**A Research Proposal on the Reduction of Cyberbullying**

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# Executive Summary

Cyberbullying has become a major challenge associated with social media and information technology use. Over the recent years, several cases have been reported of individuals taking up aggressive behavior to cause physical, emotional, or even psychological damage to social media users (Chun et al., 2020). There has been a need to reduce or even end this cyberbullying act. The paper below is a research proposal that covers detailed information on previous research on reducing cyberbullying. In the paper, we get an insight into what a researcher should be aware of when researching the reduction of cyberbullying, understanding the term cyberbully, the targeted victims and its impacts, the best methods of data collection to use, analysis, and the overview of the expected findings.

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# Reduction of Cyberbullying among Students

# 1.0 Problem definition

Over the past two decades, the world has witnessed a rapid advancement in technology in the telecommunication and information industry. Computers, laptops, and mobile phones now exist, multipurpose technological devices with unlimited capabilities. With these devices, the youth now interacts more with the internet, retrieving information from social media platforms, instant messaging, online journals and blogs, or even chat rooms. Other innovations, such as the introduction of the 5th Generation networks and WiFi has made it easier to access the internet, encouraging more people to use the internet services. Although many access much important information from the internet (Akram, 2022), there has been a growing effect of online abuse that significantly affects internet users. Internet abuse is commonly known as cyberbullying.

Cyberbullying is the use of information in the various internet information relay platforms such as the social media platform (Tiktok, FaceBook, Instagram, Telegram, Whatsapp, Snapchat) or others such as email, blogs, personal websites, text messages, instant messaging in such a way that intends to harm others. Cyberbullying causes physical, psychological, or emotional damage to the intended victim.

## 1.1 The rationale for the study

Since the first reported cyberbullying case in 1999, society has given more attention to the use and the abuse that might result from the internet (Zhu et al. 2019). However, more so for children, it is complicated to control the content they access from the internet; unlike television, computer and mobile phones are more private and secretive. About 99% of Canadian students use the internet, about 50% use the internet at least one hour per day, and 60% use chat rooms and instant messaging services. There are now various forms of cyberbullying; one can wrongly type a comment on a social media post only to get harassed by other social media users. Therefore, managing cyberbullying for young people should involve parents, teachers, schools, and various community groups to monitor and control young people's internet usage.

## 1.2 Significance of the research

Young people, more so children, still lack the capability of handling the harassment that comes with cyberbullying. There have been several reported cases of cyberbullying, with youth people reducing their interaction time with social media platforms, posting less on those platforms, or avoiding completely commenting on various posts over the internet. The research checks the various causes of cyberbullying and recommends how cyberbullying can be reduced.

## 1.3 Research Question and Objectives

The research seeks to identify the various forms of cyberbullying witnessed by young people using the internet and the various platforms associated with cyberbullying. According to Qudah et al. (2019), their various situations when students get harassed and assaulted over the internet. According to universal human rights, it is illegal to threaten dearth, bodily, psychologically, or emotionally harmful to an individual. With the right of expression, it is out of order for an individual to get harassed for commenting or posting over the internet. Therefore, the research will seek to use the following questions in responding and providing various solutions concerning the course of cyberbullying, the various forms of cyberbullying, the suspected cyberbullying practitioners, and the platforms most notorious for cyberbullying activities.

1. How often does an individual get cyberbullied?
2. How often may a student participate in cyberbullying?
3. Where do cyberbullying victims report to?
4. On which platform does cyberbullying occur most? That is blogs, chatrooms, emails, or social media platforms.
5. At what time is cyberbullying mostly witnessed?
6. Who are the cyberbullying victims?

# 2.0 Literature Review

Over the past years, due to the rampant cases of cyberbullying reported by students and other internet users, researchers have done several studies on cyberbullying. Although modern cyberbullying seems new to people, it is more or less the same as traditional forms of bullying. There are now several relevant themes concerning the frequency of the spread of cyberbullying, its consequences, and penalties issued to those found guilty of the act. Considering the previous research, males are most likely to bully others than females, that is, a percentage of 35 for a male to 30 for females. In contrast, females participate in verbal bullying more than males (Faucher et al., 2018). The research claims that women take advantage of the secrecy of the internet to send hurtful messages that they cannot pass on face-to-face communication. Some of the available cyberbullying research work includes:

## 2.1 CBC News Online: Cyberbullying

In October 2002, CBC's article, *The National* news program, David Night, had a website devoted to him, allowing readers to comment on the website. Among the comments posted on the website where the following:

* David was accused of being a paedophile
* He was accused of being gay and physically dirty where; the readers mention he has used date rape drugs on young boys.

