Etiology of crimes committed on virtual social networks

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Abstract

The virtual world has increasingly emphasized the concept of a second life for humans. This research, written with a descriptive-analytical method, seeks to answer the question of what are the most important causes of crime in virtual social networks? This structure of the virtual world is a platform for the interactions of users of the virtual world and also for expressing their views on various issues. The right to health, the right to quality of life, the right to security, the right to access the virtual world, imitation, and the transition of criminal acts from the virtual world to the real world are some of the foundations for analyzing the causes of crime in virtual social networks. Insults, threats, sexual violence, and security crimes are some of the most numerous of the aforementioned crimes. The most important causes of the aforementioned crimes can be divided into two categories: criminological (less criminal regulation in the virtual world, increased incidence of secondary victimization, ineffectiveness of the criminal justice system in virtual activism, and criminal characteristics of the virtual world) and meta-criminological (globalization of the virtual world, vulnerability of specific human groups, low media literacy, lack of sexual culture, inability to localize the virtual world, and uncertainty in the concept of privacy). This study has found that a proper etiology of crimes committed in virtual social networks can be effective in implementing appropriate preventive or proactive responses and bring new perspectives on human activism throughout the virtual world.

Keywords: Crime, Criminology, Virtual World, Virtual Social Networks, Criminal Justice System

Introduction

Crime is a natural phenomenon in society, and predicting appropriate strategies to control it is one of the most important expectations of public opinion from the criminal structure of governance. Success or failure in this path can have different consequences and outcomes depending on the case.

It is clear that the endless importance of the efficiency measure in each of the social organizations, including the criminal justice system, requires that the most important criminal centers that create the highest and most effective level of victimization are always identified and accompanied by efficient and knowledge-based responses. In this way, it can be expected that criminal management, as a special task of the criminal justice system, will occur appropriately in these cases.

In general, throughout history, the phenomenon of victimization has always been a very important target for various researchers in criminal sciences. The emergence and sustainability of the virtual world has also significantly highlighted the victimization trend. Therefore, criminal justice systems are expected to manage these risk areas as well as possible using proven strategies.

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The fact is that despite the undeniable importance of criminal and extra-criminal management of various criminological challenges facing users of the virtual world, the scope of this risk is increasing in line with the numerous developments in the field of information and communication technologies and industry.

Therefore, assessing risks such as various crimes committed against users of the virtual world from different perspectives is one of the most fundamental missions of forensic scientists in our time.

It should be noted that technology, depending on the role it plays, plays a major role in the definition of virtual crimes (Finklea and Thehoary, 2015:3). In some cases, electronic devices and the data contained in them are the target or victim of the crime. In other situations, electronic or digital technologies are the actual tools used to commit crimes that affect individuals, organizations or government institutions. (Viano, 4:2014)

Users of the virtual world have been among the vulnerable groups in criminological research for decades. One of the most important reasons for this insight, which has arisen due to inherent differences from the other world, is the multitude of crimes that occur against them in this realm.

One of the most important structures of the virtual world is virtual social networks, which are known for their attractiveness and diversity with a large number of users approaching them. This widespread approach necessitates comprehensive criminological surveys in it with the aim of reducing the likelihood of crime occurring there.

This study, which was written using a descriptive-analytical method, seeks to answer the question of what are the most important causes of crime in virtual social networks? To achieve this goal, after analyzing the concepts of the virtual world and virtual social networks, the most important figures of crime in these networks and the various causes of the occurrence of these crimes are examined.

1- Concepts

Every research emerges from a specific knowledge-vocabulary. Thus, in this topic, the knowledge-vocabulary of the virtual world and virtual social networks will be analyzed.

1-1- Virtual World

The first knowledge-word of this research is also the virtual world. In this topic, various components of the virtual world, such as the domain and characteristics, will be discussed.

