



Understanding the effects of Social Media on Human Rights Violation among General Public

Dr. T. Kavitha

Assistant Professor, Madras School of Social Work, Chennai

Dr. S. Sudarmathy

Assistant Professor, Madras School of Social Work, Chennai

Date of Submission: 14-02-2026

Date of Acceptance: 27-02-2026

Abstract

In the present day context, where digital communication permeates every aspect of life, the significance of digital media platforms in shaping the dynamics of human rights has increased over years. People are trying to compete with the false ideology that social media is creating to be accepted by people and to live an ideal life according to the society's set standards. Platforms namely, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and others are functioning as channels for both safeguarding and encroaching upon inherent human rights and fundamental freedom of expression, privacy, and the right to procedural fairness trial. Social media's impact from a human rights perspective is dual; it empowers voices, mobilizes movements, and documents abuses, but also spreads harmful misinformation, poses privacy risks, fosters online harassment, and invites government censorship. This complex interplay underscores the need for careful management to safeguard and advance human rights in the era of digital transformation. The major objective of the present investigation is to assess the digital media influence on human rights violations include assessing its influence, spotting patterns, online harassment, study the user behaviours, exploring digital literacy, examining privacy concerns and to evaluate the ways to reduce risk behaviours among the users. This research employs a quantitative research method utilizing self-prepared questionnaires. By simple random sampling technique, 50 respondents from the general public residing in Egmore Chennai will be used for the study. To conclude, the study seeks to understand the vibrant interaction among social media and rights-related concerns in the digital world and preventive measures that potentially taken by the users to lessen the harmful magnitudes of social media.

Keywords: *Social media, Digital communication, Human rights, Violation, General public.*

I. Introduction

Technological advancements have dramatically transformed human interaction. Social media platforms now function as powerful communication tools that shape opinions, behaviors, and social movements. They connect individuals across geographical boundaries and provide spaces for dialogue, activism, and information exchange. However, the growing dependence on these platforms raises serious concerns regarding the safeguard of fundamental human rights.

Fundamental human rights are general entitlements that safeguard dignity, equality, and freedom. These contain the right to expression, privacy, non-discrimination, education, and protection from harm. As social media increasingly influences daily life, it becomes essential to examine on how these platforms affect such rights. While digital networks can amplify marginalized voices and expose injustice, they may also contribute to hate speech, cyberbullying, misinformation, and privacy violations.

This study aims to analyze whether social media acts as a supportive tool for human rights advocacy or inadvertently contributes to rights violations. Understanding this dynamic is crucial in promoting safe and ethical digital practices.

Social Media: Concept and Growth

Social media refers to digital platforms that enable users to create, share, and exchange information in virtual communities. Globally, billions of people use the platforms such as the Facebook, Instagram, X (formerly Twitter), and YouTube for communication, entertainment, business, and news consumption. What initially began as a medium for connecting friends and family has evolved into a powerful global communication ecosystem.

These platforms play an influential role in shaping public opinion, marketing strategies,



political engagement, and crisis communication. A significant portion of internet users rely on social media for news updates, especially younger generations. Given the extensive time individuals spend online, social media now holds substantial power in influencing attitudes and behaviors.

Usage of Social Media Today

Social media platforms can be categorized into networking sites, media-sharing applications, microblogging platforms, online forums, and messaging services. Governments use them to disseminate public information during emergencies, businesses employ them for marketing and customer engagement, and individuals utilize them for personal expression and relationship-building.

Despite these benefits, excessive and unregulated usage may result in addiction, distraction, and exposure to harmful content. Therefore, critical evaluation of social media's societal impact is necessary.

Human Rights in the Digital Era

Human rights belong to every individual irrespective of race, gender, nationality, or social background. These rights include life, liberty, education, freedom of speech, and protection from exploitation. International human rights law assigns governments the responsibility of safeguarding these freedoms.

In the digital age, new challenges have emerged. Online harassment, data theft, cyber exploitation, hate speech, and digital surveillance can undermine basic rights. While digital platforms provide avenues for activism and reporting abuse, they also create vulnerabilities that require regulatory oversight and ethical governance.

