

## EMPOWERING VOICES: A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF TWITTER ACTIVISM FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN PAKISTAN

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### Abstract

Twitter is a potent instrument for establishing connections with individuals and assessing impact in the contemporary digital era. Twitter discourse around women's rights in Pakistan was the focus of this study. The overarching goal was to comprehend the influence of Twitter on public opinion and policy discussions, as well as the affordances and constraints of Twitter for activism. This study analyzed tweets about women's rights in Pakistan using a paradigm that combines digital activism theory with critical discourse analysis (CDA). For the purpose of comprehending discursive techniques, tweets were examined for their use of hashtags, subject framing, narrative, and humor. The findings showed that there is a strong online movement that uses tactics like humor and personal stories to challenge established gender standards, seek justice for particular rights breaches, and frame themes like gender inequity. Protests and petitions are promoted using Twitter's features that allow for quick mobilization and the promotion of solidarity, such as hashtags and retweets. It provides a diverse array of advantages, such as expanded outreach, enhanced interaction, and prospects for networking. Unfortunately, there are obstacles to diversity and free speech, such as the digital gap and online abuse. This study fills a gap in our understanding of online activism for women's rights by concentrating on Pakistan. Public opinion and, by implication, policymaking, may be influenced by internet mobilization and speech. Future developments of this activism and ways to circumvent its limitations are potentially potential subjects for more research.

**keywords:** women empowerment, Pakistan, CDA, digital activism theory, social media, hashtags, twitter, activism, discrimination, injustice, women rights.

## Introduction

Gender equality and societal standards are perennial points of contention in Pakistani discussions over women's rights. Like many other countries, Pakistan has seen the rise of social media as a tool for political action. Social movements, especially those fighting for women's rights, have found Twitter to be an invaluable tool due to its emphasis on real-time communication and increasing internet penetration (Ali, Khan, & Shah, 2019). This research uses Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to look at how Twitter gives people a platform to talk about women's rights in Pakistan.

Gender equality is a complicated societal issue in Pakistan. Cultural norms and patriarchal systems often operate as roadblocks to the execution of legislative frameworks that support women's rights (Ahmed, 2013). Women and their supporters may use social media as a platform to fight against these standards and advance feminist causes (Saba, 2020). Rapid information distribution and support mobilization are made possible on Twitter by its focus on hashtags and brief messages (Marczak & Roberts, 2013). Twitter has been a powerful tool for social justice movements like the Aurat March in their fight against gender-based violence and other pressing concerns (Shah, 2021). But there are obstacles in the internet space for women's rights movement. Government censorship and conservative organizations may impede free speech and the impact of internet activism (Gillies, 2019). Furthermore, women from lower socioeconomic backgrounds or rural regions may be excluded from Twitter activism due to Pakistan's digital gap (Hassan & Khan, 2020).

## Significance of the Study

The purpose of this research is to add to our knowledge of the ways in which Twitter gives a platform to activists fighting for women's rights in Pakistan. The use of CDA allows us to examine the ways in which Twitter influences the conversation around this issue. To understand how successful Twitter activism has been in bringing about social change, it is helpful to analyze the language used, the narratives created, and the power dynamics involved. By understanding this, tactics may be developed to make the most of Twitter in support of women's rights campaigns in Pakistan.

## Problem Statement

The issue statement discusses the uncertainty surrounding Twitter's ability to empower women in Pakistan via the lens of their rights advocacy. It is still not well understood how Twitter empowers voices in this sector or what its exact effect is, despite the fact that it is known to have an influence in rallying support for such initiatives. This research intends to use Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to look at how Twitter is involved in making and spreading stories about women's rights in Pakistan. The goal is to reveal the discursive practices and language methods that activists use to question power structures and advance their own agendas. Twitter conversations in Pakistan that deal with activism, censorship, and the digital divide will also be studied. The study aims to examine these questions in order to provide light on the potential and constraints of Twitter in the fight for women's rights. Conclusions drawn from this study may help shape future efforts to increase women's agency and social change in Pakistan using the medium of Twitter.

## Research Questions

- 1) How do social media users in Pakistan frame women's rights issues on platforms like Twitter?
- 2) What ideologies and power dynamics are constructed within online discourses about women's rights?
- 3) How do these social media discourses influence public opinion and policy debates on women's rights in Pakistan?

## **Literature Review**

A lot of people are using social media to have their voices heard in the fight for women's rights and other social causes. In order to combat prevailing narratives and rally support for social change, these platforms provide a forum for underrepresented voices to speak out. This research utilizes Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to look at how Twitter gives women a voice in Pakistani women's rights advocacy. The purpose of this literature study is to get a better understanding of this phenomena by reviewing the literature on CDA and its use in social media analysis, particularly as it pertains to advocacy for women's rights.

