

Impact of Social Media and AI on Facilitating or Preventing Cyber Sexual Exploitation among Teenagers

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ABSTRACT

Social media has changed the way adolescents communicate and interact, but it has also posed serious risks, particularly in the area of child abuse and online exploitation. This study sheds light on social media and the key factors contributing to child abuse and these risks, while also highlighting strategies to mitigate them. By examining empirical research, legal frameworks, and intervention programs, this study provides a comprehensive view of how digital platforms enable and combat child abuse. The findings underscore the urgent need for strong policies, improved parental controls, and advanced technological safeguards to create a safe online environment for children. Additionally, in today's digital age, academic literacy, particularly regarding artificial intelligence, is essential for teenagers. Through this research, students will gain a deeper understanding of AI and its role in online safety. Ultimately, the study aims to protect vulnerable youth by informing the development of intervention strategies and resources.

Objectives: To understand Artificial Intelligence and Social Media in Promoting or Reducing Teen Cyber Sexual Exploitation (CSE). To create a more secure internet environment for teenagers.

Methodology: A qualitative method is used in this research because this study deals with how teenagers perceive sexual harassment and what level of awareness they have about cyber-sexual exploitation.

Conclusion: This study underlines that to effectively address cyber-sexual exploitation in the digital area, schools, parents, and technology developers must work together.

Keywords: Artificial intelligence, Social media, Cyber Sexual Exploitation, Adolescent.

Introduction:

The rapid advancement of social media has revolutionized global communications, enabling unprecedented connectivity. However, the rise of digital interactions has also led to increasing concerns about child abuse facilitated through online platforms. Reports indicate a significant increase in cases of cyberbullying, grooming, and exploitation, necessitating a systematic analysis of the factors contributing to these risks and strategies for prevention. This study aims to explore the dual role of social media in enabling and reducing child abuse, providing insights for policymakers, educators, and technology developers.

Teenagers' daily lives are increasingly infused with social media platforms, which present both new opportunities and difficulties, especially in the area of sexual exploitation. Social media and artificial intelligence encourage and discourage this kind of exploitation. However, advancements in artificial intelligence technology offer practical instruments to identify and stop this kind of abuse. In the digital sphere, gender-based harassment includes insulting terminology linked to the user's identification, sexist jokes, sexual insults, gender-humiliating statements, and unwanted sexual attention. When signals about sex or sexuality are directly related to personal communication, unwanted sexual attention is evident.

Defines sexual assault based on images as the practice of obtaining authorization to take, publish, or threaten to publish explicit pictures or videos. School dropout is common among victims of commercially sexually exploited children and has been identified as a red flag for commercially sexually exploited children. A major reason for this is social media and artificial intelligence. Online grooming primarily takes place on open chat sites or private conversation posts on social media. As a result, relevant information for finding online grooming should share characteristics with chat logs on the mentioned sites. As a result of the lack of such data, numerous research projects have been conducted. Addressing cybercrimes against children requires a comprehensive approach that includes raising awareness about online safety, implementing effective legal frameworks, and building support and systems for victims. Communities play an important role in developing a culture.

Literature Review:

Gámez-Guadix, M., De Santisteban, 2023. Children often engage in online grooming behaviors. The fact that vulnerability increases with age and that girls are more likely to experience violence than boys. Wilkes, A. 2019, A study shows that the incidence of cybercrime and sexual exploitation of minors is increasing in urban and rural areas. This trend is due to factors such as the widespread availability of the Internet and the intensive use of digital technology by minors. Finkelhor, D., 2023. Images created by young people account for the majority of image abuse cases, the need for a comprehensive knowledge of the dynamics of image abuse beyond adult involvement, with the most harmful cases arising from peer abuse.

Helpingstine C. E., 2021, Teenage sexually exploited women exposed to commercial sexual exploitation perceive their social networks as both beneficial and harmful. O'Brien, J., Finkelhor, D., 2022. Despite the growing body of research on interventions for high-risk youth, there is a critical need for focused, empirically supported programs specifically designed for victims of commercial sexual exploitation and their specific difficulties and outcomes. Borj, P. R., Raja, K., 2023, The need for better algorithms and real-time online grooming detection systems. The importance of incorporating psychological theories and robust feature sets into machine learning models to improve detection accuracy.

According to V.M., 2024, there is a significant amount of discussion and postings about child sexual abuse content on the dark web, which sheds light on the attitudes and actions of its creators. Furthermore, the proposed machine learning detection technique promises to accurately recognize child sexual abuse content and extract important data for child protection efforts. Tan, Y., Vandebosch, H., 2024. While consumers value multimedia content, labeling, emotional support, and informational support in technological tools for victims of online sexual harassment, they are dissatisfied with the evidence-gathering aspect. Ali, S., Hagel, H. A., 2023. There is a strong correlation between children being sexually abused and being exploited online. This highlights how easy it is for young people to access the Internet and how child pornography is becoming more common.

