

Gender Fluidity and the Digital Age: Performance of Gender in WhatsApp Emojis



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Abstract: *Gender as a social construct continues to evolve with shifting societal norms, emphasizing inclusivity and diversity in all aspects of life. Efforts to break away from traditional gender norms are evident in many areas, including digital communication. One example is the introduction of gender neutral emojis, which offer more inclusive ways for people to express themselves. The article analyzes WhatsApp's emoji collection, focusing on how gender neutral emojis promote the idea of gender fluidity. By reviewing and categorizing these emojis, the article examines their design features such as clothing, hairstyles, and expressions, and how they avoid strict gender labels. This analysis shows how these emojis reflect a broader cultural movement towards inclusivity, providing a small but meaningful way to challenge traditional ideas of gender in everyday communication.*

Keywords: Emojis, Digital Age, Gender Performativity, Digital Communication, WhatsApp Emojis

Introduction

The gender performativity theory was presented by feminist theorist Judith Butler in 1990. Butler identifies neither as female nor as male; in studies, Butler is referred to by gender-neutral pronouns such as them and they. Butler questioned the pre-defined gendered behaviors that are commonly associated with people right after birth. Butler introduced the idea that gendered behaviors are not innate or biological but are imposed on a person by normative heterosexuality. Butler claims that gender is not a fixed identity given to someone; rather, it is a performance. Gender identity is created by performing repeated and learned behaviors associated with males or females. According to Butler, gender can be reproduced in diverse ways other than speaking, like dress, body language, visiting medical specialists, exercises, and more.

"One is not born, but rather becomes a woman." (Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*)

Butler (1990), in *Gender Trouble*, advances this idea as:

"man and masculine might just as easily signify a female body as a male one, and woman and feminine a male body as easily as a female one." (Butler & Judith, 1998)

For Butler, gender is created through performance. Butler (1990) in *Gender Trouble* argues:

If gender attributes and acts, the various ways in which a body shows or produces its cultural signification, are performative, then there is no preexisting identity by which an act or attribute might be measured; there would be no true or false, real, or distorted acts of gender, and the postulation of a true gender identity would be revealed as a regulatory fiction.

Butler defined a mix-up of what "is" with what "should be" by the concept of "norms." According to Butler, when we name a child from the categories of girls or boys, we are fixing their gender roles; by naming them as men or women, we are defining categories. According to Butler, gender is defined by performance, and the process of defining gender and redefining it never ends; they are open to change according to the change in performance.

Gender Fluidity: Someone whose gender identity changes eventually. They identify as men, women, or neither at any point in life.

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Gender Flexibility: Someone who is flexible in their gender representation. They may behave or dress like men, women, or both depending on the situation.

Literature review

“Sex” pertains to biological attributes like chromosomes, genetics, and hormones. “Sexual preference” refers to whom the person is attracted to, whereas “Gender” reflects a person’s identity, social expectations, and behaviors (World Health Organization, n.d.). Gender has always been understood as a social and cultural concept that goes beyond biological differences. Traditionally, it is divided into two main categories: male and female. However, over time, this understanding has evolved, and now many people see gender as a spectrum rather than a strict binary. This shift has led to the recognition of identities like gender fluidity, where a person’s identity is not fixed and can change over time or exist outside fixed categories. “I am not a category, I am an ‘I’” highlights personal choice of identity. The Millennial generation embraces gender as a spectrum, not as a fixed title given at the time of birth (Rivas, 2015)

Parker (2016) states that Gender fluidity is an umbrella term that describes possibilities for gender identity beyond the binary “man” or “woman.” Diamond (2020) reports that an increasing number of children and teenagers are identifying with gender expressions or identities that are different from those assigned at birth. Some identify themselves as transgender, whereas others describe themselves as non-binary or gender fluid. His paper explores current non- binary forms of gender identity and expression among young children and how these experiences align with or differ from transgender experience.

Yaghoubi-Notash et al.’s (2019) research views gender as a construct shaped by social and linguistic practices, aligning with Judith Butler’s theory of performativity. They argue that societal structures perpetuate dominant norms, aligning language and power to reinforce binary gender identities. According to their study, language serves not merely as a reflection of these structures but as a tool that actively sustains them through repetitive performative acts.

