Campion School MUN

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Forensics Junior Discussion Groups

THE EXPLOITATION OF GENDERS BY THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Student Officer: Ioannis-Stylianos Velonias

Position: Co-Chair

President: Cleo Asteris

International Community

Memorable Experience

Challenges Skills

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PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

Dear delegates,

My name is Ioannis-Stylianos Velonias, I'm a student of the Rizareios Parochial High School and I look forward to serving as your Co-Chair in the Forensics Junior Discussion Groups and the expert chair on the topic of the exploitation of genders by the use of social media. I hope this study guide provides you with a good starting point for your research and a clear picture of what we're expecting to hear in your discussions. I strongly advise you to read this document thoroughly and use the charts provided for you, so you can prepare a well-rounded and effective discussion on the topic. That being said I wish you best of luck and trust that we will have fruitful debates in the Committee. For any question you may have, do not hesitate to contact me via email at: giannosvelonias@gmail.com

Best regards,

Ioannis-Stylianos Velonias

INTRODUCTION

The issue of the exploitation of genders by

the use of social media frequently generates a great deal of heated debate in our modern world. Nowadays, the broad use of social media and the influence it has in our lives is a global issue. According to verified statistics, currently, "42% of the worldwide population is using social media"[1]. Children, teens and

adults have shown great interest in creating various accounts and posting, following their friends and favourite people or just looking at images and videos. Its impact can be considered wide and double-sided. Connecting and keeping in touch with childhood friends, linking with people of international environment, learning new things, exchanging ideas and becoming more familiar with technology are surely a part of the positive impact in a user's life. Social media is a vast place with no control where children can look into inappropriate information, waste their time or where cyber-bullying can also take place. A big issue, as mentioned in research, is the exploitation of the gender in terms of emotions and psychology. Social media gives free pass both to those who want to abuse others by stalking their account, privately and publicly and to those who are more vulnerable and attract this kind of abuse. Ergo, steps and measures should be taken in order to not only to alleviate the problem but to facilitate its future resolution.

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1 https://www.skyword.com/contentstandard/marketing/10-social-media-usage-statistics-you-should-know-an d-what-they-mean-for-your-marketing-strategy/

DEFINITIONS OF KEY TERMS

- **Exploitation**

"The action or fact of treating someone unfairly in order to benefit from their work." [2]

- **Gender**

"Either of the two sexes (male and female), especially when considered with reference to social and cultural differences rather than biological ones. The term is also used more broadly to denote a range of identities that do not correspond to established ideas of male and female."[3]

- **Social Media**

"Forms of electronic communication (such as websites for social networking and microblogging) through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content (such as videos)." [4]

- **Hate speech**

"Speech or expression that denigrates a person or persons on the basis of (alleged) membership in a social group identified by attributes such as race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, physical or mental disability, and others. Typical hate speech involves epithets and slurs, statements that promote malicious stereotypes, and speech intended to incite hatred or violence against a group. Hate speech can also include nonverbal depictions and symbols." [5]

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[2] "Exploitation | Definition of Exploitation in English by Oxford Dictionaries." *Oxford Dictionaries | English*, Oxford Dictionaries, en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/exploitation.

[3] "Gender | Definition of Gender in English by Oxford Dictionaries." *Oxford Dictionaries | English*, Oxford Dictionaries, en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/gender.

[4] "Dictionary by Merriam-Webster: America's Most-Trusted Online Dictionary." *Merriam-Webster*, Merriam-Webster, www.merriam-webster.com/.

[5] Curtis, William M. "Hate Speech." *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 29 Nov. 2016, www.britannica.com/topic/hate-speech.

- **Racism**

"Racism, also called racialism, any action, practice, or belief that reflects the racial worldview—the ideology that humans may be divided into separate and exclusive biological entities called "races"; that there is a causal link between inherited physical traits and traits of personality, intellect, morality, and other cultural and behavioural features; and that some races are innately superior to others. Since the late 20th century the notion of biological race has been recognized as a cultural invention, entirely without scientific basis."[6]

- **Cyberbullying**

"The use of electronic communication to bully a person, typically by sending messages of an intimidating or threatening nature."[7]

- **Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse is any kind of abuse that is emotional rather than physical in nature. It can include anything from verbal abuse and constant criticism to more subtle tactics, such as intimidation, manipulation, and refusal to ever be pleased. [8]

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[6] Cyberbullying | Definition of Cyberbullying in English by Oxford Dictionaries." *Oxford Dictionaries | English*, Oxford Dictionaries, en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/cyberbullying.

