

## A Study on Cyberbullying: The Impact on the Community, Businesses, Companies and Prevention Methods

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### ABSTRACT

The internet was developed to make it easier for people to share information and knowledge and to promote global communication and understanding, and it is now available everywhere in the world. Every day, more people are using social media. In 2022, more than 5 billion people are online, representing more than 63% of the world's population. The report shows that about 4.7 billion of these people use social media. As more and more people use the internet and social media, cyberbullying is one of the crimes committed online. It affects many different sectors such as business, education, health, and private life. Therefore, it is important to raise awareness about cyberbullying and its consequences. The aim of this article is therefore to raise awareness of cyberbullying and discuss the role of technology in preventing cyberbullying with various additional strategies. The information was gathered from academic articles and online sources. The findings of the research show that cyberbullying can be classified into seven categories and that it can be curbed either using laws, technology, and cyber awareness.

**Keywords:** *Awareness, Cyberbullying, Impacts, Mitigation*

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

In the 21st century, the internet has become a popular and helpful technology that helps people communicate, develop business knowledge, share new ideas and get support. In 2022, 5 billion people worldwide used the internet, which is 63 per cent of the world's population. Among them, 4.65 billion are social media users, representing 93 per cent of internet users (Statista, 2022). Although the internet brings many benefits, it is manipulated by irresponsible people to spread harassment. This type of harassment is also

known as cyberbullying. Cyberbullying is the term for bullying that takes place online on mobile devices. Unlike physical harassment, cyberbullying uses the internet and verbally, sexually, emotionally, or socially abuses a person, group, or organisation. The main goal of cyberbullying is to gain influence and power over the victims because they are unable to protect themselves (Nuccitelli, 2021).

Hence, cyberbullying has been defined as "an aggressive, intentional act perpetrated by a group or individual, using electronic forms of contact, repeatedly and over an extended period of time against a victim who cannot

readily defend himself or herself" (Smith et al., 2008).

In addition, cyber bullies used different media to launch their attacks. The medium can be altered through photos and videos, social media postings, chat room communications, text messages and many other digital forms. According to the authors (López-Meneses et al., 2020), there are different forms of cyberbullying as shown in Figure 1 below:

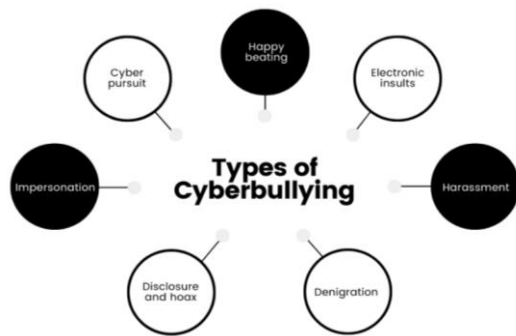


FIGURE 1  
Types of cyberbullying

- Happy beating: A cybercriminal videotapes a physical assault and posts the footage on social media.
- Electronic insults: The victim is insulted by a cybercriminal in emails or public conversations.
- Harassment: The cybercriminal harasses the victim by posting offensive remarks on social media.
- Denigration: A criminal constantly posts offensive text or images on social media.
- Disclosure and hoax: The crooks use social media to extract the victim's compromised information.
- Cyber-pursuit: During cyber-pursuit, threatening texts are regularly sent to the victim.
- Impersonation: This is the online appropriation of the victim's identity.

Meanwhile, cyberbullying is an extremely significant problem that affects not only the young victims but also their families, the bully and the bystanders. It is difficult to eradicate because it happens all the time, day, and night. Consequently, cyberbullying has a

variety of effects. Some of them are that they become more socially isolated than usual, they have difficulty concentrating at work, they lose interest in hobbies they used to enjoy, they become angry and explode quickly, they use drugs or alcohol, they commit suicide and so on (Kaspersky, 2022). The aim of this article is therefore to raise awareness of cyberbullying and to explore the impact of cyberbullying on victims. Therefore, the rest of this article is structured as follows. Section 2 describes the methodology of this study, and Section 3.0 discusses the impact of cyberbullying. Section 4 discusses the reduction techniques and Section 5 presents the conclusion of the article.

## 2.0 METHODOLOGY

Figure 2 describes the methodology used to conduct the review.

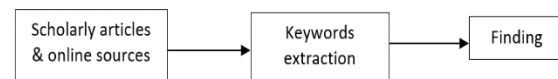


FIGURE 2  
Methodology

The methodology for this review involves searching for relevant literature from reputable online sources. The search is guided by entering relevant keywords on the topic of cyberbullying, such as its impact and strategies to combat it. Conclusions are extracted from the selected studies.

## 3.0 IMPACT OF CYBERBULLYING

The effects of cyberbullying can be divided into individuals, organisations, and society.

