BULLYING AND VICTIMIZATION

BULLYING AND CYBERBULLYING

PREVALENCE, PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACTS AND INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

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BULLYING AND VICTIMIZATION

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BULLYING AND CYBERBULLYING

PREVALENCE, PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACTS
AND INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

CONOR MC GUCKIN
AND
LUCIE CORCORAN
EDITORS

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This book offers a timely review of the key considerations with regard to international cyberbullying research and prevention and intervention efforts for practitioners, schools, communities, and families. The scope of the book is broad, and therefore, appropriately we begin with a chapter by Peter K. Smith and Fethi Berkkun who chart the development of cyberbullying research since its emergence in the international literature, indicating the breadth of the literature and highlighting some of the main aspects that researchers have focused on, such as prevalence and gender differences.

Following this Pauline K. Hyland and colleagues examine conceptual and definitional perspectives on the phenomenon that is commonly termed cyberbullying; important fundamental considerations which must be explored when attempting to conduct research, intervene effectively, or develop appropriate policy or legislation. In the next chapter, Irene Connolly draws on some of the same arguments (particularly relating to definitions and measurement) in order to review the current international knowledge on prevalence of cyberbullying among children and adolescents. Approaching another major area of the cyberbullying literature, Raúl Navarro and colleagues assess current perspectives on the role of gender in cyberbullying, offering both quantitative and qualitative findings to inform their review.

Offering a unique perspective on cyberbullying, Jolanta Burke and Stephen James Minton discuss a new perspective on traditional bullying and cyberbullying; a positive psychological perspective. In this chapter they explore the potential advantages of approaching the phenomenon from a positive psychology perspective, thus offering an alternative view to the more traditional, "deficit" model. Following this, Stephen James Minton provides another alternative and intriguing perspective on the phenomenon of cyberbullying, drawing on the much wider literature base than is normally attended to and discussing the influence of physical proximity and social distance on behaviour. These two chapters provide much food for thought in how we are currently conceptualising, researching, and applying knowledge from cyberbullying research.
Moving towards the current international and cross-national literature, Brian O’Neill and Thuy Dinh provide an overview of the EU Kids Online project, highlighting the need for large scale cross-national research. Offering an Asian perspective on cyberbullying, Seung-Ha Lee examines cyberbullying in South Korea.

In the final section of the book, the focus shifts towards coping, intervention, and generally protective mechanisms for young Internet users. To begin, Dehue and colleagues provide an overview of the important issues we must consider when attempting to advise and support young people online, discussing factors such as the effectiveness of different coping strategies. Lucie Corcoran and Conor Mc Guckin review the current literature on coping with cyberbullying from an individual perspective, whilst also considering more systematic and legislative approaches to the problem. Nicole Gunther and colleagues look at Internet-based interventions with regard to young people, cyberbullying, and mental health - an emerging and important component of the work in the area. Providing a chapter that spans many of the key issues explored in all sections of the book, Marilyn Campbell examines cyberbullying from an Australian perspective; critically exploring efforts to counter the problem. Finally, Caroline Wheeler offers an Irish secondary school perspective on the issue, reporting findings which relate to teachers’ experiences and perceptions of cyberbullying among students.

To end, Lucie Corcoran discusses the book, drawing conclusions from the work of the authors and providing direction on the basis of the contents. This book examines the key issues facing researchers and practitioners in 2016, charting the development of the research to date, exploring key considerations of the fundamental conceptual and theoretical aspects of cyberbullying as a phenomenon, and offering an up-to-date review of current international literature on prevalence, cultural, and gender influences. Moreover, the final chapters discuss the importance of coping and intervening effectively; the ultimate aim of much of the research, and policy and legislative reform which has been conducted to date.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We have received a great deal of support in the creation of this book. We wish to thank all of those who have assisted with the practical tasks which facilitated its completion, and those who provided the much needed support in our personal and professional lives. Our gratitude goes to all of the authors who willingly contributed their time and expertise. They often demonstrated great patience with us, and at other times they tolerated and graciously responded to our many requests. Thanks also to the team at Nova Science Publishers for their supportive collaboration and encouragement on this project.

No project like this would ever be possible without the graciousness and kindness of strangers. To all of those children and young people who have allowed our research community to encroach on their lives and experiences, we are eternally grateful.

Conor
For Eunan and Ethan – I hope you are enjoying living in the future.

Lucie
For Margaret and Michael Corcoran
Chapter 1

FROM THE TRENCHES: CYBERBULLYING AND BEYOND

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INTRODUCTION

We are living in the future
I’ll tell you how I know
I read it in the papers 15 years ago

(John Prine: Living in the Future)

Welcome to this collection of state-of-the-art writings on cyberbullying. The title of this opening chapter alludes to three things. Firstly, that we are in a war and fighting from the trenches - where hand-to-hand fighting occurs - up close and personal with the enemy. We believe that some of the intervention and prevention work in the area of cyberbullying has been exactly this - hasty approaches to fighting an enemy that caught most of us off guard - perhaps being aware of the potential threat - but not the intensity or frequency of it. The second issue is that we are dealing explicitly with cyberbullying. The authors present a timely critique of the area - from definitional issues to intervention and prevention approaches. In a relatively short space of time, we have been flooded with the positive aspects of the Web 2.0 technological and digital revolution. Even more so, we have been faced with the ever evolving menace of bullying behaviours that utilise these new technologies and media. Thirdly, we want to encourage you to consider the lessons learnt from the initial emergence, and ongoing experience of, cyberbullying. That is, as you read these critical reviews of the literature, we want you to speculate about future developments in the area. In particular, we believe that it is worth taking heed of the messages in these chapters for the days and years

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ahead, as we see another important issue on the horizon - the rapid growth in the development and implementation of artificial intelligence and robotics. As an ethical and civil society, it is our duty to learn from the past, account for the present, and plan effectively for the future. We can always hope for the best, but we should plan for the worst. So, as the chapters aid our understanding of cyberbullying, the things we have learnt and have done well (or not so well), as individuals with an interest in how to protect childhood whilst encouraging creativity and imagination in the modern world, we do need to lift our heads from the sand and look to the unknown future – to plan ahead for the children yet to be born.

**FROM “TRADITIONAL” BULLY/VICTIM PROBLEMS TO CYBERBULLYING ... AND BEYOND**

Just as we were getting used to “traditional” bully/victim problems, albeit differentiated across different contexts (e.g., f2f: Mc Guckin, Cummins, and Lewis, 2010; alterophobia: Minton, 2012; disablist: Purdy and Mc Guckin, 2014, 2015), each with a substantive canon of knowledge regarding prevalence, actor status, correlates, and intervention approaches, along came cyberbullying. From an initial stance of widespread denial by school leaders about bully/victim problems occurring in their schools, even the best regulated schools now admit that such problems exist among the pupils in their care. The focus has now become about who is involved, what are the consequences on educational and personal growth and attainment, and how its insidious nature can be ameliorated.

Tim Berners Lee’s Internet and the World Wide Web, whilst being arguably the most open form of communication to evolve since the Cro-Magnon’s development of cave drawings and linguistic ability that separated them from their Neanderthal predecessors (Corcoran, Mc Guckin, and Prentice, 2015; Drogin and Young 2008), is perhaps also one of the most anonymous. Indeed, considering the very fundamentals of the technology - ownership and regulation - Berners Lee has advocated for an online Magna Carta/Bill of Rights in this area (Kiss, 2014). In the absence of such control or regulation, to what extent can we rely on children and young people (and adults) to use the technology in this modern “wild west” (Corcoran, Frazer, and Mc Guckin, 2015) for positive benefits only? If we accept that the experience of being human is fraught with a continual dichotomy of “good versus evil,” then we need to also accept the responsibility of helping fellow humans make pro-social choices in relation to the use of this great technology. As alluded to, the emergence of artificial intelligence and robotics as significant areas of technological growth and employment, brings with it the “potential” for new areas of concern - could the perpetrators of bullying behaviours include not only humans and virtual avatars, but also humanoids? Indeed, we could argue that, in a transhumanism advance, most of us already fit the criteria of being a cyborg (cybernetic organism: Clynes and Kline, 1960) - that is, whilst we talk about smart“phones,” the reality is that most of us use these devices for telephone calls far less than for all of the other means of connectivity made possible by their technological capabilities. The sheer extent to which these devices are part of our daily life and engagement with routine day-to-day tasks (e.g., remembering birthdays, anniversaries), we have fears now of issues related to “digital dementia” (Mc Guckin, 2014).
In a very short period of time, humanity has evolved from the significant advances of the agricultural revolution, through the industrial revolution, to the recent digital revolution. Even though the very real and positive advances of the digital revolution have yet to be fully explored, or indeed experienced by all members of society, we are already involved with the Internet of Things (IoT) and newer technological discoveries and applications for the advancement of society and human experience – e.g., the CRISPR interference technique in genetics (clustered regularly interspaced short palindromic repeats) (Qi et al., 2013) that means that gene editing is now as simple as “copy and paste” on this word-processor I am using, and blockchain distributed databases that will become pervasive in terms of ensuring security of online transactions and cryptocurrencies (e.g., Nakamoto, 2008). For all of us with an interest in the protection of children and young people, we have to work hard and fast to keep abreast of these developments.

Whilst Moore’s Law (1965) predicts the exponential growth of technology, specifically computer processor power, the emotional repertoire of children still develops in the timeless manner in which our own emotional capabilities developed. Unlike technology and computing power, we do not have similar “laws” with regard to children’s development, still relying heavily on the assumptions of lifespan development theories (e.g., Freud, Piaget, Erikson, Kohlberg). The unenviable task that society has challenged us to, is to think, research, and act in the same manner as Moore and colleagues - to help future-proof our children and their children in time to come. We must accept this challenge. We must also embrace the challenge and prove our worth as researchers, practitioners, and fellow citizens.

We do not have the luxury of sitting on the side-lines admiring the shiny new technologies. Rather, like the pioneering theorists and researchers before us, we must feel free to “think aloud,” to “stop and stand and stare,” and encourage each other that it is okay to make mistakes in our thinking and logic (e.g., Dweck’s [2006] Growth Mindset). Success, unfortunately, does not come without a pathway of failed ideas and faulty logic. Even with the advances of neuroscience, we can still find lots of examples of “faulty logic” in the hypothesised implications and applications of these new findings and discoveries for educators and classrooms (Doyle and McGuckin, 2016).

As the Nobel laureate Samuel Beckett (1983) encourages us: “Ever tried. Ever failed. No matter. Try again. Fail again. Fail better” (p. 7). As researchers and practitioners in this area, it is our duty to accept Beckett’s encouragement and to never see the work to be done as a Sisyphean task. The authors of the chapters in this book have certainly seized the task and are constantly seeking the new information that we need in order to ameliorate the insidious and obnoxious effects of bully/victim problems mediated through these new, and still to emerge, technologies. As you read through the chapters, we would again encourage you to think widely about the issues raised, remembering that we do not have to be responsible for the problem to be responsible for the solution.
Chapter 2: How Research on Cyberbullying Has Developed

An obvious and interesting question that many readers might have is exactly how much research has been completed in the area. It is this query that Peter Smith and Fethi Berkkun explore in their fascinating portrait of the area. This work is a great contribution to the literature. Just as the later chapter on definitions challenges us to consider how we “talk about” and conceptualise the issues of concern, Peter and Fethi’s chapter provides us with an opportune reflection on “where we have come from” and “where we have arrived at,” after 15 years of activity. We enjoyed reading the analyses in Peter and Fethi’s chapter, perhaps summed up as “lots done, more to do.” We hope that this chapter provides some impetus for new research studies and challenges that need to be surmounted (e.g., longitudinal designs) if we are to impart really robust evidence to colleagues designing or implementing prevention/intervention programmes.

Chapter 3: Conceptual and Definitional Issues Regarding Cyberbullying: A Case for Using the Term Cyber Aggression?

At the start of any discussion in the social sciences, researchers should “operationally define” the key concept(s) of concern to the work. All too often, however, this does not happen and the reader can be left with an ongoing internal debate as to how the central issues should be defined - perhaps in law, in practice, or just in terms of inclusion/exclusion criteria for the various audiences that we seek to inform. A small number of years ago, the community of those with an interest in the emerging issues that were to be called “cyberbullying” debated and worked collaboratively to explore how this new issue should be defined - should it be a natural extension of the definitions associated with traditional bully/victim problems, how to include reference to the new technology - and the technology that does not yet exist, etc. In their chapter, Pauline Hyland, John Hyland, and Christopher Alan Lewis present a timely review of the interesting developments in this area - from initial and perhaps “blunt” definitions to more nuanced definitions that emerged as knowledge and thought in the area matured. Whilst most of the research regarding traditional bully/victim problems has operated from largely the same definitional criteria (i.e., intentional harm doing, repeated actions, imbalance of power), work in this new area of cyberbullying requires consideration of extra factors - e.g., 24/7 aspect of the digital world, a different focus for what “repeated” means in this new context. Bringing us right up-to-date, the chapter explores whether we should consider “cyber aggression” as a more appropriate conceptualisation of the issues.
Chapter 4: Prevalence Rates of Cyberbullying from a Cross-National Perspective: Definitional and Methodological Issues

Irene Connolly helps us to understand the prevalence of cyberbullying from a cross-national perspective. Irene rightly points out that research in this area is constantly evolving, partly due to a response to developments at a societal and technological level, and also at a research level, where understanding of the nuances involved in definitions and methodologies are becoming more mature. Of necessity in a chapter like this is an introduction to the development of the definitions used and subsequent methodological issues that enable us to intelligently decipher these prevalence rates. What becomes evident throughout Irene’s chapter is the development of thought and understanding within this important area – e.g., the critical debate that Peter Smith and Dan Olweus encourage us to consider - the extent to which traditional and cyberbullying are either sufficiently different from each other in terms of those involved or at a more conceptual level. What is evident is that merely trying to present a cross-national perspective on prevalence rates is less than straightforward.

Chapter 5: Cyberbullying among Children and Adolescents: A Quantitative and a Qualitative Approach to Gender Differences

Raúl Navarro, Santiago Yubero, and Elisa Larrañaga reflect upon gender issues and cyberbullying - from childhood through adolescence to college. This is a timely chapter that explores that “old chestnut” of gender differences in aggression. Whilst such differences always exist, the real challenge is to explore the nuances involved. As society becomes even more heterogeneous and accepting of differences between individuals, this chapter serves to caution us about our previous thinking about how aggression is mediated via gender construction. Whilst it used be considered that girls were not aggressive, the research community eventually included girls in research studies of aggression. Within this new paradigm, we saw that girls were not really aggressive. However, the flaw in this approach was that girls were be assessed against a set of theoretical and operational criteria that were, essentially, male-focused (e.g., physical aggression). Considering that the major thinkers in the field of aggression were predominantly (if not nearly exclusively) male, this error becomes contextualised. With the situation rectified in the early 1990’s, we developed a more fine-grained understanding of female aggression, with it becoming understood that girls and boys were aggressive in a “quantitatively” similar manner, but in “qualitatively” different ways. Raúl and colleagues have been researching this area and provide a timely and up-to-date review of how we currently conceptualise gender and how cyberbullying is experienced through this important variable; challenging some of the possible stereotypes that may be clouding our perceptions. Interesting in this chapter too is the new quantitative and qualitative data that the authors share from their research among children and young people in Spain.
Chapter 6: Re-Thinking Well-Being Measures in Bullying and Cyberbullying Research

Jolanta Burke and Stephen Minton give us a lot to consider in their thought provoking chapter. We can probably accept that through much of psychology’s history, we have had a focus on the negative side of human experience. Whilst this is not necessarily wrong or misguided, and has often been necessitated by societal developments (e.g., WWII and the subsequent research of compliance, conformity, and obedience) or the requirements of an ethical science (e.g., quasi-experimental studies of acquired brain injury, aftermath of significant and unexpected trauma), there has, until relatively recently, been a neglect of the positive side of human experience. Couched within a positive psychology perspective, Jolanta and Stephen explore approaches to well-being. The importance of this chapter is to challenge us to consider how we can usefully modify our research efforts in this area if we are to really work towards prevention and intervention approaches that are successful in protecting our children and young people.

Chapter 7: Physical Proximity, Social Distance, and Cyberbullying Research

Whether you are new reader to this area or not, Stephen Minton provides a chapter that really is “food for thought.” Stephen excels as not only a significant researcher in the areas of bully/victim problems and cyberbullying, but critically adds to our knowledge in this fast paced research and applied environment by taking time to “stop and stand and stare.” That is, Stephen excels in thinking and theorising about these issues (e.g., alterophobia: Minton, 2012). We are thankful to Stephen for this work, as detractors from outside the area seek to criticise research in this area as being atheoretical. In this chapter, Stephen asks us to consider the evolution of theory and action regarding human aggression - from the seminal work of Lorenz in ethology, to the work of Milgram on post WWII issues of concern regarding compliance and conformity to authority figures. This notion of “distance” - both physical distance and social distance is explored through Stephen’s chapter, and argued as important criteria to be cognisant of when considering the new parameters of human aggression via technological means - i.e., cyberbullying. Stephen brings together a previously disparate literature to show us, and to remind us, not to forget highly important theoretical concepts, empirical research findings, and the societal issues that we should never forget - e.g., Auschwitz, Zimbardo, dehumanising language, bystander effect, genocide, native American Indians, and moral distance.

Chapter 8: The EU Kids Online Project: The Importance of Large Scale Cross-National Research

At an early stage, one of the most welcome developments at a pan-European level was the instigation of the cross-national EU Kids Online research project. In one place, and at one time, we had a considerable amount of rich and detailed information about the experiences and wider familial and societal issues related to what was fast becoming termed the “always-on” (Belsey, 2006) generation. In their chapter, Brian O’Neill and Thuy Dinh provide us with
an overview of the work conducted by the consortia and the key messages from the research. Such contextual information has been of great benefit to researchers and practitioners who have sought answers to important questions regarding Internet safety, usage, etc. This work is still salient and highlights the need for such networks and their important recording of information that enables us in our need to monitor, interpret, and understand the lives of our children and young people.

**Chapter 9: Cyberbullying in South Korea**

Historically, research and interest in bully/victim problems was largely from a European perspective, with interest later developing further afield (see Smith et al., 1999 for a very interesting and classic cross-national perspective). With the emergence of US based research in the area, the research literature grew with this body of new knowledge. We would argue that, amidst this heightened interest and awareness, it became more difficult for colleagues in other parts of the world to have their voices heard. Again, Smith et al.’s (1999) book gave us critical insight to the work of colleagues in the Australasia region. In her chapter, Seung-ha Lee gives us a very important review of the development and current state of cyberbullying in South Korea. This chapter identifies the issues that are different for children and young people in South Korea, and the approach being taken to counter the various issues and types of cyberbullying discussed.

**Chapter 10: Needs, Determinants, Coping, and Stand-Alone Interventions**

Health and well-being (physical and mental) are always of concern when we explore issues such as cyberbullying. Francine Dehue, Trijntje Völlink, and Nicole Gunther explore these issues in the context of needs, determinants, coping, and stand-alone interventions. Of particular interest in this chapter are the linkages made with the need to help and support children and young people. The linkages are made between successful coping strategies and the development of programmes aimed at helping children and young people. Francine and colleagues review some of the programmes that have demonstrated usefulness, whilst also pointing out that much work is still needed to address the requirements of effective evidence-informed approaches.

**Chapter 11: Coping with Cyberbullying**

Having been actively researching the issues regarding coping with cyberbullying over the last number of years, Lucie and I have worked on a chapter that explores the theoretical views of coping and how we have been able to develop knowledge of how children and young people cope with cyberbullying – from technological coping strategies to personal strategies. Like many of the variables associated with the experience of being involved in cyberbullying, the issues regarding coping are more intricate that a casual perusal of the literature might suggest.
Chapter 12: Cyberbullying and Mental Health: Internet-Based Interventions for Children and Young People

As part of the increasing risks and community fears regarding children and young people and cyberbullying, many attempts have been made at developing prevention and intervention approaches to the issue. Whilst we see a review of these efforts in this book, what is often missing - not just from prevention/intervention programmes in the field of cyberbullying - but from many programmes that address risk factors among our children and young people, is attention to health and well-being. Nicole Gunther, Francine Dehue, and Viviane Thewissen introduce the concept of e-mental health and encourage us to be more cognisant of the possible additive effect of including such approaches in our explorations of cyber related issues amongst children and young people. For example, they point out that many children and young people will not identify cyberbullying as a factor when discussing their issues with parents or health professionals.

Chapter 13: The Australian Perspective: Efforts to Counter Cyberbullying

Research studies exploring bully/victim problems among Australian children and young people has had a long and important history. In 2005, Marilyn Campbell published her “old problem in a new guise?” paper, and demonstrated that Australian society and research community were well aware of the dangers associated with new technologies. In the last number of years, Australian researchers have continued to advance knowledge in key areas regarding cyberbullying - from papers exploring definitional issues, to prevalence, and intervention studies. In her chapter, Marilyn provides us with an overview of these contributions, as well as issues regarding the media, the law, and teacher education.

Chapter 14: Teachers’ Perceptions of Cyberbullying in Irish Secondary Schools

Much research in the area has explored the experiences of children and young people. In a quest to get as much knowledge on prevalence figures, correlates, and the overlap with traditional bully/victim problems, not as much attention has been directed at the adults who support and care for these young people. If we are to encourage educators to be the “upstanders” for pro-social behaviour in educational settings, and to implement prevention and intervention programmes, knowledge of their attitudes and perceptions is critical. This has been demonstrated in relation to disablist bully/victim problems by Purdy and Mc Guckin (2014, 2015), where one-third (35%) of student teachers reported that they would deal with incidents of disablist bullying using “natural instinct.” Caroline Wheeler reports upon her research among a sample of Irish teachers. With the knowledge from this study, and other studies that have sampled adults, we can move further towards a position whereby the adult carers and supporters of children and young people feel confident in their knowledge of the issues.
Chapter 15: Concluding Thoughts: Where Are We Now and Where to Next?

To conclude, Lucie reflects upon the chapters and their messages. In doing so, Lucie also looks to the future, a future that will surely change through more technological developments. As we move towards that unsure future, we all have the same goal in mind – to help preserve the normality of human growth and development, and to protect children and young people from harm and harassment.

REFERENCES


Chapter 2

HOW RESEARCH ON CYBERBULLYING HAS DEVELOPED

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INTRODUCTION

The origins of the term cyberbullying have been discussed and also researched by Bauman (2011). She points out that its first use is often ascribed to Bill Belsey. Belsey was moderating a website on general bullying prevention, and as young people were starting to describe being bullied online, in 2003 he created a website at www.cyberbullying.ca. However, Bauman found a few earlier uses of the term, the earliest apparently being a New York Times article about cyber addiction in 1995.

The term cyberbullying, and indeed Belsey’s use and website which may have sparked the wider adoption of the term, suggests a relationship to bullying generally. As has now been well discussed, cyberbullying can be seen as a new, additional form of bullying. There is clearly substantial overlap with what is now often called traditional bullying, both conceptually, and in terms of who is involved. But the overlap is far from complete in either respect. Conceptually, the particular characteristics of cyberbullying challenge or stretch the usually accepted definition of bullying, in terms of the repetition and imbalance of power criteria. In terms of who is involved, because cyberbullying is not face-to-face it can involve persons who rarely or never see each other in offline situations. In addition, the disciplinary nature of research on cyberbullying shows new aspects. Research on traditional bullying has mostly come from developmental psychologists, and some from sociologists. Cyberbullying has also attracted more attention from disciplines such as media and communications, information technology, and legal studies.

Cyberbullying has certainly impacted on the study of school bullying, which has been a major research program developing since the 1970s. Smith (2014) suggested that there have

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been four main phases in this. The first, from the 1970s-1988, covered the origins of research, notably with Olweus' (1978) book *Aggression in Schools: Bullies and Whipping Boys*, and his development of a self-report questionnaire. The period from 1983-1985 saw the first major school-based intervention program, in Norway; the success of this inspired the next phase of research. The second phase, from 1989-mid 1990s, saw surveys being carried out in many countries; in addition peer nominations methodology was developed. Interventions started taking place in other countries, beyond Norway. Also, the definition of bullying (as with aggression generally) expanded to include relational and indirect forms, notably social exclusion and rumour spreading. The third phase, from mid 1990s-2004, saw school bullying established as an international research program. The development of participant role scales by Salmivalli and colleagues was an important innovation. Surveys, and intervention work, were now reported from many countries around the world. The fourth phase Smith (2014) dated from 2004, with the growth of cyberbullying. Although cyberbullying had origins before 2000, most press reports and awareness of the issue date from around 2004, initially with text message and then email bullying, but now taking many forms.

Smith's comments were based on experience of active research in the area since 1989, rather than on any systematic review. Zych, Ortega-Ruiz, and del Rey (2015) reported a more systematic study of publications on bullying and cyberbullying, from 1978 to 2013. They used the Web of Science and selected journal articles on school bullying, which explicitly referred to and were concerned with bullying (including cyberbullying). Due to the great number of such articles, they took the 10 most cited articles in each year (or all, if less than 10), resulting in 309 articles. These comprised 233 on traditional bullying and 76 on cyberbullying. They divided the content of these into: (a) nature and dynamics, (b) related variables, (c) minorities, and (d) prevention and intervention.

Zych et al. (2015) found the earliest articles on cyberbullying in 2003, with just four articles before 2006. To analyse time trends they therefore divided their analysis of cyberbullying articles into the two periods: 2006-2010 and 2011-2013. Of 42 articles sampled in the 2006-2010 period, 28 were on nature and dynamics, and 14 were on related variables. Of 30 articles from 2011-2013, this switched around with 11 on nature and dynamics, 17 on related variables, and two on minorities. None of their cyberbullying articles were scored in the prevention and intervention category.

Zych et al. (2015) also counted the number of authors of each cyberbullying article. Comparing the same two time periods, the mean number of authors increased from 2.74 to 2.87. The percentage of articles with international collaboration (two or more country affiliations in the authors) increased from 14% to 20%. The US, followed by Canada and the UK, provided the most articles.

The work of Zych et al. (2015) provided a valuable sketch of how research on bullying, including cyberbullying, has developed. However they only examined the 10 most cited articles each year. This means that the picture they present is of the most influential research at the time of writing. Nevertheless these articles are only a small fraction of the total, and so this does not give a full picture of the kinds of research being carried out and reported in peer-reviewed publications. They also only included articles on school-age bullying; but cyberbullying especially is more permeable to age distinctions. We decided to build on the work of Zych et al. (2015), focusing just on cyberbullying but in greater detail. We aimed to examine the abstracts of all journal articles, rather than just the most highly cited ones, and to
include lifespan studies as well as those on school-age participants. We also extended coverage up to 2015.

**METHOD**

Following Zych et al. (2015), we used the Web of Science database to extract details (title, authors, and abstracts) of articles on cyberbullying. We made the following searches: cyber* and bully*; cyber* and victim*; electronic bullying; Internet bullying; and online harassment.

**Table 1. Categories used for coding abstracts on cyberbullying, at step 1 and step 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step 1 (n = 538)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year of publication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of authors (when occasionally not clear from the Abstract, this was checked with the full article)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National affiliation of authors (when occasionally not clear from the Abstract, we checked with the full article)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of article</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opinion piece/no data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrative review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meta-analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Original empirical data</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Step 2 (n = 454)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Articles that presented original empirical data were scored for the presence of any of the following:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion of definitional or measurement issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Longitudinal data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualitative data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prevalence figures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age comparisons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender comparisons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country comparisons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability/minority group/data or comparisons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other risk factors or correlates of involvement (e.g., personality, empathy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome variables (e.g., health, well-being, internalizing or externalizing symptoms, suicide)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer group factors, social dynamics, bystanders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
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<tr>
<td>Siblings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coping strategies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Legal issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources and interventions</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

We started the search from 1990. However from 1990 to 1999 we only obtained 6 abstracts; these were all judged irrelevant at initial screening (they either were brought up by different aspects of “electronic” and “bullying,” or referred to electronic attacks on company
brands). We then searched the period from 2000 up to 2015 on a yearly basis, delaying the 2015 sampling until mid-March 2016 to ensure a nearly complete record for that year.

For further analysis we used the following inclusion criteria: Academic journal article; Abstract at least is in English; Article is focused on cyberbullying, victimization or harassment, or has this as a major part. We had corresponding exclusion criteria: Book, book chapter, non-academic article, conference proceedings (in conference proceedings we included Procedia articles; the Procedia website states that “The Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences does not have, and is not eligible for, an Impact Factor as it does not publish primary research, full length, peer reviewed articles”); No abstract or text in English; Article does not mention cyber bullying, victimization or harassment, or else has it as quite a minor part of the main objectives (for example, only one of five or more topics or measures examined).

Following this procedure, we obtained a total of 538 eligible Abstracts over the 16-year period, an average of 33.6 per year. We then proceeded to code the Abstracts in two steps, using the categories shown in Table 1. In step 1 we coded all of the Abstracts. In step 2 we carried out further coding of 17 categories for those articles reporting original empirical data.

The coding was discussed extensively between the two authors, and the codes clarified where necessary, with any doubtful codings being discussed jointly. The codings are only based on the Abstracts, as examining all the full articles in detail was beyond the timespan of this project. This is a limitation; some codings might only be apparent from the full article, for example “gender comparisons” might have been reported, but not mentioned in the Abstracts. The Abstracts did vary considerably in terms of their quality and apparent coverage. However, being limited to Abstracts also has an advantage in that it highlights the main thrust(s) of each article as thought of as important by the authors. This seems appropriate for an overview of the development of the sub-discipline, such as this chapter aims to provide.

**RESULTS: STEP 1 ANALYSES**

**Year of Publication**

Although the average number of articles per year was 33.6, this built up from a very slow start during the first seven years of this century, but then increasing rapidly. The year 2015 saw 131 articles, meaning about 2.5 new articles every week. The change on a year-by-year basis is shown in Figure 1. The figure suggests three broad phases in terms of volume of research published: (a) from 2000 to 2006, a small trickle of articles (range 0 to 5 per year); (b) from 2007 to 2011, a substantial but still modest number of articles (range 10 to 38 per year); (c) from 2012 on, a very large number of articles (range 85 to 131 per year). Since 2009 the trend has been steadily upwards, with no sign of a plateau. For purposes of later analyses of time trends, we made 3 groupings of year periods: (a) from 2000 to 2011 (n = 125); (b) 2012-2013 (n = 180); and (c) 2014-2015 (n = 233).
How Research on Cyberbullying has Developed

Number of Authors

The overall mean is 3.11 authors per article. However, there is a steady increase over time in number of authors, from 2.66 for 2000-2011, to 3.00 for 2012-2013, and rising to 3.42 for 2014-2015.

National Affiliation of Authors

We started this analysis by looking at the lead (first author) national affiliation of authors. The USA (n = 161) provided the largest contribution, followed by South Korea (52), Canada and Australia (36 each), UK and Spain (35 each), Turkey (27), Germany (21), Belgium (19), Italy (17), Netherlands (15), Taiwan and Sweden (9 each), Israel (6), Finland, Switzerland, New Zealand, and China (5 each), Czech Republic and Singapore (4 each), Denmark, Japan, and Hong Kong (3 each), Austria, Portugal, Norway, and Nigeria (2 each), Estonia, Poland, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Brazil, Colombia, Croatia, Cyprus, India, Ireland, Lithuania, Serbia, Slovenia, France, South Africa, and Thailand (1 each).

For purposes of further analysis, we grouped lead author national affiliation by continent. This yielded North America (n = 197), Europe (including Israel) (n = 190), Asia (including Turkey) (n = 106), Australasia (n = 40), and Other (Africa and South America) (n = 5).
Continental affiliation by year period is shown in Figure 2. North American contributions predominated in the first period, but with an equally substantial contribution from Europe since 2012. Contributions from Asia have been increasing markedly, and there has been a steady contribution from Australasia.

Examining mean number of authors by continent, this was highest in Europe (n = 3.54), followed by Australasia (n = 3.15), then North America (n = 2.97), and Asia (n = 2.58).

**Cross-National and Cross-Continental Research**

The preceding analyses are by first (lead) author, so numbers are equivalent to number of articles. Many articles featured researchers all from the same country. However we also looked at how many articles featured authors spanning more than one country and also more than one continent.

Out of the 538 articles, 29 (5%) had authors from more than one country within a continent, and 36 (7%) had authors from more than one continent (of these, 4 articles had authors from different countries within and continents). Of the 29 cross-country (within continent) articles, 24 were within Europe. Of the 36 cross-continental articles, 27 involved North America, 20 Europe, 14 Australasia, and 13 Asia.

![Figure 2. Continent of lead author by grouped years.](image-url)
How Research on Cyberbullying has Developed

Type of Article

The great majority (n = 454) of articles provided original empirical data. We classified a much smaller number as opinion pieces (n = 45), narrative reviews (n = 33) or meta-analyses (n = 6). Figure 3 shows trends in these, by year period. There is a steady increase in empirical articles. Review articles (either narrative or meta-analyses) are more noticeable in the last four years.

RESULTS: STEP 2 ANALYSES

The number and percentage of articles scoring in each of our 17 categories are shown in Table 2. The four largest (all over 30%) are “Other” predictors of involvement (i.e., beyond age, gender, country, minority group), outcomes of involvement, prevalence rates, and gender differences. We examined each category in relation to both year period (2000-2011, n = 105; 2012-2013, n = 150; 2014-2015, n = 199), and continent of lead author (North America, n = 163; Europe, n = 159; Asia, n = 96; Australasia, n = 33) (Other, n = 3, was not included in analysis). Where there was a clear and sizeable difference, by year period or by continent, we refer to this in the Discussion.
Table 2. Numbers, and percentages (out of n = 454) of empirical data articles scored in each of 17 categories, based on abstracts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Definitional or measurement issues</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Longitudinal data</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualitative data</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prevalence rates</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age differences</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender differences</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-national comparisons</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minority groups</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other predictors of involvement</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcomes of involvement</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer groups, Social dynamics, Bystanders</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Siblings</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal issues</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coping strategies</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources and interventions</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DISCUSSION**

The findings of our analyses confirm some trends reported by Zych et al. (2015), but extend these to articles on cyberbullying generally (not just the most highly cited articles), and to two more recent years, 2014 and 2015. In fact the last two years provide 43% of the total number of articles. Figure 1 illustrates the dramatic rise in the number of articles, especially over the last five years. The research area of bullying generally has also shown a sharp rise this century (Olweus, 2013), but cyberbullying has clearly contributed significantly to this growth from 2012 onwards.

The earliest articles came from the US (as noted by Zych et al., 2015), and indeed North America predominated in the early years of cyberbullying research (Figure 2). This contrasts with research on traditional bullying, which originated in Scandinavia in the 1980s (with a separate tradition on ijime in Japan) (Smith, 2014). Traditional bullying research became active in many European countries from the early 1990s, but in North America some years later. North American work initially referred to peer victimization and harassment (Juvonen and Graham, 2001), but the bullying concept soon came to be widely used, and Espelage and Swearer (2004) were able to provide an important collection of research in American schools. Interestingly cyberbullying does not appear in the index of these contributions, although it no doubt existed (Bauman, 2011). Soon after this, the first relevant publications on cyberbullying were appearing, sometimes referred to as Internet harassment (e.g., Ybarra, 2004).

Although North American research provided the main initial contribution in the cyberbullying area, the volume of research in Europe has grown more rapidly, and has overtaken North America in the last four years. One factor here is likely to be sources of
funding through the EU Framework programs. Programs such as DAPHNE (on child and family safety issues) generally require that several different European countries collaborate, and Europe has provided the majority of cross-national (but within-continent) articles, and the highest number of authors per article (3.54 compared to 2.97 in North America). The COST IS0801 Action on Cyberbullying, which ran from 2008 to 2012, brought together 28 European countries in networking activities, and led to many publications (see Smith and Steffgen, 2013).

Research in Asian countries has also been significant, and is increasing rapidly (Figure 2). Major players here have been South Korea and Turkey. The high number of abstracts obtained from South Korea (n = 52), compared to for example Japan (n = 3), may of course reflect whether an English language abstract is provided by the journal (we picked up many Korean journals doing this). Turkey (n = 27) was also involved in the COST project. Finally, research in Australasia has been at a steady rate, modestly increasing and sizeable given the population of the countries involved. However, to date, research from Central or South America, and Africa, has been very limited.

The rapid rise in research publications has of course paralleled the rapid rise in penetration of ICT amongst the population generally and especially young people. Surveys such as Kaiser Foundation (www.kff.org) and Pew (www.pewinternet.org) in the USA and Ofcom in the UK (www.ofcom.org.uk) have demonstrated how availability and use of mobile phones and computers has increased dramatically this century, with a rapid increase in Smartphone use since around 2011. New journals, such as Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking (1998-), New Media and Society (1999-), and Cyberpsychology: Journal of Psychosocial Research on Cyberspace (2006-) would have facilitated the growth in English-language publications (Livingstone and Smith, 2014). There have also been many special issues of mainstream journals on the topic of cyberbullying (e.g., Australian Journal of Guidance and Counselling 20(2), 2010; Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties 17(3-4), 2012; European Journal of Developmental Psychology 9(2), 2012; Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology 23(1), 2013; School Psychology International 33(5), 2012; Zeitschrift fur Psychology/Journal of Psychology 217(4), 2009).

Naturally, the great majority of journal articles have been providing original empirical data. A relatively small number of articles in academic journals were classed as opinion pieces, for example discussing conceptual or practical issues without providing any data. The number of review articles in journals is also small, but growing over the period with meta-analyses beginning to appear in the last few years to help make sense of the vast amount of findings now accumulating (Figure 3).

**Types of Research**

*Definitional or Measurement Issues*

This category covered both studies of definition (such as which criteria are recognised as important for deciding if an incident is cyberbullying), and measurement issues (such as reporting on the design, reliability and/or validity of a questionnaire). These have appeared at a fairly constant rate of around 7% of articles, over the three time periods.

Definitional issues are still debated, with some researchers preferring to use the concept of cyber-aggression more generally; see Bauman, Underwood, and Card (2013) and Smith,
del Barrio, and Tokunaga (2013) for different views on this. An example of an empirical study (originating from the COST Action on cyberbullying) is a six-country cross-national study by Menesini et al. (2012, 2013), in which 11-17 year olds were given scenarios and asked to judge whether they were cyberbullying, or not. Scenarios varied according to the presence or absence of various criteria. Imbalance of power was found to be the most important criterion, followed by intentionality, and anonymity of the perpetrator (as a substitute for imbalance of power); less important criteria were repetition, and also the public/private nature of the context.

Measurement issues also remain unresolved. For traditional bullying, although there are many instruments available, the Olweus Bully/Victim questionnaire has held some position as a widely recognized and used instrument, also adapted for cross-national surveys such as carried out by HBSC (Currie et al., 2012). This is not the case for cyberbullying. There is a plethora of instruments, each often used in just one or two studies, and many with shortcomings. Systematic reviews of 44 cyberbullying instruments by Berne et al. (2013) and Frisén et al. (2013) found that many did not give adequate definitions (only 13/44 mentioned imbalance of power) and few reported their reliability or validity. Reference periods and cut-off points varied. Similar findings were reported by Vivolo-Kantor et al. (2014).

Longitudinal Data
Longitudinal studies make up around 5% of the total, increasing however from only 1% in the 2000-2011 time period to 6% and 7% in the two more recent time periods. Although nearly half (46%) of all empirical articles report on outcomes, the great majority of such studies have been cross-sectional. These can present a prima facie case for outcomes, but any causal inferences between involvement in cyberbullying and, for example, internalizing or externalizing symptoms, will only begin to be convincing when longitudinal data is available. Even then, data over a series of time points (rather than just two) are highly desirable (Braun, Kuljanin, and DeShon, 2013).

Qualitative Data
Most empirical studies have been quantitative. Studies that included qualitative data (either solely qualitative, or mixed methods) make up around 7% of the total. This has only changed slightly over the three time periods (6%; 5%; 8%). Qualitative data are likely to be most useful when some aspects of the phenomena are under-explored, and thus predetermined survey questions may miss out important aspects of what those involved in cyberbullying are experiencing. Given that cyberbullying is a relatively new area, and also one where the phenomena are changing rapidly, this lack of qualitative studies could be seen as a negative feature of the research program so far. It may reflect the preponderance of psychologists (rather than sociologists, for example) and of researchers coming from work on traditional bullying. Traditional bullying has a long history and has arguably not changed much over decades, so a relative lack of qualitative studies (see Thornberg, 2011), even if unfortunate, is understandable. It appears less justifiable for cyberbullying.

Prevalence Rates
It is natural that prevalence rates appear in many studies (38%), since they will often be reported even when the main focus of interest might be on correlates of involvement, or outcomes. These have included rates for perpetration, being a victim, or more rarely the joint
bully/victim role. Prevalence rates vary hugely (Kowalski, Giumetti, Schroeder, and Lattanner, 2014; Modecki, Minchin, Harbaugh, Guerra, and Runions, 2014), even when based on self-reports of peer bullying/victimization (the most common source). For example, some studies report prevalence rates of around 2-5%, others of 20-30% or more (Hinduja and Patchin, 2012; Olweus, 2012). Reasons for this variation include the nature and age of the sample, the date of survey administration (often not stated!), whether a definition is given and what it covers (criteria such as repetition and/or imbalance of power?), what emphasis there is on particular media or types of cyberbullying, what time reference period is used for occurrences (last month?, ever?), and what frequency cut-off is used for reporting (just once or twice?, or more often?). Overall, it appears that occasional or one-off occurrences may be reported by over 20% of young people but serious or recent or repeated incidents are typically reported by only around 5%.

Not surprisingly, studies reporting prevalence were most frequent in the first time period, at 55% of articles, when the phenomenon was being established. They have fallen to 32% and 33% in the two more recent time periods. They have also been somewhat more frequent in North America (46%) than in Europe (29%).

**Age Differences**

A specific comparison of age differences appeared in around 16% of articles, largely irrespective of time period or continent of authors. Cyberbullying is a phenomenon that spans age ranges. Ševčíková and Šmahel (2012) gave prevalence figures in the Czech Republic from 12 to 88 years, with a peak for both aggressors and victims in adolescence. The early adolescent peak was confirmed by Kowalski et al. (2014), and Tokunaga (2012) suggested a peak of involvement around 15 years, slightly later than for traditional bullying, perhaps because of the greater technological knowledge involved. However cyberbullying has also been reported in children down to 8 years (Monks, Robinson, and Worlidge, 2013). The increasing penetration of ICT to younger ages may well mean that age differences in cyberbullying change to reflect this.

**Gender Differences**

A specific comparison of gender differences appeared in around 36% of articles. This is much more numerous than age differences, perhaps because, unlike for age, almost all samples will provide the opportunity for gender comparisons. They have become slightly less frequent over the time periods (40%; 37%; 33%). Gender differences have been found to be very variable across studies (Tokunaga, 2012). They may depend on the type of cyberbullying (for example, girls being more interested in social networking sites, boys more in online gaming; Pew Research Center). But age appears to be another important variable. Barlett and Coyne (2014) examined 122 gender effect sizes from 109 research articles, for cyberbullying perpetration. Overall, they found boys’ rates exceeding girls; but this varied by age. Up to early adolescence, girls exceeded boys in cyberbullying perpetration, but by later adolescence, boys exceeded girls. Compared to traditional bullying (where boys predominate), it does seem that girls are relatively more involved in cyberbullying. This is perhaps because girls are relatively more interested in reputation damage as a means of bullying, for which cyberbullying via social networking sites is an obvious forum.
Country Comparisons

Cross-national comparisons have been very rare, at only 3% of articles. They have been slightly more frequent in European studies (5%), perhaps aided by the cross-national cooperation required in much EU funding for research, referred to earlier. While interesting, cross-national comparisons are difficult to carry out in a reliable and valid way, due to many issues around equivalence of constructs, bias, and language used in translation (Guillaume and Funder, 2016; Smith et al., 2016).

Disability/Minority Groups

Cross-national comparisons have been rare, at only 6% of articles. These have included any comparisons of minorities such as different racial or ethnic groups, or sexual orientation, as well as disability. They have been more frequent in North America studies (10%), compared to other continents (3-4%), perhaps indicating a higher profile of these issues in the US especially. The overall low frequency is perhaps surprising, given the greater risk of cyberbullying involvement that many minority groups experience (Kowalski et al., 2014).

Other Risk Factors or Predictors of Involvement

This emerged as our most numerous category of article, at 57%, even though it was not scored for comparisons by age, gender, country, disability or minority group. Particularly common are measures such as self-esteem, empathy, and personality variables. Risk factors or predictors will be important in developing theories of involvement in cyberbullying, as well as for targeting some intervention procedures. Such studies are somewhat less in the last time period (48%) compared to the first two (64% and 63%).

Outcome Variables

Outcome variables was the second most numerous category of article, at 46%. This covered aspects such as health, well-being, internalizing or externalizing symptoms, and self-harm, suicidal ideation, or suicide. Demonstration of the generally very negative consequences of being a victim of cyberbullying, or of any kind of involvement, is important in harnessing concern for the issue and getting support for intervention and prevention. There is not much variation in such studies by continent or time period, but unlike predictors, they are not decreasing in recent years (49%) compared to earlier time periods (43%; 43%). Most studies have been cross-sectional, but as noted above, the small number of longitudinal studies has shown a modest increase in recent years.

Peer Groups, Social Dynamics, Bystanders

About one-fifth (20%) of studies have included some focus on the peer group. There is little variation by time period or continent. These have included studies on participant roles such as bystanders and onlookers. They also include studies of class factors such as injunctive norms (what behavior is commonly expected by other pupils within the class) and descriptive norms (the perception of what most pupils in the class actually do). Peer group dynamics are an important part of understanding any bullying behaviors, including cyberbullying, and are focused on explicitly in the KiVa anti-bullying program, which appears effective with cyberbullying as well as traditional bullying (Salmivalli, Kärna, and Poskiparta, 2011).
**Teachers**

Only 6% of articles included a focus on teachers. The role of teachers, both as a model of behaviour, and in terms of how they respond to incidents, has been shown to be an important factor in traditional bullying (e.g., Saarento et al., 2013). Their influence may however be somewhat less for cyberbullying. Firstly, much cyberbullying is at least initiated outside school. Secondly, pupils seem rather less willing to seek help from teachers as regards cyberbullying, than parents and friends (e.g., Slonje and Smith, 2008). Interestingly there is a suggestion of a continent difference here, with Asian studies featuring teachers more often (10%) and North American and European studies less often (both 4%). This might possibly be aligned to greater respect for adults, including teachers (but also parents, see below) in Asian countries.

**Parents**

Compared to teachers, there were twice as many articles including some focus on parents (12%). Victims of cyberbullying more often confide in parents than teachers. In addition, some studies have focused on the importance of parental supervision but not over-control (e.g., Sasson and Mesch, 2014) and of the general quality of parent-child relationships (e.g., Ang, 2015). Interestingly there is a suggestion of a continent difference, with Asian studies featuring parents more often (10%) and North American and European studies less often (10%, 11%). This again might possibly be aligned to greater respect for older adults in Asian countries.

**Siblings**

Very few studies (2%) had any focus on siblings. It has also been relatively neglected in traditional bullying, but a review by Wolke, Tippett, and Dantchev (2015) found 12 studies of sibling bullying. These showed it to have higher prevalence than peer bullying, and related to parenting quality and behavior. While cyberbullying might also occur between siblings, the few studies so far have mainly been on siblings as someone for victims to tell about their experiences or seek support. Its relevance for cyberbullying seems to be a potentially important but largely unexplored area.

**Legal Issues**

Very few studies (2%) had any focus on legal issues. Issues around what kinds of bullying behaviors are actually illegal are clearly important in traditional bullying; but there is special interest about such issues in cyberbullying, where the legal system in many countries is in catch-up mode as regards relatively new phenomena, and where case lore is being established. These issues will also vary widely by country (Campbell and Zavrsnik, 2013). This appears to be another rather neglected research area.

**Coping Strategies**

How victims of cyberbullying cope with the experience was a focus of 8% of articles. This has been slightly more of a focus in Europe (12%) than in North America or Asia (each 5%). Although a minority of victims say they are not much affected by cyberbullying and can ignore it, the kind of coping strategy adopted can impact on how severe the effects are (Machmutow, Perren, Sticca, and Alsaker, 2012).
Resources and Interventions

Some 9% of articles had a focus on resources for dealing with cyberbullying, or on interventions to reduce or prevent it. Clearly a fundamental aim of cyberbullying research should be to help design effective ways of reducing cyberbullying and the harm it causes. In a review of prevention and intervention strategies for adolescent cyberbullying, Ang (2015) discusses both general empathy training and modifying beliefs supportive of aggression, more specific guidelines for Internet behavior, developing strong and positive parent-adolescent bonds, and training for teachers.

A review of thirteen intervention models using ICTs was provided by Nocentini, Zambuto, and Menesini (2015). They found only four of these had satisfactory evaluation. A number of promising interventions are under way or being developed (see e.g., chapters in Völlink, Dehue, and Mc Guckin, 2016; and special issue of Aggressive Behavior, 42(2), 2016), and hopefully substantive progress in this will come about in the next few years.

CONCLUSION

Our survey of journal articles on cyberbullying has provided a picture of the volume and content of research, this century. Some provisos should be noted, however. Our coverage was limited to one main search engine; however we found Web of Science to be comprehensive, and exploratory use of additional search engines did not greatly increase our database. We also had certain exclusion criteria. In particular we only covered English language publications. Also, we did not include books and book chapters (which typically do not have abstracts). While books and book chapters often synthesize research published elsewhere in journal format, they do sometimes provide original research findings not published elsewhere.

Cyberbullying has built on a previous research tradition in school bullying, but with inputs from other disciplines. We found there has been a decade of a rapidly increasing number of research studies, such that currently every week sees 2 or 3 new journal articles appearing. This has been a global phenomenon, with an initial impetus from North America but by now an even greater volume from Europe. By continent, only South America and Africa have so far lagged behind in this global development.

Cyberbullying has both similarities to and differences from traditional bullying. The types of cyberbullying are changing rapidly. There is still continuing debate about issues of measurement and definition, which the changing technological scene only exacerbates.

Many studies have reported prevalence rates, but these vary hugely; while important in making within-study comparisons, prevalence rates are less meaningful in absolute terms in the absence of consensus on definition and measurement across studies. The great majority of empirical studies have been quantitative, and cross-sectional. There is a need for more longitudinal studies, and also more qualitative and mixed methods approaches.

The most common focus of studies has been on risk factors and predictors of cyberbullying involvement, and on outcomes. There are many negative correlates of involvement; as much or maybe more than for traditional bullying. There has been considerable attention paid to the peer group, and also to parents; but much less to teachers, and also the role of siblings.
Legal issues around cyberbullying deserve more attention. There has been research on individual coping strategies, and also on resources, guidance and intervention. Theory-guided interventions are being developed, and it is important that these are fully evaluated so that further progress can be made in reducing cyberbullying and its negative effects.

REFERENCES


How Research on Cyberbullying has Developed


Chapter 3

CONCEPTUAL AND DEFINITIONAL ISSUES REGARDING CYBERBULLYING: A CASE FOR USING THE TERM CYBER AGGRESSION?

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INTRODUCTION

Recent literature has argued for a reconsideration of school-based traditional bullying and cyberbullying in terms of conceptualisation (e.g., Corcoran, Mc Guckin, and Prentice, 2015) and operationalisation (e.g., Corcoran and Mc Guckin, 2014). Corcoran et al. (2015) argue, within the context of cyber behaviour, for a move from cyberbullying toward the term “cyber aggression” due to complications with existing definitions and measurement tools. The present chapter critically appraises the current context of aggression from a definitional, typographical, and operational perspective. As a subset of aggression, bullying is discussed in the context of operationally defining traditional bullying. Furthermore, the methods and motives associated with this behaviour are considered. Definitions and issues with defining the behaviour are reviewed with regard to cyberbullying and a case is proposed as to the importance of behavioural measurement when assessing both traditional bullying and cyberbullying among children and young people (CYP). The chapter concludes with a discussion of a proposed move in the literature to a broader label of cyber aggression when discussing online abuse.

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DEFINITIONS OF AGGRESSION

Anderson and Bushman (2002) define human aggression as “… any behaviour directed toward another individual that is carried out with the proximate (immediate) intent to cause harm” (p. 28). It is further posited that the aggressor must prescribe to the notion that the act will cause harm to the target individual and that this individual will in turn strive to avoid the incident (Baron and Richardson, 1994; Berkowitz, 1993; Bushman and Anderson, 2001; Geen, 2001). The important consideration from this definition is the notion of “intention” within the context of the act. Accidental harm is not considered aggressive behaviour from this particular perspective as it lacks such intent (Anderson and Bushman, 2002). To further consider associated features of aggression and characteristics of aggressive acts, the “types” of aggression need to be acknowledged.

THEORIES OF AGGRESSION

From the biological perspective of aggression, two established accounts of aggression are offered by Lorenz (1974) and Krahé (2001). Emerging from the field of ethology, Lorenz (1974) proposed a model of aggression that stems from a genetic fighting instinct, where only the strongest males will acquire a mate and transfer their genetic material to subsequent generations, predicting the continuation of their lineage. This core philosophy concerns the continuous accumulation of aggressive energy in organisms manifesting in accordance with both individual and environmental factors, such as the amount of built up aggressive energy and the strength of the external stimuli that can activate an aggressive reaction (Lorenz, 1974). Lorenz (1974) would further argue that aggression is a pervasive and unavoidable feature of human nature. Sociobiology seeks to apply the logic of evolutionary theory to the understanding of social behaviour (Krahé, 2001), imbedded in Darwin’s (1859) The Origin of Species. From an evolutionary perspective, aggressive behaviour is adaptive, and exists to defend against attackers and rivals in the process of selection of mates (Archer, 1995; Buss and Shackelford, 1997; Daly and Wilson, 1994). Aggressive tendencies pass in accordance with the phylogeny of the species (Krahé, 2001), and have been used to explain sexual aggression in humans (Malamuth and Heilmann, 1998). The biological stance of human aggression being inevitable in human nature has been viewed as deterministic, and maintains that if an individual carries “the” aggressive gene, they will grow up to be violent. Behavioural geneticists disagree, however, arguing that genetic make-up may “predispose” a person to become an aggressive person, but environmental factors may intervene or reinforce it.

Due to Freud’s (1920) psychoanalytic account of aggression maintaining that aggressive behaviour was the expression of a genetically imbedded instinct, his theory initially was classified as a biological approach. Freud (1920) posited that human beings are wired for violence, inherent to all beings, which creates an urge to aggress against others. Freud (1920) argued that all human behaviour is driven by two key forces, (a) the death instinct (thanatos), and (b) the life instinct (eros). These can cause internal conflict which is only resolved when diverted away from the person onto other people. Consequently, an aggressive act towards
other people is a mechanism for releasing the destructive energy to protect the individual and is termed as catharsis.

As a counterargument, drive theorists argue that aggression is an external drive to cause harm to others. This position is taken by several drive theories of aggression where external circumstances, especially that of frustration, provokes a motive to harm others (Berkowitz, 1989; Feshbach, 1984). A drive is not an always present force that increases in energy. Rather it is only activated if an individual discovers that they are deprived of the means to fulfil an important need. The “frustration-aggression” hypothesis (Dollard, Doob, Miller, Mowerer, and Sears, 1939) argues that aggression is the result of a drive to end the feelings of frustration; an external interference in the goal-directed behaviour of the individual. Frustration leads to arousing the drive that concerns itself with harming other people or objects that are the source of the frustration. However, not every feeling of frustration results in aggression, rejecting sadness, depression, despair, and other emotive responses as possible outcomes (Krahé, 2001). Furthermore, people engage in aggressive acts as a response to many different factors, not just that of frustration. Berkowitz (1989, 1990, 1993) addressed these flaws with the cognitive neoassociation theory, postulating that the relationship between frustration and aggression is mediated by negative affect in the form of anger. Frustration would only result in aggression if the frustration evoked negative affect. Frustration not only elicits negative affect, but also aversive events such as provocations and loud noises. These experiences automatically evoke thoughts, memories, expressive motor reactions, and physiological responses that are associated with fight or flight responses. Stimuli present during a negative event become associated with the event in addition to the evoked cognitive and emotional responses. Aggressive thoughts, emotions, and behavioural tendencies become associated with the memory (Collins and Loftus, 1975). When concepts of similar meaning to these events are experienced, they trigger the same associations and feelings and in turn the same response. This can also be affected by metacognitive processes such as appraisal and reflection. Aggression is just one possible reaction to an aversive event or stimulus, and is not viewed as inevitable, but a feature of human behaviour which can be encouraged or suppressed by the emotional experience evoked by the negative event.