Sumerau, Mathers, & Moon (2019) also claim that the ideas of binary gender and sexuality are created by society, and they influence our thinking so deeply that even people who oppose sexism and homophobia might unintentionally support these ideas. Their article also highlights a pattern called "foreclosing fluidity," in a society that removes or limits fluid possibilities in gender and sexuality. Through responses from 115 sexually and gender-fluid individuals, they show how people, whether they are cisgender, transgender, gay, or straight, unintentionally reinforce rigid norms through societal practices and beliefs.

Media has also played a crucial role in shaping and reflecting societal ideas about gender. Historically, mainstream media often reinforced stereotypical gender roles. Over time, however, it has become a space for challenging norms and increasing representation of diverse gender identities. Representation in films, advertisements, and digital platforms has become essential in normalizing non-binary and fluid identities. Zaslow (2015) highlights how, in U.S. news media, boys’ gender-fluid behavior was both supported and reframed by newscasters, often limiting the acceptance of such behaviors. Her analysis reveals that while gender-fluidity was acknowledged, it was often presented as acceptable only in certain contexts, such as children's play, and was framed within traditional gender norms. This illustrates the complex ways in which media shapes and negotiates gender expression and non-conformity.

Lalwani, Vidhani, and Mehta (2020) argue that the term “gender-fluid” is gaining popularity as society becomes increasingly inclusive. People believe that a person's identity is not confined to preconceived gender stereotypes of male and female, and they can be anything they want. This perspective has broadened societal views of how an individual may dress and has given them a better understanding of the whole constellation of genders. Their research also emphasizes that Generation Z, as raised in a digital era, is more adaptive and socially connected, using platforms like social media to share their experiences. A mixed-method research approach was used to examine how social media influencers have significantly shaped Gen Z's perceptions of gender fluidity within the beauty and fashion industries.

This evolving view of gender is not confined to social media or fashion, but it is also becoming a key element of digital communication. Platforms like WhatsApp, which people use daily to express themselves, are starting to reflect these changes. One key example is the introduction of emojis with gender-neutral and gender-fluid designs, which allow users to express their identities more authentically. Emojis enable users to express themselves emotionally and identify senders' intentions to improve conversation efficiency (Lo, 2008; Tigwell & Flatla, 2016).

The English word "emoji" is derived from a Japanese word meaning "picture" or "character," and it has become a vital part of digital communication (Danesi, 2017). Emojis convey their meaning by visually resembling real-world objects, such as a smiling face. Although emojis were first created in Japan in the late 90s (1990), they were not officially incorporated into the Unicode Standard until 2009 (Davis & Edberg, 2012). Furthermore, today there are 3,790 emojis recommended for widespread use across digital devices, including WhatsApp. Emojis allow users to better convey their moods, intentions, tones, and feelings through text communication (Tauch & Kanjo, 2016). These emojis now also include gender-neutral and gender-fluid emojis, which provide users with more inclusive ways to express their identities in digital conversations.

Research shows that such inclusivity is significant for representation, and users feel more validated and seen when digital tools, like emojis, offer options that match their identities. Walther & D'Addario (2001) claim that in this digital age, without non-linguistic cues, it can be very hard for users to communicate via digital messenger applications.

Fathiya Al Rashdi (2018) is of the view that emojis not only indicate users' emotions but also serve some communicative functions aligning with Gumperz's (1982) "contextualization cues". These include an indication of celebration, an expression of approval of others' messages, responses to gratitude and compliments, conversational openings and closings, linking devices, and an indication of the fulfillment of a requested task. In other words, emojis facilitate connections between participants, organize interactive exchanges, and convey the tone of the message; however, it is argued that the use of emojis is socially determined, and it depends on people how they interpret the meaning of emojis (Miller et al., 2016).

