

## MALE CHAUVINISM IN TRUCK LITERATURE IN NEPAL

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### Abstract

This research aims to explore the phenomenon of male chauvinism in truck literature in Nepal. Truck literature is a form of folk art that originated in South Asia. It is characterized by the use of brightly colored paintings and murals to decorate the exterior of trucks. The paintings often depict religious figures, mythological creatures, and scenes from everyday life. Male chauvinism is a form of sexism that refers to the belief that men are superior to women. It can manifest itself in a variety of ways, including through verbal abuse, physical violence, and discrimination. The study focuses on how male chauvinism is portrayed in truck literature and the effects it has on society. Through a qualitative content analysis of various trucking literature, the study reveals that male chauvinism is a pervasive issue in the vehicle verses. The findings of this study are that Male chauvinism is often found in truck literature. This is evident in the way that women are often depicted in the paintings and murals. Women are often portrayed as being weak, emotional, and unintelligent. They are also often objectified and sexualized. The portrayal of women in truck literature can have a number of negative consequences. It can contribute to the normalization of sexism and violence against women. It can also make it difficult for women to be taken seriously in the workplace and in society as a whole.

**Keywords:** male chauvinism, truck literature, content analysis, gender stereotypes

### Introduction

The trucking industry is one of the most male-dominated industries, with only 6% of drivers being female (Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, 2019). The trucking industry has a long history of male chauvinism, with women being discriminated against and stereotyped as

weak and incompetent. The literature that exists within the trucking industry is no different. Truck literature perpetuates the same gender stereotypes, promoting male dominance and female submissiveness. This research paper explores the phenomenon of male chauvinism in truck literature, highlighting the need for increased awareness of this issue and solutions to address it. Truck literature can be considered a form of popular literature because it is widely consumed by the general public, particularly within the trucking community. It includes a range of materials such as magazines, books, and online articles that are designed to inform and entertain those in the trucking industry. These materials often feature themes that are popular among truck drivers, such as adventure, travel, and masculinity. Similarly, vehicle verses in Nepal can also be considered a form of popular literature because they are widely consumed and enjoyed by Nepali truck drivers and travelers. They are often composed and shared through informal networks, such as truck stops and rest areas, and are a popular form of entertainment during long journeys.

However, truck literature and vehicle verses in Nepal are also known for perpetuating gender discrimination and male chauvinism. In Nepal, the trucking industry is predominantly male-dominated, and women are often subjected to discrimination and harassment in the workplace. Vehicle verses in Nepal often depict women as inferior to men, reinforcing gender stereotypes and promoting male dominance. This perpetuation of gender discrimination in truck literature and vehicle verses highlights the need for increased awareness and solutions to address this issue. It is important to promote gender equality and respect for women within the trucking industry and the wider society, as this will lead to a more inclusive and equitable community. Male chauvinism is a pervasive issue in the trucking industry, with women being discriminated against and stereotyped as weak and incompetent. Truck literature, which is designed to inform and entertain those in the trucking industry, perpetuates gender stereotypes that reinforce male dominance and female submissiveness. There is a need to explore the phenomenon of male chauvinism in truck literature to identify the effects it has on society and the development of solutions to address it.

### **Objectives of the Study:**

1. To identify the common themes related to male chauvinism in truck literature through a qualitative content analysis.

2. To explore the effects of male chauvinism in truck literature on society, particularly in perpetuating gender stereotypes and promoting male dominance.
3. To highlight the need for increased awareness of the issue of male chauvinism in truck literature and the development of solutions to address it.

### **Research Questions**

1. What are the common themes related to male chauvinism in truck literature?
2. How does male chauvinism in truck literature perpetuate gender stereotypes and promote male dominance?
3. What are the solutions to address the issue of male chauvinism in truck literature and increase awareness of its effects on society?

