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Prevalence of Cyberbullying: Data from Two Education Centres in Spain

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Abstract: Cyberbullying, which is a scourge within modern society, consists of assaulting and mistreating victims via new technologies, causing serious damage. In this study, we shall analyse the prevalence of cyberbullying according to gender, education centre, and academic year in two education centres of Spain. The sample was comprised of 227 Spanish primary and secondary school students. A non-experimental study, ex post facto, was conducted as a descriptive study by way of single measurement within a single group. The Cyberbullying Test has been adopted as the main instrument for the study. The statistical analysis was carried out by way of IBM software SPSS® 22.0. The internal reliability of the instruments used was analysed by means of Cronbach's alpha coefficient. The results reveal that the cyberbullying conduct that is most perpetrated, suffered, and witnessed by adolescents is the sending of offensive and insulting messages, that girls are more often the victims, and that during early adolescence, the cases of cyberbullying increase with the age of the adolescents. We consider that humanistic education is the remedy for helping to reduce the cases of bullying and cyberbullying among adolescents.

Keywords: Cyberbullying, Adolescence, Primary Education, Secondary Education

Introduction

Until a few years ago, we solely and exclusively talked about the intimidation, aggression, or violence that existed among peers within education centres. Said conduct was carried out face to face, in a visible manner between the victim and the aggressor. The foregoing scourge called “bullying,” which continues to exist in its traditional form, has expanded its resources and mechanisms and transformed into an even more harmful type of bullying for the victim. These resources and mechanisms include the use of new technologies to rebuke and enhance the damage that is caused. Today, in most cases when bullying takes place, the victim also suffers “cyberbullying” (Smith et al. 2008; Ortega-Ruiz, Del Rey, and Casas 2016). For the aggressor, the new technologies constitute an easily accessible resource. This provides a broad and extensive public dissemination of messages that, if desired, allow for the anonymity of the perpetrator, while for the victim, cyberbullying represents a type of continuous harassment and mistreatment without any possibility of escape.

In Spain, as in other countries, cyberbullying is causing some particularly serious situations. The direct effects thereof include depression, anxiety, despair, self-pity, hating oneself, mental problems, and also the development of ideas of suicide (Chu et al. 2018; Mitchell et al. 2018; Tian, Yan, and Huebner 2018). A study carried out by Athanasiou et al. (2018) affirms that the prevalence of cyberbullying in Spain is 13.3 percent, whereas the investigation carried out by Rey et al. (2018) establishes a rate of 16.05 percent.

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The most common forms of cyberbullying are offensive messages and calls via mobile telephone or the internet, the recording of the victim or the posting of recordings on the internet, the dissemination of photos or videos, anonymous telephone calls, threats, blackmailing, and identity fraud (Smith et al. 2008). Furthermore, it is of significant concern that, according to Wong and McBride (2018), the pursuit of fun is one of the reasons that leads youths to bully, which means that human values and rules of respect are losing credibility and consideration.

Cyberbullying consists of a number of actions and acts that are far from widely accepted moral conduct and human understanding. Cyberbullying includes various actions that are carried out against other persons with the intention of inflicting harm. Zych et al. (2018) affirm that aggressors have low social conscience and scarce prosocial behaviour, meaning their emotional and social capacities is almost non-existent. Other studies affirm that prosocial conduct is directly related to high emotional intelligence and the lack of emotional intelligence affects students negatively in all aspects of their lives (Zavala and López in Estévez-Casellas, Carrillo, and Gómez-Medina 2018).

Emotional education, i.e. working on empathy and tolerance within schools, is constitutive of elements that promote the reduction of bullying among peers. Inglés et al. (2014) affirm that children who manage to develop said skills and capacities will establish affective relationships with others; however, children that do not develop them will suffer social rejection that will negatively affect them. Furthermore, León, Gozalo, and Polo (2012) affirm that cooperative learning techniques that are implemented in education centres reduce aggression in general, and above all, the social exclusion of students. In light of the foregoing, humanistic education is a valid option in order to reduce the cases of bullying and to improve the situation in education centres (Garaigordóbil and Oñederra 2010; Casas, Ortega-Ruiz, and Del Rey 2015; Lucas-Molina et al. 2015; Save the Children 2016; Zych et al. 2018).

Material and Method

In this article, we present the prevalence of cyberbullying among adolescents in sixth grade primary education and first grade secondary education of two education centres in Spain. Students were included based on their sex, academic year, and education centre.

