Who Are Incels and How Does the Definition Impact Approaches to Deradicalization?

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Abstract

The emergence of the internet and social media has enabled individuals to express their apprehensions, dissatisfactions, and ire in an anonymous manner. Within this context, the manosphere has emerged as a loosely affiliated network of sexist organizations that portray men as marginalized by the gender hierarchy. The manosphere encompasses a range of subgroups, including those that espouse extremist views, such as the subculture of individuals who identify as involuntarily celibate (incel). The incel community has garnered scholarly attention and sparked discourse in recent times. According to what I call the "evil revenge" discourse, inceldom has transformed into a terrorist entity because of deeply ingrained misogynistic and hostile ideologies. An alternative perspective, hereby called "violent frustration", suggested by a cohort of scholars posits that individuals identifying as incels may suffer from psychological disorders, experiencing a sense of despair, exasperation, and ostracism. The present thesis acknowledges the ongoing academic discourse surrounding the phenomenon of inceldom and its potential relationship with the internet in terms of incel deradicalization. In furtherance of this discourse, this current investigation adopts a passive observational approach towards the incel community on the online platform 4chan. Results show that the examination of scholarly literature and the close observation of incels in their natural environments provide robust evidence for both paradigms. Furthermore, it is possible that certain individuals who identify as incels do not meet the aforementioned criteria, suggesting that the incel community encompasses a diverse range of individuals who cannot be easily categorized. Thus, the findings of this study indicate that there is a need to broaden the range of deradicalization strategies. Investigating the potential of the internet to mitigate the radicalization of incels and the efficacy of mental health interventions in reducing stigmatization may prove to be pivotal. This approach encompasses both paradigms, potentially facilitating the process of deradicalization among individuals identifying as incels.

Keywords: incels, deradicalization, frustration, revenge, mental health

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1. Introduction

The emergence of the internet and social media has enabled individuals to express their apprehensions, exasperation, and ire in an anonymous manner (Chang, 2022; Helm et al., 2022; Hoffman, Ware & Shapiro, 2020). Simultaneously, the prevalence of hate speech has been observed to rise, with a particular focus on women, as a means of gender-based disparagement (Sang & Stanton, 2020; O'Malley, Holt & Holt, 2022). The rise of the manosphere has been seen in this particular context, encompassing a varied assortment of loosely connected groups that espouse misogynistic views and portray men as victims within the existing gender hierarchy. These groups advocate that feminism is oppressive and promote male supremacist ideologies (deCook & Kelly, 2022). Specifically, the manosphere spectrum includes a variety of radical subgroups, among which the involuntary celibate (incel) community is prominently featured. This group, consisting primarily of white men, recognizes itself to be situated at the bottom rung of society as a result of perceived unattractiveness, which it believes leads to rejection by women (Glace, Dover & Zatkin, 2021; Labbaf, 2019).

As per the incel community, the economic concept of the "Pareto Principle" is applied to the dynamics of the "sexual marketplace." The principle posits an 80/20 distribution, where the wealthiest 20% possess 80% of the total wealth. In the incel framework, this implies that the top 20% of men with the most desirable physical attributes garner 80% of female attention (Jones, 2020). Particularly, the perception that women are the ones responsible for excluding physically unattractive men creates an unjust hierarchy, leading to loneliness, depression, and rejection among incels. The sentiment of entitlement among incels towards women and their objectified physical forms as a communal asset is an important aspect that evokes strong emotions (Witt, 2020). Consequently, the inability to fulfill their sexual desires with physically appealing women leads to animosity within the incel community, which is

characterized by derogatory remarks directed towards women on various online platforms and violent physical escalations.

The incel community has garnered significant attention and scholarly interest nowadays, primarily due to its propagation of animosity from the virtual realm to the physical world, resulting in violent acts (Rummelhoff, 2020). According to Moskalensko et al. (2022), individuals who identify as incels exhibit a sense of profound hopelessness and apathy towards their circumstances. They contend that their situation cannot be improved through personal internal changes, but rather necessitates a pressing need for retribution against women who are successful in sexual relationships, and potentially against men as well. This paradigm resulted in severe mass violence, beginning in 2014 with Elliot Rodger. In 2015, Chris Harper-Mercer, followed by William Atchinson in 2017, Alek Minassian, and Scott Beierle in 2018 perpetrated acts of violence resulting in the deaths of innocent individuals, with a particular focus on women (Jones, 2020. The escalation of violent incidents has prompted scholarly discourse regarding the underlying factors that drive such heinous acts (Hoffman, Ware & Shapiro, 2020; Lindsay, 2020; Pantucci & Ong, 2020).

One academic discourse, which this paper will call "evil revenge", posits that the emergence of inceldom as a terrorist group can be attributed to ideological reasons rooted in deeply misogynistic perspectives and violent beliefs. Therefore, it is advisable to implement policies aimed at addressing incels as terrorists to promote deradicalization through the prohibition of online forums next to offering mental support. On the other hand, a separate cohort of scholars espouses the notion of comprehending incels as individuals who suffer from mental health disorders and operate under a sense of hopelessness, frustration, and rejection, which this paper describes as "violent frustration". Therefore, it is advisable to offer psychological assistance through online forums to facilitate the process of deradicalization within this particular community.

The present study aims to conduct an in-depth analysis of the academic contributions in the literature review. The thesis recognizes the existence of a scholarly discourse regarding the perception of inceldom and the potential impact of the internet on the process

of incel deradicalization. Therefore, this paper makes a passive observation within a digital ethnography to contribute to this debate. As such, the present study aims to investigate the radicalization of the incel community and the associated individual and collective sentiments to understand the reality of being an incel. Conducting a thorough examination of the existing scholarly literature and closely observing the behavior of incels in their natural settings could facilitate the formulation of policy recommendations aimed at mitigating misogynistic attitudes prevalent within the incel community, thereby promoting the deradicalization of incels. Henceforth, the ensuing research question will be taken into account.

Who are incels and how does the definition impact approaches to deradicalization?

This paper hypothesizes that inceldom is a spectrum, which implies that there is no unique solution for the deradicalization. Instead, both academic paradigms need to be combined, using the internet and mental health care as a first step to deradicalization.

2. Methodology

2.1 Research Objective

The research objectives become clearly evident from the introduction and literature review, which underline that this paper seeks to contribute to the current academic debate on the understanding of the incel community to advance recommendations for deradicalization. Specifically, this research focuses on the notions of revenge and frustration and their meaning within the context of radicalization, regarding the paradigms as possible reference points to form solutions to reduce radicalization in the incel community. Importantly, this main research objective follows the premise to understand incels and their emic perspective through passive observation to allow for comprehension and, thus, contribute recommendations for policy-making that reflects thoroughly researched academic articles and incels´perspectives, allowing for inclusivity and plurality.

