

Framing Gender Through Words: Examining Stereotypical Language in AI-Generated News Headlines on TikTok

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Abstract. The increased integration of artificial intelligence in the development of digital news has had a significant impact on how information is concluded and consumed on social media platforms. TikTok, in particular, has become an important platform for the spread of information in the form of news, for which short videos accompany AI-generated headlines, which have a strong impact on the interpretation of the audience. This study examines the frame of gender in cases of AI-generated news headlines in TikTok and analyses whether the automated texts replicate stereotypical gender depictions. Employing a qualitative content analysis of 100 TikTok videos published from 2023-24, the study examines the insistent stability of lexic patterns in the headlines with the subjects (male vs. female) in particular manifesting certain aspects like authority, achievement, emotional framing, appearance, and relational identity. The results show the presence of clear and systematic gender asymmetries: Headlines of men apparently focus mainly on competence, agency, and professional accomplishment, while those of women more often foreground emotional states, physical appearance, and familial or relational roles. These patterns suggest AIs will not only reflect age-old gender issues in traditional news media, but they can actually exacerbate these issues in algorithmically led but engagement-optimised institutions. The study concludes that the unchecked acceptance of AI-generated language in the social media space for news content runs the risk of perpetuating gendered hierarchies as well as highlighting the need for more critical oversight in AI-assisted news content.

Keywords: Language bias, Gender Language, News Headline

1. Introduction

The spread of content created with artificial intelligence on social media platforms has changed the processes of news production, dissemination, and interpretation dramatically. TikTok, with its short-form videos and algorithm-implemented "For You Page," has become a popular platform for the consumption of news-like content among the younger audiences. More content creators are now using AI-based text generation software to churn out their on-screen headlines or captions for reduced framings of the news for a TikTok video. While such a practice makes a site more efficient and engaging for the audience, some critical concerns about the linguistic bias automated language creates, especially bias in gender representation.

Gendered linguistic practices in traditional journalism have been very well documented. Women are often depicted in terms of their appearance, emotionality, or domestic roles, while men are often depicted in some relation to competence, agency, and authority [1]. Recent empirical research on large language models proves that such asymmetries do not get nullified by automation; rather, AI systems often replicate and amplify governmentally embedded biases that are contained in their training data [2]. When such AI-sourced headlines exist in the emotionally fuelled reality of TikTok's high speed, emotionally stimulated algorithmic structure, these gendered ways of framing may receive heightened visibility and heightened persuasiveness. Against this background, the present study identifies the varied framing of gender in the context of the meaning of news headlines, which is linguistically staged in

TikTok platform through Artificial Intelligence (AI). Rather than cobining previous research, this paper empirically tests whether automated headline generation reproduces stereotypical men and women in a modern social media news context. Using content analysis of qualitative data, the research examines the 100 TikTok videos posted in 2023-2024 that represent AI-generated headlines, with a focus on lexical patterns of authority, achievement, emotion, appearance, and relational identity. The research question that focuses on guiding this study is: How do AI-generated news headlines on TikTok frame linguistically male and female subjects, and to what extent do these framings reinforce gender stereotypes?

2. Literature review

2.1. Gendered language in the news media

Contemporary empirical study further confirms sexism in the evolving news. Macharia reported that women are still vastly underrepresented in news content around the world and are more likely depicted as victims or defined by their connections and relationships instead of their professional selves. Similar trends appeared in Bender et al.'s comparative study of Chinese and Western digital media, where there has always been a focus on women's personal lives and physical traits. While the headlines are limited by their very nature and precisely to be succinct, they tend to amplify such discrepancies by using selective language to influence the audience's temper, and that is done before the contextual needs are revealed [1,3].

