

Eve Teasing as a Social Problem: A Study on the School Girls in Dhaka City, Bangladesh

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Abstract:

Eve teasing is being treated as a momentous problem in Bangladesh now a days. Now it is the most discussed despicable and brutal violation of human rights. Many students of schools and colleges are choosing the way to be suicided for this reason. Parents are becoming childless and the neighbors, classmates and faculties being shocked. Students of school and colleges even working women of growing age are not able to save themselves by any means from the terrific strike of it. This uncontrolled criminal action has become a normal thing in our society to uplift the head with the chage of time. Some abandoned and libidinous youngs continue such wrong, obscene, criminal mischief to ignore the harsh punishment in different areas. It is a tremendous result of dreadful decadence of our family tradition cherished for decades, education, compassion and values. This terrible disease is carrying our society to a disastrous eventuality gradually. So this study has been conducted through direct deep interviewing to select 20 girls students as sample by incidental sampling from different secondary schools situated at South City Corporation Area in Dhaka city in order to detect various causes related with eve teasing, identify its impact on social life and seek the solution of this problem considering significant the matter in overall perspective of national life.

Keywords: Eve teasing, social problem, school girls, Dhaka city.

Introduction

Generally eve teasing means to treat negatively towards women to be accustomed with sexual addiction in medieval brutal custom, in which influence the women's emotional disability is occurred. Eve teasing has been considered as one of the most discussed topics in recent years. The problem has been spread at every corner of our society very quickly shaping as national problem. The lives of many students are dropping in Dhaka city in the effect of this awesome problem. Those who are mostly school going students.

The most favourite child is being immolated of parent's self-centralism and happiness at the beginning of academic life instead of growing up with joyful and loving surroundings from this issue. A large number of school going students has chosen the tremendous way like suicide as the solution being victims of eve teasing. The lives and future independence of school going students are almost inverted now in the horror of hugely practiced gender violence.

A large number of school going students choose the abhorrent way like suicide for eve teasing every year in Dhaka city. According to the assumed information of World Health Organization (WHO), about 1.53 million people will be died by 2020 through suicide, which mostly will be occurred in the effect of eve teasing. In every 20 second minimum one dies and in every 1-2 second minimum one does try to be suicided in accordance with this estimate.

Although most of the women become victims of eve teasing, the adolescent and school going girls are more affected of it in the patriarchal society of Bangladesh. Usually ruined and graceless young aged boys lead these misdeeds more. The young loafer forsaken studies, mastans of neighborhood, political cadres, student leader-workers, the unemployed and stroller, young rickshaw pullers all are involved with eve teasing. Sexual harassment, rape, kidnapping, murder, acid throwing, forced marriage, family leaving from locality, injury of parents, brothers and sisters etc are occurred from this issue. The recently happened pathetic deaths of Simi, Rumi, Indrani, Trisha and others for eve teasing condemn our society.

It can be seen from DMP (Dhaka Metropolitan Police) information, 1027 persons had been arrested to tease girls from April to October 2013. At this period 25 cases were registered. In addition, the complaint came at Thana against 834 evils. Among them, 418 were released by Bonds.

RAB conducted 369 raids for harassment cases in last two years. 186 criminals arrested in these raids. RAB filed total 51 cases. The accused were punished in 7 cases among those. The guardians released 16 eve teasers by deponent. RAB extricated 3 criminals to receive fine at this time (Daily Prothom Alo; 22 August-2013). The total 51 sexual harassments were occurred across the country in December-2011 (Daily Jugantor; 2 January-2012).

Typically, 65 to 70 percent eve teasing happens around the educational institutions in our country. The girl students become affected by the teaser's nuisance at the time of going school or college and returning from there. 10 percent of girls students do not feel safe them at all in this respect (Daily Prothom Alo, 11 April-2014). However, School going girls are being affected more by teasing. They are not only being annoyed on the way of

school but also with mobile phone. After annoying for a long time through mobile phone the teaser declares his love and offensive behaviour publicly to understand the scope. Nowadays, no any woman is safe also on the streets for these disorder eve teasers. School girls, guardians, female teachers none of them are free. In broader sense, beautiful colleague to her boss in office, girl student to her male teacher every one is being victims somehow by eve teasing. One study found that nearly 33% eve teasers are middle-aged men and 11% women being abused anyway by their boss at office. The remaining 32% eve teasers are students and 35% are other antisocial, valueless and abhorrent juveniles. In every 51 seconds, a woman is being the target of teasing in South Asia (Daily Prothom Alo, 16 November-2010). A significant number of girls are dropping prematurely from study life to save them from eve teasing. The trend of early marriage is increasing for it. Many female students do not expose these things to their family. They suffer from mental problems and can not execute the daily normal works properly in the negative impact of it. Their health as becomes damaged for it, as the normal development becomes interrupted (Daily Prothom Alo; 27 November-2010).

