

## Virtual bullying: psycho-emotional causes and consequences in adolescent's victims of cyberbullying

Bullying virtual: causas e consequências psicoemocionais em adolescentes vítimas de cyberbullying

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### Abstract

One form of bullying has been more frequent and has gained space in the media and in the scientific community, virtual bullying, or cyberbullying, which has consequences as serious as the traditional ones. Like bullying, cyberbullying can be seen as a public health issue, as a phenomenon that significantly affects the development of children and adolescents, causing short, medium, and long-term consequences. Therefore, the aim of this paper is to analyze and discuss the aspects of this form of aggression through social media, conceptualizing and differentiating it from traditional bullying, focusing on the psychological consequences of the adolescent in the position of victim of cyber aggression. In effect, a bibliographic research was conducted, without specific date criteria, of exploratory nature, where theoretical and empirical studies of authors/researchers were used, such as: Cortés et al. (2021); Hinduja & Patchin, (2020); De Oliveira (2016), among other authors/researchers who permeate the theme of Cyberbullying, the causes and psycho-emotional consequences of adolescents in the context of virtual aggressions, and the context of violence of the victims. We used the following data platforms: Scielo, PePSIC, BVS, BDTD and Google Scholar. The main results suggest that adolescent victims of cyberbullying are more likely to have suicidal ideas, use chemical substances, and present anxiety and depression problems. The study presents that people involved in cyberbullying have lower indicators of self-esteem. We conclude that there is a need for further studies on the subject in Brazil and also the importance of discussing prevention measures and intervention strategies.

**Keywords:** Cyberbullying; Adolescent; Psycho-emotional.

### Resumo

Uma forma de bullying tem sido mais frequente e ganhou espaço na mídia e na comunidade científica, o bullying virtual, ou cyberbullying, que apresenta consequências tão graves quanto as tradicionais. Assim como o bullying, o cyberbullying pode ser visto como uma questão de saúde pública, como um fenômeno que afeta significativamente o desenvolvimento de crianças e adolescentes, causando consequências a curto, médio e longo prazo. Portanto, o objetivo deste artigo é analisar e discutir os aspectos dessa forma de agressão por meio das tecnologias virtuais, conceituando e diferenciando do bullying tradicional, com foco nas consequências psicológicas do adolescente na posição de vítima de ciberagressão. Com efeito, foi realizada uma pesquisa bibliográfica, sem critério de data específica, de natureza exploratória, onde foram utilizados estudos teóricos e empíricos de autores/pesquisadores, tais como: Cortés et al. (2021); Hinduja & Patchin, (2020); De Oliveira (2016), entre outros autores/pesquisadores que permeiam o tema do Cyberbullying e as causas e consequências psicoemocionais dos adolescentes no contexto de agressões virtuais. Utilizamos as seguintes plataformas de dados para auferir embasamento em nossa pesquisa, tais como: Scielo, PePSIC, BVS, BDTD e Google Acadêmico. As discussões sugerem que adolescentes vítimas de cyberbullying têm maiores chances de ter ideias suicidas, usar substâncias químicas e apresentar problemas de ansiedade e depressão. O estudo apresenta que pessoas envolvidas em agressão cibernética apresentam indicadores mais baixos de autoestima. Concluímos que há necessidade de estudos mais aprofundados sobre o assunto no Brasil e também a importância de discutir medidas de prevenção e estratégias de intervenção eficazes.

