EDICIONES
COMPLUTENSE

A Picture is worth a Thousand Words: A Study on Millennial Women's Curation of Self on Facebook Profile Pictures

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Abstract. The human-computer interaction works in a Mixed Realty (MR), and the Facebook Profile Picture is one such function of MR (Rajan, 2018). Facebook users engage with profile pictures, which is the first component of a user's Facebook profile. This study shows that millennial women (between the ages of 18 and 25) curate and commodify (Kasch, 2013) their Facebook self-presentations. The aim of these millennial women is to have a unique digital identity by consciously showcasing elements like attractiveness, lifestyle, and clothing through profile pictures. Images are often used for gaining a sense of celebrity status evoked through user's interactions (likes, comments, etc.) with these images. In such social media spaces, women feel pressured to represent themselves as 'hot' or 'sexy' in order to gain attention for the representation of self.

Women are also conscious that their images evoke a range of affect amongst their users. This includes feelings of sexual arousal and the users' attempt to communicate this through sexually explicit messages (verbal/visual). Such affect, informed by patriarchy, predetermines the patterns of self-presentation and perception of female bodies (Bordo, 1993). This study uses a combination of in-depth, qualitative interviews and self-assessment survey questionnaires to understand the curation behind the profile picture of millennial women in Bangalore. This study conducted survey of 117 millennial women between 18 and 25 years of age in Bangalore. This paper studies the process behind women's choices of images, the purposes they are consciously aimed at, and the affect-inducing power of engagement anticipated with these images. A modified version of Goffman's (1976) framework of *Gendered Advertisements* is used to analyze millennial women's Facebook profile pictures. This study observed that women apply elaborate processes to achieve the 'perfect' profile picture. The profile picture serves multiple purpose for the user including the assertion of one's class, commodification of the self and curating the self based on societal expectations. These millennial women were often aware that these images are embedded in patriarchy, and evoke affective response from their users.

Keywords: Self Curation; Social Media; Women Representation; Facebook; Profile Picture; Affective Communication

[es] Una imagen vale más que mil palabras. Estudio sobre la autocuración de las mujeres millenials en las imágenes de perfil de Facebook

Resumen. La interacción humano-computadora funciona en una propiedad mixta (MR), y la imagen de perfil de Facebook es una de esas funciones de la MR (Rajan, 2018). Los usuarios de Facebook interactúan con las imágenes de perfil ya que son el primer componente del perfil de Facebook de un usuario. Este estudio muestra que las mujeres *millenials* (entre las edades de 18 y 25 años) cuidan y mercantilizan (Kasch, 2013) sus propias presentaciones en Facebook. El objetivo de las *millenials* es tener una identidad digital única mostrando conscientemente elementos como el atractivo, el estilo de vida y la ropa a través de imágenes de perfil. Las imágenes que utilizan buscan obtener, a menudo, una

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sensación de estado de celebridad evocado a través de las interacciones con los usuarios (me gustas, comentarios, etc.) con estas imágenes.
Por otro lado, también son conscientes de que sus imágenes evocan una variedad de efectos entre sus usuarios. Esto incluye sentimientos de excitación sexual y el intento de otros usuarios de comunicar dicha excitación a través de mensajes sexualmente explícitos (verbales / visuales). Tal afecto, propiciado por el patriarcado, predetermina los patrones de auto-presentación y percepción de los cuerpos femeninos (Bordo, 1993). Este estudio utiliza una combinación de entrevistas cualitativas en profundidad y cuestionarios de encuestas de autoevaluación para comprender la curación detrás de la imagen del perfil de mujeres *millenials* en Bangalore (India). Este estudio realizó una encuesta a 117 mujeres *millenials* de entre 18 y 25 años de edad. Este artículo estudia el proceso detrás de la elección de determinadas imágenes de las mujeres, los propósitos a los que están dirigidos conscientemente y el poder de implicación afectiva del compromiso anticipado con estas imágenes. Se utiliza una versión modificada del framing de Goffman (1976) de los Anuncios de Género para analizar las fotos de los perfiles de Facebook de mujeres milenarias. Este estudio observó que las mujeres aplican procesos elaborados para lograr la imagen de perfil "perfecta". La imagen de perfil tiene múltiples propósitos para el usuario, incluida la auto-afirmación de clase, la mercantilización del yo y la elección del yo en "redes sociales" en función de las expectativas de la sociedad. Estas *millenials* solían ser conscientes de que estas imágenes están incrustadas en una sociedad patriarcal y evocan respuestas afectivo-sexuales en otros usuarios.
Palabras clave: Autocuración; redes sociales; Representación de la mujer; Facebook; Foto de perfil; Comunicacion afectiva

Contents: Introduction. Theoretical Background. Curation and Commodification of Self. Mixed Realities and Affect. Female Body Relations. Profile Picture and Identity. Methodology. Discussion. Conclusion.

Introduction

Attitudes to the growth and use of Facebook have evolved, from broadly positive conceptions of their role as instruments or sites of democratic exchange to less favourable assessments that identify their part in the reproduction of an inequitable and fractious social order. In recent years, greater emphasis has been placed on the 'consumer-citizen' (Needham, 2003; Clarke and Newman, 2007), who are encouraged to partner with the 'platform capitalists' (Srnicek, 2016) and contribute towards creating a unique way of 'seeing' (Hui, 2016). This form of seeing assists in curating a representation of self online that meets the capitalist notion of representing self, which can be argued as the commodified self. This seeing of self exists in a performance-driven and information-saturated condition, which according to Mukařovský (2015) develops an aesthetic function that emphasizes on gesture and body language in accordance to fashion in that particular period of time. This aesthetic function expands into the social media sphere, especially with the curation of one's profile picture (Mukařovský, 2015). Such curation done by women as part of 'seeing' themselves on their profile pictures works across different cultural customs and practices, authority structures, hetero-patriarchal and hetero-normative regimes at local, national and international and also at everyday micro levels.

