A Brief Study on Social Media Anonymity and Trolling

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ABSTRACT

Anonymous Trolling has become an online subculture through which individuals participate in posting unworthy and non-desirable content to harass users, and spread false information for their own intentions. Social media allows people to create, broadcast, and interpret the self in new and evolving ways. At the same time it lays the opportunity to manipulate the perception and occurrences. As of the time of this study, research is limited to trolling culture, Anonymous behavior, and the perception of trolls. The research tends to investigate the behavioral pattern and emotional reactions of different age groups and generations and how they navigate through the very idea social media trolls.

Key words: Social Media, Trolling culture, Trolling perception, and Behavioral pattern, Emotional Reactions

I.   INTRODUCTION

Over the past years, a wide range of controversies has been enhanced across India regarding social media anonymity and trolling. There are wide range of uses of social media platforms in which individuals express their point of view regarding different aspects. As a result, many individuals are becoming susceptible to cyber bullying and trolling which is one of the rising problems in the 21st century. A report observed from Pew research centre shows that 86% of Americans, between the ages of 18-29 use social media for their purpose. Not only that, the social media statistics of India show that 448 million people used deep penetration of social media to an ample extent. People spend 2.25 hours on social media on a daily average and it can be observed that enhancing the rate of social anonymity is due to overexposure to the virtual world (Bbc.com, 2021). Anonymous social media is a category of social media where details of an individual using social media cannot be trusted. Sharing and the interaction around the content and information anonymously in the social media platforms is the main incident by which conflict and social media crime is enhanced. Therefore, the study discusses some crucial aspects of social media anonymity and trolling based on the present situation of social media.

Statement of the problem

In a public place, the courtesy and behavioural pattern of an individual is dependent on the social, not individual norms. In this scenario, online messages can potentially reach out to several people but the involvement of the social norms is no longer valid to them. Now in the present day, the anonymity of social media increases the rate of crime to a wide extent. As per the view of McCreery, &Krach (2018), the problem in social media is enhanced due to uncontrolled trolling and limitless bullying. Hatred cannot be suppressed by an individual and as a result misuse of social media is visible. Although mobile phone users have proper identity verification due to the use of other anonymous sources such as the dark web crime has been increasing at a steady rate. It has also been observed that people use some pseudonyms in digital media platforms for repressing their original information. Conversely, the ideas of Kaur et al. (2021), show that anonymity is one of the key factors which enables online deviance in the general point of view and online trolling more specifically. Particularly, individual norms of different online communities are one of the crucial aspects in which problem-related to social media anonymity and trolling enhancing. Well established career of online hackers is the main theme by which trolling has been enhanced, exemplified by the Facebook page. On the multifarious Facebook page, there is numerous Page admin who does daily trolling of an individual or a community. Their direct consequences are involved in this scenario. The main problem of social media anonymity is the

absence of a real named environment. According to the view of Seigfried-Spellar& Lankford (2018), the real name environment of an individual or a community inhibits negative actions and language. Therefore, trolling is not possible in this scenario.

Now in the present day, Twitter can be considered as one of the most hazardous social media where the problem is enhancing due to trolling. In the opinion of Chen (2018), a problem has been arising in Twitter which is creating a complete digital arena for wielding, shielding, and also trolling talk. It has been observed by their point of view that trolling talk is greater in the case of feminism. Understanding the wide aspect of feminism is acceptable at a certain range but in reality, feminism is not acceptable in every array. It has been seen that most people want women to be equal to men, but in practical situations, this comment is no longer valid. For example- In the case of the education system and service life- 85% of women want that they are self-dependent. But in the case of the education system or various kinds of Government service exams- women's exam fee is not taken into consideration. This interpretation is often replied to by trolling some individuals who are feminists. As a result, cases of cyberbullying have been enhanced to an ample assortment. Another problem regarding social media anonymity and trolling shows that there is a wide range of variables in this case study. The name of the variables is- revenge, attentionseeking, boredom, personal amusement. At the time, when proactive comment or post influences people to for taking some serious steps then the crime enhances exponentially. As per the ideas of Sparby (2017), online age regression in social media is due to uncritical recapitalisations of the previous behaviour. In other words, the absence of collective identity is the main problem in the case of social media trolling and anonymity. On the contrary, the ideas of Rosamond (2020), the mental health of an individual is during adolescence is responsible for the enhancement of social media anonymity and trolling. However, a complex period of lifespan and a more challenging contemporary environment for adolescence is the main responsible factor for the enhancement of theme problems related to misuse of social media and trolling. Therefore, the statement of the problem in this scenario is to identify some crucial causes for the enhancement of social media bullying and trolling. Positive and negative consequences of social media have also been discussed in this scenario. Significant harm and distress of an individual is also an importantaspect in this scenario. Wrong with trolling includes disrupted sleep, lowered self-esteem, self-harm, depression, suicidal ideation, and in some cases commit suicide.

