Faculty Members’ Perceived Experiences and Impact of Cyberbullying from Students at a Canadian University:
A Mixed Methods Study

by
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Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Education

in the
Educational Leadership Program
Faculty of Education

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SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
Spring 2014

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Abstract

This mixed methods study was conducted at a Canadian University in 2012, using an online survey and individual interviews to explore faculty members’ perceived experiences of having aggressive, intimidating, defaming, or threatening message(s) sent to them or about them by students via electronic media. Limited empirical research on this issue within the context of higher education led the researcher to draw from literature on workplace bullying, academic bullying, and K-12 sector cyberbullying—of which theoretical frameworks have included student development, power, aggression, and group theories. This study explored cyberbullying through the theoretical lenses of power, disinhibition, and victimization.

Consistent with previous bullying and cyberbullying research, this study found that faculty members who had encountered at least one significant cyberbullying incident (it had a negative effect on them) experienced detrimental physical, emotional, relational, and professional effects. Demographic data such as age, rank, and gender are discussed, in addition to the duration of effects, support measures sought, and support measures recommended by cyberbullied faculty members. Study findings not only serve to inform the workplace and cyberbullying literature of this phenomenon, but provide a foundation for the development of institutional policy and education programs in the prevention and management of cyberbullying.

Keywords: post-secondary education; cyberbullying; faculty members; undergraduate students; impact; mixed methods
This research study is dedicated to the faculty members who, in taking the risk to disclose their difficult and sometimes painful cyberbullying experiences, have exposed and illuminated this phenomenon.
Acknowledgements

Several people have made a valuable contribution to this research study, without which the successful completion of this doctoral study could not have been achieved.

• Dr. Michelle Nilson, Senior Supervisor: Thankyou for your mentorship over the past 4 years. From the first class in this program & throughout the dissertation process, your expertise and dedication to this study has been greatly appreciated.

• Dr. Wanda Cassidy, Supervisor: Your energy and enthusiasm toward enhancing awareness of cyberbullying is inspiring, and I am deeply grateful for the time, expertise, and encouragement that you have contributed over the past 2 years.

• Internal examiner, Dr. Margaret Jackson, and external examiner, Dr. Jamie Lester: I greatly appreciate your interest in this study and thought provoking questions.

• Dr. S. Lampman, Dr. L. Keashly, Dr. J. Neuman, and Dr. K. McDevitt: Thankyou for conducting a scholarly review of the online survey instrument.

• Dr. Patrice Keats: I greatly appreciate your advisement about interviewing vulnerable participants.

• Dr. Dan Laitsch, and Dr. Michelle Pidgeon: Thankyou for your ongoing advisement, support, and encouragement throughout the various stages of this research study.

• Dr. Chantal Faucher: Thankyou for reviewing and providing advisement in the final edit of this dissertation.

• Joanie Wolfe: Your expertise and assistance in formatting this document into such a professional looking dissertation. You certainly go above and beyond in your support of students.

• Maggie Karpilovsky. Thankyou for sharing your expertise during the qualitative coding process.
# Table of Contents

Approval ............................................................................................................................. ii
Partial Copyright Licence .................................................................................................. iii
Ethics Statement ............................................................................................................... iv
Abstract ............................................................................................................................. v
Dedication ......................................................................................................................... vi
Acknowledgements .......................................................................................................... vii
Table of Contents ............................................................................................................ viii
List of Tables ..................................................................................................................... xi
List of Figures .................................................................................................................... xi

## Chapter 1. Introduction .............................................................................................. 1
1.1. Statement of the Problem ........................................................................................ 2
1.2. Purpose of this Research ......................................................................................... 3
1.3. Significance of the Study ........................................................................................ 4
   1.3.1. Background .................................................................................................. 4
   1.3.2. Significance: Practice, Theory, and Policy ................................................... 6
1.4. Research Questions ................................................................................................. 7
1.5. Study Design ............................................................................................................ 7
1.6. Definition of Concepts .............................................................................................. 8
1.7. Study Delimitations ................................................................................................ 10
1.8. Potential Limitations ............................................................................................... 12
1.9. Dissertation Overview ............................................................................................ 14