Manali Karmakar (2022) shows the dual nature of emojis, with both positive and negative implications. Emojis foster a sense of belonging, but can also lead to conflict and misunderstanding due to their context-sensitive and multiple interpretive nature. Her study also examines the sexual connotations of non-facial emojis such as eggplant and cherry in virtual communication. It analyses how these emojis generate sexual meaning in closed group interaction, revealing that the non-facial emojis are used with sexual connotations that are highly context-specific and are commonly used in interpersonal conversations. (Manali Karmakar, 2023)

Emojis are widely used, yet their meaning is subjective and open to interpretation. A study conducted in the U.S. surveyed 228 participants about their most recent use of emojis in their chats. The researchers collected the message along with the description, intended meaning, and function of the emojis. The results revealed that the social and linguistic roles of emojis are intricate and vary significantly between individuals.

In addition to that, Koch, Romero, and Stachl (2022) analyzed a data set comprising 309,229 WhatsApp messages from 226 volunteers to identify the influence of gender and age on emoji use. By using machine learning, the research found that gender and age significantly influence emoji use and language patterns, with a predictive accuracy of 85.7% for gender. Their findings also highlighted privacy concerns in the context of digital communication (Koch, Romero, & Stachl, 2022).

Likewise, Pérez-Sabater (2018) also examined the use of emoticons in WhatsApp, particularly focusing on gender differences. Her research claims that women send emoticons for relational purposes, reflecting group belonging rather than content emphasis (Pérez-Sabater, 2018).

Wirza et al. (2020) also analysed the use of emojis between male and female Indonesian college students. They noticed that there is no significant difference in emoji usage intensity but found that gender influenced

emoji selection. Additionally, Chen et al. (2015) explored the use of emoji across 134,419 users from 183 countries. The study revealed significant gender differences in the use of emojis, such as frequency, preferences, and patterns, providing deep insights into emoji behaviour across different communication contexts.

While these studies have examined gender-based patterns in emoji usage, none specifically address the role of gender fluidity in WhatsApp emojis. Gender fluidity is not well explored concerning WhatsApp emojis. Most existing research focuses on the binary categorization of gender. Still, as gender fluidity becomes a more recognized concept in society, it is essential to explore how people who identify outside traditional gender categories use emojis. So my research aims to fill this gap by investigating how gender fluidity is expressed through emojis on WhatsApp. This research will contribute to understanding the fluid nature of digital communication and offer a more inclusive perspective on emoji usage.

Research Questions

- How do WhatsApp emojis represent the construction and negotiation of gender norms?
- How do WhatsApp’s gender-neutral emojis align with Judith Butler’s theory of gender fluidity, particularly in terms of challenging binary gender norms?

Analysis

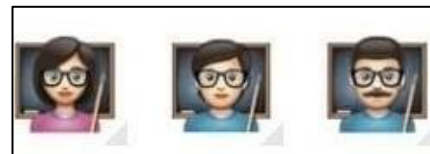
This research adopts a descriptive approach to analyze the inclusion of gender neutral emojis in WhatsApp. The study involved systematically identifying and examining the gender neutral emojis available on the platform. To achieve this, all emojis in WhatsApp’s emoji library were reviewed and categorized based on their visual and symbolic representation.

Gender-related Emojis from WhatsApp

Here are the emojis related to gender on WhatsApp, and a description is given of the purpose for which they are used.

Table 1
WhatsApp Gender-related Emojis and their Description

Sr.	WhatsApp Gender-related Emojis	Description
1.		This emoji represents gender, like a girl, a boy, and the neutral, third gender. This is used in chats to refer to a girl, a boy, or a neutral gender.
2.		This emoji represents gender, like an old uncle, an old aunt, and the aged neutral, third gender. This is used to refer to aged people.
3.		This emoji represents bald women, bald men, and the third gender named a bald person. This is used to refer to someone with a bald head or facing hair loss issues.
4.		This emoji represents the female version of wearing a Turban, the male version of wearing a Turban, and a person wearing a Turban. It is used culturally and to refer to a royal person.

