

'Role of Social Media in Social Sustainability'

Journal By



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PREFACE

In today's day and age, it is rare for a person to be unaware of social media. Defined as computer-mediated tools that allow people or companies to create, share, or exchange information, career interests, ideas, and pictures/videos in virtual communities and networks, social media has invaded our lives in all ways. Some of the more popular ones are Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and WhatsApp.

Our project #SocialSurfing consisted of a series of workshops across India, intending to initiate the dialogue on how the user can have a positive online experience by maximizing the use of social media platforms. #SocialSurfing intended to engage with a diverse group of internet users and build their capacities for a positive and gender sensitive online experience. With these workshops, we also aimed at initiating a dialogue on Counter speech, for the very first time in India. While discussing it with an Indian context, we encouraged the students to come up with their own campaigns that they can run on their social media network. The project was a huge success and we are gearing up for #SocialSurfing 2.0, with even greater vigour and enthusiasm.

In the course of this project, we realized that there are several gaps in the academic literature pertaining to social media, as a field of study. Academic literature and research is of extreme importance in the understanding of a discipline, and for its advancement.

Thus, we decided to invite academic pieces from across the country, in an attempt to begin an academic journey on the topic of social media, and its implications on society, particularly on issues related to gender. This journal is the first of its kind academic journal on social media in India and we are very happy to say that we have received some very well research papers. We believe that it definitely serves as a precursor to a strong literature base on social media, especially in the Indian context.

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Web Diaries: A study on time spending by young urban adults on Social Networking Sites

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Abstract

We live in a world surrounded by social networks that connects people every time and everywhere. Generally individuals who are inevitably attached to these social networking sites are young adults and adolescents, though the frequency and duration of usage varies from person to person. Thus, 120 ($N=120$) young adults were selected on the basis of this usage and were divided into 4 groups ($n=30$ in each group). Purposive sampling was done. Among these four different groups, two groups differed on the basis of frequency of usage (2 hours daily and two hours weekly) and the other two groups differed on the basis of duration of usage (30 minutes daily and 30 minutes weekly). The purpose of the study was to identify whether the groups formed on the basis of frequency and duration of usage of social networking sites differs in terms of their personality traits, self concepts, willingness to communicate, and adjustment in social, personal and occupational spheres. Hence, Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (H.J. Eysenck & Eysenck, 1975), Self construal Scale (Markus & Kitayama , 1991), Willingness to communicate scale (McCroskey & Richmond, 1985) , Bell adjustment inventory (H.M. Bell, 1934) were administered to measure personality traits, self concepts, willingness to communicate, and adjustment respectively. 2 X 2 Analysis of Variance was done to find out the difference. Findings suggest that the groups spending more than 2 hours (both daily and weekly) in social networking site differ significantly from the groups using it for up to 30 minutes (both daily and

weekly) in terms of willingness to communicate with acquaintances and occupational adjustment. Interestingly individuals reported to be occupationally not well adjusted tends to show more willingness to communicate through internet. The findings were discussed.

Keywords: personality traits, willingness to communicate, self concept, adjustment, social networking sites.

1. INTRODUCTION

Connectivity has become a craving among adolescents and young adults, which manifested as over involvement in virtual world through social networking sites. Social networking sites are websites built to allow people to express themselves and to interact socially with others (McBride, 2009). A social network is online community where people share information about themselves on specific websites and connects with others through their social links in both real and virtual world, where users interacts with each other via the inbuilt communication facilities. But not all young adults are addicted to the connectivity craze in a similar degree, the reason behind which has been explained by many previous researchers (e.g.-Brandtzaeg, 2009). Evidence suggests that Web page viewers utilize page content to form impressions of owners' personalities. Marcus and colleagues (2006) found that Website features relevant to each of the Big Five personality dimensions correlated with viewers' impressions of the owners' Big Five personalities. Seemingly, presence of certain traits such as extraversion, social desirability tends to increase this need for forming socially desirable impression and make them surfing in virtual world for longer hours (Campbell & Buffardi, 2008). Thus, as a factor affecting likelihood of using social networking site Personality plays a major role which is defined as – a dynamic

organization within the individual of those psychophysical systems that determine his unique adjustment with the environment (Allport, 1937).

Social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1989) details how internal cognitions and environmental factors work in conjunction to alter self-beliefs, which are central determinants of human affect and behaviour. A new, very popular aspect of this phenomenon is online self-presentation on websites (Krämer and Winter, 2008). Thus, the individual's 'internal cognition' might affect the preferences of using social media as communication platform. Self construal is characterized by separateness from others, by attention to one's abilities, traits, preferences, and wishes, and by the primacy of one's individual goals over those of in-groups (Coleman, 2009).

Users of social networking sites have more control over their self-presentational behavior than in face-to-face communication, which provides an ideal setting for precise impression management as described by Goffman (1959). Hence, social networking sites enable them to communicate with their peers in a more organized way which might encourage their willingness to communicate.

Adaptation to the environment plays a severely important role in individual's engagement in social networking sites "because the symbolic environment occupies a major part of people's everyday lives, much of the social construction of reality and shaping of public consciousness occurs through electronic acculturation."- Bandura (2001). It helps the individual to adjust with his/her environment. Adjustment has been defined Coleman (2009) as- Adaptation, especially behavioural adaptation to a particular environment or set of circumstances.

The present study thus aimed to identify, whether the groups formed on the basis of frequency and duration of using of social networking sites differs in terms of their personality traits, self

concepts, willingness to communicate, and adjustment in social, personal and occupational spheres.

2. METHOD

2.1 SAMPLE AND STUDY DESIGN

The study comprised of 4 groups consisting 30 individuals in each, within the age group of 18-23 years, with at least standard 10+2 education, hailing from urban, middle socio-economic background were selected for the study, by using purposive sampling method. Among these 4 groups of young adults the first group use social networking sites for above 2 hours daily, the second group use it for above 2 hours weekly, the third group use it up to 30 minutes and the fourth group use it up to 30 minutes.

2.2 MEASURES

- Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (H.J. Eysenck & Eysenck, 1975) - used to measure personality traits i.e. Psychoticism, neuroticism, extraversion and lie scale.
- Self construal Scale (Markus & Kitayama , 1991)- used to measure independent and interdependent self construal
- Willingness to communicate scale (McCroskey & Richmond, 1985) – used to measure willing to communicate in the sphere of Group Discussion, Meeting, Interpersonal conversation, Public speaking, Stranger, Acquaintance and Friend
- Bell adjustment inventory (H.M. Bell, 1934)- used to measure Home, Health, Social, Emotional and Occupational adjustment.

2.3 STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Statistical analysis of the data was done with the help of statistical package for social sciences, windows version 21.0 (SPSS 21.0). The obtained data was checked for normal distribution using the skewness and kurtosis of the distribution for equality of variances. As the data followed normal distribution and the sample size was large, parametric statistics were considered. 2 X 2 Analysis of Variance was done to find out the difference. For analysis 0.05 level of significance were accepted as critical level.

3. RESULTS:

Table 1- Descriptive table: The mean and SD of all the variables have been presented here

Group 1- use social networking sites for above 2 hours daily

Group 2- use it for above 2 hours weekly

Group 3- use social networking sites for up to 30 minutes daily

Group 4- use social networking sites for up to 30 minutes weekly

Total- sum of 4 groups

Variables	Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Psychoticism	Group- 1	30	5.2000	3.1557
	Group- 2	30	4.7000	3.0303
	Group- 3	30	4.9655	3.2457
	Group- 4	30	4.7333	2.6773
	Total	120	4.8992	3.0011
Extraversion	Group- 1	30	4.4333	3.2662
	Group- 2	30	4.9667	3.3372
	Group- 3	30	5.8621	4.3648

	Group- 4	30	4.1000	3.8627
	Total	120	4.8319	3.7401
	Group- 1	30	4.4000	3.3073
	Group- 2	30	3.8667	3.3086
Neuroticism	Group- 3	30	3.3793	2.9205
	Group- 4	30	4.4667	3.2027
	Total	120	4.0336	3.1808
	Group- 1	30	3.8333	2.9721
	Group- 2	30	4.3667	3.5766
Lie scale	Group- 3	30	4.2414	2.8493
	Group- 4	30	3.6333	2.2512
	Total	120	4.0168	2.9285
	Group- 1	30	6.4373	3.9414
Independent	Group- 2	30	6.6680	3.7011
	Group- 3	30	6.3838	4.4678
	Group- 4	30	5.6700	3.9938
	Total	120	6.2890	3.9978
	Group- 1	30	6.5200	4.0328
Interdependent	Group- 2	30	5.6810	3.2096
	Group- 3	30	6.0121	3.4456
	Group- 4	30	5.9780	3.4123
	Total	120	6.0481	3.5072
Group discussion	Group- 1	30	48.0667	19.6836

	Group- 2	30	52.3333	20.5046
	Group- 3	30	50.0000	21.4726
	Group- 4	30	46.3000	17.3128
	Total	120	49.1681	19.6656
Meeting	Group- 1	30	46.7667	24.4254
	Group- 2	30	38.8333	21.8917
	Group- 3	30	48.6897	24.8985
	Group- 4	30	43.9667	21.5494
	Total	120	44.5294	23.2269
Interpersonal conversation	Group- 1	30	42.9000	20.7769
	Group- 2	30	46.4333	19.8471
	Group- 3	30	43.7586	17.9993
	Group- 4	30	46.8000	23.0896
	Total	120	44.9832	20.3382
Public speaking	Group- 1	30	43.0333	20.8550
	Group- 2	30	37.9333	21.5901
	Group- 3	30	47.3103	24.4834
	Group- 4	30	46.8667	25.5056
	Total	120	43.7563	23.1923
Stranger	Group- 1	30	44.0333	22.9550
	Group- 2	30	43.9000	23.1671
	Group- 3	30	45.3103	22.9939
	Group- 4	30	65.2333	113.7725

	Total	120	49.6555	60.4223
Friend	Group- 1	30	42.0333	22.3198
	Group- 2	30	35.0667	18.5118
	Group- 3	30	52.5517	25.0008
	Group- 4	30	51.5333	27.6577
	Total	120	45.2353	24.3946
Acquaintance	Group- 1	30	66.8000	24.2094
	Group- 2	30	52.2333	22.4187
	Group- 3	30	56.1034	25.9565
	Group- 4	30	53.4333	30.1796
	Total	120	57.1513	26.1701
Willingness to communicate	Group- 1	30	49.7333	16.9297
	Group- 2	30	44.7667	19.0583
	Group- 3	30	47.3448	20.3808
	Group- 4	30	55.6667	20.2967
	Total	120	49.3950	19.3913
Home adjustment	Group- 1	30	5.3333	3.2519
	Group- 2	30	5.4333	2.6997
	Group- 3	30	6.0690	3.2725
	Group- 4	30	6.2000	3.8183
	Total	120	5.7563	3.2650
	Group- 1	30	4.6333	3.7184
	Group- 2	30	5.0667	3.8141

Health adjustment	Group- 3	30	5.1724	3.9285
	Group- 4	30	4.9667	3.8371
	Total	120	4.9580	3.7809
Social adjustment	Group- 1	30	5.1000	3.8088
	Group- 2	30	5.1333	3.8303
	Group- 3	30	4.6207	3.7073
	Group- 4	30	4.0667	3.3107
Emotional adjustment	Total	120	4.7311	3.6492
	Group- 1	30	4.8667	3.3190
	Group- 2	30	4.7667	3.0021
	Group- 3	30	4.9655	3.9864
Occupational adjustment	Group- 4	30	4.1333	2.5695
	Total	120	4.6807	3.2284
	Group- 1	30	4.1333	2.6488
	Group- 2	30	4.2333	2.1284
	Group- 3	30	5.6552	2.5534
	Group- 4	30	4.8667	2.5289
	Total	120	4.7143	2.5148

Table 2: Table showing 2 x 2 Analysis of Variance with Duration and Frequency as main effect and their Interaction effect with personality as the dependent variable

Personality traits	Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Psychoticism	Duration	.675	1	.675	.073	.787
	Frequency	3.008	1	3.008	.327	.568
	Interaction of duration and frequency	1.008	1	1.008	.110	.741
	Error	1066.433	116	9.193		
	Total	3923.000	120			
	Corrected Total	1071.25	119			
Extraversion	Duration	2.700	1	2.700	.196	.659
	Frequency	12.033	1	12.033	.873	.352
	Interaction of duration and frequency	40.833	1	40.833	2.961	.088
	Error	1599.733	116	13.791		
	Total	4478.000	120			
	Corrected Total	1655.300	119			
Neuroticism	Duration	.533	1	.533	.052	.820
	Frequency	1.200	1	1.200	.117	.733
	Interaction of duration and frequency	16.133	1	16.133	1.571	.213

	Error	1191.600	116	10.272		
	Total	3194.000	120			
	Corrected Total	1209.467	119			
Lie scale	Duration	1.200	1	1.200	.138	.711
	Frequency	.000	1	.000	.000	1.000
	Interaction of duration and frequency	8.533	1	8.533	.984	.323
	Error	1006.267	116	8.675		
	Total	2936.000	120			
	Corrected Total	1016.000	119			

Table 3: Table showing 2 x 2 Analysis of Variance with Duration and Frequency as main effect and their Interaction effect with self construal as the dependent variable

Domains of self construal	Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Independent	Duration	5.179	1	5.179	.314	.576
	Frequency	3.714	1	3.714	.225	.636
	Interaction of duration and frequency	10.179	1	10.179	.618	.434
	Error	1911.544	116	16.479		

	Total	6761.572	120			
	Corrected Total	1930.616	119			
Interdependent	Duration	.181	1	.181	.013	.908
	Frequency	11.520	1	11.520	.858	.356
	Interaction of duration and frequency	1.443	1	1.443	.108	.744
	Error	1557.214	116	13.424		
	Total	6093.328	120			
	Corrected Total	1570.358	119			

Table 4: Table showing 2 x 2 Analysis of Variance with Duration and Frequency as main effect and their Interaction effect with willingness to communicate as the dependent variable

Different dimensions of willingness to communicate	Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Group discussion	Duration	80.033	1	80.033	.203	.653
	Frequency	.533	1	.533	.001	.971
	Interaction of duration and frequency	580.800	1	580.800	1.476	.227

	frequency					
	Error	45635.000	116	393.405		
	Total	338942.000	120			
	Corrected Total	46296.367	119			
Meeting	Main effect duration	484.008	1	484.008	.893	.347
	Main effect frequency	1394.008	1	1394.008	2.573	.111
	Main effect interaction	37.408	1	37.408	.069	.793
	Error	62855.167	116	541.855		
	Total	305705.000	120			
	Corrected Total	64770.592	119			
Interpersonal conversation	Duration	28.033	1	28.033	.066	.797
	Frequency	258.133	1	258.133	.612	.436
	Interaction of duration and frequency	10.800	1	10.800	.026	.873
	Error	48910.333	116	421.641		
	Total	293830.000	120			
	Corrected Total	49207.300	119			
Public speaking	Duration	1080.000	1	1080.000	1.987	.161

	Frequency	140.833	1	140.833	.259	.612
	Interaction of duration and frequency	258.133	1	258.133	.475	.492
	Error	63055.000	116	543.578		
	Total	291430.000	120			
	Corrected Total	64533.967	119			
Stranger	Duration	3898.800	1	3898.800	1.074	.302
	Frequency	2881.200	1	2881.200	.794	.375
	Interaction of duration and frequency	2960.133	1	2960.133	.815	.368
	Error	421062.533	116	3629.849		
	Total	726816.000	120			
	Corrected Total	430802.667	119			
Acquaintance	Duration	5360.033	1	5360.033	9.696	.002
	Frequency	448.533	1	448.533	.811	.370
	Interaction of duration and frequency	288.300	1	288.300	.522	.472
	Error	64124.600	116	552.798		
	Total	315748.000	120			

	Corrected Total	70221.412	119			
Friend	Duration	720.300	1	720.300	1.086	.300
	Frequency	2150.533	1	2150.533	3.243	.074
	Interaction of duration and frequency	1116.300	1	1116.300	1.683	.197
	Error	76930.333	116	663.193		
	Total	471710.000	120			
	Corrected Total	80917.467	119			
Willingness To Communicate	Duration	563.333	1	563.333	1.540	.217
	Frequency	76.800	1	76.800	.210	.648
	Interaction of duration and frequency	1293.633	1	1293.633	3.536	.063
	Error	42443.400	116	365.891		
	Total	337418.000	120			
	Corrected Total	44377.167	119			

Table 5: Table showing 2 x 2 Analysis of Variance with Duration and Frequency as main effect and their Interaction effect with domains of adjustment as the dependent variable

	Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Home adjustment	Duration	18.408	1	18.408	1.716	.193
	Frequency	.208	1	.208	.019	.889
	Interaction of duration and frequency	.008	1	.008	.001	.978
	Error	1244.300	116	10.727		
	Total	5265.000	120			
	Corrected Total	1262.933	119			
Health adjustment	Duration	.833	1	.833	.057	.833
	Frequency	.833	1	.833	.057	.833
	Interaction of duration and frequency	2.133	1	2.133	.146	2.133
	Error	1691.667	116	14.583		
	Total	4616.000	120			
	Corrected Total	1695.467	119			
Social adjustment	Duration	17.633	1	17.633	1.321	.253
	Frequency	2.133	1	2.133	.160	.690
	Interaction of duration	2.700	1	2.700	.202	.654

	and frequency					
	Error	1549.000	116	13.353		
	Total	4260.000	120			
	Corrected Total	1571.467	119			
Emotional adjustment	Duration	1.875	1	1.875	.179	.673
	Frequency	7.008	1	7.008	.667	.416
	Interaction of duration and frequency	4.408	1	4.408	.420	.518
	Error	1218.300	116	10.503		
	Total	3873.000	120			
	Corrected Total	1231.592	119			
Occupational adjustment	Duration	38.533	1	38.533	6.263	.014
	Frequency	4.800	1	4.800	.780	.379
	Interaction of duration and frequency	7.500	1	7.500	1.219	.272
	Error	713.667	116	6.152		
	Total	3472.000	120			
	Corrected Total	764.500	119			

4. DISCUSSION

The results of the study suggest that the main effect of frequency and the main effect of interaction were found to be insignificant in case of personality and self construal. Significant main effect of duration was obtained only in case of acquaintance (domain of willingness to communicate) and occupational adjustment.