Furthermore, empirical studies exploring the intersection of artificial intelligence and journalism have suggested that the algorithmically synthesised will potentially reproduce, if not exaggerate, traditional gender patterns. For example, in large language models trained on historical corpora of news articles, a bias in which women are associated with emotionality or domestic roles, whereas men are associated with competence and authority, may be inherited [3]. This pattern is especially worrying in the context of little content full of news, on websites to see, such as TikTok, for example, where the amount of information in a concise headline needs to make sense very quickly and therefore may lean on stereotypical clues. As a result of this, AI-assisted headlines do not simply mirror existing societal biases-they can perpetuate and normalise these for a large audience at large, contributing to the perpetuation of inequitable gender representations in public discourse [4].

2.2. AI-generated content and reproduction of bias

Generative artificial intelligence systems learn the associations of language from huge amounts of data (corpora), and can perpetuate gender stereotypes without active mitigation [4]. Bender et al. also famously called large language models "stochastic parrots," saying that large language models

reflect patterns found in the data upon which they are trained, including harmful associations. Kotek, Dockum, and Sun further presented that the association of women with domesticity and men with authority is a systematic association in large language models. In relation to AI-assisted journalism, Bender et al. found stark differences in gendered sentiments in automated news establishments of journalism [2,3].

Recent research also highlights the point that amplification of gender bias by AI, indeed, is not just ourselves - is not just down to the despicable level of lexical choices but also involves subtler narrative structures and framing devices. For instance, the AI-generated headlines and summaries tend to overemphasise the context of relationality/emotionality in the description of subjects described as female versus focusing on professional achievements or authoritative actions in the description of subjects described as male [4]. Those trends arise in the ostensibly even distributions of data, which points to the conclusion that bias may be designed to be embedded in statistical associations acquired during the training phase, and not explicit human design or editing. Consequently, AI-assisted journalism could inadvertently radiate the existing stereotypes within our society, and it is therefore important that bias detection and the approach of mitigating bias should be systematic for developers and the creators of content development [5].

2.3. TikTok as a mechanism of news and AI-driven content

Although TikTok is not a traditional news disseminator, it plays a significant role in understanding events for the public. It has an algorithm based on emotional engagement, sensational vocabulary, and dissemination of fast content. Dawson found that the use of A.I.-assisted content production on TikTok has continued to rise and includes AI-generated scripts, headlines, and captions [6]. The platform's focus on speedy consumption means that text overlays are often the equivalent of stand-alone headlines. Also, the influence of interpretations, even if there is no further interaction from the user.

The algorithmic nature of TikTok's platform allows it to focus on maximising interaction and distributing content globally, particularly when it comes to extreme and emotionally stimulating items, whether they be truthful or representationally unjust [7]. AI-organised headlines that fulfill a stereotypical male or female gender frame can spread faster as they elicit a higher level of emotional reaction from an audience. Thus, a cycle occurs where the language used reinforces the societal stereotypes and generates visibility for that type of discourse. Consequently, an audience tends to see those types of imbalanced portrayals frequently, leading them to develop a belief that men are the authority figures and women are the emotional figures of reference, even if they never move beyond the headline itself.

3. Methodology

A qualitative content analysis has been performed for the investigation of gender based linguistic patterns in AI-generated news headlines spread on TikTok. The dataset was comprised of 100 TikTok videos that were published during 2023 - 2024, which contained AI-generated on-screen text that functioned as news headlines in the videos. Videos for manual sampling were based on a set of hashtags and descriptors related to the use of AI in news production, such as #AInews, #AIGeneratedHeadline, #ChatGPTNews, and related keyword variations. Only videos containing headlines enough for readers to see the main idea that summarises or frames a news event have been included to ensure consistency in the corpus of linguistic material analysed [8]. All content was

publicly available, and no personal/identifiable information about creators was collected, consistent with the ethical guidelines for social media research³².