[7] Media. "Emotional Abuse." *University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma*, 31 Jan. 2014, usao.edu/other/emotional-abuse.

[8] "Racism." *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 22 Mar. 2017, www.britannica.com/topic/racism.

TIMELINE

Date	Description of Event
April 1993	Cern puts the World Wide Web (WWW) in function, allowing each and every person to have access to the internet.
2003	MySpace was invented, which was a platform that people could send private messages to each user and also post public comments to a user's profile
2005	YouTube was invented, which was the first organised video streaming as well as video sharing platform
2006	Facebook was founded by Mark Zuckerberg, which is the best performing social media platform until now with over 1.44 billion active users
2006	The same year Twitter was also founded, which is a microblogging platform with the format of questions and answers
October 2006	In this month, the first suicide due to cyberbullying occurred. More specifically, a 13 years old teenager committed suicide because she was receiving many cruel messages on MySpace.
2007	Tumblr was created, which is a live streaming and microblogging platform
2012	Snapchat was invented, which is an application, in which people communicate with other users by posting pictures
February 2012	It was reported that according to Anatolian News Agency, every year approximately 750 adolescents in Australia commit suicide because they have fallen victims of cyberbullying[9]
August 2016	According to Cyberbullying Research Centre, approximately 16.9 percent of students of the middle and high school have characterized themselves as victims of cyberbullying

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[9] hurriyetdailynews.com. "Increased Cyber Bullying Leads to Teen Suicides in Australia." *Hürriyet Daily News*, Hurriyetdailynews.com, 29 Feb. 2012, www.hurriyetdailynews.com/increased-cyber-bullying-leads-to-teen-suicides-in-australia-14921.

TOPIC DISCUSSION

Privacy

It is commonplace that each and every person nowadays can easily have access to the Internet and various social media platforms. However, it is of great importance to highlight the fact that the Internet is public and, of course, not private. Therefore, this means that everything that it is uploaded on the Internet is accessible for every user. In this way, everything can be saved, copied and re-used for any purpose and obviously it is almost impossible to remove it from the cyberspace. For this reason, it is of vital importance to be careful with what you are uploading in the public platforms, because in many occasions the information that you are sharing in your profiles is very significant for two fundamental reasons. First of all, in order to gain financial profit. For example, businesses like Google profit by uploading advertisements of different companies and other businesses and, obviously, using marketing tactics in order to maximise it. Ergo, they manipulate your shared information in order to discover your interests and bombard you with respective advertisements. Furthermore, the second reason is much worse and has a negative impact on people's lives. There are many people who use personal information of different users in order to destroy your reputation and may exploit those users. Hence, every user should take into consideration and be aware of every possible threat and danger that exists on the Internet and be cautious with what you are uploading. Since the social media platforms are here to stay, it is not the media itself, which should come under closer scrutiny, but rather the way we use it.
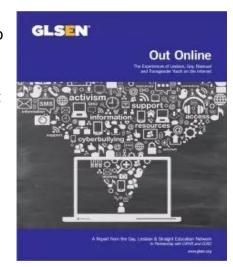
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Cyberbullying and LGBTQ

LGBTQ constitutes a term which includes all people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (or questioning). A recent study from the GLSEN or Gay, Lesbian, & Straight Education Network pertaining to various experiences of LGBTQ youth online came to some unbelievable conclusions. More specifically this study found that LGBTQ community, especially the youth, experience intensive cyberbullying and online harassment, in comparison to other adolescents, who do not belong to this community. Almost the half of the LGBTQ youth (42%) has reported that they have been bullied and harassed online due to their sexual orientation or gender identity, while 27% of them declared that they feel totally insecure in the cyberspace. Furthermore, it has to be mentioned that, according to experts, cyberbullying as well as online harassment have devastating effects on the psychological health and self-esteem of the victims. In this part, it is of vital importance to highlight the fact that even the verbal harassment, constitute a type of violence and it is against the human rights. According to the Gay, Lesbian, & Straight Education Network the 82% of the youth of the LGBTQ community even nowadays deals with the verbal harassment. In this way, it is perceivable that the LGBTQ youth are quite vulnerable to a great extent and measures should be taken in order to provide safety to those adolescents and also mental aid in order to deal with any possible psychological problem that the cyberbullying has caused.

