# INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL FOR LEGAL RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS

Open Access, Refereed Journal Multi Disciplinary Peer Reviewed

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# Avinash Kumar

*Avinash Kumar has completed his Ph.D. in International Investment Law from the Dept. of Law & Governance, Central University of South Bihar. His research work is on "International Investment Agreement and State's right to regulate Foreign Investment." He qualified UGC-NET and has been selected for the prestigious ICSSR Doctoral Fellowship.He is an alumnus of the Faculty of Law, University of Delhi. Formerly he has been elected as Students Union President of Law Centre-1, University of Delhi.Moreover, he completed his LL.M. from the University of Delhi (2014-16), dissertation on "Cross-border Merger & Acquisition"; LL.B. from the University of Delhi (2011-14), and B.A. (Hons.) from Maharaja Agrasen College, University of Delhi. He has also obtained P.G. Diploma in IPR from the Indian Society of International Law, New Delhi.He has qualified UGC – NET examination and has been awarded ICSSR – Doctoral Fellowship. He has published six-plus articles and presented 9 plus papers in national and international seminars/conferences. He participated in several workshops on research methodology and teaching and learning.*

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# ADDRESSING THE RISKS OF ONLINE SEXUALISATION AND CYBER-EXPLOITATION OF MINORS IN INFLUENCER CULTURE

AUTHORED BY - NIVEDHA K.V & JAISVICA KAUR BAGGA

## Background of the Study

A concerning dichotomy arises in the digital age, where each scroll takes us into the life of influencers: children, who are praised for their inventiveness and relatability, are being thrust more and more into the stark glare of audiences around the world. Beneath the glamour of likes and followers, there is a more sinister reality, minors are being sexualized and exploited online, a problem that has outrun current legal frameworks. How can we balance the need to protect children from the predatory aspects of influencer culture with their right to self-expression?

India is at the core of this dilemma because of its fast increasing number of young people who utilize digital devices. The lines between benign visibility and dangerous vulnerability are frequently blurred by the algorithms that magnify their content for engagement. While the financial benefits for young influencers are apparent, are we unintentionally commercializing childhood and are parents, platforms, and policymakers complicit in perpetuating this cycle? This study aims to spark a critical conversation about these vital issues[1]. It seeks to clarify the role of law, technology, and ethics in addressing these concerns, asking stakeholders to create a digital ecosystem in which children can prosper without fear, exploitation, or injury. The stakes are high—our collective response could change the course of digital childhood forever.

## 1. Introduction

In India, a country with over 658 million internet users, kids' participation as influencers or content makers has been a growing trend. The decision of this study stems from the worrisome increase in occurrences of child exploitation in internet areas[2]. According to the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), cybercrimes against children in India have increased
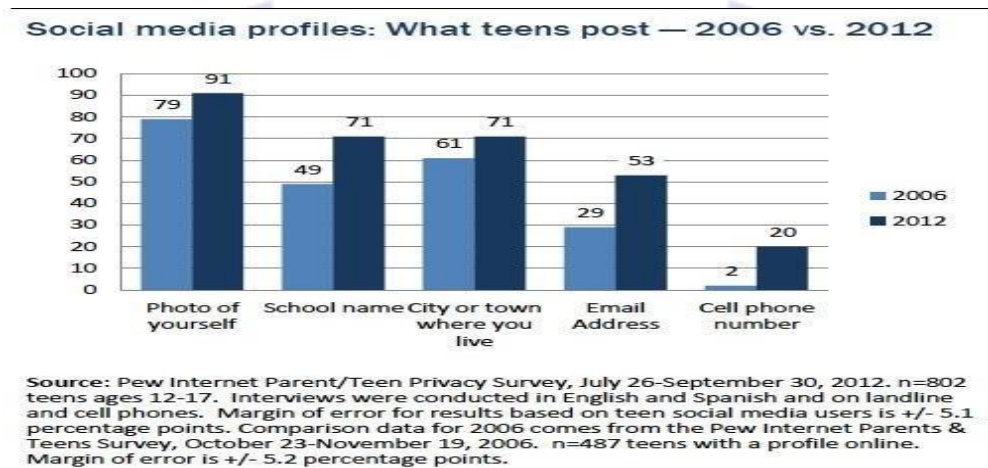
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[1] Louis Fourie, Protecting Children in the Digital Society, in Childhood Vulnerabilities in South Africa: Some Ethical Perspectives 229, 229-72 (Jan Grobbelaar & Chris Jones eds., 1st ed. 2020).
[2] Sabine K. Witting, Regulating Bodies: The Moral Panic of Child Sexuality in the Digital Era, 102 KritV 5, 5–38 (2019).

