

## Cyberbullying in High School Students- Systematic Review

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### Abstract

This systematic review aimed to identify studies that address Cyberbullying, such as trolling, Fleming and Sexting in secondary students. The review was framed in the PRISMA protocol, the exploration of the information was done in English, using the Scopus search engine, with the search equations: Ciberbullying AND High School Students, Ciberbullying AND Trolling, Ciberbullying AND Fleming, Ciberbullying AND Sexting. 1170 scientific writings were identified, 686 were screened after eliminating duplicates, 484 were selected of which 388 were excluded for not keeping agreement with the title, keywords and abstract. We chose 96 full-text articles, separating 64 for not meeting the inclusion criteria, of which 32 were written that were included for review based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria. The search period was June-August 2022; The information collected was entered into a data matrix. The results indicate that Trolling and Fleming are favored by the use of cyberbullies from cyberspace to humiliate and intimidate their cybervictims; on the other hand, Sexting shows that students exchange sexual images in order to intimidate and culminate in sextortion.

**Keywords:** Cyberbullying; Fleming; Sexting; Trolling

### 1. Introduction

At present, a growing technological advance can be evidenced in the world, where digitalization through its use plays a preponderant role in the various areas of human and social development (1). In this sense, many adolescents and adults use various social networks to communicate, which are exposed to risks and opportunities (2). Likewise, a study conducted worldwide, in relation to the preponderance of cyberbullying and the age group among students, ranges from 10% to 53%. While in North America it has been perceived that 30% report a case of cyberbullying (1). On the other hand, students in recent years are exposed to various online risk situations such as: Cyberbullying, Trolling, Sexting, Grooming, Fleming (Astorga-Aguilar, & Schmidt-Fonseca, 2019; as cited in (3).

### Bullying

For many years, bullying has been of interest to all countries worldwide (Chan & Wong, 2015, as cited in (4). Bullying is one of the most worrying difficulties facing the global village (5). In this sense, bullying has been defined as a manifestation that occurs when a defenseless and vulnerable person is exposed continuously and prolonged to the negative behaviors of one or more people, which take the name of perpetrator or perpetrators of the aggression (6). Likewise, bullying is defined as aggressive behavior that is repeated over time where an inequality of power is established between the victim and the harasser(7). In addition, bullying is the intentional act of harm caused by a group or individual, repeated over time, using modern digital technology to harm a defenseless victim (Juvonen & Gross, 2008, as cited in(8). Thus, the impact caused by bullying through bullying has led to many problems, including mental health problems, stress, depression, antisocial behavior, and even suicidal thoughts in some cases (Wolke & Lereya, 2015, as cited in(8)).

### Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying as a term, was introduced to refer to the use of technology for the purpose of harassing, threatening, embarrassing other people (9). In this sense, it is defined as intentional behavior where aggressors use technological devices to attack their victim (10). It is also considered an aggressive and deliberate act by one or

more people, which uses repetitive electronic forms of communication directed at a vulnerable victim (Pelfrey and Weber, 2014, as cited in(9)). Thus, cyberbullying spreads faster and can reach a wider audience than traditional bullying (Slonje and Smith, 2008; Erdur Baker, 2009, as cited in(4)). In this sense, in this type of youth violence, the aggressors feel able to repeat cyberbullying, almost indefinitely even after a single act, using the breadth and depth of cyberspace, ultimately contributing to the destruction of the victim's life (11).

### **Types of Cyberbullying**

Cyberbullying manifests itself in various forms, which can range from text messages, harassment, photos, videos to phone calls (Ibiwani, 2017, as cited in(9)). Thus, online harassment can occur in many electronic formats, including emails, instant messages, text messages, chat, websites, blogs, online games or using social networks (Kowalski & Limber, 2013, as cited in(12)). Hence, cyberbullying has several dimensions such as:

#### **Trolling**

Trolling is defined as those repetitive and ill-intentioned actions with offensive phrases through the websites that some young people use towards others (13). Likewise, trolling is defined as the process of acting on online social networks in a derogatory, offensive way to generate a reaction from cybervisitors (14). In addition, it is considered a negative, inappropriate, aggressive behavior that seeks to annoy or harm cybervictims (15).

#### **Fleming**

Fleming occurs when a student makes use of electronic communication technology as a deliberate means to intimidate, harm, embarrass or socially exclude another person (Ang et al., 2011, as cited in(16)). Likewise, this type of cyberbullying is considered as a deliberate aggression, publishing or sending insults perpetrated in the context of the internet towards other people who are often defenseless (17). It is also defined as a deliberate and repeated act of violence by a person or a group, using electronic devices where offensive messages are sent to another person with the intention of harming him (18).

