

# Role of social media in gender sensitization of illicit relationship

<sup>1</sup>R. Venkatesh Aravindh, <sup>2</sup>S. Thirupathi

<sup>1,2</sup> Doctoral Research Scholar, Department of Journalism and Mass Communication, Periyar University,  
Salem, Tamil Nadu

Email – <sup>1</sup>rvenkatesharavindh@gmail.com, <sup>2</sup>thirupathi.vellore@gmail.com

**Abstract:** Coverage of issues are important in any media outlet. Illicit relationships are not something new in the contemporary society. Importance plays a vital part in the spreading and discussion amongst the masses regarding any news in any media outlet. Gender sensitization takes varied forms and dimensions especially in social media. There are many instances when social media has been the front runner in bring many social issues to the masses in the country to the forefront. Social media outlets also happen to have shown varied levels of importance and coverage to various issues and events. Social media is always at the forefront in projecting the relationship news and happenings especially about celebrities, film stars etc. In the recent past, a killing of two children by their own mother created huge furore and uproar across media outlets and more predominantly in social media outlets. The current research study is envisioned to investigate the specific case study about Abirami who committed the heinous crime in Chennai by employing qualitative research approaches in the form of semiotics in Facebook and YouTube.

**Key Words:** Social media, Gender, Sensitization, Illicit relationship, Semiotics,

## 1. INTRODUCTION:

### 1.1 Social media:

For Barnes S.B. (2008), social media were applications that enabled people to interact with each other and build social networks that increases social capital. According to Comm (2010), it is this aforementioned phenomenon which is changing the way content is created and used.

### 1.2 Forms of social media:

For Laroche, Habibi, and Richard (2013) social media takes a variety of forms and works on various platforms, such as weblogs, social blogs, networks, microblogs, wikis, podcasts, social bookmarking etc. For Sachs (2016), social media is one of the biggest technological innovations that has changed people's communication ability as well as the ability for organizations to do direct marketing for their target audience.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW:

### 2.1 Social media evolution:

According to Seltzer and Mitrook (2007), the structural and interactive features of social media fosters discussions between their authors and their readers making them more dialogic in nature than traditional web sites. Dickey This phenomenon provides a greater relationship-building amongst the users and beneficiaries. After e-mail was invented in 1971, Bulletin Board System (BBS) came into existence and was used predominantly for making announcements, sharing information, etc.

### 2.2 Gender & social media:

Bujala A. (2012) found out that men are likely to have more time for the use of social networks because of gender expectations and roles. According to a study by Volkovich et al. (2014), gender was found to occupy a special place in understanding people's decisions, adoption and usage of new technologies. Further research studies by Muscanell and Guadagno (2012) & Rousseau and Puttaraju (2014) highlighted that males used social networking sites for networking, making new friends, and seeking out potential dates and playing games, while females used it for relationships.

### 3. METHODOLOGY :

The study adopts qualitative research approaches through content analysis and semiotics. Images and videos regarding the case study are analysed.

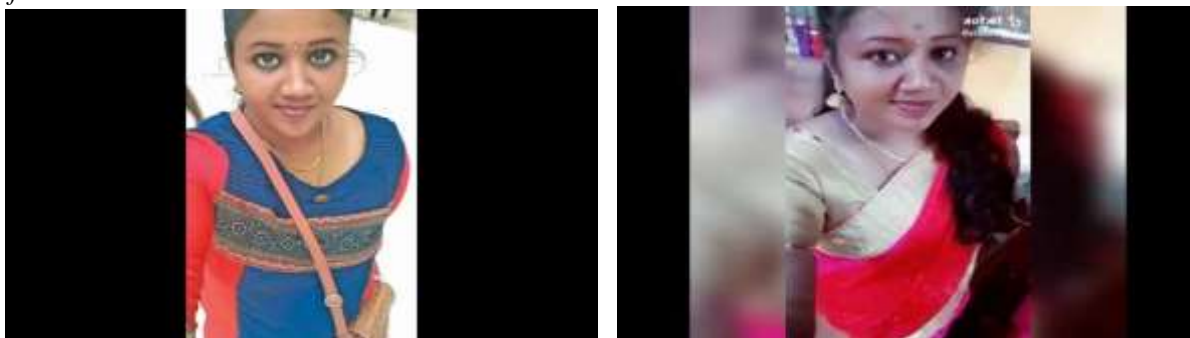
### 4. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

- To analyse the pictures of Abirami which were circulated in Facebook.
- To analyse the videos of Abirami in YouTube using semiotics.

