

## **Sexual Harassment At Workplace: Systematic Literature Review Of #MeTooIndia Movement In India**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Tanushree Dutta, a mostly forgotten Bollywood actress, returned to India in October after ten years of living in the USA, which marked the beginning of the well-known #MeToo campaign in India. She made a statement to the public claiming that she had experienced sexual harassment at the hands of well-known Bollywood actor Nana Patekar during the 2008 filming of a movie, which led to the decline of her acting career (Starkey et al. 2019, p. 439). Nearly a year after its launch in the US, #MeToo began to take off in India (Goel, Venkataraman, and Schultz 2018). However, it did so slowly at first.*

*According to the Oxford Dictionary, sexual harassment is a behavior that involves making unwanted and inappropriate sexual comments or physical advances in a professional or social setting, such as the workplace. The problem of gender violence has strong patriarchal roots. It happens in all spheres—private, public, academic, and professional. Actual or attempted rape, eve-teasing, approaching too closely, brushing up against the person, sleazy messaging, etc. are all examples of sexual harassment. Since the advent of social media, delicate women's issues have begun to gain attention. (T J Raju, 2019).*

*In spite of the media coverage #MeTooIndia has received, little is known about the methods used by academics to study the movement. I discovered that only 31 studies looked at involvement on Twitter throughout the 2018–2023 time spans through a thorough literature review of sources. More research is necessary, especially to fill gaps in qualitative studies that directly include people in order to understand their experiences with the movement in India.*

**Keywords:** *MeTooIndia, digital activism, sexual harassment, workplace, social media, systematic literature review, Twitter*

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### **I. INTRODUCTION**

Women have historically experienced sexual harassment and assault. Over the years, there have been many rapes, abuses, and attacks; some are reported, while others are discussed in whispers only within the confines of the four walls. Vasundhara Prasad asserts that "secrecy is an ally of sexual violence" (Prasad, 2018). Many female victims of sexual harassment opt to remain silent about it, and in some situations, they feel pressured to do so by others. But the Me Too movement, which Tarana Burke launched in 2006 and which was later made well-known by well-known Hollywood actress Alyssa Milano, has given women the courage to speak up and share their tales. Through JustBeInc., Tarana Burke spearheaded a social movement aimed at empowering and uniting victims of sexual assault and other forms of violence. She launched this movement for young women of color who were from underserved communities and were between the ages of 12 and 18. However, after Alyssa Milano, a well-known Hollywood actress tweeted: "If you have been sexually harassed or assaulted, write me too as a reply," the Me Too campaign evolved into the Me Too and a widespread social movement. So that people may appreciate the scope of the sexual harassment issue (Neha Pravin Shilwant, 2019).

The Indian origin can be traced back to an interview that Tanushree Dutta, a former Bollywood actor, did with Zoom TV on September 25, 2018, during which she discussed a sexual harassment complaint she had filed against Nana Patekar ten years prior. Journalists this time covered Dutta's response, which had previously gotten little attention and generated both public support and mockery. After that, on October 4, writer Mahima Kukreja made accusations on Twitter against comedian Utsav Chakraborty. Journalist Sandhya Menon named senior journalists in her account of sexual harassment and assault one day later. Menon encouraged other women to share their stories through her tweets, which sparked a wave of public "call-outs" of men on the social media platform.

Among them was M J Akbar, a prominent editor who entered politics and served as India's junior foreign minister at the time. The "male boss" Priya Ramani had mentioned in her previous article, "To the Harvey Weinstein's of the world," which appeared in Vogue magazine, was Akbar, as she tweeted on October 8, 2018. Several others also came forward to relate their stories of misbehavior while Akbar was their editor. Resigning was Akbar. In addition, he sued Ramani for defamation. It wasn't just Akbar who lost his job. A number of other named journalists resigned, and many more had their employment looked into. The Indian government also paid some attention to the movement. An email address specifically designated for complaints of sexual misconduct has been established by the Indian government's statutory body, the National Commission for Women. In addition, the government formed the Group of Ministers (GoM) to suggest measures for dealing with workplace sexual harassment (Wire 2018a).

"India's #MeToo movement has leapt forward over the past week, getting concrete action in two of the country's most powerful industries: entertainment and the news media," as the NYT put it (Goel et al., 2018). This is after a year of fits and starts. Within the first month of its emergence, the movement was successful in identifying and taking decisive action against powerful men. In order to distinguish the Indian #MeToo handle from the US hashtag, the word India was added to it. A collection of tweets under the #MeTooIndia hashtag was created by journalists and activists after they were initially collected on individual Twitter feeds. Gathering and amplifying the stories was done by journalists, activists, and various civil society organizations. A powerful feminist resonance can be found in Lauren Berlant's concept of "intimate publics" (Berlant, 2011), which takes into account the ways in which strangers can form communities through affective ties. In this case, women shared personal accounts of violence and received validation and support from other women on a public platform. In contrast to earlier hashtag movements, it was able to maintain its strength on the internet without the support of the media (Chadha and Harlow, 2015).

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature looks at many aspects of the MeToo movement in India amongst those who have experienced sexual harassment at work and discusses it, but because the movement is so new, there is very little research done in relation to it. In the Indian context, where the issue has received minimal research attention, this shortage is especially pronounced. (Naresh Esha Eskasmayi et al., 2022).

