A META-ANALYSIS OF CYBERSTALKING AND CYBERBULLYING VICTIMIZATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

DR ANNA BUSSU & DR NICHOLAS LONGPRÉ

OVERVIEW OF THE TALK

- CYBERSTALKING /CYBERBULLYING DEFINITIONS

- CYBERSTALKING /CYBERBULLYING IN HE

- RESEARCH PROJECT

  - ➢ AIM AND RQS

  - ➢ METHODOLOGY/DATA ANALYSIS

  - ➢ MAIN FINDINGS

- IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

- QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

STALKING: DEFINITION

- STALKING CAN BE DEFINED AS A PATTERN OF REPEATED AND UNWANTED BEHAVIOURS THAT CAUSE ANOTHER PERSON TO BE AFRAID

- SOME OF THE BEHAVIOURS MAY NOT BE PERCEIVED AS SERIOUS (E.G., BROWSING SOMEONE'S SOCIAL MEDIA WITHOUT THEIR CONSENT AND KNOWLEDGE)
  - IT IS THE PERSISTENCE AND THE LEVEL OF INTRUSION BY THE STALKER THAT MAKES THE BEHAVIOUR CRIMINAL

- STALKING REMAINS AN UNUSUAL OFFENCE AS ITS OCCURRENCE IS NOT SOLELY DEFINED BY THE ACTIVITIES OF THE PERPETRATOR, BUT ALSO BY THE REACTION OF THE VICTIM (LONGPRÉ ET AL., 2022; STEFANSKA ET AL., 2021)

BULLYING AND CYBER-WORLD

- STALKING CAN EXTEND TO THE CYBER-SPHERE ➡️ CYBERSTALKING

- CONCEPTUALLY OVERLAP WITH BULLYING

- THERE IS NO CONSENSUS ACROSS JURIDISCTIONS. IT IS USUALLY DEFINED AS BEHAVIOUR THAT IS:
  - REPEATED
  - INTENDED TO HURT SOMEONE EITHER PHYSICALLY OR EMOTIONALLY
  - OFTEN AIMED AT CERTAIN GROUPS, FOR EXAMPLE RACE, RELIGION, GENDER OR SEXUAL ORIENTATION
  - FOR ADULTS, WE USED THE WORD INTIMIDATION, CYBER-INTIMIDATION & HARASSMENT TO DESCRIBE THE SAME BEHAVIOURS   (HINDUJA & PATCHIN, 2014, PATCHIN & HINDUJA, 2016; BUSSU ET AL UNDER REVIEW).

- IT TAKES MANY FORMS, SUCH AS:
  - TEASING, NAME CALLING, RUMOURS, THREATS, PHYSICAL ASSAULTS AND CYBERBULLYING

HOW IS CYBER DIFFERENT?

THE INTERNET OF THINGS
AN EXPLOSION OF CONNECTED POSSIBILITY

- PERPETRATORS CANNOT SEE IMMEDIATE REACTION
  - DISINHIBITION & DEINDIVIDUATION
- UNABLE TO SEE PAIN, UNLIKELY TO FEEL EMPATHY
    OR
- UNABLE TO SEE PAIN, UNLIKELY TO GAIN REWARD FROM ENJOYING
- REPETITION AND FREQUENCY
  - THE REPETITION CAN BE PERPETRATED BY OTHERS
  - POTENTIAL FOR NO END POINT TO THE VICTIMIZATION
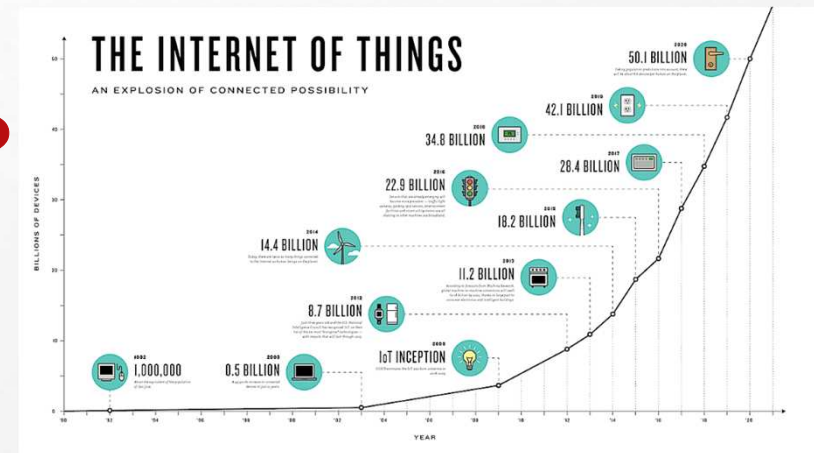
CYBERBULLYING AND CYBERSTALKING

CB can be defined as the 'willful and repeated harm inflicted through the use of computers, cell phones, and electronic devices' (Hinduja & Patchin, 2014, p.1). It can include sending, posting or sharing negative, harmful, false or malicious content about someone else, causing embarrassment or humiliation (Olweus, 1993; Patchin & Hinduja, 2016).

