Psicología Educativa xxx (2017) xxx–xxx

Psicología Educativa

www.elsevier.es/psed

Original

Cybergossip and cyberbullying during primary school years

Inés C. López-Pradas, Eva M. Romera*, José A. Casas, Rosario Ortega-Ruiz[1]

University of Córdoba, Spain

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:
Received 22 December 2016
Accepted 2 May 2017
Available online xxx

Keywords:
Gossip
Cybergossip
Cyberaggression
Cybervictimization
Primary education

ABSTRACT

The use of social networking sites and instant messaging apps, despite playing a key role in building social relations, poses a risk, such as cybergossip. This research focused on the study and measurement of the cybergossip phenomenon and the psychometric properties of the Cybergossip-Q-Primary instrument. Cybergossip involvement in the development of cyberbehaviours performed in cyberbullying was analyzed. The European Cyberbullying Intervention Project Questionnaire (ECIPQ) was adapted to primary school-age children. The sample comprised 866 students (52.9% girls) with ages ranging from 10 to 13years ($M = 11.21$, $SD = 0.90$). Using both exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses, the fit of a one-dimensional structure for the cybergossip instrument and a two-dimensional structure for cyberbullying (cyberaggression and cybervictimization) were contrasted. A structural equations analysis revealed a significant relationship between cybergossip and cyberbullying. The results in relation to cybergossip, cyberaggression, cybervictimization, and the consequences of misinterpreting information are discussed.

© 2017 Colegio Oficial de Psicólogos de Madrid. Published by Elsevier España, S.L.U. This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC-ND license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/).

El cibercotilleo y el ciberacoso en la enseñanza primaria

Palabras clave:
Cotilleo
Cibercotilleo
Ciberagresión
Cibervictimización
Enseñanza primaria

RESUMEN

A pesar de que la utilización de redes sociales y de aplicaciones de mensajería instantánea juega un papel muy importante para establecer relaciones sociales, supone riesgos como el cibercotilleo. Esta investigación se ha centrado en el estudio y medición de este fenómeno y de las propiedades psicométricas del cuestionario de cibercotilleo, *Cybergossip-Q-Primary*. Se analiza la implicación del cibercotilleo en la formación de los cibercomportamientos presentes en el ciberacoso. Se adaptó el Cuestionario del Proyecto Europeo de Intervención en el Ciberacoso a niños en edad escolar. La muestra constaba de 866 alumnos (el 52.9% niñas) en edades comprendidas entre los 10 y 13 años ($M = 11.21$, $DT = 0.90$). Mediante análisis factoriales exploratorio y confirmatorio se contrastó el ajuste de una estructura unidimensional en el instrumento de cibercotilleo y bifactorial en el de ciberacoso (ciberagresión y cibervictimización). El análisis de ecuaciones estructurales mostró una relación significativa entre el cibercotilleo y el ciberacoso. Se comentan los resultados relativos al cibercotilleo, la ciberagresión y la cibervictimización, así como las consecuencias que conlleva malinterpretar la información.

© 2017 Colegio Oficial de Psicólogos de Madrid. Publicado por Elsevier España, S.L.U. Este es un artículo Open Access bajo la licencia CC BY-NC-ND (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/).

Social networking sites and instant messaging applications have become virtual platforms that, actively, promote the emergence, development, and maintaining of various types of relationships and behaviours via information and communication technologies (Boyd, 2008; Chang & Cheng, 2014; Davenport, Bergman, Bergman, & Fearrington, 2014; Ellison, Vitak, Gray, & Lampe, 2014; Valkenburg & Peter, 2009). Social networking use is widespread and forms an integral part of the social lives of teens, adults and, increasingly more so, young boys and girls. Findings from recent studies connected to the Net Children Go Online project (EU Kids Online), which addresses the impact that the changes regarding

* Corresponding author. Avda. San Alberto Magno, s/n. 14004 Córdoba, Spain.
E-mail address: eva.romera@uco.es (E.M. Romera).
[1] Visiting Professor at Greenwich University. United Kingdom

http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.pse.2017.05.007
1135-755X/© 2017 Colegio Oficial de Psicólogos de Madrid. Published by Elsevier España, S.L.U. This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC-ND license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/).

Please cite this article in press as: López-Pradas, I. C., et al. Cybergossip and cyberbullying during primary school years. *Psicología Educativa* (2017), http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.pse.2017.05.007

Internet usage conditions has on online security among young boys and girls, have reported social network use to be the activity that 9 to 12 year olds spend the most time and attention on (27% of 9 to 10 year olds and 60% of 11 to 12 year olds have a social network profile), despite the fact that the presence of minors on such sites is legally restricted to 16 year-old users and over approximately (Mascheroni & Cuman, 2014), and is prohibited in some countries. Furthermore, as indicated by Livingstone, Haddon, Vicent, Mascheroni, and Ólafsson (2014), 41% of those aged between 9 and 16 use instant messaging services.

Social networking sites and instant messaging apps enable users to socially interact with one another as well as publish and share personal and social information among followers and friends, as is the case of Facebook, Instagram, Tuenti, Twitter, and WhatsApp (Chang & Chen, 2014; Davenport et al., 2014; Lee, 2014; Reinecke & Trepte, 2014; Spies & Margolin, 2014). This group of online platforms is characterized as having a public, semi-public, or private profile (Oh, Ozkaya, & LaRose, 2014; Reinecke & Trepte, 2014). Instant messaging apps such as WhatsApp allow messages, photos, videos, and recordings to be shared and spread imminently and in real time. Despite lacking a social profile, a Google or Apple account is required to be able to access them.

