Chapter 24
Cyberbullying in the World of Teenagers and Social Media:
A Literature Review

Sophia Alim
Independent Researcher, UK

ABSTRACT

Cyberbullying amongst teenagers is a major issue, due to their increased use of social media. Previous literature surveys have not covered in detail cyberbullying studies in 2014 and cyberbullying risk factors. This literature review explores cyberbullying research areas, such as the use of social media by teenagers, themes from cyberbullying studies carried out since 2012, cyberbullying risk factors and how teenagers deal with cyberbullying incidents. Current cyberbullying studies highlighted issues such as the high volume of cyberbullying incidents in school, increased personal information disclosure on social media, peer influences and the safety of the school environment for both bully and victim. Studies focusing on cyberbullying risk factors raised debates on factors such as whether males or females are most likely to be victims/cyberbullies. Tackling cyberbullying requires awareness, education for actors involved in cyberbullying, development of software to detect cyberbullying and including actors in the monitoring of cyberbullying.

INTRODUCTION

The increased use of social media by teenagers, has led to cyberbullying becoming a major issue. Cyberbullying is the use of information and communication technology to harass and harm in a deliberate, repetitive and hostile manner (Stopbullying.gov, 2014). Information and communication technology includes the use of email, text message via mobile and social media. Types of social media include social networking sites (Facebook, Google+); microblogging (Twitter); blogs; virtual worlds (Secondlife), social bookmarking sites (Delicious, Digg); photo or video-sharing sites (Flickr, YouTube); forums and discussion groups.

A study by ditchthelabel (2014) in partnership with Habbo Hotel, surveyed 10,008 teenagers and young people aged 13–22 years old. They found 37% of teenagers experienced cyberbullying on a frequent basis. From 75% of the sample that used Facebook, 54% had experienced cyberbullying. Survey participants originated from the UK, USA, Australia and other countries. Madden, Lenhart, Duggan, Coresi and Gassar (2014) research into technology and teenagers, discovered that of 802 teenagers aged 12–17 years old surveyed, 95% had access to the Internet, 78% had a mobile phone, 47% owned a smartphone and 23% had a tablet computer. The statistics illustrate the accessibility of the digital world and the impact this can have on cyberbullying.

One of the reasons social media, especially social networking sites (SNS) by teenagers, has provided a platform for cyberbullying, is due to the amount of personal data posted and interactions between users. Teenagers aged 13–18 years use SNS for various activities, such as communicating with friends, passing time, learning things outside school and raising their confidence when they are down (Seo, Houston, Knight, Kennedy, & Inglish, 2013). This corresponds with a study conducted by Common Sense Media (2014), who surveyed 1,030 13–17 year olds, to explore the experiences of US teenagers regarding the role of SNS in their emotional and social lives. Seventy five percent had social networking profiles, 88% use SNS to keep in touch with friends they do not see regularly, 69% used SNS to build on friendships with other students at school and 57% connected with other people who share a common interest.

Alternative reasons for joining SNS not covered by Seo et al. (2013) included (a) peer pressure from friends who already have social network profiles, (b) finding a girlfriend or boyfriend (Siibak, 2009), (c) self-expression, experimenting with their identities which includes aspects such as gender, sexuality, class, ethnicity, etc. (Davies, 2007), (d) needing to belong, (e) collective self-esteem (Gangadharbatla, 2008) and (f) creating a private space for intimacy with friends (Livingstone, 2008).

Social media is more than a communication tool. Teenagers' lives revolve around its usage and are classed as '*Generation Y*'. A major characteristic for *Generation Y* is the frequent and early exposure to technology. Many teenagers have grown up with computers and mobiles, where they have relied on technology for entertainment and to interact with one another (Park & Gursoy, 2012). For teenagers, the transition from childhood to adulthood is a time to explore and develop their identity and personality. The role of social media helps to develop a teenagers' personality and network of friends. The traditional interaction model between friends, view teenagers firstly belonging to a clique, which is a small group of friends that share similar interests and then moving onto a crowd. A crowd is a larger group of several cliques brought together by shared values and norms (Shaffer & Kipp, 2010). Social networking sites allow teenagers the possibility to build larger friendship groups.

The aim of this paper is to present a literature review, exploring cyberbullying involving teenagers by analysing cyberbullying research studies and studies exploring cyberbullying risk factors from 2012–2014. Previous studies, such as (Notar, Padgett & Roden, 2013; Chisholm & Day, 2013; Bauman, 2013), have undertaken literature reviews into areas of cyberbullying, such as cyberbullying definitions, risk factors, reasons for cyberbullying, intervention, prevention and gender issues. However, the literature reviews have not covered cyberbullying studies involving social media from the year 2014 and explored in detail cyberbullying risk factors. The literature review in this paper covers areas such as characteristics of cyberbullying, cyberbullying education, issues in current cyberbullying studies, cyberbullying risk factors and how teenagers deal with cyberbullying incidents.

The structure of the paper is as follows: Section 2 explores the characteristics of cyberbullying against traditional bullying, the prevalence of cyberbullying, cyberbullying education and cases of cyberbullying

31 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage: www.igi-global.com/chapter/cyberbullying-in-the-world-of-teenagers-and-social-media/162534

Related Content

Guidelines Based on Need-Findings Study and Communication Types to Design Interactions for MOOCs
Sandra G. Jiménez-González, Ricardo Mendoza-Gonzálezand Huizilopoztli Luna-García (2018). *Optimizing Human-Computer Interaction With Emerging Technologies (pp. 210-231).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/guidelines-based-on-need-findings-study-and-communication-types-to-design-interactions-for-moocs/183389

Managing Information for Real-Time Decision Support at Community Level
Hakikur Rahman (2013). *International Journal of Information Communication Technologies and Human Development (pp. 60-76).*
www.irma-international.org/article/managing-information-real-time-decision/76321

Introduction: Information Systems as Constrained Variety-Issues and Scope
Steve Clarkeand Brian Lehaney (2000). *Human Centered Methods in Information Systems: Current Research and Practice (pp. 1-12).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/introduction-information-systems-constrained-variety/22190

An Extension to Simulated Web-Based Threats and Their Impact on Knowledge Communication Effectiveness
Ruth Chatelain-Jardon, Jesus S. Carmonaand Ned Kock (2016). *International Journal of Technology and Human Interaction (pp. 64-77).*
www.irma-international.org/article/an-extension-to-simulated-web-based-threats-and-their-impact-on-knowledge-communication-effectiveness/158142

Layout Optimization for Online Questionnaires on Mobile Devices
Helge Nissenand Monique Janneck (2020). *International Journal of Mobile Human Computer Interaction (pp. 1-21).*
www.irma-international.org/article/layout-optimization-for-online-questionnaires-on-mobile-devices/258949