Many modern theories of aggression do not focus on one factor, rather they utilise knowledge from different areas of psychology to understand the factors that influence behaviour. Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1997) is one such theory where it is argued that humans are not born with aggressive responses, but rather they are obtained like other forms of social behaviour through observational learning or direct experience. It is through social models, whether through direct experience or observational learning that social behaviours such as aggression are learned. Past experiences influence how one seeks to harm others, identifies appropriate victims for aggression, informs what actions are considered to justify retaliation or vengeance, and what settings are appropriate for aggression and where it is permitted (Baron, Branscombe, and Byrne, 2008). A more specific and detailed approach of Social Learning Theory, is Script Theory (Huesmann, 1986, 1998) which proposes that children learn aggressive scripts when they observe violent behaviour in the mass media. These scripts define situations and guide behaviour, with a person selecting a particular script for the given situation and taking on a prescribed role. This script can be retrieved at a later stage as a guide for behaviour once it has been learned. Scripts are sets of well-practiced, highly related concepts in memory, which can involve causal links, goals, and action plans (Abelson, 1981; Schank and Abelson, 1977). When these concepts become strongly related
they become a script; a single concept in semantic memory. With more rehearsals of the script, this increases the number of activations of the script, and strengthens the links in the script. Within the context of social behaviour, when a child has witnessed several thousand occurrences of the use of a gun to resolve a dispute on television, they are likely to have developed a very acceptable script that has been generalised to many situations and is accessible for use. However, several studies have indicated that some people have a “hostile attribution bias,” whereby individuals who have a history of aggressive behaviour prefer the interpretation of other people’s behaviour as having hostile intentions, especially in the case of ambiguous behaviour (Geen, 1998). This bias can trigger an aggressive script and increase the likelihood for an aggressive response to be selected as the response.

Social Interaction Theory (Tedeschi and Felson, 1994) views aggressive behaviour as “social influence” behaviour. Here the actors use intimidating actions to create some change in the victim’s behaviour. Coercive actions can be employed to gain something of value, to command justice for perceived wrong doings, or to gain desired social and self-identities. The actor is the decision maker, whose decisions are aimed at the anticipated rewards, costs and the likelihood of attaining different outcomes. In the context of aggression, this theory views aggressive behaviour as being motivated by higher level goals (Anderson and Bushman, 2002). For example, hostile aggression may have some rational objective behind it such as punishing the person provoking the response, in order to reduce the probability of future provocations. This theory refers to research that suggests that aggression is the consequence to threats to high self-esteem, especially to undeserved high self-esteem such as Narcissism (Baumeister, Smart, and Boden, 1996; Bushman and Baumeister, 1998).

The General Aggressive Model (Anderson, 1997; Anderson and Bushman, 2002) builds upon the Social Learning Theory, and is designed to integrate existing mini-theories of aggression into one theory. It argues that aggression is largely founded on the process of learning, activation, and application of aggression-associated schemas and scripts stored in memory. This theory maintains that a chain of events can result in overt aggression. It maintains that these cognitions can be started by two main types of input variables; personal factors and situational factors. Personal factors include traits that predispose some people for aggression, sex (males and females differ in aggressive tendencies), attitudes and beliefs about violence, traits, values, long-term goals, and scripts. Situation factors include frustration, provocation from another person, exposure to aggressive cues, anything that causes pain and discomfort, the use of drugs (alcohol and caffeine can increase aggression [Bushman, 1993]), and incentives. These personal and situational factors can lead to overt aggression through their influence on three routes; (a) arousal, (b) affect, and (c) cognition (Anderson and Bushman, 2002). For the first route of arousal, personal and situational factors can increase physiological arousal in a person. For the cognition route, they can induce hostile thoughts or bring attitudes and beliefs about aggression to mind, or through the use of scripts. Whereas with affect, they can arouse hostile feelings and these can be portrayed through expressive motor responses such as angry facial expressions. Depending on the individual’s appraisal of the situation they can engage in thoughtful action which could result in restraining their anger, or they may engage in impulsive action, which can result in overt aggression. With repeated exposure to factors such as media violence and poor parenting among others, this can produce aggressive adults (Huesmann and Miller, 1994; Patterson, Reid, and Dishion, 1992). This long-term effect on personality is the result of the development, automatization and reinforcement of aggressive-related knowledge structures.
The General Aggressive Model (Anderson and Bushman, 2002) suggests that long-term users of violent media can develop more aggressive stances, perceptual prejudices, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours that are negative in nature, compared with what the person exhibited prior to the frequent exposure. The personal factors are clearly influenced with this repeated exposure, with changes in aggressive nature and tendency, but the long-term effects of exposure also impacts upon situational factors. In the case of the aggressive child, the environment responds with the type of people that want to interact with this child, in addition to the types of interactions and situations available (Anderson and Bushman, 2002).

The Excitation Transfer Theory (Zillmann, 1983) maintains that physiological arousal tends to dissolve slowly over time, but elements of this arousal may remain in the person and transfer from one situation to the next. Thus if two arousing events are separated by a short period of time, the arousal from the first incident may be mis-assigned to the second event. If this second event evokes anger, then the extra arousal should lead to an increase in the person’s anger level. The excitation is transferring from one event to the other, with the anger possibly extending over a longer period of time if the person has assigned the heightened arousal to this response. As a result, even when the arousal has reduced, the person is prepared to aggress for as long as the self-generated label of anger continues (Anderson and Bushman, 2002).

In conclusion, when discussing aggression, Berkowitz (1993) states “… people have a capacity for aggression and violence, but not a biological urge to attack and destroy others that is continually building up inside of them” (p. 387). This is an argument that is supported by these aforementioned theories, emphasising the mediating role of cognitive, decision making, and learning processes. The following section will move focus from the theoretical to the practical, to the particular types of aggression which emerge across various contexts.

**TYPES OF AGGRESSION**

With regard to the typography of aggression, a number of forms exist. These include hostile, proactive, overt, relational, and instrumental aggression. Hostile aggression or reactive aggression can be defined as impulsive, unplanned, and motivated by anger, focused on harming the target, and as a response to perceived provocation; it is sometimes termed as affective or impulsive aggression (Anderson and Bushman, 2002). It is considered to be an impulsive, immediate response to a perceived threat, without any cognitive appraisal of the situation (Griffin and Gross, 2004). In contrast, proactive aggression is characterised by premeditated tactics of obtaining a particular goal other than harming the target (Anderson and Bushman, 2002), and tends to be unprovoked (Griffin and Gross, 2004). This form of aggression include two subtypes: (a) instrumental aggression (an attempt to claim an object such as a toy), and (b) bullying (aggression that is focused on domination or intimidation of a person). Overt or direct aggression is centred on confrontational behaviour towards others as observed in physical assaults, verbal threats, destruction of property, and self-injurious behaviour (Connor, Melloni, and Harrison, 1998). A further specific subtype of aggression is “relational” or “indirect” aggression which does not contain direct confrontation between the aggressor and the victim, but rather consists of behaviour such as exclusion, rejection from a peer group, rumour spreading, keeping secrets, and embarrassment in a social context (Griffin
and Gross, 2004). Therefore, it is important to consider these types of aggression when considering bullying behaviour as it can be located in a number of these types of aggression such as relational and reactive as it can be verbal, physical, social, and cyber based (Law, Shapka, Hymel, Olson, and Waterhouse, 2012). Consequently, bullying can also be considered a specific aggressive behaviour, a theme that will be discussed in the subsequent section.

BULLYING

As aggression is concerned with the intention to cause harm or upset to another person, bullying behaviour can be closely linked to aggression, and can be considered a subcategory of it. Primarily a behaviour that is unidirectional, bullying exists where one person repeatedly assaults one or more people who do not have power, or have very little power, to react (Olweus, 1993). Similarly, Stephenson and Smith (1989) suggest that the prerequisite for an incident to be considered bullying is with the presence of an aggressive act, which in turn causes upset to the victim. Bullying can therefore be viewed as an extension of aggressive behaviour. Where bullying differs from aggression lies in the frequency of the behaviour, as aggression can be one single act and short-term, whereas bullying generally requires an element of repetition in the behaviour and over time (Krahé, 2001). Similar to aggression, bullying can take different forms, and thus can be located within the various forms of aggression. The next section will address the issues with defining this behaviour.

OPERATIONALLY DEFINING BULLYING

To measure something consistently requires a clear operationally defined construct. However, there is not one distinct agreed definition of bullying within the area of bullying research. Previously, there was disagreement within the literature on the key characteristics of this behaviour and, especially so, cross-culturally. One of the first descriptions of the behaviour was by Heinemann (1973) in the use of the Norwegian term “mobbning,” to describe when group violence is enacted on a deviant person and is started and finished suddenly. This is defined as a group behaviour against an individual, similar to the term “mobbing” used in the English language. A similar term also was used in the German literature (Niedl, 1996). However, these descriptions do not account for bullying at the individual level of one person bullying another.

The term bullying is well established in the English language, and can be traced in literature back to the novel Tom Brown’s Schooldays (Hughes, 1857/1989). Within the research literature, Olweus (1978) provided the foundation publication in the area, where he employed a similar definition to that of Heinemann (1973). However, Olweus (1999) did not initially acknowledge the role of indirect bullying in his earlier definitions and it did not include the systematic one-to-one attacks of a stronger child against a weaker child. He has since adapted his definition in later years to include these characteristics (Olweus, 1999). This systematic abuse of power seen in bullying behaviour is a feature widely used within the literature and adopted by theorists (Rigby, 2002).
Later definitions have agreed upon three main criteria for bullying behaviour; repetition of the behaviour, a power imbalance between the aggressor and the victim, and intention to cause harm (Olweus, 1993, 1997, 1999; O’Moore and Minton, 2004; Rigby, 2002). The feature of a “repetitious act” is one that O’Moore and Minton (2004) suggest should be an exception when classifying an incident as bullying, as they view that one particular serious occurrence of the behaviour can lead to a continued feeling of intimidation, an exception that Olweus (1999) concurs with. Furthermore, it can be added that bullying behaviour can occur without provocation (Olweus, 1994) and the act can be physical contact, words, or other actions such as gestures, facial expressions, or exclusion. These characteristics tend to be the agreed terms when identifying bullying generally within the literature (Farrington, 1993; Smith and Sharp, 1994).

In a cross-cultural comparison (England, Italy, Japan, Portugal, and Spain) of the definition of and conceptualisation of bullying, Smorti, Menesini, and Smith (2003) noted that when the English term “bullying” was translated into other languages, there was no such word that captured the exact meaning that exists in the English form of the word. This is particularly the case in Latin languages such as French, where there is no direct translation for the English word “bullying” (Smith, Cowie, Olafsson, and Lieføoghe, 2002). In some other cultures, other terms are used to describe the behaviour. For example, in Japan bullying is described as “ijime” that is bullying within the same year group as a methodical social exclusion. In South Korea bullying has been labelled as “wang-ta” where it involves social exclusion by all classmates, and “jun-ta”, where it involves social exclusion by the whole school (Kwak and Koo, 2004). In Italy, “prepotenza” and “violenza” are employed but tend to describe acts that are physical and violent (Fonzi et al., 1999). Due to this variation in terms when describing bullying behaviour, it is important that the focus is on the characteristics rather than on the term to successfully identify the behaviour. Having discussed the issues of defining the behaviour, the next section will provide details on the methods and motives of bullying behaviour.

**METHODS AND MOTIVATIONS OF BULLYING**

Face-to-face, or traditional bullying, can be conducted using a number of methods, such as physical, verbal, or relational, and can be carried out by the same bully on the same victim (Benbenishty and Astor, 2005; Nishina, 2004; Rigby, 2002). Physical bullying is the most obvious form and recognised by all with features of kicking, hitting, and beating among others (Smith et al., 2002). As children mature, verbal bullying becomes more common than physical bullying, consisting of repeated derogatory remarks or names (Berger, 2007). Both of these forms of bullying can also be labelled as direct forms of bullying (Griffin and Gross, 2004). Relational or indirect bullying is characterised by exclusion, social rejection, ignoring, and spreading rumours (Griffin and Gross, 2004), where there is a disruption to the social relationship (Berger, 2007). This type of bullying is more common and more hurtful in puberty when children are more socially skilled and when peer approval is central (Underwood, 2003; Xie, Swift, Cairns, and Cairns, 2002). These forms of bullying have also been associated with proactive and reactive aggression (Pellegrini, Bartini, and Brooks, 1999).
Bullying has now moved outside of the traditional methods of bullying, to occur in the online environment and has been labelled as cyberbullying. When defining face-to-face bullying, the characteristics do not refer to cyberbullying. However, it may be viewed as similar to traditional bullying but occurring through the use of new communication technologies (Menesini and Nocentini, 2009), through social networking sites, instant messaging services, chat rooms, and chat features of games, among others.

The characteristics also do not make mention of the motivations such as homophobic bullying, racist bullying, and disabilist bullying among others. However, in accounting for these forms of bullying, they can be seen as an extension of traditional bullying. In these cases, the bully can be said to be motivated by a characteristic of the person such as disability, gender, disfigurement, race, ethnicity, skin colour, sexual orientation, religious belief, gender identity, community, or status in terms of being an asylum seeker or refugee. This can also be referred to as identity-based bullying (Tippett, Houlston, and Smith, 2010). Therefore, researchers and schools need to be aware of both the motives and methods when designing intervention and prevention anti-bullying programmes.

DEFINING CYBERBULLYING

Recent years have seen the expansion of the Internet and social interactions in the online environment with the fast development of information and communication technology (ICT). Ownership of mobile phones and Smartphones has increased exponentially with upwards of 7.4 billion mobile phones estimated in the world, 3.4 billion of these being Smartphones, with the number of mobile phones owned expected to exceed 9 billion by 2021 (Ericsson, 2015). Coupled with this is the increased use of social networking sites, apps, chat room, and other media to communicate. Communication through previously considered non-typical means is now popular and ICT has become engrained in our communication with one another. Expansion in technology and communication provides great advantages, but some consequences of these advancements are problems such as bullying, trolling, and stalking.

From the online perspective, bullying is termed as “cyberbullying”, an umbrella term for a selection of similar concepts, such as online bullying, Internet harassment, online aggression, and electronic aggression (Dooley, Pyżalski, and Cross, 2009; Kowalski, Limber, and Agatston, 2008; Smith, 2009; Tokunaga, 2010). It has been viewed as similar to traditional bullying, but it has a unique venue (Dooley et al., 2009), with the use of electronic forms of contact (Sticca and Perren, 2013). However, defining the concept has been difficult. The term cyber is guilty of the same problem as bullying when defining the construct. Cyber conjures up different connotations in different languages. In the German dictionary, “cyber” speaks of an online computer contrived environment that is treated by the individual as an extension of reality (Nocentini et al., 2010). In Italy it is the use of electronic means and virtual environment (Garzanti, 2007), whereas in Spain, “ciber” makes reference to computer networks (RAE, 2016). Consequently, the term denotes different meaning across languages and countries which poses a problem when operationally defining the construct. As a result, there are a number of different definitions that describe cyberbullying, many of which are derived from the traditional bullying domain. Due to these differing definitions, there is no uniform, agreed definition of the behaviour. Ybarra and Mitchell (2004) defined
Conceptual and Definitional Issues Regarding Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying as an explicit, deliberate act of aggression, online, towards another person. Juvonen and Gross (2008) define it as insulting or threatening someone through the use of the Internet or other digital communications. One definition that closely resembles Olweus’s definition of traditional bullying, is offered by Smith et al. (2008), where they define cyberbullying as “… an aggressive, intentional act carried out by a group or individual, using electronic forms of contact, repeatedly and over time against a victim who cannot easily defend him or herself” (p. 376). This definition has similar characteristics to traditional bullying; intention to cause harm through an aggressive act, imbalance of power, and repetition of victimisation (Grigg, 2010), but with the addition of technological devices to commit the act (Dooley et al., 2009; Slonje and Smith, 2008; Smith et al., 2008).

The imbalance of power that occurs online can refer to the victim’s lack of power, instead of the perpetrator’s possession of power (Dooley et al., 2009). This may also be due to the aggressor’s real life power of strength or age over the victim, where the victim knows the perpetrator possibly from being bullied through traditional means. Thus the determinants of traditional bullying could be also be factors for cyberbullying (Slonje and Smith, 2008), so the real life physical imbalance may play a role in the online setting. Or, this imbalance can be attributed to a victim’s perspective of the perpetrator as being a digital expert (Vandebosch and Van Cleemput, 2008) and cannot defend themselves from the actions of the perpetrator.

This use of electronic means as the medium of contact entails some differences to traditional bullying. Cyber communication allows for a potentially larger audience to witness bullying (Kowalski et al., 2008), the increased possibility of anonymity for the aggressor, a decrease in the amount of direct feedback between the bully and victim, along with decreased time and space limits (Slonje and Smith, 2008), and supervision (Patchin and Hinduja, 2006). With regard to the repetitious nature of the behaviour, in the case of cyberbullying even a single act can be disseminated widely, copied by others, and reposted, thus meeting the criteria, and repeatedly creating that imbalance of power (Menesini and Nocentini, 2009). Furthermore, due to the archival nature of the Internet, it is possible for victims and bullies to re-read, re-look at the event, and re-experience it (Law et al., 2012). In addition, where offline bullying occurs in real-time, online bullying is not limited by time (Walther, 2007) and it can occur at anytime and anywhere. With traditional bullying, once the victim gets home they can avoid the bullying until the next day, whereas victims of cyberbullying may still receive messages, comments, or emails wherever they are (Slonje and Smith, 2008).

As the perpetrator and the victim are communicating online, there is no way for the perpetrator to see the impact of their action on the victim (Smith, 2012) and this may result in disinhibition and deindividuation (Agatston, Kowalski, and Limber, 2012; Davis and Nixon, 2012; Patchin and Hinduja, 2011; von Marées and Petermann, 2012). This emotional disconnect can sever any empathetic responses that might have emerged in a face-to-face situation (Cassidy, Faucher, and Jackson, 2013). However, this medium of bullying may not appeal to bullies who like the feedback that they receive in a face-to-face bullying situation as they do not have the opportunity to demonstrate their power over the victim or to see their reactions (Smith and Slonje, 2010). For some cyberbullies however, it is suggested that they enjoy the anticipation of the response or impact of their actions at a later stage (Nathan, 2009).

Bullying behaviour has evolved from using mobile phone for bullying through text messages and phone calls to now include picture/video clip bullying and happy-slapping – where the victim is slapped or made to look silly and it is filmed and the content circulated to
others (Smith et al., 2008). Similarly, using the Internet for bullying is no longer confined to just emails. It now includes bullying in chat rooms, instant messaging, and websites – forums and social networking sites (Smith et al., 2008). With the advancements of ICT it is envisaged that this behaviour will continue to evolve using the new media.

Olweus (2012) holds that cyberbullying should not be examined separately from traditional bullying, but rather they should be understood in conjunction with one another. Furthermore, and despite media claims to the contrary, he holds that there has been no increase in the prevalence of cyberbullying over time, nor has there been an increase in the number of victims. Rather it is a behaviour overrated by media, with a low incidence rate, and where there are not many new victims or bullies. Olweus (2012) argues that there is an overlap between traditional bullying and cyberbullying. As a consequence, it is suggested that schools should focus on policies to deal with traditional bullying and include system-level strategies to tackle cyberbullying problems. In response to this, Smith (2012) challenges this stance, and disputes the claim that cyberbullying has a low rate of occurrence, and contends that Olweus (2012) underestimates the role of cyberbullying especially in research programmes. He indicates that cyberbullying in fact is on the increase, providing research evidence of this over a five-year period, and furthermore states that in some countries, traditional bullying has decreased in prevalence over the past 10-20 years (Rigby and Smith, 2011). Furthermore, as the use of the online environment expands, so too do the opportunities to target individuals to abuse, providing a greater number of possible targets.

Following this, Smith (2012) discussed key differences between cyberbullying and traditional bullying. These distinctions include: (a) the requirement for technological expertise when cyberbullying, (b) the role of anonymity, (c) the possibility that the perpetrator does not witness the victim’s response, (d) the role of the bystander (who may be present with the victim, with the bully, or with neither when the victimization occurs), (e) the greater potential audience in the online setting, and (f) the difficulty for the victim to escape cyberbullying. In addition to this, Smith (2012) discusses the issues of repetition and power imbalance. His own definition is an adaption of the definition for traditional bullying by Olweus (2012), with the features of aggression, intention, repetition, and power imbalance. However, Smith (2012) notes that just one post online by a perpetrator can constitute a repetitious act, as it can be reposted by others although this act is not by the perpetrator. The physical power imbalance is not present in the online setting and, therefore, Smith (2012) suggests rethinking this. However, this imbalance may be present in a non-physical manner. Smith (2012) concludes that although Olweus (2012) makes some valid points, he underestimates the differences and role of cyberbullying within research.

With regard to the overlapping nature of face-to-face bullying and cyberbullying, Patchin and Hinduja (2006) highlight how bullying is “moving beyond the schoolyard” thus highlighting that victims of cyberbullying are also targets of traditional bullying; a finding that Ybarra, Diener-West, and Leaf (2007) report on, with 36% of children in their sample experiencing traditional and cyberbullying concurrently. Juvonen and Gross (2008) similarly report on this, with 85% of their cyber victims experiencing victimisation in school also. In these cases, it can be the same or different people committing the aggressive acts (Ybarra et al., 2007). When this is the same person, the bully is using cyberbullying in combination with traditional bullying to maximise the harm that they can inflict on the victim (Tokunaga, 2010). This overlapping nature of the behaviour has been reported in research with a consistent correlation between involvement in cyberbullying and traditional bullying (Didden
et al., 2009; Juvonen and Gross, 2008; Katzer, Fetchenhauer, and Belschak, 2009; Slonje and Smith, 2008; Smith et al., 2008). However, when considering these behaviours, the issues with defining the constructs also extends to measurement of traditional bullying and cyberbullying.

**ISSUES WHEN MEASURING BULLYING**

When comparing research findings an issue emerges in terms of incidence rates. Due to the lack of agreement on the definition for identifying bullying behaviour, this problem extends to measuring the behaviour. Solberg and Olweus (2003) highlighted issues surrounding the measurement of traditional bullying. In terms of the sources of data, different sources of measurement have been employed; those of normative and ipsative; normative being the reporting of bullying from the stance of a teacher or peer, and ipsative being the self-reporting of victimisation. In addition, in some cases a definition of bullying is presented to the participant prior to completing the questionnaire. Where there is no definition, there is room for subjectivity by the participant for their interpretation of the behaviour.

The next issue Solberg and Olweus (2003) discussed is the time reference period employed across research studies, which involves ranges which vary from a year, to the past term, to the past two or three months, or indeed in some cases no indication of time frame at all. The response options presented to participants also vary across research studies, with some including a dichotomous response of “yes-no,” some with a range of categories such as “does not apply at all” to “very often,” and in other cases a frequency-based response of “seldom” to “very often” or a more specific frequency based response of “not at all in the past couple of months” to “several times a week.” How research studies report on the prevalence rates also differs where some calculate incidence rates based on a single item or key global questions and other studies employ a series of questions added or averaged together to assess the construct (Solberg and Olweus, 2003). These issues should be noted when trying to compare incidence rates from study to study. Although these differences were noted in relation to traditional bullying, cyberbullying also suffers from the same issues of measurement and reporting (Menesini and Nocentini, 2009), as much research in the area has employed self-report measures with key global questions, whereas other research focused on types of behaviours. These measurement issues and problems with definitions have also been outlined by Mc Guckin, Cummins, and Lewis (2010), indicating that such inconsistencies in the research area make comparisons between studies difficult. Menesini and Nocentini (2009) suggest that a more accurate approach to measure bullying behaviour is through a multiple-item scale instead of a global question. Nunnally (1978) argues that these multiple-item scales carry more validity than a single-item measure which cannot fully represent a complex construct and cannot distinguish between the finer details of the concept. Thus the multiple-item scale can assess these finer details, to provide a more accurate and precise assessment of the concept with more reliability. Considering methodological issues of measurement concerning bullying behaviour, and the difficulty with operationally defining cyberbullying under the original three key criteria of face-to-face bullying, the focus should be on the behaviours associated with bullying rather than global questions.
Cyberbullying or Cyber Aggression?

Tokunaga (2010) offers an alternative definition to Smith et al. (2008) based on a meta-synthesis of the term; proposing that it is “… any behaviour performed through electronic or digital media by individuals or groups that repeatedly communicates hostile or aggressive messages intended to inflict harm or discomfort on others” (p. 278). However, this definition has been developed based on previous definitions in the literature. These previous definitions contain limitations and are not consistent across languages and countries. In comparison, Langos (2012) postulates that cyberbullying is underpinned by the elements of traditional bullying, those of aggression, power imbalance, intention, and repetition but it consists of direct and indirect forms of the behaviour where the former is based on a private interaction such as in the case of a text message, and the latter is a public interaction such as on social networking sites. Both forms of the behaviour features the power imbalance, where the victim cannot defend themselves against the intent to cause harm to them. She expands to say that the repetitious nature of cyberbullying is more visible in the direct form of the behaviour, as it is direct action by the perpetrator, whereas it is more difficult in the case of indirect cyberbullying. This direct action also demonstrates the intent of the perpetrator to cause harm to the victim, which is not as clearly visible in indirect cyberbullying. Thus the indirect form, may be a single act or multiple acts by the perpetrator towards the victim. With regard to this intention to harm the victim, Langos (2012) postulates that one should assume the viewpoint of the victim, and whether a reasonable individual would consider the act(s) as intentionally harmful to the victim.

With the problems surrounding operationally defining the concept, Grigg (2010) offers an unconventional solution in comparison to other researchers in the area. She proposes that researchers should move away from the label of cyberbullying and move towards cyber aggression, a concept that considers aggression more broadly in the cyber setting. With regard to the imbalance of power element of cyberbullying, Grigg (2010) argues that there is no empirical research supporting the stance that perpetrators of cyberbullying are media experts. Furthermore, the responsibility for the repetitious element is unclear in terms of whether this falls to the perpetrator or the bystander in the context of repeated viewing of the negative act. The role of the bully is clear in the case where the negative act is repeated, but in the case of repeated viewing of content or forwarding of the content, the one-time action of the bully may be viewed by bystanders or shared and “passed along”, reinforcing the negative act rather than supporting the victim or ignoring it. Grigg (2010) proposes a definition of cyber aggression which is considered “… 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” (p. 152). She concludes that this definition of cyber aggression considers behaviours such as bullying, harassment, stalking, abuse, assault, or hostility, along with “happy slapping,” “outing,” and “flaming,” where all of these behaviours employ smart phones or the Internet to conduct the behaviour. The description omits the elements of power imbalance and the repetition that is a feature in definitions of cyberbullying, however, the role of the bystander should be considered in the understanding of cyber aggression.

Corcoran et al. (2015) support this stance by Grigg (2010), where they posit that there should be a move towards cyber aggression, rather than an attempt to try and “fit” the
unsuitable criteria into a definition of cyberbullying. They draw on this research by Grigg (2010) and Langos (2012), and also by Pyżalski (2012), stressing that research should consider the target individual(s) in cyberbullying. It should be examined whether the behaviour was peer-directed cyber aggression, at individual(s) within the peer group, or electronic aggression, focused on individual(s) outside of the peer group such as random victims, celebrities, school staff, groups, and vulnerable individuals. Corcoran et al. (2015) propose a definition of cyber aggression as “… any behaviour enacted through the use of information and communication technologies that is intended to harm another person(s) that the target person(s) wants to avoid. Intent to cause harm should be judged on the basis of how a reasonable person would assess intent” (pp. 252-253).

This proposed definition allows for a deviation from the restrictions of a definition based on traditional bullying, and considers the aforementioned issues highlighted by Grigg (2010), Langos (2012), and Pyżalski (2012). This cyber aggression definition is developed based on five conclusions by Corcoran et al. (2015) regarding issues with using the term cyberbullying. Firstly, the term cyberbullying suggests that it is an extension of traditional bullying, using the same criteria for the behaviour except in the location of cyberspace. This creates a difficulty in that, as pointed out by previous researchers, it is difficult to identify these features in cyberspace due to the nature of the online environment. Secondly, with respect to the features of cyberbullying, there is a disagreement within the literature as to the exact features of the behaviour, thus providing difficulty with operationally defining the construct (Menesini et al., 2013; Nocentini et al., 2010; Vandebosch and Van Cleemput, 2008). Thirdly, concerning the interaction between the victim and aggressor, bullying is considered a form of social aggression (Björkqvist, Ekman, and Lagerspetz, 1982), and by definition this would exclude any incidents of cyberbullying where the aggressor is unknown by the victim, such as in the case of “happy slapping.” Therefore, considering the concept in terms of social aggression would mean an oversight in omitting behaviours that would otherwise be considered a form of cyberbullying. Consequently, there is a need for a more inclusive concept such as cyber-aggression. Fourthly, research by Corcoran and Mc Guckin (2014) demonstrated the difference between researchers’ understanding of the behaviour and the associated label, and students' understanding of cyberbullying. This highlights a disconnect between the understanding in research of cyberbullying and what those involved perceive the behaviour to be. This could be attributed to a lack of awareness of the construct on the part of those involved and a need to educate students on the behaviour. It also, however, may be an issue with defining the construct and a need to use a different term such as cyber aggression. Corcoran and Mc Guckin (2014) employed a multiple-item scale approach to measuring cyber aggression, coupled with a global question to assess the construct of cyberbullying. The scale measure provided an overview of the incidence of cyber aggression under elements considered to be associated with bullying behaviour, and yielded a higher rate of involvement compared to the global question. This may provide a more holistic picture of what was happening on the ground for those involved. Corcoran et al. (2015) conclude that this supporting research suggests at this point that the term cyberbullying is unclear and outdated. Fifthly, the lower incidence rate reported by Corcoran and Mc Guckin (2014) could be attributed to the stigmatisation of reporting the behaviour. This supports the requirement for another approach to provide a better assessment of the behaviour. This may well be offered by the term cyber aggression.
CONCLUSION

This definition of cyber aggression offered by Corcoran et al. (2015) provides a holistic approach to assessing this behaviour in a more inclusive manner. Grigg (2010) described the “vagueness, restrictiveness and ambiguity” (p.152) associated with using the term cyberbullying and describes cyber aggression as an approach that considered broad negative behaviours that occur online. Considering that bullying behaviour as a whole can be viewed as a subcategory of aggression, a term of cyber aggression is more fitting when describing this online behaviour. This provides clarity when dealing with the behaviour, removing the constraints with the criteria previously set by definitions of traditional behaviour. Furthermore, as a sub-category of aggression, the theories of aggression, whether biological or psychological, highlight the argument of the inherent possibility of aggression in humans. It is only through the mediating roles of cognitive, decision making, and learning processes the aggression can be reduced or prevented. Consequently, this stance of viewing online bullying as a form of cyber aggression provides a more precise account of the behaviour. Furthermore, in doing so, research should consider employing multiple-item scales that offer more reliable and valid measures of the behaviour rather than a number of global based items.

REFERENCES


Chapter 4

PREVALENCE RATES OF CYBERBULLYING FROM A CROSS-NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE: DEFINITIONAL AND METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES

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INTRODUCTION

Cross-cultural cyberbullying research, while extensive, is varied in relation to prevalence rates. Many reasons have been put forward regarding these issues, with the focus pointing towards definition of concepts and methodologies used. Society’s rapid technological development also causes problems, with earlier research focusing on mobile phones and Internet based behaviour independently. However, with the ability to access the Internet from smartphones, and the increasing uptake of smartphones by young people, it is now almost impossible to view these devices as separate entities (Genta et al., 2012). Smartphones are perceived among children and adolescents as “extensions” of their body (Mascheroni and Ólafsson, 2014), that can be easily kept in a pocket (Stald, 2008) and aids a feeling of permanent contact with friends and family. This chapter will explore the reasons behind the varying levels of cyberbullying, cross-nationally. This chapter begins by exploring with the variety of definitions used in the research, and then focuses on the various methodologies employed by researchers which are intertwined with the cultural context of the research.

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FACTORS INFLUENCING THE DEVELOPMENT OF A CYBERBULLYING DEFINITION

The act of bullying is multi-dimensional and can be categorised as: overt/covert, direct/indirect, physical/verbal, social/relational, and having psychological/physical impact. Experts in the area of cyberbullying tend to vary in their use of a standard definition, mainly as a result of previous research carried out, the cultural context in which the research is being conducted, and the aspect or component of cyberbullying being examined. Many researchers distinguish bullying from other aggressive behaviour due to deliberate intent to harm, power imbalance, and repeated behaviour (Olweus, 1993). One of the most widely used definitions of cyberbullying is Smith et al.,'s (2008) “… an aggressive intentional act carried out by a group or individual, using electronic forms of contact, repeatedly and over time against a victim who cannot easily defend him or herself” (p. 376), which is a direct modification of Olweus’ (1989) definition of traditional bullying. However, in addition to this definition is the emergence of new criteria essential for a definition of cyberbullying which include; anonymity, 24/7 or unlimited access, and exposure to large audience (Menesini and Nocentini, 2009; Slonje and Smith, 2008; Tokunaga, 2010), which are not entertained in the aforementioned definition. Further examination of the definition has led researchers (Corcoran, Mc Guckin, and Prentice, 2015) to suggest that cyberbullying itself is too narrow of a concept when applying the issue of bullying to the cyber world, and that the bullying behaviour that occurs in the online world is more suggestive of cyber-aggression. Adapting the definition of traditional bullying to encompass the myriad of behaviours associated with cyberbullying may not be the best fit or approach. There are several aspects of cyberbullying that are completely distinct to those of traditional bullying.

In an examination of concepts of repetition, power imbalance and intention to harm in the development of a definition of cyberbullying, there is a large variation with regards to how these are applicable to the traditional form of bullying. Researchers have found that they play a big role in the development of a definition of cyberbullying. Repetition is resolutely recognized as being a key criterion in cyberbullying (Patchin and Hinduja, 2006). It is an imperative principle to allow for distinction between a joke or jovial teasing and an intentional attack (Nocentini et al., 2010) and establishes systematic behaviour. The online world alters the understanding of repetition in relation to cyberbullying occurrences. The indefinite nature of cyberspace means that messages can be shared or forwarded to others, and photos can exist for an undetermined length of time (Slonje and Smith, 2008). Direct cyberbullying occurs when communications, whether by Instant Messaging (IM), text, multimedia messaging or e-mail is sent directly to the cyber-victim with the intention of having an immediate effect on them. This direct cyberbullying does not involve the use of public cyberspace, just private interaction. Within the direct cyberbullying context, repetition occurs as a consequence of several contacts, this would be more similar to the repetitious nature of traditional bullying. Whereas indirect cyberbullying, in the public arena can be established simply by its appearance in that forum (Brenner and Rehberg, 2009). In this sense, a single photo that is uploaded and shared or liked by others can gain a huge audience. In cyberbullying, some acts may occur just once, such as a photo or video being uploaded by the primary perpetrator and therefore may not fit into the concept of repetition. These acts may include outing, happy slapping, flaming, and sexting (Dooley, Pyzalski, and Cross, 2009;
Spears, Slee, Owens, and Johnson, 2009). However, repetition is evidenced due to the amount of times that the video/photo/text is viewed by different recipients or passed along by various bystanders, the term going viral is a concept we have become familiar with, as material moves easily across the world via the Internet (Smith et al., 2008; Vandebosch and Van Cleemput, 2008). Within this context, distasteful pictures and video clips are identified as particularly disturbing, due to the extent of the audience who view these contents and the subsequent psychological effect that these may pose to the targets (Gillespie, 2006; Smith et al., 2008). Traditional classifications would assign this repetition to the perpetrator but in the cyber context this is more multifaceted where the repetition can be attributed to either the primary perpetrator or the bystanders. Cyber-bystanders can strengthen the harassment by forwarding on the information (Smith et al., 2008). Furthermore, Grigg (2010) discusses a lack of transparency, in whether the accountability lies with the cyberbully or the bystanders when repetition occurs, in the form of repeated views of degrading material. Within the concept of cyberbullying, this is considered repetition but does this really fit the idea of repetition in the traditional sense? The role of repetition in the definition of cyberbullying is controversial, the complexity of the nature of repetition in cyberbullying in private and public forums adds to this controversy. Many researchers see it as an essential element within a definition of cyberbullying, while others feel that the element of repetition is not always present, and therefore irrelevant and hence not included in their definition. In addition to repetition, further controversial aspects in the development of a cyberbullying definition are the imbalance of power and anonymity.

The imbalance of power in cyberbullying exists due to the fact that a cyberbully can penetrate the home environment of a cyber-victim, accessing their private time 24/7 or indefinitely. Just as there are no limitations for the cyber-bully, there is little escape for the cyber-victim. While many would argue that the removal of the technology by the parents or withdrawal by the young person themselves will rectify this imbalance, it will only do so for a short time. Young peoples’ social and emotional development is intrinsically linked to social media. It is simply an extension of their socialisation. Social media is all encompassing and an absolute communicative necessity, in the eyes of young people. For most it would be difficult to imagine a life without it. Trying to separate the young person, from the technology, will never result in a long term solution to the problem. Within, the power imbalance aspect of cyberbullying, a cyber-bully obtains the upper hand and may make the cyber-victim feel helpless (Dooley et al., 2009). In an attempt to counter this helplessness, many try to protect themselves using technical interventions such as blocking, changing passwords or emails and usernames or deleting anonymous texts without reading them (Aricak et al, 2008; Smith et al, 2008). Moreover, the size of the potential cyber audience may cause an imbalance of power for the cyber-victim also, experiencing an inability to defend themselves. In cyberspace, a cyber-bully is presented with new incidents in which to exhibit their power over an apparent weaker victim. It has been suggested that varying degrees of technological skill may create a power differential between a cyber-bully and a victim in the digital world (Vandabosch and Cleemput, 2008). However, in a society where toddlers are now accessing tablets, to watch their favourite animated shows and to play games, this divide is not as prominent today as it was a few years ago. In fact, this technological prowess should be used in the prevention of cyberbullying, including savvy use of privacy settings to re-establish equilibrium in the online world for the target.
A further power discrepancy exists in relation to the existence of anonymity in the online world. It may be the anonymity that encourages a cyberbully to behave in this maladaptive way. The feelings of helplessness experienced by the cyber-victim may be increased as a result of not knowing the identity of those behind the cyberbullying (Vandabosch and Cleemput, 2008). It can be difficult to respond when the person causing the torment remains unknown, therefore the victim could be interpreted as the weaker party. Research has shown that 40%–50% of those who are victimized by cyberbullies know the identity of the perpetrator (Kowalski and Limber, 2007; Wolak, Mitchell, and Finkelhor, 2007), which indicates that many cyber-victims are unaware of the perpetrator’s identity. This leads to further psychological torment for the cyber-victim. The area of anonymity is a problematic one, some argue that the removal of anonymity online would affect one’s civil rights. However, in the online world, the effect of disinhibition combined with anonymity appears to alter people’s behaviour. An almost dual Bruce Banner/the Hulk personality existing, while operating face to face, individuals are temperate and polite, yet in the online world some individuals release a torrent of abuse on others. Whether it is famous people, online bloggers, or just ordinary people, few can escape the wrath of these individuals. While anonymity provides a safe hiding place for the perpetrator, it simultaneously disallows the target any protection. It could be argued that expression of one’s thoughts in social media should be accompanied by identifying facts, such as photos and location. This view would assert that if you are not afraid of sharing your views online, then you should not mind having the world being able to identify you. Individual governments’ intervention would motivate social networking companies to adhere to a non-anonymous online environment. It would be interesting to see the impact that this would have.

Two further aspects in the development of a definition of cyberbullying are the roles of intention and aggression. While mentioned in the definition by Smith et al., (2008) these concepts are omitted from some definitions. Intention and aggression are intrinsically linked within the area of bullying. The elements that build the definition of aggression are the same as bullying (Smith et al., 2002), where bullying, stalking and aggression are repeated forms of aggression (Dooley et al., 2009). Grigg (2010) emphasizes the need to consider different perspectives on cyber-based aggression in the development of a definition of cyberbullying. She defined “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” (p. 152). This argument, that there is a need to look at aggression more broadly, i highlighted by Corcoran et al., (2015). Bullying emerges as a subset of aggression due to the presence of repetition and power imbalance (Monks and Smith, 2006). Arguments for and against the inclusion of intention in a definition of bullying relate to the arguments advanced in the context of aggression (Baron, 1977; Geen, 2001; Guerin and Hennessy, 2002). Without its inclusion, joking, jovial teasing, and unintentional behaviours are depicted in an excessively wide-ranging meaning of bullying. In the same way, inadvertent online behaviours and behaviours such as good-natured cyber-teasing and cyber-joking, which do not involve the essentials of repetition, power imbalance, or intention to cause harm to someone, would be branded belligerent cyber acts.

An examination of definitions cross-culturally have been conducted in relation to the varying use of concepts within definitions (Menesini et al., 2012; Smith, 2012). It was Olweus (2012) who emphasised the importance of a definition for standardisation of prevalence rates cross-culturally and nationally (Palfrey, 2008). As a starting point in
research, a standardised definition could lead to more standardised methodologies and hence more transparent prevalence rates. In addition, a systematic literature review by Smith (2012) of 44 studies, focused on instruments developed for cyberbullying assessment and the definitions used in these studies. Smith (2012) reported that the majority of the definitions stress the fact that cyberbullying behaviour occurs through electronic devices/media (42 of the 44). Furthermore, 40 of the 44 definitions included the condition that the cyberbully must have the intention to harm.

Repetition of the behaviour occurred less, where only 25 of the 44 studies included it, and imbalance of power was presented in only 13 of the 44 definitions. Smith (2012) concluded that the developers of these instruments used the concept and definition for cyberbullying in different ways. Some examples of these varying concepts and definitions included Ybarra and Mitchell (2004) who used the concept of “online harassment,” which represented online behaviour that had the conscious intent to harm someone, yet only included intentionality, one of Olweus’ (1999) three criteria in the traditional bullying definition. Another example was the concept of cyberbullying as used by Raskauskas and Stoltz (2007), which included only intentionality and repetition. Conversely, Smith et al., (2008) presented the concept of cyberbullying with a definition that contained intentionality, repetition, and imbalance of power as outlined by Olweus’ principles. However, Corcoran et al., (2015) suggest that with the potential magnitude of audience accessing a content, a single cyberbullying incident could have a severe and ongoing detrimental consequence on the victimised person. Consequently, refining the definition as cyber-based aggression, could have serious implications for protecting mental health, as no longer would a young person have to tolerate several incidents of victimization before the behaviour could be accepted as cyberbullying. By eliminating the element of repetition from the conceptualisation of cyber aggression, it identifies the possibility for one single act to produce psychological harm to a targeted person.

However, the aspect of anonymity, the potential size of the audience and the limitless access to the victim, which are suggested characteristics specific to cyberbullying were not integrated into any of the 44 instruments’ definitions of cyberbullying (Smith, 2012). Furthermore, a cross-cultural study concerning five definitional criteria (intentionality, imbalance of power, repetition, anonymity, and publicity) for cyberbullying in six European countries (Menesini et al., 2012) revealed a first element categorized by imbalance of power and a second feature typified by intentionality and anonymity. Participants demonstrated a higher likelihood of identifying cyberbullying, if the episode was intentional and non-anonymous and a lower chance if the episode was non-intentional and anonymous. Thus, they emphasised the role of intention and anonymity as specific cyberbullying criterion. As a result of this finding, Menesini et al., (2012) suggested that cyberbullying should be studied under the more general definition of bullying, while simultaneously suggesting that the broad general definition can be challenging and disregards the specificity of cyberbullying. Of these 44 studies reported above, each study demonstrates a variation in the inclusion of the aforementioned elements of anonymity, intention, 24/7 exposure, and imbalance of power. The study by Mensini et al., (2012) also demonstrates the importance of these aspects. The omission of these elements can in itself lead to varying methodologies and may impact the prevalence rates reported by researchers cross-nationally.
OVERLAP OF CYBERBULLYING AND TRADITIONAL BULLYING

As the research on cyberbullying has developed, it has become evident that cyberbullying is no longer seen as completely separate to traditional bullying. Growing evidence from research has shown that rather than cyberbullying occurring in isolation to traditional bullying, there is in fact a degree of overlap (Olweus, 2012; Smith, Steffgen, and Sittichai, 2013). Research has indicated that cyberbullying is more common in European countries that have pre-existing high levels of traditional bullying, rather than in countries where the Internet is more established (Livingstone, Haddon, Gorzig, and Olafsson, 2010). This suggests that cyberbullying is another aspect of the traditional bullying rather than something completely separate to it (Hinduja and Patchin, 2012; O’Moore, 2012). It would appear that technological advancement is, in effect, providing another podium for bullies to target victims. However, perhaps this is not the whole picture. While some overlap of the behaviour exists, other aspects are distinct from traditional bullying and it is vital that these aspects are examined by the research community. The literature is replete with examples of overlap of traditional bullying and cyberbullying (Juvoven and Gross, 2008; Katzer,FETCHENHAUER and BELSCHAK, 2009; Slonje and Smith, 2008; Smith et al., 2008). Ybarra and Mitchell (2004a) found that many cyberbullies were also cyber-victims, and that almost half of the cyberbullies reported having been victims of traditional bullying. Research by Ybarra, Diner-West, and Leaf (2007) reported that 36% of children in a US sample simultaneously experienced traditional bullying and cyberbullying. Juvoven and Gross (2008) found that as many as 85% of children and teens who are cyber-victims were also victims at school. Traditional bullies were more than twice as likely to be both the targets and the perpetrators of cyberbullying, compared to those who do not engage in traditional bullying (Hinduja and Patchin, 2008), and victims of traditional bullying were 2.7 times as likely to be the victim of cyberbullying (Hinduja and Patchin, 2012). Canadian prevalence rates of students in grades 7-9 suggested that that one-third of those who cyberbullied were also traditionally bullied at school (Beran and Li, 2006). Kowalski, Giumetti, Schroeder, and Lattanner (2014) found that individuals can be targets in both the real world and online settings, and proposed that this offers “… support for the idea that cyberbullying can be considered an extension of traditional bullying” (p. 52). These rates suggest that cyberbullying and traditional bullying may be used in conjunction against the target. The perpetrator in one instance can be the victim in another circumstance and vice versa. Consequently, the importance of research cannot be underestimated when trying to analyse and resolve the behaviour of those involved in cyberbullying.

CROSS NATIONAL PREVALENCE RATES OF CYBERBULLYING

Regardless of the definitional concept and measurement approaches that have been utilised, a number of comprehensive studies have been conducted across the world in order to determine the prevalence rates of cyberbullying and determine the extent of the phenomenon. Explorations of the levels of cyberbullying have been conducted over the past few years and although the questionnaires used to assess cyberbullying differ, and this clearly impacts frequency rates (Rivers and Noret, 2010), the presence of cyberbullying in young people has
been observed. In Australia, early research revealed almost 10% of 2,027 12 year old pupils from Western Australia had been sent hurtful messages on the Internet during the past school term (Epstein, Waters, and Cross, 2006). More recent research in Australia found that 6% of students reported that they were cyberbullied (every few weeks or more often), whereas less than a quarter (23%) reported being exposed to cyberbullying behaviours once or more often in the previous term. Similar differences were observed for cyberbullying others, where 3% reported that they cyberbullied others (every few weeks or more often) and 18% reported that they engaged in cyberbullying behaviours at least once in the previous term (Cross et al., 2011). In Britain, Smith et al., (2008) reported that a total of 22% of the participants between the ages of 11 and 16 years had been cyberbullied, where 15.6% of participants reported that the victimisation occurred once or twice and 6.6% of these had been cyberbullied on a frequent basis. Li (2010) sampled participants from both China and Canada and revealed that 15% of Canadian participants were classified as cyberbullies compared with 7% from the Chinese sample. In Ireland, research with respondents aged 12-16 years found that 2.6% admitted to cyberbullying on at least one occasion, 6.3% had been cyber-victimized at least once, 4.3% admitted to cyberbullying others almost every day, and 5.5% reported being cyberbullied almost every week (Corcoran, Connolly, and O’Moore, 2012). Further research reported that around one in seven students (14%) reported being cyber-victimized at least once, 6.3% had been cyber-victimized at least once, 4.3% admitted to cyberbullying others almost every day, and 5.5% reported being cyberbullied almost every week (Corcoran, Connolly, and O’Moore, 2012). Further research reported that around one in seven students (14%) reported being cyber-bullied in the past couple of months. One in 11 (8.7%) reported that they had cyberbullied others (O’Moore and Minton, 2009). Additional European data from the EU Kids Online research of 25,000 9-16 year olds across 25 European countries revealed that cyberbullying rates were highest in the 15-16 age group at 8% compared with 3% for the 9-10 year olds (Livingstone et al., 2010). In the 13-16 year old group only, the girls were cyberbullied more (9%) than boys (6%). Further European research carried out by Net Children Go Mobile (Mascheroni and Olafsson, 2014) found that 12% experienced online bullying, an increase from previous studies carried out in member states.

In the US several studies have provided prevalence rates. Early research by Ybarra and Mitchell (2007), in a telephone survey of 1,498 Internet users (10–17 years old) found that 19% of the adolescents had been involved in cyberbullying either as cyber-bullies or cyber-victims in the previous year. In a further study of 3,767 middle-school students of grades 6 to 8, Kowalski and Limber (2007) found that 11% were cyber-victims, 7% were cyber-bullies/victims, and 4% were cyberbullies. The majority (78%) had no experience of any form of cyberbullying. In a summary of their extensive work on cyberbullying in the US, Hinduja and Patchin (Patchin and Hinduja 2006; Hinduja and Patchin, 2008, 2010, 2012) found that (on average), about 25% of the students who had been a part of these studies reported that they had been the victim of cyberbullying at some point in their life-time. The rates of cyberbullying others varied throughout the research. However, an average of 16% of the participants, admitted that they cyberbullied others at some point in their lifetime. Kowalski and Limber (2013), in a study of 918 individuals between the ages of 11 to 19 years, examined cyberbullying. Prevalence rates using the conventional criterion of two or three times a month or more, and the more copious criterion, of at least once in the previous 2 months revealed the following: 10% reported having been cyberbullied at least once in the past couple of months. Six per-cent stated that they had cyberbullied others within the last couple of months. Just over 5% reported that they had cyberbullied others and had been cyberbullied. The research above provides evidence of the existence of cyberbullying cross-nationally, with many countries reporting cyberbullying amongst young people. However, the
evidence does not support the notion of a rapid increase in prevalence rates as many media outlets have reported.

Much of the research regarding young people’s involvement in cyberbullying varies. Research suggests that prevalence rates are not increasing exponentially. The results for four consecutive years of the US sample of 440,000 participants (Kowalski and Limber, 2007-2010) revealed that whilst 4.5% were cyber-bullied, 2.8% cyberbullied others. Norwegian data with prevalence figures from 41 schools, over a five-year period from 2006 to 2010, show a very similar pattern of results but at somewhat lower prevalence levels (Olweus, 2012). The average figure for being cyberbullied was 3.4% and for cyberbullying others was 1.4%. In addition, Jones, Mitchell, and Finkelhor (2013) collected data from students across the US in 2000, 2005, and 2010 and reported a modest but steady increase in cyberbullying between 2000 and 2010 (from 6% to 11%). However, variation was dependent on samples, definition, and measurements used. In a review of 35 papers that were published in peer-reviewed journals, Patchin and Hinduja (2012) found that, on average, 24% of students had been cyberbullied and 17% of students admitted to engaging in cyberbullying behaviours. A longitudinal study in Finland (based on the KiVa program) which involved 17,000 participants suggested that electronic bullying is actually quite rare. Indeed, Salmivalli, Sainio, and Hodges (2013) argued that based on rigid criteria which applied to both traditional and cyberbullying, the timeframe of taking place two or three times a month or more often, that bullying is rare, with only 2-3% of students reporting being cyber-victims. Now that the existence of cyberbullying cross-nationally has been established, it is important to investigate the methodologies employed in the cross-national research, which may contribute to the varying prevalence rates.

FACTORS INFLUENCING METHODOLOGIES OF CYBERBULLYING RESEARCH

One of the largest differences in the collection of prevalence rates of cyberbullying is the differing methodologies employed. As mentioned previously, the various definitions in use by researchers is one of the first issues that arises. Ybarra (2014) referred to inconsistencies regarding how the behaviour is ascertained and comprehended within studies. Variation occurs where a definition is provided within a questionnaire, when lists of behaviours are provided, or in some case neither of these is provided. Of 61 studies reviewed by Smith (2012), almost half of the instruments used to examine cyberbullying, did not actually use the concept cyberbullying. They ranged from internet harassment behaviour, to electronic bullying behaviour, to cyberbullying. The concept of cyberbullying was only included in 21 of the 44 instruments, and 24 of the 44 instruments included the concept cyber-victimization. This exemplifies that there is a variation of the concepts used in the instruments measuring cyberbullying. A similar finding emerged from another systematic literature review of cyberbullying instruments and measures carried out by Frisén et al., (2013). This review further established that almost half of the instruments used to measure cyberbullying did not use the concept of cyberbullying in the methodology, but actually measured associated constructs such as Internet harassment. Again, this demonstrates that researchers are not content with the definitions in existence and are looking to the behaviours evidenced or
experienced by victims of cyberbullying. Furthermore, the rapid advancement of technology also affects the methodologies of studies. In early research, texts and phone calls were seen as separate entities to the Internet/computer. Essentially a smart phone is a hand held computer, providing access to social media in an instant. However, this technological distinction has now been abandoned by many researchers, with focus adapted to concentrate more on the different types of behaviour such as: flaming, insulting, text messaging, using pictures and videos, exclusion, and misappropriation of personal information or passwords (Menesini, 2012). The methodologies employed in some cyberbullying research has been lagging behind the technological advancement. In earlier research, experts advised parents to keep the family computer in a family room, but within a few short years this advice is obsolete. Young people can access the Internet, wherever Wi-Fi exists, which in today’s society, is a great number of places. Young people arriving into a restaurant or café, even the cinema, automatically check for Wi-Fi access and actively search it out. In fact, the implication of technological prowess differing amongst young people is also practically obsolete. As long as research lags behind the developing technology, prevention techniques will also lag behind. Smith’s (2012) review reported that the technology assessed in the cyberbullying instruments varied considerably: a total of 34 devices/media were assessed in the instruments, with mobile phones (24 of the 44 instruments), and e-mail (21 of the 44) being included most. The majority of young people now communicate via social networking messaging and other social media apps over Wi-Fi rather than e-mail. The move from texts to email, and to social networking sites, the role of smartphones and tablet devices, alongside any newer technological developments will need to be examined more in further research, alongside the impact these differing technological devices will play on prevalence rates. Gaming is also an important factor today. Children and young people are playing online games with a variety of people, some known to them and others that are not. With cyberbullying occurring through this medium, little of the research is focusing on this aspect of social media interaction. Therefore, it is important to stay abreast of new types of devices/media when measuring cyberbullying experiences (Smith, 2012).

