Digital Feminist Activism (2019)

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Central argument	Digital communication can help challenge sexism and patriarchy by connecting people and making experiences visible. But online activism does not empower everyone equally.
What did they study?	How girls, women and some men use digital platforms to challenge sexism, misogyny, harassment and rape culture. Campaign examples include Everyday Sexism, Hollaback!, #MeToo and #BeenRapedNeverReported.
Research methods	Analysis of 800+ digital items (including posts, blogs, tweets and images), 82 semi-structured interviews and observation of online communities.
Key finding: empowerment	Online platforms can increase voice,visibility and solidarity. People can share experiences, recognise common problems and organise collective action against sexist norms.
Key finding: limits	Activists can experience harassment and emotional pressures. Some voices gain greater attention than others, so participation and influence remain unequal.
H583 link: key question 1	Apply feminism and fourth-wave feminism to the relationship between globalisation and digital communication. Discuss patriarchy, collective resistance, social conflict and change.
H583 link: key question 2	Assess the positive and negative impacts of digital communication on gender identities, relationships, values and inequalities in a global context.
How can it be evaluated?	Strength: combining digital content and interviews reveals both public activism and lived experience. Limit: studying activists does not represent all users; online visibility does not prove lasting structural equality.
Using it in an exam	5 marks: outline a way activism challenges patriarchy, with an example. 10 marks: use a source to explain two reasons linked to digital communication. 20 marks: weigh empowerment against continuing inequalities to make a justified judgement.

SUMMARY |Explain the study in two sentences

Mendes, Ringrose and Keller (2019) found that digital feminist activism can give women a voice, connect them with others and help challenge patriarchal attitudes. However, online harassment, unequal visibility and the difficulty of achieving long-term change mean that digital communication alone cannot remove gender inequality.

REFERENCES| FURTHER READING

Mendes, K., Ringrose, J. and Keller, J. (2019) Digital Feminist Activism: Girls and Women Fight Back Against Rape Culture. Oxford University Press. https://academic.oup.com/book/5871

Cambridge OCR (2026) A Level Sociology H583 Specification, Section A: Globalisation and the Digital Social World (pp. 27–28). https://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/758593-specification-a-level-sociology-h583.pdf

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