

Rising Ratio of Abusive Terms in Our Society: Its Causes and Effects

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Abstract

This research delves deeply into the upsurge of abusive language permeating our society, meticulously exploring its origins, manifestations, and ensuing repercussions. Through a systematic approach, interviews were conducted with students from Hazara University, unravelling the multifaceted facets of this linguistic phenomenon. The study discerns that the prevalence of abusive terms in everyday discourse is often rooted in varied intentions. Individuals employ such language as a means to establish camaraderie, assert dominance, alleviate personal frustrations, or, on occasion, as inadvertent slips. These motives underscore the complex interplay of social dynamics contributing to the proliferation of abusive language. Moreover, the research advocates for targeted interventions, particularly counselling, to assist individuals in managing their emotions effectively. By addressing the underlying emotional triggers, there exists the potential to mitigate the chronic use of abusive language. The emphasis on emotional regulation emerges as a critical component in steering societal discourse toward healthier and more constructive avenues. A pivotal finding of the study underscores the broader societal consequences of unchecked abusive language, particularly among older people. In essence, this research advocates for a nuanced understanding of the motives behind abusive language, coupled with targeted interventions aimed at emotional regulation. By addressing these aspects, society can aspire to cultivate a more respectful and harmonious discourse, mitigating the adverse effects on both interpersonal relations and broader societal peace.

Keywords: Abusive Terms, Societal Values, Linguistic Phenomenon.

Introduction

The use of informal or abusive language is not a new lingual practice; it has evolved with the development of language. Every language has its own abusive words. In the dictionary, the term "abusive words" is used for informal use of language and abusive terms used during speaking or writing. Abusive words are not considered part of the standard vocabulary of a language as they are informal expressions of language users that friends use as fun, or as they are used to express anger and anxiety. People of the same social group mostly use abusive words, but when used as a verbal attack, it can offend people. These words are not permanent terms of a language. They can be removed or may disappear from the language.

The other term for informal use of language is slang. The term slang mainly refers to the informal usage of words and phrases that can be specific to a particular group of people. They are used to have a unique way of communication, and it is thought that conversations can easily be carried out

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in this way. The slang that the researcher wants to discuss is the abusive terms used in our discussion; those terms have become part of our daily language and conversations and are much below ethical standards. Although the use of local slang gives rise to affiliation with the very community, but total misuse of language in the form of abuses has lowered the standards of our regional languages, and this is called the use of abusive words.

Abusive words are much less common than standard language and are considered curses in official or formal meetings. Although it is mainly opined that abusive words are used by teenagers or youngsters, in our society, we can witness old people most commonly using such terms. So, the use of this form of language is not restricted only to youngsters.

Abusive words are primarily used in spoken communication, or it can be said that abusive terms are a way of expressing fun or anger-filled thoughts in spoken language. In writing, there is not much use of abusive language as it is generally considered that written communication is more formal than spoken, so it has very few chances of having informal or abusive expressions. In verbal expressions, abusive words are used by young groups as fun with their fellows and friends, while older adults use slang mostly to throw out their anger at other people or groups. It is not apparent that young people use it only for fun; they also use it as a verbal attack against their opponents. So, the use of abusive words is not confined to a specific age group or specific class and profession. Still, it's a general social practice or we may call it an ill practice, which is widely practiced by many people in every society.

Language misuse is also used as a tool to misuse authority or class; in our society, we can see that while talking to juniors in profession and attendants, we use slang to have a hard hand on them. Authority or upper rank in a profession also gives rise to misuse of language. Also, people of the upper class mostly use abusive terms while talking to inferior ones. So, socially abusive language also plays a role in showing class or status.

Abusive words used in anger are the most effective and misused form of language. Whenever abusive language is used to verbally attack an opponent, it causes social problems. It is considered an easy way to express anger and throw others on the lower belt, but this easy and verbal way of anger expression sometimes may give rise to fatal endings.

The use of abusive words has a negative effect on a person's social life, as a person who commonly uses abusive terms is considered illiterate and ill-mannered. It might also affect the user's abilities. A regular user of abusive words is considered aggressive and less trustworthy. Even if people do not get offended by such a person, they still judge a person's behaviour and ability on the basis of the choice of vocabulary he uses while communicating.

In addition to abusive words, abusive expressions are used where words are not abusive, but the expressions make them abusive. For example, we commonly use gentle irony in our daily conversation, in which words are simple, but the way we express them is sometimes cursing or abusing.

In this research, the researcher will work on the use of abusive words and expressions and the rising ratio of abusive terms in our daily conversations. The researcher will also look for the causes of why this ratio is increasing. The effect of abusive words and expressions on the personality of the user will also be discussed, along with the social effects of abusive words and expressions.

Objectives

1. To inquire about the intensity of abusive words used in our society.
2. To investigate the causes of the use of abusive words.
3. To know about the social effects of abusive language.

