

Algerian Social Networks and Gender Representation**Khadija Rezki¹, Souryana Yassine²**¹English Department, Tizi Ouzou University (Algeria)khadija.rezki@ummto.dz²English Department, Tizi Ouzou University (Algeria)souryana.yassine@ummto.dz*Received: 3/9/2023**Accepted: 25/6/2024**Published: .../6/2024***Abstract**

Internet memes are a new genre of digital communication. Previously, they used to reflect the floating ideas between minds. With the advent of the internet, they extended to reflect the replication of ideas from minds to social network applications such as Facebook and Instagram. This paper is a corpus-based study that explores gender representation in internet memes circulating in Algerian social network. It aims at raising awareness amongst social networkers to avoid such misogyny molded as a funny meme. Therefore, the following research question is raised: How is gender represented in internet memes posted in Algerian social networks? A corpus of ten memes is selected from Algerian social networks; the analysis draws on Kress and Van Leeuwen's (2006) theory of visual design and Goffman's (1979) theory of gender representation. Results showed that internet memes disseminated in Algerian social networks are gender-biased; they portray women stereotypically. In some cases, these internet memes incite misogyny. Therefore, the study aims at raising awareness amongst social networkers to avoid such misogyny molded as a funny meme.

Keywords: Social Networks, gender representation, Grammar Visual Design, internet memes, misogyny.

1. INTRODUCTION

People use social networks to connect and keep in touch with their entourage via texting (texts and emojis), (video) calls, or sending pictures (Gifs, stickers) and videos. The ritualized habit of connecting with others led to the emergence of internet memes as a new genre of digital communication, which are pictures superimposed with a catchphrase; these internet memes are used by internauts to express and explain their ideas in the form of migrating digital thoughts. Internet memes are used to cover an array of topics that can be personal (like feelings), and public that attains multiple spheres in society, such as politics, education, and media studies. Social networkers circulate funny internet memes in the form of humorous or sarcastic jokes. However, these internet memes carry a hidden meaning. Plenty of these funny internet memes bring stereotypical ideas about women in our society, and the net accessibility made it easier to transmit and disseminate such stereotypes, and prejudice about women. Therefore, via our study, we aim to shed light and raise awareness of the stereotypical internet memes circulating unconsciously in Algerian Social Networks (ASN), by analyzing a selected corpus of internet memes depicting females and males participants. Therefore, the following research question is raised:

- 1- How gender is portrayed in internet memes that circulate in Algerian social networks?

Our research is a corpus-based study; it is investigating gender representation in internet memes disseminated in Algerian social networks. We are going to analyze gender representation in internet memes drawing on two different theories being; multimodality (2006) and Goffman's (1979) theory of gender representation, to identify the various stereotypes of gender representation existing in internet memes circulating in the Algerian social networks. It uses purposive sampling through which ten Facebook and Instagram memes are selected as a corpus.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Internet Memes

With the growth of the internet and considering human beings as digital immigrants (Prensky, 2001), internet memes sprouted. A brief overview of the concept 'meme' shows its origins; it was coined with analogy to the term 'gene' came from Greek roots, which mean imitation. It appeared first in Dawkins' book "The Selfish Gene" (1976). According to Dawkins a meme is a replicator, a unit of cultural evolution, which makes it possible for human ideas to evolve in the same way as the biological evolution of genes. The notion of "internet memes" is not a recent

phenomenon; it dates back to the 1990s. One of the original internet memes is called ‘Godwin’s Law’, which was produced during the early period of internet innovation (King, 2013). Yet, academic research did not start studying internet memes until the beginning of the new millennium; and credit goes back to Susan Blackmore for her first tag in her influential work “The Meme Machine” (2000) (cited in Baurecht, 2020).

