Types of cyberbullying involvement and mental health problems

Görzig, Anke ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7623-0836 (2014) Types of cyberbullying involvement and mental health problems. In: Cyberspace Conference 2014, 28-29 Nov 2014, Brno, Czech Republic. (Unpublished)

This is the Presentation of the final output.

UWL repository link: https://repository.uwl.ac.uk/id/eprint/1449/

Types of Cyber-bullying Involvement and Mental Health Problems

Findings from *EU Kids Online*, 2014

Dr Anke Görzig

What is cyber-bullying?

- **Bullying:**

  An act of aggression which is <u>intentional</u>, <u>repetitive</u> and directed towards an individual of <u>lower power</u> (cf. Olweus, 1993)

- **Cyber-bullying:**

  An act of aggression which is <u>intentional</u>, <u>repetitive</u> and directed towards an individual of <u>lower power</u> using *electronic forms of contact, specifically mobile phones or the internet* (Smith et al., 2006).

Bullying & adolescents mental health

- Traditional and cyber-bullying among adolescents are considered a **major public health concern** (Hertz et al., 2013).

- Involvement in bullying as a young person increases the **risk of suicide or suicide-related behaviours** (i.e., suicidal ideation, suicide attempt, self-harming) (Arseneault et al., 2006; Bauman, Toomey, & Walker, 2013; Brunstein-Klomek, Sourander, & Gould, 2010; Price & Dalgleish, 2010).

- Bullying is associated with short and **long-term mental health difficulties** (depression, anxiety, conduct disorder) (Maughan, & Arseneault, 2014)

- Studies on traditional bullying have shown that it is important to differentiate between **different types of bullying involvement (bullies, victims and bully/victims)**

Types of bullying involvement

- **Suicide-related behaviours**

  (reviews, 30+ studies; Brunstein-Klomek et al., 2010; Kim & Leventhal, 2008)

  – Bullies and victims are at risk

  – Bully/victims are the most at-risk group

- **Psychological problems**

  – Victims: internalising (emotional problems), peer problems (Hawker & Boulton, 2000)

  – Bullies: externalising (conduct problems) (Ttofi et al., 2011)

  – Bully/victims: internalising + externalising, peer problems (Cook et al., 2010)

- **Psychological problems mediate between bullying and suicide-related behaviours?** (cf. Hertz et al., 2013)

  – Depression: traditional bullies but not cyber-bullies (Bauman et al., 2013)

  – Delinquency/depression: bullies but not victims or bully/victims (Espelage & Holt, 2013)

  – Traditional bullying was a risk factor for suicide-related behaviours independent of depression (Kaminski & Fang, 2009)

Dr Anke Görzig

Cyber-bullying and suicide-related behaviours: Fact or moral panic?

Self-harm sites and cyberbullying: the threat to children from web's dark side
(The Guardian, 10.3.2014)

Suicide Among Children Is A Bigger Problem Than Ever Before, And Cyberbullying May Be The Cause
(Inquisitr, 31.10.2014)

More children 'self-harming because of cyber-bullying'
(Metro, 27.5.2014)

- Media reports and effects
  - Public concern has been amplified by the mass media, most risks are encountered by a small minority (Vandebosch et al., 2013)
  - Media reports have contributed to a dramatic bias in views on cyber-bullying (e.g., prevalence rates, cause for suicide etc.; Magid, 2011)

Types of *cyber*-bullying involvement

■ **Suicide-related behaviours**

   – Cyber-victims: suicide ideation/attempts, self-harm

   – Cyber-bullies: suicide ideation/attempts

      (Bauman et al., 2013; Hinduja & Patchin, 2010; Schneider et al., 2012)

   – Cyber-bully/victims: most at-risk group (1 study; 18-24 yr olds)

      (Schenk & Fremouw, 2012; Schenk, Fremouw, & Keelan, 2013)

