Protection Against Cyberbullying for Teens in the United States

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ABSTRACT

Cyberbullying, also known as cyberbullying, is any form of violence experienced by a child or adolescent and perpetrated by peers their age through the internet or cyberspace. If a child or teenager is teased, insulted, bullied, or humiliated by another child or youth through the medium of the internet, digital technology, or cell phones, this is also known as cyber bullying. This research uses a literature study approach to explore it, this approach involves the disclosure of a comprehensive literature to sources relevant to cyberbullying cases in the United States. In achieving the research objectives, the main focus will also be given to factors affecting cyberbullying and protection efforts from cyberbullying as well as the United States' policy in handling cyberbullying cases among adolescents. There are several factors that can influence the occurrence of cyberbullying in adolescents. Some of these include individual factors including experience of violence, perception, gender, age, psychological control, and addictive use. Family factors include parenting, family support, and parental stress. The friend factor is support. The school factor is the type of school. The last factor is the use of the internet in the form of intensity and competence of ethical media. There are also cyberbullying protection measures for adolescents and U.S. policies in handling cyberbullying cases among adolescents. Cyberbullying is an increasing concern affecting young people around the world, particularly in the United States. To address this issue, it is important to develop comprehensive strategies and support systems that address the root causes of cyberbullying and encourage positive social interactions.

Keywords: Cyberbullying, Factors, Policy, Teens, United States

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1. INTRODUCTION

Cyberbullying, also known as cyberbullying, is any form of violence experienced by a child or adolescent and perpetrated by peers their age through the internet or cyberspace [1]. Millions of people around the world have been exposed to cyberbullying, or cyber negotiations. Cyberbullying differs from conventional negotiations in that it is done through digital platforms such as social media, instant messaging, and websites. This allows the perpetrator to kill the victim anonymously.
and repeatedly without any time or place limits. If a child or teenager is teased, insulted, bullied, or humiliated by another child or youth through the medium of the internet, digital technology, or cell phones, this is also known as cyber bullying [2]. This phenomenon affects the victims’ social, academic, and professional lives in addition to their mental health. Many victims of cyberbullying experience depression, anxiety, self-humiliation, and in some cases, even suicide. It shows how serious cyberbullying is and how important good handling is to protect victims and prevent negotiations on the Internet. Due to the lack of supervision of access to electronic devices and the internet, these actions are usually carried out on a deliberate basis. Cybercrime or cyber stalking, also known as cyber harassment, can only be committed if the perpetrator and victim are under the age of 18, which is not legally considered an adult. If either of the parties involved, or both, are over the age of 18, the case will be classified as cybercrime or cyber stalking [3].

This article will review the background of cyberbullying in the United States, covering current statistics, factors that influence cyberbullying in adolescents, efforts that have been made to protect them from this threat and the United States policy in handling these cases. With a better understanding of these issues, it is hoped that communities can work together to create a safer and friendlier online environment for teenagers.

Cyberbullying has become a serious issue affecting many teenagers around the world, including in the United States [4]. With the widespread use of digital technology, teenagers are vulnerable to various forms of online harassment and bullying. Cyberbullying not only affects their psychological well-being, but it can also impact their physical health and academic performance [5].

In the United States, governments and NGOs have taken steps to protect children and adolescents from cyberbullying [6]. A number of laws and policies have been implemented to stop cyberbullying behavior and provide protection to victims. In addition, educational programs and awareness campaigns have also been launched to increase understanding of the dangers of cyberbullying and how to tackle the problem [7].

According to the statistics of the PEW research center, the survey was conducted on April 14 - May 4, 2022. States that older teenage girls stand out for experiencing different types of cyberbullying behaviors. Men aged 13-14 years experienced various types of cyberbullying as much as 22%, one type of cyberbullying as much as 19%, any cyberbullying as much as 41%. Men aged 15-17 years experienced various types of cyberbullying as much as 26%, one type of cyberbullying as much as 18%, any cyberbullying as much as 44%. While women aged 13-14 years experienced various types of cyberbullying as much as 22%, one type of cyberbullying as much as 18%, any cyberbullying as much as 41%. Women aged 15-17 years experienced various types of cyberbullying as much as 38%, one type of cyberbullying as much as 16%, any cyberbullying as much as 54%. So the conclusion of the statistical data above is, the minimum value of experiencing cyberbullying is women aged 13-14 years, while the maximum value of experiencing cyberbullying is women aged 15-17 years [8].

