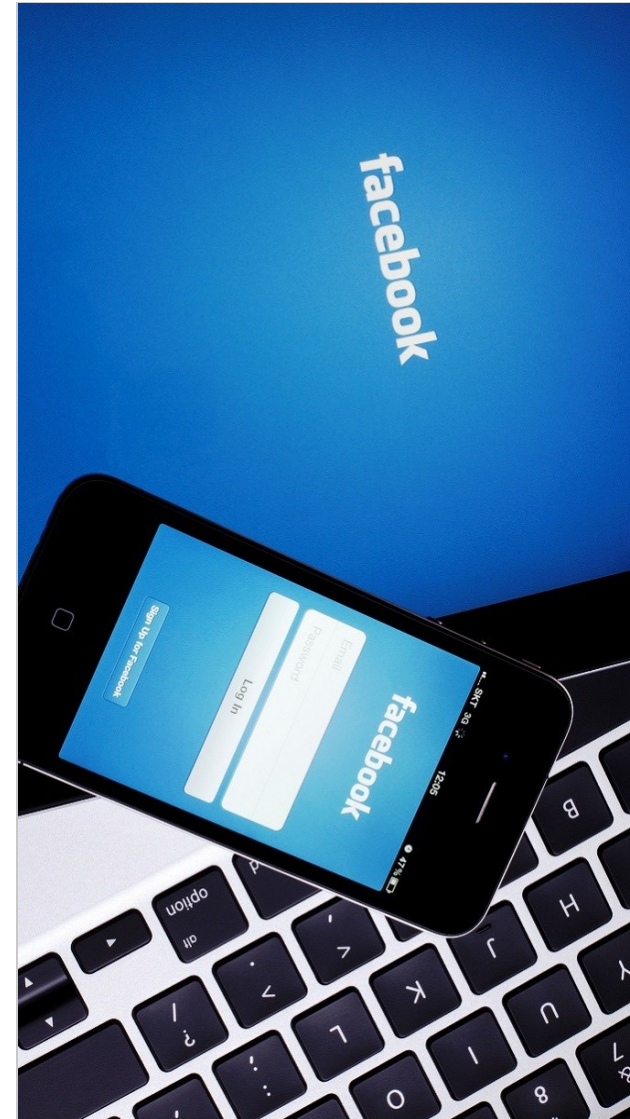# Mobile Bully-Victim Behaviour on Facebook:
The Case of South African Students

By: Michael Kyobe – IBPA 2019

Prof Michael Kyobe
PI - Mobile Bullying Research Project
Department of Information Systems
Leslie Commerce Building, Upper Campus,
Tel: 021 650 2597
**Email: michael.kyobe@uct.ac.za**

INTRODUCTION

- The new technologies are challenging current networking practices, and this has given rise to bullying incidents online.

- Young people are twice as likely to suffer cyberbullying on Facebook than on any other social networking site.

- **Aim:** Create understanding of the nature of this behavior among high school pupils, and Facebook features they commonly use.

- **Take away**: Participants will understand the characteristics of mobile bully-victims on Facebook, in South Africa; understand Facebook features commonly employed by bully-victims, their impact and possible interventions that can be put in place by schools to mitigate the risks bully-victims pose to themselves and to other students on Facebook.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Bully-victim behaviour on Facebook
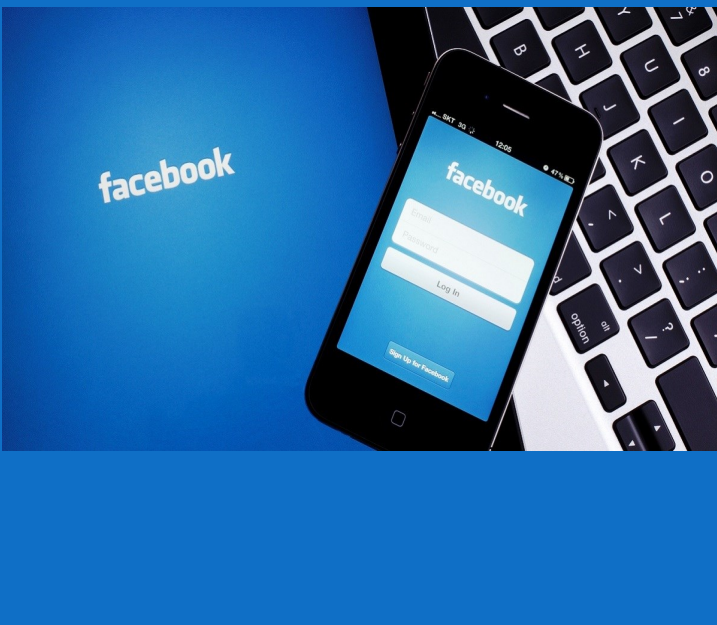
- Facebook application is one of the most popular social networks used globally with same features that could also be used for cyberbullying.

