Domestic Violence and New Media:
Ushering a Change

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Abstract
This article will focus on two significant concerns in order to provide a foundation for understanding the connection between "new media" and domestic abuse. The first question that has to be answered is whether or not "new media" should continue to have a negative impact on both our personal and social life, as well as whether or not it should bring about changes in the way that women are seen and treated in society. Second, it will investigate how welcome and constructive changes have also been brought about by this "new media," and how we are on the verge of ushering in an age of gender equality and putting an end to the stigma of domestic violence in a New India as a result of these developments.

1. Introduction: Understanding what constitutes domestic violence

It is possible to measure the prevalence of domestic abuse based on the premise that it has been reported in a variety of ethnicities and communities across the globe. There is a growing recognition that domestic violence is a phenomenon that is prevalent all over the world and that it is also a significant problem in emerging nations. (6) Despite this, domestic violence may take many different shapes and manifestations based on the environment in which it occurs, and it is widely acknowledged as a significant public health hazard. Despite of the wide variety of abusive tactics, it is the most prevalent reason of non-fatal injuries to women, who often suffer in silence because they believe they are at fault for the violence and do not want to draw attention to it. As a matter of fact, many women would analyse and internalise the mistreatment by feeling that the

action was triggered because of something that they have done; as a result, they will accept and embrace it as their destiny, which will require them to keep coping with it. (20) It has been noted that domestic abuse, which may be perpetrated by either a husband or a companion, has significant repercussions for the bodily, emotional, and biological wellbeing of women, as well as a significant risk of death. (12,19) Depending on where you live, anywhere from 6 percent to 60 percent of Indian households experience some kind of domestic abuse, which varies greatly among regions and locales. (12,15,16) Moreover, because there is currently little reportage on the issue, the size, scope, and gravity of the crisis in the nation has not been adequately taken into consideration. There are only a small number of society studies (2,27) that have been conducted in India. These studies focus only on bodily assault, and there is little information about emotional or sexual violence (2). There is also only a small amount of actual data to support its many causes, results, and connections. (7) Recent investigations on domestic violence from South Asian nations have found a variety of related individual and family level risk variables, demonstrating the correlation between domestic abuse and demographical parameters as age, the number of live male offspring, and staying with extended family. (18,25) A better social and economic position, women's employment, stability of marriage, and access to higher education among women have been recognised as protective variables in emerging nations (8,10). It is well established that women who are young, have low family incomes, are less educated, are from lower castes, are not employed, have a husband who gambles or consumes alcohol have a greater likelihood of experiencing marital abuse. (2,15) Nonetheless, there is still a lack of awareness about the problem of domestic abuse and the socio-economic factors that contribute to it in emerging economies, particularly in the case of India.

The prevalence of bodily, sexual, emotional and psycho-social abuse against women is a problem that has significant implications for both public welfare and human dignity. According to a report published by the World Bank, the likelihood of women enduring torture at the hands of a close companion or a person they trust is much higher than the likelihood of them encountering aggression at the hands of strangers. In spite of this, a sampling of women from 41 different nations found that 29 percent of the respondents believe that husbands always have right to assault their wives if they argue with them, 25 percent if they refuse to have sexual relations, and 21 percent if they accidentally ruin the meals while preparing them. (28)

The patriarchal societal attitudes that place a premium on male aggressiveness and female subordination are a significant factor in the formation of masculinity and contribute to the continuation of domestic violence. The study's objective is to prove how tradition, masculine assumptions, and domestic abuse are related to "new media" in India and how it influences and changes these conceptions. Over the course of the past few decades, the media has evolved into a force that has a decisive influence on every aspect of life. This is especially evident when we consider the socio-cultural environment of gender problems, with its obvious disparities and the abuse that these imbalances result in. It is widely acknowledged that the news media, in particular, have a significant amount of power in shaping the perspectives of the general public. The way a tale is put together, coupled with the way individuals and events are portrayed; may have an effect on how a person, institution, government, or social justice organisation responds. Although there is growing interest in the

prospect that the media might help reduce violence against women, past study shows that the actual content of news reports often misrepresents the reality. Research has shown that only a small percentage of news articles truly address the social constructions that contribute to male-perpetrated violence, despite the fact that there are several ways to do so and that doing so would expand one's understanding of the topic. The study reveals that instead of employing event-based journalism or episodic storytelling, media reporting of aggression against women tends to concentrate on particular events. This is in contrast to the approach used by certain investigative journalists. Because discrete episodes or occurrences that take place in various locales and eras (episodic narrative) evoke personal rather than communal sense of culpability, this style of storytelling is effective at concealing from audiences the idea that violence against women is a pervasive social problem.