1-1-1- Domain

One of the most important contributions of man in light of the rapid advances in information and communication technologies is the virtual world. The history of this human contribution goes back to the 1960s, when the Pentagon, in order to confront its rival in the Cold War, tried to create a system for sending, storing, and processing various data. Since then, the virtual world has gained an increasingly stable position in human life, to the extent that in various writings, human activity in this space is referred to as the second life of man.

The virtual world in criminology deserves to be examined from various perspectives, as so far

numerous studies have been conducted on the consequences of human activity in it. In general, the virtual world, in addition to its constructive consequences for human life, has also created a dangerous environment from the perspective of criminology teachings, and therefore, it has made it necessary to adopt appropriate practical approaches for its constructive management by the criminal justice system.

In general, there is this idea in the doctrine of criminology that the virtual world, due to some of its characteristics such as the anonymity of users, being transcendental and spatial, and .. is a suitable platform for the realization of various forms of crime and victimization. Virtual world criminology, which is today among the attractive study trends in criminology, studies the most important platforms for committing crimes in this area of human life.

One of the most widely used and common symbols and facilities of the virtual world is virtual social networks. Today, it is rare to find a normal citizen who is not a member of one of the aforementioned networks. This apparent tendency of citizens of the global community to the aforementioned networks has led criminal justice systems around the world to value criminal acts in them as criminal.

This fact indicates the necessity of the commitment of academics and government officials, especially criminal justice system activists, to study the most important criminological challenges arising from this space and to strive to implement appropriate responses to curb the waves of crime and other anti-social actions carried out in it.

In our opinion, the tendency of the world to this achievement of the virtual world is to the extent that various national and international policies in it can only achieve the pre-planned goals of the criminal justice system if they have a solid, considered, and knowledge-based infrastructure. While if the aforementioned features do not emerge and governments start to provide various restrictions for the activity of virtual users in these networks in order to control the waves of crimes committed in them, this process may itself lead to the emergence of many dangers from various legal, political, economic, sociological perspectives, etc. for the country.

2-1-1- Features

The virtual world, in the aforementioned sense, has important features that must be paid attention to when analyzing its criminological features. These features will be examined in the following paragraphs.

1-2-1-1- Anonymity of users

The first feature of the virtual world is the anonymity of its users, which allows them to freely carry out their actions and not fear the usual prosecutions in the real world.

Of course, it should be noted that some of the identity symbols (ID) used in this space are fake or unreal, and this issue itself leads to criminal situations that make it necessary to diagnose it.

2-2-1-1- Expansion and pervasiveness

The pervasiveness of the virtual world means that the lives of a large number of citizens of the global community are connected to it. Any disruption in the functions of this space leads to disorder in social processes and causes civil life to malfunction.

It should be noted here that in general, the development of relations and relationships between countries and the links of national economies with the international economy have caused criminal problems to leave national borders and enter international arenas, and have confronted countries comprehensively with numerous problems in the economic system, monetary markets, etc. Especially since, as previously stated, today many daily actions of citizens have been transferred from the real world to the virtual world and therefore, the feature of being extra-spatial and extra-temporal, in the sense of being international, is also the virtual world. Many active institutions at the international level also believe that a kind of process of internationalization of crime and its globalization has emerged, which undoubtedly follows the virtual world as a manifestation of human actions. Today, with the theory of the global village approaching reality, many of these criminal acts are being carried out by going beyond the borders of a country.

2-1- Virtual social networks

One of the most important phenomena that has emerged in the virtual world is the concept of social networks, which is known for its great user orientation and is among the most important metrics for evaluating user behavior. Therefore, the most important discussions about the consequences of the virtual world can be devoted to social networks, which is especially important in terms of the vulnerability of groups such as women in these networks.

Virtual social networks, as a new media ecosystem, despite legal restrictions on access, have found a special place among users, and a wide range of different age, gender, social, and economic groups are present in its

various forms. Therefore, evaluating the phenomenon of crime occurrence in virtual social networks is also very important in this regard.

To understand virtual social networks from various perspectives, it is necessary to examine the links between criminology and media in order to analyze one of the most widespread media of our time, namely virtual social networks, from the perspective of crime occurrence in it.