Hereby, it is essential to note that for the sake of the scope of the paper, it will only deal with the topic of misogyny in the context of inceldom and will not consider the links of incels with extremist right-wing beliefs, which are connected to racism and antisemitism.

2.2 Methods and Source of Data

2.2.1 Research Type

To achieve the research goal, it is crucial to develop a comprehensive methodology that prioritizes an in-depth understanding of academic literature and incels in online forums as fundamental components of the data gathering process. The present study adopts a theoretical and qualitative methodology, employing primary and secondary sources for data acquisition.

The primary objective is to construct a theoretical framework concerning the various paradigms surrounding inceldom. One essential paradigm in academia is the establishment of evil revenge under the notions of terrorism, misogyny, and violence. Conversely, it presents a juxtaposition to the violent frustration paradigm by adhering to the concepts of hopelessness, rejection, and the inexorable radicalization facilitated by the internet. In order to gain a comprehensive understanding of the current academic discourse on incels, it is necessary to conduct an extensive literature review that encompasses both quantitative and qualitative studies.

Secondly, drawing upon the established theoretical framework, the provision of paradigms that serve as a fundamental basis for comprehending the potential deradicalization of inceldom is facilitated through the utilization of qualitative methods. This approach enables a comprehensive understanding of the behavior of the community under investigation. The proposed methodology entails conducting a digital ethnography by means of unobtrusive observation of the target population within publicly accessible incel forums on the online platform 4Chan. This approach facilitates comprehension of the community's milieu and susceptibility to radicalization by providing empirical data on the dynamics of interpersonal relationships among community members. Such data can offer insights into the

subjects that are being discussed, thereby potentially serving as an indicator of the degree of radicalization present. Moreover, the study's descriptive character is corroborated by its investigation of the processes underlying prevalent beliefs, their evolution, and their interrelation with the prevailing academic paradigms.

2.2.2 Data collection: Sources, Population and Sample

The principal theoretical examination will rely on a comprehensive survey of scholarly articles obtained from Google Scholar, utilizing specific keywords such as "incel(s)", "reasons incel(s)", "inceldom", "revenge incel(s)", "frustration incel(s)", "misogyny incel(s)", and "manosphere incels". The collected papers will subsequently undergo a rigorous analysis involving close reading and the identification of key paradigms through the categorization of the papers' primary themes.

The second analytical instance entails conducting an empirical investigation on the targeted sample, through passive observation of 4Chan forums over a period of one month for approximately one hour a day, to gain an understanding of the study population. Passive observation will entail accessing various forums that may be frequented by individuals who self-identify as incels. The forum titled "Politically Incorrect" will be primarily utilized for the purpose of investigation by examining the latest threads and conducting a keyword search for terms including "incel", "blackpilled", "women", "hate", "Chad", "Stacy", and "relationship". The process of capturing screenshots will be conducted, followed by a subsequent analysis based on the two paradigms identified in the literature review. The aim is to contribute to the ongoing academic discourse in this field.

2.3 Ethical Implications

The present study centers on a digital community that espouses misogynistic views and has engaged in acts of mass violence, thereby necessitating a thorough examination of ethical considerations. These considerations can be broadly categorized into three fields, namely anonymity, interpretation fallacies, and positionality.

Initially, it is imperative that this study acknowledges the significant anonymity afforded by cyberspace to individuals who self-identify as incels. Incel individuals commonly express their emotional states of vulnerability and sensitivity, including but not limited to anger, frustration, depression, and loneliness, on incel platforms. It is vital to exercise caution when conducting passive observation of the aforementioned factors, as they may inadvertently disclose sensitive information that could have adverse effects on the study population and individuals who identify as incels. Therefore, it is crucial to maintain the anonymity of incels, refrain from interacting with them, and eliminate the information once it has been gathered and appropriately employed for scholarly investigations.

An additional ethical consideration pertains to the potential for misinterpretation of the language employed by incels in their social circles, which may result in a misapprehension of their convictions and a potentially inaccurate assessment of their extremist tendencies. In the context of ethnographic research, it is essential to distinguish between the linguistic expressions utilized by individuals identifying as incels and the degree to which these expressions accurately reflect a genuine radicalization. This differentiation is crucial to avoid committing a fallacy of causality, which would entail an overemphasis on the correlation between their verbal expressions and their corresponding actions, and vice versa. The mitigation of this matter can be achieved through the contemplation of the compiled data within the two distinct paradigms, each of which presents dissimilar frameworks for analysis.

Finally, it is crucial to take into account the researcher's positionality, as it entails various ethical implications. The present study involves a young, educated female researcher of Western origin who may be perceived as a potential object of interest for the incel community on account of her age and physical attributes. Consequently, this study entails a twofold hazard for both the researcher and the community under investigation. Specifically, the community may perceive disrespect and heightened degradation due to the female observer's presence, while the researcher may be vulnerable to online attacks and subjected to severe hate speech, which can be personally demeaning. It is imperative to conscientiously recognize these concerns to facilitate the implementation of strategies aimed

at reducing discomfort for both parties. Therefore, the primary objective of this study is to prioritize the preservation of anonymity and confidentiality within the incel community, refraining from disclosing any indicators that may reveal their identities. Additionally, to safeguard the researcher, there will be no direct interaction with the incel community, despite the assessment of their threads within the confines of established academic frameworks.

Drawing from ethical considerations, it is viable to conduct a more comprehensive examination of the incel community while avoiding potential infringements on the anonymity of incels, unfounded causal attributions, disregard for the community of focus, and jeopardizing the safety of the researcher.

3. Literature Review

3.1 Defining Incels

The inception of the incel community can be traced back to 1997, when a young woman who identified as queer initiated an online project known as "Alana's Involuntary Celibacy Project." The project aimed to provide a platform for both male and female individuals who were experiencing loneliness and sexual rejection in their dating lives to express their emotions, particularly their feelings of frustration (Palma, 2019). Later, in the 21st century, online platforms such as 4chan and Reddit have surfaced, enabling extremist groups from the developing manosphere to express their animosity towards women, as a response to the growing trend of women's liberation. This is in contrast to the predominantly peaceful nature of the original incel network (Hoffman, Ware & Shapiro, 2020). A prevailing ideology emerged within the manosphere on various platforms, positing that a man can be classified as redpilled, purplepilled, or blackpilled, as noted by deCook and Kelly (2022) and Moskalenko (2022).

