

The Association between Adolescents' Exposure to Violent Content and Bullying Behaviour

-- Exploring the impact of media violence on adolescent behaviour

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Abstract: This paper explores the impact of adolescents' exposure to violent content on their online and offline bullying behaviour. Against the backdrop of the proliferation of new media information, uncensored negative information is prone to have an adverse effect on adolescents, changing them from passive receivers to active seekers. The article analyses the current situation of school bullying and cyberbullying, pointing out the different manifestations of gender, age and social-economic status in bullying behaviour. Through specific cases, it reveals the seriousness of school bullying and the law's provisions on the responsibility of minors for offences. Meanwhile, the article also discusses the influence of family factors and social media on adolescents' mental health, as well as the hidden and harmful nature of cyberbullying. Finally, the article calls for strengthening the review of online information, improving the living environment of adolescents, and improving the supervision and intervention of bullying behaviour in schools in order to promote the healthy growth of adolescents.

Keywords: Adolescents; Violent Content; Bullying Behaviour; School Bullying; Cyberbullying; Mental Health; Social Media; Legal Responsibility.

1. Introduction

In such an era of complex new media information, the mixed content on the media leads to contemporary youth reading a lot of information through the Internet, media, and uncensored or vetted negative information is then displayed on the platform. They may be attracted to this negative information. External conditions such as puberty, academic pressure, etc. Over time, they get used to the negative information appearing on the platform, and some teens go from being passive recipients to active recipients.

Negative messages include violent messages, and with such violent messages, it is hard not to deny that teenagers may engage in bullying behaviours, which include both online and offline bullying. Offline bullying mostly occurs in schools, which is especially significant among teenagers in China, Japan and South Korea. Bullying behaviours are mainly manifested in verbal violence, psychological bullying, physical bullying, and so on, and perhaps an inadvertent bad behaviour can become a trigger for bullying. In the data, it is shown that overall, girls are more likely to be bullied (31.3% vs. 22.9%), especially by cyberbullying (22.0% vs. 10.8%), while boys are only more likely to be bullied at school (12.2% vs. 9.2%). The overall prevalence of bullying declined from age 14 (32.6 per cent) to age 18 and over (21.2 per cent), a decline largely due to a decrease in exclusive school bullying (from 16.6 per cent to 7.1 per cent), while exclusive cyberbullying actually increased from 6.2 per cent at age 14 to 7.4 per cent at age 18.

2. Main Article

In this paper, we focus on the study of "online and offline bullying behaviours resulting from adolescents' exposure to violent content". Such cases are very common nowadays, and what we call school bullying and cyber bullying are the most

typical examples in this category. In fact, these cases are happening all around us, only that we have not exposed the social reality to the public.

3. Traditional School Bullying

Among the many typical examples of this is a horrific case of school bullying that took place within China in 2024. It was a vicious school violence murder in Handan City, Hebei Province, where on 10 March 2024, three junior high school students viciously bullied their classmates and extorted money from them before brutally murdering them and burying their bodies in a vegetable shed. It is impossible to imagine what led the abusers to commit such terrible acts, and what kind of mentality could have made them do so. Such cases are bound to be few, but most of them are still in the dark and have not been shown, those threatening words, explicit video, horrifying scars are not the real experience of a victim. In order to prevent such incidents from happening again in China, the Criminal Law of the People's Republic of China (CLC) has been enacted. Criminal Law of the People's Republic of China Article 17 of the Criminal Law of the People's Republic of China, if a person who has reached the age of twelve or less than fourteen commits the crime of intentional homicide or intentional injury, causing death or serious injury by particularly cruel means, resulting in serious disability, with aggravating circumstances, and the Supreme People's Procuratorate approves of the recourse, he or she shall be held criminally liable [1]. The question of how to minimise bullying by minors seems to remain open. Many social issues are still being explored, and the legal system is still being improved.