Each of the headlines was transcribed in a strict sense and was then coded on the basis of whether the main human subject in the headline was a man or a woman. Headlines that were relevant only to institutions or events for which there were no identifiable human subjects were excluded from the sample. The coding procedure that followed was done using a systematic coding framework that was designed to capture recurrent gendered patterns in lexical framing. This coding framework consisted of six analytical dimensions, which were developed in light of research that has already been done on the subject of gender and media discourse:

- a. Agency and Authority - lexical items, those used to emphasise leadership, making decisions, expertise, or control (e.g., "leads," "decides," "expert," "authority).
- b. Achievement Orientation - mentions of professional success, accomplishments, innovation, or public recognition (e.g., "wins," "breakthrough," "career milestone).
- c. Emotional Framing - language that emphasises emotional states, vulnerability, or affective responses (e.g., "heartbroken," "emotional," "shocked")
- d. Appearance - Based Descriptors - references physical appearance, attractiveness, clothing, age, or bodily features (e.g., "beautiful," "stunning," "young," etc.);
- e. Relational Identity - Descriptions that differentiate people in terms of familial or interpersonal roles instead of professional identity. (ex, "mother," "wife," "girlfriend."
- f. Sensationalism/Victim Framing – the use of language to frame individuals in the context of narratives: tales of scandal, personal drama, crisis, victimhood, neglecting agency or expressing professional competence (e.g., 'tragic', 'exposed', 'victim', 'breaks down').

Each of the headlines was coded for the presence, or lack thereof, of these dimensions, which allowed more than one category to be applied to an individual headline where appropriate. Coding was performed manually in an attempt to gain interpretive sensitivity towards context and nuance. Some ambiguous cases were worked out with iterative comparison with the previous coded headline in order to maintain internal consistency.

The analytical focus was on finding systematic differences in male versus female-centred headlines to be linguistically framed (rather than individually word frequency only). In this way, the study compares patterns across these dimensions in order to evaluate how AI-generated headlines across TikTok reproduce or reinforce gendered representations that conform to the broader discourses in media.

4. Results

Table 1. Gender distribution in AI-generated TikTok headlines (N = 100)

Category	Count	Percentage
Headlines featuring men	58	58%
Headlines featuring women	42	42%

Table 1 provides the overall distribution of gender of AI-generated TikTok headlines in the sample. The dataset indicates that 58 percent of the total number of headlines mention men and 42 percent mention women. This distribution suggests a moderate bias with Marxist use of gender when examined in terms of visibility, as subject matter, with male subjects being more frequent of the central figures in AI-dowly-generated news headlines. Though the difference is not drastic, it is

part of a general trend in news discourse toward the primacy of male actors as primary newsworthy subjects, especially in political, technological, and public affairs.

Table 2. Linguistic framing of male vs. female subjects

Framing Dimension	Men	Women
Competence/authority emphasis	High	Low
Appearance descriptors	None	High
Emotional framing	Low	High
Family or relational roles	Rare	Frequent
Sensationalism/victim framing	Moderate	High
Achievement focus	High	Moderate

Table 2 summarises male and female subjectification (comparative linguistic framing) in the five dimensions of analysis defined in the coding frame. Clear and systematic differences appeared between male and female-centred headlines in all dimensions. Headlines featuring men had a severely emphasized focus on competence, authority, and achievement, and often talked about being leaders, showing expertise, and being successful in a professional capacity. In contrast, the headlines that did mention women showed a much smaller focus on authority and achievement, and a far higher incidence of emotional framing words, descriptors that referred to appearance, and references to family or other kinds of relationships.

These patterns indicate that AI-generated headlines do not portray men and women in a symmetrical light, even if both are in the position of subject in the news. Table 2 shows that among headlines with male subjects, scores "high" on the factors related to competence/authority and achievement focus were always found, while "low" and "moderate" scores were always found with similar headlines about female subjects. Gendered lexical choices do seem to lead audience interpretation in the direction of the construction of men as active agents and women as emotionally or relationally defined people.

