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Child Cyber Sexual Exploitation

By

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B.SC., Chicago State University, 2013

CAPSTONE PROJECT

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements

For the Degree of Master in Public Administration

Governors State University

University Park, Il 60484

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Dedication

First and foremost, I give all praise to Almighty God, the most merciful and compassionate, who give me the abilities to complete this project successfully. I am grateful to my parents who were always been a source of encouragement for me throughout my life, although you are not with me physically today, but your spirits are looking down upon me with smile and pride; you thought me to be consistent, determined, and work hard. May your souls continue to rest peacefully..

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Abstract

The availability of the Internet has become increasingly easier to children due to technological advancements. An increasing number of children have access to smart phones and tablets, hence, allowing their susceptibility to become a cyber victim, as parental control is lacking. Concerns about the role of technological change in relation to sexual crimes against children, sexual exploitation and potential harm have been expressed in the USA for some considerable time. These have been reflected in a change in legislation with respect to abusive images of children (child pornography) and its attendant violent content. This study examined the impact of child cyber sexual exploitation. The study also explored the methods predators used to prey on children, the role child's behavior played in their susceptibility to being seduced, and the role education system play to protect children. It was important to conduct this study as previous studies did not really address the fact that security measures are lacking as well as knowledge on the potential dangers of the Internet. The researcher used interview questions to carry out this study by getting the opinions of the Police Officers at the Bradley Police Department, Bradley, Illinois since these are the officers who work on the Cyber Crime against the children. The study identified the security measures that are lacking as well as knowledge of the potential dangers of the Internet. Also the education systems are not mandated to incorporate Internet safety courses into the curriculum as many educators themselves lack the necessary knowledge on the subject. The study also revealed that many parents lack knowledge on Internet safety and feel their children may be more tech-savvy, making Internet safety conversations more difficult. This allows a child the opportunity to utilize the Internet unsupervised, as many parental controls can be bypassed.

Introduction

Background of the Study

The advent of the Internet has given rise to all kinds of sexual materials that are offensive to children. Children learned how to use the computer at a younger age, but there is little awareness about the dangers of the Internet. The use of the Internet by school children has led to an increase in cyber sexual exploitation of minors in the United States. Children need to be aware of the dangers associated with the Internet. There is the need to conduct more studies about the use of the Internet, and the influence of the environment on cyber sexual victims. Child sexual abuse pertains to children is an act that lures children into committing sexual acts, under age sexual molestation, and sending children unwanted sexual materials online. Carr (2003) found that the Internet has led to an increase in child pornography materials, and to a significant increase in sexual crimes. Dunham (2006) concluded that sex offenders abused children because of the use of pornographic materials when they were younger.

It was important to conduct an examination into the impact of environments on the victims of child cyber sexual exploitation. Home environments do play a crucial role in the upbringing of children and have a significant effect on their lives. Child abuse could be the cause of physical and emotional abuse in children. This research was focused on the awareness of the dangers with children using the Internet as a social medium forum.

Problem Statement

Although the advent of internet has made the whole world a global village, hence, collapse of borders across the sister planet called earth. There is no doubt that internet has made our life to be easier and more convenient. We can use internet to communicate with people around the world, doing business by using internet, make new friend and know different cultures, searching information and for academic purposes etc.

However, despite the glaring advantages and positive aspects, the Internet has its dark and ugly side too. One of this ugly side that must be addressed is the problem of child cyber sexual exploitation.

Children nowadays are addicted to Internet and they visit Internet on a daily basis. This is one of the greatest threats Internet poses to children. Internet has provided an easy medium to children to gain access to pornography and this is causing sexually-deviant or sexually-addictive behavior. This phenomenon has also caused another problem, and that is the increase in prevalence of sexually transmitted diseases (STD) in children. According to reports, one out of every four teenagers gets infected with a STD every year. The adult content that is present on the internet promotes irresponsible sex and creates false notions in the minds of students..

Children have been lured by pedophiles who pose as good Samaritans but physically abusing and molesting them. Internet has also made it easy for unscrupulous elements to get in touch with children and this has led to an increase in the cases of sexual exploitations and identity thefts. About 60% of young teens in the United States has admitted to responding to messages from strangers. This kind of behavior is extremely risky and has made children extremely vulnerable, thereby, becoming the victims of cyber-crime.

Research Questions

For the purpose of this study, the following questions were addressed:

1. What is the impact of child cyber sexual exploitation?
2. What are the methods used by predators to prey on the children?
3. What role do children' behavior play in their susceptibility to being seduced?
4. What role does education system play to protect the children from the hands of predators?

Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study was to conduct an examination into the impact of environment on victims of child sexual exploitation. It is also important to find better ways to prevent children from falling victims of cyber sexual exploitation. The rate at which children are being exploited sexually on the Internet is too alarming. Although Internet has its positive sides but the negative angle is now overwhelming the positive sides. Every child has the fundamental human right to take advantage of this invention that has come to impact humanity positively. However, the ugly side of this innovation is exposing children to unnecessary cyber sexual exploitation.

Volunteered Law Enforcement Officers were asked to voluntarily disclose some information through interview questions. Participants identity were also given all the sense of confidentiality. Their responses were used to have a better understanding about the role of environment, bring more awareness about the dangers associated with Cyber Sexual Abuse , and to determine the effort needed to notify parents about the dangers of exposing children to the use of internet without proper supervision.

The significance of the study was to have a better understanding on how to prevent children from falling victims of cyber sexual exploitation and to add to the body of knowledge.

Creating a better understanding on the preventive measures to save a child from being a victim of cyber sexual exploitation will help children to fulfill their dream and realize their ambition in life.

Theoretical Framework

The theory used for this research was the Theory of Reciprocal Determinism. It was developed by Bandura in 1977, and used to study why people behave the way they do in certain situations, and why others do not. This theory indicates that physiological, behavioral, and environmental are the three factors that influence people. Personality traits explain why people are attracted to certain media contents. As applied to this study, this theory holds that the independent variable- cyber sexual materials to influence or explain the dependent variables- environment, behavior, and physiology because the position to cyber sexual materials, changes some people's behavior, environment, and physiology.

Definition of the terms:

For the purpose of clarity, it is important to define the terms so as to avoid ambiguity

Child Cyber Sexual Exploitation could be defined as a person or youth who was under 18 years of age at the time of experiencing one or more of the following incidents of exploitation:

- Depicted in child pornography or child abuse images on the Internet or in electronic mail sent to others (including chat rooms, e-mail, peer-to-peer software, website posts, social networking sites, cell phones, etc.);
- Sexually assaulted or exploited by someone who communicated with the child or youth
- Online (such as via websites, e-mail, chat rooms, discussion boards, text messages,
- Sexually assaulted by a person who has been charged with or convicted of any child
- Pornography offence that involved the use of the Internet or digital communication,
- Regardless of whether the current assault is related to the Internet/digital communication or not;

- Subjected to Internet luring or grooming, such as where an adult sent the child or youth child pornography, or communication of a sexual nature or impersonated someone else in an effort to meet the child/youth;
- Was a victim of distribution of images, videos or audio recordings of a sexual nature without consenting to the distribution, even if the images, videos or audio recordings were originally posted by the victim:
- Was the victim or identity theft and images or Information of the child or youth of a sexual nature were posted on the Internet.

Internet Sexual Exploitation could be in the form of enticement, unlawful soliciting, or illegally exposing of a minor to sexually explicit behavior (National Center for Missing & Exploited Children, 2008).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Internet proliferations have sailed the world. Since its inception, it has attracted people from all over the world. With a click of a mouse, everyone can be connected. The world of the computer has inspired lots of innovative ideas, for instance e-mailing, networking, files sharing (peer to peer), downloading, online music sharing, online banking, online dating web sites and many more. The Internet also has its unpleasant side as well. Computer viruses, cyber fraud, hackers and identity theft can be associated with the danger of the Internet.

James (2009) of the Time US wrote about the dangers of the Internet to individuals, companies, and governments. The “Melissa” and “I love you” virus of mid 1990’s and early 2000’s, which brought attention to Cyber threats was one. This virus started the sales of virus protection software. There was the story of a 15 years old Canadian boy, nickname “mafia boy”- who was responsible for the first documented DOS attack in 2000. The attack affected many online store web sites, such as eBay and Amazon, which resulted in about \$1.7 billion in damages.