However, we also discover that threats of violence other than physical injury are often used against domestic violence victims. A significant number of people who are victims of abuse also have to deal with their partner controlling their private life. This may include the websites that they visit, the people with whom they connect virtually, and the manner in which they interact with those people in the real world. It is becoming increasingly usual for victims to express their need for aid utilising applications and social media websites that have talking capabilities. This allows the victims to stay concealed from their partners while yet receiving support. After Instagram implemented, a new feature that allows users to send and receive messages without leaving a paper trail behind, users can be certain that whatever they say on the platform will be deleted as soon as they sign out of their profile. People may send one-time messages to one other in the form of textual dialogues, movies, or still images using Snapchat, which has a capability that is equivalent to this one. Domestic abuse victims who choose to remain anonymous may provide evidence or make a request for aid by using this resource. Applications such as WhatsApp, which allow users to encrypt their communications, now make it feasible to have private conversations. When it comes to exposing proof of domestic violence while remaining with an abusive spouse, there is no room for mistake. This is especially true if the abuse occurred recently.

This research contributes to the existing body of knowledge by putting its emphasis on the use of various forms of multimedia. Particularly, our research will be focussed on the impact of media channels like television and internet as potential pathways by which opinions towards domestic abuse may be changed. In other words, we want to know whether or not these different mediums have any impact on one another.

2. Factors leading to domestic abuse

Not just in academic writing but also on media platforms, more and more people are talking about how they have experienced or are experiencing domestic abuse. There are numerous grounds to believe that this problem has reached alarming proportions, given the shockingly high incidence statistics of domestic abuse. In the eyes of the general population, domestic abuse has become acceptable and has lost its stigma. The media may contribute to the normalisation and acceptance of domestic abuse via a number of different means. These news organisations sadly have a propensity to handle the issue of domestic abuse by displaying misogyny, the marginalization of women, and, most crucially, abuse of women.

The extent to which a community comprehends the functions played by men and women in the society as well as the effects of being married is among the most important aspects that plays a part in the societal acceptability of domestic abuse. Across many Arab communities, women are viewed as belonging to her partner's patrilineal lineage, and as a result, domestic abuse is accepted as a regular part of the social fabric. Similarly, in Hispanic society, the ideals of masculinity legitimate many aggressive forms of conduct that Westerners may perceive to be domestic abuse.

As a general rule, Hispanic males are supposed to be sexually assertive, domineering, and in charge of their women. Hispanic women, on the other hand, are supposed to abstain from sexual activity, to be subordinate to men, and be able to put up with a considerable amount of pain for the sake of the household. In a similar manner, it is required of Indian women to keep the family structure as peaceful and happy as possible. This might be counterproductive in many cases because it could promote societal assumptions that males should maintain power.

In addition, the propensity that exists throughout many societies to place a high value on the seclusion of the family unit and to place the welfare of the family unit ahead of that of the individual, a concept known as "familism", is a factor that leads to the continuous acceptability of abusive conduct.

Familism is a cultural phenomenon that is more prevalent in collectivist societies. It has the potential to encourage and sustain physical and mental abuse inside families by preventing victims from successfully seeking outside aid or even seeing their treatment as abusive.

Other study reveals that religious leaders may make it more difficult for a woman to decide to leave an abusive relationship, despite the fact that a believe in God may function as a component that protects against intimate partner abuse.

In some situations, such as those in which victims are reliant on their abuser, the structure of the family may both contribute to and prolong cycles of abuse. Because children are highly dependent on their caregivers for their survival and abusive partners have a tendency to isolate their significant others in order to gain control over their social lives, financial lives, and other aspects of their lives, child abuse and intimate partner violence are the two forms of violence that occur the most frequently.

In addition to cultural variables having a role in the normalising of domestic violence, the constant exposure of the general public to information on domestic violence in social media has the potential to desensitise the public's view of violence. It is considered that long-term and frequent exposure to domestic abuse may produce changes in an individual's emotional, cognitive, and behavioural processes. To be more specific, it is hypothesised that these consequences encourage the development of desensitised thinking and responses to domestic violence.

In addition, it is believed that regular depictions of violence contribute to the normalisation of violent behaviour in the general population. While more and more study is being done on how humour may be used to show sexism, the devaluation of women, and most significantly, violence against women, there is a lack of research on how comedy can convey domestic abuse. Furthermore, portraying abusive relationships in a beautiful and alluring light creates the impression that aggression against women is permissible. The downplaying of the seriousness of domestic abuse can have unsettling repercussions, like a reduction in the

number of incidents being reported of domestic abuse. This, in turn, can have an effect on the number of people trying to seek therapies and can contribute to survivors of domestic abuse going unrecognised.