### 5. ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS:

#### IMAGE ANALYSIS

*Images of Abirami shared in Facebook*



PICTURE 1 & 2 (Courtesy: Facebook)

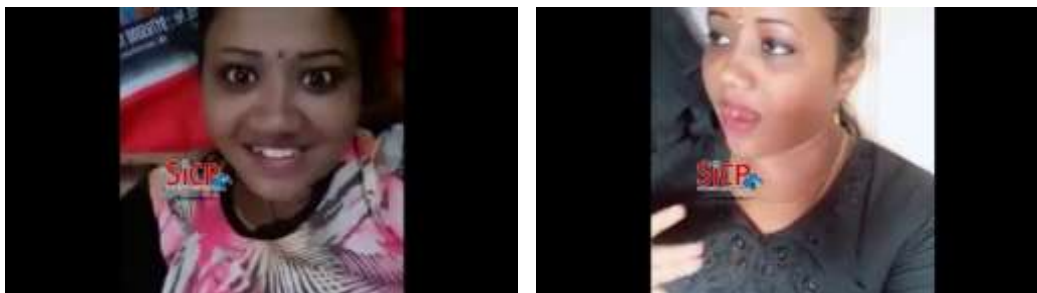


PICTURE 3,4 & 5 (Courtesy: Facebook)

Picture 1 to 5 were the most shared photographs in Facebook by various users in Facebook. The initial photographs were her display pictures in her social media accounts.

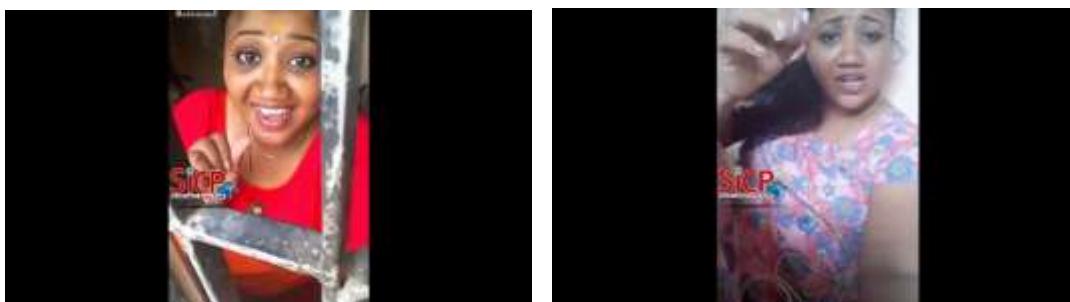
#### VIDEO ANALYSIS

*Videos of Abirami in YouTube  
Dubsmash*

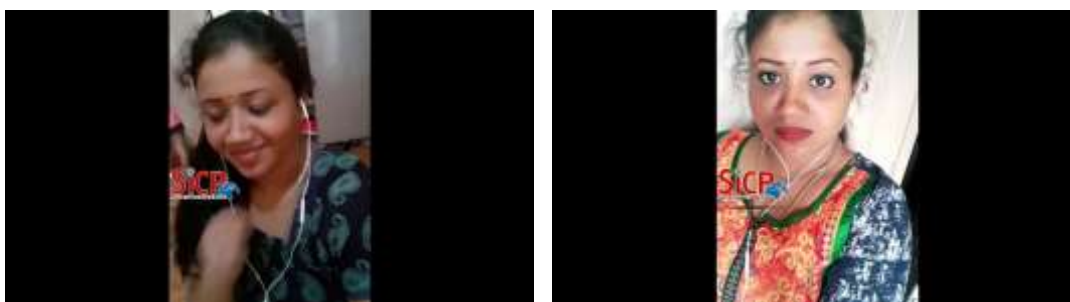


**PICTURE 6 & 7 (Courtesy: YouTube)**

Picture 6 is her rendition of Rajinikanth's famous dialogue in the movie Kaala – *Kya reh setting ah, Vengaiyan mavam othaila nikken, dhillu iruntha mothamma vaangale...*