Government is no exception. The president of the United States announced on May 29, 2009, the coordination of efforts to combat the threat of computer attacks against government, corporations and individuals. "I know how it feels to have privacy violated because it has happened to me and the people around me," Obama said hackers had penetrated his campaign's website in late 2008, and went through his e-mails, travel plans and other files — a "powerful reminder" of the Internet's glaring vulnerabilities, he said. According to a survey the President said, computer crime has cost Americans \$8 billion over the past two years (James, 2009).

There is no doubt that the use of the Internet by school children for learning is an admirable thing. It has provided them with the opportunity to be connected to a lot of shared information, and a host of other educational materials that were once less accessible. School

children learned about the importance and the fun of the Internet in school, and this experience stays with them even when they get home. The advent of the Internet came with its own unintended consequences to the children.

Internet dangers that affect children include Cyber bullying, Sexual Predators, and Internet Pornography. The more children use the Internet, the more they are prone to these dangers. Without someone monitoring their online activities, it is even more dangerous if they use computers at home. Some of these children have parents that are not computer literate, so it is hard to teach them about the dangers of the Internet when mothers and fathers do not know how to use the computer. Research conducted by Deblinger, et al. (2010) found that most parents do not educate their children about the dangers of child pornography. An estimated twenty three percent warned their children about child pornography.

Hughes (2010) wrote about the importance of parent awareness about using pornography. She wrote that pornography is not just pertaining to boys; girls are using pornography just like boys, and that parents need to know about the aggressive nature of pornography as it targets children. Hughes stated that children are vulnerable during the start of high school and when they go away to college.

Research conducted by Mishma et al. (2009) found children that as young as 14 years old are exposed to Cyber Sexual images online. This trend continues to be on the rise, as more and more children use the Internet as a social gathering place to follow up with people they know and people they meet on line. Many children have fallen victims to sexual abuse and exposed to pornographic materials, and the number of children is growing every day. Children share music files with their friends through peer- to- peer networks (P2P) and during these times may have unintentionally come across unwanted and unsolicited sexual materials or viruses. These peer- to- peer networks are known to use this method of disguise to attract or convince

these young children to meet or engage them into the world of cyber sexual explicit materials or behaviors (Dombrowski, et al. 2007).

The use of Anonymous Remailers was one way the Internet paved the way for the distribution of illicit sexual materials. Mostyn (2000) described the Internet as being used for the distribution of child pornography due to the benefit of the user not having to disclose the origin of the contents. The Anonymous Remailers were an easy to use tool by criminals who can turn their computer into remailer. Originally, the tool was designed to provide covers for political dissidents in Finland, who freely discuss their view on abuse and sexual diseases. Anonymous Remailers cannot be abolished because there is no international agreement to contain it. Nations will have to come together to hold a convention as to how to regulate its use.

Child pornography is an international phenomenon

In 2007, the Canadian law enforcement agents teamed up with Microsoft to create Child Exploitation Tracking System (CETS), a cyber tool to fight criminals in the Cyber world (Thompson, 2007). The Microsoft and Canadian law enforcement collaboration made possible in early 2003, by Paul Gillespie, a Sergeant in the Toronto Police Services Sex Crimes Units. Paul was frustrated by the growth of online child exploitation, and the innovation of technology. He e-mailed Bill Gates for help, later on the partnership was formed. The use of CETS has allowed law enforcement agencies to identify culprits and communities of offenders. The tool was credited in assisting in the investigation to catch international online child pornographies on three continents.

The research conducted by Wolak et al. (2003) found that in the mid 1990s, the growth of computer technologies has given law enforcement agents a lot of challenges. They have to learn about new technical advances, and manage multiple jurisdiction of criminal

activities. The federal government increased funding to assist in the Internet related crimes against children, due to the challenges Cyber attacks posed, and also by creating Internet Crimes against Children Task Forces to assist state and local law enforcement and specialized Internet, child-exploitation units in federal law enforcement.

The rise in Internet use has given rise to numerous cyber crimes, which children that use the Internet are exposed. There are many chat rooms that specifically target minors, by luring them with unrestricted and unsolicited adult content materials.

Predators Grooming Methods

The Cybercrime and Internet sexual exploitation of children has reached epidemic proportions today. With a simple mouse click, the predator can open an entire world of potentially new victims. The Internet's secrecy and anonymity allow the offender to lure victims with more ease than in a social setting (Rufo, 2012). It has been reported that 89% of sexual advancements made towards children took place on the Internet through chat rooms and instant messaging applications (Kempf, 2012). It has been reported that 33% of the crimes committed against youths involved the offender making the first contact on the child's social media site (Finkelhor, Mitchell, &Wolak, 2009). There has been a 17% increase in children between the age of thirteen and seventeen who update their status on social media applications that include personal information such as address, phone number, and where they go to school (Kempf, 2012).

In furtherance, 84% of children post personal information online, it makes it easier for a predator to prey on that child. Predators prey on children through information gathering that is called phishing and allows the predator to gain insight into how the child may react to

different grooming techniques. This technique is not only used to obtain the child's likes, dislikes, or their nicknames but to acquire pertinent information. Information may include following posts the child makes on social media applications about the weather, a local sporting event, a comment about the school mascot, school clubs they attend (Beaton, et al., 2013).

Previous thoughts predators had of being caught in a public setting has now been lessened due to copious amounts of children being exposed online. Offenders are also able to communicate anonymously with other offenders making their behavior seem more justifiable. The offender's justification of their actions is what keeps their victimization attempts ongoing. The ease of accessibility of youths online also poses a threat to those curious about exploiting children. The anonymity of the Internet allows predators interested in children to lie about themselves and their intentions. This anonymity allows predators to search for multiple victims at once using various websites (Rufo, 2012).

Predators do not follow the same strategies when approaching every victim. Predators may utilize the hit and run strategy, where the predator prefers a fast and aggressive approach with the victim or the implementation of a slower technique, to spend more time getting to know the victim and their personal life (Michalopoulos & Mavridis, 2013). Grooming tactics have been studied early on and have shown the same frequented process, most notably cited in O'Connell (2003), five-stage grooming process. It is not to say that all offenders' progress through all the stages, consequentially, some may stay in stages longer than others, while many will skip stages. The first stage in O'Connell (2003) model is the friendship forming stage. During the duration of the friendship stage, which does not have a particular length of time, the predator attempts to get to know the child. The friendship building stage is when the predator asks for a picture of the child, with no sexual references being asked of them. The

friendship forming stage is limitless depending on the offender's frequency of interaction with the child of the child's unwillingness to open up (O'Connell, 2003).

The second stage in the model is the relationship forming stage. The relationship forming stage is extended from the friendship forming stage, as the only addition is the predator is now asking personal questions. Only those predators who are planning to maintain contact with a child for further relationship building will utilize this stage. When the predator begins to ask personal questions to gather information about the child the risk assessment stage is then initiated. These questions are more personal such as asking parents employment, when they are home, where is the computer located, and if the child's activity is being monitored (O'Connell, 2003).

Following the personal questions, the child gets the sense the predator has mutual respect for them and understands what they're going through, this is the exclusivity stage. The exclusivity stage is when the predator makes sure the child trusts them enough to keep their relationship a secret. Following the exclusivity stage, the predator can open the conversation geared more towards sexual issues, the last stage in O'Connell's (2003) grooming model is then initiated, the intimate stage. The predator begins to open up into highly intense conversations asking the child more private and sensitive questions like is he/she ever been sexually touched by another boy or girl before or if have ever been masturbated. The nature of the sexual conversations between the child and predator will vary. Predators may ask for sexual photographs, in the hopes to open the child's mind to meet in person (O'Connell, 2003).

The predators goal when going through O'Connell (2003) model is to become a friend to the child, someone they can rely on and trust enough to be a mentor and future lover (O'Connell, 2003). When a predator preys on a child in an attempt to gain sexual images, it is important to

show the child attention and give them compliments. The extra attention makes the child feel more comfortable telling the predator personal information such as their bra size, showing a picture of them wearing the bra and further the conversation to a nude photograph. The introduction of child pornography happens to children at a range of 25% according to Mitchell, Finkelhor&Wolak (2003).

