Cyberbullying and its Awareness among college students: A Meta Analysis

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ABSTRACT

Over a period of time, technological advancement has given us a new phenomenon called cyberbullying. Cyberbullying is defined as electronic bullying or online social cruelty through email, instant messages (IM), in a chat room, on a web site, on an online gaming site, or through digital messages or images sent on cell phone. It is a method of bullying made possible because of technological advances over the past 15-20 years.It has received increasing attention in the media. Cyberbullying is prevalent on college campuses despite that there is limited research among college students in India. This study examined the previous studies conducted on college students regarding meta-analysis by looking into the past years. Overall, there was a low prevalence rate for cyberbullying at among college students.

Keywords: **cyberbullying, social media, college, students, survey.**

INTRODUCTION

Bullying became the focus of research in the 1970s; however, a new form of bullying known as cyberbullying (or cyber-harassment) is now becoming known in the 21st century (Beran& Li, 2005). In spite of recent media attention devoted to this topic, many people are still not familiar with the term. But, for those who are and who have experienced it, the memories, like those of traditional bullying, may last a lifetime. Cyberbullying, also known as electronic bullying or online social cruelty, is defined as bullying through email, instant messaging (IM), in a chat room, on a web site, on an online gaming site, or through digital messages or images sent to a cellular phone.

It is a method of bullying made possible because of technological advances over the past 15-20 years. About twenty years from now, we were unaware of the term called Cyberbullying. A decade had not advanced to the point where cyberbullying was even an issue. Times have changed, however, and for better or worse, children, youth and adults are keeping pace with the change. Although bullying in schoolyard and college occurs regularly, students are today experiencing a new type of bullying that has been made possible through technological advances, such as cellular phones and the internet.

In recent years, countless examples of cyberbullying have been reported in the media because of which it has gained popularity both in popular press and academic circles.Cyber Bullying includes a range of experiences, some are legal, some are illegal.As it is type of bullying which occur online with the accessibility of free email services, such as Gmail, Yahoo & Hotmail ("internet bullies", 2006), a single bully who cyberbullies can communicate with a victim using multiple identities and multiple email addresses. Examples of cyberbullying include mean text messages or emails, rumors sent by email or posted on social networking sites, and embarrassing pictures, videos, websites, or fake profiles.

Bullying, once restricted to the school/ colleges or neighborhood, has now moved into the online world. Bullying through electronic means is referred to as cyberbullying is defined as "willful and repeated harm inflicted through the use of computers, cell phones, and other electronic devices" (Hinduja &Patchin, 2015).Cyberbullying can result in serious emotional problems for targets, including anxiety, low self-esteem, depression (Hinduja &Patchin, 2015), stress, and suicide ideation, (Kowalski et.al,2014).

There can also be more permanence with cyberbullying compared to traditional bullying: nearly everything on the Internet is available to everyone, everywhere. It can be challenging to erase information once it goes on the Internet(Pearson et al., 2005).Those who are cyberbullied can feel uncontrollability as they have less control over who views the bullying and less ability to make the bullying stop.Those who experience this phenomena are likely tohave anxiety issues, depression, less life satisfaction, low self-esteem, and may face drug and alcohol abuse(Kowalski et al.,2014) Cyberbullying activities can be subcategorized into text messages, bullying, pictures, video clips and phone calls(Asanan et al.,2017) The two main aspects are repetition aspect and aspect of power imbalance (Slonje, 2013). Cyberbullying, bullying via electronic media, is a growing problem in middle and high schools across the United States (Beran& Li, 2005). However, cyberbullying does not end at high school graduation, and it continues onto college campuses.

Defining Bullying in a digital Era and types of Cyberbullying

Networked technologies complicated how people understand bullying. Although scholars have examined different aspects of meanness and cruelty over the past decades, there is no universal definition of cyberbullying. Cyberbullying is defined as a willful and repeated harm inflicted through theuse of computers, cellphones and other electronic devices (Cassell,2008). Cyberbullying can happen anytime day or night which leads to victims feeling trapped. Cyber bullying', a term first used and defined by Canadian educator Bill Belsey around the turn of the millennium (Campbell, 2008). Belsey defines it as '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' (Beley,2006).