Further analytical difficulties in relation to prevalence rates of cyberbullying is the difference in the age ranges of the participants, with some studies examining those under the age of 10 years and others concentrating on adolescents (Tokunga, 2010). Unpredictable findings can result from the diverse range of age groups included within samples. For instance, Kowalski and Limber (2007) and Ybarra, Mitchell, Wolak, and Finkelhor (2006) demonstrated positive associations between age and frequency of victimization in their studies examining 11 to 14 year olds and 10 to 15 year olds, respectively. Slonje and Smith (2008), in contrast, uncovered an inverse relationship between age and victimization in their sample of 12 to 20 year olds. Similar negative trends are reported in other studies also (Dehue, Bolman, and Völlink, 2008). By contrast, in research carried out by Williams and Guerra (2007) of fifth, eighth, and eleventh graders, the results found that fifth graders experienced the least victimization, with a prevalence rate of 4.5%. Those who had been cyber-victimised the most of the three age groups, were the eighth graders (12.9%) and the high school students falling between these groups (9.9%). Some researchers have also employed cartoons to represent bullying and cyberbullying for younger ages (Joint Select Committee on Cyber-Safety, 2011). This also has repercussions for determining prevalence, as developmentally diverse age groups need distinct methodologies, in order for researchers to figure out their perceptions of the behaviour. Young children can amalgamate their experiences and this can cause difficulties in retrieving the information (Smith, Cowie,
Collectively, the data suggested that these diverse results may be credited to a curvilinear relationship between age and frequency of victimization (Juvoven and Gross, 2008; Katzer et al., 2009; Patchin and Hinduja, 2006; Smith et al., 2008; Wolak et al., 2007; Ybarra, 2004). It makes sense that different age groupings would reveal different results, therefore the research will need to compare within similar age groups to establish true prevalence rates rather than across a variety of age groups. The time reference period is a key issue in determining prevalence of cyberbullying, with some research including timeframes such as last month, last term, last year or ever at school (Monks et al., 2009). This judiciously impedes cross-study and cross-cultural evaluations. Solberg and Olweus (2003, p. 243) suggested that “… every couple of months is a reasonable “memory unit” for students to recall traditional bullying, but no consensus has been arrived at with regard to cyberbullying”. These cut-off points for the establishment of groups and sub-groups is vital to evaluating prevalence. In traditional bullying research Olweus (1999) queried bullying levels in relation to the “last couple of months” followed by a series of choices as to frequency, which included: not been bullied; only happened once or twice; two or three times per month; about once a week; several times a week. The cut-off point has usually been 2–3 times a month, as this indicates repetition and the bullying being ongoing over time (Olweus, 1999). In cyberbullying research, however, there appears to be a shift towards a lower cut-off point: it has happened once or twice (Frisén et al., 2013). A lower threshold for categorisation such as “once or twice” makes it more challenging to find significant and reliable models of results (Olweus, 2012). Such a strategy is also likely to end up with more chance findings leading to less consistency. This has consequences for establishing prevalence across studies. The longer the timeframe used, the greater the number of people who will have had the experience in question. Some studies have asked participants about any experience with cyberbullying, while others have focused on those who have experienced specific types of high-tech harm within the previous 30 days (Subella, Patchin, and Hinduja, 2013). Other studies restricted the time frame in which the cyberbullying could have occurred (Dehue et al., 2008; Williams and Guerra, 2007; Wolak et al., 2007; Ybarra and Mitchell, 2004, 2008), naturally diminishing the prevalence rates of victimization.

Another issue is the varying methodologies used in data collection, with national random telephone surveys, online random surveys, online self-selected surveys or offline convenience samples having all been used. Methodologically, self-report instruments with close-ended questions used in the research of traditional bullying have influenced the design of instruments measuring cyberbullying (Tokunaga, 2010). Self-report questionnaires have advantages for researchers, due to their ability to gather large amounts of data in a relatively short time frame. They are quick and easy to administer and acquire the respondents’ views directly. Furthermore, it is a good way to measure the respondents’ perception of the construct measured (Streiner and Norman, 2008). However, precise self-report data are challenging to achieve, as there is frequently an inclination for young people to under-report deviant behaviour or to reply in socially desirable manners. In Smith’s (2012) methodological review of 44 studies of cyberbullying, 41 used self-reported questionnaires. Additionally, two out of the 44 studies contained data from both focus groups and self-report questionnaires (Smith et al., 2008; Wright, Burnham, Inman, and Ogorchock, 2009). In relation to reliability and validity of self-report questionnaires used, only 18 out of the 44 studies reported the instruments reliability, these only reported on internal reliability/consistencies. The review also found little evidence of test validity. Convergent validity data was reported in only 24 out
of the 44 instruments. Future research on cyberbullying must emphasise the development of valid instruments which allow researchers to consistently measure the same phenomenon. Some questionnaires used are discussed below.

Instruments involved in gathering rates of cyberbullying vary tremendously cross-culturally, with several researchers designing their own specific instruments. One of the most widely used instruments is the Revised Olweus Bullying Questionnaire (Olweus, 1996), which provides participants with a detailed definition of bullying and 39 key questions. Since 2005, a question about cyberbullying with two sub-questions about mobile phone or Internet has been added. Several empirical and conceptual analyses have verified the functionality, construct, and concurrent validity of the two global questions (Olweus, 2010; Solberg and Olweus, 2003) and a scale of bullying others using item response theory analyses (Breivik and Olweus, 2012). This examines cyberbullying within the context of traditional bullying, as does the Smith et al., (2008) Cyberbullying Questionnaire, and the Slonje and Smith (2008) Cyberbullying Questionnaire. This method of data collection is promoted by Olweus (2012) who suggested that the high prevalence rates of some research may be due to the fact that data collection occurred in isolation to traditional bullying research. However, others have examined cyberbullying as a stand-alone issue. Some of these included The Cyberbullying Questionnaire (Calvete, Orue, Estévez, Villardón, and Padilla, 2010), The Revised Cyberbullying Inventory (Erdur-Baker, 2010), Cyberbullying Student Survey (Li, 2010), Cyberbullying Scale (Menesini, Nocentini, and Calussi, 2011), and Cyberbullying and Online Aggression Survey Instrument (Patchin and Hinduja, 2006). Menesini (2012) proposed that cyberbullying can be deciphered as a uni-dimensional measure, where items fall on a spectrum of aggressive acts (Menesini et al., 2011) and hence, in contrast to Olweus’ (2012) suggestion that cyberbullying should not be examined in isolation to traditional bullying. Furthermore, extrication of prevalence of traditional bullying from cyberbullying is also challenging, due to the positive correlations which have been found between traditional and cyberbullying, in terms of bullying and being bullied (Sourander, Klomek, and Helenius, 2010). Cyberbullying incidence is often examined in the form of one or two item measures, which are based on yes/no responses (Ybarra, 2012). Numerous difficulties materialise concerning this type of methodology. First, cyberbullying is a complex construct, which makes a yes/no response difficult to decipher. Researchers are relying on a child’s ability to understand multifactorial definitions and their ability to respond to the one or two item measure regarding those multifactorial elements (Tokunga, 2010). Secondly, issues of reliability are evident with the use of the one or two item measures, as single items are often less reliable than multiple-item instruments (Smith, 2012). Single items have been found to have greater chance of random error, and response biases such as social desirability, whereas increasing the number of items in a measure has the effect of increasing the reliability of that measure (Murphy and Davidshofer, 2005). Thirdly, single items can only differentiate moderate to large differences (Griezel, Craven, Yeung, and Finger, 2008) but lack scope and the ability to expose detail (Farrington, 1993; Smith, Schneider, Smith, and Ananiadou, 2004).

The true prevalence rates of cyberbullying have been disputed by many researchers (Hinduja and Patchin, 2012; Olweus, 2012; Smith 2012). Media reports have highlighted the problem of cyberbullying but empirically based evidence is essential to analyse the success or failure of intervention programs. There appears to be important national or cultural differences evident in cyberbullying (Li, Cross, and Smith, 2011). Many factors discussed
above play a role in the differing rates, including the educational systems, local and national anti-bullying and cyberbullying policies, the nature of the society, and the emergence of new technologies (Smith, 2012). The differences that exist between cultures is an important aspect of the variation, however, the lack of consistency between instruments is dramatic. This in itself will continue to result in large differences. It is perhaps a variation that we have to accept. However, when variation continues to occur across national surveys, then the instruments in use in these studies may need to be considered seriously. However, there exists agreement amongst researchers regarding the negative effects of being cyberbullied (Smith et al., 2008). Early research by Beran and Li (2005) found the following psycho-social outcomes of being the victim of cyberbullying. The cyber-victims reported anger, anxiety and feeling sad, but the cyber-victims also reported that they found it difficult to concentrate in school, affecting both their learning ability and their consequential success at school. In addition, Hinduja and Patchin (2009) in a study of almost 2000 middle school students in the US also found that the cyber-victims reported similar effects of anger, and sadness, but also being frustrated and even scared following a cyberbullying episode. In addition, this research revealed that the self-esteem of both the cyberbullies and cyber-victims was lower than their counterparts who were not involved in bullying. These psycho-social consequences can also be accompanied by mental health issues, where Ybarra (2004) reported a link between cyber-victimisation and depressive symptoms. A similar finding was also reported by Kessel Schneider, O'Donnell, Stueve, and Coulter (2012) who highlighted the connection between victimisation and psychological stress. Their research found that one-third of students who were cyberbullied in the past 12 months reported symptoms of depression, a figure which rose to nearly one-half for those who experienced both cyber- and traditional bullying.

**CONCLUSION**

Alongside the outcomes for those involved in cyberbullying, the research on prevalence of traditional bullying is of great importance. Much of the research into cyberbullying has been conducted by psychologists, but both sociologists and lawyers can play a big role in the understanding of cyberbullying consequences, such as the sociological perspective of the bystander in cyberbullying and the legal implications of cyberbullying others. Smith (2012) stated that developmentally, cyberbullying may demonstrate more penetrability than traditional bullying as it takes place in cyberspace. Therefore, developmental changes in cyberbullying may be less confused by situational changes than for traditional bullying. Despite media coverage of tragic cyberbullying cases, the research community finds evidence that traditional bullying occurs at a far greater level than cyberbullying (Hinduja and Patchin, 2012; Smith, 2012). The exposure of cyberbullying in the media has brought greater knowledge of this phenomenon to students, parents, and educators, with the knowledge of intervention techniques spreading, as a result of the awareness linked to cyberbullying (Smith, 2012). Researchers need to pay attention to the rapidly developing technology and its impact on cyberbullying prevalence levels. Bearing this in mind, intervention programmes must be designed to deal with both traditional bullying and cyberbullying and not an over emphasis on one aspect over the other. Much cyberbullying research focuses on the prevalence rates, but rarely is the duration of the victimization examined (Aricak et al., 2008). Additionally,
acquiring information about the average length of time between each cyberbullying encounter could provide a greater understanding of cyberbullying and its effects (Tokunga, 2010). The aim of future research on cyberbullying needs to focus on the development of a reliable and valid measure of the cyberbullying construct. Valid and reliable measures improve the overall quality of research; the value of an effective scale, depends on the transparency and intensity of the theoretical definition from which it originates. In the case of cyberbullying research, measures are unable to thrive in the dearth of a unanimously-agreed definition (Tokunga, 2010). Further consideration will need to examine the differences in educational systems, local and national anti-bullying policies and the nature of the society. One final last point regarding the prevalence rates of cyberbullying, is that while there does not appear to be an exponential increase in cyberbullying cross-nationally, we are also not finding much evidence of decreasing levels of cyberbullying either. This in itself is of great concern and emphasises the need to delve further into the world of cyberbullying in order to reduce these prevalence rates.

REFERENCES


Prevalence Rates of Cyberbullying from a Cross-National Perspective


Chapter 5

CYBERBULLYING AMONG CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS: A QUANTITATIVE AND A QUALITATIVE APPROACH TO GENDER DIFFERENCES

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INTRODUCTION

In the last decade, researchers who study bullying behaviours have shown increased interest in cyberspace since the Internet may be a fertile ground for cyberbullying (Juvonen and Gross, 2008). One definition of cyberbullying states that it includes “... any behavior performed through electronic or digital media by individuals or groups that repeatedly communicates hostile or aggressive messages intended to inflict harm or discomfort on others” (Tokunaga, 2010, p. 278). Like traditional bullying, cyberbullying is an aggressive act between peers, characterised by (i) imbalance of power (provided by perpetrators’ anonymity or different grades of technological expertise), (ii) negative intentions and (iii) repetition. Among the growing number of studies conducted, those that sought to learn about the personal and social factors that make youths more vulnerable to suffering or perpetrating cyberbullying stand out. The main interest in analysing these factors lies in knowing in detail the characteristics associated with such aggression and, thus, improving the efforts made to prevent and intervene in it when it occurs. Among the examined factors, gender is present in most of these studies. Indeed, most research that works on such problems has analysed gender differences, even when this was not their main objective.

Consequently, this chapter examines the role of gender in cyberbullying incidents carried out by children and adolescents, by reviewing international research which has linked cyberbullying with gender studies. To this end, we first briefly review the concept of gender

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and the predominating theories that have analysed how learning the traits, roles and preferences associated with the male and female social categories comes about, which may contribute differences in the involvement of males and females in cyberbullying. Second, we review the research that has explored gender differences for cyberbullying involvement, and we also examine cyberbullying that addresses members of the same or the opposite sex. Finally, we analyse how cyberbullying can be a form of aggression in dating relationships, and also a way to retaliate after a romantic relationship ends. Throughout this chapter we accompany theory with a description of studies conducted in different countries, and to present new quantitative and qualitative data to illustrate the role that gender plays in cyberbullying.

**Gender as a Cultural Construct and Its Relationship with Aggressive Behaviours**

In order to know the extent of the relationship between gender and aggressive behaviour, like cyberbullying, first it is important to delimit what we refer to when we talk about gender. The first thing we must consider is that gender is a social category (males and females) which people can distinguish from a very early age, and is not just a product of our biology. Consequently, we use this relevant information to structure our social world. Gender includes stereotypical beliefs about personality traits (e.g., males are meant to be independent, tough and assertive, and females are emotional, sensitive and people-oriented), roles (e.g., males as a defender of the family and companions; females as nurturers and caregivers), and preferences (e.g., males show more interest in watching sports, and females in shopping). In other words, when we talk about gender, we refer to a collective imaginary which, despite being different between cultures, defines what is masculine and feminine, and indicates how males and females must behave (Eagly and Wood, 1999; Matud, 2004).

Gender studies have attempted to understand how individuals acquire these preferences, behaviours, interests, skills, and even personality traits, which are more typical of their own sex. The gender-typing process is the name given to the acquisition of these features, and the two most relevant theories that analyse such processes are the Social Learning Theory (Bandura and Bussey, 2004; Bussey and Bandura, 1999) and the Self-Socialisation Theories (Halim, Ruble, Tamis-LeMonda, and Shrout, 2013; Martin and Ruble, 2010).

According to Social-Learning Theories (Bussey and Bandura, 1999), acquiring gender schemata takes place through direct socialisation in which various agents (e.g., parents, teachers, peers) provide rewards or punishments that reinforce gender-appropriate conduct, but also through observing relevant or powerful models similar to young people, either at home or at school, in the peer group or via the media (Bandura and Bussey, 2004). From this theory, the interest is in the social-interactive processes where gender is recreated and learnt.

The Self-Socialisation Theories of gender development argue that both genders actively seek gender-related information which serves as a guide for their own conduct, and contributes to their own socialisation (Halim et al., 2013). During this process, children are active as they seek information that may, or may not, be congruent with gender stereotypes depending on the individual, the social context, and on other conditions that make gender a salient variable, such as peer pressure (Halim et al., 2014).
Both gender learning explanatory models underline the importance of two socially
distinct groups existing (males and females) surrounded by a series of traits, roles and
stereotyped conduct, that may influence the way we act in personal relationships and how we
construct reality. The time has come to consider to what point we identify ourselves with the
masculine and the feminine group, and to also wonder about how learning typified conduct
per gender influences our aggressive behaviour, and specifically cyberbullying.

In line with the arguments put forward to date, research has proposed that differences in
aggressive conduct can be influenced, to a point, by gender socialisation, but specifically by
learning instrumental (masculine) or expressive (feminine) traits. According to these traits,
men must be assertive, aggressive, brave and independent, whereas women must be sensitive,
emotional, friendly and caring in relations. So it seems that gender socialisation indicates that
for males, aggression is useful for maintaining their gender role, while aggression for females
should be inhibited, or females should employ more indirect forms because they would better
stereotypically match the feminine role (Underwood, Galen, and Paquette, 2001). Other
researchers point out the possibility that the different implications of males and females in
aggressive and antisocial conduct relates to gender differences in cognitive abilities according
to differential socialisation. For example, research acknowledges that females acquire social
 cognitive skills much earlier in life than males and may, consequently, have superior skills
(Bennett, Farrington, and Huesman, 2005). These cognitive abilities might result from
placing, in socialisation, greater emphasis on empathy, social reasoning, perspective taking
and social problem solving, which can protect from behavioural difficulties and antisocial
attitudes (Bennett et al., 2005).

An established risk factor for suffering aggression is gender. Specifically, females are at
greater risk of experiencing violence as a result of reproduced cultural hierarchies of power
related with gender socialisations, where men occupy a better position in society than women.
From this perspective, girls are inherently more at risk of being victimized because of their
disadvantaged position in society. For example, Navarro and Jasinski (2013) argue that girls
may be subject to higher rates of cyberbullying victimization because of their already
disadvantaged position on the Internet.

THE ROLE OF GENDER IN CYBERBULLYING AMONG CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

Most research done on cyberbullying has focused on analysing the prevalence, correlates
and antecedents of these online behaviors in youths by attending primary and secondary
schools (Wingate, Minney, and Guadagno, 2013). Regarding gender, research into gender
differences in cyberbullying took the results found in traditional bullying as a starting point.
In this section, we review gender differences in traditional bullying and examine international
research on gender differences in cyberbullying. We also offer new data from the studies we
have conducted in Spain about overall gender differences in cyberbullying, differences in
specific forms of cyberbullying, and the perceptions of pre-adolescents and adolescents about
cyberbullying as a gender-typed behaviour.
Gender-Based Differences in Cyberbullying

Traditional bullying includes forms of physical, verbal and relational aggression. Relational aggression strategies refer to a kind of social manipulation in which the perpetrator uses a peer group to attack a victim and encompasses behaviours where damage to relationships is used as a means to hurt others (Crick and Grot彼得, 1995). According to Artz, Nicholson, and Magnuson (2008), relational aggression has been applied to face-to-face behaviours like actions such as keeping someone out of a group, saying you will not be friends with someone, ignoring a person, telling rumours or lies about someone you are mad at, threatening to end a friendship or no longer talking to someone. Relational aggression also includes covert behaviours like indirectly excluding or socially manipulating a person by using another’s relationship with that person as the vehicle for harm.

For a long time, research has tended to show that males generally employ more verbal and physical bullying than females, who tend to resort to more relational forms. Several reasons have been pointed out to explain gender differences reported in the past literature, among which: (i) females use indirect forms of aggression because they learn that adults frown on direct forms of aggression (Björkqvist, Lagerspetz, and Kaukianien, 1992). Simmons (2002) shares this opinion when he talks about the influence of gender socialisation and how females emphasize more emotions and interpersonal events, which inhibit direct aggressive conduct; (ii) the social structure that groups of females adopt is smaller and more intimate compared to males. This fact implies that indirect aggression is more effective (Björkqvist, Österman, and Kaukianen, 2000) and; (iii) the social intelligence of girls aged 9-11 years is more advanced, which relates with a better use of manipulation strategies in interpersonal relations (Bennet et al., 2005). Indeed, research has pointed out that females get involved in such conduct because they are better at hurting for something that their own gender values more: friendship (Huntley and Owens, 2013, Jennifer, 2013).

However, a recent meta-analysis has shown that males are more involved than females in any form of conventional bullying, and in bullying roles as victims or bully-victims (Cook, Williams, Guerra, Kim, and Sadek, 2010). Furthermore, several studies reveal that, despite previous evidence, no gender differences exist when using relational strategies (Archer, 2004; Card, Stucky, Sawalani, and Little, 2008; Toldos, 2005). All of these studies conclude that males and females do not differ significantly in their use of relational aggression in pre-adolescence and adolescence. Males employ any form of aggression to a greater extent than females. More recent studies have even shown that males have exceeded females in using relational aggression (Artz, Kassis, and Moldenhauer, 2013). These results should help to refute the characterisation classically made of females as being more manipulative and resorting more to spreading rumours, which has made such aggression inherent to the female nature (Horn, 2004).

Therefore, it is not possible to simplify such a complex phenomenon like bullying, in which we need to consider the existence of individual variability, and also the influence that the social context has on our conduct. People mostly use various types of aggression depending on surrounding demands. From this perspective, aggression provides a series of tactics that function for different social objectives. Although the willingness of each person to act aggressively differs, its incidence must be seen in the social context where people interact (Underwood, 2003).
Despite empirical evidence providing contradictory results, the generalised belief that females use more relational aggression forms, as part of conventional bullying, than males apparently still persists (Kowalski, Giumetti, Schroeder, and Lattanner, 2014). This belief, along with cyberbullying described as a type of psychological and emotional abuse performed by means of diffusing information over the Internet where the aggressor remains anonymous (Beran and Li, 2008), has led to research on such relational aggression starting from the premise that it is a form of bullying employed more by females (Dooley, Pyżalski, and Cross, 2009; Tokunaga, 2010). However, empirical evidence has not always backed this premise. In fact, far from providing a clear gender pattern of involvement as perpetrators or victims, research has provided mixed results.

The next section will present, along with a review of international research, some new data obtained with Spanish pre-adolescents, which will enable us to analyse the role of gender in cyberbullying.

**Overall Gender-Based Differences in Cyberbullying**

In Spain, as in other countries, studying the prevalence of cyberbullying according to participants’ gender has produced mixed results (Buelga, Cava, and Musitu, 2010; Éstevez, Villardón, Calvete, Padilla, and Orue, 2011). The majority of studies have focused more on analysing gender differences in secondary education students rather than in primary education pupils. In order to verify if there are gender differences in pre-adolescents’ involvement in cyberbullying, we analysed gender differences in a sample of Spanish students, where we took gender to be a self-assignment of one category (male – female) or another (Navarro, Larrañaga, and Yubero, 2016). The participants were 445 school pupils who were in grades 5 and 6, who we sampled randomly from four primary schools. These schools were located in a city of central Spain, with an approximate population of 60,000 people. Participants included 208 girls (M(age): 10.78, SD=0.74) and 237 boys (M(age)=10.78, SD=0.68). All of the children studying grades 5 and 6 were eligible to participate in the study. We recruited the children whose parents agreed they could participate, and obtained complete data from 445 of the 500 questionnaires distributed. We measured cyberbullying victimization (CBQ-V, Estévez et al., 2011) and cyberbullying perpetration (CBQ; Calvete, Orue, Estévez, Villardón, and Padilla, 2010). The data was collected at the end of the 2013/2014 academic year.

Participants were categorised as victims or bullies by following a highly restrictive criterion. We classified those students as victims who indicated experiencing, but not perpetrating, at least one of the behaviours included in the questionnaire several times a week. We classified those students as bullies who reported perpetrating, but not experiencing, at least one of the behaviours several times a week. We considered the remaining students as not being involved in bullying. This procedure resulted in 52 (11.6%) children categorised as cybervictims and 37 (8.3%) as cyberbullies. Table 1 shows the distribution of cyberbullying involvement according to gender.
Table 1. Distribution of males and females among cybervictimization experiences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Non victims</th>
<th>Victims</th>
<th>Non perpetrators</th>
<th>Perpetrators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Females</strong></td>
<td>187 (89.9%)</td>
<td>21 (10.1%)</td>
<td>199 (95.7%)</td>
<td>9 (4.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Males</strong></td>
<td>206 (86.9%)</td>
<td>31 (13.1%)</td>
<td>209 (88.9%)</td>
<td>28 (11.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>393</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>408</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chi square analyses were conducted to examine if there were any statistically significant differences among study variables. Significant differences were found, with more males than females reporting that they were frequent perpetrators ($\chi^2$ (df 1) = 8.14; p < .005). Also, no gender differences were uncovered in relation to the victim role ($\chi^2$ (df 1) = 0.95; p = 0.376).

Here we wish to stress to readers the fact that, by assuming that this difference exists as regards the perpetrator’s role, by following the Social-Cognitive Theory (Bussey and Bandura, 1999), we argue that this difference might be due to a distinct gender socialisation, as females develop more empathic capacities and get less involved in antisocial behaviour (Bennet et al., 2005). In parallel, cyberbullying as an aggressive conduct can be useful for maintaining the masculine gender role. That is to say, males can display adherence to certain traits linked to the classic masculine identity, like aggression, power, or arrogance. Nevertheless, it is difficult to corroborate these conclusions because we have not specifically analysed these variables. Thus, we should study the influence of gender on cyberbullying by ascertaining the factors relating to the social and cultural expectations of gender, which lead males to become more involved as perpetrators (see Navarro, 2016).

We can add our results to several trends in international research (see Navarro, 2016 for more details of studies that analyse gender differences in cyberbullying). Generally speaking, some researchers have found that males are more aggressive than females, but females are more victimized than males (e.g., Ayas, 2014; Barlett and Coyne, 2014; Låftan, Modin, and Östberg, 2013). Other studies have reported that males act more as perpetrators, but with no significant differences in victimization (Smith, Thompson, and Bhatti, 2012). Other studies have found that females act more as perpetrators and victims than males (Mark and Ratcliffe, 2011), or more males are the perpetrators and victims (Fanti, Demetrious, and Hawa, 2012). Some studies have found no gender differences in either perpetrators or victims (Griezel et al., 2012; Hinduja and Patchin, 2008). Overall, the literature on gender differences in cyberbullying indicates that more research needs to be conducted before drawing conclusions.

**Gender-Based Differences in Specific Types of Cyberbullying**

As overall gender differences are lacking, authors like Underwood and Rosen (2010) express the need to analyse gender differences in the specific forms of cyberbullying employed by one gender and the other. Several authors have performed this task to find some gender differences in the forms of cyberbullying employed or received. Nonetheless, the results are sometimes mixed and comparing studies is a complicated issue because they have used several different measurement instruments, and not all studies have analysed the roles of perpetrators and victims. Some of these studies have examined gender differences in the form of cyberbullying practiced with cell phones (e.g., text messaging, phone calls) or over the Internet (e.g., e-mail, IM applications). This group of studies includes the work of Kapatzia.
and Syngollitou (2007), conducted in Greece, which found that males were more involved as perpetrators using cell phones, while females were more implicated in cyberbullying over the Internet. A study by Smith et al. (2012) in England, revealed that males get more involved as bullying perpetrators both on the cell phone and over the Internet than females. They failed to find differences in the role of victims. Also in England, Monks, Robinson, and Worlidge (2012) found that girls were more likely to use email and instant messaging to cyberbully, while boys were more likely to use text messaging. In Belgium, Vanden Abeele and De Cock (2013) discovered that females were more likely to engage in indirect cell phone bullying (e.g., gossiping) than their male counterparts. However, they found no gender differences between males and females in direct cell phone bullying (e.g., using a phone call to insult someone).

Another set of studies analyzed gender differences in specific cyberbullying practices. In Belgium, Vandebosch and Van Cleemput (2009) reported that males were significantly more likely to admit their participation in several types of cyberbullying, like making threats or insults and spreading rumors by e-mail and/or phone. In Spain, Calvete et al. (2010) observed that boys were significantly more likely to record and send images of physical aggression, record humiliating images of a classmate, and send images of a sexual nature of classmates. In the US, Kowalski and Limber (2013) found that particular types of cyberbullying (e.g., video gaming) were more likely to affect males than females. Also in the US, Connell, Schell-Busey, Pearce, and Negro (2014) reported that females were considerably more likely than males to report engagement in, and victimization by, every mode of cyberbullying examined. In New Zealand, Fenaughty and Harré (2013) indicated significant gender differences between the Internet (e.g., use of social networks, IM applications to cyberbully) and cell phone harassment (e.g., use phone calls or texting to cyberbully). Males were significantly more likely to report being more victimized receiving scary or disgusting images, or having mean or embarrassing images of themselves sent to others. Female participants were more likely to report victimization involving mean, nasty or hurtful comments.

After considering the studies reviewed, we analysed gender differences in specific forms of cyberbullying between victims and perpetrators in the aforementioned sample. In our case, as shown in Table 2, we found gender differences only in two cyberbullying practices with male participants, who reported that they were more likely to send threatening or insulting messages by cell phone, and being victims of recording a video or taking pictures by cell phone when someone hits or hurts them, compared to their female counterparts.

The results obtained in international research and the data provided herein do not allow us to conclude that a clear gender difference exists in the various forms that cyberbullying takes. However, they allow us to draw some conclusions. First of all, whereas in traditional bullying males are more victims and perpetrators compared with females, in cyberbullying a clear difference between males and females is missing. This result indicates that more females are victims of cyberbullying than conventional bullying, as indicated by previous research (Kowalski, Morgan, and Limber, 2012). Second, more males apparently tend to exercise and suffer the form of cyberbullying that employs humiliating images or contains physical aggression than females. Males also tend to send more sexual or pornographic images, which is a form of cyberbullying to which females are more exposed, according to previous studies (Cassidy, Brown, and Jackson, 2012). These new forms of sexual and gender harassment require more research effort, which could be essential to understanding the role that gender plays in cyberbullying. Next, we analyse such aggression types in more detail.
Table 2. Prevalence and type of cyberbullying experiences per gender (n=445)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of cyberbullying</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Females</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t(1, 443)</th>
<th>d</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Receiving or sending threatening or insulting messages by e-mail</td>
<td>Victim</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>0.389</td>
<td>-0.954</td>
<td>-0.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Perpetrator</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>1.14</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>-1.876*</td>
<td>-0.17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receiving or sending threatening or insulting messages by cell phone</td>
<td>Victim</td>
<td>1.29</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>1.078</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Perpetrator</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>-1.876*</td>
<td>-0.17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posting on the Internet or sending humiliating images</td>
<td>Victim</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.209</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Perpetrator</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>-1.226</td>
<td>-0.13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing embarrassing jokes, rumors, gossip, or comments on the Internet</td>
<td>Victim</td>
<td>1.26</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>-0.803</td>
<td>-0.08</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Perpetrator</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>1.27</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>-1.374</td>
<td>-0.13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hacking to send messages by e-mail or social networks</td>
<td>Victim</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>1.14</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>0.690</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Perpetrator</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>-1.045</td>
<td>-0.08</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recording a video or taking pictures of humiliating situations by cell phone</td>
<td>Victim</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>-0.356</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Perpetrator</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>-1.650</td>
<td>-0.15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recording a video or taking pictures by cell phone while hitting or hurting someone</td>
<td>Victim</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>-2.138*</td>
<td>-0.21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Perpetrator</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>-1.074</td>
<td>-0.13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broadcasting online secrets, compromising information or images</td>
<td>Victim</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>1.370</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Perpetrator</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>-0.613</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deliberately excluding from an online group</td>
<td>Victim</td>
<td>1.51</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>1.38</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>1.436</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Perpetrator</td>
<td>1.36</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>1.28</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>-0.977</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repeatedly receiving or sending messages with threats, are intimidating by Skype, Facebook, etc.</td>
<td>Victim</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>0.206</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Perpetrator</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>-1.025</td>
<td>-0.09</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<.05.

Same-Sex and Cross-Sex Cyberbullying

One of the least explored aspects of cyberbullying is gender differences when it addresses peers of the same sex, or the opposite sex. Accordingly, research into traditional bullying has reported that bullying between pre-adolescents and adolescents occurs mainly among members of the same sex, with aggression that affects members of the opposite sex obtaining very low prevalence rates (Wei and Jonson-Reid, 2011). However, when bullying addresses members of the opposite sex, there is data which indicates that females use more physical aggression against males (when we compare what males do to females). On the contrary, males employ more forms of verbal and social aggression when they address bullying to females (Navarro, Yubero, Larrañaga, and Macorison, 2012; Russell and Owens, 1999).

As far as we know, studying these gender differences in cyberbullying has not been the object of systematic analyses. The characteristics of cyberspace (e.g., the possibility that perpetrators remain anonymous) make their analysis difficult because it is possible that the victim is unaware of the perpetrator’s gender. Nevertheless, previous research has indicated that the majority of cyberbullying occurs in groups of friends (Jackson, Cassidy, and Brown,
and, in many other cases, cyberbullying is a reaction to an incident that has taken place at school (Cassidy, Jackson, and Brown, 2009), so perpetrators and victims of cyberbullying can know each other. Perpetrators in cyberbullying can also inform researchers about their victims’ gender, but we know that the answer to this question is conditioned by the social desirability and sincerity of those who participate in a study of this kind.

If we take the results found in traditional bullying as a starting point, we might expect cyberbullying among people of the opposite sex to be less usual than among people of the same sex. Of the very few studies that have analysed these differences, Fenaughty and Harré’s (2013) research in New Zealand (pupils aged 12-19 years) explored electronic harassment on the Internet and cell phones. These authors found that, as expected, males were significantly more likely to being victimised by other males over the phone and the Internet, whereas females were more to likely receive harassment by females in the two examined forms.

Nonetheless, when we consider previous results relating to traditional bullying, and the fact that one description of cyberbullying is that it is a new form of relational and social bullying (Beran and Li, 2008), the percentage of males who resort to cyberbullying against females is possibly higher than that of females who use it against males. To verify this premise, in one of the studies conducted in Spain (Navarro, Ruiz-Oliva, Larrañaga, and Yubero, 2015), we asked the participants to indicate not only if they had been victims or perpetrators of cyberbullying, but also the gender of their perpetrators or victims. The study sample included 1,058 children (516 females and 542 males, mean age = 11.08, SD = 0.80). Of these, 495 students (46.8%) were in year 5 and 563 were in year 6. Table 3 provides the data of those who indicated that they were victims of cyberbullying - in accordance with the gender of their perpetrators. We can see that most victims did not know their perpetrator’s gender. No significant differences were found between males and females for those participants who knew their perpetrator’s gender ($\chi^2$ (d.f.:1) = 7.04, $p = 0.70$). Yet the data indicate that cyberbullying was perpetrated mainly by people of the same sex as the victim, and the number of participants who reported having suffered cyberbullying started by males and females is striking. It is feasible that this last result relates to the fact that while one person starts cyberbullying, others can help spread it over the Internet, or even participate in it, because it becomes a public event to which they can access (Smith, 2012).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants’ gender</th>
<th>Non victims</th>
<th>Victims who did not know their perpetrator’s gender</th>
<th>Victims of males</th>
<th>Victims of females</th>
<th>Victims of males and females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>457 (88.6%)</td>
<td>35 (6.8%)</td>
<td>3 (0.6%)</td>
<td>9 (1.7%)</td>
<td>12 (2.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>480 (88.6%)</td>
<td>37 (6.8%)</td>
<td>8 (1.5%)</td>
<td>2 (0.4%)</td>
<td>15 (2.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>937</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All of the perpetrators informed that they knew the gender of the person to whom they directed cyberbullying (see Table 4). Cyberbullying addressed significantly more people of the same sex than of the opposite sex. Yet if we compare the cyberbullying that the males and
females indicated, more males reported getting involved in a form of cyberbullying that simultaneously addressed males and females ($\chi^2$ (d.f.:1) = 12.93; p < .005).

Table 4. Gender differences in perpetrators’ prevalence according to the gender of the target

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants’ gender</th>
<th>Non perpetrators</th>
<th>Perpetrator against males</th>
<th>Perpetrator against females</th>
<th>Perpetrator against males and females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>498 (96.5%)</td>
<td>1 (0.2%)</td>
<td>12 (2.3%)</td>
<td>5 (1.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>520 (95.9%)</td>
<td>8 (1.5%)</td>
<td>3 (0.6%)</td>
<td>11 (2.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,018</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In general terms, the data indicate that most forms of cyberbullying address peers of the same sex. Yet despite the prevalence found being low, the percentages obtained seem to indicate that female victimization by males is less frequent that male victimization by females. This result supports former research which has indicated that males employ more forms of indirect and relational aggression when harassing females (Russell and Owens, 1999). The anonymity that the Internet offers may contribute to higher rates of bullying directed to females. This fact can be explained by the fact that, in comparison to the “real world,” males in virtual settings are less exposed to social condemning of aggression against females and to the “masculine gentlemanliness” norms that should guide male behaviour (Yubero and Navarro, 2006). In any case, we must reinforce research on this aspect of cyberbullying in order to reach valid conclusions.

However, different studies have documented that aggression between genders exists, which relates to matters such as sexual relationships, and they also represent one gender having more power over the other (e.g., Dunne, Humphreys, and Leach, 2006; Leach and Humphreys, 2007). Thus, gender identity development plays a key role in the development of hostile and antisocial behavior in adolescence, which often come in the form of bullying. Duncan (1999) concludes that this form of aggression may be related with the initiation of heterosexual contacts and has a lot to do with social and school popularity because insults, in particular, go against adolescents’ socio-sexual behavior. In this way, when both genders approach the opposite sex, searching for a dating relationship, popularity, leadership or peer’s acceptance can favour the use of aggression. In line with this, Lahelma (2002) concluded that in the cases in which such behavior types shift toward intimidation, participants employ aggression as a form of social control to maintain hierarchical limits between genders, or to approach the opposite sex using conduct that can take the form of sexual harassment. So, if bullying takes the form of sexual harassment, research indicates that boys are more likely to be perpetrators, and girls are more likely to be victims (Duncan, 2004).

Therefore, sexual status and reputation are a central aspect of the social development of secondary education students. We believe that this dynamic is most important to understand the influence of gender socialisation, and to identify aggressive conduct that relates to certain “sexual hostility” among adolescents that can represent the threshold of other behaviours like homophobia or partner violence.

Despite former research showing that violent conduct can emerge in adolescence in romantic relationships (Díaz-Aguado and Martínez, 2014; Niolon et al., 2015), we have paid
very little attention to analysing cyberbullying in such relationships. Although many victims do not know their perpetrators, other studies have demonstrated many adolescents’ exposure to the cyberbullying that former friends, classmates, and even boy- and girlfriends, or ex-boy/girlfriends, practice (Fenaughty and Harré, 2013). A recent study revealed that cyberbullying performed by someone with whom the victim has had some form of offline relationship causes even more unease for those suffering it because the former relationship could make harassment seem more intense and personal, and could involve more negative interactions (Mitchell, Ybarra, Jones, and Espelage, 2014).

For this reason, it is important to study romantic relationships because the information and communication technologies in this life stage are an important element to start and maintain intimate relationships (Korchmaros, Ybarra, and Mitchell, 2015), and could be a means by which to assault and control partners (Burke, Wallen, Vail-Smith, and Knox, 2011). Therefore, this subject requires further analysis since previous research has demonstrated that females tend to reject using violence to a greater extent, whereas males tend to justify and approve using violence against their partners. Moreover, many males minimise gender violence and even consider that the victims who receive violence are partly to blame for the situation they find themselves in (González-Ortega, Echeburúa, and Corral, 2008; O’Keefe, 2005). Indeed, more tolerant beliefs in, and attitudes to, violence against females is one of the risk factors for partner violence to occur. There are two very important risk conditions: (i) the tendency to justify and reproduce the sexist and violent models with which they have observed in their infancy and adolescence; (ii) the imbalance of power between males and females, which is the basis to create and perpetuate gender-linked stereotypes (González-Ortega et al., 2008; O’Keefe, 1998). Hence, research into cyberbullying must analyse to what extent it is practiced in romantic relationships, which gender is more exposed to aggression, and the specific forms it takes.

Students’ Perceptions of Gender and Cyberbullying

Researchers like Doucette (2013) have expressed the need to adopt a qualitative methodology if we wish to be sure about the role gender plays when analysing the implication of males and females in cyberbullying. More and more qualitative studies appear which analyse primary and secondary education students’ perception of cyberbullying (Kota, Schoohs, Benson, and Moreno, 2014; Misha, Saini, Solomon, 2009). Yet, as far as we know, none of these studies has specifically examined their perception of gender differences. Our goal in this section was to obtain as much information as possible from youths in elementary and secondary schools about their views of cyberbullying as a gender specific-behaviour. This information was obtained from focus groups that we formed to obtain in-depth views of cyberbullying in Spain. The work of Navarro and Serna (2016) describes the method, participants and procedures used. Table 5 shows the themes and subthemes, per gender and grade, to emerge from the discussion which took place in the focus groups, and quotations to illustrate youths’ views.

Generally speaking, most participants believed that cyberbullying is a conduct that can involve both genders, and as both perpetrators and victims. When they talked about victims, no specific aspects or characteristics appeared which can make males and females more vulnerable when suffering cyberbullying. Yet when they talked about perpetrators, they used
arguments that remind us of the results obtained in research into traditional bullying. On the one hand, part of the participants of both genders see cyberbullying as a more typical strategy of females, as it allows people to cause harm without face to face confrontation and, in many cases, it involves spreading secrets about other people or matters that have something to do with intimate aspects of their lives. In many cases, participants in the focus groups justify females’ greater involvement using stereotyped beliefs that describe females as being more sibylline, harmful and vengeful than males. Not only males who participated in the discussion groups held on to such beliefs, but also some of the female participants did. Here it is important to consider that despite these results apparently coinciding with the studies which state that cyberbullying is a conduct in which more females get involved, as it may be an efficient means for indirect and relational aggression (Cassidy et al., 2009), young participants’ opinions may not be based on real facts, but on the different gender stereotyped behaviour of males and females persisting.

On the other hand, part of the participants of both genders described cyberbullying as a problem of males - as they are normally more aggressive than females, so they would employ any aggression strategy to a greater extent than females, including cyberbullying. In these cases, however, cyberbullying is a way for people to introduce themselves assertively to others and to display certain masculine values associated with aggressiveness, arrogance and power. Cyberbullying performed by males is viewed as a continuation of traditional direct bullying, and even complements previous physical damage caused (e.g., break some of the victim’s belongings or a fight). We can relate these results with other studies that have demonstrated how both traditional bullying and cyberbullying reinforce feelings of power and control among males and how, in these cases, bullying and cyberbullying can be an efficient power strategy to manage hierarchies in peer groups (Law, Shapka, Hymel, Olson, and Waterhouse, 2012).

In relation to this matter, secondary education students talk about the different reasons that can guide the cyberbullying performed by males and females. This theme did not appear in the primary education pupil groups. Popularity and leadership seem to be important reasons for both genders. So, participants’ opinions showed different perspectives. On the one hand, there are people who could be less popular in peer groups at school and employ cyberbullying to get at those who are popular and to counteract the harassment they may suffer at school. On the other hand, some participants stated that people who are actually popular use cyberbullying to reinforce their position in the group as a continuation of events that take place at school. These perceptions coincide with previous research which has indicated that people resort to traditional bullying as a way to manage social status in peer groups (Guerra, Williams, and Sadek, 2011). Nevertheless, these motives seem to be more sensitive among females. Some of the female participants expressed that female’s bullying behaviours are often driven by matters related with popularity, but also jealousy of, and rivalry with other peers. Females describe males as using motivations to guide them which, although related with power and status in a peer group, are more trivial, such as conflicts while practicing sports which they have not solved in person. Likewise, females are seen as more jealous, complex and envious than males, even when both genders employ cyberbullying as a way to manage their relationships in peer groups.
Table 5. Students’ perceptions of gender differences in cyberbullying

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Subcategories</th>
<th>Examples</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prevalence of cyberbullying</td>
<td>No differences per gender</td>
<td>&quot;Both boys and girls can insult you on their cell phone, or sometimes on the Internet. All they want to do is annoy you.&quot; A 11-year-old boy.</td>
<td>Primary Secondary</td>
<td>Males Females</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Females get more involved as perpetrators</td>
<td>&quot;This is something more girls do because they are nastier. Girls tend to judge girls more, and boys don’t judge so much or face people more than girls do. A girl doesn’t easily ignore what others have done to her, so she can use it to get her own back or because she envies someone.&quot; A 14-year-old girl.</td>
<td>Primary Secondary</td>
<td>Males Females</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Males get more involved as perpetrators</td>
<td>&quot;I think it’s something more boys do because they’re more aggressive. When they clash with someone, they hit them, and the same happens on the Internet . . . if a boy wants his friends to think he’s tough, he can also do this on the Internet and he doesn’t always need to be fighting.” A 14-year-old girl.</td>
<td>Primary Secondary</td>
<td>Males Females</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reasons for cyberbullying</td>
<td>Popularity, jealousy and envy among females</td>
<td>&quot;I’ve seen two cases . . . one girl sees how her boyfriend receives photos of another girl who wants to go out with him. Rather than being angry with her boyfriend, she’s jealous and starts saying awful things about the other girl on Facebook, then they fight when they meet. The other case is Z, the prettiest girl in class, and everyone gets at her on Facebook and Instagram because they so jealous that she’s so pretty and all the boys are after her.” A 15-year-old girl.</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Males Females</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Popularity and former conflicts among males</td>
<td>&quot;It’s normal that there has been some clash before among boys. They might be playing football, or whatever, and when a foul is made against someone, they get at that person and run them down on Tuenti. Normally they sort things out, a bit of a fight, but nothing much.” A 13-year-old boy.</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Males Females</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forms of cyberbullying</td>
<td>Methods of attack</td>
<td>&quot;What I’ve seen is that girls upload more photos of other girls to laugh at them. As they were friends before and were always taking photos . . . when something happens, they upload photos of them when they don’t look good or are doing something really silly to hurt them” A 12-year-old girl.</td>
<td>Primary Secondary</td>
<td>Males Females</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“Girls are more subtle and have more ill-feelings than boys. We are rougher, but girls use more insults or things they know will really hurt another girl . . . they think about things more” A 13-year-old boy.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Table 5. (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Subcategories</th>
<th>Examples</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Gender</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Differences in content of</td>
<td></td>
<td>“Girls write differently because they spell better and they write in a softer tone. Although they try to be aggressive, they don’t manage it enough. A boy makes more spelling mistakes, uses stronger words and more direct threats”</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Males</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aggression</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Females</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A 13-year-old girl.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“Girls insult the way people look because they know it’s more annoying. If someone tells me I’m ugly and silly, telling me I’m ugly affects me more than them telling me I’m silly.”</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A 14-year-old girl.</td>
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<td>“It’s OK for a boy to sleep with lots of girls, but if a girl does this with lots of boys, watch out. Then the girl is a slut, but the boy is tough, and you can find these girls on the Internet shown to be “easy-to-get” or they even do it for small amount of money. When it comes to sex, girls lose out, and many boys upload photos of the girls who they have been with and comment about them.”</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A 15-year-old girl.</td>
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<tr>
<td>There were no major differences</td>
<td>in the method of attack that males and females employ in cyberbullying, but many participants believe that the information that females upload on the Internet is more subtle, and entails them being better at planning their conduct, while males are more impulsive and post the first thing that comes to mind. They believe that the cyberbullying that involves posting photos in which people do not look good or are doing something silly is more characteristic of females, especially if this aggressive action addresses former friends because they have shared more time with their victims and have more material to use against them. They state that it is easy to distinguish if perpetrators are female because they are more careful when writing and spelling, insults are more intelligent and threats are more ambiguous. Yet almost all the groups agree when they say that females suffer more from the cyberbullying with sexual content that includes insults and rumours about someone’s sexual reputation or images of people in the nude and that, in most cases, males perpetrate this, although some females also do this. Overall, the discourse of the target group participants indicates that both genders can get involved in cyberbullying as a victim or perpetrator, and there are different reasons that lead them to be perpetrators. However, we are concerned about a certain stereotype view that tends to predominate among Spanish (male and female) students who describe females as being much worse, more subtle, and more harmful than males. This demonstrates that the internalization of stereotyped beliefs that empirical research has shown are false (Artz et al., 2013). These results indicate that we must pay more attention to how youths employ internalized gender schemata to talk about aggression. Therefore, gender is an important factor not only for considering if there are differences between the involvement of males and</td>
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females in aggressive conduct or not, but also because we must consider its impact on the way it affects males and females’ reasons for their aggression, and how these schemata may bias research.

CONCLUSION

We now go on to present the fundamental ideas that this review has led to. Readers should know that:

1) Most of the studies conducted to date have attempted to uncover the personal and social factors that make youths more vulnerable to suffering or perpetrating cyberbullying.
2) Gender forms part of the factors studied in most research studies on cyberbullying.
3) Gender is a social construct that defines what is masculine and feminine, and indicates how males and females should behave.
4) The Social Learning Theory states that socialisation processes allow us to acquire gender schemata, and that modelling by observation and imitation is a leading characteristic in these processes.
5) Research proposes that gender socialisation can affect differences in aggressive conduct, specifically learning instrumental (masculine) and expressive (feminine) traits.
6) Gender socialisation might indicate, for males, that aggression can prove useful for maintaining their gender role and, for females, that aggression can be inhibited or they can use more indirect forms of aggression, which better match their gender stereotype.
7) In traditional bullying, research tends to demonstrate that males get more involved than females. For many years, the common perception was that females used relational aggression to a greater extent, but recent research indicates that we cannot maintain this pattern today.
8) On occasion, although studies have provided mixed results, the general trend in cyberbullying conduct confirms that males are more aggressive than females, but differences in victimization are not significant.
9) Studies indicate that females are more often victims of cyberbullying rather than traditional bullying.
10) The data generally demonstrate that cyberbullying mostly targets peers of the same sex; however, there seems to be evidence that males direct more cyberbullying to females when compared to females using it against males.
11) Different studies have shown that many adolescents face cyberbullying that former friends perform, ex-classmates, but also by boy/girlfriends, or ex-boy/girlfriends. So cyberbullying may be a way to control and harass partners.
12) Gender stereotypes and roles are relevant factors when analysing how males and females reason about aggression and how they interpret behaviours like cyberbullying.
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Cyberbullying among Children and Adolescents


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INTRODUCTION

Both the impact of bullying and cyberbullying, and the knowledge that exists regarding the psychological make-up of those involved in bully/victim problems, have almost exclusively been measured in terms of deficits. Furthermore, and similarly, most of the research that focusses on both well-being and health, has been expressed in terms of measurements of the absence of ill-being and ill-health respectively, rather than the presence of well-being and positive health. This chapter provides an alternative view, in that it invites the reader to consider how we can conceptualise and measure well-being and health, and presents tools that can be used in the measurement of well-being that have been developed within the field of positive psychology. Accordingly, the concepts of Subjective Well-Being, Psychological Well-Being, the Authentic Happiness Model, the Well-Being Theory, the Dual Continua Model of Health, and the Mental Health Spectrum are presented, and tools used in the measurement of their attendant constructs are discussed. Given the modest levels of success recorded by many existing anti-bullying intervention programmes, we encourage you to consider the measurement of well-being in their ongoing attempts to inform the development of efficacious anti-bullying and anti-cyberbullying strategies.

BULLYING AND CYBERBULLYING

As Minton (2010, 2012) argues, most experts acknowledge the relevance of a number of key aspects in approaching a definition of bullying behaviour (as distinct from other, related
forms of aggressive behaviour - see Olweus, 2003). Bullying behaviour is generally seen as being characterised by being (i) aggressive (verbally, psychologically, or physically); (ii) deliberate on the part of the perpetrator(s); (iii) generally unprovoked on the part of the target(s) of the bullying; (iv) repeated, or systematic in nature; and, (v) characterised by an imbalance of (physical, social, or technological) power in favour of the perpetrator(s) (Minton, 2010, 2012). Cyberbullying is typically characterized by similar criteria, although the technological medium of the aggressive behaviour is specified (e.g., Smith et al., 2006).

However, Vandebosch, Van Cleemput, Mortelmans, and Walrave (2006) argue that there are important differences between cyberbullying and non-cyber forms of bullying: “With cyberbullying, it is not necessarily the case that the victim is harassed repeatedly. A defamatory website, for example, will often stay online for a longer period of time and can, moreover, be read by many individuals. A spoken insult, by contrast, disappears from the moment it is uttered, and is only heard by those present at the time” (p. 1).

As O’Moore and Minton (2011) point out, this line of argument prompts those who would seek to provide definitions of bullying and cyberbullying to consider “... where the ‘repetition’ lies; in cyberbullying, the perpetrator’s act of posting offensive material is a one-off event, but due to the possibility of multiple viewers and viewing, the target’s experience of being abused is one of repetition” (p. 4). As Minton (2010, 2012) argues, such a distinction prompts educationalists and policy-makers to think about how they respond to bullying.

Indeed, in the most recent guidelines provided to primary and post-primary schools in Ireland in forming anti-bullying policies and strategies (Department of Education and Skills, 2013), such a distinction is evident in how schools are advised to respond to different types of cyberbullying. The Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools state that whilst “... placing a once-off offensive or hurtful public message, image or statement on a social network site or other public forum where that message, image or statement can be viewed and / or repeated by other people will be regarded as bullying behaviour.” This is in keeping with Vandebosch et al.’s idea (2006) that given the ‘... possibility of multiple viewers and viewing, the target’s experience of being abused is one of repetition” (p. 1).

However, the Department of Education (2013) go on to say that “... isolated or once-off incidents of intentional negative behaviour, including a once-off offensive or hurtful text message or other private messaging do not fall within this definition of bullying and should be dealt with, as appropriate, in accordance with the school’s code of behaviour” So the notion of repetition (whether that be of perpetrator activity in face-to-face bullying, or target experience in cyberbullying) is key; according to governmental guidelines on anti-bullying policies for schools in Ireland, posting offensive text on, for example, Facebook is cyberbullying, but posting the same offensive text in a once-only private text message is not.

The consequences of bullying and cyberbullying have been extensively examined, and range from decreases in academic performance and psychological health (Kowalski and Limber, 2013), through to developing psychosomatic difficulties such as sleeping problems, headaches, poor appetite (Beckman, Hagqvist, and Hellström, 2012) and an increase of suicidal behaviour (Hinduja and Patchin, 2010; Kessel Schneider, O’Donnell, Stueve, and Coulter, 2012; Klomek, Marrocco, Kleinman, Schonfeld, and Gould, 2008). Olweus’ pioneering work on bully/victim problems showed that those bullied at school had higher levels of depression and poorer self-esteem in adulthood (see Olweus, 1993), and O’Moore and Minton (2004) recorded that being made the target of bullying behaviour can, and often does, “... destroy a person’s confidence and self-esteem [and] cause physical, emotional and
psychological damage of the potentially most serious and long-lasting kind.” In Finland, Kaltiala-Heino (1999) found that having been bullied was associated with depression and suicidal ideation; this finding was replicated by Roland (2000) in a study of a representative sample of 2,083 eighth graders (approximately 14 years old) in Norwegian schools. In a study of 209 12 to 15 year old bullied and non-bullied students (97 male, 112 female) in eight urban post-primary schools in Ireland, Mills, Guerin, Lynch, Daly, and Fitzpatrick (2004) found that having been bullied was significantly linked to depression, suicidal ideation, having made a suicide attempt, and referral to psychiatric services. In a study in Finland of 423 parents and 420 children, Kumpulainen, Räsänen, and Puura (2001), using diagnostic measures based on those used in Michael Rutter’s classic studies of psychiatric epidemiology amongst children on the Isle of Wight (1964-1974), which included survey items on bullying (Rutter 1976), found that children involved in bully/victim problems were more prone to have psychiatric disorders than non-involved children, with the most common diagnoses among children involved in bully/victim problems being attention deficit disorder, oppositional/conduct disorder, and depression.

What researchers have found about the personalities and psychological make-up of those involved in bullying behaviour has also been dominated by findings concerning the correlation between involvement in bully/victim problems and the preponderance of negative patterns of behaviour and personality traits. For example, those who bully have been found to be proactively aggressive, and those who are targeted to be reactively aggressive (Roland and Idsøe, 2001; Salmivalli and Nieminen, 2002); links have been found between poor student self-esteem and involvement in bullying behaviour in schools (O’Moore and Kirkham, 2001); and trait psychopathy has been found to predict the perpetration of cyber-aggression amongst adolescents (Pabian, De Backer and Vandebosch, 2015).