significantly, particularly those involving sexual exploitation and the distribution of pornographic content.

This demonstrates a substantial vacuum in legislative safeguards and enforcement mechanisms for children in the fast changing digital world.

The issue is particularly important in India due to its unique socio-cultural dynamics, growing youth population, and fragmented legal environment. This policy aims to investigate the convergence of law, technology, and ethics in protecting minors in the influencer ecosystem. The study intends to suggest rigorous, actionable policy solutions by concentrating on India's legislative framework, worldwide best practices, and region-specific socio-technological problems[3]. The findings will help to create a safer digital world by balancing children's rights with the need to prevent exploitation in a technology-driven society.



Social media profiles: What teens post — 2006 vs. 2012

Source: Pew Internet Parent/Teen Privacy Survey, July 26-September 30, 2012. n=802 teens ages 12-17. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones. Margin of error for results based on teen social media users is +/- 5.1 percentage points. Comparison data for 2006 comes from the Pew Internet Parents & Teens Survey, October 23-November 19, 2006. n=487 teens with a profile online. Margin of error is +/- 5.2 percentage points.

**1.1 Theoretical Framework - Theory of Reciprocal Determinism.**

This policy framework, which addresses the concerns of online sexualization and cyber-exploitation of kids in influencer culture, is based on Albert Bandura's Theory of Reciprocal Determinism. This approach emphasizes the interaction of human elements (such as minors' cognitive and emotional characteristics), behavioral aspects (content generation and engagement patterns), and environmental factors (social media algorithms, societal norms, and parental guidance). By recognizing how these aspects interact to create behavior, this policy takes a comprehensive approach, addressing all dimensions to offer strong protections for

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[3] Wendy Walsh, Melissa Wells & Janis Wolak, Challenges in Investigations and Prosecutions of Child Pornography Crimes, in Refining Child Pornography Law: Crime, Language, and Social Consequences 215, 215–34 (Carissa Byrne Hessick ed., Univ. of Mich. Press 2016).

children while encouraging safe digital involvement.

The Theory of Reciprocal Determinism explains how environmental factors such as algorithmic rewards impact personal goals for digital recognition, resulting in behaviors such as excessive sharing. For example, the glamorization of influencers (environmental) affects a child's self-perception (personal), which leads to harmful online conduct. This circular connection highlights the importance of various measures such as regulating platform activities, fostering digital literacy, and increasing parental participation[4]. By addressing these interconnected elements, the policy applies this theoretical framework to suggest long-term solutions for protecting minors in India's fast changing digital ecosystem.

## 2. Major Issues

The hazards of online sexualization and cyber-exploitation of minors in influencer culture present complex legal, social, and technological challenges. Indian laws, such as the Information Technology Act, 2000, and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offenses (POCSO) Act, 2012, fail to address the specific risks associated with influencer culture, including the lack of parental consent for monetized content and unchecked algorithmic exploitation.

Social media platforms often prioritize engagement through biased algorithms that amplify exploitative content, neglecting proactive safety measures such as default privacy settings or real-time moderation. Algorithmic incentives further encourage minors to create sensational content, unintentionally normalizing their sexualization. A lack of awareness among children and guardians amplifies these risks, as comprehensive digital literacy programs are yet to be widely implemented[5]. The global nature of social media adds complexity, with cross-border offenders often evading Indian jurisdiction.