## Chapter 2. Literature Review ................................................................................... 15
2.1. Empirical Literature ............................................................................................... 16
   2.1.1. Definitions................................................................................................... 16
   2.1.2. Bullying: Workplace Sector ......................................................................... 18
   2.1.3. Cyberbullying: An Overview ...................................................................... 19
   2.1.4. Cyberbullying in the Workplace ................................................................. 21
   2.1.5. Cyberbullying within School Sectors ......................................................... 22
      2.1.5.1. Cyberbullying: Post-secondary Students ..................................... 23
      2.1.5.2. Cyberbullying: Post-Secondary Faculty Members ....................... 24
   2.1.6. Impact on Targeted Individuals .................................................................. 25
      2.1.6.1. Impact of Bullying: Workplace and School Sectors ..................... 25
      2.1.6.2. Impact of Cyberbullying: Workplace and School Sectors .......... 26
   2.2. Theoretical Underpinnings ............................................................................... 28
      2.2.1. Power Relations: Students and Faculty Members ......................... 29
         2.2.1.1. Foucault’s Analysis of Power ....................................................... 29
         2.2.1.2. Disinhibition and Retaliation ......................................................... 33
      2.2.2. Victimization of Targeted Faculty Members ........................................ 34
         2.2.2.1. Faculty Members as Victims ....................................................... 35
         2.2.2.2. Victim Recourse ........................................................................... 38
      2.2.3. Research Paradigm: Social Constructivism ........................................... 40
   2.3. Conceptual Framework: Cyberbullying ............................................................... 42
   2.4. Summary ............................................................................................................ 44
Chapter 3. Methodology .................................................................................................. 46
3.1. Research Questions ................................................................................................. 47
3.2. Research Design ........................................................................................................ 47
  3.2.1. Mixed Methods Approach ................................................................................ 49
  3.2.2. Strengths and Weaknesses of the Methods ...................................................... 52
    3.2.2.1. Strengths and Weaknesses of Surveys ..................................................... 52
    3.2.2.2. Strengths and Weaknesses of Interview Methods .................................. 53
    3.2.2.3. Strengths and Weaknesses of Mixed Methods ...................................... 54
3.3. Population and Sampling ......................................................................................... 55
3.4. Instrument Design and Data Collection .................................................................... 56
  3.4.1. Online Survey ..................................................................................................... 56
    3.4.1.1. Scholar Review and Pilot Review ............................................................. 57
  3.4.2. Recruitment Procedure ...................................................................................... 58
  3.4.3. Individual Interviews ........................................................................................ 60
    3.4.3.1. Interview Preparation .............................................................................. 60
    3.4.3.2. Conducting the Interview ....................................................................... 61
  3.4.4. Strengths and Weaknesses of the Instruments .................................................. 63
3.5. Data Analysis .......................................................................................................... 64
  3.5.1. Online Survey Data Analysis ............................................................................ 65
  3.5.2. Individual Interview Data .................................................................................. 66
  3.5.3. Trustworthiness ................................................................................................ 71
  3.5.4. Study Limitations ............................................................................................. 72

Chapter 4. Findings ......................................................................................................... 75
4.1. Demographic Information ....................................................................................... 75
4.2. RQ 1: Faculty Members’ Awareness of Online Media ........................................... 77
4.3. RQ 2: Participants’ Cyberbullying Experiences....................................................... 78
  4.3.1. CB Messages: Frequency, Content, Most Recent Occurrence ...................... 78
  4.3.2. Participants’ Most Serious Cyberbullying Experiences .................................. 78
4.4. RQ 3: Impact of Serious CB Messages .................................................................... 82
  4.4.1. Physical and Emotional Effects ....................................................................... 83
  4.4.2. Relational and Professional Effects ................................................................ 85
  4.4.3. How Long the Negative Effects of CB Persisted ............................................ 86
4.5. RQ 4: Response to Cyberbullying .......................................................................... 88
  4.5.1. Reporting Cyberbullying Incidents ................................................................. 89
  4.5.2. Participants’ Responses to Cyber-aggressors .................................................. 90
  4.5.3. Participants’ Coping Strategies ...................................................................... 91
  4.5.4. Participants’ Views of CB Messages ............................................................... 91
4.6. RQ 5: Institutional Support Measures ..................................................................... 92
  4.6.1. Institutional Policy, Procedures, Sanctions, and Support at MU ..................... 92
4.7. Participants’ Recommendations ............................................................................. 93
  4.7.1. Institutional Policy, Education, and Counselling Support for Faculty Members .......................................................... 94
  4.7.2. Support for Students: CB Education and Counselling .................................. 96
  4.7.3. Further Research ............................................................................................ 96
4.8. Summary ............................................................................................................... 97
Chapter 5.  Summary and Discussion ................................................................. 98

5.1. The Research Problem ............................................................................. 98
5.2. Summary of the Findings ........................................................................ 98
5.3. Discussion of the Findings ...................................................................... 100
  5.3.1. The Impact of CB on Targeted Faculty Members ................................ 102
  5.3.2. Participants’ Responses to CB .......................................................... 107
  5.3.3. Theoretical Frameworks .................................................................... 109
5.4. Study Limitations .................................................................................... 114
5.5. Implications and Recommendations ..................................................... 115
  5.5.1. Implications and Recommendations for Policy ................................. 117
  5.5.2. Implications and Recommendations for Practice ............................. 119
  5.5.3. Implications and Recommendations for Further Research ............. 121
5.6. Conclusion ............................................................................................... 122

References ........................................................................................................ 126