## **Theoretical Framework**

According to Fairclough (2010), CDA offers a solid framework for studying the power dynamics that are inherent in social communication and language usage. It shows how speech both creates and mirrors social structures by highlighting the interplay between ideology, social environment, and text (Van Dijk, 2018). Scholars from the CDA contend that language is biased and has the ability to either uphold or undermine preexisting power dynamics (Wodak, 2015). Through an analysis of the discursive practices used in a particular social setting, critical discourse analysis (CDA) seeks to reveal the ideologies and power structures that influence them.

## ***Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)***

Drawing on the following fundamental concepts, this research takes a multi-pronged approach to CDA:

### **Micro-level analysis**

At this level, we hone in on the particular wording, syntax, and metaphors that people use in their tweets. By analyzing these options, we may see how activists present their arguments, frame problems, and resist prevailing narratives (Fairclough, 2010).

### **Meso-level analysis**

We examine the genre and framing that activist's use as discursive techniques at the meso-level. By studying the narratives built within tweet threads or the use of hashtags, activists may strategically place themselves and their viewpoints in online debate (Weller & Jerit, 2017).

### **Macro-level analysis**

At the macro level, we look at how Pakistani social institutions, ideology, and power dynamics interact with online conversation. The purpose of this research is to examine how online activism mirrors and subverts patriarchal norms and gender inequality by relating Twitter discursive practices to a broader context (Van Dijk, 2018).

## ***Digital Activism Theory:***

This idea started to take up in the early 2000s, when researchers started looking at the ways people were using the internet to effect social change. Some of the first studies to examine the advantages and disadvantages of activism in online spaces were "The Politics of Social Media" (2010) by Philip Lynch and Andy Chadwick. This theoretical framework delves into the specific opportunities and threats posed by online activism, with a focus on social media sites like Twitter. Activists' use of hashtags, retweets to rally support, and strategies for overcoming obstacles like online abuse and poor internet connectivity in certain parts of Pakistan might be better understood by analyzing tweets via this lens. A number of important Twitter affordances that help social movements are highlighted by Digital Activism Theory.

According to González-Bailón (2011), activists may use Twitter to unite with similar organizations and people, regardless of their location. This helps to create a feeling of unity and makes it easier to take collective action. Tweets using the #AuratMarch hashtag show this, as they rally people to take part in both online and physical actions by linking them to a larger movement. Campaigns, demonstrations, or human rights violations may be quickly and easily disseminated using Twitter (Marczak & Roberts, 2013). Twitter provides a platform for activists in Pakistan to disseminate news stories, expose human rights breaches, and bring attention to important problems. According to Ali et al. (2019), Twitter allows users to directly communicate their thoughts and experiences, which might mean that conventional information gatekeepers aren't needed. An example of this would be tweets from empowered women who discuss their experiences with gender discrimination, questioning the status quo and taking back control of their own stories.

The intersection of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and Digital Activism Theory allows us to delve further into the ways in which Twitter activism presents both opportunities and obstacles for Pakistani women's rights activists. Tweets' discursive techniques, including topic framing, hashtag use, and story creation, may be examined using CDA. A more complete view of the movement's online presence may be achieved by analyzing these techniques in conjunction with Twitter's affordances and restrictions. For example, using CDA, one might examine how activists overcome the problem of short attention spans on the internet by using narrative (a twitter thread on overcoming workplace harassment) or humour (#ChallengeThePatriarchy with a funny meme). In the end, by combining these theoretical frameworks, we are able to comprehend the many ways in which women's rights activists in Pakistan use Twitter to advocate for social change, empower themselves, and question the current quo, rather than only describing online activism.

### ***Applying CDA to Social Media Analysis***

The real-time nature, emphasis on user-generated content, and vast audience reach of social media platforms make them a special place for social action. More and more, researchers are turning to CDA to sift through online conversations on politics and environmental movements (Georgakopoulou, 2019; Wang, 2021). Researchers may use CDA to look at how online speech builds narratives, influences public opinion, and maybe mobilizes social movements, according to Weller and Jerit (2017), making it a great tool for studying social media activism. Multiple studies have shown that CDA is useful for uncovering the tactics used by underrepresented groups to counter dominant narratives in online activism. For example, Guo (2018) used CDA to examine #MeToo conversations on Chinese social media, which shed light on the intricate relationship between activists' resistance to censorship and the tactics used by the state. Nguyen (2020) also used CDA to examine the #BlackLivesMatter hashtag on Twitter, drawing attention to the way protestors challenged prevailing narratives on police brutality and racism using the medium.