Gossip

The interactions that take place in cyberspace are commonly referred to as cyberbehaviours (Ortega, Del Rey, & Sánchez, 2012); they play a key role in the socialization process by enabling individuals to broaden their social networks. The content of the messages that result from these interactions can take on different nuances with varying characteristics. In moral terms, they can be classed as positive, negative or neutral, as is the case of *gossip*, namely comments made about other people. This phenomenon has been widely recognized in real world situations, where approximately 70% of conversation time is seen to involve this type of talk (Emler, 1994). However, scientific studies assessing the nature of gossip as an emerging and interactive behaviour that occurs in the virtual world of social networking sites and instant messaging apps are limited. This type of cyberbehaviour is known as *cybergossip* (Laghi et al., 2013; Oluwole, 2009; Subramanian, 2013).

Definition and Characteristics of Gossip

Before analysing the phenomenon of cybergossip, it is necessary to revisit the concept of gossip, recognized as a form of seemingly innocent conversations that always involve evaluative nuances expressed by two or more people about somebody who is not present (Foster, 2004; Levin & Arluke,1987; McDonald, Putallaz, Grimes, Kupersmidt, & Coie, 2007). These are situation-based conversations, where the message being conveyed and its interpretation depend on the message's context and its features (Foster, 2004; Guerin & Miyazaki, 2003; Wert & Salovey, 2004). This behaviour is characterized as being subordinate to the interests of the person spreading the gossip (Levin & Arluke, 1987). There is no doubt that gossip impacts on the inner workings of the social group in which it occurs. This impact may be inclusive; positive gossip may help someone new become accepted in a group or could make more popular which was already part of it.

Meanwhile, gossip of a negative or devaluative nature may result in a person being kicked out of the group by its other members, thus losing credibility and social status (Hartung & Renner, 2013; Levin & Arluke, 1987; Turner, Mazur, Wendel, & Winslow, 2003).

The development of behaviours linked to gossip depends on the group's own normative beliefs; for example, those associated with the acceptance or rejection of gossip and the support the group attributes to this conduct (Eder & Enke, 1991; Foster, 2004; Low, Frey, & Brockman, 2010), as well as the person's level of maturity when it comes to interacting and communicating with their peers (Björkqvist, Lagerspetz, & Kaukiainen, 1992) and the topic being discussed (Nevo, Nevo, & Derech-Zehavi, 1993). Furthermore, it should be noted that the status and popularity of the gossiper play a very important role in the use, spread, and credibility of what is being said (Levin & Arluke, 1987; McDonald et al., 2007; Watson, 2012).

For gossip to flourish, one must belong to a social group where trust among its members prevails, sharing the same values and standards, which in turn facilitates the delivery, interpretation, evaluation, and spread of gossip. Moreover, this talk, in a cybergossip setting, needs to be short and to the point acceptable and interesting (Cole & Scrivener, 2013; Dunbar, 2004; Levin & Arluke, 1987; McAndrew, 2014). Finally, it is imperative that the other person who is being spoken about behind their back is familiar to the group and onlookers (Guerin & Miyazaki, 2003; McDonald et al., 2007; Rosnow & Fine, 1976).

Functions and Basic Structure of Gossip

Gossip about other people implies a series of intentions that enable us to interpret the message. Thus, gossip may perform different functions according to the specific intentions. These include: a) to inform, which refers to spreading information to other people; b) to entertain and derive enjoyment from this activity; c) to build friendships and maintain them via a shared understanding of social standards and the creation and nurturing of bonds involving closeness and trust; and d) influence, whereby gossip is used as a means of interfering in the way the listeners react towards and view the other person being gossiped about (Cox, 1970; Foster, 2004). The performance and fulfilment of these functions require an unconscious yet observable use of the gossip phenomenon's basic structure: 1) the first moment when the person (target) of the gossip episode is identified; 2) evaluation of and immersion into the gossip deemed negative, positive, or neutral and which influences how the listeners might interpret the gossip being communicated; and 3) responses, which covers the level of support from the listeners, the expansion of evaluation by the onlookers, the request for clarification, and the explanation or over-reaction from the aforementioned group (Eder & Enke, 1991).

Measuring Gossip

The gossip phenomenon has primarily been measured through observation, identified as a socially enhancing behaviour that promotes the exchange and adoption of socially and culturally driven learning experiences (Baumeister, Zhang, & Vohs, 2004; Hartung & Renner, 2013; Wert & Salovey, 2004). However, research which has used a self-report measure to assess gossip has identified it as an inherent and defining dynamic of indirect relational aggression: The Direct and Indirect Aggression Scale (DIAS) (Björkqvist, Lagerspetz, & Österman, 1992) and The Indirect/Social/Relational Aggression scale (ISRA) (Coyne, Archer, & Eslea, 2006). In fact, it has been treated as a must-prevent behaviour in anti-bullying programmes (Committee for Children, 2001; Low et al., 2010). Wert and Salovey (2004) suggested that this construct should be measured as an independent phenomenon, moving away from the reductionist view of gossip which identifies it as a form of relational aggression. The Gossip Functions Questionnaire (Foster, 2004) adopted this all-encompassing vision of the concept, although the validation results were not conclusive.

This information makes us to plan an analysis which led us to design a questionnaire about cybergossip, as an independent

Please cite this article in press as: López-Pradas, I. C., et al. Cybergossip and cyberbullying during primary school years. *Psicología Educativa* (2017), http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.pse.2017.05.007

Download English Version:

https://daneshyari.com/en/article/7275990

Download Persian Version:

https://daneshyari.com/article/7275990

Daneshyari.com