India was overtaken by the #MeToo movement in October 2018. When well-known Indian actress Tanushree Dutta accused well-known actor and filmmaker Nana Patekar of sexual harassment on a film set in 2008, the Indian film industry took the lead. A few days later, prominent government minister M.J. Akbar was charged with sexual harassment by journalist Priya Ramani. Many other women who work in the Indian film industry, media, government, private sector, and academia now have greater opportunities thanks to these actions. (Shareen & Joshi, 2019)

Since its founding in October 2017, the #MeToo movement in India, an international expression of the worldwide #MeToo movement, has been committed to the empowerment of Indian women. The #MeTooIndia movement has been effective in bringing attention to sexual abuse, harassment, and rape that occur at the nexus of sex, power, and politics on Twitter. It has made use of the digital public sphere to help urban Indian women feel more comfortable "coming-out" with their own personal narratives. Women in India were using social media to share their stories of sexual abuse and harassment by powerful men and women before the #MeToo movement went viral around the world (NANDITHA, N. 2021). Similar to numerous other global movements, the #MeToo movement in India did not emerge overnight. Rather, it was the result of years of simmering resentment on Indian campuses. The 2012 Delhi Nirbhaya rape case marked the beginning of a new wave of feminist activism in India, as the first author has documented elsewhere (Dey, Citation2020a; Molyneux, Dey, Gatto, & Rowden, Citation2020). It was the first movement in India to use digital technologies and social media on this magnitude to unite people around a feminist cause (Dey, Adrija, 2021). Over the past few decades, gender relationships at work have undergone significant change in India. The rise of the multinational call center and IT industries [119] has sparked a sharp increase in the number of women working in professional settings since the nation's economic liberalization in the 1990s [99]. Organizational policies and practices have changed as a result, with many making an effort to establish gender-neutral workplaces. For better or worse, according to our participants, the rise of #MeToo has scared off men from working in the workplace. These men are genuinely afraid that they will be listed as sexual harassers. As a result, it's said that tensions in the workplace between men and women have increased since the #MeToo movement because of uncertainty about what constitutes sexual harassment. For example, a lot of participants said that men are hesitant to joke around or engage in casual conversations with their female coworkers. (MOITRA APARNA et al., 2021) It is also said that #MeToo has instilled a generalized fear of hiring women in some industries, leading employers to hire men for positions where women were previously hired. This avoidance tactic has its roots in the belief that women are the source of the issue, and that by not hiring them, employers can avoid having to deal with sexual harassment issues at work.

Women in India who were using social media platforms to talk about their experiences with sexual abuse and harassment became part of the global #MeToo movement. The main cause of this exclusion is the Indian elite's growing awareness of sexual abuse issues. This includes journalists, politicians, Bollywood stars, and well-known media figures who use Twitter as a platform for "coming-out." The absence of conversation about sexual abuse and harassment in the lives of Dalit women, trans women, women from lower castes and classes, and other marginalized and gendered communities—whose experiences with sexual abuse differ greatly from those of the elite, urban woman—is another indication of non-inclusivity. At last, the lack of personal narratives under the same hashtags reveals exclusion because of toxic masculine language and the establishment of unsafe spaces where gendered minorities cannot feel comfortable sharing their stories (Nanditha, Narayanamoorthy, 2021). Indian newsrooms gradually stopped covering sexual harassment and other infractions. Despite the fact that the COVID-19 pandemic has only made online sexual harassment worse (Ahuja and Padhy 2021, 325), policy-related dialogues have not received much attention, either in newsroom discussions or media coverage (Network of Women in Media India 2021, 27).

The media sector and higher education were the initial focus areas of #MeToo when it started in 2017 and #MeTooIndia in 2018. Following four years, elections, and a pandemic, the movement might refocus on inclusivity and policy changes so that no woman—regardless of caste, class, ability, or geography—would be left behind to experience physical or virtual sexual abuse.

### III. RESEARCH METHODS

In order to reduce researcher bias, I conducted a systematic literature review, which is different from more conventional narrative reviews in that it uses a transparent and replicable methodology and includes a thorough literature search of both published and unpublished studies (Tranfield et al., 2003).

The #MeTooIndia hashtag was first used on Twitter after Tanushree Dutta disclosed her experiences with harassment in a film that was released in 2008, so the search was restricted by the relevant timeframe for the hashtag. Following her vocalization, other celebrities began to share her narratives on social media, particularly Twitter. This limited the search to the period between October 1, 2018, and the present (2023), when the last search was carried out. All databases only allowed English-language searches. The primary English keywords were "hashtag #MeTooIndia," and "MeToo in India."

The inclusion criterion for the 31 research papers I have gathered is whether or not they use the hashtags #MeTooIndia or #MeToo in India. I looked through Google Scholar to find these kinds of papers. Twenty-five papers that meet the inclusion criteria have been eliminated.

### IV. THEMES

#### Theme 1- Method used

Of the thirty research papers that were submitted for evaluation, twenty of them included a discussion of their research methodology. The different research approaches used in the research articles that are covered below.

**(Mishra Suman \_2020\_ID 1)** The study was based on a textual analysis of 641 news stories that were published between October 2017 and October 2018 in five major English-language newspapers.

**(Sreedhara Chindu et al., \_2019\_ID 2)** This study investigated the "cause" of the campaign—the prevalence of sexual harassment and sexual violence in workplaces—by conducting 257 semi-structured interviews with journalists operating in 14 languages throughout India. After that, focused on the campaign's potential impact.

