

## **Hate Speech and social media: A Systematic Review**

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### **Abstract**

With the advent of new media technologies, the process of communication becomes very easier for the users of internet and social media around the globe. The remarkable advancements in the technology give a boost to the acceptance of new media. With the rise in the usage of social media the phenomenon of online hate speech also draws the attention of researchers towards itself. Therefore, the present systematic review has established by analyzing 50 researches studies based on online hate speech with the help SALSA a simple and rational framework (Search, Appraisal, Synthesis and Analysis). For developing better understanding of the topic the analysis of hate speech was divided into four categories, hate speech and social media, religious hate speech, gendered hate speech and racists hate speech on social media. Findings of the study revealed that due to the presence of anonymity in online media the use of hate speech on social media is immensely increasing and attracts the users towards itself. Because of the absence of restrictions on social media the trend of religious, gender and racists hate speech is expanding. Likewise, online harassment on the bases of gender and religion is also increasing. Online communities of users such as social media platforms can be studied by observing their actions, the information they post and share for better understanding online hate speech. On the basis of review, some new dimensions have suggested for future research studies in this specific area.

**Keywords:** Hate speech, Social media , Gender and hate , Religious hate speech , Racism,

Cyber terrorism

**Introduction**

As compared to the traditional media internet is considered as more power full medium for disseminating the news and information. It becomes more accessible through the use of technology like mobile phones, computer and laptop. (Khalil, 2010). However, the presence of proximity, anonymity and worldwide services of the internet has made it an appropriate tool for spreading hate and extremism. Along with the development of technology there has been a remarkable change in the number of online hate speech. Additionally, the rise in web based hate speech has been illustrated directly or indirectly through hate speech content , harassment, cyber bullying and discrimination among the individuals on the basis of their color, cast and religion (Banks,2010).

In the frame work of previous researches that has been done on hate speech, defined hatred as the intense dislike of a person or group of people on the basis of their color, faith, sex, and ethnicity (Waltman & Haas, 2011; Foxman & Wolf, 2013). Similarly, Hate speech refers to problematic communication in which groups promote hatred and prejudice on the base of their race, cast, color, culture, belief, sexual orientation, or other identity (Boyle, 2001). Hate speech isn't allowed by law. Although internet culture is not new, it has always been associated with anti-social activities such as bullying (Delgado & Stefancic, 2014). Bullying and cyber bullying, of course, arise and spread widely in the online world, which is on the rise due to the usage of social media (Festl & Quandt, 2013). The number of persons harassed differs between harassment and hate speech: one or more bullies target a single person, while many hate speeches target specific groups. Threats have been made on a huge scale on Twitter and on Facebook (Chess & Shaw, 2015).

Hate speech "has been prevalent in human interactions in many forms over time in the actual world (such as racism and prejudice), and now it has found a carrier in the virtual world defined by social media Internet" (Thomas, 2011). Because it is easy to access any information and can be quickly conveyed to a large number of individuals, the latter has become an obvious carrier of "hate speech." Although there is no universal agreement on what constitutes "hate speech," a similar definition has been presented. This phenomenon was characterised by Gitari et al. (2015) after the widespread usage of the phrase "hate speech" in social networks, because it is frequently generated by hostile users who prejudice "others" due to specific benefits (such as discrimination, creating fear, or instability between countries). Hate speech, according to Erjavec & Kovai (2012,.) is "a type of abuse, insult, intimidation, harassment, encouragement to violence, hatred, or any other forms of violence. According to Awan (2016), "hate speech" refers to any sort of rhetoric that is meant to dehumanize others, regardless of their color, gender, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or any other characteristics, like disabilities, both physical and mental This form can be customized or used in a generic way.

It's a common occurrence in everyday life, and it's extremely easy to share with "others." Hate speech not only reinforces prejudice and stereotypes in society (Citron and Norton, 2011), but it also has a negative impact on the mental and emotional health of target groups, particularly target individuals (Citron and Norton, 2011; Festl & Quandt, 2013).

