Causes and effects of Cyber Bullying

Your Name (First M. Last)

School or Institution Name (University at Place or Town, State)

**Introduction:**

Cyberbullying is defined as harassing other by using the technology. It mainly takes place over digital devices such as cell phones, computers, and other latest digital gadgets. It means threatening someone by having someone's confidential or personal details that one may not want to expose. There are different forums through which a cyber-criminal could threat others, for example, there are text, SMS, online social media and games through which one is going to disturb privacy of others. Cyberbullying also includes the posting or sharing some negative and unethical content about someone on social sites.

**Most common place or areas where cyberbullying occurs:**

Though in today's world where technology is raising high to the sky on each passing day, still there are some specific areas or places where cyberbullying takes place. These places are listed below:

* Most active social sites, such as Facebook, What sap, Snap chat, Line, Tango, and Twitter.
* SMS that is the short message service, it is also known as the text message that could be send through various devices.
* Devices and apps that are known for sending instant message and conveying information within Nanoseconds.

**Discussion:**

Technology is getting advance with each passing second, and there are many aspects attached to this advancement. There are many positive aspects of it, but by looking at the present age and the usage of this technology, it could not be denied that people are using this for destructive as well as constructive purposes (Hoff, et, al,2009). But by taking a look at the ever-growing cyber-crime ratio and cyber bullying it could be said that criminals are taking every benefit of technology for making people restless. Cyberbullying has been noticed getting popularity among the youngsters who most of the time for making money or taking revenge uses cyberbullying as the primary tool.

It has been seen that cyberbullying can happen accidentally as well, it is not necessary that cyber buying is always intentional. As the impersonal nature of the text messages and emails cannot be much helpful in knowing the tone of the sender. The sources that are now a day used for communicating could be confusing as well. One cannot be so sure about the intention of the sender that what message one wants to actually send (Erdur-Baker, et, al,2010). One's joke could be hurtful for others. Many studies have proved that children most of the time don't share incidents of cyber bullying. They are reluctant to tell their parents about many things that they thought are not appropriate for sharing with parents. These kinds of things are going to put them in more trouble, so there comes more responsibility on the side of parents to have an eye on the behavior of children if they feel any change in them. Also, parents should take their children in confidence for knowing the facts about anything that may be torturing them mentally.

**Signs of cyberbullying:**

Studies have proved that many of the students and teenagers who are cyberbullied don't want to tell their parents and teacher because most of the time it has been seen that they feel ashamed of the social stigma. Sometimes they also have this thing in their mind that may be they are not going to be supported by their parents and teachers, so they thought to hide the fact of being cyberbullied.

There are some obvious signs for parents and teachers that may vary according to different situations:

* Looking upset after using a cell phone or internet.
* On being overprotective about his digital or social life.
* One may start avoiding family, friends and favorite activities.
* Start avoiding social or group gatherings.
* Falling of grades.
* Acting out from home in anger.
* Visible changes in sleep, behavior or appetite.
* The desire to stop using a cell phone or computer.
* Being nervous or change in expression when receiving an instant message or email.
* They start avoiding discussion which includes topic like cyberbullying, cellphone or computers.

**Causes of cyberbullying:**

This world is a place where people are being bullied and would be bullied ever but cyberbullying is much more appealing than other types of bullying. Cyberbullying also have the same kind of reason as other types of bullying would have. There could be various causes of cyberbullying that has been listed below:

* First and the primary cause of bullying is revenge. People use cyberbullying for taking revenge, rather than coping the situation in healthier ways. Cyberbullies most of the time wants others to go through the same pain that once they have experiences in their past. Cyberbullies want to torture people with the same trauma that they have been through. In most of the cases, it has been seen that victims of cyber bullies wants to take revenge from others because they have been the target of cyber bullying , so for satisfying their ego they wanted to do the same with others.
* Another cause of cyberbullying is that cyber bullies believe that their target deserves to be tortured mentally. Mostly cyber bullies are seen to be frustrated with a person. Jealousy is one of the main reasons why a person is going to face cyberbullying. When people get jealous of others and wanted to torture them, they can go beyond any limits.
* Boredom is another thing that is going to be a cause for threatening others by using the tool of cyberbullying. Teenagers who get nothing to do and feel bore looks for entertainment. They get involved in such activities and put others in critical situations. They may get involved in cyberbullying as they lack supervision of parents. When they have a lack of attention from the side of their parents, internet becomes their only source of entertainment. Internet becomes their outlet of grabbing the attention of others. Rather than finding constructive ways of spends their time, they indulge them in those activities that are going to create hustle for others. Such cyber bullies entertain them by creating digital drama.
* One of the major reasons why cyberbullies target others by threatening them of leaking their confidential details is for making money. Many examples have been seen that people first come closer to others and then by knowing all the secrets of their life they start blackmailing them. Despite realizing the fact that their actions could put lives of others on risk, just for the sake of some money they threat others and put their lives on risk. Money has been seen as one of the main cause of cyberbullying now a day.
* Cyberbullies lack empathy; this serves as one of the causes of cyberbullying in today's world. For most of the cyber bullies, cyberbullying is not a big deal. They consider it as usual fun thing. They never see the pain that others go through because of their childish act. They never considered their action as wrong rather they always have justified answer for their immoral actions.
* Getting popularity is also one of the causes why people do cyber bullying. This unethical act got the manifestation of social status. Famous people used to make fun of the less famous people. The less famous people for getting popularity got corrupt with such unethical acts. They start making fun of others for passing their time and for releasing their frustration. Particularly they target the ones who used to make fun of them for being less popular.

