CAMPAIGN ON AWARENESS OF THE NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF CYBERBULLYING

KAMPANYE KESADARAN TENTANG DAMPAK NEGATIF DARI CYBERBULLYING

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Abstract

Cyberbullying has evolved into a significant issue that frequently affects teenagers in today's society. This can be attributed to the fact that teenagers spend a significant amount of time on the internet, particularly on social media platforms. It is vital to take preventative measures against cyberbullying because these activities can have a significant influence on the mental health of teenagers. Awareness campaigns about the negative impacts of cyberbullying are one of the prevention measures through socialization to high school students regarding the dangers of cyberbullying actions. This campaign is conducted through lecture methods accompanied by supplementary interactive materials and supplemented with pamphlets designed to support the lecture method and achieve better communication targets with audiences. The evaluation of the activity is conducted by asking participants simple questions related to the campaign material. From several participant responses, it can be concluded that there is an increase in awareness of cyberbullying among the participants of this campaign. With this activity, it is hoped that students can prevent cyberbullying from happening in the future.

Keywords: cyberbullying; teenagers; awareness

Abstrak


Kata kunci: cyberbullying; remaja; kesadaran

Introduction

Information is now more easily obtained because of the ongoing digitization transformation. Digital technology has become an integral part of our daily lives. We can access all necessary information on the internet using our digital communication devices. This swift transformation has adverse consequences, particularly in the misuse of the internet for disseminating useless and perhaps destructive content. One such instance is cyberbullying, which primarily affects children and teenagers as its victims and has a very detrimental effect on them. This occurs due to the integration of social media into the daily lives of modern teenagers. Based on data from KPAI (Dwi et al. 2021), it was found that around 904 cases of cyberbullying targeted teenagers as the main victims.
According to the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia, distributing fake news or videos through electronic media to provoke or damage someone’s reputation is considered as defamation (Kemenkes RI 2019). The UN Children’s describes cyberbullying as a type of recurring harassment using digital technology to intimidate, enrage, or humiliate the victims. (Unicef 2020). Cyberbullying is the deliberate act of sending electronic messages in textual, visual, or video formats with the purpose of causing harm, distress, or fear to an individual (Sameer and Justin 2014).

There are several examples of cyberbullying, including the following (Iqbal and Jami 2022):

- **Flaming** – the act of sending angry, rude, vulgar messages directed at a person or persons privately or to an online group (Abaido 2020).
- **Harassment** – The act of sending hurtful messages or threats via chat platforms, writing hurtful words in social media comment sections, or posting something embarrassing/hurtful to a person or other people.
- **Impersonation** – Impersonating someone else (e.g., using fake accounts or logging in through someone else’s account) and sending malicious messages to others on their behalf (Unicef 2020).
- **Denigration** – Sending or posting harmful, untrue, or cruel statements about a person to other people (Abaido 2020).
- **Exclusion** – The act that specifically excludes a person from online games, activities, or friendship groups.
- **Outing and trickery** – Sending or posting material about a person that contains sensitive, private, or embarrassing information, including forwarding private messages or images, and engaging in tricks to solicit embarrassing information to be made public (Abaido 2020).
- **Cyberstalking** – The behavior related to harassment and intimidation including persistently spying, monitoring, and controlling another person’s life (e.g., hidden webcams, GPS devices etc) (Bussu et al. 2023).

Cyberbullying is more prevalent than traditional forms of bullying due to the fact that its offenders are more likely to employ anonymous techniques, hence concealing their genuine identities on the internet (Casas et al. 2013). In most cases, those who engage in cyberbullying aim to cause psychological pain to their victims by insulting and intimidating them through the use of the internet.

In light of the fact that cyberbullying has emerged as a significant risk to the mental and emotional well-being of teenagers especially high school teenagers, we need to give this matter serious consideration and work out strategies that are effective in preventative measures. This consideration serves as the main foundation for the writer to choose high school as the location for the community service activity that will be carried out. Therefore, there is a need for a better level of knowledge among the community, particularly concerning the negative impacts of cyberbullying, the means by which families can be protected from cyberbullying, and how the effects of cyberbullying can be mitigated. This forms the basis for the goal of conducting awareness campaigns about the negative impacts of cyberbullying.

**Method**

This campaign begins with preparatory activities, during which the location for the campaign is surveyed, the technical aspects of the campaign are organized, and the campaign activities are communicated to the target audience. The awareness campaign about the negative impacts of cyberbullying is conducted at SMA Labschool USK, targeting the audience of newly admitted 10th-grade students at Labschool USK. SMA Labschool USK was chosen as the venue for implementing this campaign activity because this school is part of the collaboration between Syiah Kuala University (USK) represented by the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering and SMA Labschool, and Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) represented by the Department of Electrical, Electronic and System Engineering.