Design and Participants

A non-experimental study, *ex post facto*, was conducted as a descriptive study by way of single measurement within a single group. The sample was comprised of 227 Spanish adolescents (sampling error of 0.05; CI = 90%), of which 45.4 percent ($n = 103$) were male and 54.6 percent ($n = 124$) were female, and were between ages eleven and fifteen (12.06 ± 0.77). The educational centres that participated in the study are: one is a public high school, and the other one is a public-private school (private school partially subsidised by public authorities), with a distribution of 46.3 percent ($n = 105$) and 53.7 percent ($n = 122$), respectively. For the selection of the participants, who voluntarily took part in the study, a randomization was considered for natural groups in accordance with the criteria of Merino-Marbán et al. (2015).

Instruments

Cyberbullying Test. The foregoing instrument was validated by Garaigordóbil (2013), which provides sound adjustment and reliability indices. The instrument is comprised of forty-five items grouped according to the role (observer, victim, or aggressor). The foregoing items provide for the determination of the frequency of situations of bullying during the past year, measured by means of a Likert-type scale with four response options where 0 = Never and 3 = Always. Furthermore, the foregoing instrument also provides for the determination of the degree of bullying via twelve items. Thereafter, a sum total is carried out that determines a total score for each role both for bullying as well as cyberbullying. In this instrument for cyberbullying, an excellent internal consistency is obtained, the value of which is $\alpha = 0.925$.

Self-registration sheet. An ad hoc type of questionnaire is used for the registration of socio-demographic variables, such as sex, age, education centre, or academic year.

Procedure

First, a meeting was called with the directors of both education centres, which one of the authors of this article personally attended, and their collaboration was requested after informing them of the objectives and the methodology of the project. After confirmation was received from both centres, the informed consent of the legal guardians or parents of the adolescents was requested by way of a form.

The application of the instruments was carried out during teaching hours without any type of incident whatsoever to report. The investigators were present during the application process. Students were guaranteed that their identity would remain anonymous, and they participated voluntarily and in application of the Declaration of Helsinki of 1975 regarding research ethics.

Data Analysis

The statistical analysis was carried out using IBM software SPSS® 22.0. The basic descriptions were analysed by means of frequencies and averages, whereas contingency tables were used for the relationships between variables. The internal reliability of the instruments used was analysed by means of Cronbach's alpha coefficient, and the Reliability Index was established as 95.5 percent. The reliability was established as $p < 0.05$.

Results

For victims, as may be seen in Table 1, the most noteworthy result is as follows: 25.1 percent of the students surveyed affirmed that they have "sometimes" received offensive and insulting messages by mobile telephone or via the internet; 13.7 percent of the students stated that they "sometimes" received anonymous telephone calls for the purposes of scaring them; 15.4 percent stated that they have had their password to their blog or email stolen; and 7.5 percent of the students discovered that "sometimes" their blog has been signed into by other persons who have usurped their identity and written defamatory comments. Thus, 14.1 percent of the students stated that they "sometimes" had been defamed via the internet.

Table 1: Victims in Cyberbullying

Items CB.V	Victim	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
CB.V.1	Total	69.2% (n=157)	25.1% (n=57)	4.8% (n=11)	0.9% (n=2)
CB.V.2	Total	90.3% (n=205)	8.8% (n=20)	0.9% (n=2)	0.0% (n=0)
CB.V.3	Total	98.2% (n=223)	1.3% (n=3)	0.4% (n=1)	0.0% (n=0)
CB.V.4	Total	94.7% (n=215)	4.0% (n=9)	0.9% (n=2)	0.4% (n=1)
CB.V.5	Total	95.6% (n=217)	4.0% (n=9)	0.4% (n=1)	0.0% (n=0)
CB.V.6	Total	82.8% (n=188)	13.7% (n=31)	3.1% (n=7)	0.4% (n=1)
CB.V.7	Total	92.5% (n=210)	6.6% (n=15)	0.9% (n=2)	0.0% (n=0)
CB.V.8	Total	97.8% (n=222)	0.9% (n=2)	1.3% (n=3)	0.0% (n=0)
CB.V.9	Total	90.7% (n=206)	7.5% (n=17)	1.8% (n=4)	0.0% (n=0)
CB.V.10	Total	82.8% (n=188)	15.4% (n=35)	1.8% (n=4)	0.0% (n=0)
CB.V.11	Total	99.6% (n=226)	0.4% (n=1)	0.0% (n=0)	0.0% (n=0)
CB.V.12	Total	92.5% (n=210)	6.2% (n=14)	0.9% (n=2)	0.4% (n=1)
CB.V.13	Total	96.0% (n=218)	3.5% (n=8)	0.4% (n=1)	0.0% (n=0)
CB.V.14	Total	96.5% (n=219)	3.1% (n=7)	0.0% (n=0)	0.4% (n=1)
CB.V.15	Total	81.5% (n=185)	14.1% (n=32)	3.5% (n=8)	0.9% (n=2)