Firstly, the term red-pill originates from the film of 1999, "The Matrix," wherein the protagonist ingests the eponymous pill as a metaphorical representation of his or her enlightenment to veracity (Gheorge, 2023). The incel community employs the phrase "red-pilled" to characterize individuals who refuse to adhere to traditional beliefs regarding

romance, sexuality, and gender norms (Fowler, 2022). The prevalence of skepticism towards feminism and the notion that males are subjected to unjust treatment within society are frequently observed elements (Sisemore, 2020). Thus, men who follow this ideology seek for revenge in the form of ignorance or despise against women. However, they do not engage in mass violence. Hence, they cannot be considered as either fully involuntary celibate or violent terrorists.

Secondly, the notion of being purple-pilled is utilized to denote individuals who possess the ability to recognize and appreciate the advantages of both the red pill and the blue pill (being ignorant or not knowing about the reality; opposite of red pilled) (Zdjelar, 2020). In other words, individuals may hold partial agreement with the incel ideology while remaining receptive to alternative perspectives. The symbol represents the concept of adopting a moderate position, which does not approve of mass incel violence (Thomas, 2022).

Thirdly, the word black-pilled is commonly used within the incel community to describe a pessimistic perspective towards dating, relationships, and social dynamics. Individuals who possess a black-pill mentality often experience a sense of powerlessness due to their conviction that their unfavorable circumstances are inescapable and that they lack agency in altering their life trajectory (Suguiura, 2021). Predisposition towards fatalism and persistent contemplation of ominous occurrences or outcomes are prevalent attributes, as exemplified by a higher risk of mass violence from black-pilled community members (Daly & Reed, 2022).

The symbolic meaning of the pills is placed in the broader spectrum of misogyny. According to Papadamou et al. (2021), the term "misogyny" pertains to the manifestation of male animosity towards women and the perpetuation of male dominance in their interactions with women. Apart from the transmission of "sexual prejudice" among males through symbolic means, it can also be perceived as an irrational aversion or antipathy towards women that is outwardly evident within each cohort (Gilmore, 2001, p. 9). According to Jaki et al. (2019), the incel subculture is characterized by a strong emotional drive, with hatred of

women being elevated to a central aspect of their identity. Although some incels claim that

they do not hold contempt towards women, the prevalent misogyny observed in incel online

discourse contradicts such assertions (Sang & Stanton, 2020).

The expression of misogyny in incel forums is primarily conveyed through the use of

hate speech, which can be defined as any form of communication that belittles an individual

or a group based on any characteristic (Sang & Stanton, 2020). The proliferation of social

media platforms has led to an upsurge in hate speech, as noted by Hofman et al. (2020).

Specifically, the incel subculture is widely known for its contentious online discourse, wherein

its adherents attribute all of their romantic challenges to women. According to Sang and

Stanton (2020), certain individuals who identify as incels resort to online platforms to

disseminate harmful ideologies, including but not limited to misogyny, through the use of hate

speech and physical violence.

3.2 Paradigms on Inceldom

This section provides an introduction to the two predominant paradigms that exist within the

incel community, namely, what I will call 'evil revenge' and 'violent frustration.' The evidence

for these paradigms is drawn from the available literature. Particularly, revenge under the

notions of terrorism, mass violence, and misogyny will be juxtaposed to frustration in the

context of hopelessness, rejection, and internet radicalization to provide a framework for

analysis in the data collection.

2.2.1 Evil Revenge

There is considerable literature arguing that the incel community acts upon revenge,

focusing on the notions of terrorism, mass violence and misogyny (O´Donell & Shore, 2022;

O´Malley et al., 2022; Sommer et al., 2014; Alexandroff & Burman, 2023; Hoffman et al.,

2020; DeCook & Kelly, 2022; Askenberger, 2021).

Revenge is one of the crucial motives in the mass violence of incels. As O'Donell and Shore

(2022) show, incels utilise mass violence as a means to an end, including gaining notice,

exacting revenge, promoting masculinity, and effecting political change. Specifically, incels

highly support revenge against sexually active women (Stacys) who do not have sex with

them, Chads who they regard as superior attractive men, and against "normies" who are

either blatantly contemptuous of incels or uninformed of their condition (O'Donell & Shore,

2022). Within this context, the incel vocabulary includes explicit calls for political or social

change by instilling fear, attracting attention, or exacting punishment in the form of revenge

(Scapture & Boyle, 2020).

Particularly within Alexandroff and Burman's study (2023), participants of the incel

community frequently expressed a desire for retaliation. Their research demonstrates that

incels feel oppressed by numerous groups and that this resentment feeds violent and sexual

crimes committed in revenge. As such, some in the incel community justify acts of violence

and sexual assault motivated by vengeance: the need for payback is a rationale for violent

acts. This evil pursuit of revenge becomes evident as members of the Incel subculture

frequently write about accepting their destinies or actively pursuing revenge because they

believe that violent vengeance will provide them with some form of relief (Alexandroff &

Burman, 2023).

Additionally, some incels argue that besides providing relief, revenge fosters justice

and reformation among the incel community (Helm et al., 2022). Alexandroff and Burman

(2023) observe that incel forums regularly appear to be seeking societal change through

revenge because of their disagreement with feminism, especially with regard to women's

sexual emancipation. As they see no other way to bring about change through exacting

revenge, they resort to violence. For example, forum users report that they feel like sexual

harassment or rape is the only way to become close to women physically (Alexandroff &

Burman, 2023).

Other incels argue that women should be treated poorly because they are responsible

for the predicament of incels, making them deserving of violence (Papadamou et al., 2020).

This normalization of violence may be related to the concept of neutralisation tactics, which

includes the practice of victim denial. Essentially, victim denial is used to justify damaging

actions taken against the victim because of the false idea that the victim is entitled to

retaliation or punishment, leading to the occurrence of criminal action and harm. By

assigning blame to a deserving individual, the criminal ensures there will be no victim, but

merely adequate revenge. Hence, the perpetrator employs this neutralisation approach to

relieve themselves of responsibility for their actions, feeling that the victim deserves whatever

suffering is inflicted upon them (Sykes & Matza, 1957). Applying this framework to incels, one

could argue that if women "starve" incels of sex, they deserve to be raped, attacked, or

murdered while if attractive men steal "incels' women or sabotage them", they also ought to

be punished. Consequently, some incel users in forums describing mass homicides justify

the deaths as acts of vengeance against the tyranny they had to endure, wanting to kill as

many Stacies, Chads and Normies as possible (Alexandroff & Burman, 2023).

3.2.1.1 Terrorism and Violence Objectives

The drive by revenge can be attributed to terrorism objectives according to many

scholars (Baele et al., 2019; Hoffman et al., 2020; DeCook & Kelly, 2022; Pelzer et al., 2021;

Labbaf, 2019; Malthaner, 2017).