**(Kelly Souza Marron \_2018\_ID3)** The study was conducted from May through July 2018 over a ten-week period. Focus groups and semi-structured, in-depth one-on-one interviews made up the first methodology. The use of questionnaires was the first. In the second, a quantitative approach was used; during focus group discussions, presented four distinct scenarios of sexual harassment, each of which fit into one of the four categories. Then he asked the women to indicate whether or not they agreed that the incidents qualified as sexual harassment. The third strategy involved creating a patchwork saree with various accounts and perspectives of sexual harassment through an art-based project.

**(AKANKSHA SINGH \_2022\_ID5)** The sample universe for this study consisted of the top 1000 listed companies. The NSE website provided the list of the top 1000 listed companies, both large and mid-cap. The systematic random sampling technique was applied to determine the sample size. In order to maintain sample homogeneity and produce as many objective results as possible, systematic random sampling was utilized.

**(Ms. Seema Shukla, Dr. Pavitar Parkash Singh, Dr. Sorabh Lakhnopal \_2020\_ID6)** The study's foundation is a descriptive analysis of the #MeToo movement. The research study in this reference has examined and analyzed a number of cases. The survey approach has been utilized to gather pertinent

information and examine the various facets of the Me Too Movement. The samples were gathered from Dehradun's various workplace locations.

**(Tumpa Dey\_2019\_ID8)** In order to gather information and develop a theory based on it, secondary sources of data are consulted in the exploratory research methodology. Cases that were not reported are not included in the data.

**(Ila Ahlawat\_2022\_ID9)** It was a timely study on the topic of global challenges to online feminist activism because it attempted to examine how social media, with a particular emphasis on Twitter, aided the #MeToo movement in India and contrasted it with how the movement dealt with more general issues of justice and access for Indian women.

**(Adrija Dey & Kaitlynn Mendes\_2022\_ID10)** This study is based on empirical data gathered through seven interviews with victims of sexual assault who shared their experiences online following the spread of Sarkar's "list" and the #MeToo movement in India. Some created a group and used the internet portal Medium to anonymously share testimonies against a single offender, while others posted their testimonies on their personal Facebook pages.

**(Naik, M. G., Rodrigues, U. M., & Rani, P.\_2020\_ID12)** The study's analysis of 26 news stories from India's two largest national dailies is its main focus. The study examined the reports and news articles that were approached in The Times of India and Hindu, two Indian newspapers, by looking into the five categories of the frame.

**(Nayantara Ranganathan\_ID13)** Searching Twitter's advanced search yielded a collection of tweets containing the hashtag #MeTooIndia. Every tweet since the start of 2017 that contained the hashtag were gathered. A total of 21 gigabytes of tweet data were gathered. Every field of data that was accessible for each tweet that included the hashtag #metooindia was gathered.

**(Sanjana Pegu\_2019\_ID14)** Using in-depth interviews with five women from various backgrounds, this study examines the importance, implications, open-ended questions, and possible solutions surrounding the movement.

**(Rahul Sambaraju Dr.\_2020\_ID17)** Transcripts of news stories from Indian media outlets that were publicly aired and that addressed the #MeToo movement in the Indian context provided the study's data. Participants in these programs included activists, members of the public acting as in-house audiences, legal professionals representing the accused or invited as experts, and women who had been sexually harassed in a variety of workplace settings. Google Video Search Engine programs were used to look for videos of debates or discussions in English that were produced by reputable media organizations during the two-year period between September 2017, the first public reporting of sexual harassment under the #MeToo banner, and September 2019.

**(N. NANDITHA\_2021\_ID19)** Between October 1st, 2018 and August 24th, 2019, Twitter Web API was used to gather and filter 4,000 unique tweets about the #MeToo movement in India. Taking into account that October 2018 marked the first peak of the #MeToo movement and associated hashtags related to the Indian movement in India (Swati Mathur 2018). Every week between these dates, a maximum of 100 tweets per request were randomly gathered. To ensure methodological consistency, only English-language tweets were gathered, and retweets were not included in the sample dataset.

**(T J. Raju et.al.\_2019\_ID21)** The study used a quantitative research methodology in an effort to better understand the public's awareness of the #Me Too movement. Purposive sampling with a sample size of one hundred was employed. An intentional attempt was made to provide equal representation for both genders. A questionnaire was given to 50 male and 50 female respondents in order to collect the responses. In order to get the information needed for this study, self-designed closed-ended and open-ended questions were employed.

**(Paromita Pain\_2020\_ID22)** Using Google's Twitter archiver, tweets with the hashtags #MeTooIndia, #TanushreeDutta, and #ibelieveyou were gathered between October 5, 2018, and February 28, 2019, when they were trending. According to the analysis, the number of tweets peaked from October 5, 2018, to February 28, 2019 (averaging about 20 tweets per day), after which they gradually decreased. Each tweet containing a hashtag was gathered separately. 40,356 tweets were included in the original Excel sheet that was downloaded when the Google Twitter archiver gathered the pertinent tweets on a Google drive. There were no pictures or photos in this dataset. The final corpus of 35,065 tweets was textually analyzed to identify themes and look at the resulting discourses. The tweets were gathered between October 5, 2018, and February 28, 2019.

