ROLE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY IN THE CAUSATION OF JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

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INTRODUCTION:

Juveniles are always individuals with innocence and curiosity that sustains with their age. Due to the fact that cyberspace offers lot of places to explore irrespective of their good or bad characteristics, it stimulates the curiosity of the juvenile to an unforeseen level and offers him an escapade into the world of fantasy but it also causes an insurmountable damage to his views of reality and makes him numb towards the feelings of fellow brethren the society.

Thus, when a juvenile is exposed to the world of information technology it overwhelms him and when he gets attracted towards the more evil pathways of cyberspace it fascinates him and causes him let go of the reality behind. When he is faced with real issues of life, he tries to implement the things he learned from cyberspace into motion which may be anti-social in nature, thus causing to be alienated from the society and make him to violate the laws on which the society is based upon, serving as an effective catalyst in creating juvenile delinquency. I have sketched out some of the causes that influence juvenile delinquency through usage of cyberspace.

LOW SELF-CONTROL, DEVIANT PEERS:

In today's society our most valuable commodity is not grain, steel or even technology; it is information. Because of computer networks, just about

128

everyone can now access an astounding range of information. The Internet is international, and a staggering amount of information on every subject imaginable is available for free. Because so many people now have access, computer crimes have become more frequent. Everyone with a computer and a modem can commit a computer crime if so inclined.

In light of the diverse range of offending opportunities facilitated by the Internet, criminologists have begun to explore the ways in which traditional theories of crimemay account for these behaviors. One of the most heavily tested theories used to examine cybercrime is Gott fredson and Hirschis (1990) general theory of crime.

They argue humans are rational beings who weigh the costs and benefits of potential behavior, including crime, and act accordingly. Individuals with low self-control,however, are impulsive, insensitive, short sighted, risk-takers who prefer simple tasks. As a result, they are likely to choose the immediate gains of crime even through the long-term consequences are greater. The general theory of crime has been tested extensively and has received strong support as one of the most significant correlates of street crime and juvenile delinquency Low self-control has also been linked to various forms of cybercrime, including illegal music downloading, movie piracy, software piracy and viewing sexual material online.

Tests of self-control and computer hacking, however, have produced mixed effects that do not fully support the general theory of crime. Thus, self-control appears to have some value in explaining individual participation for a wide variety of cybercrimes.

Since research has consistently identified that both low self-control anddeviant peer associations are strong predictors of both traditional and cybercrime

offending, emerging scholarship has explored the interactions between these two

Variables. It provides a theoretical basis for a mediation effect, stating that "people acquire the propensity to delinquency, find delinquent friends, and then commit delinquent acts, including serious criminal acts." Research indicates that individuals with lower levels of self-control self-select into deviant peer groups in the real world.

MASS MEDIA AND VIDEO GAMES:

The problem with the modern world is the desensitizing of society's youth through violence in the mass media, specifically television and video games. I incline to believe that because of violence on television and the violent content contained in video games has increased, so has youth violence. if the increasing violence shown on television and video games has a desensitizing effect on juveniles. thus, increasing the probability that they will commit an act of violence. I believe that this is important because I think violence on television and video games is a form of classical conditioning. In the movie, "A Clockwork Orange," the character was given negative reinforcement whenever he sees acts of violence shown to him on television. Eventually, he becomes repulsed by it and feels ill every time he sees or thinks of committing an act of violence. I think television and violent games are having a reverse effect on today's youth. Violence is glorified in the mass media, thus youth become to associate killing with entertainment, they see violence as the "manly" thing to do, and they see how violence on television often goes unpunished. I feel this is a cause of juvenile delinquency because of the desensitizing nature of violence on television. In conclusion, studies have shown that media violence has negative effects on children's behavior and their outlook on society in general.

By imposing government supervision on media violence, parents will become more aware of the situation and this will, in turn, help deter children from viewing such violent shows. Children should not be continually exposed to violence in the media, and the government should take action to prevent this occurrence.

CYBERBULLYING AND JUVENILE VICTIMISATION:

As increasing numbers of youth embrace computer-mediated communication to meet academic and social needs, interpersonal violence directly and indirectly related to the Internet is occurring more often. Cyber bullying in particular has shot to the forefront of agendas in schools and communities due to the emotional, psychological, and even physical harm to which victims can be subjected. Both interfamilial offenders and strangers have found that young children and teenagers are perfect targets for criminal acts because they are often trusting, naive, curious, adventuresome, and eager for attention and affection. However, the most attractive factor to predators is that children and teenagers historically have not been viewed as credible witnesses. Today, the danger to children is even greater because the Internet provides predators anonymity. Whether the victimization occurs in person or over the Internet, the process is the same—the perpetrator uses information to target a child victim. For example, the predator may initiate an online friendship with a young person, sharing hobbies and interests. This may lead to the exchange of gifts and pictures. Just like the traditional predator who targets children in person, the online predator usually is willing to spend considerable time befriending and grooming a child. The predator wants to build the child's trust, which will allow the predator to get what he or she ultimately wants from the child.

