Chapter 16
Mapping Cyberbullying and Workplace Cyberbullying:
A Road Towards Understanding Research Gaps in the Indian Context

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ABSTRACT

In this increasingly connected world, the internet has affected almost every aspect of human life. With the advancements in technology came the curse of many cyber offences. Cyberbullying studies are usually focused on children and adolescents, but the last decade had witnessed a paradigm shift on the working adults. Cyberbullying is more complex and insidious than traditional forms of workplace bullying. Workplace bullying has negative impacts on the employees' health and organization repute. Studies indicate that organizations are not well equipped to deal with workplace cyberbullying. The chapter includes definitions of cyber violence and cyberbullying, cyberbullying statistics, workplace cyberbullying, and case studies in the Indian context. Further, the chapter presents studies of workplace cyberbullying in India, maintaining that more longitudinal work is required to facilitate relevant and effective interventions to tackle the problem in the subcontinent. It is crucial that workplace cyberbullying are recognized in law, so as to deal with the risks to employee health and safety.

INTRODUCTION

In this age of information technology and Internet, the lives of many are uplifted; however, it has added to the complexities of life in today's world. The advent of smart phones and social media made it even worse. With the advancements, came the curse of many cyber offenses. Internet-mediated aggression is one of the rising global phenomena. In little over a decade, social media has become "a vector for youth violence," and has dramatically changed the landscape for aggressive behavior (Patton et al., 2014).

Bullying has always persisted in sedentary societies. With the advent of the Internet in general and social media, in particular a new type of bullying has found existence: cyberbullying. Bill Belsey, a Canadian educator coined the term cyber bullying for the first time (Shivashankar & Prakash, 2018). Cyberbullying is as harmful as bullying in the real world. The only difference is that the party, or bully uses social media and other Internet platforms to harm the reputation of a person. Cyberbullying can be done at any hour of the day.

In the past, cyberbullying was an issue that involved children and adolescents only. Workplaces around the world are no longer immune to it. There is no place in the workplace for cyber-bullying, yet the practice persists. Cyberbullying can cause significant emotional distress and lead to a diminished workplace performance (D'Cruz & Noronha, 2011; Vega & Comer, 2005). The danger of cyberbullying at the workplace is that, there are no boundaries between work and home. The target is put under constant harassment even when the working hours are over. Cyberbullying in the workplace needs to be addressed through promoting a work environment that refuses to nurture a bully. There is a need of formulating dedicated laws that deal with cyberbullying at workplace.

Due to the fast growing and uncontrolled digitization combined with a high digital population of Indian adolescents and working adults, the rate of cyber-attacks and cybercrimes are increasing day-by-day. This chapter presents existing facts and studies of cyberbullying and highlights what we do not know, but need to. The chapter aims to review and organize the existing literature on cyberbullying and its relationship with social media. The various cyberbullying facts, around the world, are presented through an extensive organization of the literature and surveys carried out in different parts of the globe. Statistics related to cyberbullying and workplace cyberbullying is presented in the Indian context. The legal options related to cyberbullying and workplace bullying are listed, in the Indian context. Further, real case studies are presented.

Cyberviolence

"Cyberviolence is the use of computer systems to cause, facilitate, or threaten violence against individuals that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, psychological or economic harm or suffering and may include the exploitation of the individual's circumstances, characteristics or vulnerabilities" (Cybercrime Convention Committee, 2018). It may involve sexual abuse, exploitation, harassments, violation of privacy, and biasing on social groups or communities. There are no fixed types or topologies of cyberviolence and most of the time the types are overlapping or interconnected.

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