Sr.	WhatsApp Gender-related Emojis	Description
5.		This emoji represents women with beards, men with beards, and a third gender (neutral) with a beard. This is used to refer to such a person.
6.		This emoji shows women as police officers, men as police officers, and a police officer (neutral). This is used to refer to people in this profession.
7.		This emoji represents women, men, and third gender (neutral) as construction workers. This is used to refer to workers in the field of construction or labor.
8.		This emoji represents women, men, and third gender (neutral) as Guards. This is used to refer to the people who work in this profession.
9.		This emoji represents women, men, and third gender (neutral) as detectives. This is used to refer to the people in this profession.
10.		This emoji represents women, men, and third gender (neutral) as doctors. This is used to refer to doctors.
11.		This emoji represents women farmers, men farmers, and a third gender (neutral) as farmers. This is used to refer to the people who are engaged in agriculture.
12.		This emoji represents women, men, and a third gender (neutral) as chefs. This is used to refer to chefs or cooking masters who can bake or cook food.
13.		This emoji shows women as teachers, men as teachers, and a neutral gender as teachers. This is used to refer to the faculty or teachers.
14.		This emoji represents women, men, and third gender (neutral) as office workers. This is used to refer to a businessperson or someone in a professional setting.

Sr.	WhatsApp Gender-related Emojis	Description
15.		This emoji represents female students or graduates, male students or graduates, and a third gender (neutral) as students or graduates. This is used to refer to learners.
16.		This emoji represents a female mermaid, a male merman, and a gender-neutral mermaid (merfolk). This is used to refer to such concepts.
17.		This emoji represents a woman, a man, and a neutral person wearing a traditional Western wedding dress with a veil over their head. This is used to refer to marriages.
18.		This emoji represents women, men, and the third gender as a labor force. This is used to refer to plumbers.
19.		This emoji represents judge/ lawyer women, judge/ lawyer men, and judge/ lawyer person (neutral). This is used to refer to the leading roles of the legal profession.
20.		This emoji represents women, men, and third gender (neutral) as pilots or flight attendants. This is used to refer to people in aviation.
21.		This emoji represents women, men, and the third gender (neutral) with a crown on the head. This is used to refer to the Queen, King, or person in power.
22.		This emoji represents women, men, and third gender (neutral) wearing Santa hats. This is used to represent Santa Claus.
23.		This emoji represents pregnant women, pregnant men, and pregnant people. This is used to refer to pregnant women, trans men, and non-binary people.
24.		This emoji represents a woman breastfeeding a baby, a woman feeding a baby, a man feeding a baby, and a person feeding a baby. This is used to refer to this role.
25.		This emoji represents a woman, a man, and a person making a gesture of No. This is used to show disagreement.

Sr.	WhatsApp Gender-related Emojis	Description
26.		This emoji represents two friends holding hands, often used to symbolize friendship without any gender markers.
27.		These emojis represent a couple in love, with a heart symbol between them, representing the love and relationship between them. The emojis show: ▪ Heterosexual couple ▪ Lesbian couple ▪ Gay couple ▪ Heterosexual couple with a kiss ▪ Lesbian couple with a kiss ▪ Gay couple with a kiss
28.		
29.		

Application of Butler’s Theory on WhatsApp Gendered Emojis

WhatsApp is one of the most widely used social media platforms in the world; people communicate across the world with their families, friends, colleagues, and fellows. In earlier days, communication was done through various methods, such as face-to-face communication, letters, the postal system, and telephonic calls, as time passed people started communicating using mobile phones but before the advancement of visual elements in technology, people used words and describe thoughts and emotions in form of paragraphs, used punctuations, keyboard characters, emoticons like “:-), :), :(, <3”. The descriptive words contain a direct message or lack emotions altogether, but following the period of technological visual communication was welcomed, and then it became more effective to show complex and long messages even by using a single emoji. Emojis are visuals for communicating messages, but they have deep meanings hidden in their style, color, and the way they are situational and culturally created. They sometimes communicate what represents real emotions, but sometimes they symbolize the larger context, such as ongoing debates.