Notes: **CB.V.1**= Have you been sent offensive or insulting messages via mobile telephone or the internet? **CB.V.2**= Have you received offensive and insulting telephone calls via mobile telephone or the internet? **CB.V.3**= Have you been assaulted or attacked to record you and post the video on the internet? **CB.V.4**= Have private or compromising photos or videos of you been disseminated via mobile telephone or the internet? **CB.V.5**= Have snatched photos been taken of you in places such as changing rooms, the beach, the toilet...and then said photos have been disseminated by mobile telephone or via the internet? **CB.V.6**= Have you received anonymous telephone calls so as to scare you or cause you fear? **CB.V.7**= Have you been blackmailed or threatened by way of telephone calls or messages? **CB.V.8**= Have you been sexually harassed via mobile telephone or the internet? **CB.V.9**= Has anyone signed into your blog by usurping your identity, and written defamatory comments, lies, or has revealed your personal secrets? **CB.V.10**= Has your password been stolen so as to prevent you from accessing your blog or your email? **CB.V.11**= Has anyone modified your photos or videos to disseminate them via social media or web pages (for example, YouTube) and to humiliate you or laugh at you? **CB.V.12**= Have you been bullied to isolate you from your contacts on social media? **CB.V.13**= Have you been blackmailed to make you do things that you did not want to in exchange for not disseminating your intimate and personal affairs via the internet? **CB.V.14**= Have you received death threats vis-à-vis you or your family via mobile telephone, social media, or any other type of technology? **CB.V.15**= Have you been defamed via the internet by persons that have stated lies about you so as to discredit you? Have people spread rumours about you to cause you harm?

Source: *Epelde-Larrañaga, Oñederra-Ramirez, and Chacón-Cuberos*

For aggressors, as may be seen in Table 2, the most noteworthy result is the response obtained to question CB.A.1: 10.6 percent of students responded affirmatively to the question within the frequency range of “sometimes.” With the same frequency range, 3.5 percent of students responded affirmatively to question CB.A.10, and 3.1 percent of students also responded affirmatively, with the same frequency range, to questions CB.A.2 and CB.A.6

Table 2: Aggressors in Cyberbullying

Items CB.V	Aggressor	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
CB.A.1	Total	89.0% (n=202)	10.6% (n=24)	0.0% (n=0)	0.4% (n=1)
CB.A.2	Total	96.5% (n=219)	3.1% (n=7)	0.0% (n=0)	0.4% (n=1)
CB.A.3	Total	99.6% (n=226)	0.0% (n=0)	0.0% (n=0)	0.4% (n=1)
CB.A.4	Total	97.4% (n=221)	1.8% (n=4)	0.0% (n=0)	0.9% (n=2)
CB.A.5	Total	99.1% (n=225)	0.4% (n=1)	0.0% (n=0)	0.4% (n=1)
CB.A.6	Total	96.5% (n=219)	3.1% (n=7)	0.0% (n=0)	0.4% (n=1)
CB.A.7	Total	97.4% (n=221)	2.2% (n=5)	0.0% (n=0)	0.4% (n=1)
CB.A.8	Total	99.6% (n=226)	0.4% (n=1)	0.0% (n=0)	0.0% (n=0)
CB.A.9	Total	98.7% (n=224)	0.9% (n=2)	0.0% (n=0)	0.4% (n=1)
CB.A.10	Total	95.6% (n=217)	3.5% (n=8)	0.4% (n=1)	0.4% (n=1)
CB.A.11	Total	99.1% (n=225)	0.4% (n=1)	0.4% (n=1)	0.0% (n=0)
CB.A.12	Total	98.7% (n=224)	0.9% (n=2)	0.0% (n=0)	0.4% (n=1)
CB.A.13	Total	99.1% (n=225)	0.4% (n=1)	0.0% (n=0)	0.4% (n=1)
CB.A.14	Total	99.6% (n=226)	0.4% (n=1)	0.0% (n=0)	0.0% (n=0)
CB.A.15	Total	99.6% (n=226)	0.4% (n=1)	0.0% (n=0)	0.0% (n=0)