**Palavras-chave:** Cyberbullying; Adolescente; Psicoemocional.

## Resumen

Una forma de acoso se ha hecho más frecuente y ha ganado espacio en los medios de comunicación y en la comunidad científica, el acoso virtual, o ciberacoso, que tiene consecuencias tan graves como las tradicionales. Al igual que el acoso escolar, el ciberacoso puede considerarse un problema de salud pública, como un fenómeno que afecta significativamente al desarrollo de los niños y adolescentes, provocando consecuencias a corto, medio y largo plazo. Por ello, el objetivo de este artículo es analizar y discutir los aspectos de esta forma de agresión a través de las tecnologías virtuales, conceptualizándola y diferenciándola del bullying tradicional, centrándose en las consecuencias psicológicas del adolescente en la posición de víctima de la ciberagresión. En efecto, se realizó una investigación bibliográfica, sin criterio de fecha específico, de carácter exploratorio, donde se utilizaron estudios teóricos y empíricos de autores/investigadores como: Cortés et al. (2021); Hinduja & Patchin, (2020); De Oliveira (2016), entre otros autores/investigadores que permean el tema del Ciberbullying y las causas y consecuencias psicoemocionales de los adolescentes en el contexto de la agresión virtual. Para fundamentar nuestra investigación hemos utilizado las siguientes plataformas de datos: Scielo, PePSIC, BVS, BDTD y Google Académico. Los debates sugieren que los adolescentes víctimas de ciberacoso son más propensos a tener ideas suicidas, consumir sustancias químicas y presentar problemas de ansiedad y depresión. El estudio presenta que las personas implicadas en el ciberacoso presentan indicadores más bajos de autoestima. Concluimos que es necesario realizar más estudios sobre el tema en Brasil y también la importancia de discutir medidas de prevención y estrategias de intervención eficaces.

**Palabras clave:** Ciberacoso; Adolescente; Psicoemocional.

## 1. Introduction

We live in the digital age, where there is a great influence of the rapid development of the media in the social sphere. The use of technological devices - which aim to exchange information more quickly - has become something almost indispensable in the world, and very attractive to young people. With this, the violence that used to be confined to the physical space now also manifests itself virtually through moral aggression.

Cyberbullying is presented as a form of aggression practiced in the virtual environment, being an act of intentional moral aggression that aims to harm and damage the public image of someone through insults and defamation, causing psychological consequences, such as affecting the self-esteem of the person and in some cases inciting suicide. Cyberbullying can occur through the use of cell phones, internet, e-mails, or any other means of communication, where the victim receives harassing messages, defamatory content, offensive comments on social networks, or when personal content such as compromising images and videos is disclosed without permission.

In that regard, the psycho-emotional consequences of cyberbullying are countless, which can range from low self-esteem, such as the victim's difficulty in relating to others, panic syndrome, depression, and can lead in many circumstances to the apex of the disorder, such as suicide, for example. According to Fante (2005), in this scenario there are also bystanders, who witness the mistreatment and remain silent for fear of reprisals.

Thus, the present study aimed to investigate the influence of cyberbullying on the development of the adolescent victim. It sought to analyze and discuss the concepts of bullying and cyberbullying, and their forms of manifestation, seeking to question the points that differentiate them; to call attention to the psycho-emotional consequences of this practice in the development of the adolescent victim; to present the various roles involved; and to try to identify the risk and protection factors. It aimed to highlight the psychological implications arising from the involvement with this phenomenon for adolescents.

The interest in conducting such a study emerged from a personal and professional curiosity to study more deeply this phenomenon present in several societies, and that has been gaining more space in discussions and research, mainly because of the growing dissemination of fake news. The problem in question requires more in-depth studies in Brazil in order to have a better understanding about the functioning of this behavior in our culture. For this reason, this study does not intend to exhaust the question, but to collaborate to enlarge the view about this phenomenon, besides encouraging the debate about the consequences arising from the involvement with this behavior and serve as a source of data for future research.

According to Wendt and Lisboa (2013), research on cyberbullying and the relationship of the influence of the online universe on subjective and emotional aspects of new generations of children and adolescents becomes relevant, because this phenomenon represents a daily challenge for professionals in Education and Health, as well as for those responsible for creating public policies. The authors also point out the relevance of further studies on the complexity of the process of cyber aggression in different cultures, in order to deepen the knowledge about the precise impacts and the best ways to face it.

Adolescence is a phase of human development marked by the transition between childhood and adulthood. There is no exact definition of the beginning and end of adolescence, as it depends on several factors such as genes, nutrition and culture. However, it is estimated that it starts around 11 or 12 years old and extends until before or after 20 years, being two or three years earlier in girls than in boys (Papalia & Feldman, 2013). It is a period of transformations where the teenager goes through several physical, cognitive, sexual, emotional, and psychosocial changes.

This phase is marked by the beginning of puberty, which is the process of sexual maturation and reproductive capacity in which there are bodily and biological changes due to the large production of hormones that significantly influence the behavior of adolescents. Therefore, it appears that there is a secular trend where young people are entering puberty at an earlier age, that from previous generations the most plausible explanation for this trend would be an improvement in the standard of living and hormonal and sociocultural stimuli (Papalia & Feldman, 2013). It is also on this face that adolescents are more vulnerable and exposed to health risks, as well as violence, early pregnancy, abortion, alcohol, and drug use, in addition to STD/SIDA (Araújo et al., 2009).

