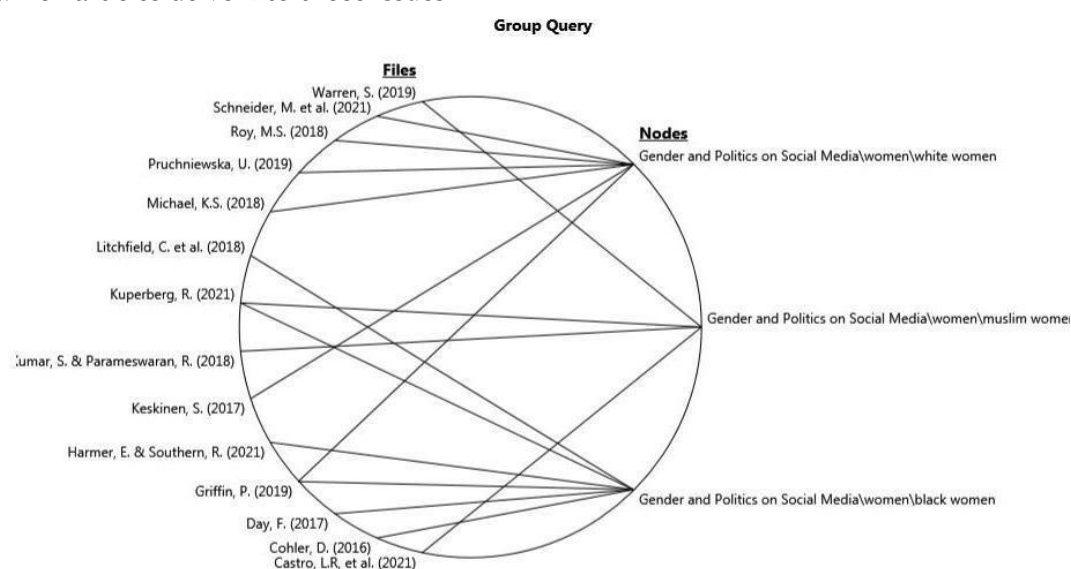


Figure 7. Group Classification under Nodes and Articles – Selected Issues  
Source: NVivo 12 plus, 2022.

Several contents of the article focus on issues pertinent to White Women, Muslim Women, and Black Women. Generally speaking, white women have advanced further in the politics of gender nationalism, many of them being situated in important positions in women's movement. White women play pivotal role in addressing sexual violence online since their race provides them with a greater presence compared to that of non-white women. (Keskinen, 2018).

Even though violence against women has no racial boundaries, some white women are shielded from such atrocity by their whiteness (Pruchniewska, 2019). In contrast, black women are often harmed by violence, partially due to the stereotypes against (Day, 2018; Kuperberg, 2021). Muslim women are situated in an uneasy intersection of gender religion, and sometimes race. They face Islamophobia which is exacerbated by the online rhetoric from political leaders which enmeshed stereotypes against Islam, race and gender into one

discourse on hate. Such rhetoric was successful in marginalizing black, female Muslim members of Parliaments from in British parliament. (Kuperberg, 2021).

**Themes Proportion Classification**

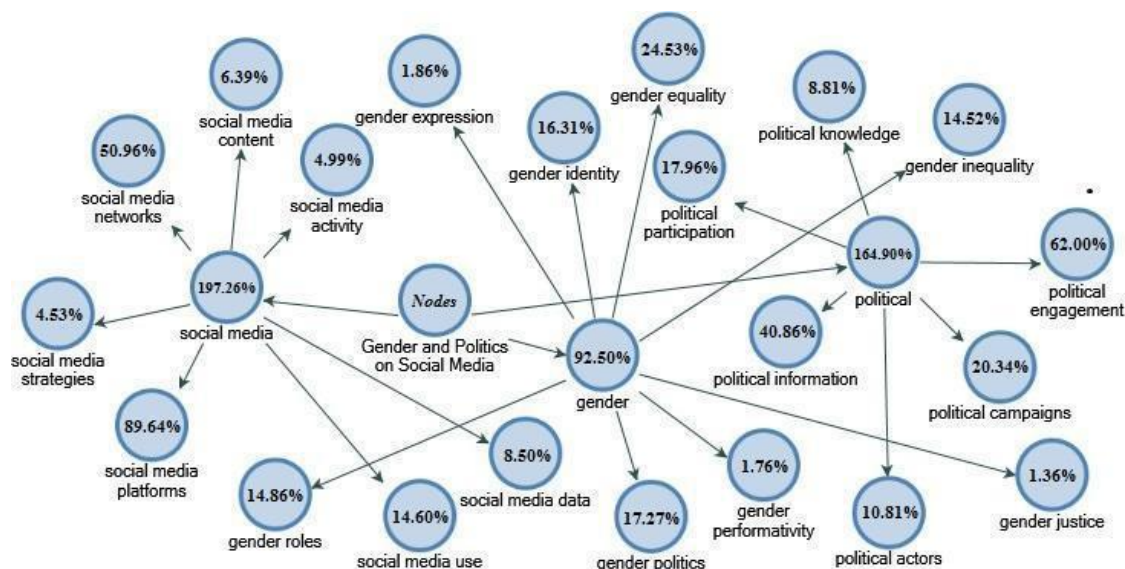


Figure 8. Themes Proportion Classification  
Source: NVivo 12 plus, 2022

As shown in the proportion review above (Figure 8), three proportions of topics explicitly observe studies from several previous studies, including social media, gender, and politics. Many sub-nodes branched out from those three nodes.