Notes: **CB.A.1**= Have you sent offensive and insulting messages by mobile telephone or via the internet? **CB.A.2**= Have you made offensive and insulting telephone calls by mobile telephone or via the internet? **CB.A.3**= Have you attacked or caused anyone to be attacked to give them a beating and to record it and post it on the internet? **CB.A.4**= Have you disseminated private or compromising photos or videos of anyone via mobile telephone or the internet? **CB.A.5**= Have you taken snatched photos in places such as changing rooms, the beach, the toilet ... and have you disseminated them by mobile telephone or via the internet? **CB.A.6**= Have you made anonymous telephone calls in order to scare or cause fear? **CB.A.7**= Have you blackmailed or threatened anyone by way of telephone calls or messages? **CB.A.8**= Have you sexually harassed anyone via mobile telephone or the internet? **CB.A.9**= Have you signed into the blog of another person and written defamatory comments, lies, or personal secrets? **CB.A.10**= Have you stolen the password of anyone to prevent them from accessing their blog or their email? **CB.A.11**= Have you modified photos or videos of anyone to disseminate them via social media or web pages (for example, YouTube) and to humiliate or laugh at anyone? **CB.A.12**= Have you bullied anyone to try to isolate them from their contacts on social media? **CB.A.13**= Have you blackmailed or forced anyone to do things that he or she did not want to do in exchange for not disseminating their intimate or personal affairs on the internet? **CB.A.14**= Have you threatened to kill anyone or their family via mobile telephone, social media, or any other type of technology? **CB.A.15**= Have you defamed anyone via the internet by stating things about that person that are lies in order to discredit said person? Have you spread rumours about other people in order to cause them harm?

Source: Epelde-Larrañaga, Oñederra-Ramírez, and Chacón-Cuberos

For witnesses, as may be seen in Table 3, a total of 30.8 percent of the students have “sometimes” seen offensive or insulting messages sent via mobile telephone or the internet. The theft of passwords for blogs or emails has been observed “sometimes” by 16.3 percent of the students and defamation has been seen “sometimes” by 14.5 percent of them. Furthermore, 19.4 percent have “sometimes” seen anonymous telephone calls being made for the purposes of scaring or causing fear, and the dissemination of private or compromising photos or videos has also been observed by 14.1 percent. Also, 18.5 percent of the students have been witness to offensive and insulting telephone calls with a frequency range of “sometimes,” 12.3 percent of them have “sometimes” observed blackmailing and threats by way of telephone calls or messages, and a total of 11.5 percent have witnessed “sometimes” how someone bullied another person in order to isolate said person from their contacts on social media.

Table 3: Witnesses in Cyberbullying

Items CB.V	Witness	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
CB.T.1	Total	60.4% (n=137)	30.8% (n=70)	7.5% (n=17)	1.3% (n=3)
CB.T.2	Total	78.0% (n=177)	18.5% (n=42)	2.6% (n=6)	0.9% (n=2)
CB.T.3	Total	87.2% (n=197)	8.4% (n=19)	4.0% (n=9)	0.4% (n=1)
CB.T.4	Total	80.6% (n=183)	14.1% (n=32)	3.5% (n=8)	1.8% (n=4)
CB.T.5	Total	89.0% (n=202)	8.4% (n=19)	1.3% (n=3)	1.3% (n=3)
CB.T.6	Total	77.1% (n=175)	19.4% (n=44)	2.2% (n=5)	1.3% (n=3)
CB.T.7	Total	81.9% (n=186)	12.3% (n=28)	4.0% (n=9)	1.3% (n=3)
CB.T.8	Total	94.3% (n=214)	3.1% (n=7)	1.3% (n=3)	1.3% (n=3)
CB.T.9	Total	86.8% (n=197)	9.3% (n=21)	2.2% (n=5)	1.8% (n=4)
CB.T.10	Total	77.1% (n=175)	16.3% (n=37)	5.3% (n=12)	1.3% (n=3)
CB.T.11	Total	85.9% (n=195)	11.5% (n=26)	1.8% (n=4)	0.9% (n=2)
CB.T.12	Total	85.0% (n=193)	11.5% (n=26)	3.1% (n=7)	0.4% (n=1)
CB.T.13	Total	87.7% (n=199)	8.4% (n=19)	3.5% (n=8)	0.4% (n=1)
CB.T.14	Total	91.2% (n=207)	7.0% (n=16)	0.9% (n=2)	0.9% (n=2)
CB.T.15	Total	76.2% (n=173)	14.5% (n=33)	7.5% (n=17)	1.3% (n=3)