Sadaka. K., Prabhu. S., 2024. A custom multi-level hierarchical classifier predicts child sexual abuse awareness with a high level of accuracy, demonstrating that machine learning models can increase public awareness of this important issue. Sunday, N., Sunday. I.M., 2021, PrevBOT, a computer program for automatic processing of personal data, can accurately classify potential perpetrators of child sexual exploitation and abuse and identify risk factors associated with online grooming with systematic development and training on appropriate datasets.

Sunde, I. M., & Sunde, N. 2022. Police can legally use it to stop online exploitation and sexual abuse of children. There needs to be a clear legal framework to identify the target of the tool and provide adequate protections for the rights of individuals. Okolie, C., 2023. In addition to better enforcement methods, stricter laws and increased public awareness should prevent the misuse of deepfake technology for image-based sexual harassment. Shipe. S.L. Guastafarro, K., 2024, Single-parent families are more likely to contact child protection services again. Married couples with distinct risk factor patterns indicate the impact of family structure on child protection services participation.

Ramakrishnan.D., Alexander. A.C., 2024. A multifaceted strategy including mental health support, community participation, and legislative efforts is necessary to reduce the incidence of child and adolescent suicide in India, Douglas, P.D., Holia. K., 2024, Social barriers are more likely to be broken by bystanders because they are personally affected by norm violation, have specific fixed characteristics, and exist in cultural contexts that prioritize confrontation and group norms. Cerezo, M. A., Ponce Salvador, 2004, Trained professionals significantly increase detection rates of child abuse cases and reduce the gap between identified and actual cases.

David Finkelhor, D., Hamby, S.L., 2005. A wide range of child victims' experiences reveal a significant overlap between different types of victimization. Subramani, S., Wang, H., 2018, The ability of machine learning classifiers in this context to successfully distinguish between social media posts about abuse and those that do not. Jacqueline Nesi, J. 2020, Although social media use is associated with a small but significant effect on adolescent mental health, the effects vary based on individual vulnerability and specific online experiences.

McLean, C., Johnson, K., 2021. Victims face a range of complex issues, based on five primary themes: social disintegration, stability, image-based sexual abuse, isolation, lack of independence, and existential threat. Kelz, P., McRae, N., & Grealish, A., 2020, The relationship between teenage mental health problems and social media use. Spending time on social media and substance use stand out as major risk factors for anxiety and depression. Ferrara, E., Cresci, S., Luceri, L., 2020, Multidisciplinary approaches are essential to prevent the spread of misinformation and the public health problems it poses during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Schneider, F.D., Loveland Cook, C. A., 2020 There is a significant association between childhood trauma and poor mental health in adulthood, and the effects vary depending on the strength of social relationships. Huang, C., 2020. There are significant associations between problematic social media use and several mental health conditions, including depression and low self-esteem. Different social media platforms and cultural contexts Castano Pulgarín, S. A., 2021, Hate speech on the Internet can take many forms, such as hate speech motivated by underlying ideas such as politics, race, or religion. It is important to develop better techniques to assess and understand the effects of cyberhate, especially on social media,

Ramasamy, S., Seshadri, S., 2020, The need for integrated child protection action plans to reduce risks and threats to child protection, including child labour, human trafficking and sexual violence. Ulvi, O., Karamehic-Muratovic, A., 2022, Social media, especially Twitter and Instagram, can affect mental health in both positive and negative ways. Consistent Instagram use has been linked to self-harm and negative body image. Cataldo, I., Leбри, P., 2021, Social media has been linked to several psychological problems, such as anxiety and depression, especially in adolescence. These results take into account biological and environmental influences. Pozzola, P., Spina, G., 2022, Poor social media use and multiple health problems, such as depression, eating disorders and cyberbullying in children and adolescents. Screening media exposure and informing families about potential risks and ways to avoid them and. Herath, D. P., Khanna, P., Ahmed, M., 2022. Although user awareness of cybersecurity may influence safe behavior, to draw firm conclusions about how safe behavior also affects social media vulnerability levels,

Social media should also be given importance Campbell, F., Valera, P. 2020, College students traumatized by deaths posted on social media, this trauma causes feelings of frustration, fear, and anger. Furthermore, the children's actions can also have a major impact on how they react . Maurya, C., Muhammad, T., Dhillon, P., Maurya, P., 2022, Cyberbullying victims are more likely to suffer from depression and consider suicide. Then non-victims, and their rates rise significantly over three years. Witgen, P., Broniadowski, T., 2020, A structured classifier to identify bias against East Asians by specifying four types of prejudice A prospective investigation of hate speech on the Internet,