And while society seems to have gained a new awareness of such injuries and is taking it very seriously, one of the ways in which information is widely accepted is by using social media to spread it. The massive amount of data pushed out on

the media will find you following such information and keep pushing it out and such content will flood your platform. This includes films, TV shows, and presentations by anchors. Films with similar themes of school bullying are widely available in South Korea, with countless productions. *Dark Glory*, which blew up last year, and *Pyramid Game* and *School 2015*, which were filmed a few years ago, are true reflections of contemporary realities. People seem to only know that there are many suicides in Korean entertainment, but what few people know is that the suicide rate of Korean students is also the highest in the world. The main reason for the high and rising suicide rate is the seriousness of school violence in Korea. According to a survey conducted by the Korean government in 2022 using students from the fourth grade to the third grade of primary schools, with the relaxation of immunisation policies and the gradual resumption of offline education, bullying incidents have occurred frequently in schools, and 1.7% of the students (about 53,800) said that they had been subjected to violence in schools, which is the highest percentage in nine years. Among the victims, 41.8 per cent said they had been subjected to verbal violence, 13.3 per cent to ostracism and 9.6 per cent to cyber violence. While the latter two declined from the 2021 figures, the proportion of those who suffered physical harm increased to 14.6 per cent from 12.4 per cent in 2021. This is also the majority of cases globally, with nearly a third of teenagers experiencing bullying [2]. According to HBSC data on children in Europe and North America, socio-economic and immigrant status are also important factors in bullying behaviour. In these regions, socio-economic status based on parental wealth, occupation and level of education is the most likely predictor of bullying: up to 40 per cent of children from poorer families experience bullying, compared with 25 per cent of those from wealthier families.

4. Online Bullying and Offline Bullying

So many cases are known to people on the internet. The Internet has a clear effect of attracting people, and in such cases curiosity and the herd mentality will prompt you to click into the video and watch it, and *Dark Glory* exposes the "black" violence that occurs in the unknown corners of such a beautiful campus. The victims may have been traumatised at the time, but those who have the courage to expose them don't know what kind of torture they are going through in their minds, and it's an unforgivable past. Contemporary people are very good at connecting the new media with the human psyche, effectively spreading the word, in that period of time, it is undeniable that b station, microblogging and other high-traffic new media platforms, all appeared in the figure of the drama, which is a psychological butterfly effect. Such an intelligent push measures, not only good publicity for such an exposé of the dark society of the drama, more able to drive people for such a number of cases for more in-depth understanding and attention.

But the internet is destined to be a double-edged sword. And there is much more to it than that that makes contemporary adolescents develop a bullying mentality. In the literature I searched, many cases, although comparing the empirical evidence of victimisation between traditional bullying and cyberbullying, are in fact essentially the same. The Ferguson trio alone have shown in their experiments that social media use may be associated with negative mental health, including suicide, loneliness and reduced empathy[3]. But it's not complete, and exposure to content on the internet

can only be one of the causes, but it's enough to be confirmed. When we launched a survey of 467 people, it became clear that reading negative information online can lead to extreme behavioural tendencies in young people, including bullying. Granted, maybe some kids are born with violent personalities, such cases are rare but not guaranteed, and antisocial personalities are a good example of proof. However, as teenagers, we are not yet mature enough to recognise the truth of information, and we are most likely to be compelled by it.

5. School Bullying

To analyse the topic of "concern and exposure to violent content" in depth, let's start with a quote from Luo Xiang: "The pain of the family of origin is not only the trauma of childhood, but also the fact that when you grow up, you find that there are shadows of the hurt you once suffered, and you can't change them easily! These deep-rooted influences, it's like a chronic pain that stays with you for the rest of your life." Some parents discipline their children in extreme anger, and inevitably mis-educate them. Verbal injuries may sometimes be more frightening than scolding, and scolding may be physically hurtful, but if the child has problems in his heart because of such harsh and hurtful words, there will be indelible consequences. Physical wounds can fade with time, leaving scars at best, but you can not detect a teenager in time, vulnerable heart, he will disguise himself in your words, you "bully" him at home, then his psychological problems will inevitably occur, then bullying others is also normal. He will be the keyboard warrior, he will be the videographer, he will be the aggressor, and all of this is because violence in the home will seem to him to be commonplace, and the transmission of this from home to society is certainly not another way to cause bullying.

