Research Paper   Management

The Harmful Effects of Cyberbulling on Teenagers – Acommonstudy

Pooja Bector	Asstt. Professor, BPR College, Kurukshetra (Haryana)
Dr. S.K. Dubey	Associate Professor, DAV College, Sadhaura Yamunanagar (Haryana)

ABSTRACT

A literature review of research pertaining to cyberbullying was completed.Findings indicate that cyberbullying and youthbullying is becoming more prevalent as students spend an increasing amount of time using technology that keeps them connected to people at all hours of the day. There are many different ways in which cyberbullies reach their victims, including instant messaging over the Internet, social networking web sites, text messaging and phone calls to cell phones. There are different forms of cyberbullying including, but not limited to, harassment, impersonation, and cyberstalking. It has been found that there are differences between not only the prevalence of cyberbullying between males and females but also the ways in which males and females cyberbully. Like bullying, cyberbullying is a serious problem which can cause the victim to feel inadequate and overly self-conscious, along with the possibility of committing suicide due to being cyberbullied. One such cases is included in this paper. There are numerous ways in which schools and parents can prevent cyberbullying and ways in which they can intervene if it has occurred.

In this paper, I further describe the incidence of bullying, including gender differences, as well as characteristics of targets and bullies. Next, an outline of the short and long-term impact of bullying is provided. Finally, I discuss assessment issues, and effective interventions, both at the systems and individual levels. This article is intended to be an introduction to the subject with particular focus on issues of concern to psychologists. Therefore, many issues which could be discussed in much greater detail will only be briefly outlined with references to allow the reader to further explore a subject.

KEYWORDS : Cyber Bullying, Youth Bullying

Introduction

CyberbullyingInvolves the use of information and communication technologies such as e-mail, cell phone and pager text messages, instant messaging, defamatory personal Web sites, and defamatory online personal polling Web sites, to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behavior by an individual or group, that is intended to harm others.

According toBelsey (2012) "cyberbullying involves the use of information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behavior by an individual or group that is intended to harm others" (Belsey, 2012). In 2010, the National Crime Prevention Council worked with Harris Interactive Inc., to create a study on cyberbullying. The study found that 43% of the 824 middle school and high school-aged students surveyed in the India had been cyberbullied in the past year.

The Pew Internet and American Life Project on cyberbullying conducted a similar study in 2012 which found that one out of three teens have experienced online harassment. Pew also found that the most prevalent form of cyberbullying was making private information public; which included e-mails, text messages, and pictures. Thefindingsofthe Pew research also indicated that girls are more likely to be part of cyberbullying than boys. Older girls, between the ages of 15 and 17, are the most likely to be involved in some form of cyberbullying, with 41 % of those surveyed indicating that they have been involved in some type of cyber bullying.Cyberbullies do not have to own their actions due to the anonymity and cyberbullying is often outside of the legal reach of schools and school boards since it often happens outside of the school.Victims of cyberbullying may experience stress, low self-esteem, and depression. It has been found that cyberbullying can also have extreme repercussions such as suicide and violence.Cyberbullying is different from traditional bullying due to the anonymity that the Internet can provide. Cyberbullying is a new form of bullying that follows students from the hallways of their schools to the privacy of their homes. Many victims of cyberbullying are bullied 4 from the moment they wake up and check their cell phone or e-mail, to the time they go to bed and shut off their computer or cell phone.

Incident of cyberbullying lead to suicide

A particular victim of cyberbullying that lead to "bullycide" is Megan Meier. Megan was a I3-year-old female from Missouri who was cyberbullied to the point that she hung herself in her closet in October of 2009 (2009). Megan thought that she was talking with a 16-year-old boy named Josh on MySpace. During the six weeks they were talking, Megan's mom kept a close eye on the conversations. On October 15th, 2009, Megan received a message on MySpace from Josh which said, "I don't know if! want to be friends with you anymore because I've heard that you are not very nice to your friends." The next day, students were posting bulletins about Megan and Josh had sent her another message which read, "Everybody in O'Fallon knows how you are. You 3 are a bad person and everybody hates you. Have a shitty rest of your life. The world would be a better place without you." That day, Megan's parents found her hanging in her closet and rushed her to the hospital, where she died the following day (2009). Although Megan's parents did know about Josh and what he had been saying to her, there was no way of knowing that these messages would lead to her suicide. It was found that Lori Drew, the mother of one of Megan's former friends, had created the fake MySpace account with her daughter. Drew was convicted of three misdemeanor charges of computer fraud for her involvement in creating the phony account which tricked Megan, who later committed suicide.