Notes: **CB.T.1**= Have you seen offensive or insulting messages sent via mobile telephone or the internet? **CB.T.2**= Have you witnessed offensive and insulting telephone calls via mobile telephone or the internet? **CB.T.3**= Have you witnessed any attack or the beating of anyone to record it and post it on the internet? **CB.T.4**= Have you witnessed private or compromising photos or videos of anyone disseminated via mobile telephone or the internet? **CB.T.5**= Have you seen snatched photos taken in places such as changing rooms, the beach, the toilet ... and said photos disseminated by mobile telephone or via the internet? **CB.T.6**= Have you witnessed anonymous telephone calls for the purposes of scaring or causing fear? **CB.T.7**= Have you seen anyone blackmailed or threatened by means of telephone calls or messages? **CB.T.8**= Have you seen any student sexually harass any other person via mobile telephone or the internet? **CB.T.9**= Have you seen anyone sign into the blog of another person by usurping their identity, to include defamatory comments, lies, or to reveal their secrets? **CB.T.10**= Have you seen people steal someone's password to prevent them from accessing their blog or their email? **CB.T.11**= Have you seen photos or videos of anyone that have been modified to disseminate them via social media or web pages (for example, YouTube) and to humiliate or laugh at said person? **CB.T.12**= Have you seen anyone who has bullied another person in order to isolate said person from his or her contacts on social media? **CB.T.13**= Have you seen anyone who has blackmailed or forced another person to do things that he or she did not want to in exchange for not disseminating their intimate or personal affairs on the internet? **CB.T.14**= Have you seen anyone threaten to kill any other person or their family via mobile telephone, social media, or any other type of technology? **CB.T.15**= Have you seen anyone defame or spread rumours via the internet about anyone that include lies in order to discredit them or cause them harm?

Source: Epelde-Larrañaga, Oñederra-Ramírez, and Chacón-Cuberos

Cyberbullying and Gender

By way of the cross-reference between victims of cyberbullying and gender, as may be seen in Table 4, a significant difference exists in relation to question CB.V.15. We can clearly see that females are victims of defamation (25.8%) to a significantly greater extent than males (9.7%). Furthermore, in respect to question CB.V.6, although no significant difference has been detected, a certain trend is nonetheless detected that females are again the ones that receive anonymous telephone calls (19.3%) as opposed to males (14.6%).

Table 4: Correlation between Victims of Cyberbullying and Gender

Items CB.V	Gender	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
CB.V.6	Male	85.4% (n=88)	8.7% (n=9)	4.9% (n=5)	1.0% (n=1)
	Female	80.6% (n=100)	17.7% (n=22)	1.6% (n=2)	0.0% (n=0)
	Total	82.2% (n=188)	13.7% (n=31)	3.1% (n=7)	0.4% (n=1)
CB.V.15	Male	90.3% (n=93)	6.8% (n=7)	1.9% (n=2)	1.0% (n=1)
	Female	74.2% (n=92)	20.2% (n=25)	4.8% (n=6)	0.8% (n=1)
	Total	81.5% (n=185)	14.1% (n=32)	3.5% (n=8)	0.9% (n=2)

Note: **CB.V.6** and **CB.V.15** (See note below Table 1)

Source: Epelde-Larrañaga, Oñederra-Ramírez, and Chacón-Cuberos

For aggressors, in relation to the cross-reference between cyberbullying and gender, no significant differences exist between males and females. However, it is necessary to clarify that the students surveyed have scarcely declared themselves to be aggressors in cyberbullying.

For witnesses, we have detected a significant difference between males and females in relation to question CB.T.10. A total of 28.2 percent of the female students have witnessed the theft of passwords as opposed to 16.4 percent of male students that have been witnesses thereto. The significant difference is that 22.6 percent of female students have witnessed the foregoing with the frequency range of “sometimes,” whereas only 8.7 percent of male students have witnessed said conduct with the same frequency range (see Table 5).

Table 5: Correlation between Witnesses of Cyberbullying and Gender

Items CB.V	Gender	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
CB.T.10	Male	83.5% (n=86)	8.7% (n=9)	5.8% (n=6)	1.9% (n=2)
	Female	71.8% (n=89)	22.6% (n=28)	4.8% (n=6)	0.8% (n=1)
	Total	77.1% (n=175)	16.3% (n=37)	5.3% (n=12)	1.3% (n=3)

Note: **CB.T.10** (See note below Table 3)

Source: *Epelde-Larrañaga, Oñederra-Ramírez, and Chacón-Cuberos*

Cyberbullying and Education Centre

In relation to the cross-reference between victims of cyberbullying and the centre where the students study, as may be seen in Table 6, two significant differences have been found in relation to questions CB.V.5 and CB.V.9 of the questionnaire.