The literature (Olweus, 1993; Patchin & Hinduja, 2006) defines CB as repeated and intentional aggressive behaviour with the intent to intimidate a victim, using tactics to induce fear

CS is the repeated use of electronic communications to harass or frighten someone persistently, for example, by sending threatening emails or finding out information about them (Alexy et al., 2005; Kraft & Wang, 2010).

CS behaviours relates to harassment and intimidation and may include spying, monitoring or controlling the victim's behaviour (e.g. hidden webcams, SpyWare and GPS devices) (Fissel & Reyns, 2020)

CB & CS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

There are several reasons to explore CB and CS jointly in an academic context.

1) First, according to Kamali (2015), CB and CS research in HE lack consistent definitions. Additionally, the two phenomena are often considered interrelated by victims. HE environments remain under-researched (Oksanen et al., 2021).

2) Second, CB (Abaido, 2020) and CS (Stevens, 2021) have been investigated in the workplace and academic context independently but not together (Fissel & Reyns, 2020) and without included both students and staff.

3) Third, there is a need to understand cybervictimisation in HE during the COVID-19 pandemic.

4) Finally, CB and CS in HE have not received internationally an adequate attention, leading to a lack of clear policies for students and staff (e.g., Alotaibi, 2019; Marcum & Higgins, 2019; Marcum et al., 2016).

AIM AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The paper explores the impact of cyberstalking and cyberbullying on the everyday lives of students and staff and the potential strategies to counteract cybervictimisation.

*RQ1.*What are the risk factors that predispose or mediate an individual's (students or staff) experience of cyber-bullying and/or cyber-stalking as a victim?

*RQ2.*The impact cyber-bullying and cyberstalking have on individuals.

*RQ3.*How can the literature informs best-practices and policy for victims of cyber-bullying and/or cyber-stalking?

Bussu, A., Molloy E., Mangiarulo M., Pulina & Ashton, S. Cyberbullying and Cyberstalking in Higher education: a narrative systematic review submitted to Cyberpsychology, 2nd review)

Bussu A., Ashton S., Pulina M. & Mangiarulo M. A Qualitative study of cyberbullying and cyberstalking in the academic context during COVID-19 to submitted to International Review of Victimology in July 2022 (under review).

METHODOLOGY

Full searches were conducted in February 2021 on PsycINFO, PubMed and Scopus, in accordance with the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-analyses (PRISMA) guidelines (Bussu et al., forthcoming).

A meta-analysis was conducted on the articles providing empirical data.

7269 articles, following removal of 249 duplicates, these were screened via title, abstract and full text. A total of 176 were eligible for full text, of these articles 61 were deemed eligible for inclusion in the **meta-analysis** Of the 61 articles 48 examined cyberbullying, 10 examined cyberstalking and 3 articles examined both cyberbullying and cyberstalking
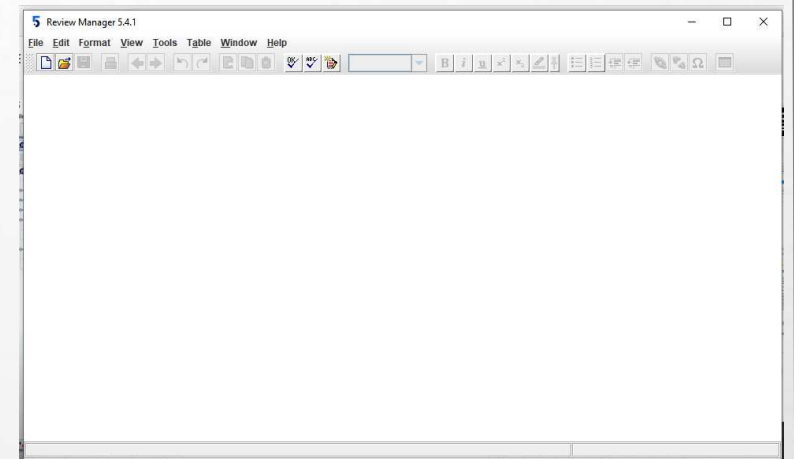
DATA ANALYSIS

