

“The Impact of Media on Crime Against Women (With special reference to Bhilai Town)”

Rashmi Tiwari & Rukhsar Parveen

Guest Faculty , Dept. of Social Work, Kushabhau Thakre Patrakarita Avam
Jansanchar Vishwavidyalaya, Raipur (CG) INDIA.

Guest Faculty, Dept. of Mass Communication, Kushabhau Thakre Patrakarita Avam
Jansanchar Vishwavidyalaya, Raipur (CG) INDIA.

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ABSTRACT

Media plural to medium which means a way of communicating with people or source of communication through which information , entertainment is provided to mass. There are mainly two types of Media – Print and electronic. The impact on shaping perception of mass by Print Media i.e. Newspaper/Literature is undisputed, whether in case of French Revolution or India's freedom movement and even for wrong reasons like Naxalism, Terrorism. It has established that the contents of Media influence thoughts , psychology of receivers. In the present study, it is trying to find out the influence of Media on sexual crime against women, i.e. it has focused on Media factor. Other factors have not taken for the study. The adult educated urban women are primary data source. Primary data is collected through structured close ended Questionnaire. Analysis of data gave conclusion that

Keywords: Media, Internet, Smart phones, Sexual Crime, Women, Child/Teenage Girl

Introduction -

Media are source of information, entertainment. It is of two types – Print and Electronic. Newspapers, Magazines etc. are form of print media and provide written information. Radio, Television, Cinema, Computer/laptop/Tablets and smart phones provide information and entertainment audio or audio-visually. Print media mainly prefer as a source of information, Electronic media have become great source of entertainment besides information. Many Media sources are now common, reachable and affordable. It seems people carry/use smart phones/mobile phones round the clock, because it provides unlimited options of on line songs, movies, reality shows, cartoons, games, news etc. In some studies it is found that people even feel uncomfortable without their smart phones. The dependency on these electronic gadgets is increasing day by day. In nuclear families where both spouse are working or not , their children are now socialize by electronic media. As the rate of usage of Electronic Media in terms of time duration and number of sources has increased hundred times as compare to two to three decades before, when such variety of sources of Media were not available, their impact on psychology is bound to increased many times. There are many free internet zones/free Wi-Fi zones available by the Government at public places like railway stations, parks etc. This facility also increase the tendency of usage of internet especially among children, teenagers , youths, even middle aged via smart phones, tablets etc. Children of urban middle and upper class families are now preferred to play on line games rather to play at playground. On internet all type of contents easily accessible including porn and obscene materials without any filtration and restrictions. Penetration of these gadgets has been increasing in rural areas also. In rural area Electronic Media is more popular as compare to Print Media , because of it's utility for illiterate population. In all Electronic Media is more popular among all age group of people and in urban and rural areas. Time spend in watching these media is also more, so definitely they impact on thoughts, perception, behaviour, attitude of a person. In the current study it is trying to find out the impact of Media on Sexual Crime it means at what extent Media is responsible for such crime and which media have more influential.

Sexual Crime against women has been increasing rapidly. The crime scene is also serious in Bhilai town of Chhattisgarh. The annual National Crime Record Bureau Report of 2015 listed cities of the country on parameters of rape cases and assault on women with the intent to outrage their modesty. These cities are seen a high number of cases. The crime rate has been calculated using the female population in each city.

Table- 1 showing NCRB data 2015 on crime rate against women of the country

| Rank | City | Rape cases | Assault on Women |
|-----------------|---------|------------|------------------|
| 1 st | Jodhpur | 13.4 | 38.7 |
| 2 nd | Delhi | 11.6 | 28.0 |
| 3 rd | Gwalior | 10.4 | 17.1 |

| | | | |
|-----------------|----------------------|------|------|
| 4 th | Bhopal | 7.10 | 17.1 |
| 5 th | Durg-Bhilai Nagar | 7.90 | 16.4 |
| 6 th | Nagpur | 6.60 | 15.7 |

Table - 2 showing increase in crime against women in last two decades in the country

| Crime | Incidence (in 000) | | Change (in %) | Rate of Incidence (Incidents/lakh population) | |
|------------------|---------------------|------|---------------|---|------|
| | 1995 | 2015 | | 1995 | 2015 |
| Assault on Women | 27 | 82 | 207 | 2.9 | 6.5 |
| Rape | 14 | 35 | 105 | 1.5 | 2.8 |

It is clear from above tables that sexual crime against women has been increasing. Many factors are responsible for these crimes. The current study focuses only on Media factor. Several other factors are subject to more researches.

Significance of the Study-

Sexual crimes against women, particularly against teenage/child girl are in daily news. It has become an alarming social problem. To control the problem it is necessary to find out causal factors behind it. There are several factors responsible for the crime. Media seems to be an important factor. This study helps in identifying the Media's responsibility in increasing such crime and also which type of media is more influential for increasing the crime? This study could help in effective control of the crime.