Pursuant to question CB.V.5, the percentage of victims of cyberbullying is higher in the private-public school (7.4%) than in the public high school (1.0%). A total of 6.6 percent of students of the private-public school responded that they have suffered this type of bullying with the frequency range of “sometimes” as opposed to 1 percent for the same frequency range at the public high school.

However, in relation to question CB.V.9, it is the public high school that reveals a higher percentage of victims of cyberbullying, namely 12.4 percent, as opposed to 6.6 percent of the private-public school. The most noteworthy aspect is that 11.4 percent of students responded in the frequency range of “sometimes” at the public high school, whereas only 4.1 percent of the students of private-public school responded with the same frequency range.

Table 6: Correlation between Victims of Cyberbullying and the Education Centre

Items CB.V	Centre	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
CB.V.5	Public High School	99.0% (n=104)	1.0% (n=1)	0.0% (n=0)	0.0% (n=0)
	Public-Private School	92.6% (n=113)	6.6% (n=8)	0.8% (n=1)	0.0% (n=0)
	Total	95.6% (n=217)	4.0% (n=9)	0.4% (n=1)	0.0% (n=0)
CB.V.9	Public High School	87.6% (n=92)	11.4% (n=12)	1.0% (n=1)	0.0% (n=0)
	Public-Private School	93.4% (n=114)	4.1% (n=5)	2.5% (n=3)	0.0% (n=0)
	Total	90.7% (n=206)	7.5% (n=17)	1.8% (n=4)	0.0% (n=0)

Note: **CB.V.5** and **CB.V.9** (See note below Table 1)

Source: *Epelde-Larrañaga, Oñederra-Ramírez, and Chacón-Cuberos*

In relation to the cross-reference between cyberbullying as aggressors and the education centre where the students study, no significant differences have been detected in relation to whether the centre is public or public-private.

In relation to the surveyed students as witnesses of cases of cyberbullying and when cross-referencing said data with the education centre where they study, we have detected a significant difference in relation to question CB.T.1. A total of 48.6 percent of the students of the public high school have been witnesses to this type of bullying, as opposed to 32.0 percent of the students of the private-public school, which is also a relatively high percentage. It is noteworthy to mention that among all of the students, 41.9 percent of the students of the public high school affirm that they have witnessed said conduct “sometimes,” as opposed to 21.3 percent of students of the private-public school in relation to the same frequency range (see Table 7).

Table 7: Correlation between Witnesses of Cyberbullying and the Education Centre

Items CB.V	Centre	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
CB.T.1	Public High School	51.4% (n=54)	41.9% (n=44)	6.7% (n=7)	0.0% (n=0)
	Public-Private School	68.0% (n=83)	21.3% (n=26)	8.2% (n=10)	2.5% (n=3)
	Total	60.4% (n=137)	30.8% (n=70)	7.5% (n=17)	1.3% (n=3)

Note: **CB.T.1** (See note below Table 3)

Source: Epelde-Larrañaga, Oñederra-Ramírez, and Chacón-Cuberos

Cyberbullying and Academic Year

In relation to the cross-reference between the victims of cyberbullying and the academic year of the students, whether the sixth grade primary education or first grade secondary education, we have detected a number of significant differences, as set out in Table 8. The most noteworthy difference refers to question CB.V.1, to which a total of 37.1 percent of the students of first grade secondary education stated that they have suffered this type of bullying, as opposed to 13.3 percent of the students of sixth grade primary education.

The next most significant difference relates to question CB.V.14. In relation to the foregoing question, the students of sixth grade primary education affirmed that they have suffered this type of threat (10%) with the frequency range of “sometimes.” With the same frequency range, in first grade secondary education, only 0.6 percent of students affirmed that they have experienced said type of bullying.

Furthermore, another significant difference exists in relation to question CB.V.9. A higher percentage is obtained from the students of first grade secondary education, where 10.2 percent of students declared that they have suffered this type of bullying “sometimes” (in total, 12%), as opposed to 0 percent of students of sixth grade primary education in relation to the same frequency range (in total, 1.7%).

In relation to question CB.V.7 as well as question CB.V.2, we have detected a clear trend that reveals that in sixth grade primary education, this type of conduct is more prevalent, with affirmative responses from 8.8 percent of students in relation to question CB.V.7 and 11.6 percent in relation to question CB.V.2.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, in relation to question CB.V.10, the students of first grade secondary education represent a higher percentage of victims in relation to this type of bullying (20.4% of students of first grade secondary education vs. 8.3% of students of sixth grade primary education).

