

Gendered Discourse: Technology-mediated Violence and Women Students

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Abstract

Students' access to technology-mediated communication gadgets is increasing day by day. Mobile phones, especially smartphones have become like regular attire for the student communities with inbuilt cameras, memory spaces, and online facilities with a single touch. Apart from entertainment, these gadgets are mainly used for communication purposes. It is essential to understand how these devices have negotiated with the traditional gendered platforms either to evolve new ones or overcome the old ones. The nature of gendered discourse perpetuated via the platforms of technology-based gadgets is yet another area to be explored, especially within the student communities. Informal discussions, observations, and sharing with women students show us that traditional norms are reset by the new media gadgets. Especially in terms of abuse, monitoring of movement, harassment, stalking, etc., are being experienced by women students based on their gender. In this regard, the present research tries to find out the level of awareness of technology-mediated violence against women students, its type, and the level of prevalence. Further, the study would try to identify the linkage between the nature of violence prevalent and its linkage between the social patriarchal norms of the society cross-cutting into aspects of class, caste, language, religion, and so on. It also tries to know the different intervention strategies these women students adopt to address these issues, by means of overcoming or within the gender frameworks. This study would help us identify what type of interventions women students are more likely to take up at different levels – personal, family, social, institutional, and legal. The study adopts a mixed method of survey and interview, both with rural and urban women students in Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu. The study could further help us identify the context of educational and policy-level changes in this regard toward addressing both women and men students.

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