Some scholars have studied social media platforms that intersect with politics. Caldeira (2021) notes that the social media platform such as Instagram, can capture various political perceptions of young women on gender issues. Cardo (2021) also observes that Twitter and Facebook have become communication tools for gender conversation during election campaigns (Cardo, 2021), and web bloggers have become a space of expression for 'pioneer' feminists in the world, including those in Muslim countries (Sunday Grove, 2015). The comments section in Youtube has emerged as a place to conduct debates on race, gender, and sexuality (Day, 2018). The social media platforms have transpired to be the main prerequisite for the emergence of e-democracy as it facilitates freedom of expression (Molnár & Urbanovics, 2020).

Sullivan (2021) has reflected on his findings that several politicians and mayors of Canada have become active users of social media (Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram), and his study also shows an increasing number of women among active users of social media.

Beltran et al. (2021) found that the social media open doors of communication among politicians and their constituents, even though the formers often express various bias in their social media platform other studies, such as that of Mellon and Prosser (2017), have compared the use of social media data in election forecasts. In addition, McGregor et al. (2017) found that gubernatorial candidates are not concerned about presenting their strategic personalization through social media. Lilleker et al. (2021) emphasized that social media networks inspire more comprehensive political activity. His research demonstrates that there is no gender disparity in terms of the use of the social media platform to express people's political views (Lilleker et al., 2021). In essence, the social media has become an important part of the political campaign.

Through political campaigns, many female politicians tried to enhance their standing by demonstrating the combined masculine stereotype of a good leader and feminine image as a warm and caring person. (McGregor et al., 2017). Norocel (2018) noted that many female politicians use their political stature to negotiate their ideological beliefs about gender and feminism through social media (Norocel, 2018). Darshan & Suresh (2019) have looked at how political parties and political actors in India have pivoted from traditional media to social media as a tool for campaign. Caldeira (2021) also stated that Instagram has become a popular forum for channeling political information. Bode (2017) points out that people's political involvement in social media generates three issues: the existence of political interests, differences in politics, and variation in political participation. Vochocová et al. (2016) found that the increasing types of social media expand the list of online platforms and multiplies new forms of political engagement networks. The expansion of social media is followed by mushrooming online political advertisement which later led to the debate about supporting versus regulating political advertising on social media (Nelson, et.al.2021).

Gender has become a significant and divisive issue in political discussion in various public spaces. Darakchi (2019) indicates that there is a fear of among political figures to comment on social media about gender. This apprehension is attributable to the strengthening of heteronormativity. Consequently, discussion on gender equality and LGBT are perceived as threats. (Darakchi, 2019). The resurgence of patriarchal culture also limit the space for discussion about the suitability of women to participate in the political sphere

as they are perceived as weak and lack of masculine attribute of men (Yuwono, 2018). Meanwhile, gender equality is essential for a healthy growth of democracy. In fact, a sufficient female representation in the political discourse and policy making is a prerequisite for democracy (Kirsten Zeiter et al., 2019). Female participation in the political sphere will widen the space for inclusivity (Simaibang & Bajari, 2019).

## **CONCLUSION**

This study systematically reviewed the scholarly landscape of gender and politics on social media between 2012 and 2021 by analyzing 89 peer-reviewed articles indexed in the Scopus Academic Database. Using two analytical tools—NVivo 12 Plus and VOSviewer—, the study explored thematic trends, methodological approaches, and key actors in the field. The findings highlight a growing scholarly engagement with gender-political discourse in digital spaces, particularly through empirical case studies within the social sciences. The United States emerged as the most prominent contributor to the literature, while *Information, Communication & Society* ranked as the leading journal in publication volume. Notably, while Caldeira et al. (2020) appeared frequently in publication records, Pennycook and Rand (2019) received the highest citations, indicating both the breadth and depth of impact in this area of study.

The significance of this research lies in its ability to consolidate fragmented knowledge and offer a comprehensive typology of gendered political discourse on social media. Through VOSviewer, dominant keywords such as “female,” “male,” “young women,” “LGBT,” “gender and sexuality,” and “female leaders” revealed core areas of focus and emerging trends. NVivo thematic coding further confirmed the methodological preference for qualitative, empirical approaches across the literature. Specific attention to subcategories like “Muslim women,” “Black women,” and “White women” exposed persistent patterns of intersectional stereotyping and marginalization. This synthesis not only enriches the existing scholarship by mapping its structure and direction but also underscores the role of digital platforms as both arenas of representation and sites of symbolic exclusion.

Despite its breadth, this study acknowledges limitations in scope, particularly in its reliance on the Scopus database and the English-language corpus, which may omit relevant regions or non-English perspectives. Future research should expand into other databases, languages, and disciplines to ensure more inclusive global coverage. Moreover, longitudinal

studies could further track the evolution of gendered political discourse across shifting media ecosystems. From the practical point of view, the insights gained from this review offer valuable implications for gender-sensitive digital policymaking, algorithmic accountability, and inclusive civic engagement. Thematically structured and methodologically rigorous, this study contributes not only to gender studies and political communication but also provides a strategic framework for addressing stereotypes in the digital public sphere.

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