

## Role of Social Networking sites On Gender Violence

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### **ABSTRACT**

"Promote, as an object of primary importance, institutions for the general diffusion of knowledge. In proportion as the structure of a government gives force to public opinion, it is essential that public opinion should be enlightened." - George Washington How true it is. Education should be treated as receiving knowledge and there should be freedom of speech by students to express their views to the teacher and at the same time the teacher should not play the role of an instructor giving lecture only. Rather the class should be interactive both way. I also believe Education is that asset which an individual invests on future and it should be free for all without any kind of biasism against religion or ethnicity or disability. An apt teaching environment should be provided to all the learners which can be strengthened by embracing diversity,

### **1. Introduction:**

Gender-based violence is a kind of human rights violation. It is indeed a global phenomenon which takes place everywhere irrespective of any country, religion borders, etc. . Woman abuse is usually performed in her direct social environment thereby affecting the physical as well as her mental health. Violence has disastrous consequences on social welfare, children, families and community. Gender violence restricts the woman's right to be involved in social life. Many national surveys have been conducted on topic related to the hazardous effects caused on women due to social networking sites. Nevertheless there is a clear need for a national survey project which on the one hand would , extract information on the basis of sex based violence, its forms and intensively, attitudes and perceptions, caused to women within the age group of 16- 28 who are considered to be the maximum users of social networking sites. The research aims to investigate the relationship between gender violence and social media of women in different spheres of their lives. Every year in a very progressed country like America, an average of 1.5 to 3.6 million women are raped or physically assaulted by an

intimate partner. With a number of violence inflicted upon per individual, it increases approximately 4 to 6 million partners facing physical and sexual attacks by their own intimate partners with each year and there are many un reported cases too which goes unnoticed. This is due to widespread occurrence over cultures, subcultures, and socio-economic status which has an impact on the economy, and severity of the crimes, the complexity of

and giving respecting to one's self, and maintenance of one's dignity. The paper intends to explore this intense association of sentiments with social Role of Social Networking sites On Gender Violence. The paper has been researched from three critical angles with an introduction and a conclusion i.e.

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. The impact of social networks on women who are in their teens**
- 3. The effect of social networks on women**
- 4. Using Social Media to Prevent Gender violence**
- 5. Conclusion**

**Keywords:** Sentiment Analysis, Social Networking sites,

**Teens emotion, Women, Communalism**

domestic violence and violent relationships must be better understood by mental health professionals so that it becomes important to facilitate more useful and significant services, and improve access to those services, for those who seek them. During the period from 1980, an increased number of people are becoming aware of domestic violence, more literature is being published, and some of the common myths are being dispelled .The last decade in particular has seen a surge of newfound awareness and programmes of domestic violence. The implications of this research and the logical next steps must be integrated and discussed in order to provide medical care, counselling , services, assessments and preventions for victims of internet violence. The paper intends to explore this intense association of sentiments with social networking sites.

Socializing on social media like Face book, You Tube Watsapp and other blogging sites have become a regular activity among women which constitute an important activity in the daily lives of millions of people in India. According to a report carried out in June, 2012, Asia consists of more than 1,076,000,000 people who use internet. This is highest than any other continent in the entire world and this accounts for nearly 45 percent of worldwide internet. While internet penetration rates are only 28 percent, The world's fastest growing and largest segment of social network users in the world is Asia especially the youth.. Those who have survived these abuse report using a wide range of technology resources which helps them to have a larger sense of security, greater support, along with decreased isolation. They reach out over email to ask family members to help in

deserting a partner who is abusive, to look for shelters and a new home online, and to research on order options that is available on the Internet without being aware of risks or safety precautions. There are so many incidences which have taken place due to access of internet sites.

After one survivor succeeded in getting separated from her abusive partner, she found a web camera that was hidden which explained how he used to monitor her conversations and activities and used to call her frequently and demanded explanation why she was talking to her family members or friends. He also was aware when she was alone and most apt time to attack. There is a significant rise in cyber-stalking and survivors are seeking protection orders as reported by activists and many NGOs who have started the formation of cybercrime police units to come to the rescue of victims. Attackers assault victims and force them to disclose their email passwords so that they can keep a track on all the activities or for any symbol that she may try to escape from the clutches of the abuser.

Social media is a means of connecting people which has ample scope for interaction at every level including peer to peer, and gets people talking with each other on a mass scale. Social media tools or services use the internet to facilitate conversations including internet based and cell phone technologies which are commonly used to convert communication into text and gives scope to people to ventilate their opinion in many ways. Social media empowers people to engage with other people.