### 3.1 The impact of cyberbullying on individuals

Children, adults, both genders and other social groupings were all affected by the threat of any form of cyberbullying. Teenagers between the ages of 13 and 21 are particularly vulnerable to victimisation by their peers. The anonymity of the internet and global connectivity are of great concern. According to studies, teenage girls are the most vulnerable to victimisation. They are 18% victims of cyberbullying at age

13, 15% at age 14, 24% at age 15 and 21% at age 16, making them more vulnerable than male adolescents in their teenage years. According to a study of university students, 44% percent of female students said they had been victims of cyberbullying in some way (Vismara et al., 2022).

Victims of cyberbullying exhibit the following criteria: They are overly emotional when using a phone, they are very secretive or protective of their digital life, they avoid family, friends and all activities to avoid school or group meetings, their mood, behaviour, sleep or appetite changes, they give up using phones, computers and other devices for social communication, they feel anxious when receiving messages, and they try to hide their discussions or conversations on the phone or computer from family members - these are common signs that someone is being cyberbullied (Subaramaniam et al., 2022).

In the worst cases, victims of cyberbullying suffer from depression, illness and anxiety in addition to the never-ending stress. When victims begin to doubt themselves, their mental health suffers. Because they have become the target of cyberbullying, victims also suffer from lowered self-esteem and begin to feel insecure about themselves. Some victims of cyberbullying even contemplate suicide. They feel helpless in these circumstances and think that suicide is their only option (Dudley, 2020). Research from Swansea University (2018) therefore suggests that children and young people who engage in cyberbullying should be tested for common mental illnesses and self-harm.

### **3.2 The impacts of cyberbullying at the workplace**

Most workers today regularly use email and the internet at work, making the use of technology in the workplace almost commonplace. For both workers and companies, this increased time spent online has both positive and harmful effects, including perceptions of greater productivity and connectedness, and feelings of overwork or stress. Cyberbullying, which is repeated harassing acts that take place using technology

and where there is a power imbalance between the victim and the perpetrator, is one of the possible negative consequences of increased technology use in the workplace (Giumetti & Kowalski, 2019). Nevertheless, 40 percent of people who are bullied in the workplace are in a supervisory position and also 10% of working adults are victims of cyberbullying (Ademiluyi et al., 2022).

Some examples of the many ways in which workplace bullying occurs online include abusive messages, emails, offensive posts and comments on social media, and the spreading of misinformation and malicious rumours via message or chat. Consequently, victims of cyberbullying in the workplace may be forced to give up their normal working lives due to poor health, stigmatisation, victimisation, or reputational damage. These incidents can increase the likelihood of low employee productivity, as victims may work less effectively, take more time off work, feel less connected to organisations, or even leave the company, which can increase turnover rates and decrease organisational productivity (Karthikeyan, 2020).

Cyberbullying in the workplace has a serious impact on the entire workplace or perhaps even the entire organisation as it makes employees more anxious and panicky. By causing stress in the workplace and forcing people to stay away from work, bullies inflict harm on their victims. As a result, the employer who has difficulty retaining talent due to cyberbullying in the workplace has lower productivity, which affects the entire company and indirectly increases the cost of the company's recruitment efforts (Karthikeyan, 2020).

### **3.3 The impact of dissemination of fake news and bad reviews on business reputation**

There are many different types of cyberbullying and its purposes. A smaller company may use cyberbullying as a strategy to manoeuvre a larger rival. This can be done by using its allies as proxies or by spreading fake information about the larger corporation on social media platforms while remaining

anonymous. Fake news can weaken customer trust in companies and brands and affect customers' perception of brand value. This not only undermines customer trust, but also leads to lower market prices and ultimately more and worse consequences.

On the other hand, customers constantly search for product-related information before making a purchase. An internet review is a source of knowledge. Through weblogs, discussion forums, newsgroups, social media websites and video-sharing websites such as YouTube, people can post news, opinions, comments, and reviews about specific products online. Online customer testimonials, comments and conversations are referred to as "electronic word of mouth" (eWOM).

However, a single unfavourable rating can turn away at least 30 people who might otherwise have visited the shop in favour of a competitor. The impact of one bad internet review can be offset by up to 12 good reviews. So low reviews can have a snowball effect, making it harder for potential customers to find the business. Finally, the price of winning back customers is higher than other problems because it may require increasing the social media budget, hiring more permanent or temporary staff, and buying licences for the new software needed (Smith, 2021).

