

Examination of Relationship between Internet Addiction and Cyber Bullying in Adolescents

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Abstract : As the information and communication technologies have become embedded in everyday life of adolescents, both their possible benefits and risks to adolescents are being identified. The information and communication technologies provide opportunities for adolescents to connect with peers and to access to information. However, as with other social connections, users of information and communication devices have the potential to meet and interact with in harmful ways. One emerging example of such interaction is cyber bullying. Cyber bullying occurs when someone uses the information and communication technologies to harass or embarrass another person. Cyber bullying can take the form of malicious text messages and e-mails, spreading rumours, and excluding people from online groups. Cyber bullying has been linked to psychological problems for cyber bullies and victims. Therefore, it is important to determine how internet addiction contributes to cyber bullying. Building on this question, this study takes a closer look at the relationship between internet addiction and cyber bullying. For this purpose, in this study, based on descriptive relational model, it was hypothesized that loss of control, excessive desire to stay online, and negativity in social relationships, which are dimensions of internet addiction, would be associated positively with cyber bullying and victimization. Participants were 383 high school students (176 girls and 207 boys; mean age, 15.7 years). Internet addiction was measured by using Internet Addiction Scale. The Cyber Victim and Bullying Scale was utilized to measure cyber bullying and victimization. The scales were administered to the students in groups in the classrooms. In this study, stepwise regression analyses were utilized to examine the relationships between dimensions of internet addiction and cyber bullying and victimization. Before applying stepwise regression analysis, assumptions of regression were verified. According to stepwise regression analysis, cyber bullying was predicted by loss of control ($\beta=.26$, $p<.001$) and negativity in social relationships ($\beta=.13$, $p<.001$). These variables accounted for 9 % of the total variance, with the loss of control explaining the higher percentage (8 %). On the other hand, cyber victimization was predicted by loss of control ($\beta=.19$, $p<.001$) and negativity in social relationships ($\beta=.12$, $p<.001$). These variables altogether accounted for 8 % of the variance in cyber victimization, with the best predictor loss of control (7 % of the total variance). The results of this study demonstrated that, as expected, loss of control and negativity in social relationships predicted cyber bullying and victimization positively. However, excessive desire to stay online did not emerge a significant predictor of both cyberbullying and victimization. Consequently, this study would enhance our understanding of the predictors of cyber bullying and victimization since the results proposed that internet addiction is related with cyber bullying and victimization.

Keywords : cyber bullying, internet addiction, adolescents, regression

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