The young adults using social networking sites for more than 2 hours both daily and weekly tends to be more willing to communicate with their acquaintances than young adults using it for up to 30 minutes. This is very obvious because “in terms of their affordances, social networking sites enable communication among ever-widening circles of contacts” (Livingstone, 2008). Thus, their willingness to communicate brought them to a state of addiction to the social networking site. this "addictive appeal" of social networking sites, suggesting that they may "induce in some of their users a sense of 'flow'" (McBride, 2009), the mental state described by the psychologist Csíkszentmihályi (1990) in which a person feels strongly focused motivation and may lose track of time as a result of being fully engaged in an activity (Egbert, 2005). As a result it engages them in social networking sites for a larger amount of time. The young adults using social networking sites for more than 2 hours both daily and weekly are found to be less occupationally adjusted than of those who are using it for up to 30 minutes, as Bargh & McKenna (2004) suggested that maladjusted individuals seems to spend more time in social networking sites. Present study suggests that occupational maladjustment in young adults might lead them to investing their time and energy in virtual world in order to overcome the dissatisfaction in the field of occupation. In panorama of this scenario it can be suggested that occupationally maladjusted young adults are more willing to communicate with acquaintances spent more time in social networking sites by communicating with their peers in order to overcome the boredom

and distress of their work place. Recent studies have also suggested that associations between online communication and adjustment may differ substantially depending on the initial social functioning of the individual (Valkenburg & Peter, 2007). More specifically, links between online communication and adjustment may depend in part on whether youth use online social communication to expand small or unsatisfying social networks, or instead use it at the expense of maintaining satisfying in-person friendships. For youth who may experience limited social success offline (which can be detected from their occupational maladjustment), opportunities to make friends online may be an attractive way to make connections with others (Valkenburg & Peter, 2007). Another reason can be that people who are socially and occupationally mal adjusted are not comfortable in public speaking or meeting as – they can not manage their self-presentations strategically in face-to-face situations (Ellison, Heino, & Gibbs, 2006).

But it should be also noted that the association between adjustment and communication behaviour do not necessarily represent a unidirectional casualty. As Kim (1978) concluded in his study- while the choice of communication partners and networks likely has an effect on the adjustment process, it is also a product of the existing motivation to adjust and attitude towards the host culture.

5. CONCLUSION

From the result and discussion it can be concluded that the groups spending more than 2 hours (both daily and weekly) in social networking site differ significantly from the groups using it for up to 30 minutes (both daily and weekly) in terms of willingness to communicate with acquaintances and occupational adjustment. Individuals reported to be occupationally not well adjusted tends to show more willingness to communicate through internet.

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RISE OF THE TROLLS: ONLINE DEVIANCE AND PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

In the 21st century Internet and the social media became an important part of our personal as well as professional lives and transported us to unexplored areas which were earlier inaccessible to us. Social media connected us to people who we had never met. The debate on the pros and cons of the World Wide Web is one that will continue for long. However, it is undisputed that the internet and social media has been used by criminals and non criminals alike for furtherance of ill conceived objectives.

The Oxford Dictionary defines deviant behaviour as something that is departing from normal standards.ⁱ Deviance in a sociological context describes that behaviour or those actions that deviate from the prescribed social norm.

Online deviance can take the form of sexual deviance, self harm groups and hate groups, hacking, cyber stalking cyber bullying, digital piracy et al. Most of these qualify as cyber crimes in most countries including India. According to a study ,Cyber crimes in India have increased from 13,301 in the year 2011 to 300,000 in the year 2015ⁱⁱ Out of the 92 million facebook users of India 11% are between the ages of 0-17 and 50% are between the ages of 18-24. Facebook users in India comprise of 7.73% of the total Facebook users.ⁱⁱⁱ

It is of great importance to understand that the childhood and adolescent years shape our outlook and personality. The amount and the kind of use of the internet and the social media can have an adverse effect on the personality development of a child. If a child of 12 were to indulge in sexual deviance on the internet this would lead him to have serious flaws in his interpersonal skills. Also, if a teenager would affiliate himself to a self harm or hate group on social networking sites this could lead to him being passive aggressive or reclusive A victim of cyber stalking or cyber bullying would have self esteem issues or may also suffer from depression and have suicidal thoughts. A study conducted by the telecom operator Uninor (now telenor) has shown that around one third of school going children in India have experienced cyber bullying, cyber stalking and defamation .Unfortunately 34% of these children do not inform their parents of their online activities.^{iv}

In my paper I do not wish to completely ignore the benefits of the World Wide Web or the social media but I will elucidate their ill effects .This paper is on the subject of online deviance and its impact on personality development. In this regard I will refer to the kinds of deviance that can occur through and on the internet and the subsequent impact of each of them on different age groups focussing primarily on children and adolescents

KEYWORDS: Online deviance, Personality development, cyber crime, victims, offenders, internet, social media, social networking sites.

1. INTRODUCTION

The 21st century saw the birth and the evolution of the Internet as well as social media. The Internet unfastened an unexplored world of information and knowledge which in turn opened up new avenues for the humankind. Social media and social networking sites connected us to people who we were not in touch with us and also introduced and help us meet new people who had similar aspirations and ideologies. The debate as to the advantages and disadvantages of the World Wide Web is one that will continue till the end of time. There are always going to arguments and discussions as to the use and misuse of social media and the Internet.

The World Wide Web is now being pervaded by criminals in furtherance of their ill conceived objectives. Unfortunately, non criminals get sucked into this virtual world and subsequently become criminals. The Internet has now become one of the strongholds of deviant behaviour.

The Oxford Dictionary defines deviant behaviour as something that is departing from normal standards.

⁵Deviance in a sociological concept means that behaviour which is not in conformity with the norms of the Society and thus becomes unacceptable. All crimes recognised under the Penal Statutes of a country are nothing but different forms of deviant behaviour.

Online deviant behaviour refers to a range of activities that may be considered illegal or immoral or both. This paper will refer to the following forms of Online Deviance, namely:

1. Cyber Bullying
2. Cyber Stalking
3. Sexual Deviance

As a student of law and a former student of psychology, the author in her paper will explore online deviance in the form of cyber crimes and will identify its impact on the personality development of youths. The author will also touch upon the mechanisms to deal with victims of cyber crime. The author through her effort does not wish to completely ignore the importance of the World Wide Web but does wish to elucidate its ill riding effects which are more than often ignored by people.

2. ONLINE DEVIANCE AS CYBER CRIMES

As people are becoming increasingly dependent on internet technology in their personal as well as professional lives, the instances of computer crimes have also increased. The most vulnerable group that is children are worst affected by cyber crimes not only in India but all over the world. According to a study, Cyber crimes in India have increased from 13,301 in the year 2011 to 300,000 in the year 2015⁶. Out of the 92 million facebook users of India 11% are between the ages of 0-17 and 50% are between the ages of 18-24. Facebook users in India comprise of 7.73% of the total facebook user's⁷. In a study of most victimized nations of cyber crimes India ranks second after China.

As said earlier online deviance is illegal or immoral behaviour done on social media websites or by using the internet as a medium. The following are the types of online deviance that are also Cyber Crimes:

2.1 Cyber Bullying

The bully from the school or the playground and has now entered the virtual world. The Cyber bullying Research Centre in Jupiter, Florida defines cyber bullying as the “wilful and repeated harm inflicted through the use of computers, cell phones, and other electronic devices”. Cyber bullying can take the form of angry or rude messages, repeatedly sending insults or threatening messages, spreading cruel rumours, revealing something online which the person had shared in confidence et al.⁸ The most extreme form of cyber bullying occurs when a person makes a fake profile of another and posts obscene or defamatory material. India is ranked third in cyber bullying worldwide and thirty percent of children accessing the Internet have experienced some kind of cyber harm.⁹ According to Microsoft's “Online youth Behaviour Survey” fifty three percent of children in India between the ages of 8-17 were bullied online.¹⁰

2.2 Cyber Stalking

Cyber stalking is defined as using the Internet or other electronic means as a way to harass, intimidate, threaten, monitor or make unwanted advances towards another. It can involve direct communications through e-mails, chat rooms, bulletin boards or social sites such as Facebook, the surreptitious gathering of information regarding the target, or covert observation. Cyber stalking can be scarier than actual stalking because in the case of the former you have never come physically close to that person and you probably do not even know how he looks,. Stalkers on most occasions create a fake profile online with a specific aim to stalk their victims behind the comfort of their computer screens. Cyber stalkers are motivated by different aims such as reconciling with a partner, revenge on a partner, finding a new romantic partner, hate or intolerance for a particular group or person et al. In this regard cyber stalking could also be labeled as a crime of passion.

2.3 Sexual Deviance

Online sexual deviance could take the form of pornography, pedophilia, posting and publishing sexual content on social networking sites. Pornographic material is so freely available on the Internet these days that it is somehow inevitable that a child would have seen pornographic content till the ages of 10-12. Some of the pornographic material available online is extremely violent. The internet is also a breeding ground for pedophiles who lure young girls and boys in chat rooms and social networking sites into performing sexual acts with them. A lot of people publish and post sexually explicit material of a former partner as a form of revenge. According to a study published in The Hindu, 1203 cases of publishing obscene material online including child pornography were reported.¹¹ It is important to note that these are only statistics for reported cases and that there are still a large number of unreported cases.

3. ONLINE DEVIANCE AND PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT

The victims of aforementioned cyber crimes can have long lasting effects on their mental and emotional health which in turn can be detrimental to their all round personality development. The most vulnerable victims of cyber crimes are children or adolescents and they are the ones who are most deeply affected by crimes such as bullying, stalking and sexual deviance on the Internet.

Bullying on social networking sites can leave the victim with deep mental scars. Even though it may not take place in person, the emotional and psychological effects of cyber-bullying are just as destructive. Victims of cyber bullying experience a lack of acceptance in their peer groups and this results in loneliness and isolation. They become reclusive and they avoid social gathering or are really uncomfortable around people. Also, this can damage their self esteem to a great extent and in extreme cases it can lead to depression and suicidal tendencies. What makes it worse is that children who are victims tend to hide this fact because they are embarrassed. They become quieter and less confident and this can adversely affect their academic progress as well. These behavioral tendencies if left unattended persist up to adulthood and can be really damaging personal and professional lives.

Cyber stalking has similar effects such as cyber bullying on the personality development of a person. Mostly young girls and women become a victim of cyber stalking and this leads to them feeling unsafe at all points of time. They can experience psychological trauma as well as physical and emotional reactions. Some of these effects may include change in eating or sleeping patterns, anger, depression, nightmares, anxiety, helplessness, fear, shock and disbelief.¹² Some victims also suffer from some symptoms of post traumatic stress disorder such as hyper vigilance. There also has a detrimental effect on a person's social life as they avoid social situations. The professional life may also suffer because the mind is always preoccupied with the fear that all her online activity at every moment is subject to stalking by an unknown face.

To be a victim of child pornography can have devastating long lasting effects on the mental and emotional development of a child. The victimization of a child due to pornography is one that never ends because they can never be fully erased or removed from online databases. Victims also experience an overwhelming sense of guilt, embarrassment. Once adults these children experience problems in the sexual lives because of the fact that their idea of sexuality is tarnished. Like victims of other cyber crimes they also experience stress which can further lead to depression and suicidal ideation. Victims of pedophilia, experience acute feelings of guilt, shame, despair and anger. They start viewing themselves as only fit for sexual purposes. They have a low self esteem and highly damaged self worth. Victims of such crimes also have issues of intimacy and commitment.

4. CONTROLLING AND PREVENTING CYBER CRIME

4.1 Cyber bullying

Section 66A of the Information Technology (Amendment) Act provides for a punishment for Cyber bullying Section 66 A reads as: Punishment for sending offensive messages through communication service, etc. Under Section 66 (A) of the IT Act, 2000, cyber bullying is a bailable offence, punishable with three years of imprisonment and fine. However, the complainant and police can interpret what constitutes offensive behavior.

4.2 Cyber Stalking

Although cyber stalking is not directly referred to in the IT Act, 2008, it is dealt with by Section 72 and 72 A which deal with invasion of privacy of an individual. The most used provision for regulating cyber stalking in India is section 72 of the Indian information technology act (Amended), 2008. Section 72 provides relief for Breach of confidentiality and privacy.

The new Section 354 D of the Indian Penal Code would also be beneficial in dealing with cases of cyber stalking. S.354D of the IPC (as has been added by the Criminal Law Amendment Ordinance, 2013) specifically deals with the offence of stalking.

4.3 Sexual Offences

The Protection of children from Sexual Offences Act criminalises watching or collecting pornographic content involving children. It also contains provisions for punishing paedophiles or people involved in child sexual abuse.

5. DEALING WITH VICTIMS

Victims of cyber bullying, cyber stalking, pornography and paedophilia need immense care and protection. It is imperative that parents of such victims are interactive with them. Also, to prevent further occurrence of these crimes there must be parental supervision and vigilance of their child's online activities. Children as young as 10 or 12 should not be allowed to access social networking sites.

Also if there are severe emotional or mental effects a person should not feel shy or embarrassed to seek psychological or medical help. Victims should be ready to start afresh in spite of their harrowing experiences and in this the help of family and friends is extremely necessary.

6. CONCLUSION

The advancement of technology in this day and age should not be used only to further the occurrence of crimes. On the other hand it should be used to control and prevent crimes. Social media websites should foster a sense of security and privacy for their users and make sure that the incidents of bullying, stalking and sexual deviance don't go unreported. People in our country need to be made aware of the legislations and laws available to them and even if they are aware they need to be empowered enough to talk about such incidents. Childhood and adolescent years shape our personality and thus it is very important to use the right quality and quantity of the internet and social media. This should also be applicable to adults so as to not be a hindrance at their homes and their workplace. Psychologists are welcoming initiatives by schools' move to launch awareness programmes for students. Experts stress that students should not believe anyone online as their profiles might be fake, explaining further that if someone tries to isolate you from your family and friends, or turn you against your parents or make you keep secrets, these are all warning signs¹³.

ⁱ Compact Oxford Dictionary and Thesaurus Guide Pg239.

ⁱⁱ ASSOCHAM , Mahindra SSG Report 2015.

ⁱⁱⁱ <http://dazeinfo.com/2014/01/07/facebook-inc-fb-india-demographic-users-2014/> (last accessed on 7th February 2015).

