

A Study of Implications of Mandating Phone Number Verification for Account Registration on Websites and Apps

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Abstract

As Internet users grow in India, Internet safety has become an important topic of discussion. This paper seeks to evaluate the feasibility of a theoretical government regulation that would mandate all online platforms to include a phone number as a mandatory piece of information for user account registration. The purpose of this mandate is to bring down the number of cyber crimes committed under anonymous guise on online social platforms, especially crimes like cyber fraud, online harassment (especially targeted harassment), cyber-stalking, etc. A policy like this carries various constraints across different domains including what attributes it carries to solidify its success, what are its implications on the internet environment of the country, and especially how do the people react to the minimization of discreet internet activity among other things. These concerns have been addressed using public opinion and relevant studies to find a conclusive end to the hypothesis.

Keywords: *Online Harassment, Cyber Crime, Cyberspace*