**Effects of cyberbullying:**

Cyber bullying is going to have hazardous effects on every individual whether one is mature or teenager, both who are going to be bullied and those who bully, are going to have visible effects on them. Bullying has multiple effects and outcomes that mainly include mental health issues, drug usage and in severe cases suicide (Litwiller, et,al2013). It is very important for parents to discuss about on lighter notes to determine whether their children have any cyber bullying related issues.

There are quite obvious effects of bullying upon the individual who is being bullied, and these are listed below:

* An individual who becomes the target of cyber bullying becomes mentally upset as him/her remain in constant stress all the time. This makes them depression patient, and more anxiety has been witnessed in them. Such people used to have increased feelings of sadness and loneliness.

There are clear changes in the general habits of the victim as it could be seen that there are changes in sleeping and eating patterns. Even time of such activities has been noticed to be spoiled.

* One who is being targeted by cyber bullies start losing interest in the activities that were once his/her favorite.
* Physical health issues have been one of the major crises that the sufferer face, health complaints become more frequent.
* If the victim is a student there would be a clear decrease in the academic achievement such as cyberbullying is going to have a negative impact on the GPA and test scores as well. Students who face this issue used to miss or skip their classes as it becomes difficult for them to pay attention to the lectures.
* There are some exceptional cases in which after investigation it was revealed that in few of the cases, students after being cyber bullied attack on the school by shooting that make them violent.
* People after becoming the target of cyberbullying start using drugs and become addicted to alcohol and substances.
* Because of frustration victims of cyber bullying start having clashes with their family members and loved ones. They start avoiding family and social gathering.
* They start getting indulge in few things much before the appropriate age; they get involved in sexual and criminal activities.
* One of the effects of cyberbullying is that victim starts using abusive language with loved ones, spouses, children, and friends.
* In extreme cases, it has been seen that victims who are not strong enough mentally and physically take severe steps for getting rid of the cyber bullying. Such people think of having a permanent solution from this tension and for the sake of getting rid of this challenge they commit suicide.
* They start feeling low, lonely and start having low self-esteem as well.

**Quantitative analysis:**

Incidents of cyberbullying have been reported and many researchers have been done for collecting the authentic data for knowing the numbers of victims.

* According to the many researches and from several authentic sources, figures have been collected about people who have been suffered from cyberbullying. There are 20% of children and adults who admitted the threats from the cyber bullies make them reluctant for going to school.
* According to the reports, there are 5% people who after being the target of cyberbullying has harmed them.
* There are 3% people who after being a target of cyberbullying, directly attempted suicide.
* Mostly people used to be cyberbullied on Facebook and other social sites.
* According to the reports, there are 28% cyberbullying incidents on one of the most used social site Twitter.
* 26% of people have been targeted on Ask.fm according to the reports.

**Ways used by parents, teachers, nurses, and psychologists to protect and support victims of cyberbullying:**

First of all parents and teachers can play the most important role in supporting the targets of cyberbullying. First of all, they should take the victim in confidence so that he/she could share openly about exactly what happened with him/her. This freedom from fear is going to save the sufferer from mental torture. Secondly make them realize through positive reinforcement that the person and not even anyone else deserves to be treated in such as a way (Mason, et, al,2008). Make them realize that they have not done anything wrong and even if they did something wrong that does not matter. Assure them that there is always help available for them and they don't need to be afraid of others. Teachers and parents should encourage them to talk so that they could discuss what is bothering them and make them feel safe and secure at educational institutions and home.

In some cases, when the victim needs to seek medical help, nurses and psychologist could play one of the most significant roles in bringing them back to their normal life. They can make them stronger psychologically and can assure them that it was just a bad chapter of their life. There is no need to be afraid of such bullies. It is important to make a person realized that it was not at all his/her fault if one has bullied them. Psychologists should also counsel those people whose behavior is going to have direct effects on the target such as parents, siblings, spouses or loved ones. They need to make them understand that the victim needs their love, care, trust and support in such situations, so they have to entrust the victim and make him/her realized that cyber bullied had not affected their relationship. The victims should compelled to feel relax mentally, and it would be the responsibility of the medical staff including psychologist to put all their efforts for making the target realize that it was not his/her fault at all.

**Conclusion:**

It could be concluded that at the present age cyber bullying is becoming one of the most common issues specifically it is a becoming a threat for the teenagers who are using more digital technology. The number of the victims is getting high as the use of social, and digital media is becoming more common than ever before. But it is important for the family members to have an eye on the other members and take them in confidence if they feel any change in the behavior of the person. Only loved one could save such victims of cyberbullying as they could make them realized that mistakes happen and it is not necessary that one is going to be at fault always.

But now a day many other alternates are there. First by taking this fact in consideration that most of the sufferers of cyberbullying never want to let their families know about this, families members have to play a crucial role in identifying about issue the victim face. So there have been many ways through which one could try to solve his or her issues (Mishna, et, al,2012). Many organizations and cyber-crimes cells are working on different forums that are going to help people if they are going to through any issue related to cyberbullying. Cyberbullying is getting attention across the world and many organization and institutions are making their efforts for protecting people who are being threatened by the cyber bullies. But as the organizations have been taking effective steps against cyberbullying for the last few years notable decrease has been seen in this immoral activity.

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