During the implementation phase, this campaign using lecture methods a traditional form of teaching that involve an instructor presenting information to a group of students or learners. This method involves conducting in-person meetings and discussions, during which the campaign organizers will deliver materials focused on raising awareness about the adverse effects of cyberbullying. The supplemental material is presented in an interactive manner that includes showing some videos about cyberbullying and engaging the audience for feedback on the videos and material.

To support the presented material, the campaign organizers also prepared a pamphlet providing general information regarding awareness of the negative impacts of cyberbullying. Designing this information pamphlet involves applying principles of graphic design and communication theory to create a visually appealing and effective piece of printed material that effectively conveys information to
the target audience. Detailed explanation of the theory behind designing this pamphlet are as below:

- **Audience Analysis:** Before designing this pamphlet, it’s crucial to understand the targeted audience - their demographics, preferences, needs, and level of understanding regarding the information being communicated. This analysis helps in tailoring the content and design to resonate with the audience. In this designed pamphlet as our audience are high school teenagers, we need to make sure the design is simple yet creative so it can be set more interest to young adults.

- **Hierarchy of Information:** Establishing a clear hierarchy of information is essential. Some important details in designed pamphlet were prominently displayed, while less crucial information was presented in a subordinate manner. This helps readers quickly grasp the main points and navigate through the content.

- **Visual Elements:** Visual elements such as images, illustrations, icons, and color play a significant role in capturing attention and enhancing comprehension. The visuals in designed pamphlet carefully choose in relevant to the content, consistent with the overall theme, and used strategically to break up text and make the pamphlet visually appealing.

- **Typography:** Choosing appropriate fonts and typography is vital for readability and aesthetic appeal. Clear, legible fonts are all been used for body text, while decorative fonts used sparingly for headings or emphasis. Font size, spacing, and alignment was also carefully used to contribute to readability.

- **Layout and Composition:** The layout of the pamphlet should be well-organized and easy to navigate. The designed pamphlet has grouped some information logically, with consistent spacing and alignment to create a sense of harmony and enhance readability.

The design of this pamphlet can be seen in Figures 1 and 2 below.

![Figure 1. The main page of interactive pamphlet for the campaign](image-url)
Figure 2. The cover page of interactive pamphlet for the campaign

The number of participants in this campaign activity are 50 students from the 10th grade of Labschool USK. These students have just entered the high school phase, so they can be classified as a group of teenagers who are very vulnerable to cyberbullying cases. The detailed explanation of the provided material is expected to foster better awareness among students so that they can understand cyberbullying and encourage them to be more open and speak up if they feel they are victims of cyberbullying. Moreover, it is particularly important to make them aware of the negative impacts of cyberbullying so that they will hopefully not become primary actors in cyberbullying cases in the future.

Result and Discussions

Campaign Activity on Awareness of the Negative Impacts of Cyberbullying
The initial step of this activity involved conducting a direct survey with the implementing partner of the campaign, the administrators of SMA Labschool USK located in Desa Kopelma Darussalam, Banda Aceh. The survey helped the activity organizers pinpoint the concerns and target audience to create a more tailored and focused activity program. The school officials highly appreciated and were open to the implementation of this campaign activity, as no other party had previously conducted an awareness campaign about the negative impacts of cyberbullying. The school officials recognized that the campaign would significantly enhance students' understanding of cyberbullying. They instructed the activity organizers to focus the campaign on 10th-grade pupils.

For coordination purposes, the activity organizers formally conducted correspondence regarding the implementation mechanisms. In this regard, the school directly appointed the Coordinator of Student Affairs, as the direct liaison between the school and the activity implementation team. After several regular communications with the school liaison, it was agreed that the awareness campaign about the negative impacts of cyberbullying would be held on July 25, 2023.

Cyberbullying Amongst Teenagers
These days, teenage culture would be incomplete without digital communication devices. In the United States, research shows that about half of all teenagers (54%) own tablets, and nearly half (42%), have their own cell phones. Teenagers who did not have access to the internet were represented by just 13% of the total. Thus, cyberbullying is becoming more common among teenagers, and they are at risk of being victims, perpetrators, or bystanders to such incidents.

Research shows that social media, particularly Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat, Whatsapp, Youtube, and Twitter, are common
platforms for cyberbullying. Instagram had the highest percentage at 42%, followed by Facebook at 37%, Snapchat at 31%, Whatsapp at 12%, Youtube at 10%, and Twitter at 9% (Figure 3).

![Figure 3. Cyberbullying in some social media platforms (Djuraskovic 2023)](image)

The study by Patchin and Hinduja (2022), revealed that approximately 15% of teenagers had encountered cyberbullying, with 21% of them being involved as targets, offenders, or observers. A significant number of kids experience online cruelty and meanness when engaging in gameplay, interacting with friends, and sharing random or noteworthy moments of their days on social media.

Cyberbullying perpetrators usually possess a deep knowledge of digital communication technology, allowing them to effectively access others’ personal online information, skillfully conceal their digital footprints, occasionally impersonate others, and have the capability to post humiliating content (Aboujaoude et al. 2015; Ferrara et al. 2018).