■ **Psychological problems**

   – Cyber-victims: internalising / emotional problems

   – Cyber-bullies: externalising / conduct problems

   – Cyber-bully/victims: internalising & externalising problems

      (Gradinger et al., 2009; Ybarra & Mitchell, 2004)
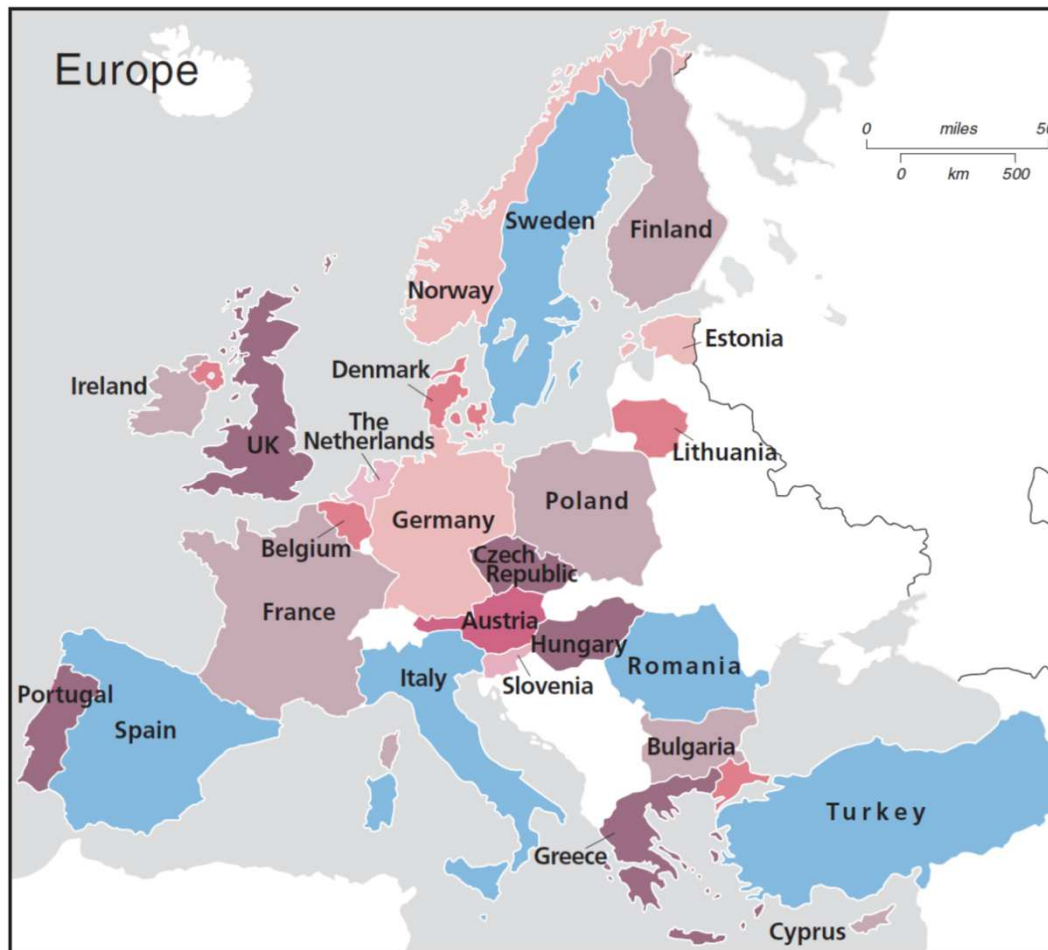
⟶ **Similar patterns, less evidence**

■ **Psychological problems mediate between bullying and suicide-related behaviours?**

The current study

- **Research evidence comparing all cyber-bullying types within one sample is scarce**

- **Confirm similar patterns for bullying and cyber-bullying on**
  - Relation of <u>bullying types</u> and <u>suicide-related</u> behaviours
    - Victims & bullies > not involved
    - Bully/victims >> not involved
  - Relation of <u>bullying types</u> <u>psychological problems</u>
    - Victims: internalising / emotional problems, peer problems
    - Bullies: externalising / conduct problems
    - Bully/victims: internalising & externalising problems