Objectives of the Study -

- 1) To find out the impact of media on sexual crime against women.
- 2) To find out the reasons of increasing sexual crime against teenage/child girls.
- 3) To find out the reasons of increasing tendency of teenage/minor boys for committing sexual crimes.
- 4) To know about the past scenario (before IT revolution i.e. year 2000) of sexual crime against women.

Hypothesis -

- 1) The impact of Media on increasing sexual crime against women is significant.
- 2) The impact of Media on increasing sexual crime against women is not significant.
- 3) Easy and free access to internet particularly via smart phone is more influential among all media factors.
- 4) Nearly two decades before sexual crimes against girl children were not common as in today's scenario.

Review of Literature -

Ample studies have done on crime which are occur virtually i.e. cyber crime. The current study focuses on Media's role for direct physical crime against women. Research Literatures for Media's role for such crimes in Indian context are not sufficient.

International agency Thomson Reuters Foundation has claimed in it's survey report that India is the most dangerous country of the world regarding women safety and security, due to increasing sexual crimes and imposed work. The report is prepared by taking opinions of 548 experts of women issues. Afghanistan ranked 2nd followed by Syria. USA ranked 10th in the report. The report says the situation has not improved even after nation wide demonstration due Nirbhaya episode in 2012. India also stands 1st in human trafficking. In 2011 India ranked 4th for the survey.

A 2017 report by Global Peace Index had claimed India to be the fourth most dangerous country for women travellers. Gender Vulnerability Index 2017 compiled by Ministry of Women and Child Development found Bihar, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, and Jharkhand to be the bottom four in terms of safety. The data highlight the urgent need to ensure proper law and order situation in the country.

Even as juvenile offences take on a monstrous face in conflict with law, rape tops the list of serious crimes in state. Chhattisgarh retained its fifth position for third time in last four years and Madhya Pradesh came in first. Juveniles in state registered 112 cases for assault on women to outrage her modesty in 2013, state ranking third on the list for these crimes, shows National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) 2013. It is increasing number of juvenile offences and assault on women to outrage her modesty.

Going by figures of last four years, juvenile offences in Chhattisgarh have been prominent among top ten

with statistical graph heading northwards year after year particularly when it comes to rape and assault on women. In 2010, 70 of the 858 rapes cases involved juveniles in state which rose to 80 in 2011; in 2012 NCRB shows no data while a steep rise is seen in 2013 with 122 rape cases reported.

Rodenhizer and Edwards, after reviewing of 43 studies collectively finding that exposure to Sexually Explicit Media (SEM) and Sexually Violent Media is positively related to Sexual Violence (DV) and Domestic Violence (DM) and SEM/SVM more strongly impact men’s SV and DV behaviour , attitude than women’s.

Tanya Serisier’s (2017) article on sex crime and media in Oxford Research Encyclopedia explain the Pornography and feminist “sex wars”. In the late 1970s feminist academics and activists connected pornography and “rape culture”. Activist Robin Morgan (1980) declared “pornography is the theory , rape is the practice.” An anti pornography feminist group “Women Against Pornography” opposed pornography on the grounds that it was causally related to violence and sought to restrict the production and sale of pornography. In 1986, Republican president Ronald Regan formed Messe Commission on pornography which found that pornography was harmful and linked to organise crime. The debates about the relationship between pornography and sexual violence have been enhanced by the growth in pornography available on line. Anti pornography feminist claim that the internet has seen the exponential growth of pornography and an intensification of it’s harms , sexual coercion. Film and television have also been accused of eroticizing violence against women through the inclusion of highly sexualized representation of rape and other forms of gendered violence.

The UK Government’s Report on “Ending Violence against Women and Girls” Strategy 2016-2020 include Protecting people on line strategy which says – Exposure to unsuitable material at an impressionable age can affect some one’s attitude to violence and abuse. Access to unprecedented quantities of information and entertainment through may be harmful. UK Government and UK Council for Child Internet Safety continue to work with internet service providers , mobile network operators , school etc for the filters provided on mobile phones and on public Wi-Fi to protect children from accessing inappropriate internet content.

Edmond Pui Xang Choi , & Others (2016) published article titled “An Emerging Risk Factor of Sexual Abuse :The use of Smart phone Dating Applications”. In 2015 sex hundred and sixty six participants were recruited for one year for the study. It was found that users of dating apps were more likely to be sexually abused in the past year than non users. Using dating apps was also a risk factor of life time sexual abuse.

