Persuasion strategies and sexual solicitations and interactions in online sexual grooming of adolescents: Modeling direct and indirect pathways

# Details

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## Topics

* Risks and harms
* Online safety and policy regulation
* Wellbeing
* Other

## Sample

The initial sample of the study consisted of 2731 adolescents between 12 and 15 years old (female: 50.6%, male: 48.3%, not reported: 1.1%). Eleven schools of the Community of Madrid were randomly selected, including 7 public schools and 4 private schools. Considering the objectives of the present study, we identified those minors who had reported some type of sexual interaction with an adult through information and communication technologies.

## Implications For Parents About

* Parental practices / parental mediation
* Parental digital literacy
* Parenting guidance / support
* Other

## Other Parent Implication

The importance of parental risk awareness regarding online grooming situations to prevent harmful consequences for children

## Implications For Educators About

## Implications For Policy Makers About

* Stepping up awareness and empowerment
* Creating a safe environment for children online
* Fighting against child sexual abuse and child exploitation
* Other

## Other PolicyMaker Implication

The need to develop and implementing intervention programs to educate adolescents by warning about strategies used by adults in online grooming situations and to avoid potential child sexual exploitation

## Implications For Stakeholders About

# Abstract

Online sexual grooming and exploitation of adolescents is receiving increasing social attention. Drawing on a social influence framework, the aim of this study was to test a model of the direct and mediated relationships between an adult's use of persuasion strategies and online sexual grooming of early adolescents. The initial sample of the study consisted of 2731 early Spanish adolescents between 12 and 15 years old (50.6% female). Of these, 196 adolescents (7.17% of the total; 53% girls) were involved in online grooming (mean age = 14.93, SD = 0.90). Persuasion strategies by the adult through internet increased the probability of using deceit, bribery, and the minor's nonsexual involvement. In addition, deceit and bribery were associated with higher rates of sexual solicitation, which in turn increased abusive sexual interactions. Understanding strategies used by adults to groom minors contributes to the prevention of and intervention in this crucial societal problem.

# Outcome

The results indicate that the use of strategies of influence to exert social persuasion on the victim (reciprocity, commitment and consistency, authority, social validation, scarcity, and likability) are associated with three tactics used by the abuser (nonsexual involvement, deception and bribery) and, of these, the latter two are associated with sexual solicitation, whereas involvement is directly associated with sexual interactions. Results show that under the influence of such principles, the adolescent may develop feelings and attitudes of deep emotional involvement with the aggressor.
[Translated and adapted by the coder, based on the original text]