This policy seeks to close these gaps by amending existing laws to include algorithm regulation and mandatory parental consent for minors' content. By fostering international cooperation,

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[4] Shaheen Shariff & Ashley DeMartini, Defining the Legal Lines: eGirls and Intimate Images, in eGirls, eCitizens: Putting Technology, Theory and Policy into Dialogue with Girls' and Young Women's Voices 281, 281–306 (Jane Bailey & Valerie Steeves eds., Univ. of Ottawa Press 2015).
[5] Gillian Angrove, "She's Such a Slut!": The Sexualized Cyberbullying of Teen Girls and the Education Law Response, in eGirls, eCitizens: Putting Technology, Theory and Policy into Dialogue with Girls' and Young Women's Voices 307, 307–36 (Jane Bailey & Valerie Steeves eds., Univ. of Ottawa Press 2015).

the policy aims to hold global platforms accountable under Indian law, ensuring a safer, more equitable digital space for children in the influencer economy.



## 3. Policy Overview and Key Considerations

Recognizing the critical issues at stake and guided by the dynamic principles of Bandura's Theory of Reciprocal Determinism, this policy endeavors to weave a multifaceted framework integrating legal reforms, platform accountability, and educational initiatives. Aligned with the foundational tenets of reciprocal determinism, this policy envisions a cohesive framework where individual behaviors, institutional safeguards, and societal norms dynamically interact to reinforce one another, constructing a fortified and equitable digital landscape that protects minors from exploitation while safeguarding their autonomy and creative expression.

**Key considerations**

**3.1 Sample size**

Determining an appropriate sample size for a study on online sexualisation and cyber-exploitation of minors in India demands consideration of the country's vast demographic diversity and infrastructural challenges. With over 472 million internet users under 25, the study must capture the nuanced experiences of minors across urban and rural settings, socioeconomic strata, and cultural contexts. A stratified sampling approach is essential to ensure adequate representation from metropolitan hubs and underserved rural regions. Engaging key stakeholders, including minors, parents, educators, and social media platforms, provides critical insights into behaviors, awareness levels, and regulatory practices. However,

challenges such as safeguarding minors' privacy, securing parental consent, and reaching low-connectivity rural areas complicate data collection. Rural regions may necessitate field-based investigations, while urban respondents might exhibit survey fatigue. Existing datasets, like those from UNICEF and NCRB, offer valuable baselines but lack the granularity to analyze algorithmic impacts or specific exploitation trends, necessitating extensive primary data collection.
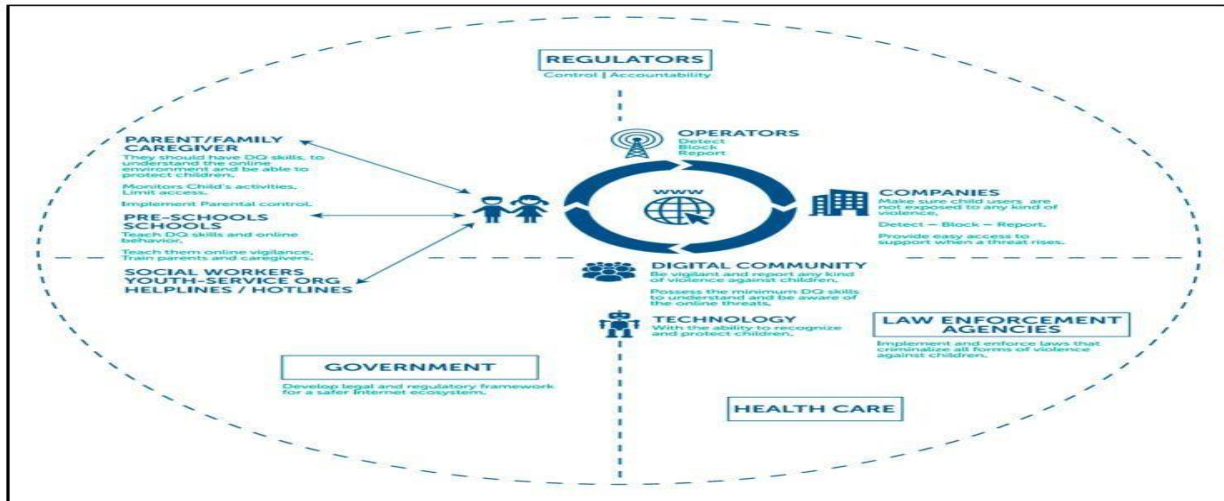


This figure presents a framework for safeguarding children in digital spaces, emphasizing collaboration among regulators, families, schools, social workers, law enforcement, healthcare providers, technology platforms, and companies.