It is not possible, according to Van der Veer (2020), to agree on a single definition of

terrorism. Nonetheless, there are a few areas of agreement. One of them being that terrorism

has a political objective, such as the promotion of social change or the destruction of

established social systems and structures, by its mere definition. To evaluate the existence of

a political objective, the current argument over whether or not incel violence constitutes

terrorism centers mainly on whether the worldview of incels qualifies as an ideology and

whether or not the violence that follows from this worldview can be characterized as

ideologically and politically motivated violence (Van den Veer, 2020). Incel violence with a

clear political objective, such as changing the current social order to establish a more

oppressive regime towards women, may and should be regarded as terrorism, according to

proponents of this view.

While the incel worldview may not appear overtly political as it does not follow a clearly defined political goal on the misogynist spectrum, Hoffman, Ware, and Shapiro (2020) argue that its primary ethos is the subjugation of women and that its aggression is meant to have far-reaching societal ramifications. Thus, incel violence may be part of a new pattern in terrorism, with a more significant hate crime component, necessitating a closer look, primarily as it spreads to Europe and shares commonalities with other terrorist movements. Additionally, despite ongoing media and law enforcement attention, the incel extremist fringe is flourishing, ideologically evolving, and continuing to threaten further atrocities. Thus, domestic law enforcement should not disregard as unimportant the threat posed by the incel ideology's violent manifestations, Hoffman and his colleagues underline (Hoffman et al., 2020).

Baele et al. (2019) add another level of analysis to the terrorism paradigm by arguing that several real-world acts of violence performed by incels illustrate the ideological nature of terrorism. Since 2014, there has been an uptick in mass shootings by dissatisfied young men who have adopted the incel worldview (Jones, 2020). The most notorious killer, Elliot Rodger, killed six women as "revenge against humanity" and then committed suicide himself (Blake, 2016). Rodger's manifesto contains hate toward men who are successful in relationships, as well as a fury that women did not choose to sleep with him (Jones, 2020). The mass shooting by Rodger is not an exception, showing that incels are part of mass violence, many scholars note (Jones, 2020; Hoffman et al., 2020; Blake, 2016; O´Donell & Shore, 2022). According to Lewis (2017), these incidents show that the larger incel "manosphere" has "become a recruiting ground for future mass shooters." Particularly, young men who identify as incels advocate committing crimes out of a desire for revenge and social change in favor of incels, with criminal acts of violence and sexual assault being welcomed and glorified in many cases (Alexandroff & Burman, 2023). Consequently, Lewis (2017) argues that "anti-feminist rhetoric is a powerful gateway to violent white nationalism" and is "calculated to appeal to the demographic overwhelmingly responsible for mass shootings: young white men" (Lewis, 2017, p.).

Furthermore, according to Baele et al. (2019), killing is lauded as a form of unfettered revenge that serves no practical purpose. Their study uses evidence from incel communication to support their position. The most common phrases discovered next to Rodger are "go," "I," and "want," which are all used in the incredibly popular expression to go (or to do an) Elliott Rodger, which means to conduct a "retribution" attack against the evil in-group. Certain words, such as "rape," "attack," "revenge," "suicide," "gun," and "mass shooting," are associated with violence, but "hero," "saint," and "brother" express the Incel community's affection for these figures (Baele et al., 2019). Clearly, these words show that evil revenge is the primary purpose of incel mass violence, underlining the need to investigate the community as a rising terrorist group.

3.2.1.2 Recommendations

In light of the continuous threat posed by incel extremist violence, Hoffman and his research team (2020) argue that concerted effort is necessary to counteract the incels' increasingly aggressive ideology and extreme worldview. Examples include improving access to online mental health resources for young men, enhancing programming for countering violent extremism, monitoring and regulating online extremist communities, and combatting terrorism perpetrated by lone actors (Hoffman et al., 2020). DeCook and Kelly (2022) add that it is further necessary to combat "incel terrorism" by rewriting societal narratives about masculinity and implementing comprehensive sexual education with a focus on consent. Introducing young boys and men to feminist theory, which challenges traditional ideals of masculinity, is also crucial (DeCook & Kelly, 2022).

3.2.2 Violent Frustration

Contrary to the view that the incel community exerts revenge in the form of terrorism with mass violence as a result of misogynist beliefs is the notion that incels act out of frustration due to the rejection and hopelessness they experience, which they can freely express within the manosphere, leading to internet radicalization (O´Malley et al., 2022;

Cottee, 2020; Helm et al., 2022; Brzuskiewicz, 2020; Sang & Stanton, 2020; Williams &

Arntfield, 2020; Rummelhof, 2020).

Cottee (2020) argues that although incels may appear to act out of revenge, their

motivations are not evil because they attribute their anguish to sexual dissatisfaction and

isolation (Cottee, 2020). Contrary to the prevalent assumptions that the incel movement is

based on pure revenge based on their violence and justification of it, it is essential to

consider the beliefs of incels to understand their frustration. It needs to be acknowledged that

incels embrace their personal ideas of evolutionary psychology and natural selection, which

assert that women are selfish and harsh when driven by the impulse to reproduce (O´Malley

et al., 2022). As a result, incels portray feminists or those who continue to advocate for an

"unnatural and unjustified" expansion of female equality, as the enemy.

Within this context, incel's frustration stems from women's apparent innate inferiority,

their exploitation of contemporary society's power structures, and incels' claims of oppression

due to not being able to hold their deserved power (Lindsay, 2020). These notions bolster the

incels' argument that they are genuinely oppressed people while simultaneously feeding their

anger and hatred. Instances of violent rhetoric include comments to "going ER," (Elliot

Rodger). They would use the sentence of "going ER" as a way of showing indignation at

feeling mistreated, underlining their victimization (O´Malley et al., 2022).

Moreover, incels perceive themselves as being lonely and excluded. Cottee (2020)

found that incels perceive their situation as one of chronic existential pain, full of shame and

humiliation, unending torment, and continuous trauma. Incels attribute their suffering to

sexual dissatisfaction and solitude. Additionally, the public discourse is unrelentingly

antagonistic to incels, characterizing them as toxic and dangerous, thereby aggravating their

already complicated life circumstances, which include being of lower socio-economic

background, being the victim of rejection or bullying, and in many instances struggling with

mental health issues (Cottee, 2020). These notions show the active personal and individual

exclusion of the incel community, which bolsters their sentiments of frustration, giving rise to

more radicalization as it increases their anger towards society.

