Cyberbullying in WhatsApp Classroom Groups among Children and Adolescents: Exposure and Victimization

# Details

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Risks and harms

## Sample

The sample consisted of 1,248 respondents (children who received computers during the
years 2013–2014) was assessed in two measurements. The first measurement took place
before introducing the computer into the home; the second one approximately a year
later. All the children were enrolled in regular primary schools

## Implications For Educators About

Other

# Abstract

Social networks are an essential part of school-aged children's social lives. WhatsApp application is
perceived as a social network which enjoys enormous popularity among children and adolescents. Nonetheless, alongside the increasing popularity of WhatsApp, increases cyberbullying, defined as an aggressive online behavior aimed to harm another person through internet and technological communication means. The present study is a pilot research aimed to learn about the extent, characteristics and expressions of cyberbullying that children and adolescents experience in WhatsApp groups in their classes, either as witnesses, or as victims.
Additionally, the study aims to offer a classification of cyberbullying in WhatsApp groups. Data was collected from Israeli students who learn in 4th to 12th grades (N = 1111). The participants completed a questionnaire regarding cyberbullying in their class WhatsApp groups. Findings indicated that the vast majority of participants are members in at least one WhatsApp group in their classes, to which it`s important for them to belong.
Alongside, most participants experience cyberbullying in their WhatsApp class-groups, either as victims or as witnesses and over half of them experience more than one expression of cyberbullying simultaneously. Insults are the most common expression of cyberbullying. After that swearword, forced removal from a group and posting offensive photos. Witnessing WhatsApp cyberbullying is more common than personal victimization. In addition, findings indicated of differences in cyberbullying expressions according to the level of educational institution (elementary school, middle school, and high school). Implications regarding schools` and parents` roles, including developing educational policy and school curriculum, are discussed

# Outcome

findings showed that 70% of the students reported of exposure to cyberbullying in their class whatsApp groups and almost one third experienced personal victimization of cyberbullying while participating in WhatsApp groups in their classes, while over half of them victimized more than one cyberbullying type simultaneously (Aizenkot, 2018). The findings of the present study show that exposure to cyberbullying in class WhatsApp groups is more common than personal victimiation, in all the types of cyberbullying. Findings showed that the most common type of cyberbullying victimization was verbal violence, expressed mainly by insults (15.3%) and curse words (14.1%). The second common type was group violence and selectivity, reflected in forced removal from groups (13%), and finally, visual violence i.e., posting offensive photos (10.4%). Further findings of the current study revealed significant differences between schools` age levels, regarding verbal violence (insults), and group violence and selectivity (forced removal from a group), that decreased inversely to school`s age level, and visual violence (posting offensive photos), that increased as school age raised.