This interconnected approach aligns well with the theory of reciprocal determinism, where behavioral, environmental, and systemic factors collectively shape outcomes, ensuring a holistic response to online sexualization and exploitation.

### 3.2 Suitability

Designing a policy that is both legally robust and culturally nuanced necessitates alignment with India's foundational laws, such as the Information Technology Act, 2000, and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012, while addressing gaps unique to the digital age. These frameworks, while foundational, lack provisions to tackle emerging risks in influencer culture, such as the monetization of minors' online personas or the subtleties of algorithmic exploitation. To bridge these gaps, amendments must introduce specific measures for platform accountability, regulate minors' digital behavior, and mandate parental consent—drawing inspiration from the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) in the United States, which enforces strict parental oversight over

data collection for children under 13.

Equally critical is ensuring feasibility across India's diverse digital landscape, marked by disparities in technology access and literacy. Resource allocation must prioritize investments in AI-driven content moderation, law enforcement training, and expansive digital education initiatives. Public-private partnerships with platforms like Facebook and Google can amplify these efforts, enabling collaborative development of real-time moderation systems and awareness campaigns.

### 3.3 Sensitivity

Sensitivity is paramount in crafting interventions to protect minors from exploitation, demanding trauma-informed approaches that preserve their dignity and privacy. Policies must dismantle the victim-blaming narrative often associated with online exploitation cases, ensuring minors coerced into creating inappropriate content are protected under the law while platforms and perpetrators are held accountable. The Supreme Court's 2024 ruling, emphasizing social media intermediaries' obligation to report Child Sexual Exploitative and Abusive Material (CSEAM), underscores the critical need for platform accountability. The Court's call to amend the POCSO Act to replace "child pornography" with CSEAM reflects a nuanced understanding of online exploitation complexities and necessitates comprehensive legal language.

This policy must advocate for accessible mental health resources, robust privacy safeguards, and culturally sensitive family support systems. Drawing from the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, it should prioritize dignity, privacy, and the assurance of a safe online environment for minors[6]. By integrating sensitivity, suitability, and resource optimization, alongside a systematic sampling approach, the policy aspires to construct an inclusive, ethical framework.

## 4. Aim and Objective of the Policy

This policy aims to establish a comprehensive framework to safeguard minors from online sexualisation, cyber-exploitation, and abuse, with a specific focus on influencer culture.

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[6] Roelof Petrus Reyneke, A Restorative Approach to Address Cyber Bullying, in Rethinking Teacher Education for the 21st Century: Trends, Challenges and New Directions 340, 340–54 (Marta Kowalczuk-Walêdziak et al. eds., 1st ed. Verlag Barbara Budrich 2019).

Addressing the evolving nature of digital threats, it employs a multi-pronged strategy integrating legal reforms, technological advancements, educational initiatives, and societal transformation. By amending existing laws such as the POCSO Act and Information Technology Act, and aligning with global standards like COPPA (USA) and GDPR (EU), the policy ensures robust mechanisms for age verification, parental consent, and platform accountability[7].

The following policy suggestions combine legal, technological, educational, and societal strategies through a systematic seven step process.

Step 1 - Digital Literacy and Resilience Training

A nationwide digital literacy program for minors, parents, and educators should be implemented, focusing on safe online engagement, risk recognition, and exercising digital rights. This program can be modeled after Finland's successful integration of digital safety education into school curriculums, where children learn to identify online manipulation, understand privacy settings, and safeguard personal data. Psychological resilience training should also be included, enabling minors to resist pressures related to online sexualisation.