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¹³ *Supra* note 5

FROM SOCIALIZING TO VICTIMIZING: TYRANNY OF THE CYBERWORLD, WOMEN and THE FILM INDUSTRY

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Abstract

I would like to limit myself to India while discussing the relationship between women and the cyber world. My aim is to discuss analyze and conclude how socializing slowly becomes victimizing when it comes to women, irrespective of class, caste ,race, in cyber spaces. Inequality prevails not only in the real world but also virtually. Patriarchy, gender discrimination, communal difference and orthodox “puritan” views regarding the role of women is a matter of great shame when on the other hand women are moving mountains. We must strive to make the world, virtually and in reality. My study would show how cyber bullying and unrestricted entry in social networking sites has raised violence against women, in India. We talk about equality and justice aloud nowadays in every walk, protest for Nirbhaya holding candles, carry pepper sprays to keep away a few lecherous ogles and hands but are we safe virtually? Various cyber crimes particularly targeted on women includes email spoofing, cyber stalking, harassing messages defamation morphing even moral policing over online social networking sites. While battling against a patriarchal mind set conquering even on cyber spaces I believe it is important to create awareness that are viable to the general public specifically women. No place on earth can call itself civilized if it treats its women as a subordinate and accessible to public humiliation. I would like to conclude my area of research as suggesting a nuanced debate must be made to stop these nuances in cyber spaces. As Shabana Azmi in one of her interview once stated, “There is a fine line between celebrating sensuality and allowing women to objectification.”Another essential point on which I am going to stress in my area of research is we must practice is to verbalize what we think without the fear of being appropriated by moral policing in any sphere virtual or real. If rights of women in cyber spaces need to be protected, we must address cyber crimes of all hues sincerely. A gender sensitive approach aimed at reforming the country’s laws regarding the victimization of women in cyber space is a path everyone sees but seldom approaches. I would like to conclude on a note where I would discuss the role of the new media and the impact of Cinema on the general mass of India which instigate a few ignorant minds to think

of women in cyber space as a mere object to gaze. Members designated for humiliation and to make bawdy jokes about.

My paper is particularly based on the role of the Indian film industry and unrestricted entry to social networking sites in increasing the misconduct, hostility, and delinquency against women. In a country like India, people are unable to understand the difference between accepting disparity of thought is not as same as to tolerate it. We must all protest in favor of keeping away all the oddity and may wisdom be bestowed upon the ignorant minds, as it is high time we stop shouting for what is right and start questioning and making informed choice.

KEY WORDS: Cybercrime, Violence against women in cyberspace

1. Introduction

If we look around ourselves we see everything happening faster than ever before, the previously prevailing ways are slowly dissipating and new ways of existence are unveiling themselves. The Social Media is playing a crucial role in the reshaping and restyling of our views, opinions, development of intellectual abilities, modes of behaviour and personalities. But what it also does is affect our lives by creating insurmountable menace due to its misuse in the name of 'access to all' policy. Globally there are 3.010 billion Internet users out of them 2.078 billion are active users of the social media. Unfortunately the social networking sites have become platforms for not only socializing but also to victimize its users. Cyberpunk writer William Gibson defines cyberspace as, "a consensual hallucination experienced daily by millions of legitimate operators." With this 'hallucinating' effect of the social media it has become too easy to spread messages online without a grain of truth in it. Lewd comments, messages, undignified trolls and even death threats on social networking sites are some of the most harrowing effects which disclose the unacceptable misemployment of the Internet and technology. The victims are of multiple categories as the perpetrators of unlawful activities spares none. On one hand social media pluralizes and diversifies opinion and on the other it gives birth to casual sexism and misogyny. Cybercrime include several types of online harassment via Email Spoofing, Intimate Partner Violence and, Culturally Justified Violence. There are also unfamiliar terms (for the common mass) such as Bucket Brigade Attack, Botnet, Tailgating, ARP Cache Poisoning all of these are different categories of cybercrime. The most used method to execute these crimes is what the psychologists refer to as 'Deindividuation', a process where social norms are withdrawn because of concealed

identities. Given the modern sensibility aren't these crimes truly evocative of the intensified unruly behaviour succeeding in our society? I presume they are. Some of us are familiar with the piteous incident of Alia Bhatt in a popular talk show where she named Prithviraj Chauhan as India's President. And what followed her statement? She was ridiculed and victimized ignominiously all over the media. Social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter were flooded with comparable virtual rage and even fantasized violence for Alia Bhatt's lack of 'intelligence'. The eminent question in this context is not that if she deserved to be spurned and humiliated for being uninformed but the exceeding amount of fashionable political incorrectness that emphasized antagonism, vicious bullying and robust criticism. Jaron Lanier, author of 'You Are Not a Gadget' writes, "Trolling is not a string of isolated incidents but the status quo in the online world." Trolls are compared to graffiti artist, as they want people who are familiar with the online language to identify them. They strive to achieve a point of recognition for their online identity. And anonymity assists them to remain essentially risk free.

The recent emergence of this online behaviour, as statistics show is deliberately much more insensitive towards women. Even online norms are partial when it comes to women. Few in the cyber world is taking free speech to unrestrained extremes. The fabrication of misquoting and turning it into 'fact' is what Nandita Das, eminent actor and women's rights activist had to face when Twitter was flooded with her (mis)quote, "All men are potential rapists." She writes, "Today, in the age of attract-traffic-at-any-cost media and its amplifications online, I wonder whether it is wise to turn a blind eye. It actually managed to damage my work as an advocate of women's rights." Why cannot we make positive and informed discussions online, instead of harassing or suppressing voice of dissent? We seldom interrogate our motives behind these nonchalant acts and pertain to the age old values of subordination and subjugation of women. Norms are influential and powerful but in the cyber world it works only in certain contexts. We Indians have given ourselves the constitution but are barely able to keep it. We inherited a transcendent heritage but are not wise enough to admire and preserve it. It is mandatory for every individual to involve themselves in welfare, access, participation and control over their cyber modes of behaviour. Anonymous destructive threats by a few moral polices got in the way of constructive debate. An idea of dissent now is seen as an attack on institutionalized ideology followed by clueless mobs. They are constantly creating ruckus due to their misfortune of ignorance in social networking sites. In early years the online behaviour which was popular as flaming is now aspiring violence

through trolls which is the attack of the lowest denominator. Antipathetic emotion of disgust and outrage towards women in cyber spaces is a reflection that we have not yet been able to prove the construct wrong: men is the norm and women the derivation. But what is to be done to shout down this excessive disrupt of outrage created by a number of people? These issues must be stressed by the domestic laws of the country where the victim resides or is domiciled. A complete pragmatic change in the ways of thinking and decision making is all what is needed. Because if we have not faced any of such violence ourselves we cannot sympathize with the victim's torment but only believe in it. A much more gender sensitive approach and regulative measures must be taken because preachers of patriarchy harm not only women in general but the society's structure all by its entirety. The role of the new media and the impact of cinema in India is vast and widespread. It is the most accessible method to reach out to the common mass. So why not use it as a tool to uproot notions like women can be objectified as Sheila and Munni? Why not make a few sensible and sensitive films which would help to inform the common people about how much respect should be given to a woman and make them think twice before cracking a bawdy joke or two on someone who is dressed not according to the 'acceptable' conduct to dress? Even though we all grudgingly affirm that the world is changing and women are escalating to empowerment yet we are told through the worn out clichés of film scripts that even if a woman is in charge of a fashion magazine she still needs to become 'a mother' 'a wife' and play her role unmistakably. That she is essentially and fundamentally a mother and wife first and 'uncharacteristically' sometimes is allowed to go and work. Ideas are actualized in practice. And we must never forget there is a thin line between celebrating sensuality and allowing women to objectification. People should be able to make a certain norm work in a specific circumstance with accordance to the welfare and consent of EVERYONE. Digital violence through various external influence and sources against women is not a first world problem anymore as it recklessly follows the global spread of connectivity. Daniel Citron in "Hate Crimes in Cyber Space" writes, "Only 40 years ago, sexual harassment and domestic violence were viewed as normal. Today we see the same pattern of subordination in cyberspace. Cyber harassment is seen as trivial." And I believe meaningless mainstream Indian cinema plays an integral part in communicating wrong messages which has given rise to this invasive, intensive and traumatizing act of violence to a great extent. To make an impact we do not lack public intellectuals but lack a platform where they can express and engage into a nuanced debate as a critical mass. The importance of safety measures should be made transparent to the last individual residing in India to develop a sense of judgement and to condemn the acts of

violence on human beings irrespective of their class, caste or gender. To conclude, I would like to state that acts of violence on social sites is as damaging as physical abuse and a radically altering way with flexible judicial system must be made available. With proactive strategies and administrative competence crimes must be addressed in the right earnest. Otherwise what use it is to say that India is changing when actually we are still lacking potential to attain the crown of such credibility.

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Liberating or Debilitating: The Transforming Scenario Of Romantic Relationships and Use of Social Media as a Modifier in Commitment

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Abstract.

Interpersonal relationships are a driving force in our lives. Individuals with good relationships live longer and report less physical and psychological illness and greater satisfaction with life. (Duck , 1981). The shrinkage of real social space presents social scientists with an emerging challenge - to devise new ways of studying relationships as they remould themselves with transforming virtual spaces. The present study examines the relationship between social media usage among youth and its effects on their commitment level in romantic relationships. Does use of social networking sites modify the extent to which an individual adheres to his or her partner? With the efforts to bring individuals close to each other, social networking sites and instant messenger applications have been developed recently. These keep one updated on the current happenings in others' lives and let one update and post what they have been up to recently. These services have created a facet of virtuality in every aspect of life, and relationships are no exception. Marital conflicts are taking place because of Facebook that are being linked to the time each spouse spends on Facebook and the kind of photos, status messages, and private messages they post online, leading to increase in jealousy (Valdes, 2009). The social networking sites have also heightened the expectations of an ideal relationship in couples as the content floating on these sites can sometimes be staged, and even if it is not, it leads to comparison among individuals. To understand this phenomenon better, undergraduate students between the ages of 17 - 22 years were approached. A mixed method approach was used wherein participants filled The Investment Model Scale (Rusbult, 1998), the Facebook Jealousy Scale (Muisse, Christofides and Desmarais, 2009), and a semi structured questionnaire. The Facebook Jealousy Scale was improvised to take into account the use of Instagram and WhatsApp as well.

The results of the study seek to answer if social media plays an influential role beyond match - making, thus shaping how long a relationship lasts for. Does social media act as a platform where we compare our relationship with someone else's? Or it merely brings individuals closer as they interact more frequently, and in multiple ways. The implications of the research in the sociocultural context are discussed.

Keywords: Social Media, Commitment, Jealousy, Effect of Social Media on Relationships.

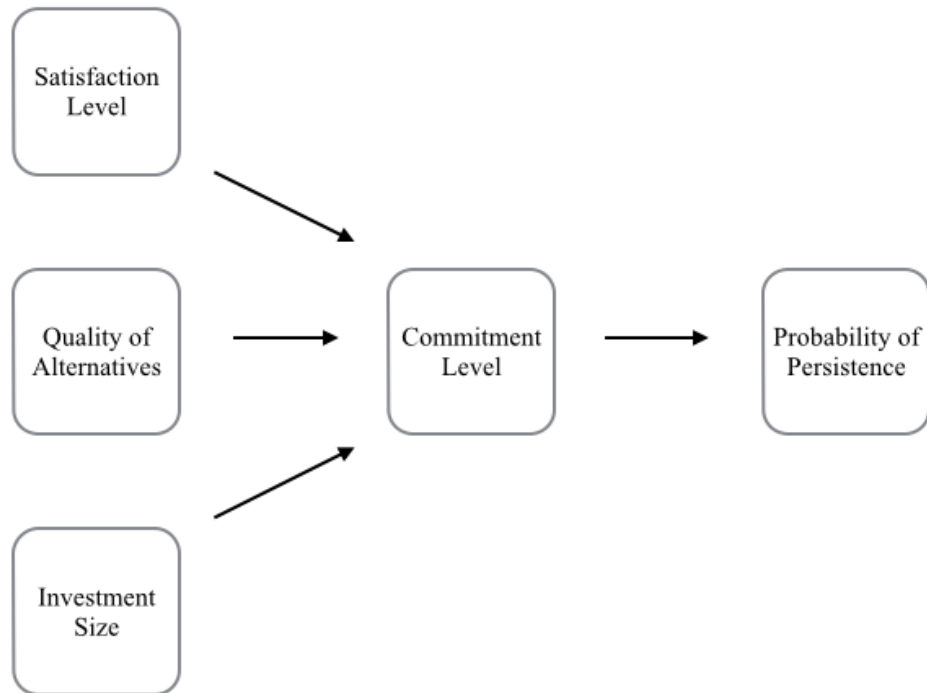
1. Introduction

Despite the enormous amount of research that has been generated in the field of romantic relationships, there is a dearth of research tapping what persists an individual to continue in a relationship, especially as relationships become more digital in terms of enactment. As romantic relationships have branched into an online component, it is crucial to study how the use of Social Media Network Sites by individuals acts as a modifier in their commitment towards a romantic relationship.

1.1 Commitment

The theoretical underpinning of this study is the Investment Model of Commitment Processes (Rusbult, 1980, 1983), often deemed as one of the most influential and empirically supported theories of commitment and persistence within relationships. A major premise of the investment model is that relationships persist not only because of the positive qualities that attract partners to one another (their satisfaction), but also because of the ties that bind partners to each other (their investments) and the absence of a better option beyond the relationship with the current partner (lack of alternatives); all of these factors matter in understanding commitment (Rusbult, Agnew, & Arriaga, 2012).

Figure 1. The Investment Model of Commitment Processes



1.2 SNS Usage

Social Networking Sites (SNSs) have become an integral part of communication means in today's world. SNSs enable a user to (a) create a public or semi-public profile, (b) identify and connect with other users, and (c) trace these first-degree connections to identify members farther out in the collective network (Boyd & Ellison, 2008). In contrast to previous forms of online interaction, SNSs like Facebook are predominantly used to connect with one's existing offline networks (Zhao, Grasmuck and Martin, 2008). Since the advent of Facebook in 2004, a boom has been observed in the emergence of social media sites like Instagram and instant messenger services like WhatsApp. Smith, Segall, and Cow (2012) reported that Facebook now reaches one out of every 7 people on the planet, which is a huge user base. Furthermore, the overall time spent on Facebook increased by 566% from 2007 to 2008 (The Nielson Company, 2008). Research also indicates that electronic communication is frequent within romantic relationships (Coyne, Stockdale, Busby, Iverson, & Grant, 2011; Subrahmanyam & Greenfield, 2008), and is

particularly useful for long distance relationships (Boneva, Kraut, & Frohlich, 2001; Dainton & Aylor, 2002; Stephen, 1986).

As of October 2015 Facebook has maintained its position as the world's favourite social platform; almost one third of global internet users (30%) say they use it every day. Over half of internet users worldwide (55%) are now using instant messaging every day, while 76% are using it on a weekly basis, according to Connected Life, a study of over 60,000 internet users worldwide from global research consultancy TNS. Even in India TNS reported that Facebook with 125 million users continues its dominance for social networking platforms with 51% of the users while WhatsApp is the most popular for instant messaging app with 56% of users. Furthermore, monthly active users of Instagram in India more than doubled in a year to 400 million, as of September 2015, according to a study conducted by market researcher Nielsen NV, with most active users in the 18-24 age group.

1.3 SNS Jealousy

Jealousy has been defined as “A complex of behaviours, thoughts, and emotions resulting from the perception of harm or threat to the self and/or the romantic relationship by a real or potential rival relationship” (White and Mullen, 1989). The effects of jealousy on romantic relationships have been studied by researchers since long (DeSteno, Valdesolo, & Bartlett, 2006; Knobloch, Solomon, & Cruz, 2001; Pfeiffer & Wong, 1989); very little attention, however, has been paid to the impact of social networking sites on jealousy and romantic relationships. It is an indisputable finding that the constructs determine the interdependence of a romantic relationship such as dependency, investment, satisfaction, quality of alternatives are important correlates of jealousy (White & Mullen, 1989). In a world webbed by the presence of multiple virtual spaces that allow one to display affection publicly in form of public display of commitment (Bowe, 2010; Utz & Beukeboom, 2011), it is easier to gain access of information about someone by just looking at their profile.

A factor commonly related with Social Media related Jealousy is Surveillance. It is in fact reported that surveillance is highly related with trust issues within couples ((Darvell et al., 2011). Social networking sites have various functions when it comes to romantic relationships: not only

do they (1) facilitate the gathering of information about the partner; but also act as (2) a medium for expressing romantic feelings, by updating profile pictures with one's partner; and proving to be (3) outlets for expressing anger towards the partner, by keeping certain messages as their 'status'. Beyond this, social network sites related jealousy can be triggered by some posts, such as a picture of the partner with the opposite sex, etc. Also, couples are using SNS as a tool to gather information about possible threats to their relationship (Marshall et al., 2012). Studies have reported that Facebook may expose an individual to potentially jealousy-provoking information about their partner, which creates a feedback loop whereby heightened jealousy leads to increased surveillance of a partner's Facebook page" (Muise, et al., 2009, p. 443).

