

Chapter 21

Social and Legislative Issues in Handling Cyberbullying in India

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ABSTRACT

This chapter will address the social and legislative issues of workplace cyberbullying in India. The sociological issues arising out of workplace cyberbullying in India and across the world, its nature, evolution, impact, and intensity are analyzed with the statistical evidence from various research studies. The importance of averting and preventing cyberbullying is addressed with the developments happening in the introduction of legal provisions and legislative measures, enactments of controlling various countries of the world including India are analyzed. The chapter covers the veracity in the psychological impact with statistical inputs from the evolution, kinds, and purpose of using the anti-bullying laws in India, and its socio-legislative issues beyond the law, and clarifies the difficulties in measuring, with examples and the practical strategies to handle cyberbullying. The chapter also brings in through references and some of the popular posters that are popular across the world, which shall be put up in important places to educate every Indian citizen.

INTRODUCTION

Evidence from research studies across the world (Anderson & Bushman, 2002), indicate that workplace cyberbullying has evolved as a social issue (Smith, Del Barrio, & Tokunaga, 2013). Workplace cyberbullying is a growing social menace, across the world (Kowalski & Limber, 2013). Cyberbullying is defined as an act of repeated and intentional harassment by mistreats or by making fun of another person online or while using cell phones or other electronic devices (Hinduja & Patchin, 2019). Cyberbullying is viewed and felt like a sociological problem since it has invaded all human interaction platforms in society, like cell phones, computers, tablets, text messages, mobile apps or software digital apps. The human interaction through the social media forums is now into gaming including sending, posting, or sharing negative, harmful, false, or mean content on anyone in these platforms, and it is affecting the

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lives of people across the developing countries in the world including India (Ray, 2002). This sociological problem called workplace cyberbullying (Peek-Asa, Bunyan, & Swirling, 2001), is now seen as a social menace (Baron & Neumann, 1996), and in an organizational context is seen as an occupational hazard (Bjorkqvist, Oysterman, & Hjelt-Back, 1994) that degenerates workplace positivity, as well as, productivity in an organization. The workplace cyberbullying characteristics are persistent, all the time, in societies across the world, but it is still hard to detect, and its anonymous most of the time. The bullied victims are not aware of each other, and are easier to be hurtful, and cyberbullying is now a permanent part of every society. Cyberbullying for victimization, cyberbullying for offending, and cyberbullying by gender is now growing as a social menace in the developing countries including India, which is why it is now considered a sociological issue.

The prevailing social menace, workplace cyberbullying, is defined by Smith and Steffen (2013) as an aggressive, intentional act carried out by a group or individual by using electronic forms of contact repeatedly and overtime against a group or individual using electronic forms of contact. This act occurs repeatedly overtime against a victim (Bjorkqvist, Oysterman, & Lagerspetz, 1994) who cannot easily defend himself or herself (Dupré & Baling, 2006). These definitions revolve around three criteria. The first criteria is the intent to harm, secondly, to create an imbalance of power, and thirdly, to make a repetition of the act, that may happen accidentally (Greenberg & Baling, 1999). Accidents occur due to the impersonal nature of the text messages, instant messages, and e-mails, which make it hard to detect the sender's tone. Dr. Jaishankar, in his book on cyberbullying profiles and policy guidelines, defines cyberbullying as abuse or harassment by teasing or insulting the victims' body shape, intellect, family background, dress sense, mother tongue, place of origin, attitude, race, caste, or class using modern telecommunication networks such as mobile phones and Internet. The socio-psychological problems of cyberbullying on the working people in the organization around the world in the developing countries including India is very vast than ever imagined (Dupré & Baling, 2006). The methods adopted in cyberbullying are serious and intimidating since the arrival of digital connectivity. The majority of present incidents are done by using social media platforms with the digital devices through text messages, phone calls, e-mails, instant messengers, social media platforms (LeBlanc & Kelowna, 2002), which have increased in manifold. This includes workplace messages or even chat rooms, and the act of cyberbullying varies from posting hurtful words, derogatory comments, posting fake information on public forums or blogs, or hacking accounts for personal revenge (Harvey & Easily, 2003) that impacts the psychological health of the victims, and it is growing as a sociological menace.

Embracing technological change is required for professional and personal progress in life by any working population (Sorensen et al., 2011). The technological advancements have evolved positively for the good of the organizations in terms of growth and development of the organization and the professionals working there, not without the disadvantages like the increasing workplace cyberbullying or harassments through cyberbullying since the workplace now thrives on the usage of digital platforms (Rousseau & Aube, 2011). The digital platform on which the organization thrives for growth and development in this competitive world also faces the new socio-psychological problem, which demands greater attention from the top management and the leadership side of the organizations across the world and in India (Lapeer, Specter, & Lack, 2005). The workers in the organizations across the world are facing one way or other means of workplace harassment, with the advent of technological developments creating digital platforms and exhaustive usage dynamics in the work environment for interaction through cyberspace (Lapeer, Specter, & Lack 2005). The state of the art technology with the support of high-speed Internet facilitates speedy organizational communication that contributes to its positive growth, but at the same

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