

Cyber Violence Behaviors Among Social Media Users in Ghana: An Application of Self-Control Theory and Social Learning Theory

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Abstract : The proliferation of cyberviolence in the wave of increased social media consumption calls for immediate attention both at the local and global levels. With over 4.70 billion social media users worldwide and 8.8 social media users in Ghana, various forms of violence have become the order of the day in most countries and communities. Cyber violence is defined as producing, retrieving, and sharing of hurtful or dangerous online content to cause emotional, psychological, or physical harm. The urgency and severity of cyber violence have led to the enactment of laws in various countries though lots still need to be done, especially in Ghana. In Ghana, studies on cyber violence have not been extensively dealt with. Existing studies concentrate only on one form or the other form of cyber violence, thus cybercrime and cyber bullying. Also, most studies in Africa have not explored cyber violence forms using empirical theories and the few that existed were qualitatively researched, whereas others examine the effect of cyber violence rather than examining why those who involve in it behave the way they behave. It is against this backdrop that this study aims to examine various cyber violence behaviour among social media users in Ghana by applying the theory of Self-control and Social control theory. This study is important for the following reasons. The outcome of this research will help at both national and international level of policymaking by adding to the knowledge of understanding cyberviolence and why people engage in various forms of cyberviolence. It will also help expose other ways by which such behaviours are enforced thereby serving as a guide in the enactment of the rightful rules and laws to curb such behaviours. It will add to literature on consequences of new media. This study seeks to confirm or reject to the following research hypotheses. H1 Social media usage has direct significant effect of cyberviolence behaviours. H2 Ineffective parental management has direct significant positive relation to Low self-control. H3 Low self-control has direct significant positive effect on cyber violence behaviours among social, H4 Differential association has significant positive effect on cyberviolence behaviour among social media users in Ghana. H5 Definitions have a significant positive effect on cyberviolence behaviour among social media users in Ghana. H6 Imitation has a significant positive effect on cyberviolence behaviour among social media users in Ghana. H7 Differential reinforcement has a significant positive effect on cyberviolence behaviour among social media users in Ghana. H8 Differential association has a significant positive effect on definitions. H9 Differential association has a significant positive effect on imitation. H10 Differential association has a significant positive effect on differential reinforcement. H11 Differential association has significant indirect positive effects on cyberviolence through the learning process.

Keywords : cyberviolence, social media users, self-control theory, social learning theory

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