This study examines ways in which schools can prevent cyberbullying and, when necessary, intervene when cyberbullying does occur. In finding a possible solution to cyberbullying, victims will feel safer, not only in their homes, but at school as well.

Review of Literature

This part of research includes a discussion of the prevalence and seriousness of cyber bullying, followed by the different forms of cyber bullying.

Cyber bullying involves the use of information and communication technologies to cause harm to others (Belsey, 2012). According to the National Crime Prevention Council and Harris Interactive, Inc.'s study in 2012 ,43% of the students surveyed had been cyber bullied within the last year (cited in Moessner, 2012). That same year, the Pew Internet and American Life Project found that one out of three teens have experienced online harassment (Lenhart, 2012). According to an article in the NASP Communique (2007), a poll conducted by the Fight Crime: Invest in Kids group found that more than 13 million children in India aged 6 to 17 were victims of cyber bullying. The poll also found that one-third of teens and one-sixth of primary school-aged children had reported being cyberbullied (Cook, Williams, Guerra, & Tuthill, 2007).

According to Willard these ways include sending cruel, vicious and sometimes threatening messages, creating web sites with content

about the victim without the victim knowing, or posting pictures online asking other people to rate things such as who is the biggest loser in the school. Other cyberbullies may break into the victim's e-mail account to send e-mails posing to be the victim, engage the victim in a conversation via instant 10 messaging and send the information collected to other people, or take pictures of the victim without them knowing, such as in the locker room (Willard, 2012).

According to Beale and Hall (2007), the six main ways are e-mail, instant messaging, chat roomslbash boards, small text messaging, Web sites, and voting booths. Objective of this Research

The purpose of this comprehensive research paper is to further understand cyberbullying which continues to occur more frequently as technology becomes more readily accessible by the masses, especially students; and to explore ways of preventing cyberbullying before it happens, and intervening after it has occurred.

Research Questions
This study addressed three research questions.
1. What is the prevalence of cyberbullying and what are the different forms of cyberbullying?
2. What are the differences between males and females when it comes to cyberbullying?
3. What are some prevention and intervention techniques for cyberbullying?

Prevalence & Forms of Cyberbullying
Cyberbullying involves the use of information and communication technologies to cause harm to others (Belsey, 2013). According to the National Crime Prevention Council and Harris Interactive, Inc.'s study in 2013,43% of the students surveyed had been cyberbullied within the last year.According to an article in the NASP Communique (2012), a poll conducted by the Fight Crime: Invest in Kids group found that more than 13 million children in the India aged 6 to 17 were victims of cyberbullying. The poll also found that one-third of teens and one-sixth of primary school-aged children had reported being cyberbullied.

According to Willard (2012), there are nine main forms of cyberbullying: flaming, harassment, denigration, impersonation, outing, trickery, exclusion, cyberstalking and cybertreats.Flaming is online fights using electronic messages with angry and vulgar language. Harassment is another form in which the cyberbully repeatedly sends insulting messages via the Internet. Denigration is "dissing" someone online which can include sending or posting gossip or rumors about a person that could damage their reputation or friendships. Impersonation is pretending to be someone else in order to get that person in trouble with other people or to damage their reputation and friendships. Outing is sharing someone's secrets, embarrassing information, or photos online without hislher permission. Trickery is similar to outing, in which the cyberbully will trick the victim to reveal secrets or embarrassing information and then share it with others online. Exclusion is intentionally excluding someone from an online group. Cyberstalking is repeated, intense harassment and denigration that includes threats or creates a significant amount of fear in the victim. Lastly, cyberthreats are defined as either threats or "distressing material," general statements that make it sound like the writer is emotionally upset and may be considering harming someone else, themselves, or committing suicide.

Form of Threatening Messages
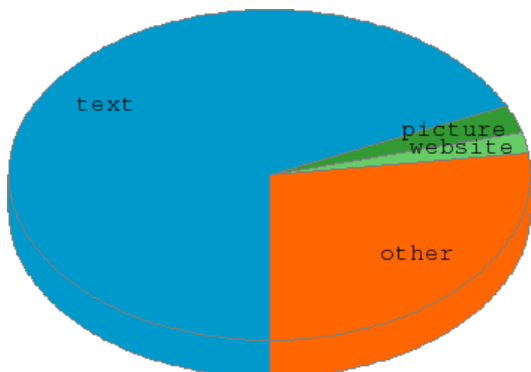
Differences between males and females when it comes to cyberbullying
According to the Pew Internet and American Life Project survey in 2013 about cyberbullying, girls were more likely than boys to say they have experienced