A work on Internet use , pornography and Sexual crime, Manudeep Bhullar & Others (2010) found that a vast supply of extreme sexual content and pornography has triggered sex related crimes such as rape and child sex abuse. The study was based on Norwegian registry data.

Limitations of the Study –

- 1) The study does not include the opinion of uneducated women and male beings.
- 2) The representation of senior citizen and middle aged women is negligible therefore the opinion regarding past scenario of sexual crime is not satisfactory.
- 3) The study does not include the opinion of educated rural women.

Research Methodology –

The study is based on quantitative analysis of primary data to diagnose the causes of sexual crime against women. The current study is based on Diagnostic type of Research. Various sources of Media has taken as variables. Primary data is collected from adult women aged between 18 years to 50 years. They are of various educational and occupational background. Some are 12th passed or graduate or post graduate. Respondents are from various occupations like dental surgeon, nursing, manager, interior designer, teacher, entrepreneur, director, banker, students, house wife, sales manager etc. 50 women are selected through purposive sampling from target population. Following table showing the status of education and occupation of sample group-

Table -3 showing the status of education and occupation of sample group-

| Education Qualification | 12 th | Graduate | Post Graduate |
|-------------------------|------------------|----------|---------------|
| Number of women | 4 | 31 | 15 |

The tools of primary data collection are Questionnaire, Interview Schedule (telephonic) which include close and open ended questions. Study area is Bhilai town of Chhattisgarh. The study area is selected due to proximity for researchers.

Research Methodology at a Glance

| | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Research Design | Diagnostic type |
| Research Area | Bhilai town |
| Sampling population | Educated adult women |
| Sampling type | Purposive |
| Sample size | 50 |
| Tool of primary data collection | Structured Questionnaire (mixed questions), Interview Schedule (telephonic) |
| Sources of secondary data | Reports, Research articles, Websites |
| Data analysis | Percentage analysis |

Processing and Tabulation of Primary Data-

Following table is showing respondents preferences of Media sources for News and Entertainment. These responses show respondents awareness regarding various Media contents.

Table - 4 showing Media's preference of respondents for News

| Sources of News | Frequency of responses in % |
|---|-----------------------------|
| Newspaper | 12 |
| Television | 32 |
| Social media/news app | 12 |
| On line news | 24 |
| Newspaper & T.V. | 12 |
| Social media & on line | 4 |
| News paper,T.V., social media, on line news | 4 |

Table - 5 showing Media's preference of respondents for Entertainment

| Sources of News | Frequency of responses in % |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Newspaper | - |
| Television | 48 |
| Social media | 8 |
| On line entertainment programmes | 40 |
| Cinema | 4 |

Table - 6 showing responses regarding various parameters

| Parameters of study | Frequency of responses | | | |
|--|------------------------|----|------------|-----------|
| | Yes | No | Don't know | Can't say |
| Vulgarity on T.V./ internet provoke sexual crime | 64 | 12 | - | 24 |
| Obscene movies provoke sexual crime | 60 | 4 | 4 | 32 |
| Frequent media coverage of sexual crime provoking | 60 | 28 | - | 12 |
| Crime based T.V. programme also provoke sexual crime | 56 | 20 | 4 | 20 |
| In the past, sexual crime were as frequent as today's scenario | 40 | 16 | 28 | 16 |

Table - 7 showing percentage weight of responsibility given to various media sources for increasing sexual crime

| Responsible media for increasing crime | Percent weight (%) |
|--|--------------------|
| Television | 8 |
| Obscene movies | 16 |
| Internet via smart phone | 48 |
| Internet via computer/laptop | 4 |

| | |
|--|---|
| Vulgar magazines | 4 |
| Internet via computer/laptop, obscene movies | 4 |
| Internet via smart phone, computer/laptop | 8 |
| T.V., smart phones | 8 |
| All types of media sources | 4 |

Table - 8 showing factors responsible for increasing sexual crime against teenage/child girls

| Factors | % of responses |
|---|----------------|
| Lack of sex education | 12 |
| Teenage/child girls are soft target i.e. physically weak, lack of self defence, easily threatened or murdered | 32 |
| Don't understand good - bad things and implications of such crime | 12 |
| Male dominance psychology | 16 |
| Indecent wearing | 16 |
| Easy & free access to internet, porn sites through gadgets | 44 |
| Alcoholism among teenage boys | 4 |
| Television or media socialization | 4 |
| Lessening in faith of God and spirituality | 8 |
| Increase in indiscipline and less regulated life | 4 |