#### **Grooming**

This type of online harassment is defined as a situation in which a person creates a false profile to find, court and seduce another person using a social network(19). Along the same lines, grooming is defined as online sexual cyberbullying activity carried out by an adult to gain the trust of a child and subsequently urge him or her to have sex (20).

#### **Sexting**

Sexting consists of that practice carried out by students in a consensual manner where sexual images are exchanged through the mobile device (2). In the same way, Sexting is practiced among young people with the help of digital technology to send or receive texts, photos, videos with sexual content online (21). Hence, adolescents who practice Sexting should be aware that it can lead to sextortion, if the images are shared with other people without assent (22).

The aim of this systematic review is to identify studies addressing Cyberbullying and its types including trolling, Fleming, Grooming, and Sexting in high school students.

## **2. Method**

The review was based on the qualitative approach and a series of steps were developed on a recurring basis for the analysis of the acquired data, corresponding to a systematic design (23); likewise, the research was carried out through documentary analysis to collect, organize, analyze and interpret information in relation to a specific topic(24). . The review was framed in the methodological aspects of the PRISMA protocol, appropriate for carrying out systematic and bibliographic reviews(25).

The exploration of the information was done in English, using the academic search engine Scopus, with the following search equations, Ciberbullying AND High School Students, Ciberbullyng AND Trolling, Ciberbullyng AND Fleming, Ciberbullyng AND Sexting. 1170 scientific writings were identified, 686 were screened after eliminating duplicates, 484 were selected of which 388 were excluded for not keeping agreement with the title,

keywords and abstract. Likewise, 96 full-text articles were chosen, separating 64 for not complying with the inclusion criteria, of which 32 were written that were included for review based on the inclusion criteria: original articles, quantitative, qualitative and mixed studies according to the purpose of the investigation. The target period was June 2022 to August 2022; The information collected was entered into a data matrix that is shown in Table 1.

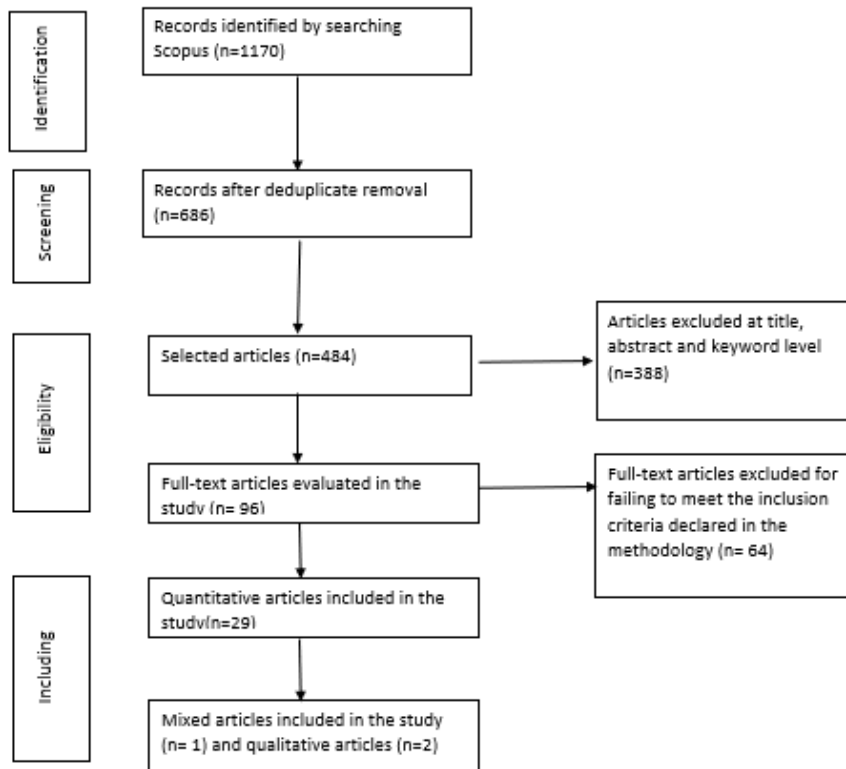


Figure 1. Flowchart with the PRISMA method (25).

### 3. Results

Table 1 shows the results of the exhaustive search of the information that were taken into account the types of Cyberbullying: Trolling (9) of which one is related to Fleming; likewise, 21 articles were found that analyzed the Fleming dimension, and two articles that studied the Sexting dimension. The above analysis shows that researchers are more inclined to study Fleming.