From a multimodal lens, internet memes are considered as a “multimodal symbolic artifacts created, circulated, and transferred by countless mediated cultural participants” (Milner 2013, p.2359). Semiotician Fomin has added “the concept of sign is the metalingual equivalent for both the concepts of gene and meme ... [a meme is] a thing that stands for the rules of how a particular social and cultural practice is performed” (Fomin, 2019, p. 333). In brief, a typical Internet meme is the combination of two modes which are text and image (Zhang, 2016), besides an added focus on discourse; and “how discourses are communicated, naturalized, and legitimized beyond the linguistic level” (Machin, 2013, p. 347). The concept of recontextualization as an axiom in the meaning-making is significant to the selected sample of internet memes in this study. Bezemer and Kress (2016) view recontextualization as the process by which “discourses that originate in one social site ... are reshaped to fit with the social givens of a new site” (p. 75). Van Leeuwen and Wodak (1999) have stated that “representation always involves recontextualization” and “recontextualization always involves transformation” (p. 233). Memes depend on multimodal recontextualization, as on their humor hinges where different memers photoshop an image or change a caption (or both) to fit in their communicative purpose (Avery, 2022).

2.2. Gender Studies

During the 1900s, women worldwide witnessed marginalization, and the thought that their place was in their houses, raising their children and supporting their husbands was circulating. Their representation was restricted to sideline homemakers and caregivers (Healy, 2009). As a result, scholars gave attention to studying and evaluating the different manifestations of gender which gave rise to various studies dealing with gender representation. Gender inequality according to Rundell (2009) means representing or treating one differently from the other based on one’s gender. The latter can be referred to differently, such as; gender bias, gender discrimination, sexism...etc. (Rundell, 2009, cited in Boomthong, 2017). Women started revolting to have equal rights with men, which gave birth to

the feminist movement in the 1940s. Nevertheless, it was until the second wave of feminism (1970's/1980's) that scholars were triggered to start research on the unbiased representation of gender (Ullah, 2014,). At the Algerian level, feminist awareness did not begin until the colonial period (Yassine & Nedjai, 2014). Therefore, we can mention only few studies that have accounted for the visual representation of gender.

Goffman's (1979) *Gender Advertisement* theory is used to examine women's representation in mainstream media advertisement, together with social networks. Canadian-born American sociologist Erving Goffman introduced gender advertisement theory. He has described how masculinity and femininity are represented in western media. Goffman (1979) analyzed different advertisements and found a huge difference between the depiction of men and women in the media. Generally, the media depict men as confident, comfortable, aware of their surroundings, physically active, rational thinkers, profound, and adventurous. Unlike men, women are portrayed as vulnerable, sexy, and sexually available, soft, careless, fragile, seductive, powerless, dreamy, and childlike. Moreover, Goffman has argued that advertising photographs constituted the "ritualization of social ideals" (p. 84). Differently said the represented characteristics of men and women are not biological or natural performances; instead these performances are culturally imposed. In his theory of gender advertisement, Goffman (1979) listed six gender stereotypical categories based on advertisement images of magazines. These stereotypical categories are as follows:

- 1) Relative size: this category represents the exaggeration of representing the biological traits of men and women; for instance, by representing men taller and bigger than women in ads to point out to power and control of men over women.
- 2) Feminine touch: means that the women's body is represented as being fragile and valuable, for instance, by depicting ritualistic feminine touching with hands, fingers, or face.
- 3) Function ranking: reflects how the relationship of men and women is depicted through the professions they perform. It compares the importance of the occupations, which entails the social value of the person performing the occupation, for instance men are always depicted as a boss, and women are depicted performing a sideline job or less worthy than men's job as a secretary, for example.
- 4) The family: this category deals with the representation of the family members roles, in which female members like mothers, and daughters are shown as having a close relationship compared to male family members.

Whereas, Fathers are depicted as protectors of the family and sons are shown as ready to take their fathers position when they are absent.

5) Ritualization of subordination: depicts the stereotypes dealing with behavioral differences that are generally attributed with women to prove their subordination to men. For instance, lowering oneself physically indicates deference or admittance of inferiority and holding the body erect and the head high is stereotypically a mark of superiority.