2- Fundamentals of analyzing crime in virtual social networks

The analysis of crime in virtual social networks has various fundamentals, some of the most important of which are discussed below.

1-2- The right to health

Appropriate use in the virtual world is very effective in protecting the health of users. In particular, some of them face many challenges in their real lives due to cultural and social reasons. As a result, an efficient fight against undesirable phenomena such as crimes in virtual social networks against them can lead to the emergence of the greatest level of protection of their right to health.

2-2-The right to quality of life

Various ideas and teachings of the virtual world are very important in increasing the quality of life of citizens. Therefore, Iran's criminal policy's protection of the virtual legal activism of users of virtual social networks can also have a good impact on the realization of this right.

3-2- The right to security

Security is one of the most fundamental rights of citizens of the global community in the International Bill of Human Rights and is defined as the absence of fear and terror. This right is important in both the real and virtual worlds. As a result, implementing appropriate strategies in this regard will lead to the protection of the right to security of users of virtual social networks.

4-2- The right to access the virtual world

One of the most modern aspects of human rights should be considered the right to access the virtual world, which today, with the expansion of this manifestation of new information and communication technologies in human life, its importance is becoming more and more apparent.

In fact, cybercriminals are violating this fundamental right of citizens with their actions. As a result, it is necessary to implement effective responses in criminal policy in this regard.

5-2- Imitation

Imitation is a criminological theory that is rarely included in the realm of social learning theories. In this regard, it has been said that humans model each other's behaviors and, depending on whether the target's behavior was legitimate or illegitimate, a crime has occurred or only a permitted behavior has been performed.

Accordingly, given that a large number of users in the virtual world are connected to each other, the commission of even the simplest forms of crime can eventually be imitated by others, and as a result, the commission of any antisocial virtual action reaches its lowest level.

6-2- The transition of criminal actions from the virtual world to the real world

Despite the theoretical and operational independence of the virtual world from the real world, there is no doubt that criminal actions from the virtual world can transition to the real world. Therefore, it is necessary for those involved in the Iranian criminal justice system to always take the necessary precautions.

In many cases, the reason for the occurrence of crime in the real world is its influence from crimes or dangerous behaviors that have occurred in the virtual world, which have not yet been decided.

3- Faces of Crime in Virtual Social Networks

Criminological analysis of crimes committed in the virtual world is possible when the faces of this antisocial phenomenon are identified in the aforementioned scope, and in this topic, the evaluation of a number of the most important ones is on the agenda.

1-3- Virtual insult

One of the crimes that occur in virtual social networks is virtual insult. This crime has a territory on the one hand and special means of occurrence on the other hand, which will be reviewed below.

1-1-3- Territory

Insult is a crime that can be haddi or ta'ziri in Iranian criminal law. Each of these types may occur through virtual systems such as virtual social networks, etc.

2-1-3- Means of occurrence

The occurrence of insult in virtual social networks is carried out through special means that will be reviewed below.

1-2-1-3- Specific symbols of the virtual world

The specific symbol of the virtual world or stickers is today one of the most important symbols of virtual life, by using which the desired concepts are transmitted to others in the shortest possible time.

The diversity of stickers and the possibility of their distribution by the servers of each virtual social network such as WhatsApp are among the most important features that can justify paying attention to them within the framework of the scope of virtual insults to users.

Although stickers are a common communication action in many cases, as mentioned above,

undoubtedly some of these symbols may be considered virtual insults when used for different users and according to their status and personality base.

2-2-1-3- Vocabulary

The use of words or written symbols is also another type of committing virtual insults. In this case, users are targeted by offensive words for various reasons, which clearly have offensive meanings and meanings for them.

Of course, it should be noted that, based on the teachings of second-hand victimology, in this type of virtual crimes against users, the virtual lifestyle of users may also be very effective. For example, profile pictures, profile writing, and in collective virtual social networks such as Instagram, people followed are important in this regard.

