First Name Second Name

Instructor

Course

Date

What are The Causes and Effects of Cyber Bullying

The revolution in technology is a blessing and disguise to the world. On the one hand, technology has made life easier and increased access to information, while, and at the same time, it has come with vices like cyber bullying. Cyber bullying entails using technology devices like mobile phones, instant messaging, e-mail, chat rooms, social media, and others to exasperate, stalk, or to portend a person. According to Walther, cyber bullying is a contemporary concern with more than 95% of teens using social media becoming victims (533). There are different social and psychological causes and serious effects on both the victims of cyber bullying and the perpetrators.

Cyber bullying is caused by various psychological and social factors. First, cyber bullying is motivated by the feeling of revenge of those who happened to be bullied themselves. Research shows that cyber bullying is mostly a retaliatory attack after one becomes a victim of harassment (Hinduja and Patchin 130). It is a way of striking back against the harassment, and in other cases, it is an avenue for ventilating frustrations of harassment. Cyber bullying brings about a sense of relief and justification to the bullies for what they have experienced previously. There are some kids strong enough to go after the bully, but others will choose an indirect way like cyber bullying because they cannot match the physical advantages of their bully. Second, bullying is closely tied not only to psychological state but also social status of the bully (Walther 532). Some people feel they are of low social status or suffer from low esteem, and they resort to bullying others to boost their ego. Such people feel left out in the mainstream society, and they find their place behind the computer. Through bullying, they feel justified to cause pain to others because they see them as the source of their predicaments. For example, a mean girl at school may cyber bully another girl who excels in school because she feels jealous. At the same time, there are those who are from the upper echelons of the society but use bullying as a way to harass others who they feel are not equal in status to them. Bullying is a way of reminding them that they have power over the victims. For example, teens from suburbs might bully those from poor neighborhoods as a sign of showing their power and superiority. Besides, cyber bullying may be used as a pastime (Hinduja and Patchin 135). Bullies who are bored and looking for something to excite them may start bullying others and draw pleasure from their anguish and frustrations. Bullying for pressure is, however, considered a psychological problem because very few people will draw pleasure from punishing others. In children, bullying is also linked to peer-pressure. A teen in a company of cyber bullies will also end up as a bully because of peer pressure. Thus, psychological and social factors are among the most serious causes of cyber bullying among children.

Cyber bullying has devastating effects on the victims and their bullies as well. First, bullying will give the perpetrators a bad reputation once they are revealed (Kowalski and Limber 25). The point is that bullying may come with major repercussions in the form of punishments. For example, a student who is caught cyber bullying others may be suspended or expelled from school. Also, the perpetrator is also likely to suffer remorse, and in worse cases, a psychological breakdown when they witness the suffering of their victims (Walther 535). For example, a bully is likely to be depressed if the victim of bullying commits suicide. Second, the victims will suffer from low self-esteem. Cyber bullying takes many forms and when it takes the form of disparaging the character of the victim, it results in low self-esteem because they will lose their self-confidence. Besides, the victims feel helpless about the fact that the bullies have power over them, which also makes them lose their self-confidence and esteem. Third, cyber bullying may cause depression (Hinduja and Patchin 140). A cyber bully victim who is always picked by bullies is likely to feel like a social outcast. He/she may feel not fit to mingle with others. Such a feeling will cause stress, and with time, the victim may sink into a severe depression. Fourth, in extreme cases, cyber bullying may result in suicidal thoughts because of the embarrassment the victims have experienced. Research shows that about half of suicides among young people results from bullying (Walther 560). The Ryan Halligan case is a good example of instances where cyber bullying can lead to suicide. Ryan committed suicide after sharing an embarrassing personal story with a new friend who later rumored that Ryan was gay (Walther 560). The effects of cyber bullying are therefore long-termed and double-edged for both the victim and the perpetrator.

In conclusion, cyber bullying, which is caused by psychological and social factors, is a contemporary social problem because of its frequency and devastating effects. Cyber bullying is motivated by revenge, low self-esteem due to social status, and peer pressure, and it also might appear as a pastime activity. The main effects of cyber bulling on the perpetrators and the victims might be the same: they suffer from low esteem and/or depression and in extreme cases, commit suicide. It is recommended that when one becomes a victim of cyber bullying, they should talk to someone trusted, report the bullying incidence, block the bully, and report to the police if the bullying persists. Also, one should not share personal details online or through the phone, think before posting personal photos or videos and sharing them with friends via social media, use privacy settings for social media accounts, and take other possible precautions.

Works Cited

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