

Cyber Aggression and Bullying in Adolescents

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Abstract

In this chapter the characteristics of cyber bullying and the various methods used for cyber bullying is mentioned. This chapter depicts nine most common methods used for effective cyber bullying. This chapter also provides an outline about the various legislation and policies that are made in order to protect children from online harassment. The limitations of the existing laws in regulating cybercrimes is also detailed in this chapter. Various methods deployed for controlling cyber bullying is also mentioned in this chapter. The guidelines issued by NCERT to schools on cyber safety is also mentioned in this chapter.

Keywords: Cyber Aggression, Legislation and Policies, Adolescents, Cyber Bullying.

1. Introduction

Cyber bullying is increasingly become a cause of worry for all. In cyber bullying technological devices are been used for carrying out aggressive acts. (Grigg, 2010). Cyber bullying puts students on a virtual space with little supervision and little rules, which allow bullying to progress rapidly even at life-threatening levels. The records of cyber bullying activities are highly alarming. The eleven facts that is presented by dosomething.org is as follows: About 37% of young people between the ages of 12 and 17 have been bullied online. 30% have had it happen more than once, 95% of teens in the U.S. are online, and the vast majority access the internet on their mobile device, making it the most common medium for cyber bullying, 23% of students reported that they've said or done something mean or cruel to another person online. 27% reported that they've experienced the same from someone else, Girls are more likely than boys to be both victims and perpetrators of cyber bullying. 15% of teen girls have been the target of at least four different kinds of abusive online behaviors, compared with 6% of boys., about half of LGBTQ+ students

experience online harassment -- a rate higher than average, Instagram is the social media site where most young people report experiencing cyberbullying, with 42% of those surveyed experiencing harassment on the platform., Young people who experience cyberbullying are at a greater risk than those who don't for both self-harm and suicidal behaviors., 83% of young people believe social media companies should be doing more to tackle cyberbullying on their platforms, 60% of young people have witnessed online bullying, Only 1 in 10 teen victims will inform a parent or trusted adult of their abuse, and 4 out of 5 students (81%) say they would be more likely to intervene in instances of cyberbullying if they could do it anonymously. (DoSomething.org, 2019). Cyber bullying occurs when technology is used by individuals for writing aggressive, embarrassing and hateful messages in order to intimidate, harass, shame and control another individual or individuals. Cyberspace to kids is like a forest that awaits discovery for a formerly caged animal. This new platform is often used for all the activities that gives them pleasure. From artistic talents to bullying talents, cyber space gives an equal opportunity for each and every teen to express his true color. Cyber aggression is becoming common due to the anonymity that the cyber space provides. The bullying behavior if prevalent in a child will definitely be revealed in cyber space as cyber space provides children the opportunity for hiding their real identity. This provision could be utilized by a netizen for revealing their bullying mindset without losing their image in the society. This gives them an extra mileage for repeating more serious offences using the same media which ultimately results in the production of an anti-social attitude and for developing a misanthropic mindset right from the childhood. Combined with the treatment a child gets during his initial stages of development, cyber bullying will only be a way to express his misanthropic thoughts towards his colleagues. The anonymity offered by the internet gives seamless opportunity to the bullying children to express his deepest thoughts since he is in a veil. Due to the reasons mentioned above, cyber bullying must be considered as a working example of Freudian slips in the new era.

2. Definition

2.1 Cyber Aggression

Grigg (2010) defines the term 'cyber-aggression' as "intentional harm delivered by the use of electronic means to a person or a group of people irrespective of their age, who perceive(s) such acts as offensive, derogatory, harmful or unwanted."

2.2 Bullying

Olweus's (1993) definition of bullying states that "a student is being bullied or victimized when he is exposed repeatedly and over time to negative actions on the part of one or more other students".

2.3 Cyber Bullying

"Cyber Bullying is abuse/harassment by teasing or insulting, victim's body shape, intellect, family back ground, dress sense, mother tongue, place of origin, attitude, race, caste, class, name calling, using modern telecommunication networks such as mobile phones (SMS/MMS) and Internet (Chat rooms, emails, notice boards and groups)" (Jaishankar, 2009).

3. Methods used for effective cyber bullying

The following methods are used for effective bullying using social media.

3.1 Exclusion: Teenagers may intentionally exclude others from an online group.

3.2 Cyberstalking: Teens will harass others by constantly sending emails, messages, or tagging others in posts they don't want to be tagged in.