II. Review of literature

(Rodrigues.R, 2020) "Legal and human rights issues of AI: Gaps, challenges and vulnerabilities", this article focuses on the gaps and obstacles in the legal and the human rights issues surrounding artificial intelligence (AI), in addition to how these issues have an impact on basic human rights concepts. These problems include: algorithmic openness, cyber security weaknesses, unfairness, bias, and discrimination, lack of contestability, problems with legal personhood, problems with intellectual property, negative effects on workers, problems with privacy and data protection, liability for harm, and lack of accountability. The article uses the notion of 'vulnerability' to help readers understand significant areas of concern and to direct risk and impact

mitigation actions to safeguard people's well-being. This article advances the discussion, which is crucial given the gravity of the impacts of AI technologies, particularly on vulnerable individuals and groups and their human rights, while acknowledging the good work done in the AI law space and the need for constant evaluation and agility in approach.

(Siregar.G., 2020) "Legal framework for controlling the dissemination of SAR related content through social media under the electronic information and transactions law", the study states that Existence of the Information and Electronic Transaction (ITE) Law, which manages and regulates criminal crimes connected to the dissemination of concerns containing SARA The laws and conceptual agreement are used in this normative legal research. This study uses qualitative data analysis to create a descriptive analytical piece of work. This study discovered that material addressing SARA issues is classified as hate speech, which can be considered as a form of expression used by individuals or groups to provoke others and carry a threat of up to 6 (six) years in prison and a fine of Rp.1,000,000,000. In addition, the ITE Law's implementation of legal validity might be classified as unimplemented of the law's legality established as indicated by the society, which was unable to adhere to the legislation's rules, indicating that this law had not yet been formally implemented. The report advises the community to act appropriately by abiding by the laws outlined in the ITE Law.

(Alaggia.R., 2020) "I did not speak out until #Me too: Understanding sexual abuse and assault narratives revealed through social media platforms", the study aimed to learn more about online disclosures, social media disclosures of the highly stigmatized issue of sexual abuse/assault were researched. On Twitter and Reddit, participants posted and tweeted. Online reports of sexual abuse and assault were collected using a purposeful sampling process between September 28 and October 16, 2018 for thematic analysis. 171 social media posts were examined using a phenomenological approach to gain a greater understanding of new avenues for reporting sexual abuse and/or sexual assault. Posters noted personal hurdles, conflicting responses as of family, friends, and peers, along with inconsistent responses from experts. These themes demonstrated how the MeToo/#MeToo movement is catalyzing sexual



abuse/assault disclosures on social media in unprecedented ways.

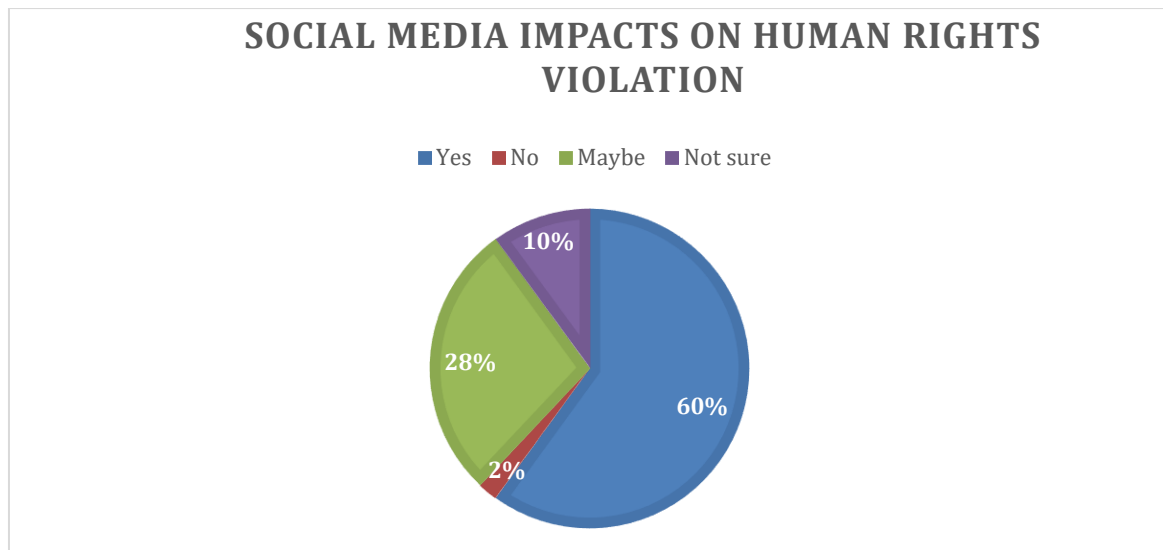
III. Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive research design with a quantitative approach. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire

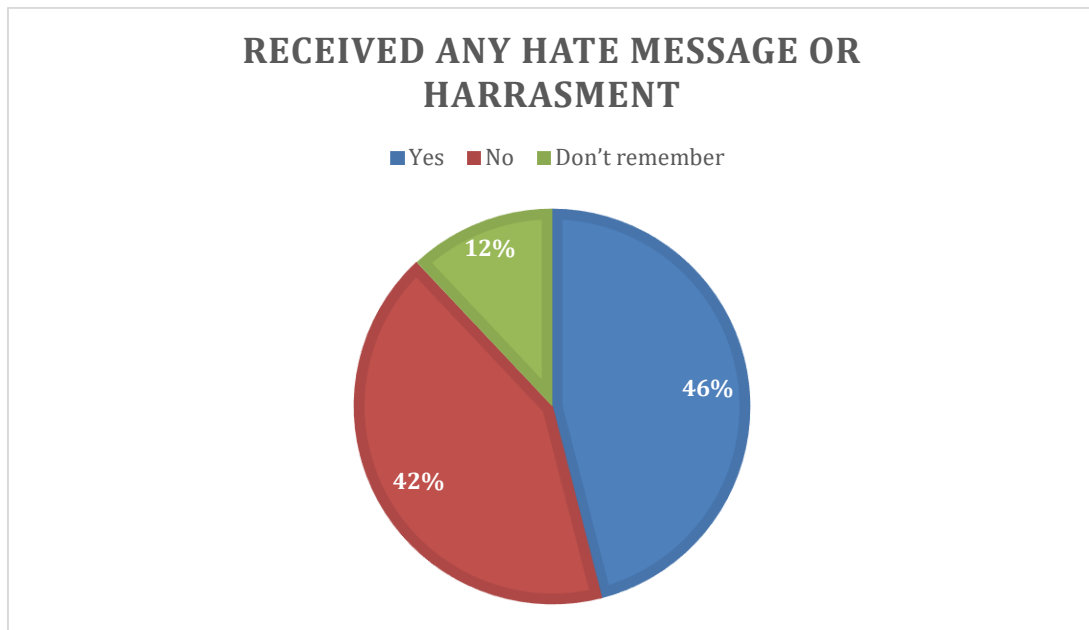
consisting of 27 items, including demographic details and questions related to social media usage and human rights concerns. A sample of 50 respondents aged between 18–30 years from Egmore, Chennai, participated in the study. Convenience sampling was used, and responses were collected via Google Forms.

Data analysis:

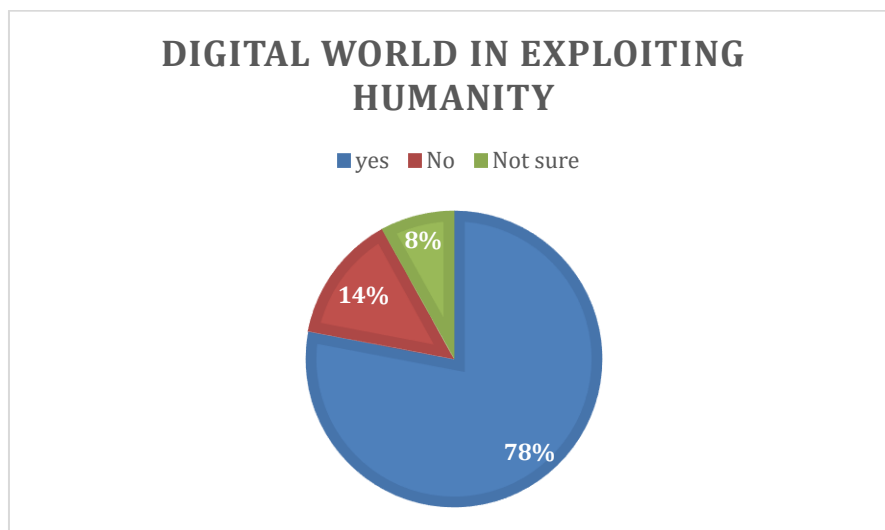
Variable	Factor	Percentage
Gender	Male	47
	Female	51
	Prefer not to say	2
Age	15-20yrs	14
	21-25yrs	64
	26-30yrs	22
Current status	Student	55
	Employed	43
	unemployed	2
Introduction of social media	10-15yrs	43
	16-20yrs	25
	21-25yrs	35



From the above chart around 60% of the respondents mentioned that social media has an impact on human rights violation, 2% of the respondents said no effects, 28% said it may be an impact and 10% of the respondents in the study were not sure about it.



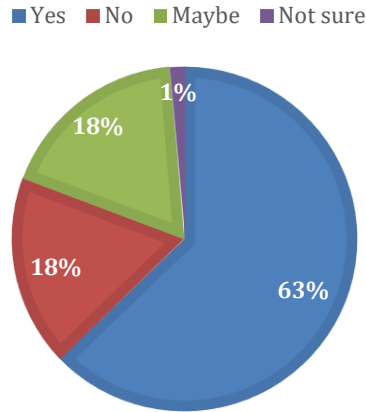
From the above table 46% of the respondent of the current study have received hate message or harassment,42% of them didn't receive and 12% of the people don't remember.



From the above table Around 78% of the them mentioned that digital world is exploiting humanity,14% of the respondents in the study said it does not and 8% said they are unsure about it.

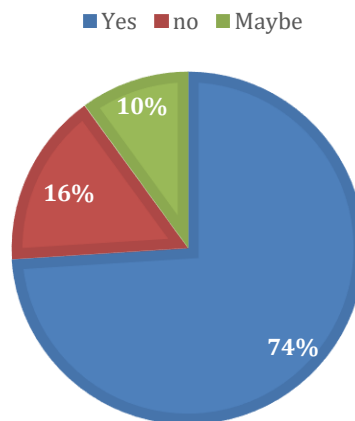


SOCIAL MEDIA IS PROVOKING TO DISCRIMINATE OTHERS



From the above table 56% of the respondents in the present study mentioned that the social media provoked to discriminate others, 16% said it does not provoke, 16% said it may provoke and the rest 12% were unsure about it.

SOCIAL MEDIA INCREASE ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIP



From the above table 74% of the them mentioned that romantic relationships are increasing due to social media 16% said it has not increased and the rest 10% said it may increase.

IV. Findings:

- Around 51% of the respondents are female, 47% are male and the rest 2% preferred not to say their gender.

- 64% of respondents were between the age of 21-25, 14% of respondents were between 15-20 and 22% were between 26-30 years.
- A majority of 43% of respondents were introduced to the social media between the age of 10-15 years, 35% of the respondents were introduced at the age between 21-25 years and 25% of them were introduced to the social media between 16-20 years of age.
- Around 60% of the respondents mentioned that social media has an impact on human rights



violation, 2% said no effects, 28% said it may be an impact and 10% of the participants were uncertain about it.

- 56% of the respondents mentioned that social media provoked to discriminate others, 16% said it does not provoke, 16% said it may provoke and the rest 12% were not sure about it.
- Around 78% of the respondents mentioned that digital world is exploiting humanity, 14% of them said it does not and 8% said that they are unsure about it.
- Around 76% of the respondents mentioned that they are aware that personal information of the respondents were stolen for financial benefit, 14% of them said it is not stolen and 10% said it may be stolen.
- 74% of the respondents mentioned that romantic relationships are increasing due to social media, 16% said it has not increased and the rest 10% said it may increase.