6) Licensed withdrawal: women are mostly to be distant or withdrawn from a particular situation physically or psychologically, which means women marginalization from different situations compared to men. Licensed withdrawal can be depicted in images that communicate the weakness, and reliance of women

2.3. Multimodality

Currently, multimodality is wider than before, because of the massive circulation of images, and their importance in creating meaning (Yassine, 2014). Multimodality stems from Haliday's work on social semiotics. Language is viewed as a social product used by people to satisfy their social needs (Haliday, 1978; Hodge & Kress, 1988; cited in Jewitt & Kress, 2010). "The term multimodality draws attention to the many materials resources beyond speech and writing which societies have shaped and cultures provide as means for making, modes are social made and culturally available material semiotic-resources for representation" (Kress 2011, p. 208). Multimodality refers to the meaning-making process using different modes that are culturally shaped. Modes include images, sound, dynamic representation, gesture, gaze, body posture, spatial orientation (Kress & Jewitt, 2010).

Memes are considered to be multimodal as they combine different modes of communication for meaning making. The memes analyzed in this study use the visual mode and linguistic mode. Kress and van Leeuwen (2001) stressed the "absolute interrelation of discourse" and mode (p. 24). Kress views discourse as ways of "being in" and "knowing" concerning the world (Kress, 2011, p. 69), and considers signs (memes) as sites where discourses are realized and materialized (Kress, 2010). Following Halliday's functional grammar, Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006) provide a framework to read images. The Grammar of Visual Design (GVD) allows different interpretations of the exact visual text, because it "provides detailed and explicit methods for analyzing the meanings established by the syntactic relations between people, places and things depicted in images" (Roberts & Philip, 2006, p. 20) by relying on three different levels of meaning

3. Method

3.1. Data Analysis Procedures

The mixed method is used to analyze the data; it “involves the collection or analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data included in a single study with some attempts to integrate the two approaches at one or more stages of the process” (Dörnyei 2007, p. 163). Henceforth, there are two separate analyses of the data, one is quantitative, and the other one is qualitative. For the quantitative analysis, a numerical presentation of males and females represented participants in the internet memes is considered. Regarding the qualitative analysis, the selected sample of internet memes is analyzed using Kress and Van Leeuwen’s (2006) grammar of visual design, then categorized according to Goffman’s framework of gender representation.

The nature of the present study is a corpus-based study that seeks to explore and identify gender representation in the selected sample of memes. Exploratory, because it explores the representation of gender within internet memes posted in ASN. It classifies them under Goffman’s (1979) categorization of gender representation stereotypes. The following paper relies on two different theories which are Goffman’s (1979) theory of gender representation, which is dedicated to the analysis of gender representation in adverts. It provides six different categorizations of gender representation, which are as follows; Relative size, feminine touch, function ranking, the family, ritualization of subordination, and licensed withdrawal. The selection of Goffman’s (1979) theory to underpin our study is due to the visual nature of our research. Besides to, the grammar of the visual design (2006) which is a framework that deals with reading images. Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006) brought out the grammar visual design as a toolkit to study the meaning conveyed through visual texts, the latter consists of three interrelated meanings, which are representational, interactional, and compositional.

3.2. Study Corpus

3.2.1. Internet Memes

The corpus of this study comprises of ten internet memes selected from a larger number of internet memes posted in ASN, mainly Facebook and Instagram. The chosen sample depicts males and females. The data collection procedure relies on two techniques, which are; purposive and simple random sampling. First, the memes were selected using purposive sample; it is a data collection technique, wherein the researcher decides what they need for their research. It is also called to as judgment sampling

(Ilker, Musa & Alkassim, 2015). In our study, from a larger scale of existing internet memes within ASN, we have selected only memes that depict male and female participants. Second, random sampling is applied to the first gathered sample to select only ten internet memes for further analysis. Random sampling leans on probability, which means all the participants have the identical probabilities or chances to be selected and included in a sample to be studied (Jupp, 2006). Each technique is selected because of its relevance to the research questions and theoretical approach.

