INVITED SYMPOSIUM EARA 2018

(Cyber-)bullying: the role of supportive environments

and online social competences in promoting resilience

Chair: Heidi Vandebosch, University of Antwerp, Belgium

Discussant: Heidi Vandebosch, University of Antwerp, Belgium

Saturday September 15th, 15.20-16.50, Auditorium 4

This symposium, with work from scholars from three different countries, looks at how (cyber)bullying can be addressed adequately. The first paper presents the results of two studies. The first study analysed the support requested by cyberbullying victims, and the support offered by peers on two online help fora: *Awel* (Belgium) and *Kindertelefoon* (The Netherlands). The second study investigated the frames that were used in news articles on celebrities' experiences with cyberbullying that appeared in two popular American teen magazines, i.e. *Seventeen* and *Twist*. Paper two focuses on the important role of bystanders, especially in the case of bias-based bullying, and looks at the potential of technological tools (i.e. a game) to promote positive bystandership. In the last paper, the attention shifts towards the role of online social competencies (OSC) as an important part of adolescents' overall media literacy and as a possible protective factor against cyberbullying experiences. This paper provides an overview of what OSC entail (according to the literature) and presents the results of a pilot study amongst 1.508 pupils from seven German schools, that aimed to develop a self-report measure for OSC. Their will be plenty of time for discussion!

PRESENTATION 1: How to cope with cyberbullying?

A look at the advice offered by peers and celebrities

Heidi Vandebosch (University of Antwerp, Belgium), Sara Bastiaensens (Antwerp Management School, Belgium) & Gaëlle Ouvrein (University of Antwerp, Belgium)

This paper presents the results of two studies. The first study analysed the support requested by cyberbullying victims, and the support offered by peers on two online help fora: *Awel* (Belgium) and *Kindertelefoon* (The Netherlands). The second study investigated the frames that were used in news articles on celebrities' experiences with cyberbullying that appeared in two popular American teen magazines, i.e. *Seventeen* and *Twist*.

PRESENTATION 2: Exploring the determinants of bystander intervention using a developmental intergroup approach

Roy A. Willems[1], Trijntje Völlink[1], Maria Sapouna[2], Leyla Sapouna[2], & Francine Dehue[1]

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Background: Bystander intervention in school bullying is highly effective in stopping a bullying incident. Studies have showed that while almost half of the children indicate they would intervene if they witnessed a bullying episode, in less than 20% of the bullying incidents bystanders actually intervene. Several important predictors have already been identified in explaining a bystander's decision whether or not to intervene in a bullying incident, such as self-efficacy, attitude, perceived personal responsibility, moral disengagement, and victim blaming. However, these determinants are from an individual perspective and do not take into account the group processes, such as ingroup identification and favoritism, which are of importance in explaining bystander intervention in more heterogeneous communities consisting of majority and minority group members (e.g., multicultural schools), identified by religion and ethnicity. The current study takes into account such group processes by integrating a developmental intergroup approach within the traditional bystander intervention model to examine bystander intervention in bias-based bullying incidents.

Research questions: What mechanisms explain bystander intervention during a bias-based bullying incident? What is the role of group status in explaining bystander intervention?

Methods: This survey study is part of a European project in which four countries (i.e., Scotland, Greece, Slovakia, and the Netherlands) collaborate to develop a serious game aimed at encouraging bystander intervention among children aged 10-12 years. Each country aims to include approximately 150 children in the study. Children are requested to fill in a questionnaire asking about theoretical and empirical based individual and group concepts related to bystander intervention, including their minority/majority group status, group identification, perceived social norm, perceived stigma by association, moral disengagement, perceived responsibility, attitude, and self-efficacy. Data will be analyzed using Structural Equation Modelling.

Implications: This study will provide us with valuable information on how personal and group characteristics encourage majority and minority status children to actively intervene in defense of victims of bias-based bullying. The findings about important determinants explaining biased-based bullying will be used for the development of an anti-prejudice bullying videogame, suitable for majority and minority group children.

PRESENTATION 3: Cyberbullying & Resilience: The Role of Online Social Competencies

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Background: Due to the expansion and differentiation of social media platforms and (mobile) communication technologies in the last decade, adolescents' media-based and social practices have increasingly conglomerated. Previous research, for a long time, has stressed that online social interactions can have positive and negative consequences on individuals' psychosocial development. Taking up a risk-orientated perspective, an array of studies have shown that the way especially youngsters interact with others online might influence their likelihood of becoming involved in negative experiences such as cyberbullying or other forms of online harassment. For example, especially among girls, an intensive use of social online media and experimental social online behavior was found to be related with more cyberbullying experiences as perpetrator and victim (Festl & Quandt, 2016).

Research questions: Looking at resilience factors, protecting young users from negative online experiences such as cyberbullying, it thus seems to be necessary to put the focus on these social media-based interactions taking place in nowadays digitalized worlds. In the presentation, I will therefore discuss the role of Online Social Competencies as important part of adolescents' overall media literacy and as (possible) protection factors against cyberbullying experiences.

Methods: Based on an integrative model of media literacy with three superordinate dimensions (expertise, self-competences & social competences; Riesmeyer et al., 2016), first a systematization of relevant Online Social Competencies (OSC) among youths was developed consisting of four content-based subdimensions: (1) *participatory competences* on how to act with and treat others online, (2) *moral competences* on how to refer one's online behavior to social values and norms, (3) *communicative competences* on how to talk with others about online contents or experiences, and (4) *educational competencies* on how to pass along online knowledge and to show others how to use the Internet. In a next step, a standardized self-report measure of OSC was established, comprising the four content-based dimensions and three process-based components of competence (knowledge, behavioral motivation, abilities) as well as the youngsters' actual behavior. Partly based on previous measures (Müller et al., 2014; Zylka et al., 2015), 64 items were developed, four items covering each of the 16 constructs (e.g., participatory knowledge, communicative motivation, educational abilities etc.). In a pilot study, a sample of 1.508 pupils from seven German schools (ø 14 years, 66% females) filled out a paper-based questionnaire. The descriptive results showed that adolescents indicated rather high levels of participatory and moral competence, while communicative and educational knowledge, motivation, abilities and behavior were clearly less pronounced.

Implications: Some first analyses have confirmed that a participatory-moral online behavior might be explained differently than a communicative or educational social behavior. The former, for example, was found to be less pronounced among individuals that reported high levels of (online) communication pressure in their peer group. It can be expected that especially high participatory and moral online competences might be relevant protection factor mediating the relationship between individual features, online use aspects and adolescents' cyberbullying involvement. These links needs to be proven in future research.