• Updating of my presentation two years ago and of my paper:


• Key issues: How do we define and circumscribe the phenomenon of bullying/cyberbullying? What are the key characteristics of the domain we want to describe and explain?

• Can cyber bullying be conceptualized as just a subcategory or form of traditional bullying, or should it be best regarded as a distinct phenomenon with special characteristics that make it (partly) different from traditional bullying?
A VALIDITY PERSPECTIVE

• Content validity

• Concurrent and predictive validity

• Discriminant validity

• Construct validity: Basically, what is the construct of cyber bullying?
GENERAL DEFINITION OF SCHOOL_BULLYING

«A student is being bullied or victimized when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other students” (Olweus, 1993, p. 9).

Three key criteria:
  • intentional harm-doing
  • some repetition
  • an imbalance of actual or perceived power implied
GENERAL DEFINITION OF SCHOOL_BULLYING (continued)

Intentional, repeated negative (unpleasant or hurtful) behavior by one or more students directed against a student who has difficulty defending himself or herself (who feels vulnerable, more or less helpless).

Important aspect: Bullying occurs in a relationship context – a context that is unpleasant, hurtful and unwanted by the targeted student, but still a context such as a classroom, a school, a sports club, a neighbourhood etc. The targeted student can be assumed to have at least some superficial knowledge of the perpetrator(s).
Can the three bullying criteria be used in connection with bullying with electronic means/cyberbullying?


Measurement of aspects of bullying and related aspects with the OBQ (Olweus Bullying Questionnaire)
From Olweus Bullying Questionnaire (1996, 2006):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Options</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 4. How often have you been bullied at school in the past couple of months? | - I haven’t been bullied at school in the past couple of months  
- It has only happened once or twice  
- 2 or 3 times a month  
- About once a week  
- Several times a week |
| 5. I was called mean names, was made fun of, or teased in a hurtful way    | - It hasn’t happened to me in the past couple of months  
- Only once or twice  
- 2 or 3 times a month  
- About once a week  
- Several times a week |
| 12a I was bullied with mean or hurtful messages, calls or pictures, or in other ways on my mobile phone or over the Internet (computer). (Please remember that it is not bullying when it is done in a friendly and playful way.) | - It hasn’t happened to me in the past couple of months  
- Only once or twice  
- 2 or 3 times a month  
- About once a week  
- Several times a week |
| 12b In case you were bullied on your mobile phone or over the Internet, how was it done? | - Only on the mobile phone  
- Only over the Internet  
- In both ways |

Please describe in what way: ____________________________________________
FOUR STATEMENTS/COMMON OPINIONS ABOUT CYBER BULLYING FOR WHICH THERE IS LITTLE OR NO RESEARCH SUPPORT

Based on two large-scale samples of US students: One comprising some 80,000 students surveyed in 2007; the second one comprising 520,000 students surveyed in the period from 2007 to 2010.

1. Opinion: That cyber bullying is very common, high-frequent form of bullying --

   Reality: Cyber bullying is a low-frequent form of bullying, only a third or a fourth of the level of “traditional” forms of bullying such as Verbal bullying. See Figure.

2. Opinion: That cyber bullying has increased dramatically in recent years --

   Reality: There has been no systematic increase in cyber bullying in the period from 2007 to 2010. See Figure.
FOUR STATEMENTS/COMMON OPINIONS ABOUT CYBER BULLYING FOR WHICH THERE IS LITTLE OR NO RESEARCH SUPPORT (Cont’d)

3. Opinion: *That the new media create many new victims and new bullies*

   Reality: Most students – 85-90 percent – who are cyber bullied or cyber bully other students are bullied or bully others in “traditional” ways. There appears thus to be few new victims or bullies and most cases of cyber bullying appears to originate in the school setting.

4. Opinion: *That girls are more exposed to and cyber bully (much) more than boys*

   Reality: Girls are cyber bullied and cyber bully others to about the same degree as boys. (A possible small qualification.)
Time series data for 2007-2010 for (direct)verbal bullying (being bullied) and cyber bullying (being bullied) n= 440 000 US students
Norwegian time series data for 2006-2010 for (direct) verbal bullying (being bullied) and cyber bullying (bullied electronically). 41 Oslo schools and 9000 students, girls and boys, at each time point.
FACTORS AFFECTING PREVALENCE ESTIMATES

• Reference period

• Cut-off point

• Measurement context: whether of not measured in the context of (traditional) bullying
POSSIBLE NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES OF OVERRATING OF CYBERBULLYING?

• Unnecessary anxiety and tension

• Feelings of power-and helplessness among adults

• Most important, shift in focus of antibullying work and distribution of resources from traditional bullying to cyber bullying

• But, at the same time........ also cyber bullying must be taken seriously
ARE THERE NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF CYBER BULLYING AND HOW DO WE FIND OUT?

Four key ways:
1. Asking students to assess degree of imagined negative impact of various experiences
2. Comparing self-report percentages of students who are not bothered/feel nothing when being cyber or traditionally bullied
3. Comparing characteristics of pure cyber victims with pure traditional victims and combined traditional and cyber victims
4. Using regression techniques to examine the extent to which various outcome variables can be predicted by cyber bullying over and above traditional bullying
Global being bullied ➔ Low self-esteem

$r = .29$  Prosent forklart varians = 8.3 %

Global being bullied ➔ Low self-esteem

$r = .33$  Prosent forklart varians = 11.0%

Global being bullied ➔ Low self-esteem

Being cyber bullied ➔ Low self-esteem
Global being bullied → Low self-esteem

\( r = 0.29 \)  Prosent forklart varias= 8.3 \%

Global being bullied → Low self-esteem

\( r = 0.34 \)  Prosent forklart varias= 11.3\%

Global being bullied → Low self-esteem

Being left out (indirect)
Conclusion: «Increased prediction cannot initself and without further analysis be taken as an indication that cyber bullying qualifies as a phenomenon that is fundamentally different from traditional bullying» (Olweus, in press, 2016)
ARE THERE NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF CYBER BULLYING AND HOW DO WE FIND OUT?

General conclusion on this point:
«In summary, the studies on intervention with a main focus cyber bullying/victimization have given mixed results and few guidelines as to how these problems can be reduced or prevented with such an approach,
In some contrast, a few general anti-bullying programs seemed to be able to achieve some positive results on cyber victimization and cyber bullying (conditional on age in the KiVa project), also in the absence of program components with a special focus on the electronical forms of bullying (Olweus, in press, 2016)”. 
ONE OF MY OWN PROPOSALS

FOR SCHOOLS: INVEST TIME AND TECHNICAL COMPETENCE IN DISCLOSING THOROUGHLY SOME CASES OF CYBER BULLYING – AND THEN COMMUNICATE CLEARLY (BUT ANONYMOUSLY) THE RESULTS TO THE STUDENTS

GOAL: TO INCREASE THE PERCEIVED RISK OF DISCLOSURE – THIS PROCEDURE WILL PROBABLY BE ABLE TO REDUCE FURTHER THE RELATIVELY LOW PREVALENCE OF CYBER BULLYING
SOME TAKE-HOME MESSAGES

• Necessary to study cyber bullying in the context of traditional bullying

• If not, there are two likely problems: Bullying may be equated with a) general aggression or b) with cyber harassment which both are partly different phenomena

• All in all, my tentative conclusion is that there are a number of theoretical arguments and empirical facts that are consistent with a conceptualization of cyber bullying as a form of bullying along with direct physical, direct verbal and indirect (relational) forms.

• At the same time, a couple of possible qualifications…..