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Cyber Bullying: An Application of Actor Network Theory

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1. Purpose of the study

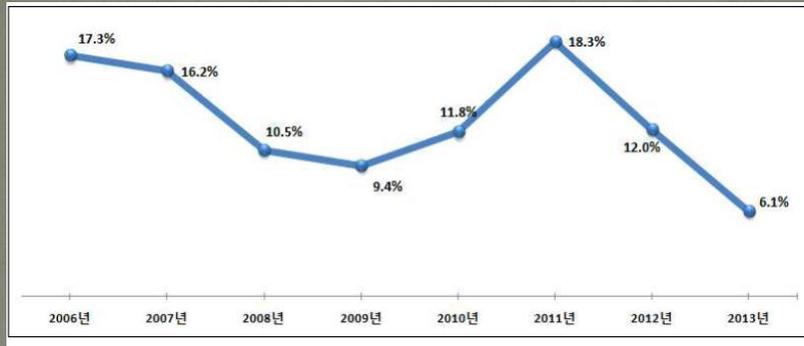
- To understand the role of electronic communication devices in development and management of adolescent conflict and aggression among youth by applying Actor Network Theory

2. Background

- Bullying

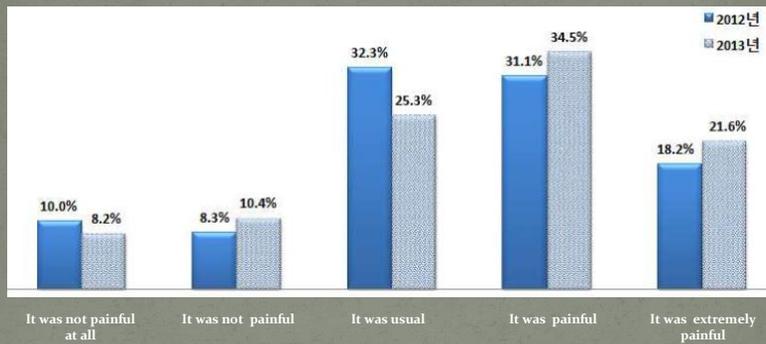
Bullying in school setting is a significant social concern in Korea that has received attention from policy makers, school counselors and researchers. Cyber bullying has increased most rapidly among all forms of school violence.

2. Background



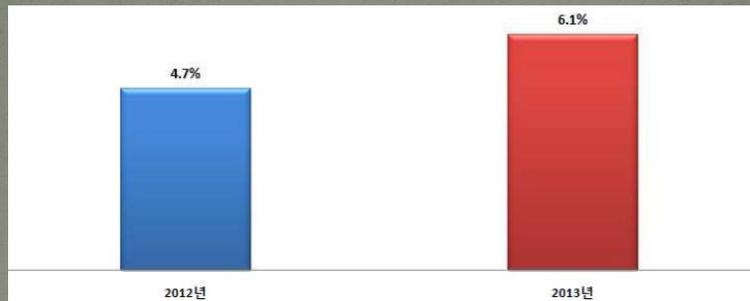
2006~2013 %of school violence victims

2. Background



Youth's subjective assessment of pain caused by school violence

2. Background



Youth's perception of Seriousness of cyber violence

2. Background

- Cyber Bullying

The potential for cyberbullying has grown with the increasing penetration of electronic devices and social network among young people. Anonymity, perpetual victimization unbound by time and space, difficulty in problem identification, ease of coordination of a bullying attack on a victim makes cyber bullying as damaging as physical bullying.

2. Background

- Cyber bullying defined as “willful and repeated harm inflicted through the use of computers, cell phones, and other electronic devices.”
- Means of cyber bullying: emails, instant messaging, chatroom, posting at websites, and circulating picture/video clip

2. Background

- Actor Network Theory (ANT)

ANT lends a good conceptual and philosophical framework to identify a transactional context of cyber bullying by looking at human and non-human actors in a moving assemblage and analyze how these human and nonhuman actors produce alliance, power, fears, resistance, and agency.

The current study focuses on the role of electronic communication devices and smartphone in particular in the network building and cyber bullying among youth.

3. Methodology

- Method: Ethnography, a qualitative design where the researcher explains about shared learned patterns of values, behavior, beliefs, and language of a culture shared by a group of people.

3. Methodology

- Data collection: Interviews and focus group
- Study participants: Experienced cyber bullying in their 8th graders as victim, onlookers, and/or passive aggressors.
- IRB approval obtained. Participants made voluntary and informed decision on participation.

Participants

Participants	Gender	Year of birth	Status (School)	Role
Student A	Female	1998	High	Onlooker
Student B	Female	1998	High	Victim
Student C	Female	2000	Middle	Onlooker
Student D	Female	1997	High	Onlooker
Student E	Female	1997	High	Onlooker
Student F	Male	2001	Middle	Victim

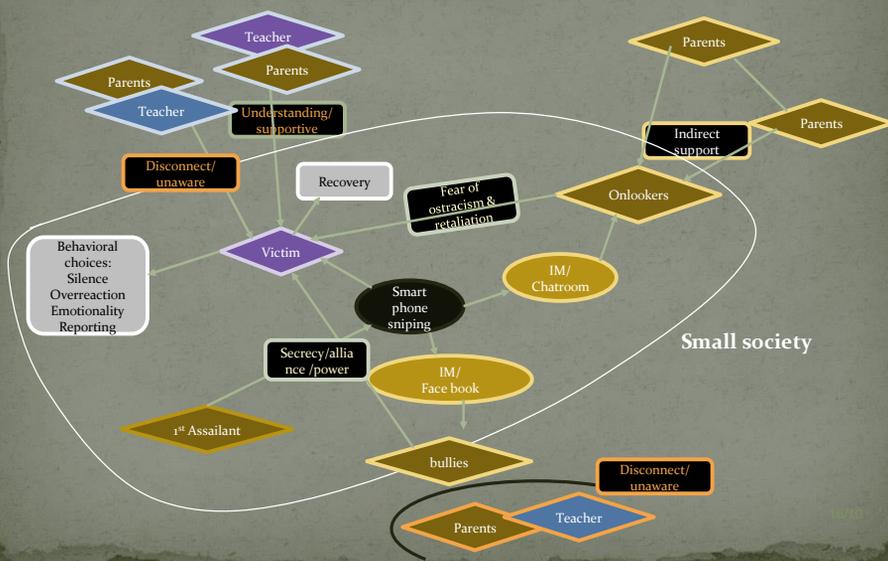
4. Findings

- Text messaging an embedded social practice among adolescents.
- Ubiquity of smartphones among the youth and convenience of its use made it the most popular tool in cyber bullying.
- Cyber bullying is social-relational aggression based on fear of ostracism, alliance building and excessive emotionality.

4. Findings

- Victims selected almost at whim of aggressors such as expensive personal belongings, aberrant behaviors etc.
- Communication technology increased volume, intensity, speed, range of rumor spreading and gossiping among youth.
- Technology affords youth secrecy and disconnection from adults.
- Ineffective interventions of school teachers and counselors reinforce the power of alliance among bullies.

5. Findings



5. Discussion

- Advancement in communication technology has created new forms and ways of bullying.
- Disconnect between adolescents and adults created by tech mediated communication.
- Impact of bullying magnified in the boundless cyber world.
- Increased awareness and effective interventions need to be developed.

Thank you ^^