Table 1. Analysis matrix of the selected literature.

Number	Author /year	Country	Database	Cyberbullying				Methodology			Authors' contributions by dimension
				Trolling	Fleming	Grooming	Sexting.	Type of study	Instruments	Population/sample	

1.	(26)	United Kingdom	Scopus	X	X					Qualitative	Observation sheet	28 students 20 women and 8 men Between 11 and 15 years old	<b>Trolling (cybermockery):</b> Virtual aggression by perpetrators through humor intimidates cyber victims. <b>Fleming (online harassment):</b> Online harassment by students is more often accentuated.
2.	(27)	Australia	Scopus		X					Mixed	Online questionnaire	54 students (48 males and 6 females)	<b>Fleming (online harassment):</b> The applied program generates effective skills in students to prevent online bullying from coping.
3.	(28)	Peru	Scopus	X						Quantitative	Questionnaire	607 students aged 12 and 19	<b>Trolling:</b> Cyber teasing influences participants' low self-esteem.
4.	(29)	Spain	Scopus	X						Descriptive comparative, transversal.	Questionnaire	1558 students from 13 to 17 years old	<b>Trolling (cybermockery):</b> In this study, the use of offensive messages and insults through the mobile phone was evidenced.
5.	(30)	Spain	Scopus		X					Cross-sectional correlational	Questionnaire	1024 high school students 456 males and 568 females	<b>Fleming (online harassment):</b> Cyber victims rely on deceptive strategies intended to assuage their bad feelings.
6.	(31)	Hungary	Scopus		X					Quantitative comparative correlational	Questionnaire	524 Students	<b>Fleming (online harassment):</b> Moral disengagement is linked to the practice of harassment on the internet.
7.	(32)	Spain	Scopus		X					quantitative	Questionnaire	1,033 students	<b>Fleming (online harassment):</b> A high moral disconnect online, between the aggressor and the cybervictim is related to cyberbullying.
8.	(33)	Spain	Scopus		X					quantitative	Questionnaire	1157 Students 629 females, 527 males	<b>Fleming (online harassment):</b> Students with high emotional intelligence report less aggression in the field of cyberbullying.
9.	(34)	Thailand	Scopus		X					Quantitative cross-sectional	Questionnaire	578 High school students	<b>Fleming (online harassment):</b> Students who are very attached to their parents in greater proportion were victims of cyberbullying.
10.	(35)	China	Scopus		X					quantitative	questionnaire	1854 Students	<b>Fleming (online harassment):</b> Internet addiction influences the psychological aspect of cyber victims.

11.	(36)	Spain	Scopus		X					Quantitative cross-sectional	Questionnaire	810 secondary school students	<b>Fleming (online harassment):</b> The regulated emotional state helps prevent online disgust.
12.	(37)	Indonesia.	Scopus		X					descriptive	Questionnaire	112 Students	<b>Fleming (online harassment):</b> The filial relationship and moods of the student negatively influence the behavior of the perpetrator.
13.	(38)	Spain	Scopus		X					Cross-sectional quantitative	Questionnaire	3520 high school students	<b>Fleming (online harassment):</b> Emotional intelligence impacts online bullying and life satisfaction.
14.	(39)	China.	Scopus		X					Cross-sectional quantitative	Questionnaire	319 Students	<b>Fleming (online harassment):</b> Students who participate in cyberbullying prevention activities improve positively.
15.	(40)	Spain	Scopus		X					Cross-sectional quantitative	Questionnaire	3173 adolescents between 12 and 17 years old	<b>Fleming (online harassment):</b> Young people who participate in online harassment have greater consumption and habits of risky situations.
16.	(41)	Thailand	Scopus	X						Cross-sectional quantitative	Questionnaire	2683 students from High school and 721 university students	<b>Trolling:</b> Trolls only seek to mock their victims, without taking into account the serious consequences they could cause.
17.	(42)	Spain	Scopus		X					Cross-sectional quantitative	questionnaire	4646 primary students.	<b>Fleming (online harassment):</b> A high rate of elementary school students who experienced traditional bullying may fall victim to cyberbullying.
18.	(43)	Spain	Scopus		X					Cross-sectional quantitative	questionnaire	1,744 students aged 14-18	<b>Fleming (online harassment):</b> Students who are victims of online harassment have mental health problems.
19.	(44)	England	Scopus	X						Quasi-experimental	questionnaires	990 participants aged between 11 and 20 years	<b>Trolling:</b> Young people who were victims of cyberteasing respond positively to their cyberbullies.
20.	(45)	China	Scopus		X					Correlational	questionnaire	4978 Pre-university students	<b>Fleming (online harassment):</b> Cyberbullying is associated in greater proportion with the psychological aspect.