**(APARNA MOITRA et.al.\_2021\_ID23)** carried out qualitative semi-structured in-person interviews with working women from the middle class in the Delhi-National Capital Region, India, to find out about their thoughts on the #MeToo movement and other online feminist movements in general. Since the 2018 #MeToo movement in India was active on all three of these social media platforms, women with active accounts on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram were selected for our study. They recruited interview subjects from a variety of professions using a snowball sampling technique, and they conducted 44 interviews before they achieved theoretical saturation. 32 of the participants were heterosexual women, including activists for women's rights;

10 were queer people, including 2 heterosexual men who were lawyers and activists, 5 gay men, 4 queer cis-women, and 1 non-binary trans-femme person. Most of the participants were from middle-class backgrounds, ranged in age from 22 to 60, and met the minimum requirement of being graduates. A purposeful sampling technique was employed to choose the participants.

(Neha Pravin Shilwant\_2019\_ID25) Based on empirical data and a qualitative analysis of the entire debate, the research methodology was used for the study. Data was gathered using both primary and secondary sources. With the aid of a pre-made questionnaire that included both closed- and open-ended questions, a survey method was employed for the primary data collection. The primary means of gathering secondary data are newspapers such as The Hindu and Indian Express, as well as websites such as Jstor, The Guardian, The New York Post, The Washington Post, The Tribunal, and a few books written by feminist scholars. A predetermined questionnaire with both closed- and open-ended questions was used to conduct the survey. Thirty women in various age groups received the questionnaire. Friends, acquaintances, and women who regularly ride public transit were the sources of the data.

(ABHA THAKUR et.al, 2022\_ID29) The Chandigarh female audience is the target audience for this research paper. The age range of the female research participants was over 18, in keeping with the study's intended audience. This study specifically targeted female professionals in Chandigarh as its target audience. Due to the fact that they frequently encounter sexual harassment on social media and occasionally during their internship, which counts as work experience, very few female students have also taken part in the study. A testing method called random sampling gives each instance an equal chance of being selected. One of the simplest ways to collect data from the complete population is through random sampling.

(Sonkar et.al\_2020\_ID30) Reaching out to women in metropolitan areas is the main focus of the research for this paper. In order to address a range of topics regarding women's perspectives and experiences with the "MeToo" movement, we decided to use the survey method. For an online survey, a sample size of sixty Delhi-based women between the ages of 18 and 25 was selected.

## **Theme 2- Inclusivity**

The movement known as #MeTooIndia was not inclusive because of its digital platform accessibility and focus. Women who lacked access to the Internet and social media sites were left behind. Marginalized women who were geographically disadvantaged, members of lower castes, or both did not feel included in the movement and were absent as important voices. Dalit women specifically talked about how their struggles were left out of the conversations (Dhanraj 2018). Furthermore, women frequently do not have the opportunity to join online social movements because they must continue making ends meet financially to work in the same setting as their abusers after experiencing sexual harassment and violence. Of the thirty one papers, five addressed inclusivity in great detail and offered potential solutions to get past this obstacle in order to accomplish the goal of giving marginalized women's voices a voice in this movement.

(Narayanamoorthy Nanditha\_2021\_ID19) In order to understand why #MeTooIndia exhibits a lack of inclusivity towards marginalized and gendered bodies and narratives on the Twitter platform, this paper reviews the literature and collects data. Second, a lack of discussion on the subject of sexual abuse and harassment in the everyday lives of Dalits, trans women, women of lower caste and class, and other marginalized and gendered communities that have experienced sexual abuse very differently from that of the elite, urban woman, is evidence of non-inclusivity. This exclusion is primarily the result of increased attention to issues of sexual abuse among the Indian elite, including Bollywood celebrities, journalists, politicians, and well-known media personalities who use Twitter as a space for "coming-out." Lastly, the lack of personal narratives under the same hashtag due to toxic masculinity and the establishment of unsafe spaces where gendered minorities are unable to share their stories expose exclusion. To create safer, more inclusive and intersectional spaces for feminist activism, this research uses intersectionality theory to ultimately rethink how to design and organize feminist movements online.

## **Reasons for exclusion**

- Bollywood and other Indian media, for starters, serve as entertainment platforms that bring together the rich and the poor, the upper, middle, and lower classes in Indian society. As a result, they subtly alter social norms. But there's also a long history of sexism, the objectification of women, and overt patriarchy in the entertainment industry.
- Currently, #MeTooIndia bears the brunt of the accusations and public humiliation of prominent figures in India. The movement makes minimal efforts to dissociate it from broader conversations occurring beyond these exclusive circles. There is already a great divide and exclusivity created by this move towards the urban visible elite.
- The new cyber-movement has mostly only attracted urban middle-class women who have access to technology thus far. Where it should be about women who identify as LGBTQ, women who live in

societies where sexism is still practiced, women without resources or access, Dalit women, and transgender women who are unable to participate in these conversations or share their experiences of assault because these spaces are limited.

- "The Me in the #MeToo India movement is ultimately the voices of the middle class, journalists, celebrities, and other professionals" (Srila Roy 2018, 2). A woman is seen by the #MeToo Movement as the cis-gendered, upper-caste brahminical counterpart who takes part in discussions aimed at advancing feminism. The word "brahminical" here refers to an Indian patriarchal ideology that has resulted in the ritual, social, and economic marginalization of women and lower caste communities by the upper castes (Brahmins). The two main pillars of the brahminical social structure are caste and gender hierarchy
- According to Benedict R. O. G. Anderson (1991), the movement's limitations stem from its sisterhood of feminist collective building, which is a purely imagined community inclusive of particular feminisms.
- The #MeToo movement highlights the hypocrisy and fear, posing concerns about the commonplace, ostensibly harmless, and widely accepted acts of sexual harassment and molestation that impact women in public places and within families across various identity markers.

