

SOCIAL MEDIA FACILITATED SEXUAL ASSAULT

Prof. Dr. Hakan Kar, MD

Mersin University Medical Faculty, Department of Forensic Medicine

The sending of the first e-mail in 1971 is accepted as the beginning of “social media” history. Even though the biggest aim of the internet is the fast sharing of economic data, social media users have used the biggest portion of the internet. The Internet has given birth to a quirky range of modern addictions and maladies such as ego surfing, blog streaking, Google-stalking, cyberchondria, photo-lurking wikipedialism etc. Sexual assault by people who were acquainted by means of social media is very frequent nowadays.

This paper presents the cases that were admitted to Mersin University Medical Faculty at the Department of Forensic Medicine by the complaint of sexual assault by those who were acquainted by means of social media. Case characteristics including age, sex, year, type of the social media, time, place, physical and genital examination findings and psychiatric outcomes are presented. Common features of social media related sexual abuse cases are highlighted. 95.8% of the 71 cases were female, average age was 15.9. Mental Retardation was diagnosed at 14.1%. One of third cases were member of a broken family. All perpetrators were male and most of them were between 14-32 years of age. Instagram was the most used platform for online dating. Most common threatening method was threatening by naked images of victims. WhatsApp was the most common platform for online sexual violence. Most of the victims were sexually assaulted within 3 months later from online dating. Nearly all of them were penetrative sexual assault. PTSD and suicidal tendency were most common psychiatric diagnosed of the victims. Educational programs to students and families which focused on safe internet usage will reduce the risk of online sexual abuse.

Keywords: Online, Sexual Assault, Social Media, Internet