Then when it comes to the family, the fights between parents, the break-up of the family, and the lack of inner strength can also lead to a wide range of mental illnesses: bipolar disorder, autism, depression, and two-way emotional communication disorders can all be dangerous elements in society. And in O'Moore, M. and Kirkham, C., two scholars also mentioned in their articles that "in other words, pure victims are those who have not bullied others, while pure bullies are those who do not feel like they have been bullied"[4].

6. Cyberbullying

As the internet has become more and more developed, cyber bullying has become a very obvious form of bullying. Unlike the traditional way of bullying, the abuser becomes a group of people rather than a specific few, which means that the area of the victim and the abuser is much wider, and such a way is much less of a bullying in the dark, it is a hurtful thing that is emitted by people hiding behind a screen. Such behaviour makes more people pay the price for their words compared to traditional school bullying. Nowadays, the internet is so advanced and there are so many channels for our youth to access the internet, so it is only natural that they will be exposed to such violent content when people "speak their mind" and attack others. Over time, the online people to carry on the tongue group Confucian, in order to their own ideas unconditional attacks on others, in the absence of clear facts, such behaviour undoubtedly caused a certain impact on the teenagers, they will also learn to use the network of this double-edged sword, do their own weapons, protection or

attack. Innocent people, who are constantly being attacked and unable to defend themselves, will naturally develop psychological problems: depression and mania will follow. The results of the study show that middle school students engage in verbal bullying, physical bullying, and cyberbullying. The main factors that contribute to bullying behaviour are the following: behaviour within grade levels, having been a victim of bullying, economic status, media violence, family and peer factors. Bullying behaviour has an impact on both the victim and the wider community of bullies or those who perpetrate the bullying. Bullying among today's middle school students. In a way, it is a growing social problem. How can this problem be solved if we don't improve the living environment of our youth and block harmful information on the Internet? I believe this is a question that every researcher is thinking about.

Bullying is one of the most aggressive attitudinal and violent behaviours among peers in the school environment. With the increasing popularity of social media, cyberbullying is receiving more and more attention. Cyberbullying can lead to many serious problems. According to the Civil Code, natural persons have the right to reputation and the right to privacy, and no organisation or individual may infringe upon another person's right to reputation by insulting or defaming him or her, or infringe upon another person's right to privacy by prying, intruding, divulging, or making public. Teenagers are not yet mentally mature and socially inexperienced, and lack the ability to discern information, making them prone to becoming disseminators of untrue information in the process of "eating melon".

7. Summary

The consequences of bullying are so serious that North American children between the ages of 8 and 15 consider it a more serious problem than racism and the pressures of sexual

relations, alcoholism or drug abuse. Based on this fact, we have to do a certain amount of limiting in terms of censorship of information on the Internet. Not all information is suitable, and to a certain extent, the transmission and exposure to violent information makes it more difficult for young people's already immature minds to discern what is true and what is not, thus allowing a series of tragedies to arise. In order for the new generation of young people to have a healthy mind, conflicts between families and relationships between students on campus have become a hot topic, so as to avoid the fear of more students for their future life on campus, schools should better monitor behavioural habits, and take a deeper step in the promotion of the reporting mailbox. School bullying seems to be widespread in schools nowadays, not only between students, but also between teachers and classmates, and even school leaders have been bribed to "turn a blind eye" to this type of incident, which has led to more and more serious incidents of bullying. The chain of events keeps this happening to our youth.

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