If the predator does not set the tone of the conversation correctly, it may make the child feel uncomfortable and start to question their relationship. The sexual stage is entered into gently and in time as to make the child feel the predator cares for them, trusts them, and sees them as a future lover. This method is how loyalty is maintained, due to the offender's ability to manipulate the child and press the boundaries. Even when a child admits to being uncomfortable the offender reacts in forgiveness in the hope that the relationship's secrecy is not breached (O'Connell, 2003).

When searching for a victim, a predator looks for a child who is vulnerable, and in need of emotional support that can be provided through online chat, texting or phone calls. A study conducted by David Finkelhor (as cited in Skenazy, 2009) states that predators seek out "the low hanging fruit, kids who are going to be easy. And they do that much more by going to places where there's already a kind of hint of sexual availability." These areas not only include chat rooms for romantic relationships and sexual encounters but popular teen forums as well.

Additional studies have been conducted regarding the role of the Internet in the sexual exploitation of children and predator's techniques. Special Agent Greg Wing, the supervisor of the Federal Bureau of Investigations Chicago Field Office cyber squad, states that "It's an unfortunate fact of life that pedophiles are everywhere online" stated in an FBI story regarding Child Predators (2011). The first contact made by a predator to a child accounts for

33% of crimes committed utilizing grooming techniques (Finkelhor, Mitchell & Wolak, 2009). A study conducted by Malesky (2007) on 31 male inmates convicted of sex offenses, in the Federal Bureau of Prisons Sex Offender Treatment Program (SOTP), showed that 81% of those men went to chat rooms specifically for minors in an attempt to locate a victim. A factor that aided in identifying potential victims was what children posted on their profiles or bulletin boards. What initially attracted predators to prey on potential victims were any indication the child was interested in sex or taking risks. Offenders were also looking for possible victims who showed a profound lack of parental supervision, a sense of neediness, or those who advised they were submissive to older men. These potential victims often utilized certain screen-names to obtain attention from certain individuals specifically when stating they are interested in older men (Malesky, 2007).

Anne Collier, the co-founder of ConnectSafely.org and editor of Net Family News, states that “Sometimes the very reason kids and teens blog and spend time in social-networking sites is to “meet new friends.” So it is not always easy for them (children) to tell when “new friends” have bad intentions, and research consistently shows that about 20% of online kids receive unwanted sexual solicitations” (2009). Special Agent Wesley Tagtmeyer stated that “in his experience, about 70% of youngsters will accept friend requests regardless of whether they know the requester” according to the Federal Bureau of Investigations (2011). Social status on social networking sites are important to some youths who feel the more friends they have, the more they feel adored. Of youths who have social media accounts, 33% are friends with unknown individuals on Facebook having the typical medium friend’s list number of 300 (Beaton, et al., 2013). Each incident encountered by a predator will not have the same grooming techniques as predators individualize their methods for each child’s needs (Collier, 2009).

The Cybercrime and Internet sexual exploitation of children is also prevalent in a technique used by predators, called phishing. Predators utilize a phishing technique to search through a child's social media site to learn personal information such as their friend's names, where they go to school, spend time after school, or search their family members. 85% of youth has admitted to posting personal information on their social media sites that include their date of birth, their real name, and their interests (Beaton, et al., 2013). Unaware to children, predators utilize their publicly made social media sites to gain insight into their lives. 64% of youth who has Twitter accounts made their profiles public while 60% of adolescents holding Facebook accounts admit to making their profiles public (Beaton, et al., 2013).

Teens making their social media accounts public is only one concern; an additional concern is auto-location being enabled on mobile devices when uploading a picture or video to a social networking site, Twitter, Snapchat, or Instagram. When making posts to accounts, 16% of youths stated they allow auto-location, so others can see where they may be located (Beaton, et al., 2013). Auto-location and public profiles are a concern as Special Agent Wing states that "the younger generation wants to express themselves, and they don't realize how vulnerable it makes them" (Federal Bureau of Investigations, 2011). The combined lack of privacy allows the predator to gain enough insight on a child to start the grooming process.

The act of sexual grooming is the method used by predators to take control in an attempt to establish a bond with the child. Motives of predators vary from case to case, resulting in face- to-face meetings or keeping the relationship strictly online (FBI, 2011). Online techniques are utilized and preferred as it masks the predator's true identity and intentions. They may portray themselves as friendly, caring, and taking an interest in the child's problems in an attempt to gain their trust (Finkelhor et al., 2008). Once a bond can be established with a child, the predator often claims to have a connection with the child whether

it be spiritual, emotionally, or physically (Out of the Fog, 2015).

Predators will make contact and will ultimately know what the child is missing from his or her life and will fill that void. This method takes time, patience, and planning for the predator to get what they want, a successful outcome. They will wait for the right opportunity to take control when they know the child will not be able to say no. When the opportunity arises, the predator begins to manipulate the child. Manipulation is key to gaining the child's trust, and who may misconstrue this in the form of affection (Rufo, 2012).

Victims often receive excessive attention, generosity, and affection. This attention can come in the form of being lavished with unexpected gifts in an attempt to lower the child's suspicions about the predator's intentions (Digital Citizens, 2014). This extra attention makes the victim feel they can open up to the predator and discuss more personal issues. That is when the offender introduces secrecy into the relationship, says psychologist Anna Salter, who is an expert in child sexual maltreatment (Weber, 2016). The initiation of confidentiality is what binds the child to the predator who advises the child by saying they should not tell anyone, specifically their parents, making threats of "if you tell your parents I will hurt them, or hurt you" (Weber, 2016).

The predator relies upon the child not to reveal their relationship or what they speak of, to their parents or friends. Grooming does not always lead to threats; predators often hope the child feels a sense of loyalty to them and will not speak of their relationship in fear their parents or friends will not approve (Weber, 2016). Predators' justification of their connection with the child intensifies when they attempt to mirror back the child's background to make it seem as if the predator knows what the child is going through. The mirror-effect is conducted with the hope that the child will not tell an adult or friend about the relationship and loyalty binds them together (Out of the Fog, 2015). Once the predator establishes a sense of loyalty

with the child, the predator will start to introduce partially nude photographs or videos of adults to the child. The predator conducts the introduction into pornography in hope to entice the child to participate (Weber, 2016). Adolescent's Environment

Antisocial Behavior

The Cybercrime and Internet sexual exploitation of children is also very prevalent in children's behavior, allowing them to become more susceptible to predator's manipulation. The utilization of the Internet in schools and homes is a fast growing trend to communicate with friends, for academic purposes, and for entertainment. Youths utilize their online social media connections to solidify the relationships they currently have, as well as making new online relationships often with strangers. Although using the Internet can be beneficial, there are negative traits associated with children using the Internet. It may lead to antisocial behavior, deviant behavior, cyber-bullying, as well as building relationships online that lead to sexual curiosity (Subrahmanyam & Greenfield, 2008).

According to Stukalenko (2016), antisocial behavior in juveniles is an increasing problem year after year. Adolescent behaviors are changing, and are becoming more aggressive, more apt to break the law, and have less moral values (Stukalenko et al., 2016). These trends in youth with antisocial behavior may be linked to parent-child relationships as well as parenting changes. There have been drastic changes over the years in family households affecting children's behavior and mindset. Changes in family homes include, single parents, step parents or unmarried parents, divorced or separated parents, as well as the parents working status or schedule (Collishaw, 2011). Parental change influences children's behavior as the parent-child relationships may suffer from lack of communication. This lack of communication and interaction may lead to the child not having a clear set of house rules, supervision, and guidance. Parental disengagement from a child's life can cause antisocial

behavior in their childhood that can grow into their adolescents (Collishaw, Gardner, Maughan, Scott, & Pickles, 2011).

Antisocial behavior has been viewed as that action which goes against social norms. Those that display antisocial behavior are often juvenile delinquents that engage in criminal activity, as well as have disruptive behavior such as manipulation, lying, aggression, and defiance of others. It was thought that as children grew into adolescence through adulthood, the behavior would subside due to cognitive and learning developments. This is not the case as the earlier a child develops antisocial behavior with aggression and defiance, the more serious risks are of later developing chronic disruptive behavior, and attention deficit disorder making it difficult for the child to learn (Calkins & Keane 2009).

