

PIP Title: TikTok... Times Up for Internalised Misogyny!

PIP Research Question/Statement: 'Pick-Me Girls' is a misogynistic phenomenon that constructs women as being in inherent competition, performing for the 'male gaze' challenging the notion of female solidarity.

Extract Section: Introduction

Introduction

“Internalized misogyny sits within us all, whether we are conscious of it or not. It’s possibly more problematic than regular misogyny, it is basically female identifying people that internalize a hatred of their own gender”¹

Social media continues to enculturate sexist cultural narratives, with one of the latest trends being the 'Pick-Me Girl' phenomenon. This trope perpetuates the view that women are in constant competition with each other, performing for the 'male gaze'. Pick-Me Girls can be defined as “a girl who seeks male validation by indirectly or directly insinuating that she is ‘not like other girls’, it epitomises a woman that has internalised misogyny, favouring male individualities”² Since the phenomenon emerged, the #PickMeGirl has garnered 788 million views on the TikTok platform³, epitomising the mass dissemination of this damaging social construct. These narratives result in toxic societal attitudes about women, conceptualising them as divisive and hierarchically opposed and unable to work collectively in any solidarity.

This research led me to my hypothesis that “ ‘Pick-Me Girls’ is a misogynistic phenomenon that constructs women as being in inherent competition, performing for the ‘male gaze’, challenging the notion of female solidarity.” This topic will examine contrasting gender narratives of internalised misogyny versus women’s empowerment through collectivity.

Secondary research was conducted in order to obtain a more objective understanding of the topic, this included useful sources such as a thesis “Not Like Other Girls”: Implicit and

¹ Dameron E. Internalised Misogyny: “Pick-Me girls” and Introspection - VOX ATL. VOX ATL. Published April 16, 2021. Viewed 3rd Oct, 2021.

<[Internalised Misogyny: 'Pick-Me girls' and Introspection - VOX ATL](#) >

² Bates G. The Internalised Misogyny of the Term Pick Me Girl. INJECTION. Published August 29, 2021. Viewed 19th Nov 2021.

<[The Internalised Misogyny of the Term Pick Me Girl](#)>

³ Rosenbluth A. The Toxic Trajectory of the #PickMeGirl Trend. Published 2021 viewed 7th Nov 2021

<[The Toxic Trajectory of the #PickMeGirl Trend](#) >

Explicit Dimensions of Internalized Sexism, by Kira Means, who examines the structural and systemic nature of internalised misogyny. Beneficial articles included 'The Toxic Trajectory of the Pick-Me-Girl Trend' by Amy Rosenbluth, as well as a podcast on "The Rise of The Pick-Me Girl".

My primary research involved three qualitative semi-structured interviews with Danica Leys, the Executive Director of the Country Women's Association and Kira K. Means, who constructed her thesis on the dimensions of internalised misogyny, as well as Human Rights Journalist Amy Rosenbluth. These interviews provided unique insight into the differing constructions of women's division and collectivity, however, are still limited, being only three representatives of people in their fields of expertise and still contain their own biases. I also conducted a qualitative and quantitative questionnaire with 146 participants, examining internalised misogyny. The questionnaire was beneficial in gaining perspectives from the meso-sphere but was limited by demographic skews. Two qualitative content analyses were conducted on visuals from news articles, reflecting both perspectives on misogynistic constructions of female relational aggression, as well as depictions of women united in solidarity.

This topic seeks to investigate the continuity and change of sexist constructions of gender roles and the depiction of women as being in inherent competition. 'Pick Me Girls' is relevant as it critically analyses the intersections of identity and gender roles through the socialisation of internalised misogyny. My cross cultural comparison is inherent in the topic, as an examination of the social constructions of gender. This phenomenon has originated via social media platforms, highlighting the power of technology to drive the consumption of narrow gender constructions of girls. These constructions generate the concept of inherent hierarchical competition between women, highlighting Tajfel's, Social Identity Theory of 'in-group' and 'out-group' behaviour as 'Pick me girls' deliberately identify themselves as an 'out-group' to perform to the male gaze.