3.3. Context of the Study

3.3.1. Social Networks

Social networks primarily identified by Barnes (1954), he describes them as “connected graphs where nodes represent entities and edges their interdependencies. Entities could be individuals, groups, organizations, or government agencies. The edges could be interactions, invitations, trades, values, etc” (cited in Sherchan, W., Nepal, S., and Paris, C. 2013, p. 47). Benrazek adds that new media or social networks are called differently such as “we media,” “new media,” “social media,” “citizen journalism,” “social network media,” “amateur journalism,” discussion-based journalism or “journalism as a conversation,” “open source journalism” and “participatory journalism” (Benrazek, 2021, p. 4). In this paper, we are going to use ASN as a virtual context of the study from which we collect the corpus. These social networks are namely; Facebook and Instagram. As concerns, the connections of Algerian population, data reportal website give an explicit hint on the Algerian reported statistics on internet stats, mobile stats, and social media stats. First of all, it is necessary to mention entire population number in Algeria, which is estimated at around 44 million in January 2021; 49.5% of Algeria’s population is female, and 50.5% is male. Concerning the internet users in Algeria, there are 26.35 million users (January 2021) amongst them 25.00 million social media users. Mobile connections in Algeria are around 46.82 million mobile connections (Kemp, 2022).

4. Results

The collected corpus analysis relies on two different theories to study and sort out the main stereotypical ideas about women in ASN. The data analysis relies on Grammar of the Visual Design (2006) (GVD), which is a framework that provides a toolkit to read internet memes on two levels of meaning. These levels of meaning are as follows; Representational meaning, and Compositional meaning. Second, in order to identify the types of gender manifestation in the internet memes in the ASN, the data is

analyzed through another theory which is Goffman's (1979) theory of gender representation. Goffman (1979) identifies six different stereotypical categories that can manifest in images, which are as follows; Relative size, Feminine touch, Function ranking, The family, Ritualization of subordination, and Licensed withdrawal.

4.1. Representational and Compositional meaning of Gender in Internet Memes

Table 1. Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006) GVD analysis of the selected sample of internet memes posted in the ASN

The table demonstrates the analysis of internet memes according to GVD's two levels of meaning which are; the representational and the compositional meaning.

Meme N°	Representational Meaning	Compositional Meaning
Meme N°1	Interactive Participants: The meme designer wants to convey a message to the meme consumer that says that it is inappropriate for Algerian girls to wear a skirt in public. They assume it as 'not scientifically possible' for a girl to wear a skirt in Algerian society. The meme designer represents Algerian society as being smart, confident, and strong by the male RP that also appears as the main participant in the meme. As it uses violence against the female RP. As concerns, the female RP is depicted as being scared, insecure, and shocked from the male RP's reaction.	The male RP in both sections of the meme attracts the viewer's attention. The first section is depicted bigger on the left side of the meme, whereas the female RP is depicted smaller on the right side of the picture, this means that the male RP is the salient RP of the whole meme. The text is integrated within the meme; it is colored in white to show the contrast between the written text and the RPs. As it occupies the same space as the RPs in the meme.
Meme N°2	Interactive Ps: It is evident that the meme designer photo-shopped the screenshot taken from a cartoon where they deleted the thing that is covered by a sheet to surprise the meme reader, in which they first tried to grab the reader's attention by the catchphrase where they invite the reader to discover something which doesn't exist. Then, in the	There is a slight framing in the meme that divides the meme into two sections, in the first section, the male RPs are depicted one on the left and the other one on the right, and the covered something between them, which means in the center of the image. The written text in white is placed in the bottom of the meme. In the second section, the RPs have the same positioning of the male RPs, but