The child's environment plays a role in their development of antisocial behavior. The development of self-regulatory skills begins at a young age, this aids in the child's behavioral abilities. It is essential that relationships between parents and their children are built as early as possible. Successful support, positive reinforcement, and positive experiences allow for proper behavioral assimilation. The strengthening from the caregiver allows the child to build good self-regulating skills, without the parent-child bond, the child may not develop the appropriate skills to adjust later in life. Parents help the child's development towards appropriate behavior and critical developmental skills but peer emotional support generally has a greater impact on the child's behavior (Calkins,2009).

Peers influence children's actions whether it be positive or negative. Negative reactions can come in the form of bullying or complete exclusion. Those children that are rejected early on in childhood are at a greater risk of aggression, and delinquency. Children may develop friendships with other delinquent peers which only increases their defiant behavior. Despite children being influenced by their peers, it is not to say that every delinquent child with

delinquent bonds will remain a delinquent. This uncertainty is due to each child's development of self-control and developmental abilities achieved earlier in childhood. It is those children with low-self regulation that become delinquent and defiant of authority figures. There have been cases where delinquent children form strong friendships, and due to those strong friendships refrain from criminal activity (Calkins & Keane 2009).

Conduct Disorder

Predators may seek children that display risky behavior and are defiant of authority, as these children can have a parent-child conflict leading to less interaction in the child's life. Children that become defiant of authority figures or their parents, often have behavioral disorders that predators may seek out. Conduct disorder in adolescents can be characterized by the repetitive pattern of non-aggressive and aggressive antisocial behavior. Oppositional defiant disorder is also a reoccurring feature of conduct disorder, defiant disorder, and aggressive behaviors in adolescents (Buitelaar, Smeets, Herpers, Scheepers, Glennon, Rommelse, N.N., & J 2013). Documented research on children's behavior has been linked to early childhood aggression to result later in conduct disorders. Aggressive behavior in children usually decreases when entering school and continues to decrease with age. However, children who do not have a decline in aggressive behavior are at a higher risk for behavioral problems in adolescence. As the child's behavior continues to decline it begins to affect their relationship with peers as well as results in parent-child conflict. Conflict with parents includes a decreased involvement in the child's life, the child having reduced reaction to punishment, and a lack of communication and compassion. The child's aggression towards peers ultimately leads them towards the exposure of other deviant peers. This exposure solidifies the behavior, deeming it acceptable, leading to a continued decline in behavior and an increase in building relationships with other deviant peers (Okado&Berrman, 2015).

For a child to be diagnosed with conduct disorder, the child must have displayed at least three of the fifteen criteria in the last six months. The criteria to meet the requirements of conduct disorder, according to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Diseases, includes: (a) aggressive conduct that causes or threatens physical harm to other people or animals (bullying, fighting, using a weapon, being physically cruel to others, being physically cruel to animals, stealing while confronting the victim, initiating forced sexual activity); (b) non aggressive conduct that causes property loss or damage (fire setting, engaging in other destruction of property); (c) deceitfulness or theft (breaking and entering, lying for personal gain, stealing without confronting the victim); and (d) serious violations of rules (before age 13: running away from home and being truant). The diagnostic criteria clearly indicate that conduct disorder includes both overt and covert aggression. (Singh, Lancioni, Singh, Winton, & al, 2007)

Research has suggested that one of the strongest predictors of adolescent conduct disorders, delinquency, and criminal behaviors is familial antisocial behavior. Symptoms of children with disruptive behavior being subject to parental antisocial behavior include abusive parenting, divorce or separation, parental conflict and separation from the child's life (Bornovalova, Cummings, Hunt, Blazei, Malone, &Iacono, 2014). Children with conduct disorder often show a distinctive type of personality, they appear fearless, dominant, have no empathy, and show little or no remorse for their actions (Fanti, Demetriou, &Kimonis, 2013). Emotional disorders such as oppositional defiant disorder and antisocial behavior have been linked to attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. When a child has been diagnosed with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder studies have shown that it can develop into serious persistent conduct disorder. Early detection of oppositional defiant disorder in children with ADD can result in a lower percentage of the child developing antisocial behavior in adulthood (Aebi, Müller,Asherson, Banaschewski, Buitelaar, Ebstein, &Steinhausen 2010).

Cyberbullying

The Internet has become a dangerous enticing place for children to utilize social media avenues for negative purposes. It is not only important for children to be made aware of bullying physically, but also cyber bullying (Davidson & Stein, 2014). Cyber bullying can be conveyed through electronic means such as web-cams, chat-rooms, email, blogs, social media sites, and cell phones (Shariff, 2005). According to Dr. Robin Kowalski, a Professor of Psychology, “Cyber bullying is typically defined as aggression that is intentionally and repeatedly carried out in an electronic context” (2014). The intention of carrying out such an aggressive act online is due to its anonymity as 75% of youth has admitted that anonymity allows them to say things they would not otherwise say in person (Colson, 2011). The average number of hours a child spends online per week is 21 hours, according to a survey report conducted by The Center for the Digital Future (Lebo, 2014).

As anonymity plays a significant role in cyberbullying as classmates who do not engage in bullying, can use technology to perpetrate serious abuse, infinite spectators cause just as much harm. By-standers or on-lookers are just as guilty of participating in cyberbullying as they support the perpetrators actions. The longer the perpetrator persists in their actions, the longer on-lookers join in on the abuse giving the perpetrator more power over the victim. Victims become isolated and vulnerable to additional attacks or repeated abuse in the future. Perpetrators often prefer cyberbullying as multiple perpetrators have the option of getting involved in abusing a victim (Shariff, 2005).

According to Dr. June Chisholm, a Psychology Professor, there are a variety of methods used to cyberbully. Cyberbullying can include catfishing, the process an individual takes to assume a false identity and trick someone into a romantic or emotional relationship over an extended period. Ultimately making attempts to disseminate indecent material online for

others to see, blocking the victim's ability to delete the content. Impersonating another person online in attempts to antagonize a victim, and conduct online harassment, spread rumors, stalk or threaten another with violence, and ratting. Ratting is an attempt by a bully to control their targets computer via remote software tools. Ratting is conducted to spy on the intended target to gain insight or take over the computer as a means of impersonation (Chisholm, 2014).

The time spent online allows children to send degrading or threatening messages to specific targets or make information public for purposes of embarrassment. Utilizing social media networks, cell phones, blogs, and forums, are often used to inflict shame on the target. When children face the sanctions of their actions such as legal threats they have found not to be deterred from continuing their activities. Adolescents want sense of belonging and to fit-in with their peers, no matter the consequences of their actions. Peer influence on teens has played a dominant role in their development. This peer influence has allowed youths to continue with their cyberbullying and is more dominant in children with deviant behavior. Those teens that surround themselves with deviant social groups are more susceptible to partake in criminal conduct. Continuing deviant behavior in groups only solidifies their behavior as acceptable, and deviating from that behavior will only make the adolescent feel shame, ridicule, and no longer accepted by their peers (Hinduja&Patchin, 2013).

Cyberbullying can be seen as a harmless joke by those who participate, and is utilized as a joke to embarrass another individual who is seen as someone who does not fit-in with others. However, there have been cases of cyberbullying having an association with the high rate of adolescent suicides (Colson, 2011). Cyberbullying has adverse effects on children that can include depression, anxiety, weight loss, a decrease in school performance, dropping out of school, substance abuse, suicide, as well as an absence from school or activities (Kowalski,

Giumetti, Schroeder, & Lattaner, 2014). Dr. Sameer Hinduja, the director of The Cyberbullying Research Center, conducted a month-long study of 487 students regarding the prevalence of cyberbullying. The study showed that 4.9% of those adolescents stated that they cyberbullied another person. Also, the study showed that 4.5% of youths posted a hurtful comment about someone online, while 3.2% of adolescents made actual threats to another person online (Hinduja & Patchin, 2013). Adolescence is the time that young people believe they should be able to make their decisions, and space their lives out from their parents. Parents who make attempts to control their child's friendships, activities, and enforce strict rules can find that behavior is ineffective and may result in defiant behavior (Shapka & Law, 2013). Those adolescents that have an open, caring relationship with their parents feel more comfortable sharing their life and allow the parent to understand their situation more easily (Shapka & Law, 2013).

The negative aspect of having a close open relationship with a parent has been shown to affect what children divulge to parents. When it comes to Internet use, those children that have a healthy relationship with their parents were less likely to disclose their online experiences. While those children who were given strict rules by their parents, and are monitored were less liable to engage in cyberbullying. Parenting behaviors play a role in whether their child participates in cyberbullying. Parents who display authoritative parenting styles and can have open discussions about setting rules on the use of the Internet can effectively lower the risk of their child cyberbullying (Shapka & Law, 2013).