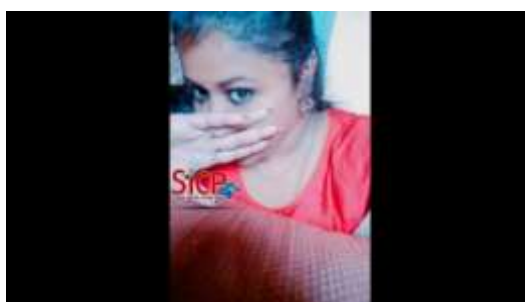


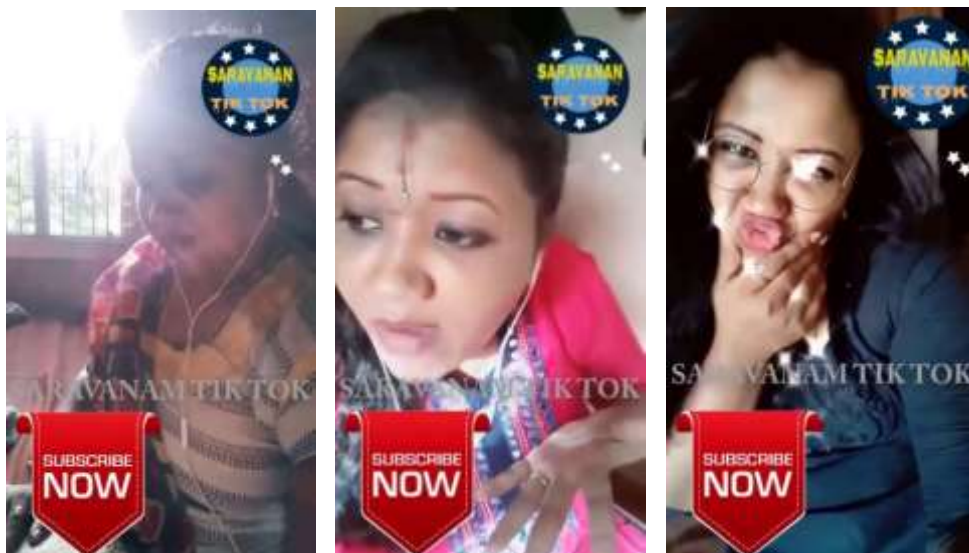
**PICTURE 8 & 9 (Courtesy: YouTube)**



**PICTURE 10,11, & 12 (Courtesy: YouTube)**

The pictures are taken from a series of Dubsmash videos of Abirami which was shared in YouTube. Pictures 6 to 12 are all rendition of many of the famous movie songs and dialogues. In all these pictures she's seen reacting by involving herself so deeply with the character she's representing or acting in those videos. *Musically/ Tik Tok*

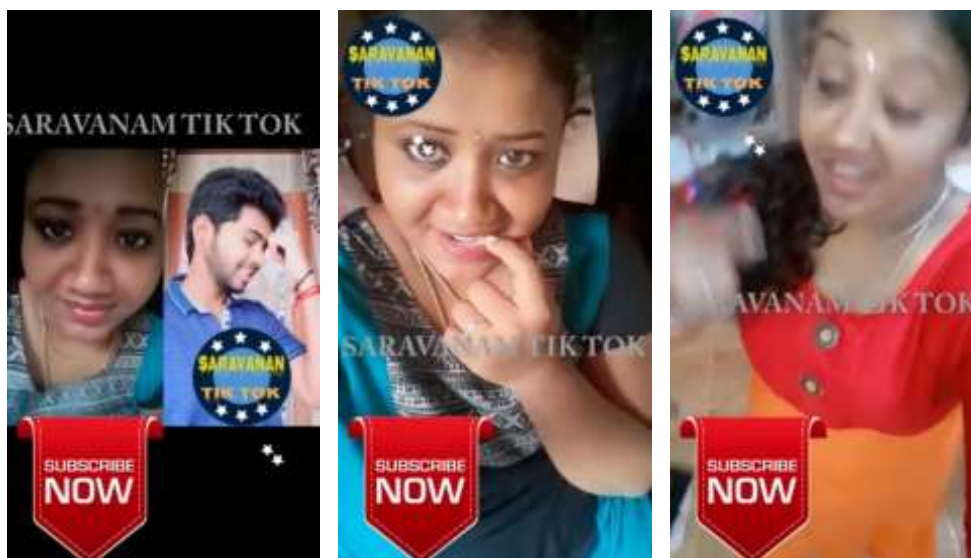




PICTURE 13,14 & 15 (Courtesy: YouTube)