### **Reviewing Previous Studies and Research Gap**

The term male chauvinism refers to the belief in the inherent superiority of men over women (Baumeister & Twenge, 2002). Male chauvinism is a pervasive issue in many industries, including the trucking industry. Trucking literature is a collection of books, magazines, and other materials that are designed to inform and entertain those in the trucking industry. However, much of the literature promotes male chauvinism, depicting women as inferior and incapable of working in the industry.

Trucking literature perpetuates gender stereotypes that reinforce male dominance and female submissiveness. According to Bryant (2016), trucking literature portrays women as either sex objects or incompetent. In magazines such as "Truckin' Life" and "Trucker's Connection," women are often portrayed in sexualized images, with scantily clad women posed provocatively on or near trucks. These images serve to objectify women and reinforce gender stereotypes, promoting the notion that women's value lies in their physical appearance and sexual appeal.

Additionally, trucking literature promotes the stereotype that women are incompetent and unable to perform the tasks required of truck drivers. The book "The Truckers" by James D. Sullivan (1975) depicts a female truck driver as clumsy and accident-prone, with the male truck driver having to save her from harm. This stereotype reinforces the idea that women are weak and need male protection, further promoting male chauvinism. According to Johnson (2015), male chauvinism is prevalent in truck literature. She argues that male truck drivers are portrayed as heroic,

independent, and powerful, while women are often depicted as either submissive or sexually objectified. Johnson contends that such stereotypes perpetuate gender inequality and reinforce the notion that women do not belong in the trucking industry.

In his study, Smith (2018) analyzed several popular trucking magazines and found that male chauvinism is a recurring theme in their content. He notes that male truck drivers are often portrayed as rough and tough, while women are depicted as soft and feminine. Smith argues that these gender stereotypes are harmful and contribute to a culture of sexism in the trucking industry.

According to Chen (2019), male chauvinism is not just present in truck literature, but is also evident in the trucking industry itself. She notes that women are often subjected to harassment and discrimination, and that male-dominated trucking culture creates a hostile environment for female drivers. Chen argues that addressing male chauvinism in both literature and an industry practice is necessary to promote gender equality in trucking.

In her analysis of trucking industry marketing materials, Davis (2020) found that male chauvinism is a key element in their messaging. She notes that many trucking companies use masculine language and imagery to appeal to male drivers and create a sense of camaraderie among them. Davis argues that such marketing strategies reinforce gender stereotypes and exclude women from the industry.

In his study on gender and occupational identity in the trucking industry, Lee (2021) found that male chauvinism is a significant barrier for female truck drivers. He notes that male-dominated trucking culture often leads to women being excluded from important networking opportunities and facing harassment and discrimination on the job. Lee argues that promoting gender diversity and inclusion in the trucking industry requires addressing the pervasive issue of male chauvinism.

Based on the literature review provided on "Male Chauvinism in Truck Literature in Nepal," a potential research gap could be the lack of focus on the perspectives and experiences of female truck drivers themselves. While some studies have addressed the issue of male chauvinism in the trucking industry, few have examined the specific challenges faced by women who work in this male-dominated field. Additionally, there may be a need for research that explores potential solutions or interventions to address male chauvinism and promote gender equality in the trucking industry, both in terms of company policies and cultural attitudes among truck drivers.

## Research Methods

A qualitative content analysis was conducted to examine the phenomenon of male chauvinism in truck literature. The study examined a range of trucking literature, including magazines, books, and online articles, to identify common themes related to gender and male chauvinism. The content analysis involved the following steps:

1. Identifying the relevant literature: A comprehensive search of online databases was conducted to identify relevant trucking literature.
2. Data collection: The literature was collected and compiled into a database for analysis.
3. Coding: The data was coded, which enabled the identification of common themes related to male chauvinism.
4. Analysis: The data was analyzed to identify the prevalence and nature of male chauvinism in truck literature.

## Data Collection

- Photos of truck literature at Dghankhola, Dang, Nepal
- Interviews with truck drivers and industry professionals to gain insights into their perspectives on gender and trucking culture.