Numerous teenagers who observe cyberbullying struggle to intervene due to a lack of knowledge on how to address the problem or a fear of exacerbating it if they try to help. The absence of dedicated reporting channels hinders youth from effectively dealing with cyberbullying situations within their community. Hence, it is essential to implement an effective cyberbullying prevention mechanism in the school environment.

**Guidelines to Avoid Cyberbullying**

Teenagers who possess a strong understanding of cyberbullying are likely to swiftly grasp and analyse information for themselves or their peers, allowing them to prevent cyberbullying behaviours at an early stage. Teenagers can cultivate a habit of steering clear of behaviours that contribute to bullying by understanding the risks associated with cyberbullying.

Some consideration steps that teenagers need to take to avoid cyberbullying (Hinduja and Patchin 2015):

- **Be Mindful of Online Behaviour:** Always think before you post or comment online. Avoid engaging in behaviour that could be perceived as hurtful or offensive to others.
- **Protect Your Personal Information:** Be cautious about sharing personal information online, such as your address, phone number, or passwords. This can help prevent cyberbullies from targeting you.
- **Use Privacy Settings:** Familiarize yourself with the privacy settings on social media platforms and adjust them to control who can see your posts and information.
- **Block and Report:** If you experience cyberbullying, don’t hesitate to block the perpetrator and report their behaviour to the platform or website administrators.
- **Seek Support:** Don’t suffer in silence. Reach out to friends, family members, teachers, or counsellors for support if you’re being cyberbullied. Talking to someone can help you cope with the situation and find solutions.
- **Maintain Offline Relationships:** Balance your online activities with real-life interactions. Spend time with friends and family offline to maintain strong relationships and support networks.
- **Educate Yourself:** Stay informed about cyberbullying and its effects. Understanding the issue can help you recognize when it’s happening and take appropriate action.
- **Promote Kindness and Respect:** Be a positive influence online by treating others with kindness and respect. Stand up against cyberbullying and support those who are targeted.
• Monitor Online Activity: Keep an eye on your online accounts and monitor for any signs of cyberbullying. If you notice suspicious behaviour or receive hurtful messages, take action to protect yourself.

From the community perspective, especially in school environments, school officials along with parents need to collaborate and spread the message that cyberbullying behaviour is unacceptable under any circumstances, both within and outside the school environment.

Especially from the school environment perspective, to prevent cyberbullying incidents, it is necessary to cultivate better quality relationships between teachers and students (Helweg-Larsen et al. 2012), increase support from teachers to establish bullying prevention systems (Haynes et al. 1997), and consistent school regulations for addressing bullying (Cohen et al. 2009).

Campaign Evaluation
As previously explained, all materials related to this campaign are described in detail, accompanied by interactive materials, and supported by campaign pamphlets distributed to all audiences from the beginning of the event. The explanations provided by the speakers are closely related to the content in the pamphlet, so it is expected that audiences can be more enthusiastic and understand the content of the campaign. At the dissemination stage, the campaign organizer conducts a brief evaluation of the implementation of this activity, especially on the increase in awareness among the audiences. The campaign organizer conducts a question-and-answer activity with prizes for all campaign audiences, where the questions asked are closely related to the cyberbullying campaign material.

As we can see from Table 1, several feedback questions were given to the audience as a form of evaluation of the ongoing campaign activity. From the sample of response answers from the audience, we can conclude that there is an increase in awareness of cyberbullying among the audience of this campaign.

Table 1. Feedback Question and their response some audiences

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<th>Feedback Question</th>
<th>Student Response</th>
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| "What would you do if you feel like a victim of cyberbullying?" | #1. "Asking for help from parents and teachers so that we can calm ourselves and break free from the shackles of cyberbullying."
#2. "Immediately block the cyberbully's account and ensure to report the account directly to the school authorities and parents."
#3. "Reach-out and discuss with close friends and always try to open up to relieve ourselves from the pressure of cyberbullying."
| "What is the best way to avoid cyberbullying?"           | #1. "Distance ourselves from friends who have a negative impact on us and always build friendships by fostering positive interactions with others."
#2. "Being aware of the dangers of cyberbullying and ensuring ourselves does not engage in cyberbullying behavior."
#3. "Get used to not being too fixated on the online world, especially social media, and it would be better to play and interact with friends." |

Summary
It is expected that following this campaign activity, both the school officials and the students will be able to identify and detect incidents of cyberbullying. Schools play an important role in preventing cyberbullying, despite situations where bullying does not happen on school grounds or during the school day. The school officials must recognize the importance of developing policies and implementing programs designed to address cyberbullying acts as well as the norms and social values of students. Differentiating between minor and severe cases of cyberbullying is crucial. Most minor incidents can likely be addressed proactively before they develop into more significant issues (Notar et al. 2013). For the purpose of preventing students from engaging in activities that constitute cyberbullying, whether they take place inside or outside of the school setting, the ability to recognize, prevent, and report instances of cyberbullying should be taught to every student so that they are aware of the consequences that are associated with each action.

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