Chapter 16
Educating Women on Cyberfeminism:
A Solution-Oriented Approach to Cybercrime

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ABSTRACT

Cyberfeminism is one that makes the relationship between cyberspace, information and communication technology, and the internet in general. Living in the 21st century we still haven't been able to do justice in giving parity to women as a gender in cyberspace. Hence empowering women for their emancipation in this platform has become the need of the hour. Women are having to face the brunt of such blatant misuse of the cyberspace. There is an intrinsic relation of cyber security with gender violence. Women have been at the receiving end of the stick facing the brunt of gender discrimination even in the virtual world where their extortion and harassment is seen often in opposition to the pledge of the internet for neutrality and equality. Hence, a solution-oriented approach is the need of the hour as has been elucidated in the chapter, connecting the dots and linking every other issue in cyber security to master the art of living in the digital space, deriving optimum output from the same without being masqueraded by the pretentious elements with ulterior motives.

INTRODUCTION

With the 21st century moving towards a more digitized space, exchange of information and messages through various digital platforms has become easier and faster, thus building connections with different people, transcending geographical and spatial boundaries. This also means circulation of legit information for people to no longer undermine women in the digital space as they have been doing till date.

Technology has always been perceived as masculine even in history as it was believed to be something that men were good at and understood better, thus obscuring all the developments and innovations by women in the field of technology including the creation and development of computer as well in which their contributions have been marginalized. Hence empowering women for their emancipation in this platform has become the need of the hour. There is a concept of masculinization in which technology is considered as masculine and that is the general belief and hence women are compared to tech-savvy men. According to research the Internet is falling out of women users because of cyber harassment, cyber bullying and cyber teasing. With services like online payments (including Universal Payment Interface (UPI) in every other transaction (in India)), digital banking, digital media, IOT (Internet of Things) on the rise, there is IPV (Intimate Partner Violence), revenge porn (non-consensual sharing of intimate photos), rape videos, morphed images, child pornography etc acting conspicuously to its detriment.

The COVID-19 pandemic has rendered a lot many people jobless and with this there has been a marked increase in criminal activities on the Internet that needs serious acknowledgement. People have resorted to scam calls and messages for siphoning money and through other methods of social engineering to befool the naivest to invest money in the name of Ponzi schemes. It has been found that women, especially housewives are being trapped in numbers because of lack of technical know-how in certain cases and lack of exposure in most.

Cyberbullying is on the rise and women are the majority stakeholders to be on the rough end of the stick and hence cyberbullying and cyber teasing have to be taken seriously because they are one of the major reasons for spoiling the mental state and mind-set of women who surf the internet for some kind of solace in search of equality if not opportunity which unfortunately is still a farfetched idea. Cyberbullying however is very less talked about and its existence, a lesser known fact. People have a tendency of trolling and shaming others on social media in the quest to look smart while demeaning and undermining the mental, physical and emotional state of the recipient. There cannot be a check on conversations owing to the freedom of free speech and expression but definitely on certain verbatim through the intelligent and resourceful use of machine learning and artificial intelligence. They have been cat called, body shamed and constantly reminded of their position in the society which promised them a level playing field, if not anything else, at the least.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The convergence of cyberfeminism and cybercrime presents a distinct and urgent challenge in the digital age. Cybercrime encompasses a wide range of illicit activities, such as hacking, online harassment, identity theft, and cyberbullying. Unfortunately, women bear a disproportionate brunt of cybercrime, experiencing gender-based violence and harassment in online spaces. To effectively tackle this issue, it is imperative to adopt a proactive approach that empowers women through cyberfeminism and education. This literature review delves into existing research and insights concerning the education of women on cyberfeminism, aiming to combat cybercrime and promote digital empowerment. Numerous studies have shed light on the gendered nature of cybercrime victimization. Women are more vulnerable to online harassment, revenge porn, stalking, and other forms of gender-based digital violence. Scholars emphasize the need for targeted interventions to address these disparities effectively.

Cyberfeminism, a contemporary feminist theory, explores the interplay between gender, technology, and society. It encourages women to actively participate in digital spaces and advocate for their rights.

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