Cyberbullying of women

Cyber bullying can be characterized as the harassment, threat and intimidation of a person by the use of mobile phones, instant messages, email or social networking sites. In the past, bullying was a frequent phenomenon within the school environment, where older students used to bully the younger ones. Nevertheless, with the development of technology, bullying transformed into cyberbullying, where everyone can bully a person anonymously and very easily, only by having access to the Internet. As in other types of violence, the main target is women. It is commonplace that many people attack women's personality and their sexuality by the use of social media, and in many occasions by the use of fake accounts. A research which was conducted by Ipsos Mori showed that the women who are basically persecuted are those, who are media personalities or in public positions. Because of their position, these women are exposed to myriads of anonymous people on the Internet who exploit the online anonymity to say anything they want.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

Nevertheless, currently there is no clear framework, which is effective enough to achieve the eradication of any type of exploitation of the genders by the use of social media, but there is a number of ways that if employed the issue could be effectively tackled. First and foremost, it is of great importance to promote cooperation between each and every state with Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in order to launch public awareness campaigns by means such as education programs on all levels of the school system so as not only to educate the younger generations on the true facts of the issue but also to promote empathy. In addition to this, public open lectures and talks are of vital importance in order for members of the public to have the opportunity to voice their concerns pertaining this issue and have their questions answered by experts and people in key governmental positions.

Moreover, it is of vital importance to provide psychological support and aid to each and every victim in order to overcome any psychological issues and problems through the help of expert psychologists and institutions. Furthermore, international cooperation is sine qua non while multilateral, bilateral agreements are essential. Last but not least, it is of paramount importance a feeling of empathy to be cultivated among the citizens so as to become part of the solution instead of falling prey to populist, xenophobic rhetoric. All these aforementioned measures will play a role of paramount significance to deal with the exploitation of genders by the use of social media and by taking these measures into account we could pave the way in order to alleviate this issue by any means and turn a new leaf, where there is no discrimination, scare and terrorism.
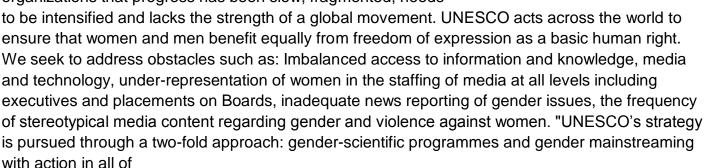
MAJOR COUNTRIES & ORGANIZATIONS INVOLVED

USA

According to statistics, the rate of North America pertaining to social network penetration is the highest all over the world. More specifically, the rate of North America is approximately 66 percent, while the global average penetration rate is about 37 percent in 2017. In the United States of America (USA), about 81 percent of the whole population had at least one social media profile in 2016. This means that there were over 207 million users of social networks in USA this year. With such high percentages, the United States of America (USA) constitutes the country with the third largest social network user base all over the world, while China is the first and India is the second. Forecasts are positive, which present a continuous raise in the number of social network users in the near future. More specifically, it is believed that the number of social network users in the United States of America (USA) will surpass the 217 million users.

UNESCO

In 1995, during the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, all governments met to discuss gender equality issues. The key potential of media to promote gender equality and diversity in all spheres was highlighted in the Declaration and Platform for Action. It is commonplace that all stakeholders are to join forces to deal with "stereotyping of women and inequality in women's access to and participation in all communication systems, especially in the media". Even long before the Beijing Declaration, gender equality was enshrined in the UN Charter in 1945. Today, there is consensus among all UN Agencies and other organizations that progress has been slow, fragmented, needs to be intensified and lacks the strength of a global movement. UNESCO acts across the world to ensure that women and men benefit equally from freedom of expression as a basic human right. We seek to address obstacles such as: Imbalanced access to information and knowledge, media and technology, under-representation of women in the staffing of media at all levels including executives and placements on Boards, inadequate news reporting of gender issues, the frequency of stereotypical media content regarding gender and violence against women. "UNESCO's strategy is pursued through a two-fold approach: gender-scientific programmes and gender mainstreaming with action in all of

UNESCO's fields of competence: education, the sciences, culture and communication and information."[10] This includes interventions concerning policy development, awareness raising and advocacy, and research, institutional capacity building, and training.