Research Questions

1. How intense are abusive words used in our society?
2. What are the causes of the rising ratio of abusive words?
3. What are the effects of the increasing ratio of abusive words on our society?

Literature Review

Abusing others is disgusting because it's against ethical and moral principles. It may be because of a lack of education or courtesy. Students who lack the spirit to become civilized citizens and have no passion for learning etiquette and moralities are habitual in abusing others. One another cause of the common usage of abusive language by students is that they feel pleasure and pride in abuse. It has become a common practice in our educational institutions that outrageous and abusive words are used most commonly by students. The child learns such use of language from his surroundings, and this is discovered just like other elements of the language. Moreover, students and other people who are frustrated and filled with hatred abuse each other. They always consider themselves superior to others (Khadim, 2018).

Abusive words are not harmful when used for storytelling and joking, but they can cause problems when used as an attack. Abusive words have a cathartic effect, which we all have experienced in frustration or response to pain. So, abuse can have positive effects as it works as a tool of catharsis. Furthermore, children start learning abusive language from their homes and continue with their surroundings. In abuse, sexual references are still at the top in the use of offensive word lists (Jay & Janschewitz, 2012)

Having knowledge of abusive words and regularly using them are two separate things. It's not like this that a person having a comprehensive knowledge of abusive words will always use this to cuss at others. So it looks confirmed that a person having greater knowledge of a language or having a bank of vocabulary will definitely have a long list of taboo words. However, still, he might not use those taboo terms as he already has an excellent language to express himself in other ways. On this account, abuse is a sign of weak vocabulary and lack of education. And such people who use abusive words most commonly are rated as lower on socio-intellectual status (Valdesolo, 2016). Choice of vocabulary creates a contradiction between a person's ability and how they are seen. Researchers found that the people around them are less like people who use more abusive words, and abuse has a negative effect on their personality and their professional life. Using more abusive words makes people appear less intelligent than non-users. Regular users of abusive words are considered aggressive and less trustworthy. People who are not offended by the ill use of language still judge others on the basis of the use of vocabulary (Pink, 2018).

Abusive words are used for a variety of reasons. It injects a direct emotional component into the conversation. Mainly abusing is to express frustration, surprise or anger. Insulting abuses can be name-calling or saying something harmful. So, abusive terms are always a defining feature of verbal abuse, hate speech and sexual harassment. Abusive words also have positive uses as they help in expressing deep emotions about something, helpful in cracking jokes, humour and storytelling (Grohot, 2018).

Conversational skills are one of the most essential skills needed to perform well in everyday society. The ability to avoid offensive words is essential to save the honour and respect of other fellows. Slang words and abusive terms commonly used by the young generation in daily conversations can be unknowingly offensive. Avoiding such words can make you a helpful citizen and can improve your social and professional life (Andal, 2018).

Youngsters mostly do abuse, and they think they look fantastic when they are abusive, but tell them that they look out of control and ignorant instead of cool. Teens must be encouraged to think alternatively and express themselves in some other ways instead of using abusive words. Help youngsters to know that they look ignorant and frustrated when they use foul and abusive language. It is also witnessed that young people use abusive words as they think they look mature in this way (Roberts, 2019).

Research Methodology

The study aims to observe and analyze the increasing use of abusive language in daily conversations. Employing the "Cause and Effect" theory, the research focuses on identifying the causes of this rise and its impact on social settings. This qualitative research involves analyzing responses from interviews.

Research Design

An analytical approach/design is employed to analyze the use of abusive words and language by individuals.

Population

The study targets students from different departments at Hazara University as respondents for the interviews.

Sample

Ten students from Hazara University will be selected for interviews through a sampling process to represent the overall population.

Instrument

Interviews will be designed to collect data, with questions explained in detail in the local language to ensure authentic responses. The interviews will be audio-taped and later analyzed.

Data Collection

Ten respondents will be administered interviews, ensuring clarity in questions to obtain authentic responses in their local language.

Data Analysis

The collected interview data will be analyzed according to the respondents' responses, providing a detailed examination of each aspect.

Analysis and Discussion on Findings

Do We Abuse

To answer this question almost all the respondents responded the same. After analysis of their answers, it is retrieved that they do abuse in their daily life conversation, and it has become so regular that it's a habit now. They unconsciously abuse without considering it a bad thing to utter. At the same time, some said that they abuse sometimes but not very often. One of the male respondents gave an interesting answer that we are male, and it is widespread for this gender to abuse. Some revealed that they never abuse in everyday interactions. It is also shown that abusive language has become part of our culture. It is also noticed that abusing in English language is

considered incredible and attractive. So, to look cool is also counted as one of the reasons for abuse.

To Whom We abuse

This is a very common yet critical question when it is asked against whom we abuse. When interviewees were asked this question, the majority of male respondents answered that either they abuse in front of their friends as a joke or they abuse the one who is doing something wrong. Some female respondents revealed that they abuse their relatives and sometimes those who tease them on the way. Moreover, it was revealed that abusive terms are mostly against friends and the ones who irritate them.

