Effect of Cyber Bullying on The Distrust Levels of Pre-Service Teachers: Internet Addiction as Mediating Variable

Abstract

The aim of this study is to determine the effect of cyber bullying on the distrust levels among final year university students by considering the intermediary effect of Internet addiction. The study group comprises preservice teachers who were senior year students at the Firat University Education Faculty in Elaziğ city, Turkey, during the spring term of the 2009–2010 academic year. Cyber bullying of preservice teachers directly impacts on their distrust levels at the .24 level. However, when Internet addiction was included in the model as a mediating variable, the direct impact of cyber bullying on distrust decreased to (.14). Therefore, it is evident that when cyber bullying is mediated by Internet addiction, its impact on the distrust levels of pre-service teachers is more significant.

Key words: cyber bullying, distrust, Internet addiction.

Introduction

Bullying has become a widespread problem among children as well as young people (National Crime Prevention Council, 2003). The most frequent types of bullying include physical (pushing and/or beating), verbal (swearing and/or nicknaming), and emotional bullying (excluding or alienating) (Kapçı, 2004). Technological changes that promote new negative behavior styles (e-pornography, cyber theft, Internet addiction, or spreading viruses) accelerate the spread of new types of crimes (Li, 2006). The most widespread of these new types of crime is