Chapter 22
Understanding Cyber–Feminism and Its Roles in the Digital Space

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ABSTRACT

Cyber-feminism is a concept that has emerged in response to the increasing use of technology and the internet in our daily lives. At its core, cyber-feminism is about challenging the gender biases that exist in the technology industry and ensuring that women have equal access to technology and digital spaces. The chapter covers the history of cyber-feminism, including key thinkers and activists who have contributed to its development. The chapter discusses strategies for staying safe online, including the importance of digital literacy and education. This chapter explores the role of cyber-feminism in the digital space through a case study approach. Specifically, it examines the impact of the #MeToo Movement, the Women's March, and the story of Malala Yousafzai. By highlighting the successes and challenges of cyber-feminist movements, this chapter offers insights into how we can work towards a more inclusive and feminist digital future.

SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the digital space has become an integral part of our daily lives, shaping how we interact with each other, access information, and conduct business. With the growth of digital technology, the concept of cyber-feminism has emerged, and it has become increasingly relevant in our society today. Cyber-feminism is a term that refers to the intersection of feminism and digital technology, and it focuses on how women can use digital technology to promote gender equality and challenge patriarchy (Starcevic & Aboujaoude, 2015). According to Wall (Wall & David S., 2005, p. 79), *"crimes that are mediated by networked computers and not just related to computers"* are considered to be cybercrimes. Computer viruses, Internet fraud or scams, identity theft, stock manipulation or securities fraud, cyber-stalking

or cyber-harassment, and computer hacking are all examples of cybercrime. In 2011, one third of the world's population, or about 2.3 billion people, had access to the internet, and by 2018 that number had increased to 4 billion (Kemp, 2018). Additionally, 45% of these internet users are under the age of 25, and 60% of them are from developing nations (Kshetri, 2010). Cybercrime has become more prevalent in developing economies as a result of the internet's quick spread and the digitalization of commercial activity and hence underscores the urgency to address the impact of cybercrime. Some estimates claim that in recent years, the global cybercrime sector has been generating US$1 trillion annually (Kshetri, 2010). International discourses have changed as a result of the significant roles that developing world-based criminals are playing in the criminal value chain of the cyberworld. According to Kaspersky Labs (Kshetri, 2010), developing nations produced seven of the top ten countries for producing trojans meant to steal passwords in 2009, accounting for 92% of all such trojans globally. The utilization of hardware and software, broadband connections, the pool of cybercriminal expertise, the availability of employment prospects, and the spread of security products are all economic elements that are changing in developing nations (Al-Shalan, 2006). The statistics on the increasing number of internet users, particularly in developing nations, highlights the growing vulnerability of women to cybercrime. As more women gain access to the digital space, there is a higher likelihood of them encountering cyber threats, making it imperative to address gender-specific risks and ensure the protection of women in the online environment.

This chapter explores cyber-feminism's role in the digital space, promoting women's empowerment, security, and gender equality. It focus on issues like online harassment, cyber-bullying, and the gender gap in digital skills. Strategies for women's online safety and using digital technology for advocacy are examined. The chapter covers cyber-feminism's history, online activism, and its intersection with cyber-security and privacy. It highlights the impact of social media on promoting positive change and managing online communities. This chapter aims to empower women in the digital world through cyber-feminism.

Defining Cyber-Feminism

Cyber-feminism is a term that has emerged in recent years to describe the intersection of feminism and digital technology. It is rooted in the belief that the digital world can be a space for women to challenge patriarchy, advocate for their rights, and promote gender equality. As stated by (Wilkinson & Kitzinger, 2013), "cyber-feminism is a movement that recognizes the role of digital technology in shaping gender identities and seeks to use this technology to empower women and challenge traditional gender roles". Cyber-feminism encompasses a range of practices, from online activism and advocacy to digital storytelling and social media campaigns. According to (Wajcman, 2006), "cyber-feminism involves the use of digital technology to challenge patriarchal structures and promote social change". Cyber-feminists seek to create a more inclusive and equitable digital space, one that is free from harassment and discrimination, and that allows women to fully participate in public discourse. Through the lens of cyber-feminism, we can explore issues such as online harassment, cyber-bullying, and the gender gap in digital skills and access, and work towards creating a more just and equitable digital world.

In addition, cyber-feminism is also concerned with issues of privacy and security in the digital space. As highlighted by (Schwarz et al., 2020), "cyber-feminism acknowledges the risks that women face in the digital world, including online harassment, stalking, and doxing, and seeks to empower women to navigate these threats safely and confidently". Cyber-feminists recognize that the digital space can be a double-edged sword, offering opportunities for empowerment and advocacy, but also presenting risks and challenges for women's safety and well-being. Therefore, they advocate for the development of

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