



## ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN WOMEN'S SAFETY (A study of educated women in Bhopal city of Madhya Pradesh)

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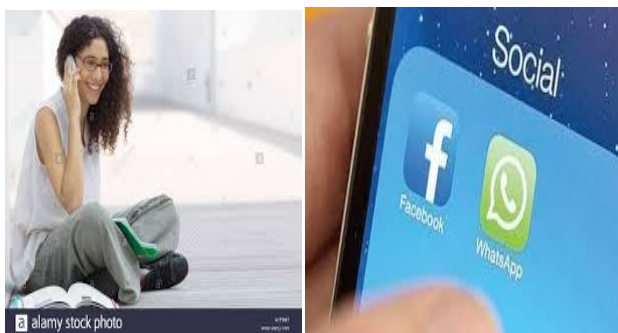
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### ABSTRACT

The main objective of this study was to find the role of Media in modern society as it brings radical changes and improve social situations especially in women. Social media is a communication whether it is written, spoken or live broadcasted<sup>1</sup>, it reaches a large audience. This includes mainly television, radio, newspapers, magazines and internet. Electronic media is undoubtedly replacing Print media due to tremendous technology up gradation and maximum access and outreach. When it comes to Social media and women's rights it is every single one of us can get involved and can amplify women's voices successfully and achieve equality. Educated women in Bhopal utilise social media to mobilise public attention in order to enhance the visibility of issues that often get lost in mainstream media. They also take part in conversations on their rights issues and raise voices to address them, may it be issues like forced marriage, family violence, gender inequality, negative stereotype etc. Due to globalization of media, now women can cover their problems and story by themselves, make it public and turn it into media for consumption. No doubt media continue to have discriminatory attitudes towards women and rely on male worldview when portraying women. Here we study what are possibilities in shape of social & traditional media that women particularly educated women in Bhopal can publicize their perceptions freely by breaking this vicious circle to achieve justice and equality in all walks of life.



**KEY WORD:** Social Media, Social Justice, Equality, Educated Women.



Source: Google search

<sup>1</sup>To make widely known or made public by means of social networking.

## INTRODUCTION:

Media is considered as one of the pillars of the society. The contemporary media has gone through tremendous changes in terms of content, style and approach and the journalistic scenario which is now not restricted to simply the printed letter, has widened its base by including the medium of broadcasting, telecasting and new media. Now in the age of internet, the journalism has lost the physical boundaries of transmission of news. The free flow of information and the competition among the owners of various media has shown careless haste in sole criteria of making news.(<http://hdl.handle.net/10603/9427>)The decline in the content of the media of every classification has ripped off the mask of decency and moral in the family.It is true that the profession is changing and it can be said that at present scenario most of the media organizations are becoming 'social entertainers' and profit making is the mantra for them.

The most significant and longest social movement continuing is movement for emancipation of women.<sup>2</sup> Though the primary goal for women empowerment is to improve the quality of life of women but it has also deep ramifications in social, economic and political scenario of body polity. The media through its reach to people at large has been instrumental though not to the extent desired in supporting the movement for women emancipation by focusing neglect and marginalization of the position of the women in society.<sup>3</sup>

## BRIEF HISTORY OF THE DISTRICT BHOPAL

Times have changed and present time is reflective of Social Media playing an instrumental role in changing the mind-set of the people in various ways. It has been a major force behind many social changes, debates, Social movements and creating activist groups. Nobody is unfamiliar with some of the most brutal and heinous crimes related to rape like Asiya Nefar Gang Rape 2008, Kanan-poshpora Gang Rape Case of 1991 in Kawpora J&K, Delhi Uber Cab Rape Case, Mumbai Shakti Mill Rape Case, Mumbai Hospital Rape Case of Aruna etc.<sup>4</sup> These cases of women atrocities would not have been able to draw such immense attention of the Societies without the active employment of social media tools by them and the people expressing their strong opinion on the different facets of the case. Times are such where important happenings and issues become a matter of concern and widespread debate within seconds of the outbreak of the event.