Rationale
The prosocial and trolling community has been enhanced by which depression is also simultaneously increasing. Anonymous behaviour of individuals inside the social media relies on different conceptual frameworks, such as:
1) Message contingent interactivity
2) proportion of agreement and types of information exchange behaviour.

Percentage distribution behavior
Social media anonymity has been enhanced to a broad range due to the information exchange behaviour of people. According to the above image, social media anonymity and trolling have been enhanced to a wide array with 45% of the individuals (Nekmat& Lee, 2018). It can also be seen that most individuals have cognitive statements. In the opinion of Jakubowicz, (2017), social media anonymity and trolling is also responsible for the formation of antisocial groups. Influencing message has been forwarded by many groups in which repressive hatred give birth to antisocial behaviour. The above image also shows that trolling is constituted as a 28.2% in the recent time. Support, queries, and reply of an individual also show that trolling comments for a minimal mistake is responsible for enhancing suicidal tendency, especially in the case of adolescents.

Percentage of message contingency

Proportions of Agreement

Comparison of Information Exchange Behaviors
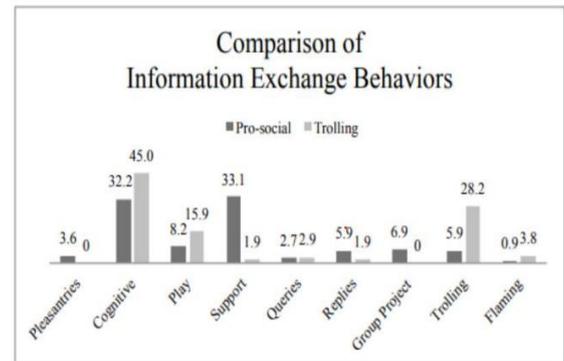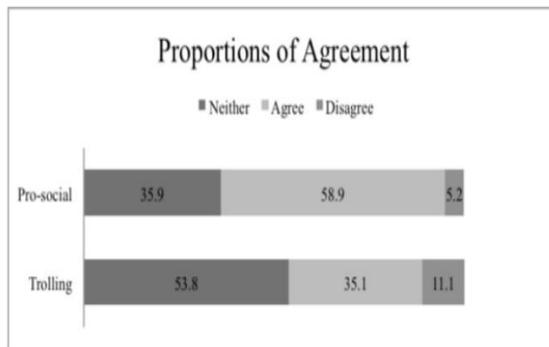
Prosocial community on Facebook would display a greater proportion of messages in agreement as compared with a version of a community of trolling. The individual proportion of agreement displayed in the trolling groups and prosocial which is significantly greater between two communities, exemplified by $\chi^2 (2) = 41.02$, $p < 0.001$, N = 989. Overall, participants of the prosocial community were found to engage in case of information exchange. Interestingly, trolling communities were found to share information in the form of cognitive statements. Self-disclosure has also been observable in this scenario that resulted from anonymous bullying in social media. The lower display of trolling behaviours found in the trolling communities could be possible by the lack of anonymity on Facebook. Prior studies have been attributed to this context which shows that release of inhibitions is present under the guise of anonymity.

Percentage of contingence comment

A greater proportion of messages in the agreement have been shown to be changed by trolling and showing anonymous variations. There are almost three categories by which the significance of the message contingency can be analyzed to a wide range. The individual proportion of display shows that prosocial and trolling groups are susceptible to enhancing hatred in the case of the adolescent population. Not only that, in the case of two different individuals, the percentage of messaging contingency has been differentiated into three categories- contingent for members, contingent for administrators, and individual with no contingency. The X value shows that differences between the two communities are $\chi^2 (2) = 41.02$, $p < 0.001$, N = 989. N number of individuals is 989. The study is also important to consider in this scenario because a piece of evidence has been found that social media causes depression in childhood. In this scenario, it has been seen that teenagers who dare to express some different point of view, particularly about diverse sexualities, open themselves up to the risk of a torrent of abuse on platforms, such as twitters. According to an individual, online bullying has a more intensive effect than playground taunts. As per the ideas of Anderson (2019), individual bullying is able to enhance depression exponentially. Anxiety is also a crucial hazard in this scenario. It has been found that a wide range of information in social media is changed or presented as misinformation. Checking of fact is the only aspect by which wrong information regarding a particular subject has been found. In the case of India, the problem is much bigger which is responsible for creating a conflict between the religions. Anonymity and bullying have been accounted for increasing various factors of political and social conflict in this scenario. An example can be given in this context- A political party is posting some hate speech for the opposition. In reality, the ruling party has not done much but it is a result of jealousy and greediness of power. Therefore, the involvement of some third party is possible here in which conflict between ruling and opposition parties continued. Emotional influences are also responsible for trolling and rising hate speech in society. In India, the social media market has been found to be used by 340 million users (Shekhar et al. 2021). Therefore, there is a chance for an increase in hate speech in this context. The bulk of hate speech has been found to be overwhelming in this scenario and it is expected to capture by internal AI engines and content moderators. It has been accounted for all over the world in which Facebook claims to have spent more

