CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Rationale

Cancel culture on social media has changed public accountability and reputational punishments online. Celebrities can quickly become targets of public criticism on social media when they are perceived to have violated social or moral standards. Affordances on social media speed up public judgment and collective responses to celebrity scandals (Altamira & Movementi, 2022).

Large-scale online conversations regarding morality, beliefs, and expressions of support or opposition often contribute to the emergence of cancel culture. Users frequently engage in debates through reply threads and quote tweets (Muharman et al., 2022; Putri et al., 2024).

Although tweets are generally brief, they may contain argumentative elements such as claims, supporting reasons, and rebuttals (Gómez-Suta et al., 2023; Schaefer et al., 2025). Users also employ emotional appeals and evaluative language to influence their audiences (Herra et al., 2025; Kim, 2024).

Argumentation patterns and persuasive components are common in Twitter exchanges. According to Gómez-Suta et al (2023), Twitter users employ emotive and evaluative language to communicate agreement, disagreement, and argumentation online. Luzón (2023) found that digital debaters utilize stance-taking tactics, evaluative expressions, and rhetorical language to alter audience viewpoints and positions. Schaefer et al. (2025) show that brief tweets may include statements, supporting explanations, and rebuttals.

Interactions on X demonstrate how users support and challenge different viewpoints through interactive features. Reply chains and quotation tweets are discussion places, according to Bodaghi & Zhu (2024). According to Ackland et al. (2024), discussions on X involve interactive exchanges in which users actively respond to opposing viewpoints. The Toulmin model may also recognize argumentative structures including assertions, facts, warrants, and rebuttals in

digital discourse, making it useful for understanding cancel culture conversations on X, according to Turós et al. (2025).

Stephen Toulmin defines an argument as numerous interconnected parts that support a proposition. Toulmin's argumentation model includes claim, data, warrant, backup, qualifier, and rebuttal (Toulmin, 2003). Data supports an assertion, which the writer or speaker intends to verify.

A warrant also outlines the data-claim logical link to help rationalize the case. Toulmin adds that backing—principles, ideals, or references—can improve a justification. Qualifiers like probably, typically, and perhaps reflect an argument's certainty. Last is the rebuttal, which addresses a potential rebuttal or opposing argument. This argumentation model is frequently used in discourse analysis to describe how arguments are produced, endorsed, and contested in many kinds of communication, including social media (Toulmin, 2003).

Despite expanding study on cancel culture and social media communication, notably celebrity cancel culture discourse on X, most studies focus on social or psychological repercussions rather than discourse argumentation patterns. This research analyzes celebrity cancel culture debates on X by examining the types of reasoning employed by users and the persuasive strategies they use to construct and challenge viewpoints. This study specifically investigates argumentation patterns surrounding the Nicki Minaj controversy on X.

1.2 Research Question

Based on this rationale, the research questions are formulated as follows:

1. What types of arguments are used in celebrity cancel culture discussions on X?
2. How do users support and contest arguments in cancel culture discussions on X?

1.3 Research Objectives

This study aims to analyze argumentation patterns in celebrity cancel culture discussions on X. Specifically, the objectives of this study are:

1. To identify and categorize the types of arguments used in celebrity cancel culture discussions on X.
2. To examine how users support and challenge arguments in cancel culture discussions on X.

1.4 Scope of the Research

This study focuses on argumentation patterns in one selected celebrity cancel culture case on X.

The scope includes:

1. Public tweets and replies related to the selected celebrity controversy on X.
2. English-language tweets only.
3. A six-month timeframe starting from the initial emergence of the controversy.
4. 52 tweets and replies selected through purposive sampling.

The analysis focuses on:

- The types of arguments used in cancel culture discussions.
- The ways users support and challenge arguments through reasons, explanations, or rebuttals in reply tweets.

  This study does not aim to:
- Evaluate the truth or validity of the allegations in the controversy.
- Conduct statistical analysis of engagement metrics.
- Perform sentiment analysis or large-scale quantitative analysis.

The focus remains on examining argumentation patterns in tweets within the selected case.

1.5 Significance of the Study

1. Theoretical Contribution

This research adds to the growing body of work in writing studies by analyzing argumentation tendencies in short-form digital genres on social media. Although argumentation patterns have been typically studied in academic essays and formal writings, this study analyzes the ways in which

argumentative components are realized in character-limited digital writings like tweets. This research contributes to understanding the role of argumentation patterns in current online communication by analyzing how users build and share arguments in conversations about celebrity cancel culture on X.

2. Methodological Contribution

This research also has a methodological importance, due to the use of an argument analysis methodology influenced by the Toulmin model in the analysis of tweets. This approach gives a systematic framework to identify argumentation components such as claims, supporting reasons and counterarguments, in short digital communications. This study extends this model to social media data and shows how argumentation patterns in online disputes may be investigated.

3. Practical Relevance

The findings of this study are expected to add to the knowledge of the construction and support of arguments in online discussions, and may allow students to enhance skills in critical writing, persuasive reasoning and argument assessment in online communication. This is all the more significant since students are increasingly engaging in online discussions and conversations via social media platforms.

4. Contemporary Relevance

The present-day contexts of digital communication are relevant to this study. Celebrity disputes are increasingly played out on social media platforms and public conversations typically take the shape of debates as individuals express, support and question viewpoints. This study contributes to our understanding of how digital users engage in public reasoning, persuasion, and debate in contemporary online settings, by investigating argumentation tendencies in cancel culture debates on X. The results may also aid to debate and argumentation learning by offering realistic examples

of argumentative structures and persuasive methods in digital communication situations.