Such heinous eve teasing defeats the anomie and oppression of medieval society also, which strikes the conscience of every healthy human being frequently. No mentionable studies have been done in this regard. So it is obligatory to conduct a significant number of studies to seek the causes, nature and sources of it, to see the effectiveness of legislations formulated by the govt. in this field and consider the requirement to control those and to create mass awareness and mass opinion identifying the impact, remedies and prevention of this problem. These matters inspired me to conduct the present study, which will open the door to study on the same topic for other researchers subsequently.

Origin and Development of Eve Teasing

Eve teasing is a leading problem in South Asia. This word is mainly used to the greatest extent to mean the sexual abuse, harassment or assault to female by male in Bangladesh, India and Pakistan. Eve teasing is basically an Indian English term. This term has been come first in discussion of public and media in 1960. Because, a large number of women started going to school even for work at outside of home since 60 decades.

Basically the term eve teasing had been introduced in Bangladesh in the benefit of the satellite channels. Imitation of Western and Indian culture and outreach of degenerate culture are the root causes of it. A powerful media is the biggest strength for a country but it is not always applicable in Bangladesh, rather the eve teasers are being provoked more from here. The eve teasing is being showing how enjoyably in various plays and advertisements, it is not going to solve the problem, rather it is spreading hugely from part to part of our society. The submissive mentality of the media businessmen is responsible for it, business and profit are the last words to them.

The fearsome handful of eve teasing began to destory the delicate social structure in Bangladesh hugely after 1990. As a result, acid throwing has been incorporated as a new dimension to the word torture. Although there are legislations against eve teasing in Bangladesh, the eve teasers get rid of available through the gaps of these legislations and contaminate the society constantly.

Different Forms or Types of Eve Teasing

Generally the term eve teasing includes the salacious glance, mockery, satire, offensive comments, obscene gesture, playing ear, provocative clapping, playing to push on, without consent the woman's body touching, sexy singing, recording the constant or moving picture for blackmailing or character assassination and so on.

Although, the types of eve teasing were limited within the above mentioned behaviours before, now the types of it are changing day by day. Now the girls of rural and urban areas always remain panicky to move anywhere and go to school safely. The parents are always terrified too for their girls. Now the eve teasers gather on the ways of schools and colleges and throw obscene comments to the girls, show bad posture and sometimes threaten to abduct them. They also collect the mobile phone number of the girls and harass them through it anonymously, they send obscene messages there as well as. Sometimes the criminals go in front of the home of the girls by car or motorcycle to chase them. The eve teasers walk behind the girls, sit beside them on the rickshaw forcefully, comment abusively to the alongside moving rickshaw women, even insult the girls and their family members to come at their residence. If anybody protests their malpractice, they threaten him on the counter. These have become the part of everyday experience to the girls. Someone tries to exaggerate the parenthood to them but he does not bother the necessity of this guardianship at all. In any populated place (hospital, bus stand, railway station), some older people come to see the girls and say, 'Mom, I like your father' or 'sister, I like your elder brother'. These maskers harass the girls to exert parenthood being soliciting. Such behaviour on any place is the rename of unauthorized interference.

Causes of Eve Teasing

The root of eve teasing is mixed in our family and social attitudes, or values. The venomous and violent culture to women, the lack of participatory, empathetic, responsible and healthy relationship between men and women influence in this regard. Moreover the lack of proper education of the children from their families mostly helps to develop such negative mentality among them. The overall causes of eve teasing are mentioned very easily below:

- i) The acute attraction to the opposite sex and women deem as goods and objects of consumption;
- ii) The decadence of social values and lack of proper family and moral education;
- iii) The misuse of technology;
- iv) The unemployment and desperation;
- v) The lack of healthy culture and the harmful effects of electronic and film media;
- vi) The available use of drug;
- vii) The lack of proper implementation of relevant legislations;
- viii) The lack of necessary training of law enforcement personnel;
- ix) The men's negative attitude towards women in society;
- x) The discriminatory relationship between men and women in domestic, social, economic and political aspects etc.

