

Social Sciences: Cyberbullying and Online Harassment

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Cyberbullying Overview

Cyberbullying is described as the act of repeatedly attacking someone using the internet. There are a variety of ways of doing this, with many popular social media platforms such as Instagram, SnapChat, and facebook being the most common sites.

Some examples of cyberbullying includes:

- Trolling
- Doxing
- Threats
- Name-calling
- Mocking
- Spreading false rumors
- Sharing personal or embarrassing videos and photos

How Cyberbullying Relate to Social Sciences

- Cyberbullying relates to the social sciences in a variety of ways. Social science is the study of human behavior and society. With cyberbullying, psychology is heavily associated with it in pursuit in understanding why people choose to do this and analyze what things in their life contributes to this behavior.
- Psychodynamic is a psychological theory that seeks to explain how past experiences influences behavior in the present. This is relevant as exploring overlaps that someone may experience in their past as this can help with analyzing and comparing certain patterns of behavior.

Why People Choose to Cyberbully

Circumstance:

- Anonymity
- Easy to commit
- Outlet of frustration
- Boredom

Behavior and personality:

- Lower self-control
- To feel like they have control
- Neutralization theory (Denial of victim, denial of injury)

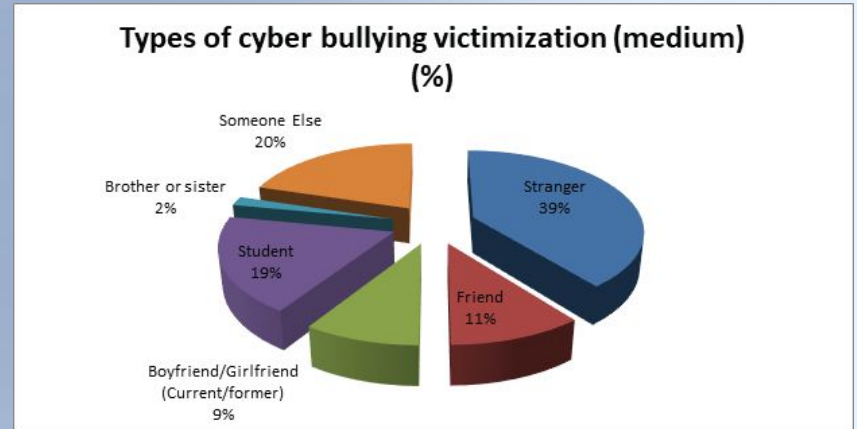


Victimization

Victimization are certain factors makes someone more susceptible to being a target.

What makes people more of a target?

- Publicizing a lot of their information makes it easier for cyberbullies to personalize and enact their attacks
- Those who are more vulnerable in society such as those with disabilities, those in poorer circumstances, women, people of color, and queer individuals



Psychological Effects

Many victims who experience cyberbullying may feel as though they have no one to turn to and may suffer in silence in result of this. It can take a toll on their mental well-being as they deal with harsh messages and cruel words.

Some psychological effects includes:

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Fear
- Embarassment
- Low self-esteem
- Increased risky behavior



Social Effects

A persons social life and relationships with their friends and family can be greatly affected as victims may feel disconnected from others and feel anxious in social situations.

Some social effects includes:

- Isolation
- Loneliness
- Being withdrawn
- Little interest in socializing



Legality

- In some places, there are laws against cyberbullying. However, it is still relatively new. In countries where they have these laws, the victim can receive justice as the aggressor(s) can be charged.
- In America, more than half of the states have anti-bullying and anti-harassment laws that cyberbullying falls under. Under these states, perpetrators can be prosecuted. And within schools, overwhelming of them have mandates and policies where students can be reprimanded.

Conclusion

In conclusion, cyberbullying is something that really sticks with someone and affects them in a variety of ways. It is something that should be taken seriously and more measures should be in place to protect those who are more vulnerable. Viewing cyberbullying under the lens of social science can greatly help in aiding this as more is being done to address this with tips, education and awareness.

Thank You

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