Step 2 - AI-Driven Content Moderation and Preemptive Screening

Artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning should be employed to preemptively monitor and filter content before it is uploaded, ensuring exploitative material is detected and removed swiftly. Platforms must implement AI systems to identify harmful content, such as sexually suggestive material, abuse, and harassment, similar to the EU's Digital Services Act. These systems should also integrate age verification measures to prevent minors from engaging in influencer activities without parental consent, as seen in the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) in the U.S.

Step 3 - Parental Control and Safeguards

Mandatory parental consent for any online activity involving minors' data collection or content creation must be enforced. Platforms like Instagram and TikTok should adopt stringent parental controls, ensuring that parents can monitor content creation, online interactions, and financial

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[7] J. Ashley & K. Burke, Implementing Restorative Justice: A Guide for Schools (Ill. Criminal Justice Info. Authority 2009).

transactions. This aligns with the GDPR's provisions on children's privacy, ensuring parental oversight through privacy-by-design mechanisms.

Step 4 - Cross-Border Legal Cooperation

Given the global nature of online exploitation, international cooperation is crucial. India should collaborate with other countries to standardize laws protecting children's online rights, as seen in frameworks like Australia's eSafety Commissioner and UK's initiatives. A UN-backed Child Online Protection Protocol would help align India with international standards and ensure global platform accountability.

Step 5 - Platform Accountability with Financial Penalties

Social media platforms should be financially accountable for failing to implement adequate safeguards. A tiered penalty system, similar to GDPR fines, should be introduced, with penalties escalating according to the extent of minors' content being compromised. Platforms would be required to submit compliance reports to the government, ensuring transparency and accountability.

Step 6 - Youth-Centered Advisory Committees

Youth advisory committees comprising minors, parents, child psychologists, and digital safety experts should guide the development of content regulation policies and platform standards. This approach, inspired by UNICEF's Child Online Protection Program, ensures that minors' voices are central to shaping protective policies.

Step 7 - Behavioral Economics and Platform Design

Drawing from behavioral economics, platforms should be incentivized to design systems that prioritize safety over engagement. This approach mirrors Norway's Digital Privacy Laws, which prioritize user safety by embedding privacy measures into the core design of digital platforms.

These measures, when implemented together, form a comprehensive, layered approach to safeguarding minors from online exploitation, creating a safer digital environment for children to thrive.

## 5. Scope of the Policy

The scope of this policy extends to all minors under the age of 18 in India, with a specific emphasis on female children, who are disproportionately targeted by online sexualisation and exploitation. The policy covers the entire digital landscape, including social media platforms, influencer culture, online gaming, and e-learning platforms, where minors are increasingly active[8]. The policy will mandate robust age verification systems, enforce parental consent for data processing, and ensure that platforms implement gender-sensitive content moderation to prevent the abuse of female minors.

The jurisdiction of this policy is nationwide, applying to all digital platforms that operate in India, regardless of whether the platform is registered in India or abroad. This includes foreign-based platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook, which are widely used by minors in India[9]. The policy mandates that these platforms comply with Indian child protection laws, such as the Information Technology Act, 2000, and the POCSO Act, 2012, as well as international frameworks like the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), to ensure that children's privacy and safety are upheld globally. Furthermore, the policy will advocate for cross-border cooperation with international bodies to ensure that the protections provided under Indian law are enforced in other jurisdictions, holding foreign platforms accountable for the exploitation of minors in India.

## 6. Data and Methodology

The policy's development necessitates a rigorous, multidimensional methodology tailored to India's socio-cultural and digital nuances. This approach integrates quantitative and qualitative research, comparative policy analysis, and stakeholder engagement, ensuring an evidence-based and adaptable framework[10]. Key data sources include National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) statistics, highlighting cybercrimes against minors like sextortion and harassment, and social media platform analytics from TikTok and Instagram, which reveal patterns of exploitation.