- **Explore whether any links of cyber-bullying types with viewing of suicide-related web-content is mediated by psychological problems**

Surveying 'Europe'

- **Random stratified sample: ~ 1000 9-16 year old internet users per country; total of 25142 internet-users, 25 countries**

- **Fieldwork in spring/summer 2010; child + parent interviews at home, face to face**

- **Questions validated by cognitive/pilot testing; self-completion for sensitive questions; care with research ethics**

- **Informed by national stakeholders and an international advisory panel**

- **Survey covered access, use, activities, risks (sexual images, sexual messages, bullying, meeting strangers), parental mediation, coping, vulnerability**

Dr Anke Görzig

Cyber-bullying

Saying or doing hurtful or nasty things to someone. This can often be quite a few times on different days over a period of time, for example. This can include:

– teasing someone in a way this person does not like

– hitting, kicking or pushing someone around

– leaving someone out of things

When people are hurtful or nasty to someone in this way, it can happen:

– face to face (in person)

– by mobile phones (texts, calls, video clips)

– on the internet (e-mail, instant messaging, social networking, chatrooms)

Cyber-bullying

Saying or doing hurtful or nasty things to someone. This can often be quite a few times on different days over a period of time, for example. This can include:

– teasing someone in a way this person does not like

– hitting, kicking or pushing someone around

– leaving someone out of things

When people are hurtful or nasty to someone in this way, it can happen:

– face to face (in person)

– by mobile phones (texts, calls, video clips)

– on the internet (e-mail, instant messaging, social networking, chatrooms)

cyber-bullying

Viewing of suicide-related web-content*

In the PAST 12 MONTHS, have you seen websites where people discuss…

- ways of committing suicide
- ways of physically harming or hurting themselves

Suicide

Self-harm

*(11+ yrs., N = 19,406)

Psychological Problems*

www.eukidsonline.net

- **Strengths and difficulties questionnaire (SDQ**; Goodman, 1998)