Due to the greater vulnerability to the risks to which the adolescent is exposed and the need to act in a way that breaks with adult values, sometimes the attachment to a group may not have a positive function. The group directly influences the behavior of young people, leading them at certain times to act and get involved in different situations than if they were alone (Araújo et al., 2009).

Given this need for belonging and the expansion of social interaction with groups, the Internet appears as a very attractive means of communication and information for adolescents. We can define it as a set of data and communication networks on a global scale that allows communication, information exchange, resources and services among millions of people (Gonçalves & Nuernberg, 2012). Therefore, we live in the digital age where there is a great influence of the fast development of the media in the social sphere. The use of technological devices that aim the exchange of information with more agility, has become something almost indispensable worldwide. As a result, there have been changes in behavior and in the ways of relating to family and friends (Estefenon & Eisenstein, 2008).

According to Gonçalves and Nuernberg (2012), the internet is so present in our daily lives that many people become dependent thanks to the possibility of creating a world parallel to the real one, where it is possible to live new experiences. Estefenon and Eisenstein (2008) also describe that this virtual world is seen by adolescents as more interesting because it is full of adventures and opportunities. Cyberspace provides an extensive range of content, where one can select the ideal site, a specific channel, or a social network of preference that fits what one wants to transmit and to whom in the chosen time.

The virtual world still offers a new language and diversified resources, anonymity, accessibility, besides being easy to handle. In it, it is possible to do several things at the same time; like performing a search on a search engine, while communicating with friends through a social network, and listening to a new song by a favorite artist. Thus, the virtual world becomes a great attraction for young people, offering greater freedom of communication, alternative ways to express themselves and a faster contact with their peer groups (Spizziri et al., 2012). Social networks appear as the main tool used by adolescents, sometimes considered by them as an extension of their offline life (Assunção & Matos, 2014).

Gonçalves and Nuernberg (2012) point out that through the virtual environment the teenager can realize his ideals, can see and be seen, adopt a new identity, expose content and participate in it. The Internet does not require proximity, which

makes young people establish contacts with people that outside the online universe would not be possible, corroborating in superficial contacts and false intimacy. In addition, it may stimulate the distancing of physical contact, more intimate like the social bonds established in real life. The anonymity, the easy use and the different activities carried out in this virtual environment, along with impulsiveness and the desire of adolescents to know everything, can lead to the feeling that one can do everything ignoring the limits of the real world, leading them to expose themselves excessively and become vulnerable to risks (Gonçalves & Nuernberg, 2012).

In this context, in the virtual environment, cyberbullying can lead to dysfunctions in the social lives of young victims of virtual attacks, which can psycho-emotional problems ranging from depression, self-harm, and suicide (Cortés et al., 2021).

After this introduction, the objectives will be presented, followed by the literature review that addresses cyberbullying. Then the methodology will be revealed and soon after it will be the turn of the discussions. Finally, and closing the research, the conclusion of the work will be presented.

## 2. Methodology

This research paper aims to conduct a survey on the phenomenon of cyberbullying, in order to highlight its consequences in the adolescent phase. To this end, a bibliographic research was conducted with a qualitative approach of exploratory nature on the scientific productions about the topic in question for data collection and analysis.

As defined by Matias-Pereira (2012, pp. 86), bibliographic research is “an approach used to learn about the scientific contributions on a given subject, aiming to collect, analyze and interpret the existing theoretical contributions on a given subject”. In other words, we chose to work with secondary data, which are those pre-existing data obtained by other researchers. Gil (2002) asserts that bibliographic research allows the researcher the advantage of a wider range of phenomena than research conducted directly.

As for the qualitative approach, Matias-Pereira (2012) defines:

It starts from the understanding that there is a dynamic relationship between the real world and the subject, that is, an inseparable link between the objective world and the subjectivity of the subject that cannot be translated into numbers. The interpretation of phenomena and the attribution of meanings are basic in the qualitative research process. They do not require the use of statistical methods and techniques. The natural environment is the direct source for data collection and the researcher is the key instrument. It is descriptive. Researchers tend to analyze their data inductively. The process and its meaning are the primary focuses of approach (p. 87).