Social Problems Created by Eve Teasing

The effects of eve teasing are totalitarian to preserve the unequal position of women in society. Always it impedes the activities and movements of women. Not only that, it puts the women socially inept and dull to destroy their morale. It prevents their capacity building qualities at early stage. The bad habit of teasing fulfils the lives of men by fascinating feelings and helps them to express their greedy mentality. On the other hand it creates the intolerable situations for the women and children constantly through which it is impossible to receive the fresh air of normal life. The common impacts of eve teasing or sexual harassment are kidnapping, rape, trafficking, acid attacks, dropping out from the study, early marriage, forced marriage, suicide, family shifting from the locality, increasing social and economic dependency, expansion of social degradation, spreading of social insecurity, hindrance in freely movement, injuries of parents and brothers, creation of psychological problems etc. and it stains and destroys the society as a whole.

Laws and Initiatives of the Government

Government of Bangladesh has introduced many strong laws to resist violence against women, but due to the lack of proper implementations of these laws in due time, violences against women are rising day by day. A few of the legal acts of government are given below in chronological order:

- Penal Code, Section 375, 186
- The Code of Criminal Procedure, 189
- The Child Marriage Control Act, 1929
- The Dissolution of Muslim Marriage Act, 1939
- The Muslim Marriages and Divorces Registration Act, 1974
- The Dhaka Metropolitan Police Ordinance (DMPO) of 1976
- The Dowry Prohibition Act, 1980
- The Family Court Ordinance, 1985
- The Legal Aid Provision Act, 2000
- The Prevention of Women and Children Repression Act, 2000
- The Acid Crime Prevention Act, 2002
- The Acid Control Act, 2002

As stated above in the Prevention of Women and Children Repression Act, 2000, a remarkable provision was mentioned in article 10 that teasing women through vulgar gestures and comments is offensive and the punishment for such act would be simple imprisonment for seven years or two years of meticulous imprisonment. But then again in 2003, the act was amended stating that no one would be charged of sexual abuse until and unless it is physical. The women right activists struggled to change the law. Finally the law has been changed when harassment of women has increased in Bangladesh tremendously with simple imprisonment for a term which may extend to one year or with fine or with both, But in most of the cases, eve teasers are not identified and eve teasing also has no proof. Although, there are many laws which need genuine and clear evidence of violence against women, mostly the women cannot produce direct evidence due to fear and threat by the oppressors, due to poverty, lack of influential person in their family and mostly due to social prestige. They do not even complain against the oppressors. In these cases, most of the teasers those who disturb the girls in mall, bus and train no longer fall under the laws. Theoretically our constitution are completely in favor of equal right and equity between male and female, laws are also there, but unfortunately implementation is very rare. Bangladesh Government is committed to reduce violence and eve teasing from the society but Government alone

cannot stop violence by enforcing laws, attitude, mind set and family education are needed to curb the violence and eve teasing from the society.

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this study is to identify the eve teasing as a social problem. The study has been conducted through the following special objectives basis on this objective. Such as, to know about the personal and demographic information of the respondents, to collect their economic and psycho-social information, to learn about the causes and nature of eve teasing, to perceive the impact of eve teasing on the school going girls of Dhaka city, to know about the legal assistance related information for the victim school girls of eve teasing, to learn the opinion of the victim students about the doings to prevent eve teasing and so on.

Methodology of the Study

This study is based on sample case study. The South City Corporation Area of Dhaka city has been identified as the study area here. The all girl students studying in class seven to ten of secondary schools situated in this area have been regarded as the population and each girl considered as the sample of this study. The data have been collected detailly from 20 girl students selected by incidental sampling from 10 secondary schools chosen by purposive sampling of this area. The direct interviewing technique with structured questionnaire has been applied in this regard.

Observation has been practiced as the auxiliary technique respectively. The necessary and timely information have been also collected from the school teachers and parents. The collected data have been edited first then described successively.

Some Studied Case Descriptions

Case No. - 01:

Name: Anika Rahman. 15 years old. Religion-Islam. She is the eldest among four sisters. She has no brother. Her father's name is: Mahbubur Rahman. Home-Sikasa Bazar, Lalbagh, Dhaka. Anika's father is a businessman. His monthly income is approximately 30,000/-. Anika reads in class nine at local Azimpur Girls School. It is known through a detailed interview with Anika; about one year ago a boy named Faruq would harass her severally on the way of school. But she would not respond at all to him. One day Faruq proposed for love and tried to drag forcefully to catch her hands getting alone on the way of school. Anika became mentally injured for this eve teasing. She could not abide this matter easily. She stopped going to school for some days. Her mental condition deteriorated gradually. She would spend her days always with fear and anxiety. Her family is also concerned about this. They all are in insecurity.