21.	(46)	Vietnam	Scopus		X					Cross-sectional quantitative	questionnaire	1498 Students	<b>Fleming (online harassment):</b> Students who experienced cyberbullying are more likely to have symptoms of depression.
22.	(47)	Turkey	Scopus	X						transversal, correlational	Questionnaire	360 students	<b>Trolling:</b> The excessive use of the internet added to the online aggression, significantly influence cybermockery..
23.	(48)	Philippines	Scopus		X					descriptive	questionnaire	168 high school students	<b>Fleming (online harassment):</b> To prevent cyberbullying and other risks on the Internet, students show empathy.
24.	(49)	Turkey	Scopus	X						Cross-sectional quantitative	questionnaire	2937 High school students	<b>Trolling:</b> Proper sensitization in students helps prevent cyberbullying.
25.	(10)	Turkey	Scopus		X					Cross-sectional quantitative	questionnaire	315 Students	<b>Fleming (online harassment):</b> Learners tend to spend more time on social media running the risk of engaging in online harassment.
26.	(4)	China	Scopus		X					qualitative	interviews	41 adolescent students aged 12 to 16,	<b>Fleming (online harassment):</b> Ongoing online harassment towards victims affects their emotional state and school performance.
27.	(50)	China	Scopus		X					Cross-sectional quantitative	questionnaire	2156 Students	<b>Fleming (online harassment):</b> Having partners with a bad relationship affects that they are victims of online harassment.
28.	(51)	Colombia	Scopus		X					Cross-sectional quantitative	questionnaire	1462 students 13 to 17 years old	<b>Fleming (online harassment):</b> Cyberbullying is related to emotional health problems.
29.	(52)	United	Scopus	X						Cross-sectional quantitative	questionnaire	2 218 High school students	<b>Trolling:</b> Home training affects the practice of cyber-teasing
30.	(53)	Spain	Scopus					X		Descriptive	Questionnaire	2356 Students from high school	<b>Sexting (sending sexual images)</b> It has an emotional impact on behavior, strongly affecting the desire and curiosity for other experiences.
31.	(54)	Portugal	Scopus	X						Cross-sectional quantitative	questionnaire	1 044 teachers	<b>Trolling:</b> Teachers who evidence cyberbullying among students are prone to low productivity and performance.

32.	(55)	Israel	Scopus					X	Descriptive	questionnaire	Online	458 Students	<b>Sexting(sending sexual images)</b> Sexting occurs in a higher percentage among older students is more common in boys than girls.
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**Table 2. Distribution of information by country.**

Country	Frequency	Percentage
United Kingdom	2	6.25%
Australia	1	3.13%
Peru	1	3.13%
Spain	10	31.25%
Hungary	1	3.13%
Thailand	2	6.25%
China	5	15.63%
Indonesia	1	3.13%
England	1	3.13%
Vietnam	1	3.13%
Turkey	3	9.32%
Philippines	1	3.13%
Colombia	1	3.13%
Portugal	1	3.13%
Israel	1	3.13%
Total	32	100

The analysis of the information according to the publications by country showed that in Spain the largest amount of research related to Cyberbullying was carried out (31.25%), while in the other countries the production of literature related to this inconstant is low.

**Table 3. Distribution of information by type of study.**

Type of study	Frequency	percentage
Qualitative	2	6,3%
Quantitative	29	90,6%
mixed	1	3,1%
Total	32	100%

The information related to the type of study showed that 90.6% (29) were quantitative studies, 6.3% (2) were qualitative and 3.1% (1) mixed.

**Table 4. Distribution of information by dimensions of Cyberbullying.**

Dimensions of Ciberbullyng	Frequency	percentage
Trolling	9	28,1%
Fleming	21	65,6%
Sexting	2	6,3%
Total	32	100%

The information around the dimensions of Cyberbullying showed that the largest amount of research was related to Fleming (65.6%); 28.1% were trolling studies and only 6.3% (2) dealt with sexting.

**Table 5. Distribution of the sample according to the type of study.**

Instrument	Frequency	percentage
Questionnaire	30	93.74%
Interview	1	3.13%
Observation sheet	1	3.13%
Total	32	100%

The analysis of the articles included in the matrix consists mostly of questionnaires (93.74%) for the collection of information; while interviews and observation cards were used in only one case respectively.

