

ONLINE GAMING AND HARASSMENT: CYBER VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN DIGITAL ENTERTAINMENT SPACES

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ABSTRACT

Online gaming is one of the most rapidly developing entertainment industries in the world where women now represent about 50 percent of the gaming population. Ironically, cyber gaming realms have turned into arenas of organized harassment, abuse, and virtual genderized cyber violence, in which male players of games are overwhelmingly harassing female players. This research paper investigates the occurrence, the nature, and the effects of online gaming harassment on women both on an international and an Indian basis, the structural issues that facilitate such harassment, the psychological and social effects of online harassment, and the inefficiency of the current legal and regulatory frameworks in solving the issue of gender-based online harassment. Based on the empirical data of studies published in 2024-2025, this paper shows that 59 percent of women who play games worldwide encounter some type of toxicity by male gamers, 20 percent of female gamers in India have received sexual harassment such as death and rape threats. The article suggests a multi-stakeholder model that includes technological intervention, legal changes, platform responsibility, and cultural change in gaming communities to build safer online entertainment services to women and marginalized gamers. Keywords: online harassment, gender-based violence, gaming toxicity, cyber violence against women, digital safety, gaming platforms, India, toxic gaming culture.

KEYWORDS: *Cybercrime, Online Gaming, Sexual Harassment, Violence Against Women.*

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