Kaur, A., Singla, G., 2020, It is becoming more common among young people, and gender differences in body image issues are significant. Shurkin, G., Kathleen Clark-Pearson, K., 2011, Social media can help children and teenagers communicate and socialize, but it comes with serious risks such as cyberbullying, privacy concerns, and harmful effects on mental health, which require parental involvement and awareness. Kewirtz-Maiden A, Lasry, D., 2021, Primary themes in survivors' accounts include the need for acceptance, personal post-traumatic stress disorder experiences, the conflict between life and death, and the notion of post-traumatic stress as a "bleeding wound," which emphasizes the importance of trust and connection, while also highlighting ongoing suffering, Salter, M., Hanson, E., 2021, Despite industry claims of commitment to child protection, profit motives and internet freedom attitudes continue to undermine effective action against online child sexual exploitation and abuse.

Wan, W., Sun, J., 2019, Social media analysis can identify specific linguistic expression patterns among women who have experienced childhood sexual abuse. Susyanti Magfiro, V., Mukkodam, F., 2018, Sexual harassment occurs in both direct and indirect ways on social media, and is often driven by attention-seeking behavior and user views, which are particularly prevalent among young people. Litchfield, C., Kavanagh, E.J., 2016, Severe online harassment against female athletes during the 2015 Wimbledon – in particular, Maria Sharapova – included sexual, emotional insults and threats of physical violence. How widespread is cyberbullying on social media platforms,

Lee, H. M., Ermakova, D., 2020, Implementation of Child Sexual Abuse Drug Detection Techniques, The overall incidence of child sexual abuse against drugs is increasing, which requires further technological developments and stronger regulation to effectively handle the difficulties presented by the medicalization of child sexual abuse Stanley, J., 2001, Teenagers exposed to violent and sexually explicit content online may become desensitized and exhibit altered behaviors, which may increase the likelihood of being abused or exploited as children. Ali, S., Hagel, H. A., 2023, The strong association between child sexual abuse and online vulnerability, How different types of solutions can benefit adolescents affected by online site use.

According to Hamilton Kiakritsis, C., Hanson, E., 2020, 46.4% and 62.5% of cases are technology-assisted child sexual abuse (TA-CSA), with comparable behavioral, psychological, and emotional consequences. Technology complicates the consequences of abuse and facilitates perpetration, emphasizing the need for updated regulations and practical guidelines. Yates, D.M., Gregor, M.A., 2012, There is a positive association between high levels of problematic Internet use (PIU) and child abuse, mediated by alexithymia. G.N., Papadaki, Z., 2015, The number of people with mental illnesses, including depression and post-traumatic stress disorder, as well as the use of digital technologies by perpetrators, is significantly associated with more severe sexual assaults,

Sanders P, J., Goddard, C., 2002, Although mass media campaigns can greatly increase public awareness and encourage reporting of child abuse, their effectiveness is often limited by a lack of funding and support. Furthermore, effective programs should combine direct intervention techniques with community education to have a long-term effect. Xu, W., Zheng, S., 2022, Cyberbullying perpetration was positively associated with childhood emotional abuse, and this association was mediated by low self-esteem and problematic social media use. Cyberbullying may be more prevalent among those who experienced emotional abuse as children, as Altana Afanador, P.N., 2020, Excessive social media use can harm people's ability to pay attention and cause a number of mental, social, and physical health problems. Furthermore, the interactive and addictive nature of social media platforms greatly affects users' attention and general well-being.

Piersman, C., Schulz, C., et al., 2014, May. The complexity of detecting and stopping online child sexual abuse content necessitates the need for sophisticated approaches that incorporate computer vision and natural language processing techniques, and a focus on signal extraction techniques that help understand data distributions that explore the behavior of child sexual abuse content suspects on the dark web.

Current Study:

Chowdhury, M., & Noor, J. H. 2024. The lack of online-based smartphone applications designed for immediate child support in abuse-related cases discusses the different types of child abuse, including physical, sexual, and psychological abuse, and the need for a comprehensive tool that addresses these issues, Azadzadeh, A., Sharoghi, 2022. To guide the scoping review and conceptual framework of recent studies on the use of virtual reality (VR) and digital games to combat child abuse, and to compile research that emphasizes the technical and clinical aspects of using digital solutions to address issues related to child abuse. Chowdhury, M., & Noor, J. H. 2024, March. The difficulties law enforcement faces in monitoring child sexual abuse content on peer-to-peer (P2P) networks are that they mainly target recognized child sexual abuse files and fail to identify unknown or new media. Overall, there is a need for creative methodologies to improve investigative processes in child sexual abuse situations. Singh, S., & Nambiar, V. et al., 2024. A systematic review of computer science approaches to violence against women and violence against children.