There are many cases of cyberbullying experienced by children and adolescents in various countries in the United States. One of them is the case experienced by thirteen-year-old teenager, Megan Meier [9]. When she receives an email message saying, "The world would be a better place without you", thirteen-year-old Megan Meier decided to end her life the same day. The message comes from her boyfriend on MySpace, who turns out to be a fictional character created by the mother of one of Megan's old friends. Before jumping to death, Tyler Clementi, an eighteen-year-old freshman, posted on Facebook, "Sorry to jump off [George Washington’s] bridge." After the incident in which he was teased online, his roommate recorded and posted
Tyler's sexual encounter with another man on the internet [10].

The factors that influence teens in dealing with cyberbullying are diverse. One of them is a lack of understanding of the consequences of their actions in cyberspace [11]. Teens often don't realize that their comments or actions online can have a big impact on others [12]. Lack of supervision from parents and teachers can also be a factor that exacerbates the situation. Adolescents who do not get enough supervision tend to be more vulnerable to becoming victims or perpetrators of cyberbullying [13].

To prevent cyberbullying, a holistic and coordinated approach between governments, educational institutions, parents, and the wider community is needed. One effective way is to increase teenagers' understanding of online ethics and the consequences of their actions in cyberspace. In addition, a preventive approach involving parents is also very important. Parents need to be actively involved in their children's digital lives, provide adequate supervision, and provide education on safe and responsible internet use [14]. In addition, strict rules should be applied to digital platforms such as social media and instant messaging apps to prevent and investigate cyberbullying cases. They should give users the tools to report harmful content and respond to it quickly. One important step to protect users is to use advanced technology to detect and remove illegal content. It is expected that the number of cases of cyberbullying can decrease significantly due to increased awareness of the dangers of cybersecurity and concrete measures to address them. We can create a safer and more positive digital environment for all users by improving education, regulation, and support from all sides.

3. METHODS

This type of research in this journal uses a literature study approach to explore it, this approach involves a comprehensive review of sources relevant to cyberbullying cases in the United States. In achieving the research objectives, the main focus will also be given to factors influencing cyberbullying and efforts to protect against cyberbullying as well as the United States' policy in handling cyberbullying cases among adolescents.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Factors affecting cyberbullying in adolescents

There are several factors that can influence the incidence of cyberbullying in adolescents. Teen cyberbullying can be affected by several things. Individual factors such as experience of violence, perception, gender, age, psychological control, and use of additives. Family factors include parenting, family support, and parental stress; friend factor in the form of support; And the school factor is the type of school. The final factor, namely the use of the internet, is the intensity and competence of ethical media [15].

a. Individual Factors

Individuals are key in cyberbullying, as a person's involvement in cyberbullying can be determined by themselves. People who are considered weak have a greater risk of being bullied.

1. Experience of Violence: A situation or event in which a person experiences acts that hurt, intimidate, or threaten physically, emotionally, or psychologically is referred to as an experience of violence. This violence can occur in a variety of places and situations, such as at home, in school, in a social environment, or at work. Experiences of violence can include physical violence, emotional violence, sexual violence, or verbal violence. Refers to a person's
experience of experiencing violence either physically or verbally, which can affect their behavior and perception of violence [16].

2. Perception: Perception is the process by which individuals organize, interpret, and give meaning to the sensory information they receive from their surroundings. Refers to the way individuals understand and interpret situations or information they encounter, which can influence their response to cyberbullying [17].

3. Gender: In a particular society, gender roles refer to social expectations, norms, and behaviors associated with a person's gender. Gender role covers a variety of attitudes, actions, and responsibilities that are culturally considered appropriate for men and women. Refers to the gender role of a person (male or female) in influencing the risk or experience of cyberbullying, due to social and cultural factors associated with gender [18].

4. Age: As teenagers and young people are more likely to use social media and digital technology, they are more vulnerable to cyberbullying. Refers to a person's developmental stage in their life, which can affect how they interact with technology and cyberbullying situations.

5. Psychological Control: A person's ability to regulate, manage, and control their thoughts, emotions, and behavior in a variety of situations is known as psychological control. This ability allows a person to control their instinctive impulses, respond to stress in a healthy way, and make wise and rational decisions. Refers to a person's ability to control their emotions and behavior, which can affect their likelihood of engaging in cyberbullying [19].

6. Use of Addictive Substances: Addictive drug use is the use of substances that can cause physical or psychological dependence, such as alcohol, nicotine, illicit drugs, and some prescription drugs. The use of addictive substances can seriously endanger a person's physical and mental health, as well as their behavior and social life. Refers to the use of addictive substances such as alcohol or illegal drugs, which can affect a person's likelihood of engaging in cyberbullying behavior.

b. Family Factors

The family plays an important role in a child's personal, social, and academic adaptation because the family is the first place they socialize and learn rules of behavior to live together. Children who do not engage in cyberbullying have high levels of communication and affection from their parents.

