

The Nature and Prevalence of Cyber Bullying Behaviors among South African High School Learners

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ABSTRACT The purpose of this study was to examine the prevalence of cyber bullying behaviors among South African high school learners (adolescents) and the extent to which learner rights are violated by such behavior. A sample of 346 Grade 11 and 12 high school learners (201 girls and 148 boys) from two provinces, namely, Limpopo and the Free State completed the questionnaire. Results indicated that there are differences in each age group regarding the mode of electronic technology most prevalent for cyber bullying in and out of school. The findings indicate that girls were more likely to be cyber victims than boys and that boys were more likely to be cyber bullies than girls. More Internet-based bullying through social networking sites was reported than through mobile phones, especially as students get older. These findings point to a high prevalence of cyber bullying and gross violation of learners, which can also serve as a basis for prevention and intervention programs to cope with cyber bullying.