**Criminological Insights: Analyzing Crime and Theory**

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Deterrence! Can it be used to reduce or outright prevent Cyberbullying in the 20th century? In this case analysis, the aim is to closely analyze the crime of cyberbullying through the theory of deterrence in criminology. Cyberbullying typically refers to the use of digital technologies, social media, or smartphones to harass, intimidate, or harm individuals (Cybercrime, 2024). Cyberbullying has become increasingly prevalent in today's digital age, with millions of people experiencing it every year; cyberbullying impact on society is profound, leading to feelings of isolation, depression, anxiety, and even suicidal thoughts among victims. According to the website stopbullying.gov, cyberbullying is vastly common among children and teens, with one in every five students experiencing some form of abuse through the web. The site also goes on to state that among students ages 12-18 in grades 6-12 who reported being bullied during school (19.2% of all students), about 21.6% reported being bullied online or by text, including nearly twice as many girls (27.7%) as boys (14.1%) (What is cyberbullying, 2024). As a result, the prevalence of cyberbullying has sparked a debate about the need for a comprehensive understanding of this crime and methods to implement to reduce its effects on society.

**Deterrence Theory:**

Firstly, in support of our argument, we will start with the common belief that the threat of punishment typically deters or discourages individuals from the act of committing a crime; this belief is known as the deterrence theory in criminology and states that the threat of punishment can effectively prevent individuals from engaging in criminal acts (Deterrence Theory, 2024). We have chosen this theory to support our analysis because of the nature of the crime and the fact that its dominant audience is children and individuals over the web. This theory is crucial to our analysis since it aids in finding solutions to the problem of cyberbullying, such as soft and permanent bands for online accounts and implementing time-out schedules for students caught committing the act.

**Analysis:**

While there are many reasons why people mistreat each other, Cyberbullying is not much different from that of verbal abuse, which we will classify as a learned behavior through medians such as observation, imitation, and or social interactions. It is a common belief that children preach what they have learned, which is a critical point to our analysis since the act of bullying 8 out of 10 times stems from the home. With this insight, we can make the argument that a child from an abusive home or social environment or has witnessed some form of bullying is more prone to being a bully because of their environment and or a lack of discipline. In support of this argument, the deterrence theory holds merits and has proposed many vital factors to ponder based on its dominant audience of children and teenagers. A popular belief in the deterrence theory is that when punishment is swift, individuals are more likely to associate their actions with the consequences (Deterrence Theory, 2024). Through this concept, we have a strong belief that individuals would differ from committing the act of cyberbullying through reinforcement or punishment on their first offense. As a result, we have recommended this approach because of the nature of the theory, which states that when potential offenders weigh the potential costs and benefits of their actions, it reduces the chances of a second offense or others picking up on the act (Deterrence Theory, 2024). Within this claim, we can proudly state that the statement holds merits from our personal experiences and when looking at the justice system.

**Conclusion:**

Finally, while deterrence is not the sole method of solving or addressing the act of cyberbullying, it can be a practical approach to preventing it! Cyberbullying is a significant problem that is on the horizon and plagues millions of individuals globally (What is cyberbullying, 2024); the Deterrence theory, when coupled with the psychological and biological theories of criminology, creates vast concepts and Ideologies that aid in better understanding where the problem of cyberbullying stems from and how to strategically reduce the chances of it occurring among children and teens. Some strategic approaches to reduce cyberbullying may include but are not limited to account banning, device confiscation, detention, time-out, and or any non-abusive punishment that suits the crime. Additionally, it is wise for parents to take part in their children's lives, giving a listening ear and creating an open space for children to express themselves freely to prevent or become aware of instances of cyberbullying.

**References**

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