2 Context of Study

In the fast changing dynamics of interpersonal relationships, the moderating effects of social media remain a crucial aspect of interest when it comes to the decreasing salience of persistence in relationships. The study thus, aims to discover the role social media is playing in relationships of the current youth, by examining the construct of SNS Jealousy. Furthermore, the study aims to realise how spending time on social media sites can have liberating or debilitating effects on romantic relationships between partners. The theoretical framework adhered to is the Investment Model of Commitment Processes (Rusbult, 1981, 1983).

Thus, the research question is: *How the increasing use of social networking sites among the youth has an impact on their current romantic relationships?*

3 Method

3.1 Participants

Students pursuing Undergraduate Degree in any college of Delhi were approached. The sample consisted of 132 participants, 41 Males and 91 Females who are currently in relationship for more than a period of 1 week and are active on Social Media since 3 months. The average age of the sample was 19 years and the age range was 17-22 years. No financial incentives were offered to the participants.

3.2 Procedure

132 participants i.e 41 Males and 91 Females who are currently involved in ongoing romantic relationships were approached in colleges of Delhi. They were informed about the purpose of the study in brief and that their personal experiences would not be disclosed to anyone. Further, Consent was obtained. Out of 41 Males and 91 Females, 10 males and 10 females were randomly selected for the administration of a semi-structured interview schedule with open ended questions. The participants were thanked for their participation.

3.3 Measures

The Facebook Jealousy Scale (Muise et. al., 2009), The Investment Model Scale (Rusbult,1998) and a semi-structured schedule on Social Media Usage and Changing Perceptions of Relationships were administered to all the participants.

The Social Networking Site Jealousy Scale (Muise et al., 2009) consists of 27 items which assesses emotional and sexual jealousy experienced while using Social Networking Sites. The scale was adapted to include the use of Instagram and WhatsApp other than Facebook. Responses were measured with a 7-point Likert scale (1 = Very unlikely, 7 = Very likely). Internal consistency was high (0.96). Participants also indicated how much time they spent actively using Social Networking Sites in a day.

The Investment Model Scale is a 37-item, self-report instrument used to measure commitment and its three component variables (satisfaction, investment size, and quality of alternatives), as put forth in the 3-factor investment model. The questions are separated into 4 scales, one for each component and an additional global commitment scale . Rusbult et al. (1998) used a 4-point Likert scale for the facet items and a 9-point Likert scale (8 = Agree Completely, 0 = Do Not Agree At All) for the global items. The validity and reliability of the measure were reported as good (Rusbult et al., 1998). Model comparison analysis over time indicated that commitment was highly predictive of couple functioning and dissolution of relationships (Rusbult et al., 1998). The measure has strong alpha coefficients that ranged from 0.69 to 0.77 (Rusbult et al.,1999).

A semi structured interview schedule (Refer to Appendix) consisting of 4 open ended questions was administered to the participants to understand the moderating effects of social media on persistence in relationships.

4 Results and Discussion

4.1 Analysis of Quantitative Data

There is a plethora of research on the dangers of SNS related jealousy, excessive use of social media, surveillance, ambiguous information presentation, and online portrayals of intimate relationships on romantic relationships (Kerkhof, Finkenauer, & Muusses, 2011; Muise, Christofides, & Desmarais, 2009; Papp, Danielewicz, & Cayemberg, 2012; Tokunaga, 2011; Utz & Beukeboom, 2011). With more and more young Indian users on Social Networking sites such as Facebook, WhatsApp, and Instagram, it is of pivotal importance to understand the changing dynamics of such online-offline relationships.

Rusbult's Investment model of commitment processes states that commitment appears to play a key role in the persistence and maintenance of benevolent romantic relationships. Furthermore, extensive research has indicated that commitment is positively associated with satisfaction level and investment size, and is negatively associated with quality of alternatives; and each of these factors contributes unique variance to predicting commitment (Rusbult, Martz, & Agnew, 1998). Consistent to the findings above, it is seen that in the present sample, significant positive correlations exist between commitment and satisfaction (0.588 and between commitment and investment (0.646), while a negative correlation exists between commitment and quality of alternatives (-0.272).

In the digital age however, these aspects of commitment can be moderated to a great extent by the use of social networking sites and newer kinds of phenomena resulting from them. With 48.48 % of the sample spending more than 4 hours on social networking sites, its impact on their relationship with their partner is now discussed. A significant positive correlation of 0.349 was found between SNS use and SNS Jealousy, indicating that Social media related jealousy increases with an increase in the time spent on these sites. Darvell et al. (2011) found in their study that the more time spent on Facebook or SNS the more time a partner's behavior would be monitored. In turn, Elphinston and Noller (2011) concluded that this ease of information into the

online world of Facebook in daily life directly caused more issues than good. Pertaining to these findings, Marshall et. al. (2012) reported that Facebook increases exposure to information about one's partner that may arouse jealousy and jealousy in turn, may increase the time spent on Facebook in search of relationship-relevant information. With respect to the impact of these social media networks on relationships, it was found that both SNS usage and SNS Jealousy were significantly negatively related to satisfaction in relationships, which indicates that an increase in use of social media and social media linked jealousy a decline in satisfaction of an individual in a relationship occurs. Romantic jealousy, in a way, can create negative thoughts about a partner and the existing relationship as a whole (Elphinston & Noller, 2011). Couples tend to trust their partners less, and in turn, are less satisfied with their relationship (Elphinston & Noller, 2011; Marshall et al., 2012).

While positively linked with Quality of Alternatives, SNS use among the sample was negatively related with investment and commitment of an individual towards the relationship. It is possible that time spent on social media does increase the quality of alternatives for an individual in a relationship, as they are continuously exposed to newer people. However, compulsive social media use can lead to a decrease in the amount of investment toward's one's partner, thereby lowering the commitment levels of an individual.

The results are summarised in the following tables.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of the Sample.

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
Age	132	5	17	22	19	1.14
SNS Jealousy	132	148	27	175	90	34.62
Satisfaction	132	48	14	62	48	9.44
Alternatives	132	47	10	57	24	10.94
Investment	132	48	12	60	41	11.16
Commitment	132	65	7	72	44	9.45

Table 2. Table Showing the correlation values between various variables of the study.

	SNS Usage	SNS Jealousy	Satisfaction	Investment	Alternatives	Commitment
SNS Usage	1	0.349	-0.307**	-0.133^	0.205*	-0.277**
SNS Jealousy	0.349**	1	-0.225**	-	-	-0.029^
Satisfaction	-0.307**	-0.225**	1	-	-	0.588**
Investment	-0.133^	-	-	1	-	0.646**
Alternatives	0.205*	-	-	-	1	-0.272**
Commitment	-0.277**	-0.029^	0.588**	0.646**	-0.272**	1

(^ = Not significant; * = Significant at 0.05 level; ** = Significant at 0.01 level)

4.2 Analysis of the Qualitative Data

10 males and 10 females were randomly selected for the administration of a Semi-Structured Interview Schedule on Social Media Usage and Changing Perceptions of Relationships. 4 out of 10 males perceived that Social Networking Sites act as a hindrance to their relationship and also attributed a variety of causes to the negative evaluation providing us an insight about how social media hinders personal space, occupies most of the time and how an individual feels entrapped because of its excessive importance and reliance to it.

Nevertheless, Females displayed such behaviours too and also 3 out of 10 females felt that these outlets though creating an outlet for positive communication space is also hampering relationships leading individuals to feel ensnared and dejected. Females though very satisfied in their relationship domain felt that such influences take away their time spent with friends and doing something worthwhile.

Among 10 males, 7 males regularly updated about their relationship in the form of posts or check-in's. The need to indulge in such behaviours is indicative of a variety of competition that people associate with Interpersonal Relationships now. The regular updates though made them happy also was attributed to a serious need to showcase the world about the happiness and loyalty that they associate with their partner. Further, 9 out of 10 females regularly updated about their relationship on Social Networking sites. An array of reasons were noted which ranged from the happiness they felt when people appreciated their relationship, to keep friends updated and also to initiate feelings of jealousy in others just for mere enjoyment. All this further leads us to believe that Social media though facilitating our day to day interactions has also established itself in an important role that has shifted its essence from a communication channel to how a person perceives his/her social acceptance and approval.

Although some people who did not update the daily updates felt that their privacy was more important as they did not feel the need to do so. It cannot be unnoticed, the vast amount of influences social media is setting up for relationships. 6 out of 10 males indulged in such accomplishment of goals to while comparing their relationships to the idealised standards. While these standards evoked a sense of compatibility of them, made them happy, facilitated feelings of togetherness and was attributed as an important factor to rekindle love in their relationships. The

one who did not followed such standards felt that Social media is creating undue pressure and sometimes preferred personal choices and these unrealistic standards in a negative light. Out of 10 females, 7 were driven by such standards as for them such standards provided them the true essence of an ideal relationship. And also forced their partner into accomplishments of such goals such that they could feel as a perfect couple.

Though these standards and goals are nothing but a basis for comparison, but certainly such comparative means are creating unrealistic negative standards for the positive feelings associated with relationships. Despite all the benefits that are channelised through Social Networking sites, its most prominent ill-effect would be hampering of personal space and privacy.⁴ among 10 males felt that their personal space was seriously thwarted by the frequent and dependable use of social networking sites. It created a hindrance in their routinely activities, created unrealistic expectations and communication goals and forced them to hourly update their partner about their whereabouts. Though, Social networking sites while keeping us one touch away from our partners is also creating negative aspects such as insecurities and jealousy in the relationships.

Out the 10 females that were interviewed, 3 felt that these sites hampered their personal space. As all these sites created a hindrance with regard to their exercise of personal choice as they always felt answerable to somebody for all their actions. Though these females positively evaluated the true essence of happiness and sharing of life events that these sites provide us with, did not miss the deteriorated effects that Social networking Sites has been producing on their own selves.

The findings of our study can be represented diagrammatically as:

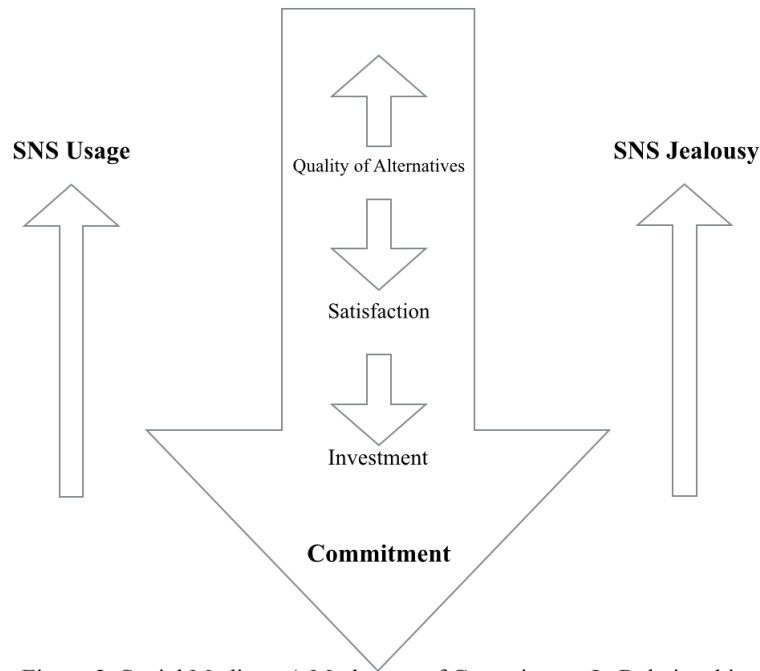


Figure 2. Social Media as A Moderator of Commitment In Relationships

5. Conclusion

It can thus be inferred that use of social media and jealousy stemming from this social media usage play a significant role in determining how committed an individual would be in a relationship. Social networking sites have curbed the extent to which an individual might persist in a relationship. The relationship can be summed in the following points:

- (i) An increase in SNS Use is linked to heightened level of SNS Jealousy by initiating a feedback loop.
- (ii) SNS Jealousy can be related with lower levels of satisfaction in a relationship.
- (iii) High SNS Usage is linked to a lower level of satisfaction in a relationship, lower investment in a relationship; it is also linked to a higher Quality of Alternatives, thereby being linked to lower levels of commitment in a relationship.

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Effectiveness of Social Media and Women: An Indian Perspective

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Abstract

The role of social media has been a powerful vehicle to address the issues of women. Policy makers all around the world are concerned about bringing gender equality. There are many incidents that reflect the importance of social media and its influence on women to take an active part in decision making of the country. It is one of the medium that provide opportunities for women to address the issues of equality, rights and freedom for them in front of policy makers and mass media. In Indian society, empowerment of women is a crucial issue. The usage of social media sites empowers the women by providing them opportunity to organize their lives independently and to identify and reduce power imbalances in society. The emergences of social media have transformed the lives of people globally and nationally. With the usage of social media an individual can share his or her opinion or content to a global audience. The use of websites such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, have allowed people to put their views publicly on some of the sensitive issues. The local issues are not local now- they are global in nature. The issue of women's rights movements have also been quick to capitalise on social media's to make them aware of their rights and freedom. Social media connects the feminist to allow their ideas to flow at the low cost. Many youngsters activist are some of the key participants in writing blogs to advance the concern for gender equality. The purpose of the paper is to understand the role played by social media in influencing women's concerns and their active role in decision making process. It addresses the impact of media on women's thinking and their active participation. This paper raises some of the questions such as what is the impact of social media on women. Can social media provide distinctive opportunities for women in politics? Can the use of

social media give women opportunity to raise their voice? These are some of the important concern of the paper. This paper is been divided into four section. First section deals with the introduction. Second Section deals with social media and women. Third section deals with major hurdles for women to use social media and finally paper concludes with policy suggestions.

Keywords: Women, Social Media, Politics, Participation

1. Introduction

The use of social media has transformed relationship between citizens and government. It provides ample opportunity to establish relationship with the global world. In recent years relevance of social media has increased, it has become a powerful tool to raise awareness and mobilise many crucial issues. Women's voices have proven to be a good result of such an online endeavour. Women have been using Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and Google+ as a platform to raise awareness and to organise campaign on gender equality. These kinds of initiatives have brought women in the forefront of decision making process. Local issues are no more local- they have become global in nature. During Wiki gender discussion, the participants supported the idea of the use of social media for giving an opportunity to women to connect to the outside world. The active women's rights movements have been an important source of attraction in bringing awareness among women in society. Some of the women's movement such as Chipko movement, Narmada Bachao Andolan, Tehri Dam have raised serious concern for rights of displaced women. In the 21st century women are communicators of internet technology, they are using it for accessing online activities such as messaging, Whatsapp, Facebook and photo sharing. This new technology has attracted the attention of many female users for taking an active part in social networking. In the political sphere, social media have played an important role in sensitising the women's' issue. It is

only through this media that women have become an active user of computers and internet. Social media have been effective in invoking awareness and respect for the women of India.

1.1 Social Media and Women

Social media is a powerful tool for online social interaction. Everyday life millions of the people around the globe uses this form of networking to connect to each other. Andreas Kaplan and Michael Haenleinⁱ defines social media as "a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0 and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content. Antony Mayfieldⁱⁱ from i Crossing, a digital marketing company, defines Social Media in his e-book (What is Social Media?) as a group of new kinds of online media, which share most or all of the following characteristics:

- (a) Participation: Social media encourages contributions and feedback from everyone who is interested. It blurs the line between media and audience.
- (b) Openness: Most social media services are open to feedback and participation.
- (c) Conversation: Whereas traditional media is about —broadcastll (content transmitted or distributed to an audience), social media is better seen as a two-way conversation.
- (d) Community: Social Media allows communities to form quickly and communicate effectively. Connectedness: Most kinds of social media thrive on their connectedness, making use of links to other sites, resources and people.

Social media plays an important role in the politics of the country. National leaders, election candidates and all official government organization are active user of social networking sites. In India some individual leaders have had first mover advantage, they believe that it is an extension of their daily business. Some of the leaders such as Manmohan Singh is on Facebook and Twitter . Almost all political parties such as Congress, BJP, AAM ADMI party

are connected to people through tweets. There is no doubt that the use of social media by government or political outfits is a quick way to share information and cost effective discussion and engagement with country's citizens. Social media expert Vivek Wadwa is of the view that people will use social networks that are for special purpose, geared towards local communities and in local language. The only way in which social media changes the political discourses by offering solution to the concerned problems.

