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The Role of Social Networking Sites in Promoting Criminal Behavior

دور مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي في تعزيز السلوك الإجرامي

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Abstract:

This study sheds light on the role of social networking sites in promoting criminal behavior where platforms like Facebook and Twitter and Instagram have become powerful tools for communication between individuals, At the same time they represent fertile ground for the dissemination of criminal ideas, Crime as a violation of law and takes many forms and these platforms have played a role in facilitating the commission of crimes in innovative ways, These platforms can enable the spread of extremism and incite violence and form virtual criminal networks that transcend geographical boundaries, The types of crimes committed through these platforms vary from cyber harassment and fraud to hacking and organizing criminal activities, These platforms also provide criminals with a rapid means of communication, which helps spread criminal behaviors and facilitates their execution on a larger scale and strengthens criminal identities while reducing awareness of the dangers of illegal actions.

Keywords: Social Networking; Behavior; Criminal Behavior; Crime.

الملخص:

تسلط هذه الدراسة الضوء على دور مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي في تعزيز السلوك الإجرامي حيث أصبحت منصات مثل فيسبوك وتويتر وانستغرام أدوات قوية للتواصل بين الأفراد ولكنها في الوقت ذات تمثل بيئة خصبة لنشر الأفكار الإجرامية، فالجريمة بوصفها انتهاكا للقوانين تأخذ أشكالا متعددة وقد أصبح لهذه المنصات دور في تسهيل ارتكابها بطرق مبتكرة فقد تمكن هذه المواقع من نشر التطرف والتحريض على العنف وتشكيل شبكات إجرامية افتراضية تتخطى الحدود الجغرافية، كما تتنوع أنماط الجرائم المرتكبة عبر هذه المواقع من التحرش الإلكتروني والاحتيال إلى القرصنة وتنسيق الجرائم المنظمة إذ تعتبر هذه المواقع وسيلة تواصل سريعة للمجرمين مما يساهم في نشر السلوكيات الإجرامية ويسهل تنفيذها على نطاق أوسع ويعزز من تشكيل الهويات الإجرامية ويقلل من الوعي بخطورة الأفعال غير المشروعة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي؛ السلوك؛ التعليم؛ السلوك الإجرامي؛ الجريمة.

1. INTRODUCTION

Social networking sites have become an integral part of our daily lives playing a pivotal role in shaping social relationships and exchanging information and enabling instant communication among individuals worldwide, These platforms have contributed significantly to facilitating various aspects of life and ranging from learning and cultural interaction to building professional networks and maintaining family connections, However despite the numerous advantages offered by these platforms a darker side accompanies this technological advancement as social networking sites have increasingly become effective tools in promoting certain negative behaviors including criminal behavior.

With the widespread use of social media across different age groups and social strata criminal groups have begun to exploit these platforms for illicit purposes, Through

platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and others local gangs and terrorist organizations and cybercriminal networks have adopted covert and sophisticated methods to recruit individuals particularly vulnerable and marginalized groups into illegal activities, The impact of social networking sites extends beyond mere incitement as they are also used to facilitate crime planning and disseminate extremist ideologies and enable rapid and clandestine coordination among criminals.

Moreover these platforms contribute to the facilitation of cybercrimes such as online fraud and theft and identity impersonation as offenders exploit weaknesses in users' data security or conceal themselves behind the anonymity provided by certain applications and modern technologies, The role of social networking sites in reinforcing criminal behavior is further amplified by their ability to create a

virtual environment in which offenders feel shielded from immediate accountability thereby increasing their audacity to commit crimes.

In this context, the danger of social media lies in its profound influence on individuals and groups through the dissemination of deviant ideas and the normalization of criminal behaviors and the reinforcement of social isolation among some users. Such conditions may drive individuals to join criminal networks as recruitment becomes easier through the availability of rapid communication tools such as encrypted messaging and secret groups which hinder authorities' ability to monitor and detect these activities.

Accordingly, the issue of the role of social networking sites in promoting criminal behavior constitutes a vital topic that requires in-depth study and analysis to understand the mechanisms employed by criminals on these platforms and to identify the impact of social media on the spread of crime and the evolution of its forms. In this regard the following research question is raised: How do social networking sites contribute to the promotion of criminal behavior?