The increase of anger can be further attributed to how incels express their frustration on the internet. Helm et al. (2022) show that the internet has enabled people to express rage, frustration, and desire, as well as to connect with others and find relief. Due to the anonymity provided by online groups, members are more likely to offer thoughts and insights that they would not typically disclose for fear of repercussions from peers or general societal rejection (Helm et al., 2022). Despite the development of intense misogyny, users often voiced their unhappiness, loneliness, and hopelessness while expressing their incel worldview. Sang and Stanton (2020) illustrate, for example, that a grammatical analysis of speech screenshots from incel forums reveals several indications of anger, frustration, and other negative emotions as a result of lacking romantic interactions. Hence, it becomes evident that not evil revenge, but romantic exclusion among offenders could be the reason for their great emotional discontent (Sang & Stanton, 2020).

3.2.2.1 Hopelessness and Rejection Paradigm

Humiliations and disappointments in life, according to Rummelhof (2020), may eventually lead to radicalization and membership in extremist organizations, especially as segments of the population may have particular susceptibilities to radicalization, such as bad mental health. Thus, while researching the radicalization of an extreme group, it is essential to consider the social conditions of the society in which the group resides. As a result of the effects of repression by and confrontation with other social groups and countermovements, some social groups are more susceptible to radicalization and the use of political violence than others, the former potentially being the incel community (Rummelhof, 2020).

Hence, the violent manifestations of the incel community need to be considered within their context. Unlike the ideological and political definition of terrorism, Cottee (2020) concedes that the general public regards terrorism as a kind of coercion. As such, he refers to Primoratz (2013), who asserts that terrorism is "intimidation with a purpose: the terror is meant to cause others to do things they would otherwise not do." (Primoratz, 2013, p.) Under this definition, Cottee (2020) emphasizes that not all incel attacks can be regarded as

coercive intimidation. Firstly, a violent act may be viewed as therapy for the perpetrator, particularly when the offender has been subjected to the shame and humiliation of forceful subordination for an extended period. The second purpose of terrorist strikes may be to send a message to the entire public or a specific group. Lastly, terrorists may wish to induce fear in a community for ethical grounds, representing a method to affect a broader ethical shift in the attitude or values of the population they wish to affect (Cottee, 2020).

In light of this, looking at the first possible reason for a violent attack is essential, which emphasizes that the incel has felt some sort of humiliation, which needs to be treated. When examining hopelessness and rejection within this discourse, the radicalization of incels can be better understood. According to Kimmel (2019), incels are "disaffected, disillusioned, and disheartened," "entitled and victimized," and "embedded and enraged" (Kimmel, 2019, p. 236). Notably, they are often individuals who battle with mental health and who, during their formative years, endure significant bullying and social marginalization (Mosalenko et al., 2022). According to the research undertaken by Mosalenko and her colleagues (2022), the prevalence of mental health problems among Incels is startlingly high. For example, concerningly high rates of anxiety and depression were found among Incels on self-report measures and diagnostic psychopathology questions (Mosalenko, 2022). Consequently, incel individuals typically develop depressive and suicidal tendencies (Jones, 2020; Romano, 2018).

Moreover, while analyzing inceldom, it becomes evident that incels deal with a type of institutionalized external locus of control (Brzuskiewicz, 2020). This notion of control is a crucial feature of most incel online forum discussions and a cornerstone of inceldom's larger theoretical framework. To illustrate, members call themselves involuntary celibates due to their perception on apparent women's excessive expectations and promiscuity, as well as their own genetic misfortune, while also having no or a very limited social life because of the world's unfairness (Jones, 2020). When one continuously applies the filters of an external locus of control to their interpretation and experience of the environment, feelings of powerlessness and isolation might arise. Individual accountability, which may typically serve

as a check on the spread of antisocial conduct and extremism, suffers as a result (Brzuskiewicz, 2020).

Additionally, individuals are compelled to limit their own gender variations by gender norms that are highly restrictive (Bosson et al., 2005). This is the reason why men frequently respond defensively and sometimes aggressively to perceived threats to their masculinity (Maass et al., 2003). To support these arguments, the scant scientific studies on incels emphasize Blumer's (1958) notions of gendered group dynamics and endangered male identity, as described above. Within this context, incels are more prevalent among men who feel they fall short of the masculine ideal (i.e., acceptability threat) or whose dominance is threatened by gains made by women (i.e., status threat) (Scaptura & Boyle, 2020). Problematically, many incels consider themselves beta men, placing themselves at the bottom of the social hierarchy due to women's recurrent rejection of them in romantic and sexual circumstances (Ging, 2019). Hence, incels exhibit a type of hybrid masculinity in which they claim a lower status than women while portraying other men as weak and impotent by drawing analogies on the superficiality of women that these men fall for (Glace et al., 2021). The intense hatred of themselves and women described in some Incel posts reveals the shadowy side of these masculinities (Witt, 2020).

Due to this beta identity, incels experience high resentment. Cushman (2009) writes, "Resentment is a particular kind of emotion, in which the object toward which resentment is directed, though specified as something undesirable, is, in fact, perhaps desired, yet unobtainable" (Cushman, 2009, p.). This description is a helpful way to view incels, whose hostility toward women is best interpreted as anger because women are the object of want that is unattainable. The contempt incels have for women is fostered by their patriarchal ideas of what is owed to them and their perception that women are having sex with everyone but them (Witt, 2020). This split leads incels to assume that women are intrinsically vain and base their relationship preferences on superficial criteria such as appearance, weight, and race. According to incel doctrine, women are inherently drawn to men with the "proper" physical traits, regardless of their personality (O´Malley et al., 2022). As a result, they believe

that women's superficial dating standards have established an unequal and exclusive dating pool into which they will never be admitted (Hoffman et al., 2020).

3.2.2.2 Recommendations

Many scholars (Rummelhof, 2020; Cottee, 2020; Brzuskiewicz, 2020) assert that incels need emotional support due to the hopelessness they experience. According to several studies, despite being a high-risk and difficult-to-reach group, incels are reluctant to seek mental health therapy (Speckhard et al., 2021). Because Incels are more likely to be uneducated with no employment or training, they may encounter financial barriers to mental health care and be dissuaded by the prevalent cynicism in their community regarding mental health therapy (Costello et al., 2022). In order to avoid dealing with their own lives and problems, individuals seek comfort in the company of those who share their sorrow (Jaki et al., 2019).

Thus, many incels expressed their agony, loneliness, and pessimism online by providing stories from their own life to illustrate their incel worldview (Bratich & Banet-Weiser, 2019). It is plausible that certain incels may benefit from the incel social identity (Speckhard et al., 2021). For example, the need to belong theory (Baumeister & Leary, 1995) asserts that humans are innately motivated by a desire for affection and acceptance from others around them. Therefore, some incels find crucial significance in identifying as victims (Crimando, 2019). Simultaneously, some incels find solace in sharing an incel identity (Ok et al., 2021). For example, O'Malley and her colleagues (2022) observe that self-loathing and self-degrading behavior might leave some forum users feeling depressed, apathetic, and hopeless, but it also has a role in bringing people together (O´Malley et al., 2022).