Here, as part of 'seeing', Facebook is both facilitating and regulating expressions of human agency, as people attempt to build networks of like-minded individuals, establish forms of intimacy, and intervene in shaping each others' representation.

The promotion of the 'self' as a cultured, capable, autonomous, attractive and yet connected being requires the careful maintenance of online profile pictures and the constant revision of the same. In addition, those driven by the goal of professional attainment, try to draw attention to their profile picture that portrays their selves as possessing 'marketable' skills and abilities. Yet, if the price of entry to this new sphere of influence is self-exposure through visuals, then these selves are composed of elements that are, in part, specifically chosen in anticipation of the scrutiny that they will receive (not only from the 'weak ties' established between fair-weather Facebook friends but also from potential recruiters and family relatives as well). Such potential for scrutiny can bring anxiety, when the user has their periodic absence from digital media (Hui, 2016). This would be popularly termed as FOMO (Fear of Missing Out). Here, one's inability to decipher how many 'likes' or reactions a profile picture would collect contributes to their anxiety.

This anxiety is part of the branding that one may receive, especially with interactions that start through judgment of ones' profile picture (Sampson, Ellis and Maddison, 2018). Such judgments are consequential for the social media users, as they work towards forming and maintaining virtual community relationships by creating a distinct digital identity on Facebook. Here, the use of self-presentational tools like posts, images, profile pictures, and Facebook stories assist in shaping a distinct digital identity. This digital identity, also known as an avatar, refers to a digital version of one's identity in the real environment. Here, the real environment refers to the environment that a person perceives without any technological aid, which is the location where they were standing. Profile pictures, therefore, are digital representations of the body, and they fall within the realm of Mixed Realities (MR) (Milgram & Kishino, 1994). Such representation involves elaborate processes, where individuals, specifically women, employ various methods to advance a unique identity. This involves focus on specific postures, expressions, clothing, and assertions of class, amongst other representations. In addition, parameters like representation of fitness are considered, where one uses processes like photo-editing to enhance certain parts and conceal others. This is in the spirit of the 'cyborg', which Haraway (2006) describes as the physical body to which various technological processes may be applied. Here, ideas of fitness in the female representational body are often associated with such characteristics as weakness, subservience, and grooming as opposed to the traditional masculine identity of strength and achievements (Markula, 2006). Such duality of definition is embedded within the patriarchal order. This article argues that in their Facebook self-presentations, millennial women often perpetuate this traditional duality despite their belief that their profile pictures transcend patriarchal norms. Here, women often claim that the usage of certain images (containing skin-exposure, etc.) are empowering and that they promote a positive body image. Yet such images may instead contribute to the objectification of the body and subscription to the male gaze (Mulvey, 1975). Here, Facebook profile pictures are tools that are consciously used by members to attain goals derived from users' immersion within digital life.

While asserting distinct digital identities, women are often aware that their profile pictures evoke affective responses from their users (Mouzinho, 2017). Here, users pertain to the women's friends and other contacts that she seeks to befriend. These users may experience feelings of sexual arousal, shame upon such arousal, and the attempt to curb such feelings. The process behind the female body's self-presenta-

tion through profile pictures may involve a conscious effort to cater to the affect-evoking capability of these images. This can happen due to high levels of interactivity with profile picture, which means high engagement and immersion. This is a perceptual, cognitive, and emotional form of immersion. Within Ludology or Game Studies, immersion refers to the removal of avatars from the game experience and allowing an individual to engage in a first-person perspective (Nacke & Lindley, 2009). Further, Brown and Cairns (2004) address the concept of total immersion as synonymous with the concept of presence. Here a person is subject to feelings of empathy and atmosphere within the gaming environment (Brown & Cairns, 2004). This immersion or presence can be extended beyond gaming to one's engagement within social media and the emotions of presence that accompany it. This is applicable to the Facebook experience, where immersive presence is accompanied by periods of absence. This article acknowledges the existence of physical and immersive absence of the user. Physical absence indicates the absence of users' physical bodies in self-presentations, which is compensated through the Facebook profile picture. Immersive absence indicates the lack of first-person engagement, for instance, when a user is offline or unavailable to attend to the profile picture at a given point. While physical absence is given, immersive absence may be experienced in periodic bouts. The term absence is used to indicate both.

Facebook profile pictures, then, may serve as affective triggers during periods of absence, often in order to compensate for the anxiety (including FOMO). The profile picture, then, compensates on two levels (Salim ,Rahardjo, Tanaya, Qurani, 2017). On one hand, it may reduce the degree of 'FOMO' experienced by encouraging users to keep their profile relevant during periods of immersive absence. On the other hand, the self-presentation of users' bodies in profile pictures evokes affect amongst the users. Images trigger affect despite the absence of the user. Hence, the study proposes that Facebook users' profile pictures are aimed at asserting digital identities and inducing affect amongst viewers in the users' absence. This paper studies the process behind women's selection of profile pictures, the purpose of the self curated profile pictures, and the affect-inducing power of engagement associated with these images.

