Paper presentation

Abstract title: Cyberbullying and subjective health. A large-scale study of school pupils in Stockholm, Sweden

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Abstract:
The increase in the use of mobile phones and the internet has given rise to new opportunities for people to meet and to communicate. However, there are also dark sides of these new ways of communication. One negative aspect is cyberbullying, i.e., bullying via mobile phones and the internet. Given that cyberbullying is a relatively new phenomenon, empirical knowledge is still limited and particularly so for the case of Sweden, which in an international perspective has reported low rates of bullying in general. The aim of the study is to investigate: 1) the prevalence of cyberbullying among students in Stockholm, Sweden; 2) the overlap between cyberbullying and “in-real-life” (IRL) bullying at school, and 3) the association between experiences of cyberbullying and subjective health. The study uses the Stockholm School Survey of 2008 which is a total population survey of students in grade 9 of compulsory school (i.e. age 15-16) and in the second year of upper secondary school (i.e. age 17-18) in Stockholm and eighteen of its surrounding municipalities (n=22544). About five per cent of the students are victims of cyberbullying, four per cent are victimizers, and two per cent are both victims and victimizers. There is some overlap between cyberbullying and IRL bullying: those who are victims of IRL bullying are at an increased risk of being victims also of cyberbullying; and being a victimizer of IRL bullying is strongly associated with the risk of being a victimizer also of cyberbullying. Still, large
shares of students who are involved in cyberbullying are not involved in IRL bullying. OLS regression analyses show that being a victim of cyberbullying is associated with worse subjective health, also when victimization of IRL bullying is taken into account. In addition, victimizers of cyberbullying as well as students who are both victims and victimizers, have worse subjective health compared with those who are not involved in cyberbullying.