Every individual has the right to freedom of expression, even in educational facilities. However, United States and Canadian school officials, as well as Internet providers are worried that if they challenge student's freedom of expression in school, they would violate

their Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Education systems that infringe upon student's individual's rights have to justify through policy-makers that their efforts are to protect the greater good, and will be overstepped as marginally as possible. As with courts safeguarding expressions that have non-violent meanings, this interpretation has been extended to the role of the education systems. There must be a perceived threat from the speech that amounts to the same as actual harm. For instance, bullying in education systems where a perpetrator tells a victim "your f...g dead" is a violent freedom of expression statement that weighs the same as actual harm because the victim perceived real harm could be done (Shariff, 2005).

Studies have shown that cyberbullying is a continued menace to children in schools as well as social environments. Cyberbullying can be safeguarded by educating children through proper support by educators and parents with available resources. However, there is a continued need to research cyberbullying in education systems, its effects on children, and how to react to harassment while online (Martin & Rice, 2012).^[1] Education System

The role of the education system in the protection of adolescents is imperative as cybercrimes are becoming an increasing issue. With the utilization of new technology, it has allowed education systems to increase their Internet availability to students. Over the last two years, there has been about 20 million student growth at schools that are now connected to the Internet at school (Marwell, 2015). This increase has made it significantly more difficult for educators to keep track of students Internet use without bridging the privacy gap. According to Professor of Pedagogy Nina Stukalenko (2016) there is a lack of resources and skilled employees in order for the role of the education system to be effective.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation has made cybercrimes their number three priority. However, there are not enough law enforcement representatives to effectively locate and apprehend every single online predator. Therefore, to strengthen the role of the education

system in protecting children they take steps to educate, and safeguard adolescents on the dangers they could face on the Internet (Defranco, 2011). Technology has become imperative to adolescents as they become heavy electronic device users. The Internet's first utilization in education systems were praised as a savior due to its ability to expand on learning. Educational institutions are now faced with a challenge, the distraction and harmful use of communication devices being linked to the Internet (Subrahmanyam& Greenfield, 2008). Educators must make Internet security a priority due to school curriculums now integrating online tools such as Google documents shared on Google Drive. This integration requires the students to spend a significant amount of time online, making adolescents even more susceptible to stray away from their task (Defranco, 2011).

Many education systems have been faced with the issue of putting limitations on computer access. Implementation of policies and filters is not enough when it can be maneuvered around or broken. The role of the education system in protecting children online is the development of academic use policies that provide guidance to children. Along with education policy, educator's curriculum can include cyber ethics courses to teach children about inappropriate behavior online, cyberbullying, solicitation, provide reading material, and a section on what to do if you think you are a victim. Educators have tools at their disposal such as staysafeonline.org that provides education systems with teaching guidelines and curriculums recommended for school age children (Endicott-Popovsky, 2009).

In furtherance, to aid the role of the education system to increase in children's lives, The Department of Education has drafted a curriculum for schools to teach Internet safety to children, although it is not mandatory, it is highly recommended that schools add the curriculum into their teaching. The program called "Online Safety, and You" provides educators with episodes, interactive lessons, teaching material, and quizzes to provide to

students (Garfield, 2009). Annette Melgosa, an instruction librarian at Walla Walla University in Washington, advises the role of the education system in children's lives would benefit from utilizing a program called C3 (2013). The C3 outline consists of cyber-ethics, teaching children to be respectful online and to conduct themselves in an ethical manner. C3 also includes cyber-safety concerns and how to navigate the World Wide Web safely, how to avoid divulging personal information to others, and to avoid disclosing personal information to access a website (Melgosa& Scott, 2013).

As well as cyber security issues allows educator's, librarians, and school IT staff to understand how to secure their operating systems effectively from malicious content. C3 was developed to help schools and teachers implement online safety curriculums into their lesson plans in a more comprehensible manner, making it easier to use and learn. Educators have the option to set objectives and assignments allowing the students to work towards a goal. The ultimate goal is to teach students to make responsible decisions while online, whether in the classroom or at home (Melgosa& Scott, 2013).

To facilitate more responsible decision making The Department of Education has developed a website for children to understand Internet privacy better, keeping personal information private, as well as teaching children about deceit. The website, OnGuardOnline.gov, also teaches children about social networking media and staying safe with regards to who they speak to and accept friend requests from. The Internet Education Foundation had also dedicated a website, GetNetwise.org, to support the use of the Internet to educate children. Internet Education Foundation does this by providing tools to educators and students to staying safe online. Additional resources for childrenonline safety was developed by the American Association of School Libraries Learning for Life is made accessed during school hours, and at home. The association has provided resources designed for educators or

librarians to teach children about online safety, even if they do not feel comfortable speaking to an educator the resources are at the child's disposal (Marcoux, 2010).

Education systems have the opportunity to receive discounts on Internet access through the E-rate program. The E-rate program as part of The Children's Internet Protection Act, allows communication products and services to be made more affordable to schools. For schools to receive E-rate program discounts, they must certify they have an Internet safety policy in place. Specific requirements to become certified include,

1. "Their Internet safety policies must include monitoring the online activity of minors.
2. As required by the Protecting Children in the 21st Century Act, they must provide for educating minors about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms, and cyberbullying awareness and response.
3. Must block or filter Internet access to pictures that are;(a) obscene;(b) child pornography; or (c)harmful to minors (for computers that are accessed by minors" (Federal Communication Commission, 2015).

The Federal Communication Commission implemented the rules into Children's Internet Protection Act in 2001(CIPA) and updated the requirements in 2011. Congress enacted CIPA in 2000 as a way to address the concerns of children being exposed to harmful and obscene material on the Internet. The requirements and discounts enacted by CIPA are meant to encourage education systems to not only accept their program but play a larger role in the safety of children (Federal Communication Commission, 2015).

International Education Systems

International education systems are concerned with the Internet's impact on children and are looking into technical solutions to the problem, as well as playing a role in students Internet safety. It has not been determined on whether or not the Internet plays a positive role in a child's life, but concerns from educators have emerged about children's unsupervised access when surfing the World Wide Web. Unsupervised access to the web allows children to be exposed to inappropriate content such as sexual solicitations, pornography, and strangers asking for personal information (Anastasiades, & Vitalaki 2011).

The Australian Communications and Media Authority conducted a study of children aged six to seventeen, showing that personal computer use, as well as a school computer, use rapidly increased (Martin & Rice, 2012). Educators in European and international countries is making it a priority to preparing students for the cyber world and teaching children proper online etiquette. A study conducted of 179 educators in Greece from urban and rural academic institutions, showed that 30.2% of educators knew the basics of how to navigate the Internet. When educators were asked where they obtained their skills for navigating the Internet, 25.7% stated they were self-taught. While 41.9% of educators advised they learned their basic knowledge from training programs. The educators that were more technologically advanced than their colleagues were more willing to use technology for educational purposes in the classroom, as well as encourage students to use the Internet for recreational use (Anastasiades, & Vitalaki 2011).

Educators who are technologically advanced were effective at promoting Internet safety in the classroom as they were better informed about the dangers of the Internet. Of the educators that were surveyed in the study, 36% of educators were capable of controlling a student's behavior while they were online. The technologically advanced educators controlling the

student's behaviors tended to inform students on a regular basis about the possible negative effects they could face while online. Although educators make attempts to control the student's behavior while online, many educators are still concerned that students are viewing online content out of their control. The lack of control educators have on students is during the breaks between classroom sessions or school breaks where educator's guidelines are not being followed. It was not the educator lack of control that made educator not want to promote online safety, but their lack of self-esteem (Anastasiades, &Vitalaki, 2011).

Educators who expressed a lack of self-esteem constituted 54.2% of the survey, while 22.3% advised they were strongly ineffective with promoting online safety awareness to students. Ineffective practices were shown to be a technological resource issue as 39.1% of educators advised they avoided promoting online safety due to the lack of school resources. Although a majority of educators do not need school resources to educate children on Internet safety, 58.7% of educators admitted they are simply not interested in having to write and implement practices of online safety into their classroom. Educators believe that it is the government's responsibility to provide educators with the proper curriculum and encourage educators to integrate safe practices into their curriculum. Due to the strong negative outcome of educator's inability to promote online safety, international education systems identified the need to take an active role in ensuring children's online safety (Anastasiades, &Vitalaki, 2011).