Bhopal district was carved out of the erstwhile Sehore District of Bhopal division<sup>5</sup>. The district derives its name from the district head-quarters town Bhopal which is also the capital of Madhya Pradesh. The etymology of the term Bhopal has been derived from its former name Bhojpal as would be evident from the following extract from the imperial Gazetteer of Central India, (1908 P.240). The district occupies 4<sup>th</sup> place in the state according to population. The district occupies 50<sup>th</sup> rank in the state in terms of area having 2,772 sq. kms, which is 0.9 percent of the total area of state. Literacy Rate of Bhopal district is 80.4 percent and it occupies 3<sup>rd</sup> position in the state. The female literacy rate of the district is 74.9 percent. Density wise the rank of the district is 1<sup>st</sup> in the state. Ranking of the district according to the sex-ratio is 33<sup>rd</sup> in the state. Female work participation of the district is 19.6 percent of total female population. Rank of the district according to female work participation is 47<sup>th</sup> (census, 2011)

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

<sup>[1]</sup>Ali, Muhammad Mahboob & etal, (2017) while working on "Testing the theory of social networking on empowerment of people specially women at two villages in Bangladesh: A filed investigation" The result

<sup>2</sup>Source: International Encyclopedia of Marriage and Family

<sup>3</sup>Address by Mr. Justice G.N. Ray, Chairman, Press Council of India at the inauguration session of National Press Day on November 16, 2008 at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi.

<sup>4</sup>Source: Wikipedia

<sup>5</sup>(Vide M.P. Govt. Notification No. 2477/1977/Sa/One/ dated 13th September, 1972).

from his study he, described those women empowerment is closely related with Social Networking, Social intelligence and social entrepreneurship along with social capital and social investment. Women's condition are not good before getting involved in social networking and after getting involved in the income of the family had been increasing. After involving in social networking the women started to participate in different income generating activities. Then, they also started to control over income, expenditure, credit and savings. They could then participate in household decision making more than before. It was found that in dimensions the women started to become more empowered than before involving in social networking.

<sup>[2]</sup>**Moussa, Mohamed Ben & Joanna Seraphim (2017)** while study on *“Digital gender divides and e empowerment in the UAE: A critical perspective”* their study endorses that ICTs do empower women when the right conditions exist such as access to education, IT resources, and job market. Their article also shows that these conditions do not guarantee transformative empowerment, i.e. enabling women to challenge dominant gender relations through equality in decision making and control over all aspects of life choices. Men still wield more leverage over women because of various reasons, chief among them cultural norms and traditions.

<sup>[3]</sup>**Vivakaran, MangalaVadivu & N. Maraimalai (2017)** they carried out a study on *“Feminist pedagogy and social media: A study on their integration and effectiveness in training budding women entrepreneurs”* they investigated the efficiency of using social media platform as a pedagogical tool to reach and educate emerging Indian women entrepreneurs. A two-day virtual workshop on entrepreneurship training was provided to the experimental group by integrating the features present in a social networking site (Facebook) and feminist pedagogy.

<sup>[4]</sup>**Norsiah Abdul Hamid, etal (2015)** while working on *“Measurement model of empowerment for women and girls using social media”* they study on the involvement of a group at risk, particularly women and girls in social media setting. Women and girls increasingly involved in social media to fulfill their various needs. This involvement can be related to the empowerment opportunity for this group by using social media. The findings can contribute greatly to a better understanding of the empowerment mechanism behind social media issue pertaining to women and girls.

## OBJECTIVE

1. To develop an in depth understanding about the growing significance of Social-media in highlighting various women issues and problems,
2. To develop an overview of the opinion of the educated women of Bhopal City regarding the role of Social media in highlighting women related issues and problems.
3. The first was to assess women's Usage of social media;
4. The second objective was to determine the demographic characteristics of the respondents in terms of: gender, age, marital status and level of education;
5. The last but not least objective of the study is to find out how youth make use of Social media to bring before women issues and cases of atrocities against women and ensure social justice with equality.

## AREA OF STUDY

Located in the heart of Madhya Pradesh, the historical city of Bhopal is deservedly the capital of the state. Besides the excellent location of Bhopal, the city is blessed with beautiful landscapes, busy profitable canters, peaceful residential areas and historical monuments. The geographical location of the Bhopal City lies within North Latitude 23°16' and East Longitude 77°36'. The location of Bhopal falls in the north-western portion of Madhya Pradesh. If seen in the Map of India, Bhopal occupies the central most region of the country. The city of Bhopal shares its border with two large and picturesque lakes. Like few other big cities of the country, Bhopal is also divided into two parts - the old city and the new one. The Old Bhopal is situated in the northern part of the city, while the southern part is called as the New Bhopal. The two lakes of the

Bhopal City are referred as the Upper and the Lower Lakes (Source: Report by UDD, Government of MP and BMC, 2012)

