Week 8: Discussion

SOC 450

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Author Note

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Technology has a strong relationship with contemporary society, and although it has helped us accomplish wonders, there are certain ways in which individuals have misused it to cause various forms of harm to society. One of the key social concerns associated with technology is cyberbullying, a phenomenon that has raised many issues regarding the ethical use of technology.

Although the practice of bullying is quite an old social phenomenon that has been found to exist in nearly all societies, affluent or developing, cyberbullying is a relatively recent occurrence. The key distinction between traditional bullying and cyberbullying is that it is mostly relational and verbal that is done via modern communication and information technologies. These include social networking platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, or webpages and blogs. Experts define it as an aggressive and intentional form of digital communication marked by a power imbalance over a sustained period of time that is intended to cause or lead to harm (Berg & Breheny, 2014). It is important to define cyberbullying in a clear and succinct way in order to differentiate it from other forms of cybercrimes and to successfully tackle behavior that comprises it.

Cyberbullying in many ways is more dangerous than conventional bullying in that it is not restricted to proximity of the perpetrator to the victim. It can follow the victim home intruding into their personal or safe spaces. Therefore, it is a more insidious and pervasive form of bullying that digital technologies have enabled. Consequently, the potential audience is nearly limitless as content can easily become viral and reach millions of viewers in a short time period. Owing to its expansive nature, failing to control it can lead to large-scale adverse consequences. Studies have established that cyberbullying causes anxiety, emotional distress, depression and suicidal thoughts in victims (Nixon, 2014). Therefore, the cost of ignoring this widespread misuse of technology could be severe and vast, and urgently requires taking corrective and preventive measures.

# Bibliography

Berg, C., & Breheny, S. (2014). *A social problem, not a technological problem: Bullying, cyberbullying and public policy.* Melbourne: Institute of Public Affairs. Retrieved from https://ipa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/archive/submission\_V6.pdf

Nixon, C. L. (2014). Current perspectives: the impact of cyberbullying on adolescent health. *Adolescent health, medicine, and therapeutics, 5*(1), 143-158.