Further, a survey conducted by Pew Research Center found that women (aged 18 to 35) were primary users that influenced Facebook usage (Hampton, Goulet, Rainie & Purcell, 2011). Here, 18% of women as compared to 11% of men update their Facebook status at least once a day, and 20% women like content several times a day as opposed to 9% of men (Hampton, Goulet, Rainie & Purcell, 2011). Another study by Strano (2008) demonstrated that women tend to change their profile picture more often than men. This study sample sought participation from millennial women to fill out a questionnaire developed with the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule.

Within this backdrop, the study seeks to answer the following questions:

1) How do millennial women feel about their curated Facebook profile picture as a tool to communicate a distinct digital identity?
2) Is the image curated to evoke affect amongst their targeted users?

Theoretical Background

Curation and Commodification of Self

Facebook users consciously represent digital identities by curating and commodifying individual lives. Kasch's (2013) study with college students' curation of self and others on Facebook portrayed that there are two ways of writing one's lifestyle onto social media. One's life is either curated or commodified. Curation refers to an ongoing digital process of organizing, assembling and editing one's images, text etc., in order to construct a self-presentation that exists in the digital sphere (Facebook) but pushes users to experience emotions as if the physical body was present (Kasch, 2013). Here, Waterworth, Waterworth, Mantovani and Riva (2010) suggest that in Virtual Reality (VR), individuals often encounter second-person representations of self and others, including images that evoke feelings of presence. This indicates continuity between the body, its physical self-presentation and it's representation on Facebook.

One's attempt to control their images on Facebook leads to the anxieties and the pleasures of commodification. Commodification refers to the amplification of the curated self-presentation and the assertion of identity as capital (Kasch, 2013). Digital identity, here, is used as capital that would allow one to express ideas of socioeconomic and cultural status, securing the user a unique, popular position. This is usually indicated by the number of friends, likes, positive reactions, positive comments, etc. that their Facebook profile collects. Here, Kasch (2013) suggests that the commodified self is used to make one's digital curation unique and enable it to stand out so that it is consumed and redistributed by Facebook friends and peers. Facebook profile pictures allow for such curation and commodification and, hence, evoke affect (elaborated below). Users generally use parameters like representation of socioeconomic status, sexual attractiveness, adherence to fashion trends, fitness etc., to assemble curations and commodifications of one's lifestyle (Bengtsson and Johansson, 2016).

Mixed Realities and Affect

Facebook allows for an immersive experience characterised by curation and commodification of self-presentations that are embedded within Mixed Realities (MR). For Milgram and Kishino (1994), MR are subject to a virtuality continuum where the real environment and the virtual environment occupy polar opposite positions. The real environment consists of real, tangible, embodied objects that are removed from any virtual influence. For instance, the human body, even when infused with technology (Fitbit, Google glasses, implanted microchips) would constitute a real object, whereas an image of the body would fall within the realm of MR. A simulated body would constitute Virtual Reality. An intermingling of both the virtual and the real indicate Mixed Realities (MR). Here, real objects have actual existence and may be sampled or re-synthesised for digital representation while virtual objects are digitally simulated (Milgram & Kishino, 1994). Such synthesis involves the production, editing, and uploading of the body's digital image.

MR and Facebook profile pictures involve the concept of bodies and the affective dimension of embodiment. While consolidating the theoretical paradigms on affect, Leys (2011) found that the affective dimension is a self-governing system (like the circulatory system) within the body that lies below the threshold of consciousness, meaning, signification, cognition, or intention (Leys, 2011). Individuals experiencing affect lack a comprehension of it and its function as informing emotions. Leys (2011) further explains this by asserting that for affect theorists like Deleuze and Massumi (2002), mediated tools (visual images, literature, mass media, political campaigns, etc.) serve to communicate chemical messengers prior to language, meaning, or ideology. For Hansen (2006), the affective dimension of the body exists prior to its sensory understanding and the affective is the frame through which an articulation of the body in the senses is enabled (Cecchetto, 2011). Further, the distinction between the real and the virtual is negated in order to allow for all realities to be recognized as MR (Hansen, 2006). Hence, the affective dimension is considered prior even to the perceived virtual, which is simply an extension of some form of embodiment (Cecchetto, 2011). Recently, works surrounding social media and affect has focused on the emotional contagion spread on social networking sites (SNS) such as Facebook (Sampson, 2012; Grusin, 2010; Ellis and Tucker, 2015). The experience of affect on SNS carries a potential to override the conscious cognitive decision-making processes (Norman, 2005). However, the contemporary *modus operandi* of SNS deals with curation-based habits of interaction on SNS. Here, users display addictive checking of notifications that combines with their relentless anxious desire to 'like' and to be 'liked' in reciprocation (Sampson, Ellis and Maddison, 2018). This study expands on the affect induced contagion and its curation. Here, the affective first translates one's physical experiences with the female body and its politics in the real environment, and subsequently allows for sensory comprehension of the images of women that one encounters on Facebook.