Cyberbullying; 38% of online girls reported being bullied compared to 26% of online boys. Furthermore, girls aged 15 to 17 are the most likely to have experienced cyberbullying, with 41 % of respondents from that group reporting they had been cyberbullied compared to 34% of girls ages 12 to 14. It was also found that nearly 4 in 10 social network users have been cyberbullied, compared with 22% of online teens who do not use social networking sites.From the same poll, it was found that online rumors tended to target girls as well; 36% of girls compared to 23% of boys. Online rumors can include someone making a private e-mail, instant message conversation, text message, or embarrassing photo of the victim, public without the victims consent. One in eight online teens reported that they had received a threatening e-mail, text message or instant message. Older teens, especially 15 to 17 year old girls, were more likely to report they have been threatened online.

Hinduja&Patchin (2013) researched the reasons why females participate in and experience cyberbullying more often than males. They found that due to females being more verbal and cyberbullying being text based, it is more likely for females to partake in cyberbullying. Females also tend to bully in more emotional and psychological ways, such as spreading rumors and gossiping, which is more in line with cyberbullying. Females tend to be less confrontational when in a face to face situation and therefore the anonymity of the online community may be more appealing to them. Hinduja&Patchinalso state that females are generally culturally and socially constrained when it comes to using aggression or physical violence, however, are not under those constraints while they are online. Females are often more apt to require social support and in order to gain that, they often gang up against other females. The online community is an easy and 13 quick way to gang up against other females and to have many people views it which adds to the humiliation.

Reasons Why People Might Start Rumors on the Internet
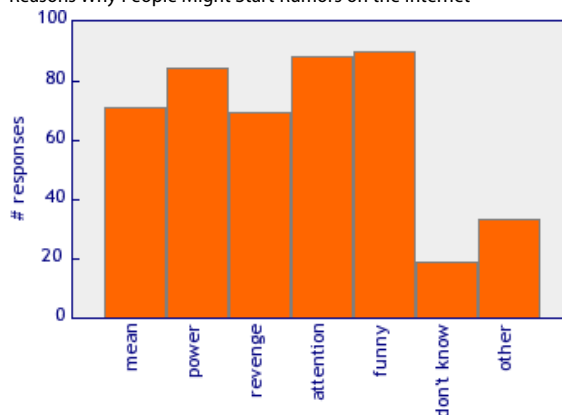
Recommended Preventions & Interventions
There are many ways that schools, parents, and students can help prevent cyberbullying and intervene when cyberbullying has occurred. The steps that suggested for schools contain elements of increasing awareness of cyberbullying concerns; empowering educators, students, parents, and community members with knowledge of how to prevent and respond to cyberbullying; provide warning to cyberbullies and their parents about the negative consequences; and effective supervision and monitoring of online activities. Willard also stated that it is important to develop a plan of action to engage in effective threat analysis for any reports of cyberbullying that raises concerns of suicide or violence.

There are eight main steps that suggested for addressing cyberbullying. They include engaging in participatory *planning, conducting an assessment*, ensuring an effective anti-bullying program is in place and reviewing policies and procedures related to Internet and mobile communication device.

The first step was engaging in participatory planning in which cyberbullying concerns are incorporated into safe schools planning, including district technology staff on the school safety committee, and including non-school participants which may include 15 parent organizations, social service agencies, and law enforcement. Step two was assessing conduct that could need assessment which can be done by conducting a survey of students to identify incident rates, locations of incidents (on or off campus), and factors that may be preventing students from reporting incidents. Step three was to ensure that an effective anti-bullying program is in place. This program would consist of core values, predictive empathy, peer norms against bullying, peer intervention skills, and effective administrative responses. Step fourconsisted of reviewing policies and procedures related to Internet and mobile communication devices, which may include restricting the use of mobile communication devices during the school day and monitoring of Internet use. An anonymous report box in which students may submit reports of bullying and cyberbullying concerns may also be utilized. Step five conduct professional development of individuals in the district, the depth of the development and understanding necessary would be determined by their status, however all administrators should be aware of bullying and cyberbullying basics. Step six included the parents by educating them on strategies to prevent cyberbullying and detect if their child is a cyberbully or a victim of one. Step seven provides student education about cyberbullying in which lessons would incorporate cyberbullying into life skills or bullying prevention classes. Finally,Step eight was to evaluate the cyberbullying prevention and intervention program periodically to determine its effectiveness.