- Teenagers bullied the most on Facebook when compared with other social media platforms.

- Previous studies have identified various factors influencing mobile bullying on social media.

- We would like to understand how factors like anonymity, collective behaviour, power, popularity and Facebook usage interact on Facebook to influence Mobile bully-victim behaviour.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Bully-victim behaviour on Facebook

- Previous studies have identified various factors influencing mobile bullying on social media.

- We would like to understand how factors like anonymity, collective behaviour, power, popularity and Facebook usage and Emojis interact on Facebook to influence Mobile bully-victim behaviour.

LITERATURE REVIEW –

Anonymity: Facebook allows *people to follow each other without being friends* – this increases opportunities for anonymous attacks. Facebook *enforces a real-name policy when creating accounts*. While this increases user accountability and content quality, it may also violate the privacy of users by letting services tie user interests to their names.

https://www.facebook.com/817032078352138/photos/a.817041705017842/850516898336989/?type=1&theater
https://www.facebook.com/Petition-To-Change-Real-Name-Policy-On-FB-817032078352138/

Collective behaviour: Collective behaviours are activities by a group of individuals acting with or being influenced by others. This may be relatively spontaneous or planned.

Groups can be formed on Facebook, some encourage meaningful conversations but others not. Some argue that Facebook groups have been acting ***as gathering places for racist and offensive activity***. ***Hate group*** by teens – case of Kenneth Weishuhn. Group privacy settings are found wanting

BuzzFeed News White Nationalist Groups Banned By Facebook Are Still On The Platform

Facebook | Screenshots

Over a month after Facebook announced a ban of a number of white nationalist, white supremacist, and other hate groups, they are still on the platform and continue to use it for recruitment.

FACTORS INFLUENCING BULLY-VICTIM BEHAVIOUR

Power: Implicit power is mostly obtained by adolescents with *high social status and other attractive skills*. For instance, a user with a high social status tends to have many Facebook *friends and followers*. Bullying behaviour can manifest when these adolescents with many resources become arrogant and choose not to share with other Facebook friends.

Mobile Phone Usage: *Mobile phone application features* can encourage people to *communicate openly,* simplify avenues for adolescents to report their bullying; such features may also escalate cyberbullying and discourage adolescents from reporting bullying.

Facebook Usage: *Easy access to these applications* increases the usage especially among the adolescents, which escalates the problem of bullying behaviour on Facebook (Keaveney, & Parthasarathy, 2012; Wilson et al., 2012).

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CONCEPTUAL MODEL
Propositions

- Proposition 1. Anonymity enhances victimisation of bully-victims on Facebook.

- Proposition 2. Collective behaviour enhances victimisation on Facebook.

- Proposition 3. Implicit power influences bully-victim behaviour on Facebook.

- Proposition 4. Usage of Emojis and Facebook Features enhance bullying resulting in mobile bully-victim behaviour on Facebook.

- Proposition 5. Frequent usage of Facebook will enhance bully-victim behaviour.

