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Women as Other: Reflecting Underrepresentation and Objectification of Women in the Age of AI

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Abstract— *We are living in a world that is continuously getting transformed by AI in more revolutionary ways than we can even imagine. Day by day, AI is becoming increasingly integrated into our daily lives. Applied in the economy, politics, healthcare, business, social media, entertainment, agriculture, and multiple industries, AI has brought about a groundbreaking change in the present world. However, in addition to its application in different sectors, it has also generated some complexities and discourses that need to be addressed with increasing insight. Living in the age of AI in the 21st century, we cannot think of a world free of gender bias, gender stereotypes, discrimination, and subordination. Hegel's theory of Otherness posits that otherness is the unknown and opposite of oneself, or it may be defined as the outsider identified by certain signs such as race and gender. Thus, the concept of Otherness is closely associated with underrepresented, victimized, and objectified people in the social, cultural, technological, and political world. Philosopher Simon de Beauvoir modified and redefined the concept of the Other by setting its association with objectification and subordination in The Second Sex. In the recent world of AI, women are becoming victims as they are objectified, harassed, and robbed of their voices in many ways. This paper endeavors to examine the representation and situation of women as Other in diverse contexts in the age of AI from a feminist point of view.*

Keywords— ***AI, Other, feminism, gender bias, stereotype, objectification.***

I. INTRODUCTION

Artificial intelligence is a product of modern science and technology, which refers to the simulation of human intelligence. It is transforming the world in every moment at an unbelievable rapidity. From dawn to dusk, it is changing lives and influencing every walk of life incredibly. But while counting AI as a blessing, the disadvantages or threats should also be counted. This study will inquire into applications of AI in different sectors and focus especially on deepfake technology, voice assistants, healthcare, and employment to bring out gender biases implied in AI-based backgrounds in the mentioned areas.

In this highly changing world of globalisation, commercialization, and technological advancement, gender discrimination still exists visibly or invisibly in various forms (Ardra Manasi, 2022). Although women are contributing largely in all social, cultural, political, and technological advancements, they are remaining underrepresented and subordinated in many spheres. A study conducted by UNESCO says that AI causes negative impacts on the economic empowerment of women (UNESCO, 2020). If we look back into the history of Computing science, we see that AI has been perceived as a masculine pursuit and seen as distant from feminine knowledge (Schelhowe, 2004). This study aims to shed light on the plight of women in the age of AI due to gender bias in AI algorithms.

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

To portray the underrepresentation of women, this paper focuses on the concept of the Other. Generally, in

Phenomenology, the term 'other' refers to an identity that is associated with 'self-consciousness' and opposite to the 'self' or 'I'. If 'self' is the subject, then 'other' is the object. "What Hegel means by the claim that for self-consciousness the object is negative is that in itself the object is taken to be nothing—it is nothing but a thing-for-my-consciousness. Self-consciousness takes itself to be the thing of significance. I am what is important and essential; the object is nothing but a thing-for-me" (Kain, 2005). Self depends on the Other for recognition which actually enforces the Self to desire recognition, and this desire gives rise to a lot of conflicts in society (Kain, 2005) . This desire becomes prominent and is prioritized by the Self and the Other, or the object is used as a means to fulfil the desire. Therefore, the subject is always the superior one, and the object is the subordinate. This subject-object dichotomy may create diverse discriminating relationships in society such as master-slave relationship which has also been discussed in Hegel's phenomenology.

In her striking book *The Second Sex,* Simon de Beauvoir reflected and redefined the concept of Other from a feminist lens. This One-Other duality existing between the man-woman relationship has been analyzed by Beauvoir in the light of history, myth, reality, present, and past throughout the text. In the patriarchal world, man represents the positive and women negative; man defines humanity and woman is defined in relation to him, man is the subject and woman is the object (Beavoir, 1953). "For him, she is sex-- absolute sex, no less. She is defined and differentiated with reference to man, and not he with reference to her; she is the incidental, the inessential as opposed to the essential. He is the Subject, he is the Absolute – she is the Other" (Beavoir, 1953).