Objective:

- To examine the role of AI in facilitating cyber sexual exploitation among teenagers.
- To describe the role of AI and social media in the mitigation of cyber sexual exploitation.
- To understand the awareness about cyber sexual exploitation among Teenagers.

Research question:

- How does social media facilitate child abuse and online exploitation?
- What are the key psychological effects of social media-related child abuse?
- How effective are AI-driven interventions in preventing online child exploitation?
- What role do legal frameworks play in mitigating child abuse on digital platforms?

- How can parental control and digital literacy reduce the risks of online child abuse?

Methodology:

This study is a qualitative research design, incorporating content analysis of secondary data, including articles on child abuse, peer-reviewed academic articles, and Case studies. The data is categorized based on thematic relevance to facilitating and mitigating approaches to child abuse on social media. Peer-reviewed

Theory:

The Routine Activity Theory uses this study. Cyber sexual exploitation and child abuse occur on social media. Motivated to use social media to exploit vulnerable children. Targets Adolescents engaging online without awareness of risks. Lack of Capable Guardianship, weak parental monitoring, ineffective social media policies, and poor AI-driven detection systems.

Findings:

By reviewing studies on the role of social media platforms in preventing or enabling teenage cyber-sexual exploitation. The findings suggest that while these platforms often target vulnerable children, AI-based technologies can reduce these risks. However, gaps remain in enforcement and accountability, as risky content often evades moderation efforts. The assessment highlights the need for collaboration between technology companies, schools, and communities to protect teenagers online. Weak privacy settings, unmonitored online interactions, and algorithmic biases contribute to children's online vulnerability. One of the most important ways to reduce child sexual exploitation and the vulnerability of teenagers is to educate them about online safety, privacy, and the risks of disclosing personal information.

Social media companies can take preventive measures against grooming practices, explicit content and the ability of artificial intelligence to identify suspicious interactions. Parental guidance, AI-based content regulation, digital literacy education, and legal reforms are critical to reducing online risks. Parents can significantly reduce the risk of child sexual exploitation by monitoring their teenager's online activity and discussing safe internet use. Social media platforms should implement strict content control guidelines that combine human and artificial intelligence oversight to prevent the spread of dangerous content. To effectively prevent child sexual exploitation and protect children online, governments, social media companies, law enforcement agencies, and educators must work together in a coordinated manner. Strengthening child protection laws, improving platform accountability, and promoting international cooperation are critical to effectively addressing these challenges.

Discussion:

The increasing use of social media platforms by young people is consistent with an increase in the number of cases of sexual exploitation. The conflicting roles of social media and artificial intelligence in enabling and mitigating this abuse are explored in this issue's report. It acknowledges the role that social media plays in the proliferation of cyber-sexual exploitation. This publication attempts to provide a comprehensive analysis of the complex relationship between social media platforms, artificial intelligence, and the sexual exploitation of young people to protect young users. It also offers potential solutions to the problems. Online sexual exploitation blatantly violates the human rights of children and all people. Due to their cover-up, child sex offenders are rarely punished for their crimes (UNICEF, 2016).

Digital crime is evolving rapidly, making it challenging for parents to monitor, regulate, and support their children's online activities. Ensuring children's online safety is crucial, and an effective first step is open communication about potential risks and responsible use (UNICEF, 2023). The need for proper education on the effective use of artificial intelligence is essential in shaping the future of social media. Therefore, it is essential to equip children with the knowledge and skills necessary to safely navigate digital platforms and prepare them for future professional environments.

Children should be educated properly as they are raised on the wrong paths, which can have long-term consequences. Any act that causes significant harm to a child is considered child abuse. It can be neglect and can be sexual, emotional or physical. Physical abuse refers to harming or injuring the body, whereas emotional abuse involves acts that damage a child's sense of self or emotional health. Any sexual contact with a child is considered sexual abuse. If a child's basic needs are not met, it is considered neglect. This study looks at how social media affects children's mental health. The

researcher wants to explore how social media and artificial intelligence contribute to or reduce teenage cyber-sexual exploitation.

Conclusion:

Today's youth place a high value on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, etc. By following recommended practices, creating strong passwords, reviewing privacy settings, and alerting users to suspicious activities, one can increase security and protect personal information using social media. Child abuse can be prevented through artificial intelligence and social media. If teenagers are unable to filter information from hackers through social media, artificial intelligence can unknowingly facilitate exploitation. Therefore, parents, social activists, and the law can work together to provide youth with a better future by providing them with awareness about online usage.

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