Role of Facebook in Sensitizing Youth against Crime against Women- A Survey Based Study

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Abstract: Gone are the days when television news bulletin and the morning newspaper were the most awaited sources of news. In the modern era of new media technology the conventional sources of information have taken a back seat. Today every issue is updated on social media as soon as it happens. Social media has become a very important, fast and credible source of information for the youth. Youth from all backgrounds, cultures and creeds could be seen united and raising their voices against the current issues on social media. Youth are very active on social media. Facebook is one such medium which provides platform to the youth in raising their concerns. With the emergence of the new technology and awakening of the youth, the face of the facebook has changed. Earlier it was considered to be medium of sharing photos, chatting with friends and other social interactions. These days it has become a potent tool in fighting social evils. Facebook has become a very important medium in raising voice against crime against women as it has been seen in many recent cases like Delhi gang rape. Similar reactions were seen in the case of Mumbai photojournalist who was gang raped at a factory site. The present study will focus on the role of facebook in sensitizing the youth against crime pertaining to women and how facebook has become a platform for the youth to vent-out their resentments against such crimes.

Keywords: Role of Facebook; Crime against Women; Sensitizing

INTRODUCTION

Human mind always strives for information. We all believe in staying updated with the current happenings round the world. To fulfil the urge to know we have been banking upon various sources. Starting from the earlier stages of signs and symbols the human information system reached present media scenario passing via all the forms of interpersonal interactions and all possible forms of traditional media. As progress is never stagnant, same is the case with methods of acquiring information. Another milestone in the field of information and communication was set up with Mark Zukerberg’s facebook in 2004. Though this social networking site was started with initial objectives of sharing events, announcements, decisions and discussions among a group of students, but its face has changed in the contemporary world. Somewhat similar to the US concept of yearbook in, which students used to share information, at the time of inception, this site became popular among youth all over the world. Initially its aim was to spread education. According to Charlotte Bunch, “Sexual, racial, gender violence and other forms of discrimination and violence in a culture cannot be eliminated without changing culture”. Metamorphosis of facebook into the contemporary phase has made it as essential as our identity cards or driving licenses. Facebook accounts have become inseparable parts of our lives. It connects people from all castes, colours and creeds. It has almost diminished the boundaries of created due to differences in cultures, backgrounds, faiths and beliefs. Besides sharing photographs, liking and commenting on videos and pictures, chatting and cracking jokes, facebook has become a platform in discussing various social issues. It plays a role in awakening the youth against social ill doings. According to Salma Hayek, “There is a subconscious way of taking violence as a way of expression, as a normality, and it has a lot of effects in the youth in the way they absorb education and what they hope to get out of life”. Many groups have been created to discuss innumerable unjustified happenings with children, rural masses, dalits and even women. Indian society which has borne shameful episodes like Delhi gangrape in December 2012 in which a girl who accompanied her male friend in a bus was brutally gangraped and beaten mercilessly by bunch of hoodlums. The case observed a novel reaction by youth. It was in the form of venting out annoyance in the form of posts which became viral at that time or in the form of creating groups and standing united against the evil and the evil doers. The resentment was also directed by changing facebook profile pictures to a black dot. A situation
of zero tolerance was created in which every individual irrespective of social strata raise their voice against the crime. People presented a true democratic set up by speaking against the laws for safety of women and suggesting changes in contemporary laws pertaining to the fairer sex. This was not the first time that Indian society has become a shameful witness to any brutality against women. The difference was observed in the after effects of the crime on the society. The conventional panel discussions and frivolous political discourse was dominated by a true and potent opinion of the common man. Where mainstream media has been portraying political parties casting mud on each other this potent social site represented the otherwise snubbed voice of the youth. Family of the victim could feel the wave of the whole nation which rose as a tide against the sin and stood with the victim and the family in the tedious times. Observing the reaction over the situation, it shows that the case would not have been highlighted in the absence of social sites, which was necessary to get the sinners behind the bars. Facebook discussed all aspects related to the case like safety of women in India, role of government and police, juvenile justice board and even the loyalty and fidelity of the male friend who accompanied the girl in the bus. People especially youth showed their rage and disagreement with the contemporary laws of the society by writing and sharing as much as they could. It became a movement on facebook where every eye was full of tears for the victim and fury for the criminals. It is also true to say that the mainstream media also carried the voice of the masses which was in the form of letters to editors, columns and other write-ups etc. but this was confined to a particular sect of society which is engrossed in newspapers and television bulletins. Tables were turned by facebook and various other social networking sites where almost every account holder got a chance to give at least some reaction to the situation. According to Margaret Mead,”Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has”. Here when the voice of the common man has become audible facebook has a chunk at its disposal.

SIGNIFICANCE

Advent of new techniques of interaction like social networking sites has brought up a massive change in the communication methods. Today the morning newspaper and the television news bulletin is not the solitary source of information. Social sites are playing a vital role in fulfilling the three E’s of television-education, enlightenment and entertainment. The present study focuses on the role played by the social sites specially facebook in awakening the youth about social issues pertaining to women. The study tends to discuss the role of facebook in providing information about social cases pertaining to women and discusses all the aspects of such cases. The study also discusses the transformation in the face of facebook from a means of social interaction to a platform to make the voice of the youth perceptible. The study also aims to discuss the frequency and practicability of follow-ups of the cases on facebook.