Thus, the qualitative approach is not limited to numerical representativeness, but is interested in deepening the understanding of the social interactions of a social phenomenon or group with aspects of reality. This study was carried out from January to March 2022, and the following steps were taken. During our research, we did not establish specific date criteria for the search of academic papers, as we wanted to expand the content of bullying to cyberbullying and considered the diachrony of the terms as a factor of social transformation arising from social media.

Therefore, the study presents as main theoretical references, themes inherent to adolescence, group relations and virtual environment, which treat the themes bullying and cyberbullying in their contexts of verbal aggression, violence that cause psycho-emotional and psychosocial consequences. In this parameter, the texts are based on the research of Cortés et al. (2021); Gonçalves and Nuernberg (2012), Papalia and Feldman (2013), among other authors/researchers that permeate the theme of cyberbullying, the causes and psycho-emotional consequences of adolescents in the context of virtual aggression, and the context of victim violence, which will serve as a guide for this research. Thus, the following research activity question was formulated: Can cyber victimization result in consequences for healthy development in adolescent's victims? Thinking hypothetically and purely based on the researcher's empirical knowledge, one can assume that any form of heated violence can

lead to significant short, medium, and long-term implications for those involved in this type of behavior, be they victims, aggressors, or bystanders.

To answer the above question and reject or confirm the presented hypothesis, an exploratory literature search was conducted, considering that the objective of the research is not to present statistical data and quantify the studies, but to problematize and expand the knowledge about the type of aggressive behavior through technologies. For this purpose, journals, thesis, and dissertations were retrieved from electronic sites (SciELO, PePSIC, BVS, BDTD, and Google Scholar), using the target descriptors (bullying; virtual bullying; cyberbullying; consequences; adolescence), selecting those that presented the greatest relevance to the hypothesis formulated for the purpose of this research. Also included were printed works about peer aggression in the virtual environment in childhood and adolescence.

The exclusion criteria for the researched papers were publications in other languages than English, Portuguese and Spanish, repeated papers, and those that did not fit the proposed theme. We did not choose to restrict the search for papers only in the areas of Education and Psychology, since the objective is not to emphasize only these areas, but rather to seek a reflection on the theme in the several areas of knowledge.

The last step was to read all the chosen papers, paying attention to the content, checking the way the theme was developed and its relevance to what we intend to address, highlighting the main parts of each one, listing the relevant information, and producing content for the formation of the ideas laid out here.

### **3. Discussion**

By cyberbullying we can understand as attacks on an individual by another or a group through the use of technological tools of information and communication, especially cell phones and internet, being an intentional act that seeks to humiliate and defame the image of the victim, where the victim has no means of defending himself (Maldonado, 2011). According to Cortés et al. (2021, pp. 6), "victims of cyberbullying understand digital attacks as provocations to generate anger". However, the emotional reactions of adolescents depend on the content of the attacks, as well as the possibilities for action they have they must stop. Therefore, the most common forms of manifestation of cyberbullying are through e-mails, SMS, instant messaging applications, virtual communities, websites, profiles on social networks, dissemination of compromising photos and videos, comments on photos and password theft (Maldonado, 2011). However, Wendt and Lisboa (2012) point out that there is no consensus on the theoretical and conceptual aspects that cover the subject as a whole, and this could be explained by the fact that new technologies are always emerging and, with them, new behaviors and ways of acting before them. In this way, all the definitions emphasize the use of communication technologies as a way of propagating bullying in the virtual environment (Cortés et al., 2021).

According to Hinduja and Patchin (2020), the general picture of violence is directly linked to poverty and social exclusion, including that of bullying. Maldonado (2011) brings prejudice and discrimination as the most common reasons for bullying and cyberbullying actions. The author also cites envy and jealousy as feelings that are conducive to this type of attack. Studies suggest that this behavior is directly aimed at groups with specific physical characteristics, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, and sexual orientation (Maidel, 2009). Regarding the differences in practices between genders, Vale (2011) points out that boys usually practice bullying in a more exposed and direct way, through physical and sexual aggression. Girls, on the other hand, tend to be more covert and use the indirect practice, through social exclusion and gossip.

With the advent of technology and globalization, the violence that used to be confined to physical space has started to take new forms and to manifest itself in the virtual environment. In this way, a form of bullying has become more frequent and has gained space in the media and in the scientific community, the virtual bullying or cyberbullying, which has consequences

as severe as the traditional one. Considered a recent process with few studies about it, with its first publications in Europe and the United States, cyberbullying is considered a significant factor for the development of children and adolescents (Wendt & Lisboa, 2014).