N = 61
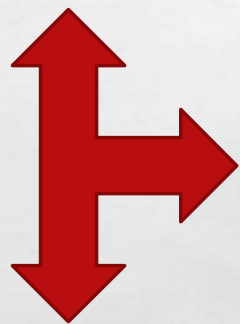
N = 50

Victims' focus
No comparable data
Not enough data
Qualitative data

N = 11

- ANALYSES WERE CONDUCTED WITH REVIEW MANAGER 5.4
- FREE SOFTWARE
  - COCHRANE'S SOFTWARE FOR WRITING COCHRANE REVIEWS

MAIN FINDINGS

- 5 PREDICTORS EMERGED
  - GENDER DIFFERENCES – MEN (10 STUDIES)
  - PERSONALITY TRAITS/ DISORDERS – ANTISOCIAL/ PSYCHOPATHIC (8 STUDIES)
  - MENTAL HEALTH - DEPRESSION (3 STUDIES)
  - MENTAL HEALTH – ANXIETY (2 STUDIES)
  - LACK OF CONTACT WITH REALITY (2 STUDIES)
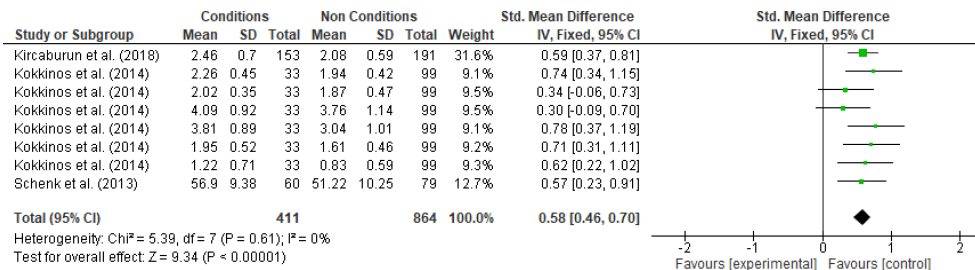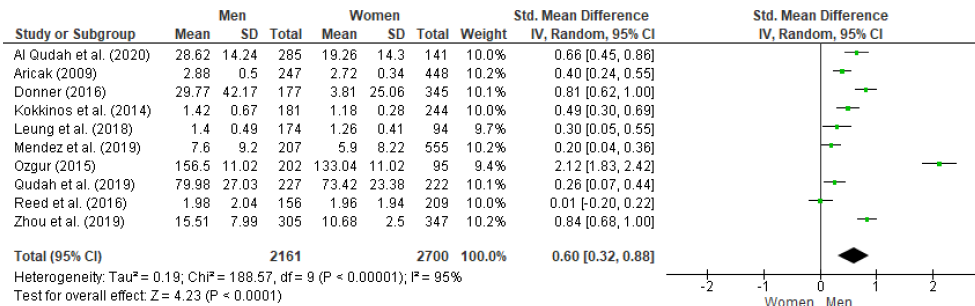
POTENTIALS RISK FACTORS ?!

- AGE - YOUNGER

- BYSTANDERS/ WITNESS & PREVIOUS VICTIMISATION
  - NORMALIZATION? REVENGE?

- CHILDHOOD TRAUMA

- ALCOHOL/ DRUGS AND OTHER ADDICTIONS

- USE OF TECHNOLOGY/ ADDICTION

- LACK OF COMPARABLE DATA – LACK OF DATA
  - MORE RESEARCH IS NEEDED

IMPLICATIONS

- WE ONLY HAVE FRACTIONAL RESULTS
    - STUDIES MOSTLY ON NON-OFFENDING POPULATIONS
    - LIMITED NUMBER OF STUDIES
    - NEED RESEARCH THAT FOCUS ON THE POTENTIAL RISK FACTORS
- IN THE GENERAL POPULATION
    - EDUCATION – BENEFICIAL – LOWER LEVEL ?!
    - INCREASE AWARENESS – BOTH PERPETRATORS AND VICTIMS
- GUIDE PREVENTION PROGRAMMES
    - BEFORE THE FACT – PREVENT THE ESCALATION CYBER STALKING/ BULLYING
- PRIORITISED IN INTERVENTION STRATEGIES/ PROGRAMMES
    - TREATMENT TARGETS
- AETIOLOGICAL FACTORS, PERSONALITY STRUCTURES AND EXTERNAL CORRELATES

Downstream & Upstream

CONCLUSIONS

- **FUTURE INTERVENTIONS** ADDRESSING CYBERBULLYING AND CYBERSTALKING VICTIMISATION PREVENTION AT THE MACRO-LEVEL.

- **BEST PRACTICES:** TRAINING FOR STUDENTS AND STAFF TO DEVELOP SELF-AWARENESS ABOUT THEIR COMMUNICATION STYLE.

- **FURTHER RESEARCH: 1)**TO DETERMINE WHICH PANDEMIC-RELATED STRESSORS LEAD TO CYBERBULLYING AND CYBERSTALKING, AND HOW TO MITIGATE THEIR EFFECTS; **2)** KEY MODERATORS NEED FURTHER RESEARCH TO IMPROVE THE IMPACT OF ANTI-BULLYING/STALKING PROGRAMMES **3)** TO EXPLORE THE PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS AND SUBSEQUENT BEHAVIOUR DURING AND AFTER PANDEMIC **4)** RISK AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS.

- **ROBUST POLICIES** AND REPORTING STRATEGIES REGARDING BEHAVIOUR IN THE HIGHER EDUCATION CONTEXT.

- **CLEAR GUIDELINES** TO SUPPORT STAFF AND STUDENTS WHO MAY BE ASSAULTED THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA NETWORKS MAY PROTECT AND DISCOURAGE AN ESCALATION OF VICTIMISATION..

THANK YOU FOR LISTENING! QUESTIONS?

DR ANNA BUSSU

SENIOR LECTURER - PROGRAMME LEADER

SCHOOL OF LAW, CRIMINOLOGY & POLICING

ANNA.BUSSU@EDGEHILL.AC.UK

DR NICHOLAS LONGPRÉ

SENIOR LECTURER - PROGRAMME LEADER

SCHOOL OF LAW, CRIMINOLOGY & POLICING

LONGPREN@EDGEHILL.AC.UK

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