Cyber-Bullying Trends Using Social Media Platform: An Analysis through Malaysian Perspectives

Mohd Arsad Johanis¹, Amirul Ridzuan Abu Bakar² and Fauziah Ismail¹
¹School of Human Development and Technocommunication (iKOM), Universiti Malaysia Perlis (UniMAP)
²Department of Chemical Engineering Technology, Faculty of Engineering Technology, Universiti Malaysia Perlis (UniMAP)

a mohdarsad@unimap.edu.my

Abstract. In modern era, existing technologies have gone through several phases of innovation and development in line with today's demand. These changes in positive manners facilitate and ease us in many things that were previously thought difficult to solve. As these technologies progress, social media has emerged as one of many preferable platforms of communication in today’s society. However, in the light of today's obsession with social media, society particularly tends to apprehends in negative cultures such as cyberbullying. In the past, bullying behavior occurred only at certain ages in certain places such as among teenagers, women, at work or school. At that time bullying could be seen either physically or verbally compared to today’s approach attributed significantly with the use of social media due to the modernization of technologies. Many psychoanalysis issues resulting from these irresponsible individuals throwing words at the cyberbullying victims are becoming a millennial disease. Evidences prove that there is no discrimination in cyberbullying as it applies to all individuals regardless of their status and background. Hence, it is time for the government to intervene and address this issues arising from the act of bullying.

Keywords: Cyberbullying, Psychology, Society, Technology and Social Media

1. Introduction
Nowadays, technologies have evolved significantly in influencing human daily lifestyle (Johanssen, 2019). It is no doubt that most member of the society are exposed directly or indirectly with the evolving era, and eventually promotes positive impact in everyday chores as it becomes easier and faster to solve with the convenience of technology. In addition, distance, time and cost are much more convenient to handle in today’s civilization compared to previous era with the help of technology. For example, it is estimated that at least one smartphone is owned by a person, boosting the capability to communicate through voice or video, benefitting in many aspects. Though this sophisticated technology brings benefit, it is also suggested that a person may not be able to perform well without the existence of a smartphone (Johanssen, 2019).

Communication network are expanding encouraging the use of new technology to communicate in today’s civilization as shown by most people having access to wireless local area networking (WIFI) either at home or on their smartphones (Rashid, 2016). In addition, researchers also point out that the presence of new applications aimed at connecting people such as WhatsApp’s, Facebook,
Twitter, Instagram and many other downloadable applications from various sources has further accelerated the use of technology regarding social media. Though most users enjoy this expanding communication network technologies, there are some who take advantage implying negativity to hurt other users emotionally and psychologically using the world wide webs and social media platforms as new act of bullying (Kipper & Ramey, 2013). This new trend of bullying is now known as cyber bullying because it uses the available technology and applications intended to either insult, curse and insult other people (Rashid, 2016). At first it seems that the situation is not that serious, but after various incidents leading to depression, lack of confidence, extreme shame and some other major psychological issues, this act of bullying are considered dangerous and required a great deal of scrutiny from the government (Kipper & Ramey, 2013).

Additionally, the public looks confident and courageous through the use of these social media platforms (Harosh & Erastus, 2018). This is proved when without any hesitation they can justly scoff, insult and drop the dignity of others when they feel the need to do so. Their justice depends only on the level of their understanding about the issue, hence it is not surprising that they are confident and courageous in their act of bullying (Kipper & Ramey, 2013). These research also point out that not only does it bring shame, it also slanders the victims. The value of today’s society is slowly diminished simply because the misuse of technology and social media by cyber-bullier, acting on their own accords without understanding the consequences to others (Kipper & Ramey, 2013).

2. Previous studies
According to Malaysian Institute for Youth Development Research, in 2013 alone, the act of cyber-bullying increase by an astonishing 55.6 % compared to previous year. It is estimated that 389 cyberbullying cases averaging 62.3 % in teenagers were victimized while the remaining 37.7 % had never experienced cyberbullying (Malaysian Institute for Youth Development Research, 2017). Corresponding with this source, if the value were simplified, approximately 7 out of 10 teenagers have been the victims of cyberbullying. The percentage of youths that had been cyber-bullied in Malaysia by race showed that the Malays having the highest cases with 67.5 %, followed by Sarawakians with 63.6 %, Indians with 52.6 %, the Chinese and Sabah Bumiputeras were 51.4 % and 48.1 % respectively (Research Institute Malaysian Youth Development, 2017). Women were mostly bullied with 58.19 % while men with 41.81 %. The number of platform-based cyberbullying cases also showed a significant difference with Facebook topping the chart (67.6 %), followed by phone usage (59.11 %), Chatroom/Forum (17.66 %), Twitter (14.75 %), Instagram (11.96 %), instant messaging (9.87 %), email (8.13 %), blog (6.62 %) and the lastly YouTube (4.3 %) (Malaysian Youth Development Research Institute, 2017).