WhatsApp has many emojis that are created differently for different purposes, used to represent different cultures, professions, and feelings, and many emojis represent Gender. The WhatsApp emojis are gendered, and in the initial times, they represented the professions, activities, cultures, and events of both genders, male and female. Following this era, WhatsApp added gender- neutral emojis in 2022 in updates to its latest version that year. WhatsApp not only gendered the emojis but also used color modifiers; one of the interpretations could be that this concept of gender fluidity, gender-neutrality, and gender flexibility applies to all nations and is universally representative.

Butler’s theory rejects the idea of fixed gender and argues that gender is created by performance. The concept of gender-neutral in WhatsApp is also linked back to Butler’s theory and even Butler’s self-identity. He did not identify his gender, and people use gender-neutral pronouns like they/them to refer to Butler. The WhatsApp emojis follow the concept of this theory, as they have updated the emojis according to gender concepts and redefined the roles, challenging gender norms and showing the changeability in gender identity, which rejects innate linked identities and roles.

The emojis from Table 1 show how they depict gender and represent the change in stereotypical thoughts related to gender.

The first two emojis represent a simple girl, boy, and gender-neutral person in early and old age; this is the first step where they give a separate identity to the third gender by calling it a person. Though there are no proper pronouns that could be used to refer to them in emojis, WhatsApp created the third emoji, which

has a few features from female emojis like eyes and eyebrows, then a few from male emojis like face shape, plus a few features are a mixture of both like hair, lips, and nose. This shows they are now referred to using this emoji to make them without specifying gender.

The 3rd and 5th emojis represent bald women, bald men, bald persons, women, men, and persons with beards, respectively. The person (neutral), using a blend of features of both genders, represents everyone without specifying gender. This also represents diverse gender identities and challenges societal norms, such as women having long hair, and women not being expected to keep beards even though they are expected to beautify their looks by going to different salons, though having a beard and a bald head is associated with men. This promotes a more comprehensive identification of gender, gender flexibility, and gender fluidity.

The 4th, 15th, and 21st emojis represent the female, male, and person wearing a Turban; then the female, male, and person as students or graduates; and the female, male, and person with a crown. All emojis have societal and cultural significance, and all three emojis challenge societal expectations and cultural norms. As the 4th emoji shows all three genders wearing a Turban, wearing a Turban is associated with men. Women are never given such powerful status to lead or have royal status, and the gender that is neither male nor female is not accepted in society, but here they are given a turban, which shows they are representing a community and are given royal status.

Then, in the 15th emoji, the female, male, and person represent the graduated people. This also challenges gender stereotypes that women cannot get an education, and this emoji shows all genders wearing a black coat and graduation cap; this represents equality among genders and empowerment of women and neutral gender through education. The 21st emoji shows the crown on the head; the concept of Queen and King was known to society, but the crown (made taller like the Queen's crown and shaped like a King's crown) on the head of the person empowers the neutral gender. This reinforces gender stereotypes. All three emojis show gender flexibility and fluidity.

The 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th, 13th, 14th, 18th, 19th, and 20th emojis represent various professions, and each profession has an emoji of a female, a male, and a gender-neutral (known as a person). The third emoji in all professions is created by blending female and male features to represent the gender-neutral. This symbolizes equal opportunity for the person, who is not identified as female or male, and this also symbolizes their acceptance in society and on social platforms. Then these emojis also show that women are empowered and given equal opportunities in the fields where men were dominant and were solely associated with men, for example, professions like police officers, construction workers, guards, detectives, farmers, labor force, lawyers/judge, pilots, office workers, and doctors. These professions were only associated with men, but this change shows equal chance and opportunity for women. Doctors were always considered to be men, and women as nurses, but now this has changed. Women were not expected to be in agriculture/farming, construction, and labor fields, but this emoji empowered women in such fields. In the same way, the professions that were linked to females and women and were expected to perform those roles are challenged in emojis 12 and 13, like chefs and teachers. Both these fields are associated with females; they were given innate roles of cooking for everyone, and then when some girls wanted to work, they were only allowed to be teachers. These emojis challenge these stereotypical roles and norms. All these emojis support the gender-inclusive approach, gender flexibility, and gender fluidity.

