Module 2 Paper: Theoretical Position Paper

    In this paper, I have decided to address cyberpornography through the lens of the Social Learning theory. Cyberpornography is, by definition, the act of using cyberspace to create, display, distribute, import, or publish pornography or obscene materials, especially materials depicting children engaged in sexual acts with adults [1]. Social Learning theory is based upon four things that will be discussed at later points in this paper, differential association, definitions, differential reinforcement or punishment, and imitation [2].

To begin, I will talk about differential association, which refers to the process by which individuals, operating in different social contexts, become exposed to, and ultimately learn, normative definitions favorable and unfavorable to criminal and legal behaviors [2]. Cyberpornography is, in essence, a global affliction. It spreads to every part of the internet and contains illegal subsects such as child pornography. Through the first section of Social Learning, differential association, we come to realize that just through the world wide web, everyone can become exposed to cyberpornography. To display the rampant use of pornography and how it can be exposed to many people at once, here are a few statistics. In the year 2018, 30.3 Billion searches were porn related, around 962 a minute, and every minute, PornHub sees 63,992 new visitors [3]. There are a multitude of forums and chat groups based around cyberpornography, as well as it being a prevalent component in modern day society, pornography has many ways to expose new people, and as well as expose people to child pornography.

The next section in the Social Learning theory is definitions. Definitionsare attitudes about certain behavior learned through the process of differential association, imitation, and general interaction or exposure to various sources of learning located in one’s social environment [2]. These definitions are attained in many ways in the world of cyberpornography. It starts with desensitization to pornography in the legal aspect, this happens with over exposure to pornography and a yearning feeling to watch something more illegal. An addiction to porn in the early stages beings to transform and morph into an addiction to illegal types of porn, such as child pornography [4]. This attitude is what makes the spread of child pornography so rampant today.

The next step in social learning is differential reinforcement or punishment. This is a concept that captures the diversity of anticipated and actual consequences of engaging in certain behavior [2]. For child pornography, most traffic happens not only on the foreseeable internet, but also on the dark web. The dark web is part of the internet that isn't visible to search engines and requires the use of an anonymizing browser called Tor to be accessed [5]. Due to this, finding who did what on the dark web is extremely difficult to impossible. Many people each day get away with trading images of children, and it due to this anonymous factor. Therefore, it is difficult to find people who engage in this type of cyber crime so they feel empowered to continue to do it.

Lastly, is imitation. Imitation simply refers to the modeling of certain behavior through the observation of others [2]. This stems from the many child pornography chat forums spread accross the internet and dark web. It starts off as a new user finding pictures, and eventually turns into an addiction which may lead to them engaging in sexual activity with children [4].

In conclusion, cyberpornography continues to happen because of social learning and its four aspects. As stated previously, cyberpornography is a broad subject that spans not only across the visible internet, but also the dark web. From this, begins that addiction which leads towards more illegal actions.

 REFERENCES

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