2. Overview of Social Networking Sites:

2.1. Definition of Social Networking Sites:

Social networking sites are a system of electronic networks that allow subscribers to create personal accounts and subsequently connect through an electronic social system with other members who share similar interests and hobbies or who are linked through educational institutions such as universities or secondary schools. (Fadhlallah, 2012, p. 7)

The core idea of social networking sites is based on the collection of data from participating members which are publicly displayed to facilitate interaction among individuals who share common interests or objectives. These platforms also aim to bring together users who seek profiles or images or other types of content thereby enabling them to build close social relationships,

Consequently effective social networking sites enhance communication among friends and acquaintances by providing visual and audio communication tools in addition to the exchange of images and other content. In this way these platforms contribute to strengthening social ties and enriching individuals' daily lives. (Al-Moukdadi, 2017, p. 102)

2.2. The Emergence of Social Networking Sites:

Social networking sites have undergone gradual development since the advent of the Internet and passing through early experiments in digital communication and eventually evolving into contemporary platforms that have become an essential part of everyday life. Their emergence can be divided into several main stages: (Ismail, 2019, pp. 37–38)

2.2.1. The First Stage: Initial Beginnings and Early Experiments (Late 1990s – Early 2000s):

During this stage social networking sites appeared in a rudimentary form and relying primarily on forums and chat rooms and email as basic means of communication. Online forums provided spaces for exchanging ideas and discussing shared interests while chat rooms such as ICQ and AOL enabled instant communication among users. The first social networking sites also emerged during this period notably "SixDegrees" in 1997 which allowed users to create personal profiles and connect with friends despite its limited functionalities compared to present-day platforms.

2.2.2. The Second Stage: Expansion and the Emergence of Modern Platforms (2003 – 2010):

This stage witnessed a significant expansion in Internet usage and the emergence of more advanced and interactive social networking platforms. Users became able to create detailed personal profiles and share photos and videos and written content and interact continuously with a large number of people. Among the most prominent platforms during this stage were "MySpace" and "Facebook" which offered

integrated social interfaces and facilitated communication among individuals. Additionally “LinkedIn” emerged as a platform for professional networking and connecting individuals across different fields of work, while “YouTube” enabled the large-scale publication and sharing of video content.

2.2.3. The Third Stage: The Era of Modern Social Networks (2010 – Present):

This stage has been characterized by the widespread use of smart phones and mobile applications which has enabled fast and immediate access to social networking platforms anytime and anywhere. It witnessed the emergence of applications such as “Instagram” and “Twitter” and “TikTok” which focus on visual content and live streaming and real-time interaction. Moreover these platforms have become powerful tools for digital marketing and cultural promotion and community engagement, making them an integral part of the daily lives of individuals and societies.

2.3. The Importance of Social Networking Sites:

Social networking sites have gained increasing importance in contemporary life as they represent one of the fundamental mechanisms that have reshaped patterns of communication and interaction within society and contributed to profound transformations at the social and cultural and economic levels. Their importance can be highlighted through the following dimensions: (Al-Dulaimi, 2020, pp. 136–137)

2.3.1. A Central Tool for Social Communication:

Social networking sites constitute an effective means of facilitating communication among individuals and groups as they enable the instant exchange of messages and information and reduce distances and enhance social interaction within society.

2.3.2. A Space for the Circulation of Knowledge and Information:

These platforms have become a

primary channel for disseminating news and information and exchanging knowledge which has contributed to expanding individuals’ cultural and cognitive awareness and promoting broader access to information.

2.3.3. Supporting Community Participation and the Formation of Public Opinion:

Social networking sites play an important role in empowering individuals to express their opinions and participate in public discussions and thereby enhancing civic engagement and contributing to the formation of public opinion on social and political issues

2.3.4. Supporting Education and Training:

Social networking sites have demonstrated their significance in the educational field by supporting e-learning and facilitating communication between learners and educators and enabling the exchange of educational resources, in line with the requirements of the knowledge society.

2.3.5. Economic and Marketing Significance:

These platforms represent an important pillar of the digital economy, as they are widely used in electronic marketing and promoting projects and institutions and creating new employment opportunities and particularly in the fields of e-commerce and entrepreneurship.

2.3.6. Enhancing Digital Identity and Self-Expression:

Social networking sites provide individuals with a space to build their digital identity and express themselves and their interests and participate in content creation and reflecting transformations in patterns of cultural and social interaction.

2.3.7. Rapid Response to Events and Crises:

These platforms acquire particular importance during emergencies and crises as they are used to rapidly transmit information and coordinate efforts and raise awareness making them an effective tool for managing

societal crises.