Surveys and interviews with stakeholders—minors, parents, educators, and child psychologists—provide qualitative insights into vulnerabilities and behaviors, while global

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[8] K. Barnes, S. Brynard & C. De Wet, The Influence of School Culture and School Climate on Violence in Schools of the Eastern Cape Province, 32 S. Afr. J. Educ. 69, 69–82 (2012).

[9] Lauren M. & K.T. Ratliffe, Cyber Worlds: New Playgrounds for Bullying, 28 Comput. Sch. 92, 92–116 (2011).

[10] M.M. Ttofi, D.P. Farrington & F. Lösel, The Predictive Efficiency of School Bullying Versus Later Offending: A Systematic/Meta-Analytic Review of Longitudinal Studies, 21 Crim. Behav. & Mental Health 80, 80–89 (2011).

frameworks such as COPPA (USA) and GDPR (EU) benchmark international best practices.

The methodology employs quantitative analyses to model trends in victim demographics and identify gaps in current safeguards, complemented by qualitative tools such as thematic coding of interviews and case studies. Incidents like the Blue Whale Challenge and data misuse cases are examined for lessons on systemic reform. Comparative analyses of global laws, including Australia's eSafety Commissioner program and the EU's Digital Services Act, ensure scalability and localization.

Workshops with policymakers, NGOs, and tech companies refine the framework, while pilot programs assess interventions like AI-driven content moderation and parental control systems. This blended approach balances empirical precision with exploratory flexibility, creating a robust, inclusive, and scalable policy. By integrating empirical data, stakeholder insights, and international standards, the methodology provides a comprehensive foundation to address the evolving complexities of online exploitation in India's digital landscape.

## 7. Tailor-Made Policies for Digital Child Safety

Each policy measure is carefully crafted to address the complexities of online sexualisation and cyber-exploitation of minors, establishing a robust legal and technological framework. Legal reforms, such as amending the POCSO Act to replace "child pornography" with Child Sexual Exploitative and Abusive Material (CSEAM), broaden the scope to include nuanced forms of exploitation in influencer culture. Mandatory age verification and parental consent provisions ensure supervised digital participation, protecting against unauthorized data collection and commercialization of minors' online identities.

The introduction of AI-driven content moderation allows platforms to proactively detect and remove harmful material, holding them accountable through stringent penalties. This aligns with international standards like the GDPR, which protects minors' digital footprints by prohibiting behavioral profiling and targeted advertising. With a focus on gender-sensitive education, the policy tackles risks like cyberstalking and sextortion, empowering stakeholders to identify and mitigate threats[11].

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[11] B. Morrison, P. Blood & M. Thorsborne, Practicing Restorative Justice in School Communities: The Challenge of Culture Change, 5 Pub. Org. Rev.: A Global J. 335, 335–57 (2005).

Acknowledging the global nature of digital platforms, the policy emphasizes cross-border cooperation, drawing from frameworks like Australia's eSafety Commissioner to ensure protection beyond national boundaries. Additionally, integrating privacy-by-design principles in platform architecture mandates default safety settings, restricted visibility, and regulated interactions, reducing exposure to unsolicited contact. These integrated measures form a comprehensive, proactive defense, safeguarding India's minors in the dynamic and evolving digital environment.

## 8. Funding the Vision

Implementing a policy to safeguard minors from online sexual exploitation in influencer culture necessitates a well-structured financial framework, with an initial outlay of ₹2,000 crore and an annual budget of ₹1,500 crore thereafter. This funding supports critical technological, legal, and educational measures, including ₹500 crore for AI-driven content moderation, ₹150 crore for age verification systems, and ₹200 crore for enhancing the National Cybercrime Reporting Portal to ensure real-time action against CSEAM[12]. Legal reforms, including amendments to the POCSO Act and IT Act, will require ₹50 crore, supplemented by ₹100 crore for judicial and law enforcement training. Establishing a Data Protection Authority, at ₹200 crore annually, will ensure compliance audits, bolstered by penalties for non-compliance in alignment with GDPR standards.

