

The Online Sexual Exploitation Of The Children

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Technology has its fair share of advantages, but with the passage of time, there are some adverse impact of the way technology has been used for disruptive purposes has been witnessed. These days, the technology is facilitating the online sexual exploitation of the children. That includes the streaming of the sexual abuse of children using web cameras as well as cell phones. These activities are carried out for the purpose of generating profit, which makes the act more disgusting, to say the least (Adams and Flynn, 2017, p.45).

Grooming of Children for Sexual Exploitation

The unfortunate part is that mobile devices have added a new dimension to the way the sexual exploitation of children is supposed to be carried out (Adams and Flynn, 2017, p.45). There are applications that are supposed to target, recruit and bring children on board for sexual exploitation. Children are being coerced to partake in sexual activity (Adams and Flynn, 2017, p.45). There are careful estimates that talk about the fact that how thousands of children are being coerced into this racket through online mediums (Shields and Letourneau, 2015, p.11). The sad part is that the number is growing with the passage of time (Adams and Flynn, 2017, p.45). The common perception is that girls are more prone to be the victims of online sexual exploitation, and it is true to an extent, but that does not mean that boys are safe in any manner. From very young children to adolescents, the victims of this abuse. Not only is that children from all ethnic and social backgrounds are faced with this situation (Shields and Letourneau, 2015, p.11).

Key Threats in the Area of the Child Sexual Exploitation

There are a number of key threats that are faced by children when it comes to online sexual exploitation (Shields and Letourneau, 2015, p.11). For instance, peer-to-peer networks and anonymous accesses like Darknet are one of the prime threats as far as children's sexual exploitation is supposed to be carried out (Adams and Flynn, 2017, p.45). These environments remain consistent when it comes to the availability of child abuse material as well as the way noncommercial distribution is supposed to be carried out (Shields and Letourneau, 2015, p.11). At the same time, they are also attractive avenues for the offenders, not only that, they are easy to use as well (Adams and Flynn, 2017, p.45). The key thing that needs to be noted is that the greater the level of anonymity, the better it is for the abusers to make sure that they can carry out their activity without

facing any consequences (Adams and Flynn, 2017, p.45). The problem is the global network has become so strong with the passage of time that it exists beneath the surface, and thus, the confidence and comfort level of the abusers have increased (Shields and Letourneau, 2015, p.11). The profit-driven abuse of children in the overseas market that is carried out in front of the live camera is another thing that needs to be kept in mind (Shields and Letourneau, 2015, p.11).

Sexting and Revenge Pornography of Children

The recent reports have implied that the children as young as 11 years are the victim of revenge porn (Adams and Flynn, 2017, p.45). At the same time, the worrying statistics is that how about 25 % of the cases in revenge pornography involved someone who was younger than 18 years old. The problem is that there is a culture of victim blaming and slut shaming that is being witnessed in the cases of revenge pornography, and due to that, it is safe to assume that the actual number is going to be much higher as compared to what one gets to see in the mainstream media (Adams and Flynn, 2017, p.45). The problem is that the way sexting has become common these days, as it is seen, is that the advent of peer-to-peer networks and online mediums has allowed people to share intimate images with each other with great regularity. It has to be said that the child can be reported with revenge pornography if they share the images of someone who is above 18 years old (Adams and Flynn, 2017, p.45). The statistics are also something that is something that is needed to be looked at (Adams and Flynn, 2017, p.45). The key thing that needs to be sorted out is the way legality in these cases needs to be reported (Adams and Flynn, 2017, p.45). If the sharing of the image is carried out at a certain point in time, even if the child is in the image, then they should be charged with revenge pornography as well as sharing the image of the children without their consent, as they are not in the position to approve of such actions at such a young age (Adams and Flynn, 2017, p.45).

Availability of the Smartphone and Online Solicitation

The key thing that needs to be noted here is how the growing number of children these days own a Smartphone, and due to that, they are able to make sure that they are able to self-generate indecent material (Balfe et al. 2015, p.439). This type of material that is initially shared with the innocent intent can land in the hands of the abuser. Either the person to whom this material is being sent might use these images in the wrong manner (Balfe et al. 2015, p.439). At the same time, the level of security and encryption that one gets to see in these peer-to-peer networks is far from ideal. As soon as this material lands in the hands of the abuser, they are in the position to exploit these images as a means of extortion (Mitchell et al. 2011, p.43). The key thing is that parents need to have a certain degree of control with regard to the way they watch the online activities of their children. At least some sort of education is supposed to be provided to these children so that they have an idea about how serious the consequences are if any intimate information lands in the wrong hands (DeHart et al. 2017, p.77).