3.3 Gossip: Teens will post or send cruel messages that damage another's reputation, relationships, or confidence.

3.4 Outing/Trickery: Cyberbullies will trick another teen into revealing secrets or embarrassing information which the cyberbully will then share online.

3.5 Harassment: Cyberbullies will post or send offensive, insulting, and mean messages repeatedly.

3.6 Impersonation: Cyberbullies may create fake accounts to exploit another teen's trust. They may also hack into an account and post or send messages that are damaging to the person's reputation or relationships.

3.7 Cyber Threats: Cyberbullies will threaten or imply violent behavior toward others to make them feel uncomfortable.

3.8 Flaming: Fights online that involve hateful or offensive messages that may be posted to various websites, forums, or blogs. (Rawhide, 2018).

3.9 Exclusion: This is when a person is left by others in a group intentionally. This could be using group messages, online apps, gaming sites, and other online engagement (Family Lives, n.d.).

3.9 Denigration: This occurs when a person may send information about another person that is fake, damaging and untrue. Sharing photos of somebody for the purpose to ridicule, spreading fake rumours and gossip is part of denigration. This can be on any site online or on apps. We even hear about people altering photos of others and posting in online for the purpose of bullying. This type of activities are known as denigration. (Family Lives, n.d.).

4. Characteristics of Cyber Bullying

The following are the characteristics of cyber bullying:

- 4.1. Anonymity
- 4.2. Infinite Audience
- 4.3. Prevalent Sexual and Homophobic Harassment
- 4.4. Permanence of Expression
- 4.5. Online Social Communication Tools
- 4.6. Prevalence of Sexual and Homophobic Harassment

(Shariff, 2009)

5. Legislation and policies to protect children online

India's policy and legal framework for cybersecurity is evolving and, despite its limitations, provides a base for building a comprehensive strategy for child online protection. The following laws exist to address cybercrimes:

5.1. The Information Technology Act, 2000

Section 67B of the act specifies the punishment for publishing or transmitting of material depicting children in sexually explicit act in electronic form. Whoever publishes materials which come under the purview of the act shall be punished on first conviction with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to 5 years and may be fined upto ten lakh rupees and on second or subsequent conviction with imprisonment of either a for a specific period or 7yr term with a fine of Rs 10, 00,000 (Parliament of India, 2000).

5.2. National Policy for Children (NPC), 2013

The national policy of children not only protects children from discrimination on the grounds of religion, caste, sex, place of birth, class, language and disability, social, economic or other status but also protects them from child labor. (Parliament of India, 2013).

5.3. National Policy of ICT in School Education, 2012

Section 4.6.1 of the policy states that "use of ICT will catalyze the cause and achieve the goals of inclusive education in schools." Section 4.6.2 of the policy states that "ICT software and tools to facilitate access to persons with

disabilities, screen readers, Braille printers etc will be part of ICT infrastructure in all schools. Special care will be taken to ensure appropriate ICT access to students and teachers with special needs. ” (Parliament of India, 2012).

5.4. National Cyber Security Policy, 2013

The national cyber security policy addresses the prevention, investigation and prosecution of cybercrimes, including those against children. (Parliament of India, 2013).

5.5. Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986

This law prohibits indecent representations of women and criminalizes the performance of obscene acts and songs but does not punish the audience or the persons who make the person perform such acts.

5.6. Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012

It deals with online offences against children, including grooming and child pornography.

The limitations of the above laws are:

Lack of a uniform terminology

Lacunae in the law

Subjective interpretation of legal provisions

Balancing protection and privacy

Children accused of cyber offences (UNICEF, 2016).

6. How to Control Cyber Bullying

The following are some of the policies that a child can take in order to prevent him/her from cyber bullying:

1. Do not accept friend request from unknown people on social media
 2. Don't share personal information
 3. Don't share phone number
 4. Never install unwanted software and Apps like dating apps, online games etc from unknown sources
 5. Don't react with an aggressive reply in case you feel hurt after reading a post
 6. Never share mean comments or hurtful messages
- (Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, 2018).

The following are the guidelines issued by NCERT to schools on cyber safety and Security.

1. Identify threats vulnerability and assess risk exposure
2. Develop protection and detection methods
3. Protect sensitive data
4. Respond to and recover from cyber security incidents
5. Educate your stake holders

(NCERT, 2019).

7. Conclusion

This chapter gives an outline about cyber aggression, methods used for effective cyber bullying, characteristics of cyber bullying, the legislation and policies followed in India to protect children online, and the various methods used for controlling cyber bullying.

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