The 16th and 22nd emojis have cultural significance and mythical backgrounds. Both of these emojis are known for gift-giving. The mermaid, merman, and merfolk (neutral) are linked to Christmas, and Santa Claus, Mrs. Claus, and gender-neutral Claus are linked to the Christmas tree and the Christmas Day event. These emojis promote gender-neutral people in powerful roles and also represent non-traditional roles for men (as merman) and women (Mrs. Claus) and challenge gender stereotypes by promoting gender equality.

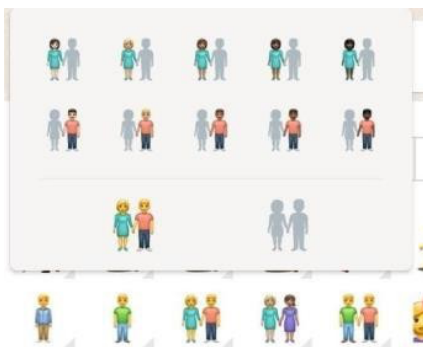
The 17th, 23rd, and 24th emojis represent family formation. The 17th emoji represents the concept of marriage by showing the bride, and the 23rd emoji represents the reproductive stage, where pregnancy is shown. The man with a bridal veil over his head symbolizes same-sex marriage between people of the same sex, as one of them is playing the role of the bride, and the pregnant man refers to a trans man; this shows that these emojis completely hold the concept of gender fluidity, which says a man or a woman can change their identity at any point in life. The gender-neutral person emojis represent gender flexibility and challenge the stereotypes that non-binary people cannot have marriages or cannot conceive a baby. The third emoji (24th) shows four people feeding the baby; the first shows a woman breastfeeding a baby, the second shows a woman feeding a baby using a feeder, the third shows the person (neutral) feeding a baby using a feeder, and the fourth shows a man feeding a baby using a feeder. This set of emojis challenges gender-defined roles that say women are responsible for the upbringing and care of children. This shows that a man also fulfills this responsibility, and this also reflects the idea of a trans man's child or non-binary people having a child and feeding their children. This holds the idea of gender fluidity and flexibility.

The 25th emoji shows disagreement, and the woman and person (neutral) making the sign of "No" gives them the power to speak and disagree. Their opinion is valued and empowered here. This challenges gender norms and societal expectations.

The 26th, 27th, 28th, and 29th emojis represent friendship, love relationships, heterosexual couples, lesbian couples, and gay couples with a heart sign in between them, then represent heterosexual couples with a kiss, lesbian couples with a kiss, and gay couples with a kiss. The 26th emoji represents two friends holding hands, symbolizing their friendship without any gender marker. This sticker gives the option to create it by one's own choice.

Figure 1

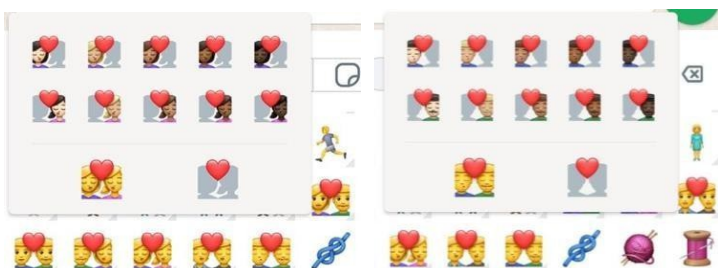
Sample for Analysis



This is how a sticker can be created by adding any gender as your friend. This challenges the traditional norms about friendship with cross-gender friends. This also holds the idea of gender flexibility. Well, the option of selecting your partner's gender is given; they symbolize heterosexual couples, lesbian couples, and gay couples. This holds the idea of gender fluidity and challenges gender norms.

Figure 2

Sample for Analysis



These gender neutral emojis introduced by WhatsApp represent a significant cultural shift in how society visualizes and interacts with gender identity and challenge the defined societal role. Butler's theory is completely applicable to WhatsApp gendered emojis, as seen in the above examples. The emojis support the gender-neutral concept, empower women, hold the idea of gender flexibility and fluidity, challenge the stereotypical and innate linked norms, and create gender according to performance instead of defining gender roles as rigid and predefined concepts.