Of course, regardless of these cases, if the mentioned words are used, one must undoubtedly believe that a crime of virtual insult has occurred against the target user and, based on the fundamental principles of general criminal law, the perpetrator should ultimately be considered worthy of a reduced sentence.

2-3- Virtual sexual threat

In addition to insult, another crime that is itself among the crimes against individuals, specifically against the psychological structure of individuals and is called virtual threat, occurs in virtual social networks. The scope and the faces of this crime are also reviewed.

1-2-3- Scope

Threatening is a crime with a criminal penalty. This crime, in parallel with its commission in the real and virtual world, is also important in this article because it may be accompanied by cultural and social ideas such as sexual connotations towards users such as women and children, and therefore a number of its manifestations are discussed.

2-2-3- Faces

The crime of virtual threat in the aforementioned sense has special faces, a number of which are analyzed in detail below.

1-2-2-3- Threat to commit violence against users in the virtual world

In this type of threat, the perpetrator of violence threatens another user to perform any of the manifestations of unpleasant actions against him that are unpleasant based on the conventional standards of society or even personally for the target users.

For example, in this regard, threatening to send pornographic images, using words with sexual and negative connotations are examples of this criminal behavior that can realize the first face of threatening to commit sexual violence against users in virtual social networks.

2-2-2-3- Threat to violate privacy in the virtual world

Undoubtedly, each citizen has a special lifestyle depending on local and national customs and organizes it with consideration of criminal legislative ideas, religion, ethics, etc.

In the second type of threat in virtual social networks, the perpetrator, with full knowledge of the facts regarding the aforementioned life of the virtual world user, tries to force them to recount and disclose it to others using virtual world platforms.

It is clear that each of the manifestations of the legitimate life of citizens should not be revealed in society due to its combination with the characteristics of shame, modesty and modesty, and the perpetrator, aware of this fact, commits the crime of threatening himself as an important face of virtual violence against users.

There is no doubt that in this scope, the determination of the crime of threatening against users of virtual social networks must be evaluated in a completely individual manner and based on requirements such as social status, religious beliefs, and their moral and practical ideas.

3-3- Virtual sexual harassment

Virtual sexual harassment is also another important type of crime committed in virtual social networks. This face of crime has its own special types that will be evaluated below.

1-3-3- Sexual phone calls

Some virtual social networks, such as WhatsApp and Instagram, have the possibility of making calls. Undoubtedly, this function may be considered violence depending on the time conditions and other symptoms.

For example, in most regions, making video calls is common only among in-laws, otherwise this can be considered a form of harassment. Making voice or video calls outside office hours, especially at night, to women and sometimes children, in some cases, is a form of virtual sexual violence against them.

Considering the possibility of blocking these users by the victim of violence, making such calls again by these people on other lines is also an important manifestation of virtual sexual harassment.

2-3-3- Sending obscene content

Another form of virtual sexual harassment should be considered sending obscene content to the recipient, which can undoubtedly be considered a gross form of harassment, especially when the recipient does not consent.

In this case, sending images, audio and video files, and even stickers that, despite being foreseen in the structure of virtual social networks, have some sexual implications, and these implications appear more unusual considering the personality and social status of the female user or the child of the addressee, is considered as virtual sexual violence.

4-3- Security crimes

For various reasons, such as the emergence of solidarity among users, the acceleration of the reflection and dissemination of messages, and the wide structural diversity, virtual social networks are a very suitable platform for the occurrence of security crimes.

Therefore, there is no doubt that the criminal justice system, in line with the necessity of implementing the special task of criminal management, must pay close attention to each of these crimes, which are actually included in the general framework of crimes against public security and peace, and seek to establish appropriate regulations for them.

4- Causes of Crime in Virtual Social Networks

The occurrence of crime in virtual social networks has criminological or meta-criminological causes that are discussed in detail in this topic.

1-4- Criminological Causes

Various criminological causes have been proposed for committing crimes in the scope of virtual social networks, and this article will discuss a number of the most important ones.

