

WORKSHOP V

ONLINE
AND
OFFLINE
RELATIONS



WORKSHOP V

Online and offline relations

5.1 Introduction

Gender-based violence has emerged as a rising global issue, with potentially significant economic and societal implications, due to the increasing scope of the internet, the rapid dissemination of mobile knowledge, and its widespread usage of social media, along with the current violent pandemic against women and girls.

Researches reveal that in one in every three women - an incident of violence has taken place in their lives, and while the Internet access is fairly new and increasing, one in ten women is reported to have experienced cyber violence. The gravity and prevalence of the phenomenon becomes more obvious when considering that incidents of GBV occur from ages as young as 11 years old.

Internet connectivity is quickly becoming a requirement for economic well-being, and is increasingly seen as a basic human right; thus, ensuring that this digital public space is a secure and empowering place for all, including women and girls, is essential.

This workshop includes:

4

Activities

2

Hours

- Reader phase (35 minutes)
- User phase (30 minutes)
- Critic phase (25 minutes)
- Evaluator phase (30 minutes)



It targets young people from 12 to 17 years old and can be carried out within the classroom.

OBJECTIVES:

- To encourage participants to consider the basic implications of cyber bullying or sexual assault, primarily by addressing the implications for girls victims in various ways (social, mental, emotional, etc.) following guiding questions - whilst helping participants understand the severity and unethical character of such actions.
- At first, we will seek to make clear to everyone engaged
 - The unregulated aspect of social media sites and other online spaces, which are at the root of their advancement, increases the risks of victimizing women.
 - The systemic gender disparity and other overlapping identity variables and perceptions provide the offenders with a hospitable environment online for harassing and abusing girls.
- Through the different phases of the envisioned workshops and their assorted activities the teachers/educators will expand the perception of the different participants on the phenomenon by introducing to them crucial information on the matter – which most definitely have not come across before.
- Moreover, the teachers/educators will work towards gaining their attention and engagement in practical types of exercises with the sole purpose of altering their behavior when needed (primarily their online attitude) and thus reduce, at least within the space young people 12 - 17 socialize and connect, a continuum of aggressions ranging from unwanted sexual advances, gender and/or racist insults, to frequent, harmful, frightening, and sometimes life-threatening abuse which girls, and especially ones with other vulnerabilities, experience on the Internet.

5.2 Life before and after the Internet



Reader phase



35 minutes

Tools

- Blackboard
- Paper
- Pencils/pens



Activity related to the "face to face option"

The purpose during this initial and introductory activity would be to essentially provide a first understanding of the phenomenon's nature in the context in which students tend to socialize and interact with each other – taking also under heavy consideration the shift, which occurs in our participants' relationships and attitude towards their peers when been online in contrast to the what occurs when interacting in the real world outside the "Social Media" bubble.

In exploring the issues above the teacher/educator involved will let everyone introduce themselves and then deliver a small talk on the transformative nature of Social Media and the various forms of Online GBV, citing selected references and focusing mostly on the pre-social media world and today's environment where the prevailing nature of the Internet affects almost everything – including their relationships. The teachers/educators should read document 1.1 Frequent forms of GBV and document 1.2 Life before the internet.

Whilst delivering these brief presentation(s) she/he will encourage everyone to politely interrupt with questions and even remarks and thoughts if they feel are needed. The purpose of this introduction is to provide an idea to the target group with a glimpse of what the school life and the general interactive environment have been prior to the Internet.

The logic behind this is that the participants' age groups reveals that most probably the majority of them was raised with the Internet being around and have not experienced a world without this revolutionary technology – therefore it is much more difficult to imagine a world where their behavior is not dictated by the norms of Social Media.

The pre-references will have a relatively playful tone in relation to popular culture and will be sorted out in different points with some relative photos whilst the different types of online harassment, which will follow, will be on a more thoughtful tone.

In order to reinforce this notion the teacher/educator will also screen a short video with the title "Life without Smart phones – how was it". The clip also has a playful – innocent tone in its approach to the subject and it doesn't require any translation when played.

Even that the video is a bit long (7 min) with different examples/sections – educators/teachers could beforehand choose to show the parts that are more relatable to their age group and not all of them.

Following, all students will be called on the blackboard to write a few short sentences or even single words in order to describe/conceptualize these two chronological situations as they perceive them – under two thematic categories: the one including students' interaction and relationships prior to the Internet and the other one after the Internet.