Female Body Relations

Women curate and commodify Facebook self-presentations keeping the affect-inducing effect of the profile pictures in mind. This indicates a usage of the female body, its postures and ornamental fashion. Bordo (1993) uses a Foucauldian model to suggest a dual recognition of the status of men and women within the realm of politics of the body. The model acknowledges the enmeshment of men within a patriarchy that may have unduly contributed to their status as 'enemies' (Bordo, 1993). Here, men have internalised practices (such as the objectification of the female body). Yet they also hold a higher stake in perpetuating the institutions within which they have historically occupied dominant positions relative to women (Bordo, 1993). Within these institutions, women willingly adhere to cultural practices that uphold patriarchy through devices like fashion and surgical enhancement of bodies, including silicone breast implants (Bordo, 1993). Here, Mulvey (1975) applies the concept of male gaze to films and suggests that it is an active tool that man uses to apply his obsessions and fantasies onto the silent, passive image of the woman. This image is attributed qualities of passivity and exhibition, where appearance is coded to visually and erotically influence the user (Mulvey, 1975). Women's exhibitionist tendencies (obsession with dress and style) indicate a passive representation of

self-embeddedness in patriarchal norms (Mulvey, 1975). This is applicable to the profile picture that, despite indicating the illusion of women's agency in selection and display, could still be a result of their adherence to the patriarchal order. The representation of male and female bodies in profile pictures is perceived subject to the affect associated with such patriarchy.

This affect further influences the sensory system to react, allowing for presence to be felt by the user of the profile picture despite the physical absence of the body. For instance, a study by Walther, Van Der Heide, Kim, Westerman, and Tong (2008) studied the perception of physical attractiveness based on Facebook posts and images that implied sexual conduct and binge-drinking behaviour. The study found that men's profiles that showed high instances of both were rated as more physically attractive compared to women's, which were rated less attractive if perceived as indulging in both. Hence, such traditionally rooted perceptions may be applicable to the Facebook body (Walther, Van Der Heide, Kim, Westerman, & Tong, 2008).

Profile Picture and Identity

Facebook affords an autobiography characterised by users' curations, informed by their identities as networked selves and their routine interactions with Facebook's algorithms (McNeill, 2012). Facebook profile pictures are the first self-presentational tools consciously used to curate an identity that serves certain goals. This involves women's need to be perceived by others as 'hot', 'sexy', and attractive. This identity represented through the profile picture has the ability to induce affect in users. Images of other bodies on social media evoke affect that is felt through intensities (shiver or gut feeling). Here, mediated images are experienced through bodies, and in the projection of such a 'self', only physical aspects such as fitness regimes and cosmetic surgery are considered (Featherstone, 2010). Instead, in order to produce bodies that make others stop and take notice, the affective dimension (posture, the look etc.) must also be activated (Featherstone, 2010). This allows the body to create a positive affective charge in other bodies, so that one achieves the identity of being charismatic (Featherstone, 2010). Facebook profile pictures often involve women employing their bodies to aspire towards this charismatic identity.

Further, Dimulescu (2015) acknowledges that traditional feminine roles have outgrown those of motherhood and of service to those of reclamation and free expression of sexuality, ability to choose what to wear etc. Yet women are guided by the objectification and sexualisation of their bodies to cater to an economically driven consumer culture (Dimulescu, 2015). Such a consumer culture, in turn, uses digital representations of women's bodies to perpetuate femininity and, hence, patriarchal norms. (Goffman, 1976, p. 8). All of these contribute to women's self-presentations and digital identity.

Methodology

This is an explorative study which proposes that millennial women consciously use their Facebook profile pictures to evoke affect amongst their targeted users. The research design employed seeks to answer the questions through two methods of data collection: questionnaires and in-depth interviews. Using questionnaires allows

the collection of a large amount of data from a sample, to understand the population (Cresswell, 2003). Further, this method allows for standardization of data, which allows easy comparisons. The set of questions assist in gathering vital facts pertaining to, their beliefs, opinions, attitudes, motivations and behaviour (Kerlinger & Lee, 2000). Each person (respondent) is subject to respond to the same set of questions in a predetermined order. (Kerlinger & Lee, 2000; Cresswell, 2003). The second method used in the study is in-depth interview, which assists in grounding descriptions of individuals and events in their natural setting. Hence, interviewing assists in broadening the scope of understanding an investigated phenomena, since it is a more naturalistic and less structured data collection tool (Alshenqeeti, 2014)

Using these tools, the study examines millennial women's process of taking, selecting and uploading their profile picture. It enquired about their experiences of self curation prior to posting and after having uploaded the profile picture, and their satisfaction towards the response it received from their users. This study conducted a survey of 117 participants and 34 in-depth interviews of millennial women between the age of 18 and 25. A majority of the participants were between 18 and 22 and were pursuing their undergraduate program in a university.

The participants were selected using purposive sampling technique and were predominately collected using snowball sampling technique. The study sought to gain insight into the elaborate processes and emotions that women employ behind the construction of their profile picture. The survey examined the assumed effect that the users believe their profile picture has on their audience. This is with their carefully curated choice of clothing, display of skin, postures, presentation of status, fitness, sexual availability, and their experience of unwanted sexual advances they received through their Facebook profile picture.

Elaborate processes are applied behind this image to curate and commodify the female body (Kasch, 2013). This contributes to women's aims at a unique self-presentation on Facebook. The study uses inferential and descriptive statistics. Descriptive statistics has been used to summarise the data collected to explore the interaction that users have with their Facebook profile picture. The statistics for Skewness and Kurtosis emphasize on a normal distribution that has both skewness and kurtosis values equal to zero (Field, 2009; Malhotra & Birks, 2007); for statistical purposes, skewness and kurtosis values between -2 to +2 is acceptable (George & Mallery, 2010). This would further help in bringing out trends and patterns if any. The results would be analyzed as visual displays through graphs and charts of the data.

