

“You are what you share”

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Digital Media Bash



Level 1



10 to 30



120 minutes



Complexity: Level 1

Group size: 10 to 30

Time: 120 minutes

Overview: This activity uses research techniques to address the presence and use of violence in the digital media.

- Objectives:**
- To share and discuss the use of violence in the digital media
 - To learn how to recognise hate speech and act against it
 - To develop gender awareness among participants

- Materials:**
- Computers, tablets or smartphones with access to the Internet (one for each group)
 - Flipchart
 - Copies of the handout (one for each group)

Preparation: Prepare links to a series of web pages for participants. These should include links to mainstream media sites and/or alternative media and social media. For social media, you could ask participants to open their social media pages. Look for web sites presenting different opinions, for example from different political perspectives. If you have less time available for the activity, select some articles and give participants links to these. Do not provide links to extremist web sites.



Instructions

- 1) Inform participants that they are going to analyse digital media using a pair of “gender / violence glasses”. You may need to explain the concept of gender and gender-based violence.
- 2) Start the activity with a simple brainstorm, asking participants about examples of how violence and gender-based violence are presented online. Write down the answers on the flipchart. You could ask the group if they have ever heard of hate speech. If they have not, or if they are unclear about it, provide them with the definition in the glossary.
- 3) Split participants into smaller groups of 4-5 people and tell them that each group will be given a different web site and will analyse it using the “Research and analysis tool”. Participants should look at different content on the web sites they have been given – for example, articles, pictures, photos, videos, memes, advertisements, comments, etc. This part of the activity may take some time, but you could limit it to 45 min. Provide the group with links to the web sites to be analysed. Tell the group that they can use their own social media profiles e.g. on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.
- 4) Ask the entire group in plenary to compare their findings and draw conclusions on the use of violence and its impact for young people of different genders.
- 5) After the presentations, go to the debriefing and evaluation

Debriefing and evaluation



Start with a few general questions on how participants felt about the activity, and then move to explore how online gender-based violence can be challenged and addressed. Use some of the following guiding questions:

- Have you ever looked at the issue of violence through gender glasses before? If not, what did you learn by taking this new perspective? Did anything surprise you?
- Is the material found and displayed representative of issues in your community?
- Did you find any gender stereotypes in the web sites? If yes, what were they?
- Were there more examples of violence committed by men? If yes, why do you think this is?
- Were there any “invisible” groups (e.g. LGBT+)? If yes, which? Why do you think they were not represented?
- Did you find examples of hate speech related to gender?
- Why do people use gender-related hate speech?
- Which human rights may be violated when people use hate speech online?
- Should hate speech be prohibited on digital media? Explain your answer
- How can the media be influenced to change the way it presents violence, stereo- typed images of perpetrators of violence, and different genders?



Tips for facilitators

This activity can take some time and requires preparation from the facilitator. It is important to prepare links to the web sites participants will analyse beforehand, and you should make sure to select web sites that differ in content and present opinions from different points of view, including different political viewpoints. Encourage participants to look at the comments under articles, as this is where most examples of hate speech can be found.



Suggestions for follow-up

If participants are interested in exploring the topic further and seeing how site administrators react to examples of violence, try the activity 'Reading the rules' from *Bookmarks*. In this activity, participants explore the terms of use or community guidelines of websites and take steps to report inappropriate content. Participants also discuss the positive and negative aspects of reporting.

For an in-depth exploration of bias and stereotyping in the media, you could run the activity 'Front Page', adapted to the issue of gender. This activity can be found in *Compass*.

Alternatively, you could suggest that participants review student text books and analyse these using "gender glasses".



Ideas for action

Encourage participants to contact local media outlets and ask them about their policy on reporting gender-based violence. Participants could challenge them to use "gender glasses" in their approach to reporting violence. You could organise a discussion in your group with media professionals and students about the responsibility of media professionals for the content and approach of their reporting.



Research and analysis tool

Review carefully the web site provided by the facilitator. Analyse the contents, looking at articles, pictures, videos, ads, photos, memes, comments, etc. You should analyse the content using gender/violence glasses, looking at how gender and violence is portrayed or reported. Discuss this within your group and answer the following questions, recording the answers on flipchart paper:

- What is the name of the web site?
- Comment on how the following are presented:
 - images of femininity:
 - images of masculinity:
 - images of people who are neither portrayed as stereotypically feminine, nor as stereotypically masculine (if any):
 - images of LGBT people (if any)
- Count how many times you see examples of violence, including violent expressions
- Count how many times men are described or portrayed as 'perpetrators', and how many times as 'victims' of violence
- Count how many times women are described or portrayed as 'perpetrators', and how many times as 'victims' of violence
- Are expressions of violence initiated by men and women treated or reported differently?
- Are there any examples of hate speech on the web site? Make a note of some of these. Do the examples refer to gender or to other characteristics?
- Is there any violence portrayed that you would identify as gender-based violence? Write down some examples
- Did you find any examples of encouragement or incitement to hate?
- Any other comments.