Hence, while the possibility of violence by some incels must be addressed seriously, it may be more beneficial for the community as a whole to push for compassionate and understanding mental care to make it accessible for them and change their attitudes on mental health services. In light of the fact that incels have found incel forums useful for releasing pent-up anger, fostering a sense of community and belonging, and venting their frustration with a widespread lack of faith in the efficacy of mental health interventions and

therapy, it has been suggested that this online community could be a good place to discuss innovative approaches to therapy and other forms of psychosocial support (Rummelhof, 2021). The inclusion of incels or formerly incels in the design and implementation of such interventions is thus all the more essential.

3.3 Controversy: Internet Radicalisation

Nonetheless, it must be considered that O'Malley and her colleagues (2022) assert that joining online incel networks could be a significant prelude to radicalizing and accepting terrorist ideologies (O´Malley et al., 2022). Moghaddam (2005) uses the metaphor of a stairway to illustrate how people become increasingly connected with terrorist organizations. The first step up the stairs is to recognize that one's current situation is unjust and the determination to change it (Moghaddam, 2005). In response to perceived wrongs, anger and frustration may make individuals more susceptible to radicalization and recruitment by extremist groups. Then, individuals learn to direct their hate toward a greater common foe, such as other races, religious groups, or even other nations (Simi & Futrell, 2010). People who establish these beliefs and advocate for them are more likely to create a sense of belonging, and as a result, they may form ties with key figures in social movements (Moghaddam, 2005).

Torok (2013) describes radicalization similarly by pointing out the necessity for polarization. The frequent comparison of the in-group as "just" or "good" to that of outgroups increases the homogeneity of the group's worldviews, according to Torok (2013). "The key to the success of radicalization is the victor of one idea over another", states Torok (2013, p. 8). This idea is exemplified by the terminology of the Black Pill, which calls for enforcing certain views over others. The Black Pill is utilized to strengthen cohesion inside the in-group by providing an outlet for pent-up hatred and cultivating a greater understanding of the Incels' position within the larger social order (Ging, 2019; Zimmerman et al., 2019).

In addition, Munn (2019) identifies three cognitive stages — normalization, acclimation, and dehumanisation — that incels potentially pass through during their

radicalization journey. He demonstrates how hilarious and ironic inside jokes (in the form of gifs, memes, or linguistic play) normalize racism, xenophobia, and misogyny (Munn, 2019). Incels frequently refer to the "science" of the Black Pill to silence dissenting voices within their own community (such as Incel Tears). This serves to both normalize and regulate viewpoints in the larger Incel community. Eventually, they assimilate into these norms and values, adopting them as their own, which results in the dehumanization of the outgroup, as evidenced by the use of violence (Lindsay, 2020).

Hence, individuals potentially commence their journey into inceldom with feelings of frustration, rejection, and hopelessness, which they can share with other individuals, creating a sense of belonging. But problematically, their journey might continue with the embracement of radical views due to ruling ideologies, such as the black pill, that give rise to the justification of violence. Simultaneously, incels support each other in their violent actions, also praising Elliot Rodger, and similar mass violence inducers, as role models.

4. Results and Discussion

The act of passively observing interactions between incels within 4chan forums yields a wide spectrum of expressions, thereby enabling varied interpretations of inceldom. The subsequent analysis will examine a number of quotations, taking into account the theoretical frameworks outlined in the literature review pertaining to "evil revenge" and "violent frustration." Subsequently, further analysis will be conducted on quotes that deviate from the two paradigms to demonstrate the heterogeneity present within the incel community.

4.1 Evil Revenge

The evil revenge paradigm suggests that individuals who identify as incels are motivated by a desire for revenge and may be situated within the spectrum of terrorism. The emergence of inceldom as a terrorist group can be attributed to ideological reasons that are deeply rooted in misogynistic perspectives and violent beliefs.

Upon analyzing the interactions among incels, it was observed that four themes emerged under the evil revenge paradigm, namely revenge, violence, and misogyny.

It becomes apparent that a significant number of individuals who identify as incels on the online platform 4chan espouse a desire for retribution, with violence serving as a means to achieve their goal, which is rooted in misogynistic ideology. As an illustration, a user hailing from the United States has expressed that the resolution to their distressing predicament lies in the act of femicide and the substitution of women with technological advancements. He further expounds that this could serve as a means to exact vengeance on women's shallowness by eliminating them. Another participant contributes to the discourse by suggesting, *"If women are the source of the problem, why not simply get rid of them? The blackpill needs to be spread. The more males are aware of female manipulation, the faster it can end and females can be placed back in their cages, gagged and pregnant".* Both users indicate a necessity to eliminate women to advance their own interests. The black pill is specifically referenced as an ideological instrument utilized to rationalize acts of violence perpetrated against women. Therefore, certain individuals who identify as incels perceive themselves as being justified in carrying out acts of revenge and feel compelled to disseminate the underlying ideology in support of their conception of justice.

Concurrently, the remarks are encompassed within the wider scope of violence, which is manifested through verbal and graphic means in numerous comments made by individuals identifying as incels. One user provides a clear illustration of their perspective on how women ought to be treated, with the inclusion of rape as a significant factor:

Women need to be raped. It is the only language they understand. Women enjoy rape. Don´t let them tell you otherwise because they are notorious liars and don´t know their own minds. Women want to be held down and fucked hard. They want to be made cry and scream. Women have a biological imperative to be raped. (…) some women never had an orgasm in their life save for a rape. They want to be slapped in the face, told to shut the fuck up, and then raped until they can´t stand up. This is what women really want. I say we give it to them.

The user's comment has garnered significant approval from fellow members of the forum. One user from the United States adds that "*the pathetic whores need their faces slapped until they are in a permanent coma",* while another one agrees with "*100%. Bring back wife-beating unironically".* Both find themselves in a discussion, while a user from the Czech Republic disrupts their conversation by stating that they are *Retards. They shouldn´t have said anything and just started shooting femoids.*

The aforementioned remarks collectively demonstrate the salience and prominence of the subject of violence within discussions amongst individuals identifying as incels. The individuals in question employ highly derogatory language to express their intense animosity towards women, bolstered by fundamental beliefs associated with the incel movement.