Forms of cyberbullying go beyond name calling and enter a world of impersonation and cyber threats. According to Willard (2006), there are nine main forms of cyberbullying: flaming, harassment, denigration, impersonation, outing, trickery, exclusion, cyberstalking and cyber threats. Flaming is online fighting 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 his/her 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, cyber threats 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 (Willard, 2006).

Psychosocial Impact of Cyberbullying

In India, cyberbullying has been more experienced by female college going students. This is due to women being more likely to communicate using text messages and email than men.The offline fear is generated through online threats and harassment which results in a preoccupation with focus on guarding oneself from encounters at cost of responsibilities, family matters, and academics (Domanjit Sandhu, 2016). The impacts differ in each person which might include negative, physical health, academic performance, isolation, and interpersonal relationships as trust and loss of friendship (Cassidy et al., 2017).

The effect of cyberbullying tends to parallel those of traditional bullying. Victims of traditional schoolyard /college bullying often report feelings of depression, Low self-esteem, helplessness, social anxiety, reduced concentration, alienation, and suicidal ideations. Based on prominently correlational research to date, victims of cyberbullying report similar effects of their victimization (Beran& Li,2005; Hinduja &Patchin, 2005, 2007) The long-term effect of being a victim of cyberbullying stem in part from the intentional nature of the behavior. "It's not just the fact of getting hurtpeople get hurt in accidents. It's the fact that someone made a choice to intentionally hurt you "(Akwagyiram,2005).

According to a new study published by The Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA), one in every four Indian teenagers has been a victim of Cyberbullying (The Times of India, 2014). Most of the students are scared of telling parents about them being bullied online. Parents can look for signs that match the following to know if their child is a victim of cyberbullying. The signs can be, fear in leaving the house, lack of appetite, low self-esteem, secretive about internet activities, close computer windows on your arrival, behavioral changes, aggression at home, decreased success, unexplained pictures on their computer, crying for no reason, changes in the dressing and other

habits, lack interest in attending social gatherings where other students are also present, complaining sickness before any event in the community or at school, etc.

Previous Research on Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying among undergraduate college students has become an issue of concern for university administrators. According to MacDonald and Roberts-Pittman (2010), of the 439 college student participants in their study, 38% knew someone who had been cyberbullied, 21.9% had been cyberbullied, and 8.6% had cyber bullied others. Cyberbullying is not limited to just adolescents. Although research on cyberbullying among older populations, most notably college students are very few. In the study by Kowalski et al. (2012), 35% of college samples said that their first occurrence of cyberbullying was during college. Among those who have been cyberbullied, 44 % reported that the majority of the cyberbullying occurred during college, 30 % during high school, and 26% during middle school. As the technology use spreads to younger and younger ages, these statistics will likely shift to reflect greater percentages of cyberbullying occurring at older and older ages.The purpose of this study is to examine cyberbullying prevalence based on experience shared by 89 college students of Delhi University.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine cyberbullying as experienced by college students in Delhi NCR region. To fulfill this purpose previous research which were taken in viewpoint by following a systematic pattern with the help of review of literature.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

It has been seen from the previous research that cyber bullying is a threat to nation in general as well as to the students. Many crimes have been reported in the past. We must aware every student about the kind of technological changes and its impact on their physical and mental health. We must educate them to stand on their rights and should encourage them to take necessary actions towards such kind of bullying behavior shown by others to the victim. Cyber bullying is different in terms but similar in bullying that it makes a victim uncomfortable and anxious, and it reduces his/her self esteem. Cyber bullying has a long term as well as short term impact in overall health of a victim. it leads to social isolation of an individual which leads to the symptoms related to depression and it also reduces internal confidence of an individual.

Implications of the Study

Although this study was conducted to look upon the previous trends in the field of cyberbullying but has got very important aspects it is indicative of the negative consequences of cyberbullying on college students. One must be aware about such kind of negative consequences on mental health also. It will also help in reducing the possibility of cyber bullying in future too.

Limitations of the study

- It was a very small study; the sample taken was very small.
- Some other variables would have been taken i.e.gender difference in cyber bullying, cultural differences, technology awareness and society etc.

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