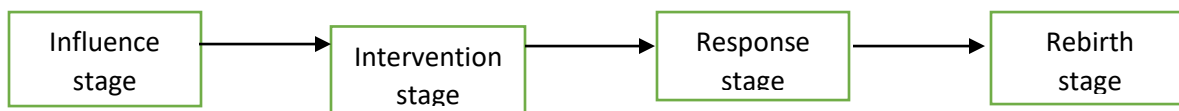
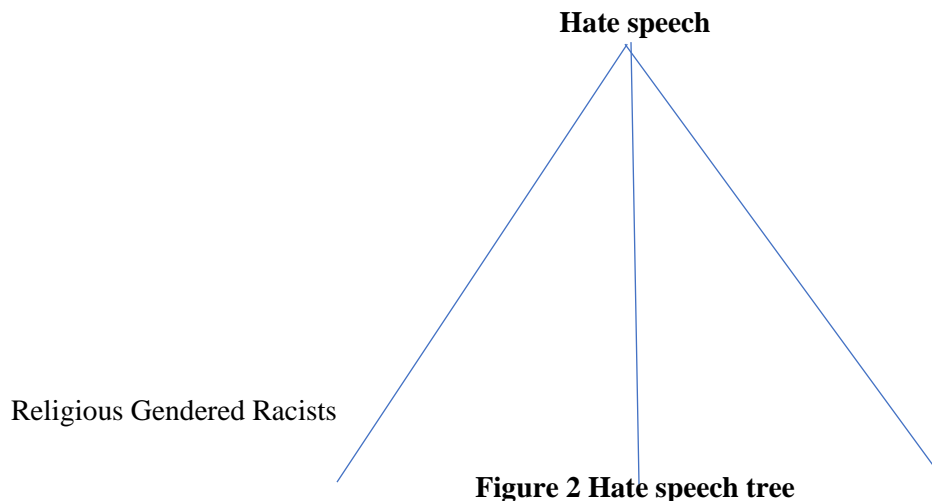


Figure 1 Stages of hate speech

Four distinct phases of hate speech following a crucial incidents were defined by Chetty and Alathur 2018, shown in figure 1. First stage known as (influence stage) in which flow of hate speech will remain high on social networks, then in second stage (intervention stage) after few days hate speech will get reduced, and in third (response stage) after some more days the hate speech become almost zero and in final (rebirth stage) the hate speech reappear, but the rebirth of online hate speech depends on the nature and effects of the happening. Similarly, effects of online hate speech has not been same for all the individuals, it depends on the different circumstances that include nature of content, personal affiliations and locations of the persons. This shows that various factors like who, what, when and where determines the impact of online hate speech on different individuals. Hate speech can effects in both way directly or indirectly. In case of immediate hate speech the sufferers get hurt instantly by the comments of others while in the case of indirect hate speech the results are delayed and evaluated by the mediators (Seglow, 2016). Sometimes, the freedom of expression considered as the one of the crucial cause to promote online hate speech. Online use of hate speech for expressing different thoughts and feelings about particular person or group has become very popular on social media and because of this the trend of hate speech on social media is rising. Moreover, due to the rise in online hate speech, freedom of expression and essential rights of human beings has been violated. (Bhandari and Bhatt, 2012). Additionally, online hate speech is frequently adopted in order to encourage aggression against the others groups or individuals (Waltman & Haas, 2011). Target of hate speech doesn't based on only sole identity. It can be based on different factors like religion, ethnicity, disability and gender (Seglow, 2016). In this article, a review of online hate speech based on, gendered, racists and religious, is made (figure 2)



### **Objectives of the study**

Following are the core objectives of the current study:

1. To review the results of different research studies based on online hate speech particularly related to gendered, religious and racists hate speech.
2. To find out the gap in the previous research studies based on online hate speech and also identify the new dimensions for future studies.

### **Methodology**

This study was developed by using the method of systematized literature review (Grant & Booth, 2009). The SALSA a simple and rational framework (Search, Appraisal, Synthesis and Analysis) was used specifically for writing this particular review paper, hate speech on social media. Several research studies were conducted on this topic but it is impossible to include all these studies in this current review paper because of some limitations ( e.g. time span, availability of data etc.).Therefore, only those studies on hate speech were included that revolve around the gendered, racists and religious hate speech. By using the framework of SALSA first step was to search or to identify the relevant researches studies. For this purpose different search engines that includes Google Scholar, OATD, web of science and Scopus were used. Different key words were used for searching relevant studies like hate speech, social media, gender and hate, racists hate speech, online hate speech, religious hate speech etc. After downloading the relevant studies with the help of key words the manual appraisal has been done irrelevant and duplicate studies were excluded from the list and 50 research studies were selected for review that fulfill the certain objectives of the review paper.