International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR)

The International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR) is pleased to be working with UNESCO and other organisations around the world as part of the Global Forum on Media and Gender. This is the leading worldwide professional organisation in the field of media and communication research. The members of the (IAMCR) foster worldwide comprehensiveness and excellence within the context of the best traditions of critical research in the sector. Most importantly, it depicts an international social group of scholars who concentrate on media and communication research. The International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR) has dealt with issues considering media and gender for many years. Since the early 1980s, the organisation has included an active and productive section that focuses on these issues. The Gender and Communication Section has regularly organised panels at IAMCR conferences, as well as working with the organisation's other sections and working groups to expand the scope of these concerns. Numerous publications and research projects have emerged from the section members (for instance, Carolyn Byerly's (2011) study of women in the global news industry, which involved many of the section members). The section also hosts a Facebook page that features announcements and resources relevant to research on gender and communication.

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[10] "Monitoring Gender Equality in Maghreb Media | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization." *UNESCO*, Discovery Channel, Producer., www.unesco.org/new/en/media-services/single-view/news/monitoring_gender_equality_in_maghreb_media/

UN INVOLVEMENT: Relevant Resolutions & Treaties

Resolution A/HRC/20/L.13 The promotion, protection and enjoyment of human rights on the Internet
https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/RegularSessions/Session20/Pages/ResDecStat.as px

The General Assembly of the United Nations adopted this resolution on the 29th June 2012. It was the first resolution to be made pertaining to the protection of the human rights in the cyberspace. More specifically, it is highlighted that all the human rights have exactly the same validity offline and online.

UN Resolution 68/167 https://undocs.org/A/RES/68/167

The General Assembly of the United Nations adopted this resolution in December 2013. This Resolution voiced every concern and issue pertaining to the adverse influence that electronic surveillance and interruption of communications may have on the human rights. According to the General Assembly, it was additionally stated that all the rights held by people offline, have to be under protection also online. Ergo, all member states were called upon to show respect, and of course, secure the right to privacy in the communication through digital means. Furthermore, the member states were asked to reconsider their legislation, policy and procedure regarding these issues and adjust them to the respective circumstances and definitely to the international human rights law.

United Nations Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee

A special meeting took place at the United Nations in New York on 1st of December 2016. The fundamental topic of the aim of this meeting was the prevention of the exploitation of the social media and in general the Internet for terrorist purposes. H.E. Amr Abdellatif Aboulatta, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Egypt to the United Nations, mentioned in his closing statement that: "We must work together to promote dialogue among all stakeholders in order to find effective ways to prevent the exploitation of information and communication technologies for terrorist purposes"

Previous attempts to solve the problem

Indeed, the issue of the exploitation of genders by the use of social media. Undoubtedly, the

United Nations, the European Union as well as many Anti-Bullying Organizations such as Stomp out Bullying and Cyberbullying Research Centre have effectively contributed in order to deal with the situation over the past years. In addition to this, it is imperative to mention that a lot of conferences have taken place and a wide range of official resolutions have been composed, in order to combat a serious number of problems that affect those, who have fallen prey of exploitation.

More specifically, it has to be mentioned that there has not be found any concrete solution to the problem, but measures have been taken into consideration in order to promote security. Without doubt, several efforts have been made in order to provide security in the social media as well as a plethora of improvements have been made in some occasions in the sector of education, as many seminars have taken place in many countries concerning the dangers of the Internet as well as the cyberbullying. Moreover, it is of crucial importance to mention that also health care and psychological support has been offered to victims through cooperation between intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.

Nevertheless, there have not been a lot of efforts made, pertaining to the exploitation of the genders by the use of social media. A lot of incidents have been mentioned over the past years, about people, who have exploited myriads of people, either women or men, for their own benefit and they have treated them with inhumane ways. Ergo, stricter measures should be taken, in order to combat this situation.

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