
Cyberbullying: Repercussions and Strategies for its Prohibition

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Abstract

Cyberbullying is the use of information technology to repeatedly harm or harass other people in a deliberate manner. According to U.S. Legal Definitions, “Cyber-bullying could be limited to posting rumours or gossip about a person in the internet bringing about hatred in other’s minds or it may go to the extent of personally identifying victims and publishing materials severely defaming and humiliating them”. The present paper discusses cyberbullying in India, its form, and its major sources. It also reflects the major cause and effects of cyberbullying. Graphical representation is also present in the paper on how it can be done according to age group, religion wise etc. and further suggestions and some anti-cyberbullying laws are also discussed to prevent the problem.

Key Words: *Cyberbullying, Strategies, Prevention, Flaming, Denigration*

Objectives of the Paper:

- To understand the concept of cyberbullying.
- To identify the cause of cyberbullying.
- To identify the forms of cyberbullying.
- To become aware about the strategies for prevention from cyberbullying.

Introduction

In developing countries like India, where education is an essential human right and there are only a few isolated areas where kids might not go to school, children in major cities, especially Mumbai, frequently deal with unpleasant experiences like bullying in school, which can have lasting effects on their lives. Bullying can be defined as when someone purposefully and consistently utilizes words or acts against another person or group of people in an aim to distress someone or put their wellbeing at danger. A type of bullying called "cyberbullying" occurs when one or more persons intentionally and consistently harm another person using digital technologies. According to Willard (2004), “cyber bullying can take different forms, ranging from flaming to harassment to cyber stalking.” This crime can be

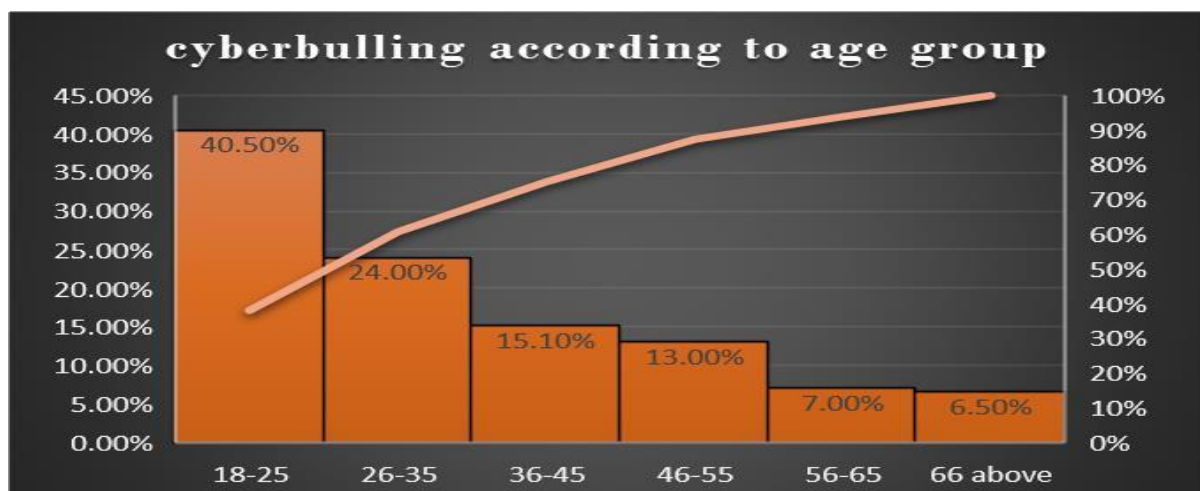
done by several social media platform like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter etc. which not only cause behavioural and mental change but also physical effect of cyberbullying can be seen. To reduce the increasing case of cyberbullying we have to take the proper precautions for security. Although there's no certain method or technique to stop children from being bullied, there are certain steps you can take to reduce the risk of cyber bullying. **According to Belsey (2004)** "cyber bullying involves the use of information and Communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behaviour by an Individual or group that is intended to harm others" **Smith et al., 2008** "Cyberbullying is reported 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 her-self".

