

# Unsocial Social Media and Rapes in India

## Abstract

In the last two decades things have drastically changed in India. Unprecedented use of social media affecting every aspect of our society be it over moral values, ethos or social and family relations. In spite of its being emerging as biggest tool of expression, connectiveness, it can't be acquitted of its impact on inducing crimes against women especially 'rape' the most heinous crime against women. Endowed with the great capacity to be the pillar of humanity, woman is vulnerable throughout her life and even before her birth, social media has increased her vulnerability. According to national crime records Bureau statistic 2010, there has been 4.8% increase in crimes against women as compared to 2009. Videos, images portraying women as cheap objects of gratification, depicting rapes on social sites is some way glorifying these crimes.

**Keywords:** Gratification, Vulnerability, Unprecedented.

## Introduction

During the last few decades, several changes have taken place in the position of Indian women as far as proprietary rights, marital relation and public life are concerned, Dignity of women and their equal participation in economic, social and cultural development in the contemporary world. Digital activism has revolutionized the Indian society. It has created a platform which is interactive, connective. It has been major force behind social change. It has proved to be best example to mobilise people in short time. There have been innumerable instances where social media activities have been the strongest tool behind all the kinds of social activism based campaign. Blogs, social networking sites, facebook, twitter, youtube provide platforms where issues related to women, injustice and atrocities and thus creating strong opinion groups against these. However on the same side social media proves to be tool against women. Today India has overtaken the United States in total number of facebook users. Indian users 241 million a shade ahead of united states 240 million becoming social network giant's Top Country by user base and this huge social media sometime work in direction of maligning women status.

## Objective of Study

The Objective of Study is to understand the impact of social sites on the crimes against the women in two ways the first one is how these sites give the platform to befriend the girls, secondly how the threat of uploading the videos of rape stop the rape victims to report the crime.

## Source of Study

Beside the primary sources like The times of India, The Hindustan secondary sources Wikipedia, Social Sites have been the sources of study.

## Discussion

Man is a social animal <sup>1</sup>Social media cater to his need of social belongingness that's why in an age of estranged relations where people believe more in making facebook friends than in face to face relation, these social sites have emerged as big tool of expression. No doubt these sites are empowered with the liberty of expression, connectiveness, and many more benefits but on the same time they have proved instrumental in inducing crimes against women. In the present paper I have focused on 'Rape' the most heinous crime against women.

According to national crime Records Bureau statistics 2010, there has been 4.8% increase in crime against women in India as compared to 2009. In 2015 there has been 24923 rape cases in India. India ranked 129 out of 187 countries in gender inequalities. NCRB Report 2012 shows that the singular crime of rape is the fastest growing crime in India and has increased 902% over 1971 to 2012. The gang rape of a girl in moving bus has shocked India in 2012. On that case social sites like facebook, Twitter had played important role in arousing people's condemnation against this rape and also exposed Government in manhandling the case but even then



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these sites cannot be acquitted of the charges of inducing crimes against women.

The porn videos and images portray women as the cheap objects of personal gratification. There are many social sites where user can access and upload such videos. A wide use of these sites cause an increase in violent and aggressive behaviour. Research has indicated that viewers feeling are aroused after watching such posts on social sites which depict physical intimacy scenes. Sexualized images of women in such videos desensitize society towards women's pain<sup>2</sup>. Once largely hidden from view, this brutality is now being exposed in unprecedented way which instead of creating sympathy indirectly induce the sexual feelings of males, moreover depicting rape on these sites is like glorifying these crimes. Although there is lot of checks on the posts which attack a person based on sex, religion, community and race but these are mostly disobeyed thus internet today is bringing violence against women out of it<sup>3</sup>.

Few cases of rapes which have been in the newspaper in recent past, there is case of rape of an Asha worker who was called on the pretext of a delivery case in UP. She was raped and a video clip of this crime was made later on this clip was uploaded on social media site. Whats app and circulated in victim's village later on victim the mother of three children committed suicide out of the shame another news of rape of a girl from Kailwara Khatoli, Muzaffarnagar she was gangraped by two men two years back. They filmed the crime, the accused continue to rape her on threat of making her rape video viral later on they leaked it on the social media "The Hindu" dated 18<sup>th</sup> Jan. 2016 reported that this is the third case of alleged rape and video being made public reported from muzaffarnagar in last 10 days. On 29<sup>th</sup> Dec. 2015 in 14 year old girl who fled from her house to meet her facebook friend was raped by two army Jawans inside a compartment of Howrah Amritsar Express after being compelled to consume alcohol. Similarly there is case of 15 years old girl from Mumbai who had gone to attend her facebook friend's birthday party, was raped. There have been lot of cases like rape of a married women of Jodhpur, school girl of South Delhi, fashion designer of Gurgaon where facebook friends turned to be rapists and in most the cases the crime has been filmed and them process of blackmailing the victim for more sexual favors on the threat of making video viral. The threat of uploading the video of rape has become constant torture to the rape victims, on the one hand they have to bear rape, physical assault, society's comments on the other hand they have to suffer mental agony, constant threat of uploading of their videos on the social sites. In this way the social sites become very "unsocial".

Sexually violent materials on social sites contribute to social climate in which violence against women is more accepted and thus may be more likely to occur. Sexual violence is often treated with humour one in media. It is very traumatic for the survivors of rapes, to live under the constant threat of posting their rape videos on social sites. Sexual assault is a crime

of power and dominance and by distributing images of the rape through social media, it is a way of asserting dominance and power to hurt the victim over and over again. This is the biggest humiliation for the rape survivors, infact shame about the rape caused due to sharing of videos of sexual assault on social media is worse than actual rape. This blackmailing stop victims to report the crime most of the times.

#### **Conclusion**

Social media has both white and black side, it has increased the awareness of issue for sexual assault<sup>4</sup>. Sometimes rape images posted on social media social sites could make it easier to convict rapists. Many women safety apps like safepin, Raksha and Himmat, unwomen, Feminist help in empowering women against violence back inspite of its drawbacks social media cannot be avoided. Among the present generation two minute culture is viral. Whether its the case of two minute maggie or instant coffee, the same concept they are following in their relationship also. In such atmosphere girls have to be aware of the fact that they cannot rely even their nearones as the maximum rapes are committed by the people known to them, so how can they rely on their online friends. Social sites should ban uploading of any such vidoes showing sexual violence against women.

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