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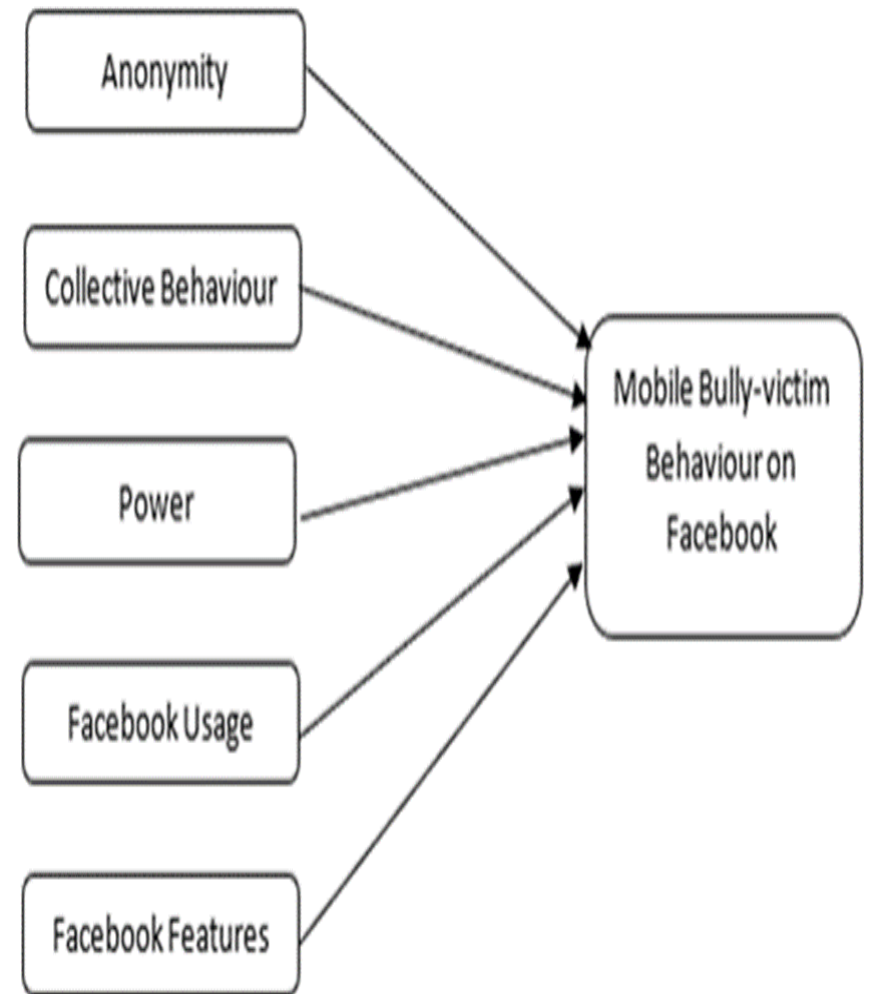
METHOD

Data Collection
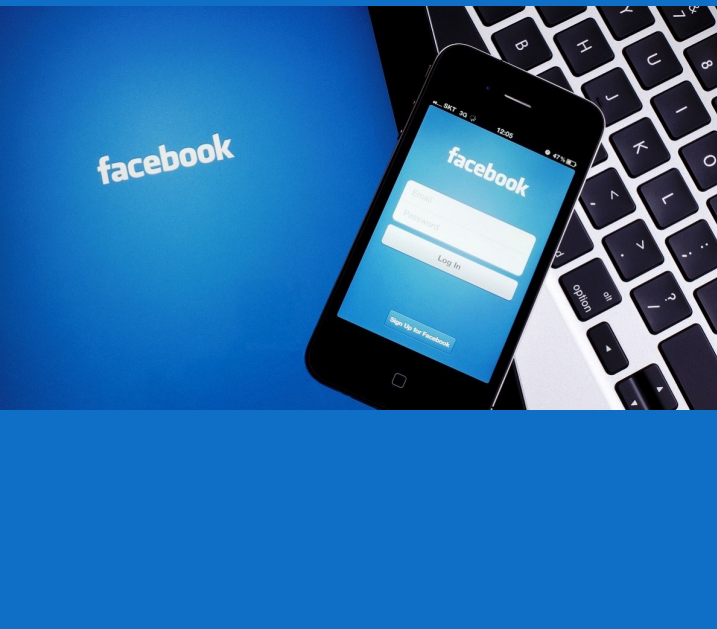
- Data was collected using a questionnaire. The targeted population were learners both females and males from various public high schools in two provinces, i.e., the Western Cape and Gauteng, ranging from grade 10 to grade 12 who have one or more active Facebook accounts.

