



RESEARCH ARTICLE

Eve Teasing is Perennial Problem: A Study of Warangal District

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ABSTRACT

Many Young girls of India are curtailed from education, which is their basic right due to eve teasing. Parents are afraid of their daughter's honor, family and social prestige, so ensure the safety of the daughters; sometimes they take the decision to withdraw their daughters from schools and colleges. Most of the time this type of occurrence like eve teasing happen when girls were in the way to educational institutions. Eve teasing is a ridiculous form of enjoyment for men and a physical as well as mental torment for women. This is one of the daily problems women in Indian society face. Of all the forms that violence against women can assume, eve teasing is the most ubiquitous and insidious because it is considered normal behaviour and not an assault to females. This paper provides an analysis of the magnitude of eve teasing and its relation to age, socio-economic and psychological factors. Many acts can be added to this compendium. It has also been defined as crime committed against women everyday but the criminals are not punished and continue violating a women's privacy assuming they have a right to do so. It is an offence every women faces in her life and not just once and ignores the offence and accept it as a price she has to pay for being a women. Further the making of unwanted sexual remarks or advances by a man to a woman in a public place. Sexual abuse or molestation is the forcing of undesired sexual behavior by one person upon another. When the force is immediate, of short duration, or infrequent .society's attitude towards this particular violence against women has been dismal. According to constitution of India, women are legal and prominent citizens of the country and have equal rights when compared to men .Due to lack of credence from the male dominant society, women suffer immensely. Many cases of eve teasing and molestation have been reported in Warangal. In the present research paper an attempt has been made to understand the factors of the problem through an empirical study.

Key words: Eve Teasing, Warangal District, Education

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INTRODUCTION

In the ancient Indian women held a high place of respect in the society as mentioned in Rigveda and other scriptures. Volumes can be written about the status of our women and their heroic deeds from the vedic period to the modern times. But later on, because of social, political and economic changes, women lost their status and were relegated to the background. Many evil customs and traditions stepped in which enslaved the women and tied them to the boundaries of the house.

Eve-teasing is normally meant as teasing a girl or woman. "Eve-teasing" refers to public sexual harassment or street harassment to a girl by a boy, when it turns into a serious issue. Eve-teasing is a very common term in India, Bangladesh, Nepal and Pakistan. Eve teasing is not a new problem in India. It is a concern since many years. Almost every young girl is a victim of teasing, especially by the local young teaser. The most of the people may avoid it as a common matter with young generation. Yes, it is. But it is not every time. It can be tolerated until no girl is being attacked. But when it crosses the line, it will raise as a problem to us. It is surely a social problem. These days, many girls have committed suicide only to safe themselves from eve-teasing. Eve teasing is a very different form of sexual assault. There are many forms the teaser behaves with the girls in a different manner. It ranges from whistle, catcalls, sexually evocative remarks, brushing in public places to outright groping and sometimes teasing by mobile phone and mobile tracking.

Eve-teasing to-day has become pernicious, horrid and disgusting practice. The Indian Journal of Criminology and Criminalistics (January-June 1999 Edition) has categorised eve-teasing into five heads viz:

1. Verbal eve-teasing;
2. Physical eve-teasing;
3. Psychological harassment;
4. Sexual harassment and
5. Harassment through some objects.

Menace of eve-teasing of woman is on the increase. Eve-teasing in public places has been a perennial problem. Recently, incidents of eve-teasing leading to serious injuries to, and even death of a woman have been reported. Such act of eve-teasing, apart from dehumanizing act, is an unlawful intrusion on the right of privacy and sanctity of a female. It is a serious blow to her supreme honour and offends her self-esteem and dignity. It humiliates the victim and leaves a traumatic experience behind her. Eve-teasing is a euphemism, a conduct which attracts penal action. Eve-teasing is a menace to society as a whole and has to be eradicated. But there is no specific legislation in the country except the state of Tamil Nadu which has enacted Tamil Nadu Prohibition of Eve-Teasing ordinance, 1998 which later became an Act, namely, the Tamil Nadu Prohibition of Eve-Teasing Act, 1998.