**METHODOLOGY**

As the approach followed in most social science (ShafiqMohiud din Mohd Ashraf Ganaie, 2018), present study is based on the both primary as well as secondary source of the data collection. On the, "Role of Social media in social justice and equality(A study of educatedwomen in Bhopal)". For in-depth study ten college of the Bhopal city was selected. Educate women of graduate/under graduate level from different Colleges of Bhopal City of Madhya Pradesh), were selected randomly for the study. Interview method used for data collection consisting of structured questions keeping in view the objectives of the study. Social background information was collected through an interview schedule which includes information about age, education, family type, social participation and source of information of the respondents. Other section of the tool dealt with the questions to obtain information regarding the availability of Social media, the utilization pattern and reasons of using the Social media by the educatedwomen in relation to the Social media, namely Mobile phones, newspaper, magazine, radio and television. Data collection is being done by conducting personal interview at the study centres of the subjects.

**UNIVERSE & SELECTION OF SAMPLE:**

The selected district is constituted of numerous educational institutions with almost a bulkstudent, out of which we have selected only threecolleges for present study. From each college only15 respondents were selected for the collection of research data in relation to the demographic composition of the Bhopal city. In this way, 45 respondents were selected in total from the concerned universe. Before interviewing the respondents of the urban areas, a thorough study was conducted in the area to collect the necessary information regarding the urban dwellers and women in the district. After that with the help of random sampling, 15 respondents from each college are selected for the collection of research data. There are many research designs to carry out the research or fieldwork on a particular type of research problem such as experimental research design, descriptive research design and exploratory research design. As far as our research is concerned, exploratory research, design has been used in the present work. The data available to us revealed that our problem can be studied further for more research work as it has been suggested by exploratory research design (Andrew Peterson, et al., 2006)

**Table 1  
Profile of Respondents:**

Selected College	Social Media Users			Family Income		Qualification		Media User		
	FB	Whatsaap	Tiweter	Low	Middle	UG	PG	D	P	O
Hamidia College	15	15	8	10	5	8	7	15	10	3
Excellence College	15	15	5	7	8	10	5	15	9	2
IPC	15	15	6	9	6	6	9	15	11	4
TOTAL	45	45	19	26	19	24	21	45	30	9

Note: (FB= Facebook, y= years; UG= Under Graduate; PG= Post Graduate; D= Digital: P= Print: O= Others & IPC= Indra priyadarshani College)

From each college, we have taken 15 respondents making a total sample size of 45 respondents, out of which all 45 are FB users as well as whatsapp users while only 19 respondents use twitter. 26 respondents are from Low Income group while as 26 belong to Middle Income group. Whereas 24 respondents are pursuing Graduation and 21 have completed Graduation courses. And according to Social Media-wise distribution 45 respondents' use Digital Media channels, 30 female respondents use Print Media and 9 utilise others.

**Analyses:**

**Table 2**

**1. Regular watching/reading of TV/newspaper (Media)**

Option	Response	Percentage
Yes	30	66.67
Sometimes	15	33.33
No	0	0.00
Total	45	100.00

Out of the total 45 respondents, 66% respondents confirmed that they are regular users of Social Media and a very nominal 15% of the sample said they were not regular users. The results clearly demonstrated that in the present times Social media has emerged as the strongest and the most widely used media platform by the youngsters.

**Table 3**

**2. Frequency of Usage of Social- Media Tools**

Usage of Mass- Media	Response	Percentage
Daily	28	62.22
Average	15	33.33
Sometimes	2	4.44
Total	45	100.00

The above tabled data made it very clear that Social Media has undoubtedly taken the place of being the most popular media amongst the women, especially educated women, although they might be using it for different purposes. Therefore it becomes very necessary to find out their frequency of the usage of media so that it becomes clear as what level of importance do they attach to these tools. More than half of the sample, i.e. 62% of them used media daily. 33.33% of the sample replied that they used Social media in average while as meager amount of respondent replied with sometimes. The findings are clear hints that educated women are much habituated towards Social media.