Though this discriminating scenario has changed a lot over the last centuries and women have been actively contributing in every sector, women are still being oppressed, victimized, and less recognized in every sector worldwide. They never shared equality with men; they are nothing but submissive to men (Beavoir, 1953, pp. 18-20). "Even when her rights are legally recognized in the abstract, long-standing custom prevents their full expression in the mores." (Beavoir, 1953). There are some traditional beliefs or ingrained concepts existing in society for long ages that make us consider women to be caregivers, affectionate, sensitive, weak, and inferior. *The Second Sex* also portrays how the age-old myths and stereotypes work as a basis for considering women submissive in a patriarchal world. As AI algorithm is set based on these social beliefs, AI applications are not free of stereotypes and bias, leading to the objectification of women in different fields. Therefore, this research analyzes the usage of AI-centered tools and examine how they create discrimination and treat women as the Other.

III. DISCUSSION

Basically, AI programs are a series of algorithms set in specific programming language or data. This implies that successful applications of AI depend on big data and powerful algorithms (Guszcza, 2018). Algorithms related to decision-making are used in diverse sectors such as diagnosis, job recruitment etc. AI algorithm is greatly influenced by the input data. As a result, algorithms set based on subjective choices may reflect data bias while using AI tools (F.R.A Focus, 2018, p. 5). Thus, if the original input data carries a bias against a particular group, the algorithm can lead to wrong and discriminatory results in which cases women suffer most. (F.R.A Focus, 2018).

3.1 MIRRORING WOMEN OBJECTIFICATION THROUGH VARIOUS AI APPLICATIONS IN DIFFERENT SECTORS

3.1.1. DEEPFAKES

In today's world of simulation and hyper-reality, it's difficult to differentiate between real and fake. Today we live in a "post-truth" era, which can be characterized by digital disinformation, false information, and manipulated opinions of individuals (Anderson, 2018). Nowadays, fake news, fake videos, and fake images are commonly used to threaten one's identity, honour, and social status. In this crucial context, the emergence of deepfake, an AI technology, is contributing largely as it is able to make videos by imitating human personality, voice, and gesture, etc. Deepfakes create fake videos by merging, combining, replacing, and superimposing pictures and videoclips to make it look authentic (Maras & Alexandrou, 2018). Deepfakes mostly appear as humorous, pornographic, and controversial videos of politicians, actors/actresses, social media influencers, or other people of different social sectors.

In recent years, deepfake technology has been used to create violent and sexual images to degrade women. Cathy Newman, an English news presenter of Channel 4, told BBC 4 about her feelings when she discovered her images as part of deepfake videos. She said, "It was violating... it was kind of me and not me," as her face was shown in the video but not her hair (Cooney, 2024). In January 2024, social media platforms were flooded with intimate images of pop icon Taylor Swift, quickly reaching millions of users. However, the abusive content was not real; they were deepfakes (Nelson, 2024). This kind of malicious video poses great threat to the safety, privacy, and honour of women.

The most horrible matter is that in recent years, deepfake technology has been largely used to produce adult videos of

celebrities, actors, and actresses. This is alarming that a large number of them are also made as revenge porn. Celebrities like Scarlett Johansson have been featured on deepfaked adult videos, and an altered video of American politician Nancy Pelosi got viral which had a huge outreach (Westerlund, 2019). Although deepfakes are being produced using the images or clips of both male and female celebrities and politicians or random people, this is a matter of serious concern that women are the greatest victims of this technology. Moreover, revenge pornography and non-consensual videos are used by men to abuse, defame, and control the victims who are most likely to be women (Lucas, 2022)

In recent years, deepfake technology has been used to deceive, blackmail, and sometimes to intimidate someone, where revenge is the main motif. In most cases, for women, deepfake images and videos are degrading and dehumanizing. The organization named Sensity AI monitored a large number of deepfake videos online in 2020 and found that only 35 videos had featured politicians, 96% of them were non-consensual deepfakes and the majority of those were made of women (Dunn, 2021).