Effect of Sexual Abuse and Exploitation on Children

There are many effects of long-term child abuse and exploitation on children. One of the key things in this regard is that what are the short-term and long-term impacts. Studies have shown that the victims of child abuse have to face bullying at school and hurtful behavior from their peers (Flannery and O'Brien, 2016, p.45). The problem is that the lack of support that they receive at this point in time is very daunting for them, and it has a long-term impact on the mental health of these children. Their grades develop due to that, and as they lose interest in their studies, the key thing is how sexual exploitation is supposed to be carried out at the given time period (Flannery and O'Brien, 2016, p.45). The first thing that they lose is their self-esteem and how they view themselves; at the same time, there is also the prevalence of stress disorder at each and every level. Not only that, they also develop suicidal tendencies at the given point of time. There are also instances when they develop violent tendencies and resort to violence against some of the people who are facing these issues in the long run (Flannery and O'Brien, 2016, p.45). There are issues related to drug and alcohol abuse as well that need to be taken into consideration (Flannery and O'Brien, 2016, p.45). Studies have also shown how they tend to develop this habit in the future; they resort to substance abuse in the later parts of their life as well (Merdian et al. 2017, p.65).

Commercial Child Sexual Exploitation

To some extent, there is considerable evidence that some form of child sexual exploitation is a commercial market, and there exists a demand for the live streaming of sexual acts and what it is doing is that it is contributing towards the increase in the amount of abuse that one gets to see at the given point of time (Greenbaum et al. 2015, p.574). Live-distant child abuse has the most obvious connection with the way commercial distribution of the whole thing is carried out (Merdian et al. 2017, p.65). There exists a vile community that approves of these actions in a distant manner. The material of such type is also valued highly in the commercial market, to say the least (Greenbaum et al. 2015, p.574).

Are Girls More Prone to Sexual Abuse and Exploitation at Online Forums

It has to be noted that girls are more at risk of online abuse and sexual exploitation as compared to boys. There exists a commercial market that values child pornography, and due to that, girls are at more risk of being sexually exploited at these online forums. As per empirical evidence, it can be seen that in 35 % of the cases of sexual exploitation, usually the victims are girls (Greenbaum et al. 2015, p.574). Again, that does not mean that the risk factor for the boys is on the lower side. The boys are

also at higher risk, and the repercussions for the abuse and problem are as serious for boys as is the case for girls. The problem is that the effects for girls are much more serious for girls as they face complete social rejection in the wake of sexual abuse (Merdian et al. 2017, p.191).

How Situation Can Be Improved

There are concrete steps that need to be taken to make sure that this whole community is being roped (Kloess et al. 2014, p.126). There are many challenges, but governments, international organizations as well as NGOs are making sure that they address these concerns together to make sure that sexual exploitation is being stopped in one way or another (Kloess et al. 2014, p.126). The first thing that needs to be done is to make sure that the successful detection and prosecution of the perpetrators is being carried out to make sure that these crimes are being stopped. Not only that, improvement is also needed to be placed towards securing the cyber evidence as well as allowing for the criminal prosecution of the crimes that are committed at online mediums (Kloess et al. 2014, p.126). The biggest challenge is that the low encryption in peer-to-peer networks is something that needs to be looked at in a close manner to make sure that the level of control can be developed. A mechanism also needs to be developed that allows the prosecution of criminals (Kloess et al. 2014, p.126).

Developing the Appropriate Legal Framework

At the moment, the biggest challenge that is being faced by legal prosecutors across the world is due to the different interpretations that one gets to see as far as the way these are developed. The other thing that needs to be looked at is to make sure that the essential steps are also needed to be taken and that there should be a level of consistency with regards to how sexual abuse, online exploitation, and revenge pornography as it is the vagueness in the legislation that is causing a lot of issues with regards to the development of the controls in this regard (Merdian et al. 2017, p.191).

Conclusion

It can be seen that online sexual exploitation is one of the biggest criminal and legislative issues (Merdian et al. 2017, p.191). The problem is that the criminal network is working in a very discrete manner, and there is a lot of vagueness attached to the whole sexual abuse thing, due to which victims are not coming forward and reporting the incidents. At the same time, the other major problem that is faced with regard to the legislation (Merdian et al. 2017, p.191). The legal framework in this regard also needs to be looked at to make sure that the criminals can be prosecuted (Merdian et al. 2017, p.191). Despite such challenges, governments, international organizations, and NGOs are working together to address the online sexual exploitation of children. Governments must rally significant political will and resources to hold perpetrators accountable, provide comprehensive

services to child victims, and prevent the crime from occurring (Merdian et al. 2017, p.191).

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