Traditional bullying, cyber-bullying, and tackling strategies

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The Problems of Bullying

• Bullying among school children is certainly not a new phenomenon.
• There is considerable evidence now that continued or severe bullying can contribute to immediate problems such as depression, sleeping difficulties, playing truant, low concentration in problem-solving, and long-term problems such as permanent anxiety, low self-esteem or study difficulties.
• The worst possible outcome is that a severely bullied child takes his/her own life.
What is bullying?

- Definition
  - Bullying is a negative and often aggressive or manipulative act or series of acts by one or more people against another person or people usually over a period of time.

  Bullying is defined as repeated oppression, physical or mental, of a less powerful person by a more powerful person or group of persons. It occurs where there is an imbalance in power between people, and it is a repeated or continued behavior.

Subtype of aggression

- Bullying can be regarded as a subtype of aggressive behavior and shares the main elements of most forms of aggressive behavior, yet it has certain characteristics which are not necessarily shared by other forms of aggressive behavior.
Common Categories of Bullying Behavior

Physical bullying
- Pushing, hitting, purposely hitting someone violently

Verbal bullying
- Calling names, making fun of others’ names, backgrounds or physical appearance making others feel embarrassed or sad.

Exclusive bullying
- Ignoring someone’s presence or threatening others not to play with somebody

Extortion bullying
- Taking somebody’s things violently and threatening somebody to do something for oneself
Bullying contains the following elements

- The person doing the bullying has more power than the one being victimized,
- Bullying is often organized, systematic, and hidden.
- Bullying is sometimes opportunistic, but once its starts is likely to continue.
- It usually occurs over a period of time, although those who regularly bully may also carry out one-off incidents.
- A victim of bullying can be hurt physically, emotionally, or psychologically.
- All acts of bullying have an emotional or psychological dimension.

What is Cyber-bullying?

- A covert form of bullying
- Psychologically devastating social cruelty
- Due to proliferation of electronic communications technologies
- Medium: cell-phones, websites, webcams, chat rooms, and email
- Examples:
  - Sending harassing text messages
  - Posting embarrassing pictures of someone else online without their permission
  - Threatening someone on Facebook or other social network sites.
What is Cyber-bullying?

Cyber-bullying is defined as “an individual or a group willfully using information and communication involving electronic technologies to facilitate deliberate and repeated harassment or threat to another individual or group by sending or posting cruel text and/or graphics using technological means”

It can also be defined as “willful and repeated harm inflicted through medium of electronic text”.

Prevalence of Cyber-bullying

- In American, studies estimated that the lifetime self-reported cyber victimization in adolescence ranges from 6% to 72%.
- In Canada, one in every 17 adolescents is threatened on the Internet, and one in four youth aged 11 to 19 is threatened through personal computer or mobile phone.
- British studies estimated that 6% to 25% of adolescents had been harassed or threatened via Internet Communication Channels over the past 12 months.
A Study on Cyber Bullying among middle school students in Calgary, Alberta

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources</th>
<th>% (Can choose more than one answer)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>By emails</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In chat rooms</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By SMS</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By known schoolmates</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By people outside school</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple sources including schoolmates</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Research on traditional bullying and cyber-bullying in Hong Kong (Wong, 2010)

- A total of 1,411 Secondary 1 to Secondary 2 students from 5 different Hong Kong schools filled in a self-administered questionnaire in late 2010.
## Experience of bullying others in traditional ways

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical bullying</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deliberately shove someone.</td>
<td>30.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Throw things at others.</td>
<td>38.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kick or trip others.</td>
<td>23.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verbal bullying</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Verbally threaten others.</td>
<td>37.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Give/call people nicknames.</td>
<td>67.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laugh at others’ looks or body features.</td>
<td>41.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exclusion bullying</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boycott someone.</td>
<td>35.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tell a schoolmate not to play with a particular person.</td>
<td>31.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stop others from playing with one particular person.</td>
<td>19.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extortion bullying</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Take away or hide someone else’s belongings.</td>
<td>24.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Force someone to lend you their belongings.</td>
<td>31.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Force someone to let you copy their homework.</td>
<td>26.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Experience of cyber-bullying others

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Login to others’ account and changing their personal information without their permission.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Editing others’ photos to humiliate them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Start or participate in searching for a person online (Using the power internet users to find out information about a particular person).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use multimedia forms (E.g. Photos, videos etc.) to play a joke, insult, tease or edge out someone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maliciously spread fictitious or slanderous rumors about others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open an account using fake information to play a joke on someone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuously use different tools (E.g. SMS/Email/MSN etc.) to send annoying or vulgar messages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use online texts to play a joke, insult, tease or edge out someone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Join in groups which purpose is to personally attack someone.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When you are bullied, how would you respond?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Call the police</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Join up with my friends and fight back.</td>
<td>15.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cancel the registered account.</td>
<td>17.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fight back myself.</td>
<td>17.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pretend I could not see and ignore it.</td>
<td>19.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seek help from my family, teachers or social workers.</td>
<td>22.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can tolerate, although I am not happy.</td>
<td>24.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delete the webpage or related messages.</td>
<td>26.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blacklist the attacker.</td>
<td>31.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Characteristics of cyber-bullies

- Cyber-bullies, in general, are heavy Internet users and attach great importance to the Internet.