The foregoing also takes place in relation to question CB.V.15, where students of first grade secondary education represent a higher percentage of victims of said bullying (22.2% of the students of first grade secondary education vs. 8.4% of students of sixth grade primary education).

Table 8: Correlation between Victims of Cyberbullying and Academic Year

Items CB.V	Grade	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
CB.V.1	1 st Gr. Secondary	62.9% (n=105)	32.3% (n=54)	4.8% (n=8)	0.0% (n=0)
	6 th Gr. Primary	86.7% (n=52)	5.0% (n=3)	5.0% (n=3)	3.3% (n=2)
	Total	69.2% (n=157)	25.1% (n=57)	4.8% (n=11)	0.9% (n=2)
CB.V.2	1 st Gr. Secondary	91.0% (n=152)	9.0% (n=15)	0.0% (n=0)	0.0% (n=0)
	6 th Gr. Primary	88.3% (n=53)	8.3% (n=5)	3.3% (n=2)	0.0% (n=0)
	Total	90.3% (n=205)	8.8% (n=20)	0.9% (n=2)	0.0% (n=0)
CB.V.7	1 st Gr. Secondary	92.8% (n=155)	7.2% (n=12)	0.0% (n=0)	0.0% (n=0)
	6 th Gr. Primary	91.7% (n=55)	5.0% (n=3)	3.3% (n=2)	0.0% (n=0)
	Total	92.5% (n=210)	6.6% (n=15)	0.9% (n=2)	0.0% (n=0)
CB.V.9	1 st Gr. Secondary	88.0% (n=147)	10.2% (n=17)	1.8% (n=3)	0.0% (n=0)
	6 th Gr. Primary	98.3% (n=59)	0.0% (n=0)	1.7% (n=1)	0.0% (n=0)
	Total	90.7% (n=206)	7.5% (n=17)	1.8% (n=4)	0.0% (n=0)
CB.V.10	1 st Gr. Secondary	79.6% (n=133)	18.0% (n=30)	2.4% (n=4)	0.0% (n=0)
	6 th Gr. Primary	91.7% (n=55)	8.3% (n=5)	0.0% (n=0)	0.0% (n=0)
	Total	82.8% (n=188)	15.4% (n=35)	1.8% (n=4)	0.0% (n=0)
CB.V.14	1 st Gr. Secondary	98.8% (n=165)	0.6% (n=1)	0.0% (n=0)	0.6% (n=1)
	6 th Gr. Primary	90.0% (n=54)	10.0% (n=6)	0.0% (n=0)	0.0% (n=0)
	Total	96.5% (n=219)	3.1% (n=7)	0.0% (n=0)	0.4% (n=1)
CB.V.15	1 st Gr. Secondary	77.8% (n=130)	16.8% (n=28)	4.8% (n=8)	0.6% (n=1)
	6 th Gr. Primary	91.7% (n=55)	6.7% (n=4)	0.0% (n=0)	1.7% (n=1)
	Total	81.5% (n=185)	14.1% (n=32)	3.5% (n=8)	0.9% (n=2)

Note: CB.V.1, CB.V.2, CB.V.7, CB.V.9, CB.V.10, CB.V.14, and CB.V.15 (See note below Table 1)

Source: Epelde-Larrañaga, Oñederra-Ramírez, and Chacón-Cuberos

In relation to the cross-reference between cyberbullying as aggressors and the academic year in which students study, no significant differences have been detected. However, one trend that has been detected is that aggression increases with the age of the students. This is based on 13.2 percent of students in first grade secondary education responded that they have “sometimes” sent offensive and insulting messages by way of mobile telephone or via the internet, whereas 3.3 percent of sixth grade primary education students reported the same frequency.

Table 9: Correlation between Aggressors of Cyberbullying and Academic Year

Items CB.V	Grade	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
CB.A.1	1 st Gr. Secondary	86.2% (n=144)	13.2% (n=22)	0.0% (n=0)	0.6% (n=6)
	6 th Gr. Primary	96.7% (n=58)	3.3% (n=2)	0.0% (n=0)	0.0% (n=0)
	Total	89.0% (n=202)	10.6% (n=24)	0.0% (n=0)	0.4% (n=1)

Note: CB.A.1 (See note below Table 2)

Source: Epelde-Larrañaga, Oñederra-Ramírez, and Chacón-Cuberos

When the students were asked whether they have been witnesses of any type of cyberbullying, when cross-referenced with the academic year in which they study, we detected a significant difference in relation to question CB.T.1. We have seen that 44.9 percent of the students of first grade secondary education stated that they have witnessed this type of bullying, as opposed to 25.1 percent of the students of sixth grade primary education. Both are high percentages and accordingly are of concern, and show that this type of bullying increases with the age of the students. Further, a total of 35.9 percent of the students of first grade secondary education stated that they have seen said conduct “sometimes,” whereas 16.7 percent of the students of sixth grade primary education have witnessed said conduct with the same frequency range (see Table 10).