The study uses the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) to generate the momentary reaction that people feel towards their Facebook profile picture (Watson, Clark, and Tellegan, 1988). The scale consists of a series of words that describe different feelings and emotions. The participants need to select, using a five-point Likert scale, their feeling that they attribute to that particular word at that present moment (Watson et al., 1988). This can be categorised into feelings of positive and negative affect prior to posting their profile picture and after uploading their profile picture. Pearsons Product Moment Correlation was computed to understand the nature of the relationship between the positive affect reported by the participants before and after posting their Facebook profile picture, and the relationship between the negative affect reported by the participants before and after posting their Facebook profile picture (Field, 2009).

Discussion

Quantitative analysis was used to analyze the results obtained in this research. Descriptive statistics was made use of for the preliminary analysis. As represented in Graph 1.1, half the participants changed their profile picture once a year. However, 10% changed it every few weeks, with 1% changing it daily. The digital identity, which the participants emphasize through their profile picture is static to a large extent. This portrays the satisfaction they feel towards their digitally curated selves. It also shows that their objectives online are being met by their first self-representational tool of the profile picture. Only a small percentage (15 %) seeks to alter their profile picture on a weekly and monthly basis. Here, the responses or inactivity in encounters with the image as well as the discontent one feels towards the posed image, reduces their affective connection to the image and its perceived affect on their users. This could be one among a few factors that needs to be explored further.

Graph 1.1.
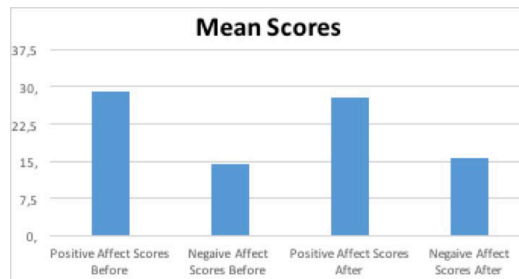
Moreover, the understanding of affect in this study is the process of emotionally feeling a positive or negative mood. The PANAS scale is used for understanding the positive and negative affect between 10 and 50 points. The participants were asked to read each item and then select how much they feel about those words from the scale. The objective was to see the correlations of variable strength between positive and negative affect. The normality of the obtained data was established using skewness and kurtosis, which was between +2 and -2 (George & Mallery, 2010). As reflected in the table below:

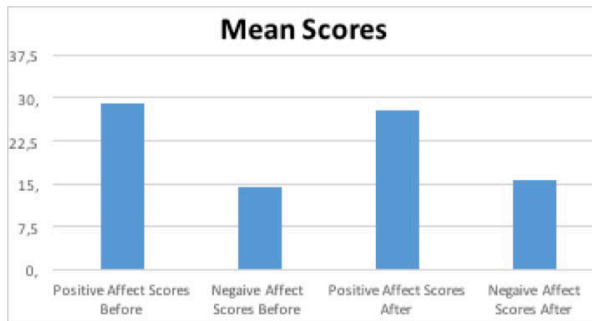| Affect Scores from Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) (Watson et al., 1988)	Positive Affect Score Before Posting	Negative Affect Score Before Posting	Positive Affect Score After Posting	Negative Affect Score After Posting
SKEWNESS	-0.03	1.45	-0.02	1.32
KURTOSIS	-0.41	1.96	-0.47	.072

Table 1. Correlations between positive and negative

The skewness and kurtosis values are smaller for negative affect as compared to the values of positive affect. The skewness and kurtosis values are negative for posi-

tive affect and positive for negative affect. The negative affect data is more clustered towards the left and vice versa for the positive affect's data.

In reference to the calculated mean of the positive and negative affect with Graph 1.2, it was observed that, the positive affect scores before posting the profile picture is marginally higher than the positive affect score later. This indicates that the participants felt more positive towards their image prior to posting, as compared to after. Similarly, they had lower scores representing lower negative affect before posting as compared to after. Here, the marginal increase in negative affect scores show that interactions with the image post posting was marginally more negative.
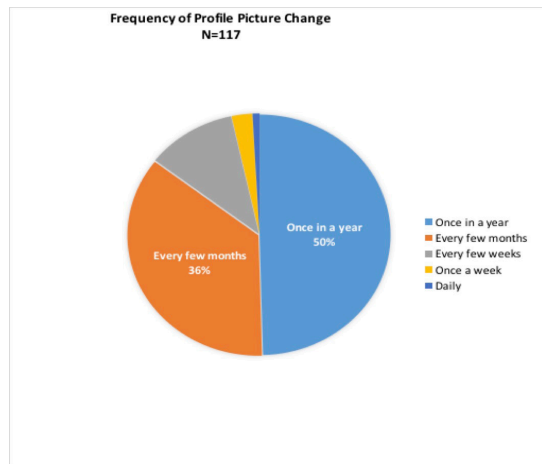
Graph 1.2.

It was found that there was strong positive affect co-relation between before posting and after posting. The correlation value for positive affect score is 0.84 and negative affects score is 0.83. Graph 1.3 and 1.4 both show a strong positive linear relationship. Graph 1.3 indicates the scatter plot representing the relationship between the negative affect score before and after posting a profile picture. Graph 1.4 indicates the scatter plot representing the relationship between the positive affect score before and after posting a profile picture. This means the positive and negative affect experienced by the participants, prior to posting the profile picture is consistent with the affect experienced after.