Using deepfake, people are easily making fake images or videos of women by collecting their photos and clips available on social media. The alarming matter is that most of these videos and photos are produced without any consent. Consequently, any woman from any class, religion, or profession can be objectified and assaulted unknowingly. Men who are producing these malicious videos or images consider their acts as a victimless crime driven by a sense of superiority over women (Wolfe et al., 2023). In short, objectifying and commodifying women became much easier than before because of the advancement of deepfake technology.

3.1.2 LANGUAGE VISION MODEL AND VOICE ASSISTANT

Language vision models and voice assistants have been two widely used AI applications over the last decade. Past examples of language vision models and voice assistants show that most of the models and assistants are female. This paper also attempts to figure out the gender biases in virtual assistants directed by AI algorithms. According to the European Institute for Gender Equality, gender bias refers to "prejudiced actions or thoughts based on the gender-based perception that women are not equal to men in rights and dignity" (İLERİ, 2024). Most often, language vision systems display sexualized pictures of the female body or body parts, where commercialization is likely to be the main motif. Study shows that in language-vision AI technology, women are exhibited in sexualized contexts visually, where they are depicted as bodies or sexual objects (Wolfe et al., 2023). Containing stereotypical gender features, input data plays a crucial role in creating bias in these applications. Moreover, stereotypical datasets not only create gender bias but also promote colour bias. It is also found that computer vision datasets cause underrepresentation of women with darker complexion (Wolfe et al., 2023). Therefore, women with darker skin are facing twofold discrimination in these AI-controlled systems. They are being underrepresented firstly because they are not male and secondly because they are not fair. This colour bias leads women to be 'other' to their male counterparts and also to women with fair skin. This is the way stereotypical datasets may promote racial prejudice in AI-generated programs.

The remarkable growth of AI has led to the emergence of voice assistants and many companies have launched Smartphone applications operated by AI. Many world-famous companies have launched voice assistants associated with smartphone applications such as Siri (Apple), Cortana (Microsoft), and Alexa (Amazon) etc. Use of virtual assistants is increasing remarkably in different fields to make modern everyday life easier, and this advancement leads us to a smooth interaction between humans and AI in the future. Study predicts that by 2030, 55% of interactions will be done through AI-based voice assistants (Robier, 2019). But designers and researchers are also facing some challenges that must be taken into great concern. Biased outcome is one of them which should be monitored and mitigated as much as possible. It is evident that most of the AI voice assistants are female by default (Lee et al., 2024). Siri, Alexa, and Cortana came with feminine voices, and among them, only Siri has a masculine option but with a limited set of languages (Costa, 2018). The meaning of Siri's name in Nordic is "beautiful woman who leads to victory," and Cortana's name was adapted from a female character of the video game Halo (Fessler, 2022). The primary reason behind their being feminine might be the conventional belief that the female voice is the symbol of care, affection, and love, which leads customers to rely more on the female voice. On the other hand, research also shows that female voices are highly user-engaging because they are perceived as more attractive (Yuasa, 2010). Another reason for choosing female voices might be the fact that most of the research data was derived from male participants and researchers who found female voices more appealing (Puts et al., 2011).

The abovementioned data show that the female voice is preferred both by designers and customers because it sounds attractive and flirtatious to them. Therefore, femininity in voice assistants might be a byproduct of stereotypes that reinforce bias that might misrepresent

women through these applications. Moreover, in the male-dominated technological industry, women are underrepresented because they are not getting enough opportunities to contribute to the industry with their talent or skills; rather, their voices or organs are used to gain profit which indicates nothing but objectification where men are leading as the subjects.