Anika's father carried her to a psychiatrist for mental betterment in the mean time. As well as he expects the cordial cooperation of civil society and law enforcing agencies to resist these eve teasers.

Case No. - 02:

Name: Rokeya Rubiya. 16 years old. Religion-Islam. She is a student of class ten at Azimpur Raihan International School and College, Dhaka. Her father's name is Mohammad Giasuddin and mother's name is Hazera Begum. She is the eldest among two sisters and one brother. Her younger sister reads in class six and younger brother in class two. It is known through a detailed interview with Rokeya that her father is a stationery shop keeper. His monthly income is approximately 25000/-. Their residence is at New Palton, Azimpur, Dhaka. Since Rokeya has no elder brother, so she has to sit at the shop occasionally in absence of her father. They sell mobile card and conduct flexi-load, b-cash business additionally with their stationery shop. She told, a boy named Al-Amin of their community would come often to shop for mobile card and flexi-load purpose. Being a regular customer for a long time Alamin had a good relationship with her father and sometimes he would go to their residence also. One day Alamin suddenly offered Rokeya for love to get her alone at shop coming there for flexi-load. Rokeya was silent to his proposal. Al-Amin deemed this silence as the consent of love. Then he built more business relationship with Rokeya's father to get her love. So the levels of communication between them extended day by day. After some months, one day Al-amin proposed to Rokeya for marriage suddenly, but she informed the dissent to marry him without her parent's consent in this regard. Al-amin could not accept this answer. So one day he tried to abuse her physically to get alone in the shop.

Rokeya became sick mentally for this incident. Then she was taken to a clinical psychologist at Dhaka Medical College Hospital. Now she is sound enough after treatment. She and her family expect sufficient legal assistant to resist these criminals.

Case No. - 03:

Toma Khatun. 15 years old. Religion-Islam. They are two sisters and one brother. Toma is the second among them. Her father's name is Junaid Ahmed and mother's name is Khadija Akter. Her father is a businessman and mother is a housewife. Father's monthly income is 40,000/-. They live at Sukrabad, Dhanmondi, Dhaka. She is a regular student of class nine at Vikarunnessa Noon School. Toma is very pretty to see. So some local abusive

boys tease her constantly on the streets and in front of shopping malls. She does not dare to go to school and outside for any work alone for this irritation. Eve teasing becomes a cause of horror to Toma. In these circumstances, she became mentally upset day after day.

Toma's parents did not get any legal assistance inspite of deserving in this regard. Because the eve teasers were socially and politically so powerful. So, Toma tried to adapt with the surrounding situations in accordance with her parents suggestions, but eventually she was failed to do it.

Case No. - 04:

Nigar Sultana. 15 years old. Religion-Islam. Her residence is at Razia Sultana Road, Mohammadpur, Dhaka-1207. Nigar Sultana is second out of two brothers and two sisters. Her father Abdullah Al Mamun is a second-class job holder and mother housewife. Her father's monthly income is 25000/-. Nigar lives with her family. She reads in class nine at Mohammadpur Girls School. Her father had a dream that she would be a doctor but his dream was destroyed because of the eve teasing of a abandoned and vagrant boy. It is known through a detailed interview with Nigar, a crude and drug addicted named Arman, son of a house holder beside their residence would like her elder sister. But after knowing this, Nigar's father executed her elder sister's marriage hurriedly with an immigrant bridegroom. Arman became angry for it and started to follow his lover's younger sister Nigar as the revenge and teased her regularly on the way of school. Sometimes he would stay in front of Nigar's home and chat with some of his friends there. One day Arman proposed Nigar for loving. But Nigar did not agree to his proposal. So, he was threatening Nigar continuously somehow.

In these circumstances, Nigar collapsed mentally being frightened. Naturally, she could not go to school alone and failed to adapt with situations. Her family availed social assistance only in this regard but didn't take any legal action against Arman in order to preserve their family dignity.