  - **Emotional difficulties**, e.g. "I am often unhappy, sad or tearful."
  - **Peer problems**, e.g. "Other people my age generally like me." (reversed)
  - **Conduct problems**, e.g. "I get very angry and often lose my temper."
    - **5 items each, 3-point scale: (1 = *Not true,* 2 = *A bit true,* 3 = *Very true*)**
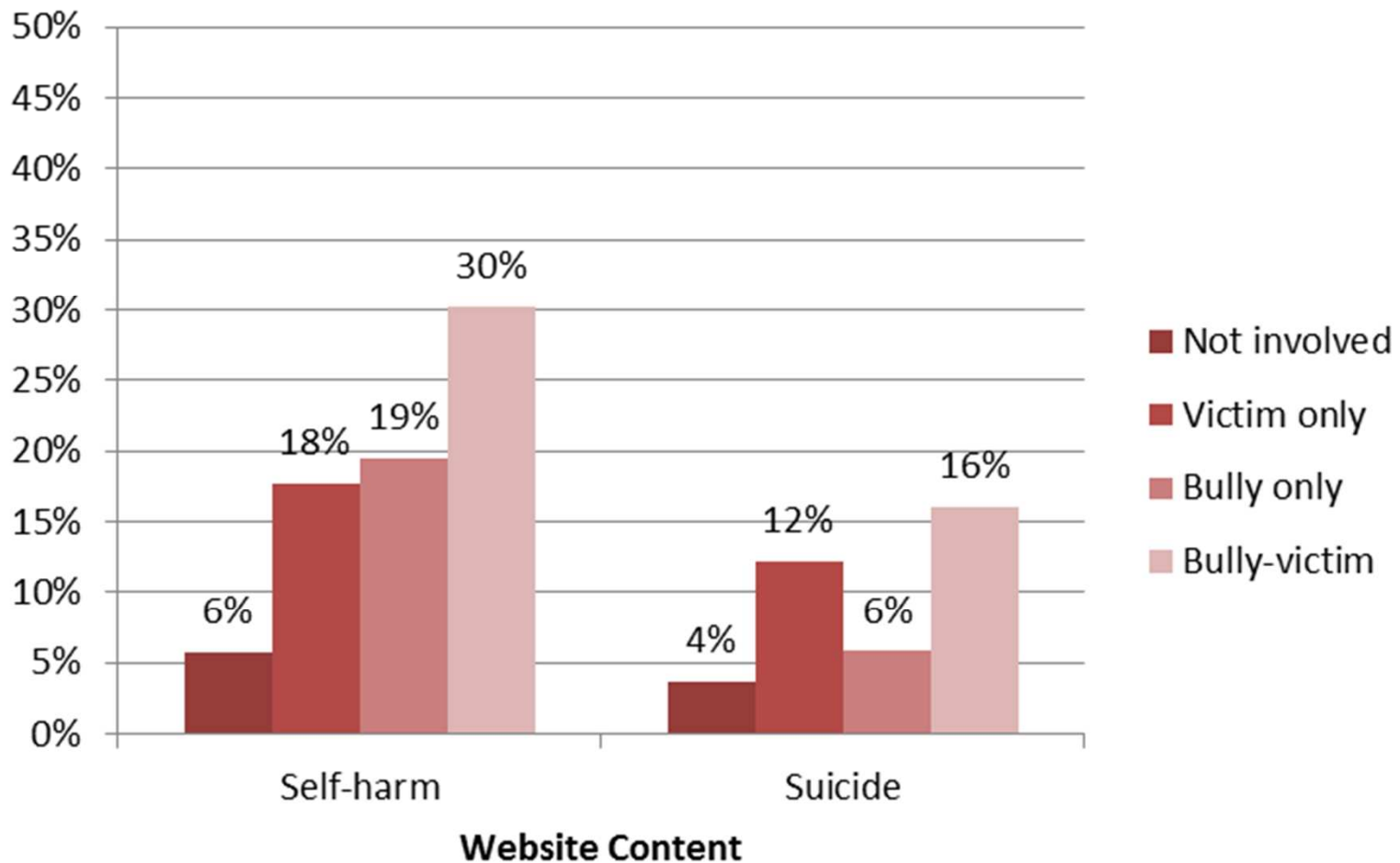
- **Borderline clinical cut-off points** (Goodman et al., 2000)
  - **Used widely for screening in CAMHS** (Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services)
    - **Emotional difficulties: sum > 6**
    - **Peer problems: sum > 4**
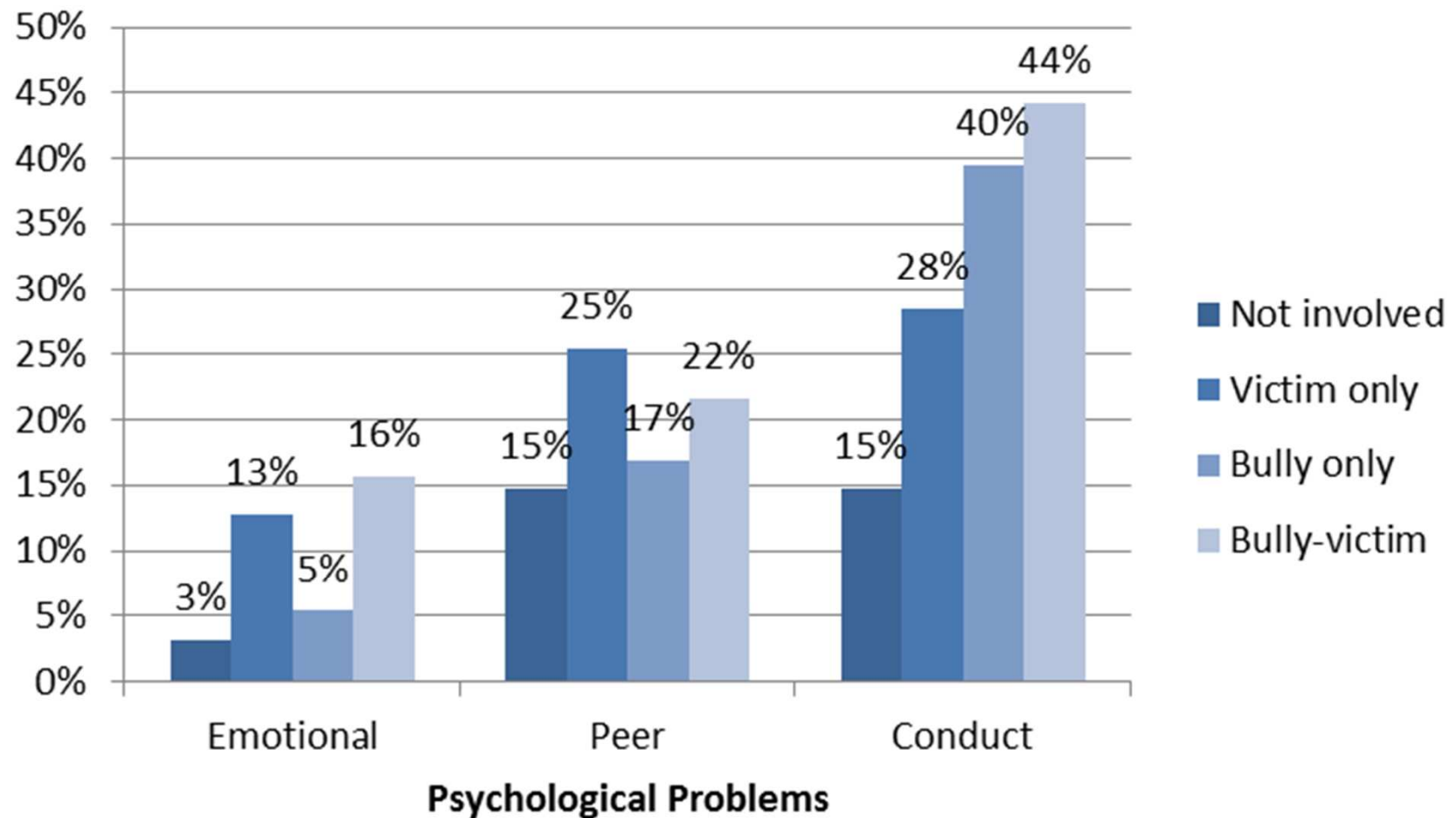   - **Conduct problems: sum > 4**