Additional research was conducted by the Technological Educational Institute of Mesolonghi, Greece on a group of 130 Greece students aged 15 to 18 years old, on unsupervised Internet access while at school. The purpose of the study was to determine what websites students were visiting on a weekly basis while utilizing school computers. The study was also to determine if students were able to bypass the school controls to visit unsafe

websites, to see if security policies needed to be reconfigured, and to determine the type of webpage locations had explicit material. Internet controls were active during the study, restricting access to any website with a suspicious address or with keywords such as gambling, pornography, or sex. The log files that contain domain names, duration of the visit to the website and specific webpage that was visited were collected at the end of the study (Lazarinis, 2010).

Over 121 exclusive Internet addresses were documented from the access logs, with a combined total of 657 websites visited. The websites were categorized according to the topics to determine what students were doing while online. An accumulation of the websites located in the access logs related to personal websites of actors or singers, sports, music, games, newspapers, and local interest. The next step of the analysis of the research findings was to determine which websites contained unsafe content for students. Out of the 121 websites that were raised from the study, 60% contained inappropriate content such as racism, violent games, gambling adult content and pirating. Out of the 60% of the online risks associated with the websites, 13.45% was found to be sexual discrimination while adult content constituted 10.92% of the problem. It was mentioned earlier that Greek standards are to implement security controls to prevent students from visiting inappropriate content. Statistics showed the top three categories viewed by students were offensive language, sexual discrimination, and adult content. Restrictions on Internet access in Greek schools are not strong enough to filter out a website that contains unsafe material (Lazarinis, 2010).

Websites visited by the students were determined to have legitimate Internet addresses that would not get filtered as they were deemed to have seemingly nonviolent content. However, the websites contained sexual jokes about specific orientations, as well as offensive language, pornographic material, and violent imageries. To improve understanding why the security

filters allowed websites with harmful content to be viewed, search engine queries were examined. It was determined that submissions were made to image searches as well as web page searches, to determine that student's queries were aimed towards sexual information. The resulting analysis of the study concluded that although search queries and websites visited by students seemed harmless in nature. It was discovered that 86.67% of searches contained inappropriate adult content that indirectly or directly is harmful to children. The inappropriate content included on websites that students can access while at school should be thoroughly analyzed to determine how they bypass school security measures. This analysis would allow educators to discover new knowledge and teaching points to shape a better environment for students (Lazarinis, 2010).

METHODOLOGY

Interview Questions

A qualitative research design was selected to conduct this study to enable participants respond to interview questions. The qualitative research provided a good opportunity to involve the stakeholders to participate so that we could have a good understanding of the difficulties they encountered. Qualitative research is used for this study to get the opinions of the Police Officers at the Bradley Police Department, Bradley, Illinois since these are the officers who work on the Cyber Crime against the children. The qualitative method of inquiry was used for this study because it provided the opportunity for participants to voluntarily provide their information and disclose their official status. The qualitative method was adopted purposely to find out the security measures that are lacking and how to find the way forward.

A qualitative survey was selected because this approach was the best method to know the roles that parents play to prevent the children from becoming cyber sexual

abuse victims. For this study a questionnaire was developed to obtain the information needed from the relevant authority. The advantage of using this approach is that the relevant security agency could provide their feedback on what they consider as proactive measures to be put in place to forestall future occurrence.

The researcher requested the police officers who were willing to voluntarily participate to respond to the various interview questions. The researcher collected all the questionnaires and analyzed each of them to determine if all the responses on the questionnaires were addressed. Data was collected through natural setting by in person interview, in Cook County, sitting with each officer's face to face and asking them the prepared questions, and taking notes. The Study took place with officers of the Cook County Sheriff child exploitation unit at one of their offices located in Cook County, Illinois. One advantage of this Data collection was that the researcher actually sat with the officers in their office and with officers describing what they do on daily basis.

The benefit of the interview question is that participants may be more honest and feedback could be obtained compared to questionnaire method. The interview questions provided information and feedback that were necessary to have a better understanding of the challenges and various ways in which children fall victim of cyber sexual exploitation.

Instrumentation

Eight open-ended questions were developed to determine what affect/effect a child's home environment has on the child becoming an Internet cyber sexual exploitation and sexual abuse victim.

Child cyber sexual exploitation and sexual abuse includes a spectrum of sexual crimes and offenses in which children up to the age of 17 are victims. The problem of cyber exploitation and cyber sexual abuse is not limited to the United States children, in fact it is view and

treated as global threats to our children. The Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Cyber Sexual Abuse (2007) offers definition for child sexual abuse under Article 18.

- 1) Engaging in cyber sexual exploitation and sexual abuse with a child who, according to the relevant provisions of national law, has not reached the legal age for sexual activities;
- 2) Engaging in cyber sexual exploitation and sexual activities with a child where – abuse is made of coercion, force or threats; or – abuse is made of a recognized position of trust, authority or influence over the child, including within the family; or – abuse is made of a particularly vulnerable situation of the child, notably because of a mental or physical disability or a situation of dependence.

Online (cyber) child sexual exploitation and sexual abuse is the engagement of a child in sexual activities via Internet facilities.

Sample Population

The sample population consisted of six law-enforcement officers in Bradley Police Department, IL., who worked and had experience with cyber pornographic cases. The law enforcement officers that participated were over 18 years of age. The population was selected using purposeful convenience sampling.

Study Limitations

The limitation of this study was the differences in interpretations of materials that are offensive and provocative to the children; differences in municipal definitions of materials that are considered child pornographic materials; another challenge is the difficulty in determining the actual sources and ages of the people in the materials that are posted on the Internet. Finally, certain information regarding cases of sexual exploitation involving minor

have to be kept confidential. Another limitation encountered was in the area of questions the researcher could ask the officers, so that sensitive information pertaining to the families involved would not be compromised.

Data Collection and Analysis Procedures

Data was collected through natural setting by in person interview in Cook County, sitting with each officer's face to face and asking them the prepared questions, and taking notes. The Study took place with officers of the Cook County Sheriff child exploitation unit at one of their offices located in Cook County, Illinois. One advantages of this Data collection was that the researcher actually sat with the officers in their office and with officers describing what they do on daily basis.

The Officers monitored and chatted with would be offenders and the officers pretended to be minors chatting with grown people who literally thought they were chatting with children. Sometimes the predators would send graphic pictures of themselves to the officers, not knowing they were being set up. These officers will then set up meeting places to meet these predators, and arrest them. There were pictures of predators caught on one side of the wall named "wall of shame" in the office.

Due to the nature and sensitivity of this study, the researcher was not allowed to disclose or identify officers by their names, ranking, and actual location of work. The five officers who participated in this study were address as officer 1, officer II, officer III, officer IV, and officer V.

Data was analyzed, categorizing the idea and pattern that happened repeatedly, grouping common things and patterns. Data was then interpreted by attaching a specific

significance to the themes and patterns observed. This method shed more light as to whether common themes are phenomenological in nature.

Protection of Human Rights

Members of the Law Enforcement Officers (Participants) that took part in the study were asked to voluntarily complete the interview question. They were informed that they had the right to withdraw at any time. The identity of the participants was confidential, the interview questions were anonymous because the form did not reveal the participant's name. The participants were properly informed that there was no penalty for not participating in the exercise.

Impact of Cyber Crimes

Most of the researches on cyber crimes and Internet exploitation of children have focused on quantifying the prevalence of illegal activities and identifying ways of preventing future activities. However, a few researchers have attempted to assess the psychological impact these activities have on young persons, as well the implications for other criminal activity. For example, Cameron and Salazar, in their study of adolescents ages 14 to 17 who regularly use the Internet, determined that both boys and girls reported their perception that exposure to sexually explicit material had no effect on their personal views of either gender or of relationships. Similarly, Sabina, Wolak, and Finkelhor found in their study of college students that only a minority reported that viewing online pornography before the age of 18 had strongly affected their attitudes or emotions about sexuality. On the other hand, Greenfield, who studied the unintended exposure of young people to pornography through peer-to-peer file-sharing networks, concludes that evidence supports the thesis that pornography and sexualized material can influence the moral values, sexual activity, and

sexual attitudes of children and youth, including their attitudes toward sexual violence. Neil Malamuth and Mark Huppin studied the relationship between pornography and child molestation. They found that although child molesters (individuals who commit sexual acts against children) use pornography to groom potential victims, pedophiles (individuals who are sexually aroused by children) are less likely to molest a child after viewing pornography. The researchers conclude that whether exposure to a real or virtual child affects a person's behavior depends on a number of risk factors, and that, therefore, no strong cause and effect exists between viewing child pornography and committing sexual molestation of a child.