- Therefore, the probability sampling technique was used, and the bully-victims were identified by those who indicated that they were both bullies and victims.

- A definition of mobile bullying was provided to the respondents.

- 457 learners responded to the questionnaire of which 319 were mobile bully-victims.

- Construct validity and reliability tests done

FINDINGS

- Female bully-victims prefer to use someone else's identity.

- Often involved in indirect relational bullying act such as spreading rumours, silently excluding their peers from chat-groups.

- **Anonymous** Mobile bully-victims on Facebook **victimized more than the non-anonymous**. **Proposition 1** *is therefore supported, i.e., anonymity in some way increases bully-victim victimization on Facebook.*

- **Confirmation of Contagion theory -** Those that make fun of someone's Facebook post always comment when someone is made fun of on Facebook pages. T**he Contagion Theory** which predicts that crowd behaviour will make members who share similar traits to abandon moral responsibilities.

FINDINGS *(contd.)*
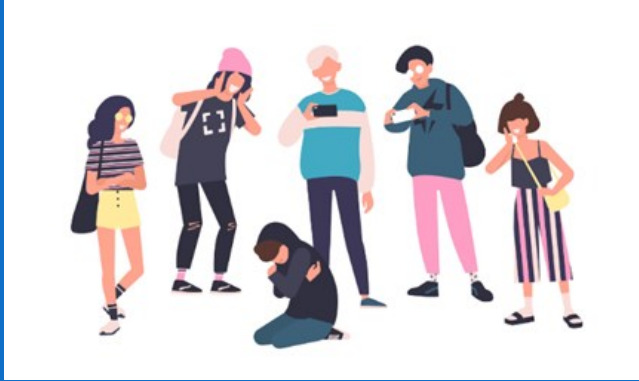
- Mobile bully-victims **engaged in collective behaviour were more victimized than who did not** on Facebook. **Proposition 2** is therefore supported in this study.

- Mobile bully-victims **control who they want to be on their Facebook**. They **have implicit power and exert a force on others**. This force appears to arise from the **need for security or maintenance of the power (Girls).** There appears to be competition for power with other students (perpetrators who victimise them). The T-test results indicate a significant difference in means scores of those using Power and those that do not.

- Students who had **implicit power were generally found to be mobile bully-victims more than those who did not. Proposition 3** was also supported.

- There is also **evidence of reward power** as some offer incentives to those without implicit power, like access to their Facebook group in return for doing what they want.

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Mobile bully-victim and Facebook Usage

- T-test results also show that there is a significant difference in means between **frequent Facebook** users and **Non-frequent Facebook users**.

- **Proposition 4** is also supported since participants who were frequent users were mainly mobile bully-victims more than non-frequent users.

- Bully-victim behaviour **increased with the school grade**

Table - Descriptive Statistics for Emojis & Facebook Features

| Variable	Valid N	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Std.Dev.
Descriptive Statistics: Emojis & Features					
please indicate how often you use reaction Emojis on a post on Facebook					
Like	319	3,965517	1,000000	5,000000	0,615882
Love	318	3,446541	1,000000	5,000000	0,867556
Haha	318	4,515723	1,000000	5,000000	0,812795
Wow	319	4,620690	1,000000	5,000000	0,818619
Sad	319	4,244514	1,000000	5,000000	1,158681
Angry	319	3,921630	1,000000	5,000000	1,035594
Please indicate how often you use the following Facebook features					
Follow button	316	4,303797	1,000000	5,000000	1,096655
Share button	317	3,296530	1,000000	5,000000	0,984253
Comment button	319	4,344828	1,000000	5,000000	1,024954
Tag friend button	317	4,533123	1,000000	5,000000	0,905158
Embed Post	315	4,314286	1,000000	5,000000	1,153623
Video Call	319	4,329154	1,000000	5,000000	1,269426
Sending Location	319	3,382445	1,000000	5,000000	1,183404
Message	318	4,500000	1,000000	5,000000	0,832123