Graph 1.3.
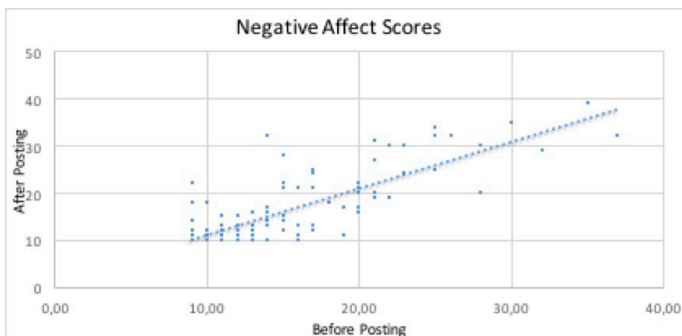
The descriptive stats also provide an understanding about how the participants felt about their self representation towards their profile picture. This explored the self-commodifying aspects that collaborated with the patriarchal coding of the vi-

Graph 1.4.

Frequency of Profile Picture Change
N=117

- Once in a year
- Every few months
- Every few weeks
- Once a week
- Daily

Once in a year 50%
Every few months 36%

suals. The women's exhibitionist tendencies aligned with their adherence to the patriarchal order. The adjectives used were derived from Goffman's category of gendered advertisement, which emphasizes on women exhibiting a culturally constructed and defined idea of femininity (Goffman 1976; Jha, Raj & Gangwar, 2017). The data collected along this parameter (Graph 1.5) showed that 47% of the population strongly agrees that their profile pictures are 'pretty'. This is the highest percentage of number of participants who strongly agree that their image is 'pretty'. The next highest percentage is for the category of their image being 'classy' (Graph 1.5). The data shows that the participants want to be associated closely to a representation of self, which can be categorised as being Pretty, Classy and Attractive. Moreover, they do not want to be associated with words that categorize them as Trashy, Sexy and Hot.

Graph 1.5.

Positive Affect Scores

Nonetheless, the data also engages with participants' profile picture and its interactions with the male gaze. The affective impact of the profile picture and the sexual objectification of the profile pictures show the affective arousal of the user based on interaction with the images. In Lindner's (2004) definition of objectification, representations suggest that the primary purpose of the body is to be looked at. The parti-

cipants are aware of the objectification of their own bodies (Graph 1.6). Here, around 36% of the sample population does not mind that their profile picture is eliciting sexual arousal from their users. The data also show 18% of the millennial women consciously choose profile pictures that can sexually attract their users (Graph 1.6). However, a large percentage (68%) also disagree with the statement that their profile picture is evoking sexual arousal (Graph 1.6). This is keeping in line with their perception regarding the objective that their profile picture should be identified as being 'pretty' and 'classy'.