Within this conceptual framework, a high occurrence of sensationalism and victim framing (as a form of dramatic, crisis-oriented or vulnerability-focused language) were found for headlines that referred to both genders; however, in female-centred headlines, such framing occurred in a significantly higher rate than in male-centred headlines (the coding frequency was "high" vs. a "moderate" rate, respectively, see Table 2). This pattern is further supported by Table YES, which shows 27% of female-focused headlines have explicit references to physical appearance, and 31% of female-focused headlines have relational labels, like "mother" or "wife," whereas references to these are almost non-existent in male-focused headlines. Collectively, these findings suggest that women are more often depicted in narratives of personal vulnerability, emotional exposure, or individual drama, whereas men are more commonly depicted in professional roles and actions and thus serve to reinforce gendered assumptions of emotionality, dependence, and social authority.

Table 3. Key patterns identified in AI-generated headlines

Pattern	Male-Focused Headlines	Female-Focused Headlines
Primary emphasis	Agency, expertise, achievement	Appearance, emotion, relational roles
Common descriptors	Innovator, strategist, scientist	Stunning, beautiful, heartbroken
Emotional language	Minimal and neutral	Frequent and amplified

Table 3. (continued)

Physical appearance references	None	27% of headlines
Relational labels	Virtually none	31% include mother/wife/etc.
Portrayal tendency	Competent, authoritative	Vulnerable, emotional, sensationalised

A more detailed breakdown of the recurring linguistic patterns that were identified in the dataset can be seen in Table 3. Male-focused headlines overwhelmingly focused on agency, expertise, and accomplishment, using such descriptors as "innovator," "strategist," and "scientist." Emotional language in these headlines was almost non-existent and mostly neutral in tone. Of note, the sample of male-centered headlines did not use explicit references to physical appearance or family position.

By comparison, female-focused headlines had a specific representational pattern. About 27 percent of the headlines with women involved explicit references to physical appearance, compared with 31 percent that described women in terms of relational identities - "mother," for example, or "wife." Emotional language, which was often frequent and was itself exaggerated, contributed to depictions of women as vulnerable, feeling brokenhearted, or even sensationalisation. These results suggest that AI-generated headlines' systemic bias toward gendered stereotyping, in which the AIs forefronted emotion and appearance in portrayals of females and reserved authority and achievement for men.

Taken together, the results show that the linguistic patterns identified are not coincidental but are then reproduced consistently throughout the results, and therefore apt to explain how AI-generated headlines on TikTok reproduce structured gendered framings in line with the dimensions specified in the coding framework. This stability suggests the impact of both AI training data and incentives that may be brought by a given platform on gender representation as part of automated news discourse.

5. Discussion

5.1. Key findings: systematic bias and its automated “legitimation”

This part of the research defines the major empirical result of the study: AI-generated headlines on TikTok present systematic gender bias, which both reflects and normalizes long-lasting stereotypes in media. The findings raise the concern that the AI-generated headlines on TikTok are systematically biased towards gendered linguistic framing and will thus perpetuate and reinforce the stereotypes that exist in our society, often observed in the news discourse. Women are systematically located on the basis of references to appearance, emotional expression, or relations personae, while men are mainly located in relation to competence, achievement, and professional authority. Rather than being isolated occurrences, these patterns recur across the data set, suggesting that these represent a structured, and therefore gendered form of representation which is rooted in the AI-headlines construction process. These findings are similar to previous empirical studies of media representation and algorithmic bias that have shown that generative systems tend to reinforce the cultural assumptions found within the data, which configure the systems [1,2].

Working upon this grand pattern of magnitude for this study openly shows the pronounced asymmetry in the assignment of linguistic value to the male and female subjects. The present research highlights a large asymmetry in the linguistic framing of news headlines from the media: the headlines that target women disproportionately build on appearance and emotion rather than authority and achievement, as they do for men. This differential is not merely a matter of style, but is a deliberate and active process that attempts to configure and influence audience interpretive processes, in terms of determining judgments of credibility, competence, and social value.

