CYBER BULLYING

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According to Erdur-Baker (2010), online bullying, also known as cyberbullying is an intentional and hurtful activity that utilized the internet, mobile phones, and electronic gadgets. Online bullying is one of the worst types of bullying due to the anonymity of the internet environment. Children and especially adolescents tend to be more aggressive online because they can use fake identity in their social networks (Erdur-Baker, 2010). There are different kinds of cyber bullying and they range from deliberate removal of a person from chat, interfering with private internet information and hacking and stealing of accounts and passwords. The increasing use and reliance on technology as a communication tool has increased the frequency of cyberbullying. Sophisticated gadgets such as tablets, portable computers, mobile phones, other electronic devices with the help of social networks assist in facilitating online bullying. The devices and the social platform are used to harass people by either uploading defamatory media to the internet or sending abusive text messages. Cyberbullying is an intentional and hurtful communication activity utilizing technological devices such as mobile phones or the internet (Erdur-Baker, 2010). Furthermore, they found that the anonymity of the internet environment might cause adolescents and children to adopt a more aggressive attitude unlike in real life because they can use fake usernames and images. Common forms of cyberbullying include stealing passwords, tampering with private internet communication, removing someone from the chat, etc. The rise in using the internet-mediated communication tools increases the frequency of cyberbullying. Erdur-Baker’s study showed that there is a relationship between cyberbullying and the frequency of using internet-mediated communication tools.

Cyberbullying is a big deal because it is rampant and uncontrollable. The internet is everywhere, and it is accessible to anyone. Unfortunately, the youths nowadays face cyber bullying because of the widespread of the internet. The people who bully are anonymous, therefore, making things even more difficult to reduce the issue. It is everyone's dream to see cyber bullying die. It is sad that the subsequent effects are detrimental. One of the consequences of cyberbullying is depression which leads to suicide. Most of the victims are usually unable to handle the pressure and commit suicide rather than face the bullies’ every day of their lives. If cyberbullying can make someone commit suicide, then it is a problem. Some people see it as if it is the modern way of bullying where they argue bullying has always been there from time memorial where someone could eat your food and get away with it now it happens on the internet because that is the communication platform for interaction. Another big problem with the cyber bullying is the fact that it takes place in very many forms. A person can decide to victimize you with the text message via social sites, videos, and photos. It can be very harmful and in fact causes depression or even lower a person's self-esteem. There is nothing as disturbing as someone trying to intimidate you, and other people can see it. Some teenagers end up committing suicide. Some people think that cyber bullying can be controlled and should not wait until it is too much. Before someone escalates the level of intimidating the other from one form to another, they should at least have been reported for investigation since it is against the law. They also argue that it is not as dangerous as it was there before because you cannot come to face to face with person bullying you hence you can avoid it much easily.

Research by Erdur-Baker (2010), shows that even though cyber bullies use anonymous identity, their victims cannot detect who is bullying them. Evidence shows that most of the times the bully is within the social circle. However, due to lack of definitive proof, the victim is powerless. Cyberbullying is more frustrating to the person being bullied because one can never be sure if it is your next door neighbor or your closest friend who is bullying you. Unlike the other types of bullying, cyberbullying is a permanent form of bullying because once something posted on the internet, it remains accessible to all people at any time. Besides, social network platforms are familiar places where disclosure of private information, posting of abusive comments and spread of false rumor is rampant. When teenagers and adults alike spend more time on the internet, they are more acceptable to cyberbullying due to the excessive exposure to cyber bullies. The current situation will remain the same because as the new technology emerges, more sophisticated threats of online bullying emerge (Erdur-Baker, 2010).

Research studies state that cybers bullying results into immediate and long-term outcomes and may affect mental, social, and physical health negatively. The mental interference is the most common result of cyber bullying. The mental interference is the most common result of cyber bullying and may develop anxiety, depression, suicidal ideation, emotional disorders, and substance abuse (Hemphill, Kotevski and Heerde, 2015). The most common health manifestation of cyberbullying is depression (Perren, Dooley, Shaw & Cross, 2010).Depression is usually accompanied by anxiety and results from erosion of self-confidence and self-esteem. Depression coupled with fear results into the increased feeling of loneliness and sadness, altered sleeping patterns, altered eating patterns and social withdrawal (Bonanno & Hymel, 2013). The magnitude of depression depends on upon the nature of bullying encountered and the number of the activities they do on the internet. Studies have shown that students who are intimidated individually or in a group are more likely to be overwhelmed severely (Bonanno & Hymel, 2013).Several studies have shown that students who are intimidated individually or in a group are more likely to be overwhelmed severely (Bonanno & Hymel, 2013). The consequences of bullying in the workplace, school or the internet have long-term effects on victims because they cause the social, psychological and emotional effect. Extreme cases can lead to withdrawal from school, chronic absenteeism, quitting a job or homicide at work. Educators, HR's and parents should intervene in incidents of bullying as failure to do so will imply they support bullying. The impact of a witnessing bystander to take action is communication in itself that sends a message to the bully. The potential of a group influence can be used positively to help individuals under a bullying circumstance by choosing to intervene as opposed to remaining silent. Sense making is vital in issues such as bullying because a person's interpretation of the situation can be done through communication with others. Therefore, strengthening communication will reduce bullying because communication is a management strategy that can deal with bullying at all levels. Relevant training should be carried out to enforce policies that do not tolerate traumatizing communication, and that warns about bullying. Communication should be encouraged and anonymous avenues to report bullying in the workplace and at school availed to ensure every complaint is reported and seriously investigated. Relevant measures such as strengthening communication, training internet users about internet ethics and enforcing policies that warn about bullying at all levels could help to reduce bullying. It is our obligation to ensure that we kill cyberbullying in the society.

Cyber bullying has and up to now is still a big deal. In conclusion, bullying is a widespread problem facing both adolescents and adults. The consequences of bullying in the workplace, school or the internet have long-term effects on victims because they cause the social, psychological and emotional effect. Extreme cases can lead to withdrawal from school, chronic absenteeism, quitting a job or homicide at work. Educators, HR's and parents should intervene in incidents of bullying as failure to do so will imply they support bullying. The impact of a witnessing bystander to take action is communication in itself that sends a message to the bully. The potential of a group influence can be used positively to help individuals under a bullying circumstance by choosing to intervene as opposed to remaining silent. Sense making is vital in issues such as bullying because a person’s interpretation of the situation can be done through communication with others. Therefore, strengthening communication will reduce bullying because communication is a management strategy that can deal with bullying at all levels. Relevant training should be carried out to enforce policies that do not tolerate traumatizing communication, and that warns about bullying. Communication should be encouraged and anonymous avenues to report bullying in the workplace and at school availed to ensure every complaint is reported and seriously investigated. Relevant measures such as strengthening communication, training internet users about internet ethics, and enforcing policies that warn about bullying at all levels could help to reduce bullying. It is our obligation to ensure that we kill cyberbullying in the society.

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