Cyberbullying in India

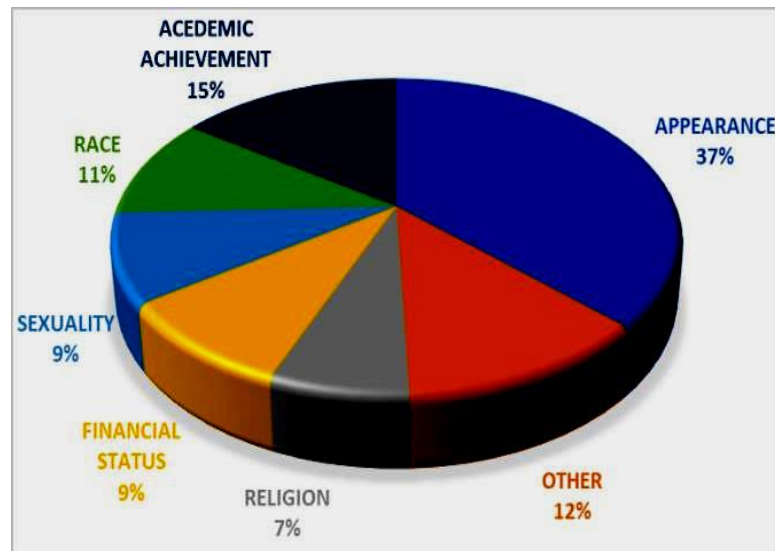
India leads globally in the percentage of children reporting cyberbullying, with over 85% of them involved. Also, the research found that kids in India reported cyberbullying someone twice as often as kids around the world. 48% of children in India reported cyberbullying they understood, compared to 21% of children worldwide, while 46% of children reported cyberbullying a stranger. The top three forms of cyberbullying reported in India were name-calling (34%) followed by spreading false rumours (39%), getting kicked out of chat rooms or groups (35%), and spreading incorrect information.

The Indian state of Maharashtra had the highest rate of cyberstalking and bullying incidents against women and children in 2021 compared to the rest of the country, with around 62 cases filed with the police. Telangana came next with thirteen cases. As stated, the nation reported about 123 cases of these offenses in that particular year. Section 354D of the Indian Penal Code applies to this class of crimes. Cyberbullying is also carried out based on age group in India.

According to a Study on Cyberbullying Research Center 2021



Cyberbullying can be caused by physical, cultural, racial, or even religious prejudices and may occur to with individuals of any age or gender.



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Forms of Cyberbullying

The various forms of cyberbullying are defined in the list below:

Flaming: – ‘if someone is sending harsh, vulgar, and furious messages with group members online or personally to a person or people.’

Harassment– If someone is consistently sending nasty messages.

Cyber stalking – ‘It is a form of harassment that is highly intimidating or includes threats of harm.’

Denigration (put-downs) – ‘If someone is posting harmful, inaccurate, or offensive information about an individual to other people.’

Masquerade – Sending or posting anything that denigrates or puts someone in danger while pretending to be someone else.

Outing and trickery –If someone is sharing or binging out information about another person that is embarrassing, private, or sensitive for example, by forwarding private messages or photos.

Exclusion – An intentional and targeted exclusion of a person from an online group.

Impersonation – pretending to be the victim and utilizing electronic methods to share unfavourable or improper information with others under the victim's name.

Sexting – publishing an individual's naked photos without that person's permission.

Trolling –‘In this situation, the victim gets bullied by the attacker through the purposeful posting of inappropriate material on the internet.’ Although they usually don't know each other personally, the bully wants to psychologically damage the victim.

Trickery: In this case, the harasser uses false security promises to gain the victim's trust. The harasser then exploits the victim's confidence by disclosing personal information to an unidentified third party.

Major source of Cyberbullying is Social Media

According to TIMES OF INDIA news 19 Jan2023, a recent survey of cyberbullying

Instagram	42%
Facebook	37%
WhatsApp	12%
YouTube	10%
Twitter	9%

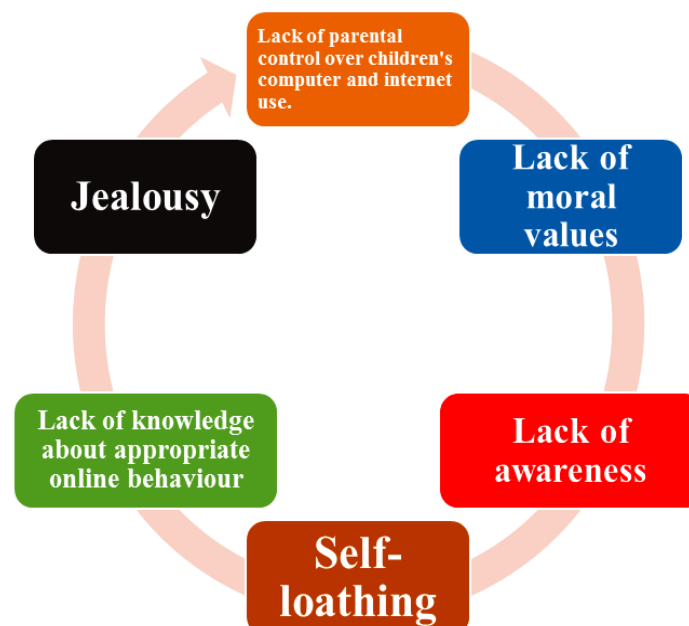
Besides of there are many other ways which promotes the problem of cyberbullying such as websites for instant messaging profiles, burn books Cameras, media networking, and iPod social sexting with iPhoto, blogs instant messaging, emails personal digitals, cyber stalking online chat, cell phones internet Skype.