2.4. Characteristics of Social Networking Sites:

Social networking sites are characterized by several features that make them effective tools for interaction and communication among individuals and societies. The most prominent of these characteristics include the following: (Soultana & Ben Labeled, 2021, p. 565)

2.4.1. Universality:

Social networking sites eliminate geographical and spatial barriers enabling individuals in the East to communicate easily with their counterparts in the West. This feature enhances individuals' ability to interact without restrictions imposed by international borders thereby contributing to the formation of a global network of social interaction.

2.4.2. Interactivity:

Users on these platforms are not merely recipients or readers, rather they are also senders and content creators and active participants. This dynamic helps break the rigidity that characterized traditional media as it allows audiences to engage actively thereby reinforcing the values of dialogue and discussion.

2.4.3. Multiplicity of Uses:

Social networking sites offer a high degree of flexibility and ease of use as students can utilize them for educational purposes and scholars for disseminating knowledge and writers for communicating with their readers and individuals for mutual interaction. This versatility makes them multifunctional tools that meet diverse societal needs.

2.4.4. Ease of Use:

Social networking sites rely on simple elements such as letters and symbols and images which facilitate the transmission of ideas and interaction among users. This simplicity makes them accessible to all and including younger generations and individuals with limited technical expertise.

2.4.5. Cost-Effectiveness in Terms of Effort and Time and Money:

These platforms are highly cost-

effective as they provide their services free of charge or at minimal cost. Consequently, anyone can create an account on these platforms without the need for significant financial investment and making them accessible to all segments of society rather than limited to affluent or privileged groups.

2.5. The Most Popular Social Networking Sites:

2.5.1. Facebook:

Facebook is considered one of the earliest social networking platforms with a history spanning more than a decade and it has gained widespread popularity and global influence. The platform was founded in February 2004 by "Mark Zuckerberg" at Harvard University where it was initially limited to Harvard students only. It later expanded to include students from other universities followed by high school students and a limited number of companies before eventually becoming accessible to anyone wishing to create an account. The founder of Facebook has expressed his vision of the platform as a social movement rather than merely a communication tool or medium. He describes Facebook as a "directory of the world's population" as it provides ordinary individuals with the opportunity to construct their public identity by presenting and sharing information about themselves and their interests and emotions in addition to personal photographs and video clips. (Hassanin, 2013, p. 185)

2.5.2. Twitter:

Twitter is one of the most prominent social networking sites to have emerged on the Internet in recent years. Its name is derived from the term "tweet" meaning a chirp and it adopts a bird as its symbol. The service is considered a microblogging platform that allows users, known as "tweeters" to post short personal messages not exceeding 280 characters per message which can be read and responded to by visitors. Twitter is distinguished by the speed with which information particularly news is transmitted and making it an ideal platform for following current events and interacting with them in real time. (Al-

Mohareb, 2011, p. 118)

The idea of Twitter originated in early 2002 as a research and development project carried out by the American company Odeo in San Francisco. However the service was officially launched to users in October 2006. Since then, the platform has achieved wide popularity as a new and innovative service in the field of social networking. In 2011 Twitter was spun off to become an independent company under the name "Twitter" and with the continuous growth in its user base it became a significant tool for documenting daily events and engaging with the public. (Dhiraj, 2014, pp. 14- 15)

2.5.3. YouTube:

YouTube is considered one of the most popular websites on the Internet as it allows users to upload and share video content easily and free of charge. Once a user registers on the platform they are able to upload an unlimited number of videos that can be viewed by millions of people around the world. YouTube also enables viewers to interact with content by posting comments on videos thereby creating collective dialogue around the topics presented. In addition users can rate videos by assigning them a relative value on a five-point scale which reflects the perceived importance of the video from the perspective of the online community. According to the global Alexa ranking YouTube occupies the third position among the most visited websites worldwide after Yahoo and Google which indicates its prominent status in the digital sphere. (Al-Dulaimi, 2020, p. 189)

One of YouTube's most distinctive features is the possibility of immediate interaction among users as it allows commenting and rating based on diverse viewpoints thereby encouraging the exchange of opinions and discussions. This feature enhances the viewing experience by enabling users to actively share their thoughts and feedback making the platform not merely a space for watching videos but an interactive environment. However YouTube faces several challenges such as the presence of inappropriate content and

misleading information due to the freedom of content uploading. In some cases issues of credibility may arise which underscores the need for effective monitoring systems to ensure content quality. Moreover YouTube plays an important role in marketing products and services as it is widely used as an effective tool in advertising campaigns. This commercial use has made the platform a focal point for many companies seeking to reach a broad audience. (Al-Dulaimi, 2020, p. 190)