1. Parenting: Caring patterns are the way parents educate, guide, and interact with their children. An authoritative caring pattern, which balances support and control, usually results in children who are more empathic, have good self-control, and are able to interact socially in a healthy
way. On the contrary, a permissive, too loose caring model can cause children to experience problems in self-regulation and social relationships, increasing the risk of involvement in cyberbullying. Refers to the way parents raise and educate their children, which can affect the likelihood of the child engaging in cyberbullying [20].

2. Family Support: The help, attention, and affection of family members is part of the family’s support. Children can feel lonely, isolated, and vulnerable to pressure from classmates, which can encourage them to engage in cyberbullying both as perpetrators and victims if they do not have family support. Refers to the level of emotional and practical support provided by family members, which can affect a person’s ability to cope with or avoid cyberbullying.

3. Parental Stress: Stressed parents may not be able to provide the attention, support, and guidance their children need. As a result, children may feel ignored and seek relief on the Internet, including cyberbullying behaviour. Refers to the level of stress felt by parents, which can affect their interactions with their children and affect the risk of cyberbullying [21].

c. Friend Factor
How friends behave can be an example to others in the group. If someone sees his friends doing cyberbullying and gaining social benefit or status from such behavior, they may feel encouraged to do the same thing as well. Besides, if friends do not suffer the negative consequences of negotiating behavior, it can strengthen the belief that cyberbullying is acceptable or harmless. Peers are groups of people who have similar characteristics and can influence each other’s behavior and opinions. However, peers can also mediate the link between cyberbullying and the dissatisfaction teens experience. This factor refers to the social support provided by peers, which can affect a person’s ability to cope with cyberbullying [22].

d. School Factors
Schools that have a culture that is friendly, supportive, and respects differences tend not to experience cyberbullying. Students can reduce the likelihood of negotiating behavior by feeling safe and appreciated in a positive and supportive environment. Out-of-school activities, mentoring programs, and anti-bullying programs can affect the school community. Adolescents need social support for socialization with their environment. School level, school type, and school quality are associated with the risk of bullying and cyberbullying; The prevalence of cyberbullying varies by school type and school quality. Social support can also be a risk factor for teens who are victims of cyberbullying. This factor refers to the characteristics and environment of the school, which can influence the policies and supports available to
prevent and address cyberbullying.

e. **Use of Social Media**

The intensity of social media or internet use is related to the incidence of cyberbullying in adolescents. Daily social media use for more than two hours increased the incidence of cyberbullying by 66% [23]. This factor is in the form of intensity of internet use and ethical media competence.

1. **Intensity of Internet Use:**
   Internet usage intensity refers to the frequency and duration of a person’s use of Internet services. This can include various activities such as browsing, streaming video, playing online games, using social media, working, and learning online. Refers to how often and for how long a person uses the internet, which can affect their exposure to cyberbullying.

2. **Ethical Media Competence:**
   The competition between the media that follows journalistic ethics and social responsibility is known as the ethical media competence. Refers to a person’s understanding of the ethics of using media, which can influence their online behavior including in the context of cyberbullying.

3.2 **Efforts to protect against cyberbullying for adolescents and the policy of the United States in handling cases of cyberbullying among adolescents**

a. **Efforts to protect against cyberbullying for adolescents**

   Efforts to protect against cyberbullying for adolescents involve several steps, including:

   a. **Education and Awareness:** Schools and educational institutions can take initiatives to raise awareness among parents and students about online harassment. Educate teens about cyberbullying, its negative effects, and how to overcome it.

   b. **Supervision:** Parents and teachers should actively monitor their children’s online activities so that they do not engage in cyberbullying. Parents and teachers need to monitor teens' online activities and provide guidance to avoid potentially cyberbullying situations [24].

   c. **School Policies:** Schools can establish clear policies on combating cyberbullying, which involve punishment for those who do so. Schools can have clear policies on cyberbullying and actions to be taken if such cases occur.

   d. **Use of Technology:** The use of smart technologies, such as parental surveillance apps and content filters, can help prevent cyberbullying. Encourage the wise use of technology, such as limiting online time and using appropriate privacy settings [25].

