

## Chapter 17

# An AMPIC Research on the Effects of Cyberbullying on Children

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### ABSTRACT

*Cyberbullying is a new form of bullying and brings additional challenges for school staff. In addition to the numerous benefits that information and communication technologies provide, it also contributes to the occurrence of negativities. One of these negativities is that it adds a new dimension to peer bullying, which is already a problem in schools. This bullying, which is called cyber bullying or electronic bullying, is a subject that has just started to be studied in other countries and has not yet been studied in Turkey. This chapter qualitatively examined cyberbullying and exposure of children to cyberbullying.*

### INTRODUCTION

New media environments that have emerged with the developments in information and communication technologies have gradually reduced the age of using the Internet and have begun to play a vital role in the daily life practices of children and youth and the development of their identities. Livingstone and Brake (2010) state that social networking sites are rapidly adopted by children and young people worldwide. They argue that it offers significant new opportunities for fundamental issues such as self-representation, learning, building and developing networks, and maintaining and managing intimate relationships and personal privacy. Özkent and Açikel's research results discovered significant positive associations between binge-watching behaviour and emotional conduct, cognitive problems, and DSM-IV–Inattention. From a democracy policy perspective, there was a consistently hopeful view that this could enrich freedom of expression and freedom of the press and that democracy would benefit from this development (Özkeçeci 2022: 43).

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On the other hand, Internet technologies and new media environments, which offer many opportunities to users, also caused security problems such as encountering anonymous identities and loss of privacy and brought some risks.<sup>1</sup>. One of these risks is cyberbullying, also called cyberbullying or electronic bullying. Cyberbullying targeting children and young people includes bullying behaviours derived from traditional peer bullying, differentiated from it in various aspects, and expanded its sphere of influence. Cyberbullying behaviours that go beyond the boundaries of the school environment, which is relatively easy to supervise and control, by moving to electronic environments such as computers and mobile phones, are a severe problem. It can threaten children anytime and anywhere. Although bullying is not a new phenomenon, it has moved to the virtual world with the widespread adoption and adoption of new communication technologies, and it has been widely defined as a “cyberbullying” phenomenon. Therefore, cyberbullying emerges as a new type of violence that involves deliberately hurting or harming someone else using information and communication technologies. While traditionally, bullying behaviours are mostly associated with the school environment and framed by the supervision of educators, cyberbullying allows the victimization to take place at any time of the day by carrying the victimization out of school. This situation causes bullying to continue uninterrupted and widespread, independent of time and place. In other words, unlike face-to-face peer bullying, victims of cyberbullying do not have the opportunity to escape from negative comments and posts launched about them on the Internet. In addition, because these comments and posts spread to huge peer groups quickly, victims are also exposed to attacks and abuses by people they do not know (Campbell, 2005; Tokunaga, 2010). Likewise, the lack of apparent authority in cyberbullying and the reluctance of children to share the discomfort they experience with the fear of losing their freedom on the Internet expand the dimensions of bullying and increase its adverse effects on children.

## **BACKGROUND**

### **The Concern of Bullying**

There is no single reason why a child becomes a bully at school or an aggressive adult. This is due to three major components. Genetic and environmental influences, social cognitive traits and personality traits, and situational factors (factors that can increase or trigger aggressive behaviors). Researchers have determined that if left untreated, an aggressive child will turn into an aggressive adult and develop problems such as substance use, delinquency and mental health disorders (Plotnik, 2009: 600-604). Bullying can be classified as a type of aggression or as a type of harassment. There is bullying in every field; However, in scientific publications, the term ‘bullying’ is mainly used in ‘school bullying’. Pupils are not allowed to hit, push, insult, taunt, name offensively, damage their belongings, threaten, extort, etc., directed at each other. All behaviour in the form of ‘school bullying is defined as. Victims of bullying are subject to both material and moral harassment, they experience physical pain and psychological distress, and they lose their motivation to work. School phobia may occur in those who are exposed to bullying. There are two important points in school bullying. The first is that the act of bullying is not a one-off; it is continuous, albeit partially, and in a sense, it is a systematic attack. Secondly, in the act of bullying, the aggressors often pressure the victims not to convey their bullying to the authorities and their parents (Dökmen, 2012: 166-167). Olweus (1978; 1999) made the first definition of school bullying who started the first scientific studies on this subject. Bullying behaviours observed during childhood have

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