Table - 9 showing factors responsible for increasing tendency of teenage/minor boys of committing sexual crime

| Factors | % of responses |
|---|----------------|
| Lack of sex education | 12 |
| Hormonal changes, curiosity about bodily changes provoke teenage/minor boys | 16 |
| Internet and porn sites | 60 |
| Improper socialization and social environment | 24 |
| Alcoholism among teenage boys | 12 |
| Obscene movies | 8 |
| Westernization | 4 |
| Don't understand the aftermath of the crime | 8 |
| Poor implementation of Laws/fearless for laws | 12 |
| Frequent media coverage of sexual crimes | 4 |
| Bad company | 4 |
| Less education | 4 |

Findings and Analysis -

- Table -4 is showing main source of News which are preferred by respondents is Television as 32% women prefer it, followed by on line News with 24% of women respondent watch on line News. On line News mostly preferred by students and young respondents. News paper is less preferred due to availability of several other multipurpose media. Most of women do not prefer social media as source of News because most of them fake.
- Table - 5 is showing 48% women prefer Television as main source of entertainment followed by on line entertainment with 40% women watch many online series, movies etc.
- From table 4 and 5 it is clear that women respondents are aware of contents of programmes broadcasted/available in T.V. or internet.
- Table -6 is showing majority of women respondents agree that vulgarity on T.V./ internet, Obscene movies, Frequent media coverage of sexual crimes ,Crime based T.V. programmes, are provoking. 40% women believe that, in the past when the approach of media was not so vast and media was not as versatile as nowadays such crime did not got media coverage, but the frequency and nature of crime was similar as of today's.

- Table – 7 is showing respondents opine that internet via smart phones are singly more responsible for influencing sexual crime as 48% weight is given to it among all types of media sources. Free Wi-Fi and cheap internet offers has increased usage of internet many times. There is no provision for censor/filter for the contents available on line. Porn sites, obscene movies are easily accessible and attract and provoke viewers particularly of teenagers.
- Use of internet through smart phones is more easy as compare to through Computer/laptops. Therefore respondents have given less weight-age to computer/lap tops. Some respondents has also opined that more than one type of media are responsible for such type of crimes.
- Table – 8 is showing that, according to 44% respondents easy access to internet and porn sites is main factor behind increase in crime against teenager/girl children and 32% respondents said girls are soft/easy target therefore they are increasingly become target. Actually objectionable materials easily available in internet through smart phones provoke viewers and they target teenagers/girl children because they can not resist them physically, easily threatened not to tell any one about the crime or murdered. Girl child even can not realize and understand about the gravity of crime which victimize her.
- Table - 9 is showing that majority of respondents said provocation from internet/porn sites is the single major factor of increasing criminal tendency among teenager/boy children. After that improper socialization is also an important factor for the same.

Conclusion -

It is concluded that hypothesis 1st and 3rd proved correct that Media impact is significant in increasing sexual crime against women. Among all types of Media , use of internet through smart phones is particularly more influential among all media factors.

Hypothesis 4th proves partially correct as only 40% respondents opine that nearly two decades before sexual crimes against women were as common as in today's scenario. However 28% respondents do not agree that such crimes were not frequent as of today's scenario.

Suggestions -

- 1) Strict regulations/norms should be implemented by the Government for Media contents which are published/broadcasted/viral in newspapers/T.V./internet. Obscenity must not be common as it become nowadays. Because whole Indian society has not as open as it seems in vulgar media contents. So we are not familiar to such openness/ vulgarity. When we expose to it, it impacts our psychology, particularly of teenagers negatively. The way Media expose sexuality is very wrong. Non familiarity creates curiosity for new experience. It would be better, first provide sex education. Familiarity with the subject reduce curiosity and thus crime.
- 2) Openness and vulgarity in movies should be strictly censored.
- 3) Provision for filters for internet contents should be made and implemented.
- 4) Families, educational institutes must bear their responsibility of proper socialization of children. The trend of socialization by Media like cartoon series or social media must be stopped. Respect for opposite gender, discipline, morality, spirituality must be taught to children from early childhood.
- 5) Provision of learning self defence mechanism, good and bad touch by children, should made mandatory in curriculum.
- 6) Strict and proper implementation of laws by the Government agencies to control such crimes. Conviction rate is very low and criminals are easily escaped. In a famed case of Nirbhaya, culprits are still not punished. This must be stopped.
- 7) Ban of alcoholism like in Bihar state.
- 8) Government should conduct study on the impact of services of free internet/Wi-Fi, smart phones (as Chhattisgarh government is going to distribute by SKY). One of study on the use of free Wi-Fi in Patna railway station in 2017 it was found that most of the users watched porn sites. Government should think first before providing such unnecessary freebies. It is more important, necessary, urgent to make a healthy and safe society for all rather providing facilities for sake of digitalization, modernization of society.

Scope for Future Studies-

- 1) A study can be done with taking educated men as respondents.
- 2) A comparative study of opinions of women and men can be done for the same subject.
- 3) An exclusive study on the opinions on psychologist can be possible.

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