In '*The Platform For Action*' set by the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing towards empowering women, two strategic objectives stated were "increasing the participation and access of women to expression and decision-making in and through the media and new technologies of communication and the promotion of a balanced and non-stereotyped portrayal of women in the mediaⁱⁱⁱ. Jagori, an advocacy group working on women's rights circulated a 30 seconds film, 'Don't Suffer in Silence' in You tube as part of their campaign against violence. The crucial issue of underreporting of crime against women and silencing the voices against violence surfaces in a number of online campaigns in social media space. Maitri India post in Facebook shares: "victims often feel pressure to keep quiet and hide the truth...call helpline^{iv}. The vibrancy of social media in generating awareness on gender injustices has been well acknowledged in recent burst of online campaigning by the women's organizations, human right groups or civil society associations. Community blogs, organizational reach to Facebook or Twitter have opened up a hitherto unseen virtual space of campaign against violence, pervasive in nature that breaks the glass ceiling in the public deliberations on gender equality. Oxfam India, shared the popular 'We Can' campaign towards reduction of violence against women and political empowerment. It launched 'The Close the Gap Campaign' in social networking sites, the tag line of which was 'Indians Demand Equality for Women'. It thought of reaching out the citizens, including the rural

India through interactive response system to engage them in public conversation on gender equality^v.

Social media space is flooded with campaigns against such stereotypes. Kalki Koechlin, the Bollywood actress, has been part of a satirical video on rape – ‘It’s Your Fault’, that was posted on You tube on September 2013, which received great response from social networking sites. The video was filmed as a response to statements made by some top politicians after the Delhi gang rape case suggesting that ‘rape is inevitable if women wear short clothes’. In response to such ‘insensitive’ statements Metro and You, a youth blog comments: “... Dear Society, instead of putting restrictions on girls and blaming them for whatever happened with them, can you please teach your boys how to treat a girl?”^{vi} Thus, the women and youth activist have build a forum of deliberation where the issues of gender discrimination and justice are taken by addressing their social and economic concerns. It is important to discuss some of the important cases or incident that were viral on the social media that have involved women to come in forefront and fight against injustice.

1.2 Aarushi Murder Case:

It is also important to make a note of famous ‘Aarushi Murder Case’ in which social media played an important role in which the case was discussed on the social networking sites. Citizens demanded justice for the girl and refuted all false claims against her. Women were active participant in demanding for justice for her through this medium.

1.3 Jessica Lal Murder Case

It was another important case where Jessica was shot by some of the influential congress nominated Member of Parliament from Haryana. Due to their influential nature they were acquitted from crime. There was massive criticism against the legal system. The information

was all online and on social media that led many supporters to come forward and fought for her rights. It was only this kind of revolution by people that brought these criminals under the preview of judicial custody.

1.4 Nirbhaya Case

It was turning point when Delhi was faced with its worst rape case event. In the widely report incident, a woman was beaten and gang raped in private bus in which she was travelling with male friend. The women suffered massive injury and died after 13 days in Singapore. This incident shook the conscious of Indian society. It questioned the security of women in Delhi. There was a public display of mass anger. There was massive campaign, people came to roads. The information was posted on all social media sites to highlight this incident. Many people raised their voiced through facebook and twitter. This case was watershed in the use of social media that impacted the nation. Above some cases were discussed that depicted the involvement of women by the use of social media. It is important to understand the hurdles faced by women in their active participation in the use of social media.

2. Barriers for women accessibility to social media

- (a) Illiteracy: Many women are illiterate to understand the relevance of digital literacy. Lack of infrastructure availability. In rural areas also hampers women to understand the role of social media in their life. The opportunity to connect to the outside world is meagre.
- (b) Limited Networking: Majority of women who use social media have low chances of networking with leaders and public figures that disconnect them from online activism.

- (c) **Censorship and Harassment:** Many cases were reported when women activist have been harassed online. Negative gender stereotyping and lower representation of women also silence their voices.
- (d) **Social and Economic Barriers:** Many women are not permitted or allowed to use computer or internet by their male members. The social norms such as patriarchy, religious and caste discrimination are still prevalent practices.

3. Policy suggestions

- (a) The focus of government institutions should be on increasing female representation in decision making process.
- (b) Steps should be taken to check the sexual and physical harassment of women at the workplaces.
- (c) To increase their access to new technology so that their political voices can be heard.
- (d) To conduct workshop and campaigns in rural areas to make women aware of the usage of social media.

4. Conclusion

It can be concluded that the role of social media is imperative for raising women's concern and spreading awareness about their rights. Some of the important online endeavours such as Facebook, Twitter, Whatsapp and Instagram have broken the traditional practices of communication and interaction. Women are an active users of this technology and they have responded back to fight against gender inequality. The political power of social media emerges as important tool in the women's movements. The social media sites highlight the issues of gender discrimination especially the vulnerability of women in terms of their identity formation. Many incidents in India have raised concerned about the social and

economic issues where women have been an active participant in using this new kind of social media.

End Notes

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ⁱⁱⁱ T, Williams (2000) Gender, media and democracy, The Round Table, *The Commonwealth Journal of International Affairs*, 89 ,p.357, p.579

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The social impunity of Linguistic Violence on Social Media: A Gender Perspective

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Abstract

The paper centres on understanding the linkages between linguistic violence against women on social media, within the framework of cultural violence. Further it examines Freud's postulation of Id, Ego and Superego in relation to patriarchal practices. It finally explores Non-Violent Communication as an alternative thinking to create culture of peace and compassion. To examine the underlined theoretical assumptions, the paper draws from the primary instances of linguistic violence that one comes across daily on social media websites, particularly Facebook, YouTube and simple Google searches. A combination of ten posts, pages, communities and groups, which were accessed from February 11-22, 2016 are used to draw analytical conclusions.

Keywords: Linguistic violence, Gender and social media, Non-Violent Communication.

1. Cultural Violence

Violence is said to comprise of words, actions, attitudes, structures or systems which does not allow an individual to reach his/her full potential, and gets expressed in various forms. According to J. Galtung¹, violence is avoidable injuries to basic human needs, where the needs are not just limited to food, clothing and shelter, but extends to include socio-economic, psychological and emotional needs. Galtung argues that physical harm is just one kind of violence perpetuated on someone- referred to as direct or *physical violence*. Investigation into reasons of physical violence reveals that direct violence is often perpetuated due to injustices in the structures of functioning of the society – like that of legal

system, governance structures, etc. and hence categories it as *structural violence*. When the existing structures become rigid and structural violence along with the direct violence begins to shape the norms of the society, it manifests into *cultural violence*, giving way to norms and practices like that of classism, racism, sexism, etc. Very often structural and physical violence is used to justify cultural violence². Patriarchal paradigms a practice, since time immemorial has set out a structure of societal norms, roles, expectations and behavioural patterns for men and women, girls and boys, which could be studied within the larger picture of cultural violence, manifesting itself through various institutions. Language is one such institution.

2. Language as an institution of violence

Patriarchal expectations often fall into the holds of hate speech, derogatory comments and offensive statements in the name of moral policing against women. Linguistic violence pertains to use of language as a tool to cause more of psychological harm, than physical³. Understanding if words and symbolic actions cause pain, J. L. Lemke argues that “meanings of words and deeds always induce the feeling produced when an individual makes sense of a situation”⁴ and therefore an otherwise sexual joke to many may not appear humorous to a rape survivor or to a victim of hate speech.

Stephaine Ross argues that words hurt because of demeaning attitudes posed by the speaker⁵. Linguistic violence is practiced across a wide spectrum of instances, ranging from simple jokes to use of totalitarian language, which further re-enforces patriarchal, racial norms and beliefs⁶. William Gay further opionated that those using sexist language place women on a lower level- considering them someone inferior, as second class citizens, sex objects, indicating towards the violent nature of language⁷. The choice and tone of words used reflect volumes about the psyche of the people and the society, at large.

Therefore, we argue that patriarchy, which is deeply embedded in the society, could not escape the victimization of linguistic violence. Moreover, extensive use of linguistic violence against women also explains the strong roots of patriarchal norms in the society. There exists an essential link between cultural violence and linguistic violence which cannot be overlooked. Linguistic violence itself as a manifestation of cultural violence is important to the understanding to recognize how gender based violence is perpetrated through subtler means all around in everyday lives that acts of physical violence do not sprout out all of a sudden but are sanctioned by practices, cultures and notions deeply embedded in the social consciousness.

3. Linguistic Violence on the Social Media

Women have been targeted time and again through linguistic violence in various ways, through jokes, movies, books, etc. Social media, comprising of websites, such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube could also not be spared from the practice. Like all other forms of media whose evolution and praxis has been influenced and impacted by the society, social media too reflects the predominant cultures, practices and attitudes that are prevalent in the society, thus not very far from the clutches of patriarchal stances, notions and believes.

Social media is highly reflective of what the society thinks and due to its high popularity among the young strata of the society, one may argue that young minds are both, at the contributing and receiving end of the information shared on-line. There have been many instances where social media websites have been used to express non-acceptance of ideas of gender equality and freedom. This has been possible because social media gives every individual space to express him/herself, which otherwise would not get heard. Various ways are used for expression – like Facebook posts, comments, ‘Shares’, ‘Likes’, pictures, hash-

tagging, Instagram pictures, Tweets, videos, etc. like-minded personalities often get-together through 'Groups' and 'Pages' to discuss their concerns and ideas in detail.

At the same time, when an act of physical violence in the form of rape or molestation happens, the social media goes rallying for gender justice; however, what goes unnoticed and unrecognized is how conducts of violence through our activities on the social media are condoned. Herein we extend language to include larger forms of communication across the social media, for which we have looked into comments, posts, videos and pictures circulated on some of the social networking websites.

We put forward an analysis of what we find problematic with such circulation. To begin with a casual search on women jokes on Facebook revealed that there are a number of pages, communities and closed groups thriving and having a laugh, some even going by the name of 'Making Sexist Joke is Fun'⁸. While that is evident of the largely accepted mindset of what is understood as funny and therefore harmless, the contents show that such fun is mostly had at the cost of women. These also revealed how women are still considered subservient to men, when a post thought it was smart to use WOMEN as an acronym to 'Waiting on Men's Every Need', and WIFE as 'Washing, Ironing, F-word, Etc'.⁹ This is what breeds and perpetrates gender based violence when we start categorizing, 'liking' and 'sharing' ideas on one section of the population as inherently inferior to another, and more importantly consider them as just a funny take on what is a given. A large part of these 'funny elements' concentrates on the sexual objectification of women, some of which were justified on grounds of biological correspondence – for instance, one photo-shopped image of a girl's t-shirt was made to read as containing the message that those with female reproductive organs should not make the rules but cook the food¹⁰ – of course, the words used for such purpose were violent in itself, each degrading and demeaning to the dignity of the woman, implying a loaded connotation of

generations of offensive objectification. Another ‘funny’ post showed how women view yoga as a health regime and men as an opportunity to ogle at women’s rear-sides¹¹. There was still another which said that a ‘loving’ husband spend quite a few dollars to get his wife a number of cosmetic surgeries, but when he spent \$30 to get himself some sexual gratification, she goes ‘mental’¹².

This is only a minuscule representation of a plethora of similar posts and updates going viral on the social media which fails to see women as anything beyond the body serving the sexual needs of men, thereby inflicting a peculiar kind of violence on women – one that resists them from rising above such set boundaries and aims to push them back into the draconian pigeon coups – we have all at least once come across a troll/post on Facebook saying “B****, go make me a sandwich!” The audacity and the intonation of this statement divulges how the superiority of male over female is expressed through violent and abusive language – one that can order women back into disciplining themselves else bear the brunt – even on the social media.

Another aspect of such gender based linguistic violence comes to the forefront in the event of disagreements of any sort amidst a discussion, conversation or debate. That the choicest of our swear words are aimed at and are abusive of women is not new, neither is it uncommon that whenever a verbal fight breaks out the first words that come rushing out refer to the women of the ‘other’s’ family, thereby violating the ‘sacrosanct’; like all other manifestations of the culture of violence this too is reflected in the social media¹³. Such example can be cited through the recent upheavals that we are witnessing on-line over the last week, with name-calling of the students of a particular institute, videos circulated on the social media in solidarity have comments demonstrating that it takes only one disagreement to degrade

women for and through their relations, ideologies, life choices etc.¹⁴, some going to the extent of even suggesting ‘rape’ for the larger, general interest.

The above examples, thus show how cultural violence works horizontally and vertically, and linguistic violence is a part of a pyramid – the base of this pyramid lies in patriarchal assumptions and conventions, which goes upwards to be manifested in terms of conduct, gestures, words spoken and actions done – all of which separately and in combination target women’s dignity and safety. In terms of linguistic violence on the social media, a casual sexist comment, an abuse in a heated debate, a threat of rape or acid attack as a reaction to something shows how these small instances are not only permitted but also contribute to a culture of violence.

4. Freudian Slips

The existence of cultural violence can be located in patriarchal practices allowing Freudian slips. Freud postulates that human personality is governed by the dynamic systems of Id, Ego and Superego¹⁵ – the development of which is dependent on environmental influences. The Id consists of instinctual (sexual) and aggressive drives, a substratum of personality operating according to pleasure principle. The Ego develops as a control system that functions to control the impulsiveness of the ID, in order that drive satisfaction can be obtained but within limits imposed by the society. The Superego is the ‘moral element of personality, which represents the totality of internalized demands’. As the development of it all is dependent on environmental influences, when a direct expression of a conduct is forbidden by social norms, the Id and superego generally operate in opposition to each other – the struggle compelling the Ego to maintain a delicate balance. However, under patriarchal systems, when the social norms itself do not find certain behavioural patterns problematic, the environment becomes conducive to developing an intemperate personality which can unleash itself in the

absence of a clash between the Id and Superego, thereby creating and contributing to a culture of violence. That a spoken or written word, or certain gestures also amounts to violation of dignity is not taken cognizance of, these instances are brushed aside as ‘just a joke’, ‘casual comment’, or ‘a little something that is tolerable’ – which exhibits the inequality of power dynamics and incompatibilities in terms of perceptions and perspectives – which eventually lead to a language and culture that is inherently violative and violent. In this context, it becomes important to discuss possibilities of an alternative.

5. Non-Violent Communication as an alternative

When language itself has become a manifestation of violence, which is so deeply embedded in the hearts and minds of the people – because of which they are often unable to realise that they hold a position of that of an offender – it is important to ask for an alternative approach. Marshall B. Rosenberg’s Non-Violent Communication¹⁶ (hereafter NVC) is one such alternative.

NVC¹⁷ intent to address needs of the other with respect and compassion. NVC as a process largely comprises of three layers. First is *empathising*. It is to acknowledge the other person’s needs and feelings, irrespective of how it is expressed. Second is *expressing*. Here one expresses him/herself without judging, blaming or criticising. The four elements of expression are observations; feelings; needs and request. Lastly, NVC stresses upon *self-empathy* or connecting with oneself, i.e. to be non-judgemental about self or others even during the process of self-thinking. This communication skill is based on the understanding that the language which one chooses to express him/herself is significant as it shapes one’s thoughts, ideas, perceptions about the other, form ‘enemy images’ and therefore must not engage in alienating a person, rather strive to establish a heart-to-heart connection.

6. Conclusion

The paper has moved on from indication of existence of linguistic violence against women on social media, within the larger framework of cultural violence, towards discussing the alternative communication approach which places empathy and feelings of the other at its core. Based on the discussions in the preceding sections, we argue for a strong relationship between linguistic violence against women on social media. The language and politics of gender based violence on the social media, not merely through reactions against and outbursts of and on hardcore sexual harassments, but through the lens of cultural violence as manifested through linguistic violence in the form of sexist posts, comments, trolls, opinions and the like that are widely circulated on the social media. We thrust upon the understanding of violence that goes beyond mere direct physical violence and incorporates a cultural and institutional violence – patriarchy being one of them – a practice and approach, which is so deeply embedded in the social consciousness, that its demonstration in various ways - from marriage to market, social gatherings to social media – which constantly and continuously puts women in a subservient sexualized position goes unrecognised by a large portion of the population, thereby amounting to violence – language, intonations and gestures being an important part/ expression of it.

We also tried to bring into perspective Freud's postulation of Id, Ego and Superego, in relation to the patriarchal impunity to abusive approaches to women, limiting to linguistic expressions that occur across a continuum on the social media ranging from subtle jokes to offensive posts, thereby changing the medium of targeting women's dignity and associated safety. The paper ultimately sets on the path of an alternative approach towards communication, which seeks to move away from alienating language towards humanisation of the other.