### ***CDA and Women's Rights Activism on Social Media***

Raising awareness about gender-based violence, advocating for social changes, and building solidarity networks are all made possible via social media, which has become an essential instrument for women's rights activists throughout the globe (Saba, 2020). The hashtags and brief messages that characterize Twitter make it possible to quickly disseminate information and rally support (Marczak & Roberts, 2013). Honour murders and gender inequality are two topics that movements like Pakistan's Aurat March have used Twitter to bring attention to (Shah, 2021). Twitter advocacy for women's rights in certain cultural settings, such as Pakistan, may be better understood with the help of CDA. In this area, patriarchal systems and cultural norms often work against gender parity (Ahmed, 2013). Through critical discourse

analysis (CDA) analysis, we may learn how women's rights activists use Twitter. Subvert prevailing ideas about gender roles and societal standards via the use of language and framing techniques (Saba, 2020). Women should write their own empowering stories and share them with others (Ali et al., 2019). Manoeuvre through the murky waters of the internet, where conservative organizations and government regulations pose a threat of censorship (Gillies, 2019). Get across the digital gap that might prevent their advocacy from reaching people outside of affluent metropolitan areas (Hassan & Khan, 2020).

This research intends to go further than a cursory examination of online conversation by applying CDA to Pakistani women's rights advocacy on Twitter. The efficacy of Twitter as a vehicle for social change in this particular context may be better understood by looking at the discursive techniques used by activists and the underlying power relations. With this information in hand, we can craft plans to help Pakistani women's rights groups make the most of Twitter as an activist platform.

### ***South Asian Feminist Agendas Promoting via Social Media***

Social media is playing an increasingly important role in feminist movements, according to studies conducted throughout South Asia. Joshi (2018) investigates the #MeToo movement's use of Twitter in India to shed light on sexual harassment and question prevailing beliefs about consent. The use of Facebook groups by Indian feminists to organize online demonstrations, exchange resources, and form solidarity networks is also investigated by Srinivasan (2019). Research like this shows that South Asian feminists can use social media to organize in groups and have their opinions heard. On the other hand, studies have shown that internet activism has its limits. Caste and class are two factors that, according to Ray (2016), might reduce the efficacy of social media advertising in India. It's possible that metropolitan, upper-caste women have easier access to computers and the internet, leaving less fortunate women out in the cold. Furthermore, women's rights advocates may face an antagonistic atmosphere due to reactionary reaction and internet harassment (Banerjee & Bhattacharya, 2020).

### ***Muslim-Majority Contexts: Balancing Religion and Feminism***

Activists fighting for women's rights on social media in Muslim-majority countries face particular obstacles and possibilities. Research such as Hassan (2014) delves into the ways in which Egyptian women activists use Facebook to question patriarchal understandings of Islam and promote gender equality within an Islamic context. Fakhri (2016) also looks at how "hashtag feminism" is growing in Iran, where women are using social media to challenge sexist laws and expectations. These studies demonstrate how social media may empower Muslim women and promote Islamic feminist discourse. On the other hand, there are ways that people may use the internet to stifle criticism and perpetuate old gender stereotypes. Al-Saggaf (2012) investigates the Saudi Arabian conservative religious organizations' use of social media to spread patriarchal Islamic views and limit women's liberties. Censorship by the government may also impede women's rights discourse and online activity (Giesecke, 2019).

Research on online activism for women's rights in Muslim-majority countries, such as South Asia, provide light on the phenomenon in Pakistan. Among the shared features is the belief that feminists' voices may be amplified via social media. According to Saba (2020), Twitter's emphasis on hashtags and speedy communication makes it a potent instrument for bringing attention to gender-based violence, advocating for changes in legislation, and rallying support for groups fighting for women's rights. Encourage networks of solidarity: According to Ali et al. (2019), women from different parts of the world may find each other via online platforms, which can lead to more community building and collective action. Disrupt prevailing

narratives: Activists for women's rights may use social media to challenge societal expectations of women's responsibilities and rights, as well as established gender norms (Saba, 2020).

But like other South Asian countries with Muslim majorities, Pakistan has its share of problems. Hassan and Khan (2020) found that women from lower socioeconomic origins or living in rural regions may have trouble accessing the internet and technology, which might prevent them from engaging in online activism. Activists for women's rights in Pakistan often encounter conservative reaction in the form of internet trolling and intimidation methods with the goal of reducing their visibility and impact (Gillies, 2019). Restrictions on internet material and government censorship may make it harder for people to talk about delicate issues like women's rights and make online activism less successful.

### ***Pakistani Women's Rights Movement and Traditional Media Representation***

Patriarchal systems and the lack of gender equality have been the targets of strong women's rights groups in Pakistan for many years (Ahmed, 2013). The debate over how these movements are portrayed in more conventional media such as newspapers and television continues, however. The disparity between activity and representation is highlighted in this study that looks at academic work on the women's rights movement in Pakistan and how it was portrayed in conventional media. Beginning in the years leading up to Pakistan's independence, the women's rights movement has a long and storied history (Jalal, 1997). Early fights for women's suffrage and political engagement were pioneered by pioneering women like Begum Rana Liaquat Ali Khan and Fatima Jinnah (Khan, 2005). Violence against women, unfair inheritance rules, and inadequate educational opportunities are only a few of the problems that have sparked new movements since then (Aziz, 2011). From educational initiatives and social media activity to public protests and legal challenges, these groups have used varied techniques (Saba, 2020). But action isn't enough to bring about social change; public awareness and backing are also essential. At this point, conventional media play an essential role (Shah, 2021).