THE LAW ON EVE TEASING

Under Indian Penal Code the term eve teasing is not used. There are three sections under which action can be taken against eve teasers. Section 294 punishes any obscene act or recital of any obscene songs or ballad or words in a public place with a punishment of three months or fine or both. Section 509 (Indian Penal Code) punishes anyone who, to intrude upon the privacy of a woman or with an intent to outrage her modesty utters any word, makes any sound or gesture or exhibits an object with an imprisonment for one year or fine or both. It is a cognizable as well as a bailable offence. A question can be raised as to what constitutes an obscene act. Another section is 354 (IPC) according to which anyone who uses forces or assaults a woman to outrage her modesty will be punished with 2 years of imprisonment or fine or both.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The report of a study conducted by the Gender Study Group of the University of Delhi showed that in 1996, 91.7 per cent of all inmates of women's hostels and 88.2 per cent of all women day scholars had faced sexual harassment on the roads within the campus. The report says, "Molestation is possible because its violent face is masked by its deceptive stage name, 'eve-teasing'. In India, sexual harassment has been disguised, made to appear harmless, by its name; the term 'teasing' conveys the apparently harmless intention of the act, successfully veiling the pernicious violence lying behind the mask. The term, 'eve', deflects attention away from the perpetrators onto the victim 'eve', who, through the process of naming, is pictured as '... a temptress who seduces or provokes men...' (Gender Study Group, 1996). A study sponsored by UNICEF and Save the Children Fund in the Indian subcontinent showed that the film medium is influential, especially with teenage boys, in teaching notions about masculinity, power, and violence in relationships with women (Poudyal, 2002).

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The present study is an attempt to study the nature and dimensions of eve teasing among the residents of the women at Warangal district

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study has been conducted by eliciting the views and perception of women in Warangal city. Both primary and secondary data was collected. For the purpose of primary data, (convenient both ways) sample of 100 respondents were taken from the warangal district, of different age groups and of varied disciplines. For secondary data various books, journals, articles, and websites

were browsed. Interview Schedule was prepared for the respondents to draw views of the respondents about the menace of eve-teasing in the Warangal district. The collected data was analyzed and the findings were tabulated and interpreted.

ANALYSIS OF THE STATEMENTS

Table 1: Eve teasing faced by the respondents according to age

Age	No of respondents	Per cent
Below 20	42	28.00
20- 30	63	42.00
30-40	29	19.33
40-50	11	7.33
50 above	5	3.34
Total	150	100.00

Source: Primary data

The data in the Table 1 revealed that there was a majority (42%) of the respondents faced the problem of eve teasing in the age group of 20 -30 followed by below 20 (28%).

Table 2: Eve Teasing, Frequent Experience for Women in Public Sphere

S.No	Variable	No of respondents	Per cent
1	Eve Teasing is a frequent experience	109	72.67
2	Eve teasing is rare	41	27.33
Total		150	100.00

Source: Primary data

The data in the Table shows that the highest percentage (72.67) of the respondents experienced frequent eve teasing and 27.33% said that eve teasing is rare.

Table 3: The Table below presents the respondent's responses in yes or no

S.No	Statements	Yes %	No %	Total%
1	Eve-teasing is a common phenomenon.	67	33	100
2	Eve-teasing is irritating.	91	9	100
3	You are fed up with the eve-teasing.	71	29	100
4	Have you ever been eve-teased?	41	59	100
5	You avoid going to the market at odd hours to prevent eve-teasing	71	29	100

Source. Primary Data

The data presented in the Table 3 clearly reflected that eve-teasing was a common phenomenon (67 per cent) and it was irritating as well (91 per cent). Further, very high proportion of the respondents (71 per cent) was fed up with the eve teasing. Interestingly, despite the fact that womens were not ready to make open disclosures on the issue yet substantial proportion of the respondents (41 per cent) revealed that they fell prey to eve teasing at one or the other time. The women respondents were blunt enough to admit that they avoided going to the market at odd hours to avoid eve teasing.