3. The pathways that relate media to views towards domestic abuse

Exposure via the media may be a constructive force for the evolution of societal standards. As an instance, a survey in Tamil Nadu revealed that when satellite television was introduced, women's acquiescence of domestic abuse decreased by 16 % and their predilection for having a male child decreased by 8.8 percent. (11) There were also gains in women's empowerment and involvement in taking decisions at home, as a result of the advent of urban standards and beliefs. Another research shows that improved broadcast network coverage in Indonesian communities is related to significant lower levels of involvement in community events like neighbourhood groups and educational councils, as well as reduced levels of trust. (11) This finding contradicts the findings of the previous investigation. Rather than spending time with family and friends or doing domestic chores, this shows that individuals are turning to television to pass their time instead.

It is possible that an increase in marital abuse might result from time spent away from traditionally assigned responsibilities such as preparing food or caring for kids. According to polling data of families, men frequently cite the fact that their wives do not fulfil their responsibilities at home as a justification for physically abusing their wives. The normalisation of violent behaviour may result from a rise in the number of violent incidents against women that occur in a given society. As a matter of fact, there seems to be a remarkable amount of research in the field of psychology that investigates a phenomenon known as the "Stockholm Syndrome". This condition manifests itself when one close companion repeatedly shames, insults, assaults, or generally mistreats the other without severing the deeply personal connection that exists between them. Furthermore, a few of the instances of domestic abuse that occurs in India could be the result of males reacting negatively to the more progressive worldviews held by their wives. Our research focuses on the relationship involving media exposure and the prevalence of domestic abuse in India, where satellite television is becoming more popular. The primary function of the media is to entertain; yet, as opposed to television, the internet has become an important medium to access any information in recent decades. As we can see that information and entertainment both play a role in the process of shaping societal standards and conventions, then we may anticipate the effect of different forms of media on the development of new societal norms surrounding domestic abuse.

When it comes to the formation of views towards women and domestic abuse, commonalities and variations in the contents of satellite television and internet shows may have either a substitutive or a complementing influence. For example, documentation of local job opportunities or electoral prospects of women, or narratives about empowerment of women on local cable networks, might very well reaffirm the impact of watching enabled and self - reliant women on broadcast tv.

4. Domestic violence and the media's influence

The constant exposure that occurs when domestic violence is discussed in the media has the potential to desensitise the people's opinion of the severity of the problem. It is hypothesised that prolonged and recurrent exposure to domestic abuse causes alterations in emotional, mental, and behavioural functions in victims of the abuse. In particular, it is argued that these outcomes contribute to the emergence of desensitised attitudes and behaviours that have been to domestic abuse. In addition, it is believed that frequent depictions of violence in the media contribute to the normalisation of violent behaviour in the general population. The use of comedy to depict misogyny, the devaluing of women, and more significantly, aggression towards women, is the subject of an increasing amount of scholarly investigation. It is common practise to use humour to downplay the issue of domestic abuse; nevertheless, humour on domestic abuse usually incorporate overtly derogatory slurs and may be highly insulting if they are taken seriously. The ever-expanding issue of normalisation and societal desensitisation may be exacerbated by TV programs and commercials that depict domestic abuse as humorous. A local high school was the subject of a broadcast that was shown on a news channel not too long ago. In the segment, kids played out how a certain Hollywood star assaulted his celebrity wife. The youngsters said that it was supposed to be humorous and were looking forward to receiving praises. Instead of that the community was offended. The actions of the students contribute to the beliefs held by the society as a whole, particularly those held by youngsters, that domestic abuse is not a massive concern and thus, it is OK to jest and joke about it. Social networking has also led to a shift in young people's expectations of their companions' privacy that has been dubbed "borderless". This shift puts them at more danger of and tolerant of abusive conduct. It's been proposed that social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter may be used to perpetrate domestic abuse by creating a dynamic of power and dominance inside a partnership.