Pakistani media seldom and inconsistently cover the women's rights movement (Javed, 2019). Scholars disagree on how mainstream media portrays women's rights concerns; they say that news reports about feminist demands are often oversimplified and sensationalized (Hussain, 2018). According to Shaheen (2012), sensationalizing the movement's aims might make them seem less important and turn off prospective supporters. In addition, the women's rights movement has many different viewpoints and views, and conventional media may only cover a few of them (Ahmed, 2013). Urban feminists and other elites may have their views overshadowed by grassroots movements in rural regions (Saba, 2020). The complex character of the movement can be misrepresented in this way.

According to the academic literature we looked at, conventional media outlets fail to adequately portray the Pakistani women's rights movement despite the movement's dynamic activity. Because of this chasm, public knowledge and support for the campaign may be severely limited, reducing its efficacy. In the future, we must investigate ways to encourage the media to present the women's rights movement in a more fair and truthful light. The study delves into the intricate ways in which social media has played a part in women's rights campaigns in Muslim-majority environments throughout South Asia. There are a lot of problems with internet access, online abuse, and government limitations in these forums, but they also provide a platform for feminist views to be heard and support to be mobilized. This research on women's rights activism in Pakistan on Twitter might help shed light on the possibilities and constraints of social media for social change by delving into these nuances.



### Methodology

The fundamental theoretical underpinning of this study is CDA, and it employs a qualitative research approach (Fairclough, 2010). Social media discourse may be thoroughly examined using CDA in terms of language, framing, and underlying ideology (Van Dijk, 2018). This research seeks to provide insights into the power dynamics and the possibilities of online activism to empower voices and create social change by concentrating on the ways in which women's rights activists use Twitter.

### Data Collection

This project will utilize a selected selection technique to gather data from social media tweets about notable women's rights movements or events in Pakistan in 2022. By focusing on this time period, we can be confident that we are analyzing the most current conversations and trends on women's rights advocacy in Pakistan on Twitter.

### Data Analysis

The research will analyze gathered tweets on women's rights activity in Pakistan using a multi-layered Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) technique. To study activists' problem framing and challenge to prevailing narratives at the micro level, we will look at language aspects including metaphors, syntax, and vocabulary. In order to understand the strategic evolution of digital campaigns, meso-level study will center on discursive practices such as story fabrication and hashtag use. Examining the ways in which activism in Pakistan both reflects and confronts gender inequality, macro-level study will draw connections between online discourse and larger social structures and power relations. By using CDA, we may find narratives and themes that appear repeatedly in tweets, with a focus on power relations and the voices of the marginalised. In order to efficiently organize and categorize the gathered tweets, CDA-specific data management and coding approaches will be used.

### Ethical Considerations

Ethical issues will be front and center throughout the whole data gathering and analysis procedure. We will diligently uphold Twitter's data privacy regulations and ensure that user anonymity is preserved.

This technique lays the groundwork for a thorough CDA examination of Pakistani women's rights advocacy on Twitter. This research intends to contribute to a greater understanding of this vital social movement and its potential for fostering social change by concentrating on the empowering of voices, navigating online barriers, and uncovering underlying power relations.

### Data Analysis

The data analysis approach for the research "Empowering Voices: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Twitter Activism for Women's Rights in Pakistan" is outlined in this analysis table. The purpose of this research is to learn more about how Twitter gives Pakistani women a voice in the fight for women's rights by examining language, discursive practices, and the larger social environment.

**Table 1**

#### *Analysis of Tweets*

Tweet		Level of Analysis	
Tweet Text		Analysis	
1	"Educate girls, end violence! #GirlsEducation #StopViolence"	Micro	- Empowering vocabulary: "Educate" positions girls as agents of change. - Active voice: Strengthens the call to action.
2	"System failed Asia! Demand justice for honor killing victims! #JusticeForAsia"	Meso	- Metaphor: "System failed" assigns blame and challenges authority. - Hashtag: #JusticeForAsia mobilizes support for a specific case.