	second section, they represented the ‘something that doesn’t exist’ by a blank space and labeled it as ‘a girl that deserves to know my mother’. The meme producer is an arrogant male who believes he is superior and better than women.	the superimposed text is between them, which means at the center of the image, it entails it is the salient RP of the meme.
Meme N°3	Interactive P: the meme designer aims to transmit a message through this meme where they represented women at their fine states well-dressed and well-styled hair during the 60s. In which he compares Algerian women before and after feminism’s introduction to Algeria. Women were doing much better before the feminist movement; they labeled feminism; an ‘invasion’. They represent women as three independent and confident feminine women who feel secure to wear and walking freely downtown, contrary to nowadays, where women suffer from harassment, insecurity, and limited freedom, especially in public.	The catchphrase is placed on the top of the meme picture which makes it the ideal, and the 3 female RPs appear in the bottom section, in the center of the picture occupying the foreground of the meme. All the RPs are essential in the meaning-making of the meme. The framing divides the meme into two sections, the first small section is devoted to the introductory catchphrase written in bold black font on a white background contrast, the second section, comprises the three female RPs walking in downtown square.
Meme N°4	Interactive participants: the meme designer photoshopped the picture that belongs to the female RP with her husband, whom are public figure. They replaced the face of her husband by Houari Boumediene’s (ex-president of the Algerian democratic republic) face and added a garbage can on the left side of the picture. Misogyny is very apparent in this meme; the female RP is considered a successful woman in real and virtual life, which maybe the meme designer is bothered by her success and the only way to express themselves, is by creating this misogynous meme	The background displays a monochrome color, what makes the focus on the RPs and their placement; the garbage occupies the left side of the meme, and the female RP and the male RP appear in the center of the meme. The 3 RPs attract the viewer’s attention since they occupy the foreground of the meme. There is a complete absence of framing in this meme.

	against women by representing women as trash and throwing her in the garbage can.	
Meme N°5	Interactive P: the meme designer wants to transmit men's dissatisfaction towards the interest that women receive in their international day. The catchphrase and the man's facial expressions, convey that he is unsatisfied. Whereas the female RP is surrounded by microphones, and the catchphrase shows that women receive more attention than men on their international day. Which is only one day in the year, and men didn't hesitate to express their dissatisfaction.	The meme is divided into two sections by minimal framing, the male RP is represented in the left section with a catchphrase written and juxtaposed in a black rectangular space to show contrast with the image of the male RP. Whereas, the female RP is depicted on the right side of the meme with juxtaposed white text placed within a rectangular black column to contrast between the image of the female RP and the catchphrase. The salient participant is the male RP.
Meme N°6	Interactive P: the meme designer photo-shopped the picture to mock women's abilities and competencies that they cannot be astronauts. The idea backs up the stereotype that says that household is a women's task. Overall, the meme circulates a stereotype and it conveys a misogynous message which supports the sexist stereotype that women's role is restricted only to cleaning, and makes the women's competences in question that they can't land on the moon next to the male astronauts.	Minimal framing divides the meme into two sections; the top section and the Bottom section. The top section shows the male RP in the center; and the American flag on the left of the picture; and the bottom section includes Cameron Hill's comment. The salient RP is the astronauts and the written texts.
Meme N°7	The Interactive participants: the meme designer, via this meme, he tries to represent the state of Algerian woman and her feelings when she is harassed socially, and abused by her family members. They used a male figure that represents disappointment in the world of memes to represent the Algerian woman feelings. Interestingly, even to describe women's	The meme is divided by minimal framing that divides the top section where the introductory catchphrase written in black font color placed within a white space, the bottom section depicts the male RP in the center occupying the image's foreground with an integrated text written in bold red color that overlaps with the male RP.

	feelings the meme producer used a male RP (recontextualization of the bald Indian guy meme) rather than using a female RP.	
Meme N°8	The interactive Participants: the meme is a screenshot from a movie, in which the meme designer photoshopped and recontextualised it transmits their message. This message is sexist, because they represented women as servants working hard without taking rest to ensure men's comfort, and satisfy them. While the man is represented lying down, relaxing, and enjoying the comfort provided by the woman, who looks drained.	Minimal framing divides the meme into two sections; in the top section the female RP with the integrated text are placed in the center of the image and both of them occupy the foreground of the image. In the bottom section, the RPs occupies the right side of the image, in which the text appears above the male RP. The text is written in bold black font and placed within a rectangular column colored in grey to contrast and makes the text apparent.
Meme N°9	Interactive Participants: The meme designer wants to convey a message to the meme consumer, particularly the female consumers. The message says you can be whomever you want, even Angela Merkel, who is well-known as the 'Iron lady'. But, if you don't know how to make couscous, you are incomplete as a woman. The meme designer is restricting the woman's role to the kitchen and preparing food, no matter her success in other fields like politics, education, medicine...etc.	The male RPs in this meme occupy the whole space of the background and the foreground of the meme, except the female RP, appears in the middle ground of the picture, and in the center of the meme appear the other RPs. The salient RPs are those with an integrated text on them whom are the sitting male RP, and the standing female RP.
Meme N°10	Interactive Participants: the meme designer represents women as a punching bag, as he is giving legitimacy to the use of violence against women. The meme producer via this meme disseminates the most dangerous act towards women, which is domestic violence in a simple normalized humorous manner. Just because she can't cook bread doesn't give the husband the right to abuse his wife.	The meme is divided into two sections; the top section includes an introductory catchphrase written in black bold font within a white background. It is also separated from the bottom image. The bottom section is divided into four sections with a slight framing to represent the gradual transformation of the female RP to a bunching bag. The salient RPs are the written text and the female RP.