than $13 billion for addressing the safety of individuals being bullied. More than 40,000 workers have been appointed for this team in which the safety of the individuals is guaranteed (Anderson, 2019). Due to technological difficulties, trolling and anonymity have been boosted inside social media. Information regarding the personal data of users is also not authentic in this context. There are many people who have an emotional involvement with their nearest one and trolling has been enhanced surrounding emotions. Trolling is not dependent on success, achievement, failure, rather than it is dependent on changing traditional lifestyles (De Seta, 2017). At the time, when an individual breaks the chains of a normal lifestyle then the individual is susceptible for trolling to trolling. A business standard report shows that women in India are susceptible to trolling to a range of 40%. Education and career development are the top priority of an individual, India is reported by 44% of women who are fearful to be trolled in Facebook (bbc.com, 2021). This data shows that women's safety is the main theme that needs to be implemented in social media also. The percentage of male individuals is higher than the female ones who have been accounted for trolling in social media. As per the view of Fichman& Peters (2019), internet trolls and abusers can face two years of jail under proposed new laws. Malicious communication act 1988 has been found to be sensitive for the people who are bullied on social media. As discussed earlier, trolling in social media can cause significant harm distress for people especially in the case of adolescents. According to the ideas of Hannan (2018), adolescents have a minimal idea regarding their surroundings. There is a vast chance in which adolescence can be susceptible to trolling. They are more engaged withsocial media in this scenario and they love to share personal information on Facebook (Gabdulhakov, 2020). It may possible for their near one to develop trolling habits, and they might troll their nearest individual with anonymity. Logging of personal hatred is one of the main causes of enhancement of trolling habit in this scenario. It can also be said that anonymity on Facebook is enhanced due to the efficiency of hackers and their knowledge regarding the topic of bullying. Data from various sources shows that anonymity in Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram has been enhanced due to the careless persuasive of app developers. However, the conduction of this study is crucial in this scenario only for the addressing pros and cons of social media.

Research objectives

● To understand the causes of anonymity in social media.
● To understand causes of trolling enhancement in social media.
● To investigate factors in which anonymity can be reduced.
● Toanalyse preventing mechanism for mitigating trolling.
● To examine the way trolling can make an impact on society.

Research questions
• What are the causes of anonymity in social media?
• What are the causes of trolling inside social media?
• Which factors are responsible for reducing anonymity in social media?
• What are the factors responsible for preventing trolling in social media?
• How trolling is affecting social media users and society in general?

Overall approach:
Causes of anonymity inside social media can be addressed by understanding various data from different fields. Newspapers, journals, and articles are authentic sources from which the study can proceed. Therefore, a secondary qualitative analysis has been discussed in this study which is effective for addressing the pros and cons of the study. The research method is dependent on both case study and action research. Action research has been taken into consideration for the study because finding a case study for the research is comparatively difficult in this scenario. A deductive approach of methodology has been used in this study for establishing the overall integrity. Since, quantitative data assist research to gather the data that is more reliable and less to open argument, in this research the primary quantitative data analysis method has been chosen. The primary data collection method refers to gathering data from a phenomenon by asking a question through a survey or interview to the individuals to get more authentic data to develop the research. Here in this research, a questionnaire has beendeveloped for conducting a survey on 51 participants with 10 close-ended questions. This questionnaire is based on a five-point Likert scale and divided into two sections: demographic and socialize.

Fitting of approach with research design
        This study is about finding causes of enhancing anonymity in social media with the aid of

trolling therefore a quantitative research design is beneficial in this scenario. Not only that, qualitative data has been useful in this study, because from the analysis of quantitative data, a real-world view can be effectively addressed. On contrary, qualitative data is about the conduction of interviews in which open-ended answers can be understood to a wide array. Close-ended questions have been conducted in this scenario. The qualitative analysis is conducted by the second method in which data has been collected from different journals. Hence, in this study, a mixed-method of both qualitative and quantitative data has been chosen to develop the research.