Social media has certain characteristics that other media do not:

**Participation** – Social media encourages input and feedback from everyone (who has access to social media) and is interested in a cause/issue/campaign/ online activity. Unlike traditional media, the audience can also be the content provider.

**Openness** – Most social media platforms are open to feedback and participation. They encourage comments, information sharing, and acknowledgment by means of various activities through voting.

**Community** – Social media platforms permits various communities to originate quickly and communicate in the best effective way. Communities share common interests such as in a campaign to end violence against women.

**Conversation** – Traditional print and broadcast media distribute or broadcast content to their readers/listeners, whereas social media is seen as a two-way conversation.

**Connectedness** – Most of the social media platforms flourish due to their policy of ‘being connected’ and using links to other websites and online resources.

## 2. Impact of social networks on women who are in their teens:

The impact of social networking sites on youngsters especially who are in their teens is of particular importance, not only because the abovementioned group is increasingly at a risk but also because they are counted among the heaviest users of social networking. According to a report by a media called common sense, about 60 percent of Indian teenagers currently have profiles on social networking sites and Facebook constitutes of 60 percent as their main social networking tool.

While social networking undoubtedly plays an important role in extending the social network and getting knowledge about technical skills, its threat can't be ignored. Sometimes, when the lack or difficulty in self-regulation and susceptibility to meet peer pressure demands, it makes the adolescents resorting to take such evil steps which includes cyber bullying, sexting and Facebook depression which are easily considered to be realistic threats. Among the other problems social network-inspired obesity to name a few. Internet addiction and sleep deprivation are some issues which are a resultant of uncontrolled social networking thereby resulting in deriving contradictory results achieved in various studies.

A study that was conducted by the researchers about the use of social media by the teenagers who are aged between 11 to 17 467 teenagers were taken as a sampling size about their use of social media during the day and at night. Similarly, other tests were carried out to examine on the quality of sleep among the teens', their self-esteem, their anxiety level and depression if at all they faced. The researchers also worked out whether the children faced pressure due to social media accessibility always. The researchers found that those teenagers who use social media more often was considerably related to decreased the sleep quality, with a lower level of self-esteem and a steadily high level of depression and anxiety.

Heather Cleland Woods, professor at the University of Glasgow in Scotland, said in a statement about the quality of sleep, that those children who are online during the night are more prone to get affected in particular because the age between 13 to 19 are the years that can be a time when someone can be more vulnerable to depression and anxiety and less amount of sleeping may contribute to the risk of getting trapped in these conditions. The massive research carried out particularly on this type of issues always suggest that there is a strong connection between the children using social media and the feelings expresses by them especially who are adolescents. Many books, projects and research papers are being written. For instance, a research paper that was presented at the American Psychological Association meeting in 2011 found out that the use of social media in teens and traits is very closely related to a psychological disorder called schizophrenia and depression. Another study based on this behaviour was

published in a journal called *Cyber-psychology, Behaviour, and Social Networking*, which said that frequent use of social media among the teenaged people was more prone to risk of mental ill health.

Sexting is an method of sending sexually exposing pictures of self or sending sexually inducing messages to someone or in a group. It is an activity which has started gaining momentum of late mostly among the teenagers in social media. According to a survey conducted all over the country,' National Campaign to Support Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy', it was found that a shocking 20 percent of teens are actively involved in sexting. Teenage boys opt for sending sexually explicit or provoking texts, girls usually send their pictures in a very revealing postures and costumes usually to their boyfriends. So it is due to the excessive use of internet by the teenagers which has been responsible to create a strong space to spread this type of information to such an extent that it goes viral. It has been found that nearly 17 percent of sexters admit that they share the message they receive with others at the same time, about 55 percent of people say that they share messages with more than one person. Sexting may cause personal trauma and humiliation which can't even be imagined, which results in judicial cases as well and there are some states which consider such activities as misconduct while many states categorise sexting as criminal offence.

"Facebook Depression is defined as a disturbance taking place in the mind of an individual which starts when someone spends a considerable amount of time on social networking sites". It is one of the cause of a very common situation trending in the recent times. Advanced studies and research have concluded that comparing someone with others is one of

the main reason of Facebook depression which can be further simplified as down-comparison meaning comparing someone with inferiors was just as likely to cause depression or up-comparison meaning comparing with someone who is better than the concerned person. However, some reports are completely contradictory . Another study was conducted that showed a different picture. It showed that Facebook generates more happiness and increased mutual trust and engagement among users of Facebook. Sometimes, if we think in a more logical way, we can understand that social networks helps to enable share and can cause a self-reinforced sense of mental satisfaction. These analysis shows that the impact of social network depends on how well the social networks are used ,whether it is to connect or it is to compare.