### **Findings:**

This section comprises on synthesis review of the research studies that were included in this paper. In other words, those researches related to online hate speech particularly revolve around the gender, religion and racists online hate speech were analyzed and appraised in this section.

These findings have been synthesized as follows:

### **Hate speech and social media**

Lim 2020, explored the gowning dimension of hate speech on social media and indicates that because of technological acceptance and improved communications skills the audience response towards online hate speech is rising. Findings of his study urge mass media researchers to elaborate this phenomenon and ensure the public discourse in terms of societal issues and digitalization of media. While, Malmasi and Zampieri 2017, used classification text method to detect hate speech on social media. Core objective of the study was to differentiate between profanity, hate speech and other type of text on social media . Findings of the research study revealed that there was a very minor difference between profanity and hate speech and it is very difficult to differentiate between both of them. Moreover, the researcher suggests, that for developing clear understanding of difference between the both profanity and hate speech more research work is required in this particular area.

Guiora & Park, 2017, explored the origin of free speech and also explained the ancient foundation of free speech in US by analyzing the Raphel Cohen Almgor's on hate speech. Finding of the study revealed an overview of free speech in America and its limitations. It also proposed a framework for imposing limitations on internet in terms of social media. Likewise, Pohjonen 2019, conducted a research study on online hate speech. The researcher proposed the theory of commentary as a comparative research framework for explaining the concept of hate speech in global digital media environment. Additionally, the findings of the study revealed that hate speech is a complex phenomenon and further more researchers are required for better understanding of hate speech.

Fernandez and Farkas 2021, conducted a study in the context of racism and hate speech on social media by examining 104 articles, the researchers highlights the geographical context and background for studying racism and hate speech. Findings of the study emphasize on the need of more examinations that how media policies and users habits re shape the current situation of hate speech and racisms on social media. Furthermore, Waltman and Mattheis 2017 examined the different ways of hate speech on internet. Findings of the study suggests that internet plays a vital role in expanding of hate speech .Moreover,

novels and music based on hate speech also played a significant role in promoting hate speech movement and sense of violence.

Jammes Bank 2010, conducted a research study on regulating online hate speech. The finding of the study highlights the importance of internet as a mode of communication in this age of digitalization. The researcher signifies that because of the presence of anonymity, technological advancement and affordance of internet the online harassment and hate speech is exceptionally increasing. Similarly, Brown 2018, studied online hate speech with comparison to offline hate speech. Purpose of the current study was to dig out the factors that make online hate speech more complex and easiest at the same time as compared to offline hate speech. The researcher argued that presence of secrecy, and instantaneous nature of internet make online hate speech different form offline hate speech. Similarly, Santos, Amaral and Simoes, 2020 argued that the tremendous development of information communication technologies contributed in the rise of the online bullying and hate speech. The finding of the study indicates the deeper understanding of the phenomenon and highlights the impact of online hate speech in negative behavioral changes among the university students of Portugal.

Rao 2020, explored that use of Facebook and Twitter by political parties at the time of elections in Pakistan. Qualitative content analysis method was used for analyzing the Facebook post and tweets of selected political party members to evaluate the level of media information literacy and hate speech in political campaigns. Findings of the study suggest that political leaders from the different parties used social media platform to promote hate speech for attaining their agenda and goals. Moreover, the study also proposed the formulation of code of ethics for political parties on social media for reducing the hate speech.

### **Religious hate speech**

Religious hate speech is an expression of anti-religious biasness directed at religions including Islam, Hinduism, and Christianity. Hate speech directed at religion is more detrimental than hate speech directed at individuals or group of a people. With the purpose to incite violence, Muslims are defamed and slandered online, with unfavorable opinions, stereotypes, prejudice, personal assaults, and harassment.(Awan and Zempi 2017).

Tornberg and Tornberg, (2016), concluded that Muslims were utilized as an example for other organizations that are involved in conflict, bloodshed, and extremism that too generate a stronger polarization effect, the Internet functions as an amplifier, reflecting and amplifying the words available on the Internet. Awan (2016), studied Facebook in term of promoting hate speech against Muslim community. In his study, he concluded that on the basis of religion, color and faith. Muslims were targeted on some specific Facebook groups and pages. Furthermore, the researcher reported 494 incidents specifically related to hate speech against Muslims.