¹Galtung, J. (1990). Cultural violence. *Journal of Peace Research*, 27 (3), 291-305.

²*Ibid.*

³Gay, 1997.

⁴Lemke, J. L. Violence and language: The signs that hurts. 21st Century Research at Columbia. Retrieved from: <http://www.columbia.edu/cu/21stC/issue-1.2/Language.htm>. Accessed on February 22, 2016.

⁵Gay, W. C. (1997). The reality of linguistic violence against women. In *Gender Violence: Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (ed.). Laura T. & Jessica S. (eds.), pp 467-473. New York University Press: New York. Retrieved from: <http://www.philosophy.uncc.edu/wcgay/publingvioagwomen.htm>. Accessed on February 19, 2016.

⁶*Ibid.*

⁷*Ibid.*

⁸Facebook search for 'Sexist jokes'. Retrieved from: https://www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=sexist%20jokes&init=mag_glass&tas=0.03577277669683099&search_first_focus=1456295247224. Accessed on February 14, 2016.

⁹Women jokes. Facebook Page. Retrieved from: <https://www.facebook.com/women-jokes-357423187151/>. Accessed on February 22, 2016.

¹⁰*Ibid.*

¹¹GMMMMMMMM (God Made Man Man Made Math Math Made Mad). Facebook Page. Retrieved from: <https://www.facebook.com/GMMMMMMMM-God-Made-Man-Man-Made-Math-Math-Made-Man-Mad-186517944990/>. Accessed on February 22, 2016.

¹²Picture posted on Women Jokes Facebook page. Retrieved from: <https://www.facebook.com/357423187151/photos/a.10151330300177152.531166.357423187151/10153924052302152/?type=3&theater> Accessed on February 12, 2016.

¹³Picture posted on GMMMMMMMM (God Made Man Man Made Math Math Made Mad) Facebook page. Retrieved from: <https://www.facebook.com/186517944990/photos/a.10150236926929991.63116.186517944990/10150401229264991/?type=3&theater> Accessed on February 12, 2016.

¹⁴Umar Khalid Speech at Admin Block Today 22 Feb 2016. Retrieved from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G9K8ZM_6Tc4. Accessed on February 22, 2016.

¹⁵Vetter.J.H and Silverman.J.I (1986). *Psychiatric and Psychological Theories of Criminality in Criminology and Crime, An Introduction*. Harper and Row, Michigan.

¹⁶ See: Marshall B. Rosenberg (2003). *Nonviolent Communication: A language of life*. Puddledancer Press.

¹⁷ Drawn from the notes circulated at the WISCOMP's (Women in Security, Conflict Management and Peace) workshop, Unravelling competitive realities: A Youth Dialogue between Delhi and Kashmir in January 2013 in New Delhi.

Representation of women's body within popular mass-media: The concept of beauty as injected through popular print magazines and online subscriptions.

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Abstract. *Popular print-media has a represented women's body with a certain fixity of spatiality which depicts the larger 'public-sphere' where a woman is allowed to imagine herself. It constructs the bodies which are hegemonized to a culturally-determined symbolic order. The new-media too is no redeemer to this culturally construed order.*

Keywords: *Print-media, Body, Online-subscriptions*

1. Introduction

The female body has been one of the central concerns amongst the feminist scholarship, particularly with the understanding of power-relations which the women's embodied experiences highlight. The women's body is always embedded within the discourse of 'power' where they are sexualized to a particular hegemonized order. Scholars like Berger(2008), Davis(1997) , McRobbie (1994), Mulvey (1975), Thapan et al (1997) have argued about how the concept of 'Body' is central in unveiling a social order where women act essentially as the passive recipient within the visual culture. Berger argues that women representation is objectified to the extent that she often positions herself to the scrutiny of male gaze. To extend this argument further he says "men act and women appear. Men look at women. Women watch themselves being looked at. This determines not only most relations between men and women but also relations between to themselves" (Berger 2008: 47). Bordo similarly considers 'body' as a "powerful symbolic form" (Bordo 1993:90) which is based on rules of hierarchy and is embedded in the culture. Developing further on the concepts of Foucault she argues 'body' as made by culture and is not free of historical and political underpinnings. The women's body is part of a 'construction' which is homogenized and has a standardized ideal. Visual images thus become the way to culturally transmit these culturally-determined orders. Popular print magazines which are widely

read particularly amongst women and the online subscriptions of the same have played a major role in concretizing the dominance of visual regime. In this paper I intend to look into two magazines *Cosmopolitan* (English Medium) and *Vanita* (Vernacular Medium) and their online subscriptions to understand the meanings they impart to their target audience and to what extent they play a role in injecting Beauty consciousness and cosmetic-culture among its readers and viewers.

Firstly, in order to understand the meanings centering around representation of women's body one needs to work with the idea of 'body' itself. The Body is not as free-floating as one might presume it to be rather body represents a set of encoded social meanings which are the 'metaphor of the society' itself (Nirajana 1997: 107). There have been further works of Turner (1996), Wykes and Gunter (2005), Thapan (1997) et. al. who have attempted to theorize the very idea of 'Body' per se. Thapan talks about femininity as construed through the everyday lived experience of woman. This construction has a set parameter for imaging a woman in order to ascertain her identity within the society. A misfit into this structure of 'ideal' body becomes what she calls as a "The Imperfect Body" (Thapan 1997, 176). Through her ethnographic experience she cites some of these perfections against which 'an imperfect body' has to be constantly corrected. The constraints in relationships, the denial of love, failed marriages and gender violence often become the obvious repercussions of failing to adhere to such prescribed regimented body order. Similarly, Turner (1996), Bourdieu (1984) et. al. have extended the argument about the 'body' by conceptualizing it as something placed within the larger rubric of economic, political and cultural dimension. Bourdieu (1984) argues 'the science of taste and of cultural consumption begins with a transgression that is in no way aesthetic' (Bourdieu 1984:6) or is a matter of choice or preference rather it is the 'cultural consecration' imposed upon the object, persons or situations it touches upon. Thus the representation of woman images within popular print magazines are the larger repercussion of what society wants them to be like rather than an assertion of a free floating choice.

Wykes and Gunter in their work 'The Media and Body Image' have looked into the 'body' as desirable within a mediatized space. They have done content analysis of four popular magazines namely *Cosmopolitan*, *Sugar*, *J17* and *Bliss* to show the obsession around constructing a 'slender

and sexualized' body (Wykes & Gunter 2005:65). Their research reveals that there is almost uniformity when the young girls in the magazine were depicted. They all were 'white, fair, long-haired and made-up' (ibid 2005:89). Further they observe the glossiness and slender body with which these young girls were associated. Even the tables of contents in these magazines were more or less the same and they centered on motifs like Beauty, Fashion, Top Celebs, Boy-watching, Star-signs etc. The work throws up the unanswered question about why a sexualized image is sought through only young women. Even if the aging woman appears on such magazine she is to façade like young to be popularly accepted.

Now this paper intends to extensively look into the two magazines Cosmopolitan and Vanita, which are the two popular magazines widely circulated in India. Cosmopolitan is published by the India Today Group (in India) and is circulated around 100 countries including India. The current Editor-in-chief of the magazine is Arun Purie, while editor of the magazine is Nandani Bhalla. The magazine is priced at Rs 150 on the stand. Vanita on the other hand is published in Hindi by Malayalam Manorama. Its current editor is Mariam Mammen Mathew. The magazine circulates widely particularly in the Hindi belt of India. The magazine is priced at Rs 35 on the stands.

I am looking at three editions of Cosmopolitan magazine, October 2013, April 2014 and August 2015. I intend to particularly look at the cover pages of these magazines and not elaborate on the contents per se. The sample chosen is through random sampling method. The October 2013 was a bulky edition with 462 pages and had a supplement of about 200 pages, giving its readers a 'Shopping Guide'. The edition was titled "The Celebrity Issue", however the edition had more coverage to advertisements of brands rather than covering anything else. More than 50% of the content was advertisements of beauty products that can make body 'desirable'. It is interesting to mention here that even the contents like 'Style News', 'You, You, You' etc. were an extension of product advertisements spilling over the articles. The cover had the model posing with flashy attire, looking onto its audiences and posing. Clearly, the affect produced through such a gaze is what Laura Mulvey would call 'masculine gaze' because it positions woman in a way where woman is the image and a man is the bearer of the look. Even women's gaze by default is a masculine gaze where she constantly positions herself in a way which soothes and confirms to

the male desire. Even the other editions that I looked into bore the same logic 'lookism'. Griselda Pullock's work "Modernity and the spaces of femininity" also refers to such 'objectification' of women by referring to some of the Renoir paintings. She has argued how "women were denied a representation of their desire and pleasure" (Pollock, 1998: 122) and they were often positioned in way that attracted a masculine gaze. Such a sexualized presentation of women made paintings popular and sellable. The April 2014 issue had bold words talking about "Hot, Summer Fashion Looks!" which ended up talking about clothes and cosmetic Brands which one keep for the summer. Like other editions it too had column talking about 'Shopping secrets', 'Meet our Love Experts', 'Beauty Report' etc. The August 2015 issue cover page had similar structure too. There were topics covering 'Fashion Alerts', '100 Gorgeous Beauty Buys' and a section stating 'Amazing Body Hacks'. The section 'Body Hacks' was of a special interest as it revealed how to have a flawless Body by having perfect weight, perfect hair and even perfect teeth and nail.

Vanita on the other hand, which is published in vernacular medium, was a less bulky edition than Cosmopolitan. The magazines I here intend to look into are issues of August 2013, October 2015, February 2016. The magazines selected are through Random sample method. The magazine had cover models posing. Like Cosmopolitan, it had substantive coverage to advertisement. However, instead of just cosmetics it had substantive advertisements relating to home-care. Clearly, the magazine had set audience target in mind. The August 2013 issue had broad areas relating to cooking, understanding your partner (Balma Abhoojh), Skin whitening cream and techniques etc. The October 2015 issue was a 'Wedding Special' issue had contents focusing on 'Marriage and Make-up', 'Bridal Fashion', 'Honeymoon Travels', 'Jewelry Information' etc. It also had special coverage of overhyped weddings. Clearly the magazine was targeting the middle class audience where there is a desire for voyeurism particularly when it comes to social events like marriages. The February 2016 edition more or less was following similar pattern by talking about 'improving Beauty', 'How to be a Good Girlfriend' and cookerries. Despite differences about content one thing was constant across three issues cover which was the affect which the cover models of the magazine generated. The skin-tone, make-up used of the models on the cover was similar. The 'Lookism' about which I had talked previously was also what dictated models posture and positionality across magazines irrespective of its issue.

The online subscription of the magazines had large number of likes (approx. 7 billion). The page had active updates and the issues covered on the web page were not different from the content of the magazine. However on the online platform besides online versions of print subscriptions, there were other web pages like Glamrs, Steal a style etc. which were exclusively online platforms and which were not associated with the print forms. They had an equal or even more 'likes' than some of the pages like Cosmopolitan. When it came to online subscription of Vanita it can be rated as very poor. It had just 28 likes which is negligible in front of Cosmopolitan or other English medium online magazines. Though it had updates it hardly had a fan following. Even the other similar pages like MeriSaheli, Griha-Shobha etc. the following was very less despite updates. One can further meditate upon these trends by looking into the viewership and readership of the targeted audiences, who actually have access to the new-media like social-networks and online versions.

A study of these popular webpages particularly on social-media showed that they were informational to the set of audiences they targeted. Donna Haraway (1991), Lister (2003)et. al. have looked into evolution of new-media technologies which have consequences upon the 'materiality' of life itself. Haraway for instance talk about how the biology is woven with the information technologies and system, which can be further extended to understand the relationship between woman and media. The content displayed on these social websites is not very different from what the women's body is expected to materialize into. Thus with the emergence of new-media has thrown up a new paradigm of how one makes sense of the representations made within online spaces and the ways in which it allows women to position themselves within such spaces.

2. Conclusion

After a detailed reading of the Print magazines and their online subscriptions one needs to debunk the naïve presumption that the selection of print forms by women is their pure choice. Clearly, the very spaces discussed and covered within these spaces are have a hegemonic relationship were women are constantly seduced to the glamour of cosmetic culture, were maintaining domesticity and a healthy family and spousal relationship is considered the sole prerogative of woman. Media thus becomes the guiding space for the same dictating women to

behave in a particular manner. Susan Faludi (1991) has shown how when a woman tries to transgress these spatiality she is considered a lunatic and psychopath. Luce Irigaray (1997) has argued on similar lines about how not adhering to an order and parameter set through mediatization reduces woman to a patient were she is the sufferer of depression or neurosis. Hence, there is need to rework the ideas relating to representation of women within media spaces more extensively.

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Reclaiming Spaces: Using Social Media as a Tool for Autonomy in University Campuses

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Abstract

Social media has fast emerged as a most vibrant instrument of pluralistic communication in India. The rise of new media has allowed for thriving democratic online spaces where the public is constantly deliberating, dissecting and redefining national economics, politics, cultural practices, societal norms & constructs, and their complex relationships with each other. Social media surpasses traditional forms of media by virtue of its global reach and accessibility, resulting in a constant torrent of multicultural information. This state of global connectivity has placed issues of social importance under an international microscope. This development has allowed the social media-savvy citizens of India comprising of its students, academics, homemakers, artists, civil society members, policy makers and social activists to imbibe the learnings from socially-pertinent events from across the world, and utilize them locally.

A conversation that has been greatly amplified by this coming-of-age of digitized media is “gender”. Indian women have fiercely asserted their agency through online dialog, constantly dismantling the patriarchy by vociferously advocating for equal rights and social justice for women. One of the most visible sites of the social and political action triggered by social media activism have been the university campuses across the country. Myriad online campaigns inspiring students to agitate against unjust academic and residential rules and policies, as well as protest against national incidents of a miscarriage of justice, have surfaced and transformed the face of student activism in India. However, not all movements have been gender equal, some more so than the others.

Focusing on political and social activism in the context of Aligarh Muslim University where student activism remains largely male-dominated, this paper will attempt to trace the role of women students in campus activism. This paper will take into account the responses of undergraduate, postgraduate, and research students to a detailed questionnaire and follow-up interview series in an attempt to record their individual experiences with social media. Through the participants’ responses, I will try to study the significance of social media in the lives of women students who had thus far felt removed from campus activism, the implications of, and the reactions to, their social and political asseverations, and the extent to which social media has successfully altered gender perceptions in the university. Thus, this

paper will investigate the extent and nature of the participation of the women students of Aligarh Muslim University and discuss the role and value of social media in their lives as a platform for assertion and a tool for reclaiming their autonomy.

Keywords: social media; women and social media; social media and gender; women's autonomy; campus activism

1. Introduction

Pre-independence India witnessed an impassioned resistance movement at the behest of the tribal groups of India who vehemently revolted against non-tribal groups' unjust use of administrative and social structures set up by the British to expel tribes from their land, and deny them their resources through artifice, debt bondage and systemic oppression. The year 1947 witnessed one of the greatest national struggles for independence in history that finally led to the overthrow of a staunch colonial government. The years leading up to June 02, 2014 in post-independence India bear testimony to the resilience of the state of Telangana for separate statehood. These are but a few watershed movements in the extraordinary history of India that have established it as a nation entrenched in autonomous struggle, a land constantly breaking in hives against tyranny and the stripping away of self-sovereignty.

Equally significant, and oft-understated, has been the role of Indian women who have stood shoulder-to-shoulder with their male counterparts to uphold social justice in a society mired with class and caste divide, and who have stood separately, holding a torch to their feminine identity, to thwart systems that violate the agency of women and deprive them a right to life and unrestrained living.

2. Indian Women, Media and Social Justice

The women's movement in India gathered steam during the 1970s and 1980s after the government of India launched a Committee on the Status of Women in the year 1972, which published a momentous report titled "Towards Equality: Report of The Committee on Status of Women in India" in 1974. The Report discussed the central question of women's political, social, economic and cultural autonomy in post-colonial India, and thus, heralded a new phase of the women's movement in India during the 1970s and 80s. This "new movement" unabashedly demanded social, political and economic empowerment, and initiated a national dialog around the "unsettling" questions of physical and sexual violence and rape,

dowry-related violence and deaths, sex-selective abortion and gender discrimination in education and employment, and demanded stringent legal action in way of curbing such harmful practices.