PICTURE 16,17 & 18 (Courtesy: YouTube)



PICTURE 19,20 & 21 (Courtesy: YouTube)



PICTURE 22,23 & 24 (Courtesy: YouTube)



PICTURE 25 & 26 (Courtesy: YouTube)

Pictures 16 to 26 are a collection of all the Musically and Tik Tok videos made by Abirami and were shared by various users across social media platforms. Most of the videos were again rendition of famous dialogues and songs of movies.

## 7. CONCLUSION:

Social media has had been rated and seen as one of the greatest inventions of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Since e-mail, sixdegrees.com, Ryze came into existence social media took Many dimensions and forms. S years progressed, Friendster, Orkut, Twitter, LinkedIn all came and revolutionized the social media arena completely. Instagram, Tik Tok and Musically are some of the newer additions to the list of ever growing and evolving social media. Social media also has been used for a variety of purposes chiefly for awareness, rescue etc. The current research paper looks at the gender sensitization of Abirami, the women in Kundrathur who murdered her two children because they were a hindrance to her illicit affair with a biryani shop worker. On September 2 2018, Abirami (33) killed her Ajay (7) and Karunika (5) by giving them poisoned milk. On the aforementioned date, her husband Vijay (35) had called her to inform that he'd not be able to return home after work. However, her phone was switched off. He found the house locked and broke open it only to find both his children tied and lying on the bed with their mouths foaming. He then called for an ambulance and the children were taken to a private hospital where they were pronounced already dead. It was said that Abirami had an affair with Sundaram who was working at a biryani shop near her house in Agasthiyar Koil Street in Kundrathur. He was arrested. The images and videos of her in Facebook and YouTube were taken up for the study. The study revealed that most users resorted to bashing the women for a variety of reasons. First and foremost, they bashed and questioned her as to how a mother would have the heart to kill her own children by poisoning them. Later, most of the

users bashed her with their comments on her character, more of her unfulfilled sexual desires and her character. The study also revealed that most of her Tik Tok and musically videos were of famous movies and dialogues which were popular among masses in the 1990's. The images taken from videos which are at the fag-end of the analysis are from movies of the recent past and mid 2000's.

**REFERENCES:**

1. Barnes, S. B. (2008). Understanding social media from the media ecological perspective. In *Mediated interpersonal communication* (pp. 28-47). Routledge.
2. Bujala, A. (2012). Gender Differences in internet usage, *Acta Universitatis Lodziensis*, 43, 49-67.
3. Comm, J. (2010). *Twitter power 2.0: How to dominate your market one tweet at a time*. John Wiley & Sons.
4. Dickey, I. J., & Lewis, W. F. (2010). The evolution (revolution) of social media and social networking as a necessary topic in the marketing curriculum: a case for integrating social media into marketing classes. *Advances in Marketing: Embracing Challenges and Change-A Global Perspective*.
5. Jesus Milton Rousseau, S., & Puttaraju, K. (2014). A Study on Gender Differential Factors in Uses of Social Networking Sites. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention*, 3(11), 31-40.
6. Laroche, M., Habibi, M. R., & Richard, M. O. (2013). To be or not to be in social media: How brand loyalty is affected by social media? *International Journal of Information Management*, 33(1), 76-82.
7. Muscanell, N. L., & Guadagno, R. E. (2012). Make new friends or keep the old: Gender and personality differences in social networking use. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 28(1), 107-112.
8. Seltzer, T., & Mitrook, M. A. (2007). The dialogic potential of weblogs in relationship building. *Public Relations Review*, 33(2), 227-229.
9. Volkovich, Y., Laniado, D., Kappler, K. E., & Kaltenbrunner, A. (2014, November). Gender patterns in a large online social network. In *International Conference on Social Informatics* (pp. 139-150). Springer, Cham.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Disclaimer: All the images used in this research paper work have been taken from Facebook and YouTube.**