Significance or implication of the study

Individuals can freely express their points of view on social media. Therefore, it can be said that persons in this scenario express themselves without fear and repercussion. Decrease of suicidal tendency is another aspect in which this study is significant. Individuals who have a tendency to abandon social media norms are susceptible to increasing bullying to an ample assortment. Not only that, but this study is also significant because surveys and questionnaires can reflect the problems with the aid of the pros and cons of this study. Security of the internet, hacking, digital vandalism, bots, rogue accounts, and digital gang wars are one of the major problems in this scenario that has been addressed in this study accordingly. Use of VPN, use of temporary email, checking app permission, encrypted messaging are the major persuasiveness that can be further addressed in this study that has significance to an ample extent. In order to discuss the benefit of the study, it can be said that finding the cause of depression for adolescents is the main benefit of this study. The practical and theoretical importance of the problem can be viewed by the increase in cyber bullying.

Research Approach

There are two basic approaches to conduct research. That is Quantitative analysis and Qualitative analysis. In this research, qualitative is the approach chosen. This research is therefore more concerned with subjective analysis of attitudes, opinions and behaviours. The approach of collection of data.

Research Tools
- Questionnaires
- Case studies
- News reports
- Social media posts
- Articles
- Surveys

Scope of the Study

This research provides a detailed analysis of anonymity and trolling behavior in social media platforms. This study provides authentic and reliable data that assists the research study to be more useful to future

researchers. As this study gives a close examination of the behavioral pattern and physiological factor that influence an individual to troll and act abusive in online platforms future researchers can use this research study to identify similar behavioral patterns and other factors that may play an important role for such offensive activities on the internet. Furthermore, as this study does not provide any annual data, future researchers can incorporate such necessary secondary statistical data that may help in developing a more highly researched study with multiple perspectives. This study further suggests a few recommendations in order to reduce both anonymity and trolling culture. Through this future researchers can develop a close analysis and discuss whether these recommendations are valid and suggest other suitable strategies that may be useful to handle emerging trolling behavior on the internet. Researchers can make this study more efficient and informative in the future by providing more detailed data regarding the opioids of administrative personnel involved in redesigning and reconstructing the harassment and privacy policies and procedures. This shows that this research is 66 helpful for gaining a more insightful and valid research study on online trolling and its relation with anonymity.

Limitation of the study

Main limitation of this study includes a brief discussion about the impact of trolling on elderly people in recent times. However, the propensity of trolling towards elderly members is evaluated in a significant manner. Apart from that, the government implications in handling the social media trolling is also not covered in this study. Mainly the trolling culture among the modern generation and its impact on the young generation has been discussed through selecting an appropriate method of data collection and analysis in this work.

II.   CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the above study reveals that trolling that just begins from online jokes and humour posts is now developing itself as it is making a severe impact on the social environment. The study examines the way anonymity enhances online abuse and harassment to internet users. Real account users feel a sense of resistance as they can be identified with name tags. However, people with anonymous accounts and pseudonyms feel a lack of restraint of the social norms and thus act more violent and aggressive. Although the social media platforms are gradually redesigning their privacy and harassment policies, these abusers are making alternative accounts with fake names. The finding of the paper shows that both the executives administer these social media accounts as well as the government authorities required to take more strategic policies and action to prevent such online attacks. The study further analyses the way anonymity can be reduced in order to prevent such offensive behaviour in online platforms. Verifying the identity of the account holders is the one of the most effective strategies as the police and law department can easily track these abusers involved in cyber bullying and trolling. Loss of anonymity discourages such impulsive behaviour of the online users. Even other internet users that are not involved with both trolling and abusing is responsible too for enhancing these behaviours as a large number of users rely on others to have access of high quality content. Interacting with fake accounts further encourages more people to act the same way. However Facebook and Twitter have recently deleted many fake accounts and prevented users from using pseudonyms. Several psychological studies, on the other hand, suggest psychological factors that influence individuals to troll and abuse others online. These studies have revealed that people with abusive childhood and mental traumas, suppressed for a long time either by their families or friends, vent out their emotions by trolling others. Others with narcissistic behaviour through trolling try to show themselves as superior and directothers to have similar perspective and thinking as that particular person holds. In terms sexual trolling there generally exist two types of online abusers. This includes one that makes fun of others based on their sexual orientation and others that make offensives or distorted images of others to give them rape threats. These types of trolling and online harassing needs immediate actions as these abuses can have severe impact on the victims as only through legal actions such behaviour can be discouraged.

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