In a survey conducted by Wendt and Lisboa (2012) with 367 adolescent students from public and private schools in the metropolitan region of Porto Alegre-Brazil, whereby 72.7% of the participants reported at least one incident of cyber aggression in the last six months prior to the survey, and 75.6% reported at least one occurrence of cyber victimization. The same study found that among the most common cyberbullying behaviors were jokes about comments on social networks (50.8%), forum deletion or message blocking (33%), or insults in online forums (25.9%). The most common cyber victimization behaviors were jokes on social networks (39.1%), and insults in online forums (33.6%). Another survey conducted in Brazil by a non-governmental NGO, Plan Brasil, in 2009 with 5,168 Brazilian students aged 11 to 15 years found that of these, 17% had already been victims, 17.7% had practiced, and 3.5% had practiced and been victims (Brazil, 2015).

Another online survey study conducted by De Oliveira (2016) with 453 adolescents aged between 13 and 17 years in the city of Juiz de Fora - MG, found that of the total participants, 67.3% reported at least one episode of cyber aggression and 63.8% of cyber victimization. In addition, 78.6% of the adolescents scored at least one point in the general score for the role of victim or aggressor. In another study by the same author with 70 adolescents, in the same city and age group as the previous one, the most recurrent types of cyberbullying were insults in online forums (20%) and publications of embarrassing photos without authorization (18,6%).

Although cyberbullying is a form of manifestation of bullying in the virtual network, these phenomena have peculiar characteristics that differentiate them, making the former sometimes more harmful. The first difference lies in the concept of repetition of the act. When in bullying there is a very striking repetition, occurring always in the same places and being performed by the same person or group, in cyberbullying this repetition takes a different characteristic, where the aggressor/offender is not directly involved with the action (Maldonado, 2011).

Because the virtual environment enables a fast transmission of information and the reach of a large number of users in just a few seconds, a simple act of the cyberbullies/aggressor can be seen and shared by several other people, not requiring him to continue to replicate his action (Hinduja & Patchin, 2020). An example would be when the offender publishes a photo or video on a social network and then other people who are part of the same network - and that sometimes the victim does not know - start sharing the publication, replicating it several times.

This characteristic of the quick spread of cyberspace gives the cyberbullying action another differentiating element from traditional bullying, the amplitude of the audience. In bullying, the aggressions are restricted to a small group of spectators, as in the case of bullying that occurs at school. In cyberbullying, the audience can reach immeasurable proportions (Rondina et al., 2016). This gives this process a character of permanence, that is, once the information is disclosed on the network, it is seen by thousands of people who can reproduce, share, and save on their computers, which makes it impossible for the information to stop circulating and the acts of victimization do not cease (Wendt & Lisboa, 2013).

One of the most striking differences between the two processes pointed out by Maldonado (2011), is in the knowledge of the person responsible for the attack. Usually in situations of traditional victimization, the victims are aware who their attackers are. In cyberbullying, because it occurs through the mediation of technologies, the offender does not necessarily need to be in the same physical environment as the victim, besides being supported by anonymity. This anonymity is due to the difficulty of finding the person responsible for the action in the virtual network, due to its complexity. As a result of the violence without identity, of the inhumanity of people towards those who are let down by virtual aggressions, young people develop psycho-emotional dysfunctions that affect the functioning of the mind, and consequently, the healthy social life that the victim could lead (Cortés et al., 2021).

Wendt and Lisboa (2014) point out that by being protected by anonymity, the cyberbullying offenders suffer what he calls disinhibition effect, by having their identities preserved young people may feel more confident and courageous, thinking that they will not be held accountable for their actions, in this sense, they have difficulties in containing their impulses and act in the opposite way they would act in real space. Maldonado (2011) mentions that in the virtual environment the aggressors, despite having the intention of causing suffering, have no real notion of the repercussion of their acts on the lives of their victims. When asked about what made them do such an act, they say that it was just a joke or that they did not know why they were doing it. The episodes of bullying and cyberbullying always feature three characters: the victim, the bully, and the bystander, all are likely to cause some type of psycho-emotional disorder. The victims are usually shy and withdrawn, have difficulties in establishing social relationships, are insecure, have characteristics considered out of the standards for adolescents, such as ethnicity, height, physical disability, and weight. They can also be targets for presenting behaviors, religion and school performance different from the group (Vale, 2011).