1-1-4- Less Criminal Rulemaking in the Virtual World

Rulemaking is the fundamental mission of legislative criminal policy, on the basis of which various criminal guidelines in society are processed and pursued to achieve specific goals.

In fact, in many cases, failure to achieve such goals is due to obvious theoretical and operational shortcomings in criminal rulemaking processes. Therefore, rulemaking clearly requires a clear, up-to-date knowledge-based basis for each of the strategies of the criminal justice system against various criminal phenomena.

2-1-4- Increasing incidence of second-degree victimization

In parallel with the victimization of the first users of the virtual world, their second-degree victimization has also occurred for various reasons, which ultimately leads to the occurrence of other forms of violence against them. Part of this phenomenon is also related to the behavioral shortcomings of the criminal justice system in this regard, which will be discussed in the next section.

3-1-4- Inefficiency of the Criminal Justice System in Virtual Activism

How the criminal justice system functions in fulfilling its fundamental missions against the criminal phenomenon has been accompanied by various pathological surveys, which have also found their way into the field of critical criminology studies.

According to the teachings of criminal science, the occurrence of crime is a natural reality throughout human life. In this regard, it should be noted that all humans participate in committing antisocial behaviors throughout their lives. (Piquero, 2016:16) Therefore, predicting the most appropriate and efficient responses to delinquency is among the fundamental missions of criminal justice systems. The virtual world, given its fundamental importance, should also be considered from the perspective of controlling various crimes.

In general, identifying the most appropriate and efficient methods for responding to crimes is one of the most fundamental tasks of governments, and criminological evaluation of the criteria for good governance and governance is also carried out in this way. (Hassani et al., 27:1400) The high probability of crime occurring in the virtual world also deserves attention from this perspective, so that we can hope for the implementation of appropriate crime control processes.

By comparing the virtual and real worlds, it is clear that there is a clear inequality between the functions of the criminal justice system in these two realms. In particular, the underdevelopment of each of the structures of the social system leads to inefficiency in carrying out fundamental missions.

In this regard, it is seen that almost all governments resort to filtering based on various considerations in order to prevent crime in cyberspace. However, often, due to technical and criminological limitations on the one hand and unprincipled implementation of filtering on the other hand, they do not succeed in achieving their goal, but also violate some fundamental human rights. (Pournajafi et al., 163:1401) Therefore, criminal justice systems must use different strategies to combat the obvious criminality in the virtual world.

4-1-4- Criminal Features of the Virtual World

Some of the structural features of the virtual world clearly show its criminal face for committing behaviors such as crimes in virtual social networks, which will be examined in detail below.

1-4-1-4- Identification of the Virtual World

One of the initial consequences of activism in the virtual world is the emergence of a special identity in users. The continuation of activism in a realm such as social networks, being influenced by received messages, instilling special values and anti-values, etc. are among the factors that create a special virtual identity for users of these networks. With the increasing spread of virtual social networks such as Telegram, Facebook and Instagram, identifying the behavioral patterns of individuals in choosing friends in these networks has become very important. By having the behavioral patterns of individuals, their interactions in these networks are better understood and through it, it is possible to predict and control these collective interactions. (Salehi et al., 2016:96)

Some of the aforementioned networks, such as Telegram, are very important from the perspective of the aforementioned outcome, by predicting the ability to form groups and increase the number of members. Membership in these groups is done by both users who are members of the group and those who are not, and therefore it is clear that membership in Telegram groups that

set the stage for committing some types of crime is one of the obvious things in the virtual world.

When a person becomes a member of such a group, over time and depending on the level of his/her activity in it, he/she is exposed to the influence of criminal messages exchanged by the members of that group.

Meanwhile, users, especially children and adolescents, are at risk of creating a virtual criminal identity for themselves, which seems to have much more adverse consequences for society than its occurrence in the real world.

