Chapter 6
The Role of Social Media in the Fight Against Gender Violence

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ABSTRACT

Gender violence is a pervasive global issue that demands urgent attention and action. Social media platforms have emerged as powerful tools in the fight against this form of violence, providing opportunities for awareness raising, advocacy, and support. It enables individuals and organizations to share information, personal stories, and resources related to gender violence. It serves as a platform for survivors to break their silence, share their experiences, and find solidarity. Social media campaigns raise public awareness, challenge societal norms, and encourage discussions surrounding gender-based violence, fostering a sense of collective responsibility. Social media plays a crucial role in the fight against gender violence, providing a space for survivors, activists, and advocates connecting and educating. This chapter explores the role of social media in the fight against gender violence, focusing on its impact on awareness raising, survivor support, and community mobilization.

INTRODUCTION

Social media is a tool for communicating, sharing information and connecting people with each other. Today, the widespread use of the Internet, especially social media, has emerged as an alternative medium that women can use to seek their rights and express themselves. Social media can play an important role in empowering women and protecting their rights. From the "MeToo" movement to the Women's March, social media has been sed in many areas for women to express themselves and seek their rights. Thus, social media has provided women, women's rights violations and women's movements with the opportunity to capitalize on the unique awareness-raising potential of social media.

One of the most important ways in which social media has influenced women's rights is by giving women a platform to talk about issues once considered taboo. With the rise of social media, women can share their stories of harassment, abuse and discrimination. For example, the #MeToo movement has brought to light the extent of sexual harassment and assault that women face in their daily lives. Women from all communities of society can share their stories through social media and create a collective voice for change.

Social media plays a vital role in promoting gender equality and challenging traditional gender roles. Women can raise awareness and use social media by creating hashtags to exhibit their skills and talents, challenge gender stereotypes, end violence and discrimination, and demand equal opportunities. For example, by launching social media campaigns such as #LikeAGirl, #WomenInSTEM and #WomenIn-Leadership, they can highlight their achievements, raise awareness and claim their rights (Gianniri, 2021). Another important way in which social media empowers women is through its use as a platform for activism and rights advocacy. Women can use social media to raise awareness on issues that affect them, such as reproductive rights, equal pay and access to health care. Through social media, women may be able to connect with activists in their own countries, around the world, organize events, and create a space for collective action. Social media can be used to make women' voices heard and seek their rights such as equality, freedom, rights, bias, and stereotype.

However, in addition to the advantages of social media channels in terms of women's rights, there are also negative aspects in terms of digital violence against women. The anonymity of social media channels can sometimes lead to cyberbullying and online harassment (Cybersafe, 2021). Especially women who are outspoken about their views or have a large following are often the target of online harassment.

Violence Against Women on Social Media

The internet especially social media is a double-edged sword for women. On the one hand, it provides vital spaces for women seeking self-expression and opportunities, and on the other hand, it creates a space for abusers who target women. Violence on Social Media - Digital / Cyber Violence refers to all forms of harassment, abuse, humiliation, insult, abuse, threats, blackmail, bullying, hate speech, non-consensual sharing of pictures and images and sharing of unwanted sexually explicit messages against women through information technologies such as the internet, smartphones or video games.

Digital violence against women is widespread and alarming, affecting millions of women worldwide. While social media has the potential to play a critical role in preventing violence against women, it can also be a digital medium through which violence against women is perpetuated and normalized. Digital violence against women, cyberbullying, online harassment and revenge sexual posts are a growing concern.

One of the most important forms of violence against women on social media is cyberbullying. Cyberbullying refers to all forms of bullying that occur online, including harassment, humiliation and threats. Women are disproportionately affected by cyberbullying. Research shows that women are more likely to experience online harassment than men. Cyberbullying has a negative impact on women's mental health and well-being and can lead to anxiety, depression and even suicide (Cybersafe, 2021).

Online harassment is another form of violence against women on social media. Women who express their opinions or challenge traditional gender roles are often the target of online harassment, which can take many forms, including threats of violence, hate speech and malicious intent, including searching for and posting information about women. Online harassment negatively impacts women's lives and can lead to feelings of isolation, fear and reluctance to express themselves online.

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