Rousseau at all (2011), conducted a study to explore the consequences that happened after 9/11 attacks. Findings of the study revealed that the Muslims all over the world face discrimination because of their religious background .Moreover, the results of the study also highlighted the psychological disorders among the Muslims because of excessive hate and injustice. A person's clothing style may reveal some information about him, but it is not comprehensive.

Incidents on Muslims have grown since the terrorist attacks in Paris, Tunisia, and Woolwich. Muslim males were physically brutalized, Mosques were desecrated, Muslim women's headscarves or veils were

removed, and some Muslim properties were demolished as a result of these attacks.(Awan and Zempi, 2016).Likewise, Rudra et al., 2016, conducted a study on twitter and concluded that one should focus on non-contextual/community tweets rather than contextual tweets, which are offensive posts directed at certain religious or ethnic groups. In general, popular individuals and people with more followers will tweet more frequently. Situational tweets receive more retweets than community tweets. Oboler 2013, studied the phenomenon of islamophobia on internet because of the increase in hate speech targeting Muslim community. the researcher explored the many Facebook pages have been created to promote religious hate speech against the Muslims.

### **Gender and Hate speech**

This is a gender-based demonstration, versus a certain gender specifically; females are frequently the targets of such hate speech. There are deliberate acts of violence against females around the globe because of their sex identification. This is also recognized as sexist hate speech, and it is a societal stigma intended at demeaning women and instilling fear and insecurity in them.. Harassment of women has a negative impact on women's personal and professional lives (Simons, 2015). Women and Muslims are the most reviled gender and community on the internet. Scholars who care about society explored that women and members of the Muslim community are not treated equally, and the Internet may be a dangerous place (Barlow and Awan, 2016). One of the reasons why women join terrorist organizations could be because of societal violence and stalking of females. Terrorist organizations are in desperate need of young women to serve as domestic servants and give all of the domestic and sexual services that men require. This tendency separates two sorts of sexual assault against women: forced marriage and the supply of sexual services (Edwards 2017). Moreover, Bullying, whether traditional or digital/cybernetic, is influenced by a person's personality and background .Girls are more prone than boys to engage in cyber bullying (Beckman et al., 2013). Changes in gender patterns are present in both traditional and cyber bullying forms. When more serious incidences of bullying occur, spectators may assist the sufferer, and in certain cases, bystanders may foster bullying among their peers (Bastiaensens et al., 2014). When it comes to bullying, gender has a role in both helping and strengthening behaviors. Children in households with the same number of boys and girls will socialize in separate locations based on gender. Men actively participate in non-community, leadership, and achievement-oriented activities, while women actively participate in social connections to care for others and better communicate (Ridgeway, 2011).

Women are more likely to be exposed to jobs such as teachers, cashiers, nurses, and hairdressers, while men are more likely to be exposed to positions such as computer programmers, bankers, security guards, and factory operators, depending on the occupation (Chua et al., 2016). The fast growth of online media like social networks has undermined the rules intended to oversee and control it, making it more difficult for victims of online crimes to get help. Due to the usage of online social media, feminist activists are often subjected to abuse and harassment (Hardaker and McGlashan, 2015). The employment of a do-it-yourself method to internet harassment, such as the threat of rape against feminist activists, is one of the alternatives (Jane, 2016).

According to Barlow and Awan (2016), social media businesses like, Twitter must take helpful action to curb online exploitation of female and Muslims. Casas et al. (2013) proposed that different pragmatic learning and education curriculums can be utilized as a tools to prevent bullying and cyber bullying abuse based on the association between traditional bullying and cyber bullying based on gender. Beckman et al. (2013), to control cyber bullying collect data from 2989 Swedish student and studied the function of gender-differentiated teenagers who participated in traditional harassment and cyber bullying. Findings revealed that gender based cyber bullying has been increasing among the teenagers.