*(11+ yrs., N = 19,406)

Results

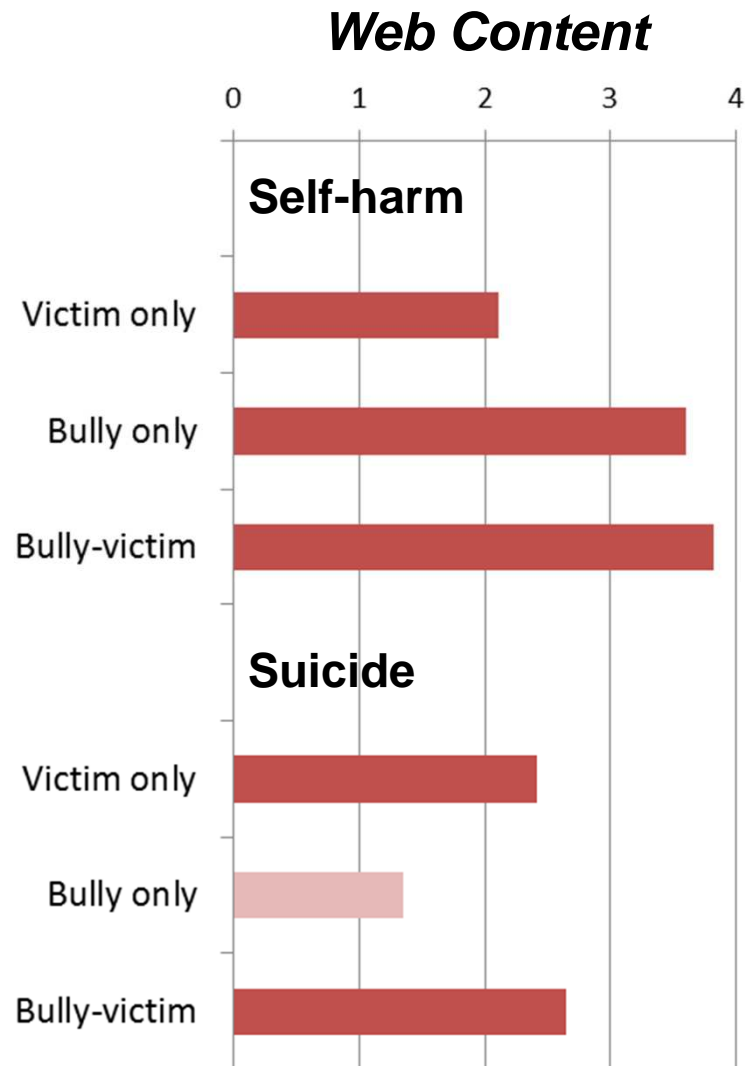**Percentages for Viewing of Suicide-Related Web-Content within Cyber-bullying Involvement Types.**

Percentages for Psychological Problems within Cyber-bullying Involvement Types.

Regression – Step 1 (viewing of web content only)
Odds Ratios (reference group: not involved; controls: age, gender)
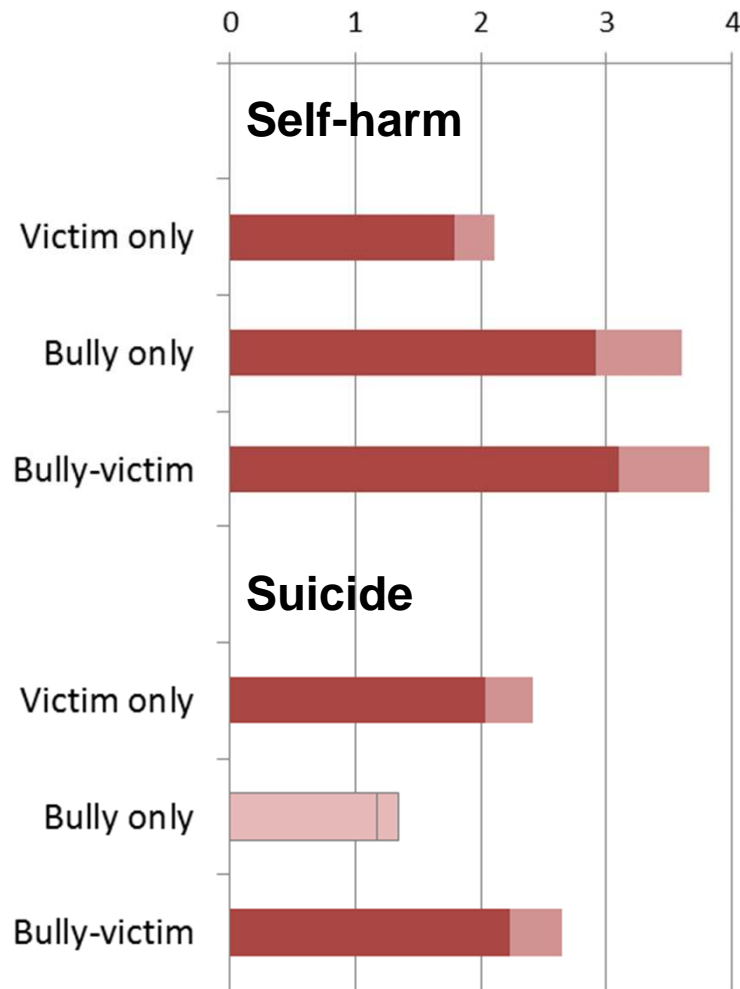
Web Content