3. The issues
There are various issues that can be identified from bullying using social media. One of it is abusing its platform (Johanssen, 2019). Misuse of this technological platforms are definitely happening in society as exposure to these new gadgets become common (Johanssen, 2019). Though nowadays getting new and sophisticated gadgets seem to be easy, it should be stated that in previous era, having one or two gadgets such as hand phone are luxurious as these gadgets does not come cheap. Contradict to previous era, since nowadays there are many manufacturers producing gadgets, the price can be reduced at an affordable rate (Johanssen, 2019). As a result, the ability to own a gadget increases as well as the public's understanding of its importance. Though having a smartphone today is a must, there are a small number of those who have misused this technology for their benefit to slander, curse and curse others (Johanssen, 2019). The power of possession is misused for improper purposes contributing to the issue of cyberbullying (Klein, 2012).

This issue of bullying continuously happens due to the behavior of today’s society in particular love to exaggerate an issue by sharing a story or video online (Klein, 2012). This has led to the occurrence of cyberbullying in groups and sometimes up to millions of individuals involved in a single
uploaded and viral issue (Klein, 2012). Even though the original intention is just to share the story, it can be backfired to cyberbullying when every comments that came with the words of contempt indirectly causing embarrassment and sadness to the individuals and families involved directly with these viral issues. It is unfair for the victims of bullying, as most non-traditionalists or outsiders who read it tend to blame the victims and unwilling to look at the facts of the bully (Klein, 2012). Thus, the victims of bullying will continue to be in unfavorable situations and may not be able to clear their name or escape from the negative treatment they faced (Klein, 2012).

Another problem arises from these cyberbullying activity is the erosion of moral values in society (Kipper & Ramey, 2013). This aspect is often associated with attitudes and culture in a society (Rashid & Mohamad, 2016). The erosion of values within the members of society is at an alarming state due to the impact of technologies (Kipper & Ramey, 2013). In the past, people are able to keep their word and are ashamed to say something outrageous or deviate from society's norms, but nowadays ridicule word is cheap, words of contempt are lightened and the tendency to respect others are a thing at the past (Rashid & Mohamad, 2016). It is time for all parties without blaming other, to reestablish this already tainted value in order to prevent it from being buried and drowning due to the advancement of technology (Kipper & Ramey, 2013).

Lack of legal attention toward the cyberbullying issue is also a problem the society faced today (Kipper & Ramey, 2013). The government under the ministries should actively play roles in tending the problem arises from cyberbullying as these unmoral activities happens without any borders (Kipper & Ramey, 2013). Reviewing the law and legislation affecting social sites and the use of this technology to curb the evil hands of a society should be continuously conduct to prevent the misuse of today’s technology.

Cyberbullying also directly disrupted the harmony in an affected society (Rashid & Mohamad, 2016). Harmony can be defined as the ability of individuals and societies to socialize well in their environment. As a result of cyberbullying, it is becoming more like entertainments to certain people, the harmony in society is waning, as there are no restrictions and barriers in current society compared to the past (Kipper & Ramey, 2013). Uploading unmoral photos or videos without the victim consent, bombarding them with crushing negative intended words will continue to flourish in society. All of these are the cause of disruptive harmony that previously never experienced. The effects of evil are worsening each day and the victims are continuously oppressed (Kipper & Ramey, 2013).

4. Psychological impact in individual and community

There are many psychological effects due to cyberbullying issues involving the victims. These effects and consequences were thoroughly discussed in a detail manners regarding cyberbullying issues (Gray & Bjorklund, 2014). The first effect is the collapse of one's self-esteem. When an individual is exposed to cyber bullying, this may directly affect the individual's dignity and may result the victim to lack in confidence when dealing with the surrounding community that could worsen when involving personal matters. If the victim is unable to cope with the sadness or shame surrounding them, the victim could distance themselves from others with the feeling inappropriate for them to contact directly. From a family standpoint, cyberbullying can affect the household of an individual, as there are certainly many questions and answers need to explain, fight will occur, trust will be broken and a relationship can be destroyed beyond imaginable (Gray & Bjorklund, 2014).