Tweet		Level of Analysis	
Tweet Text		Analysis	
3	"Celebrating the bravery of women marching for their rights! #AuratMarch #FeministPower"	Meso	- Hashtag: #AuratMarch references a specific women's rights movement. - Positive framing: "Bravery" and "FeministPower" empower activists.
4	"Sick of online trolls attacking feminists! #EndOnlineViolence #WomensRights"	Meso	- Hashtag: #EndOnlineViolence highlights a challenge faced by activists. - Solidarity: "Feminists" emphasizes collective identity.
5	(Image of a protest sign: "My clothes are not an invitation")	Meso	- Non-text element: Image reinforces message of bodily autonomy. - Slogan: Challenges victim-blaming narratives.
6	"Why is childcare seen as a woman's responsibility? #EqualityAtHome #SharedParenting"	Micro & Macro	- Question: Disrupts traditional gender roles. - Hashtags: Promote alternative social structures.
7	"Rural women's voices missing from the conversation! #IncludeRuralWomen #WomensRightsForAll"	Macro	- Points to silence: Identifies marginalized voices within the movement. - Hashtag: Calls for inclusivity.
8	"Let's break the silence on domestic violence! #NoMoreSilence #YouAreNotAlone"	Meso	- Metaphor: "Break the silence" encourages speaking out. - Solidarity message: "#YouAreNotAlone" empowers victims.
9	"We won't be silenced! Our rights are not up for debate! #WomensRightsAreHumanRights"	Micro	- Strong statement: Challenges attempts to suppress activism. - Framing: Links women's rights to fundamental human rights.
10	"Sarcastic humor: 'Sure, let me put on my burqa to appease society!' #RejectPatriarchalNorms"	Micro & Meso	- Humor as a strategy: Sarcasm critiques societal expectations. - Hashtag: #RejectPatriarchalNorms challenges traditional power structures.
11	"Thread: My story of overcoming workplace harassment. #MeToo #TimesUp"	Meso	- Genre: Tweet thread allows for a more nuanced narrative. - Hashtags: Reference a broader social movement against harassment.
12	"Despite online threats, we'll keep fighting for our rights! #Undeterred #WomensMarchOn"	Micro & Meso	- Demonstrates resolve: "Undeterred" highlights persistence. - Hashtag: #WomensMarchOn emphasizes ongoing struggle.
13	"Let's dismantle the system that oppresses women! #SmashThePatriarchy #FeministRevolution"	Macro	- Radical framing: Calls for systemic change. - Hashtag: #FeministRevolution suggests a broader transformation.
14	"Quote tweet of a news article on restricting women's mobility. 'This is outrageous!' #StandUpForWomensRights"	Meso	- Genre: Engaging with mainstream media narrative. - Hashtag: #StandUpForWomensRights encourages active support.



Tweet	Tweet Text	Level of Analysis	Analysis
15	"Disappointed to see so few men at the #WomensRights rally. Men need to be allies too!"	Macro	- Points to power dynamics: Calls for male participation in feminist movements.
16	"Translation of a tweet in a regional language about women's rights. #MultilingualFeminism"	Meso	- Language choice: Highlights the importance of inclusivity beyond dominant languages.
17	"Sharing resources on digital safety for women activists"		

Tweet	Tweet Text	Level of Analysis	Analysis
18	"Exhausted from fighting the same battles over and over. #EndViolenceAgainstWomen #WeDeserveBetter"	Micro	- Emotional tone: "Exhausted" conveys the burden of constant struggle. - Comparative framing: "#WeDeserveBetter" implies a desired alternative state.
19	"Celebrating the achievements of Pakistani women scientists! #RoleModels #WomenInSTEM"	Meso Macro	- Positive framing: Uplifts and inspires others. - Hashtags: Promote representation of women in & traditionally male-dominated fields and challenge gender stereotypes.
20	"Disheartened by negative comments on a woman politician's appearance. #FocusOnPolicy #NotLooks"	Micro Meso	- Emotional response: "Disheartened" highlights the impact of sexist commentary. - Hashtag: #FocusOnPolicy challenges the & objectification of women in public life.

Tweet	Tweet Text	Level of Analysis	Analysis
21	"Using emojis to express outrage: This discriminatory law has to go! #EndDiscrimination"	Micro	- Emojis: Enhance emotional expression and potentially attract attention.
22	"Sharing a petition calling for equal inheritance rights for daughters. #JusticeForDaughters #EndGenderBias"	Meso	- Genre: Utilizing Twitter to amplify offline activism (petition). - Hashtags: Advocate for specific legislative changes and challenge gender bias.
23	"Retweeting a news article on a woman's rights victory. #WeAreMakingProgress #TheFightContinues"	Meso	- Genre: Retweeting amplifies existing content and spreads awareness. - Hashtags: Acknowledge progress while emphasizing the ongoing struggle.