Table 10: Correlation between Witnesses of Cyberbullying and Academic Year

Items CB.V	Grade	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
CB.T.1	1 st Gr. Secondary	55.1% (n=92)	35.9% (n=60)	7.8% (n=13)	1.2% (n=2)
	6 th Gr. Primary	75.0% (n=45)	16.7% (n=10)	6.7% (n=4)	1.7% (n=1)
	Total	60.4% (n=137)	30.8% (n=70)	7.5% (n=17)	1.3% (n=3)

Note: CB.T.1 (See note below Table 3)

Source: Epelde-Larrañaga, Oñederra-Ramírez, and Chacón-Cuberos

Discussion and Conclusion

The students that reported they have been present during a number of cases of bullying among peers; however, they seldom identify themselves as victims and even less so as aggressors. Above all, they identify themselves as witnesses. The foregoing also took place in the study carried out by Garaigordóbil (2015), where the percentage of victims in relation to offensive messages amounted to 8.5 percent; however, for witnesses of said conduct, the percentage amounted to 25.1 percent.

According to our data, the most common form of cyberbullying used by adolescents is that of sending offensive and insulting messages. This modality is the most suffered, perpetrated, and observed by adolescents. The foregoing confirms the results obtained by Garaigordóbil (2015), Rey et al. (2018), and Yudes, Baridon, and González (2018), which revealed that, within the age range of twelve to thirteen years, this modality is the most common form of cyberbullying used by aggressors.

As witnesses, the four modalities of cyberbullying that have been witnessed the most in our study included the sending of messages, anonymous telephone calls, offensive telephone calls, and the theft of passwords. In the study carried out by Garaigordóbil (2015), data differs somewhat, but despite these differences, both studies show that the sending of offensive messages is the predominant conduct most often used.

In our study, we have been able to verify that there are more female victims of cyberbullying than male victims. Our results show similar percentages to the rate reported by Athanasiou et al. (2018) (15.7% of females versus 10.7% of males) and by Yudes, Baridon, and González (2018) (11.7% of females versus 1.3% of males). Rey et al. (2018) came to the same conclusion and justified this by saying that girls have less skills involving emotional regulation.

In relation to the academic year, we have determined that the percentages of victims, aggressors, and witnesses are higher for students of first grade secondary education than students of sixth grade primary education. This leads us to believe that as the students get older, the cases of cyberbullying also increase. Accordingly, we are able to affirm that, although our investigation has been focused on two consecutive academic years, we have detected that in relation to students of first grade secondary education, there is a higher degree of aggressivity. This confirms results data of the study carried out by Garaigordóbil (2015). Furthermore, our data confirm the results obtained by Yudes, Baridon, and González (2018), who affirm that the highest prevalence and peak incidences of cyberbullying take place between the ages of twelve to fourteen. In light of the fact that our study has been carried out in relation to these academic years, we can affirm that our data confirms these results, as we have determined a higher prevalence of cyberbullying in first grade secondary education than in sixth grade primary education.

We believe that the increase of the incidence of cyberbullying according to the age of students may be explained when related to early adolescence, i.e. between the ages of eleven and fourteen years. During said ages, above all when they change education stages, students have increased access to social media (Ruiz-Palmero, Sánchez-Rodríguez, and Trujillo-Torres 2016). This facilitates the perpetration of this type of conduct. Thus, we are able to confirm that between these two academic years, the prevalence of cyberbullying increases.

Deficits in emotional intelligence are associated with cybervictimization; adolescents with high aggression scores show lower scores in emotional intelligence (Inglés et al. 2014; Rey et al. 2018). Following these authors, we believe that it is necessary that the education centres carry out a collective effort to try to tackle and resolve this social scourge. We contend that an education syllabus must be proposed for education centres, which emphasizes the primacy of humanity, emotional education so as to help students acquire humanistic emotional intelligence, cooperation between students through cooperative learning, and tolerance and respect as drivers behind the education of adolescents. Without this type of primordial base, we believe that the rest of the knowledge that students acquire may be used erroneously, and that without said base, we will drive future generations toward a real social problem.

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