The policy dedicates ₹300 crore to digital literacy campaigns for children, parents, and educators, with ₹100 crore for psychological support systems. Additionally, ₹150 crore annually will facilitate cross-border enforcement collaborations under frameworks like GDPR and COPPA[13]. To future-proof initiatives, ₹100 crore is reserved for research and development, with a ₹200 crore contingency fund for unforeseen needs.

Funding sources include government allocations through the MWCD and MeitY, CSR contributions from tech companies under the Companies Act, 2013, and international grants from UNICEF and the World Bank. Fines from non-compliant platforms will provide self-sustaining revenue. Cost-efficiency measures include leveraging existing systems like the

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[12] Tim McCaskell, Race to Equity: Disrupting Educational Inequality 182 (Between the Lines 2005).
[13] Catharine MacKinnon, "Reflections on Sex Equality Under Law," Yale Law Journal 100:5 (1991).

National Cybercrime Reporting Portal and Aadhaar-based verification, phasing rollouts, and integrating child protection training into current law enforcement programs. Partnerships with tech companies to develop AI systems at reduced costs further optimize resources[14]. This integrated, advanced funding strategy ensures sustainability and maximizes the policy's impact in protecting minors across India's digital ecosystem.

# 9. Unveiling the Ripple Effects: Implications of the Policy

The policy to protect minors from online sexual exploitation sets into motion a wide array of ripple effects, fundamentally reshaping India's digital landscape. In the immediate term, it establishes a fortified legal framework that bridges critical gaps, empowering authorities to address exploitation effectively.

## 9.1 Short-Term Implications

In the short term, this policy will provide immediate legal clarity and enforceability by addressing critical gaps, such as updating the POCSO Act to include Child Sexual Exploitative and Abusive Material (CSEAM), and implementing AI-driven content moderation and age verification systems. These measures will quickly enhance detection and removal of exploitative material, creating a deterrent effect against malicious actors. Platforms will face heightened accountability, with penalties for non-compliance, promoting better regulatory practices.

Additionally, digital literacy campaigns will empower minors and their guardians to identify and report online exploitation. However, resistance may arise from platforms due to compliance costs and technical challenges, necessitating adaptive regulatory measures.

## 9.2 Long-Term Implications

Long-term, the policy will establish a robust, sustainable framework for child protection by integrating legal, technological, and educational strategies[15]. The creation of a Data Protection Authority and expanded National Cybercrime Reporting Portal will institutionalize child protection mechanisms. Over time, these efforts will position India as a global leader in

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[14] Jordan Fairbairn, Rape Threats and Revenge Porn: Defining Sexual Violence in the Digital Age, in eGirls, eCitizens: Putting Technology, Theory and Policy into Dialogue with Girls' and Young Women's Voices 229, 229–52 (Jane Bailey & Valerie Steeves eds., Univ. of Ottawa Press 2015).

[15] Holly Johnson & Myrna Dawson, Violence Against Women in Canada: Research and Policy Perspectives 2 (Oxford Univ. Press Canada 2011).

safeguarding children's digital rights, aligning with international frameworks like GDPR and COPPA for cross-border cooperation. Digital literacy programs will cultivate a generation capable of navigating online spaces safely, reducing exploitation at its core. By prioritizing gender-sensitive measures for female minors, the policy will address specific vulnerabilities, furthering broader societal goals of gender equity and child welfare. Ultimately, this policy will not only mitigate immediate risks but transform India's digital landscape, fostering trust, accountability, and safe participation in the digital economy.

## 10. Global Benchmarks: Learning from International Models

Several countries have adopted robust measures and legal frameworks to address the online sexual exploitation of minors, offering valuable case studies and precedents for India to draw from.

Australia has been a global leader in this domain through its eSafety Commissioner, a statutory body established to protect Australians from online harm. The Commissioner's office provides tools for reporting child abuse material and mandates immediate takedown of exploitative content by online platforms. In the landmark Australian Communications and Media Authority v. Twitter (2021), the court upheld stringent penalties against non-compliant platforms, reinforcing platform accountability. This regulatory framework demonstrates how a centralized authority can enforce proactive moderation and rapid response systems effectively.