2.5.4. Instagram:

Instagram is a free application that was launched in October 2010 in San Francisco United States by the technology developer "Kevin Systrom". Initially the application was designed exclusively for iPhone and iPad and iPod devices which contributed to attracting users of Apple products. In April 2012 the developing company then consisting of only 13 employees expanded the application to include smart phones operating on the Android 2.2 "Froyo" system such as Samsung Galaxy devices. As a result users became able to download the application easily from the Apple App Store for iPhone devices and from Google Play for Android devices. (Al-Wadi, 2025, p. 145)

One of Instagram's key features is its strong emphasis on visual content which makes it an ideal platform for designers and artists and photographers as it allows them to showcase their work and interact with their audience. This visual orientation distinguishes Instagram from other social networking platforms that rely more heavily on text-based communication such as Twitter. Furthermore Instagram's modern communication tools such as Stories and live streaming have contributed to enhancing user engagement as users can now share moments of their daily lives in real time thereby increasing the sense of connection and community participation. (Al-Wadi, 2025, p. 145)

3. Advantages and Disadvantages of Social Networking Sites:

3.1. Advantages of Social Networking Sites:

Social networking sites represent one of the most prominent manifestations of digital transformation in contemporary societies, They have contributed to profound changes in social relations and communication patterns and knowledge transfer, The main advantages of social networking sites can be summarized as follows: (Al-Dulaimi, 2020, pp. 213–214)

3.1.1. Enhancing Social Communication:

Social networking sites have enabled individuals to communicate instantly and continuously and transcending geographical and temporal barriers. This has contributed to strengthening family and social ties and maintaining old relationships and building new ones based on shared interests.

3.1.2. Dissemination of Knowledge and Information Exchange:

These platforms play a pivotal role in facilitating rapid access to information and its dissemination. They have become an effective means for exchanging scientific and cultural knowledge and expertise particularly within academic and educational circles.

3.1.3. Supporting Learning and Education:

Social networking platforms have contributed to the development of new learning patterns such as e-learning and distance education and through educational groups and live streaming and the sharing of educational content. This has enhanced opportunities for self-directed and lifelong learning.

3.1.4. Enhancing Community Participation:

Social networking sites have enabled individuals to express their opinions and participate in social and cultural issues. They have contributed to raising social awareness and encouraging volunteer initiatives and solidarity campaigns.

3.1.5. Supporting Economic Activities and Marketing:

Social networking sites have become an effective tool for digital marketing

especially for small and medium-sized enterprises as they allow the promotion of products and services at low cost and enable access to a wide audience.

3.1.6. Developing Personal and Professional Skills:

These platforms help develop various skills such as communication and content management, teamwork and personal branding which positively affects employment opportunities and professional development.

3.1.7. Facilitating Access to News and Updates:

Social networking sites provide real-time coverage of local and global events and making users more informed about political and economic and social developments.

3.1.8. Supporting Creativity and Self-Expression:

These platforms provide an open space for creativity in writing and photography and video production and digital arts contributing to the discovery and widespread dissemination of talents.

3.2. Disadvantages of Social Networking Sites:

Despite the growing importance of social networking sites and their effective role in facilitating communication and disseminating knowledge, they entail a range of negative effects that impact both individuals and society, These disadvantages can be outlined as follows: (Ismail, 2019, pp. 152–153)

3.2.1. Weakening Direct Social Relationships:

Excessive use of social networking sites has led to a decline in face-to-face interaction as virtual relationships increasingly replace real ones. This has contributed to weakening family and social bonds and increasing feelings of social isolation.

3.2.2. Addiction and Waste of Time:

Social networking sites are among the most attention-grabbing digital media leading to addictive use among wide segments of society especially youth. This negatively affects time management and

impacts academic and professional performance.

3.2.3. Spread of Misinformation and Rumors:

The rapid circulation of content on social networking sites contributes to the spread of false news and inaccurate information and creating a state of media misinformation that affects individuals' awareness and attitudes and may lead to social anxiety or conflict.