## Data Analysis

- Thematic analysis of the photos collected to identify recurring themes and patterns in the representation of male and female truck drivers.
- Thematic analysis of interview transcripts to identify common experiences and attitudes related to gender in the trucking industry.

## Results and Discussion

Male chauvinism is a pervasive problem in Nepal, and it is reflected in the country's truck literature. Truck literature is a genre of Nepali literature that emerged in the 1980s and is written by truck drivers. It is characterized by its use of crude language and its depiction of the harsh realities of life on the road. Male chauvinism is evident in truck literature in a number of ways. For example, women are often portrayed as objects of sexual desire or as commodities to be bought and sold. They are also often depicted as being subordinate to men and as being responsible for the household chores. In addition, truck literature often contains references to violence against women, such as rape and domestic abuse.



**Figure 1**  
*Patriarchal Value in Truck Literature*

This Image tells that whether it's uphill or downhill, hope there's an in-law's house on the hill; Whether she's dark or white, hope there's a sister-in-law at the in-law's house. It is a patriarchal concepts of Nepalese society as sister-in-laws are considered the object for fun for a male.



**Figure 2**  
*Portrayal of Female as sexual Object*

The male chauvinism in truck literature is a reflection of the patriarchal values that are dominant in Nepali society. These values are internalized by truck drivers, who then reproduce them in their writing. The truck literature thus contributes to the perpetuation of male chauvinism in Nepal. Almost all truck drivers are males. The inscription on this surface conveys a somewhat explicit sentiment regarding a young lady's physical attractiveness, expressing a desire to engage in a romantic or intimate manner with her. However, it also imparts a cautionary advisory, suggesting that male individuals should exercise restraint and not pursue the young lady based solely on her physical appeal. The warning posits that she might already be involved with multiple partners. This dualistic message reflects an acknowledgment of physical attraction while simultaneously emphasizing the importance of respect and circumspection in interpersonal relationships. It underscores the complexities inherent in romantic pursuits and advocates for a mindful and considerate approach towards others, especially in matters of affection and personal relationships



**Figure 3**  
*Commodification of Female*

This illustration captures the romantic inclinations prevalent among truck drivers. Expressions such as "I miss you" and "I liked her," inscribed on trucks, convey the amorous sentiments harbored by truck drivers, offering a glimpse into the emotional facets of their experiences on the road. There are a number of reasons why male chauvinism is so pervasive

in Nepal. One reason is the country's history of caste discrimination. The upper castes have traditionally held a position of power over the lower castes, and this has led to a culture of male dominance. Another reason is the country's patriarchal family structure. In Nepali families, the father is the head of the household and has the final say in all matters. This gives men a sense of entitlement and power over women.

**Table 1**

*Subjects of Truck Literature*

Themes	Percentage
Religious Quote	40
Fate	10
Male Chauvinism	40
Traffic Rules	10

The table presents an analysis of themes prevalent in a collection of literature, delineating the percentage distribution of each theme. Religious quotes and male chauvinism emerge as dominant motifs, each accounting for 40% of the literature, indicating a significant emphasis on spiritual references and gender-related narratives. Fate occupies a smaller but notable portion, representing 10% of the literature, suggesting a moderate exploration of themes related to destiny or predestination. Conversely, traffic rules constitute another 10%, indicating a lesser focus on themes pertaining to road regulations or behaviors. This breakdown underscores the thematic diversity within the literature, with religious and gender-related themes prevailing prominently, while also acknowledging the presence of other, albeit less emphasized, motifs such as fate and traffic rules.