In addition, it is necessary to point out the power of various media, including virtual social networks, which have become among the most important and influential symbols of the virtual world today. The widespread tendency of global citizens to digital media, such as virtual social networks, also increases the risk of criminal identities arising from users' different perceptions of the criminological challenges of society. Therefore, appropriate management of the virtual world can, in addition to protecting the fundamental rights of users to act in it, reduce the scope of possible criminal consequences.

2-4-1-4- Transition from governmental prohibitions

Although freedom of virtual activism is among the fundamental rights of its users, it is seen that some governmental systems limit access to some of its symbols for various reasons. Of course, this strategy can also be seen as one of the risky responses of the criminal justice system to possible crimes in the virtual world.

Nevertheless, the reality is that the advances made in the world of information and communication technologies have provided the possibility of passing through the aforementioned blockages for users of the virtual world. There is no doubt that these are more blockings than in the real world. However, as mentioned earlier, bypassing the aforementioned blockings using new and increasingly sophisticated types of filter breakers is very possible.

Therefore, one of the most important dangerous features of the virtual world should be considered to be the greater possibility of bypassing governmental restrictions compared to the real world. This can also make potential criminals determined to commit various purely virtual and related crimes.

It seems that just as the virtual world itself is a product of human technologies and the numerous changes and advances that have occurred in it are also like this, the tools for bypassing the prohibitions of the governing system in it - filter breakers - are also products of these same technologies, and therefore, this feature should also be taken into account when assessing the criminal value of accessing unauthorized Internet sites.

3-4-1-4-Variety of Criminal Consequences of the Virtual World

Perhaps the most important risk inferred from the virtual world in light of the findings of criminal science is the diversity and scope of the dangers that this phenomenon may pose to society. For example, the emergence of security, economic, cultural, victimological challenges, etc. indicates that the capabilities of the virtual world can create various difficulties for human life as much as they are beneficial, and therefore, require the presentation of appropriate responses from criminal justice systems.

In fact, as Durkheim also emphasized, the criminal phenomenon has special functions for society. (Kozer, 2014:49) Because crime, deviance and deviation from the basic and known norms of society, is one of the oldest social problems of man, whose historical background goes back to the formation of the most primitive human communities. (Habibzadeh, 2012:78) Therefore, instead of dreaming of having virtual social networks without crime, one should try to organize a response to it in an appropriate way and, in order to achieve this goal, engage in a comprehensive etiology of possible crimes in it.

4-4-1-4- Divergence Potential

One of the most important criminological causes of risk associated with the occurrence of crimes in virtual social networks should be considered the potential for deviance, which in most cases indicates the lack of appropriate functions in the criminal justice system or any other social actor.

The potential for deviance is a concept created by the labeling theorist - Leslie Wilkins. He used this concept to refer to a social process in which, through the application of stigmatizing labels, a minor and insignificant act of lawbreaking can lead to the commission of more serious and deeper deviance.

Regardless of the range of behaviors that society considers undesirable, labeling may have the opposite effect, because labeled individuals react to their stigmatization by committing future controversial behavior, which leads to more severe social blame, etc. This concept was later used by criminologists such as Jack Young to examine how more or less minor examples of criminal activity – such as marijuana use – create a major social challenge.

2-4- Meta-criminological causes

The meta-criminological causes of crime in virtual social networks also deserve evaluation, each of which will be discussed below.

1-2-4- Globalization of the virtual world

The globalization of the virtual world is an obvious phenomenon for various reasons, such as the many attractions available in each of its platforms and infrastructures. In addition, the virtual world is a strategy for human introversion to overcome the challenges that have occurred for him in the real world. A set of such factors can

bring about the increasing globalization of the virtual world.

In the context of this widespread epidemic, the occurrence of any good or bad, desirable or undesirable behavior by users is not far from being expected. Therefore, committing behaviors that are associated with criminal valuation ultimately leads to social reactions against the perpetrators.