According to Zhang (2022), the effort to bring down the website related to David, the government and the concerned bodies took around seven months using phone calls, messaging, and even passing threats of taking various legal actions against the internet service provider to bring down the website from the internet. In this research, we realize that it is very challenging to combat cyberbullying; people judge by putting up comments that may eventually come out as harassment to another person. The essay records that about 16% of Canadians admit to having posted hateful comments on different blogs and websites.

## 2.2 Olweus Bullying Survey (McClure Middle School)

In November 2003, a round of 374 surveys was conducted in McClure Middle School, where there were 192 female respondents and 179 male respondents (Wójcik & Mondry, 2020). From the survey, the below findings were generated:

* About 12% of the respondent had experienced cyberbullying (16% males to 9% female)
* About 24% were bullied about three or more times a month.
* About 8% of the respondent students participate in bullying fellow students.
* Furthermore, a note was taken where about 4% of the students believe their teachers do nothing considering the cyberbullying cases.

In the essay, with the teacher putting no measure to curb bullying, the student fails to have where t report the bullying cases. In the same cases, the school fears even facing more severe forms of bullying that may physically cause damage to the victims.

## 2.3 The student’s view (the young Canadians using the internet)

The research study captures data to analyze internet usage among young Canadians (seventeen and below age). Akarsu et al. (2020) clarify that the research's main goals were to check parental knowledge of the student's internet usage and how internet exposure exposes the students to various cyberbullying attacks.

* About 99% of Canadian youths report using internet services, with 79% having home access to internet services.
* About 605 of the youth use the internet services for downloading and playing music, 56% use the internet for sending email messages, and about 50% for fun surfing.
* About 56% of the youth use chat rooms and about 51% use email services.

As observed in the survey (El Morr et al., 2020), many students and young people use internet services. It takes a collective responsibility of the school, parents, and teachers to manage student exposure and immerse psychological damage from cyberbullying.

# 3. 0 Methodology

To generate accurate results on the extent, effect, and impact of cyberbullying, it may be easier to survey university students. The students are familiar with social media platforms, chat rooms, and emails, which expose them to various types of cyberbullying. The research uses both questionnaires (Saginova et al., 2020) to collect data among university students and compare the previous literature reviews to generate a comparison on the extent of cyberbullying.

## 3.1 Population and sampling

Since the university population ranges from five thousand to twenty even more population, the population would provide adequate information for the proposed research work. Every survey was attached with a consent form, a letter describing the purpose, and the policy to keep the information only for educational purposes and not to manipulate the data for personal benefit. The students are issued with survey papers that should be filled on the spot or returned after one day to the university information office. The survey is then collected to be analyzed by the researcher.

## 3.2 Instrumentation

After signing the consent form, the student is issued a survey paper containing about 20 questions. The questions were directed to the extent to which the students use cell phones and how often they face or participate in cyberbullying. How safe the student feels when using the internet services and how often the student interacts with social media platforms.

## 3.3 Data Analysis

The collected data are recorded in excel, where analysis is done using frequencies and percentages using a chi-square analysis. The SPSS software is used to explore and analyze data extensively. According to Pallant (2020), the SPSS tool is used in the analysis to generate meaningful, approximate percentage that depicts the overview of the percentage of victims of cyberbullying, the various platforms with most cases of cyberbullying, among other analyses to answer the research questions.

## 3.4 Scope

The research will be conducted on students studying within the Universities of Canada. Among the university chosen are, The University of Toronto and the University of Montreal. The various research reviews are from the research on cyberbullying among University students across Europe, especially Germany and the USA. The research consists of the cyberbullying cases reported in the last three years, from 2019.

# 4.0 Ethical consideration

The research work has to be in alignment with the protection of personal data. Before issuing the survey paper, a participant has to sign the consent form (Suri, 2020). This form assures the researcher that the respondent willingly participates in the survey data collection. The collected data has to be used for the intended purpose only and for no personal gain to the researcher. Survey questions are structured, so they do not ask about the respondent's details. The respondent has to be given enough time, up to one week, to complete the survey form.

# 5.0 Conclusion

The proposed research paper should compare the previous literature review with the currently collected data to identify the progress in reducing cyberbullying activities over the internet. The researchers used the survey questionnaire on students to identify the primary source of data that would generate a conclusion on the forms, participants, victims, and impacts of cyberbullying while using the internet by students.

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