4.2. Stereotypical Categorization of Gender Representation in Internet Memes

The following table deals with the analysis of the ten internet memes relying on Goffman's theory of gender representation in advertisements, to identify the different manifestations of stereotypes; in accordance with the six different parameters specified by Goffman (1979) in his theory.

Table 2.Goffman's (1979) stereotypical categorization of gender representation in internet memes posted in ASN.

	Me me 1	Me me 2	Me me 3	Me me 4	Me me 5	Me me 6	Me me 7	Me me 8	Me me 9	Me me 10
Relative Size	X				X				X	
Feminine Touch	X		X							
Function Ranking	X			X		X	X	X		X
The Family										
Ritualization of Subordination	X			X	X	X	X		X	X
Licensed Withdrawal		X			X	X	X			X

Table two shows the manifestation of Goffman's (1979) stereotypical parameters in the selected memes from the ASN. All the parameters exist in the selected memes, only the 'Family' parameter, which is absent.

5. Discussion

5.1. Women Portrayal within internet memes in Algerian Social Networks

Considering internet memes as a multimodal artifact and multimodality means using different modes to communicate, the memes posted in ANS have achieved this criterion. Internet memes proved themselves as a subject of investigation. As a result, the selected sample depicts different participants, like objects and human beings, in both realistic pictures and drawings like cartoons. But, the focus of our analysis is on female and male represented participants and how the meme designers represent them. A differentiation between the representation of males and females is remarkable at the first level, the representational dimension. It

indicates how the depicted participants are represented according to two types of meaning processes narrative and conceptual. The entire selected corpus include narrative meaning wherein the RPs are represented busy, and occupied in their world, only meme n° ten that include conceptual process. Because the RPs are static, they are offered as a piece of information for contemplation.

Overall, the selected ten memes depict 28 represented participants (female and male), 19 amongst them are male RPs depicted in nine internet memes, and nine amongst the RPs are female RPs depicted only in seven internet memes. Male and female RPs are represented unequally and differently in which three internet memes show male participants figuring alone (memes two, six, and seven), or occupying all the front space of the picture plane (memes one, two, six, seven, and nine), as they are represented positively as being strong, confident, intelligent and powerful, whereas the female RPs representation differs. They are represented negatively as a performer (meme one), or representing them via a male RP (meme seven), an object and trash (meme four and ten), or nothing (meme two). Only two memes (three and 10) that depict a female RP alone with no male RP figuring in the image plane. Hence, few memes are depicting both genders RPs simultaneously, for instance, memes one, four, five, and eight. However, in some of the aforementioned memes, male participants are numerous than female participants, like in meme nine.

At the compositional level of the selected memes, male RPs are depicted as more important than female RPs. Female participants are shown as important RPs only in three memes (memes nine, three, and 10). However, male participants are more highlighted in most internet memes one, two, four, five, six, eight, and nine, as they are depicted in the left side of the memes (five and two), it connotes the importance and familiarity of the RP. Furthermore, sometimes meme designers used a male RP to represent women's feelings (meme seven). The results obtained after applying GVD framework on the selected memes, reveal that at the first representational level of meaning, women are shown less than men within the selected memes. Also, the compositional level of meaning supports the first one, in which men are portrayed as salient RPs and, more important, RPs than female RPs, which entails that the internet memes posted in the ASN are biased and favor men over women.