WhatsApp provides users with symbols that do not enforce male or female characteristics, giving them a choice they can identify themselves however they feel like, i.e either male or female, which again leads us to Butler's notion that gender expressions are not inherently tied to a natural essence. Moreover, gender-neutral emojis create a sense of belonging for non-binary and gender queer individuals who often feel excluded by strictly male or female options.

The ability to choose between male, female, or neutral forms empowers users to experiment with and assert their identity without societal constraints. The inclusion of non-binary options in emojis underscores the rejection of the male/female binary. This aligns with Butler's critique of how societal norms create and enforce binary frameworks that limit self-expression.

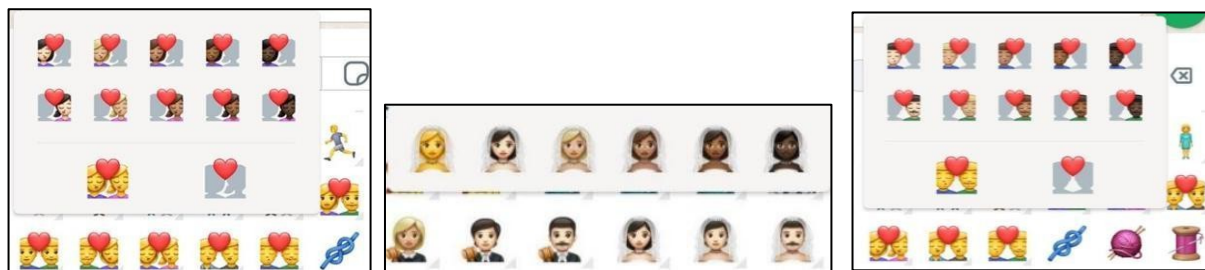
The widespread use of these emojis in everyday conversations helps normalize non-binary and fluid identities, reducing stigma and fostering acceptance. For younger generations exploring these identities, these options offer a safe way to express themselves without being forced into predefined categories.

Heated Debates (Reality) and Gendered Emojis on WhatsApp

The ongoing debates and the promotion of concepts such as LGBTQ+, gender binary vs. non- binary, gender identity vs. biological sex, transgender rights, reproductive rights, gender and sexual orientation, and gender plus intersectionality are promoted by communication and media representation. WhatsApp, being one of the largest communication tools, fully plays its role in promoting these concepts.

Figure 3

Sample for Analysis



WhatsApp emojis, as discussed above, symbolize the following concepts: gender fluidity, gender flexibility, acceptance for transgender individuals (person emoji on WhatsApp), diverse genders in education, and LGBTQ+, which supports bisexual, gay, lesbian, same-sex marriages, and transgender individuals (pregnancy, marriage/bride, love relationship emojis on WhatsApp). WhatsApp emojis also represent gender and intersectionality, which supports the idea of how gender intersects with other races and classes. There is the option of choosing a skin color that represents different classes and races. The option of selecting a second partner as a friend or love also symbolizes how one gender intersects with other races, as there is an option of making a couple from two different races. The WhatsApp emojis are gendered, and emojis are associated with real life, showing how people promote all these gender-related concepts and prefer to change their gender, identity, and challenge defined societal roles. The reality is pictured in WhatsApp emojis.

Conclusion

The incorporation of gender neutral emojis in WhatsApp marks a significant milestone in promoting inclusivity and gender fluidity. By providing options beyond traditional male and female, these emojis empower users to express themselves without the constraints of societal norms. This shift mirrors broader cultural efforts to embrace diversity and aligns with the idea of gender as a fluid and performative construct. Through these features, WhatsApp not only facilitates but also normalizes non-binary and gender fluid identities in digital communication.

However, there remains scope for further exploration. Future research could focus on exploring the perspective of gender fluid people, examining whether these visuals adequately capture their identities and experiences. Investigating their opinions can provide valuable insights and can highlight areas for improvement. Additionally, understanding how gender neutral emojis are perceived across diverse cultural contexts can guide platforms like WhatsApp in creating more inclusive and meaningful representations for all users.

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