Cyber violence pertaining to women can be considered as any form of gender -based and sexual violence which are expressed through various types of cyber technologies such as the Internet, cell phones , video games and many more. Many features of these technologies make them ideal weapons for gender violence. The communication devices like smart phones are so easy to use which can easily get connected to

internet thereby spreading defamation and public humiliation and their ability to allow the attacker to act remotely without getting identified thereby making it more difficult to take action against an attacker or to stop spreading the unwanted content online. Greater attention is being paid today to cyber violence against women as this type of violence which are related to technology has an impact on the teenagers as well as adult who are women and is reported everywhere around the world . Recently , women politicians in the European countries like the UK, Italy etc made a decision to speak up against online sexual harassment and Internet threats of inflicting torture and murder to which they had been subjected personally. A survey that was conducted by an NGO revealed that nearly 95 per cent of women respondents had received harassing in the form of calls and messages from men whom they did not know. In India, half of cybercrime cases that are reported which are filed by women discover that their faces are changed and converted into pornographic images which are posted online with their personal phone number. Some other tragic stories have revealed the multiplier effect of technology on violence and its destructive impact on individuals which is one of the cases filed by three teenaged young girls in America and the United States namely Rehtaeh Parsons and Amanda Todd in and Audrie Pott who ended their lives themselves because they were sexually assaulted , exploited and faced torture and insult which resulted from the wide online dissemination of the crimes committed against them.

### **3. The effect of social networks on women**

Many studies have been conducted which have overwhelmingly emphasised on effects of usual mass media like depictions in magazine, advertisement in television ads, TV entertainment programs, even music videos. Young women and adolescents aren't primarily attracted to magazine reading, watching television or any entertainment programmes. There have been steep declines in magazine readership, and television viewing has decreased to a larger extent especially those who are teenagers and who are in their adolescent stage. U.S. residents aged 12 to 34 still watch television, however they watch television on as a part time medium of entertainment. They watch TV shows on iPads or mobile devices More than 80 percent of young women in the country are wireless Internet users, and 72 percent of the women who are online between 18–29 year-old use social networking sites .A national survey conducted by a research Centre found that those who are of in the age group 18–29 use Internet and most likely use a social networking site and it is important to note that women love to tune into these sites than men.

According to a research conducted in-order to get an appraisal on the relationship with social networking sites like Twitter, Instagram, Facebook and Wattsapp streams 1,000 women between the 18-49 were taken as the sample size, to study how social media rules into our lives and really makes us feel. It was concluded that we should own

up the responsibility of our posts and comments that we make . It's not only that, rather we should also take mature decisions regarding whom to follow, whom to send friend request etc. because social media also strengthens our interpersonal relationships with ourselves with our colleagues, relatives higher authorities.

Here's what we learned: Women are all addicted to social media, through Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram and wattsapp and they find time throughout the day to scroll through the news post their feedback of either compliment or rejection. 89 percent of those women surveyed, admitted that getting a "like" on social media is a compliment, while 82 percent said comments on social media boost them which helps in improving their self-esteem. It was also found that a majority of women gave return compliments on others' feeds after receiving a social media compliment from their friends as they felt more motivated. This practice of complimenting a friend's get up or appearance in a Facebook post or making a tweet that is something positive about a colleague's achievement may seem to be casual in the beginning, but it has an ever-lasting effect .About 75 percent concluded that social media has indeed strengthened their interpersonal relationships.

#### **4. Tentative Steps to Prevent Violence:**

As we all are aware of the proverb, Prevention is better than cure, same thing is applicable here. Efforts to stop violence needs to be taken before it starts. One of them is Primary prevention which comprises of a holistic approach ending violence and to promote non-violence and peace. Response may refer to different kind of measures which are taken to support and protect the women who have suffered and experienced violence. Primary prevention aims to identify and address the underlying reasons of violence to minimize the opportunity whenever it happens in the first place which means it is an effort to prevent violence before it crops up. The attempts proved that for a campaign to be effective, several considerations are to be thought of in terms of planning and implementation of the awareness. In terms of good practices, the three campaigns found that for a campaign to be effective, utmost care needs to be taken to plan and to implement the campaign.

We all are aware that social media is a means of connecting people at every level through professional as well as non professional interaction and getting people communicate with each other at a larger scale. Social media tools or services utilize the internet to assist conversations. It may also include web-based and mobile technologies which are used to convert a casual communication into interactive dialogue, which is also a platform where people can voice their opinion in various ways. Social media empowers people to engage with other people.