The expansion of social networks among today's societies is such that there is no possibility of controlling lifestyles with these new media, that is, a lifestyle that is considered ideal and desirable in an ideal and desirable society,

whether religious or non-religious, does not have the ability to adapt to social networks that are pervasive and have no control or restrictions on it. (Khosrowshahi and Ghadami, 2019:406)

2-2-4- Vulnerability of special human groups

The inferiority of women, children, the elderly, the disabled, etc. in various social structures and even in the criminal justice system is one of the undeniable realities throughout human life and one of the most important feminist propositions. This inferiority, which has occurred solely on the basis of the dominance of sexual and sometimes gender beliefs, encompasses many aspects of human life.

In the virtual world, such a view also gives, for example, male criminals the right to target the fundamental rights of women or children. Moreover, such an approach, with its obvious institutionalization among users of the virtual world, has clearly become a culture.

3-2-4- Low media literacy

One of the most important requirements for using various media is their media literacy. From this perspective, mass or social media are components that can only be used to their full potential by having the necessary media literacy, and any shortcomings in this regard expose their users to various adverse consequences, such as victimization.

Considering the course of developments in the world and the transition from the information society to the era of the knowledge society, increasing the media literacy of users is one of the media requirements for realizing a knowledge-based society. A knowledge society requires adopting a permanent and lifelong education approach for citizens.

Access for all citizens to the necessary training, investment in the production and dissemination of knowledge, and increasing the level of media literacy of society are decisive strategies in following the path of knowledge-based development. Lifelong learning in the knowledge society means that understanding how adults learn has become important and that it is also necessary to think about facilitating and promoting education throughout life.

From a traditional perspective, education meant acquiring knowledge. Today, this meaning has evolved to learning the skills necessary for membership in society, producing knowledge, and developing cognitive abilities. Therefore, education is one of the main processes of the knowledge society.

Meanwhile, the use of media embedded in the virtual world also requires its own special media literacy. Virtual social networks are of particular importance from this perspective because they are the locus of actions of a significant number of citizens and users. It is obvious that if users of virtual social networks are equipped with the necessary media literacy, it can be expected that the risks arising from activism in these networks will be minimized.

There is no doubt that adopting the approach of maximum empowerment of media literacy of users of virtual social networks is an up-to-date and cost-effective approach to combat the various dangers that are seen in this realm. The nature of the virtual world and the various structural complexities of this world that arise based on its temporal and spatial nature have further raised the need to pay attention to the necessity of empowering users' media literacy. Since the criminological risks arising from activism in virtual world social networks are generated by users and their consequences also affect them, enhancing users' media literacy is of particular importance.

In this regard, all criminal justice system activists and criminal science academics should, by drawing a criminological perspective of virtual life in social networks, on the one hand, reveal the most important possible criminological challenges in this realm to users and, on the other hand, teach them effective strategies for facing these challenges.

The well-known types of criminological prevention of crimes, which are among the important topics of applied criminology, should be included in the realm of the approach of empowering users' media literacy. Many users, due to their unfamiliarity with the criminal and dangerous features of the virtual world, especially virtual social networks, become victims or commit various types of virtual crimes themselves.

4-2-4- Lack of sexual culture

Given the taboo nature of sexual instinct and its related issues, the existence of ineffective socialization in this regard is easily recognizable. In fact, in order to achieve goals such as protecting the security of citizens in each of its types, such as sexual security, it is necessary to create appropriate socialization in this regard. However, in many cases, such an approach by institutions active in the socialization process such as the family, peer groups, the education system, and the higher education system completely becomes a taboo.

However, given the various costs that the occurrence of crimes on virtual social networks, especially against female users, can be completely prevented by creating an appropriate culture in this regard and by each of the aforementioned influential institutions.

Of course, it is clear that given the global nature of the virtual world, the aforementioned culture-building must be carried out with due regard to its global nature, which has led to the emergence of a similar lifestyle among people around the world. But in any case, it is clear that in our time, especially in Iran, we cannot speak of a culture of sexuality. Because the active institutions sometimes never enter this realm due to lack of knowledge and sometimes due to cultural and social barriers.