**(Paromita Pain\_2020\_ID22)** Women are more economically disadvantaged than men among the poor, underscoring the intricate relationships between caste and socioeconomic status. Women make up a larger portion of the Dalits. Women are viewed as being more primitive among the natives. #MeTooIndia." #MeTooIndia 2018 "... spread its wings to domestic workers, construction workers, waste workers, sex workers, transgender, and the whole gamut of working-class women... RT @thewire\_in: #MeToo." Despite the #MeToo movement receiving some, if minor, support from India's rural areas and marginalized LGBTQ populations, its intersectional borders still need to be expanded. The majority of participants were predominately English-speaking city-based women from working class backgrounds, proving once more that the online sphere in India is home to a specific type of participant. Working class women did share their experiences with harassment, and frequently marginalized voices like those of the LGBTQ communities and low caste and poor women did find some space. For instance, rural India may not have found any representation at all if the journalists from Khabar Lahariya had not taken part. Burke said that instead of asking poor women to recount their ordeals, they should be encouraged to draw strength from their shared status as survivors.

**(APARNA MOITRA et.al, 2021\_ID23)** Sexual harassment is a common occurrence for many women from low socioeconomic backgrounds, particularly Dalit women and LGBTQ+ people. According to women's rights advocates we spoke with, the majority of women employed in the unorganized sector are unaware of local centers for reporting sexual harassment. Even if they are aware, they are unable to report the harassment because to familial pressures, previously described concerns with LCs, their economic weakness, their lack of job security, and a poisonous combination of stigma and isolation.

Historically, Dalit women have been seen as expendable, regardless of their disadvantage or privilege. For example, one of the study participants told in this study that when a friend – a middle class Dalit woman at the time – worked for an International Human Rights NGO (IHN), her male boss sexually harassed her. The Indian Council of their organization (IC) failed her by not supporting her. Survivors are often forced to settle the matter in private for the betterment of the already marginalized community. If they don't settle, they risk being ostracized as they sabotage the entire community's fight against the wrongdoings of a member of their community. In many cases, survivors decide not to file a complaint, withdraw their complaint or settle because of their desire to take the 'path of least resistance'. Even though social media movements didn't specifically limit who could participate, everyone in our study agreed that the MeToo movement was "elitist", "heteronormative," and "not intersectional". They said that even though it was happening online, it still reflected the "social caste, class, and gender dynamics" that kept marginalized people out. They also said that there weren't enough stories from minority groups like Muslim women and Indian women, who often don't have the resources or language to tell their stories.

**(Neha Pravin Shilwant\_2019\_ID25)** The research on sexual abuse of women is huge and important, but it often overlooks disability. Disability research rarely looks at sexual abuse of disabled women, and when people talk about diversity and inclusion, disability is often forgotten. Women with disabilities are having a hard time finding their place in the Women's Movement, and campaigns like Me Too remind us how far we still have to go before our voices are heard. Most of the things about disabled women are still a bit of a secret, especially their sexuality. Abuse of disabled women still happens all over the world, especially to women with learning disabilities who may find it hard to talk about their experiences or not be believed when they do (Strike, 2018).

In Indian villages, there are countless stories of sexual harassment and discomfort. Without a doubt, the hardest working people in this nation are rural women, especially those from Scheduled Castes, Other Backward Classes, and tribal communities. They operate in disorganized sectors and have open workplaces. Perhaps far more pervasive and heinous than what has been documented in the current Me Too movement are the levels of patriarchal insensitivity and other forms of discrimination that women experience. It is a sad fact

that these women will never be able to voice their outrage on Me Too and seek justice because they lack the necessary language skills, device, and knowledge. Furthermore, these crimes would usually be committed by men of relatively modest stature and sweep rather than by men of prominence and standing. But one hopes that the Me Too movement in some way begins to assist these helpless, disenfranchised rural sisters in enhancing their working environments. It is essential and urgently needed (Chandola, 2018).

(P. GUHA\_2023\_ID16) ultimately, in late 2018, the then-Indian government established a commission to look into workplace sexual harassment, despite the short-lived virality and lack of inclusivity in the #MeTooIndia movement. But after the government was reelected in 2019, the commission was quietly dissolved. The movement had no effect on current policies or gain traction in political campaigns. The #MeTooIndia movement was successful in raising awareness of sexual harassment and abuse in the media, entertainment industry, and academic fields. However, it was restricted when it came to the formulation and implementation of policy.

### **Theme 3- Backlash**

(P. GUHA\_2023\_ID16) The movement gained popularity in 2018 after a number of young women came forward to report instances of sexism, trolling, and sexual harassment on social media platforms. However, the lack of inclusivity among the general public caused the movement's popularity to fade quickly. Though they experienced brief moments of widespread attention, #MeToo and #MeTooIndia eventually lost steam due to indifference, the tacit destruction of media attention, and the policies and support of the government.