Consequently, in turn, the professional identities of women are regularly eclipsed by affective or personal terms, whereas male public roles are unconsciously taken as the norm and reinforced. The observed asymmetry is consistent with historically established media practices of male agency and the marginalization of women's expertise in the public discourse.

Crucially, the automated nature of the headline generation does not make it any less biased; it, in fact, gives the biased content an aura of legitimacy. The empirical evidence suggests that automation does not get rid of gender bias, but may repackage and legitimize such bias by virtue of the perceived objectivity that comes with machine-generated language [5]. Given that AI-produced headlines are often seen as being technically produced or optimized by algorithms, and their choice of linguistic vocabulary and strategies in the headlines may be considered to be less subjective, this makes them less open to critique. This perceived neutrality can help mask social constructions of values latent in automated text that can make it more elusive to recognise and ameliorate gendered framing.

5.2. Platform amplifier: how TikTok's format and algorithms exacerbate bias

While AI machines provide the information (language content), the platform architecture of TikTok decides how the information is consumed and amplified. It can be said that, in the TikTok ecosystem, headlines are primary framing devices, perhaps more so because of the unique format of the platform. Unlike traditional news outlets, where a headline functions as a gateway to other, textual content that has greater heft, the headlines on TikTok will often function as a stand-alone interpretive unit of content. Users may be exposed to a headline without interacting with the audiovisual resources and supporting contextual information that goes along with it. As a result, AI-created headlines on TikTok wield a disproportionate influence on the language within the semiotic structures, and they quickly determine meaning and often do so in an irreversible way in the limited window of time for exposure.

This phenomenon is exacerbated by the recommendation algorithms used by TikTok, in which emotion resonance and engagement figures have priority. The algorithmic environment of TikTok may increase these effects. Content that generates major emotional responses, or visual engagement, is amplified preferentially by the recommendation systems of the platform. Consequently, TikTok's engagement-based metrics can be seen as implicit rewards for content creators to use emotionally charged or stereotypical linguistic framing, as this type of content will be more likely to be amplified by TikTok's algorithmic recommendation system [6]. Algorithms aimed at generating headlines with maximum engagement also tend to follow the linguistic patterns that work best on the analytics platform and thus reproduce emotionally loaded and stereotypical discourse free of critical oversight [9]. The crossnotations of algorithmic bias, visibility provided by platforms, and cumulative media stereotypes and stereotypes create a spiral of feedback that is solely an iterative loop that facilitates and normalizes gendered representations.

5.3. Social impact: the feedback loop from text to cognition

The pattern of such cumulative exposure to these linguistic patterns has larger consequences for society at large that go beyond the individual headlines. Within this feedback situation, the gender encoded here can be understood as a situation of widespread disparity in which women as affective subjects are presented as holding worth by affective resonance or physical beauty (even compliments are designed as if the woman were marked by beauty), and men as informational subjects are marked by associations of authority and informational authority. Cumulative exposure

to these patterns may help to internalize gendered expectations related to leadership, credibility, and sexism's social relevance [10]. Such dynamism is particularly problematic on TikTok, with its predominantly youthful audience, through which they depend on their media intake to develop social norms as well as establish identity.

5.4. Accountability and solutions: multi-dimensional intervention possibilities

Mitigation of these patterns requires a shift from prescriptions of purely diagnostic nature, where responsibility is issued around the media ecosystem, to the different actors. These findings also raise important questions concerning the accountable and responsible aspects of production in AI-assisted media production. Although content creators can use AI tools to improve efficiency, the lingual outputs that are produced are inherently un-neutral [4]. Choices about the acceptability, modification, or rejection of AI-generated headlines have a significant effect on the representational truths that are shown to audiences [7]. Moreover, people developing AI occupy a critical role in determining how language models are trained, evaluated, and deployed, and may create the difference between whether or not measures are taken to combat gender bias.