An evaluation of the actions of formal and informal educators shows that appropriate educational content about sexuality is not provided to citizens. However, as mentioned earlier, the sexual instinct is of great importance and sensitivity due to its future normal functions in human life.

In fact, in line with the ideas of developmental criminology, there is no doubt about the importance of providing various educations, whether within the framework of a formal program or a hidden program, to students in order to improve their behavior in adulthood. However, the evaluation of the content of textbooks in the education system shows that such training never exists. Even the use of other platforms in this field, such as parents and educators' associations and family knowledge-enhancing courses, which can somewhat overcome the undeniable shortcomings of the family institution in this regard, is not seen in the country's education system.

Citizenship today is considered a social status, and a citizen is an individual as a member of a political community who has rights and duties related to this membership. Cyberspace, which is also interpreted as virtual space, is referred to as a set of internal communications between humans through computers and telecommunications devices, regardless of physical geography.

Today, the virtual world has become widespread much faster than was thought, and not only has its tools entered public life, but in a way it has included all people, and even governments provide many of their services to their citizens through virtual space. In fact, today, citizens should also enjoy the same rights they enjoy in the real world in cyberspace. This space has some characteristics that can easily affect many of the rights of citizens, including the right to privacy, financial security, and moral rights of individuals.

5-2-4- Inability to localize the virtual world

Localizing the virtual world, which is also important from the perspective of concepts such as localizing crime prevention processes, is an important step in overcoming the high probability of undesirable phenomena such as crimes occurring in virtual social networks.

However, it can be seen that the strategy of localizing the virtual world has not been followed well for various reasons, such as the lack of necessary knowledge of the actors of the virtual technology system, and this also allows some people to openly violate the fundamental rights of users such as women by committing antisocial behaviors in this area.

Today, all aspects of human individual and social life are permeated by the media, and from the most private human behavior to the greatest changes in social institutions and cultural and political structures, they are presented through social networks. (Vafaei Nejad, 1400:87) Therefore, the lack of localization of virtual social networks can, in turn, strengthen the factors influencing the occurrence of crime and create many costs for the users of these networks.

6-2-4- Weakening of the concept of privacy

One of the obvious phenomena in the realm of the virtual world is the increasing weakening of the concept of user privacy. Because the violation of user privacy occurs easily, and in light of important features such as the anonymity of antisocial users and the transcendental and spatial nature of the virtual world, this phenomenon is constantly recurring.

In fact, the violation of user privacy always occurs in the simplest way without the target users necessarily realizing it. Thus, the weakening of the concept of user privacy in virtual social networks can clearly lead to the commission of a crime against them.

Conclusion

Virtual social networks are a clear actor in the individual and social life of the third millennium man, and

its increasing role in various aspects clearly brings up the necessity of thinking about its optimization.

One of the most practical and important of the aforementioned topics is the occurrence of crime during activism in these networks. Because the inherent characteristics of this structure of the virtual world increase the probability of crime in it and at least make users connected to a number of human groups, such as women, children, etc., very vulnerable.

Therefore, it is always necessary to identify the most important reasons for committing crime in virtual social networks with an etiological approach, so that in the next step, action responses can be implemented based on those reasons.

Despite the diversity of causes of committing crime in this area of the virtual world, a number of the most important ones have been analyzed in the current research. The aforementioned reasons, on the one hand, indicate the difficulty in identifying the processes of emergence of criminological challenges in these networks, and on the other hand, the necessity of a comprehensive approach to the etiological processes of crimes.

The obvious tendency of the world to increasingly approach the use of these networks, despite the important opportunities that arise from it, has created a great test for criminal justice systems to address the etiology of crimes committed in these networks through balanced research and the use of achievements arising from previously collected experiences.

Such an approach causes appropriate action responses to be taken, whether against possible crimes in virtual social networks or in any other structures of the virtual world, in line with the globalization of crime prevention and the dependence of the comprehensive or partial legitimacy of governments on its success.

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