## **Racist Hate speech**

Racist hate speech is the expressing of an individual's or group's looks. This style of speech is usually given on a global scale. According to Tatum 2001, Racism as a plan includes social and political information, established procedures, as well as personal attitudes and behaviors. Racism is both an integrated ideology and a unfair social traditions, which can be established and reinforced by dominant societal groups. This demonstrates that persons in a group are judged depending on their looks in a given setting or system. (For example, skin color) demonstrate their power over another group/individual. Twitter is an online social media platform that not only allows individuals to express themselves freely, but also promotes hate speech by reposting it (Wok and Wang, 2013). Racist slander on Twitter dropped dramatically when issues were endorsed by white men with a big number of followers (Munger, 2016). More blacks than whites tweeted after young black Michael Brown was killed by the Darren Willson police officer (Chaudhry, 2016). Racism is prevalent on social media, and it is a source of knowledge about it. Racism-related problems can be learned, challenged, and solved in a social media context. Student identities and diverse ways of making and using networks that own and configure social conduct and racism are discussed on social networks (Nakagawa and Arzubaiaga, 2014).

Munger (2016) tracked down and gathered some harassing Twitter users, then utilized "bots" to construct a controlled account to punish bullies. Chaudhry (2016) discovered that the xenophobic group (target group) involved will have extra tweets than the offender unit after examining the tweets following the black fatalities. By stressing more intersectionality, Nakagawa and Arzubaiaga (2014), explored they ways to reduce the hate speech against the racism and the researchers concluded to increase the racial literacy rate for confronting the hate speech based on racism. Moreover, the finding suggests that categorizing Twitter data with specific descriptions, administered by machine learning systems play a significant part. Additionally, Kulaszewicz (2015), conducted a research study on the influence of media in promoting racism. Findings of the study suggest that media play a crucial role in the campaign of racism and it shows media biasness towards specific community. Furthermore, this biasness leads the individuals towards psychological issues, hate and recession

## **Conclusion**

This particular review paper comprised on 50 research studies based on hate speech and social media particularly related with religious, gender and racist hate speech on social media. Findings of the previous research studies were mainly focused on detecting online hate speech and on the framework to study the online hate speech. But very few research studies were conducted on the impacts of online hate speech while, it is very essential to underpin the effects of online hate speech on users specifically, related to religious and gender based online hate speech. Whenever, the users of social media face any kind of hate speech they suffers from stress and depression negative and bad comments on their post make them feel sad. So, this particular area need much more consideration that how online hate speech is effecting the psychological conditions of the users and what are the after effects of hate speech on the individuals. Due to the use of excessive hate speech on social media the concept of cyber terrorism is grabbing the attention of the researcher for future studies.

Hate speech causes emotional pain. It's a common occurrence in everyday life, and it's extremely easy to share with others. In general, people consider a headscarf to be a reflection of one's level of personal integration. This delusion and uncertainty can be prevented by teaching the people about Islamic civilization. To attain this goal, methods such as Islamic culture, values and other activities should be

promoted in collaboration with different ventures of fashions (veil/turban design projects, multicultural displays) should be proposed and implemented. These kinds of activities can be developed further as a counter narrative to tackle religious hate speech particularly against Muslims around the globe. Likewise, online harassment of Muslims is on the rise, so the problem of Islamophobia should be tackled. Online communities can be studied by monitoring their actions, such as the information they publish, reveal, and enjoy for better understanding of religious hate speech. In gender and racist hate speech, the ease with which different genders may access the Internet, the swift advancement of information and communication tools, and the extensive use of social media have made it simpler to describe violence against them. These technological developments are being utilized to abuse females. Cyber-violence against females is regarded as a worldwide issue. The most common form of online gender-based abuse is social media platform .Because hate crimes can lead to discrimination and violence. Legal equality has the potential to reduce violence and information that will help victims to improve their capabilities, discourage culprits, and raise public awareness about cyber law.

Phenomenon of online hate speech is growing rapidly because majority of the users are less educated and they are unfamiliar with the cyber laws. It is very important to conduct future research studied on this dimension to reduce the trend of online hate speech. Likewise, most important reasons for immense increase in the rate of online hate speech is the lack of awareness about the cyber laws and its penalties in case of any violation of rules. Majority, of the online media users violates the rules and they are unaware of it because of lack of information about online harassment and its punishments. Furthermore, there is a need to educate the users about the laws and policies of using online media to avoid any kind of violation of rules and to decline the trend of online hate speech.

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