

# Investigating The Role of Anonymity in Online Insensitivity Among Teenagers

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## Abstract

In the current digital era, cyberbullying, defined as the intentional use of digital platforms to inflict harm on other users through hostile and aggressive behaviour, has grown to be a very serious concern. As everyone has started to increasingly rely on social media for communication and a main source of entertainment, especially amongst adolescents, incidents of online harassment and emotional abuse have grown rapidly. One factor often associated with cyberbullying is anonymity. It is the power that individuals have to conceal their true identity when communicating online. This lack of identification can create a sense of detachment and reduce personal accountability. The perceived protection offered by anonymity can lower the threshold for socially unacceptable actions, making it simpler for people to bully, harass or intimidate others in online spaces without worrying about the repercussions. The present study explores the impact of anonymity on insensitive behaviour and cyberbullying among teenagers in the Indian subcontinent. Sixty participants (30 anonymous, 30 nonanonymous) were selected using convenience sampling, and data were collected through online surveys where participants had to rate insensitivity in troll comments on a scale of 1-5, with 5 being the most insensitive. The research followed a quantitative design. The findings revealed that there was no significant distinction between the anonymous and non-anonymous groups' overall responses, suggesting that anonymity alone may not drive online insensitivity. However, significant differences in the reaction were seen in passive-aggressive and personal insults, such as "Remember when you were thin?" and "Having a brain would be a good start.". Limitations included a small, geographically limited sample and gender imbalance. In order to fully understand the complex connection between anonymity and online activity, future research should include larger, more varied populations.

**Keywords:** anonymity, non-anonymity, cyberbullying, victimisation, social media consumption