Michael Bourke and Andres Hernandez, in a very recent study on the relationship between the viewing and collection of child pornography and the commission of a sexual contact crime against a child, arrived at different conclusions. The results of their research indicated that following participation in a treatment program, child pornography offenders admitted to a significantly greater number of sexual abuse crimes than before they were sentenced. Persons in this study group who had used the Internet to access child pornography were also significantly more likely to have committed a sexual contact crime. The authors conclude that persons using the Internet to commit child pornography offenses may also be undetected child molesters.

The Convention Rights of the Child

The Internet common set of definitions and terminologies relevant to this study has drawn on existing research and policy writing in this area.

Age of consent is the age at which the child is considered old enough to make an informed decision to consent to sexual contacts.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child defines a 'child' as a person below the age of 18, unless the laws of a particular country set the legal age for adulthood younger. However,

Gillespie (2010) has argued that such a definition, which uses an arbitrary cut off, is not without difficulties in the context of abusive images and that, “the difficulty of defining “a child” has a direct impact on the ability of the law to create laws relating to child pornography. It is submitted that there are two principal ways of defining a child for the purposes of child pornography: biologically or by age-specification”. Child sexual abuse and child exploitation includes a spectrum of sexual crimes and offenses in which children up to the age of 17 are victims.

Online (cyber) child sexual exploitation and sexual abuse is the engagement of a child in sexual activities via Internet facilities 1) with a child who, according to the relevant provisions of national law, has not reached the legal age for sexual activities; 2) engaging in sexual activities with a child where abuse is made of coercion, force or threats.

All of these activities can be differentiated from adolescent sexual behaviors which are developmentally appropriate and which do not imply coercive activity. There are clear overlaps between online child sexual exploitation and the commission of contact and other non-contact offences and all are seen as part of a spectrum of sexually violent behavior towards children and young people. Online (cyber) child sexual exploitation and abuse includes the production, distribution, downloading and viewing of child abuse material (both still and video images); the online solicitation of children and young people to produce self-generated child abuse material, to engage them in sexual chat or other online sexual activity, or to arrange an offline meeting for the purposes of sexual activity, also known as grooming or luring; and the facilitation of any of the above.

Online sexual exploitation involves threats or other offensive behavior, sent online to the youth or posted online about the youth for others to see (Finkelhor 2000). Online exploitation occurs when someone uses the Internet to express aggression towards another person. This

can take the form of inflammatory e-mails or instant messages, or damaging pictures or text posted on a profile.

Sexual exploitation encompasses a wide variety of behaviors and can range in severity from degrading remarks to unwanted sexual advances and sexual assault (Dill et al 2008). Most expressions of sexual exploitation that prevail on the Internet appear in the form of gender exploitation and unwanted sexual attention (Barak 2005). Gender exploitation in cyberspace includes gender-humiliating comments, sexual remarks, dirty jokes, insulting erotic or pornographic picture, and the like. These messages can be targeted directly to a particular person or potential receivers generally. Unwanted sexual attention assumes personal communication between a harasser and victim sending messages that refer to or ask about a victim's intimate subjects (i.e., sex organs, sex life), or invite to talk about or engage in sex-related activities.

In contrast to gender exploitation, unwanted sexual attention is specifically intended to solicit a victim to sexual cooperation in virtual or non-virtual environment (Barak 2005).

Unwanted sexual attention is a connection point between sexual exploitation and sexual solicitation. Obviously, various authors use either sexual exploitation or sexual solicitation investigating similar construct. Sexual exploitation is one form of sexual abuse. It is differentiated from sexual abuse by the fact that the act of sexual abuse is somehow unequal and exploitive from the start of communication. For example the child's position as younger and less experienced is exploited for the gain of the offender through the coercion and the persuasion of the child (Quayle et al 2008). Asquith and Turner (2008) suggest that sexual exploitation encompasses various forms of sexual abuse including prostitution, child pornography and child marriage, and is used variously to mean any one or all of these.

Violence against children is the broader concept than child abuse and sexual exploitation, especially due to its societal dimension. Many forms of violence that are harmful to children (i.e., involvement in violent conflicts in state) lie outside common definitions of child abuse.

RESULTS

Since the aim of this study was to conduct an examination into the impact of environments on victims of child sexual exploitation, the most appropriate research design when carrying out a study of this nature was the qualitative approach. The sample population consisted of six law-enforcement officers in Bradley Police Department, IL., who worked and had experience with cyber pornographic cases participated in the interview questions..

The first question the researcher asked each officer was- How many cases of Cyber Sexual Abuse have you been involved in while serving in the police force?

Most of the officers have been involved in or investigated more than 100 cases of child sexual abuse.

Officer I said he began working in the Child Exploitation Unit in 1998. Since then he had investigated approximately 1000 cases of child sexual abuse. These cases have included Indecent Solicitation of a Child, Possession and manufacturing of child pornography, criminal sexual assault, criminal sexual abuse, child prostitution, Human Trafficking and traveling over state lines in over to have sex with a child (The Mann Act). In 2003 he became the Sergeant of the unit and was promoted to Lieutenant and Commander of the unit. He has arrested over 500 individuals that have attempted to or who have succeeded in sexually abusing children.

Officer II has personally participated in over 100 cases of Cyber Sexual Abuse while serving as a Cook County Sheriff's Police Officer. Some of these cases involved real victims, while others involved the role of an undercover police officer. Officer III has been involved

in approximately 200 Cyber Crimes against Children cases, not all of these cases involved an actual abuse of a child, but may have been an attempted exploitation or solicitation.

Question 2. How would you describe the living conditions of victims of Cyber Sexual Abuse living with a single parent (biological mother or father) compared to parents (father and mother).

Officer I said many of the victims he encountered were from single parent homes. It is difficult to put a number on how many are from a single parent home, he claimed. He said predators are looking for someone who is not the most popular child or one who is in need of something. These predators look for children who they can easily manipulate and who are in need of love and affection. These victims were not receiving this from home and look to other places for it. Officer III shared the same believe, he said Children of single parent homes definitely play a major role in who becomes a victim, the subjects seem to seek out children with little parental support or victims with low self esteem, however that is changing to include more victims within a two parent household. It seems that the majority were lower income families, where the parent had to be away from home more to support the family, but even that is shifting to include more middle and upper class homes.

Officer IV said single parent households tend to have more of a financial burden and that will mean less time to spend with the child. Officer II however said he did not notice a dramatic difference between the living conditions between a single parent and two parent household. What was most consistent is that the fact that parents were either too busy to monitor what their children were doing on a daily basis, or provided them with too much freedom at such a young age.

Question three was- What effect does single parents (female or male) – headed households have on the CyberCrime and Internet Sexual Exploitation of Children compared

to two parents (biological mother or father)? Please provide an example of support your opinion/perception?

Officer 1, III and IV shared the same believe that single parents house hold children might be targeted easily, because children might not be closely watched and that the single parent might be working so hard to provide for their children. Officer 1 said Some of the victims who come from single parent homes are not monitored as closely as they should which could be a reason why some become victimized. This is true with many different issues with children. If they do not have appropriate adult supervisions, they will find ways of getting into trouble. Many parents do not realize that a child can get in trouble on the Internet much faster than they do on the street, he concluded.

Officer III believed that Children of single parent families seem to be alone more. Therefore have less supervision as far as their Internet activities. Often children will have a computer or laptop in their bedroom and the parent has no idea what their child does while they are away at work. It seems like females with a single father or males with a single mother seem to fall more victims to these kinds of crimes. Because fathers may not know how to communicate with their daughter and mothers seem to trust their sons more therefore communication regarding inappropriate activities don't seem to be discussed. Officer IV also shared in the believe, he said Single parents often struggle with spending quality time with their children and educating them against potential threats of the Cyber world. Single parents are usually working long unusual hours and often the children are left alone without supervision or the parents have limited time with the children. Officer II however disagreed; he did not believe there is an added effect between single parent and two parent households. "I would say 80% of my cases involved two parent households. I believe it's the lack of monitoring and not the lack of one parent that is of greater concern.