The case of Ritika Sharma

Ritika Sharma, a student at a respectable Delhi school, received a message from a Facebook friend she had unfriended several months before and with whom she had shared all of her personal information, including her home address, mobile number, and school address. He filed a complaint against it when she told her brother about it. Following this incident, the Delhi police conducted an awareness campaign during which they advised students regarding providing personal information to unknown people.¹

Causes of Cyber Bullying

Following are the most frequent causes of cyberbullying:



Repercussions of Cyberbullying

Psychological Effects

Cyber bullying can have negative psychological and physical impacts, which are just as harsh. Victims of cyberbullying may experience a range of negative feelings, such as despair, fury, embarrassment, and fear. Apart from that, people might feel alone.’

- Low self-regard
- Withdrawal and isolation
- Negative behaviours

Physical Effects

The physical health of the victim is affected by cyberbullying. Among these side effects are:

- Headaches
- Ache in the stomach
- Issues with sleeping

Mental Effects

Victims of cyberbullying may also experience negative impacts in their day-to-day lives.

Among the psychological impacts are:

- Dizziness
- Anxiety
- Intentions to commit suicide

Emotional Effects

Cyber bullying victims could also find it difficult to build relationships with other people they may be scared to trust people and may not want to interact with social activities. They may feel isolated as a result of this.

These are some of the emotional effects of cyber bullying:

- Embarrassment, guilt, or shame
- Depression

Strategies for Prohibition of Cyberbullying

What can students do?

- Not share their phone numbers/personal information, password with unknown people.
- Changes their phone numbers, password, profiles and usernames when necessary.
- Block phone calls and messages from disturbing people.
- Not respond to threatening messages and keep those messages as evidence.

What can parents do?

- Determining the time their children use technology to protect their children from cyberbullying.
- Talk with their children about internet safety, cyberbullying, how to protect themselves, about privacy and security.

What can a counsellor do?

They can help students gain awareness of the phenomenon and learn how to cope with cyberbullying through strategies in the following dimension:

- Establishing the school policies.
- Organizing classroom guidance practices, Peer assisting programs.
- Offering counselling assistance.
- Conducting consulting and training activities.

What can educators do?

- Establish clear rules regarding cyberbullying.
- Create a positive school climate.
- Participate in training on cyberbullying and safe technology.

Laws in India Regarding Anti-cyberbullying

Although Section 66A of the Information Technology Act governs cyberbullying, there are no laws specifically related to it in India. This Act lays forth the penalties for using digital and information communication technologies to deliver obnoxious, disrespectful, or offensive communications.'

Additional laws that can be utilized to combat cyberbullying are listed below:

- Disseminating or publishing pornographic content (Section 67)
- Publishing or sending electronic content that is sexually explicit—Section 67A
- 'A statement, gesture, or other action meant to disparage a woman's modesty (Sec. 509.'
- Sending an email with defamatory messages (Section 499 IPC)
- Publishing, which is distributing or advertising blatantly vulgar or slanderous content or content meant to be used as a form of blackmail (Sec. 292A).
- Following, contacting, or making an effort to contact someone female (Sec. 354D).
- 'Sexual harassment (Section 354 A) for making sexually suggestive comments.'
- Privacy violation (Section 66E).
- Criminal harassment by unidentified communication (Section 507).

'Cyber Crime Prevention against Women and Child: The CCPWS system establishes several sections that are in charge of reporting online criminal actions and related investigations, examining complaints of cybercrime, and spotting any concerning cybercrime circumstances. 'The scheme's primary components are given below, with an anticipated total investment of Rs.223.198 cr. A national-level cyber forensic laboratory, an

online platform for reporting cybercrimes, activities to raise awareness of cybercrime, research and development, and training for judges, prosecutors, and police officials. In 2019, there were around 3800 complaints on www.cybercrime.gov.in.

Conclusion

At last, we can conclude that cyberbullying is a social problem whose solution can only be developed by understanding its cause and effects on society. Cyberbullying can be done by various online platforms like YouTube, twitter; Facebook. It derives from the need for justice, amusement, power, self-esteem, and reminding people of their place in society. And due to many more reasons. Increasing cases of cyberbullying leads to drastic consequences, not only change in behavior and mental state but also it affects our physical health too. 'For prevention many techniques can be followed like spreading awareness about the concept, knowledge of use of technology in an appropriate manner and also there are Anti cyberbullying laws in India to reduce this discussed problem.'

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