This is a regrettable matter that the voice behind Apple's voice assistant Siri belongs to Susan Bennett, but Apple never acknowledged her and they wanted to keep it secret. In fact, Susan Bennett never worked for Apple; she recorded her voice for a client eight years ago. Later on, audio forensics analyzed both Siri's and Susan's voices and confirmed that Susan is the real person behind the voice of Siri. In one of her interviews with "Business Insider" Benett said that Apple used my voice without my knowledge and never acknowledged or paid me (Cucci, 2023). Here it's clear that Apple had been using Susan's voice without her consent because of their business policy according to which they usually keep the voices anonymous. The tech industry is a place of constant competition among the brands where earning revenue is the main motive of each and every company. Apple used Susan's voice without her consent to make a profit but they didn't acknowledge her contribution to the profit-making for their company. So, it is Susan's voice which has been used as a product to sell worldwide and earn profit by the renowned company Apple. This clearly indicates objectification in a male-dominated tech industry. Therefore, through the AI applications such as language vision AI models or voice assistants, women's voices and other organs are used as objects or commodities which can clearly be considered as women's objectification.

3.1.3 ADVERTISEMENTS AND SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT

The present age is the age of social media where we cannot live without it for a single day. In almost all jobs, employees need to be connected on social media and companies need good exposure on social media to reach their goals. As a result, it became the major platform for broadcasting all types of advertisements and promotional events. Since it is easier to reach millions of people within minutes, nowadays the majority of companies are relying on social media rather than TV channels or newspapers.

After the emergence of AI, making advertisements and other content became even easier than before. Some companies are not hiring human models for making advertisements anymore. Anyone can generate images, posters, and videos by using ChatGPT, DeepSeek, Deepfake, and many other AI-based apps and tools. In these sectors, women are being objectified and underrepresented too. Demographic analysis shows that algorithmic bias and other societal factors are causing women underrepresentation in almost all ad categories (Roy & Linden, 2025). Over the last decades, women's objectification in media and advertisements has become very common scenario. In some advertisements, women's bodies seem to be reduced in body parts and displayed through sexualized clothing, poses and so on. Moreover, these kinds of advertisements are likely to promote unrealistic body standards which might be a great threat for man-woman sexual relationships in the real world (Kelly et al., 2025). Stereotyping in advertisements is another major issue and study shows that in many of the advertisements, women are associated with domestic and beauty products while men are associated with the traditional work environment in public spheres such as sports and outdoor activities (KRIJNEN, 2017). In case of product description, male products are described as durable, long-lasting while words like dressy, fashionable or silhouette are used for female products. Words like 'silhouette', 'fashionable' are clearly stereotypical and at the same time indicate objectification (Kelly et al., 2025). In most of the advertisements, thin body shapes are represented as standard which creates a sense of inferiority and negative self-perception among those who are physically bulky or suffering from obesity syndromes (Colin Campbell, 2025).

Nowadays, the perception and concept of beauty are determined and influenced by AI-generated content on social media (Minna Ruckenstein, 2020). In every scroll on popular social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube, we are watching videos made by generative AI which are changing our aesthetic viewpoints largely. Many AI-based photo editing apps contain filters that can transform a decent image into a sexually attractive one. Young people are widely using these apps and tend to show themselves as 'perfect' as possible on social media. This emerging trend of being perfect has a drastic impact on the mindset of the growing generations. Since AI is changing their perception regarding beauty and perfection, they seem to be disrespectful and judgmental towards those who prefer showing the real beauty and gesture on social media. AI-driven portrayal of beauty standards is creating "algorithmic aesthetic": a culturally dominant beauty standard which is produced by algorithmic data (Blake Hallinan, 2016).

Another alarming matter for the women of the Eastern world is that AI-generated content is promoting Western standards of beauty. Research and media reports show that widely used AI beauty-enhancing filters lighten the skin, narrow the nose and jawline, enlarge eyes, which are

traditionally associated with Eurocentric beauty standards (Elias & Gill, 2018). These issues have a terrible impact on women's physical and psychological health. For instance, AI-driven beauty standard grows high expectations in marital and sexual relationships. Since the reality is quite different, the rate of sexual exploitation, abuse, domestic violence, and abortion is increasing day by day (Wang, 2020). These also cause psychological harm by internalizing social stereotypes which can eventually lead to doubt and insecurities in women's minds (Wang, 2020). The growth of Eurocentric beauty standards might have twofold impacts on women's psychology. On the one hand, women who don't meet the so-called beauty standard may feel like 'other' in comparison with their fellow women fulfilling Eurocentric beauty standards. On the other hand, they might be humiliated, underestimated, and oppressed physically as well as mentally by their male counterparts.