Question four was What issues concern you most about the Child Cyber Abuse of Exploitation cases that you have been assigned?

Officer 1 concerns were children that have no idea of the danger they can get into by “playing” on the Internet. Many of the victims I have interviewed viewed their Internet activity as a game and provided a great deal of information about them to just about anyone that wanted it. The children are very naïve about the dangers of the Internet and don’t take precautions about their safety. Many of the children who become victims are lacking something in their lives and are attempting to find it on the Internet. Some lack love, some attention, some are neglected at home and some are just lonely. “When investigating a case of sexual abuse in which the victim met the offender on line, I often find that the parents were unaware of their child’s activity on the computer and in some cases were using the computer as a babysitter for their children”. Another issue that concerns me is the ease at which a child can log onto the computer and access just about anything they want. Parental controls work but can be easily bypassed by any child. The easiest way of bypassing these controls is to log onto a friends computer or cell phone.

One issue of concern for officer II is the fact that parents allow their children to engage in social networking at such an early age, and the lack of monitoring that is involved between the parents and the child regarding their online activities. Parents are too concerned with being their Childs friend than being their parent. Another concern is the fact that a large percentage of suspects arrested in child abuse cases have disclosed that they were themselves sexually abused as a child. Officer III concern is about children are now producing their own child pornography, whether it is a girl sending nude photos to her boyfriend or falling prey to someone she meet on line and sending nude photos. Kids don't seem to think it is a crime if they send photos of themselves. They believe it is consensual therefore it’s not a crime. Officer IV said what he was troubled by parents who often discipline a child without

understanding the entire circumstances surrounding the event of offence which the child committed.

Question 5 asked- In your investigations, would you say there are more victims of Cyber Sexual Abuse in broken homes (disorganized or dysfunctional homes) or single parent homes, compared to traditional home settings (mother and father) ?

Officer 1 noticed not too much difference between single parent homes and traditional home. He did say when that when he started investigating these crimes in 1998 the majority of the victims came from across were from single parent and dysfunctional homes. As computers became more accessible, he saw a change over the 7 or 8 years. There now seems to be no standard in which any victim can be categorized. Many of the victim he said are still from single parent or dysfunctional homes but there are also many from “normal” two parent households. Officer III said the majority of the case he was initially involved comprised of victims from dysfunctional homes, but that is no longer the case anymore. Officers IV believe there was no difference between single parent homes, compared to traditional home settings (father and mother). Officers II actually witnessed the opposite, he said the majority of the cases he investigate involved two parents’ households.

Question 6 asked- What do you think parents should do to ensure their children do not become victims of Cyber Sexual Abuse victims?

Officer 1 said parents need to be parents and know what is going on in their children’s lives; parents can NEVER keep their child off the Internet and must realize this. Children are connected to the Web at school, through phones and through friends. Taking a child’s electronics away from them will not prevent them from being victims. Parents need to parent and stop trying to be their children’s friend. They must be aware of what their child is doing and know what they are doing on the Internet. They must know their child’s Facebook page email accounts and any other digital media they have signed onto.

Officer II said that children now live two lives; their real life, and their cyber life. Parents need to be equally involved in both of these. Parents should stay educated in the latest trends regarding social networking. Parents should monitor their Childs online activity, it is not spying, and it's parenting. Children need to know they can come to their parents if they are feeling harassed, uncomfortable, or pressured, regarding any online activity they encounter.

Officer III said parents needs to explain to children about the dangers of the Internet. Show them the crime statistic on children that have become victims, remove computers from their bedrooms, install monitoring software, and make sure you have good communication with your child.

Officer IV believed that parents need to become intimately involved in their child's life and discuss the danger of the Internet to their children.

Question 7 is- What approaches do you believe are the most efficient in regard to protecting children against cyber sexual crimes?

Officer 1 believes that the most efficient way of addressing this problem, is through the education of children about the dangers of the Internet. Many children have been taught about how to stay out of trouble on the Internet but have not seen the ramifications of their actions when not properly utilizing the Internet. Children have to understand that the Internet can be a dangerous area in which they can get into trouble. They have to realize that just because they are in the safety of their home using the Internet doesn't mean they are safe.

Officer II said Being a child's parent and not trying to be their friend will help. What children need most when they are young is a parent who will love them, guide them, and protect them. Officer III said parents should monitor their child's internet usage. Make them provide you with account passwords and periodically check what they are doing. Officer IV said Parents need more education in ways their children are becoming victims of sexual abuse and once they have an understanding, they need to discuss it with their children.

DISCUSSION /INTERPRETAION OF RESULT

Based on the literature review that gave us the background information on some similar researches , we are convinced that children are facing a lot challenges and becoming victims of cyber sexual exploitation. The literature review also makes reference to the fact that parents have a big role to play in assisting the children from falling victim of this negative aspect of internet.

It was important to conduct a study on examination into the impact of environments on victims of child sexual exploitation. Getting the feedback from the participants further expose the challenges that must be addressed Based on the study, good parental care for the children is needed. Good education for the children and the parents to understand the potential dangers of social media is very important at this critical time when children spend more time on social media. Monitoring of the activities of the children by their parents is another area this study has revealed. The significance of the study was to have a better understanding on how to prevent children from falling victims of cyber sexual exploitation . It is important to make some recommendation that will further add to the body of knowledge Child Cyber Sexual Exploitation should be addressed to make the world a better place for the children of 21st century.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study was conducted to provide an understanding about the role of environment, bring more awareness about the dangers associated with Cyber Sexual Abuse , and to determine the effort needed to notify parents about the dangers of exposing children to the use of internet without proper supervision. The literature review included in

the study, assisted the researcher to concentrate on this particular area where further research needed to be done.

Based on the study conducted, parents need to be more aware of the activities their children are conducting online. Many parent's views of the dangers of the Internet come from personal experience of the media. Parents are not doing enough in-depth research on the real severity of incidents that children can face. Parents primary concerns are their child being exposed to seduction, abuse from adults or authority figures, child pornography, and talking to strangers. Children are often taught at a young age not to speak to strangers while in public places, however, the Internet should be no different. Managing to gather information and research on the dangers children face online should be a high priority for parents (Ktoridou, 2012).

Not all parents are tech-savvy and are familiar with how the Internet works. This lack of knowledge leaves the parent concerned, as their illiteracy leaves them wondering about their child's Internet use. Parents who inform themselves feel more comfortable and confident in speaking with their children about the dangers of the Internet. This confidence allows the child to feel comfortable telling their parents about incidents that might occur while online. Trust and knowledge about online safety can also enable the parent to set house-rules comfortably on the use and timing of the Internet. Parents need to educate themselves through training, educators, community centers, and local law enforcement agencies about the dangers of being online. Not only is it the parent's responsibility but the child should not rely on others when it comes to their safety while online. Children working together with their parents will establish an increase in trust and understanding of house-rules.

The academic curiosity of the researcher to contribute his quota to the body of knowledge in this 21st century when we need good research work like this to further expand the scope of knowledge and assist the horizon of humanity informed this study

RECOMMENDATIONSS

Some recommendations based on the study are stated below which would further create more scholarships and contribute to the body of knowledge.

Good parental care for the children by their parents is recommended. The time children spend online should be monitored and regulated. Exposing children to the Internet without proper monitoring from the parents or teachers on how to protect themselves can lead to sexual exploitation..

A robust preventive and security measures should be encouraged by the government so as to nip the nefarious activities of the people who exploit these children in the bud.

In as much as we really appreciate the efforts of the security personnel, additional preventative measures should be put in place so that the likelihood of a child becoming a cyber sexual victim could be decreased drastically.

Governments at all levels should fund research on Internet sex offender's behavior. It would be beneficial to know if new offenders are surfacing and what avenues they are taking to victimize children or share child pornography.

Children should be properly sensitized, educated, and conscientized on the need to embrace the positive sides of internet and condemn the negative sides. As advanced technology is being developed, children are very curious to use these mobile devices. Therefore, It would be beneficial to educate the children so that they would be aware of the attendant danger that characterized the use of social media.

Finally, it is advisable that future researchers should start from where this study has stopped so as to continually contribute to the citadel of knowledge,

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