It is, of course, entirely understandable and proportionate that researchers have illuminated the negative consequences of involvement in bullying behaviour. Similarly, it is understandable that researchers have focused - at least thus far - on the negative traits typical of those involved in perpetrating what is surely universally held to be an anti-social and undesirable pattern of behaviour. Even when the apparently “positive” construct of emotional intelligence has been investigated by bullying researchers, it was found to be negatively correlated (in terms of the regulation of emotions) with involvement in the perpetration of traditional bullying and cyberbullying (Baroncelli and Ciucci, 2014). However, in this chapter, it is our intention to buck this general trend somewhat, in presenting an alternative development; that is to say, in focusing on variances in the positive psychological attribute of well-being amongst those involved in the various aspects of bullying and cyberbullying behaviour.

**HOW WE CAN CONCEPTUALISE AND MEASURE WELL-BEING**

Whilst there is disagreement amongst researchers as to which well-being theory best reflects well-being, researchers in the area have generally encouraged a multi-faceted approach to measuring the construct (Forgeard, Jayawickreme, Kern, and Seligman, 2011; Ryff and Singer, 1998). The theories that have been developed regarding well-being emphasise a potentially broad array of components that constitute and influence well-being.
In the absence of consensus, therefore, the list of constituting and influencing components that have been offered thus far cannot be seen as exhaustive; furthermore, whilst some of the components have been found to overlap, others have not. Hence, depending on the research questions that have been broached, various approaches can and have been used in the understanding and measurement of well-being.

There has been, however, a greater level of agreement regarding possible methods of the measurement of well-being. Generally speaking, modes of measurement have followed the approach that is common to hierarchical models (of personality traits, and intelligence) that are familiar from the psychology of individual differences. Hence, measures of well-being have been constructed to permit the measurement of the individual levels of their assumed sub-components; hence, the outcomes of these measures offer an “overall” well-being score, which comprises the sum of their assumed sub-componential scores, which can also be offered. Conceptually, therefore, in order to increase overall well-being, it is assumed that each sub-component can be increased, and that the sum of those increases will have an impact on overall well-being. Moneta (2014) has referred to this approach as a “body-builder” approach to measuring well-being, and has argued that more research needs to be carried out to investigate whether it is possible for individuals to achieve the highest levels of scoring on all components of a well-being model, as well as whether it is beneficial for individuals to aim to do so.

To step back a little, it is of importance to note that two main philosophical traditions have been identified as impacting upon and informing research into the psychology of well-being, namely hedonia and eudaimonia (Ryan and Deci, 2001). Hedonia (from the Greek ἡδονισμός [hedonismos], “delight,” which is in turn, from ἡδονή (hēdonē), “pleasure”) was developed by Aristippus of Cyrene, a student of Socrates, who developed the principle that pleasure is the beginning and goal of a happy life. Eudaimonia (from the Greek, εὐδαιμονία [eudaimonía], “happiness,” “welfare,” or “human flourishing”), on the other hand, was proposed by Aristotle who claimed that the hedonic approach to happiness was vulgar (Irwin, 1999) and described eudaimonism as a state of being well, by living in accordance with the virtues (Ackrill, 1975). Psychological theories that have been formulated subsequently have generally either reflected hedonic or eudaimonic understandings of well-being. Whilst some psychological understandings of well-being have attempted to reflect both approaches, Ryan and Deci (2001) assert that from the eudaimonic perspective, such an integration is impossible, as an emphasis on individualistic pleasure-seeking (hedonia) cannot be equated with the eudaimonic emphasis on living by collectivistic virtues.

Subjective Well-Being (SWB) theory, for example, derives from the hedonic philosophical tradition, and asserts the existence and operation of three inter-related components: life satisfaction, pleasant affect, and unpleasant affect (Diener and Suh, 1997). Life satisfaction, which is seen as the cognitive element of the theory, is held to be the individual’s perception and evaluation of the discrepancy between his or her present situation, and what he or she believes his or her ideal life should be. The affective elements of the theory measure the individual’s experience of both positive and negative emotions (Diener, Suh, Lucas, and Smith, 1999). Empirically, the three components have been found to be correlated, but separate constructs (Diener, Smith, and Fujita, 1995; Lucas, Diener, and Suh, 1996). The components have shown fair temporal stability over four- (Headey and Wearing, 1992), and seven-year periods (Magnus, Diener, Fujita, and Pavot, 1993); consequently, SWB has been presented as being a trait-like variable. Accordingly, many scales have been
developed with the express purpose of measuring SWB. Most are based on self-report, and these include the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLF: Diener, Emmons, Larsen, and Griffin, 1984); the Temporal Satisfaction with Life Scale (TSL: Pavot, Diener, and Suh, 1998); the Subjective Happiness Scale (SHS: Lyubomirsky and Lepper, 1999), and The Oxford Happiness Questionnaire (OHQ: Hills and Argyle, 2002). There are also many scales available that measure positive and negative affect, rather than negative affect only; these include the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS: Watson, Clark, and Tellegen, 1988), and the Scale of Positive and Negative Experiences (SPANE: Diener et al., 2009). Apart from self-report, experience sampling methods have been employed by, and found useful in, measuring subjective well-being (Stone, Schiffman, DeVries, and Frijters, 1999). However, Diener (2000) has pointed out that subjective well-being is, by definition, a measure of ‘subjective’ experience, and therefore care should be taken not to attempt to objectify it.

Psychological Well-Being (PWB) theory, on the other hand, reflects the eudaimonic tradition, and asserts the existence and operation of five elements: self-acceptance, positive relations, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life, and personal growth (Ryff and Keyes, 1995). This is a theory-driven model which acknowledges the heritage of decades of psychological research. In particular, the theories of Erikson (1959), Maslow (1968) and Rogers (1963) are held by Ryff and Keyes (1995) as influential. PWB theory aims to address a rather fundamental question - that is to say, what it means to be “psychologically well.” According to the PWB theory, individuals who achieve high levels in each one of the components will become a fully-functioning, or to borrow from Maslow, as Ryff and Keyes (1995) do, a self-actualising, person. Curiously, for a model that posits itself as drawing on phenomenological psychology, the theory disregards affective aspects of well-being, and psychometric modes of measurement have been advocated. For example, in order to measure psychological well-being, Ryff (1989) developed a Psychological Well-Being Scale (PWBS), which is a 20-item scale, with shorter versions available for researchers to use (14, 9, and 3-item).

Despite Ryan and Deci’s (2001) reservations regarding attempts at such integrations, the Authentic Happiness Model attempts to combine hedonic and eudaimonic elements of well-being (Seligman, 2003). The three components of the theory are the life of pleasure, engagement, and meaning, which represent routes to happiness. Conceptually, the life of pleasure is, of course, informed by the ethos of the hedonic tradition; it is a study of aspects of life that make it pleasant and unpleasant (Kahneman, Diener, and Schwarz, 1999). The life of engagement describes the experiences of psychological flow, which allows individuals to function at their fullest capacity (Csikszentmihalyi, 2009). Finally, the life of meaning draws on the eudaemonia tradition, and describes pursuits of virtues (Seligman, 2003). The first attempts to measure Authentic Happiness were made via the construction and the application of the Steen Happiness Index (SHI: Seligman, Steen, Park, and Peterson, 2005), which was subsequently adapted in the construction of the Authentic Happiness Inventory (AHI: Peterson, 2005). At present, there is limited empirical data about the validity and reliability of the AHI. The questionnaire that is now most commonly used to measure three dimensions of authentic happiness is the Orientations to Happiness Questionnaire (OHQ: Peterson, Park and Seligman, 2005), which has been tested in multiple languages; a shorter version of the OHQ is now available to researchers (Ruch, Martínez-Martí, Heintz, and Brouwers, 2014). Seligman (2011) is also responsible for the creation of the Well-Being Theory, in which well-
being is said to consist of five components: positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishment. Three components have been adopted from the authentic happiness theory (positive emotions, engagement, and meaning), and two new components have been created (relationships and accomplishment). The anagram of the components is PERMA, and therefore it is often referred to as a PERMA model. Well-Being Theory has been measured with the newly-created PERMA profiler (Butler and Kern, unpublished), which is a 23-item scale that has been tested on a sample of over ten thousand respondents.

HOW WE CAN CONCEPTUALISE AND MEASURE HEALTH

According to the World Health Organization, health is defined as “a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity” (WHO, 1948). Therefore, in order to measure well-being, positive states of well-being need to be measured, not only the absence of negative states. Over fifty years ago, Jahoda (1958) argued that the absence of mental illness and the presence of mental health are two distinct variables. Herzlich (1973) agreed, adding that individuals might not become aware of health until illness affects it; however, not experiencing illness, does not constitute health. For decades, little progress has been made to find empirical evidence for the distinction between mental illness and health, until Ryff and Singer (1998) proposed to revisit this issue and prompted scientific debate about its merits (e.g., Diener, Sapyta, Suh, 1998; Fleury, 1998; Ito and Cacioppo, 1998), as well as instigated a surge of further research in the area.

From the affective viewpoint, there is research to support the idea that positive affect is not simply the opposite of negative affect - i.e., positive feelings are not merely the absence of negative ones, or negative mental health. Indeed, it has been found that positive affect and negative affect may be only modestly negatively correlated (Cacioppo and Bernston, 1999; Headey, 2006). Furthermore, Huppert and Whittington (2003) found that ill-being and well-being can exist concurrently within individuals. In a longitudinal study, with 6,317 respondents from the UK, positive well-being and negative well-being were compared. It was found that 35.1% of respondents reported high scores on the existence of psychiatric conditions and similarly high scores on experiences of positive well-being, or low scores in both positive and negative well-being. If positive and negative well-being were merely opposites, participants' scores would consistently show a simultaneous reduction in negative well-being and an increase in positive well-being, or vice versa. This suggests, we feel, that it may prove useful to measure positive well-being and negative well-being as related, but separate, constructs.

The Dual Continua Model of Health was the first model that introduced the concept of flourishing. Flourishing is defined as the pinnacle of mental health, wherein individuals “...thrive, prosper and fare well in endeavours” (Michalec, Keyes, and Nalkur, 2009, p. 393). Following on from this concept, languishing was introduced as a state between well-being and ill-being. Individuals scoring low on 6 of 11 scales of positive functioning. In a large scale study, Keyes (2002) found that the risk of depression was twice as likely among individuals experiencing languishing than it was amongst those who were moderately mentally healthy. Furthermore, the risk was six times greater among languishing than flourishing participants. Therefore, Keyes (2002) speculated that languishing may be as
debilitating as depression. The Dual Continua Model of Health utilises a diagnostic tool that classifies three sets of mental health symptoms: psychological well-being (PWB: Ryff and Keyes, 1995), social well-being (SWB: Keyes, 1998), and emotional well-being (EWB: Diener, 2000).

The Mental Health Spectrum is a model of flourishing that consists of two components: the first one incorporates a set of three core features, and the second one six additional features. The core set of features are based on the Authentic Happiness model (see above), and include positive emotions, engagement, and meaning. The additional features incorporate self-esteem, optimism, resilience, vitality, self-determination, and positive relationships. It is an approach that promotes a population-level, rather than individual-level approach to improving well-being (Huppert, 2009). Huppert posits that there are considerably more individuals in each society who are moderately healthy and only a small proportion of those experiencing mental illness and languishing. Therefore, focusing on moving the moderately healthy individuals into the flourishing state may have a significant effect on reducing the prevalence of mental disorders.

The mental health spectrum was measured in a large sample study across 23 European countries (Huppert and So, 2013). The scale used to measure well-being was a 54-item European Social Survey (ESS) which compared the common mental health disorders such as depression and anxiety with indicators of well-being (Huppert et al., 2009). The results have shown that the ten features of positive mental health functioning included: competence, emotional stability, engagement, meaning, optimism, positive emotion, positive relationship, resilience, self-esteem, and vitality. These features represent both eudaimonic and hedonic elements, as well as components of the previously mentioned PERMA model. To date, these elements offer the basis of the most comprehensive conceptual framework of well-being.

The Advantages of Thinking About Well-Being and Positive Health in Anti-bullying Research

As we noted in the early part of this chapter, well-being in bullying and cyberbullying literature has, predominantly, been measured in terms of absence of illness, such as symptoms of depression and anxiety (e.g., Clark et al., 2014; Greenleaf, Petrie, and Martin, 2014; Kaltiala-Heino, 1999; Kowalski and Limber, 2013; Rivers and Noret, 2008; Turner, Reynolds, Lee, Subasic, and Bromhead, 2014; Young and Sweeting, 2004), psychiatric conditions (Kumpulainen et al., 2001; Mc Guckin, Lewis, and Cummins, 2010; Mills et al., 1994; Young and Sweeting, 2004), self-harm behaviours (Buchianeri et al., 2014; Hinduja and Patchin, 2010; Ozdemir and Stattin, 2011), or psychosomatic symptoms (Beckman et al., 2012; Sourander et al., 2010). However, this dichotomous approach to well-being assumes that the school population may be divided into students with or without psychiatric conditions, such as affective disorders, and that those involved in bullying and cyberbullying may be displaying symptoms of mental illness (and conversely, lack of mental illness is assumed to indicate mental health). Furthermore, in the well-meaning attempt to illustrate the serious impact that bullying and cyberbullying behaviour can have, the borrowing from psychiatric and psychological diagnostic understandings can obscure the fact that at
least some, if not the majority, of the upset that is experienced and expressed by bullied individuals is entirely proportionate to their being the recipient of unfair, unwanted and undeserved aggressive treatment, rather than being indicative of internalised pathological symptomatology. Feeling afraid, despondent and isolated as a result of ongoing bullying is entirely understandable - most people who have been bullied feel this way, and this is due to their having been treated badly, rather than their being in any way psychiatrically ill. And yet were these people to fill in psychometric inventories of, say, depression or anxiety at the time, the results of those psychometric tests could indicate otherwise.

As we have already suggested, there are, of course, other important implications for applying a purely deficit approach to the measurement of well-being and health. In the first place, face validity is reduced, as deficit-based scales measure either the presence or the lack of ill-being and ill-health, and not the presence of well-being and positive health. As an example, it would, therefore, be invalid to conclude that being a target of bullying behaviour necessarily reduces feelings of positive well-being, if one was to draw on evidence derived from a measurement that points (and critically, by design, can only point) to an increase in ill-being. Secondly, crucial information could be missed if the measurement of bullying behaviour were to be incorrectly applied, as demonstrated in two studies carried out by Huppert and Whittington. After analysing data, Huppert and Whittington (1995) deduced that symptoms of psychological distress predicted mortality in a seven-year longitudinal study. When data was revisited using four sub-scales which differentiated between positively and negatively worded responses, Whittington and Huppert (1998) found that mortality was correlated with the absence of life satisfaction and enjoyment, rather than the presence of anxiety or depression. Therefore, not only can distinguishing well-being and ill-being, and positive health and ill-health, provide additional findings when studying bullying and cyberbullying, but more importantly, it may prevent the researchers from making incorrect inferences.

As yet, there are very few studies within the bullying and cyberbullying literature that have utilised measures of well-being, rather than the absence of ill-being. However, Drennan, Brown, and Mort (2011) used a Satisfaction with Life Scale measure (Pavot and Diener, 1993) to measure the impact of telephone bullying on adolescents. Smithyman, Fireman, and Asher (2014) used a Brief Multi-Dimensional Student Life Satisfaction Scale (BMSLSS: Huebner, Suldo, Valois, Drane, and Zullig, 2004), in order to identify long-term consequences of peer victimisation. Goswami (2012) used single-item scales (Cantril, 1965; Cummins and Lau, 2005) in order to explore the correlation between subjective well-being and bullying. The use of well-being scales is innovative in the above studies. However, care needs to be taken as to what type of scales are used to measure well-being. For example, the single-item scales in Goswami’s (2012) research, which measured evaluation of well-being, is subject to retrospective thinking. Kahneman and Riis (2007) posit that questions such as: “What's your happiness with life as a whole?” involve the participants’ evaluation of life, a cognitive task that is conceptually distinct from the lived experience of well-being. Moreover, positive and negative affect, of course, impact on the evaluation of past experiences (Redelmeier and Kahneman, 1996), and therefore, the single-item scale may prove insufficient to measure subjective well-being.

Again, as we have already noted, considering the real-life and serious impact that the experience of having been bullied or cyberbullied can have, and indeed has had, upon many people, it is understandable that the research literature has focused on the negative impact
such behaviours experienced by participants, with aims to design interventions to reduce bullying and cyberbullying. With an eye towards the development of efficacious intervention strategies, there could be, however, merits in measuring well-being as one of the constructs. In the first place, such a measurement would allow researchers to understand the extent of the consequences of bullying and cyberbullying more broadly (more broadly, that is, than reference being made only to deficit-based measures). Secondly, a person’s overall psychological response to involvement in bullying or cyberbullying may be somewhat complex, and will certainly vary. For example, bully/victims (those involved in bullying behaviour as both perpetrators and targets) have been found to display more internalising problems than have bullies or victims (Ozdemir and Statin, 2011). Measuring well-being may help researchers identify the necessary complexities in this domain. Farrington and Ttofi’s (2009) meta-analysis of 44 anti-bullying programmes conducted between 1983 and 2009 showed that school-based programmes succeeded in reducing reports of having bullied others by between 20% and 23%, and having been bullied by between 17% and 20%. Furthermore, Merrell et al.’s (2008) meta-analysis of anti-bullying intervention research conducted between 1980 and 2004 indicated that programmes are more likely to influence knowledge, attitudes and self-perceptions concerning bullying, than they are actual bullying behaviours. Indeed, in Norway, traditionally a world leader in anti-bullying research and intervention, in a report commissioned by the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, Lødding and Vibe (2010) stated that “. . . bullying is not a problem that can be solved by adopting a specific programme . . . features of a good learning environment can help reduce bullying” (p. 26). Whilst the logic of Lødding and Vibe’s (2010) argument has been criticised (Minton, 2014; Olweus and Breivik, 2011), the uncomfortable fact remains that the success that anti-bullying intervention programmes have had is actually been rather modest (Minton, 2014). If we are to continue to advocate that anti-bullying intervention strategies and interventions be evidence-based (and it is difficult to see what else could be argued), then surely it makes sense to broaden that evidence basis beyond the paths that we have already trodden. The measurement of attributes such as well-being in bullying and cyberbullying research could be a useful first step towards the generation of potentially more effective interventions in our future anti-bullying and anti-cyberbullying intervention strategies.

**CONCLUSION**

This chapter presented the approaches to the measurement well-being in the context of positive psychology. The main theories of well-being have been discussed as an alternative to the prevalent measurements of the absence of ill-being in the current bullying and cyberbullying literature. The approaches and models presented above constitute an innovative approach to the measurement of well-being. Rather than continue to focus solely on identifying the absence of ill-being, as is prevalent in the current bullying and cyberbullying literature, we would like to encourage researchers to consider the measurement of well-being in their attempts to improve the efficacy of anti-bullying and anti-cyberbullying intervention strategies.
REFERENCES


Chapter 7

PHYSICAL PROXIMITY, SOCIAL DISTANCE AND CYBERBULLYING RESEARCH

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INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the idea of distance (be that literal/physical, or psychological (e.g., social, or moral)) is examined, with specific reference to its potential importance in understanding cyberbullying. A critical review of the general trends in cyberbullying research is then undertaken, and the potential advantages of placing a greater emphasis on qualitative research in the future, which might facilitate the elicitation of young people’s own meaning-making in acts of cyber-aggression, are examined.

PROXIMITY AND AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR

The notion of distance (both physical proximity, and so-called “social distance”) as a factor in understanding aggressive and prejudicial behaviour has had a lengthy history in research in the social sciences (e.g., Bogardus, 1926, 1947; Karakayali, 2009; Matthews and Matlock, 2011), but has not, in my opinion, received sufficient attention in the area of cyberbullying to date. As cyberbullying can be seen as systematic aggression at a distance afforded by technology, the factors of physical proximity and social distancing would seem to be particularly pertinent. Even after the passing of half a century, as a direct laboratory demonstration of the effects of variations in physical proximity on the likelihood of a person delivering noxious stimuli, the results of the variations in the set-up of the famous (and some might say, infamous) experimental demonstrations of conformity to authority by Stanley
Milgram (1965) are still significant. It may be recalled by the reader that the genesis of the original series of experiments was interesting; as a young man, Milgram had seen the films of the results of the Nuremberg trials, at which many Nazi officer and soldier defendants attempted to evade their responsibility for their crimes, on the basis of having simply “followed orders.” The experiments began at Yale University in July 1961, three months after the start of the trial of Adolph Eichman in Jerusalem. An unfortunate outcome of the publication of the results of the Nuremberg trials, regarding folk psychology understandings amongst the populations of the victorious Allies, had been the development of the view that somehow, “Germans were different” and that, “the same thing couldn’t happen here.” According to Milgram, these were dangerous falsehoods, and in the original series of experiments he demonstrated that psychologically “normal” American people could, and in fact did, reject or ignore their own feelings of sympathy or empathy for an apparently suffering and dying fellow human being in favour of showing obedience to the authority of an experimenter (Milgram, 1965).  

The subsequent variations of the original set-up (reported by Milgram, 1974), altered the physical proximity between the “teacher,” “learner,” and experimenter. Compliance (in terms of the “teacher” “completing” the study; that is to say, continuing to the maximum voltage) decreased with increasing distance between the experimenter and the “teacher” - when the “teacher” received telephone instructions from the experimenter, rather than being in the same room, compliance decreased to 21 per cent. Gender had no impact on “teacher” compliancy. The original set-up had involved male participants between 20 and 50 years of age; when an all-female sample of teachers were used, obedience levels were not significantly different, although the female participants were more likely to report experiencing higher levels of stress. Most significantly of all for the current discussion, the series of variant demonstrations showed that physical proximity was found to predict the levels of compliance amongst the genuine participants. For example, in a situation where proximity was at a maximum, the participants had to physically hold the

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1 The original demonstration (Milgram, 1965) involved participants, who had been paid a fee of $4 (plus 50 cents car fare) for one hour’s participation in “a study of memory and learning,” being duped into believing that they were delivering, via an electroshock generating machine, shocks of increasing severity to a fellow participant (to whom they were introduced at the beginning of the procedure) in a “learner” role in the room next door, according to the learners’ “errors” in a “word-association learning task.” The genuine participants’ apparently “random” assignation to the “teacher” role was fixed; the learners were in fact “stooges,” that is to say, actor confederates of the experimenter; and the “shock generating equipment” was bogus. The teachers were instructed to give the learners a “shock” each time that the learner made a mistake. The shocks were to increase by 15 volts each time; the “shock machine” had levers up to “450 volts,” followed by three more levers marked by large X’s and “Danger.” At 120 volts, the teacher would hear the learner complain of pain; at 210 volts, the teacher would hear the learner complain of a “heart condition”, and make repeated requests to be able to get out of the room; and after 330 volts, there was only an ominous silence. On hesitation, the genuine participant received prompts from the experimenter; in order, these were (i) “please continue”; (ii) the experiment requires that you continue; (iii) it is absolutely essential that you continue; and (iv) you have no other choice, you must go on (see Milgram, 1965, 1974). Before conducting the experiment, Milgram had undertaken polls at Yale, asking 14 final-year undergraduate psychology students, and 40 psychiatrists from the medical school, asking them to predict what proportion of teachers would go “all the way” to the maximum voltage. Those polled predicted that only a pathological few of the teachers (estimations amongst the psychology undergraduates ranged from 0 to 3 per cent, and amongst the psychiatrists was around 10 per cent) would do so. Such predictions amongst those polled fell well short; in Milgram’s first set of demonstrations, 26 out of 40 teachers - that is to say, 65 per cent - continued up to and including the maximum voltage (Milgram, 1965, 1974).
learner’s arm onto a shock plate, and compliance decreased to 30 per cent. Conversely, where proximity was at a minimum, and participants had to perform a subsidiary task such as reading the questions to the learner, or logging the answers of the learners, with a “teacher” (in this case, a stooge) complying fully, 37 out of 40 participants completed the study (a compliance rate of 92.5 per cent) (see Milgram, 1974).

The relationships between the lack of physical proximity to our own weapons, the consequent rise in the destructive capability of those weapons, and our simultaneous shirking of responsibility for the effect of those weapons on others and ourselves was elucidated by “the father of modern ethology,” Konrad Zacharias Lorenz. In what many consider to be his masterpiece, “Das sogenannte Böse” (1963; first translated into English under the title, “On Aggression” in 1966), Lorenz, took as his subject matter “…the fighting instinct in beast and man which is directed against members of the same species” (Lorenz, 1966, p. ix) - hence, intra-specific “fighting,” rather than the usually predator-prey, or defensive, inter-specific aggression. Intra-specific fighting almost always - in non-human animal species - confers a survival advantage at the species level, despite the apparent risk to the individuals involved in the confrontation. Lorenz (1953, 1966) provided numerous examples of how, whenever an animal species develops a “weapon” (which grows on its own body) such as a fang, claw, or horn, which could potentially inflict serious or fatal injury, that species invariably develops a social inhibition to prevent the usage of that weapon, otherwise the survival of the species as a whole would be placed under threat. Hence, fighting in animal species becomes heavily ritualised - a series of posturing challenges and threats, and dominance and appeasement gestures. The relationship between the evolutionary development of weapons of animal species, and of social inhibitions against their use is particularly important when we come to “…the one being in possession of weapons which do not grow on his body and of whose working plan, therefore, the instincts of his species know nothing and in the usage of which he has no correspondingly adequate inhibition. That being is man” (Lorenz, 1953, p. 216–217).

According to Lorenz, it is our differential progression as a species that has sealed our potential for self-destruction - the pace at which we have developed our weapons technology has far outstripped the progress we have made in treating our fellow beings ethically and humanely (1953): “…with unarrested growth his [man’s] weapons increase in monstrousness … But innate impulses and inhibitions, like bodily structures, need time for their development … We did not receive our weapons from nature. We made them ourselves, of our own free will … The day will come when two warring factions will be faced with the possibility of wiping the other out completely” (p. 217).

**SOCIAL DISTANCE, AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR AND CYBERBULLYING**

The “distancing” of ourselves from our weapons, and the responsibility for the destructive effects of our aggression, is not only maintained through decreased physical proximity, but also increasing social distance. The mechanisation of physical genocide, as observed in the gas chambers and crematoria of Auschwitz, was based on both factors. Survivors of the concentration camps, some of the psychology of which Milgram (1965,
1974) had attempted to understand through laboratory demonstrations as a peace-time researcher, have testified in the bleakest possible way the role of decreased physical proximity at critical moments, in making mass killing possible. The Austrian psychiatrist, and later founder of logotherapy, Viktor Frankl's first-hand witness experience as a prisoner of Auschwitz, for example, tells of how the Zyklon B capsules that delivered the poisonous gas to the chambers were not positioned in the delivery hatches by the SS soldiers themselves, but rather by a special detail of prisoners, whose refusal to comply would have led to them taking the place of their fellow prisoners in the chambers (Frankl, 1985). Furthermore, in understanding the psychology of the death camps, many researchers have pointed to the role of increasing social distance. Frankl (1985) and another Auschwitz survivor, the Italian chemist Primo Levi (2006), recorded that prisoners of the Nazis were not referred to as prisoners, or in any person-related way; when talking about prisoners, Nazi soldiers would invariably use the multi-purpose, but usually object-related, German word Stück (translated literally, “piece”) instead. The Nazis were able to do what they did to the prisoners of the camps because many of those prisoners were not considered (and this, of course, had legal underpinnings in the Nuremberg Laws) human at all. Philip Zimbardo has reflected that in times of war, soldiers and even civilian populations on opposite sides of a conflict come to use collectivising, derogatory, and dehumanising language to refer to one another (Zimbardo, 2007). Numerous examples, throughout history, exist of the use of dehumanising language in which “enemy” populations, and particularly the children of “enemy” populations, are referred to in verminous terms. Colonel John Chivington, a former Methodist missionary and a then-candidate for Congress, who led “…a special volunteer unit of voluntary cavalry [that had been] raised for the expressed purpose of “exterminating” all Cheyennes and Arapahos residing within territorial boundaries” (Churchill, 2003, p. 53), resulting in the massacre of almost 600 Indians at the Cheyenne-Arapaho village at a bend at Sand Creek in 1864, said that his policy was to “…kill and scalp all [Indians], little and big,” advocating the wholesale slaughter of the Indian children as “nits make lice” (Stannard, 1992, p. 131, italics mine). Stannard (1992) also pointed out that half a century later, Heinrich Himmler described the extermination of Jewry as “delousing” and that at the time of the Iraq war, Iraqi soldiers were referred to as “cockroaches” by US soldiers, a term also used to describe the Tutsi minority and Hutus moderates during the 1994 Rwanda genocide (Herbert; in Selby, 2015). On Monday, 7th July 2014, Israeli politician Ayelet Shaked, a representative of the far-right Jewish Home party, said of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on her Facebook page that: “Behind every terrorist stand dozens of men and women, without whom he could not engage in terrorism. They are all enemy combatants … this also includes the mothers of the martyrs … They should follow their sons, nothing would be more just. They should go, as should the physical homes in which they raised the snakes. Otherwise, more little snakes will be raised there (cited in Hillel, 2014).2

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2 In 2015, Katie Hopkins, a columnist with the British gutter-press tabloid newspaper The Sun, and her editor David Dinsmore were reported to the London’s Metropolitan Police by D. Peter Herbert, the Chair of the Society of Black Lawyers, for incitement to racial hatred, following Hopkins’ description, once again as “cockroaches”, of desperate migrants who had drowned in the Mediterranean (Selby, 2015). Whether Hopkins, who used the language employed, as we have seen, by active participants in genocides in the United States, Nazi-occupied Europe, Rwanda, and Israel saw or sees those desperate migrants as an “enemy population” is not clear; however, as Suzanne Moore (2015) noted, Hopkins’ use of such language demonstrated that “…on immigration, the language of genocide has entered the mainstream.”
As well as dehumanising the “other,” or “enemy” populations, social distancing achieves, often simultaneously, another function in establishing and embellishing One-Other relationships - the de-individuation of the “one.” The “bystander effect,” also known as “bystander apathy,” and “social loafing,” is often explained by the fact that in uncertain situations, the initial response of human beings is to look for what others are doing, and then to behave in a similar way (Latané, 1981). From the mid-1960s, Latané and Darley investigated what became known as the “bystander effect,” or “bystander apathy” - why people fail to intervene and to help in emergency situations. In a typical experiment, participants in a “waiting room” would see smoke pouring over the top of the laboratory door, or perhaps hear a female scream, or a crash from behind the door. The factors which determined whether the participants attempted to intervene were the presence of others (the more people in the proximity, the less likely they were to intervene) and ambiguity or otherwise of the situation (the more clearly the situation appeared to be an emergency, the more likely they were to act). When an individual is “one-of-many,” his own sense of social responsibility becomes “diffuse” (Latané, 1981), as he or she “deindividuates.” This has also been used to explain why some people behave anti-socially, as the sense of anonymity within the crowd disinhibits impulsive anti-social behaviours (Latané, 1981). We have already seen in the laboratory demonstrations of Stanley Milgram (1965, 1974) that our sense of personal responsibility, at least in as far as we may measure its behavioural correlates, appears to be diminished further when we are directly told or ordered to do something by a person in “authority” - when someone else “is in charge,” then we can tell ourselves that we are simply “following orders.”

In the rigid military hierarchy of Nazi Germany, the route of buck-passing was a clear one; but what of other situations of genocide? From which “authorities” did those involved in the genocide against the native peoples of the New World receive their orders? For one, the federal Indian agents and US Army officers who were involved in the negotiations of treaties with the Indians in the latter half of the nineteenth century often referred to the “Great Father” in the East, who, according to whatever best suited the white men’s points, was either full of love for or full of anger with his “red children” (see Brown, 1970). However, there was a more powerful authority still, who apparently commanded the obedient whole-scale slaughter and destruction of the Indians by the immigrants from the Old World and their descendants – God Almighty himself. The historian David Stannard (1992) argued that the four hundred year conquest of the New World was an extended series of Holy Wars mounted by the European colonists, and that the difference in the specific modalities of the genocidal activities in North and Central/South America is explainable via the temporal, and above all, denominational differences between the Anglo-American settlers and Spanish conquistadors.

In the medieval Spanish/Roman Catholic mindset, the tradition of contemptus mundi (“contempt for the world,” which by the fourteenth century had developed into the practices of self-flagellation, self-starvation, and a variety of other forms of corporal mortifications), coupled with the unquestioned widespread beliefs in witchcraft and Satanic practices, and the Papally-approved hunt for, torture, and killing of heretics by the Inquisition, led to the simultaneous fascination with, and acclaimed horror of, the sexual becoming devolved onto the uncivilised, non-Christian, non-European races. Within European tradition, of course, and back to the time of Ancient Greece, slavery provided an economically sound alternative use of non-persons (as slaves were under Roman law) (Stannard, 1992). In contrast, the Calvinist and Puritanical British settlers of North America, according to Stannard (1992), reasoned that...
“...those without a sense of private property were, by definition, not putting their land to “good or profitable use” and “...therefore, they deserved to be dispossessed of it” (p. 234). The Spanish were hungry for the mineral wealth that could be extracted from the land, and so economically, needed (at least some of) the native people of Central and South America as slaves; the British were hungry for the land itself, and therefore had no use for the native people of North America, who were an economic obstacle to their territorial ambitions. As Stannard (1992) concluded, “…allegedly having shown themselves to be beyond conversion to Christian and civil life – and with little British or American need for them as slaves – straightforward mass killing of the Indians was deemed the only thing to do.” (p. 247).

The language used by the European settlers involved in the western expansion of the United States of the nineteenth century did not reflect the physical and cultural genocide committed against the Indian, or the theft of his land. The key provision of the 1834 Act of the United States Congress (An Act to Regulate Trade and Intercourse with the Indian Tribes and to Preserve Peace on the Frontiers), which determined that all land west of the Mississippi, excluding that within the states of Missouri and Louisiana and the territory of Arkansas, would be Indian country, thus establishing a so-called “permanent frontier” (Brown, 1970; Churchill, 2003) was already nonsensical by 1860, with statehood being granted to California, Colorado and Minnesota, and the growth of the Kansas and Nebraska territories, in the 1850s. The proximal separation between the European-American and the Indian tribes was to be a short-lived strategy, and instead: “To justify these breaches of the “permanent Indian frontier,” “the policy makers in Washington invented “Manifest Destiny,” a term which lifted land hunger to a lofty plane. The Europeans and their descendants were ordained by destiny to rule all of America. They were the dominant race and therefore responsible for the Indians – along with their lands, their forests, and their mineral wealth. Only the New Englanders, who had destroyed or driven out their Indians, spoke out against “Manifest Destiny” (Brown, 1970, p. 8).

More famously, perhaps, those involved in the twentieth century genocide committed against the Jewish people by the Nazis included similar mystifying language, again with the express purpose of deindividuating the One responsible, and transforming mass slaughter and greed for property and land into a “higher purpose.” Among other precautions, in order to keep the “secret”, in official language only cautious and cynical euphemisms were employed: one did not write “exterminations”, but instead, “final solution”; not “deportation”, but instead, “transfer”; not “killing by gas”, but instead, “special treatment”; and so on (Levi, 2006, p. 384).

As we have seen, then, we attempt to morally distance ourselves from our own behaviour, and the social consequences of that behaviour, by employing the tactics of distance in two other modalities - decreased physical proximity, and increased social distance. When we utilise the latter in order to make justifications of aggressive behaviour, we do so via dehumanisation of the Other, and deindividuation of the One, thus diffusing our own feelings of responsibility. As well as these post hoc interpretations, we may also predict that if (i) we do not share physical proximity with another person; and/or (ii) we socially distance ourselves from another person, such that we have no feelings of empathy with that other person, then we will be able to disregard our own agency in terms of our subsequent responsibility for our negative behaviour towards that other person. In short, it will be more likely for us to behave aggressively towards a person we do not have to share space with, or
face, or a person whom we have effectively marginalised from the concerns of the One that we belong to, and easier for us to live with the consequences.

The bullying of someone else by technological means - mobile telephones, games systems, online social networks - like other forms of bullying, is understood as a form of aggressive behaviour (see Smith et al., 2006, and discussion below), but unlike other forms of bullying behaviour, permits the perpetrator to attack the target from a remote location, and therefore outside of a face-to-face context. If we follow the Lorenzian (1953) reasoning outlined above, we may get to the suppositions that (i) we may find it easier to kill someone with a weapon that is not of our body (say, to shoot him with a rifle) than it is to beat him to death; and (ii) we may find it “easier” to enter the system code that triggers a missile launch resulting in our wiping out the existence of tens of thousands of unknown, faceless people than it is to (say) hack ten individuals to death with an axe, being that this latter sort of attack would mean that we had to stand toe-to-toe and face-to-face with our opponents. If what has been said about physical proximity (and to a lesser extent, social distancing, which is possible, although perhaps not as likely, in face-to-face forms of bullying) has relevance to the phenomenon of cyberbullying - and of course, I would argue that it does - then we might expect that it is “easier” in terms of the availability of post hoc self-justifications, and our living with the consequences, to attack and bully someone on-line, than it is to attack and bully that person in a face-to-face situation.

Pornari and Wood’s (2010) quantitative research provided some interesting headway into the idea of whether social distancing can have an effect, in terms of its provision of an investigation of “…cognitive mechanisms, applied by people to rationalise and justify harmful acts, and engagement in traditional peer and cyber aggression among school children” (p. 81). Amongst their sample of 339 secondary school children, cyber aggression was positively related to moral disengagement and moral justification. Traditional (that is, non-cyber-) peer aggression was positively related to children's moral justification, euphemistic language, displacement of responsibility, and outcome expectancies, and negatively associated with hostile attribution bias. Traditional peer aggression and cyber aggression were also highly associated. Pornari and Wood (2010) concluded that their data had indicated “…the need for future research to elaborate on the current findings, in order to advance theory and inform existing and future school interventions tackling aggression and bullying” (p. 81). However, whilst their work into differential contribution of cognitive mechanisms is an important contribution as regards understanding social distancing, much of the quantitative research that exists, and continues to be undertaken, into bullying and cyberbullying research is focused on the establishment of incidence rates and typologies or the outcome of intervention programmes - utilising self-report participant questionnaires which rest on the assumption of concordance between participant understandings and researcher definitions. To understand what sense young people may make for themselves of aggressive behaviour in the technological sphere, and even to answer the apparently simple, theoretically obvious, and yet seemingly undressed issue of whether remote location makes a difference, I would argue for a re-thinking of what research methodologies might be most helpful.
THE CASE FOR DIVERSE APPROACHES IN CYBER-BULLYING RESEARCH

If I may be permitted a personal reflection, my own involvement in conducting empirical research into cyberbullying has been neither lengthy, nor extensive. In 2007, I was asked to present a paper to the Psychological Society of Ireland’s Special Interest Group in Child and Adolescent Psychology, with the title, “What do we know about Cyber-Bullying?” (Minton, 2007a). Only half-jokingly, the first slide that I used in that presentation was entitled, “The Short Answer,” and the body of text on the slide was limited to two words: “Not enough!” At this point, I was able to offer various media accounts of youth suicide linked to cyberbullying: a definition and sub-typology of cyberbullying, from Peter Smith et al.,’s (2006) report of their study of 92 11-16 year-olds in London. Indeed, Smith, Mahdavi, Carvalho, and Tippet’s (2006) data, along with Qing Li’s (2006) study of 177 seventh-graders in Canadian schools, formed much of the basis for what I could offer regarding evidence on (especially) online cyberbullying. The empirical evidence that I could draw on from Ireland was slim indeed; apart from data gleaned from a single item on bullying via mobile telephones that had been included in the questionnaire that I had used in my own Ph.D. research (Minton, 2007b) (“Other pupils have sent nasty text messages to me, or used mobile phones to get at me” to which 2,312 primary school and 3,257 post-primary school pupils had responded), quite simply, there was nothing there. Small wonder that I concluded that presentation with the note that, “The evidence we have is essentially either small-scale, anecdotal, or provisional. This is neither empirically nor – in terms of adhering to evidence-based practice – professionally satisfactory. Hence, large-scale study is desirable. Such a project is due to start in October” (2007a).

It was, in fact, thirteen months, rather than six months, later (so May 2008) by the time that I had successfully arranged the necessary funding (from RTÉ [Radio Telfis Éireann: the national broadcaster] and the Irish Independent newspaper) to conduct a large-scale study of cyberbullying in Ireland, which involved 2,794 12-16 year-olds from eight post-primary schools completing a 38-item questionnaire (see O’Moore and Minton, 2009, 2011). This contribution from Ireland seemed to be part of what was an explosion of interest in the area of cyberbullying, as other chapters in this book will surely have documented. Indeed, by the time that I presented a research paper at the 2011 European Conference on Developmental Psychology in Bergen, Norway (Minton, 2011), no less a person than Dan Olweus gave a special pre-conference presentation on the issue of cyberbullying. Olweus’ contribution was an interesting one: he posited that although substantial media and research attention was being given to cyberbullying, that it was in fact an over-estimated and actually a quite low-prevalence phenomenon (see Olweus, 2012). Nevertheless, of the papers that addressed bullying that were presented at that particular conference, over one-third were on the subject of cyberbullying.

Cyberbullying research often received input - especially in its earliest days - from those who had already achieved international expert status in the area of research of school bullying, e.g., Peter Smith (see Smith et al., 2006), Justin Patchin (see Patchin and Hinduja, 2006), and Mona O’Moore (see O’Moore and Minton, 2009 (I too had cut my teeth in the area of school bullying before approaching cyberbullying, but I make no claim to international expert status myself). There appears to have been an assumption on the part of
these researchers that cyberbullying was a directly analogous phenomenon to school bullying; that what had been happening in the school yards down the centuries was now being played out on mobile telephones, or over the Internet - that the bullying had “spread online.” In order to illustrate this, let us first consider a widely used definition of bullying behaviour: “A person is bullied when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other persons, and he or she has difficulty defending himself or herself” (Olweus, 1993, p. 14).

Now, let us consider the definition of cyberbullying presented by Smith et al., (2006), and used by them (and also Mona O’Moore and myself) in our early studies on cyberbullying (O’Moore and Minton, 2009, 2011; Smith et al., 2006): “Cyberbullying is an aggressive, intentional act carried out by a group or individual, using electronic forms of contact, repeatedly over time against a victim who cannot easily defend him- or herself” (Smith et al., 2006).

Smith et al.,’s (2006) definition of cyberbullying shares the characteristics of Olweus’ most definition of bullying behaviour (i.e., that it is [i] aggressive; [ii] intentional on the part of the perpetrator(s); [iii] repeated, or systematic in nature; and, [iv] characterised by an imbalance of power, in favour of the perpetrator(s) [see also Minton, 2010, 2012]), adding to this understanding a modality, i.e., the use of “electronic forms of contact.” Since the systematic research of bullying behaviour began, self-report questionnaires have specified a definition of bullying for the respondents, and then assumed that having been so instructed in the definition of bullying, that the respondents’ understanding of bullying was one and the same as that of those who designed the questionnaire. Indeed, we used Smith et al.,’s (2006) definition of cyberbullying in the questionnaire that we designed specifically for our study of cyberbullying in Irish post-primary schools (O’Moore and Minton, 2009, 2011), and this approach is typical in self-report measures of cyberbullying, as well as those of bullying. So what has developed is that we, as researchers of cyberbullying have assumed that children and adolescents today understand instances of upsetting and aggressive behaviour that they experience and perpetrate on-line in the same way that we do, that is to say, as an extension of school yard bullying. However, there is no clear reason why they should share this type of understanding with us; indeed, there is rather more reason to suspect that such an assumption that they do share our understanding is an artefact of the way in which the cyberbullying research tradition has developed.

Indeed, empirical evidence collected in Ireland supports the idea that the way in which participants are instructed to categories the aggressive behaviour that they have experienced or perpetrated online has an effect on the incidence rates that emerge. In a study of 2,474 Irish second-level school students (aged between 12 and 19 years), a definition of cyberbullying was provided, followed by a single questionnaire regarding perpetration, and a single questionnaire item regarding having been targeted. Using the frequency of “once a month or more often” 2.24 per cent of respondents indicated involvement as a target, and 1.12 per cent as a perpetrator of cyberbullying. However, when self-reported involvement in cyber aggression was recorded in the same sample (using two nine-item scales, one scale regarding perpetration, and one scale regarding having been targeted, again using the frequency of “once a month or more often”), with no definition of cyber aggression being provided, 10.83 per cent of respondents indicated involvement as a target, and 5.15 per cent as a perpetrator of cyber aggression (Corcoran, Mc Guckin, and Prentice, 2015). Olweus, amongst many others keen to define bullying properly, has demonstrated consistently that bullying is a narrowly
confined form of aggression (see especially Olweus, 1993, 1999). Corcoran et al., (2015) have shown that in the digital environment, too, online, cyber aggression and the narrower cyberbullying are by no means interchangeable terms. This demonstrates something about the importance of researchers’ understandings; indeed, the authors concluded that: “Rather than attempting to “shoe-horn” this abusive behaviour into the preconceived conceptual framework that provides an understanding of traditional bullying, it is timely to take an alternative approach . . . it is now time to turn our attention to the broader issue of cyber aggression, rather than persist with the narrow focus that is cyberbullying (p. 244).

I, too, would argue for a fresh approach, but perhaps of a different kind, as I feel that Corcoran et al.,’s (2015) findings also support the assertion that young people’s understandings could and should be given greater gravity in informing how researchers categories online behaviour. This seems to me to be a better starting point than the assumption that aggression in the digital environment (which may well be a “new phenomenon” to established researchers in aggressive behaviour, but is a life-long reality to the so-called “digital native” participants involved in their studies) is necessarily directly comparable to the situation of the school yard (a familiar, and historical situation to researchers and young participants alike). Research into bullying behaviour, be that the establishment of incidence rates and typology, the study of demographic differences, or the assessment of the outcomes of anti-bullying intervention programmes, has always been dominated by quantitative research (see Farrington and Ttofi, 2009; Smith, 2003; Smith et al., 1999). There are good social reasons for this. It is important for experts to be able to provide reliable answers to questions asked by legislators, policy makers, educators, and the general public regarding the scale of the problem of bullying, and questions from those who would financially support anti-bullying programmes about the effectiveness, or likely effectiveness, of such measures. Such an approach, however, pre-supposes either that young people share, or can/should be brought to share, the understandings of bullying behaviour already established (although often debated) by experts. To an extent, in the arena of schools, this is an ecologically valid approach, especially when it is applied to research into anti-bullying interventions, where such programmes rely, as they invariably do, on raising young people’s awareness (and the awareness of adults in school communities) of what bullying is, and challenging bullying behaviour (Minton, 2014; for examples of anti-bullying programmes, see Minton, O’Mahoney, and Conway-Walsh, 2013; Olweus, 1997; O’Moore and Minton, 2005; Roland, Bru, Midthassel, and Vaaland, 2010; Salmivalli, Kärnä, and Poskiparta, 2011; and for reviews of anti-bullying programmes, see Farrington and Ttofi, 2009; Smith, 2003; Smith, Pepler and Rigby, 2004). However, the meaning-making actually employed by young people in their on-line activities remains elusive (if that meaning-making is not one and the same as that of the researchers) if we circumscribe this by either providing definitions of cyberbullying (to be shared - or ignored! - by our young participants) (e.g., Li, 2006; O’Moore and Minton, 2009, 2011; Patchin and Hinduja, 2006; Smith et al., 2006), or follow Corcoran et al.,’s (2015) idea of focusing on the broader area of cyber aggression (an area that is still conceptually circumscribed by researcher understandings in the construction of self-report questionnaires, whether it is defined for participants on such inventories or not).

Participant meaning-making, in my opinion, might best be derived by the utilisation of qualitative methodologies (see also Hunter, Lusardi, Zucker, Jacelon and Chandler, 2002), which thus far have been (at least in terms of published output) only seldom applied to the areas of bullying and cyberbullying behaviour. Interestingly, in what is probably the most
frequently cited example of qualitative research in cyberbullying, Vandebosch and Van Cleemput’s (2008) participants’ understandings of cyberbullying was found to match researcher definitions. Data derived from 53 focus groups (comprised of school students aged between 10 and 18 years), showed that the participants interpreted “cyber-bullying” as “Internet bullying” and in order for it to be considered “true” cyberbullying, the actions should (i) be intended by the perpetrator to be hurtful; (ii) be perceived by the target as hurtful; (iii) be part of a repetitive pattern of negative offline or online actions; and, (iv) be performed in a relationship characterised by a power imbalance (based on “real-life” power criteria, such as physical strength or age, and/or on ICT-related criteria such as technological know-how and anonymity). However, it is not necessarily the case that these findings reflect all young people’s spontaneous understanding of cyberbullying. Despite the relatively (in this field) early vintage of this study, cyberbullying has long been part of the wider public consciousness in Belgium, where Vandebosch and Van Cleemput conducted their study, due in no small part to the success of the Nic Balthazar-directed 2007 film “Ben X” which depicts the cyberbullying of a boy with Asperger’s syndrome, and was itself inspired but the real-life cyberbullying-related suicide of a 17-year old boy with autism in Belgium in 2002 (Nic Balthazar makes a film, 2005). Štěglova and Cerna’s (2011) qualitative work, conducted via semi-structured interviews with fifteen 14- to 18-year-old targets of cyberbullying in the Czech Republic, was largely focused on the coping strategies used by their participants. It was found that whereas the participants, depending on their experiences, might use technical defences, activity directed at the perpetrator, avoidance or utilise social support from peers, that some technical coping strategies were found to be ineffective, and the coping strategy most often recommended to young targets of bullying telling one’s parents - was not used at all. Helen Johnson’s (2012) work focused on teaching professionals rather than young people; she reported on a thematic analysis of semi-structured interviews with eight anti-bullying coordinators (employed in primary, secondary, middle and high school settings) in the UK, with results indicating that teaching professionals, and indeed schools, were beginning to develop an understanding of issues relating to cyberbullying, to acknowledge its unique features, and to develop a range of methods to counter and prevent cyberbullying; however, the schools were in need of additional support in order to be more comprehensive in their approaches.

We have seen, via Pornari and Wood’s (2010) (quantitative) research, the link between the internal (cognitive) rationalisation and justification of harmful acts to the increased participation in the perpetration of bullying and cyberbullying amongst young people (see above). We have also seen that whilst Vandebosch and Van Cleemput’s (2008) qualitative research (see above) showed that Belgian pre-teens and teenagers’ understanding of cyberbullying matched with that of researchers in 2008, there is no firm reason to believe that that is still, or is more generally, the case - the area of young people’s online and technological activity moves quickly, as many researchers of cyberbullying have commented in the past. As we have also seen, qualitative research has been rather under-utilised within cyberbullying research. It is my suggestion that in (i) the further exploration of the physical proximity/social distance/aggression issue, as applied to cyberbullying, and (ii) in the broader issue of understanding young people’s meaning-making around cyberbullying and cyber aggression, that qualitative approaches could be appropriately and usefully employed, and that significant in-roads into these understandings could be made.
CONCLUSION

We have seen that, if illuminated through the lenses of classical ethology and classic social cognitive theory, it is reasonable to expect that the distance (both physical proximity and social distancing) has a relevance to the phenomenon of cyberbullying, in that it might be “easier” to attack and bully someone online than it is to attack and bully that person in a face-to-face situation. However, the testing of this idea has been obscured by the fact that the bulk of the cyberbullying research conducted to date has been quantitative in nature, conducted by those with a pre-existing expertise in face-to-face bullying who have assumed that cyberbullying is merely an online extension of face-to-face bullying, and that the young people involved in this phenomenon either share or, for the purposes of research, can be brought to share, the researchers’ own understandings of cyberbullying. It is suggested that, especially given that there is no clear basis for making these assumptions, and the comparative “newness” of the field, that a greater emphasis on qualitative research in future might help to elicit young people’s meaning-making regarding their online activities and use of technology.

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INTRODUCTION

Cyberbullying or the use of online or electronic forms of communication to harass, threaten, and otherwise inflict harm has become one of the most talked about negative consequences of young people’s use of Internet technologies. With ever increasing and diversifying online platforms, policymakers have sometimes struggled to find the right balance to support youthful adoption of social media and the need for protection and/or redress when things go wrong. Crucially, policymakers require evidence to support decision making and to target solutions to problems that have sometimes been the subject of heightened public concern and anxiety.

Since 2007, EU Kids Online has sought to contribute on a pan-European basis a body of research and evidence regarding young people’s experiences with Internet technologies. EU Kids Online is a multinational research network that seeks to enhance knowledge of European children’s online opportunities, risks, and safety thereby lending greater understanding of the online landscape that increasingly frames children and young people’s experiences. Through large scale survey research, EU Kids Online offers an insight into children’s online lives across Europe and provides a baseline on which to assess trends in the situations that children find problematic. Uniquely, this project has, through its close relationship with the Safer Internet Programme of the European Commission, sought to contribute to policy debates as well as solutions and to play a role with other stakeholders on some of the key problematic issues affecting young people.
The harmful effects of bullying and harassment on children and young people have long been of concern to parents, educators, and policy makers, long before the Internet became such a feature of contemporary life. That the online world presents a new environment in which vulnerable children can be victimized and a space where perpetrators find new ways to perform acts of harassment has been acknowledged by educators and online safety experts as one of the most complex issues facing children’s online participation. Yet, the extent to which this is a risk identified by children and the manner in which they respond to experiences of bullying and harassment remains a challenging research question. Bullying and online harassment feature as one of the risks asked about in the EU Kids Online survey, and while not the most prevalent of negative experiences that children describe, it is the one that was found to have the most severe impact. Key findings from EU Kids Online and the wider contribution of cross-national large scale studies to cyberbullying research are the subject of this chapter.

**SAFER INTERNET RESEARCH IN CONTEXT**

The rapidity with which the Internet has been embraced by young people and the speed at which it has impacted young people’s approach to communication and access to information and entertainment is remarkable. Young people have been to the fore in embracing new Internet technologies (Rice and Haythornthwaite, 2006), adapting them effortlessly to new modes of social interaction (Boyd, 2008), and forging new and often unexpected opportunities for learning (Ito et al., 2008). Yet, a dual discourse counterpointing the diverse multiple opportunities that the Internet affords with attendant risks and concerns with how best to manage young people’s engagement with a complex amalgam of technologically-mediated content and contact risks has preoccupied policy makers, almost since its inception (Gill, 1996).

The first phase of policy interventions towards dealing with potentially harmful effects of the Internet downsides may be said to have been largely founded on the assumed risks it posed to children, based variably on intelligence from industry, law enforcement, and child welfare experts supported by limited forms of research alongside political concerns regarding child protection. Much of this was framed at an international level with the EU and the US playing leading roles in framing the principal themes of risks and safety online (European Commission, 1996; Internet Safety Technical Task Force, 2008). The European Commission’s Safer Internet Programme acted on a pan-European level to support efforts to combat illegal uses of the Internet, principally the use of Internet technologies to exploit children and disseminate child abuse images, and to raise awareness, especially among parents and educators of the risks, predominantly content-based, that the Internet might pose to young people (European Commission, 1999).

The rise of social media and the explosion of young people’s active participation in online social networking gave the lie to this policy approach. Egregious as online child abuse or exploitation is, the framing of education and awareness approaches around risks of exposure to online predation appeared increasingly irrelevant to the real experiences, positive and negative, that young people encountered. The absence of an adequate evidence base to inform such policy led to the development of the EU Kids Online as a Europe-wide research
The EU Kids Online Project network committed to producing reliable evidence of children’s online opportunities, risks, and safety. Preceded by a number of international comparative studies such as the Safety Awareness, Facts and Tools or SAFT survey (Staksrud, 2005), and a series of Eurobarometer studies on Internet safety (Eurobarometer, 2005, 2007), EU Kids Online was the first project to propose a robust and comparable, survey-based investigation of children’s (and their parents’) access and use of the Internet as well as approaches to dealing with problems encountered online.

EU Kids Online originated as a so-called “knowledge enhancement” project for the European Commission’s Safer Internet Programme in order to support policy decision making processes related to online services used by young people. In its first phase (2006-09), EU Kids Online created a network of European researchers and a body of knowledge based on comparative analysis of the existing evidence base on children and online technologies conducted in Europe. A key contribution was its classification of the typology of content, contact, or conduct risks and opportunities that arise in the context of young people going online (Livingstone and Haddon, 2009). Going against the popular rhetoric of “digital natives” (Prensky, 2001), it was argued many children still lacked the resources to use the Internet sufficiently to explore its opportunities or to develop vital digital literacy skills (Helsper and Eynon, 2010), highlighting the importance of encouraging and facilitating children’s confident and flexible Internet use.