The public's perceptions are shaped and influenced by the information presented in the media. Recent years have seen an increase in the number of research that investigate how the media presents stories about domestic abuse. In particular, the media, Cable news, and media articles have been proven to have a significant influence on the public's view of violent act. One study, for instance, examined how media worded stories about felonies connected to domestic abuse and sexual assault. We can come to the conclusion that the stories had a pattern of portraying the perpetrator in a favourable light while doing so in a manner that was unfavourable to the victim. If the victim is depicted unfavourably, others would assume the person "did earn it" and that abuse is okay. Local news recently covered a story of a woman who killed her husband. The wording of the headline went "Woman kills husband for not providing a good life". However, contrary to what the audience might understand, the reality was entirely different. The so-called innocent man was a drunkard and a wife-beater, and on the fateful night he was strangulating his wife for not paying him money for more liquor. It was in an act of self-defence that the woman struck the man with a stick and he died. Such narratives alter reality and, as a result, influence public opinion.

Even if there hasn't been a lot of study done on the topic yet, comedies and violent scenes in mainstream television are becoming more commonplace. Researchers are also beginning to look at the impact this has on viewers. It is possible for humour to be exploited as a kind of misogyny, and turning domestic abuse into a farce may make it appear to the society as if it is increasingly permissible. It is possible, via the use of insouciance and sexist jokes and phrasing, to give the impression that women are on a lower social or professional level than males. Through the use of humour, insults and contempt may be slipped into conversation in a way that can be easily denied. Sexist jokes carry a great deal of weight and has the potential to not only promote marginalisation of the other gender but also to justify it. Sexist comedy permits remarks to be spoken that overtly denigrate women, demean them in their work and social life, and promote and legitimise aggression against women. Sexist humour also allows for the normalisation of sexual harassment and assault. But some argue that sexist words are not the issue; hegemonic masculinity implies that males are in charge of this kind of language, which is why it's so problematic.

The manner in which a woman reacts to such gags is also incredibly significant, and it may have a variety of contradictory effects on society. When a woman is subjected to sexist humour, the situation might be likened to the infamous "dual edged blade". If she laughs at the joke, it would be assumed as a sign that she thinks less of her own gender. On the other hand, if she does not laugh when she is supposed to, others will assume that she does not have a sense of humour. In either scenario, the woman has less "power and influence" than she had before. The results of a research that looked for common threads in different sexist jokes posted on webpages that are only devoted to humour uncovered five common threads. Four of them are particularly important: the degradation of personality attributes, the reaction against women's rights, the physical exploitation of women, and the aggression against women. The gravity of the issue of domestic abuse is trivialised through jokes, which in turn encourages people to regard such behaviour as more tolerable. This kind of comedy is demeaning to women and helps to keep them silent. It also helps normalise and desensitise the public towards the issue of abuse of women. Not only do sexist remarks mirror the fundamental preconceptions that people have about women, but they also help foster an environment where people are willing to tolerate the demeaning treatment of women.

5. Is there a link between social media and domestic abuse?

The informative and communication capacities of women have significantly improved as a result of the proliferation of digital technology. They have accomplished this by blurring the lines separating the personal and public spheres, which has resulted in increased chances for women 's consciousness and participation in socio-political life. Unfortunately, the attributes that make information and telecommunications technology a critical weapon for the emancipation of women have however led to women being persecuted because of their use of these technologies. The mask of online anonymity fosters masculine notions of dominance over women, which in turn leads to the badgering out of women who are viewed as posing a danger to the traditional sexual standards. It is clear that the internet public space is experiencing a poisonous disinhibition, which lowers the boundaries for sexist and bigoted language and behaviour.

The term technology influenced domestic abuse refers to acts involving gender-based violence that are perpetrated, assisted, or worsened, partly or entirely, through the use of electronic media. It will include things like e-mail, social networking sites, and telephone conversations. Today, everyone has access to the web, which means that everyone also has access to its violent content. These predators are no longer constrained by geographical or other physical limits. However, violent social media activity may vary from the intent to do real damage to the act of virtually harassing someone or publicly humiliating them. And if that happens, the web might become a mechanism that brings the horrors of the internet into the real world.

6. Examples of domestic abuse that is caused by the use of technology:

- The abuse that occurs on mobile and web-based platforms might eventually turn into cyber-bullying and trolling.
- Creating fictitious online identities of women with the intention of harassing them by smearing their names, spreading rumours about them, and causing their reputations to suffer is a kind of cyber-stalking.
- The dissemination of personal and confidential information without the owner's consent and the deliberate sharing of personal content, including personal images and sexually graphic images and content.

7. Domestic abuse, Indian values and social media

Marginalization of women in the digital realm has been a topic of major concern in India; nevertheless, there is a lack of understanding about this issue. The strange mix of the type of the assaults, the continual change in patterns of victimisation, and the inadequate awareness about the specific constitutional provisions for victims in situations of cyber-attacks all make a significant contribution to the formation of a peculiar attitude to the situation of cyber-bullying and victimisation.