With this exercise ending, the teacher will initiate a discussion among the students and encourage them to give a brief explanation of what they wrote whilst highlighting their perceived integral differences of online and offline relationships with their peers – focusing on types and forms of negative interactions among them and especially ones that could in their own perspective represent and violence that could evoke negative feelings and emotions to the receiving end.





Reader phase



35 minutes

Tools

- PC/tablet/android phone
- Internet connectivity



Activity related to the "online option"


Although the main thematic subject of this particular part of the trainings is to give the participants the ability to acknowledge the transformative nature of the internet in various aspects of life – it is crucial to instill in their perception the fact that despite the space (physical or online) in which an offence - harassment takes place, the long –term consequences on the victim’s mental state are equally severe and crucial on the impact that they can have.


During this particular section of the training, the teacher/educator will seek to encourage a brief debate among the participants by providing a set of guiding questions that can be adjusted according to the different setting/age group, etc. – and which will revolve around the transformations that takes place when it comes to issues relating to online gender-based violence.

An example of such a sequence of questions that could – as was indicated above, be adjusted accordingly is the one provided below:

1. Does the experience of buying something in an online shop (e.g. clothes) feels like the one of shopping in a physical shop? If not what are the main differences in your opinion?
2. When reading a book/graphic novel, etc. on a tablet or a computer, does that feel the same as reading a paper version of it? If not what are the main differences in your opinion?
3. When discussing-hanging out with a friend you already know online does it have the same feeling as when you do it outside in the physical world? If not what are the main differences in your opinion?
4. If someone posts a negative comment on your social media, when you read it does it feel – disturb you as negatively as if he/she was saying that to you face-to-face? Please expand a bit on the reasons behind your answer.
5. What do you believe can be the consequences of gender – based – violence on the behavior/attitude/psychology of the victim, when this violence is directed towards her online? Please expand a bit on the reasons behind your answer.
6. Do you believe that there are any crucial differences between online gender-based-violence and the one in the real world? Please expand a bit on the reasons behind your answer.

5.3 Understanding the unseen consequences of GBV



User phase  **30 minutes**

Tools

- Different objects
- PC and projector
- Internet connection



This second activity into the thematic subject explores how relationships between different individuals form and how they can manage or not to co-exist and be as meaningful and harmless as the ones in the physical world.

Following a guiding sequence, they will delve into the effects for girls' victims from different points of view (social, psychological, emotional, etc.) which will allow them to enhance their perspective on the gravity and illegality of these behaviors.

In achieving the above, participants will be administered two different questionnaires during the duration of the workshop that will include situational questions – seeking from them to detail their response in two different manners and contexts – one being their behavioral reaction within the physical world and the other one being their response online through the available mediums of communication (primarily their social media).



The activity will start with a short explanation of how the participants should answer the questionnaire (a mixture of very straightforward and simple closed and open – ended situational type of questions). The scenarios briefly presented to them, seeking their response will have a relatively innocent tone so that the teacher/educator might highlight at a later stage the gravity of personal consequences for the victims of online harassment in contrast to what a lot might consider “playful” or even “funny” behavior.

After completing the questionnaires n.1 anonymously – the teacher/educator will ask participants to randomly read loud responses in two different questions. After doing so, the rest of the participants will write down three words that can best characterize the response they just heard, e.g. positive, incorrect, friendly, etc. and the teacher/educator will collect all of the responses.

Before beginning the second part of this workshop and administering our questionnaire n.2, the participants will be asked to respond in the same manner as before although in this case the questions will be slightly more related to the phenomenon's response and consequences from an online presence stance.

In the same way as the process in questionnaire n.1, random responses will be read out loud (this time by the educator/teacher in order to ensure anonymity since participants could essentially recognize the writing style of a fellow student). Similarly, as before participants will write down a few words they think they can be more representative of what they just heard. After the teacher/educator transfers these words under a second category she/he will encourage a comparative discussion between the findings of the two parts of the workshop (questionnaires 1 & 2) highlighting the contrast between offline and online behaviours as these are being captured in the two questionnaires.



 **User phase**  **30 minutes**

Tools

- PC/tablet/android phone
- Internet connectivity





Activity related to the "online option"

Due to the practical nature of this particular part of our workshop – it can actually be delivered both in online and offline environment in the same way.