#### **4. Discussion**

The analysis of Table 1 shows that Cyberbullying allows the development of aggressive behavior in various forms and ill-intentioned of the aggressors towards their victims, agencise for this purpose of the cyberspace, which are examined below.

##### **Trolling in basic education students**

Cyberbullies often use humor as a form of intimidation towards cybervictims, feeling more popular when performing this aggression (26); In this regard, one of the most frequent behaviors registered by cyberaggressors to cause harm is the use of offensive messages and insults through the mobile phone (29); Along the same lines, trolls only focus on mocking their victims, making excessive use of the Internet, regardless of their actions that can have serious consequences on the emotional state of the victim(41); (47).

On the other hand, information from the literature shows evidence that those young people who were victims of cyberbullying, contrary to what is expected, responded positively to their cyberbullies (44); this would be explained to the extent that adequate awareness of victims helps prevent cyberbullying (49). ; In addition, the bond and coexistence in a context of violence allows the threshold of tolerance to aggression to be raised and also to consider it as natural within the social coexistence in which the victim develops (56). Likewise, the family context and the way they assume violence affect the practice of cybermockery by the perpetrator (52). Not only students are likely to be victims of cyberbullying, but also teachers, which will generate in them a low productivity in their performance (54).

##### **The Fleming (online harassment)**

The cyberhumor made by the harassers towards their cybervictims can be misinterpreted since Cyberspace does not contain corrective signals of a verbal nature or social context, this leads to it being accentuated more frequently (26); Likewise, students who tend to spend more time using social networks, have greater consumption habits and run the risk of participating mostly in online harassment (10); (40); In turn, students who suffered cyberbullying are usually prone to symptoms of emotional depression and a decrease in their academic appearance(46); (4); (43); (45); (51); on the other hand, the regulated emotional state of cybervictims contributes both to the prevention of online harassment and to life satisfaction(36); (38).

On the other hand, those students who usually participate in certain activities related to the prevention of cyberbullying and the influence on cybervictimization present positive improvements in terms of awareness of these events (39); In addition, cybervictims rely on maladaptive emotional-cognitive regulation strategies that help mitigate their bad feelings and overwhelming emotions that could have an impact on the increase of disastrous consequences on their health (30); In the same context, dependence on the Internet plays an intermediary role between cybervictims and their physical-psychological symptoms (35); In this sense, the behavior of the perpetrator is negatively and significantly related to attachment, moods and favorable school climate (37); on the other hand, a high moral disconnect generated online, between the aggressor and the cybervictim is related to cyberbullying(32); (31); In the same vein, students who have a strong attachment to their parents and who at some point in their lives were bullied, or witnessed cyberbullying towards friends and family are the most affected compared to others who never experienced such an event (34).



It is important to note that having partners with a bad relationship affects that they are victims of online harassment (50); since, it often happens that victims often become cyberbullies (48); in addition, bad relationships, having few close and social friends predict the perpetration as victimization through cyberspace (50). ; Likewise, students who suffered traditional bullying were also victims of cyberbullying (42).

Faced with this reality, it is important to highlight that coping to prevent cyberbullying is related to the empathy developed by students (48); likewise, it has been observed that students with high emotional intelligence tend to be less aggressive in cyberbullying (33); finally, it is necessary to implement programs to develop coping skills and prevention of cyberbullying (27).

### **El Sexting**

In relation to Sexting, learners build a vigorous connection between desire and curiosity for other novel experiences, basically directed towards sexual relations, parallel to this, they consider that by exchanging and distributing sexual material, it is a way to become more popular and known to be accepted within a group (53).

On the other hand, students who develop within a family environment where there is less control of their actions and a very permissible mode of training by their parents, are more likely to participate and incur in sexting situations such as asking other people for nude and semi-nude photos (55).

### **5. Conclusions**

Trolling will be favored to the extent that cyberbullies make use of cyberspace to send humiliating and intimidating messages, based on humor and mockery, negatively impacting the socio-emotional state of their victims, reaching even teachers.

As for the Fleming, it is evidenced by virtue that those students who spend more time connected to social networks, are participants on a larger scale of online harassment, causing a depressive emotional effect and poor performance in school in their cybervictims; However, cyberteasing will not be relevant if people enjoy a high emotional balance.

In relation to Sexting, the incidence is basically dynamic, students who show various positive emotional behaviors experience desire, sexual initiation and the need to create popularity among their peers by sharing sexual images; Therefore, if students grow up within an incipient family bosom of established values and rules, they will be more likely to participate in online sexting.

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