- Aftab (2010) divided cyber-bullies into three distinct categories:
  - “vengeful angels”
  - “power hungry”
  - “revenge of the nerds”
Traditional bullying vs. Cyber-bullying

1. Anonymity
2. No time constraint
3. Accessibility
4. An infinite audience
5. Power imbalance

Impacts of Cyber-bullying

- Cyber bullying occurs typically outside supervision boundaries
- This presents schools and parents an unprecedented legal and educational concern:
  - “To what extent can schools intervene when their students cyber bully off-campus, outside school hour, and/or from home computers?”
Impacts of Cyber-bullying

1. Victims report feeling depressed, sad, angry and frustrated.
   - A teenage discloses “It is exactly a traumatic experience. It makes me hurt both physically and mentally. It scares me and takes away all my confidence. It makes me feel sick and worthless.”

2. Victims are afraid or embarrassed to go to school.

3. Victims may have suicidal thoughts.

Impacts of Cyber-bullying

4. Victims are harassed by someone that they know.
   - Research suggests that the relationships between victim and bully:
     - Friend (21.1%), Ex-friend (20.0%), someone else from school (26.5%). Only 6.5% victims states that the offender is a stranger (Hinduja, & Patchin, 2009).
   - Studies have shown that a vast majority of cyber-bullies (as high as 84%) knew their victims (Ybarra & Mitchell, 2004).
Prevention of Cyber-bullying

- **Google yourself**
  - Searching for your personal information like full name via Google, Yahoo to see what information may be out there on the Internet about you.

- **Protect your information**
  - Avoid to put your personal information online. For example, Name, Age, Address or photos.
  - Sometimes, other people will put your information online (like tagging you in a photo and including your full name).
  - You want to make sure that there is no information online that could be used to find you and harm your safety.
  - You must take advantage of the privacy settings within Facebook, other websites, and social software that they use.

Tactics for facing cyber-bullying (Personal)

- **Rationality**
  - To keep control over your emotions and behaviors, so that you do not do anything that might get you into trouble or that you might later regret.
  - Call police when someone threatens your safety or forces you to do something illegal.

- **Save any evidence (Print screen, printout, etc.)**
  - Adolescents should be encouraged to save the harassing message and report the incident to an adult.
  - It can help prove what was going on and who started it.
Tactics for facing cyber-bullying (Personal)

- Don’t retaliate.
- Don’t fight back.
- Don’t think that it is your fault.
- Don’t keep it to yourself.
- Don’t skip school.
- Don’t commit suicide.

Tactics for facing cyber-bullying (Personal)

Stop, block and tell

Stop
- Victims are advised to take time to stop and calm down rather than responding to a cyberbullying in an adverse way.

Block
- Blocking the cyberbullies, limiting all communication on a buddy list.

Tell
- Telling a trusted adult or friends for emotional support.

(Stop Cyberbullying, n.d.)
Role of Bystanders

- Bystanders should not encourage or directly involve in bullying:
  - by forwarding hurtful messages, laughing at inappropriate jokes or content, condoning the act just to “fit in”, or otherwise silently allowing it to continue.

- Standing by: To Stand up for the victims who feel helpless and hopeless and need someone to come to the rescue.

Tactics for facing cyber-bullying (Parents)

1. Parents or caregivers should be proactive in discussing cyber-bullying with their children.

   - Kowalski and Limber (2007) showed that adolescents are more reluctant to report their cyber-bullying experience with their parents.

   - Because of the fear their parents will restrict their time on the Internet or mobile phones, or discover information that the adolescents themselves have involved in cyber-bullying.
Tactics for facing cyber-bullying  
(Parents)

2. Parents should cultivate and maintain open communication with their children regarding their use.

- Such open dialogue between parents and adolescents may encourage the adolescents to recognize and to report cyber-bullying incidents.
- Studies proved that positive caregiver-child relationship has shown to decrease the likelihood of online offending.

3. Parents must also regularly monitor their children’s online activities. If your child feels their privacy has been violated, this could cause more harm than goods.

4. Parents must teach and reinforce positive morals and values and empathy as well.
**Tactics for facing cyber-bullying (School)**

1. Cultivate a harmonious school culture.
   - In essence, many scholars support the call for the inclusion of cyber-bullying prevention in traditional anti-bullying programs such as the widely-acclaimed *Whole-school Approach Anti-bullying Prevention Program*.
   - Prevention efforts should be directed at helping adolescents to develop pro-social attitudes and behaviors in lieu to foster and maintain healthy relationships both within and beyond the school setting.

2. Teach student that cyber-bullying is unacceptable and that will result in discipline.

3. Post signs or posters in school to remind students to use technology in a right way.

4. Encourage senior students to share experience to junior about the importance of using technology and to promote positive online interaction and attitudes.
References


Managing bullying proactively with wisdom

Thank you