Incels and the Incelosphere:
An Overview of Current Research and Understanding

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INTRODUCTION

This report provides an overview of the incel ideology and the wider manosphere, as well as a discussion as to whether this ideology crosses the threshold to be considered an extremist ideology and of the threat posed by incels. In doing so, it is shown that the incel ideology has all the characteristics of an extremist ideology. It is shown that there is a need to evaluate the incel threshold for violence in relation to both individual-level and wider contextual factors, with incel harm and violence taking three different forms; individual-level (i.e., self-harm and suicide), interpersonal (i.e., cyber-stalking) and societal-level (acts of mass-violence), with perpetrators of societal-level violence likely to have a psychological profile that is akin to that seen in school shooters.

It is also discussed how the increase in incel online content, frequency of violent behaviours by those who have engaged with it, and the growing awareness of this phenomenon is occurring at a time when higher proportions of younger people are appearing in the UK's terrorism statistics. At the same time, there is an emerging body of evidence demonstrating that increases in online misogynistic and anti-woman sentiments are related to broader offline behaviours, with strong support of these views also being related to an increased likelihood of support for extremist violence.

Finally, using a data-driven approach, it is also shown that that majority of UK-based online engagement with incel content occurs on the main incel forum of Incels. is, and that the vast majority of UK-based users actually contribute relatively few posts to the discussions on incel online spaces.

ABOUT THIS PROJECT

This Executive Summary comes from the Con. Cel project, which focuses on incel ideology. To read the full report, as well as other outputs from this project, visit our website: *www.crestresearch.ac.uk/projects/tracking-online-contagion-incel/*

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