Another consequence from cyberbullying issue is depression. Depression is defined as anxiety, sadness and extreme guilt that a person felt (Groome et.al., 2014). Depression that occurred through cyberbullying is usually fast-paced due to involvement of hundreds or thousands of people giving negative verbal forms of speech regarding a viral issue (Groome et.al., 2014). Hence, individual involved as the cyberbullying victim are likely to experience depression symptoms such as sleep deprivation, over-thinking about an issue, problems with food digestion, and frequently feeling sad (Groome et.al., 2014). If individuals who are the victims of this kind of bullying does not know take care of this problem, it will lead to more serious cases such as self-harm or even suicide (Groome et.al., 2014).
Suicidal thought occurs repeatedly in a depressed person. This problem could be the worst outcome in cyberbullying issues (Groome et al., 2014). Suicidal cases are usually related to personal issues and the victim are customary with women (Gray & Bjorklund, 2014). Before reaching the level of suicide, it takes place step by step as stated in the preceding per mentioned. There are many cases abroad suggesting the dangers of cyberbullying and it takes place regardless of the individual's background (Gray & Bjorklund, 2014). Therefore, individuals who are aware of this need to collectively address the issue of cyberbullying whether they are bullying or victimization (Groome et al., 2014).

5. Intervention

There are a number of suggestions that can be submitted in addressing cyber-bullying issue. One important suggestion is to strengthening the role parents in educating their children. Parents should not only educate their children using the preferable methods and expecting others contribute also for their children knowledge and education, but they also need aware of current events and learn new knowledge about this current era. Parents should increase the knowledge regarding the latest technology so that they can at least say something good to their generation. In addition, positive values in everyday life need to be emphasized as this will indirectly make their children realize the importance of positive values are not only limited to everyday life but also extend to the use of social media and technology.

Besides parenting method, authorities can also play their part by leveraging the power of mass media such as television and advertising on the broadband network to constantly emphasize and reprimand the entire population so that civilian are aware of this cyberbullying issue. Enforcing this is a straightforward method that authorities can achieved as the they hold the jurisdiction in keeping civilian safe. Psychologically, every person who is educated and are being positively criticized on a daily basis will be easily molded to be a good citizen. Even if it is time consuming, at least an appropriate action has been taken, rather than simply banning on-off or better known by an expressions touch and go. The problems of cyberbullying will certainly be mitigated gradually and the quality of life of a society will gradually improve. Concurrently, a more moral society can be achieved in the future.

Moreover, the authorities can use the same approach, enforcing a more severe law and legislation to ensure that blasphemous, defamatory, cursing and other forms of bad words can be refined using various application and in turn can help to reduce cyberbullying among members of the public. There are many experts in this country that can assist in resolving this issue if it is taken seriously by the government for the sake of peace.

On the school's part, the teaching approach by school needs to be improved. This is because students in primary and secondary schools today are different compared to previous era. The moral and religious issues in students, whether they are Muslim or non-Muslim, need to be strengthened. A thorough amendment on today’s syllabus need to be made adding more experts in various area giving opinions and thought to cure this problem to realize the solution. It is approximately 11 or 12 years’ student being educated in school hence we can believe they are equipped to face reality and real world expectations.

Imposing strict laws such as prison and penalties for cyberbullying offenders is suggested to reduce this unmoral behavior. The government in particular needs to take these offenders more seriously because it is crime and have dangerous consequences as the cyberbullying offenders are more difficult to identify compared to the physical offender. Therefore, it is proposed that the existing legislation on cyber-crime to be re-evaluated and strengthened for the benefit of the Malaysians’ public. Certainly there are appropriate laws in other countries can be refer as a guide for cybercrime offenders. Technology will evolve continuous and if this is not taken seriously, cyberbullying will continue to grow and infected our society, leading to disruptive civilization.
Another aspect that can be strengthened to intervene this problem is to highlight and improve the career of counselors in all institutions. Adding counselors in various departments is predicted to reduce cyberbullying issues and help victims to recover from these traumatic events. In general, a department has 2 or 3 people as a counselor, increasing the workloads far beyond their capability. Hence, it is time for the government to re-evaluate and understand the importance of having appropriate so that it could occupied the needs of the victim due to the role of counselors is extremely need in organization and society as they involved in issues involving psychiatry, prevention, and etc.

6. Conclusion
All the problems related to society and technology can still be avoided if we understand the trigger and culprits. Therefore, through this paper it is hoped that all parties mentioned directly or indirectly will work together to address this cybercrime offense rather than letting it continue to spread in our society. The main concern of researchers in this matter is the inclusion of cyberbullying culture in human life. This is problematic as cyberbullying seems to have become a norm in the culture and social issue in Malaysia. It is hoped that these suggestions can be taken as a positive input to eradicate cyberbullying culture among Malaysian citizens.

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