   e. **Reporting and Intervention:** Helping to cope with cyberbullying is an easily accessible reporting system and quick intervention from schools or authorities. Provide safe reporting channels for adolescents experiencing cyberbullying, as well as prompt and appropriate intervention.
f. Collaboration: Collaboration between parents, schools, government, and other relevant institutions to create a safe and supportive environment for adolescents. Collaboration between the various parties can strengthen protection efforts against cyberbullying.

g. Emotional Support: When victims of cyberbullying receive emotional support, it can help them cope with the effects. Provide emotional support to teens who experience cyberbullying, whether from family, friends, or mental health professionals.

h. Strengthening Identity and Empathy: Teaching the values of empathy to teenagers can help them understand the impact of cyberbullying. Helping adolescents understand their identity and increase empathy for others, so that they are better able to appreciate differences and avoid cyberbullying behavior.

b. U.S. policy in handling cyberbullying cases among teenagers.

In general, the United States government has taken a series of steps to deal with cases of cyberbullying in adolescents. Some of the policies and actions that have been taken include:

a. Anti-Bullying Acts: Many states in the United States have anti-bullying laws that cover cyberbullying. The law provides a legal basis for authorities to crack down on cyberbullies. Most states in the United States have enacted laws banning cyberbullying and holding perpetrators accountable for their actions. For example, a New York state law known as the "Dignity for All Pupils Act" mandates that schools must protect students from opening online. These examples show how the legal system works to protect victims of cyberbullying and give authorities a strong legal basis to prosecute offenders [27].

b. Law Enforcement: Authorities, including police and schools, cooperate to investigate cases of cyberbullying and take action against perpetrators in accordance with applicable law.

c. Protection Laws: Some states have laws prohibiting cyberbullying, and the federal government has introduced several laws to protect teens from this behavior. Federal laws in force in the United States include those protecting human rights and computer crime [28].

d. Awareness Campaigns: The government also frequently conducts awareness campaigns to educate teens and parents about the dangers of cyberbullying and how to address it.

Burger King teamed up with No Bully to create an anti-bullying campaign showing that 30% of students are bullied each year worldwide, and bullying is the most common form of violence against teenagers in the United States. To
commemorate National Bullying Prevention Month, the Burger King Campaign focused on a case where a student was bullied by another Burger King customer. Those who help students who are bullied are only 12% of the audience. This campaign makes the mind think unacceptable and vocalize if you see someone being bullied.

e. Cooperation with Online Platforms: The government works with online platforms such as Amazon, eBay, Walmart, Costco, etc. to develop policies and tools to protect users, especially teenagers, from cyberbullying.

f. School Education: Schools often have programs to educate students about the importance of respecting others and ways to deal with conflict in a healthy manner. The use of mobile phones in school premises began to be banned in several US states. Because mobile devices play a huge role in cyberbullying, mental health issues, and lack of learning. In several states, including Florida, Ohio, Colorado, Maryland, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and California, cell phone use has been banned or practiced during school hours. The use of smartphones, or smart phones, in Minnesota has been completely banned from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

g. Support and Resources: Governments provide support and resources for parents, teachers, and adolescents to address cyberbullying and manage its effects [29]. Despite this, government efforts in dealing with cyberbullying cases continue to change and evolve along with technological developments and changes in online behavior.

4. CONCLUSION

Cyberbullying is a serious problem that affects many young people around the world, particularly in the United States. Factors contributing to the prevalence of cyberbullying include a lack of understanding of the consequences of online comments and threats, as well as a lack of support from parents and educators. To combat cyberbullying, a holistic and coordinated approach between governments, educational institutions, parents, and the wider community is needed. Effective strategies include raising awareness of online ethics and the consequences of cyberbullying, as well as preventive measures that involve parents actively participating in their children's digital lives, providing supportive services, and providing education about internet use [30]. Cyberbullying is an increasing concern affecting young people around the world, particularly in the United States. To address this issue, it is important to develop comprehensive strategies and support systems that address the root causes of cyberbullying and encourage positive social interactions.

Advice:

1. Education and Awareness: Increase education and awareness about cyberbullying among adolescents, parents, and educators.

2. The Role of Parents and Schools: Strengthen the role of parents and schools in detecting, preventing, and responding to cyberbullying.

3. Policy and Law Enforcement: Strengthen policies and law enforcement that ensure the
protection of adolescents from cyberbullying.
4. Technology Development: Deploy technology that can help detect and prevent cyberbullying effectively.
5. Psychological Support: Provides psychological support for adolescents who are victims of cyberbullying.
6. Collaboration Between Parties: Encourage collaboration between governments, educational institutions, technology companies, and communities in protecting adolescents from cyberbullying.

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