Associations between Witnessing and Perpetrating Online Hate in Eight Countries: The Buffering Effects of Problem-Focused Coping

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## Sample

A total of 6829 adolescents aged between 12–18 years. The study sample included participants from Cyprus (n = 221; age= 12–18 years); Germany (n = 1480; age = 12–17 years); Greece (n = 670; age = 15–18 years); India (n = 1121; age = 13–18 years); South Korea (n = 756; age = 12–17 years) Spain (n = 1018; age range = 12–18 years); Thailand (n = 716; age = 13–18 years); the United States (n = 847; age = 12–18 years).

## Implications For Parents About

## Other Parent Implication

The role of parents in promoting coping strategies among their children to avoid their involvement in online hate

## Implications For Educators About

## Implications For Policy Makers About

* Stepping up awareness and empowerment
* Creating a safe environment for children online
* High-quality content online for children and young people

## Implications For Stakeholders About

## Other Stakeholder Implication

Media pedagogues

# Abstract

Online hate is a topic that has received considerable interest lately, as online hate represents a risk to self-determination and peaceful coexistence in societies around the globe. However, not much is known about the explanations for adolescents posting or forwarding hateful online material or how adolescents cope with this newly emerging online risk. Thus, we sought to better understand the relationship between a bystander to and perpetrator of online hate, and the moderating effects of problem-focused coping strategies (e.g., assertive, technical coping) within this relationship. Self-report questionnaires on witnessing and committing online hate and assertive and technical coping were completed by 6829 adolescents between 12 and 18 years of age from eight countries. The results showed that increases in witnessing online hate were positively related to being a perpetrator of online hate. Assertive and technical coping strategies were negatively related with perpetrating online hate. Bystanders of online hate reported fewer instances of perpetrating online hate when they reported higher levels of assertive and technical coping strategies, and more frequent instances of perpetrating online hate when they reported lower levels of assertive and technical coping strategies. In conclusion, our findings suggest that, if effective, prevention and intervention programs that target online hate should consider educating young people about problem-focused coping strategies, self-assertiveness, and media skills. Implications for future research are discussed.

# Outcome

This study contributes to the existing knowledge about the relationship between witnessing and perpetrating online hate among adolescents. To enhance the understanding of this relationship, assertive and technical coping were investigated as moderators. Findings further advance the understanding of the involvement of adolescents in online hate behavior in eight countries. Results show that assertive and technical coping strategies are negatively related to being a perpetrator of online hate. The results highlight the importance of problem-focused coping strategies in the relationship between being a bystander to and perpetrator of online hate. Based on these results, Wachs et al., 2019: 11 advise that "future studies should focus on developing a better understanding of how different coping strategies impact this relationship" and warn regarding the need "for media pedagogues to educate adolescents to manage online hate by using assertive and technical strategies" as well as " developing intervention programs that focus on coping strategies to help to mitigate the likelihood that adolescents become involved in online hate" (Wachs et al., 2019: 11).
[Text adapted by the coder, based on the original manuscript]