Social Media as a Channel and its Implications on Cyber Bullying

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Abstract: This research aims to provide an explanation on the role of social media as a channel and its implications in cyber bullying. It focuses on the problems of bullying that happens in the cyberspace. Qualitative approach was utilized for the study. It involves methods of data collection and analysis that are non-quantitative. The researcher relies on the data provided by the chosen key informants who were experts in their respective fields. The findings explicated that social media has become a channel (1) to bring its users in the cyber space where things that are impossible in the real world are made possible; (2) to provide a person in the cyber space more power through the mask of anonymity; (3) to let unwarranted use of power dominance; and (4) to allow information to travel fast. It also elucidated the legal and ethical implications for cyber bullying in the social media. The findings indicated that social media can be used to do massive information dissemination to encourage people make themselves aware of the possible impact and consequences of using social media. It was concluded that social media possess distinct characteristics that make it a gratifying tool for cyber bullies. Social media therefore has real-time updating, has widespread dissemination of information, is a rallying point for people, is open to anonymity, has instantaneousness, has the ability to reach wide audience, is cheap, has a connection to power dynamics, can make an information to go viral, is open to making other social network users to respond or generate feedback, can build up and generate support from others, can assure cyber bullies of the impact of their actions, and is very empowering.

Key Words: social media; channel; cyber bullying; implications