Furthermore, a significant number of comments exhibited instances of misogyny. As evidenced by prior citations, women have been subject to derogatory treatment, portrayed as hapless individuals lacking in abilities, and valued solely for their reproductive capabilities. These recurring themes have been observed in numerous comments across various discussion threads. An Australian user asserts that granting women reproductive rights has had a catastrophic impact on the planet's ecosystem. A fellow contributor hailing from the United States has contributed to the discourse on reproduction by providing the subsequent statement,:

> *Women are poor selectors of who should breed, and were rightfully considered subhuman property not even 120 years ago. They need to go back in the cages where they belong. I personally don´t even think women deserve to raise children. Just force them to get pregnant and then take away the child after 2 years. Nothing to be gained by exposing them to female idiocy longer than needed. Eventual goal would be total replacement and total antihalation of their sex. Nothing of value would be lost.*

The phenomenon of incels is characterized by a pronounced manifestation of misogyny, which is often accompanied by a desire to enact violent retribution. This tendency

is reinforced by the ideological frameworks that incels espouse, as evidenced by the comments they make, which illustrate the blackpilled ideology and their tendency to violence.

4.2 Violent Frustration

In contrast to the evil revenge approach, the concept of violent frustration posits that incels should be viewed as persons who experience mental health afflictions and are burdened by feelings of despair, exasperation, and exclusion.

Upon analyzing the interactions among incels, three distinct themes emerged under the violent frustration paradigm, namely, hopelessness, mental health, and social pressure.

Comparable to the evil revenge paradigm, numerous individuals who identify as incels exhibit behaviors that can be categorized as manifestations of violent frustration. The manifestation of individuals' despair resulting from the rejection they encounter is particularly conspicuous across various online platforms. Numerous individuals who identify as incels actively seek assistance as a result of their self-perceived lack of physical appeal, which has led to a significant number of instances of rejection. A user reports that their testosterone levels are extremely low, possibly even below the normal range. The speaker expresses a perceived lack of confidence in their speech and physical appearance, as well as difficulty in engaging with women. The individual's behavior suggests a deficit in self-assurance regarding their physical presentation, prompting other incels in the forum to provide help and advice. Another fellow user seeks guidance regarding their romantic life, stating that they are currently 25 years of age and have yet to engage in a romantic relationship. "*I currently have no where I could interact with girls. (…) I know I am not ugly, I just lack the social skills, might have a mild case of autism or schizoid. (…) Any advice?".* As a response another incel takes into account the validity of the sense of hopelessness, expounding upon the circumstances at hand:

> *It´s all about genetics isn´t it? Face and height are like 80% of your attraction. The*
> *rest is money/status and personality and these things can be overlooked and don´t*
> *matter that much because everyone is already working on those. (…) I am not saying*

it´s over but if you are 23 you kissless, friendless, virgin loser you can chill and sit back because it literally never began. You can probably still become beta bux for some used up whore rostie or enjoy an emotional tampon.

The recurrent motif of hopelessness stemming from perceived unattractiveness or inadequate communication skills with women is indicative of the incel phenomenon. Hence, the phenomenon of inceldom is not solely characterized by violent behavior, but also functions as a secure platform for the expression of shared frustrations.

In the context of emotional distress and despair, individuals may also experience mental health challenges, commonly manifested as anxiety and thoughts of suicide. For example, one user asks, "*how do I know when I should just give up and kill myself? How do I know when it´s really truly hopeless?"* Another user similarly states that "*I´ve lost faith in humanity. I tried. (…) I´m tired. I can´t keep going like this. Bye 4chan. Thanks for keeping me hopeful for a brief period of time I guess."*

The aforementioned perceptions regarding potential mental health concerns stem from individuals' sense of marginalization within society, with a particular emphasis on the role of women in this dynamic. According to certain individuals, women are perceived as a threat to the male population, and various societal platforms, such as social media, are hindering their ability to achieve sexual success. As per a Norwegian user's account, the following description is provided:

There is literally zero hope for an average looking male in todays world. The latest tinder data shows 90% of women only want 4.5% of men, its literally over if you´re not born a Chad. Even if you do manage to work up your way and become rich, the best you can hope for is some used up whore who´s broken mentally. What the fuck is an average male supposed to do in this society?

An additional contributor hailing from Ireland has contributed to the discourse by expounding upon their perspective regarding the matter of dating applications. Although this person uses misogynist language, they show frustration as they place men in an inferior

position in the sexual marketplace, which they cannot escape due to their unattractiveness compared to Chads.

> *Women KNOW they can install the Chad dick locating app on their phone and ditch whatever loser they´re dating right now AT ANY TIME. This automatically means they wear the pants in pretty much any relationship since most dudes aren´t in the same position, and are pussybeggars desperately clinging to their pussy ration.*

Due to their perceived marginalization, a significant number of individuals who identify as incels resort to seeking refuge on the internet as a final recourse. As an illustration, a self-identified incel proactively seeks a romantic partnership:

> *Any women interested in dating an incel? (…) If anyone is interested, I´m more than willing to contact you through various means, even if I have to register for whatever. (…) No, I won´t post pics of myself that's retarded and all you care about is looks, you wont like me when you see my face anyway.*

Another individual inquires about the methodology for eliciting interest from a woman, posing the following query:

> *What can an ugly guy do to get a conversation with women? Whenever I try to talk to them, they never want to talk to me. Is there some sort of setting where I can go that women would have to talk to me at? Or maybe some way I could show women my personality before my looks turn them away from me? Willing to try anything.*

The prevalence of the violent frustration paradigm is apparent in incel forums, where a significant number of individuals experience feelings of hopelessness and contend with mental health challenges and societal pressures, such as those associated with dating apps. Some individuals who identify as incels may contend that they do not harbor animosity towards women. One incel explicitly states that *"being an incel just means you can´t have sex. (…) An incel is just someone who can´t have sex. The idea that they all have a certain personality and share the same beliefs is inaccurate"*.

Additionally, a self-identified incel residing in the United Kingdom has provided a clear depiction of their situation, which is shaped by frustration, hopelessness, and rejection, stating the following:

> I´m an incel who doesn´t hate women. (…) The evidence for the incel worldview is overwhelming, women statistically don´t want to date men of lower social status than them, and the sexual revolution and women´s rising social status has meant that 80% of women go for the top 20% of the guys. That being said, I don´t think women are inherently evil or bad natured for going for the most high status mate they can possibly get. The problem is not women but rather the woke society and the way it is structured, what values are promoted, and what is incentivized. (…) I´d really love to find a chill girl to be in a relationship with.

Therefore, it is insufficient to categorize all incels as potential terrorists solely based on the evil revenge paradigm, which views them as extreme misogynists with a primary goal of seeking revenge. On the contrary, the research presented here demonstrates that some self-identified incels do not associate with terrorist ideology. Rather, they can be regarded as purplepilled individuals who are frustrated and do not want to engage in mass violence.