Graph 1.6.
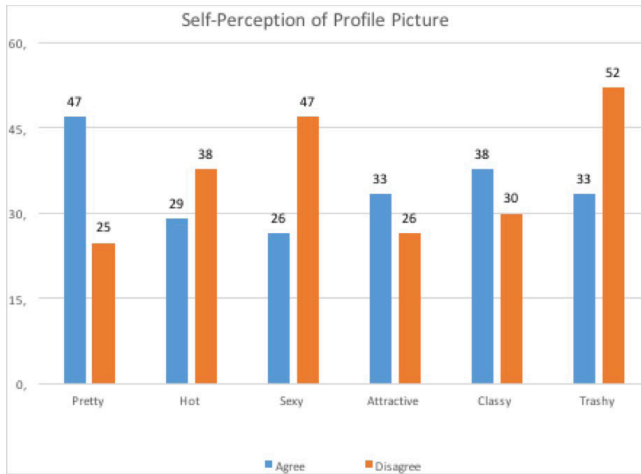
This sexual arousal and interaction that occurs at times translates into obscene messages received by women in reference to their profile picture. Obscene for this study was operationalised as content that contains sexual matter that challenges one's idea of decency or morality. The participants stated that 95% of such messages they received were from men (Graph 1.7). These messages show the affective resonance
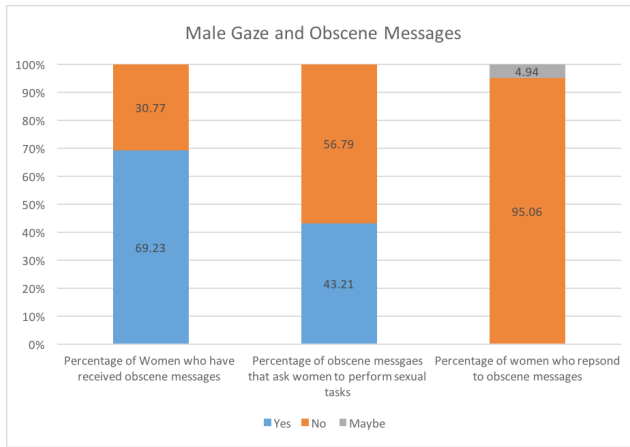
Graph 1.7.
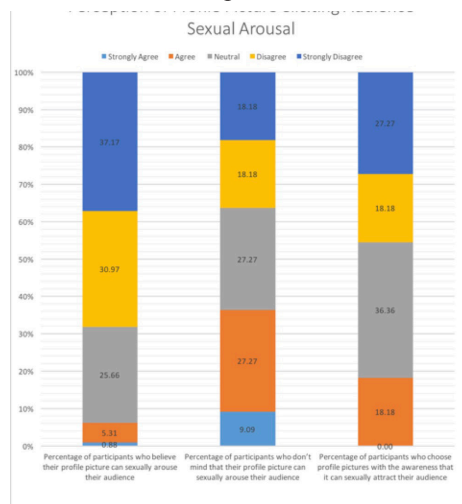
felt by the male gaze and their response to it. Here, Clough (2008) points out to Massumi's (2002) usage of 'memory without content' as an internalised bodily memory that influences resultant emotions and actions. In this way, women's self-presentations of their bodies on Facebook evoke affect amongst users who are encouraged to communicate and leave traces of this affect through their reactions and messages. The sample population depicted that 69% of the women have received such obscene messages and 43% of these messages asked the women participants to perform sexual tasks for their gaze (Graph 1.8). When asked if the participants respond to such messages, it was seen that 95% of the millennial women remain silent and do not respond to such messages. The patriarchal framework of power imbalance encourages women to stay silent, these messages are also online harassment that might badger women into silence online by sexualising, belittling and humiliating them. A participant stated in the comment section, "My Facebook images have received various messages including things like 'show me your panties'. Now I avoid wearing anything provocative" (Participant 15, survey comment, 22 April, 2018).
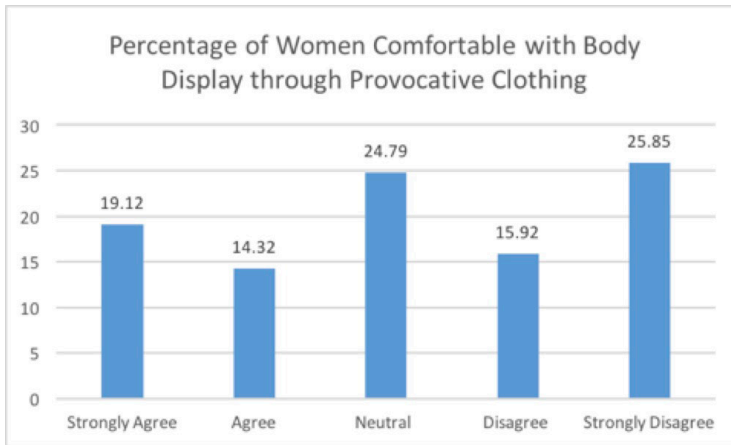
Graph 1.8.
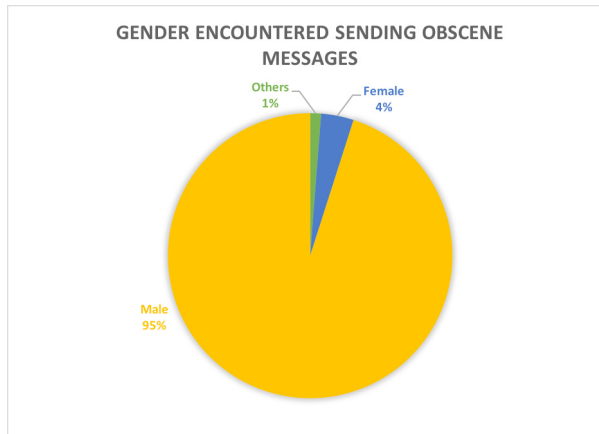
It was felt that the participants devoted significant thought to clothing. The questions for clothing engaged with representing attractiveness. The participants were aware that clothing choices contributed to their objectification. This notion was communicated using the phrase of 'provocative clothing'. Here, provocation is implied to be sexual in nature through body display (legs, cleavage, shoulders etc.) and revealing clothes like bathing suits, mini-skirts, translucent apparel, body-hugging clothes, shorts and the like, which specify a degree of nudity (Jha, Raj & Gangwar, 2017). The data showed that 33% of the participants were comfortable with wearing clothes that they believed to be provocative in its orientation, but a large majority (41%) stated that they were uncomfortable with body display (Graph 1.9). Here, the majority avoids certain clothes that are considered provocative. This happens on two levels of negativity. Firstly, obscene or unpleasant Facebook messages from men (who are not their target users) they have encountered push them to self-censor their images as well as the clothes. Secondly, these clothes are avoided to cater to the needs of their family and elders within the Facebook community, who act as moral vigilantes (Graph 2.0).
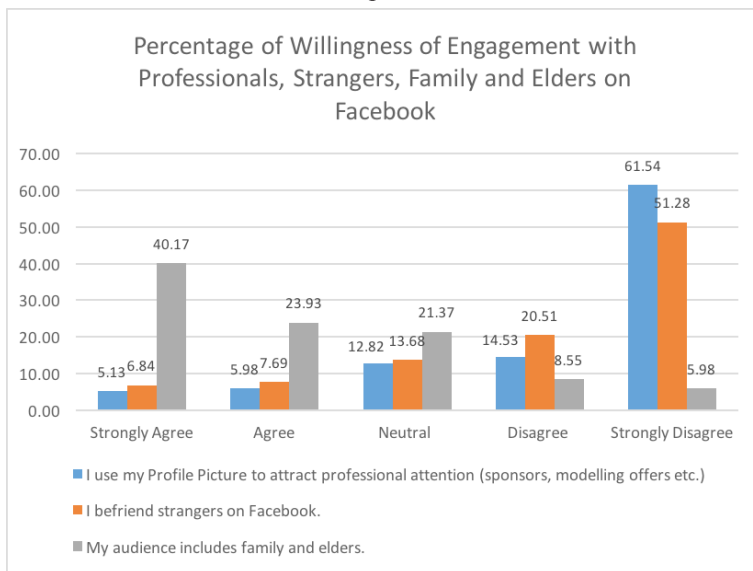
Graph 1.9.