Critical Analysis & Recommendations

A cyberbullying study by the National Crime Prevention Council and Harris Interactive Inc. found that 43% of the 824 middle school and high school-aged students surveyed in the United States had been cyberbullied in the past year . There are many preventative actions that school districts and parents can take in order to reduce cyberbullying, however, the difficult part is getting administrators on board and convincing them that cyberbullying is a real and growing problem. According to a study conducted in 2012 by Hinduja&Patchin, females are as likely, if not more likely, to be involved in cyberbullying in their lifetime (Hinduja&Patchin 2012). This is believed to be due to the nature of cyberbullying and the anonymity that the internet provides. According to Willard (2006) there are many ways that schools parents and students can help prevent cyberbullying and intervene when cyberbullying has occurred. Willard suggests steps that schools can take which contain elements of increasing awareness of cyberbullying concerns; empowering educators students, parents, and community members with knowledge of how to prevent and respond to cyberbullying; 22 and effective supervision and monitoring of online activities (Willard, 2012). In addition to Willard's proposed steps, there are many other programs available to schools and communities that have been found to prevent cyberbullying and intervene when it does happen. One such program is the CyberSmart! Cyberbullying Package which is free to schools nationwide and designed to be integrated into the existing curriculum by classroom teachers.

Limitations of this Research Paper

Limitations of this research paper are that this being a literature review, there is not any new research being presented or results. Cyberbullying being a relatively new type of bullying limits the amount of research that has been conducted and therefore the amount of literature available for this review. That also limits the extensive research pertaining to the effectiveness of the proposed prevention and intervention techniques and programs.

Implications for Future Research

There is a need for more research to be completed in the scope of cyberbullying, including effectiveness of suggested prevention and intervention programs. Additionally, it is important to continue surveying the prevalence of cyberbullying. Developing and utilizing a student survey for middle and high school students about cyberbullying could assist in keeping track of the prevalence. Developing an internet based survey which will be e-mailed to all incoming freshman to universities such as UW -Stout, and community colleges about their experiences with cyberbullying would be another viable option. Comparing the difference between the university students and the community college students may be beneficial as well.

Conclusion

Findings indicate that cyberbullying is becoming more prevalent as students spend an increasing amount of time using technology that keeps them connected to people at all hours of the day. There are many different ways in which cyberbullies reach their victims, including instant messaging over the Internet, social networking web sites, text messaging and phone calls to cell phones. There are different forms of cyberbullying including, but not limited to, harassment, impersonation, and cyberstalking. It has been found that there are differences between not only the prevalence of cyberbullying 24 between males and females but also the ways in which males and females cyberbully. Like bullying, cyberbullying is a serious problem which can cause the victim to feel inadequate and overly self conscious, along with the possibility of committing suicide due to being cyberbullied. One such cases has been included in this paper. There are numerous ways in which schools and parents can prevent cyberbullying and ways in which they can intervene if it has occurred. According to Willard (2012) there are many ways that schools parents and students can help prevent cyberbullying and intervene when cyberbullying has occurred. Willard suggests steps that schools can take which contain elements of increasing awareness of cyberbullying concerns; empowering educators~ students, parents, and community members with knowledge of how to prevent and respond to cyberbullying; 22 and effective supervision and monitoring of online activities (Willard, 2006). In addition to Willard's proposed steps, there are many other programs available to schools and communities that have been found to prevent cyberbullying and intervene when it does happen. One such program is the CyberSmart! Cyberbullying Package which is free to schools nationwide and designed to be integrated into the existing curriculum by classroom teachers.

REFERENCES

Barak, A. (2005). Sexual harassment on the Internet. Social Science Computer Review, 23, 77-92 | Belsey, B. (2012). What is cyberbullying? Retrieved April 4, 2009, from: www.bullying.org/external/documents/ACF6F8.pdf | Ferro, P.M., &Terjesen, M.D. (2011, February). School based intervention to reduce cyberbullying: A preliminary analysis. Poster presented at the National Association of School Psychologists Convention. Jamaica, NY | Hinduja, S. &Patchin, J. W. (2012). Bullying beyond the schoolyard: Preventing and responding to cyberbullying. Sage Publications: Corwin Press. Lenhart, A. (2012). Cyberbullying and online teens. Pew Internet & American Life | Marr, N., & Field, T. (2001).Bullycide: Death at playtime. Didcot, Oxfordshire: Success Unlimited. | Moessner, C. (2007, April). Cyberbullying. Youth and Education Research: Trends &Tudes by Harris Interactive, 6(4), 1-5. | Project. Retrieved April 2, 2009, from: www.pewinternet.org |