4.3 Inceldom as a Spectrum

Notwithstanding the paradigm of evil revenge and violent frustration, it is imperative to acknowledge that the passive observation has revealed that certain individuals who identify as incels cannot be ascribed to either of the aforementioned paradigms. The phenomenon of inceldom exhibits significant variation, as evidenced by the diverse range of pills available to incels, including the black, red, and purple pill. The black pill is primarily associated with the evil revenge paradigm, whereas the purple pill is better suited to characterizing the violent frustration paradigm. The red pill occupies an intermediate position on the spectrum, positing that incels may achieve success in sexual relationships through concerted effort. As an illustration, an individual who previously identified as an incel submitted a photograph of himself, indicating that he does not possess the physical attributes of a stereotypical

attractive male, but still manages to attract women who are conventionally considered attractive, albeit with some exertion. "*Point is it´s not impossible if a short shitskin like myself can do it, then so can you*". Another former individual who identified as an incel from Spain has reported that it has become a relatively simple endeavor to engage in romantic relationships with women. The individual in question attributes this newfound ease to the following:

> *Pussy has never been cheaper and easier to get. You have to be a monogloid to not score in today´s day and age. Literally a drooling troglodyte. There´s alcohol everywhere, there are drunk girls everywhere, just improve your communication skills and their intoxication will do the rest. Your 4 will be seen as an 8 by a drunk hoe.*

Analogous to the evil revenge paradigm, he alludes to the utilization of physical force and non-voluntary measures to attain his objectives. This form of revenge is a common theme among redpilled incels, as another incel from Russia says "*become top 1% of the wealthy just out of spite, and find an 18yo virgin, or die trying. That's what I´m planning to do*". A Canadian individual who identifies as an incel concurs with the idea of achieving success as a means of seeking retribution. The individual contends that their sole aspiration is to attain attractiveness and success, striving to become the optimal iteration of themselves, thereby enabling them to derive great amusement from observing women attempt to leech onto their life. The sole factor preventing them from committing suicide is this.

The aforementioned quotations serve to illustrate the perspective of certain individuals who identify as incels, wherein they place emphasis on self-improvement as a means to attain romantic relationships with women, or alternatively, choose to abstain from such relationships altogether due to a perceived sense of superiority stemming from their accumulation of wealth. The quotes under consideration depict the manifestation of evil revenge. However, it deviates from the conventional terrorist framework as it stems from the redpilled ideology, bringing forward the idea that there is no need to commit mass violence to

seek for revenge against women. Instead, they argue to escape their inferior position to either convince women of their worthiness or make them envious of their greatness.

5. Limitations

The results of the research and discussion must be evaluated within the context of two important limitations, particularly the construal of findings and the study's scope.

Initially, it is imperative to recognize that the interpretation of the collected data concerning the interactions among incels poses a formidable undertaking owing to various factors. One potential factor to consider is the possibility of an observing bias that could impact the outcomes. The interpretation of anonymous internet speech can be challenging due to the difficulty in distinguishing intent from mere venting, especially with the use of community-specific jargon that can complicate the interpretation process. Additionally, the present study adopts a passive observational approach, refraining from direct engagement with the community of interest on account of ethical considerations. Consequently, the study does not permit inquiries into the nuances of meaning and interpretation. In order to mitigate the impact of constraints on the accuracy of findings, the data obtained through passive observation was analyzed through two distinct theoretical frameworks that represent opposing ends of the incel spectrum.

Secondly, the study's scope was restricted due to ethical considerations, and limitations of space and time. Due to the limited scope of this bachelor thesis, it was not possible to conduct an extensive investigation into the subject of inceldom, representing mostly incels from the western hemisphere due to the platform used. Furthermore, direct interaction with incels to gain firsthand insight into their beliefs and thoughts was unfeasible. Finally, it should be noted that the present study employs two theoretical frameworks to investigate the phenomenon of inceldom. As a result, there may be certain limitations to the comprehension of incels, which could potentially constrain the incorporation of diverse viewpoints on the subject. However, the present study endeavored to mitigate this constraint by conscientiously considering various pills that depict inceldom as a spectrum.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

The advent of the internet and social media platforms has facilitated the ability of individuals to voice their beliefs in an anonymous fashion. The incel community is a group that has utilized the internet as a platform to propagate hate speech in the form of misogyny. This group is characterized by limited opportunities to engage in sexual or romantic relationships with women. As a result, individuals express their grievances on online platforms regarding the perceived injustices, and may exhibit their anger through hostile actions, such as committing mass shootings. Consequently, the academic community developed an interest in investigating this particular group. As a consequence, two distinct academic streams emerged, giving rise to a discourse on the appropriate portrayal of incels.

According to the evil revenge paradigm, the rise of inceldom as a terrorist organization can be traced back to ideological factors that are grounded in profoundly misogynistic viewpoints and hostile convictions. Conversely, the violent frustration belief advocates for the interpretation of incels as persons who experience mental health conditions and function within a framework of despair, exasperation, and exclusion.

This study employed a passive observation to gain a deeper understanding of inceldom, which was subsequently analyzed through the two paradigms previously mentioned. The analysis revealed a noteworthy body of evidence supporting both paradigms. Furthermore, it is worth noting that certain individuals who identify as incels may not fit neatly into any of the categories, suggesting that inceldom encompasses a spectrum of individuals who cannot be easily classified.

As a result, this study proposes that the diversification of deradicalization strategies is crucial. It acknowledges that both academic paradigms suggest mental health care as one potential solution, and thus, suggests employing it in different ways. Specifically, this notion entails exploring the potential of the internet as a means of deradicalizing individuals who identify as incels. From the current literature, it is unclear how this could be applied in practice. Hence, this paper suggests mental health care advertisements in forums or professional psychologists to be present in incel forums to provide direct support and create

interest in mental health. Due to the trust of incels in their forums, as they provide them with a sense of belonging, offering mental health care services in incel forums may help to mitigate biases against such services. Hence, the specific propositions of advertisement and direct psychological support have the potential to be advantageous in terms of advancing the process of deradicalizing individuals who identify as incels, as it presents a pivotal resolution that addresses both paradigms. Nonetheless, it is essential to consider that blackpilled incels are deeply misogynist with highly violent tendencies, which implies that mental health care might not be sufficient.

Hence, further research is required to examine the implementation of the suggested mental health care for incels to effectively reach the community. Both, mental health care advertisement and direct psychological support on the internet need to be implemented and tested to understand their efficacy. Furthermore, additional research is required to examine the incel community on different internet pages and adopt an emic approach that effectively addresses deradicalization in an inclusive manner, which may yield more favorable outcomes in terms of solution propositions that represent a wide variety of individuals worldwide. This notion is especially important as the potential solutions proposed are more tailored to purplepilled or redpilled incels from the West. Lastly, it needs to be understood how biases can be prevented towards mental health care, so that potential deradicalization methods can be more successful.

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