The collected sample of internet memes from the ASN is gender biased according to Kress and Van Leeuwen's (2006) GVD framework that deals with reading the visual representation of gender within internet memes

relying on two levels of meaning, being representational and compositional. The study reveals the uneven representation of men and women depicted in memes; thus men are represented more than women. Also, they are portrayed as salient RPs in most of the selected memes posted in the ASN. Furthermore, the analysis reveals how interactive participants (memes designers) have used memes for two significant reasons, next to mocking and mimicking Algerian women. The first one is to communicate discourses of delegitimization concerning Algerian women. Ultimately, they portray women as being servants and weak who merit violence for nothing. The second reason is to disseminate and naturalize misogyny among users of ASN.

5.2. Stereotypical Representation of Gender in the Algerian Social Networks via Internet Memes

As regards gender representation within the ASN, it comes out; the internet memes circulating within the ASN are biased. Because all the parameters suggested by Goffman (1979) in his theory of gender representation proved that the ASN circulates stereotypical internet memes, as well as those internet memes' producers, failed to make a balance in representing the two genres in social media. To backup this claim, all the selected memes comprise at least one of the six parameters introduced by Goffman(1979) in his theory. The existing parameters in the corpus of the study, starting from the most manifested one to the least. First, 'Ritualization of the subordination' parameter exists almost in all the selected internet memes in which they highlighted the depiction of stereotypical behavioral differences between men and women like; men are depicted as being stronger (memes one and four) arrogant(memes two and nine) superior (memes two, four, and nine) intelligent (memes one and six) while women are represented as nothing (meme two), servants (meme six), inferior (memes one, four, and five) garbage (meme four) or an object (meme 10). The second most exhibited parameter in internet memes is 'licensed withdrawal', which depicts the marginalization of women from different situations or fields compared to men, for instance, in memes (one, two, five, six, seven, and 10). Next, the 'Function Ranking' parameter which deals with the importance of the occupation performed by the two genres in memes one, four, six, seven, eight, and 10, wherein men's occupations (scientist, astronauts) are more important than those of women (performer, servant). Then, the 'relative size' parameter reflects the exaggeration of representing the biological traits of both women and men representations like in memes one, five, and nine, wherein men are depicted

as stronger, bigger, and taller with a serious gaze. The ‘feminine touch’ parameter, is exhibited only in two Internet memes one and three in which the female body is represented as something delicate and fragile. The last parameter is ‘the family’, in which it is absent in the whole corpus of the 10 internet memes. Finally, the selected corpus reveals that internet memes circulating in the ASN are not only biased but also misogynous. In which they highlight stereotypical ideas that favor men and underestimate women, as they incite to use of violence against women.

CONCLUSION

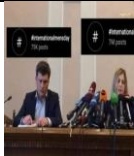
This paper is a corpus-based study that tried to account for gender representation in internet memes disseminated in Algerian Social Networks namely; Facebook and Instagram. Multimodal analysis reveals that the analyzed sample favors the representation of men over women. The two levels of meaning of Grammar Visual Design being representational and compositional, have demonstrated that male represented participants are more apparent, and they are portrayed as being more important than female participants within internet memes. Goffman’s (1957) theory of gender representation results backs up multimodal analysis results and shows that the collected sample of memes represents gender unequally. Consequently, out of six parameters from Goffman’s theory, we have found five parameters in the examined corpus. The study concludes that internet memes posted in ASN show evidence of not only an unequal representation of gender, but also they hold and transmit misogynous messages. Internet memes posted in ASN are gendered biased and communicate stereotypical ideas against women. Therefore, this paper incites for more social network censorship in Algeria to filter what is posted and circulated; as it attempts to raise awareness against the blind consumption of dangerous misogynous posts molded under humor.

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Appendix: (Sample of Algerian Internet Meme)s:

Meme 1	Meme 2	Meme 3	Meme 4	Meme 5
				
Meme 6	Meme 7	Meme 8	Meme 9	Meme 10
				