The movement specifically gained traction on Indian social media platforms, which led to backlash and criticism regarding the following issues. First, because of its emphasis and availability on digital platforms, the #MeTooIndia movement lacked inclusivity. Women who lacked access to the Internet and social media sites were left behind. Furthermore, women are frequently denied the opportunity to engage in online social movements because they must continue making ends meet financially to work in the same setting as their abusers after experiencing sexual harassment and violence.

In addition, the LOSHA movement of 2017 had a strong connection to #MeTooIndia. Names, affiliations, and accounts of sexual harassment that occurred in academic settings were compiled into a Google Spreadsheet known as LOSHA, or List of Sexual Harassers in Academia. Although Raya Sarkar initiated the list and initiative, prominent feminists from earlier eras strongly opposed the LOSHA movement, which is a subset of the #MeToo movement, because the initiative was anonymous (Gajjala 2019, 204, 206). When the #MeToo movement first started in India, it wasn't even well-liked by the feminist community.

(Rahul Sambaraju Dr., 2020\_ID17) Results indicate that sexual harassment is a problem, even for women who report it with some degree of privilege. It would be helpful to comprehend how reports of sexual harassment are handled on other platforms, like social media, as these may provide additional or different avenues for reporting instances of sexual harassment in the workplace.

(N. NANDITHA\_2021\_ID19) The #MeToo movement is entirely digital, and while it can be compared to other feminisms and local Indian feminist movements, its digital nature is what makes it unique. Indian feminist movements have dedicated their lives to achieving women's emancipation. What started out as India's contemporary third-wave feminist movement on the streets eventually made its way onto digital platforms, where it encountered new issues with marginalization and clumsy depictions of feminist groups. In Suman Mishra's (2020) analysis of Indian press coverage of the global #MeToo movement, she argues that the movement has overlooked regular women from marginalized communities in favor of celebrity scandals. Through the analysis of tweets and interviews, Paromita Palomita Pain 2020 also shows that suburban experiences and voices are excluded from the movement.

(APARNA MOITRA et.al., 2021\_ID23) examined the motivations behind survivors' sharing of their experiences with sexual harassment on social media, highlighting how #MeToo appears as a symptom of their discontent with the due process.

**Sharing without any expectation of justice-** A subset of participants stated that, in a cathartic attempt to find validation for their experiences, they or the survivors in their networks shared their stories of harassment during the #MeToo movement. They had no intention of pursuing legal redress. The support of their friends and family allowed those who were able to share their stories to do so. For survivors of such experiences, the public naming and shaming that accompanied the catharsis of sharing the experience on social media was said to provide some closure and served as an example of how widespread the problem was for others.

Though it was nothing new to Dalit women, the #MeToo movement may be a turning point for Savarna women. The sentiment surrounding the issue was most fully expressed in a statement that Dalit feminists and activists posted on Twitter using the hashtag #DalitWomenFight on #MeToo. It reaffirmed the fact that Dalit women have long opposed sexual harassment from men of all castes, including dominant caste

men, mixed caste men, and men from their own caste, but they are unable to identify with the "me" of the Indian #MeToo movement.

(Naresh et al\_2022\_ID24) The social media-driven #MeToo movement was also perceived as a way to address sexual abuse cases that, for lack of time and resources, could not be formally handled in a court of law. This movement offered an alternative to the formal systems of redressal's numerous flaws.

(Sonkar et.al\_2020\_ID30) While it is still up for debate whether the changes will benefit women or not, men may also experience insecurity from working close to women if they perceive them as having ulterior motives. Nevertheless, following the movement, women began to ask questions they had never asked before. The movement has facilitated abuse survivors' access to resources. In many nations, there has been a rise in the use of online help lines. To ensure the movement's long-term impact,

#### **Theme 4- Sexual violence prevention**

Themes that emerged are how to reduce sexual violence against women. I identified this theme in seven resources

(Kelly Souza Marron\_2018\_ID3) People often stay silent about sexual harassment because they fear they won't be believed that they will become even more victims, that they will be abused further, and so on. The offenders typically escape punishment for their crimes, while victims experience a whirlwind of emotions and struggles. Whether they are online or off, a community, support network, and platform like "#MeToo" can have a positive influence and serve as a lighthouse for those who would prefer to remain in the background or who have not yet found their voice.

(Ms. Seema Shukla , et. al,\_2020\_ID 6) The study clearly shows that, following the cases discussed in the 'Me Too Movement,' males are more conscious of their behavior toward female colleagues. The study also demonstrates the need for complete cultural and social transformation in order to eradicate sexual assault from Indian society.

(AKANKSHA SINGH \_2022\_ID5) The #MeToo movement in India has reawakened the conversation about how businesses can protect their employees' safety at work by preventing and responding to sexual misconduct against them. According to analysis, a large number of businesses "claimed" to have established internal complaint committees (ICC) and developed workplace-based anti-sexual harassment policies. Nonetheless, there are notable gaps in the information provided by businesses regarding a number of crucial areas pertaining to the enforcement and implementation of preventive workplace-related sexual harassment policies and practices, such as the steps taken to create gender-sensitive awareness and gender sensitization as well as the makeup and operation of internal committees.

Companies are either giving too little information or none at all in this regard, or they are giving defensive, evasive, and confusing explanations. The results also show that many businesses' corporate policies regarding sexual harassment are still primarily oriented toward women. Despite the fact that workplace-based sexual harassment is an offense that does not always entail "men the perpetrators" and "women the victims," many businesses have yet to make their policies gender-neutral.