Solid fill indicate statistically significant coefficients

Multi-Nominal Regressions:
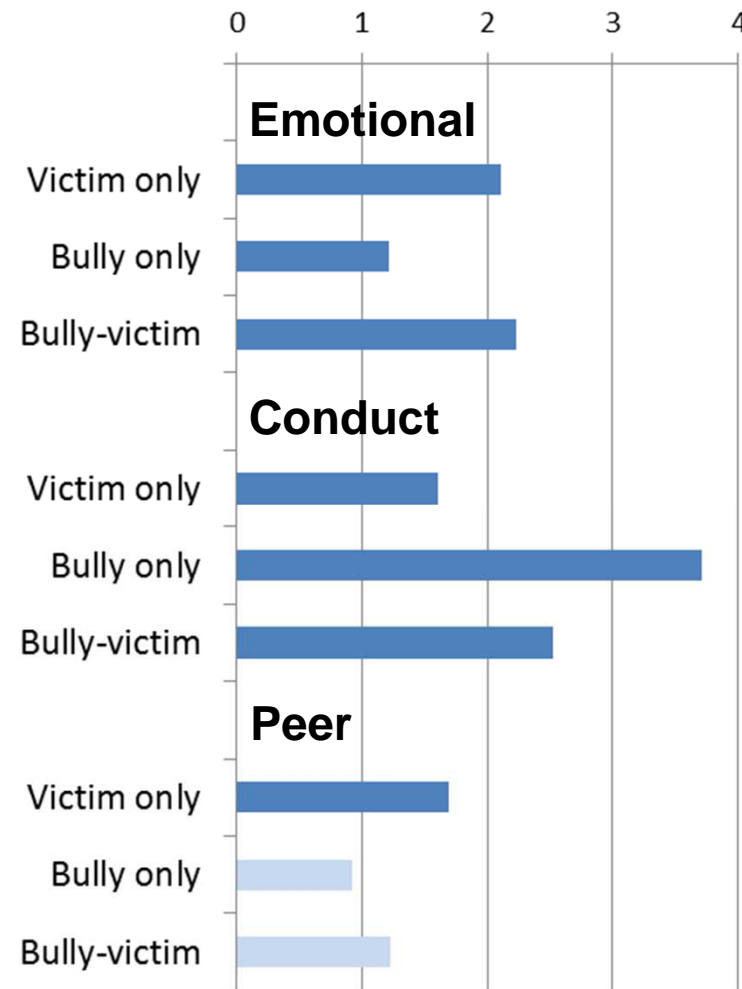## Viewing of Web-Content and Psychological Problems on Cyber-bullying Involvement Type

Regression – Step 2 (+ psych problems)
Odds Ratios (reference group: not involved; controls: age, gender)

Web Content

Self-harm
- Victim only
- Bully only
- Bully-victim

Suicide
- Victim only
- Bully only
- Bully-victim

Psychological Problems

Emotional
- Victim only
- Bully only
- Bully-victim

Conduct
- Victim only
- Bully only
- Bully-victim

Peer
- Victim only
- Bully only
- Bully-victim

Solid fill indicate statistically significant coefficients

www.eukidsonline.net

16

Discussion: Bullying & cyber-bullying Similar patterns?