3.2.4. Negative Impact on Mental Health:

Intensive use of social networking sites is associated with increased levels of anxiety and stress and depression due to constant comparison with others, the pursuit of social approval, and exposure to cyber-bullying.

3.2.5. Violation of Privacy:

Social networking sites pose risks to individuals' privacy either through the collection of personal data without users' full awareness or through account hacking and misuse of information, threatening individuals' digital security.

3.2.6. Decline In Academic Achievement and Productivity:

Excessive engagement with social networking sites negatively affects concentration and attention and particularly among students and leading to lower academic achievement and reduced productivity in work environments.

3.2.7. Promotion of Negative Values and Behaviors:

Some of the content circulated on social networking sites contributes to promoting behaviors and values that conflict with prevailing social and cultural norms such as verbal violence and hate speech and the negative imitation of inappropriate role models.

4. The Nature of Crime:

4.1. The Concept of Crime:

Crime can be defined as "an event that occurs, an incident that takes place or a practice that is carried out or an experience that is undergone whether intentionally and with premeditation or accidentally without intent or planning whereby the perpetrator

violates prevailing customs and traditions or contravenes the positive law that protects individuals from aggression against one another and deters those who are tempted to commit crimes". (Al-Saati S. H., 2005, p. 23)

Crime is considered a violation of society's norms and regulations and it constitutes harm that affects both the individual and society, Consequently the law which represents and safeguards the social entity prescribes a punishment or criminal sanction for it, Crime may also be understood as those acts that pose a threat to society and render coexistence and cooperation among individuals within the community impossible or as any behavior that violates feelings of social loyalty, From a legal perspective or jurists generally agree in defining crime or criminal behavior as "any act or omission that the legislator criminalizes and for which the law provides a penal rule applied to those who violate it". (Al-Amarat, 2023, p. 67)

In general, the definition of crime is based on identifying its constituent elements which are determined by law, without a legal provision that defines the legal model of a crime criminal liability cannot be established. This principle is grounded in the doctrine of criminal legality and which stipulates that no punishment may be imposed in the absence of a legal text and in the prohibition of analogy in the field of substantive criminalization. (Houssin, 2021, p. 18)

4.2. Characteristics of Crime:

For an act to acquire a criminal character it must entail certain characteristics that distinguish it from other social problems, Among the most important of these characteristics are the following: (Al-Saati & Issaoui, 2021, p. 132)

- Occurrence of actual harm: Mere contemplation of a crime or the intention to commit it is not considered a criminal act in itself. The law does not punish intention or thought unless the criminal act is carried out and results in actual harm to others.

- Legal criminalization of harm: The act causing harm must be defined as a crime under the Penal Code and meaning that the law explicitly criminalizes it and determines the nature of the prohibited harm.
- Existence of criminal intent (mens rea): For an act to be considered a crime criminal intent must be present. This implies that the perpetrator is aware of their actions and acts with free will and ensuring consistency between intent and the criminal act itself.
- Causal relationship between the act and the harm: There must be a causal link between the act committed by the offender and the resulting harm. In other words the act must be the direct cause of the damage suffered by others.
- Legal determination of punishment: Every crime must have a legally prescribed penalty. No individual may be punished unless the law provides for a specific sanction for the criminal act in question.

4.3. Elements of Crime:

A crime is composed of three main elements, namely: (Fadel, 1963, p. 194)

- The moral element (criminal intent): This element refers to the individual's intention or awareness of the behavior they engage in and meaning that the offender acts consciously and with free will when committing the criminal act, It reflects the extent of the offender's awareness of the surrounding moral and social values as well as their individual and social responsibility toward society, This element represents the psychological dimension of crime as it is based on an internal foundation linked to the offender's mind and free will in committing the act, Criminal intent is crucial because it distinguishes between spontaneous or accidental behavior and deliberate conduct that violates social norms, Without this element it may be difficult to classify an act as a crime for example if a harmful act is committed without intent or awareness it cannot be

considered a complete crime.

- The material element (criminal conduct): This element relates to the act or observable behavior that leads to the commission of the crime, Such conduct may be positive or meaning an action performed by the individual or negative meaning the failure to perform a legally required act, This element reflects the surrounding circumstances and factors that may drive an individual to commit a crime, The material element constitutes the practical aspect of crime as it is the act that causes harm whether directly or indirectly, It embodies the behavior that society can observe and deem as deviating from accepted norms, This element is closely linked to social reality which contributes to shaping individual behavior as social or economic or even cultural pressures may play a significant role in pushing individuals toward criminal acts, It is considered the most evident element as it is manifested in tangible and observable actions that can be proven.
- The legal element (legal rule): This element means that any criminalized act must be defined in legal texts. No behavior can be regarded as a crime unless there is a clear and explicit law that defines such conduct as criminal and specifies the penalties associated with it. This principle is known as "no crime and no punishment without a legal text".