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FINDINGS
Use of Emojis
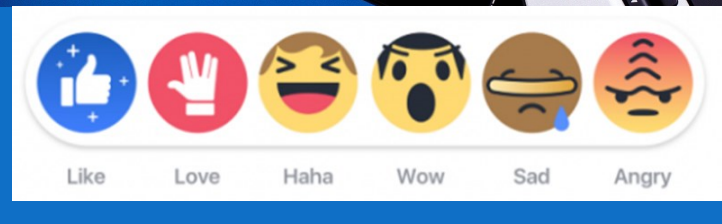
- Emojis communicate certain sentiments that may be viewed as hostile, menacing, or foreboding. Hateful content often embedded.

- *The **introduction of emotional reactions** was intended for expressing empathy and making responding to posts quicker.

- But should we/or shouldn't we be more concerned about this?

Facebook's 'feeling fat' emoticon is fueling a fight over digital body shaming

- Facebook Emoticons - Should we be over-excited about them?

- By selecting an Emoji to express your feelings instead of merely writing it out, what are the benefits for you, others? Or are you helping Facebook structure your data – feed it in search engines? Will Facebook use these emotions/behaviours to pinpoint you with ads? (easier way than work with text?), What are privacy concerns? What are implications for bullying?

- Emotions fail to force the user to think of a written comment which makes it easier to post negative messages/feelings without thinking through carefully.

- Smiley faces, and emojis that can wink, blow kisses, and those representing religious symbols are all open to various interpretations.

- Sending messages with these emojis is quick, and fun for adolescents but have also inspired lawsuits and criminal charges. People interpret them differently, therefore caution need to be exercised.
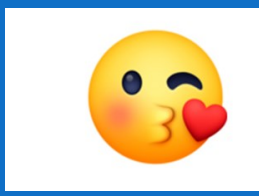
FINDINGS

Mobile bully-victim that used Emoji & Features
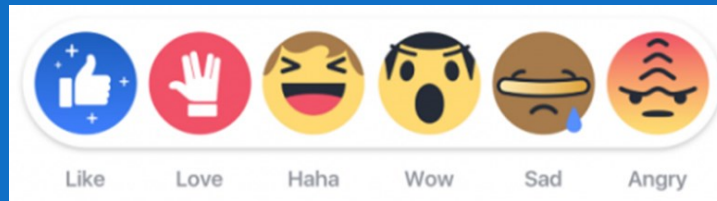
- As would be expected:
  - A **"Ha-ha" emoji** is used to show they are **laughing** at what is being posted.
  - A **"Wow" emoji**, mostly used on a post that is shocking to others on Facebook.
- However, **A "like'** emoji is mostly used **by the bystanders on Facebook**.
- Unlike in traditional bullying, **by bystanders do not just watch their peers victimized.** They react with a "like" emoji to express compassionate feeling.
- ***The more prevalent the mobile bully-victim behaviour, the more likely bully-victims would use "Facebook features", the "angry" and "Love" Emojis.***
- The "**Ha-ha**", "**Wow**" and "**Sad Emojis**" are less used to bully others, while **the "Love" and "Anger" emojis** are mostly **used to share and express compassion** following victimization.
- This could be explained by the fact that bully-victims swing between the behaviours or characteristics of a bully and victim

CONCLUSION

- The findings confirm that **adolescent mobile bully-victims exist on Facebook** in South African high schools **and these are mainly females.**

- Given the growing concern about bully-victim association with suicidal tendencies, and that violence against females in South Africa is rated among the highest in the world, **urgent call is made for further research on bully-victims and interventions**

- The findings that bully-victim behaviour **increased with the grades is another major concern**. It refutes earlier claims that bullying declines with age. There is therefore need to ensure that interventions are not only focused at the early grades but across all grades in schools.

- The study confirms that factors like Anonymity, Collective behaviour, Power, Facebook usage, and usage of Emojis all influence mobile bully-victim behaviour on Facebook in the South African context.

