



RIGHTS OF WOMEN RELATED TO MORPHING

Muskan Chhabra

4TH Semester BA LL.B, Bharati Vidyapeeth Deemed University, New Law College, Pune

Dr. Sapna Deo*

Assistant Professor, Bharati Vidyapeeth Deemed University, New Law College, Pune
*Corresponding Author

ABSTRACT This article essentially deals with the one of the latest cybercrime which has evolved in recent times i.e. Morphing. Morphing relates to the crime which is committed by misusing the pictures of women in pornographic materials. Due to the expansion in digital world social media has acted as a biggest platform for sharing information with others. But it has increased the number of crimes which is challenging the dignity and modesty of women. The author has observed the impact of privacy of women by morphing. Further the laws under Information Technology Act, 2000. The author has concluded the article with suggestions and opinion.

KEYWORDS : Morphing, Digital World, Pornographic, Misuse Of Pictures, Privacy, Modesty.

INTRODUCTION:

The evolution of internet is indeed a blessing to the whole world. This has led to the globalisation of the world and made the world one global village. The advancement of digital technology is a boon as well as a bane for the world. Advancement of internet and the information technology has given rise to the crimes against women. Women were already subjected to so many crimes and this new age crimes are also evolving on a larger scale. Internet has proved to be a platform for various opportunities but this platform has challenged the women's dignity, privacy and her rights. It affects the mental health. It basically cause mental harm to the victims of these crimes. The information and technology is used by the criminals as a platform to defame women, by stalking them and sending obscene images to them. Worst of all these crimes is making pornographic videos by morphing the images of the women without their consent. It creates a stigma on the part of women who suffer morphing. Morphing as a crime is increasing day by day as it has now become very easy to download images of the women from social media. It is done by editing the pictures of the women and misuses them in the pornographic videos. It is worst because in some cases women even do not know about the fact that their images are being used in some pornographic videos or pictures. There are many resources and sites on which these morphed images are being published.

WHAT IS MORPHING?

First I would like to ask "Are women Safe on the Internet?" According to me, NO.

Morphing is misusing the pictures of women to promote sex chats and pornographic materials. It is one of the cybercrimes which has evolved in recent times. Due to increase craze for social media morphing is also increasing challenging the dignity of women. The pictures of women are modified and posted and circulated through different sites without their consent. This is usually done by the cyber criminals to extort money from the victims. Due to the fear of social stigma the victims give the demanding money in order to get deleted the pictures from the social or adult sites. They upload pictures and demand money to delete it.

ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN MORPHING:

Every sixth cybercrime in India is committed through social media, Alok Mittal, the chief of the National Investigation Agency (NIA) has said. Though he did not divulge the basis of his findings, data from the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) show around 70% rise in cybercrimes annually between 2013 and 2015.

Social media has hampered the privacy of women to a great extent. Most of us enjoy uploading photos on social media but now it has now become a matter of concern because these pictures are being used by cyber criminals. The new age crimes are increasing due to the advancement in digital technology. One of these crimes is morphing wherein the ill-intentioned men misuse the pictures of women in creating pornographic videos and then circulate and upload it on the social media site and the adult sites. These men create fake ids on different social media sites to download pictures of random

women. These crimes are done due to malafide intention of men to take revenge, or to insult the modesty of women. Social media has become a platform for ill-intentioned men to hurt the modesty of women.

Amnesty International India recently launched a campaign to address the issue of online violence faced by women in the country. It has been interviewing women who express their opinions online, documenting their experiences of being active on social media platforms and the violence they regularly face online.

IMPACT ON PRIVACY:

Supreme Court in 2017 has upheld Right to Privacy as a fundamental right of every citizen of India. Women has an equal status in the society under article 14 of the constitution and also special provisions under article 15(3) of Indian constitution. Coming back to the reality of condition of women who are subjected to various crimes. Morphing as a crime has caused serious threat to the privacy of women by downloading images of women and misusing it. There are many social sites through which the pictures are being downloaded. For instance let's take Facebook, it has an option in privacy settings in which it is set default on "public". By opting public it means the information regarding the gender, address, images, e-mail, phone number, videos displayed to the public as a whole. It means that anyone who has an account on Facebook can go through your account and pose a risk to your privacy as your whole personal information can be displayed. But there are several other instances where the profile, personal information including the pictures are secured and limited but still become a victim of morphing.

According to the Indian Express, two people were arrested in the case of morphing a woman's image in Kerala. The team suspected the Owners of 'Sadayam' studio. Satheesan and Dinesh were taken into custody from Wayanad, where they were absconding. However, the police are still clueless about the whereabouts of the prime accused, Bibeesh, who morphed photographs for pornographic purposes. There were many complaints filed by women against the same studio for misusing their respective images. After filing of large number of complaints police conducted raid at the studio. The team of police seized the computers for pornographic purpose. Over 40,000 photographs of women taken from various marriage functions in and around the region were found stored in a hard disk seized from the studio. However, the investigation team is clueless whether more photographs were misused by the culprits.

According to the India Today, A class-12 student of South Delhi was shocked to find her pornographic video online, the link of which was shared by an anonymous user on chat demanding money to delete it. Preliminary investigation revealed that her picture was copied from a social media site and was later morphed to extort money.

Another student of private university in Jagatpur, Jaipur filed a complaint with police stating that a picture of hers from her Facebook account was being downloaded by someone. Her photo was circulated through WhatsApp with a vulgar caption.

LAWS AND RIGHTS OF WOMEN RELATED TO MORPHING:

- Section 354 of the Indian Penal Code talks about “outraging the modesty of women”.

Under the Information Technology Act 2000 there are several provisions under which these cyber criminals can be punished:

1. Section 67 deals with publishing or transmitting obscene material in electronic form.
2. Section 66E deals with privacy violation. Whoever, intentionally or knowingly captures, publishes or transmits the image of a private area of any person without his or her consent, under circumstances violating the privacy of that person, shall be punished with imprisonment which may extend to three years or with fine not exceeding two lakh rupees, or with both.

CONCLUSION:

Legal awareness related to cybercrimes is necessary among the women. As they are easily targeted education should be given related to tackling cybercrimes from the school level. They should be made aware about the digital technology and how to deal with crimes related to it. They should know what is cyber law and their rights.

Women empowerment also plays an important role in tackling morphing. It encourages them to file and raise voice against the crime committed against them. NGOs and women advocates can play an important role in guiding the victims to raise voice against the misogyny.

Women should also take preventive steps on the social media. They should not share something more than necessary and should not add strangers in their social networking sites.