In order to prevent gender violence, lots of social media campaigns have been launched that includes all the

elements to generate chances of getting best results. At the same time many successful social media campaigns are organised and events are conducted which can be entertaining. Other good practices that also emerged from the three campaigns which are intended at creating an on-the-ground community which feels a belongingness of being the owner of the campaign and secondly, working with this community to assemble more members online as well as offline can be found to be one key to ensure success. The crusaders try to develop online activities that are not only entertaining but also easy to participate. It helps to make personal connection more appealing to people's emotions. One pragmatic approach could be to hold online discussions and debates around current attitudes and behaviours on gender behaviour, bringing equality between gender , giving respect and maintaining healthy relationships, and advocating for a model with positive gender-equitable behaviours. Incentives can be given for successfully engaging audiences ranging from capacity development opportunities and for recognising material rewards. Lessons learned from the campaigns highlight the limitations of social media for the prevention of VAW. This discusses the fact that social media campaigns are the least effective when its conducted as the activities with a single individual as compared to when they are conducted with a group in the form of face-to face discussion or on-the-ground activities. It can be like to understand and then measure the type of impact social media interactions have on the general audience which may be difficult, yet it's possible with the right monitoring plan. A general overview suggests that social media are more prone to be accessed by a huge audiences to the messages. It can also be available to a much smaller number of people in learning activities, and an even a less number of audience can take tangible actions to prevent VAW.

These campaigns describes lessons learned from the three campaigns in terms of what changes for VAW prevention a social media campaign can contribute to. The campaigns found that social media is useful in terms of mobilizing people to provide a space where groups of people can take initiative to influence changes aimed at preventing VAW. The campaigns also found that social media can be used to strengthen networks, promote relationships of being part of a community and help create an existential and healthy environment. Social media can provide a space for dialogue that would not otherwise be available.

All the effective social media campaigns use the social media platforms to combine them with reputation, reward and influence based contests or challenges. The offline components to gather and engage the youths around the campaign by rewarding both the kind of people who contribute as well as who benefit. They partner on the ground in the aforesaid target zones and communicate clearly about the campaign's substantial results to all the parties who are involved. They don't merely propagate information and are clear about the results. The people who want to create a difference , be rewarded and recognized for it are the ones who require to build in

virility. There are other methods which can help curbing gender violence.

All identifying information which identifies self or others should be strictly prohibited and if its published, then there should be with clear-cut definition whether it should be visible public or to private audience. There should be minimum intermediaries obstacles to download pages, posts, or content pertaining to privacy concerns and people would refrain from it if there is a warning message followed by threats. Companies should take action and there should be clear accountability measures which necessitates clarity in response to complainant. A case surfaced in Pakistan where a Pakistani blogger, under the name Baaghi, was highlighted because his national identity card, marriage certificates, even residence of last 10 years including other such private information was updated online which finally ended in an attempt to assassin the blogger.

Similarly a woman in Sarajevo which is a part of Bosnia and Herzegovina tried to report about a fake Facebook profile that was created in order to damage her reputation. For that she tried to take help from an organization called 'One World-See' to report that the profile and the forms were only available in English. That organization assisted people like her in Promoting Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty (MLAT) which reforms to increase assessment to get justice in all the cases of technology-related VAW which provides clarity along with transparency and accountability regarding any action on the content in the internet and privacy requests. Many women reported that they get very few response or even if they get, it's just an automated response. By this way it is more transparent and is more accessible as well as accountable to public in the workplace inside the departments and all the staffs who are responsible for responding to the internet content and privacy complaints that they make.

## 5. CONCLUSION:

Many voluminous literature have been written on social networking effects about the portrayal of the versatility of the role of woman and different issues related to women which maybe a girl in her teenage or even it maybe of young adult women in any parts of the country. It's really tragic that very little theoretically-driven research has been made on this issue about the cause effects of social media on gender violence and how to control them which is indeed surprising. Yet taking for granted that an overwhelmingly large number of women in all ages are logged in to internet and their alliance with the social media, it is worth noting to compliment the level which social media can influence them and how this social networking sites can redefine her image and the same

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internet can help in preventing gender violence at a massive scale which however cannot be achieved only by the crusaders like women rights' groups, gender violence researchers, internet users, and the society along with the government who has active role to play by implementing the law enforcement. There has to be cooperation from both sides and both should work in coordination with each other and create a holistic approach to the problem which where civil society and users are actively involved. Twitter came forward to post out a major update regarding a blocker who would be able to see the timeline of the person who has blocked the user by just scrapping the most important aspect of blocking which should be stopped completely.

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