In the United Kingdom, the Online Safety Bill aims to make the internet a safer space for children. Platforms are required to prevent harmful content under penalty of heavy fines. In the case of Ofcom v. Facebook (2022), the UK's communication regulator penalized Facebook for failing to remove child exploitative material promptly, showcasing the efficacy of fines in enforcing compliance. The UK also emphasizes parental controls, with tools built into platforms for monitoring children's online activity, demonstrating the importance of involving guardians in child protection.

Canada has focused on cross-border cooperation and legal enforcement through initiatives like Project Arachnid, an AI-powered tool operated by the Canadian Centre for Child Protection.

This tool has scanned billions of images to identify and remove exploitative content globally. In R v. Sharpe (2001), the Supreme Court upheld stringent laws against child pornography

while balancing freedom of expression, reinforcing that child safety takes precedence in online spaces.

These examples show that integrating centralized oversight bodies, platform accountability, technological solutions, and international cooperation creates an effective framework. India can adapt these strategies, ensuring a comprehensive policy tailored to its digital and cultural landscape.

## 11. Navigating Implementation Challenges and Addressing Research Gaps

Approaching the execution of this policy requires a careful balance between enforcing child safety and respecting digital freedoms. Legal measures must avoid overreach, ensuring they do not stifle minors' legitimate rights to expression and participation in the digital economy. For instance, stringent age verification systems, while crucial, must not disproportionately invade privacy or create barriers to access[16]. Sensitivity in implementation is vital; victims of online exploitation should be protected from further trauma through confidential reporting mechanisms and trauma-informed support services. Inspired by Canada's Project Arachnid, the policy must include tools for rapid identification and removal of exploitative content while ensuring accountability for platforms.

However, no research is without shortcomings. This policy relies heavily on secondary data, which may not fully capture ground-level realities, especially in rural and underrepresented regions of India. Addressing these gaps requires continuous feedback loops, stakeholder collaboration, and adaptive mechanisms to ensure the policy evolves with emerging challenges in India's diverse digital landscape[17].

## 12. Conclusion

The urgency of implementing this policy lies in the faces and futures of the millions of children who fall prey to online exploitation every year. Consider a 14-year-old girl from a small town who, inspired by social media influencers, starts sharing videos online, only to become a target of predators through manipulated images and threats. Her parents, unaware of the digital risks,

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[16] Shaheen Shariff & Andrew H. Churchill (eds.), Truths and Myths of Cyber-Bullying: International Perspectives on Stakeholder Responsibility and Children's Safety (2015).

[17] Jamie L. Williams, Teens, Sexts, & Cyberspace: The Constitutional Implications of Cur- rent Sexting & Cyberbullying Laws, William and Mary Bill of Rights Journal, Vol. 20 (2012), p. 1032.

are left helpless as the harm spirals. Stories like hers are far too common, reflecting a growing crisis where minors are victimized in spaces designed for expression and connection.

As Plato wisely observed, "All learning has an emotional base," highlighting that the most sensitive and challenging topics often drive the greatest growth and awareness. Discussions surrounding online sexual exploitation of minors, particularly in influencer culture, are inherently uncomfortable but vital[18]. Such topics confront societal norms and expose vulnerabilities, yet addressing them is crucial to initiating meaningful change. When we shy away from these conversations, we allow exploitation to persist in the shadows, leaving victims without recourse and perpetuating cycles of harm. Open dialogue around these measures, despite their discomfort, fosters a culture where difficult but necessary conversations pave the way for actionable solutions.

This isn't just a policy; it is a promise through this multi-pronged approach, we ensure that no child's laughter is muted by fear and no childhood is stolen by exploitation. In doing so, we uphold not only their rights but the collective humanity that demands we protect the vulnerable.

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[18] Dana Northcraft, A Nation Scared: Children, Sex and the Denial of Humanity, 12 Am. U. J. Gender, Soc. Pol'y & L. 511 (2004)