An overriding priority was the need for reliable comparative data with which to assess the extent of the challenges facing young people in Europe when using the Internet. With 75% of European children regularly going online, many observers celebrated children’s youthful expertise while others worried about their vulnerability to new forms of harm. Policies to balance the goals of maximising opportunities and minimising risks require an evidence based approach. Therefore, with funding from the EC Safer Internet Programme from 2009-11, EU Kids Online proceeded to design and conduct a major quantitative survey of 9-16 year olds experiences of online use, risk, and safety in 25 European countries (Livingstone, Haddon, Gorzig, and Ólafsson, 2011a). The underlying aim of the survey was to enhance knowledge of European children’s and parents’ experiences and practices regarding risky and safer use of the Internet and new online technologies in order to inform the promotion among national and international stakeholders of a safer online environment for children. The approach adopted was child-centred, comparative, critical, and contextual and informed by a socio-ecological perspective to better understand individual children’s experiences within the diverse and varied contexts that constituted the wider European landscape (O’Neill, 2015).

**THE EU KIDS ONLINE SURVEY**

The EU Kids Online survey (2009-11) was a unique research endeavour in terms of breadth and scope of its investigation of online risks for children aged 9-16. A random stratified sample of 25,142 children aged 9-16 who used the Internet, plus one of their parents, was interviewed during Spring/Summer 2010 in 25 European countries. The survey investigated key online risks: pornography, bullying, receiving sexual messages, contact with people not known face-to-face, offline meetings with online contacts, potentially harmful user-generated content, and personal data misuse. Although a quantitative approach by
theoretical and methodological design, the survey also collected free form responses to open-ended questions of what pre-occupied and bothered children on the Internet.

A number of features of the methodology for EU Kids Online stand out to distinguish it from earlier cross-national studies such as Eurobarometer. In the first instance, the research is child-centred and reports incidence based on accounts provided by children themselves. Both children and their parents were surveyed as part of the research but it is the child’s account that is reported in cross-national analysis. Secondly, a robust methodology was used to ensure representativeness of the sample on the national level and standardisation of sampling methods to ensure appropriate comparability across all countries included in the study. Thirdly, every effort was taken to ensure the reliability of children’s responses through an ethically-sensitive approach. Children were interviewed in their own homes by specially trained interviewers. Self-completion sections were included for sensitive questions, with care taken to ensure that children were enabled to provide responses to sensitive issues without any adult interference. An optional open-ended question was also included to allow children to describe any situation they had experienced in which they were made to feel uncomfortable or which had bothered them. The question path in the survey was one in which initially all children were asked about incidence of exposure to risks. For those who did experience any of the risks asked about, this was followed by questions which asked them about impact and how it had made them feel. This was then subsequently filtered such that only those who had been adversely affected were then asked what they had done about it or to whom they turned for help and support.

Previous research indicated that the patterns and social contexts of general Internet use are key factors shaping children’s online activities and online risks encountered (Livingstone, Haddon, and Görzig, 2012). Online experience is defined as a pathway composed of the online activities engaged in by children and the online and offline factors (e.g., family, social and cultural environment) that shape children’s behaviours toward the technological world. This approach, based on Bronfenbrenner’s socio-ecological model, offers a re-conceptualization of the child’s ecology as a multi-layered set of nested and interconnecting environmental systems, all of which influence the developing child but with varying degrees of directness (Bronfenbrenner, 1997). The perspective has evolved since its early inception and today acknowledges the role of the child’s own characteristics, hence the model is now referred to as the bio-ecological model (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006). The framework recognizes the complex interdependencies between the institutions and structures that support or constrain children’s opportunities and their agency in making choices and decisions online while negotiating these possibilities and constraints. While limited demographic data was collected from parents to determine socio-economic status (SES), independent variables relating to national context were used to examine cross-country differences and are discussed further below (Lobe, Livingstone, Ólafsson, and Vobed, 2011).

Four main areas of risk were at the core of the investigation as set out by EU Kids Online: (i) exposure to sexual images online, (ii) sending and receiving sexual messages, (iii) bullying and harassment, and (iv) meeting strangers. The range of risks was selected based on a review of the available evidence derived from empirical studies that had been conducted across Europe (Hasebrink, Livingstone, and Haddon, 2008) and a classification of risks identified in the literature (Livingstone and Haddon, 2009). A typology of risks according to content, contact, and conduct was developed, recognising children as actors and participants as well as consumers of content, in need of protection (Table 1).
Table 1. EU Kids Online Classification of Risks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Contact</th>
<th>Conduct</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child as receiver (of mass productions)</td>
<td>Child as participant</td>
<td>Child as actor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(adult-initiated activity)</td>
<td>(perpetrator/victim)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggressive</td>
<td>Violent / gory content</td>
<td>Harassment, stalking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bullying, hostile peer activity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sexual</td>
<td>Pornographic content</td>
<td>“Grooming”, sexual abuse or exploitation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sexually harassment, “sexting”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Values</td>
<td>Racist / hateful content</td>
<td>Ideological persuasion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Potentially harmful user-generated content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial</td>
<td>Embedded marketing</td>
<td>Personal data misuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Gambling, copyright infringement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: EU Kids Online.

Figure 1. Relating online use, activities and risk factors to harm to children.

Much initial policy activity, as discussed above, was focused on content risks, drawing on well-established tropes of child protection in media contexts, seeking to provide “safer” forms of access for children to content in online, largely unregulated spaces. Accordingly, filtering tools were proposed as an important technology-enabled step towards restricting access to mass-produced content that may be unsuitable for children (Staksrud and Kirksæther, 2013). Children as participants in contact risks (adult-initiated) similarly is well-represented in the literature of online risks with children vulnerable to online predation (Gillespie, 2008), forms of ideological manipulation (Rogan, 2006), and online harassment by strangers (Peter, Valkenburg, and Schouten, 2006). Importantly, the typology recognises the increasingly active role of children in use of the Internet and in contexts in which they may be at risk of being the victim or even the instigator of acts that threaten or endanger others. It is in this
context that EU Kids Online has created a comprehensive evidence base across 25 countries in Europe regarding the incidence and response to bullying and other risks encountered through Internet technologies.

The EU Kids Online model explains adolescents’ online risks and opportunities within a specifically adapted socio-ecological framework (Görzig and Machackova, 2015) (see Figure 1). Guided by this model, the EU Kids Online survey captured variables on the level of the individual as well as their parents, peers, and teachers. In addition, the survey data allows linkage with country level data, thus enabling the ability to capture the cultural level of the socio-ecological system by using country as a proxy.

In the following sections, we discuss findings relating to cyberbullying from the EU Kids Online survey and map the factors that emerged from the survey to the three distinct levels of the individual, the family, and the country level. Cyberbullying is usually defined as a form of bullying that uses electronic means such as email, mobile phone calls, text messages, instant messenger contact, photos, social networking sites, and personal web pages, with the intention of causing harm to another person through repeated hostile conduct. This can include forms of aggression such as humiliation, harassment, social exclusion, mockery, and unpleasant comments (Smith et al., 2008). In terms of the classification of risks above, cyberbullying is one of several conduct risks that may harm children through online contact with others. While a familiar term in English-speaking usage, “bullying” proved to be a difficult term to translate. Therefore, for the purposes of the survey, bullying was defined as follows:

“Sometimes children or teenagers say or do hurtful or nasty things to someone and this can often be quite a few times on different days over a period of time, for example. This can include: teasing someone in a way this person does not like; hitting, kicking or pushing someone around; leaving someone out of things.”

During the interview, children were asked if this had happened to them either in person face-to-face, by mobile phone calls or texts, or on the Internet – e.g., via email, social networking sites.

**Individual Level (Child as Unit)**

Focussing in the first instance at the level of the individual child, data from the EU Kids Online survey allows us to describe the overall incidence of cyberbullying as reported by children aged 9 to 16 years. The survey found that 19% of children from across the 25 participating European countries, or one in five, reported that someone had acted in a hurtful or nasty way towards them. These children were then asked how it happened. The most common form of bullying reported was in person face-to-face at 13%, compared to 7% who reported that this happened to them on the Internet. The survey also found that for teenagers who experienced being bullied, this was more likely to be accompanied by online bullying and/or by bullying on mobile devices (Livingstone, Haddon, Görzig, and Ólafsson, 2011b).

Drawing on the full survey findings, individual level factors may be further elaborated as follows:
Age and gender: There is little consensus in the literature on how various socio-demographic factors influence cyberbullying behaviour. Smith, Mahdavi, Carvalho, and Tippet (2006), for instance, find no effect of age among children aged from 11 to 16 years in the prevalence of cyberbullying, whereas Ybarra and Mitchell (2004) found that older pupils (15 years old and above) were more often Internet aggressors than a younger children's group (10-14 year-old). EU Kids Online, likewise, found some association of both age and gender with cyberbullying. Overall, as noted above, more bullying occurred offline than online: while 19% of children said they had been bullied either online and/or offline, just 6% of respondents reported being a victim of online bullying, while 3% said they had bullied others online. Within these findings, girls and older adolescents reported being cyberbullied more often than boys or younger children (Livingstone, et al., 2011b). Furthermore, bullying others online or via mobile phone was found to increase slightly with age. The data also showed that there was a link between offline and online bullying: 56% of online bullies said they had bullied others face-to-face and 55% of online victims of bullying also claimed to be victims of face-to-face bullying. Although being bullied online was generally more common among older children, no particular age trend in forms of bullying was evident (Görzig, 2011; Lampert and Donoso, 2012).

Psychological factors: EU Kids Online included items adapted from the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) using items measuring psychological difficulties only, examining children’s level of self-efficacy, sensation seeking, experiences of ostracism, and psychological difficulties. Generally, both cyberbullying victimisation as well as perpetration showed a positive relation with psychological difficulties, self-efficacy, and sensation-seeking (Lampert and Donoso, 2012; Laurinavičius and Zukauskiene, 2012). Moreover, it also appears that those involved in online bullying showed overall a higher level of psychological vulnerability than those not involved in online bullying (Hasebrink, Görzig, Haddon, Kalmus, and Livingstone, 2011).

Cyberbullies compared to face-to-face bullies were more likely to engage in risky online activities, spend more time online, and find it easier to be themselves on the Internet – a pattern that remained stable across countries suggesting that it is individual level factors rather than the country level that are generally more important in explaining cyberbullying (Görzig and Ólafsson, 2013).

Family Level (Household as a Unit)

Socio-economic status was the principal variable used by EU Kids Online to detect possible differences at the level of the household. This was included primarily to examine questions of digital advantage or disadvantage, following on from previous research on the so-called “digital divide” (Livingstone and Helsper, 2007). Findings from the survey showed that the risk of being involved in either online or offline bullying increased slightly with higher levels of socio-economic status, although differences were small (Livingstone et al., 2011b). However, among youth who were involved in online bullying, those with a higher SES were more often involved as a bully, while those with a lower SES were more often
involved as victims (Görzig, 2011). Young people from lower SES households also indicated more and a higher intensity of harm than those from a higher SES background. Lower levels of SES were related to a less likely occurrence of some coping responses, specifically changing Internet settings, responding by deleting a message, or trying to fix the problem (Vandoninck, d’Haenens, and Smahel, 2014). Furthermore, young people from families classified as a minority group reported higher experiences of being bullied online as well as subsequent harm (d’Haenens and Ogan, 2013). Moreover, youth more often sought support upon being victimised if they belonged to a discriminated against group or spoke a minority language at home (Livingstone, Kirwil, Ponte, and Staksrud, 2014).

- Socio-economic status (SES): Some SES variation was found among those who responded to at least one of the questions regarding bullying and/or bullying others. However, the differences were minor. Among those who have experienced online bullying, girls, younger children, and those from a low socio-demographic background were more likely to be victims of bullying (and less likely to bully others) than boys, older children, and those with a higher socio-demographic background (Livingstone et al., 2011b). Overall, these differences suggest that those socio-demographic groups that are in some way or other more vulnerable are also more likely to report being victims than perpetrators of online bullying (Lampert and Donoso, 2012).

- Parental factors: Some differences were also found between parents’ awareness of their child’s experience of cyberbullying compared to more general awareness of their child’s Internet activities. Overall, both 6% of children and 6% of parents reported that the child had been bullied on the Internet. Slightly more girls than boys (7% vs. 5%), and slightly more older teenagers (7% of 15-16 years) than younger children (3% of 9-10 year olds) said they had been bullied. There was a high level of agreement between children and their parents regarding whether or not the child had been sent hurtful or nasty messages on the Internet or bullied online. At the same time, there are some small, but noticeable, country differences in relation to the child/parent gap in perceptions. The child/parent agreement is a little lower in countries such as the Netherlands, Finland, Sweden, and Norway in that parents are more likely to think their child has been bullied online even when the child says they have not. By contrast, in Romania, Estonia, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, and Hungary, children are more likely to say they have been bullied online than are parents.

Cross-Cultural/Cross-National Perspectives (Country as a Unit)

A powerful feature of the EU Kids Online survey was its combination of a pan-European survey interviewing some 25,000 children about their online experiences whilst also incorporating representative samples in each of the 25 participating European countries, thereby enabling detailed analysis at a national as well as the European level. Differences in Internet usage among European countries can have several explanations: for instance, how well established the infrastructure for the Internet is, the degree to which Internet safety awareness is disseminated, or more widely cultural factors that impact on parenting styles.
All of these aspects constitute cultural differences that can be explored via quantitative or qualitative approaches. For instance, opportunities, risks, harm, as well as parental mediation can be analysed and provide detailed information in terms of cultural as well as national contexts (Helsper, Kalmus, Hasebrink, Sagvari, and Haan, 2013).

Assessment of cultural differences remains a complex problem requiring a combination of approaches for identifying and discussing cross-cultural differences. The cultural level, for instance, may comprise abstract influences such as economic, social, educational, legal, or political systems which, in keeping with Bronfenbrenner’s ecological model, can elicit indirect influence upon individuals and other levels of the ecological system (Bronfenbrenner, 1997). For explanatory purposes, EU Kids Online developed a classification of countries according to the amount and types of Internet use and risks (Lobe, Livingstone, Ólafsson, and Vobed, 2011). This approach was underpinned by the underlying trend consistent in all instances of the more Internet use, the more risk was found. As such, participating countries were classified into the following four groups:

- “Lower use, lower risk” countries (Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Hungary) – here children made the lowest use of the Internet, and they were below average on all risks apart from meeting online contacts – online and offline; still, it may be expected that as levels of use rise in these countries, so too will risk.
- “Lower use, some risk” countries (Ireland, Portugal, Spain, Turkey) had the lowest Internet usage, although there was some excessive use of the Internet and some problems with user-generated content.
- “Higher use, some risk” countries (Cyprus, Finland, the Netherlands, Poland, Slovenia, the UK) made high use of the Internet but were high only on some risks, possibly because of effective awareness-raising campaigns, regulatory strategies, or strategies of parental mediation of children’s Internet use.
- “Higher use, higher risk” countries (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Lithuania, Norway, Romania, Sweden) include both wealthy Nordic countries and Eastern Europe that have the highest Internet usage across Europe as well as Eastern European countries with lower income but through more recent broadband investments experience “new use, new risk.”

Country differences for experiences of being bullied both face-to-face and online are noteworthy. Findings from EU Kids Online show that cyberbullying appears to be more common in countries where bullying in general is more prevalent rather than in countries where the Internet is more established. For example, in Romania and Estonia, more than four in 10 children report having been bullied, twice the average across all 25 countries included in the survey. Online bullying in these countries is also more than twice the average, at one in seven children who use the Internet. As such, levels of all forms of bullying, and experiences of victimisation and perpetration of cyberbullying go hand in hand. Variance at the country level represents a more complex issue. According to Görzig (2012), 7% of the variance in cyberbullying victimisation can be explained by aspects located at the country level. Gender differences (i.e., girls) were found to be the most important predictor of cyberbullying victimisation in Spain, the Netherlands and Finland. Higher Internet usage was found to be
more significant in Greece, Hungary, Italy, and Slovenia. Then, risky online activities were
the most relevant predictor in Bulgaria, Denmark, Poland, Portugal, and Sweden and the
lowest in Turkey, Hungary, and Lithuania. Reviewing the evidence for the variation in
cyberbullying and its correlates across countries, Görzig and Machackova (2015) conclude
that the cultural or country level does play a role in cyberbullying even if it is one of an array
of factors within a socio-ecological system.

**OFFLINE VS. ONLINE VICTIMS AND PERPETRATORS**

Two key questions within the literature on bullying which were explored further by EU
Kids Online are the relation between traditional offline bullying and online bullying, and the
relationship between victims and perpetrators of online bullying, including the psychological
profiles of those who have experienced both.

EU Kids Online findings show that across Europe, 6% of 9 to 16 year-olds who use the
Internet report having been bullied online while only half as many (3%) admit to having
bullied others. Since 19% have been bullied either online and/or offline, and 12% have
bullied someone else either online and/or offline, clearly more bullying occurs offline than
online (Görzig, 2011). There is a link between offline and online bullying however. Fifty-six
percent of online bullies said they had bullied others face-to-face and 55% of online bullying
victims also claimed to be victims of face-to-face bullying. As such, bullying and being
bullied tend to go together. Among those who do not bully others, being bullied is relatively
rare – 8% offline only, and 4% online. But, among those who have bullied others offline,
nearly half (47%) had also been bullied offline (and fewer online). On the other hand, among
those who had bullied others online, nearly half (40%) had been bullied online (and fewer
offline) (Görzig and Machackova, 2015; Hasebrink et al., 2011).

Findings from EU Kids Online also show how the odds for a child to perpetrate bullying
online compared to offline increase when one of the factors is changed by one unit.
Specifically, it is shown that the odds of being an online bully as opposed to an offline bully
increased by 48% when the child was a girl compared to a boy; by 28% when the child’s
belief in his or her Internet abilities increased by one point (of three); by 36% when the
child’s score on the “online persona” scale increases by one; by 30% when the child spent an
additional hour online; by 31% when the child engaged in one additional risky online activity,
and by 5% when the child engaged in one additional risky offline activity (Hasebrink et al.,
2011).

Additionally, offline bullies were more likely to be boys rather than girls. However, when
it comes to online, the likelihood of girls being bullies increased more than for boys. The
consequence is that boys and girls are equally likely to bully online (but not offline). In sum,
these findings suggest that online bullies can be differentiated from offline bullies on the basis
of their behaviour and attitudes associated with the Internet as well as their gender rather than
on the basis of their offline behaviours.

Online bullies and those being bullied online are those children who are mostly also
vulnerable offline. This supports previous findings that those children who already face
problems offline are not only in need of support in their offline lives but also in their online
lives. This includes children who have psychological difficulties, are socially excluded
(ostracised), engage in unhealthy sensation-seeking behaviours or are in some way or other members of a vulnerable group (Hasebrink et al., 2011).

Children who are bullied and/or bully others online have similar demographic and psychological profiles to those who are bullied and/or bully offline, suggesting that those children bullied or bullying online are not very different from those bullied or bullying offline except in that they make use of the affordances of the Internet (for example, the chance to meet new people online or to network with peers).

Those children who are causing harmful experiences online to others in the form of bullying are often the very same ones being bullied online by others, some of them known and some unknown to them offline. It is possible that being bullied by others online can sometimes be the response to having bullied others online, and vice versa, bullying others online can sometimes be the response to being bullied by others online. Although we cannot determine which is the cause and which the effect, providing more support for children who are victims of bullying might simultaneously decrease the occurrence of online bullying. Similarly, working to prevent children from engaging in online bullying behaviours might reduce the chance that they themselves will be bullied online by others. On a positive note and to keep these findings in perspective, it was shown that 93% of European children have neither been bullied nor bullied others online.

**TRENDS OF BULLYING ONLINE AND OFFLINE**

Following completion of the EU Kids Online survey in 2011, a new project called Net Children Go Mobile was undertaken in 2014, also supported by the European Commission’s Safer Internet Programme. Closely modelled on the original EU Kids Online survey, Net Children Go Mobile provides time-series data for experiences of online risks and safety in a subset of countries allowing for the identification of trends (Livingstone, Mascheroni, Olafsson, and Haddon, 2014). With new data from seven of the original 25 countries, Net Children Go Mobile shows that while overall incidence of bullying has not increased since the EU Kids Online survey, cyberbullying is now more prevalent than face-to-face bullying and occurs most commonly on SNS. This shift in experiences from bullying offline to online is most noticeable for girls and for early teenagers and is markedly a feature of increased use of mobile technologies such as smartphones and tablets (O’Neill and Dinh, 2015).

Overall levels of bullying have risen marginally from 21% to 23% (Mascheroni and Ólafsson, 2014). However, the number of children who report being bullied online or through any form on the Internet or mobile phones has nearly doubled from 7% to 12% in the period from 2011 to 2014. An increase in bullying among girls, and a slight decline among boys, is noteworthy. This is especially the case in relation to girls’ reports of cyberbullying, where almost a doubling of online bullying from 8% to 15% is reported. Age variations are also significant in this sense. There are increased reports of bullying among young children, 9–10 years of age, and among 13–14 year olds. Older teens aged 15–16 years as well as 12–13 year olds reported a slight decline in experiences of being bullied. However, reports of cyberbullying have increased among all groups. The most substantial increase is in fact among younger users, aged 9–10 years old, where reports have tripled from 3% to 10%
between 2011 and 2014, and doubled among 13–14 year olds, from 8% to 15% (O’Neill and Dinh, 2015).

The proportion of children who have been bullied at all (on and/or offline) has remained fairly stable at under a quarter of 9-16 year olds – except that it rose markedly in Denmark, and was already very high in Romania. But, cyberbullying has increased in the past four years – from 8% to 12%, especially among girls, and among the youngest age group (aged 9-10 years, followed by teenagers aged 13-14 years old). The biggest increase from 2010 to 2014 in the percentage of children who have been cyberbullied is in Denmark (a rise from 12% to 21%) and Ireland (from 4% to 13%) (Mascheroni and Ólafsson, 2014).

CONCLUSION

Cyberbullying remains one of the most discussed forms of harmful behaviour resulting from young people’s extensive participation online. High profile examples of threatening aggression and harassment of vulnerable young people, sometimes with tragic consequences, continue to dominate public discourse, especially in popular media, resulting in repeated calls for more direct intervention. Against this, EU Kids Online has, in common with other international reviews (Hinduja and Patchin, 2012), cautioned against the conclusion that cyberbullying has reached epidemic proportions. On the contrary, cyberbullying represents a subset and is best treated as a variant of unwanted, anti-social behaviour that can have damaging and sometimes devastating consequences for victims.

The value of large scale, multi-national studies such as that undertaken by EU Kids Online is that findings can provide a solid baseline for policy development and where necessary targeted intervention. As discussed, EU Kids Online has at its origins a commitment to evidence-based policy recommendations and over the course of the project has contributed to findings for policy making at both the country and European levels. Indeed, it is this combination of detailed socio-ecological data on the full range of young people’s experiences, positive and negative, that has enabled the generation of significant discussion of policy responses that are measured, informed by evidence and addressed to the multiple stakeholders involved in supporting better Internet experiences for young people (Livingstone, Ólafsson, O’Neill, and Donoso, 2012; O’Neill and Staksrud, 2012).

Arising from findings of EU Kids Online is evidential support for the general proposition that individual level factors highlighting the needs of vulnerable populations, victim support and specific groupings more likely to engage in cyberbullying behaviour merit more targeted policy measures. The multiple cultural factors notwithstanding, there remains a universality to the experience of bullying behaviour which, as more recent data shows, is migrating on an increasing basis to online platforms. This is a timely reminder of the need to maintain a strong evidence base and to continue to monitor on a pan-European basis the diversity of issues that impact young people’s online experience.
REFERENCES


Chapter 9

CYBERBULLYING IN SOUTH KOREA

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Yeungnam University, Gyeongsan, South Korea

INTRODUCTION

Early studies of cyberbullying in South Korea focused on people’s aggressive behaviour in cyberspace rather than those of school pupils (i.e., aksung-daekgul [malicious reply], cybermoyok [insults], cybersungpokryuk [sexual violence or sexting], cyberstalking etc.). Public concern for cyberbullying among school pupils was greatly raised by a middle school pupil’s suicide in 2011. One middle school boy died by suicide after serious school bullying, including cyberbullying. The boy had been insulted, extorted, and received both waterboarding and physical attacks. The aggressive behaviours happened consistently through, or by, his mobile phone. He suffered serious mental torture, which destroyed his daily life and led to the suicide. In 2012 a high school girl died by suicide after receiving swearing and flaming from several peers in the chatroom. Finally, the South Korean government announced cyberbullying as a sub-type of school bullying in 2012, and have made efforts to prevent cyberbullying in line with traditional school bullying.

TERMS FOR BULLYING AND CYBERBULLYING

There are several terms to indicate bullying-like behaviours in South Korea and the terms are also related to those of cyberbullying: gipdan-ttadolim (group isolation), gipdan-gorophim (group harassment or group bullying), hakkyo-pokryuk (school violence), and wang-ta (socially excluded person or social excluding behaviour). These terms are often used interchangeably, but there are some differences in terms of the type of aggression each term most represents (Lee, Smith, and Monks, 2012). Gipdan-ttadolim and gipdan-gorophim

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imply group behaviours (rather than one-to-one), and *hakkyo-pokryuk* includes a wide range of hostile and violent behaviours which happen among pupils, within or around schools, such as physical attack, name calling, *gipdan-ttadolim*, extortion of money, and sexual abuse. *Wang-ta* is a slang term popularized by pupils in the late 1990’s, which means socially excluded person (victim) or excluding behaviour. Among these terms, the use of the term *hakkyo-pokryuk* has increased over time and a number of recent studies have used this term rather than other terms. Similar to traditional bullying, for cyberbullying there are several terms used in South Korea: *cybergorophim* (cyber-harassment), *cyberttadolim* (cyber isolation), *cyberpokryuk* (cyber violence), and *cyber wang-ta* (a socially excluded person in cyber space, or social exclusion in cyber space). Sometimes the English term *cyberbullying* is also used. Recently, the term *cyberpokryuk* has been most commonly used to indicate the corresponding phenomena to cyberbullying in western cultures because it includes a wide range of aggressive behaviours in cyber space.

**DEFINITION**

There is no agreement of definition of cyberbullying in South Korea. However, researchers generally agree that *cyberpokryuk* is an individual’s harmful behaviour conducted by electronic communication equipment to specified or unspecified individual(s). The *Hakkyo-pokryuk Prevention and Counterplan Act* (2012. 4.1) indicated *cyberttadolim* (cyber isolation) as a subtype of *hakkyo-pokryuk*. It defines *cyberttadolim* as “the behaviours causing the other pupils’ distress; a pupil/pupils aggress(es) other pupil(s) repeatedly, consistently or spread(s) personal- or false information using information technology equipment such as internet, mobile phone.”

**Table 1. Representative types of cyberbullying in South Korea**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types</th>
<th>Contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cybermoyok/bibang (insults)</td>
<td>Abusive words such as swearing, slander through the Internet, mobile text etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cybermyungye-hweson (defamation)</td>
<td>Publicly posting messages/writings which harm an individual’s honor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyberstalking</td>
<td>Sending fearful or anxious emails/messages to someone or visiting his/her SNS although (s)he does not want this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cybersungpokryuk (sexting)</td>
<td>Posting sexual description or sexual disparagement, sexual swearing of an individual using mobile or Internet, or spreading obscene video clip(s) or photograph(s).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal information drain</td>
<td>Spreading the other person’s private information (name, address, school etc.).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cybergangyo or cybermyungryung (coercion)</td>
<td>Forcing an individual to do an unwanted behaviour or errand. Compelling an individual to purchase cybermoney, cyber character, or other materials and make payment for him (her) (i.e., wifi-shuttle, game item shuttle etc.).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyberttadolim (exclusion), cybergorophim (harassment), cyber wang-ta</td>
<td>Isolating or excluding an individual in cyberspace through electronic communication means.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Kim and Yoon (2012a) defined cyberpokryuk as: “The verbally aggressive behaviours such as swearing, criticizing, threatening, rumor, ttaodilim and gotrophim which occur in cyberspace using electronic communication skills, and these behaviours cause psychological harm to (a) specified or unspecified person(s)” (p. 216). Lim (2013) used the English term cyberbullying and defined it as “…a new type of bullying: verbal-, non-verbal-, physical-, and relational bullying occurring in cyberspace using information communication skills” (p. 30).

### Types of Cyberbullying

Generally, studies in South Korea tend to categorize types of cyberbullying by its contents or behaviours rather than the place it occurs or the media used. Table 1 below summarizes some of the main types of cyberbullying which are commonly investigated in Korean studies.

The Korean Internet and Security Agency (KISA, 2011) divided the adverse effects of the Internet into two categories cyberpokryuk and cyberbumjoi(cybercrime). The former indicates behaviours which give a person unpleasant feelings, such as a malicious Internet reply, cyber-insults, personal information drain, cyber sexual abuse, and cyberstalking. When these behaviours are against the law, they are cyberbumjoi. However, it is not clear to what extent a certain behaviour is against the law. Some types of cyberbullying, cyber-insults, cyberstalking, and sexting have similar meanings to those of Western studies, whereas there is a distinctive phenomenon in South Korea, called cybergangyo (wifi-shuttle), which compels a victim to do/deliver whatever a bully/cyberbully wants. The victim purchases what the bully asks and the costs of the materials are paid for by the victim. For example, charged data, game money, or game items can be the materials, and the victim conveys the resources to the bully after downloading on his/her mobile phone/tablet. Pupils usually call this “wifi shuttle,” because this is carried out by mobile or wireless service. If this is for a specific Internet game or related to game items, they call it “game shuttle.” This type of cyberbullying tends to be deeply related to traditional bullying in school. Although this is a serious type of hakkypokeyokryuk, studies including this are very much lacking.

### Prevalence of Bullying and Cyberbullying

Prevalence of hakkypokeyokryuk has been investigated by researchers, private, and national institutions, with samples randomly selected among schools across regions. However, the South Korean government has recently been investigating the prevalence of hakkypokeyokryuk twice a year for all school pupils aged 11-18 years (N = 4,980,000). Pupils are asked about their bully/victim experience for the last semester, or the last 6 months. The results have shown that receiving hakkypokeyokryuk (school violence) has been rapidly decreasing in the recent 2-3 years (see Table 2 below). Figure 1 shows the percentages receiving each type of hakkypokeyokryuk. As a subtype of hakkypokeyokryuk, cybergorophim has been increasing from 2012 (7.2%) to 2013 (9.7%), and has been remaining constant at around 9% (Ministry of Education, 2014).
Table 2. Percentage of incidence of being victims of hakkyo-pokryuk from 2012 to 2014 (Ministry of Education, 2014)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels of school</th>
<th>2012 1st</th>
<th>2012 2nd</th>
<th>2013 1st</th>
<th>2013 2nd</th>
<th>2014 1st</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elementary school</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle school</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Figure 1. Percentage of receiving each type of hakkyo-pokryuk by school levels.

**INCIDENCE OF CYBERBULLYING**

**Perpetrating Cyberbullying**

Perpetrating cyberbullying varies across South Korean research studies, having shown rates of 7% to 40%. These results may reflect the different methods and approaches regarding the investigations (i.e., types of cyberbullying included, time reference period). KISA (2013) surveyed the prevalence of cyberpokryuk among 1,500 elementary, middle, and high-school pupils across 16 national regions. They provided a definition of each type of cyberpokryuk (cyber verbal violence, cyber defamation, cyber stalking, cyber sexual abuse, personal information drain, and cyberbullying [ttodolim]). They enquired about pupils’ experiences of cyberpokryuk in the preceding year. The results showed that 29.2% of the respondents reported experiences of doing cyberpokryuk; it was lowest in elementary school pupils (7%), with 39% of middle school pupils, and 38.4% of high school pupils reporting having done it.

Figure 2. Percentage of perpetrating cyberbullying by its type (NIA, 2013)

The National Information Society Agency (NIA, 2013) investigated cyberbullying among 11,956 elementary (5th and 6th graders, aged 11-12 years), middle- and high-school pupils (aged 13-18 years). Figure 2 shows the incidence of cyberbullying by its type. As can be seen, cyber baejae (exclusion) was most common, and cyber bibang (insults) showed similar findings.

Types of media used for cyberbullying was commonly found to be Messenger (kakaotalk, mypeople, line, etc.), cyber community (anti-café, social club), and SNS (Facebook, Twitter, blogs, etc.) (KISA, 2013). Lee, Hwang, and Yeum (2013) reported that cyberbullying was performed most commonly through mobile phone (58.5%), followed by Messenger (21.5%).

**Gender Differences of Perpetrating Cyberbullying**

1Cyberstalking: Sending fearful or anxious emails/messages to someone or visiting his/her SNS although (s)he does not want this; Cyberbibang: Abusive words such as swearing, slander through the Internet, mobile text etc.; Imagebullying: Posting or spreading someone’s photos or video clips so as to insult that person; : ID theft; Using other’s ID and pretend to be the owner of the ID; Cybergalchui (extortion): Forcing someone to purchase or buy something which a perpetrator wants to have, by using the victim’s smartphone or Internet payment system; Cybersungpokryuk (sexting): Posting sexual description or sexual disparagement, sexual swearing of an individual using mobile or Internet, or spreading obscene video clip(s) or photograph(s); Cybergamgeum: cyber jail, which confines someone in an Internet chat room and swearing or insulting him/her; Cyberttadolim (exclusion): Excluding someone in cyberspace; Flaming: Invoking someone by intentionally starting argument to him/her; Cybermyungryung (coercion): Forcing someone to do what he/she does not want to do using Internet or smartphone; Anti-café: Internet communities or websites which have been set up for excluding and slandering someone; Cyber wang-ta: several people make someone wang-ta (socially excluded person) by insulting, swearing, or denigrating him/her in cyberspace.
In a general way, boys were more likely than girls to perpetrate cybertadolim (KISA, 2011; Lee et al., 2013; Shin, and Ahn, 2013), but differences were not statistically significant in some studies (Shin, and Ahn, 2013), or the differences of the means of perpetrating cybertadolim between boys and girls were not statistically tested in other studies (KISA, 2013; NIA, 2013).

There were more boys than girls involved in cyber verbal violence, cyber defamation, cyber stalking, cyber sexual abuse, and personal information drain. Girls were more likely than boys to perpetrate cybertadolim (KISA, 2013), but statistical significance was not tested.

NIA (2013) reported that boys were generally more likely than girls to cyberbully. However, in cyberexclusion (called, cyberbaejae), there was a higher percentage among girls than boys (Figure 3 shows the ratio of perpetrating cyberbullying between boys and girls).

Who Participates in Cyberbullying?

More than half of the pupils surveyed knew who the cyberbullies were; 54.3% of elementary school pupils, 52.3% of middle school pupils, and 64.6% of high school pupils did cyberpokryuk to a pupil(s) whom they knew in their schools (KISA, 2013). Over half (55.4%) of cyberbullies replied that they chose the target from among the pupils in their school (Lee et al., 2013). Forty-three percent of cyber-victims replied that they were cyberbullied by their peer(s) in their school (Lee et al., 2013).

Reason for Perpetrating Cyberbullying

The most common reason for doing cyberpokryuk was “for fun” and to “upset the victim” in all school levels (KISA, 2013; NIA, 2013). The reasons for perpetrating cyberbullying differed by school level; among elementary school pupils, “for fun” was the most common reason stated (elementary: 45.7%; middle: 29.7%; high: 33.3%), however, among middle-, and high-school pupils “upset for the victim” was the most frequent reason for cyberbullying (elementary: 34.3%; middle: 68.2%, high: 64.1%) (KISA, 2013). Furthermore, “no reason” (elementary: 22.9%, middle: 11.8%, high: 11.5%), and “getting along with friends” (elementary: 20.0%, middle: 5.6%, high: 12.5%) were also common responses (KISA, 2013).

How Do Pupils Feel after Cyberbullying/Being Cyberbullied?

A high percentage of elementary school pupils reported that “I don’t feel it as fault because I have done it for fun” (25.7%), “Sorry for the person” and “regret” were also common feelings after cyberpokryuk among pupils – ranging from 22.9% to 29.7% (KISA, 2013). However, “don’t feel anything” was also a common feeling about cyberpokryuk among pupils, which was higher in middle- (28.7%) or high-school pupils (24.0%) than elementary school pupils (20.0%).
Figure 3. Gender ratio of perpetrating cyberbullying by its type (NIA, 2013).

Figure 4. Percentage of being victims of cyberbullying by its type (NIA, 2013).
**Being a Victim of Cyberbullying**

KISA (2013) reported that 30.3% of pupils received cyberpokryuk; about 40% of middle-, and high-school pupils had been a cyber-victim during the last year, whereas only 7.4% of elementary school pupils had experienced being a cyber-victim. Adolescents (12-19 year olds) had most commonly received cyberpokryuk (75.8%), and the experience of this reduced according to age (from their 20’s to their 50’s) (KISA, 2011). KISA (2011) reported that 34% of elementary school pupils had experience of receiving cyberpokryuk; upper grade pupils (49.3%) had received cyberpokryuk which is three times more than pupils in lower grades (13.0%). Figure 3 indicates the percentages of being a cyber-victim by types of cyberbullying (NIA, 2013). The most common type of cyberbullying was cyberbibang(insults) followed by cyberbaejae(exclusion).

**Gender Differences among Those Cyberbullied**

Generally, boys were more likely than girls to receive cyberpokryuk (Lee et al., 2013; Shin, and Ahn, 2013). Cyber verbal violence, cyber defamation, personal information drain were more common amongst boys than girls. However, cyber sexual abuse was more common in girls than boys (KISA, 2013; Shin, and Ahn, 2013).

Figure 5 shows the gender ratio of being victims of cyberbulllying (NIA, 2013). Depending on the type of cyberbullying, boys showed a higher ratio than girls. Cyber-exclusion showed a higher ratio among girls than boys. This may indicate that the girls tended to experience relational cyber aggression more often than boys.

![Figure 5. Gender ratio of being victims of cyberbullying by its type (NIA, 2013).](image-url)
Cyberbullying in South Korea

By school level, findings were not consistent. There were more girls than boys who received cyberpokryuk, whereas in the middle- and high-school levels, more boys than girls were victims of cyberpokryuk (KISA, 2013). However, a different study showed the opposite result: elementary school boys (36.2%) had more experiences of receiving cyberpokryuk than girls (31.9%) (KISA, 2011).

Responses after Being Cyberbullied

Common responses after being cyberbullied were “get [them] back in the same way” (39.4%), and “demand deletion or correction of the message to the cyberbully(ies)” (17.6%), and “claiming apologies” (17.1%). There was a high frequency who replied “no response” (36.5%) (KISA, 2011). By school levels, middle school pupils (50.3%) and high school pupils (40.9%) were more likely than elementary school pupils (29.7%) to demand that the cyberbully(ies) delete or correct the harmful writing or message. “Telling friends” (elementary: 35.1%; middle: 27.4%; high: 22.2%) and “telling parents/families” (elementary: 24.3%; middle: 16.8%; high: 6.4%) were also common. However, “telling [the] school teacher” (elementary: 8.1%; middle: 9.1% high: 4.9%) showed relatively low percentages. “Reporting [to the] police, Wee-centre (bullying and cyberbullying intervention centre), 117, cyber bureau of national police” showed least common responses (elementary: 5.4%. middle: 7.1% high: 4.4%) (KISA, 2013).

Whether the Coping Strategies Were Effective?

“Telling friends” was most helpful for stopping cyberbullying (elementary: 69.2%, middle: 75.9% high: 60.0%) and “telling parents/families” was also reported as helpful. Around half of pupils who asked cyberbully(ies) to delete or correct the messages reported success (elementary: 45.5%, middle: 55.6% high: 48.2%). “Telling teachers” was completely useful (100%) at elementary school level, but much less useful in middle- (38.9%) and high-school (30.0%). Half of elementary school pupils who reported the incidents to the police, Weecentre, 117, or cyber bureau of national police thought it was helpful, and 42.9% of middle school pupils and 44.4% of high school pupils reported this as being effective (KISA, 2013).

Feeling after Being Cyberbullied

Many pupils who received cyberpokryuk felt psychological distress or difficulties in their social lives. Common responses were “having difficulty in getting along with friends (elementary 18.9%; middle: 10.2%; high: 8.4%), “did not want to go to school” (elementary 21.6%; middle: 16.8%; high: 14.8%), did “want revenge” (elementary 21.6%; middle: 35.0%; high: 30.5%) (KISA, 2013). However, older pupils (middle: 34.0%; high school: 43.8%) tended to report “did not feel anything” compared to younger pupils (elementary: 29.7%) (KISA, 2013).
Witnessing Cyberbullying

Around 37% of middle-, and high-school pupils, and 12.6% of elementary school pupils had experience of witnessing cyberpokryuk (KISA, 2013). Almost half of them (48.6%) reported they did nothing after witnessing it because they thought of it as “nothing” (45.6%). “Don’t know what to do” was a common reason among elementary school pupils, whereas “it is nothing” was the most common reason among middle- and high-school pupils (KISA, 2013).

Reasons for Not Responding to Cyberbullying

Approximately 42% of pupils who received cyberpokryuk reported that they did nothing because “it may be not helpful” (64.4% of these respondents), particularly, elementary school pupils were afraid of being isolated more seriously after reporting the incident (28.6% of these respondents) (KISA, 2013).

RELATED VARIABLES

Individual Factors

Studies reported that some personal traits (i.e., aggression, impulsiveness, self-control) were related to cyberbullying behaviour (Kim and Yoon, 2012a; Nam and Kwon, 2013; Park, 2012). Kim and Yoon (2012a) investigated cyberbullying experiences of 1,303 middle-, and high-school pupils in South Korea in relation to their individual, home environment, and school factors. They found that aggressive traits of male pupils positively predicted cyberbullying behaviour (but not among girls). Similarly, aggression of both male and female pupils showed positive correlations with cyberbullying behaviour (Nam and Kwon, 2013, NIA, 2013; Sung, Kim, Lee, and Lim, 2006). Impulsiveness also influenced cyberbullying behaviour (Nam and Kwon, 2013). Self-control was negatively related to cyberbullying behaviours (NIA, 2013; Park, 2012). Nam and Kwon (2013) reported that guilty feelings were negatively related to cyberbullying behaviour. Oh (2011) reported that upper elementary pupils (aged 11-12 years) who had experiences of perpetrating cybergorophim showed lower levels of self-esteem than pupils who had not.

Cyber-victim experiences predicted internalizing (depressive symptoms) and externalizing problems (aggressive traits) which resulted in academic stress (Kim, 2013; Oh, 2013). Low levels of self-control were related to cyber-victim experiences (NIA, 2013; Park, 2012). The more cyber-victim experiences that the pupils had, the more suicidal thinking they tended to do (Seo, and Cho, 2013). Pupils who experienced cyber-victimization experiences incybergorophim had lower psychological well-being than pupils who had not (Oh, 2011).
Home Environmental Factors

Adolescents’ involvement in cyberbullying was related to relationships with their parents’ behaviour (a violent home atmosphere). Kim and Yoon (2012b) reported that witnessing parental violence and abusive experiences are positively related to cyberbullying behaviour. Furthermore, adolescents’ attachment to their parents predicted cyberbullying behaviour; the less attached to their parents, the more cyberbullying behaviour adolescents showed (Sung et al., 2006).

Cyber-victim experiences were related to parental attention and degree of parental control to their children’s Internet usage; these were negatively related to children’s low level of cyber-victim experiences (Cho, 2013). Parent-child communication skills negatively predicted adolescents’ cyber delinquency, and authoritarian and controlling parental attitude were related to it (Kim, 2014).

School Environmental Factors

Delinquent peers, low level of school satisfactions and bully or victim experiences in traditional bullying (i.e., face-to-face school bullying) are related to adolescents’ involvement in cyberbullying. Having, or connecting with delinquent peers was a significant factor for cyberbullying behaviours (Kim, 2013; Lee, and Jeong, 2014; Nam, and Jang, 2011). Lee and Jeong (2014) examined several factors which may predict willingness to perpetrate cyberbullying behaviour among 514 middle-, and high-school pupils in South Korea. They investigated hakkyo-pokryuk victim experience, cyber-victim experience, contact with delinquent peers, child abuse experience, and subjective norm of cyberbullying (e.g., how other people perceive my cyberbullying), perceived behavioural control for cyber-bullying (e.g., I can do cyberbullying if I want to). They found that delinquent peers, and positive subjective norms of cyberbullying influenced their willingness to participate in cyberbullying behaviour. Also, the NIA (2013) reported that low levels of school satisfaction predicted cyberbullying behaviour experiences.

Bully or victim experiences in traditional bullying are related to cyberbullying. Many studies (e.g., Cho, 2013; Ryu, 2013; Sung et al., 2006) have indicated strong relationships between bullying in cyberspace and victimization in traditional bullying. Ryu (2013) surveyed 1,088 middle-, and high-school pupils’ cyberbullying experiences in relation to their traditional school bullying experience in South Korea. The author found that cyberbullying experiences were positively correlated both with victim and bully experience of traditional bullying.

Cyber-victim experiences were predicted by bully or victim experiences in traditional bullying among adolescents (Cho, 2013). There were significant relationships between gipdan-ttdolim (group isolation) and cyberbullying. Victims as well as bullies of gipdan-ttdolim were more likely than non-victims of it to be either a cyberbully or a cyber-victim (Lee et al., 2013).

Among individual, home environment, school factors, cyber-victim experiences (from both unspecified and specified cyberbuly) cyber-victim experiences was most influential predictor for cyberbullying (Jun, and Lee, 2010; Kim, and Yoon, 2012a; Sung et al., 2006).
PERCEPTION

There are not many studies on pupils’ perception of cyberbullying. A few studies have investigated pupils’ perception of cyberbullying (Kim, and Yoon, 2012a, b; Sung et al., 2006). Kim and Yoon (2012b) reported that attitudes towards violence were related to individual’s cyberbullying experience. They found that tolerance of violence mediated the relationship between victim/cyber-victim experiences, and cyberbullying behaviour; victim and cyber-victim experiences increased tolerance of violence, which positively influenced cyberbullying behaviour. Pupils’ ethical sense was related to cyberbullying. Sung et al. (2006) indicated that a sense of ethics of information communication and experiences of punishment negatively predicted cyberbullying experiences. Many pupils were aware of the legal punishment regarding cyberbullying. Lee et al. (2013) reported that most of them (92.8%) replied that they were aware of legal punishments for perpetrating cyberbullying. Similarly, most middle- and high-school pupils (92%), and more than half of elementary school pupils (67.8%) knew about legal punishments for cyberpokryuk. Girls were more likely than boys to be aware of this (KISA, 2013).

PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION

Laws and policies mainly focused on hakkyo-pokryuk and those of cyberbullying have been established recently. The Hakkyo-pokryuk Prevention and Intervention Act in 2012 regulated types of hakkyo-pokryuk, and cyberittadolim was indicated as one type of it. The Act indicates that the school must organize the committee of hakkyo-pokryuk if an incidence of hakkyo-pokryuk is reported. The committee consists of teachers, parents, judge, lawyer, or medical doctors. The committee deliberates upon the episodes, and decides upon actions: protection for victim, punishment to bully, conciliation between victim and bully, and intervention program for the bully and bully’s parents, etc.

Studies or programs for prevention or intervention for cyberbullying have started since 2011/2012. Some websites which support governmental institutions were established to prompt action against the incidence of cyberbullying and to provide useful information for preventing cyberbullying. To intensify the reporting system, and expedite action for cyberbullying incidents, the Ministry of Education has operated an anti-bullying website called stopbullying since 2012 (http://www.stopbullying.or.kr). Anyone who is bullied can report their experience by telephone (117) or ask for help through the website or via mobile text – the pupil can then get help, including counselling services and coping strategies. This was operated anonymously, so that pupils can ask and obtain help when they are afraid of revenge or reluctant to reveal their name or position. Also, this site is connected to their school teacher, and if they want, their case can be talked with their school teachers.

The ethical culture regarding the use of the Internet or SNS has been emphasized. To increase the sensitivity of information ethics and to create a healthy Internet culture, the Korea Internet and Security Agency (KISA) operates a website (https://www.iculture.or.kr). This offers knowledge regarding the correct usage of the Internet, SNS, and diverse educational instructions by school levels.
Studies about prevention or intervention programs are few. The National Information society Agency (NIA) operates programs for information on ethics education. Schools can apply for the information ethics education program; teachers in the schools are trained and organize a pupils’ community called areumnuri-jikimi which consists of 30-40 pupil-volunteers. The pupils are educated by the teachers and work to form positive usage in cyberspace (i.e., increasing knowledge of cyberbullying, participating in prevention activities and conduct a campaign for correct Internet use).

These institutions and websites provide very useful information or programs but effectiveness of those programs has not been evaluated yet.

**CONCLUSION**

This chapter has looked at the studies from South Korean cyberbullying research, including findings about prevalence, related factors, and prevention/intervention efforts. Studies about cyberbullying among pupils have been actively conducted since 2011 and offer comprehensive information for the current state of cyberbullying in South Korea. Recent studies about cyberbullying in South Korea tend to use the term cyberpokryuk more so than other terms, because cyberbullying behaviour has become more diverse and the term includes wide ranges of cyber aggression. Verbal insult was the most common type of cyberpokryuk and cyberttadolim (exclusion) was common - particularly among girls.

There are many steps that are needed to move forward with cyberbullying studies in South Korea. Measurement issues (i.e., definition, types of, terms for, and a time reference period of cyberbullying) need to be better clarified, and there is a lack of studies about pupils’ perception of, or attitudes towards, cyberbullying. Considering pupils’ responses regarding reasons for bullying (i.e., “no reason,” “for fun,” “upset for the victim”), and justification of cyberbullying, an important concern to decrease cyberbullying in South Korea is to increase the knowledge of cyberbullying, and to change pupils’ perceptions through education. It is strongly required to educate pupils in relation to empathy, respect for others and moral responsibility for their behaviour. Current websites for preventing cyberbullying provide good examples of this.

Individual, home, and school related factors regarding cyberbullying have been investigated among Korean studies. These factors should be considered when developing prevention or treatment programs and helping victims and bullies. Studies suggested a need for concern and efforts by government, community, school, and home for announcing that cyberbullying is seriously harmful behaviour and emphasizing an ethical Internet culture. Current efforts provide good examples of this, but this is just beginning. Future studies and attempts should be provided for preventing Korean bullying.

**REFERENCES**


Chapter 10

NEEDS, DETERMINANTS, COPING AND STAND-ALONE INTERVENTIONS

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INTRODUCTION

Cyberbullying is a phenomenon that has been linked with several serious negative outcomes for both the victims and organizations (e.g., schools), including anxiety (Bauman, Toomey, and Walker, 2013; Campbell, Spears, Slee, Butler, and Kift, 2012), depression (Goebert, Else, Matsu, Chung-Do, and Chang, 2011; Helweg-Larsen, Schütt, and Larsen, 2012; Lam and Li, 2013), lower levels of self-esteem (Patchin and Hinduja, 2011), suicidal ideation (Goebert et al., 2011; Hinduja and Patchin, 2010), substance abuse (Mitchell, Ybarra, and Finkelhor, 2007), psychosomatic problems (Sourander, 2010), absenteeism, truancy, and decreased performance in school (Beran and Li, 2007; Schneider, O'Donnell, Stueve, and Coulter, 2012).

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Analysing the problem amongst children and young people (CYP) involved in cyberbullying is an important first step in reaching the population at risk (prevention of cyberbullying) and in need of help (combating cyberbullying and buffer the negative consequences). However, in the field of cyberbullying research there is still a lot of discussion about fundamental questions like the number of victims, bullies, and bystanders which are in need of help (see Kerstens and Wilsem, 2012), whether cyberbullying is just another form of traditional bullying and thus should be prevented and combatted together (Wolke, Leraya, and...
Tipett, 2015), whether it is an overrated phenomenon (Olweus, 2012), and whether cyberbullying is an antecedent for mental well-being or a consequence of low negative well-being (Gunther, DeSmet, Jacobs, and De Bourdeaudhuij, 2015). This paragraph describes some important features of the population at risk (prevention) and in need of help (combating cyberbullying and buffering negative consequences).

Factors Influencing the Variation in Cyberbullying Prevalence

In a brief history of cyberbullying research Peter Smith (2015) informs us that there is a huge variation in the prevalence of cyberbullying and that this is caused by: (a) the strictness of the timeframe, varying from at least one cyberbullying experience in their life time (Tokunaga, 2010) to once a month during the past six months, or at least twice or three times a month during the past six months (Solberg and Olweus, 2003; Vandebosch et al., 2006), (b) the direct versus indirect assessment method (e.g., “Are you the victim/perpetrator of cyberbullying?” versus “Which of the following behaviors did you experience and how often?”) (Vandebosch and Van Cleemput, 2009); (c) the description of the cyberbullying phenomenon preceding the direct assessment; (d) the cut-off score used to define a victim, bully, or bully/victim; (e) the nature and age of the sample; and (f) the year of data collection. These factors should be taken into account when the population at risk (for prevention purposes) and the population in need for help (for combatting and buffering the negative effects) is defined.

How to Choose an Instrument to Measure Cyberbullying Involvement

The direct versus indirect assessments used to rate the prevalence of cyberbullying has an enormous impact of the prevalence rates and the selected population. A study by Vandebosch and Van Cleemput (2009) in which the direct as well as the indirect method was used for cyberbullying assessment can demonstrate the differences in prevalence rates: when asked directly whether they had ever been actively or passively involved in bullying via the Internet or mobile phone, 11% answered that they had been a victim, 18% had been a perpetrator, and 28% had been involved as a bystander. When measured indirectly, the percentage of respondents who had experienced at least one form of 12 potentially offensive Internet and mobile phone practices was much higher: 62% had been victim, 53% had been perpetrator, and 76% had been bystanders.

The question remains which of the assessments will be the most adequate to select children involved in cyberbullying for standalone ICT interventions. Vandebosch and Van Cleemput (2009) concluded that measuring respondents’ experiences with a range of negative online experiences presumed to represent forms of cyberbullying, without taking into account the context in which these activities take place and the interpretations of those involved, is not an adequate method to investigate cyberbullying since it leads to over-estimations of the problem. We agree with the researchers, however for selecting CYP for a standalone ICT intervention aimed at preventing negative experiences, the broad objective indirect assessment is more suitable. For interventions aimed at combatting cyberbullying and buffering the negative impact, the subjective direct assessment is more suitable, since this will
lead to a selection of CYP that perceive themselves to be involved in cyberbullying. Additionally, for this target population it is also important to explicitly measure the need for help: Kerstens and Wilsem (2012) found that 24% reported being involved in at least one of five specific types of cyberbullying (e.g., spreading gossip, name-calling and threats, exclusion, sending or uploading upsetting photos and/or videos) in the past three months, but only 9% of them reported feeling bothered or upset by (one) of these negative experiences.

**Time Frame to Assess Cyberbullying**

Concerning the time frame, we believe that it is more adequate for stand-alone ICT interventions to take a rather short time frame. For the preventive ICT intervention the past three months might be a proper time frame: their negative experiences might evoke interest among these CYP for preventive tips, whereas for interventions aimed at combatting cyberbullying and buffering the negative affects a more stringent time frame (the past few weeks/days) might be more suitable, since these interventions are focused on CYP that directly need help. However, this must be explored in more detail.

**IMPORTANT AND CHANGEABLE DETERMINANTS THAT INCREASE VULNERABILITY FOR NEGATIVE OUTCOMES**

The purpose of this part of the chapter is to analyse some individual and contextual changeable determinants that increase adolescents’ risk of being cyber victimized, and consequently increase adolescents’ vulnerability for negative outcomes. The study of the determinants of cyber victimization is relatively recent, and although some consistent findings have been found, so far there are still some gaps and inconsistencies (Álvarez-García, Pérez, González, and Pérez, 2015; Menesini and Spiel, 2012). Given the fact that most of the studies are correlational (= cross-sectional), causal claims cannot always be made. Nevertheless, even without being able to establish causality, knowledge on these relationships may provide valuable insights for understanding and reducing cyber victimization.