5.4 How does GBV feels?



Critic phase  **25 minutes**

Tools

- Blackboard
- Paper
- Pencils/pens



Entering into the Critic phase – the purpose is to gradually instill into the participants the notion that their online behavior can alter the mood and in time the overall psychological state of those that are in the receiving end of different types of harassment due to some internal or external characteristics that might portray them as weak and vulnerable to the rest of the group. In doing that the teacher/educator hopes to increase the conscientiousness of the students in regards to the damning effects of online violence in its various types and expressions within the school environment and non formal education.

Following the logic laid out in the introductory section the teacher/educator aims to enhance the critical reaction and thinking of the participants mainly by elevating their conscientiousness and emotional intelligence levels concerning the phenomenon of online gender-based related harassment and subsequent violence.

In order to do so the teacher/educator needs to have the participants be in the position and state of the victim even for a brief time so that they in their own right gain a glimpse of what it means to be on the receiving end of deprecatory comments.

Before executing this type of exercise the participants will be handed out a random example of a posting taken out from the internet. The teachers/educators can prepare these by selecting random postings that were created in the local language prior to the training – been careful not to reveal any personal information of the original creator.

Each one of these postings will be circulated in a printed or digital form among each individual participant

The participants will then need to write down some remarks which themselves would consider negative and unkind and which already probably have seen floating around in social media chats or comments sections.

These papers will then be collected by the teacher/educator who will hand them out randomly again back to the students – paying attention not to hand out a completed paper to the one who wrote the comments on it.

The students will then – all one by one stand up and read the description of the posting and the negative comments out loud - thus gaining a brief idea of how these negative words feel when they are spoken out loud.



Critic phase



25 minutes

Tools

- PC/tablet/android phone
- Internet connectivity

ONLINE




Activity related to the "online option"


The logic and sequence of the online activity will follow the one of the face-to face activity although implemented online. The postings presented to the students will be in front a device with an Internet access so that the overall feeling will be familiar.

In the same fashion as previously the participants will write down their comments and remarks and their collective answers will be distributed among all participants and read out loud. At the end of both activities the teacher/educator will encourage a discussion among the participants so that everyone can express in their own words the feelings they perceive can be caused by online harassment of this sort to an individual that has done nothing to deserve this.



5.5 How do we move forward?



Evaluator phase  30 minutes

Tools

- Blackboard
- Paper
- Pencils/pens



The primary purpose of the ending session will be to reflect and essentially assess what was taught during the first three parts of the workshop whilst giving the chance to all participants to imprint in their mind the full spectrum of a disturbing phenomenon such that of online GBV and at the same time gain a valuable perspective on the impact it can have on the relationships with their peers.

During the initial part of this ending activity the teacher/educator will seek to retrieve from all participants the practices that they will – after following the course of the first three activities – apply in their every day online interactions with their peers.

In doing so, after a brief explanation for the need of this reflective exercise, the teacher/educator will request from the students to think and write in a piece of paper, i. what they will from now on alter during their online interactions and behavior, ii. what they will avoid doing, and iii. the reason behind this.

After doing so, the teacher/educator will encourage everyone to read out loud their responses – in an effort to instil confidence in their thoughts and opinion in such a delicate matter – and will welcome the rest of the participants to share their own remarks in regards to what expressed out loud.





Evaluator phase



30 minutes

Tools

- PC/tablet/android phone
- Internet connectivity

ONLINE



Activity related to the
"online option"

During this last part of the workshop the teacher/educator has a dual choice.

She/he can either implement online an activity similar to the one proposed in the face-to-face session, with the appropriate adjustments or they can circulate and guide the participants in playing a video game with the name **"Chuka, Break the silence"** that was developed for the age range of the target groups with the aim of helping the users:

- **Recognizing different types of aggression**
- **Understanding their rights in the face of aggression and abuse**
- **Dealing with aggression personally or through trusted adults**
- **Developing values of fairness and respect**
- **Building skills for critical thinking, decision making and empathy**

The scope of the game is to help young girls develop ways to respond to psychological, physical and sexual violence, while raising boys' awareness and helping them recognize such situations. By playing as the character Chuka, a 13-year old female YouTuber and gamer who encounters haters and monsters in a nightmare, children learn to be assertive and to take actions which help them defeat various forms of gender-based violence.

The link for the game is:

<http://www.chukagame.com/>



The teacher/educator will dedicate a few minutes to help the students register and explain to them the controls for the game (different for keyboard and touch devices) – and then let them play with approximately 10 -15 minutes.

Similarly to a face-to face activity the participants will be encouraged to express their reflections on the exercise/video game out loud expressing what are the major lessons they will leave this series of workshops with.