Table 4: Eve-teasing is commonly committed

S.No	Variable	No of respondents	Per cent
1	While going to the job	8	5.33
2	In the evening	62	41.33
3	While going to the market	31	20.67
4	Any time of the day	49	32.67
Total		150	100.00

Source. Primary Data

The data in the Table 4 clearly reflects that 41.33 per cent of the respondents agreed that eve teasing was mostly indulged in the evening. However, next higher proportion 32.67 per cent of the respondents indicated that it can happen any time of the day (only a chance be there). The 20.67 per cent of the respondents agreed that eve teasing commonly took place while going to the market. However, 5.33 per cent of the respondents agreed eve teasing was committed while going to the job.

Table 5: Which area of the city is highly teasing prone?

S.No	Variable	No of respondents	Per cent
1	Shopping malls	23	15.34
2	In the streets	14	9.33
3	Traveling (Bus, Auto, train etc.)	45	30.00
4	Cinema theaters	8	5.33
5	Work stations and Institutions	33	22.00
6	Parks and temples	27	18.00
Total		150	100.00

Source. Primary Data

The data in the Table 5 asserts that as per the respondents the traveling area i.e. Bus stations, Railway stations, in Autos etc. was highly teasing prone i.e. option number first with 30 per cent of the respondents agreed to it and then 22 per cent of the respondents marked work stations and institutions or organisations as another area of eve teasing. Interestingly, 15.34 per cent of the respondents expressed that it happened in front of the shopping malls only. However, 5.33 per cent of the respondents stated that they were teased in or around the cinema theaters.

FINDINGS

1. Majority of the respondents faced the problem of eve teasing in the age group of 20 -30 followed by below 20.
2. Highest percentage (72.67) of the respondents experienced frequent eve teasing and 27.33% said that eve teasing is rare.
3. Majority of the respondents agreed that eve teasing was a common phenomenon.
4. Highest proportion of the respondents agreed that eve teasing was irritating.
5. Maximum proportion of the respondents was fed up with the eve teasing in Warangal district.
6. The study exposed that there were many respondents who agreed that they have never been subjected to eve teasing.
7. The study also highlighted that the respondents agreed that they did avoid going to the market during odd hours.
8. Findings revealed that Eve-teasing was commonly committed in the evening.
9. Majority of respondents are stressed that traveling area of the Warangal district was highly prone to eve teasing.

SUGGESTIONS

1. From government level, an award could be announced for the person who could resist eve teaser.
2. Electronic media and printing media should aware about the consequence and negative impact of eve teasing.
3. Law should be implemented.
4. Local police and school security should play a strong role.
5. Journalist should get training on gender issues, so that they could handle the issues very carefully. Some news in the newspaper due to the week presentation of the newspaper makes the girl vulnerable and the boys as a hero.
6. Awareness is of paramount importance as regards the issue of eve teasing. Most of the people are not aware that eve teasing is an offence and legal action can be taken against eve teasers. This arises out of the fact that eve teasing has been normalized in our society. It has become a

part of the routine of a girl's life that it is not given a second thought. But we do not realize that if we nip the problem in the bud the problem will not escalate to heinous crimes.

7. Also our attitude towards the women who face eve teasing has to change. Instead of blaming them we should take action against the offenders. Most of the offenders do not see that their acts are offences capable of leaving trauma. Generally it has been seen that men do not feel guilty about treating women as sexual objects as due to such aggression only they can be seen as real men. Such predisposition towards eve teasing has to be changed.
8. The mindset of the society has to change. This can be done when women are treated with respect and as true equals to the men. The schools can play a very major role in sensitizing young adults about the need to treat the women with respect.

CONCLUSION

The study shows that eve teasing is rampant and it grabs a women's childhood from her while making her learn to avoid victimization irrespective of the social class to which she belongs. Eve teasing against women is a social evil, and must be faced socially. Social action is probably the most effective shield against it. Social mobilization must, therefore, be attained to eve teasing. It is a mindset in which the men show their supremacy. A woman, weak, helpless and crying out provides the eve teasers with a perverse pleasure which is both sickening and tragic. Though it is true that strong laws and punishment are an effective deterrent but that is not enough. Our purpose is not just to punish eve teasers but to prevent such crimes. Besides, all of us have to stop being mute witnesses to such crimes. We must stand up and speak and act against this menace. The punishment given to the eve teasers should be strong enough so that it sets an example for others.

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