Among the determinants on the individual level, self-esteem has been relatively consistently associated with being the victim of cyberbullying. Victims of cyberbullying often have lower levels of self-esteem (Patchin and Hinduja, 2011) and a low self-esteem has been mentioned as a predictor of cyber victimization rather than an outcome, as several longitudinal studies have found that lower self-esteem at baseline was associated with cyber victimization at follow-up (Modecki, Barber, and Vernon, 2013; Yang et al., 2013). Also, in a longitudinal study by Hemphill and Heerde (2014), it was concluded that emotion control in adolescence (e.g., the ability to control one’s own temper when somebody is angry) protected against being a victim of cyberbullying in young adulthood. In addition, in a cross-sectional study, it was shown that, beyond cultural differences, low self-control (= a manifestation of self-regulation capacity) was directly as well as indirectly (via e.g., externalizing behaviour) linked to cyber victimization (Vazsonyi, Machackova, Sevcikova, Smahel, and Cerma, 2012). Furthermore, overall lack of self-efficacy (i.e., an individual’s belief in his or her ability to execute behaviors necessary to produce desired outcomes (Bandura, 1977) as well as
having poor social skills (Navarro, Yubero, Larrañaga, and Martínez, 2012) were positively associated with victimization, and victims have been consistently found to show low levels of perceived social intelligence (Hunt, Peters, and Rapee, 2012; Schultz-Krumholz and Scheithauer, 2009). Cyber victimization has been correlated with high levels of moral disengagement (Kowalski, Giumetti, Schroeder, and Lattanner, 2014). Also internalizing problems predicts cyber victimization over time (Reijntjes, Kamphuis, Prinzie, and Telch, 2010).

Previous research clearly shows that traditional bullying is one of the strongest predictors for cyberbullying (see Wolke, Leray and Tipett, 2015) and young people who experience both traditional and cyber victimization are at particular risk of experiencing negative emotions (see Gimenez-Gualdo, Hunter, Durkin, Arnaiz, and Maquilon, 2015).

Lastly, technological determinants have been linked with cyber victimization. Most of the previous studies demonstrated that frequency of Internet use related positively with cyber victimization (see for a review: Álvarez-García et al., 2015; Kowalski et al., 2014). For example, victims of cyberbullying were found to engage in high levels of Internet use (Wolak, Mitchell, and Finkelhor, 2007), spend more hours per day using a computer than those who were not victimized (Mishna, Khoury-Kassabri, Gadalla, and Daciuk, 2012). Also, weekly online game use predicted cyber victimization (Chang et al., 2015). In addition, Internet risk behaviors are consistently associated with cyber victimization. In recent cross-sectional and longitudinal studies, risky Internet behaviors have been shown to be strongly associated with and strongly predict cyber victimization (Álvarez-García et al., 2015; Chang et al., 2015; Helweg-Larsen et al., 2012). In a meta-analysis (Kowalski et al., 2014) investigating risk and protective factors of cyber victimization, it was concluded that one of the largest effect sizes (although still small), was observed for risky online behavior. As such, children who were more often cyberbullied have been found to be less aware of the risks involved in particular uses of the Internet, such as sharing passwords with others, publishing personal information on a blog, or talking with individuals they did not know in their offline lives (Hinduja and Patchin, 2009; Mishna et al., 2012; Walrave and Heirman, 2011).

Regarding contextual determinants, one of the most frequently analysed determinants that specifically relates to cyberbullying has been parental control of technology, that is, the extent to which parents monitor children's use of technology and have an element of control over their child's online behaviour. Kowalski et al.'s (2014) summary of findings shows that cyber victimization is associated with reported low levels of parental control of technology (see also Aoyama, Ulsumi, and Hasegawa, 2012). It seems that families of victimized adolescents usually established less rules about Internet usage and used filter software less often than families of non-victimized adolescents (Mesch, 2009), that cyberbully victims are more likely to have an e-mail account not accessible to parents (Twyman, Saylor, Taylor, and Comeaux, 2010) and that parental control was a risk factor of cyber victimization (Álvarez-García et al., 2015). In contrast, other studies showed that there was no statistically significant association between parental control and cyber victimization (Mishna et al., 2012; Zhou et al., 2013). Positive and negative parenting styles have also been studied in relation with cyber victimization. In a recent meta-analysis, it was found that cyber victimization was related to less parental involvement and support, less warmth and affection, worse parent-child communication, less positive and more negative parenting in general, more abuse and neglect, maladaptive parenting, and overprotection (Lereya, Samara, and Wolke, 2013; Dehue, Bolman, Völlink, and Pouwels, 2012). In addition, it was shown that adolescents living in
single-parent homes who were exposed to low family and low peer support were at a greater risk for being cyber victimized in the future (Fanti, Demetriou, and Hawa, 2012). Therefore, in line with Hodges and Perry (1999) it was suggested that interpersonal risk is an important factor in predicting cyber victimization, and this is especially true for children from single-parent families (Fanti et al., 2012). Other studies did not find parental support to be predictive of cyber victimization (Black, 2014). Kowalski et al. (2014) also identified a number of school risk factors of cyber victimization: individuals who report higher levels of cyber victimization also report lower levels of school safety and school climate.

In conclusion, some young people are more at risk of being cyber victimized than others. However, not all young people who encounter cyberbullying suffer negative effects. Most children do not report being bothered and respond in a positive way to risky online experiences (Livingstone, Haddon, Görzig, and Ölafsson, 2011). In other words: they are resilient in the face of cyberbullying (i.e., have the ability to deal with negative experiences online). In contrast, some children feel more upset and experience more difficulties in responding effectively to cyber victimization. These reactions to the demands of a stressor (e.g., receiving a hurtful e-mail) is called coping and can be defined as the cognitive and behavioral effort employed to reduce, master, or tolerate internal and external demands that are the consequence of stressful events (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984). Besides understanding who is most at risk of cyber victimization, a better understanding of the process of coping with cyber victimization is important in order to develop behavioral change programs (Bartholomew, Parcel, Kok, and Gottlieb, 2006) to help young people adequately cope with cyberbullying and consequently reduce victimization of cyberbullying and its negative effects, which is to develop online resilience.

EVIDENCE BASED COPING STRATEGIES TO PREVENT CYBERBULLYING: WHAT WORKS?

Coping Strategies in Relation to Health Outcomes: What Do We Know?

A classical framework for evaluating processes of coping with stressful events is Lazarus and Folkman’s (1984) Transactional Model of Stress and Coping. It emphasizes the importance of a cognitive judgement or subjective perception, which in turn impacts how individuals cope with a stressful situation. The model conceptualizes coping efforts along two dimensions: (a) problem-oriented or active coping strategies, and (b) emotion-oriented or passive coping strategies. Active strategies are geared to solving the problem and hence to decrease the stress, whereas passive strategies are geared to control the stress by cognitively reinterpreting the problem, for example by readjusting the perception of the problem, by making positive comparisons, and by putting the problem into perspective (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984). Other passive strategies include avoidance or distancing oneself from the problem through, for example, substance use.

Coping strategies have differential impacts on health (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984; Lazarus, 1999). Numerous studies have investigated the relationship between coping and health related problems. It has consistently been found that active strategies positively impact health: being negatively related to depressive symptoms and health complaints. In contrast,
emotional coping has been found to negatively impact health, as they do not function to change a problematic situation or remove the actual stressor (Folkman, Lazarus, Gruen, and DeLongis, 1986; Garnefski, Pannebakker, Ruchlewksa, and Kraaij, 2003; Lechner, Bolman, and van Dalen, 2007; Moos and Holahan, 2007; Stanton, Reverson, and Tennen, 2007; Völlink, Bolman, Eppingbroek, and Dehue, 2013; Ybarra, Diener-West, and Leaf, 2007).

Effectivity of Coping Strategies: Personality Traits and Context

Although coping is distinguished from personality characteristics, it can be seen as a trait or disposition based on personality characteristics (Carver and Schreier, 1994; Moos and Holahan, 2003). Indeed, individuals who generally use problem-focused coping less often use emotion-focused strategies (Nielsen and Knardahl, 2014). Concurrent research in biology and epidemiology has shown that some personality dispositions like optimism are linked to coping. Optimism is defined as the tendency to have positive rather than negative generalized expectancies for outcomes. These expectancies are rather stable over time and across situations (Carver and Connor-Smith, 2010). According to the Cognitive Activation Theory of Stress (CATS), coping strategies are selected based on previous learning as well on expectations of the outcomes. Individuals who generally have a positive outcome expectation use problem-focused coping strategies, whereas individuals who generally have the perception that situations are not controllable consider their actions as useless or as actions which decrease chances on positive outcomes. So, they expect no relation or a negative relation between actions and outcomes (Ursin and Eriksen, 2010). Thus it seems that optimism and related outcome expectancies and controllability of the situation influence the coping strategies.

Do We Have Enough Insight in Effectiveness of Coping Strategies to Advise Cyberbully Victims?

From the above it can be concluded that emotion-focused coping strategies lead to more health problems than problem-focused strategies, and that emotion-focused strategies are used in situations which are perceived as uncontrollable.

Coping in the context of cyberbullying has received a substantial amount of attention, because ineffective coping strategies appear to maintain cyber victimization (Skrzypiec, Slee, Murray-Harvey, and Pereira, 2011). Vandebosch and Van Cleemput (2009) found that contextual features, such as the kind of relationship between victim and perpetrator, are relevant for the emotional impact of the cyberbullying experience. So it seems plausible that this relationship affects the effectiveness of the coping strategy. One important aspect regarding bullying is the power differential between bully and victim and the inferior position of victims (Einarsen, Hoel, Zapf, and Cooper, 2011; Leymann, 1996; Smith and Brain, 2000; Smith et al., 2008), which may implicate that victims of bullying perceive their situation as less controllable. Hence, it may be expected that they often use emotion-focused coping strategies. This has been confirmed in the literature. Victims of bullying at work tend to use emotion-focused coping strategies (Djurkovic, McCormack, and Casimir, 2005; Hogh and Dofradottir, 2001; Ólafsson and Jóhannsdóttir, 2004), victimized CYP of traditional bullying
tend to use passive or avoidance styles and are less likely to use active styles (Skrzypiec et al., 2011; Waasdorp and Bradshaw, 2011), and victims of cyberbullying use less problem-focused coping strategies (Cassidy and Taylor, 2005), more depressive coping (Völlink, Bolman, Dehue, and Jacobs, 2013), and are less likely to seek social support, compared to other strategies (Dehue, Bolman, and Völlink, 2008; Kowalski, Limber, and Agatston, 2008; Parris, Varjas, Meyers, and Cutts, 2011; Slonje, Smith, and Frisén, 2013).

In some cases however, problem-focused strategies are not successful (Perren et al., 2012). In one study, young people were asked which strategies against victimization of cyberbullying were effective and which were not. The study showed that victims used technical solutions like blocking contacts, sought social support, and confronted their bullies online, which are active strategies through which the problem should be solved. However, they also indicated that these strategies are not effective (Machackova, Cerna, Sevcikova, Dedkova, and Daneback, 2013). Thus, problem-focused coping strategies are not always to the benefit of victims. This is in line with CATS and Zapf and Gross (2001) suggesting that emotion-focused strategies are more suitable when control over the situation is lacking. This was corroborated in the work of Dehue et al., (2008) and Parris et al., (2011), in which students recommended strategies like distancing and ignoring. In the study of Machackova et al., (2013), victims indeed rated ignoring as emotionally helpful. Machackova et al. (2013) and Parris et al., (2011) concluded that ignoring might be a good solution for victims of cyberbullying and they recommend taking such “inaction” into account when elaborating on coping strategies against cyberbullying.

These results suggest that more research is needed to effectively advise cyberbully victims, as knowledge regarding the effectiveness of these strategies in cases of cyberbullying is still scarce. This is partially due to the lack of instruments for the assessment of coping strategies in the context of cyberbullying. Almost all studies investigating coping with cyberbullying used instruments which measure coping in stressful situations. Cyberbullying however has some specific features which are distinguished from stressful situations in general. Recently, new instruments have been developed to measure coping with cyberbullying, like the Cyberbullying Coping Questionnaire (CCQ) (Jacobs, Völlink, Dehue, and Lechner, 2015), and the Coping with Cyberbullying Questionnaire (CWCBQ) (Sticca et al., 2015).

Is It Possible to Advise Children and Young People?

Although more research is obviously needed, we cannot afford to wait as children and young people need help and advice. We have to base the advice for these young people on the most conclusive knowledge we have so far. Seeking social support from parents and peers, for example, is proven to be an effective way to prevent victimization and to control negative outcomes (Kowalski et al., 2014). Since CYP tend to keep silent (Tokunaga, 2010), they have to be convinced to inform their parents and peers when they are online victimized.

Advice for CYP may be based on determinants of cyber victimization as described above. The way of using the Internet appears to be an important determinant. Victims should learn how to behave on the Internet (Kowalski et al., 2014) and how to use the Internet in a safe and secure manner (Álvarez-García et al., 2015; Barlińska, Szuster, and Winiewski, 2013; Chang et al., 2015; Helweg-Larsen et al., 2012; Hinduja and Patchin, 2009; Mishna et al.,
Another important determinant is the control over emotions whilst using the Internet (Hemhill and Heerde, 2014; Vazsonyi et al., 2012). Moreover, as described above, providing training to increase social skills (Navarro et al., 2012) should also be effective. In the meantime, we have to try to influence their outcome expectations, which are determinants of coping behaviour (Ursin and Eriksen, 2010), as stated above.

For some advice, positive effects are plausible. Since evaluative thoughts mediate the relation between the interpretation of the situation and the emotional, behavioral, and inferential reactions to these events (Ellis, 2001; Ringrose, and Nijenhuis, 1986), awareness in the relation between a thought, feeling, and behavior should be raised, and irrational thoughts should be replaced by more rational thoughts.

Is It Necessary to Tailor Advice for Children and Young People?

Advice cannot be effective if it does not fit the personality dispositions, outcome expectancies, and knowledge of the receiver. Prior research has shown that CYP who are resilient, tend towards a problem-solving approach of coping, such as deleting unwelcome messages and blocking contacts in the context of cyberbullying, or seeking social support from peers and adults (D’Haenens, Vandoninck, and Donoso, 2013; Hunter, Boyle, and Warden, 2004; Machmutow, Perren, Sticca, and Alsaker, 2012; Matsunaga, 2011). It is also suggested that optimism, related outcome expectancies, and controllability of the situation influence the use of coping strategies (Carver and Connor-Smith, 2010; Ursin and Eriksen, 2010). Also, as mentioned above, traditional bullying is one of the strongest predictors for cyberbullying, and CYP can be involved in bullying as a passive victim, a bully, a bully/victim, and a bystander. Bully/victims are victims who retaliate by bullying, probably because they expect positive outcomes of this behavior. Moreover, in evaluating their intervention, Jacobs, Völlink, Dehue, and Lechner, (2014a) suggest that lower-educated cyberbully victims aged between 12-15 years old do not like to read a lot. Hence, victims should be offered intervention strategies based on individual needs (Patchin and Hinduja, 2011).

Huang and Chou (2010) found that the most frequent behavior reported by victims and cyberbullies was threatening and harassment, followed by making jokes about someone or making fun of someone, and lastly spreading rumors. The impact of the cyberbullying experience and the kind of emotion that is evoked may depend on specific bullying behavior. For example, threats might evoke anxiety whereas making jokes and name-calling might evoke anger, and placing humiliating photos and video clips might evoke shame. These different emotions require specific coping strategies. In line with Vandebosch and Van Cleemput (2009), effectiveness of coping strategies also depends on contextual features like the relationship between victim and perpetrator.

Therefore, it is of utmost importance that information and advice in interventions is tailored. Important factors for tailoring are personality features, educational level and age, (cyber)bullying behaviors, contextual features, and roles of involvement in (cyber)bullying. Tailoring is possible through the use of web-based interventions. Research has shown that computer-tailored messages are perceived as more personal and relevant than general information, are more often read, saved, remembered, and discussed (Brug, Oenema, and
Campbell, 2003), and are more effective, that is, result in more improvement in behavior, than general information (Krebs, Prochaska, and Rossi, 2010).

**STAND-ALONE ICT INTERVENTIONS**

**Stand-Alone ICT Interventions to Prevent and Combat Cyberbullying:**

Theoretical and Evidence-Based Methods

Cyberbullying intervention resources can be divided into school-based and stand-alone interventions. School-based interventions are programs which are used in classrooms or whole schools, for example Medienhelden (Wölfer et al., 2014), ConRed (Ortega-Ruiz, Del Rey, and Casas, 2012), Let’s not fall in a trap (Menesini, Nocentini, and Palladino, 2012), Cyber friendly schools project (Cross, Roberts, and Slee, 2013), and Survivors (Amse, 2014), containing for example; lessons, videos, presentations, discussions, and workshops. Most of the programs, however, are lacking scientific merit, due to a lack of inclusion of a follow up measure and a failure to use random assignment at the classroom or school level and the effectiveness is not impressive (Cioppa, O’Neil, and Graig, 2015).

Stand-alone interventions are programs that can be used independently of schools and classrooms, at the time and place of benefit to the user. Most stand-alone interventions are psycho-educational websites. A host of these sites are provided, containing tips, advice, and recommendations regarding cyberbullying. The advantage is that the users can select items they need. The problem is, however, that many of these materials and programs, whilst well intentioned, do not have a theoretical base, nor has the effectiveness of their materials been investigated (Völlink, Dehue, Mc Guckin, and Jacobs, 2016). There are some exceptions which will be described below. These stand-alone interventions are tailored to personality characteristics and needs and are based on theory and tested on effectivity.

*FearNot* (Sapouna, Enz, Samaras, and Wolke, 2015) is a game in which the participants have an active role, in that they are asked to help the victims. The game shows them the effects of their support. The intervention consists of a virtual simulation of a primary school environment in which virtual characters can take the role of a bully, victim, bully-assistant, victim-defender, or bystander. It is based on the proven educational benefits of role-playing as a form of experiential learning, a process in which experience is transformed in acquired knowledge. Role-playing is proven to be particularly effective with social and emotional difficulties in school (Sapouna et al., 2015).

*Online Pestkoppenstoppen* (Jacobs, Völlink, Dehue, and Lechner, 2014b) or “Stop the Bully Online” has been developed for victims and bully/victims of (cyber)bullying, and contains three online tailored modules. The intervention is based on principles of Rational Emotive (Behavioral) Therapy (RE(B)T) (Ellis, 2001). The first module aims to teach participants about the connection between thoughts and behaviour. In the second module participants learn effective coping strategies in response to cyberbullying, and in the third module participants learn to use the Internet in a safe and secure manner. This intervention is developed according to the Intervention Mapping protocol, which consists of six steps that can be used as an iterative process for theory- and evidence-based development of health promotion interventions. The aforementioned needs assessment is the first step, the
Determinants influencing victimization are needed for the second step, and the selection of theory-based intervention methods contains the third step. Online Pestkoppenstoppen uses several theoretical and evidence-based methods like modelling by introducing role models, demonstrating how to act, repeated exposure, consciousness raising, guided practice, and persuasive communication (Jacobs et al., 2014b).

*Friendly Attac* (Van Cleemput et al., 2015) is a serious game for bystanders of bullying. It is an online, one-player puzzle game with a virtual character and bullying experience scenarios in which players can choose several behavioural alternatives, like ignoring the bully and standing up for the victim. Like Pestkoppenstoppen, it is developed according to the Intervention Mapping protocol, and uses modelling and active learning for behavior change. Moreover, the intervention is based on a narrative, which is developed according to several theoretical statements. For example, the statement that participants who are more engaged in a story show more story-consistent beliefs and opinions, and that this “transportation” is positively predicted by story-line appeal, quality of production, and by unobtrusiveness of persuasive subtext (Van Cleemput et al., 2015).

*The Empathic Virtual Buddy* (Van Der Zwaan, 2014) automates the one-to-one online counseling between victimized children and the virtual buddy, the latter providing emotional support and practical advice on how to deal with the situation. The intervention is developed according to a conceptual communication model that is based on the literature on social support. The model specifies the content of conversations in which social support is provided, and contains several types of social support, such as sympathy, compliments, advice, encouragement, and technical support. The model also specifies the structure and sequence, or pattern, of conversations (question and answer).

*The Reporting Button* is an intervention specifically aimed at combatting cyberbullying and buffering the negative effects in a short time frame. The visitor of the website is provided with a button that can be installed on the computer and that can then be used to report an incident of cyberbullying. The site also provides information on how to prevent cyberbullying and what to do if it occurs. Free telephone numbers, a link to the bullying-website Pestweb (http://pestweb.nl), and a link to chat sessions with co-workers of the bullying-website is provided. The site also contains information on how to report cyberbullying incidents to the police.

**Stand-Alone ICT Interventions: Important Conditions to Let It Work**

The paragraphs above refer to several useful conditions to let a stand-alone intervention work. First of all, the intervention should be tailored on relevant needs and determinants, like personality dispositions, knowledge, emotions, and outcome expectancies of the target group. However, the number of questionnaires necessary for tailoring should be limited, and questionnaires should be kept as short as possible (Edwards et al., 2009; Jacobs et al., 2014a).

The content is an important condition for interventions to be successful. Appreciation of the materials seems to depend on the novelty and on the helpfulness of the information. Therefore information should be new and related to solving examples of specific cyberbullying situations, and less attention should be given to abstract concepts (e.g., recognizing, disputing, and replacing irrational thoughts (Jacobs et al., 2014b). In the meantime, to keep the participants motivated, the information provided should be limited and
not too complex (Baumeister, 2014; Brouwer et al., 2009; Jacobs et al., 2014a). Another possibility to reach the target population is the gamification of the online ICT-intervention. Nacke, Bateman, and Mandryk (2014) and Yee, Ducheneaut, and Nelson (2012) distinguish seven gamer types that differ in the features that make games interesting: the achiever, the conqueror, the daredevil, the mastermind, the seeker, the socializer, and the survivor. The achiever, for example, is goal-oriented and gets satisfaction from completing tasks, whereas the seeker is more curious, enjoys exploring things, and discovering new situations.

Also the structure is an important condition. Online interventions should have an easy login procedure, should be clearly structured with a simple design (Brouwer et al., 2009; Schneider, van Osch, Schulz, Kremers, and de Vries, 2012), should have a progress bar and the option to partially complete questionnaires, and the choice to continue at a more convenient time (Schneider et al., 2012). Moreover, since re-visits are relatively uncommon (Schulz et al., 2014) and interest in returning to intervention websites decreases over time (Gustafson et al., 2001), participants should be able to select and use intervention components immediately (Jacobs et al., 2014a) or should be able to complete the intervention by returning to the website a number of times. Sessions should be short; website visits should not be longer than 17 minutes (Verheijden, Jans, and Hildebrandt, 2008). Moreover, the online world of adolescents is subject to change rapidly, so websites should be updated on a regular basis (Leslie, Marshall, Owen, and Bauman, 2005).

In evaluating Online Pestkoppenstoppen, Jacobs et al. (2014a) found that many low-educated adolescents lack the motivation and discipline to complete their intervention on an individual basis. They concluded that this low-educated target group needs more guidance and structure in using the intervention. Adding face-to-face elements with parents or teachers to stimulate engagement might also strongly increase retention.

Although stand-alone ICT interventions are to the benefit of adolescents because of tailoring possibilities and the possibility of completing the intervention at convenient moments and places, there are many aspects that should be taken into account to make them successful and effective.

REFERENCES


Each period of technological advancement brings with it excitement and opportunity whilst also being accompanied by worry and concern regarding the risk and potential harm posed to society - particularly its young. With the arrival of television there was concern that children would be exposed to unsuitable content, that they would damage their eyes by sitting too close to the television screen, and that their academic and intellectual development would be impaired and hindered. Similarly, widespread access to video games (especially violent ones) in the 1990s raised many of the same concerns. Historically, there were many other technological advances to create anxiety. Cassette players with earphones might have damaged the hearing of a generation. Before that, there was the supposed danger of records being played backwards to communicate satanic messages. In the 1800s, there was worry about the problem of students becoming overly reliant on paper and neglecting to learn how to properly use a slate and chalk, for when paper would inevitably be in short supply. In the first part of the 21st century, the focus has been firmly on Internet access, and in particular, the risks posed to children and young people (CYP). This brief look at historical advances and the challenges of technological progress begs the question - why do we always feel the need to “reinvent the wheel”? Just as those people who were alive at the beginning of the agricultural revolution or the industrial revolution faced challenges, those of us living through the “digital age” face new and previously unimaginable tests. Can we not, in a Piagetian manner, just assimilate the digital challenges into existing schemas - like the schema we all have for “coping” with other, more familiar stressors? However, in saying this, it must be acknowledged that the online world poses unique challenges.

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Staksrud and Livingstone (2009) make a distinction between different types of risks faced online, including: content risks (receiving unwanted or inappropriate mass communication); contact risks (participation in risky communication); and conduct risks (contributing to risky content or contact). These types of risk can be further broken down into risk categories depending on their commercial-, aggression-, sexual- or value-based nature. Bullying would most likely fall under the sub-types of aggressive conduct (for the perpetrator) and aggressive contact (for the targeted individual). Whilst cyberbullying is certainly considered a risk to CYP, it does not always lead to psychological harm. Indeed, harm is not an inevitable outcome of risky behaviour. Harmful effects of cyberbullying can be mediated and moderated by variables such as the severity of the online content, the public access to the abusive content, and, importantly, the coping strategies used by those targeted and those around them, such as parents and teachers. Although people have always found ways to cope with risks posed, it is important to keep in mind that these strategies are not always advantageous.

Just like adults, modern CYP will use both adaptive and maladaptive coping strategies. However, unfortunately their developmental stage does not always work in their favour. A frontal cortex that is not fully matured to aid reasoned and considered decision making and to support a capacity to foresee consequences can lead to impulsive reactions. Furthermore, the invincibility fable (belief that one is invulnerable to risk: e.g., Berger, 2011) which is characteristic of this age group is not associated with cautious risk assessment, and indeed may put teenagers at increased risk for exploitation online. For instance, a teenage boy who shares intimate photos of himself with his girlfriend through private messaging may underestimate both the risk and potential personal impact of such content being shared with others. Furthermore, upon discovering that such personal material has been widely disseminated with his schoolmates, he may respond instantly and aggressively, serving to escalate an already precarious situation. So, this begs the question: how can we best support CYP to deal with aggression and bullying online?

In the current chapter, both of the terms cyberbullying and cyber aggression (see Corcoran, Mc Guckin and Prentice [2015] for examination of cyberbullying and cyber aggression) will be discussed. In the current context, both refer to peer-to-peer abuse in a cyber setting. The purpose of the current chapter is to review the knowledge on coping strategies in relation to cyber victimization, and to offer direction regarding the next steps needed to better equip young Internet users to protect themselves online. The work of Kochenderfer-Ladd and Skinner (2002) emphasises the importance of exercising caution when assessing the effects of coping strategies, given that poor selection of coping may increase risk. Therefore, we will review the relevant literature examining the concepts of stress and coping before looking more closely at the literature which pertains to individual coping with bullying specifically. Furthermore, this chapter will review some of the societal or community-based efforts to cope with bullying and victimization, such as intervention programmes, national and international guidelines, and proposed legislative changes. Ultimately we will argue that, although the cyber world entails some daunting challenges, this is not the first point in history at which humans have felt threatened by new technology. Thus we should consider what we “already know” about effective coping and strive to further our empirical knowledge.
COPING WITH PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTRESS

Coping can be defined as “. . . the things that people do to avoid being harmed by life strains” (Pearlin and Schooler, 1978, p. 2). That is coping includes the efforts people make to prevent, avoid, or control emotional distress. According to Pearlin and Schooler (1978) coping is a broad term and coping resources include behaviours, cognitions, and perceptions which can prove useful when one is faced with stressors or problems. Thus, when considering aggressive victimization in cyberspace, different individuals may have different behavioural responses, differing thoughts and emotions regarding the incident, and indeed may perceive the aggression as more or less harmful, intentional, or severe than another individual would.

Lazarus and Folkman (1984) define coping as “. . . constantly changing cognitive and behavioural efforts to manage specific external and/or internal demands that are appraised as taxing or exceeding the resources of the person” (p. 141) which suggests that coping strategies are employed when there are demands which exceed an individual's resources and furthermore, coping includes attempts to manage these demands. Thus, the effectiveness of coping strategies is not integral to recognising the response as coping. For example, externalising one's distress through stamping on the Smartphone which delivered aggressive, hurtful content, may not be adaptive, but it may still be considered a coping response. Furthermore, where aggressive behaviours online are not considered to be especially taxing or distressing, perhaps coping strategies are unnecessary. It is important to be mindful of the great variations in individual responses to cyber aggression. Whilst for Jane, an embarrassing photo shared on a social media platform may be highly distressing, it may not bother Sophie in the least. However, how Jane and Sophie respond to (or “cope with”) the sharing of such a photo may have important implications for how the perpetrator(s) proceed(s) thereafter. Furthermore, coping strategies may include efforts which are effective, ineffective, or indeed harmful in terms of protecting physical and psychological well-being or in stopping the aggression from recurring. Indeed, Carr (2011) suggests that different coping styles include strategies which can be functional or dysfunctional. For instance, although physical exercise may constitute functional emotion-focused coping, aggressive acts may constitute dysfunctional emotion-focused coping.

Lazarus and Folkman (1984) suggest that coping functions defined in relation to specific situations are more situation-specific, and therefore, it is important to examine coping in relation to traditional bullying and cyber aggression problems in a situation-specific manner. In other words, it is important that researchers examine coping with cyber aggression by looking at real experiences of coping with such victimization or by examining participants' suggested coping strategies in response to victimization, as opposed to studying general coping styles. Folkman and Lazarus (1980) describe how “. . . coping efforts serve two main functions: the management or alteration of the person-environment relationship that is the source of stress (problem-focused coping) and the regulation of stressful emotions (emotion-focused coping)” (p. 223). That is, when faced with aggression on a social media platform, the victimised individual might choose a strategy that is problem-focused, such as cancelling their account, blocking the aggressor, or reporting the abusive content to the provider. Alternatively, the targeted person may choose to spend time with friends who can help to take their mind off the upsetting incident, or they might binge eat chocolate and
sweets so as to divert their attention to some transitory pleasure in an effort to regulate distressing emotions. A person may also employ both problem-focused and emotion-focused strategies. Appraisal theory suggests that emotion-focused strategies are generally used when a situation is considered to be too difficult to rectify or improve, whilst problem-focused coping is generally employed when one feels the situation can be dealt with effectively (Folkman and Lazarus, 1980; Lazarus and Folkman, 1984). One of the difficulties of dealing with cyber aggression is that without knowledge of appropriate coping responses, victimization can seem overwhelming and unmanageable.

According to Roth and Cohen (1986) coping can be categorised as approach or avoidance strategies, that is, “...cognitive and emotional activity that is orientated either toward or away from threat” (p. 813). Roth and Cohen (1986) suggest that avoidance can be adaptive initially when an individual has limited emotional resources and can be appropriate when the situation is beyond one's control. By contrast, approach strategies are appropriate when there is the possibility to control the source of stress. Therefore, when a teenager is overwhelmed by cyber aggression and does not have the tools or social support to stop the abusive behaviour, it may be adaptive in the short term to avoid social media. However, over time this strategy could be isolating and ultimately harmful. In addition, Lazarus and Folkman (1984) argue that how we cope can be determined by a range of factors including physical health, psychological factors such as positive beliefs, and personal competencies such as social skills. Thus, CYP who are victimised via social media may be better equipped to cope in an effective manner to stop the problem and to buffer the negative psychological effects, if they feel well physically, have high self-efficacy with regard to their ability to deal with the issue at hand, and can garner support from friends, teachers, and family.

When examining how people deal with cyber victimization, it is evident from this brief review of the general coping literature that coping strategies include thoughts and behaviours which may help or hinder both success in ending the victimization and success in protecting psychological well-being. In their literature review of coping with cyberbullying, Perren et al. (2012a, 2012b) make this distinction between combating cyber victimization and buffering the negative effects. In this field we are faced with many challenges. As Coolican (2007) highlights, there is no guarantee that a solution to a problem will succeed every time it is tried, or that it will be successful with specific individuals. Each individual will behave in different ways, even though external circumstances can sometimes be almost identical. As the old adage goes, in psychology we deal with people, not chemicals - that is, we are trying to do important science but using dirty test-tubes. Taking again the example of Jane and Sophie; both are teenage girls who have been “victim” to an embarrassing photo posted online. Yet, each girl will have their own unique set of situational components (e.g., concurrent stresses, appraisal of the situation), self-related components (e.g., internal locus of control, psychological maturity), supports (e.g., family support, community), and strategies (e.g., preferred coping responses) which can impact how they experience and deal with the situation (Schlossberg, Waters, and Goodman, 1995). In other words, each person will bring a unique array of assets and limitations to every experience; making it exceptionally difficult for researchers to provide a generic set of coping strategies for a wide array of potential victim experiences. Despite such real issues, we are tasked with supporting CYP to make better decisions in response to online risk, and therefore, we must start by examining how
CYP respond to victimization and what we know about the effectiveness of such responses in terms of (a) combating cyber victimization and (b) buffering the negative effects. Therefore, the next section reviews the literature regarding how CYP cope with peer-to-peer bullying and aggression.

**COPING WITH TRADITIONAL BULLYING: WHAT WORKS?**

When exploring how individuals cope with bullying, researchers have used a variety of methods including retrospective accounts of victimization, observation, self-report questionnaires, and interviews. Whilst some researchers have assessed victims’ coping styles in relation to coping with daily stress (e.g., Escobar, Fernández-Baena, Miranda, Trianes, and Cowie, 2011), others have utilised hypothetical scenarios (e.g., Andreou, 2001), and then again other studies examined how victims coped with real experiences of victimization (e.g., Frisén, Hasselblad, and Holmqvist, 2012). Although varied methods are useful in terms of enhancing our knowledge of how individuals respond to victimization, it is difficult to accurately compare findings across the research. The literature has also highlighted that coping styles are selected based on different factors such as the types of bullying one is faced with (Kanetsuna, Smith, and Morita, 2006; Kristensen and Smith, 2003; Murray-Harvey, Skrzypiec, and Slee, 2012), appraising the situation as either a threat or challenge (Hunter and Boyle, 2004), environmental aspects of the situation such as the school environment (Murray-Harvey et al., 2012), and personal factors like one's capability to regulate emotions (Kochenderfer-Ladd, 2004; Spence, De Young, Toon, and Bond, 2009). Thus it can be difficult to find a coherent thread in the literature, which is also limited by a lack of focus on the effectiveness of coping in stopping the victimization or reducing its negative consequences.

Despite such limitations it is evident that some trends emerge across studies. For example, it seems that females are more inclined to seek social support than males (Hunter and Boyle, 2004; Kristensen and Smith, 2003; Murray-Harvey et al., 2012; Naylor, Cowie, and del Ray, 2001; Olafsen and Viemerö, 2000; Smith and Shu, 2000), and this may in fact be an effective strategy (Kochenderfer-Ladd, 2004; Smith, Talamelli, Cowie, Naylor, and Chauhan, 2004). Also, similar to more general psychological literature, females seem more inclined to engage in internalising coping (Kristensen and Smith, 2003), whilst males tend to engage in externalising coping (Kochenderfer-Ladd and Skinner, 2002; Kristensen and Smith, 2003) and are quicker to retaliate (Smith and Shu, 2000). In addition, those who are both perpetrators of bullying and are victimized tend to engage in retaliation (Pateraki and Houndoumadi, 2001) and also favour externalising strategies (Kristensen and Smith, 2003). Although there is a lack of focus on the efficacy of various coping responses, there is in fact some knowledge regarding strategies which seem to be useful in terms of stopping victimization and buffering its negative effects, and strategies which seem to be ineffective or even counter-productive.

For instance, it seems that, in general, retaliation and aggressive coping are not to be encouraged as these strategies can serve to escalate and prolong bullying (Mahady Wilton, Craig, and Pepler, 2000; Spence et al., 2009) and can have negative psychological consequences such as depression (Mahady Wilton et al., 2000). Avoidance, distancing, or
passive coping; responses which could perhaps be symbolised by the ostrich with its head in
the sand, are also undesirable coping styles (Escobar et al., 2011; Hunter and Boyle, 2004;
Kochenderfer-Ladd and Skinner, 2002; Mahady Wilton et al., 2000; Murray-Harvey et al.,
2012) with, for example, distancing being linked with greater risk of victimization
(Kochenderfer-Ladd, 2004). By contrast, problem solving strategies have been found to de-
escalate a bullying incident (Mahady Wilton et al., 2000) and active (rather than passive)
problem-solving may be effective as it can allow for assertive behaviour. There is also some
evidence that conflict resolution and seeking advice are associated with decreased
victimization and internalising problems. However, cyberbullying and aggression bring a host
of new challenges which were not encountered when dealing with traditional bullying; such
as the capacity to attack a targeted individual at any time of day or night from almost any
location, the potentially global audience for abuse, the unique role of bystanders, the
possibility to remain anonymous, and the difficulty in retrieving widely disseminated data.
Thus, in 2016, we must ask whether we can use the existing knowledge to inform the coping
strategies we recommend when facing traditional bullying, cyberbullying, or both. In other
words, is cyberbullying really a case of “old wine, new bottles” (e.g., Li, 2007) or do we need
to reinvent the wheel?

**COPING WITH CYBERBULLYING AND AGGRESSION:**
**A DIFFERENT BALL GAME**

Similar to the literature which has focused on traditional bullying, studies of how CYP
cope with cyber victimization indicate that researchers have used a variety of approaches,
including self-report questionnaires and interviews, which again makes it difficult to compare
studies and to identify effective coping strategies. However, the research to date has allowed
for some useful insights. For example, it is apparent that there is general reluctance to report
cyber victimization to adults (Hoff and Mitchell, 2009; Juvonen and Gross, 2008; Li, 2006;
Smith et al., 2008). Perren et al. (2012a, 2012b) conducted a systematic literature review
which focused on coping with cyberbullying among CYP. The review indicated that in a
number of studies it has been found that there is a disinclination to consult adults for fear of
losing technology-related privileges. In addition, they are concerned that parents might
courage them to ignore the problem or simply be unable to assist them due to lack of
familiarity with cyberspace. Recent large scale research in an Irish context (Dooley and
Fitzgerald, 2012) examined the psychological health of a large sample of adolescents and
young adults. This study revealed that not only is bullying a predictor of increased depressive
and anxiety symptoms, but the availability of at least “one good adult” (an adult who knows
him/her personally and is available, particularly in times of need) was one of the strongest
predictors of good mental health. This was associated with self-esteem, sense of belonging,
and coping in response to difficulties. By contrast, the absence of such a person was
significantly associated with the level of depression, suicide, and self-harm. This is
particularly relevant to the literature indicating the reluctance of young people to confide in
parents and teachers when confronted with online victimization. It seems that the perception
of adults as ill-informed or reactionary in terms of taking away technology in effect removes
a very important coping resource from young people. Not only do they lose the potentially
useful practical assistance that an adult might provide, but the very comfort of knowing that there is “one good adult” on standby is eliminated. Whilst there is evidence to suggest that social support may benefit cybervictims (Machmutow, Perren, Sticca, and Alsaker, 2012), it seems that social support may worsen the situation for males, but may benefit females over time (Shelley and Craig, 2010). More gender-specific research is required to further explore this finding. It would also be useful to examine the role of bystanders in a cyber setting. Given the potential for bystanders to spread aggressive content very rapidly and widely it is worth examining how one might gain support from others online.

Technical coping strategies (i.e., strategies which require engagement with the Internet, with a device, or with a particular medium) may help to reduce a cyberbully’s access to the victim. Furthermore, the capacity to save and reproduce online content can allow a victim to document evidence of aggression if support is required from school administrators, or the police. Price and Dalgleish (2010) found that blocking an aggressor was reported to be the most effective online strategy. With technical coping in mind, researchers have suggested that more focus on education in relation to cyber safety may be beneficial (Juvenen and Gross, 2008; Yilmaz, 2011). However, it is important to remember that relying on technical strategies alone may leave young people vulnerable to ongoing abuse. Šléglová and Černá (2011) highlight that the effectiveness of technical strategies is partly dependent on support from administrators. For instance, if a young person reports upsetting activity on a social networking site, such as having a profile set up by an impersonator for malicious purposes, an action from the site administrators is required. In addition, blocking the phone number of a cyber aggressor does not preclude that person from creating a new account and recommencing negative contact. Thus, it is important to remember that there are limits to the effectiveness of technical coping alone and an arsenal of strategies would be desirable.

Although there is some evidence to suggest that seeking social support and utilising technical coping strategies can be effective, seeking revenge or retaliating seem not to be effective strategies in cyberspace as they neither reduce victimization (Shelley and Craig, 2010) nor combat depression (Machmutow et al., 2012). Taking a contrasting approach, the sometimes “head in the sand” response, such as passive coping, depressive coping (Völlink, Bolman, Dehue, and Jacobs, 2013), avoidance (Hoff and Mitchell, 2009), or helpless coping (Machmutow et al., 2012) also seem not to be desirable strategies. Indeed, recent research by Corcoran and Mc Guckin (2014) revealed that, similar to victimization by traditional or cyber victimization, recommending helpless coping as a response to cyber aggression (i.e., self-blame, passive inaction) was a predictor of increased depressive symptoms and reduced psychological well-being. By contrast, assertive coping, characterised by asking the bully why he/she is doing this, telling the bully to stop, and using technical strategies, was a weak, but significant predictor of increased psychological well-being. Overall, the small amount of evidence which examines the effectiveness of coping strategies in response to cyber victimization indicates some parallels with traditional victimization, with for instance, social support seeking showing some positive potential as a strategy and avoidant or aggressive coping appearing to be maladaptive responses. It is evident that more research is required in order to adequately assess the most useful strategies a young person can engage in as an individual when faced with cyber-based aggression. However, there has been a number of initiatives in the form of anti-cyberbullying programmes which aim to prevent and intervene with this form of aggression on a larger scale.
PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION: ANTI-BULLYING AND ANTI-CYBERBULLYING INITIATIVES

Not surprisingly, school-level efforts to cope with cyberbullying and cyber aggression have been informed by prior initiatives to combat traditional bullying. Mc Guckin and Corcoran (2016) emphasise the need to consider a number of important yardsticks when designing and/or implementing an intervention for bullying and cyberbullying/cyber aggression. Principles of sound intervention include, for example: theoretical grounding; evidence-based practice; and clarification of what the proposed outcomes should be, such as reduced perpetration of, and victimization by, bullying and cyberbullying or cyber aggression.

Existing traditional anti-bullying programmes are underpinned by a variety of different theories and philosophies such as focusing on positive bystander behaviour (Kiva: Kärnä et al., 2011), a zero tolerance response to bullying with importance placed on adult authority figures (Roland, Bru, Midthassel, and Vaaland, 2010), the Shared Concern Method (Pikas, 2002), restorative justice (Morrison, 2006), social skills training (DeRosier and Marcus, 2005), and peer support networks (Cowie and Olafsson, 2000).

For instance, in Finland the Kiva anti-bullying programme “... is predicated on the idea that a positive change in the behaviors of classmates can reduce the rewards gained by bullies and consequently their motivation to bully in the first place” (Kärnä et al., 2011, p. 313). The Kiva programme (Kärnä et al., 2011) was developed based upon the insights regarding the different participant roles of those directly involved in bullying and those who witness it. The purpose of the programme is to enhance the empathy, self-efficacy, and anti-bullying attitudes of bystanders so as to encourage pro-social responses upon witnessing bullying (Kärnä et al., 2011). Such an approach in which young people are empowered to respond to aggression in a pro-social manner could be useful in the cyber setting – an environment which is often lacking an adult presence. However, it would be important to ensure that efficacy is enhanced with appropriate strategies for helping.

Peer support networks (Cowie and Olafsson, 2000) offer an approach somewhat similar to the Kiva programme in that the peer group holds the power in terms of offering potential solutions. Cowie and Olafsson (2000) suggest that “One effective way of tapping the potential resource of the peer group comes from training selected young people in peer support” (p. 80). Citing Cowie and Sharp (1996), Cowie and Olafsson (2000) acknowledge three forms of peer interventions, namely: befriending, conflict resolution, and counselling-based approaches. Moreover, they suggest that these forms of peer support require: (a) a response to a request for help; (b) appropriate skills to support victims to find solutions; (c) adults who can supervise the network; and (d) the incorporation of non-punitive interventions. A peer support approach which tackles traditional bullying could be extended to also deal with cyber-based bullying and aggression, so long as there is adequate adult involvement and research informed strategies in response to victimization.

The “Zero” programme (Roland et al., 2010) takes an alternative approach, emphasising that bullying tends to occur when teacher control and support is lacking, thus creating an environment for such abuse to occur. Therefore, the Zero programme promotes an authoritative classroom leadership approach which can be implemented to inhibit behaviours such as humiliating peers as a bid for power, whilst striving to enhance social cohesion in the group. Thus, it is the adults who take responsibility for facilitating development of a climate
in which bullying will be reduced. Within the Zero programme school personnel must address any divergence from the appropriate standards of behaviour in a respectful manner. Such a programme may not be appropriate in a cyber setting considering the lack of monitoring in many cyber environments. Although anti-bullying programmes tend to vary in terms of the theoretical underpinnings, a common component of many initiatives is the Whole School Approach which advocates involving the whole school and extended community to both prevent and intervene in bullying problems.

Rigby, Smith, and Pepler (2004) argue that “It is widely accepted that countering bullying requires a ‘whole school approach’ in which the elements and initiatives in a programme are carefully co-ordinated” (p. 2). The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program (OBPP: Olweus, 1993) is a whole school intervention programme which has been implemented and assessed on a large scale which targets bullying at the school-level (e.g., rules against bullying, involving parents), the classroom-level (e.g., holding meetings with students’ parents, and posting and enforcing rules against bullying), the individual-level (e.g., student activities would be supervised and staff would be expected to intervene immediately upon witnessing bullying), and the community-level (e.g., helping to spread anti-bullying messages of best-practice throughout the community) (Olweus and Limber, 2010). In this way, bullying is regarded as a systemic problem, and therefore, it is addressed with a system-wide response. Farrington and Ttofi (2009) conducted a meta-analysis of studies which examined the effectiveness of school-based anti-bullying programmes. Elements associated with reduced bullying behaviour included a whole-school anti-bullying policy. Importantly, programmes which took their philosophy from Olweus were found to be most effective. However, a whole school anti-bullying policy was not found to be an important factor in reducing victimization. In fact, the meta-analysis highlighted the complexity of countering bullying in schools as different programme components were significant predictors of reducing victimization and reducing perpetration. So, does it make sense to roll out the same approaches to tackle cyber-based bullying and aggression? Perhaps there is some rationale for doing so, as many studies have highlighted an overlap across the two forms of aggression with the same individuals involved in both forms (e.g., Juvonen and Gross, 2008; Riebel, Jäger, and Fischer, 2009). However, once again it is important to consider the unique characteristics of cyberspace and it is vital that practitioners do not intervene in a way that ultimately does more harm than good.

Menesini, Palladino, and Nocentini (2015) argue that, considering the established overlap between traditional bullying and cyber forms of bullying, it is sensible to extend existing anti-bullying programmes to address cyberbullying. However, they too recognise that cyberspace has specific characteristics which do not pertain to traditional bullying. They have evaluated a programme called “Noncadiamointrappola!” (“Let’s not fall into the trap”) which aims to counter both forms of bullying and to promote positive use of technology. Displaying some parallels with Kiva and peer-support efforts, their programme has a pro-social approach, with provision of online support, promotion of positive cyber behaviours, and involvement of peers as educators in both physical and cyber settings. The first edition of the programme (2009/2010) was reported to have moderate positive effects. However, a stronger impact was found following a number of adaptations such as: equal emphasis on both bullying and cyberbullying; more focus on the bystander and victim roles; consideration given to coping strategies; peer-led face-to-face activities; and greater emphasis on the ecological approach where teacher support of class activities is emphasised. It is evident that this programme has a
broad scope. Compared with control participants, the experimental group displayed reduced bullying, victimisation, and cyber victimisation. In addition, experimental participants had an increased tendency towards adaptive/desirable coping strategies and showed reduced maladaptive coping. Menesini et al. (2015) state that approach coping styles make bystander defending more likely, whilst empathy and anti-bullying attitudes are associated with increased bystander intervention. They also emphasise the need to focus not only on developing individual attitudes and coping styles, but also the importance of addressing the group as a whole. In the third stage of development, some additional emphasis was placed on new components, such as cooperative work with increased consideration given to empathy and problem solving. More attention was also given to victim and bystander perspectives so as to show how change can be achieved. Showing consideration for the whole school approach, the programme included an ecological perspective (i.e., a school-wide approach). Overall, a significant decline in bullying, victimisation, cyberbullying, and cyber victimisation was found for the experimental participants compared to the controls. Although the effect size was not very strong, a programme such as this appears to meet the criteria that are important if we are to achieve what Mc Guckin and Corcoran (2016) emphasise as important: anti-cyberbullying programmes that are theoretically informed, methodologically robust, and empirically supported. Although there is relatively little evidence to date of the effectiveness of interventions and programmes which target cyberbullying specifically, there has been a number of international EU-funded initiatives (e.g., CyberTraining, CT4P, and COST IS0801 - see below) which have sought to develop educational tools and inform policy and practice through research, so as to counter online aggression.

**CROSS-NATIONAL COLLABORATION: FORGING AHEAD IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE “ALWAYS-ON GENERATION”**

In an ideal world there would be a wealth of knowledge in terms of how CYP cope effectively with cyber victimization and plenty of evidence regarding best practice in terms of intervening to protect children and adolescents online. However, there is little clarity regarding the best coping strategies and a paucity of robust research such as that provided by Menesini et al. (2015) detailing the effectiveness of anti-cyberbullying programmes and their components. We do not live in an ideal world, and we simply cannot wait until we have an abundance of evidence before we attempt to guide policy and practice so as to protect young Internet users. In order to advance knowledge about the nature of cyber-based aggression and bullying, and ultimately to facilitate development of better policy-making and practice, the European Union has funded a number of cross-national collaborations with important research and resource outputs.

The CyberTraining project (funded by the EU Lifelong Learning Programme: see Mora-Merchan and Jäger, 2011) culminated in a research-based training manual on cyberbullying. The manual provided a broad overview of the topic of cyberbullying, its nature and prevalence in Europe, approaches to countering cyberbullying, and best practice. The purpose of the project was also to provide practical guidance and resources for trainers working with the various target groups including school students, parents, teachers, as well as other professionals. Following the CyberTraining project, the CyberTraining for Parents (CT4P)
was undertaken. The CT4P initiative sought to develop a more focused output aimed at training parents to address cyber safety and also to assist coping with cyberbullying. Specifically, outputs from CT4P included “face-to-face” training courses, self-directed online courses for trainers, and moderated online courses for parents. Through its initial development and implementation, many of the principles that we outlined above can be seen in action in the CT4P project. The project partly extended the material developed by the CyberTraining initiative, with the purpose of educating parents on ICT and Internet safety, the nature of cyberbullying, its prevalence and effects, legal considerations at a national and international level, as well as strategies for preventing and countering cyberbullying.

Although the COST Action IS0801 (Cyberbullying: coping with negative and enhancing positive uses of new technologies, in relationships in educational settings: https://sites.google.com/site/costis0801/) led by Peter Smith, did not lead directly to an educational tool to be used in training, or a specific anti-cyberbullying programme, it made a very important contribution to many aspects of cyberbullying research and ultimately to prevention/intervention efforts. The Action allowed for collaboration among researchers and practitioners from the fields of traditional bullying, law, and telecommunications providers so as to advance the current knowledge on cyberbullying. Working groups were established in order to address specific aspects, such as: conceptualisation and definitional concerns; provision of national guidelines; reviewing knowledge on coping with cyberbullying; legal considerations and input telecommunication companies and service providers; and positive uses of new technologies. Not only did the Action facilitate the production and dissemination of new knowledge and research, it provided funding to facilitate development of research capacity among early stage researchers. Although such initiatives contribute greatly to current understanding of how “we” (researchers, psychologists, parents, teachers, government staff) can best cope with cyber-based bullying and aggression, some would argue that the only way to eliminate cyber aggression is to prosecute perpetrators. As a result, there are places in the world where traditional bullying and cyberbullying legislation has already been created, and there are currently many countries where there is hot debate as to whether this is the best way of coping with cyberbullies (e.g., Purdy and McGuckin, 2013).

POLICING THE WILD WEST: IS CYBERBULLYING LEGISLATION THE ANSWER?

Producing legislation to crack down on cyberbullying and trolling is sometimes likened to efforts to police the Wild West (Corcoran, Frazer, and McGuckin, 2015). However, bullying and cyberbullying offences have been criminalised in some parts of the world, and it is often the case that such legislation is introduced following tragic deaths by suicide following prolonged victimization. For example, in California, USA, Seth’s Law (2011: http://e-lobbyist.com/gaits/text/354065) pertains to students’ rights in relation to bullying and victimization on the basis of characteristics such as ethnicity or sexual orientation, and the law requires schools to implement policy and investigation processes. This legislation was preceded by the death by suicide of 13-year-old Seth Walsh who was harassed about sexual orientation and identity, and requires that policy adopted by educational agencies prohibit discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying based on
actual or perceived characteristics. Similarly, the death of a young woman, Brodie Panlock, following victimization by bullying in the workplace preceded the introduction of Brodie’s Law (http://www.justice.vic.gov.au/home/safer+communities/crime+prevention/bullying+-+brodies+law) in Victoria, Australia. This law pertains to serious bullying such as physical bullying, psychological bullying, verbal bullying, and cyberbullying and applies to workplaces, schools, sports clubs, and the Internet. Serious bullying may include behaviours that are intended (or could reasonably be expected) to lead to suicidal thoughts and thoughts or actions relating to self-harm. It is evident that whilst some legislation places obligations on schools to implement best practice and appropriate policy, other legislation allows for prosecution of those who perpetrate bullying and aggression. There is a great debate as to whether criminalizing cyberbullying and aggression is the most effective way of coping with this undesirable and potentially harmful behaviour. Despite this, we should remember that civil society and ourselves, as citizens, have signed up for, and accepted, the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child - particularly the notion of an education free from harm and harassment.

Reviewing some of the approaches in an American context, Szoka and Thierer (2009) argue that when attempting to cope with cyberbullying, education is preferable to criminalization. They argue that attempts to introduce cyberbullying-specific law means that cyberbullying perpetration could carry much more severe repercussions than traditional bullying. In a case of traditional bullying, perpetrators may be provided with counselling, whereas if they conduct such aggressive behaviour online, they could face incarceration in a federal prison. Szoka and Thierer (2009) argue that those who create legislation could alternatively focus on supporting Internet safety education and awareness-raising strategies. They cite the “School and Family Education about the Internet (SAFE Internet) Act” (see https://www.congress.gov/bill/111th-congress/senate-bill/1047/text) which facilitates outputs such as: implementation of Internet safety education programmes; provision of training to teachers and other school staff; development of online-risk prevention initiatives for children; peer-driven Internet safety education; and parent education which can support guidance of children in terms of Internet and new media safety. They also highlight important issues when considering legislating for cyberbullying. For instance, the fact that the definition of cyberbullying (or peer-to-peer cyber aggression) is still evolving poses certain challenges, such as the possibility of creating a law that also targets other forms of cyber abuse, such as cyber harassment or cyberstalking – distinct but perhaps overlapping behaviours. It is also important to consider whether such legislation should only apply to minors. Szoka and Thierer (2009) also highlight the issue that criminalizing children for cyberbullying can stigmatize them for ill-judged behaviours of their childhood or youth. They suggest that this form of aggression should instead be dealt with by education, awareness-raising, and appropriate discipline and counselling procedures at school level. In other words, they recommend taking an “educate first” approach; an approach which may equip children and adolescents with skills and strengths that will serve them long after they have finished school. Furthermore, they raise the important point that, just as we teach children etiquette and manners for the physical world and we try to equip them with skills so as to navigate risk in the “real world,” we must do so in the cyber world. Until we can properly assess the impact of cyberbullying legislation, it is difficult to definitively state that such an approach is an inferior coping strategy. Certainly, it is important to enforce laws that are responsible and thoroughly considered.
Child pornography laws have exemplified exactly the types of challenges created by the black and white nature of legislation, with children sometimes being prosecuted for sharing intimate photos of their own bodies. Levick and Moon (2010) state that

Prosecuting sexting cases as child pornography is a gross misapplication of child pornography statutes by using them as a sword and not a shield to protect exploited child victims. Sending more youth into the juvenile delinquency system for behaviour that is consistent with normative adolescent development unnecessarily exposes youth to the stigma and collateral consequences that flow from a delinquency adjudication, including possible sex offender registration (p. 1035).

