

# Chapter 21

## The Ugly Face of the Digital World: Cyberbullying

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Technology is present in every moment of our lives and has become a part of our lives. Developments in information and communication technologies affect and facilitate social life and business life day by day. Although the positive aspects of technological developments are generally mentioned, it also brings many negativities. One of these downsides is cyberbullying. Cyberbullying can be expressed as behaviors that hurt, humiliate, disturb, frighten, exclude, and cause victimization by using information and communication technologies of the individual. These behaviors can cause an individual's job and life satisfaction to decrease anxiety, sadness, tension, and loss of motivation. In this case, it becomes difficult for the individual to be effective and efficient in his/her business and social life. For this, it is useful to combat cyberbullying, and it is important to develop combat strategies for it. Otherwise, cyberbullying cannot be prevented. With the precautions, most cyberbullying can be prevented before it happens.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

The internet is in everything that comes to our mind from the clothes we buy to the water we drink, we can say that, in short, it makes our lives easier. In addition to these benefits of the internet, there may also be situations that cause people to experience psychological distress and damage social relations. Cyberbullying, which means the harmful behavior of people in the virtual environment, is one of them and has become a remarkable issue in recent years. Because the victim who is harmed as a result of cyberbullying is seriously affected by this process, and his professional, educational and social life may be damaged. For this reason, it is important to raise awareness about cyberbullying and to know what to do when confronted.

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With the rapid development of information and communication technologies, people are constantly interacting with tools such as mobile phones, computers and the internet, even in the workplace. As a result of the use of social media, this interaction has increased both in the workplace and outside the workplace (Iftikhar et al., 2020: 2166). With the use of social media networks such as Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, Twitter, people's communication with each other has increased, and the development of social networks has accelerated thanks to the opportunity to get to know other people (Johanis et al., 2020: 1-2). While all these developments, thanks to digitalization, facilitate access to information, distance education, and establish rapid communication, they also caused negative situations such as disturbing, oppressing and threatening each other (Alp, 2020: 69). These negative situations are expressed as cyberbullying, they can occur in the form of sending internet messages, e-mails, short messages, video clips, pictures using information communication technologies and social networks and this has become an issue that attracts the attention of the whole world (Begum et al., 2019: 164).

When we get down to the root of the concept of cyberbullying, the concept of cyber comes up. Cyber simply means that which belongs to the internet or computer networks. The cyber world can be expressed as an abstract and broad infrastructure where the virtual environment offers unlimited opportunities to people through various computer networks and the internet. This infrastructure, also referred to as cyberspace, is formed as a result of the use of information and communication technologies by which people and organizations are in constant communication (Niklová and Makúchová, 2018: 151). The concept of bullying has entered the field of cyberspace with the formation of various types of harassment through virtual media (Burton and Mutongwizo, 2009: 1). In other words, the transformation of the concept of bullying from physical to virtual has taken place and thus the concept of cyber bullying has emerged. Due to the physical separation of the bully and the victim, there is no limitation on the frequency, scope and depth of the harm that the victim will suffer. Cyberbullying, which is defined as the deliberate and repetitive attempt of the bully to harm the victim by using electronic text, has become a global problem regardless of place and time (Patchin and Hinduja, 2006: 152).

Bullying can be expressed as physical and psychological pressure applied systematically and repeatedly by a strong person to weaker people (Göldağ, 2017: 720). Bullying is a social problem in which people are directly or indirectly involved and harm each other physically and psychologically. This problem, which is difficult to solve in real life, has become even more difficult to solve in different ways in the internet environment. Because people use these web-based applications to spend time, make new friends, share their personal data, and they can be abused by others despite their privacy policies (Nalini and Sheela, 2014: 1867). From this point of view, cyberbullying can be expressed as a person's bad behavior such as harassing other people, using embarrassing expressions or threatening by sending an online or text message (Chiome, 2015: 187).

It can be said that cyberbullying is more common in schools due to the use of internet-based technological tools, especially by children and young people (Süslü and Oktay, 2018: 1880). It can be said that adults are also more exposed to cyberbullying as a result of their increasing tendency to communication tools and social media (Dilmaç, 2020: 1095). For this reason, it is important for both young people and adults to know what to do when faced with cyberbullying, to prevent social and psychological problems they will experience in the future. For this reason, it is necessary to raise awareness about cyberbullying and to acknowledge people.

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