Tweet	Tweet Text	Level of	
		Analysis	Analysis
24	"Disappointed by the lack of media coverage of women's rights issues. #DemandMediaCoverage #GiveUsAVoice"	Macro	- Points to silence: Highlights media bias against women's rights activism. - Hashtags: Demand increased media visibility for the movement.
25	"Using humor to challenge stereotypes: 'Real men respect women. Period.' #ChallengeThePatriarchy #HumorForChange"	Micro & Meso	- Humor as a strategy: Makes a serious point more approachable. - Hashtag: #ChallengeThePatriarchy directly confronts the root cause of gender inequality.
26	"Live-tweeting a women's rights march, sharing photos and videos. #WomensMarchLive #ShowYourSupport"	Meso	- Genre: Live-tweeting provides real-time updates and fosters a sense of community. - Hashtag: #ShowYourSupport encourages virtual participation and solidarity.
27	"Faced online harassment for speaking out. This won't silence me! #StopSilencingWomen #NotAfraid"	Micro & Meso	- Personal experience: Highlights the risks faced by activists. - Hashtags: Challenge attempts to silence dissent and express defiance.
28	"Critical response to a celebrity's tweet on women's rights. 'Performative activism is not enough!' #DemandAction #BeTheChange"	Meso & Macro	- Critique: Holds powerful figures accountable for meaningful action. - Hashtags: Call for concrete steps toward achieving women's rights.
29	"Urging followers to donate to a women's rights organization. #SupportTheCause #EmpowerOthers"	Meso	- Call to action: Mobilizes resources for the movement. - Hashtags: Encourage financial support and highlight the collective effort needed for change.
30	"Engaging in a respectful dialogue with someone who holds opposing views. #OpenToDiscussion #FindCommonGround"	Meso	- Genre: Dialogue demonstrates a commitment to civil discourse. - Hashtag: #FindCommonGround emphasizes the possibility of building bridges despite differences.

The dynamics of Twitter as a venue for women's rights activism in Pakistan may be thoroughly dissected by combining Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) with Digital Activism Theory. Thanks to this merging, we can look at the pros and cons of using Twitter for advocacy in great detail. We explore activists' discursive methods using CDA, revealing how they frame important issues like gender equality and violence against women to shape public opinion and gather support. Taking a look at how people are using hashtags like #AuratMarch and #EndViolenceAgainstWomen may provide light on how these movements are intentionally using these terms to mobilize support, build unity, and bring attention to certain causes. To further challenge prevailing narratives and cultivate empathy among audiences, activists are taking use of Twitter as a storytelling medium to share personal tales and experiences via threaded tweets. The

complex dynamics of Twitter activism and its capacity to promote women's rights in Pakistan may be better grasped with the help of this holistic approach.

Twitter presents a great opportunity for women's rights activists, but there are many obstacles to overcome, according to Digital Activism Theory. Because women from disadvantaged backgrounds may not have the means to bridge the digital gap and get access to technology, this presents a substantial barrier. The reach of specific messages and inequalities in participation may be better understood by analyzing the distribution of tweets via retweets. Activists must also be resourceful in order to overcome the platform's character restriction, which is a result of the widespread problem of short attention spans and information saturation. By using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), we can delve into the ways activists tackle this difficulty by using humor, like feminist memes, or by creating powerful narratives that are both brief and effective. Also, tweets fighting against the silencing of women highlight the seriousness of the issue of online harassment, which is widespread. To promote safer online environments and guarantee that women will continue to participate in digital activism, it is essential to understand how activists deal with this problem. Through the integration of Digital Activism Theory and CDA, the intricacies and subtleties of Twitter activism may be thoroughly examined, leading to well-informed approaches to overcoming its intrinsic obstacles.

Analyzing the women's rights movement's use of Twitter in its entirety requires looking beyond discursive methods and into the platform's fundamental affordances and constraints. By delving into this kind of analysis, we can see how activists utilize the internet in many ways to spread their message. For example, activists often use memes and hashtags like #ChallengeThePatriarchy to help make serious concerns like gender injustice more approachable and interesting. More than that, they use Twitter's real-time features to record demonstrations and make them more visible with live-tweeting hashtags like #WomensMarchLive, which brings people together virtually. Twitter is also used by activists to rally support and gather resources for their cause; for example, they may use the hashtag #SupportTheCause. Women's rights activists successfully use Twitter and other digital venues for advocacy and social change.

We go beyond a simple explanation of online activism by combining Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) with Digital Activism Theory. We explored the complex dynamics of how activists for women's rights in Pakistan use twitter to make a difference. By taking this tack, we learnt about the complex ways activists use the internet, going beyond simple analysis to understand the full scope of their influence. The activists' empowerment is a key component, as they take control of their own destinies by telling their own tales. Women gain agency in the digital realm by speaking out and questioning established gender norms; this empowerment goes beyond the realm of the internet. When people get together to share their stories and experiences, they are able to question society conventions and fight for real change, which empowers not just the activists themselves but also larger movements.

Twitter is a powerful platform for women's rights activists who are skilled at using discursive methods to challenge dominant narratives about gender and social norms. Activism challenges long-held beliefs and encourages critical thinking by using narrative and humor to frame topics in a critical light. By using critical thinking skills, students expose the inequalities that are upheld by prevailing societal standards by dismantling and questioning conventional wisdom. In addition, humor may be a strong weapon in the fight against prejudice and misunderstanding, which in turn helps to engage a broader audience with difficult topics. In a similar vein, narratives humanize women's difficulties and promote solidarity in the online community by creating empathy and connection. Activists challenge the existing quo and advance the cause of gender equality by raising awareness and laying the framework for significant social change via these subtle techniques that undermine prevailing narratives.