When children are socialised and conditioned from a young age until they reach maturity to adhere to cultural standards, beliefs, customs, and religious customs that are in line with societal acceptability, the conventional Indian family structure serves as a legitimation for the dominance of women. For centuries, men and women have been subjected to societal conventions and ideals that perpetuate the dominance of men over women and the inferiority of women.

8. Legal measures that may be taken to combat domestic abuse via the internet

8.1 Section 509 - Criminalises the use of words, gestures, acts, or the display of an item with the intent to offend the dignity of a woman. Even while this rule does not specifically tackle sexual violence or bullying digitally, it is nevertheless possible to utilise it in situations involving these issues.

8.2 Section 507 - Bullying of a witness or victim by means of an anonymous correspondence is prohibited under this Section. Despite the fact that this is a clause that does not

discriminate on the basis of sexuality, it may be used by women who are defending themselves against bullies who issue threats and whose names are almost always concealed.

8.3 Section 499 - Unlawful slander that results in damage to one's reputation is covered under this. Although this is a clause that does not discriminate based on gender, it might be used by women influencers and women on social networking sites to defend themselves against defamation and abuse.

8.4 Section 354D - Prohibits anyone from stalking a woman, engaging or trying to reach her, to encourage personal engagement frequently despite a clear message of indifference by the lady, or tracking the online usage email, or any other kind of digital communication. Only females are recognised by the law as having the capacity to be targets of cyber-stalking.

8.5 Section 354 C - Voyeurism includes viewing or photographing a woman performing a private affair in surroundings in which she has a realistic belief that she could well not be seen; and disseminating photos of a woman performing a private affair in instances in which she has consented to the photographing although not to the distribution of the photographs. Creation, dissemination, and deliberate dissemination of sexually graphic photographs and video recordings concerning a lady that was obtained without her consent.

8.6 IPC Section 354 A - Abuse of a female victim on sexual grounds, particularly exposing her to pornography without her consent. Trolling as well as other types of explicit sexual violence that may be found on blogs and social networking sites. Forcibly giving a lady videos and photographs that include sexually graphic information and imagery when she has not given her consent to receive them.

8.7 Section 67A - The act of posting or transmitting sexually explicit images in a digital format. -Trolling and other types of explicit sexual violence that may be found on blogs and online networking sites. Forcing a person to receive, without his or her consent, emails or communications sent via social networks that include graphic sexual material or photographs.

8.8 Section 67 - The distribution or dissemination of sexually explicit content through a computer network. The transmission of emails or social network interactions containing sexually suggestive information and photographs to a person without his or her consent. The act of committing graphic acts of sexual exploitation on online forums such as social media and blogs, especially trolling.

8.9 Information Technology Act, Section 66E - The taking of photographs of an individual against their permission and then electronically transmitting those photographs to another party. The transmission of sexually graphic photographs and videos concerning a someone without their consent, as well as their dissemination for a harmful purpose.

9. Inadequacies in the terms of the legislation

The problem of verbal bullying and violence that takes place online but does not include anything that is sexually suggestive is not being appropriately dealt with. The provisions of Sections 499 and 507 of the Indian Penal Code dealing with slander and libel and anonymous criminal harassment encompass just those instances of trolling that involve threat to an individual. These provisions do not tackle generic or sexist forms of abuse.

Also excluded from coverage are actions of cyber-bullying that are not coupled with defamation or harassment and do not entail the dissemination of sexually graphic pictures.

Even though the IT Act has a provision (Section 66) that makes hacking a punishable offence, the law doesn't specifically identify hacking done for the intention of cyber-bullying. In the Indian Penal Code (IPC), Sections 499 and 507, as well as Section 66 of the Information Technology Act, separate and individualistic offences are defined as electronic verbal abuse, bullying, and breach of private details. Most instances of abuse are systematic in essence and target a woman since she is a woman and hurt women more than any other demographic group. There is a substantial body of anecdotal data that suggests that harassment or abuse of women explicitly affects women's societal identities and empowerment.

Under several provisions of the Information Technology Act and the Indian Penal Code, harassment of women is not considered a breach of a woman's dignity or individual freedom. The exclusions are included in Section 66 E of the IT Act and Sections 354C and 354D of the Criminal Laws (Amendment) Act 2013, although these provisions concentrate only on the protection of a person 's bodily privacy while disregarding any potential violations of data privacy. Note that while Section 509 uses the term "privacy", it equates the invasion of a person's right to remain private with the infringement of a woman's right to maintain her dignity. A majority of people look at sexual assault from the perspective of preserving societal decorum by reducing obscenities and keeping women's dignity intact as a means of preventing sexual misconduct.