**Table 4**

**3. Purpose behind using Social Media**

Purpose	Response	Percentage
Getting Information	20	44.44
For Study purpose	3	6.67
To share and build up opinion on numerous issues	22	48.89
Total	45	100.00

A major finding of the research study was regarding the purpose behind youth making use of Social Media. Majority of the respondents, i.e 44.44% of them were of the strong opinion that they used Social

media for assembly information about latest issues, happenings and trends of the society, shows that in the present times people, specially educated women who are the regular users of Social media consider it to be as one of the major news source too besides just using it as tool for networking with friends or entertainment. 34% of the sample's opinion was that they use this media for study purpose. 22 number of the respondents were again of the view that social media nowadays by also show-casing various prominent issues and happenings of the society, especially women issues contribute to great extent in sharing and building up strong opinion groups amongst the masses. A major finding which emerged from the study was that the least number of people, i.e. only 8% of them nowadays use social media just for entertainment. Thus 74% of the youth nowadays use this tool very constructively for being informed and then sharing their opinion with all like-minded people and finally building a strong opinion group.

**Table 5**

**4. Social Media as a powerful platform for influencing the mind-set of the viewers about the prominent issues related to women.**

powerful	Response	percentage
Yes	45	100
No	0	0
Tool	45	100

A major objective of the study was to find out the opinion of Bhopaleducated women regarding the role of Social media in highlighting women related issues and problems. The outcomes revealed a major fact that almost the entire sample of population which consisted of educated women i.e 100% were of the opinion that Social Media is a powerful platform for influencing the viewer's mindset about women related issues. No doubt we see that all those cases concerning women whether it's regarding women rights or various types of atrocities against women, primarily rape cases which go unnoticed in the mainstream media. Thus the Bhopal educated women strongly felt that Social media in a way has emerged as a platform which has given voice to the voiceless and the very neglected and tortured women sections of the society, where they don't shy away in bringing forth their painful stories amongst the Masses and such stories greatly influence and impacts the mindset of the women especially the young educated women propelling them to come forward and stage their view point on it and build up a strong opinion group.

**Table 6**

**5. Women Issue which attracts the attention of the respondents to the most.**

Issue	Response	Percentage
Rape and Sexual Molestation	18	40
Gender Bias	2	4.44
Dowry	5	11.11
Domestic Violence	5	11.11
Total	45	100

One of the foremost objective of the study was to know the opinion of educated women regarding do they feel that Social Media has emerged as a very strong substitute media in showcasing women issues and atrocities and does it really motivate the masses to come forward and fight for gender justice. Most of the respondents, i.e. 40% and 33.33 of the sample were of the opinion that issues related to rape and sexual molestation. 4.44 % of the respondents were mostly influenced by issues of gender bias. 12% of the respondents revealed that cases of domestic violence attracted their attention to the most and a very nominal number of people, i.e 11.11% were affected by cases of dowry related tortures and deaths. 5



respondents (11.11%) of the opinion of dowry attract the attention of Social. The results made it clear that presently Social media has become one of the strongest platforms wherewomen can talk about their personal worries and pain, specially cases related to rape and all kinds of sexual assault have been successful to the greatest extent in agitating the Daughters of the nation and convincing them to come on the streets to demonstrate their unity in fighting for gender justice and equality.

**Table 7**

**6. How can Social-Media are used to highlight atrocities on women and create strong public opinion and ensure justice.**

Scale	Response	Percentage
Strongly Agree	30	66.67
Agree	15	33.33
Undecided	0	0.00
Disagree	0	0.00
Strongly Disagree	0	0.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100.00</b>

A major objective of the study was to find out how youth make use of Social media to bring before women issues and cases of violence against women. 66.67% of the respondent uses Socialmedia for discussing and debating on various issues of women Social and gender equality and justice thus creating a strong group of like-minded people who come on the streets to fight for women justice and equality. The above tabled data shown that the majority of the respondent 30 in number were strongly agree on scale, 33.335 agree while as zero percentage give negative response.

**CONCLUSION:**

The present research made it clear that Social media has begun as a very strong platform. It is the most widely used Media Tool where cases of women atrocities and violence are just not noticed but where the masses, especially women get a chance to express their strong opinion on various issues, thus giving escalation to various forms of protests and demonstrations both on Socialmedia platform as well as on the streets which finally results in compelling the government, which is most of the time indifferent and partial to change their policies in the direction of restoration of women equality and Social justice. The study through certain cases as well as by conducting a survey on Bhopal educate women revealed that women greatly feel that this is one of the strongest platform which highlights women issues, especially those where women have been the victims of all kinds of atrocities like rape and sexual molestation and taking into consideration the very interactive and participatory nature of Social media, it has also given the women epically educatedwomen a space to bring forth their strong opinion as well as protest against the negligent and lazy attitude of the government.

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