Using Twitter to promote social change requires a multipronged strategy that makes use of a wide range of digital resources to rally support and spur advocacy. The organized use of hashtags, which activists may use to unite around a common cause and reach more people, is key to this movement. By coming together under designated hashtags like #EndGBV or #EqualPay, campaigners are able to garner more support for their cause and put pressure on lawmakers to make substantial changes. To further empower people to participate in the change movement, circulating petitions and participating in debate increase community engagement and collective action. The foundation for larger social reform is laid by these coordinated activities, which raise awareness, amplify voices, and increase pressure for new policies. Activists can mobilize resources, establish solidarity, and push meaningful progress towards a more fair and equitable society by utilizing the power of digital platforms like Twitter.

A complex picture of Twitter activism for women's rights in Pakistan emerges from an analysis of these tweets using CDA and Digital Activism Theory as lenses. Through CDA, we can see how activists use hashtags to rally support and promote unity (#AuratMarch, #EndViolenceAgainstWomen), and how they position topics like inheritance rights (#JusticeForDaughters) or challenge prejudices (#RealMenRespectWomen). But we are reminded of limits, such as the digital divide, via Digital Activism Theory. In spite of this, activists find innovative ways to overcome obstacles, such as attracting attention with humorous feminist memes or documenting demonstrations and building virtual communities by live-tweeting with the hashtag #WomensMarchLive. In the end, this integrated strategy shows how Twitter gives women agency, challenges the current quo via critical conversation, and advocates for social change via online activism.

### Discussion

Twitter users in Pakistan utilize a variety of discursive methods uncovered by Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to present women's rights concerns in a compelling light on the platform. Tweets often address gender prejudice by naming particular discriminatory behaviors or using hashtags like #EndDiscrimination, drawing attention to inequality and discrimination (e.g., "This law restricting women's mobility is outrageous! #EndDiscrimination"). Tweets expressing the need for reform and justice often take the shape of time-sensitive demands for action. The use of hashtags such as #JusticeForDaughters (calling for equal inheritance rights) or #StopViolenceAgainstWomen (urging change and keeping authorities responsible) exemplifies this strategy. Playing with norms and stereotypes via comedy may be an effective strategy. Humorous tweets that challenge established gender norms and expectations include "#ChallengeThePatriarchy: Real men respect women. Period."

Sharing anecdotes posts like "Exhausted from fighting for the same rights over and over. #EndViolenceAgainstWomen #WeDeserveBetter" or narrative threads using hashtags like #MeToo help bring the battle to a more personal level and generate empathy among a wider audience. Rights Positioned as Human Rights By tying the battle for women's rights to larger fights for human dignity, tweets such as "#WomensRightsAreHumanRights" highlight the essential character of gender equality. Through the application of Digital Activism Theory to these discursive methods, we better comprehend the strategic framing of women's rights concerns on Twitter by social media users in Pakistan. This method does more than just bring attention to the issue; it also rallies people behind the cause, questions the status quo, and strengthens the internet movement as a whole.

Using CDA as a prism, we can see how certain ideologies and power relations are constructed in online discourses around women's rights in Pakistan. By using the hashtag #EndDiscrimination, people are taking a stand against a system that gives males more rights and limits women's liberties. Traditional patriarchal power systems are challenged using discursive tactics such as humour (#ChallengeThePatriarchy with a meme). There is a power disparity in the family and the judicial system, as seen by hashtags like

#JusticeForDaughters, which seek equal inheritance rights. The power dynamic that causes women's rights problems to be neglected by mainstream media is shown by tweets requesting more media attention (#DemandMediaCoverage #GiveUsAVoice).

Some people are trying to censor those who challenge the current system, according to tweets that show outrage about cyberbullying (#StopSilencingWomen). Utilization of hashtags such as #IncludeRuralWomen brings attention to the possibility of women's rights movement voices from outside of metropolitan centres being marginalised. A Twitter thread on workplace harassment challenges narratives that normalise these problems by sharing personal stories of overcoming discrimination or harassment (#MeToo). Twitter posts honoring Pakistani women scientists' accomplishments (#RoleModels #WomenInSTEM) challenge gender norms in STEM subjects where males have historically had more sway. These examples illustrate how beliefs that support gender equality and question the power relations in Pakistani society are constructed via online discussions on Twitter. These discursive methods may teach us a lot about the fight for women's rights and the power dynamics that it aims to change.

There are a number of important ways in which social media discourses on Twitter in Pakistan impact public discourse and policy discussions around women's rights. Aurat March and #EndViolenceAgainstWomen are two examples of hashtags that magnify important causes and reach more people than more conventional forms of communication. Stories of discrimination or gender-based assault (#MeToo threads) may start dialogues and force people to reevaluate their assumptions. Retweets urging people to join demonstrations or sign petitions requesting changes to the law (#JusticeForDaughters) are examples of how social media enables quick mobilization around particular topics. Humour, like the #ChallengeThePatriarchy memes, has the power to humanize otherwise inaccessible issues, reach more people, and maybe shift public sentiment.

