

## **The Problematic Side of Social Media: the Bandwagon Effect on Social Media Hate**

“You aren’t beautiful enough to be an actress. You don’t deserve to be in popular TV shows with such a bad personality. I hate you and your family.” We are all accustomed to hear these sentences especially after the use of social media has boomed. Although social media offers us convenience for getting information about what is happening in the world and for being always in contact with numerous people, it also creates niches for some users for their hateful comments. As being active on social media platforms has become prevalent, the number of people who show their hate on the Internet has also increased day by day. Therefore, it is important to discuss the reasons and bandwagon effect of social media hate.

First of all, we should define what the bandwagon effect is. The bandwagon effect is the attitude of being inclined to do the same thing that other people do. That is, people establish a kind of bias in that they think that something is true when lots of people agree on it by doing or saying the same thing. For instance, if a group of people tells how much they dislike an influencer and makes hateful comments under their post on Instagram, other people also start to join that group and make the same comments although they even don’t really know what kind of a person this influencer is. The reason behind the bandwagon effect is generally the need to be a part of the majority and to have the feeling of being accepted by a larger number of people.

Secondly, we should discuss what pushes people to leave hateful comments through the bandwagon effect on social media. The main reason for hate speech on social media is the lack of accountability. Due to the fact that we cannot talk about supervision on social media posts, nobody feels responsible for their activity. Furthermore, the power of anonymity on social media enables users to share posts and comments with hateful context.

All in all, expression of hate through social media is an important problem in our lives. As a result of the bandwagon effect and lack of accountability, the number of people posting hate speech has increased. On the other hand, unless people try to prevent hate speech, hostility among people will be increased and peace in societies will be disturbed. On that account, some measures should be taken to reduce hate expression on social media without violating freedom of expression.

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