It could be argued that prosecuting children for any type of cyber-crime is attempting to protect children with a sword rather than a shield.

**CONCLUSION**

Having reviewed the background theories that are important in the area of coping and cyberbullying/cyber aggression, this chapter sought to contextualise the current knowledge regarding the most efficacious ways for CYP and others (e.g., schools, families) to cope with such insidious behaviours. The “take home” message from this chapter is that, as we advance rapidly into the future, perhaps we should reach back to our past - and pause - for inspiration. Quite often in our research endeavour to help ameliorate social and educational concerns, we are afforded the chance by “the academy” to “stop and stand and stare”, and consider not just the empirical facts and theoretical suppositions, but also the anecdotal knowledge of our parents, grandparents, and forbearers. To what extent is the problem of coping with cyberbullying different from the trials and tribulations of our Cro Magnon ancestors, who perhaps had to chastise and teach their offspring regarding the potential negative effects of daubing “certain images” on the caves they inhabited. And so, with “your grandmother” in mind, along with the emerging empirical knowledge in the area, consider how we do our best for the CYP of today - and tomorrow. Whilst today will come and today will go, the coping issues of concern to this chapter will be quickly superseded by the concerns now emerging regarding racism, xenophobia, and online radicalization.

**REFERENCES**


Chapter 12

CYBERBULLYING AND MENTAL HEALTH: INTERNET-BASED INTERVENTIONS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

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INTRODUCTION

This chapter addresses intervention efforts for youth to prevent and combat cyberbullying and its subsequent negative impact on mental health, with emphasis on the potential advantages of Internet-based interventions.

CYBERBULLYING: THE IMPACT ON MENTAL HEALTH

The word “cyberbullying” did not exist a decade ago (Notar, Padgett, and Roden, 2013). Hence, although traditional bullying is found to have negative consequences for the psychological, social, and physical health of both the bullies and victims involved (Bauman, Toomey, and Walker, 2013; Tokunaga, 2010), there is a delay in the clinical research community in recognizing cyberbullying experiences as an important risk factor for developing mental health problems (Foody, Samara, and Carlbring, 2015). However, studies on the negative impact of cyberbullying for bullies, victims, and bully/victims have emerged over the last decade. Most of these studies focused on the negative impact related to victimization and showed that the psychological and emotional consequences of cyberbullying represent the largest problem (Dredge, Gleeson, and de la Piedad Garcia, 2014; Jang, Song, and Kim, 2014). Due to its repetitive and pervasive nature, cyberbullying has

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detrimental short- and long-term effects on the mental health of the children and young people (CYP) victimized. Cross-sectional studies and a few longitudinal studies have linked cyber victimization to stress, low self-esteem, anxiety, depression, and suicidal ideation (Bauman et al., 2013; Bonanno and Hymel, 2013; Campbell, Spears, Slee, Butler, and Kift, 2012; Cénat et al., 2014; Goebert, Else, Matsu, Chung-Do, and Chang, 2011; Helwig-Larsen, Schütt, and Larsen, 2012; Hinduja and Patchin, 2010; Kowalski, Giumetti, Schroeder, and Lattanner, 2014; Lam and Li, 2013; Mitchell, Ybarra, and Finkelhor, 2007; Patchin and Hinduja, 2010; Reed, Cooper, Nugent, and Russell, 2016; Selkie, Kota, Chan, and Moreno, 2013; Wang, Nansel, and Iannotti, 2011). However, the few longitudinal studies available suggested that cyberbullying may be causally related to depression, though depressed CYP are also more vulnerable to cyberbullying (Gámez-Guadix, Orue, Smith, and Calvete, 2013), or indicated that some negative consequences were in fact predictors of cyber victimization (e.g., anxiety, low self-esteem) rather than consequences (van den Eijnden, Vermulst, van Rooij, Scholte, and van de Mheen, 2014; Yang et al., 2013).

Also, the experience of being a cyberbully has been linked to mental health outcomes. Cyberbullies often experience depression as well as cyber victims (Wang et al., 2011) and a study by Hinduja and Patchin (2010) found that cyberbullies report more suicidal ideation and more suicidal attempts than those not-involved in cyberbullying, but less than cyber victims. The worst impact on mental health has been related to being a bully/victim. Similar to traditional bully/victims, there is a consensus in the literature that the impact on mental health and need for help is heightened for this subgroup compared with non-involved CYP (Campbell et al., 2012; Låftman, Modin, and Östberg, 2013; Sourander, 2010) and other participant roles in cyberbullying (Chang et al., 2013; Gámez-Guadix et al., 2013), as they experience both problems related to victimization and those related to perpetration.

It is clear that a focus on prevention and intervention efforts is important to ensure the safety of CYP for whom technology is increasingly an academic and social necessity and way of living. Furthermore, research demonstrating correlations between cyberbullying and serious mental health problems underscore the clinical importance of assessing cyberbullying in CYP.

**Interventions to Prevent and Combat Cyberbullying and Its Negative Consequences**

A limited number of interventions have been specifically designed for CYP involved in cyberbullying (Slonje, Smith, and Frisén, 2013), although parent-targeted messages do exist as well as school-based interventions such as “Medienhelden” (Wölfer et al., 2014), “ConRed” (Ortega-Ruiz, Del Rey, and Casas, 2012), “Let’s not fall in a trap” (Menesini, Nocentini, and Palladino, 2012), “Cyber friendly schools project” (Cross et al., 2016), and “Survivors” (Amse, 2014), containing, for example, lessons, videos, presentations, games, discussions, and workshops. However, most of these interventions are lacking scientific evidence due to, for example, a lack of inclusion of a follow-up measure and a failure to use random assignment at the classroom or school level. Moreover, only a few school-based programs are demonstrating positive effects (Della Cioppa, O’Neil, and Graig, 2015). Another disadvantage of these interventions is the involvement of parents and schools.
Research has shown that youth victims of cyberbullying are reluctant to report experiencing cyberbullying to their parents and are even less likely to disclose cyberbullying abuse to teachers, school personnel, or physicians (Li, 2010; Slonje and Smith, 2008; Smith et al., 2008). For example, a study by Dehue, Bolman, and Völlink (2008) showed that 11% of the parents reported that their child had been cyberbullied, compared to almost 23% of their children. Moreover, the study suggested that only 20% of the victims of cyberbullying talked about their experiences, from which 3% with their parents and only 1% with their teachers. The reasons to keep cyberbullying incidents to themselves include the need to manage or deal with cyberbullying individually, feelings of shame, and fear of being restricted in the use of electronics (Juvonen and Gross, 2008), and hence, isolation from peers (Kraft and Wang, 2009). Furthermore, today’s CYP spend significant amounts of time online (Lenhart, Purcell, Smith, and Zickuhr, 2010), prefer to get anonymous help (Webb, Burns, and Collin, 2008), and report a need for information and help through the Internet (Havas, de Nooijer, Crutzen, and Feron, 2011).

As a result, parent-targeted intervention messages are often insufficient due to CYP’s reluctance to disclose experiencing cyberbullying to their parents (Ybarra, Diener-West, and Leaf, 2007). School-based interventions are insufficient for the same reason, but they are also not equipped to provide individualised psychological support to victims as they are normally focused on children and adolescents only in the form of a whole school approach and/or standard care packages (Foody et al., 2015). Therefore, the Internet becomes the next logical method for reaching children and adolescents struggling with the consequences of a cyberbullying incident.

### INTERNET-BASED MENTAL HEALTH INTERVENTIONS

The Internet is increasingly becoming an integral part of the daily lives of people of all ages, and particularly of young people. More than three-quarters of European households (83%) had access to the Internet in 2015 and 94% of those aged 16-24 were regular Internet users in that year (Eurostat, 2013, Eurostat, 2015). To communicate with each other, CYP frequently make use of electronic communication tools on the Internet, such as chatrooms and social networking sites, and applications on their smartphones (Lenhart et al., 2010; Patchin and Hinduja, 2010). As Kowalski and colleagues state, the Internet is a critical tool for their social life (Kowalski, Limber, and Agatston, 2008). The health care sector uses this trend and develops online prevention, treatment, and support systems, collectively referred to as e-mental health. E-mental health has been defined as “… the use of information and communications technology (ICT) to support and/or improve mental health and mental health care” (Blankers, Donker, and Riper, 2013, p. 13). In this chapter, e-mental health refers to Internet-based interventions focusing directly on the mental well-being of the consumer.

Recently, Internet-based mental health interventions are gaining momentum (Lindefors and Andersson, 2016; Thewissen and Gunther, 2015). In the Netherlands for example, two out of three Dutch mental health care institutions apply e-mental health in their care provision and in communication with patients (such as e-consultations, e-appointments, and e-intakes). The number of people receiving Internet-based help for depression or eating disorders has tripled in a period of three years (GGZ-Nederland, 2013). The technological developments of
Internet-based mental health interventions offer some benefits over traditional face-to-face interventions for both client and health care professional. For example, the low-threshold accessibility of the Internet makes it suitable for offering and receiving help for psychological problems, and clients who are treated on the Internet can avoid the stigma incurred by seeing a therapist (Gega, Marks, and Mataix-Cols, 2004). In addition, CYP find it easier to communicate about thoughts and feelings online than face-to-face (Livingstone and Bober, 2004). Other benefits of these interventions that are mentioned in literature are “obtaining help at any time and place”, “working at one’s own pace,” and “reviewing the material as often as desired” (Spek et al., 2007). Also, because of the long waiting lists and, hence, treatment delays of traditional face-to-face interventions, the greater accessibility of Internet-based interventions make them an attractive treatment alternative. Given the need for early intervention in mental health disorders, long delays in receiving treatment could have devastating effects.

Based on the level of therapist involvement, Internet-based mental health interventions can be divided into self-guided interventions (information and advice, self-tests, and unsupervised self-help programs; no assistance; mainly prevention), guided self-help (minimal therapist contact by email, chat, telephone, or face-to-face sessions), and online psychotherapy (Ruwaard, 2013). However, the differences in effectiveness between guided self-help and online psychotherapy cannot easily be determined, because in research the terms “guided self-help” and “online psychotherapy” are often used interchangeably (for example Johansson, Frederick, and Andersson, 2013).

One of the core factors discussed in the context of effectiveness of Internet-based mental health interventions, is guidance as part of these interventions. Literature so far has suggested that users benefit more from Internet-based mental health interventions when guidance is provided. For example, it was shown from a recent systematic review and meta-analysis (Baumeister, Reichler, Munzinger, and Lin, 2014) that guided Internet-based mental health interventions are significantly more effective than unguided Internet-based mental health interventions. Evidence further suggests that the qualification level of the therapist providing guidance might be of minor importance. Internet-based mental health interventions have proven their added value in prevention and early interventions for mental health problems such as depression, addiction, suicide, and eating disorders (GGZ-Nederland, 2013). Looking into Internet-based treatment interventions (guided self-help and online psychotherapy) usually an approach based on cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) is at the heart of these interventions. CBT is characterized by clear-cut therapeutic procedures which are relatively easy to translate into a format suitable for delivery over the Internet (Ruwaard, 2013). In addition, CBT has been found to be an effective treatment for a wide range of mental health problems in children and adolescents, including anxiety disorders and depression (James, James, Cowdrey, Soler, and Choke, 2013; McDermott et al., 2010). A recent systematic review showed that Internet-based CBT (guided self-help) is associated with significant reductions of symptoms of depression, panic disorder, and social anxiety disorder in adults (Hedman, Ljótsson, and Lindefors, 2012). Also, meta-analyses showed that Internet-based CBT and face-to-face CBT were equally effective in the above mentioned disorders and population (Andersson, Cuijpers, Carlbring, Riper, and Hedman, 2014; Cuijpers, Donker, van Straten, Li, and Andersson, 2010). Although Internet-based treatment interventions are promising in reducing symptoms related to depression, panic disorder, and social anxiety disorder in adults, more research in this context is needed.
In recent years, there is growing attention for Internet-based treatment interventions for children and adolescents with mental health problems (Spence, March, Vigerland, and Serlachius, 2016). But how effective are these interventions? To give an answer to this question, several randomized clinical trials have been conducted to investigate the effectiveness of Internet-based treatment interventions for children and adolescents with mental health problems. These trials focused exclusively on anxiety symptoms and assessed Internet-based cognitive behavioural therapy. They demonstrated positive effects for the Internet-based intervention relative to the control group and these interventions were equally effective as the face-to-face intervention group (Khanna and Kendall, 2010; March, Spence, and Donovan, 2009; Spence et al., 2011; Spence, Holmes, March, and Lipp, 2006). There were also some trials reporting positive results on the effectiveness of Internet-based CBT for youth depression, but these interventions focus on prevention, rather than treatment (for example Stasiak, Hatcher, Frampton, and Merry, 2014). Hence, there is growing evidence for the effectiveness of Internet-based treatment interventions based on CBT for reducing the level of anxiety symptoms, but more research is needed to strengthen the evidence base for prevention and treatment programs that are delivered via the Internet, particularly for depression and other disorders in children and adolescents, such as eating disorders. In the next paragraph, existing Internet-based prevention and treatment interventions for cyberbullied CYP and their effectiveness are outlined.

INTERNET-BASED INTERVENTIONS FOR CYBERBULLIED CYP WITH MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS

As mentioned above, it is common to find that adolescents have been cyberbullied for a long time before reporting it to adults, such as their parents, teachers, or health professionals (Dehue et al., 2008; Juvonen and Gross, 2008; Li, 2010), even though cyberbullying can be very emotionally distressing. Many of these cyberbullied adolescents with mental health problems do not seek help from professional services, although effective treatment is needed. The most significant barriers to seeking help for mental health problems in this age group are perceived stigma and embarrassment, an inability to access services because of extended waiting lists, geographical dispersion, costs of services, and, in the case of cyberbullying, poor awareness about how this impacts their psychological functioning (Gulliver, Griffiths, and Christensen, 2010; Rickwood, Deane, Wilson, and Ciarrochi, 2005; Zalpuri, 2015). Another complication associated with cyberbullying is that when they come to health professionals, they often present their problems to these health professionals as general symptoms of depression, anxiety, and refusal to attend to school. Therefore, the trigger for these mental health problems may be missed, unless paediatricians and child psychiatrists routinely screen specifically for cyberbullying (Zalpuri, 2015). Many adolescents will never report that they are being cyberbullied, unless asked directly (Li, 2010). Therefore, according to Zalpuri (2015) a thorough psychiatric evaluation of CYP must also include questions about bullying and cyberbullying.

Hence, there is an urgent need for Internet-based treatment interventions for CYP with mental health problems as a result of involvement in cyberbullying. Youths appear to engage regularly in online activities, regardless of the risk of cyberbullying, so developing an
Internet-based treatment that is readily available to them is strongly encouraged (Reed et al., 2016). The Internet is now widely used to provide Internet safety tips, cyberbullying prevention tips, and tips for managing cyberbullying for parents, teachers, and young people. In the context of prevention and early intervention of cyberbullying, a qualitative study by Ahlfors (2010) analysed the general information and themes available on 17 websites (written in English and in the public domain) dedicated strictly to cyberbullying prevention and intervention. Of the 17 cyberbullying websites, the most frequently addressed population are parents/caregivers and not the populations most in need of Internet-based cyberbullying interventions, the cyber victims and cyberbullies. In fact, none of the reviewed websites were specifically designed for cyberbullies. Most of the reviewed websites are used as a source of information for Internet safety tips and cyberbullying prevention tips. Only five of the reviewed websites can be categorised as intervention websites and give specific directions to parents, teachers, or cyberbullied children and cyberbully witnesses to manage cyberbullying. Only one of these five websites pays (minor) attention to the negative outcomes of being bullied by introducing a screening instrument for depression. Also in the Netherlands, many cyberbullying prevention and intervention websites have been developed in recent years to address the growing problem of cyberbullying (for example http://www.pestweb.nl and http://www.internethulpverlening.nl).

Apart from the fact that almost none of the available websites contain Internet-based treatment interventions, a main problem is that many of these materials and programs do not have a theoretical base, and that the effectiveness of these websites in decreasing incidences of cyberbullying and its consequences has not yet been investigated (Ahlfors, 2010; Völlink, Dehue, McGuckin, and Jacobs, 2016). A starting point to investigate the effectiveness of these cyberbullying websites should be to determine how many people access the websites as well as to determine whether the information was of help or not (Ahlfors, 2010).

While cyberspace is the perfect location to offer interventions for individuals experiencing negative consequences of cyberbullying, as far as we know, no evidence-based Internet-based mental health interventions are developed addressing directly cyberbullied CYP with mental health problems. Although the web-based online intervention Pestkoppenstoppen.nl (Stop Online Bullies) is a promising approach to the problem, with a theoretical base and aiming to teach victims effective ways of dealing with anxiety and depression associated with cyber victimization without the interference of adults (Jacobs, Völlink, Dehue, and Lechner, 2014), empirical evidence is lacking and at present no randomised control trial (RCT) or effect sizes are available to demonstrate its effectiveness.

A worthwhile action would be to look at current Internet-based mental health interventions for CYP, such as online CBT, showing positive outcomes in terms of reduction in symptoms associated with a broad range of psychological disorders, and incorporate some of their modules into an online programme for cyberbullied CYP with mental health problems. An alternative is to incorporate a cyberbullying module into current Internet-based mental health interventions for CYP with, for example, depression. However, we are a long way from knowing what the ideal format is because Internet-based mental health interventions for CYP are developed to a much lesser extent than those for adults and do not focus on the whole range of mental health problems. Furthermore, the number of effectiveness studies in CYP is limited and studies are mainly directed at anxiety disorders. Hence, more studies are needed on CYP-focused Internet-based programs as a whole that include, within one design, a control group, an intervention group that has undergone a
proven effective face-to-face therapy, and an online intervention-based therapy, with special attention for mental health problems associated with cyberbullying. Also, more effectiveness studies on Internet-based mental health interventions for CYP as well as on cyberbullying interventions have to be conducted with a specific focus on the “critical ingredients” or the key processes that lead to reduction in mental health problems in general, but also to reduce mental health problems associated with cyberbullying. Furthermore, effectiveness studies have to give an answer to questions such as “for whom does CBT/cyberbullying interventions work and under what context?” and “what is the best quantity and quality of therapist support or guidance?”

Despite these reservations, the literature to date is encouraging and suggests that Internet-based mental health interventions for children and adolescents are promising and rapidly expanding. It is not likely that Internet-based mental health interventions will completely replace traditional face-to-face therapies. In fact, blended care, a combination of online and traditional face-to-face contact, is increasingly being applied in mental health care (Thewissen and Gunther, 2015). In this context, a promising treatment for cyberbullied CYP with mental health problems, such as depression, would be blending online cyberbullying modules into face-to-face sessions in order to obtain the optimal benefits from the advantages of these two treatment modalities.

CONCLUSION

Internet-based interventions might be an effective way to overcome treatment barriers of traditional face-to-face interventions for cyberbullied CYP with mental health problems. However, research to date shows that no evidence-based Internet-based mental health interventions are developed addressing directly cyberbullied CYP with mental health problems. Also the number of studies on the effectiveness of Internet-based mental health interventions for CYP is limited. More methodologically sound research on the effectiveness of Internet-based mental health interventions and cyberbullying interventions should be considered a crucial step forward in the development of Internet-based interventions for cyberbullied CYP with mental health problems. Future research needs to investigate the process at work in these interventions, in addition to how to include a cyberbullying module as part of face-to-face sessions.

REFERENCES


Cyberbullying and Mental Health


Chapter 13

THE AUSTRALIAN PERSPECTIVE: EFFORTS TO COUNTER CYBERBULLYING

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INTRODUCTION

Australian young people have easy access to technology with 89% of 14-17 year-olds using the Internet and 89% accessing a mobile phone with 69% of this group owning or using a Smartphone (one with Internet access, television, and multi-media) (Australian Communications and Media Authority: ACMA, 2014). Additionally, 70% of 12-14 year-olds use social networking sites (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2012). Australian research has shown that although most of these young people use this technology appropriately and gain advantages in access to information and social communication, there are also those who use it to cyberbully others.

DEFINITION

Defining what we are talking about is fundamental to all research and to prevention and intervention of cyberbullying. Since Bill Belsey coined the term cyberbullying in 2004 it has eclipsed other words such as e-bullying, electronic bullying, or technological bullying. Without a consensual definition of cyberbullying however, measurement difficulties arise which impacts upon the development of prevention and intervention strategies. There have been many Australian contributions to the continuing debate on the definition of cyberbullying.

The arguments regarding the most appropriate term are usually conceptualised first by a broad question of “is cyberbullying a form of bullying”; or “is it a different subset of

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aggression from traditional or face-to-face bullying” in which case the word bullying needs to be removed. Bullying is characterised by what most researchers agree are three fundamental pillars of bullying: intention, repetition, and power imbalance (Olweus, 1993).

One of the first Australian papers to consider the theoretical and conceptual similarities of cyberbullying and face-to-face bullying (or traditional bullying) was by Dooley, Pyżalski, and Cross in 2009. In this paper, it was argued that Olweus’ (1993) definition of bullying, which differentiates it from aggression, is the repetitive nature and the imbalance of power involved in bullying, and thus cyberbullying needs to evidence these factors if it is to be considered bullying. It was argued that even though repetition in cyberbullying can be different from traditional bullying, in that for instance, a single act of a cyberbully may become viral and therefore “repeated” it is a factor in cyberbullying. The factor of imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim is considered fundamental to distinguishing aggression and bullying. However, Belsey (2004), in common with some North American researchers (e.g., Justin Patchin, Michele Ybarra), did not include this factor in his definition of cyberbullying 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”. This could be interpreted as fighting among equals and continues to be a contentious point between North American scholars and others.

Another Australian, (Langos, 2012) has also contributed to this debate on the definition of cyberbullying following the same arguments on the two fundamental propositions of repetition and imbalance of power, and adding an interesting classification of the subjective nature of intention, resolving whether it is a perpetrator’s intent or the victim’s perception of the act that should be considered. Following a legal tradition she suggested that “… intention is best determined based on how a reasonable person would perceive the perpetrator’s conduct” (p. 288).

Recently, the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY) proposed a definition of school-based bullying as:

… a systematic abuse of power in a relationship formed at school characterised by: 1. Aggressive acts directed (by one or more individuals) towards victims that a reasonable person would avoid; 2. Acts which usually occur repeatedly over a period of time; and 3. Acts in which there is an actual or perceived power imbalance between perpetrators and victims, with victims often being unable to defend themselves effectively from perpetrators (Hemphill, Heerde, and Gomo, 2014, p. 3).

Independently, at the same time, the United States Center for Disease Control also issued a statement that cyberbullying or electronic bullying can be identified using the general definition of bullying which:

… is any unwanted aggressive behavior(s) by another youth or group of youths who are not siblings or current dating partners that involves an observed or perceived power imbalance and is repeated multiple times or is highly likely to be repeated (Gladden, Vivolvo-Kantor, Hamburger, and Lumpkin, 2014, p. 7).

It will be interesting to note if this definition, agreed on by eminent bullying researchers in Australia and North America will be taken up world-wide or some other definition is reached so that the field can progress in measurement and prevention efforts.
PREVALENCE

The first published study in Australia on cyberbullying reported that in a small sample of 120 students in Year 8 (13-year-olds), 14% claimed to have been cyberbullied while 7% reported they had cyberbullied another student during that year (Campbell, 2005). One large national study of 7,500 8-14 year-olds reported that 7% had been cyberbullied frequently (every few weeks in the last 3 months) with 3.5% reporting frequently bullying others (Cross et al., 2009). In 2011, Campbell and colleagues found in a national sample of over 3,000 students that 14% were cyberbullied and 7.6% cyberbullied others (Campbell, Spears, Slee, Kift, and Butler, 2011). Other Australian studies have found cyberbullying victimisation rates of 11.5% (Sakellariou, Carroll, and Houghton, 2012) and 13.4% (Hemphill, Tollit, and Kotevski, 2012).

It is of course difficult to make accurate comparisons between these studies to ascertain what trends there are in cyberbullying in Australia because of the different age groups and cut points for frequency, national and state samples, as well as studies including both or one gender. However, in 2014 in reviewing Australian cyberbullying victimisation prevalence studies, it was estimated that about 20% of young people aged between 8-17 years old had been victimised in this way (Katz et al., 2014). This is similar to international studies showing that students between the ages of 10-15 years old were cyber victimised the most (Genta et al., 2012).

Cyberbullying in Australia is not confined, however, to young people. It has been documented in a sample of 91 TAFE (Technical and Further Education) students in Victoria that 9% were cyberbullied (Reeckman and Cannard, 2009). Two studies of university students in Australia also reported cyberbullying; one with 528 students found 11.6% were victims of cyberbullying in the preceding 12 months (Wensley and Campbell, 2012), and one with 282 students found 14.5% had been victimised by these means (Wozencroft, Campbell, Orel, Kimpton, and Leong, 2015). Cyberbullying has also been shown to occur in the Australian workforce, with 10.7% of a sample of 103 workers belonging to the Australian Manufacturing Workers’ Union being cyberbullied (Privitera and Campbell, 2009).

RESEARCH

Australian research has also contributed to our understanding of: (a) the consequences of cyberbullying on both the perpetrator and the student who is victimised; (b) the motives of those who cyberbully; and (c) the actions of bystanders to cyberbullying. This is all vital information in our efforts to counter cyberbullying.

Consequences

It has been shown that Australian students who were cyber victimised reported more social difficulties and higher levels of depression and anxiety than those students who were victims of traditional bullying (Campbell et al., 2012). While these are serious sequelae for students who are victims of cyberbullying, those students who are perpetrators also reported
more social difficulties and obtained higher scores on stress, depression, and anxiety scales than students not involved in bullying (Campbell, Slee, Spears, Butler, and Kift, 2013). Additionally, in a longitudinal study of 650 Australian high school students it was found that cyber victimisation was linked to depressive symptoms one year later, whilst cyber perpetration was linked with theft. Furthermore, if the student was involved in both cyberbullying perpetration and was also a victim, they were more likely to be suspended from school and involved in binge drinking one year later (Hemphill, Kotevski, and Heerde, 2015).

It has also been shown that students who were cyber victimised were less likely to seek help than those who were victimised by more traditional means (Dooley, Gradinger, Strohmeier, Cross, and Spiel, 2010). Cyberbullying victims in Australia also appear unwilling to seek help from online services, including self-help apps and websites (Spears, Taddeo, Daly, Stretton, and Karklins, 2015).

**Motives**

The motives that propel students to bully in traditional ways have been well documented: the need to belong (Owens, Shute, and Slee, 2000), influence from families (Rigby, 1994), and victim provocation (Rose and Rudolph, 2006). When Australian adolescents were asked why young people cyberbullied, the reasons were to “… get attention from others, make themselves feel better and to get their own way” (Wilton and Campbell, 2011, p. 107). Those students who engaged in cyberbullying said it was good to be able to be someone else. In a follow-up study, teachers and parents as well as students were asked what motivated students to cyberbully (Compton, Campbell, and Mergler, 2014). Interestingly all three groups perceived a different main motivation for young people to cyberbully. Teachers perceived the main motivation was that it was easy for students to cyberbully. Parents thought that being able to be anonymous was the reason that young people bullied, while students reported that they thought the main motivation to cyberbully was to be able to avoid retaliation from victims or punishments from teachers and parents.

**Bystanders**

We know that bystanders to traditional bullying can influence this behaviour as their actions can either escalate or stop this behaviour by passively watching, joining in, or intervening to stop the bullying (Rigby and Johnson, 2006; Trach, Hymel, Waterhouse, and Neale, 2010). Less is known about bystanders to cyberbullying. Two Australian studies have explored this topic. Duncanson et al. (2015) found in a study of over 3,000 students that bystanders to cyberbullying responded differently to bystanders to traditional bullying. Bystanders to traditional bullying more frequently endorsed telling parents, friends, and adults whereas bystanders to cyberbullying were more likely to help the person being cyberbullied, stand up to the person cyberbullying, or get back at the bully later. It was hypothesised that this difference could be because of the lower risk of harm to the bystander in taking action in cyberbullying. Following on from this study another project explored whether bystanders to traditional and cyberbullying used online methods or face-to-face encounters or both, when taking action to report the bullying, stop the bullying, or support the
victim (Sheppard and Campbell, 2015). It was found that most of the young people surveyed
would take action as a bystander to either traditional or cyberbullying in person, when they
reported the bullying or when they were supporting the student who was victimised.
However, when it came to intervening directly with the student who was bullying, bystanders
told traditional bullies to stop face-to-face and cyberbullies to stop by online methods.

**PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION EFFORTS IN AUSTRALIA**

In this section the influence of the media is examined in reporting on cyberbullying in
Australia. This is followed by a description of the legal arguments fuelled by the media about
how to reduce cyberbullying. The place of anti-bullying policies in schools is then discussed.
A description of the resources provided by the Australian government and the many non-
government agencies follows. Finally, current research projects which are investigating
prevention and intervention efforts are described.

**Media in Australia**

Mass media has a significant influence on society (Macnamara, 2005) as explained by the
agenda setting theory (McCombs and Shaw, 1972) which postulates that the media
determines what people think about. Issues which are reported frequently in the media are
issues which will be high on the public’s agenda and consequently important to policymakers.
Online risks to young people, such as cyberbullying, are relatively high on the media agenda
in Australia. In a content analysis study, it was found that there was sustained media attention
in the 10 year period from 2001 to 2011 on articles about bullying and cyberbullying (Kimber
and Campbell, 2015). The articles were framed in different ways by the two newspapers, one
of which would be considered in terms of popular journalism and the other in terms of quality
journalism. The articles ranged from where cyberbullying was the main issue in the article to
those about e-safety concerns in general. Similar to Vandebosch, Simulioniene, Marczak,
Vermeulen, and Bonetti (2013), it was found that the “quality” newspaper was found to
publish less articles on cyberbullying and had a more neutral and reassuring tone than the
popular newspaper which portrayed cyberbullying in a light that could give rise to moral
panic. These are examples not only of the media setting the agenda for the public to think
about but also of the role of framing of such agendas, that is, reconstructing the story from a
certain angle (Scheufele, 2000).

In the case of cyberbullying, most media reports on young people and the Internet take a
negative news perspective. The way media frame an issue can have an impact on how people
think about it and can determine their knowledge, attitudes, and behaviour with regard to the
problem (De Vreese, 2005). If an issue is framed disproportionally and without proper
evidence as a problem it is called a moral panic (Burger and Koetsenruijter, 2008).

It would seem in Australia that there are some indications that the media is portraying
cyberbullying as a moral panic, with negative overtones (Kimber and Campbell, 2015), which
has not been the case for traditional bullying. The consequences of cyberbullying and the
seriousness of this issue have been brought to the attention of the public which has been
useful in alerting society to what is happening. However, confronting stories of the suicide of adolescents and adults both overseas and in Australia who have been the target of cyberbullying (Lannen, 2009; Wise, 2009) is not helpful as most of these incidents involved mental health problems as well as cyberbullying. This is consistent with studies that have found that there is a tendency in the media to link suicide and cyberbullying (Thorn et al., 2011).

Media attention usually results in calls from the public for solutions to the problem and thus there are many calls for “something to be done” about cyberbullying in the media. The reaction to this media hype/attention in Australia has had the community and politicians calling for a law against cyberbullying and to have the police involved in instances of cyberbullying although there is no law against cyberbullying in Australia (Langos, 2014) to enable police to act.

**Legal Responses**

One of the responses to cyberbullying in young people in Australia is the community debate regarding the law and cyberbullying. Australia at present does not have a specific law against cyberbullying (Butler, Kift, and Campbell, 2009), which means that these behaviours are not legally defined and cannot be prosecuted (Langos, 2013). However, there are criminal offences that can be enforced against these behaviours, such as misuse of telecommunications, indecent filming, stalking, and criminal defamation (see Department of Communications Discussion Paper, Appendix B, Current Offenses in the Criminal Code Act, 2014). Cases of traditional bullying in schools have led to civil claims for compensation or prosecution in the criminal courts in Australia (Campbell, Cross, Spears, and Slee, 2010). However, there has yet to be a reported case seeking civil compensation for cyberbullying and only one criminal prosecution arising from a case of a young adult involving threatening SMS messages (Milovanovic, 2010).

It is interesting to note that the general public in Australia has not called for changing laws to prevent or punish students who bully face-to-face. There could be several reasons for this. The first is that adults have not grown up with technology and often feel they do not understand this world which young people inhabit. As youngsters themselves they have had no experience of cyberbullying and so feel some degree of panic when confronted with this phenomenon (Campbell and Zavrsnik, 2013). Second, as previously argued, the constant media attention that cyberbullying attracts and the links that the media draws between cyberbullying and suicide could be reasons why adults are calling for specific laws to punish young people who cyberbully. The coining of the word “bulicide” illustrates the prominence given to students with mental health problems who are cyberbullied and then take their own life (Hinduja and Patchin, 2010).

The community mainly sees that the law exists to punish people, however, considering the ages of young people who cyberbully, this is a potential problem as in Australia children below the age of 10 are not deemed capable of criminal intent and it is up to the courts to decide if the child is capable between the ages of 10 and 14 (Butler, Kift, Campbell, Slee, and Spears, 2011). Additionally, the law is seen as a deterrent as it is thought that the fear of punishment will deter young people from cyberbullying. However, due to the impulsiveness
of young people and the fact that they do not believe they can be caught cyberbullying, a law for this purpose might not work.

The convening of the Bullying, Young People and the Law symposium held in Melbourne, Australia, in 2013, was one effort to examine ways of reducing cyberbullying by legal solutions. The symposium was attended by pre-eminent legal, law enforcement, and educational experts from Australia and New Zealand. Its recommendations were to introduce an appropriate legal framework to address bullying and cyberbullying in Australia, establish a national digital communication tribunal, and to continue to provide education about cyberbullying. Public consultation was also called for by the Federal Department of Communication in 2014 to explore options under Commonwealth legislation to deal with cyberbullying.

An interesting study garnered the views of Australian education employees’ perceptions of cyberbullying and the law (Young et al., 2015). All the interviewees held senior authoritative positions in either education or the law or both. Overall, participants were divided in their support for the introduction of a specific law for cyberbullying, mirroring both the wider community and the scholarly world’s views (Katz et al., 2014). Participants identified many sanctions which they thought would be appropriate for children and adolescents who persist in cyberbullying: such as mediation, victim impact statements, family conferences, bonds, cautions, and taking a juvenile justice team approach (Young et al., 2015).

In 2015 the Federal government enacted the “Enhancing Online Safety Act 201”. This statute established a Children’s e-Safety Commissioner and provides for a complaints system for Australian children who are cyberbullied. Removal of cyberbullying material from large social media services, such as Facebook and YouTube, will be at the service providers’ discretion, using their own procedures to handle complaints of harassing materials posted on their services. Other smaller social media services are subject to direct regulation. The Commissioner on receiving a complaint of cyberbullying material may give a binding direction to have the material removed within 48 hours or the service could be subject to a civil penalty. The statute has no effect on existing laws about cyberbullying and still leaves the question of enacting a specific cyberbullying law open.

Policy

Even though cyberbullying occurs mainly outside of school property and school hours (Smith et al., 2008) the consequences often interrupt school life and impact on student learning (Bhat, 2008), so many believe efforts to combat cyberbullying to be a school responsibility. Thus, another strategy used to counter cyberbullying in Australia is the school anti-bullying policy. Having an anti-bullying policy that incorporates proactive policies, plans, and practices that reach beyond the school is an important strategy suggested both nationally and internationally to assist schools to prevent and intervene in instances of cyberbullying (Cross, Monks, Campbell, Spears, and Slee, 2011).

The Australian government was one of the first to provide leadership internationally in this area by providing schools with a set of guiding principles regarding the provision of a safe and supportive school environment called the National Safe Schools Framework (NSSF) (MCEERYA, 2003). This framework was developed to assist schools to both reduce bullying
behaviour while improving the social and emotional health of the children in their school (Cross et al., 2011). The framework was first developed in 2003, revised in 2010, and updated in 2013. It sets out a vision and a set of principles for Australian schools taking a whole school approach aiming to promote student well-being by creating school environments in which members of the school community both feel and are safe from harassment, aggression, violence, and bullying. The policy was evaluated by Cross and colleagues (2011) four years after its implementation. While a small decline in self-reported bullying rates was observed from 1999 to 2007, it was concluded that the NSSF required greater implementation support and Australian teachers required further training.

A study by Butler et al. (2011), examined the anti-bullying policies of a small sample of Australian schools to gauge the extent of their readiness to respond to cyberbullying with regards to the potential liability they may face. The policy responses of nine schools were analysed to obtain a sense of how these schools were addressing cyberbullying according to the expectations of the law. Many of the schools’ policies were found wanting in terms of inclusive definitions for cyberbullying, procedures to report cyberbullying, and processes by which complaints would be handled. Potential sanctions were often not included and policies were not seen to be sufficiently disseminated throughout the school community.

In trying to ascertain why these policies were poorly written, another study was conducted seeking the views of Australian education authorities’ views on school policies concerning cyberbullying (Chalmers et al., 2015). In the Australian school system there are different education sectors in each state and territory, which provide schools in their jurisdiction with guidelines or templates for developing anti-bullying policies. Thus, there are different documents provided by each state which are supposed to adhere to the set of guiding principles of the NSSF. Therefore, the views of 10 key stakeholders in three states from Education Departments were sought in relation to their anti-bullying policies. Surprisingly, over half of the stakeholders did not mention the imbalance of power in their definitions of bullying for state education policies. The participants were divided in their opinions whether cyberbullying required a totally new anti-bullying policy, but most of them were advising their schools to have a 24-hour, seven day a week policy, to enable schools to officially deal with incidents between students that occur outside of school grounds and hours. This has not been the case for policies on traditional bullying in the past.

**Teacher Training**

Another initiative for countering cyberbullying in schools is the provision of resources for teacher training institutions. Teachers are often responsible for delivering anti-bullying programs in their classrooms and so the national project of Response Ability, which is an initiative of the Australian Government’s Department of Health implemented by the Hunter INSTITUTE of Mental Health in partnership with tertiary educators throughout Australia (http://responseability.org) supports the pre-service training of school teachers. The project has many free, multi-media teacher resources on bullying and cyberbullying. It also provides additional information on its website and at conference presentations as well as support to tertiary educators to assist them to integrate mental health into their teaching.
Many studies have shown that pre-service teachers believe bullying is an important issue but express low levels of confidence to deal with it (Craig, Bell, and Leschied, 2011; Ryan and Kariuki, 2011). However, the present cohort of pre-service teachers has grown up with the National Safe Schools Framework as well as being part of the always-on generation. It was found in a recent study that most of the 717 pre-service teachers from three different states in Australia, in three different universities, were able to correctly identify cyberbullying situations from banter, conflict, and aggression. They also felt informed and capable of addressing bullying (Spears, Campbell, Tangen, Slee, and Cross, 2015).

**ADVICE AND RESOURCES**

The Australian Federal government has been very active in its efforts to counter cyberbullying among youth. There is also a government initiative of the Safe and Supportive School Communities, a national collaboration in which all States and territories have representatives. This project is under the auspices of the State Ministers of Education with a major outcome of the project being the website Bullying. No Way!

A government agency called the Australian Communication and Media Authority (ACMA) provides the Cybersmart program, a national cyber-safety education program. All the resources are provided free on their website (http://www.acma.gov.au/Home/Citizen/Stay%20protected/My%20online%20world/Staying%20safe%20online). The government along with the Principals Australia Institute and beyondblue provide a framework for secondary schools to promote mental health, providing training for schools and resources on their website (http://www.mindmatters.edu.au/about-mindmatters/what-is-mindmatters). A similar framework is available for primary schools called Kids Matter (http://www.kidsmatter.edu.au/primary/about-kidsmatter-primary). Both frameworks include resources on cyberbullying. Police in Australia also offer the Internet Safety program ThinkUKnow to parents and teachers (http://www.thinkuknow.org.au/).

**Non-Government Agencies**

Non-government agencies are also involved in countering cyberbullying. In addition to programs and resources, there are two main organisations which provide help for young people in the form of telephone or online counselling. Kids Help Line is an initiative of Boys Town and offers a free, private, and confidential telephone and online counselling services for young people between five and 25 years of age (http://www.kidshelp.com.au/). Also, Reach Out run by the Inspire Foundation (http://au.reachout.com/get-involved/about-reachout) offers online mental health services.

The Alannah and Madeline Foundation was set up by Walter Mikac after his wife and two children Alannah and Madeline were among 35 people shot dead at Port Phillip in Tasmania in 1996. The aim of the foundation is to prevent and intervene in all forms of violence against children. To this end one of their initiatives was the formation of the National Centre Against Bullying (NCAB). This Centre comprises expert researchers in bullying, practitioners, and policy makers. The Centre works closely with school
communities, government, and industry. It is the peak body for anti-bullying messages in Australia and one of its main functions is to hold a biennial conference to disseminate the latest research on bullying. The Foundation also founded the e-Smart program in 2013. This program, for use in schools, has been designed to reduce the incidence and harm associated with cyberbullying.

The Alannah and Madeline Foundation has also run, in conjunction with a major national bank, a community service announcement across TV, press, radio, digital, outdoor, and cinema, highlighting the role of the bystander in bullying on the premise of “words are more powerful than you think – say something… find a voice for someone who can’t find theirs and help prevent bullying”.

While all these initiatives are useful, none is actually evidence-based and we have no way of knowing about the uptake of the resources. As these resources have not been empirically tested, it is vital for researchers in Australia to collaborate to build a research base on reducing cyberbullying. To respond to this need Professors Donna Cross, Phillip Slee, and Marilyn Campbell together with Dr Barbara Spears formed the Australian Universities’ Anti-bullying Research Alliance (AUARA). This brought together university-based research teams from the University of Western Australia, Flinders University, Queensland University of Technology, and University of South Australia. AUARA has made submissions to the Federal Government on cyberbullying such as the Joint Select Committee on cyber-safety in 2011 (http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/House_of_representatives_Committees?url=jscc/index.htm) and have made significant international links with organisations concerned with the issue of cyberbullying including Canadian PREVNET; the International Observatory on Violence, and the Cyberbullying Action Network. AUARA established the Australia-India research collaboration in 2013 and worked with the European (COST) Action 1S0801 from 2008-2012. We hosted a four-day Training School in Melbourne, Australia for this action which is the first time a training school had been held outside of Europe. Led by Professor Donna Cross when she was at Edith Cowan University. AUARA was also funded for a Collaborative Research Network to build research capacity and produce evidence-based outcomes to reduce harm from cyberbullying from 2011-2014. Some of these major research projects are outlined below.

**Research Projects**

**Cyber Friendly Schools**

Donna Cross and her colleagues have been researching in the area of prevention and intervention of bullying in school-aged students for many years. During the Supportive Schools project, a randomised control trial which targeted bullying in secondary schools (Cross, Hall, Waters, and Hamilton, 2008), Cross noticed that cyberbullying was being reported as an issue by students. After three formative studies from 2007-2009, the research team received funding in 2010 to conduct a group randomised control trial to evaluate the effectiveness of a new program called the Cyber Friendly Schools program in reducing cyberbullying in secondary schools compared to standard cyberbullying intervention.
practices. Thirty-seven secondary non-government schools were randomly assigned to the intervention and comparison conditions, involving 3,500 students in Year 8 (ages 13-14). Using an online survey the students were asked about their cyberbullying experiences in a pre-test (beginning of Year 8), post-test (end of Year 9), and follow-up (end of Year 10).

The Cyber Friendly School program targeted pastoral care staff, teaching staff, students, and parents based on Bronfenbrenner’s socio-ecological approach. Young people were involved in designing the teaching and learning intervention and Year 10 students who were trained as “cyber-leaders” helped teachers plan for and implement the program of whole-school activities. The study found the program slightly reduced student involvement in cyberbullying after 18 months of intervention but this was not sustained at follow-up.

One suggested reason for the small effect size was partial implementation failure. Teachers taught an average of only two to three 40-60 minute classroom modules out of a total of eight modules. Staff reported that they felt under-skilled to teach the program despite receiving training. Although the program had been modified from pilot testing with teachers, and was designed for teachers to facilitate the students’ online self-directed learning, many teachers indicated they could not find the time in the curriculum/classroom to include this content as they were struggling to teach their allocated subject matter. Teachers’ self-efficacy in this area therefore seems to need more professional learning and innovative methods to enable them to find time in the classroom to include these programs. An interesting finding was the Year 10 cyber leaders were so enthusiastic that many school pastoral staff were not prepared to support their suggestions as they were too adventurous. Perhaps staff need more preparation also in engaging with young people as co-researchers and collaborators.

**Beyond Bullying**

Following on from the Cyber Friendly School project, Cross’ research team was granted funding in 2013 to conduct another randomised controlled trial of a universal and a targeted intervention to reduce mental health problems from all forms of bullying in school students. The study was designed to compare three groups of schools with students in Year 8 and Year 9; a high dose cluster of schools who will receive a universal intervention against bullying (including cyberbullying) plus a targeted intervention for students who persistently bully; a moderate dose condition with the universal intervention only and a low dose condition with care as usual. It is hypothesised that the high dose intervention schools will have significantly lower student reported anxiety and depression symptoms, as well as lower rates of bullying perpetration and victimisation as reported by school staff and students. The innovative part of this project is that it targets the individual perpetrator of traditional and cyberbullying. It has been shown that these students have well developed social skills and understanding and score high on social cognition (Bem, 1972; Erol and Erdogan, 2008; Rubak, Sandbæk, Lauritzen, and Christensen, 2005). However, students who bully have been shown to show low levels of empathy (Sutton, Smith, and Sweetenham, 1999) and thus interventions which appeal to the student’s empathetic response to their victim, such as the Method of Shared Concern (Pikas, 2002), are often ineffective in discouraging the bullying. This project is instead trialling motivational interviewing, a cognitive counselling technique, which has been successfully used to reduce drug use, eating disorders, and violent behaviour in adolescents (Frey et al., 2011; Hettema, Steele, and Miller, 2005).
Research on Legal Interventions

Professor Campbell and her team won two grants from the Australian Research Council examining cyberbullying and the law in Australia. The first project investigated the incidence and consequences of cyberbullying among students and amongst teachers. Using a scenario method the understanding of cyberbullying among primary and secondary school students and teachers was investigated. Written anti-bullying school policies were analysed to ascertain their adherence to legal requirements. The second project is currently examining the knowledge and attitudes of the school community to legal responses to cyberbullying and will produce legally-informed resources for use in schools.

Safe and Well Project

An innovative strategy for the prevention and intervention in cyberbullying that is being researched in Australia is the use of a social marketing campaign (Cross, Campbell, Slee, Spears, and Barnes, 2013). Social marketing attempts to change attitudes and behaviours for social good. It is based on the model of goal directed behaviour (Perugini and Bagozzi, 2001) that proposes that attitudes are antecedents for desires which provide direct impetus for intentions which are the key predictor of behaviour. Usually in an effort to reach young people about cyberbullying, the Internet is used to build adult created websites. However, none of these are evidence-based and so we do not know if young people are accessing them. Furthermore, most have been created without consulting young people (Cross et al., 2013).

Additionally, the messages are not usually in the media spaces where the young people interact. The Safe and Well Online project is exploring ways to rectify these issues by developing an online marketing campaign, designed by youth. A longitudinal study is being conducted to examine changes in attitude and behaviour together with an online panel to estimate campaign reach and impact. The first marketing campaign to counter cyberbullying was based on respectful behaviour online. It is called Keep It Tame (http://keepittame.youngandwellcrc.org.au/) and was launched in November 2012, running for four weeks online. The YouTube clip features an animated smartphone which becomes ugly and nasty if wrong decisions are made. The clip formed an interactive “banner ad” which literally popped up all over the Internet. The reach and impact of the campaign was measured by purchasing advertising space in social media websites such as Facebook and Club Penguin.

Another project from the Safe and Well Online project, which involves an innovative approach to cyberbullying, is a smartphone app called Appreciate a Mate (http://www.youngandwellcrc.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/Young-and-Well-Annual-Highlights-2013-14.pdf). The app instantly generates messages of appreciation so that young people can share positively online. It is aimed at strengthening self-esteem and enabling young people to start a positive cycle of online communication with their peers.

On a much smaller scale there has been interventions reported in Australian schools. One compared Year 6 students’ experiences of both traditional and cyberbullying who were in a school which taught Philosophy for Children (P4C) with a matched sample of students who attended schools which do not conduct this program (Tangen and Campbell, 2010). The Philosophy for Children approach (Lipman and Bynum, 1976) is based on both cognitive development and also, through participation in the “community of enquiry,” developing
students’ social skills. The process involves children reading or viewing a stimulus, developing questions about the stimulus, and then participating in a dialogue with each other (Haynes, 2008). Although it was hypothesised that students at the P4C school would report significantly less bullying than the other students this was not the case. In fact there were more reports of face-to-face bullying in the P4C school. There were no differences in reported cyberbullying victimisation or perpetration between the two groups. It was hypothesised that while the P4C students learnt how to discuss and problem solve situations from story books they may not have transferred these solutions to their own lives. An interesting finding was that both cohorts of students reported that at their schools adults were twice as likely to prevent face-to-face bullying than cyberbullying, as the students perceived that teachers were not generally as aware of cyberbullying taking place as they were of face-to-face bullying.

CONCLUSION

Unfortunately, despite these efforts, Australia’s rate of cyberbullying in young people is similar to other countries as mentioned earlier. As Shariff (2015) has written, we seem to be no further ahead in our efforts to reduce cyberbullying. However, as cyberbullying is still half the prevalence of traditional bullying, perhaps our efforts have been able to at least contain cyberbullying if not yet to reduce it. There are many challenges for researchers of cyberbullying remaining. Until there is widespread agreement on the definition of cyberbullying then measurement difficulties will continue and prevention and intervention efforts will be hampered. Similarly measurement instruments need to be standardised, with the same cut-off points, definitions, and comparable age and nature of samples. More studies using a longitudinal design on consequences and risk and protective factors need to be carried out. In addition, community responses by the media and the legal profession need to be influenced by rigorous research. Finally, more large scale well-funded randomly controlled intervention studies to reduce cyberbullying are required.

REFERENCES


**INTRODUCTION**

School bullying is by no means a novel issue. Throughout the history of formal education systems, violence, to a certain extent, has been common place in schools (Aries, 1962). However, prior to the 1970s, school violence and bullying was not considered by teachers as an issue of foremost concern (Bayh, 1975; Gabriel, 1957; Phillips, 1932), and the cross-cultural perception that school violence is a major social and public health concern is a relatively modern occurrence (Chen and Astor, 2009; Flannery, Modzeleski, and Kretschmer, 2013; Li, 2007). For instance, during the 1930s, school bullying was not a concern for any of the newly-qualified teachers in England surveyed; rather they reported maintaining discipline, inadequate teaching equipment, social stance of the school, and violence between parents and teachers as their main matters for concern (Phillips, 1932). By the 1950s, teachers in England were mostly concerned about class control and class inspections rather than school violence (Gabriel, 1957).

However, the following decades saw an increase in school violence. By 1975, US School Superintendents noted an increase in school robberies (36.7%), student assaults on other students (85.3%), confiscation of weapons by school authorities (54.4%), school rape and attempted rape (40.1%), and school homicide (18.5%) in just three years between 1970 and 1973 (Bayh, 1975). By 1978, the U.S. congress mandated The Safe School Study, which found that 282,000 students were physically assaulted in U.S. secondary schools each month. At the same time, European countries were finding similarly high rates of school violence. In 1983, research conducted in Norwegian schools found that 15% of students were regularly bullied or acted as a bully (Olweus, 1991, 1993, 1995, 1997). The 1980s saw a rapid growth in
research on school bullying throughout Europe (Brown & Winterton, 2010; Menesini et al., 2012; Olweus, 1991, 2011; O’Moore and Minton, 2009; Ortega et al., 2012; Wolke, Woods, Stanford, and Schulz, 2001), North America (Craig and Pepler, 2007; Good, McIntosh, and Gietz, 2011; Schneider, O’Donnell, Stueve, and Coulteret, 2012; Turner, Exum, Brame, and Holt, 2013), Asia (Chen and Astor, 2009; Ong, 2015; Zhou et al., 2013), and Australia (Rigby, 2000; Srivastava, Gamble, and Boey, 2013).

Notably, this wealth of research supports the view that school bullying is a global concern. Furthermore, findings strongly indicate that bullying is particularly persistent in schools during adolescence, and largely involves violence among students and their fellow peers. This increase in school violence and bullying continued to develop as a major concern for teachers around the world. By the late 1980s, research on teachers’ perceptions of bullying had commenced, and teachers were reporting violence and bullying to be one of, if not the most serious issue within schools (Borg and Falzon, 1989; Kyriacou and Roe, 1988; Wilson, 1987).

In recent years, cyberbullying has become a major public concern for teachers throughout the world (O’Moore, 2012a). Cyberbullying has received increased international attention due to mass media reports of homicide and suicide cases, in which bullying was a precipitating factor (Dooley, Pyzalski, and Cross, 2009). Cyberbullying has received much attention from the research community with many survey-based studies being conducted (Kowalski, Giumetti, Schroeder, and Lattanner, 2014; Monks, Robinson, and Worlidge, 2012; Raynor and Wylie, 2012; Schneider et al., 2012; Slonje, Smith, and Frisén, 2013), with results suggesting that there are a significant number of young people experiencing cyberbullying globally (Baek and Bullock, 2014; Hinduja and Patchin, 2014).

Regrettably, Ireland is no exception; with research findings showing that 13.9% of respondents aged 12 to 16 years reported that they personally experienced cyberbullying in recent months (O’Moore, 2012a). Furthermore, it seems that teenagers living in Ireland have an exceptionally challenging, byzantine relationship with cyberbullying. Research conducted by YouGov (2015) has found that Irish teenagers are more likely to be cyberbullied, with one in four Irish teenagers reporting that they had been cyberbullied, in comparison to one in five teenagers over 11 other countries surveyed. Of those Irish teenagers who had been cyberbullied, 45% reported feeling helpless, and one in four experienced suicidal thoughts (YouGov, 2015).

Bearing in mind that Irish youth suicide rates are one of the highest in Europe (European Child Safety Alliance, 2014), it is crucial that this issue is explored on both a scientific and governmental basis. Although there has been a growth in cyberbullying research over the past number of years, there remain many unexplored areas within the Irish context. One such area is the analysis of employed Irish secondary school teachers’ perceptions of cyberbullying. Teachers are at the forefront of dealing with student bullying within schools (Byrne, 2015; Elledge et al., 2013; Li, 2008; Stauffer, Heath, Coyne, and Ferrin, 2012). All intervention programmes are primarily implemented by teachers, yet international research has found that although teachers acknowledge that cyberbullying is a major concern, they do not feel confident in dealing with it (Beringer, 2011; Eden, Heiman, Olenik-Shemesh, 2012; Li, 2008; Yilmaz, 2010).
BULLYING AND CYBERBULLYING: WHAT’S THE DIFFERENCE?