The media emerged as a steadfast ally of the women's organizations and civil society activists determined to reach every pocket of the nation and sensitize citizens to gender issues. While the press and media continued to report on the various manifestations of gender discrimination in the Indian society, it wasn't until the Mathura rape case of 1972 that India truly confronted the plight of its women, and the media emerged as the mouthpiece of the oppressed. Mathura, a teenage Dalit girl, was raped by two policemen, who were found "not guilty" by the Supreme court in 1974, which misrepresented Mathura's "submission" as "consent" in its official judgement. In response to this gross miscarriage of justice, several feminist organizations and women's group sprung up. Prominent among these were Saheli (a crisis intervention centre and women's collective) and "Forum Against Rape" spearheaded by Delhi University professor Lolita Sarkar. This movement initiated debates, and organized conferences, seeking radical legislative reforms around issues of sexual violence and campaigned against the unjust and insensitive verdict in the Mathura rape case. This assertive campaign was actively supported by the media, and was widely covered by the press. The women's groups involved in the campaign also utilized the public reach of the media to further their cause, and the spread the message of self-determination far and wide.

However, the above-mentioned media reportage focused on specific incidents of violence, and failed to communicate the discrimination faced by women in daily lives and identify patriarchy as the root cause of the systemic oppression of women. In recent times, electronic and print media present a similar challenge. Instead of fulfilling their role as mirrors to the society and a propelling force for social change, these media forms have become highly commercialized and excessively negligent of social problems. In the face of such media discrepancies, social media has emerged as a revolutionary platform for the public to redefine politics, society and culture based on a deluge of information received from diverse sources presenting myriad unrestrained view-points.

3. Social Media, The Campus, and Autonomy

Owing to its massive reach, social media has redefined "inclusion" by traversing cultural, linguistic and national borders, and allowed for multicultural communication among scattered populations. Because of the democratic nature of social media spaces, women are using

social media platforms to discuss issues previously neglected by mainstream media, and in the process, humanizing the discourse around feminism. Therefore, social media is filling the gaping holes left by mainstream electronic and print media, with issues such as gender discrimination and sexual harassment at home and in the workplace, the stigma surrounding menstruation, homosexuality, the attitudes of the society towards victim of rape, and a non-conformation of feminine ideals such as marriage and motherhood being brought to the forefront.

Furthermore, social media has triggered a kind of citizen activism that remains unparalleled in the history of India, one of the most bustling sites of which have been the university campuses across the nation. The Hok Kolorob (“let there be noise”) movement was started by the students of Jadavpur University to demand a probe into the sexual assault of a student on the campus. The Internal Complaints Committee formed by the university authorities to address the incident raised questions on the girl’s attire, and the students agitated and protested in response, demanding the resignation of the ICC members. Further inaction on the part of the Vice Chancellor compelled the students to intensify their agitation, which led to brutal police assaults on the students. It was in the aftermath of these developments that the hashtag #hokkolorob took social media by storm, and culminated in mass student protest across the country and several educational institutions abroad. This was the first movement that witnessed such a large-scale student mobilization through social media.

Social media served as the birthplace of the intrepid “Pinjra Tod” movement, a campaign started by students of various universities in Delhi to protest against their hostels’ sexist rules which prevented girls from staying out late at night, while not expecting the same of their male residents. This campaign started as a simple Facebook page, where women shared their unpleasant accounts with security guards, wardens and landlords, finally blossoming into a full-fledged movement through social media dialog, online meetings and petitions, and radical tactics such as spray-painting messages of self-determination on campus streets and walls at dawn. Months of social media networking finally culminated into a rally on October 8, 2015, joined by 150 girls who took a leave from their respective residential halls, and took to the streets in the dead of the night. One of the slogans raised at the march invoked the feminist poet Maya Angelou, and read: “I know why the caged birds sing”.

The recent issue of alleged “seditious” activities at JNU saw a giant backlash from the student community that was collectively accused of an anti-national stance by the ruling

government and its allies. Social media was flooded with dissenting voices, and the movement gradually gained momentum as students from across the country and abroad rallied, and continue to rally, in defence of JNU in particular, and the right to dissent in general. This movement has strengthened various political and social counter narratives, with people taking a stance on “controversial” issues they were, hitherto, reluctant to voice.

4. Social Media and the Struggle for Autonomy in the Context of Aligarh Muslim University

Aligarh Muslim University has long been a traditional institute espousing conservative values, which are reflected in its stringent hostel rules and campus segregation at BA level, its emphasis on conventional dress-code, and its religiously conservative atmosphere, despite being a secular institution.

One of the starkest, and least discussed, manifestation of this conservative outlook is the campus activism landscape of AMU, which remains largely male dominated. A survey conducted amidst 50 female undergraduate students, 50 postgraduate students, and 50 research scholar showed that almost 80 percent of the respondents “agreed” that women’s role in campus activism in AMU is limited, while 73 percent respondents “strongly agreed” that social media had given them a voice to express their campus-related socio-political opinions, which they previously felt far removed from. Around 55 percent of the respondents “agreed” that online trolls and abusers specifically targeted their female identity when opposing them on campus issues.

“Never has a women been elected as the president, vice-president or secretary of the AMU student’s union. While there have been cabinet members in the union, the criteria on which they are deemed “fit” to earn the votes of the students begin with one question: does she wear a headscarf? Does she “look” religious? Several male students of the university started a smear campaign against me, and branded me unsuitable to hold a leadership position based solely on my attire and my vocal stance on the strict hostel rules for girls”, says Mariyam Ilyas Siddiqui, cabinet nominee, AMUSU, 2011.

“I was verbally abused and threatened by a self-righteous mob who told me I was violating the traditions of the university by hanging out with boys in the university premises after sun-down. When I reported the incident to the university authorities, no decisive action was taken. When the sole female cabinet member of the AMUSU at the time resorted to Facebook to condemn this vile incident, her wall was littered with violent abuses, while the male

AMUSU members and the largely-male campus activists remained mum. At that time, the thought of taking to the streets was a pipe dream because we were sure we would get no support from the student fraternity. With the advent of social media, there is growing tolerance towards women's issues, and women are finally battling for a space in the larger student sphere. The recent library controversy saw many women students demand equal access to the rich reserves of the university library, which had thus far been denied to them owing to the strict hostel rules.", notes Sumaiyah Naaz, Phd scholar, English Department, AMU.

"The conditions are improving, and social media has a huge role to play in it. When I first came to AMU, the silence of half the student population greatly irked me, and I, along with my friends, often discussed the opportunities we were missing out on – lectures, cultural fests and seminars that were taking place in the main campus we did not have access to because we were only allowed out of hostel on Sundays. Soon, I started voicing my opinions through social media, as did a lot of other girls I know. Although we are still a far cry from more open-minded universities like JNU, we are getting there slowly. I am an avid and vocal member of the Committee against Sexual Harassment and for Gender Sensitization (CASHFGS). We mobilize the students through social media, organize discussion around women's issues, and though we started small, the participation is slowly increasing", says Kaneez-e-Fizza Husain, Phd scholar, Economics Department, AMU.

While the majority of the respondents largely agreed that women lacked representation in campus activism, some went into greater details, outlining specific incidents of gender discrimination, and some hinted that a gradual, slow-paced change is taking place, and social media has a central role to play in it.

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An Alternate or akin! : Queer perspectives on social media in an urban setting.

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Abstract

In view of prevailing sexual prejudice, social media comes forth as a powerful platform for sexual minorities. Drawing from six in-depth case studies of members from LGBT+ community in Chandigarh, this paper reflects upon the impact of virtual spaces on their lives. Based on snowball sampling, three of the respondents identified themselves as transwoman, three as gays and one as a lesbian. Narratives from my fieldwork highlight how virtual spaces (whatsapp, facebook, gay chat apps, video chat rooms, messenger) lead to community interaction with ease, self-expression of desires, clarification of self-identity, long-term relationships, transformation of cruising practices, second life, sexual encounters, heartbreaks and at times, threat to life. This paper articulates the role of social media in strengthening the sense of 'community' locally as well globally and how are the structures of sexuality and heterosexual norms challenged, reworked and reproduced in virtual space.

Keywords- sexual minority, virtual space, second life, case study

1. Introduction

After beef eating, porn, *India's Daughter*ⁱ and other non-conforming practices were banned in India, banning of the movie *Un-Freedom*, portraying a heart wrenching story of a lesbian couple, was no bolt from the blue. This banning was obliquely one of the many ways to keep 'righteousness' of heterosexuality and 'illegitimate' nature of homosexuality in place. Many

political and legal forces shroud the existence of diverse sexual identities in society considering it against India's moral fabric (Kole, 2007). In such scenario, social media has been a boon for queer community and has linked geographically dispersed individuals who have deep shared interests (Virnoche, 1998). It allows marginalized sexual identities to transcend boundaries, maintain anonymity and gives a sense of belonging to a place which is otherwise absent (McKenna and Bargh, 1998). Although not all members of any society have equal access to Internet (Shapiro, 2015) but rising consumerism is breaking class boundaries and a substantial number of people in the urban context now have access to these virtual spaces (Roy, 2014).

Discourses around virtual spaces have been a mix of utopian (Rheingold, 1993; van Uden-Kraan et al.2008; McKenna, 1998; Fisher 1998) and dystopian (Nip, 2004) perspective. At the onset of social media usage, it proved highly efficient for the working of social organizations and activist groups (Fisher, 1998). But along with empowering people with all its tools, cyberspace has deep connections with practices of offline world (Nip, 2004). This connection is apparent since virtual spaces do not exist in isolation and people using them keep navigating through both the worlds (Shapiro, 2015). Everyday practices and ideas shape the ways people use social media. Paying close attention to sexual minorities, this study contextualizes queer lives in virtual world and looks at the multiple ways in which virtual spaces shape and are shaped by queer interactions.

2. Virtual Spaces through Queer lens

Gender performances are appropriated by social scripts which teach to 'do' gender on a daily basis (Shapiro, 2015). Along with societal norms and surveillance relentlessly keeping check on gender conformity, non-conforming gender identities have always been part of societies

and various mythologies as well (Feinberg, 1996). Unlike physical spaces, Internet offers a space where users can potentially surpass gender limits of their biological sex and create gender(less) identities (Zoonen, 2002). Married, father of two, a social activist- Mukeshⁱⁱ, forty-five, identifies himself as a *kothi*ⁱⁱⁱ. People, like Mukesh, who have lived their non-conforming sexual identity in pre-liberal India express anguish for lack of internet access during their young age. Lack of links with alike sexual identities left him confused about his sexual self for a long time. He got married to a woman in search of ‘cure’ for his attraction towards men. On his initial encounter with internet, he started using *messenger* on which he could chat with people with different nationalities. He used internet as an alternative space^{iv}, pretending to be a woman, to maintain romantic relationships with two men, one from London and another from Afghanistan. Apart from his personal inclination, his pretence, however, reflects hegemonic ideology as to which relationship is considered acceptable and how the heteronormative idea gets reproduced on social media too.

“Didn’t you feel bad lying to them?” I asked. “Why would I? God made me this way. I also need love, I also need care and this is the only way.” he replied.

As above quote explains, cyberspace^v acts as a window to express those emotions which otherwise remain suppressed in social arenas. Also, being a human right activist, social media is part of Mukesh’s workspace where he educates member from queer community about their rights. At this phase of his life, social media is no more an alternative space for him as he is open about his sexuality on it. Currently he is in a long distance relationship with a gay man, 50, from the Netherlands who got attracted to Mukesh’s activist personality on *facebook*. Mukesh is planning to divorce his wife^{vi} and go to the Netherlands next year. Looking at the context, it is the *real virtuality* (Castells, 2000) that Mukesh is experiencing in real life as a result of his being on social media.

Cultural identity of Hijra^{vii} in queer community called for special attention during fieldwork in Chandigarh. Having historical and cultural roots, its members form unique transgender identity that is feared and respected at the same time. So far, chief focus of research on hijra community has been pocket-sized in relation to social media. Meeting a transwoman , Tanya, 24, who had joined hijra community at age of 22, opened multitude of compromises that members of hijra community have to make who live in *dera*^{viii}. Along with performing on *badhais*^{ix} , Tanya is perusing correspondence B.Tech degree because her *guru*^x is keen to educate her and enable her to work towards betterment of the community. Members living in *dera* have to follow many norms and restrictions –they are not allowed to go out at night, they cannot meet men, and have to abstain from sexual relations with men. In such environment, *facebook* and *whatsapp* have given her freedom to stay in contact with her male friends^{xi}. She often shows me her pictures on *facebook* and inquires: “*I look like a woman, right?*” which shows her longing, similar to Mukesh’s, to pass by as a woman. Social media not only liberates her from the undesired sexual-self for a while but also from the restrictions that the cultural identity of hijra brings forth.

Along with *Facebook* and *Whatsapp*, digital technology has come up with location aware mobile applications like *Planet Romeo*, *Grindr* and *Tindr* on which users choose partners on the basis of their self-description, preferences and photograph (Licoppe, 2015). Unlike social media, these applications bring end to physical distance and the user can locate other users nearby. People generally have sexual encounters and short term relationships through it. Tamana, 17, a graduate student, introduced me to these apps. Biologically male, she identifies herself as a transwoman but not told her family. Such apps do not interest her because she desires straight men and these apps mostly have gay users. During her preliminary use of social media, she got introduced to a policeman from Pakistan through a video chat app

which she described as ‘one sided love’. She started off friendship as a boy and later when she expressed her love for the man, it came as a shock for him and he stopped replying to her messages which has left Tamana heart broken.

Dating apps have also led to long term relationships at times. Saurabh, 25, who identifies himself as gay met his partner, 31, on *Grindr app* and they lived together for 2 years. When his partner’s parents came to know about their relationship, they forcefully took him to their home in Srinagar. Saurabh has no idea about his partner and has filed a case in Chandigarh high court in this regard.

In another instance, I met two gay men who worked in the same office but initially were not aware of each other’s sexual orientation. Once when they both were using *grindr app* in office, one asked another if he would like to meet as they were in close proximity. Later they realized that they were talking to each other. They found these apps of great help for gay men because they also show in detail the other person’s interests, preferences and relationship status. Otherwise when people cruise on hotspots^{xii} there is possibility of annoying the other person as he might not be interested in having sex. Himadri Roy (2014) discussed phenomenal change in cruising practices in Delhi after the coming of dating apps. It has led to emergence of groups like Mehrauli gays, GK gays, Rohini gays etc. which are area specific groups. So now area has become one of many criterions to choose one’s partner in Delhi.

Life of a lesbian woman is subject to multiple forms of discrimination-as women and as lesbian. Amita, 20, student of psychology, introduced herself as a lesbian but likes being identified as gay-woman^{xiii}. She described herself as ‘someone who didn’t fit in’. This led her into a phase of depression in 11th standard from which she came out after complete realisation

of her sexual identity. She had got connected with queer community during film festivals, pride walks and other community events. Her best friend from Kolkata is gay-woman whom she met on *Facebook*.

“I met her through Facebook. There is global community on it. Community is kind of a support. I have friends from all over-US, Germany.”

As Amita suggests, queer community is closely knitted on social media. It has brought together local as well as global members of the queer community. Although the caring and selfless character of the community has been denied at times (Joseph, 2002), social media tend to delegitimize class, caste and hierarchies of nationalities among members of queer community in quest to get acquainted with similar sexual identities. For Latin American lesbian communities cyberspace proved highly useful in bringing end to major problems in lesbian organizing like ‘isolation, repression, resource restriction and lack of community cohesion’ (Friedman, 2007).

3. Conclusion

Although the above case studies exhibited experiences of people from different groups (transwoman, gay, and lesbian) who are part of the LGBT+ community, but they are united by the fact that they all are oppressed by the heteronormative structures of the society. Social media demonstrates its empowering nature being a platform where people can reach out to other community members, clarify about their sexuality, take forward their activist interest, reach masses, find partners etc. It also exemplifies ways in which social media helps sexual minorities to experience things otherwise not possible in physical world. On the other hand, virtual spaces continue to reflect the character of the social world proving to be yet another closet where people hide their sexuality and fake to be ‘normal’ reinforcing the homo/hetero binary and hegemonic ideas of gender. Hence, social media cannot be considered to

exclusively signify 'development' discourse nor does it entirely characterize 'anti-utopian' discourse, but lies midway between the two.

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ⁱ *India's Daughter* is a documentary film directed by *Leslee Udwin* based on the gang rape of 23year old girl on a bus in Delhi.

ⁱⁱ All names in the paper have been changed to maintain anonymity.