Why Do We Abuse

As every output has some input, likewise every effect has some cause, so when the cause of abuse is asked, respondents responded that mainly, abusive terms are the outcome of frustrations or sometimes it happens when they are annoyed and teased by others. Some respondents said that they abuse in anger or when they are under some emotional Stress. It is also analyzed that through abusive terms, the conversations are made exciting, and respondents enjoy it. It was also revealed that some people abuse as it is their habit to abuse whenever they are teased or irritated. It is analyzed that abusive language is mostly a natural act against certain behaviours or actions. Furthermore, it was responded that abusive language is also used to show frankness among friends, and these abusive terms are fed subconsciously, so whenever there is a need, the abusive store provides relevant abusive terms to the articulatory system.

Why Do Other People Abuse

What people think about others who abuse and what they think about why they abuse is a matter of perception of others about abusers. When interviewees were asked about their perceptions of others, some of them responded that many people are habitual of abuse, and some abuse because of emotional Stress and frustrations, which, leads to a rising ratio of abuse, which ultimately leads to many destructions. Additionally, it is analyzed from the responses that education plays a vital role in lowering the abusive ratio in daily life conversation, as according to respondents, they mostly see illiterate, who use abusive terms more as compared to literate/educated people. Some revealed that people abuse because they think without the use of abusive terms in their communication, their purpose will not be completed. One of the respondents revealed that people abuse because of their short-temperedness. Furthermore, according to some respondents, drug addicts very often use abusive language, and many times, people having unbearable mental pressures also results in abusive and teasing language and tone. Sometimes, it also happens that a person abuses just to degrade the other person and to get self-satisfaction or self-praise.

Awkward Situations Because of Abusive Language

When abusive language and terms are taught in nature, it may result in some awkward, severe situations. The respondents were asked whether they had faced any such problem in which they felt awkward because of abusive language. Many responded that they had never faced such a situation, but some said that they face it sometimes when they unintentionally abuse in front of family members or any elder. Some respondents revealed that they were abused unintentionally in front of their fathers and faced such situations.

Effects on Society

After analyzing the responses of interviewees, the effects of the rising ratio of abusive terms are very adverse and alarming. Students of psychology who were interviewed revealed that whatever we utter becomes part of our mental capacity dev, develops into our nature, and shows our personality. Some responded that abusive terms have very adverse effects on a person's personality and social image. Moreover, it was revealed that when elders abuse, the young ones follow, and it has adverse effects on their upbringing. Another student from the psychology department reveals that children of the 5-8 years age group learn quickly, and whatever they learn outside, they repeat it at home and other places.

Furthermore, it is also analyzed that because of linguistic abuse, society's peace is disturbed, and this disturbance leads to destruction at individual, familial and social levels.

Elimination of Abusive

Possible or Not?

To answer the question of whether elimination is possible or not, almost all of them responded that yes, it is possible to eliminate, and it is only possible through self-counselling and self-control. Respondents also recommend that emotions are only for twelve minutes. If a person controls for only twelve minutes, then it is easy to eliminate such evils from our society. Additionally, it is recommended by some respondents that if someone is getting angry they must leave that place as it will provide them space to get some emotional stability. Some suggested that through awareness seminars we can reduce or eliminate lingual abuses from our society. It is analyzed that lingual abuse can be eliminated by punishing the one who commits this act. Some respondents also suggest that by controlling our egos and understanding each other, we can bring tolerance and reduce the ratio of abusive terms in our society.

Furthermore, it was revealed that educating the uneducated can lessen the rate of abusive terms in our daily life conversations, and it is also essential to keep our home environment safe from abusive language, which can distance the new generation from this evil. One of the respondents revealed that it is not possible to eliminate abusive language from our society as it is attached to a person forever, a person may not abuse in every setting, but still, when they get into a specific situation, they will definitely abuse.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this comprehensive exploration of informal and abusive language has unveiled a multifaceted panorama, tracing its historical evolution and dissecting its contemporary manifestations. From the distinction between abusive words and slang to the recognition that abusive language transcends generational boundaries, this research has illuminated the pervasive nature of linguistic misuse. It has been underscored that abusive terms find a prevalent place in spoken communication, serving as outlets for emotional expression and, at times, as tools for asserting authority or class distinctions. The study highlights the potential social repercussions of such language misuse, affecting individuals' perceived trustworthiness, professionalism, and overall societal harmony. Furthermore, the research probes the root causes behind the escalating ratio of abusive terms in daily conversations, emphasizing the need for self-counselling, awareness seminars, and fostering tolerance as potential solutions. While recognizing the challenges of eliminating deeply ingrained linguistic patterns, the study remains optimistic, proposing avenues for societal change through education and emotional control. As we navigate the complex terrain of linguistic expression, this research serves as a call to action, urging individuals and communities

to collectively address and rectify the misuse of language for a more respectful and harmonious societal discourse.

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