In order to truly understand cyberbullying, it is essential to review and appraise traditional bullying as both coincide to a certain extent. Olweus (2011) defines traditional bullying as “(1) intentional negative behaviour that (2) typically occurs with some repetitiveness and is (3) directed against a person who has difficulty defending himself or herself” (p. 151). Although bullying has long been established as a school-based issue (Craig and Pepler, 2008), the growing demand and dependence of social networking and electronic communication has resulted in the topic of bullying shifting from the real world to the realm of the cyberspace (Mishna, Saini, and Solomon, 2009). Over the last decade, social interactions have changed quite drastically, owing to the exponential increase of electronic and computer-based communication systems (Mishna et al., 2009). More youths are online now than ever before. In Europe, 96% of teenagers reported going online daily (Livingstone, Haddon, Görzig, and Ölafsson, 2011). According to the Internet World Stats (2014), 82.5% of the Irish population uses the Internet, with a 16.7% increase since 2010. Given that 84% of Irish teenagers own a Smartphone, it’s becoming easier for these teenagers to access cyber technology at any time of the day (Thinkhouse, 2014). Although most online interactions are considered positive, such as academic support, social support, identity exploration, interpersonal and critical thinking, and cross cultural interactions (Gross, 2004; Jackson et al., 2006; Valkenburg and Peter, 2007), the dangers of social networking are also of concern (Shariff, 2009; Turel and Serenke, 2012; Valcke, Wever, VanKeer, and Schellens, 2011). One such risk is cyberbullying.

O’Moore (2012a) describes cyberbullying as “an extension of traditional bullying with technology providing the perpetrator with another way to abuse the target” (p. 210). Taking this into account, cyberbullying can take different forms including racist, homophobic, religious, transphobic, or cyberbullying of people with a disability or special educational needs (Li, 2008; Anti-Bullying Working Group, 2013). Although there are many similarities between traditional bullying and cyberbullying, research indicates that cyberbullying can be more problematic than bullying as not only can it follow the target wherever they go, the cyberbully can also remain sometimes anonymous (Ybarra and Mitchell, 2004a). Although research on the effects of cyberbullying in secondary schools is much more restricted than research on traditional bullying, researchers believe that the effects of cyberbullying can be similar and even more harmful than traditional bullying (Beran and Li, 2007; Bonanno and Hymel, 2013; Campbell, 2005; Ybarra and Mitchell, 2004b). These effects range from school absenteeism, reduced academic achievement, poor concentration, anger, frustration, depression, and in some cases suicide (Beran and Li, 2007; Bonanno and Hymel, 2013; Kowalski, Limber, and Agatson, 2008).

IRISH SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS AND CYBERBULLYING

Considering the potential negative effects of cyberbullying, it is important for schools and teachers to take action to reduce cyberbullying within and outside of school (Stauffer et
Not only are secondary school teachers in a vital position of authority, they are also responsible for the students’ rules and behaviour (Jackson, Boostrom, and Hansen, 1993; Stauffer et al., 2012). According to the Association of Secondary School Teachers in Ireland (ASTI, 2012), the role of the teacher is to educate, respect, care for, trust, and exercise integrity. Furthermore, teachers should “work to establish and maintain a culture of mutual trust and respect in their schools” (ASTI, 2012, p. 6).

At present, research on teachers’ perceptions of bullying and cyberbullying has been internationally examined, with results indicating that cyberbullying is an urgent and significant issue which needs to be directly addressed. Owing to the growing severity, character and adverse effects of cyberbullying, there is a call for educators to precede and initiate responses both nationally and internationally. In Ireland, responses have commenced, and an action plan on bullying was published by the Minister for Education and Skills in January 2013, which released a number of recommendations for consideration (Anti-Bullying Working Group, 2013). This contributed to the development of updated anti-bullying procedures for primary and post-primary schools (Department of Education and Skills, 2013). Moreover, the Joint Committee on Transport and Communications (2013) has also issued a report on tackling cyberbullying. Some of their recommendations include the establishment of a single body to govern social media content, the development of an EU wide response, appropriate training on cyberbullying for parents and teachers, and guidelines on managing cyberbullying for school principals.

Although research has investigated students’ experiences, teachers’ experiences and perceptions of cyberbullying within an Irish cohort (e.g., Corcoran, Connolly, and O’Moore, 2012; McNamara and Moynihan, 2010; O’Moore, 2012a), currently no such research on employed teachers’ perceptions of cyberbullying in Irish secondary schools has been undertaken; with prior research focusing on students or pre-service teachers. This chapter will examine a study which adds to the research on cyberbullying by focusing on secondary school teachers’ experiences and perceptions and concerns regarding cyberbullying. It investigates how secondary school teachers cope with cyberbullying, along with prevention strategies they have in place. In addition, it also investigates secondary schools’ commitment to addressing cyberbullying.

**METHOD**

**Design**

In order to examine teachers’ perceptions of cyberbullying in Irish secondary schools, a mixed methods research design was utilised (Hanson, Creswell, Clark, Petska, and Creswell, 2005). Prior research has indicated that there is a lack of mixed method research on teachers’ perceptions of cyberbullying (Newey and Magson, 2010; Sassu, 2006). The quantitative component consisted of an online survey. An email was sent to every secondary school in Ireland, explaining the research and inviting teachers to participate. The questions were based
on prior international research which examined teachers’ perceptions of cyberbullying, and were edited to account for an Irish cohort of qualified teachers (Li, 2008; McNamara and Moynihan, 2010; Stauffer et al., 2012). Qualitative data was gathered by means of four semi-structured interviews with qualified secondary school teachers currently employed by the Irish Department of Education and Skills. The interview questions were also based on prior research, which examined teachers’ understanding of cyberbullying (Mishna, Scarcello, Pepler, and Wiene, 2005). Descriptive-interpretive analysis was used to analyse the interviews (Elliott & Timulak, 2005). Ethical approval was granted by Trinity College Dublin for this study.

Participants

A survey examining teachers’ perceptions of cyberbullying was sent to every secondary school in Ireland (N = 721) via email. One survey was to be completed by each school. Of the schools invited to participate, 82 completed the survey (see Table 1). Two were eliminated as they were unqualified (Higher Diploma students), leaving a response rate of 80 (11.1% participation rate).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1. Demographic details of Quantitative Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level of Education</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Diploma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masters of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD/Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching Role</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum Leader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-Bully Coordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home-School Liaison</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastoral Care/Chaplin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice Principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guidance Counsellor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordinator Position (i.e., SPHE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Types of Secondary School</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male Secondary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Secondary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-educational Secondary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational Secondary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community College</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The participants were fully qualified secondary school teachers currently employed by the Irish Department of Education and Skills. In total there were 39,103 pupils in all respondents’ schools, with the mean number of 479.08 pupils (SD = 252). On average, participants were teaching for 19.5 years (SD = 10.75). The mean respondent age was 43.72 years (SD = 9.86). Four teachers were also interviewed with a semi-structured interview schedule concerning teachers’ perceptions of cyberbullying (two female, and two male).

Materials

Quantitative Materials

Due to its recent emergence, measures for cyberbullying are limited (Li, 2008). However, due to the evident relationship between traditional bullying and cyberbullying, it has been suggested that instruments used in traditional bullying research can also be used in cyberbullying research (Li, 2008). In turn, three surveys used in prior bullying research were utilised in this study (Li, 2008; McNamara and Moynihan, 2010; Stauffer et al., 2012). Adaptations were made so as to make the surveys suitable for an Irish cohort.

Li’s (2008) survey, which focused on teachers’ attitudes, was an edited version of a bullying survey, developed by Siu (2004), entitled ‘Teacher’s Attitude About Bullying Questionnaire’. It was edited by Li (2008) to address preservice Canadian elementary and secondary school teachers’ attitudes about cyberbullying. McNamara and Moynihan’s (2010) survey focused on teachers’ experiences, perceptions and skills in addressing cyberbullying. A survey by Stauffer et al. (2012) which focused on prevention and intervention strategies for cyberbullying, was an edited version of a larger study which examined teachers’ overall perceptions of bullying, whereby cyberbullying was viewed as a subset of bullying. It addressed qualified secondary school teachers, and it was formatted for an American population. The edited surveys were combined into one 59 item survey divided into three sections, consisting of a combination of Likert scale response options and open ended questions. The general awareness and skills in addressing cyberbullying scale consisted of 12 items, the tackling cyberbullying scale consisted of 21 items, and the prevention and intervention strategies scales consisted of 6 items.

Qualitative Materials

The interview schedule used in this study was based on prior research, and was adapted to be suitable for a fully qualified Irish sample of secondary school teachers (Mishna et al., 2005). It was also edited to address cyberbullying, rather than traditional bullying; thus the following cyberbullying definition was used; An aggressive, wilful act carried out by an individual or group using electronic communication (e.g., O’Moore, 2012b).

Procedure

Data was gathered concurrently for this research. On the 25th of February 2013, surveys were sent via email to each of the 721 secondary schools in Ireland. All relevant information
regarding the research was provided in the email. Only one survey was required to be completed per school. Reminder emails were sent monthly over a four-month period. At the end of the survey teachers were invited to partake in an interview, and were asked to provide their name and contact details if interested. Each interview took approximately 40 minutes and each was recorded and transcribed verbatim. A debriefing form with a list of psychological support services in case of distress was given to each participant.

**RESULTS**

**Quantitative Findings**

**General Awareness and Skills in Addressing Cyberbullying**

Teachers’ overall awareness and skills in addressing cyberbullying were examined (see Table 2 below). When asked “are you aware of a type of bullying called cyberbullying” all teachers responded that they were Aware or Very aware of cyberbullying (100%). The majority of respondents (67.5%) reported that traditional bullying was the most prevalent form of bullying at their school. Of those who responded, 100% agreed that cyberbullying occurs mainly outside of the classroom, such as at lunch time or on the corridor. When asked, “how able are you to resolve cyberbullying incidents so everyone is content” just 38.8% felt that they were able to do so.

**Concern about Cyberbullying**

Findings suggest that teachers believe that cyberbullying is a problem in schools, with 93.8% respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement. Of the sample, 98.8% agreed that children are affected by cyberbullying, and 96.3% are concerned about cyberbullying. Results are displayed in Table 3.

**Table 2. Teachers’ General Awareness of and Skills for Cyberbullying: Main Findings**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Awareness of cyberbullying</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Types of bullying</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>67.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyber</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>22.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyberbullying occurs in your school</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>83.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Able to support cyberbullied students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incapable</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>26.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capable/Very Capable</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>83.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Able to resolve so everyone is content</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not able/Somewhat</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>46.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsure</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Able/Very Able</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>38.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Due to missing values, some percentages may not add up to 100%
Table 3. Proportion of Teachers’ Concerned About Cyberbullying

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Percent of Teachers’ Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problems in schools</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children are affected</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m concerned</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: N = 80. Response options 1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3= Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly agree.

Confidence in Dealing with Cyberbullying

In response to the statement “I feel confident in identifying cyberbullying” only 50.1% reported that they were confident. Similarly, in response to the statement “I feel confident in managing cyberbullying”, just 50% reported that they were confident. However, in response to the statement “If I knew cyberbullying was happening at a school, I would do something”, 96.2% of teachers reported that they would do something. Results are summarised in Table 4.

Prepared to Deal with Cyberbullying

In general, the vast majority of teachers (80%) felt that their university education left them unprepared to manage school cyberbullying. Overall, 91.3% indicated that they would like to learn more about cyberbullying during their training, and 70.1% agreed that training in cyberbullying is just as important as other topics covered in their university education.

Importance of School Commitment

Teachers’ attitudes concerning the importance of school commitment were examined. Results found that teachers were in favour of most statements regarding school commitment, such as developing school cyberbullying policies (97.6%), use of professional development days to train staff on cyberbullying (93.8%), use of cyberbullying curriculum (91.3%), and the use of classroom activities to address cyberbullying (90%). However, the majority strongly disagreed with discussing cyberbullying with parents (63.8%), addressing cyberbullying at school assemblies (46.3%), and using television and other media to discuss cyberbullying (55%).

Table 4. Proportion of Teachers Confident in Dealing with Cyberbullying

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Percent of Teachers’ Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confident in identifying</td>
<td>17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confident in managing</td>
<td>20.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would do something</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: N = 80. Response options 1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3= Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly agree.
The Impact of Cyberbullying

The majority of teachers reported that cyberbullying has long lasting negative effects (88.8%). Almost all teachers (98.8%) were supportive of implementing a formal bully prevention programme in their school. Furthermore, respondents reported that cyberbullying does not toughen kids up (96.3%), nor does it prepare them for life (85.1%).

Prevention Strategies

Increased parental involvement was found by teachers to be the most helpful prevention strategy for cyberbullying, with 96.3% agreeing that it would be Helpful or Very Helpful. Teachers were asked to share their ideas on what teachers need to manage cyberbullying. Of the 75 teachers (93.75%) who responded, 27 teachers (36%) suggested training and in-services on cyberbullying. Fourteen teachers (18.7%) endorsed increased training in information technologies; specifically one Vice Principal, M, with 30 years teaching experience, reported that “Many teachers are so unfamiliar with social networks that they don’t even share the language used by students...and therefore are at a loss when it comes to dealing with incidents...some teachers are wary of technology and it’s a very slow process to bring them on board to adopt it in their classroom.”

Teachers were also asked to share their ideas on what makes it difficult to address cyberbullying. Of the 75 teachers who responded (93.75%), the majority (N = 13; 17.3%) recognised its occurrence outside of school. Of the sample, 12 teachers (16%) referred to the lack of training, 12 teachers (16%) addressed the prevalence of bystanders and secrecy, eight teachers (10.7%) addressed the lack of parental supervision, and seven teachers (9.3%) addressed the lack of protocols. Only two teachers (2.7%) mentioned lack of school initiative, and lack of training in technology (2.7%).

Qualitative Findings

Qualitative findings obtained from teachers allow for better understanding of teachers’ perceptions of cyberbullying within Irish secondary schools. Details of the sample interviewed is displayed in Table 5. The domains, categories and themes were identified, and are displayed in Table 6. The section that follows discusses the most prominent themes in detail.

Gender Differences

All teachers agreed that female students’ cyberbullying is more malicious, intentional and more frequent than male students. J reported that

“I think that, that it’s more sorta female linked, maybe I’m wrong on that but that would be my perception that girls tend to use it more than the fellas.”
Table 5. Demographics for Qualitative Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Male/Female</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Years Teaching</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>700+</td>
<td>3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R*</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>550+</td>
<td>10 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>600+</td>
<td>10 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>600+</td>
<td>10 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* R is the school’s anti-bullying coordinator

Table 6. Domains, Categories and Themes Identified in Descriptive-Interpretive Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Awareness of Cyberbullying</td>
<td>Definition</td>
<td>Misuse of mobile phones (1/4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Misuse of social networks (3/4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Divide</td>
<td></td>
<td>Nature of female cyberbullying (4/4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Nature of male cyberbullying (4/4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposure to Cyberbullying</td>
<td>Disclosure</td>
<td>Student disclosure (3/4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>School management disclosure (1/4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Witnessing cyberbullying (1/4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Peer victimisation (1/4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reasons for Cyberbullying</td>
<td></td>
<td>Being different (1/4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A sense of belonging (1/4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Resentfulness (2/4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effects of cyberbullying</td>
<td></td>
<td>Short and long term effects (4/4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Fear of victimisation (1/4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Invulnerability (1/4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific Responses to Cyberbullying</td>
<td>Parental and School Responses</td>
<td>Proactive responding (2/4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Passive responding (2/4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Training/Policies/Programmes</td>
<td>Insufficient training on cyberbullying (4/4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Anti-cyberbullying school policy (4/4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Role of parents and communities (4/4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By contrast, all four teachers agreed that male students use traditional forms of bullying more often than female students. Furthermore, all four teachers agreed that male students can often be unaware that they are cyberbullying, and are unaware of the damage that they are doing. E explained how oblivious boys can be when it comes to cyberbullying.

“I find, boys in particular bully, and then say I was only messing, and they really do feel that it was only messing, but often you know, in this only messing some of the . . . most horrendous things are said.”
Short and Long Term Effects

All teachers interviewed agreed that cyberbullying affects students both in the long term and short term. E went on to discuss how cyberbullying can have numerous short term and long term effects.

“Students can become introspective, and you know just feeling deeply hurt about it. Others will become quite angry, and will lash out . . . in the long term, students who don’t disclose may suffer from psychological harm. It’s the children who don’t say anything, who suffer in silence, who never disclose. They’re the ones I think who are more likely to suffer more long term damage, and maybe psychological damage into the future because for them it was never resolved.”

Proactive and Passive Responding

All teachers agreed that some parents are very proactive in protecting their child from cyberbullying. R noted that parents often set up a Facebook page to monitor their child’s online activity.

“A lot of parents insist on being a friend of their son or daughter, or they insist on having controls to the profile.”

Furthermore, two teachers reported that some parents are somewhat ignorant and oblivious to cyberbullying. E in particular reported that some parents believe that cyberbullying doesn’t exist.

“There will always be a small minority who really don’t believe it’s happening, and don’t believe it’s of any great consequence. I mean . . . I had a parent who told me last year that, you know, boys will be boys.”

Furthermore, A noted that some parents will use their Facebook page to cyberbully alongside their child.

“The other girl’s mother was on Facebook, even writing stuff about her . . . it’s another story and parents are even getting involved in the cyberbullying, let alone trying to sort it out.”

Insufficient Training on Cyberbullying

All four teachers reported that they had received insufficient, or no training on cyberbullying. Although two teachers received training on cyberbullying, they reported that it was too trivial and general, and they would like to receive more specific training for cyberbullying. R, for instance reported that she would like to attend training on strategies for cyberbullying, and how to actively seek cyberbullying as

“when students see that you’re actually actively looking out for bullying, that makes a huge difference as well, there’s a change in the behaviour.”
A, who was newly qualified and had not received training in cyberbullying, reported that she felt ill-equipped to deal with cyberbullying. She further reported that senior teachers were more prepared for dealing with it.

“At a senior level . . . They’ve more experience with it but at a teacher’s level and form teacher’s level . . . not so much.”

**Role of Parents and Communities**

All teachers reported that cyberbullying is a problem. J noted that although by nature we will always have bullies, the development of cyberbullying has established an easy avenue into bullying, encouraging students once unlikely to bully to become involved in the behaviour.

“I think the development within information technology has added. It’s another avenue into bullying, and it’s probably an easy enough avenue. People who mightn’t have traditionally bullied, might have had bullying tendencies. It’s a lot easier for them to go and, and bully due to cybertechnology”.

E noted that cyberbullying enhances the opportunity of prolonging bullying, whereby students can be bullied 24/7.

“It’s 24/7 it, it you know? I used to come home from school, and tell my mate I’d meet him at the corner at 5 o’clock, you know because neither of us would have phones in our houses. You know? And there wasn’t this need for constant contact. They have this need for constant affirmation and contact with each other and they use that type of media to also bully each other . . . So it seems to be a constant”.

All teachers noted that they need more training on cyberbullying. Specifically, A noted that teachers need training on what to do when they are approached by a child who is being cyberbullied, so that every child is given the same opportunities.

“There should be some sort of in-service or more talks on cyberbullying and how to actually deal with it because yesterday I actually didn’t know what to do . . . teachers who aren’t form teacher should have some sort of idea of what to do, because any sort of a student can come to you . . . everyone in the school should have some sort of idea of what to do.”

Additionally, all teachers interviewed agreed that parents and communities have an important role in tackling cyberbullying. J noted that teachers and schools should not take sole responsibility of tackling cyberbullying, rather parents and community need to take action.

“Society will often feel, there’s an issue in society, throw it onto the schools. I think what schools are finding now is that we’re overloaded with stuff. That other agencies and parents and that have to take responsibility. Schools have a role, but we can’t have ultimate roles.”
CONCLUSION

The overall aim of this study was to examine secondary school teachers’ experiences and perceptions of cyberbullying within the Irish cohort. Given that cyberbullying is a developing global issue, and given that there is a paucity of research on teachers’ perspectives on cyberbullying in Ireland, this research gives an insight and understanding on what the current situation is like in Irish secondary schools. The insights gained from this research go some way towards highlighting the needs of Irish teachers in the current school climate; indicating some of the challenges they face, the supports they require, and the efforts they are currently making to best serve their students. The survey in the current research was conducted online, and therefore only accessed Internet users. This has important implications given the nature of the study, and future research should strive for a more representative sample of teachers. In addition, none of the teachers interviewed reported that they were bullied or cyberbullied as children or adolescents. Prior research has found that personal experiences of bullying or cyberbullying may affect one’s responses to school cyberbullying (Kallestad and Olweus, 2003; Mishna et al., 2005). Future research is necessary to develop our understanding of cyberbullying in Ireland and internationally. Based on prior research, it is recommended that future studies examine gender differences in teachers’ perceptions of cyberbullying in Irish secondary schools. Evidence to date indicates that there is a relationship between pre-service teachers’ gender and their confidence in dealing with cyberbullying; with male pre-service teachers being more confident (Li, 2008; Yilmaz, 2010). In addition, other possible correlates of teacher attitudes could be examined, such as personal attributes and empathy. Furthermore, it is not only teachers who provide care for students when in a school environment, and therefore inclusion of school principals, educational psychologists, and school coordinators in future studies could provide valuable knowledge.

Although cyberbullying is a recent phenomenon in Ireland, findings from both surveys and interviews support previous research indicating that cyberbullying is a complex and multifaceted issue embedded within secondary schools (e.g., Beran and Li, 2005, 2007; Cassidy, Brown, and Jackson, 2012). Whilst we have updated guidelines that require schools to address the issue of cyberbullying in their anti-bullying policy, there is a need to develop resources and supports for teachers. In general, the results from both surveys and interviews found that teachers are concerned about cyberbullying, and feel committed to managing and handling it, but are underprepared and lack confidence in dealing with it. Considering that teachers’ confidence can help students develop a sense of security and safety (Boulton, 1999), it is vital to develop teachers’ knowledge and skills about cyberbullying, which in turn, will increase their confidence. As cyberbullying incidents predominately occur outside of Irish secondary schools, teachers emphasise their concern regarding parental and community awareness of cyberbullying. Therefore, it is vital that both parents and communities in Ireland become more familiar with the characteristics and prevention strategies of cyberbullying, especially considering that more Irish youth are using technology than ever before. In order to best support schools to provide for the educational, physical, and psychological well-being of children and young people, we need to implement a collaborative, whole school and community approach to traditional bullying and cyberbullying with provision of adequate training, management, and resources at school- and societal-level.
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Chapter 15

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS:
WHERE ARE WE NOW AND WHERE TO NEXT?

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INTRODUCTION

This book comes at an important juncture for young Internet users, families, teachers, cyberbullying researchers, practitioners, and policy/law makers. Cyberbullying is high on the education and psychological welfare agenda internationally. In fact cyberbullying is recognised by many as a key challenge facing today’s youth - although still regarded by many as a “first world problem” rather than a pressing matter. There is a wealth of literature pertaining to the issue of cyberbullying and we see national and cross-national initiatives aimed at developing research and practice in order to best serve young people, schools, and communities in their interaction with the cyber world. This chapter reviews some of the key issues raised throughout this book and attempts to draw some conclusions regarding a range of issues, from fundamental considerations in relation to how we conceptualise cyberbullying, to important issues we must reflect on so as to intervene effectively; many of which have been highlighted by the authors throughout.

BACK TO BASICS: DEFINITIONS, MEASUREMENT, AND DETERMINANTS

The early chapters in the book examine the development of cyberbullying research, the current arguments regarding definitions, international prevalence rates, and the role of gender. Peter K. Smith and Fethi Berkkun examine the development of cyberbullying research since its beginnings with the emergence of the term ‘cyberbullying.’ They refer to four phases of

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development of traditional bullying research from the 1970s: (i) beginning with Olweus’ initial examination of school aggression which led to the creation of a self-report measure and school-based intervention; (ii) this was followed by international surveys of school bullying and intervention efforts outside of Norway, whilst the concept of bullying was expanded to encompass relational bullying; (iii) following this, school bullying became established as an international research program and in Finland Salmivalli and colleagues began to look at the various bystander roles; (iv) this leads to the most recent phase which has focused on cyberbullying and began around 2004 with emphasis on text and email bullying. Smith and Berkun undertook to chart the evolution of cyberbullying research with a literature review of journal articles from 1990 to the end of 2015 where the abstract is written in English and the article is focused on cyberbullying, victimization, or harassment. This review highlights the recent growth in academic literature which focuses on bullying and cyberbullying. Smith and Berkun credit availability of funding with some of the recent growth in European studies, whilst also highlighting the parallels between the access to cyberspace and the emergence of literature. It is also evident from this review that the research has tended to be quantitative and cross-sectional rather than longitudinal or qualitative. Smith and Berkun argue that there is a need for more qualitative research; a move away from the more traditional and perhaps psychological approach to bullying research.

These articles have covered a range of relevant issues, including definitional and measurement considerations such as the various perspectives on how best to label, define, and conceptualise cyberbullying, and the variety of available measures for assessing the incidence of the behaviours. Despite the inconsistencies across study methods, it is estimated by the authors that occasional occurrences may be reported by over 20% of research participants, but that serious, recent, or repeated incidents are generally reported by around 5%. Analysis also revealed that cyberbullying is experienced amongst a wide variety of ages, but seems to peak in adolescence. Smith and Berkun suggest that the increasing cyber access among younger age groups may come to be reflected in cyberbullying research over time. When examining gender differences, they found that age is an important consideration, with boys possibly becoming more involved as perpetrators than girls as they get older. Furthermore, it is proposed that cyberbullying via social networking may be more appealing to girls as it facilitates reputation damage. Studies which include a cross-cultural comparison or focus on disability and minority groups are rare within the literature according to this review, whereas research focusing on risk factors, or predictors, or outcomes of involvement in cyberbullying occurred more frequently. Around one fifth of studies have also focused on the peer group and group norms, whereas other researchers examined the roles of parents, teachers, and siblings. A small proportion of studies reviewed had focused on legal implications whilst studies of coping strategies, resources, and interventions were somewhat better represented. Overall this chapter provides an up-to-date account of the face of cyberbullying research, and indicates the key areas that require further examination.

Taking a narrower focus, Pauline K. Hyland, John M. Hyland, and Christopher Alan Lewis examine the conceptual issues and definitional considerations regarding cyberbullying, and also discuss the appropriateness of the term cyber aggression as an alternative label. Their review of the main theories and types of aggression highlight the complexity of aggressive and bullying behaviour and the possible factors which contribute to the problem; an important consideration for those hoping to counter it or intervene effectively. They position bullying as a sub-type of aggression which is generally agreed to be intentional, repetitive harm doing
which is also characterised by a power imbalance; components they argue are more important to focus on than the name or label provided by different cultures. Hyland and colleagues go on to examine the appropriateness of the term cyberbullying and the applicability of the criteria of traditional bullying to this cyber-based aggression. Moreover, they examine the overlap between these distinct yet related behaviours and emphasise the relevance of operational definitions for measurement of cyberbullying; highlighting the merits of a multiple-item scale as opposed to a global question. Finally, the authors examine the usefulness of the label and concept of cyber aggression rather than persisting with the term cyberbullying and the criteria which that label entails. This chapter offers an important overview of some of the fundamental considerations with which researchers must engage before undertaking to extend the knowledge in this field.

Irene Connolly echoes some of the points made by Hyland and colleagues, as she highlights the importance of definitional and measurement issues when reviewing current knowledge of cyberbullying prevalence rates. Also making reference to the evolution of cyber technology, this chapter indicates how the Smartphone has led to the merging of Internet and mobile telephone media. Connolly also discusses the importance of online anonymity (an important aspect of the cyber world) which, she says, facilitates “... an almost dual Bruce Banner/the Hulk personality ...” where individuals who conduct themselves in a polite manner face-to-face, abuse others online. Furthermore, Connolly indicates the importance of achieving an appropriate definition for standardising national and cross-national prevalence rates, as a standardised definition could facilitate standardised methodologies; a consideration highlighted by Smith and Berkkun when considering the inconsistent prevalence rates found internationally. Connolly argues that, with the emergence of cross-national cyberbullying research, it is important to examine the methodologies which can affect the prevalence rates obtained. Methodological variations include: the provision of a cyberbullying definition and listing of exemplary behaviours; the labelling/conceptualisation of the phenomenon (e.g., cyberbullying, Internet harassment); the timing of the studies in terms of how they relate to technological advances such as the development of the Smartphone; age groups included in samples; the time referencing of questions (e.g., experiences in the last month, or ever in school); and methods of collecting data and sampling approaches (e.g., offline convenience sampling). Furthermore, Connolly highlights the fact that cyberbullying rates are often examined as one/two item measures, based on yes/no responses; an approach that could create difficulty as a simple yes/no response may not be adequate for a complex construct such as cyberbullying. An important conclusion that is drawn towards the end of this chapter is that it is important for researchers to turn their attention towards the duration and length of time between cyberbullying incidents so as to gain better insight into the potential effects, whilst development of valid and reliable measures can improve the quality of literature.

Addressing another fundamental issue within the literature, Raúl Navarro, Santiago Yubero, and Elisa Larrañaga provide a current review of the findings regarding gender as it relates to cyberbullying; a variable measured in many studies on the topic of bullying or cyberbullying. Setting out the boundaries of the term gender, Navarro and colleagues indicate that it is more than our biology; it is a social category which informs our social world, including stereotypical beliefs about personality traits and roles. This has important implications for aggressive behaviour as it may be considered adaptive for males, whilst for females it may be seen as something to be suppressed. Additionally, such gender norms may contribute to the increased risk of victimization associated with being female and therefore
having a less powerful position in society and indeed a disadvantaged position in the cyber world. Navarro and colleagues highlight the common claim that males and females are inclined to engage in different forms of aggression; with males tending more towards verbal and physical bullying, and females engaging more in relational bullying. Although this gender difference has been rationalised by arguments such as the superior social intelligence of young girls contributing to more skilled manipulation, the authors make reference to research which contradicts this trend. Meta-analytic research has indicated that males engage in every form of aggression to a greater extent, and the authors suggest that “People mostly use various types of aggression depending on surrounding demands.”

In their own research, Navarro and colleagues found that, amongst Spanish students, males were more frequent perpetrators of cyberbullying than females. Similar to the points made in previous chapters, the lack of consistency in approaches to cyberbullying research makes analysis difficult. However, they found that males were more inclined to send threatening or insulting messages by mobile phone, and more likely to be victims of a video or pictures by mobile phone when someone hits or hurts them. Navarro and colleagues argue that their findings and international research suggest that in cyberbullying there is no clear difference in prevalence of involvement between males and females. It seems that females are more likely victims of cyberbullying than traditional bullying, and males are inclined to perpetrate and suffer cyberbullying that contains humiliating images or contains physical aggression. Males also have a greater tendency to send more sexual or pornographic images; which is a form of victimization to which females are more exposed. Therefore, they argue that these forms of sexual and gender harassment require more attention from researchers.

In their own research, Navarro and colleagues found that all of those who carried out cyberbullying were aware of the gender of the targeted person. Furthermore, they found that cyberbullying was directed at significantly more people of the same sex than of the opposite sex. However, males were more likely to report involvement in cyberbullying that concurrently included males and females. The authors state that males use more types of indirect and relational aggression when targeting females, and they suggest that the anonymity and differing social norms of cyberspace may contribute to higher rates of female-directed bullying. Furthermore, it is proposed that there is a need to examine romantic relationships because cyberspace is an important component in developing and maintaining intimate relationships, and therefore could be used as a vehicle to assault and control partners. Navarro and colleagues express concern about the stereotypical view among both male and female Spanish students that females are worse, more subtle and more harmful, despite the findings to the contrary. This in-depth analysis of gender roles is one which should be given real consideration as we move forward in research.

**APPROACHING CYBERBULLYING WITH A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE**

Jolanta Burke and Stephen Minton offer an alternative view to much of the research to date, by inviting readers to examine traditional bullying and cyberbullying from a positive psychology perspective. They argue that, in light of the modest success of many existing antibullying interventions, a different approach is warranted. Burke and Minton highlight the pattern in bullying research to date which has focused largely on deficits and ill-being;
examining the negative effects of involvement and the negative characteristics associated with perpetration. With regard to measurement of well-being, the “body-builder” approach has been common. Measures of well-being have allowed measurement of the individual levels of their assumed sub-components; therefore “overall” well-being scores can be calculated which comprise the sum of sub-componential scores. In this way it could be argued that to enhance well-being, each sub-component can be increased. This chapter examines some of the key theories of well-being and highlights the philosophical underpinnings. For example, Subjective Well-Being theory, is described as deriving from hedonic philosophical tradition and focuses on life satisfaction, pleasant affect, and unpleasant affect, whereas Psychological Well-Being theory has links to the eudaimonic tradition and focuses on self-acceptance, positive relations, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life, and personal growth. Furthermore, the Authentic Happiness Model includes both hedonic and eudaimonic elements of well-being; the components focus on the life of pleasure, engagement, and meaning. Burke and Minton argue that in order to measure well-being, it is important that we assess positive states of well-being as well as absence of negative states; drawing on research which suggests that there is more to positive affect than constituting the opposite of negative affect. For instance, some research indicates that ill-being and well-being can co-exist within a person. The authors argue that distinguishing well-being from ill-being can facilitate further insights into bullying and cyberbullying, but can also protect against researchers drawing flawed conclusions from the research. Burke and Minton suggest that such a broadening of the research may enhance the efficacy of anti-bullying and anti-cyberbullying intervention efforts.

Following this, Stephen James Minton offers an important, different perspective on cyberbullying behaviour; making reference to the idea of ‘distance’ in a literal or psychological sense. The role of physical proximity was an important variable in Milgram’s experiments with compliance being predicted by physical proximity to the learner and/or the experimenter. Minton also discusses the importance of proximity to weapons and how this relates to our inhibitions to use them. This can have self-destructive consequences as it is argued that our development of weaponry has outstripped our progress in relation to ethical and humane treatment of others. This chapter also argues social distance can also contribute to the lack of responsibility we feel for our aggressive behaviours. Such social distance can be facilitated by seeing others as something different to, or less than, human. Furthermore, Minton highlights the influence of de-individuation and the bystander effect on our response. By utilising decreased physical proximity and increased social distance we can morally distance ourselves from our aggressive behaviours. In this way, it is suggested, we can conduct hostile acts and bear the consequences. The relevance of this to cyberbullying is important to consider, and Minton argues that physical proximity and social distancing perhaps make it easier to abuse someone online and then justify our actions later compared with attacking someone face-to-face.

Furthermore, Minton highlights the fact that research has shown cyber aggression to be positively associated with moral disengagement and moral justification. This chapter offers Stephen James Minton’s reflections on the next possible steps for cyberbullying research. He argues that, in light of the various debates regarding conceptualisation of cyberbullying, there is a need to examine meaning-making used by young people with regard to their online activity and that this might best be achieved via qualitative methodologies. Ultimately this chapter concludes with the following recommendations: (i) there should be further
exploration of the role of physical proximity and social distance as it relates to cyberbullying; (ii) young people’s meaning-making with regard to cyberbullying and cyber aggression should be examined utilising qualitative methods. Both chapters provide thought-provoking suggestions which differ from previous literature.

THE IMPORTANCE OF CROSS-NATIONAL RESEARCH AND CULTURAL CONTEXT

Cyberbullying research has been furthered by funded cross-national collaboration. Brian O’Neill and Thuy Dinh provide a review of the main findings from EU Kids Online research and examine the contribution of cross-national large scale studies to cyberbullying literature. With regard to policy development, they state that the first phase of policy interventions focused largely on addressing potential harm and was based on assumptions about risk posed by the Internet. However, due to the lack of adequate evidence to inform policy, the EU Kids Online was established as a research network with the purpose of developing knowledge regarding children’s online opportunities, risks, and safety. In its first stage (2006-09) a comparative analysis of the existing evidence base carried out by a network of European researchers led to development of a typology of content, contact, or conduct risks and opportunities that arise for young people in cyberspace. Furthermore, this first stage promoted the facilitation of children’s confident and flexible Internet use. O’Neill and Dinh go on to describe phase 2 of the programme, which involved a major quantitative survey of 9-16 year olds across 25 European countries; the purpose of which was to develop knowledge about children’s and parents’ experiences and practices in relation to risky and safer use of online technologies so as to inform efforts to develop a safer online environment for children. The data collection focused on: exposure to sexual images; sending/receiving sexual messages; bullying and harassment; and meeting strangers. Echoing the same point made in previous chapters, O’Neill and Dinh highlight the challenge of using terminology for bullying (not an easy term to translate) in a cross-national study. Findings indicated that face-to-face bullying was more prevalent than online bullying, that girls and older adolescents reported higher levels of victimization, and an overlap between traditional bullying and cyberbullying was evident. Furthermore, O’Neill and Dinh report that those involved in online bullying showed greater psychological vulnerability than those not involved. Also, compared with perpetrators of traditional bullying, cyberbullies were more inclined to engage in risky online behaviours, spend more time using the Internet, and also felt it was easier to be themselves online. When examining participants who were involved in online bullying, higher SES was linked to increased involvement in bullying, whilst lower SES was linked to greater involvement as a victim. Importantly the authors indicate that lower SES was related to lower use of certain coping strategies such as altering Internet settings, or deleting messages. The authors also note some cross national differences, with certain countries characterised by a parent-child gap in agreement on whether the child has been victimized online. For instance, in Norway, parents are more likely to report that a child has been victimized even when the child does not, whereas in Romania, for example, a child is more likely to say he/she has been victimized than the parents are. EU Kids Online categorised countries on the basis of their levels and types of Internet use and risks as follows: Lower use, lower risk; Lower use, some
risk; Higher use, some risk; and Higher use, higher risk. An important insight offered by the authors is the finding that cyberbullying is more prevalent in countries with a higher prevalence of bullying in general, rather than being more prevalent in places where the Internet is more established. It is interesting to consider the argument proposed by Navarro and colleagues, as O’Neill and Dinh report that boys and girls were equally likely to bully online, but boys were more likely to bully offline. The authors also propose that we can make a distinction between those who bully online and offline when we examine their gender, and behaviour and attitudes associated with the Internet. They propose that those who are involved in bullying online either as a perpetrator or victim are also the most vulnerable offline and require support in both the cyber world and the ‘real’ world. A more recent cross-national study called Net Children Go Mobile has found that, within a sub-set of the countries involved in EU Kids Online, although prevalence of bullying has not increased since the EU Kids Online survey, cyberbullying has become more prevalent than face-to-face bullying and takes place most frequently on SNS. They argue that the rise in cyberbullying has been amongst females and amongst the youngest age group. O’Neill and Dinh conclude that there is value in research like EU Kids Online as a way of providing “... a solid baseline for policy development and where necessary targeted intervention.”

Seung-Ha Lee provides a chapter on cyberbullying from a South Korean perspective. It is noted that cyberbullying has been highlighted in South Korea due to high profile cases of suicide following victimization, and more recently the government have recognised cyberbullying as a sub-type of school bullying. This hierarchical categorisation of cyberbullying is similar to those approaches outlined by Hyland and colleagues when examining definitions and conceptualisations of the phenomenon. Also, echoing some key points made in previous chapters, it is noted that in a South Korean context, a variety of terms are used to describe bullying-type behaviours such as gipdan-ttadolim (group isolation) and hakkyo-pokryuk (school violence), and that such labels are sometimes used interchangeably. Similarly, a number of labels are used for cyberbullying; cybergorophim (cyber-harassment), cyberttadolim (cyber isolation), cyberpokryuk (cyber violence), and cyber wang-ta (a socially excluded person in cyber space, or social exclusion in cyber space). Furthermore, even within South Korea, there is a lack of agreement as to the appropriate definition. Seung-Ha Lee highlights the complexity and array of cyber-based aggression (including cybergangyo or wifi shuttle) and how they relate to school bullying. Indicating efforts to develop an understanding of such problems, it is reported that the South Korean government has conducted a bi-annual data collection amongst school pupils to assess the levels of hakkyo-pokryuk. Fortunately this has indicated that being a recipient of school violence has been quickly decreasing in the last 2-3 years. Again emphasising a point made by Irene Connolly, Seung-Ha Lee argues that the varying prevalence rates of cyberbullying found in South Korea may be attributable to varying methodologies.

Lending some findings to the earlier discussion of gender differences, this chapter indicates that in general, boys were more likely to perpetrate cyberpokryuk. Furthermore, more boys were involved in a number of specific types such as cyber defamation and cyber sexual abuse, whereas females were more likely to perpetrate cyberttadolim and with regard to cyberexclusion (or cyberbaejae), a higher percentage of perpetration emerged for girls. Furthermore, boys were found to be more likely to be victimized by cyberpokryuk and across a variety of forms. However, cyber sexual abuse was more common in girls; a particular form that requires further investigation if we are to consider the analysis provided by Navarro and
colleagues. Seung-Ha Lee also suggests that girls may experience relational cyber aggression more frequently than boys. Gender differences were also found to vary across school levels.

It is evident from these studies that perpetrators were most inclined to engage in cyberpokryuk “for fun” or to “upset the victim.” This has important implications for appropriate prevention and intervention as it would suggest a certain lack of emotional empathy. However, it is stated that many also felt negative feelings as a result of their behaviour. Those who are victimized report a variety of responses including getting revenge, and demanding removal of content. Telling a school teacher was an uncommon response to victimization. The least frequent reaction was to report to the police or the bullying and cyberbullying intervention centre. Sharing the incident with friends or family was considered to be a useful coping strategy to stop the problem. Whilst telling teachers was effective at elementary school level, it was not so helpful at higher school levels. This has important implications for successful intervention and reflects a need for either attitudinal change or alternative strategies with older age groups. Another finding reported by Seung-Ha Lee was that almost half of those who witnessed victimization did nothing to help because they thought of it as “nothing” or did not know what to do. Again there are important implications here, particularly in relation to bystander apathy; bringing to mind the relevance of social and psychological distance that Stephen James Minton discussed. South Korean research has identified correlates of cyberbullying involvement at an individual level (e.g., aggression, impulsiveness), at a home level (e.g., parenting style, violence in the home), and at a school level (e.g., school satisfaction, delinquent peers). Efforts to counter cyberbullying have been undertaken; for instance The Hakkyo-pokryuk Prevention and Intervention Act in 2012 requires that a school must assemble the committee of hakkyo-pokryuk if an incident is reported. The committee will deliberate on the incidents, and decide an appropriate course of action such as punishing the bully or facilitating conciliation between a victim and bully. In addition, the Ministry of Education has services which can facilitate reporting or advice seeking following an incident. This is supported via cyber technology and although it protects anonymity, it can also be linked to the class teacher. Seung-Ha Lee also recommends that there is a need to develop a healthy Internet culture, where ethics are emphasised. Evaluation of current efforts is also recommended.

**COPING AND INTERVENTION**

Francine Dehue, Trijntje Völlink, and Nicole Gunther discuss important considerations when developing and implementing stand-alone interventions. They begin by restating some of the main points made in previous chapters; for instance that there is still debate regarding some fundamental questions in the cyberbullying literature; such as the prevalence of involvement or witnessing of cyberbullying, whether we should regard it as a form of traditional bullying and therefore the two should be addressed together, whether cyberbullying has been over-rated in terms of prevalence and impact, and whether it is a cause or consequence of compromised well-being. Similar to other chapters, the authors refer to the various methodological inconsistencies that hamper assessment of prevalence; an important consideration when identifying the population at risk for prevention or intervention purposes. With regard to measurement, Dehue and colleagues suggest that, when attempting
to identify those at whom an intervention programme to stop cyberbullying and reduce its effects would be aimed, a subjective direct assessment is suitable, as this would indicate those who consider themselves to be involved. In addition, they recommend that, for stand-alone ICT interventions it is better to use a short time frame for assessment of involvement. Smith and Berkkun had highlighted the tendency towards cross-sectional studies, and Dehue and colleagues also emphasise this as it impacts on the possibility to draw cause and effect relationships between variables.

This chapter highlights the need to develop our understanding of coping strategies, so as to facilitate behavioural change programmes which will be effective and to support reduction of victimization and its associated effects. The authors indicate the importance of contextual factors such as relationship with the perpetrator and the perception of control over the situation. A perceived lack of control could lead victims to rely more on emotion-focused strategies. A key advancement in research has been the development of cyberbullying-specific coping questionnaires. Although we have not the luxury of a wealth of evidence as to what methods and strategies are effective in terms of reducing and stopping victimization and reducing its effects, Dehue and co-authors state that we cannot afford to wait before providing guidance. For instance, seeking social support is an evidence-based recommendation for prevention and reduction of negative impact.

Furthermore, great emphasis is placed in this chapter on tailoring the advice appropriately for individual personality, outcome expectancies, and knowledge. In addition, there is a paucity of empirical evidence to support the effectiveness of programmes; a concern also highlighted by Seung-Ha Lee. Only a handful of programmes have a theoretical basis and have been assessed for effectiveness. Dehue and colleagues also recommend a particular focus on content as it is important to provide novel and helpful information whilst also being limited and not too complex. A possible approach mentioned is ‘gamification’ of an intervention. Along with content, structure must be appropriate with easy procedures, simple design and other helpful features to enhance convenience for the user.

Picking up on some of the points made by Francine Dehue, Trijntje Völlink, and Nicole Gunther regarding intervention, we (Corcoran and Mc Guckin) discussed some important considerations when exploring the issue of coping with cyberbullying. Our chapter begins by placing cyberbullying in a historical context and highlighting the fact that today’s youth is not the first generation to be exposed to new and frightening technologies, nor is it likely to be the last. Therefore we ask, is this not a challenge that requires us to use our existing coping skills, as opposed to developing new ones. It is also emphasised that the adolescents (on whom most research focuses) are those who are at a particularly vulnerable stage developmentally for victimization and ill-considered coping. This chapter highlights the importance of appraisal of actual or perceived victimization, as well as coping strategies employed. Echoing a point made by Dehue and co-authors, we emphasised that coping with victimization does not happen in a vacuum or as part of some template. Every incident and response comes with personal and situational factors which impact the development of the situation. Therefore, again aligning with Dehue and colleagues’ recommendations regarding tailoring of interventions, it is not ideal for researchers to offer generic advice regarding coping.

The methodological inconsistency highlighted throughout this book also pertains to studies on coping with traditional bullying and cyberbullying. This issue, in conjunction with the lack of focus on effectiveness of responses, leaves us with a lack of evidence to inform our guidance. Although insights have been gained in relation to coping effectively with
traditional victimization, we question whether cyberbullying requires a different set of responses. Parental support or reluctance to seek it emerges as an important issue in the literature, whilst social support seeking generally may be dependent on gender. Technical responses; often considered a potential quick fix, are helpful but not without limitations. Avoidant or distancing coping seems to be highly undesirable.

Taking coping to a school or community intervention level, this chapter also provides a review of an intervention programme which appears to meet the criteria of theory-based, methodologically sound, and empirically tested. Coping at an international level can be seen in funded projects such as the Cyber Training projects and The COST Action IS0801. Although many of these efforts are focused on education-based or policy-based coping, there is also a form of legislative coping; the focus of which is prosecution of those who perpetrate cyberbullying. In this chapter, we ultimately argue against such an approach as an “educate-first” philosophy is preferable.

Following this, Nicole Gunther, Francine Dehue, and Viviane Thewissen provide a valuable review of intervention efforts to prevent and counteract cyberbullying among youth and its negative effects on mental health, with a particular focus on Internet-based interventions. They comment on the common finding that research has indicated an association between victimization and stress, low self-esteem, anxiety, depression, and suicidal ideation. However, importantly, they note that some research has revealed that some negative states were in fact predictors of cyber victimization rather than consequences. Whilst all roles involved in cyberbullying are associated with negative states, it is the group who both perpetrate and are victimized who seem to have the worst mental health markers. Similar to previous chapters, Gunther and colleagues highlight the lack of evidence-supported interventions, and furthermore, they comment on the difficulty associated with parent-directed interventions, due to the lack of desire among young people to report to parents when victimized. Therefore, they argue that the Internet-based intervention is a logical alternative. They make reference to the implementation of e-mental health; Internet-based interventions aimed at supporting the mental well-being of the user. There are a number of potential advantages of e-mental health outlined, such as the avoidance of stigma and the potential to get help at any time and in any place (interestingly the same time and space characteristics that make cyberbullying so challenging). Overall, Gunther and colleagues suggest that there is growing support for the effectiveness of Internet-based treatment interventions which have a CBT basis and aim to reduce anxiety symptoms. However, they caution that more research is required, especially in relation to other disorders among children and adolescents. Difficulty for health professionals in detecting cyberbullying as a cause of mental health difficulties is one reason that Gunther and co-authors recommend facilitating online intervention. In addition, this chapter suggests that it would be of value to examine current effective e-mental health interventions and include some of their modules in a web-based programme for cyberbullied youth who also experience mental health difficulties, or alternatively, to include a cyberbullying-focused module in a Internet-based mental health intervention. Although the authors recognise that there are limitations to the current literature, they feel that there is promise in the online intervention approach, and advocate for blended care; a combination of cyber-based and face-to-face contact for those in need of support.

Somewhat straddling different sections of the book Marilyn Campbell provides the Australian perspective; with a chapter that covers fundamental issues associated with cyberbullying research, examines prevalence rates, associated variables, and efforts to counter
cyberbullying. Similar to Dehue and co-authors and reiterating fundamental points made in previous chapters, Campbell proposes that the lack of consensus regarding a definition of cyberbullying hampers the development of appropriate measures, and this in turn negatively affects the advancement of intervention efforts. Campbell comments on some of the key difficulties with regard to achieving a suitable definition and highlights the valuable work done by Australian researchers to further these efforts with much of the debate focusing on the elements of intent, repetition, and power imbalance. This chapter also discusses the examination of prevalence rates among not only school students, but also among college students and the workforce; an age group often neglected in the international literature. This chapter also reviews Australian research on the associated effects of involvement in cyberbullying, the motivations to perpetrate the behaviour, and the role of the bystanders; illustrating the importance of this knowledge to inform efforts to counter the problem.

Offering an interesting perspective on societal perceptions of cyberbullying, Campbell talks about the role of the media in terms of “agenda setting.” The ways in which the media frame cyberbullying can offer reassurance or can lead to moral panic. Campbell suggests that in Australia there is a tendency towards the latter. Such accounts of cyberbullying has had the result of calls for legislation to be developed to tackle the problem. Similar to the discussion proposed by Corcoran and Mc Guckin, Campbell advises caution in relation to criminalizing cyberbullying as it may not exactly have the desired impact. In 2015 actions were taken by the Federal government to provide cyber victimized Australian children with a complaints system. Valuable research has been conducted in Australia to assess the development and implementation of relevant school policy. Within policy development, debate regarding definitions rears its head again. Furthermore, it is evident that the differing characteristics of cyberbullying (e.g., always on nature of the Internet) pose challenges for schools. Campbell highlights the efforts by the Australian Federal government to combat cyberbullying; development of resources being one indication of this.

Although there have also been non-governmental resources allocated to tackle cyberbullying, the absence of evidence-based practice, led to the establishment of the Australian Universities’ Anti-bullying Research Alliance (AUARA) which received funding towards production of evidence-based outcomes to reduce negative effects of cyberbullying. These research projects include Cyber Friendly Schools, Beyond Bullying, research on legal interventions, and Safe and Well Project. Marilyn Campbell’s chapter goes a long way towards illustrating the layers and complexity of the cyberbullying issue. Furthermore, it reveals the divergent perspectives; the quick fix legislative approach desired by many is in stark contrast with the tailored, theory-based and evidence-based approach advocated by many such as Dehue, Völ link, and Gunther. It is heartening to see the collaborative and focused approach from the AUARA; a great example of putting (expert) heads together to advance knowledge and practice.

In the final chapter Caroline Wheeler examines teachers’ experiences of cyberbullying amongst students. Highlighting that aggression in school has long been a source of interest and concern, she highlights the more recent interest in cyberbullying specifically. Furthermore, the paucity of research on Irish teachers’ experiences with, and perceptions of, cyberbullying, has likely hampered efforts to intervene effectively. Wheeler acknowledges that efforts have been made to address bullying problems in a modern Irish context with formation of an Anti-Bullying Working Group and updating of guidelines. In her own study of Irish teachers, Wheeler found that cyberbullying is recognised as a problem at school, and
that although only around half of teachers reported feeling confident in identifying and managing cyberbullying, the large majority said that they would do something if an incident came to their attention. Many teachers felt that their training had not prepared them for cyberbullying issues, but expressed a desire for upskilling in this regard. Interestingly, the qualitative component of the research indicated that all teachers agreed that, compared with males, when female students cyberbully it is more malicious, intentional, and it is more frequent. This brings to mind the argument regarding gender stereotyping put forward by Navaro and colleagues earlier in the book. The qualitative data also raises the important issue of the parental role in cyberbullying; as some parents actually participate in or worsen the situation. There was also reference to the sharing of responsibility, so that teachers are not overburdened with cyberbullying problems. It is vital that teachers receive adequate training and support in addressing bullying problems among students.

**CONCLUSION**

As my colleague Conor McGuckin often warns, not only do we need to deal with the current cyber situation, we also need to be prepared for what is coming next. Something we should have learned by now is that technological advancement waits for no one. As soon as we have found our footing with the challenges of the most current technology, progress will knock us off balance. In this way, we need to be considerate of the knowledge we have garnered so far whilst keeping a vigilant eye on what is coming down the line. This book has provided food for thought and challenges us to consider the best way forward. A common theme among authors was the recommendation that we must begin to diversify our research methods as more longitudinal research and control trials can allow for conclusions to be drawn regarding cause and effect rather than correlation. Furthermore, the literature is weakened by the focus on quantitative methods; we need to hear the voice of youth when attempting to conceptualise cyberbullying, understand the lived experience, and intervene in a positive sense. Many of the authors have indicated the problematic nature of cyberbullying as a label and struggle to reach a consensus on the definition. Moreover, they have highlighted how this negatively impacts on measurement and development of instruments; an issue which in turn creates difficulty with assessing interventions. Whether researchers decide to forge ahead with the cyberbullying construct as an extension of traditional bullying, or view it as a distinct construct which requires a different label; this is a matter of fundamental importance if the field is to progress. Such a development would allow for comparable research to emerge through improved measurement techniques. Gender is a variable which has been referenced throughout the chapters; however, the chapter provided by Raúl Navarro and colleagues certainly challenges current thinking on this issue. We know that bias, be it cultural or gender-based, can cloud our perception of psychological and social issues, and so it is imperative that researchers and practitioners properly consider the possibility that we misjudge the role of gender in traditional bullying and cyberbullying. If nothing else, it is our duty to examine this further.

There is a need to consider also, the different theoretical and conceptual lenses that can be applied to cyberbullying. For instance, the argument for a positive psychological perspective creates opportunity to gain further insights into the nature of cyberbullying.
Moreover, Stephen Minton makes a compelling argument for the consideration of the influence of physical and psychological distance as well as factors such as bystander apathy in relation to cyberbullying. Cross-national research not only offers international prevalence rates, it also provides insights regarding contextual and cultural factors which may influence cyberbullying and affect the efficacy of interventions, and it highlights both the commonalities and uniqueness of human experience. Whilst South Korean research has many aspects of cyberbullying in common with other nations, Seung-Ha Lee also indicated unique forms of extortive behaviour which takes place online.

With respect to intervention it seems that we can best advance our efforts by tailoring the interventions to the individual, as a “one size fits all” approach does not often satisfy diverse personal characteristics and circumstances. Also, the message through these latter chapters is loud and clear; we need theory-informed, evidence-based practice in the future. Although legislation is an important consideration when examining the issue of cyberbullying, prosecuting cyberbullies may not be the best approach, particularly in light of the age group most vulnerable to involvement. Furthermore, change to legislation does not always keep pace with the developing technology and service providers tend to be global in nature as opposed to being confined to one specific territory. Education seems to be our best option currently, and if we are to successfully educate our young people to protect themselves and each other online, then we must support their teachers and parents to guide them. What is clear from the chapters reviewed here, is that there is a high level of agreement amongst the authors as to how we can best proceed. However, each chapter also offers a unique and thoughtful perspective.
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