#### **V. Precautions To Be Taken By The Organisation (Tumpa Dey\_2019\_Id8)**

As per an article was written by Stephany Below on *How organizations can really fight sexual harassment*, following are some steps that organizations can take in order to reduce and eliminate sexual harassment at the workplace:

- Conducting a culture review: Examine the organization's culture to see if staff members feel empowered to report harassment of others.
- Encouraging diversity: When there is less gender diversity, there is a higher chance that employees will experience sexual harassment. Diversity in the leadership ranks is also crucial.
- Prompt Follow-Ups: If workers believe that nothing will be done about their complaints of harassment, they are less likely to report it. Therefore, the organization needs to act to make the offenders answerable.
- Examining the organization's policy: Find out if any guidelines exist regarding sexual harassment. Well-crafted policies foster a positive culture that forbids harassment.
- Offering a wide variety of training: Equip staff members with a variety of training materials so they can learn how to handle various distractions and avoid misbehavior.
- Offering support: The group's executives and members ought to stand by the victims. They ought to give the victims a voice inside the company.

#### **VI. Handling Sexual Harassment At Workplace**

- Ensure that staff members are informed of the organization's policy regarding sexual harassment, including that it will not be accepted and will be thoroughly investigated.
- Define procedures for formal charges and complaints from staff members.

- Select a staff member with background knowledge of the company, its personnel, and its history.
- Give the complainant or victim your word that they won't face reprisals.
- Let the worker know that you require information regarding the continuous harassment they are experiencing.
- As the employee is telling their story, pay close attention and make notes of pertinent information.
- Inform the accused that unethical behavior will not be accepted and that a complaint has been made against him. Additionally, reassure him that the investigation will be conducted in a just and fair manner.
- To obtain information that either confirms or refutes an allegation, pose open-ended questions to the possible witnesses.
- Take notes on pertinent facts during the same manner that you would interview the complainant and the accused.

(P. GUHA\_2023\_ID16) in post-pandemic India, the #MeToo movement has a chance to change course and become an advocate against workplace abuse and virtual sexual harassment.

The #MeTooIndia movement may serve as a spark for the establishment of policies and preventative measures in institutions and workplaces. Programs for digital citizenship, training, and awareness—which are still scarce—will help employees feel more empowered as witnesses and victims. For example, WhatsApp is mostly used by large and small businesses as a marketing and campaign tool. In addition, it serves as a venue for intimidating and harassing women in a sexual manner (TNN 2022). In rural and semi-rural areas, there is a need for increased awareness of digital sexual harassment as well as the development of a framework to prevent cybersexual abuse and harassment.

Since the pandemic, a few advocacy and non-profit organizations in urban India, including the Digital Empowerment Foundation and the Akancha Srivastava Foundation, have been developing awareness campaigns to combat cyber-based sexual harassment (ANI, 2021).

But their headquarters are mostly in cities. In post-pandemic India, the #MeTooIndia movement has the potential to establish an all-encompassing agenda for the prevention of cyber-based sexual harassment. In order to develop an anti-sexual violence agenda on online platforms, candidates and political parties in India's 2024 parliamentary election may want to incorporate digitally based guidelines regarding sexual harassment and violence, as well as engage social movements based on gender.

(APARNA MOITRA et.al., 2021\_ID23) To ensure that online feminist movements benefit the world's most marginalized people, future socio-technical systems must act in solidarity and with sensitivity when establishing and releasing spaces for intersectional and postcolonial narratives on social media.

(Neha Pravin Shilwant\_2019\_ID25) The Me Too movement has exposed the serious flaws in our educational system and forced us to reevaluate it. Saying that society permits or dictates how men behave is insufficient. Since the educational system plays a significant role in the socialization process, we must hold it accountable. The system that upholds equality and the values of human dignity needs to undergo structural adjustments.

There should be a lesson in sex education classes about the existence of other genders and the importance of based sexual relationships solely on consent. No really means no. The Me Too movement needs to connect with a larger democratic movement in order to actually bring the rights and freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution to everyone in practice, if it is to be more than just a cathartic experience.

#### **Theme 5- Activist role of mainstream media**

(Suman Mishra\_2020\_ID1) The public's understanding of global events and issues, as well as the direction of local public discourse and societal behaviors, are greatly influenced by the national news media. Throughout history, the Indian news media has been instrumental in shaping the nation's social, political, and economic landscapes. Unlike television, print news media has always operated independently of the Indian government, reporting on government news in a "critical-investigative-adversarial" capacity and championing social reforms, including those pertaining to gender issues. The Shah Bano case in 1985, the Deorala sati case in 1987, and other dowry-related death cases were among the many cases that women's organizations actively brought attention to, and during the 1970s and 1980s, the Indian news media also started to examine social and gender justice issues.

(Chindu Sreedharan, Einar Thorsen & Ananya Gouthi\_2019\_ID2) In addition to serving as media professionals covering other cases, journalists participated in the campaign on behalf of themselves as women who had experienced sexual harassment at work. Although women from various backgrounds brought up sexual misconduct, the movement's activities were mostly focused on journalism and journalist-activists, in part because many of the stories were written by female journalists and featured senior male journalists. Study revealed various regional perspectives on related challenges and focused on the day-to-day experiences of journalists across India, speaking in 12 vernacular languages in addition to Hindi and English.