4.4. Classifications of Crime:

Crime classifications vary even within the subcultures of the same society, as follows: (Qarawi, 2018, p. 265)

- Crimes against property: such as theft and vandalism and causing disorder.
- Crimes against persons: such as homicide and physical assault.
- Crimes against public order: such as crimes related to national security.
- Family crimes: such as marital infidelity and child neglect.
- Crimes against religion: such as attacks on places of worship.
- Crimes against morality: such as

indecent behavior and acts offensive to public decency in public spaces.

Meanwhile Boukabbous & Sahi classified crimes as follows: (Boukabbous & Sahi, 2022, p. 88)

- Classification according to severity: Crimes can be divided into three main categories is felonies and misdemeanors and infractions.
- Classification according to duration: Crimes may be categorized as instantaneous crimes and continuing crimes; instantaneous crimes occur at a specific moment and end once committed whereas continuing crimes involve repeated or ongoing acts such as concealing stolen property or kidnapping children.
- Classification into intentional and unintentional crimes: Intentional crimes are those committed deliberately by the offender whereas unintentional crimes occur without clear criminal intent such as manslaughter or accidental injury.
- Classification according to the direction of harm: Crimes may be classified into those that harm the public interest such as crimes against the state and those that harm individuals such as homicide and theft as well as political and military crimes.
- Classification according to statistical purposes: Crimes can be divided into crimes against persons and crimes against property and crimes against public morality and crimes against public order.
- Classification according to organization: Crimes may be classified into professional crimes such as prostitution and drug trafficking and non-professional crimes, such as simple theft.
- Severity of the prescribed punishment: This includes hudud crimes and crimes of retribution (qisas) and blood money (diyya) and discretionary crimes (taazir).

5. Types of Crimes Committed via Social Media Platforms:

5.1. Cyber-bullying:

Cyber-bullying is considered one of

the negative consequences of technological development in the contemporary era, Although bullying is an old behavior that has existed as long as humanity itself its emergence in the virtual world has increased its severity as the space of freedom for perpetrators has expanded and the harm inflicted on victims has intensified, It is defined as “verbal threats and persistent harassment using communication technologies such as telephone communications and email and text messages through web networks”, Cyber-bullying is also defined as “a form of aggression that relies on the use of modern communication tools and internet applications (smart phones, laptops, tablets, cameras, video, email and web pages) to publish posts or comments that cause distress to the victim or promote false news or send electronic messages for the purpose of harassing the victim, with the aim of confusing them and causing moral and material harm”. (Dehmani & Dehmani, 2022, p. 121)

5.2. Electronic Suicide:

The concept of electronic suicide departs from the traditional framework of suicide associated with mental illness or social pressures or genetic factors extending instead to what is known as suicide contagion which falls under the broader category of behavioral contagion, This type of contagion is manifested in the rapid and spontaneous spread of a particular behavior among a specific group of individuals especially youth, In recent years the phenomenon of creating memorial pages on social media platforms to honor individuals who have died by suicide has emerged as occurred in New Zealand where a single page reportedly led to a series of suicide cases reaching eight individuals, This example highlights the power of media contagion and its negative impact, In this context imitation and the desire to achieve fame or increase likes and shares on social media have become motivations for some users thereby amplifying the influence of this dangerous contagion, British police

have also revealed the existence of groups on social media that brought together adolescent girls and were linked to cases of attempted suicide and severe psychological harm. (Luxton & al, 2012, p. 195)

5.3. Electronic Forgery:

The crime of forgery in electronic documents is considered one of the cybercrimes that can be committed using computer systems or computer networks, It encompasses all forms of forgery that occur within the digital environment. In this context forgery is defined as any alteration of the truth that appears in computer outputs whether these outputs are printed on paper or stored electronically, This includes modifying or altering data stored in a computer with the aim of affecting its legal value and provided that the electronic document has legal effect in proving a right or obligation and is capable of being used, This type of crime can also be defined as unlawful interference with or interception of stored information for the purpose of falsifying or modifying it in order to achieve illegal objectives. (Nokti, 2022, p. 757)