Maldonado (2011, pp. 18) highlights that “On the other hand, people who stand out for their beauty or intelligence, or who possess coveted objects that denote a better socioeconomic level, due to the envy they arouse, may be chosen as victims.”

Santos (2016) subdivides victims into three groups: typical, provocative, and aggressor. Typical victims are those who have poor socialization skills and cannot react to the insults and aggression they suffer. They are the ones who remain the target the longest because they have difficulties in reporting what happened. On the other hand, the victims considered provocative are those who act in a way to provoke aggressive reactions from their peers against themselves, identifying points in their peers that arouse anger. Hyperactive and impulsive adolescents are usually part of this group. Finally, bullying victims are those who also practice bullying, that is, they compensate for the aggressions they suffer by looking for a victim who is more fragile than them and thus reproducing the same acts (Santos, 2016).

Subjective characteristics can contribute to the person remaining under the attacks of bullying. Thus, an adolescent who internalizes the feelings generated by the aggressions suffered and cannot create coping strategies, ends up carrying the consequences into his adult life. From this fact, to observe how each individual reacts and faces the situation of violence experienced in bullying and cyberbullying may vary from person to person (Maldonado, 2011).

#### **4. Conclusion**

In the globalized world in which we live, new communication and information technologies emerge every day, transforming the way individuals interact socially. Technologies are too present in people's lives and have a direct influence on interpersonal relationships, identity construction, learning methods, new behaviors, development as a whole, and, consequently, on peer violence, such as cyberbullying. Despite the benefits that technologies bring to our daily lives, we must take into consideration the misuse of such tools that can have a more severe repercussion, due to the peculiarities of the virtual environment, such as anonymity and the speed of propagation.

The present study aimed to conceptualize and list the characteristics of cyberbullying, highlighting the consequences of this type of aggression for the healthy development of adolescents. In effect, we discuss the context of the theme, presenting the social actors who suffer from cyberbullying in our society, trying to identify the risks and factors that contribute to involvement with such.

We can observe from the studies found that cyberbullying can have a considerable impact on the self-esteem of adolescents. It has been found that victim-offender girls have lower self-esteem indices, and that boys have lower self-esteem in the role of victim (Bandeira & Hutz, 2010). Depression is associated with online aggression, being a consequence or a predisposition of the involvement with it. Victims and victimizers are more likely to have depressive symptoms than subjects not involved in cyberbullying. Depression can increase the chance of involvement with cyber aggression by 2.70 times (Wendt

& Lisboa, 2012).

Among the many damages caused by cyberbullying we can mention the psycho-emotional and behavioral aspects that are factors that interfere in the learning process and potentiate consequences to the victim's life, such as stress, excessive use of narcotic substances, depression, anxiety, among other problems resulting from virtual aggressions (Matos et al., 2020).

Research has found that adolescents, both victims and aggressors are twice as likely to make suicide attempts as adolescents who are not involved in cyber victimization (Bottino et al., 2015). Adolescents involved with the cyberbullying phenomenon are more likely to make use of psychoactive substances, have self-destructive (Id.) behaviors, and exhibit post-traumatic stress symptoms (Maldonado, 2011). Victims may develop psychosomatic symptoms and present lower school performance (Rondina et al., 2016).

The results obtained allow us to see that the phenomenon of online victimization can lead to serious damage at psycho-emotional levels that can linger for years in the development of those involved, having a significantly negative impact on the beliefs and behavior of young people. It is concluded that people react in different ways to attacks, both bullying and cyberbullying, and that this is due to their personal interpretations and their own characteristics, and that they may take drastic measures to end a situation of suffering or find coping strategies and strengthen their skills (Matos et al., 2020).

Thus, the present review does not intend to close the research on the subject, given the objective of producing a discussion and draw attention to the complexity of the cyberbullying phenomenon nowadays. It is relevant to point out the variety and complexity of studies on the subject available in the Latin American literature, more specifically in Brazil, which points to the relevance of new investigations on virtual aggression in different cultural contexts, seeking to understand the aspects that involve it in its entirety, so that more effective measures for protection and prevention can be developed, as well as a more specific knowledge of the repercussions of this process.

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