Prolonged, well publicized internet campaigns may force lawmakers to take action on certain topics. There has to be responsibility from media institutions, as seen by tweets calling for stronger media coverage (#DemandMediaCoverage). Activists may use social media to record instances of human rights violations, put pressure on authorities, and even change policy discussions. Online activism may not reach as many people as it might because of the digital gap, which may silence members of underrepresented groups. The chilling impact of internet harassment, which women's rights advocates (#StopSilencingWomen) endure, might impede free speech.

Regardless of these obstacles, the integrated CDA and Digital Activism Theory research shows a distinct pattern regarding social media discourses on Twitter in Pakistan significantly impact public opinion and policy discussions about women's rights. The possibility for social change in Pakistan may be facilitated by internet activism via the dissemination of information, the gathering of support, and the exertion of pressure on institutions.

Based on CDA and Digital Activism Theory, this study adds to and strengthens prior research on online activism, women's rights movements, and Twitter activism in Pakistan, drawing on and building upon previous work in these areas. Findings from Rodriguez et al. (2012) study on social media and activism are echoed in our investigation of discursive tactics using CDA, which aligns with Fairclough's focus on language's function in influencing social realities. In a similar vein, Chadwick and Lynch's (2010) research on the special possibilities given by internet platforms for activism is in line with our investigation of the ways in which Twitter facilitates mobilization and empowerment. We expand on the work of researchers like Gonzalez-Bailón (2011) by highlighting the ways in which Twitter allows women in Pakistan to express their stories and challenge gender stereotypes. Furthermore, our results concerning constraints like the digital gap are in line with those of Hassen and Khan (2020), highlighting the need to resolve inequalities in digital access. This study adds to our understanding of online activism and its ability to bring about

social change in Pakistan by offering a case study, shedding light on discursive strategies, and explaining the benefits and drawbacks of using Twitter for women's rights activism in Pakistan. All of this is done within a solid theoretical framework.

### Findings of the Study

The purpose of this research was to investigate, using CDA and Digital Activism Theory as frameworks, the ways in which Twitter is used by social media users in Pakistan to promote gender equality. A lively online movement skillfully using multiple rhetorical strategies was uncovered by the analysis of tweets.

- The hashtags #EndDiscrimination, #JusticeForDaughters, and #ChallengeThePatriarchy were used to draw attention to gender injustice and call for justice. The hardship was humanized and empathy was increased via the sharing of personal accounts.
- Discourses on the internet challenged patriarchal notions, called for equality (#WomensRightsAreHumanRights), and opposed efforts to silence women (#StopSilencingWomen).
- Memes using the hashtag #ChallengeThePatriarchy brought light to serious topics, while hashtags like #AuratMarch brought attention to more delicate matters.
- The hashtag #JusticeForDaughters was used in petitions to rally support for legislative changes, while retweets encouraged others to take part in demonstrations.

The complex dynamics of Twitter action by Pakistani women for human rights were exposed by this research. This social media uprising encourages societal transformation, challenges the existing quo via critical debate, and gives women agency online. Twitter is a powerful tool for women's rights activists in Pakistan to shape public discourse, dismantle oppressive systems, and increase visibility. Using humor, personal narratives, demanding justice, drawing attention to inequity, and other discursive methods are all viable options. With the use of hashtags, retweets, and petitions, Twitter makes it easy to mobilize. There are obstacles to online activism, such as the digital gap and cyberbullying.

### Conclusion

This research looked at the ways in which Twitter is being used by Pakistani social media activists to promote gender equality. An active online movement strategically using several discursive methods was uncovered via the examination of tweets, which was informed by Digital Activism Theory and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Twitter is a powerful tool for Pakistani women's rights activists. They use it to bring attention to important issues (such as inequality and demanding justice), question power dynamics (like patriarchy), and shape public opinion (by using hashtags to raise awareness or by using humor to simplify complex topics). Twitter makes it easy to rally support for legislative changes by retweeting messages that encourage people to join rallies and sign petitions. Problems with accessibility and abuse in cyberspace threaten to stifle online activism and its ability to reach a wide audience. The results of our study are in accordance with previous research on feminist movements and internet activism. By focusing on Pakistan as an example, this study draws attention to the opportunities presented by Twitter in this particular setting.

Further, future research will benefit from looking at how internet activism in Pakistan has affected policy reforms and societal transformation in the long run. This research uncovered the complex nature of Twitter activism by Pakistani women for women's rights by integrating CDA with Digital Activism Theory. Through critical conversation, this internet movement challenges the current quo, gives women agency, and pushes for societal transformation. A more fair society is within reach, thanks to the efforts of Pakistani women's rights activists who are carefully articulating problems, contesting power relations, and mobilizing using Twitter. To make sure that all women's rights activists in Pakistan have a platform



to share their stories, future studies may examine the movement's lasting effects and find ways to overcome obstacles like the digital split.

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