METHODOLOGY

The present study is a survey based study. A sample of 50 college students consisting of both girls and boys students (25 each) was randomly selected form the colleges of Amritsar. A carefully designed questionnaire consisting of a set of questions was given to the sample. Results and conclusions were made on the basis of the answers given by the respondents.

HYPOTHESES

1. Youth get sensitized more about women issues through facebook as compared to mainstream media.
2. Facebook provides a platform to youth to vent-out their resentment against crime against women.
3. Later follow-ups of women-centric cases on facebook are rare.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1. To study the role of facebook in sensitizing youth against issues pertaining to women.
2. To study the opinion of youth about cases pertaining to women issues as reflected on facebook as compared to the mainstream media.
3. To study the shortcomings of facebook regarding follow-ups of such cases.
DATA INTERPRETATIONS

Q 1) Do you have Facebook (FB) account?
Ans) [Chart showing COLLEGE STUDENTS USING FB]

Interpretation
The above figure shows that 99% of college students are having account on Facebook and they access it and only 1% of students are not having Facebook account.

Q 2) What purpose you use Facebook for?
Ans) [Chart showing PURPOSE OF USING FB]

Interpretation
The above figure shows that 55% of people use Facebook for social interaction and 20% of students use it for information on social issues. 15% use Facebook for entertainment and 10% of people use Facebook for social interaction, entertainment and to get information on social issues. This shows that lots of people use Facebook for social interaction thus it is good medium to create awareness among people about social issues.
Q 3) Have you ever come across women related issue from Facebook?

Interpretation
The above figure shows that 69% of people have come across posts relating to issues related to women representing that there is high awareness created among people by the means of Facebook. Only 13% of people have not came across such posts and 18% of people have come across women related issues on Facebook at times, say while surfing Facebook or regarding any one particular incident.

Q 4) Do you post/ share about crime against women on Facebook?

Interpretation
The above figure shows that 72% of people shares posts related to crime against women and their is 0% people who has not shared even a single post related to issues regarding women. 22% of people have shared posts on crimes against women at times. Only 6% people do not share such posts. This shows that people want to be aware about crimes against women.
Q 5) When you share a post about women related issues, what is the purpose of it?

Ans)

**Reason for sharing women related issues posts**

- **To support**: 46%
- **To sympathize**: 10%
- **To spread**: 33%
- **No particular reason**: 11%

**Interpretation**
The above figure shows 46% of people want to support issues related to women whereas 33% of people want to spread awareness among people related to such issues, 10% of people sympathize to such issues. People have a soft corner for women who are victim of such crimes and 11% of people don’t have any reason for sharing posts on women related issues.

Q 6) Do you find Facebook as a platform for voice of people to be heard?

Ans)

**Students finding FB as a platform for people voices**

- **Yes**: 27%
- **No**: 73%

**Interpretation**
The above figure shows that 73% of people find Facebook as a platform to raise issues related to crimes against women and consider Facebook as an effective way to raise people voices against such crimes. On the other hand 27% people do not consider Facebook a platform to raise voice against such issues.
Q 7) Do you think Facebook highlights women related issues better than mainstream media?
Ans)

**Interpretation**
The above figure shows that 22% of people think that Facebook highlights better than mainstream media to highlight issues related to women while 41% people think it is not better than mainstream media in highlighting such issues. 37% people think that in some cases Facebook highlight issues better than mainstream media.

Q 8) Do you follow women related issues on Facebook on regular intervals?
Ans)

**Interpretation**
The above figure shows that 36% people follow issues related to women on Facebook representing that they want to remain aware or solve such issues while 64% of people does not follow such posts regularly.
Q 9) Do you find Facebook as a source to vent out your resentment against crime against women?

**Ans**

**Interpretation**
The above figure shows that 87% of people felt that Facebook is a source to vent out their resentment against crime against women. Thus, Facebook is an effective medium to vent out people resentment against such crimes. Only 13% of students don’t consider Facebook a source to vent out resentment against crime against women.

Q 10) Do you come across issue related to crime against women on Facebook?

**Ans**

**Interpretation**
The above figure shows that 90% of people have come across posts related to crimes against women on Facebook, representing that Facebook is an effective means of communication. Only 2% of people have not come across such posts and 8% of people have only at selective times came across such posts.
HYPOTHESES TESTING

Hypothesis 1 - Youth get sensitized more about women issues through facebook as compared to mainstream media.

The study shows that about 22% students were of opinion that they get sensitized about women related issues form facebook, 37% were sensitized in some cases and 41% said no. Hence Hypothesis 1 is tested positive.

Hypothesis 2 - Facebook provides a platform to youth to vent-out their resentment against crime against women.

The present study shows that about 87% students feel that facebook acts a platform in venting out resentment against crime against women and about 13% of them disagreed. Thus Hypothesis 2 is also proved positive.

Hypothesis 3 - Later follow-ups of women-centric cases on facebook are rare.

The study revealed that only 36% of students follow the cases on facebook and 64% of them don’t follow them frequently. Hypothesis 3 is proved positive.

RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

1. Facebook has emerged out as a very popular social site.
2. Facebook helps people to interact, share and post their opinions about women related issues.
3. Facebook is a good source of discussing social issues pertaining to women. Facebook plays a vital role in making youth aware about crime against women.
4. Facebook has emerged out as a platform for the voice of common man in a better and more accessible manner than mainstream media.
5. Presence of facebook doesn’t overlook the role of mainstream media in spreading awareness about women related issues.

LIMITATIONS

One of the biggest limitations of the study is that the sample selected for the study was only from the colleges of Amritsar.

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