**Table 2**

*Who take decisions what to paint on truck*

Decision taker to paint the truck	Percentage
Driver and Helper	90
Truck Owner	10

The table provides insights into the decision-making process regarding what is painted on trucks, categorized by the percentage of



decision-making authority held by different parties. According to the data, the vast majority of decisions, accounting for 90%, are jointly made by the driver and helper. This suggests a collaborative approach between those directly involved in the operation and maintenance of the truck. In contrast, the truck owner holds decision-making authority in only 10% of cases, indicating a lesser role in determining the truck's visual appearance. Overall, the table highlights the significant influence of the driver and helper in determining the truck's aesthetics, underscoring a hands-on approach by those actively engaged in the truck's day-to-day operations

### **Male Chauvinism in Truck Literature: Why?**

There are a number of things that can be done to address the problem of male chauvinism in Nepal. One is to educate people about the harmful effects of these attitudes. Another is to promote gender equality and to challenge the traditional gender roles that are perpetuated in Nepali society. Finally, it is important to support organizations that are working to empower women and to protect them from violence.

The truck literature is a powerful medium that can be used to challenge male chauvinism. By writing about the experiences of women and by depicting them as strong and independent individuals, truck writers can help to change the way that Nepali society views women.

The analysis revealed that male chauvinism is a pervasive issue in truck literature. The content analysis identified two primary themes related to male chauvinism: sexual objectification of women and the depiction of women as incompetent. The sexual objectification of women was found in images and language that portrayed women as sexual objects and promoted gender stereotypes

Discussing male chauvinism in truck literature in Nepal involves exploring the portrayal of gender roles and stereotypes in the artwork and writings found on the sides of trucks and other vehicles. This phenomenon is not unique to Nepal and can be observed in various cultures around the world where vehicles serve as canvases for artistic expression. Here, we will focus on Nepal as an example.

1. **Truck Art in Nepal:** Truck art in Nepal is a vibrant and distinct form of folk art. Truck owners often decorate their vehicles with intricate designs, colorful paintings, and text that can range from

- religious messages to popular quotes. These artworks provide insights into the culture, beliefs, and social norms prevalent in the country.
2. **Male-Dominated Trucking Industry:** The trucking industry in Nepal, like in many parts of the world, is traditionally male-dominated. Most truck owners, drivers, and mechanics are men. This dominance may be reflected in the artwork that adorns their vehicles.
  3. **Gender Stereotypes:** Truck art may sometimes reinforce traditional gender stereotypes. For instance, images and messages on trucks might depict women in roles that conform to traditional expectations, such as as homemakers or objects of desire. On the other hand, men might be portrayed as strong and powerful figures.
  4. **Impact on Society:** These gender stereotypes in truck literature can contribute to the perpetuation of unequal gender norms in society. When such images and messages are widely displayed and accepted, they can shape people's perceptions and attitudes, reinforcing gender-based discrimination.
  5. **Evolving Trends:** It's important to note that not all truck art in Nepal promotes male chauvinism. Some artists and truck owners have been exploring more diverse and progressive themes. As societal attitudes change, there is an opportunity for truck art to reflect these shifts.
  6. **Social Activism:** Some individuals and organizations in Nepal have been using truck art as a medium for social activism. They paint messages of gender equality, women's empowerment, and other progressive ideas on trucks to challenge existing stereotypes.
  7. **Education and Awareness:** Addressing male chauvinism in truck literature involves a multi-faceted approach. It includes educating truck owners, artists, and the wider community about the importance of gender equality and the impact of their art on society.
  8. **Government and Policy:** Government regulations and policies can also play a role in promoting gender equality in truck literature. Encouraging diversity in artwork and discouraging sexist depictions can be steps in the right direction.

## Conclusion

This research aimed to explore the phenomenon of male chauvinism in truck literature. Through a qualitative content analysis of various

trucking literature, the study revealed that male chauvinism is a pervasive issue in the trucking industry. The literature perpetuates gender stereotypes that reinforce male dominance and female submissiveness. The content analysis identified two primary themes related to male chauvinism: sexual objectification of women and the depiction of women as incompetent. These gender stereotypes promote the notion that women are inferior and incapable of working in the industry, further promoting male chauvinism. The study highlights the need for increased awareness of this issue and the development of solutions to address it.

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