Feminists have also brought attention to the fact that, in most nations, the term "consent" is not understood to be a multifarious word, in which a woman can revoke permission that she has formerly granted at some point of time. This is something that has been emphasised by feminism advocates. As a consequence of this, the necessity of addressing domestic sexual violence and the necessity of regulating the enactment and depiction of sexuality are often confused with one another. Instead of safeguarding women's physical dignity and/or their privacy, this ultimately serves to reinforce current gender societal norms and restrictions.

The violation of a person's right to privacy and confidentiality, as outlined under Section 72 of the IT Act, as well as the stealing of information, as outlined in Section 43 in conjunction with Section 66, are both considered to be financial offences rather than societal or sexual offences. There is a lack of recognition regarding the psychological violence that can result from a breach of privacy and confidentiality. This can take the form of unauthorised access to private data or the distribution of such data, provided that the information in question is not of a sexually graphic in nature.

There is also a dearth of clear measures for technology-mediated aspects of psychological assault in domestic abuse statutes, such as the 2005 Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act.

Presently, with the expanding reach of internet, geographical borders seem to dissolve, and as a result, the notion of territorial jurisdiction, as envisioned in Section 16 of the Criminal Procedure Code and Section 2 of the Indian Penal Code, will need to make way for new methods of conflict resolution.

Moreover, private witnessing of obscenity is not considered to be a criminal activity under any part of the Information Technology Act of 2000. However, similar to the situation in IPC

292, if it can be proven that the obscenity was produced, distributed, or intended to be released in digital form solely, then it may be considered a criminal activity under Section 67. The common forms of online criminal activity, such as cyber-stalking, morphing, and email spoofing, are not included as violations under the Information Technology Act of 2000, which is not the least important point to make here. The majority of them are the provisions that are in place to deal with the type of cyber-crimes that occur in cyber-space.

One of the key causes for the rise in cyber-crimes against women in India is the lack of legislative provisions for women. This gap between advancement in technology and that of legal provisions to control them is so vast today that many perpetrators of violence against women go scot-free.

In their book titled "Cyber Crime and the Victimization of Women: Laws, Rights and Regulations," authors Halder and Jaishankar state that "The issues of women's rights in cyber space could be contributed largely to the sluggish modes of the governments in executing the gender equality and gender justice promises made by the States in the form of fundamental rights". (9) "They have also reported in India cyber gender harassment is often seen as "less important sexual harassment". (9)

Additionally, they have discovered that in India, online gender harassment is often seen as "least important sexual harassment." Because of the proliferation of e-commerce, the laws pertaining to cyber-crime in various countries, such as Canada, Australia, the United States of America, the United Kingdom, and India, amongst others, are primarily focused on covering commercial and financial crimes. These crimes include hacking, deception, and other similar offences.

Numerous statutes have indeed been drafted to address issues like impersonating mails, cyber-sex, invading privacy and so on. Nevertheless, there are numerous realistic challenges involved with penalising the offender, despite the fact that the laws pertaining to cyber-attacks against women are directly tied to sex offence and violations committed online. First and foremost, a significant number of females do not have enough knowledge of the rules that prohibit cyber-crime.

The Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act was passed in 2008 with the primary intention of addressing issues pertaining to representations of women, which may or may not fall within the realm of "obscenity". According to Halder, "It is definitely a welcome move as India may get a law focused solely on the victimization of women through indecent portrayal, but at the same time, the concept of indecent representation of women must be freed from patriarchal meanings of social value and morality". (9)

In addition to the absence of adequate constitutional recourse, another factor contributing to the exploitation of women is the invisibility offered by the internet. The virtual world is a digital environment where it is very simple for a criminal to camouflage and conceal his identify while also being able to easily modify it. The rationale for this is that though the origin of the objectionable material that was uploaded can be identified, the authorities have a hard time following the trail of the perpetrator. The Space Transition Theory (2008) developed by Jaishankar provides a clear and concise interpretation. This hypothesis states that, "Identity Flexibility, Dissociative Anonymity and lack of deterrence factor in the cyberspace provides the offenders the choice to commit cybercrime". (9) Further, Balakrishnan (2009), the then Chief justice of India, opined:

The World Wide Web allows users to circulate content in the form of text, images, videos and sounds. Websites are created and updated for many useful purposes, but they can also be used to circulate offensive content such as pornography, hate speech and defamatory materials. The widespread circulation of such content is particularly harmful for women. The pervasive gender discrimination in our society is further heightened since the digital medium provides the convenient shield of anonymity and fake identities. Errant persons become more emboldened in their offensive behaviour since it is presumed that they will not face any consequences. (3)

10. How do we modernise existing legislation to given women a fighting chance?

The establishment of legislative structure and governance provisions to combat technology deliberated domestic violence can encompass either the restructuring of current legislation or the effective implementation of proposed legislation that is specifically geared toward combating the use of technology to perpetrate violence against women.