- **Suicide-related web content**
  - Cyber-bully/victims most vulnerable
  - Generally all involved groups more at risk than not involved
  - *Exception: suicide – cyber-bullies no higher prevalence than not involved*

- **Psychological problems**
  - Cyber-victims: emotional problems, peer problems
  - Cyber-bullies: conduct problems
  - Bully/victims: emotional problems, conduct problems
  - *Exception: conduct problems - cyber-victims higher prevalence than not involved*
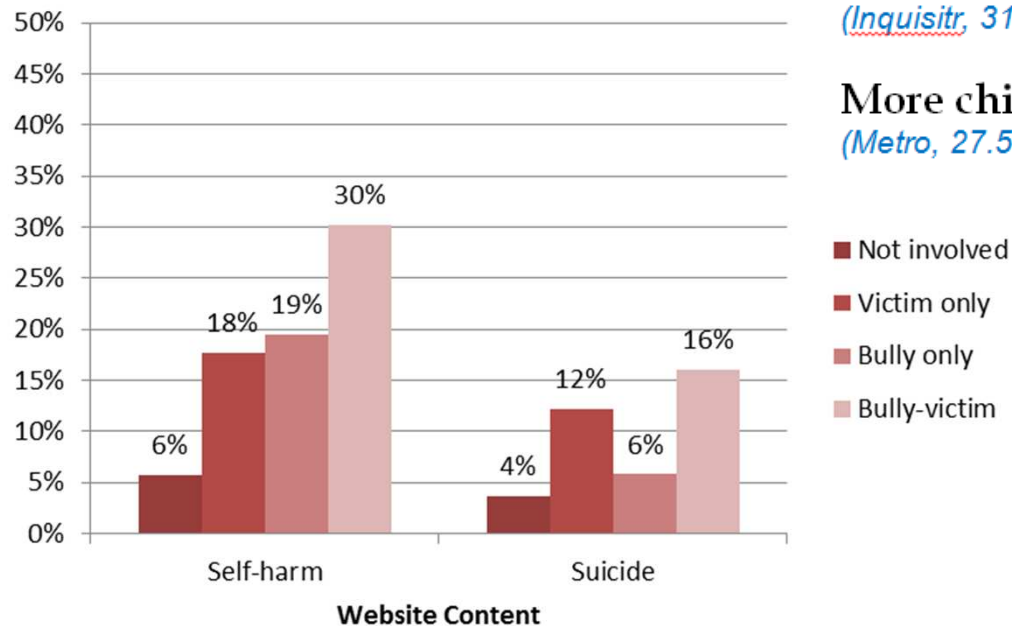
- **Psychological problems mediate between bullying and suicide-related behaviours?**
  - No change in coefficients when controlling for psychological problems
  - Possible bi-directional nature of bullying and psychological problems (Kowalski & Limber, 2013)

Limitations

- **Cross-sectional study: no implications about causality**

Self-harm sites and cyberbullying: the threat to children from web's dark side
(The Guardian, 10.3.2014)

Suicide Among Children Is A Bigger Problem Than Ever Before, And Cyberbullying May Be The Cause
(Inquisitr, 31.10.2014)

More children 'self-harming because of cyber-bullying'
(Metro, 27.5.2014)

Legend:
- Not involved
- Victim only
- Bully only
- Bully-victim

Chart values (Website Content):
- Self-harm: 6%, 18%, 19%, 30%
- Suicide: 4%, 12%, 6%, 16%

- **Intentions of viewing suicide-related web-content**

Implications

www.eukidsonline.net

- Mental health problems for different cyber-bullying involvement types on the whole resemble those for bullying involvement types

- Same kind of youth involved in online and offline risks (Görzig & Livingstone, 2014)

- Integrative prevention and intervention strategies (Finkelhor, 2014; Livingstone & Smith, 2014)

- Focus on adolescents' specific problems and developmental needs (Jones et al., 2013)

- Adolescents involved in (cyber-)bullying need support

  - Targeted towards involvement type
  - Prevent the causes and/or consequences of mental health problems

THE LONDON SCHOOL
of ECONOMICS AND
POLITICAL SCIENCE

UNIVERSITY OF
WEST LONDON

www.eukidsonline.net

THANK YOU!

Findings from *EU Kids Online*, 2014
Dr Anke Görzig