V. Suggestions:

- Media professionals should implement the guidelines effectively to safeguard the human rights of the individual.
- Parents should not encourage children to use mobile phones without their supervision for long time.
- People avoid spending too much time in social media to protect psychological well-being.
- People should avoid unsafe relationship through social media.
- The government can enforce heavy fines and punishment on media professionals if the guidelines are not properly implemented.

VI. Conclusions:

The researcher concludes by stating that social media is a powerful tool to bring both positive and negative impact in the society. It is introduced to children as early as 10 years old when the curiosity of the children is high and this can lead to unmonitored usage of social media. Women are more addicted to social media than men are also vulnerable to many cybercrimes. Even though the usage of these apps can enhance awareness and information about the world it has huge consequences if not used in a safe manner. Social media does violate human rights in a various aspects including their psychological well-being. Media professionals are not accurately following the guidelines to provide a safe platform instead they are just trying to sell personal information to make

money. There is an increase in romantic relationships among the young which leads to betrayal and unhealthy friendship. It provokes people to spread discrimination against each other and therefore increase violence in the society which in turn affects human rights

References:

- [1]. Alaggia, R., W. (2020). "I never told anyone until the #metoo movement": What can we learn from sexual abuse and sexual assault disclosures made through social media? *Child Abuse & Neglect*.
- [2]. Allan, S., S. (2007). Bearing witness: citizen journalism and human rights issues. *Globalisation, Societies and Education*.
- [3]. Balakrishnan, D. S. (2017). ROOTS INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF MULTIDISCIPLINARY RESEARCHES (RIJMR). CENTRE FOR RESOURCE, RESEARCH & PUBLICATION SERVICES .
- [4]. Law Society of Kenya. (2025, March). *LSK e-Advocate Magazine, March Edition 2025*. <https://lsk.or.ke/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/The-LSK-e-Advocate-Magazine-March-Edition-2025.pdf>.
- [5]. Limited, V. (2023). *Ironore Business Baseline Baseline cum Need Assessment, Impact Assessment Study* . KPMG International.
- [6]. Muhammad Zubi, M. I. (2021). TINJAUAN YURIDIS PERLINDUNGAN HAK-HAK NORMATIF TENAGA KERJA SETELAH BERLAKUNYA UNDANG-UNDANG CIPTA KERJA (OMNIBUS LAW). *Jurnal Ilmiah Metadata*, 1171 - 1195.
- [7]. Parveen, F., Jaafar, N. I., & Ainin, S. (2015). *Social media usage and organizational performance: Reflections of Malaysian social media managers. Telematics and Informatics*, 32(1), 67-78. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tele.2014.03.001>.
- [8]. IOBReport_Updated - 22 June 2023 250 D
- [9]. Purnomo Ananto, S. K. (2023). An Examination of Indonesian teachers and students perception and level of digital citizenship. *Heliyon A cell press Journal* .
- [10]. Ramona Alaggia, Susan Wang, "I never told anyone until the #metoo movement": What can we learn from sexual abuse and sexual assault disclosures made through social media?,
- [11]. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, Volume 103, 2020,



- [12]. Rodrigues.R. (2020). Legal and human rights issues of AI: Gaps, challenges and vulnerabilities. *Journal of Responsible technology*.
- [13]. Srijana Khadka, A. K. (2023). The Role of Social Media in Determining Tourists' Choices of Nepalese Destinations. *Journal of Logistics, Informatics and Service Science*, 180-193.
- [14]. Siregar.G., S. (2020). Legal Implementation of Electronic Information and Transaction Law in Preventing the Spread of Content Containing SARA Issues through Social Media. *International Journal of Innovation, Creativity and Change*.
- [15]. Waqas.T., M. (2012). The Impact of Social Media and Social Networks on Education and Students of Pakistan. *International Journal of Computer Science*.
- [16]. www.tandfonline.com.
- [17]. Zaib Davids, G. M. (2008). Issues for seminar leaders in infant and young child observation: A comparative study . *Taylor & Francis*, 16-29.