

The Online Power of Values: Adolescents' Values as Predicting Factors of Their Online Bystanders' Behavior While Witnessing Cyberbullying

Authors : Sharon Cayzer-Haller, Shir Ginosar-Yaari, Ariel Knafo-Noam

Abstract : The 21st century emerged as the digital century, and it is marked by a wide range of technological developments and changes, followed by potential changes in human communication skills. This technological revolution has changed human means of communication in many different ways: children and adolescents are spending much of their time in front of screens, participating in all sorts of online activities (even more so since the outbreak of COVID-19). The current study focuses on the role of values in adolescents' online bystanders' behavior. Values are cognitive, abstract representations of desirable goals that motivate behavior, and we hypothesized finding significant associations between specific values and differential online bystanders' feelings and behavior. Data was collected through online questionnaires that measured the participants' values, using Schwartz's short version of the Portrait Values Questionnaire (Schwartz, 2012). Participants' online behavior was assessed in a questionnaire addressing reactions to situations of cyber shaming and cyberbullying, and specifically positive feelings and pro-social behavior (e.g., more supportive reactions) toward the victims, as opposed to different offensive behavioral reactions (such as laughing at the victim or ignoring the situation). Participants were recruited with a commercial research panel company, and 308 Israeli adolescents' values and online behavior were examined (mean age 15.2). As hypothesized, results show significant associations between self-transcendence values (universalism and benevolence) and conservation values (conformity, tradition, and security). These two groups of values were positively correlated with pro-social bystanders' feelings and behavior. On the opposite side of the values scale, the value of power was negatively associated with the participants' pro-social behavior, and positively associated with offensive behavioral reactions. Further research is needed, but we conclude that values serve as crucial guiding factors in directing adolescents' online feelings and behavior.

Keywords : adolescents, values, cyberbullying, online behavior, power

Conference Title : ICDPA 2024 : International Conference on Developmental Psychology and Adolescence

Conference Location : Copenhagen, Denmark

Conference Dates : July 18-19, 2024