Possibilities of the amendment of currently in force legislative measures, particularly the IPC. This premise is built upon the realization that the fundamental challenge in the Indian society in responding to aggression against women has become one of adherence rather than the absence of legislative structure.

The clause that already exists about hate speech has to be updated so that it encompasses general and sexist attacks both offline and online. The Indian Penal Code's Section 153A makes an effort to police statements which incite hate towards a group of people on basis of faith, ethnicity, place of origin, residency, language, etc. This clause, in its present state, contains two major flaws that need to be addressed. In the first place, it does not take into consideration the fact that various groups, sects, and classes do not stand on a level footing. As a result, it does not provide an acceptable justification for the fact that dominating groups of a community take advantage of it. Furthermore, it does not cover hateful speech that is connected to sexual identity or orientation, which are both important aspects of an individual's identity. (23) The language of Section 153A may well be rewritten to include protection against hate speech motivated by sexuality in a way that does not provide room for its invocation or abuse by so-called men's rights organisations.

Current legislative rules on the dissemination of sexually graphic information and the portrayal of a female body, which is presently cited in connection to technology-mediated abuse on women, need to be re-examined. It isn't just sexually graphic information that's disparaging to women; it's also content that supports and perpetuates the exploitation and subjugation of women in society. According to observations on Indian law, "the sexism in non-sexually explicit representations remains untouched by any penal liability." (Kumari, Ved (1999), Gender analysis of the Indian Penal Code, in Engendering Law: Essays in Honour of Lotika Sakar edited by Amita Dhanda and Archana Parashar. Lucknow: Eastern Book Company). It is imperative that the problem of upholding 'decency' need not be confused with the problem of degrading women's experiences. Many academicians have pointed out that all limits on portrayal of female bodies, such as those related to the creation and circulation of pornographic content, ought to be entirely abolished. They believe that a

gender-based hateful speech legislation might be sufficient to handle all kinds of sexism and prohibit the societal regulation of women.

The school of thought that maintains that virtual platforms establish new patterns of dialogue and social engagement should serve as a guiding principle for the creation of new laws that explicitly addresses violence against women that is facilitated by technology. Since patriarchal attitudes and restrictions emerge in and via online environment, it is essential that violence against women mediated by technology be comprehended and evaluated within the context of legal and jurisprudential principles. Surprisingly, some academics have also suggested that the pattern of interaction also changes the standards and regulations of human conduct; for example, online environments lower the baseline for violent conduct. Therefore, 'speech' and 'action' that is digitally transmitted need to be examined in a particular manner, and the law has to adopt a multifaceted approach. (4) Women's rights advocates should also keep in mind recent developments by the Ministry of Women and Child Development, which has indicated that it intends to implement a new legislative framework on violence against women in general and domestic violence in particular. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced to the media a few months ago that it is now considering a new regulation for trolling in internet spaces.

In a similar vein, in 2014, one of the proposals offered by the National Commission for Women in their discussion on means and methods to protect women from online crimes in India was that - a legislation that would focus on women and technology has to be created in order to define the many forms of cyber-crimes that harm women. The Information Technology Act of 2000 (in its revised form from 2008) is not a women-friendly statute. It has to be evaluated so that new creative ways may be introduced into the legal system.

Women's rights organisations point out that, after receiving trainings on sexual sensitivity, the police nevertheless participate in victimizing the woman, blaming and/or trivialising of the violation when they respond to accusations regarding technology-mediated abuse against women. It does not seem that the introduction of Cyber Cells has resulted in an improvement to this predicament. Consent is a tricky concept, as has been highlighted by feminists, and the introduction of digital technology has added a great deal of complication to the concept of consent as well. When assent that was previously obtained is later revoked, policemen fail to acknowledge the validity of women's subjective perception of being violated. According to the findings of the research titled "Violence Online In India," conducted in 2016, out of the 500 interviewees who were asked about their experiences of online violence against women, one third of them claimed that they had reported it to the police. 38 percent of those who went to the police claimed that "they were not at all helpful," and more than half (52 percent) indicated that authorities do not take accusations of internet harassment seriously. (24)

Women investigators should be assigned to Cyber Cells, according to a recommendation made by the National Commission for Women in 2014 as part of a deliberation on "Ways and Means to safeguard women from Cyber Crimes in India." This recommendation was made in an effort to resolve the unresponsive nature of the Cyber Cells. The Ministry of Women and Child Development is also in the midst of establishing up a webpage that will be dubbed "Cyber Crime Prevention against Women and Children". Through this platform, women who have experienced cyber-bullying will be able to register grievances, which will then be taken care of by the Cyber Cell of the Ministry of the Home.