Although no family is immune to the possibility that their child may be exploited and harassed on the Internet, a few factors make some children more vulnerable than others. Older children tend to be at greater risk because they often use the computer unsupervised and are more likely to engage in online discussions of a personal nature. Some victims become unwitting participants as they actively participate in chat rooms, trade e-mail messages, and send pictures online. Troubled or rebellious teens who are seeking emancipation from parental authority can be susceptible to Internet predators. The risk of victimization is greater for emotionally vulnerable youth who may be dealing with issues of sexual identity. These young people may be willing to engage in conversation that is both titillating and exciting but appears innocent and harmless. Unfortunately, Internet interactions that initially appear innocent can gradually lead to sexually explicit conduct. This scars the juveniles for life and causes them to depict an anti-social behaviour as a defence mechanism leading into juvenile delinquency.

UNIQUE CHARECTERISTICS OF CYBERSPACE:

Several characteristics distinguish Internet crimes from other crimes committed against Juveniles:

Physical contact between the child and the perpetrator does not need to occur for a child to become a victim or for a crime to be committed. Innocent pictures or images of children can be digitally transformed into pornographic material and distributed across the Internet without the victims' knowledge.

The Internet provides a source for repeated, long-term victimization of a child that can last for years, often without the victim's knowledge. Once a child's

132

picture is displayed on the Internet, it can remain there forever. Images can stay on the Internet indefinitely without damage to the quality of the image.

These crimes transcend jurisdictional boundaries, often involving multiple victims from different communities, states, and countries. The geographic location of a child is not a primary concern for perpetrators who target victims over the Internet. Often, perpetrators travel hundreds of miles to different states and countries to engage in sexual acts with children they met over the Internet. Many of these cases involve local, state, federal, and international law enforcement entities in multiple jurisdictions.

Many victims of Internet crimes do not disclose their victimization or even realize that they have been victims of a crime. Whereas children who experience physical or sexual abuse may disclose the abuse to a friend, teacher, or parent, many victims of Internet crimes remain anonymous until pictures or images are discovered by law enforcement during an investigation. The presumed anonymity of Internet activities often provides a false sense of security and secrecy for both the perpetrator and the victim.

HACKING AND JUVENILES:

The original definition of Hacking could best be given as: anyone who 'breaks open' code and manipulates it in a clever or original, but not necessarily illegal, fashion. However a more recent definition would be: anyone who breaks into a computer without authorisation.

While it is difficult to pinpoint a 'profile of hacker' it is possible to detail common themes among types of hackers, in this case among elite hackers. These themes were observed as In general, they are very bright or gifted. Their ages at the time of the most frantic and sophisticated hacking was usually

133

between 14 and 22,as we can confer they are mostly juveniles. An anti-establishment view is a key factor for the top hackers. They want to rebel against symbols of authority, such as banks, government agencies. They never quite fit at school or university. This might say more about the education system than the individuals themselves. In almost all cases, they had moved far beyond anything that school or university could teach them about computers in particular fields. They are often driven by the adrenalin rush of being somewhere they were not supposed to be, commonly associated with juveniles. Often they described feeling alienated by teachers, whom, it would appear, were ill-equipped to deal with gifted children. Most were also introverted, anti-social perhaps even awkward. They usually came from less than picture perfect family backgrounds. Their families were often dysfunctional, in some cases with one parent missing, through divorce or death.

CONCLUSION:

The Juvenile delinquent is an individual who is governed by the "pleasure principle ". He wants to get immediate pleasure and immediate satisfaction for his needs. So he becomes a victim to his own impulses. He is neither able to control his impulses nor able to imagine to think the consequences of his actions and cyberspace & other forms of information technology provides him an avenue to exhibit this tendencies thus effectively influencing his criminal behaviour.

It is also said that delinquent breakdown is an escape from emotional situation for some particular individuals with peculiar individual and family background. Some emotionally maladjusted children become delinquents to get the attention of their parents or as a protest against their treatment. Thus, it may be said that

134

juvenile delinquency is the result of both social or environmental and personal or individual factors.

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