



The menace of Trolling

Description

Theme:

- Online trolling and cyberbullying are increasing at a rapid pace, which is a worrying thing. Sometimes it is too severe that victims of trolling and cyberbullying are deciding to stay away from digital space.

Causes of Trolling:

- People who troll may not abuse others in their faces. As they can hide behind a screen, they get the courage to abuse others.
- Anyone can go anonymous in the online world and hence they think that they are not noticeable. People can maintain good behaviour in real life and can be an abuser in digital space.
- Impatience in people, and lack of will to appreciate the differences of opinions.
- Some people will think that they are doing good to society by trolling and making some people quiet. They feel like social justice warriors.
- Some people troll others for fun. However, some of them realize that it is sadistic fun and others do not.
- People who troll are very confident that they can get away with it. The lack of punishments for trolling is one of the main causes.
- A good part of trolls online are on women the defy patriarchal restrictions. Some people are so caught up with the false notions of gender-based behaviour, that they go to extreme behaviour to impose their opinions on others.
- Some people are inherently bad people and exhibit anti-social behaviour in real life too. So online trolling is just an extension of their real life.
- Some people, who were abused in real life tend to abuse others. They can be treated.
- These days, politically motivated trolls are a common thing.
- Trolls encourage other people to troll. They think there are a lot of people that troll and they are among a group of people and hence no individual threat.

- There is no reward for good behaviour in the online world.



Effects of Trolling:

- Victims that face trolling may undergo trauma. They may feel unsafe in the digital space and sometimes in real life too because some people threaten the victims to an extreme level.
- Some victims, especially teenagers may take extreme decisions like committing suicide.

- Trolling encourages anti-social elements (rape threats etc.).
- Aggression and violent behaviour will increase the number of people that resort to trolling and cyberbullying. They do not realize that it harms them.

Laws in India on trolling:

- If a person harasses women even using social media with the intent to outrage the modesty of a woman, he/she can be punished with one-year imprisonment and a fine as per section 354A of the Indian Penal Code (IPC).
- If a man captures an image of a woman engaged in a private act without her consent, it is considered voyeurism and he will be punishable with one to three years of imprisonment along with a fine as per Section 354C of IPC.
- If he/she utters any word or makes any sound or gesture to insult the modesty of any woman, he/she will be punished with 3 years imprisonment and a fine as per Section 509 IPC.
- Online stalking is a punishable offence and the harasser will be punished for 3 years and in case of repeating the offence, up to 5 years as per Section 354D IPC.
- For remarks on social media, one can file defamation through which the harasser can be punishable with up to 2 years of imprisonment as per Section 499 IPC.
- Threats through social media to harm a person or their reputation is a punishable offence as per Section 503 IPC and Section 507 IPC. The harasser can be punished with up to two years of imprisonment.

What more needs to be done:

- These days, people are reporting to the police about trolls, which is a progressive thing. But not everyone is aware of the laws. So, there is a need to increase awareness through campaigns.
- The most important thing is we should aim at the root cause, which is the lack of empathy in the people. There is a need to sensitise people about the consequences of their actions. There is a need to conduct awareness programs in schools, colleges etc as a part of the Digital India program.

Conclusion:

These days some people are facing trolling for a few days to a few weeks. Anyone can be a victim. Mere expression of opinion can make you a victim of harsh trolls. There is a need to check this behaviour to make everyone feel safe in the digital space and in real life as well. There should be counselling for people who troll about how the people at the other end feel and go through trauma because of their actions.

Your Turn...

What is your opinion on Trolling? Express your thoughts in the comment section below. Subscribe to our blog to read answers for trending GD Topics.

References:

- [Online trolls beware, these are the laws that could be used against you](#)
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