Gender, racialization and sexual orientation: a common ground for aggression in the form of cyberbullying and online hate speech

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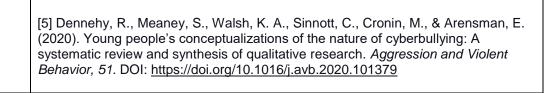Universidad Pontificia Comillas
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Bullying and its virtual form, cyberbullying, are often presented as universal phenomena that can be suffered by any student. However, if we look at the risk factors, we find issues such as gender [1], race [2] or sexual orientation [3] to be relevant to becoming a victim, which shows how inseparable these forms of aggression are from the social structure and the inequalities that permeate it. If bullying can be understood as a way to gain power and status among peers [4], and its victims are singled out for their physical and social characteristics [5], these characteristics are inseparable from the prevailing values in a given sociohistorical context.

In order to explore this issue further, 8 focus groups were conducted in five European countries (Estonia, Spain, Portugal, Greece and Slovakia) with young people between 12 and 17 years of age and a survey was implemented with a representative sample of 682 students from the Madrid region. The paper presents the results of part of the research conducted for the European H2020 Rayuela project on cybercrime and minors.

The results confirm the risk factors outlined above and also show a large overlap between forms of cyber aggression: the majority of those who claimed to be perpetrators of cyberbullying also acknowledged having carried out acts of cyberhate, in the form of sexism, racism and LGTBIphobia online. Similarly, the main risk factors for suffering cyberhate (being a woman, having migrant background or being non heterosexual) are also the main risk factors for suffering cyberbullying as well.Thus, the idea that "anyone can be a victim", although it may promote empathy and identification, at the same time hides the power relations and inequalities that run through the online socialization of minors.

Keywords	*Online hate speech, cyberbullying, sexism, LGTBphobia, racism, teenagers, cyberhate*

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