5.4. Crimes Against Persons:

In these crimes offenders use computers to commit acts such as defamation of individuals whether legal or natural persons by publishing misleading ideas or information and sometimes false news and fabricated scandals, These crimes also include violations of individuals' privacy through hacking their social media accounts or stealing their personal information, Such crimes result in serious harm to victims at the personal and social and psychological levels due to defamation and fraud that may affect their reputation and private lives. (Housni, 1978, p. 98)

5.5. Violation of Intellectual Property Rights:

The internet involves serious and increasingly complex activity as it is considered the largest repository of ideas in the world, These ideas are constantly exploited or quoted or stolen as books and artistic and literary works are copied via the internet and used without any compensation

to the author or publisher or original rights holder, As Professor "Robert Tatzner" notes hardly a day passes without reading about a case of idea theft or unauthorized use, The forms and manifestations of infringement of intellectual property rights within this network are numerous and difficult to enumerate, What unites them is that they involve a type of electronic intellectual piracy whereby the rights granted to protected works are violated through the use of computers, particularly via the internet. (Yousfi & Si Hamdi, 2018, pp. 224–225)

4.6. Cyber-terrorism:

Cyber-terrorism refers to the exploitation of digital technologies to spread fear and exert control over others whether through attacks on information systems for political or ethnic or religious reasons, It is also considered a form of aggression or threat material or moral carried out using electronic means by states or groups or even individuals, These attacks target human beings in various aspects of their lives or including their religion or life or honor or intellect or property without any legitimate justification and leading to the spread of corruption and chaos, This type of terrorism constitutes a complex threat in the modern era due to its reliance on digital tools characterized by speed and difficulty of tracing which makes confronting it a major challenge for security agencies, Addressing this threat requires international cooperation to develop strategies for protecting information systems and ensuring that they are not used as instruments to harm individuals and societies. (Qais, 2023, p. 141)

5.7. Sexual Crimes via Social Media Platforms:

These crimes refer to unlawful acts that violate individuals' sexual freedoms through the use of digital platforms, They include a wide range of behaviors such as sexual harassment and blackmail and sexual exploitation and the distribution or publication of sexual content without the consent of those concerned, Such crimes may manifest in the form of sending

inappropriate messages or issuing sexual threats or sharing private images and videos of individuals without their permission for purposes of blackmail or humiliation. Perpetrators of these crimes often exploit anonymity on the internet which causes victims to experience feelings of isolation and helplessness in confronting such acts. Moreover, these crimes can lead to serious psychological and social harm to victims and undermine their sense of safety in the online environment. (Al-Amarat, 2023, p. 104)

6. CONCLUSION

Social media platforms are among the modern social phenomena that carry profound impacts on individual and collective behavior. With the increasing use of these platforms it has become essential to understand their role in fostering criminal behavior. The research indicates that social media is not merely a tool for communication but also a fertile environment for recruiting individuals and enticing them into criminal activities. These platforms facilitate access to information and strengthen interpersonal connections which allows criminal groups to target youth and offer promises of status and power and disseminate content promoting extremist ideas. Additionally social media serves as a means for spreading criminal ideologies and providing training and supervising criminal activities.

Therefore, there is an urgent need to develop effective strategies to confront this phenomenon and including raising awareness about the risks associated with social media and enhancing individuals' critical thinking skills and promoting positive values that contribute to building safer communities. Governments and societies and families must collaborate to identify the necessary measures to mitigate the negative influence of social media on criminal behavior and ensure the positive use of these tools to foster constructive social relationships.

Based on the foregoing, a set of recommendations has been proposed as

follows:

- The necessity of updating criminal legislation related to cybercrimes in a manner that keeps pace with the rapid development of social media platforms while addressing legal loopholes exploited by criminal groups in the digital space.
- Strengthening the principle of legal deterrence by imposing stricter penalties on crimes committed via social media platforms and particularly those that affect public security and information security and individuals' rights and fundamental freedoms.
- Activating mechanisms of international judicial cooperation due to the transnational nature of crimes committed through social media in order to ensure the prosecution of offenders and prevent impunity.
- Enhancing legal protection for victims especially in cases of blackmail and defamation and cyber-bullying and sexual crimes by facilitating reporting procedures and ensuring data confidentiality and protecting complainants.

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