



Old wine in a new bottle or new wine in a new bottle: Is cyber aggression a unique form of aggression or just online graffiti?

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Cyber aggression or cyber bullying?

Who is the aggressor?

The Bull or the Matador?

The Agenda for today:

1. **Defining cyber aggression**
2. **A new concept to address cyber aggression**
3. **Types of cyber aggression**
4. **Unique characteristics of cyber aggression**
5. **What are the options that cyber victims have?**

A definition of cyber aggression

Cyber aggression alludes to a behavior that is carried out with the intention of harming another person by using electronic forms of contact (Grigg, 2010).

A definition of cyber bullying

Cyberbullying is defined as, any behavior performed through electronic or digital media by individuals or groups that repeatedly communicates hostile or aggressive messages intended to inflict harm or discomfort on others (Tokunaga, 2010).

The prevalence of cyber aggression incidents among Israeli teenagers

A report from January 2014 – published by the Ministry of Education on the prevalence of cyber aggression incidents among teenagers in Israel gives the following information:

The research was conducted among 1,094 Israeli students

27% reported they were cyber victims.

17% reported they were cyber aggressors.

46% reported they witnessed online aggression.

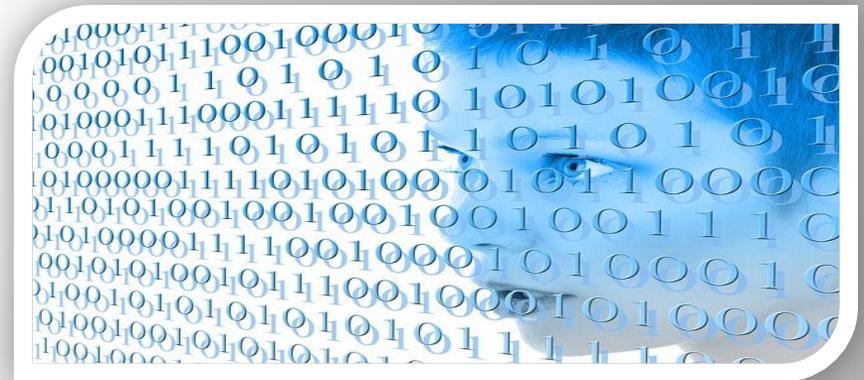
Why should we be worried about these numbers?

The social life of teens online and offline

Cyber world is not isolated from the real world

Many teens do not distinguish between their online social life and offline circles.

Often the friends whom they meet online are their friends in the real world as well (Slonje & Smith, 2008).



Do we need a new concept to address cyber aggression?

YES!

Because cyber world has different dynamics –

We act differently online and we do things online which we will not necessarily do offline. The following video shows how easy it is to manipulate kids online when you fake your identity. This would be impossible to do if those kids had known the identity of the person.....

Types of cyber aggression which you cannot find offline....

- ❖ Using webcams - Teenagers post pictures of themselves in intimate positions – for example: a girl was forced to take pictures of herself after her boyfriend threatened to expose her secrets. – “If you don’t flash I’ll tell your secrets”
- ❖ Backstabbing - friends can use their blog or website to get back at a person they had a fight with....and there is nothing you can do.
- ❖ Masquerading – concealing your identity by masquerading as someone else. Kids feel that this action is intended to increase the distress and fear in the victims – it increases the aggressors’ power by remaining hidden behind the keyboard.

Why is cyber aggression unique?

First, we need to understand the impact of technology on communication behaviors.

In offline face-to-face communications, we receive a large variety of social cues such as verbal, non-verbal, and visual cues.

Computer Mediated Communication (CMC) lacks social cues such as, gender, age or status and relies on text only cues and changes the way people interact.

The disadvantage of CMC is in the fact that aggressors feel less restrained to express themselves openly and to say or do things that ordinarily they would not say or do in offline communications, while victims may feel more anxious and helpless online.

So....what makes Cyber aggression a much worse scenario for the victims?

- ❖ Space & time boundaries
- ❖ Anonymity
- ❖ Minimization of authority

Space & time boundaries

Cyber space operates beyond physical space; therefore, space and time boundaries are not applicable in cyber aggression which may occur at any time and any place.

Unlike other forms of relational aggression, a victim of cyber aggression cannot leave the venue with the knowledge that the aggressive attacks will cease (Kerneghan & Elwood, 2013).

Anonymity

Anonymity online means the absence of personal details such as gender, weight, age, occupation, ethnic origin, and residential location (Lapidot-Lefler & Barak, 2012).

Anonymity plays an important role in cyber aggression, as it allows the aggressors to hide behind an anonymous or fake identity (Heirman & Walrave, 2008).

Minimization of authority

Although there may be moderators online, they may seem more like peers than superiors.

This contributes to a sense of helplessness which cyber victims may feel, because the aggressors are not bound by rules or authority online that can stop or deter them from being involved in aggressive activities.

Online attacks can become more severe than offline attacks, because the aggressors are not restricted by inhibitions which restrain their attacks offline (Lapidot-Lefler & Barak, 2012).



What are the options that cyber victims have?

How does the connection between offline social circles and online social networks of adolescents influence cyber victims?

- ❖ **WHICH DEFENSIVE OPTIONS DO CYBER VICTIMS HAVE?**
- ❖ **SHOULD THEY STAY ONLINE OR NOT?**
- ❖ **WITNESS THE ATTACKS AND IGNORE THEM?**
- ❖ **CONFRONT THE AGGRESSORS BY TRYING TO FIGHT BACK?**
- ❖ **BLOCKING CONTACTS, DELETING MESSAGES OR CLOSING DOWN THEIR ACCOUNT?**

What will be most effective in the case of cyber victims?

- ❖ **CMC ENABLES THE AGGRESSORS TO CONTINUE TRANSMITTING HARMFUL MESSAGES TO A WIDER AUDIENCE; THEREFORE, STAYING OFFLINE IS NOT AN EFFECTIVE STRATEGY.**