

Women Issues In Media – The Emergence Of Women Through The “Me Too Movement”

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Abstract

Sensitive Issues related to women has started to come to the limelight since the emergence of social media. Although the cause and effect prevails, the influence of media in our daily lives has made the terms such as sexual abuse, sexual harassment, sexual violence and sexual assault a common one. The recent evolution of the Me Too, which is, also known as the “**Me Too movement** (or **#Me Too movement**)”, is an initiation to reveal the extensive occurrence of sexual abuse, harassment and assault. Women who were sexually harassed expressed their victimization through social media. Undoubtedly, media has played, influenced, and reflected on the society, people and their lives. The current study focuses on the trendy issues prevailing in the Me Too and its impact on the society.

Keywords: Me Too, Sexual Abuse

Introduction

Sexual harassment can be defined as, any offensive behaviour which intimidate and humiliate; it affects people in different ways. In India, #Me Too movement was viral in social media which exhibited the prevalence of sexual harassment and sexual assault on October 2017; not only in the nation, it was also popular in other parts of the world, especially in the workplace. Few cases on sexual assault, non-residential Indian woman was sexually assaulted in Mumbai, where she filed a complaint only after a year. Ruchira was molested at HLTA, while she was taking tennis lessons; in spite of her parents report on the incident to the police, she committed suicide at 17 years (Gupta, 2018).

#Me-too Movement on Twitter

The #Me-too movement which is an autonomous was initially influenced from the American international campaign against sexual harassment of women in workplace which was called as “Me Too Social Movement”. In India, it gained prominence with the increasing popularity of the international movement. Also, it sought attention through Bollywood where Tanushree Dutta accused Nana Patekar for sexual harassment which paved way for many women in the news media to speak about it, and bring out allegations of sexual harassment against many men, Bollywood casting director Tess Joseph posted an allegation against Malayalam film actor Mukesh on twitter.

Indian media industry women have also accused several popular, powerful men from the film industry in south India. Singer Chinmayi accused Tamil lyricist Vairamuthu of sexual harassment, along with several women who have chosen to remain anonymous. Allegations of sexual harassment, sexual misconduct and inappropriate behaviour have been made against other celebrities from the south. Samantha, who has been increasingly been speaking out against gender discrimination, took to Twitter and wrote, “I am so happy that more and more women are finding the strength to say #MeToo. Your bravery is commendable. I am sorry though that some people, even other women themselves will shame and burden you with the question of proof and doubt. Be proud that your voice is a representation for saving many little girls. I support the #MeTooIndia movement.” She voiced her appreciation for singer Chinmayi for her courage to call out Vairamuthu. Actor Varalaxmi Sarathkumar raised her support on #Me Too movement, saying that it was “alarming” to hear these stories. She said that she had stood up for #MeToo last year and that she wanted more women to come forward and speak up. Actor Siddharth also supported the movement, where he specified Vairamuthu for calling women to be heard without judgement. He also defended Chinmayi for coming forward despite having a lot to lose.

Actor-turned-politician Kamal Hassan spoke on the MeToo movement at the Hindustan Times that this is the moment to address sexual harassment of women at the workplace. Actor Prakash Raj was strong to address the issue and supported the movement, calling upon women to come forward and give it back to their predators. "This country is coming terms and the movement is catching up. If a woman comes up and says 'I have been abused,' it has to be looked into".

Youth & #Me-too movement

In response to the #Me-too movement, in December 2017 MTV surveyed 1800 young people aged 18-25 years to probe the effect of #metoo on them. In a study by Zeilinger (2018) nearly 40 percent of young men accepted that the movement changed the interaction approach with their romantic relationships, while only 25 percent of the young women accepted the behaviour change of young men towards women due to the launch of #metoo movement.

Objectives of the Study

The study focused on the trendy issues prevailing in the Me Too and its impact on the society. The objectives of the study were:

1. To find out about the awareness about #Me Too movement among the younger generation.
2. To find out the specific media that created awareness on this issue, the most.
3. To examine if the #Me Too movement had created any changes in the society

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study was an attempt to understand the awareness about #Me Too movement; a quantitative research methodology was adopted for this study. A sample size of 100 with purposive sampling technique was used. There was a conscious effort to bring equal gender representation. The responses were obtained through a questionnaire distributed among 50 male and 50 female respondents. Self-designed close ended and open-ended questions were used to collect the data required for this study.

STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES

The primary objectives of statistical inferences were to enable us to generalize from a sample to some larger population of which the sample is a part.