However, it is possible that this will not be sufficient since the most important thing is to combat the "culture of impunity" that police personnel are entrenched in. Two possible initiatives that may be implemented in this regard are the following: (a) The Police Complaints Authority must work more efficiently in order to be able to resolve appeals of police inactivity. Notwithstanding an order from the Supreme Court going back ten years, a Police Complaints Authority still has to be established in each state. It is a goal which has been on the table for a long period of time. (14) (b) A penalty should be imposed on policemen and cyber-security cell personnel who refuse to take note of incidences of technology-mediated violence against women.

11. Social media as a tool to empower the victims of domestic violence

Social media has come to be hailed as a tool that may aid in the emancipation of those who are oppressed. In recent years, platforms such as Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook have been used to expose hate crimes, aggression against women, and efforts to liberate those who are struggling all over the globe. These platforms are no longer being used just as a place for idle banter and mindless gossip.

Since domestic violence (DV) is most effective when it is perpetrated by isolating its victims, social media provides victims with a link to the external world that they would most certainly be missing in their lives. Victims now have the ability to search for the information, tools, and assistance they need, all thanks to the power of social media, which would be hard for them to obtain beyond the digital realm. As a matter of fact, groups such as the National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV) and the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV) have put together comprehensive social media toolkits in order to maximize on the potential of these networks. In its vision statement, the non-profit foundation Break the Silence professes its dedication to use social networks " to educate communities on the risks of domestic violence, link victims and survivors, and aid them in the transformation of their lives" (https://www.breakthesilencefoundation.org/). These websites provide a variety of benefits in addition to information and interaction. They also prevent the loss of life. When individuals believe that they are in harm's way, they may discretely request urgent assistance, including the police, using a variety of social media and mobile applications that have been developed in recent years.

12. Conclusion

In this study, an effort has been made to construct the underlying framework and to unify the arguments on the relationship between technology- deliberated violence against women and the legal system. The issue of confronting dominant ideologies of patriarchy, which sanction men's feeling of ownership over women and the deliberate propagation of misogynistic behaviour, is surely one that extends beyond the realm in which judicial intervention is allowed to operate. Nevertheless, the importance of bringing about suitable laws and organizational reforms that are consistent with the increasing issues of technologically mediated socialisation cannot be overstated.

The most important thing in this context is to develop a legislative and administrative strategy that tackles the pervasive nature of technology-mediated abuse, including its sexist and sexually explicit manifestations. In order to accomplish this job and stay relevant with the ever-evolving aspects of the digitalized world in which we live, we will need to re-evaluate certain fundamental ideas that are used in practise. For instance, territorial boundaries would need to be rethought in order to accommodate for the prevalence of virtual aggression from a remote location, which has arisen as a direct result of the flexibility and seamlessness of modern communication networks. In a similar vein, the concept of guilt has to be rethought in the context of new kinds of violence, such as the unauthorised internet dissemination of sexually graphic movies and photos. It is imperative that we take the necessary precautions to guarantee that the present legislative regulations that punish carnal lust are not going to have the unintended consequence of stifling sexual freedom. These regulations are founded on a limited conception of social morality. To illustrate through an example, people who produce sex films for their personal use and enjoyment have discovered that they have been charged with breaking obscenity laws when they attempt to contest the "leakage" and non-consensual distribution of recordings containing sexually explicit content. In conclusion, the nitty-gritties of judicial practice might require a second look.

13.Suggestions/ Recommendations

The scope of the paper can be manifold. Firstly, the paper can help readers to delve on the question as to whether new-media can evolve further to meet the needs of those in distress, especially women. Secondly, we can also evaluate whether the rules of patriarchy, especially in a country like India, should be allowed to dominate lives of women in the 21st century. Thirdly, with the changing times and with the changing face of online interaction, to what extent will the law evolve so as to protect the victims of cyber-crimes. And finally, will social media giants like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and search engines like Google and texting platforms like WhatsApp, Snapchat and Telegram owe up the responsibility of bringing to their customers a clean and bullying free platform.

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