Male Gaze and Obscene Messages

| Yes | No | Maybe |

Graph 2.0.

Percentage of Women Comfortable with Body Display through Provocative Clothing

The women in the study often modify their commodified self-presentations depending on the restrictions that their Facebook community imposes. This community is inclusive of family and elders therefore family's honour and image prevent them from expressing themselves, as they would otherwise have in the absence of these restrictions. Family honour refers to a family's needs to uphold certain religious, patriarchal or community norms, often by directing the behaviour (dress, relationships etc.) of community members, specifically women. With reference to the Graph 2.0, it can be observed that 62% and 51% of the participants strongly disagree that they use their Facebook profile pictures to attract professional attention and befriend strangers on Facebook respectively. It can also be seen that 5.98% of the population strongly disagrees with the statement because their users includes family members. A lot of interaction on Facebook is based on the concept of class. Class, here, refers to a group within the user's Facebook community that possesses a certain high socio-economic status, and cultural awareness. These are determined by the people, the users befriend and those that they hope to attract for their specific needs. Therefore,

the female body's image, enhanced by clothes, postures, makeup, lighting, aesthetics etc., are used to determine high-class standards that they want to be associated with. This aspiration can be reflected by their want to be represented as pretty and classy and at the same time avoid being categorised as sexy, which for them carries a meaning of trashy. There is an attempt at emulating celebrity fashion and fitness into their lifestyle. Here, aspirations come into play and women dress and pose in order to gain celebrity status. A participant said, "I try to imitate Deepika Padukone (an Indian film actress), her poses, her lifestyle, clothes etc. It helps my image and my work as a model" (Participant 34, Survey comment, 24th April, 2018). Similarly, Participants 8 and 16 try to imitate the Kardashians (and specifically Kendall Jenner) in their self-presentations on Facebook.

Graph 2.1.

Percentage of Willingness of Engagement with Professionals, Strangers, Family and Elders on Facebook

■ I use my Profile Picture to attract professional attention (sponsors, modelling offers etc.)
■ I befriend strangers on Facebook.
■ My audience includes family and elders.

Conclusion

Virtual communities could be characterised as being anonymous. This is partly, the absence of cues that are associated with physical bodies (facial expressions, voice tone etc.) as well as the ability to withdraw one's membership at will (Tsatsou, 2016). However, many users on Facebook try to manage their identity with the way their profile picture is represented. This requires curation of their online representation, which is managed through clothes, makeup, postures and virtual aids (like photo editing). Women are aware that these commodified images induce affect, often sexual, amongst their users. There is a conscious attempt to create a distinct digital identity by imitating celebrities in order to achieve celebrity status. High-class standards are also maintained by keeping up the number of likes one receives on their profile picture.

The digital environment does provide room for sufficient levels of agency and choice in selecting the picture and altering it to meet the aspirations of the users. This

helps in creating a profile picture as a spectacle or visibility as part of one's self-pre-sentation can be understood through Deleuzian's (1987) concept of assemblages. He refers to the ordering of heterogeneous elements that exist in their multiplicity and can be freely added, subtracted, and recombined without ever creating or destroying an organic unified whole (Nail, 2017). Hence, the Facebook user, the profile picture, the physical body, one's status, one's users, dress, posture, expression, attractive-ness, the Facebook community, and patriarchy are all concrete elements that make the assemblage operate in a given way at a given point in time. Assemblages account for the politics of the female body within a patriarchal framework, indicating po-tential for change contained in the freedom of recombination. This recombination also objectifies (Stankiewicz & Rosselli, 2008; Lindner, 2004) their bodies in order to present a commodified (Kasch, 2013) digital identity. Women often judged their own profile pictures as 'hot' and hoped that this identity would help them achieve celebrity status, including attention from sponsors, modelling agencies, etc. This in turn represented a curation process of the profile picture that adheres to traditional definitions of femininity and is embedded within patriarchy.

The construction and performance of the self represented through profile picture engaged with status representing reality on the level of style and symbolism. Here, it was found that women are aware of the affect-evoking capability of their profile pictures in the physical absence of the body. Women were aware that users, specifi-cally men, were often sexually aroused while engaging with the profile picture. Such affect was communicated to the woman through obscene Facebook messages. The study found that the body's representation largely adhered to traditional standards of femininity and patriarchy. The images of these bodies sexually aroused users whose affective dimensions were informed by such patriarchy.

This was an explorative study that showed scope for expansion of the research re-garding millennial women's self-presentation through profile picture. Further study can be conducted to understand the static nature of 50% of the sample participants who only changed their image once in a year, and the curation and exploration of new variables that encouraged them to maintain that image. The study also portrayed that negative affect marginally increased post the profile picture had been uploaded. The absent present encounters with the images can be researched in the way it con-tributes to the negative affect with the interactive tools provided by Facebook. The study concludes that women apply elaborate processes to achieve the 'perfect' profi-le picture. This image serves multiple objectives for the user including the assertion of one's class, commodification of the self, etc. that contributes to a distinct digital identity. Moreover, women were often aware that these images are embedded in pa-triarchy, and evoke affective response from their users.

This study over a time of period could expand on the sample size, which could lead to further exploration in this field. One of the limitations of this study is the lack of scope of taking into account aspects of privacy, safety and body image issues related to their self-representations on social media.

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