Platform governance is an additional level of responsibility of the gendered discourse. From the standpoint of platform governance, these recommendation algorithms on TikTok promote the visibility and spread of gendered linguistic patterns. While such platforms often present algorithmic ranking in terms of engagement metrics (rather than editorial judgment), their cumulative effects of amplification determinations have substantive social consequences [11]. Improved transparency of how parts of the text, e.g., headlines, affect the visibility of the content could help to address the inadvertent reinforcement of stereotypical constructs.

Presumably, audience literacy will end up marking a needed counterpoint to automated framing. The dissemination of these headlines in such a short period of time and over such a large area of people creates linguistic cues around men as actors of authority and women as emotional or relational figures. Over time, such exposure can have consequences of subtly but massively affecting people's perception of gender roles, capability, and legitimacy [12]. Consequently, these results speak to how important it is to promote media literacy initiatives that would empower users to critically interpret the language generated by AI systems and recognize the ways that automated systems may construct meaning through seemingly small lexical choices in language.

In light of these observations, the discussion highlights AI-generated headlines on TikTok as occurring at the intersection of the technological automation of AI, the economics of social media platforms, and the historical bias in the media. A thorough knowledge of this intersection is seen as being important and necessary for the formulation of interventions that will lead to more equitable representation. Absent such efforts, the adventure of AI in news practice is the risk of adding to already existing inequalities in the name of innovation and efficiency.

6. Conclusion

This study proves that AI-generated news headlines circulating on TikTok replicate systematic patterns of gendered linguistic patterns that support male linguistic authority while marginalizing female professional identity. While male subjects are often described using the language of agency, competence, and achievement, female subjects are often described using the language of looks, feelings, and relationships. These findings point to the fact that incorporating AI tools in social media news production does not challenge pre-existing gender hierarchies, but instead risks their reinforcement through the automated processes of highly visible, textual framing.

Importantly, the results emphasize that gender bias in AI-generated language is not a technical problem but a sociocultural one, which is subject to historical media practices and compounded by the accentuation of platform-driven dynamics. Within the context of TikTok, where headlines are often meant to stand on their own as interpretive ideas, this effect of such linguistic framing is amplified. Consequently, audiences may repeatedly see multiple representations that promote the normalisation of male authority whilst depicting women in positions of emotional vulnerability or relationality, and affect people's perceptions of credibility, capability, and social value.

At this point, addressing these kinds of challenges requires coordinated action across multiple levels of the digital media ecosystem. Content creators have to think critically about AI-generated outputs and not rely on the output as neutral or objective. Developers should put bias-awareness and mitigation strategies in the design and implementation of language models. Platforms, such as TikTok, must consider how the greatest interactions of algorithms and automated language result in representational outcomes. Equally important is the role of the audience, their capacity to identify and question biased language, which is dependent on the availability of strong media literacy education. Together, these interventions represent a crucial process of making more equitable and responsible AI-assisted news processes a reality.

This study has a number of limitations that should be recognized. First of all, the quantity of videos (100) in this study is not large enough for the conclusions that can be drawn to be readily generalized to TikTok videos in general. Second, the analysis only considered English-language headlines, which really might not represent gendered framing practices in other linguistic/cultural contexts. Third, the content of the text only focused on the textual parts of the headline and did not focus on the audience reception or engagement metric, which might give additional information on gendered language on interpretation and interaction.

Future research could rectify these limitations by having a larger dataset in terms of platforms, languages, and time periods. Comparative studies that look at AI-generated headlines about different social media platforms could help track down the contribution of the platform-specific algorithms in contributing to gender representation. In addition, experimental research or audience-centred research could explore people's perceptions and interpretations of AI-generated gendered language. Finally, interdisciplinary work that merges both computational methods and critical discourse analysis may provide greater insight into how bias is generated, evolves, and can be mitigated in automated news systems. As AI-generated media continues to proliferate, a long-term scholarly focus is needed to ensure that the advance of technological innovation is not made at the cost of representational equity.

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