#### **4.0 MITIGATION OF CYBERBULLYING**

##### **4.1 International cyberbullying laws and regulations**

Many nations, such as the United Arab Emirates (UAE), the United States (US), the United Kingdom (UK) and Canada, have enacted laws that address cybercrime, including cyberharassment, to protect victims (Hosani et al., 2019). The authors (Kaluarachchi et al., 2020) reported that three Asian nations, Japan, the Philippines and the Republic of Korea, have domestic laws that address cyberbullying, and one nation, Singapore, is considered to have such legislation, although Singaporean law does not explicitly use the terms "cyberbullying" or "bullying", but the rest of the thirteen Asian nations, Brunei

Darussalam, Cambodia, China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, India, Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Mongolia, and Thailand, have not enacted legislation on cyberbullying as of 2018.

##### **4.2 Policy or Community Standards/Guidelines of social media platforms**

Social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, Foursquare, LinkedIn, Google+, Pinterest, Reddit, YouTube, and others have policies in place to protect users from cyberbullying. These social media platforms all adhere to the same guidelines, which briefly explain what cyberbullying is and give examples of how it manifests itself in hurtful comments, spreading rumours, uploading inappropriate photos, harassing others, and other behaviours. Community standards/guidelines have been published so that users of a particular social media service can decide whether the material is appropriate for them or not (Campbell & Bauman, 2017). If a person is affected by cyberbullying or witnesses a cyberbullying incident, they can also report it to the service staff.

##### **4.3 Policy or guidelines on workplace**

The authors (Subaramaniam et al., 2022) suggest that if employees are responsible for cyberbullying, victims can report the situation to the department HR so that the department is aware of what is happening in the workplace. Also give them copies of the screenshots just in case the posts are deleted as evidence of the bully.

##### **4.4 Dealing cyberbullying with technology**

With the development of technology, there are modern ways to solve complex problems that humans are unable to do or find challenging, such as artificial intelligence (AI), a branch of computer science that deals with the development of machines by mimicking the intelligence of humans (Ruan, 2022), machine learning (ML) a subset of AI in which machines

are trained using real data and find solutions to real-world problems (Kanade, 2022). Artificial neural networks, which are computer structures with linked nodes that function similarly to neurons in the human brain, are the basis for the idea of Deep Learning. Deep Learning models outperform basic machine learning models and traditional data analysis techniques in many applications (Janiesch et al., 2021). Researchers are trying to detect cyberbullying using such novel technologies, and they have already begun to use tools at our disposal, from social media platforms to web-based apps and services, to prevent cyberbullying in unique ways.

To counter cyberbullying, it is crucial to understand the web-based or app-specific solutions that are accessible. Adding parental control software to young people's digital devices is one of the best ways to ensure their safety online, as it gives parents the ability to monitor and limit their online behaviour. Parental control software can be used to schedule or limit screen time, prevent, or restrict access to websites, manage social media apps, etc. Well-known parental control and web filtering software such as Family Zone, Net Nanny, Web Watcher, PC Pandora, and Family Protector can be used to protect children from inappropriate internet encounters (Kaluarachchi et al., 2020).

#### 4.5 The importance of anti-cyberbullying programs

Most school-based anti-cyberbullying programmes were found to be successful in reducing cyberbullying incidents. A meta-analysis found that the anti-cyberbullying interventions studied were able to reduce cyberaggression by 10–15% and cyberbullying victimisation by 14%. To analyse the design elements of anti-cyberbullying programmes, a comprehensive account of risk or protective variables such as the lack of social norms in cyberspace and parental supervision in relation to cyberviolence and cybervictimisation would be beneficial.

An integrated framework that links different elements in the development of anti-cyberbullying education programmes is

needed if people in the socio-ecological system are to be able to comprehend cyberbullying incidents in a coherent manner (Lan et al., 2022).

## 5.0 CONCLUSION

Cyberbullying is the intentional harming of a person, a group of people or an organisation on the internet. The most important factor when it comes to a business or company is its reputation, as it is an integral framework that connects the company's brand. Harmful comments, reviews, fakes, misleading feedback and so on, which make up most cyberbullying messages, comments, and reviews, have the greatest negative impact on a company's brand. Customer trust can be lost as a result, and it can be difficult to repair and restore the company's reputation. And the lower the company's rating, the less various items appear in search engine results, which could make it harder for the company to reach its customers.

To achieve the goal of developing anti-cyberbullying, raising awareness of the impact of cyberbullying, and supporting businesses, educational programmes are needed if people in minimising the impact of cyberbullying. Last but not least, for future work socio-ecological system is recommended to be able to improve the performance, understand cyberbullying detection projects using the developing technologies such as Machine Learning Incidents in a coherent manner (ML), Deep Learning (DL), Data Mining, Natural Language Processing, Data Science, predictive analytics and so on to reduce the impact of cyberbullying in all areas, spread awareness and knowledge about cyberbullying and look for more ways to lead to an anti-cyberbullying world.

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