In the present study, two types of statistical techniques were used:

1. Calculation of frequency and percentage analysis.
2. Chi square analysis.

Table1- The frequency of Independent Variables (Age, Gender, Education)

Age of the respondents		
AGE	Frequency	Percent
below 20 years	48	48.0
Above 20 years	52	52.0
Total	100	100
Gender of the respondents		
Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	82	82.0
Female	18	18.0
Total	100	100
Educational qualification		
Educational level	Frequency	Percent
Student	86	86.0
Employee	14	14.0
Total	100	100

Table 2 showing the respondents views on #Metoo movement

Purpose of sharing information		
Purpose	Frequency	Percent
To create awareness	33	33.0
Instant reach	9	9.0
Sharing to the mass	14	14.0
Create impact in society	26	26.0
To see people's attention	18	18.0
Emotionally affected by the issues faced by women		
FREQUENCY	NO OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
Yes	52	53.06%
No	46	46.93%
Total	98	100%
Discussed about the issue with family members		
Yes	63	64.28%
No	35	35.71%
Total	98	100
Support in terms of comments		
Yes	29	29.59%
No	69	70.40%
#Me too has an impact in the society		
Yes	83	84.69%
No	15	15.30%
Total	98	100

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The present Analytical study focuses upon both men and women and the awareness about #Me Too movement. Findings of the study would form a basis for further in- depth analysis of various factors related to #Me Too movement.

The Above table reveals that, out of 100 samples, (46.0) percentage of them belong to the age group of below 20 years, 52.0 percent were above 20 years. The most of 52.0 % of the sample were between the age group of above 20 years; hence the majority of the respondents were male (82. %). The majority of the respondents were students (86.0%) and the rest (12.0) were employees. The majority of the respondents (33.0%) share information to create awareness, 9% for instant reaches, and 14% sharing their opinion to the mass, 26% to create an impact in the society, 18% to view people's attention.

The majority of the respondents (53.06%) were emotionally affected by the issues faced by women and (46.93%) were not affected by these issues. The majority of the respondents (64.28%) have discussed about the issue to their family members and (35.71%) have not done it. The majority of the respondents (70.40%) had never commented on supporting (29.59%) supported on commenting. 84.69% of the respondents said it created an impact in the society and 15.30% said it did not create any kind of an impact.

Table 3 showing the cross tabulation between Age and frequency of Sharing posts in social media

Age of the respondents	sharing post on media				Total
	Daily	once in 2-3 days	weekly	monthly	
Below 20 years	18 (39.1%)	12 (26.1%)	5 (10.9%)	11 (23.9%)	46 100.0%
Above 20 years	17 (32.7%)	12 (23.1%)	7 (13.5%)	16 (30.8%)	52 100.0%

Total	35	24	12	27	98
	(35.7%)	(24.5%)	(12.2%)	(27.6%)	100.0%

It is observed from the above table that the respondents belonging to the age group of below 20 years (39.1%) share these kind of posts in social media daily, (26.1%) share once in 2-3 days, (10.9%) weekly, (23.9%) monthly. It is observed that among the respondents in the age group of above 20 years (32.7%) of them share posts daily, (23.1%) share once in 2-3 days, (13.5%) weekly, (30.8%) monthly. Hence it can be interpreted that on the whole, nearly (35.7%) of the respondents share these kind of posts in social media daily, (24.5%) share once in 2-3 days, (12.2%) weekly, (27.6%) monthly.

Hence the majority of the respondents are above 20 years (52%) sharing these kind of posts in social media

FINDINGS AND SUGGESTION:

The study was conducted among men and women with (100/98) questionnaires were issued with respective to age and gender.

1. The majority of the respondents (82%) were male.
2. The majority of the respondents were students (86.0%)
3. 33 % of the respondents share information to create awareness.
4. Nearly 53% of the respondents are emotionally affected by the issues faced by women.
5. It is a shocking revelation that the majority of the respondents (70.40%) had never commented on this issue. It could be interpreted that there is a gender bias existing in the society, since most of the respondents were male. Probably the response would have been different if there had been an equal representation from women

CONCLUSION

In the study it was found that the # metoo movement has not reached the society as it was expected. In many places the voice of victims might not be heard because of the lack of awareness of these kinds of movements. A callous attitude is only exhibited as far as a women-oriented movement is concerned. Lots need to change in the mindset of the people and their perception on such issues.

IMPLICATIONS

Further research is required to witness the actual effect of the movement in detail. Descriptive research will decrease sexual assaults. Along with this, the media and the advertising agencies must stop any form of 'objectification' of women. The technological development had initiated most of the organizations to install safety alert apps and buttons for the women safety, on the smart phones and tablets. While these smart technologies are welcomed, it is essential that women facing assaults should 'scream aloud' to seek attention from the public for help.

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