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- ⁱⁱⁱ *Kothi* is local term used for female-identified men who have sex with men and get penetrated by male-identified men.
- ^{iv} Marciano (2014) in his study classified uses of cyberspace by transgender as preliminary, complementary, and/or alternative.
- ^v Cyberspace refers to the intangible, metaphorical ‘space’ that networked computers construct through and for electronic communication (Shapiro, 2015).
- ^{vi} *Mukesh’s* wife is a religious person. So he came out to her explaining presence of trans identities in Hindu mythologies. It took time for her to accept but eventually she did.
- ^{vii} The *hijras* are religious community of men who dress and act like women and whose culture centres on the worship of Bahuvhara Mata. They undergo surgical removal of genitals without construction of vagina. This operation defines them as hijras- neither men nor women. (Nanda, 1999)
- ^{viii} *Dera* is a place where transwomen lives away from their families following certain set of rules and hierarchy.
- ^{ix} *Badhai* is the traditional work done by *hijras* mainly in North India on the occasion of wedding or birth of son for which they get gifts and money from the family.
- ^x *Guru* is head of the *dera*.
- ^{xi} Tanya came to Chandigarh five months back but is enrolled in college in her hometown in Punjab. There she had got separated from her family and lived in a rented room. She has a big circle of friends from neighborhood and college. Now on her visit to hometown, she visits home only for few hours and stays with friends.
- ^{xii} Places in city where men come to find male partners for sex
- ^{xiii} She said meaning of both the terms- lesbian and gay woman-is same. But she just does not like the term lesbian.

Factors affecting the increase in Cybercrime

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Abstract

The Internet has metamorphosed the world of communication and technology. Although the origin of the Internet dates back to the 1960s, it was only with emergence of affordable computers which led to its rapid adoption post the 1990s. Today, the world is at the kernel of an unprecedented technological revolution as it witnesses an exponential increase in the array of communities, devices, and data connected to the internet. However, this increase in the digitalization is paralleled with the increase in threat that its growth entails. Criminal matters with a cyber nexus, or Cybercrime, pose a significant threat to the world as it scrounges on the fragile and sensitive information available on the internet. It can easily be denominated as one of the biggest global threats to security. Hence, it is imperative to identify the inducement of cybercrime as the world moves toward a unified virtual reality. The world is experiencing an expeditious increase in the number of cybercrimes; India itself reported a 51.4% increase in the numbers of cybercrimes from the year 2012 to 2013. As the standard deviation of total crime reported in India mushrooms from 134.0 to 188.3, one can also navigate through the increasing regional variation with the increase in number of crimes. Such an alarming increase and variation needs to be addressed and its reasons need to be identified. Viewing cybercrime through the lens of various economic indicators like GDP, population, unemployment, number of internet users helped us discern the relationship between them. Consequently, this would guide communities to take relevant policy commitments and formulate an effective countermeasure manoeuvre. Such potential breach of information makes cyber security an indispensable tool to protect our lives which have been wired around wireless networks. Cyber security acts as a latent determinant of economic growth as it creates a safe and trusted environment; absence of which could lead to collapse of even the most resilient institutions.

Keywords: Cybercrime, Internet, Income, GDP

1. INTRODUCTION

The promulgation of cyberspace has transmuted the way people interact with technology. The internet has now become an intrinsic part of everyday life and work, with the power to mould societies and radicalize minds. It has created a global network of interconnected devices transcending international boundaries. The growth of internet has led to an escalation in social media, E-commerce, entertainment, and most significantly online banking; and the emanation of affordable smartphones has led to a further surge in their numbers.

However, like a double edged sword, this evolution of cyberspace is emulated by the increase in threat that its growth entails. This is evident by the aggressive increase in criminal matters pertaining to cyberspace which has plagued every society cutting across borders, and India is one of its biggest victims. According to FBI's Internet Crime Complaint Centre, India ranked 4th in Complaint Count in 2013 and accounted for 0.58% of the total complaints. India had to bear a loss of \$4,399,440 which commensurate with 0.56% of the total loss incurred worldwide. Such daunting figures are a cause of perturbation for a developing economy like that of India. With the advancement in technology, cybercrime has reached heights which are unrivalled.

2. DATA ANALYSIS

Cybercrime rates are analysed using national data set from years 2012 and 2013 released under National Data Sharing and Accessibility Policy (NDSAP) by the Ministry of Home Affairs, Department of States, and National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB). The data refers to state wise and Delhi cases registered under various sections of IT Act under Cyber Crime. The data set touches upon a broad range of crime heads namely hacking ((Section 66 (1) IT Act), Section 66 (2) IT Act, Section 70 IT Act), information theft (Section 71 IT Act, Section 72 IT Act), cyber obscenity (Section 67 IT Act), Fraud (Section 73 IT Act, Section 74 IT Act), tampering computer source documents (Section 65 IT Act), and failure of compliance with concerned authority (Section 68 IT Act, Section 69 IT Act). India reported an increase from 2,876 to 4,356 in the number of cybercrimes from the year 2012 to 2013. These vexatious statistics show further imbalances and variations when viewed at a regional level. Some states have alarmingly high rates of cybercrime while others have been untouched by this plague.

In 2012 and 2013, Maharashtra reported the highest number of cybercrime which was closely followed by Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, and Uttar Pradesh. Assam, Goa, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Meghalaya, Orrisa, Punjab and Uttarakhand reported a double digit increase in cybercrime over 2012-13. There were also variations in the increase of different crime heads in different states. For example, while Goa, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Meghalaya, Orrisa, and Punjab witnessed an increase in Hacking (Section 66 (1) IT Act); Assam and Uttarakhand saw an increase in cyber obscenity.

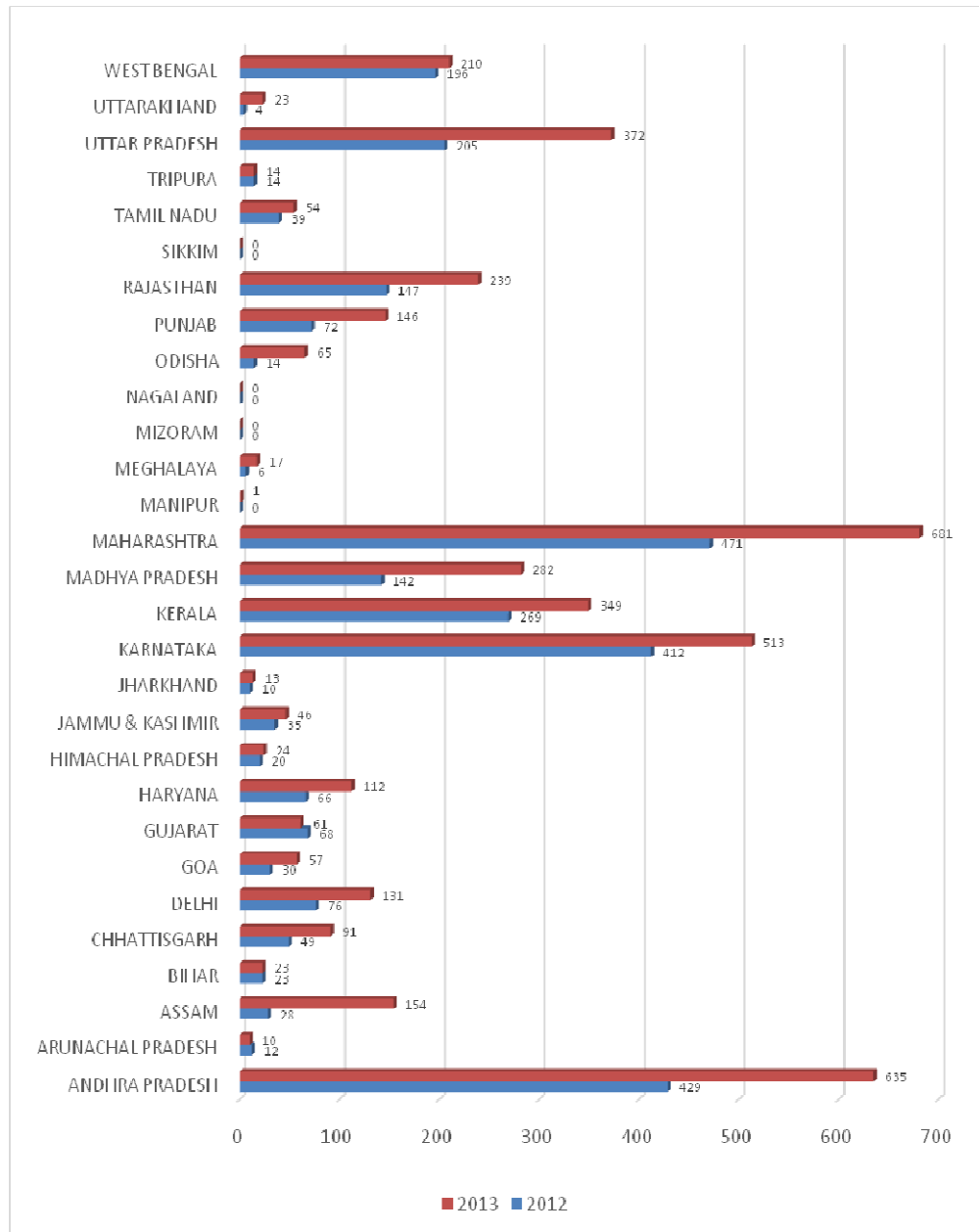
In absolute terms, hacking accounts for a major proportion of the total crime even though it witnessed only a surge of 35.4%. Cyber obscenity experienced an explosive growth of 104.2% which is infelicitous and matter of grave concern. Tampering computer source documents saw a decrease of 14.9% and serves as the only exception in the growing trend of other crime heads.

Table 1: Types of Cybercrime

Crime Head	2012	2013
Tampering computer source documents (Section 65 IT ACT)	161	137
Obscene publication / transmission in electronic form (Section 67 IT ACT)	589	1203
Hacking	1878	2543
Failure of compliance with concerned authority	9	19
information theft	52	105
Fraud	11	75

Scrutinizing these state-wise deviations and identifying the repressed economic factors which contribute to this growth is imperative. Establishing a correlation with macroeconomic indicators like population, Gross State Domestic Product, unemployment can succour societies to formulate an effective countermeasure manoeuvre. This would further guide government to adopt appropriate policy commitments and draft suitable cyber legislations.

Figure 1: Cybercrime in India

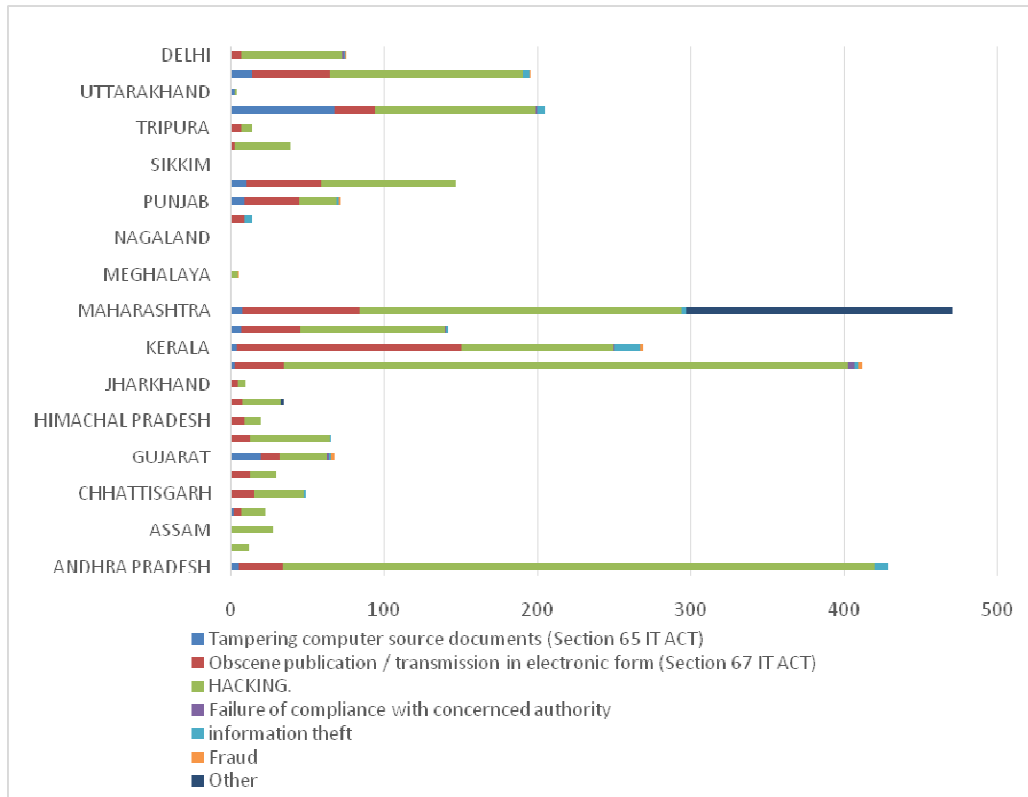


Population and cybercrime show a positive relationship with coefficient of correlation of 0.53 in 2012. This indicates that an increase in population is paralleled with an almost linear increase in cybercrime. As population grows, the number of people connected to the internet also increases and hence increasing the pool of possible victims. The only exception to this trend being Bihar, which despite a very high population showed low levels of cybercrime, which might be a

denouement of under reporting of crime. Cybercrime also showed a strong positive relationship with the Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) with coefficient of correlation of 0.723 in 2012. Statistical results indicate that the states with high GSDP also had high literacy rate and low unemployment rates which implies that people are better equipped and capable of using advanced technology which leave them susceptible to the cyber perpetrators. Hence, this positive correlation can only be elucidated by lack of comprehensive laws, and flawed security measures. One can also observe that as number of wireless phones increase, the cybercrime count also increases. The coefficient of correlation of 0.34 in 2012 can easily be explained as there is an increasing use of mobile phones both as an instrument and subject of cybercrime. Another interesting relationship which emerges is the negative coefficient of correlation of 0.17 between unemployment and crime count. As unemployment increases, people draw lower income which makes luxuries like internet a distant dream for many and reduces connectivity and hence, leads to a reduction in cybercrime.

A more comprehensive analysis of these parameters show a positive partial correlation of total number of cybercrime with Gross State Domestic Product, literacy rate and population. That is, keeping all the other variables constant, an increase in any of these parameters will be paralleled by the increase in cybercrime count. These results provide strong policy implication for policy makers in order to ensure a safe and secure cyberspace for every citizen.

Figure 2: Cybercrime distribution in 2012



2.1 CYBER-SECURITY

Cybercrime boasts of an unprecedented advantage over conventional crimes. Cyber nexus makes any physical proximity between the perpetrator and the victim superfluous and hence, erects jurisdictional hurdles to any legal proceeding. Therefore, gravity of cybersecurity cannot be undermined because of the scores of fragile and confidential data that rests with it. It has become an even more imperative tool because of the bars of anonymity, and differentiated crimes that obstruct legal proceedings. Due to the augmentation in crime specialization there is an increasing need to draft specialized legislations in order to efficiently inhibit the spread of this malignant digital epidemic. Because of cybercriminals' capacity to traverse though borders without the need of any physical proximity makes international cooperation an indispensable piece of the legislative puzzle. The developed part of the world cannot enjoy a safe and secure cyberspace

solely based on their legislation unless they're assured of similar security from other parts of the world.

The Council of Europe's Convention on Cybercrime was thus formulated to tackle this very jurisdictional dilemma. The CECC is the first international treaty which calls for cooperation among signatory countries to address cybercrime by harmonizing national laws, and improving investigative techniques. It aims at pursuing a common criminal policy to protect society against cybercrime, mindful of the need to ensure a proper balance between law enforcement and respect for fundamental human rights. Although this Convention is seen as a step in the right direction, several countries are apprehensive about committing to it because it compromises their sovereignty, and aims to put Europe back at the political pedestal. But even if the Convention isn't the best panacea, it does play a pivotal role in combating cybercrime at an international front. Due to jurisdictional and global redressal mechanism issues in the cyberspace India chose to be a non-signatory to The Council of Europe's Convention on Cybercrime. However, the Indian Parliament enacted the Information Technology Act 2000 to effectively regulate criminal activities in cyberspace. The Act was further amended in the form of IT Amendment Act, 2008 [ITAA-2008].

3 CONCLUSION

Being a developing economy although India is enslaved with tenacious matters like poverty, corruption, illiteracy, caste and gender biases, it also needs to curb the rising cybercrime rates which have increased by 51.4% over a period of just one year. The widespread variations at regional level also need to be addressed. This paper showed a positive correlation between population, GSDP, wireless phones and cybercrime count. This might assist policy makers to take relevant decisions which would act as a stepping stone to reduce cybercrime.

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