(Naik, M. G., Rodrigues, U. M., & Rani, P., 2020\_ID12) The study examines how the mainstream media in India has framed the #MeToo movements in the country.

The study examined the reports and news articles that were approached in The Times of India and Hindu, two Indian newspapers, by looking into the five categories of the frame. The two most prevalent frames among the study's five were the individual and the society categories. The Hindu made extensive use of the society frame, but The Times of India focused more on the specific frame telling the individual stories and highlighting the in-depth reporting. In the Hindu case, there was also the investigative and interpretive reporting. Subsequently, the victims—who are women—are oppressed and held responsible for the harm. Newspapers highlighted issues with women's ability to tell their stories on public platforms. The reports were descriptive and narrative, allowing for a wide range of interpretations.

(Rahul Sambaraju Dr., 2020\_ID17) The current research demonstrates how the media and its practices contribute to the expression and repression of sexism. In these exchanges, media representatives functioned as pertinent “third-party” intermediaries (Fernando & Prasad, 2019), able to cast doubt on the veracity of sexual harassment reports and take up these issues directly. Then, media practices are linked to a broader conversation about the veracity of women's reports of sexual harassment and the problems that arise from doing so (Guha, 2015). The #MeToo movement caused journalists in Indian newsrooms to feel conflicted, but those who were targets or victims were further burdened by the platforming of doubts about the veracity of those reporting (Sreedharan et al., 2019). Women were then unable to report sexual harassment due to these practices.

Collectively, the results demonstrate how gendering sexual harassment helped women cope with worries about the veracity of their reports. In addition to placing their reports of sexual harassment within the context of the #MeToo movement, women also developed the idea that gendered issues are fundamentally relevant and should be contrasted with individualised ones.

Khabar Lahariya, a completely women-run newspaper in some of India's most patriarchal states, also published #MeToo moments, “stories of battling sleaze and abuse, every single day.” They discussed the harassment they face while reporting and dealing with a largely hostile patriarchal social system: “The case of sexual assault I was responsible for filing miraculously got you in jail for a brief period of time, but it has ruined my career.” Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) issues were also addressed: “While we're on the subject of #MeToo and #MeTooIndia, let us also acknowledge that rape, sexual assault, and harassment are gender neutral.” Both the survivor and the perpetrator can be men, women, or transgender.” “Let it be the voice of the affected—women, men, and transgender #MeTooIndia,” one tweet stated emphatically.

(Sonkar et.al, 2020\_ID30) In the media sector, male journalists have been influencing news stories and journals from a masculine perspective, omitting details from a feminine perspective that is more widely shared. Social media networking sites also made it clear that men were even more afraid of being falsely accused, which led to a breakdown in the bonds and relationships between male and female coworkers, particularly at work.

## VII. RESEARCH RECOMMENDATION

This systematic literature review has the limitation of only reviewing research papers that are readily available and that address the #MeTooIndia or MeToo movement in India; additional research can cover research papers that address the movement as a whole. Scholars can also discern the distinctions and similarities between the discourse surrounding the MeToo movement in India and other nations.

## VIII. DISCUSSION

In October 2018, the #MeTooIndia movement brought digital feminist activism back to India, a country that has long been involved in hashtag feminist movements promoting women's safety, health, and human rights. (Pain, Paramita, 2020) The role of mainstream national news media in covering international events is especially crucial in developing nations like India, where the public is primarily educated and lives in cities. In terms of social media, smart phones, and the Internet, the use of platforms like Twitter is still relatively low. Scholars have emphasized that the efficacy of feminist hashtag activism and online campaigns in India is contingent upon their acceptance and representation by the country's mainstream news media. Urban, educated, and globally integrated Indians have been effective in organizing around issues that are important to them in recent years. A large-scale anti-corruption movement emerged in 2011. India saw a wave of protests and demonstrations calling for stricter laws and regulations to combat political system corruption. After a medical student named Nirbhaya (the Fearless) was raped in 2012, thousands of people took to the streets and a national dialogue about violence against women was ignited. The movement resulted in an attempt to revise the country's rape crime laws.

Many forms of harassment have been included under India's expanded rape law (Section 375/376 of IPC). Fast-track courts were established for the prosecution of rapes, and laws against sexual assault were

reinforced. For the rape of a minor, the death penalty was implemented in at least four states. Gender equality has become a more prominent topic of discussion in urban India following the #MeTooIndia uproar. All efforts, however, have their place in the short term. The way that #MeToo has shamed prominent and strong men challenges the traditional understanding of rights and responsibilities. It elevates the voices of women in legislatures, courts, and other professional settings and encourages Indian society to have a conversation about the underrepresentation of women in positions of authority. Above all, it includes a billion-person nation in a global discourse about how women are challenging stereotypes, enacting change, and advocating for equality. The future of the global #MeToo movement may very well depend on India's own fight for gender equality given the size of the population and the severity of gender inequality. ( Joshi, Shareen, 2019)

The #MeToo movement is a prime illustration of the difficulties postcolonial computing has identified with the way that the "global" adoption of a Western technology frequently has no effect on local communities in the Global South. Nonetheless, the very existence of this online feminist movement sheds light on the survivors' discontent with the legal system and draws attention to the "trampled paths that crisscross landscapes"—using digital infrastructures rather than legal infrastructures—that they are prepared to travel in the pursuit of a more equitable society.

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