Case No. - 05:

Name: Taslima Akhter. Age: 16 years. Religion: Islam. Father's Name: Wahidul Islam, Mother's Name: Salma Khatun. Her father is a company job holder. His monthly income is 45,000/-. Her mother is a housewife. Taslima is the most elder among 3 brothers and sisters. They live at Tajmohal road, Mohammadpur, Dhaka-1207. She is a student of class ten at Mohammadpur Kishaloya Girl's High School. According to a detailed interview with Taslima, on her way to school, a pedestrian named Farid suddenly stood to follow her and after a while he was walking backwards. He would often comment offensively to her from this. He would expose a variety of gesture and proposed her for love. Sometimes bizarre and abandoned Farid would stand in front of Taslima's school and home. So Taslima broke down mentally to be frightened. She stopped going to school in fright of Farid's eve teasing and would sit alone at home.

The parents of Taslima informed the matter to the head master of her school knowing about this eve teasing. The headmaster provided necessary psychological consolation to Taslima and assured them about appropriate administrative action against Farid. Taslima started going to school again in accordance with the headmaster's assurance.

Limitations of the Study:

Bangladesh is a densely populated country of 1,47,570 sq. km. volume. There are 7 administrative divisions and 64 districts under them in this country. The total population of this country is 16 millions. Approximately 47.5% are female of the total population. At present, eve teasing is a great problem among other socio-economic problems of huge women community. So the solution to the problem requires extensive research, policy formulation and implementation of the program accordingly. But this study is based upon sampling method, so depth data have been collected here on 20 girl students selecting them through incidental sampling from earlier selected 10 secondary schools of Dhaka city only through purposive sampling. Therefore, it is not possible to get the overall picture of eve teasing situation in country through this study executed on extremely small sample size. Only very small sample concept can be achieved about eve teasing from this. Moreover, the respondent's apathy to answer the questions, lack of parental consent, lack of social security and the future risk of damage, conservative social aspects etc. have impeded this study variously.

Recommendations

Now it is the demand of time to develop the socio-economic conditions of women holding half portion in society to extricate them from an unwanted social disorder like eve teasing. It is not only problem of women but also a disgusting situation for all as the human being. Because, in this era of globalization, if our women community becomes victim of harassment and repression in this medieval barbaric mode, then that will be a big defeat of humanity. If we can't control these undesirable situations rapidly, a major disaster will be gravitated in entire society in the near future. It is very important to formulate the fast-new, timely and rigorous legislation and to ensure the effective implementation of previously formulated all legislations to stop eve teasing.

Moreover, to ban the positioning of objectless and abandoned youngs in front of schools and colleges, to stop the proclamation of vulgar drama, pictures and scenes through mobile phone, newspapers, televisions and

movies, to create massive social movement and prevention against eve teasing to make public awareness about the harmful effects of it, to create religious and moral values among the children from their childhood domestically, to boycott the eve teasers socially, to increase the police patrol at educational institutions and populated areas, to ensure the exemplary punishment of eve teasers, to rehabilitate the unemployed, indolent, vagrant, familyless, drug addicted, juvenile delinquents and naughty type's growing aged adolescents organizing them by general and vocational educations etc. initiatives can play a vital role in remedy and prevention of eve teasing.

Conclusion

Women grow up in social structure as neglected, abused and deprived population from the adhering of creation in Bangladesh socio-economic perspective. They are the victims of various discriminations and violences. Lately the women suicide tendency has been increased because of the detestable, abhorrent and undesirable condition like eve teasing. A new dimension has been included with social problems. Eve teasing interrupts the women's rights, diminishes their individual freedom and the right of independent mobility, shortens their education lives, upsets their mental health and disrupts them from personal and national development stream. Women being compelled to choose the path like self-murder under tension and extreme insecurity in every where including home and outside in the effect of it. However, the amelioration of human conscience is not happening in spite of the huge development of science and knowledge. It is not found any effective way to remove the negative and oppressive attitudes of men. The women will be free, enjoy individual independence and security after stopping eve teasing. It is not possible to stop it by individual initiatives; rather it requires a concerted enterprise. The family, society, state and non-governmental organizations should be self-motivated to take different initiatives or programs. It is very important to ensure the application of appropriate legislation. In addition, it is possible to eliminate the eve teasing from our society through removing discrimination with avoiding negative and envious attitudes to women, ensuring their equal opportunity and human rights, correcting male's behaviour, upholding the religious ideals and values among men and women all in society and creating greater social movement. Thereby, the society will be taintless, the women will be independent and secure and the real national development will be confirmed by equal participation of men and women.

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