- By enabling anonymous usage, mobile applications allow bullies to create false identities, which reduce the chances of being caught.
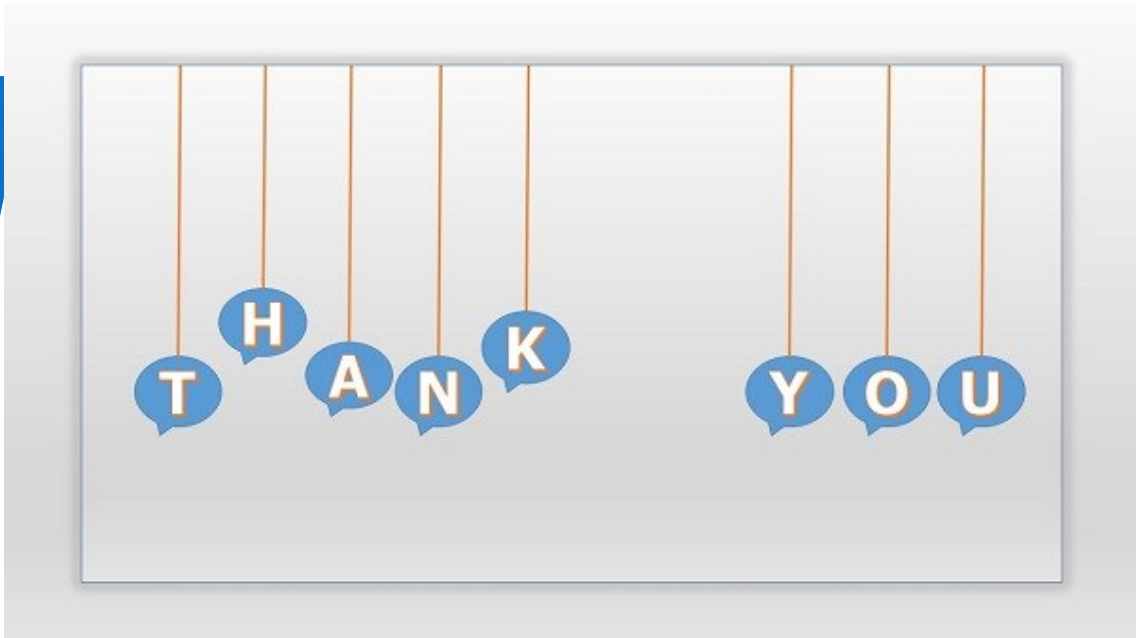
CONCLUSION
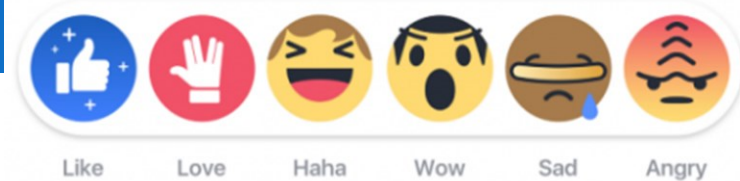
- This has therefore resulted in **anonymity being the most influencer of mobile bully-victim behaviour. It is critical that social network providers like Facebook prevent users from creating false identity, profiles, and e-mail addresses.** Furthermore, it is interesting to find that when mobile bully-victim behaviour is prevalent, bully-victims would use "Love" and "Anger" Emojis to express their different emotions and mood disorder.

- **Emojis enables victims to say something in confused moments** and can enable the invisible **bystanders to speak up against mistreatment** of their peers.

- The **Emoji findings enable researchers understand youth emotions** online in an effort to find appropriate interventions. The Emoji findings also **confirm earlier claims that bully-victims swing between the characteristics of a bully and victim**.

- However**, caution needs to be taken when using Emoji's**. Sending messages with these emojis is quick, and fun for adolescents but **have also inspired lawsuits and criminal charges**.

- Further studies into Emoji expressions and across age, gender, and different cultural environment will reveal lot of things we do not know about bully-victims online.

Like   Love   Haha   Wow   Sad   Angry

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