3.1.4 HEALTHCARE AND EMPLOYMENT

Over the last few years, AI has revolutionized the medical and healthcare systems remarkably. Nowadays, the medical sector is using various AI diagnosis and disease prediction tools increasingly. However, these tools are not free of bias as well. Also, in the field of medical research and study, women are underrepresented and their participation is less facilitated. The causes behind sex and gender bias in AI healthcare systems are many such as lack of diversity during clinical trials, poor data management, lack of data collecting accountability, and so on (Buslón et al., 2023).

Due to the bias in algorithmic data, AI diagnosis tools sometimes deliver wrong outcomes. A demographic study shows that the AI diagnosis system makes more errors in the case of female patients (Owolabi, et al., 2025). The leading causes behind the wrong diagnosis are historical and stereotypical biases in the AI algorithm. Moreover, the lack of representation of women in clinical trials also causes inadequate evaluation in the case of the treatment of some female diseases. For instance, although coronary heart disease is the leading cause of death among women, 67% of the patients enrolled in clinical trials for cardiovascular devices are male (Cirillo, et al., 2020). Consequently, these biases and discrepancies increase the health risks of women.

Like other important sectors, AI has brought remarkable changes in employment and career. Various renowned companies have been using AI recruitment technology for recruiting employees in recent years. However, this ever-evolving sector is no different from other sectors, as the algorithm of the recruitment system is not free of gender bias. A case study held in 2014 shows that Amazon's ADM (Amazon Device Messaging) discriminated against women in recruitment by favouring the resumes that contained verbs describing male engineers (Njoto, et al., 2022). It also happens due to the biased historical dataset in the AI algorithm. As women are well-known as caregivers conventionally, they are represented in algorithmic data as affectionate and caregivers which leads to a biased outcome in recruitment. Due to that, they are disadvantaged in the male-dominated professions such as data analysts and finance officers (Njoto, et al., 2022). Sometimes, women employees are also financially deprived in their workplaces. For instance, Apple Credit service has a record of granting higher credits to its male employees than female, though it was programmed to be neutral (Khight, 2019).

Therefore, it is evident that in various dominant sectors as discussed above, women are underrepresented and objectified. There is no doubt that AI brought revolutionary changes in our lives but it does not work as a blessing for all in every sector. Specifically, for women, this wonder of modern technology is threatening, demeaning, and objectifying in a range of sectors. In the disguise of gender neutrality, AI is still ruling the world being an undeclared asset of men, where women are the subordinates. As Beauvoir said, they are underrepresented, and even if they are presented, they are presented in relation to men. Stereotypical biases underlying in background data result in objectification and commodification of women in AI industry. In this age of AI, women are treated as the 'other' by their male counterparts who are in leading roles as the subjects.

IV. CONCLUSION

From every scroll on Facebook to crucial planning and decision-making, AI is heavily making impacts on our daily lives. But while counting the blessings of AI, we should not overlook the negative aspects of it. The dataset of the AI algorithm is collected from society and cultures, which actually creates the possibility of having historical bias. Although we are living in the 21st century and women are contributing immensely in every sector worldwide, this modern world could not break the age-old stereotypes and myths regarding women. Consequently, in this AI-driven world, women are still underrepresented, objectified, and victimized. The victimization and objectification of women through biased datasets, social media representations, or exclusion from technological design, reflect patriarchal subjectivity in technological systems. Therefore, in the future, AI datasets must be guided by ethical frameworks, inclusivity and recognition of women as equal subjects, not as objects.

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