Appendix A. Online Survey Questions .......................................................... 144
Appendix B. Scholar Review Email Invitation ................................................. 167
Appendix C. Scholar Review Email Survey Link .............................................. 168
Appendix D. Research Institution “MU” Ethics Approval ................................ 169
Appendix E. Research Participant Letter of Information ................................ 170
Appendix F. Online Survey Consent Form ....................................................... 172
Appendix G. Invitation Follow-up Email ......................................................... 175
Appendix H. Individual Interview Letter of Information ................................ 176
Appendix I. Individual Interview Consent Form ............................................. 178
Appendix J. Individual Interview Questions .................................................... 182
Appendix K. Data Analysis of Research Questions .......................................... 183
Appendix L. Serious Cyberbullying Incidents .................................................. 186
Appendix M. Type and Duration of Negative Effects Experienced After Serious
  CB Incidents (n=19) .................................................................................. 187
Appendix N. Duration of Negative Effects Graphs ......................................... 188
Appendix O. Course of Action Taken and Outcome ....................................... 192
Appendix P. Support Measures at MU ............................................................ 193
Appendix Q. Research Findings Summary Table: Online Survey Data .......... 194
Appendix R. Transcript Codes: Impact and Recommendations ...................... 197
Appendix S. Negative Effects and Gender Differences .................................... 198
List of Tables

Table 1.1 Definitions of Various Forms of Bullying and Cyberbullying ......................... 8
Table 2.1 Forms of Electronic Media Used To Cyberbully (Campbell, 2005; Beale & Hall, 2007) ................................................................. 20
Table 2.2 Ways of Cyberbullying (Coyne, Chesney, Logan, & Madden, 2009; Dooley et al.,2009; Willard, 2007b) ................................................................. 21
Table 2.3 Cyberbullying Research: Post-secondary Sector ........................................ 25
Table 3.1 Visual Model of Sequential Mixed Methods Research Design .................... 51

List of Figures

Figure 2.1 Conceptual Framework: Student-to-Faculty Cyberbullying ....................... 43
Figure 3.1 Sequential Research Design for Study (Collins et al.,2007) ......................... 50
Figure 4.1 Participants’ Descriptions of Serious CB Messages .................................. 80
Figure 4.2 Detrimental Effects Experienced by CB-Targeted Participants .................. 82
Figure 4.3 Professional Effects of CB on Participants .............................................. 85
Figure 4.4 Participants’ Top-priority Recommendations ............................................ 94
Chapter 1.

Introduction

The experience of teaching in post-secondary or “higher education” (HE) can be very rewarding when the interplay between faculty members and students culminates in enriched learning, yet equally challenging when conflict erupts, or worse—escalates to harmful behaviour. Within the scope of teaching rests faculty members’ responsibilities of maintaining a healthy learning environment for students and faculty members alike—a process whereby contentious issues can surface and faculty members are left to mitigate. While some issues may resolve without further incident, the possibility also exists that in the wake of addressing disparities with students, faculty members may themselves become targeted with aggression. The matrix of student-to-faculty discourse can be complex in terms of the circumstances which can trigger tensions (e.g., disagreement about grades, assignment criteria, or schedules), the environment within which it manifests (e.g., in-person versus online), and the impact on those involved.

The phenomenon of online student aggression towards faculty members became evident to me while serving in various roles as a faculty member within the post-secondary education system. For example, as a clinical placement coordinator, it was not uncommon to receive angry email messages from students who were dissatisfied with their clinical placements, or as a Program Coordinator, to receive reports from faculty members who had received “aggressive”, “uncivil”, or “disrespectful” email messages from students. While serving in this capacity, the anecdotal reports of students’ online aggressions toward faculty members appeared to be increasing—leaving faculty members and administrators alike to question both the manifestation of this behaviour and the impact it appeared to have on targeted individuals. This research study examines faculty members’ perceived experiences of cyberbullying (having online messages such as email, texting, Ratemyprofessors.com) sent to them or about them by
students, the impact of such incidents, and the support measures needed. The first chapter of this research study informs on the nature and context of the study.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

Despite empirical evidence suggesting that student-to-faculty targeted mistreatment exists in post-secondary education (Dickerson, 2005; Lampman, Phelps, Bancroft, & Beneke, 2008, 2009; Luparell, 2004, 2007; Nardone, 2010), studies to further explore this issue within the context of HE are limited. While most studies have focused on “incivilities” towards faculty members within the classroom setting (Boice, 1996; Clark & Springer, 2007b; DeSouza, 2010; Lampman, 2012; Lampman et al., 2009), or aggression, harassment, and bullying (DeSouza, 2010; Kolanko et al., 2006; Luparell, 2004, 2007; McKay, Arnold, Fratzl, & Thomas, 2008a), fewer studies (Clark, Werth, & Ahten, 2012) have explored students’ aggressions toward faculty members via electronic media.

Further, studies of faculty-targeted aggression in HE (Lampman, 2012; Lampman et al., 2009; Luparell, 2004); cyberbullying (CB) among K-12 students (Beale & Hall, 2007; Brown, Jackson, & Cassidy, 2006; Patchin & Hinduja, 2006), and CB of students in the HE sector (Beran, Rinaldi, Bickham, & Rich, 2012; Walker, Sockman, & Koehn, 2011) report similar findings in terms of the detrimental effects of such incidents on targeted individuals. It is therefore plausible that forms of mistreatment or aggression towards faculty members committed by students via electronic media could have equally detrimental effects on targeted individuals. Yet, in absence of empirical data to explain how targeted faculty members have experienced this phenomenon, it is difficult to understand the nature, implications, and severity of the issue, as well as the institutional resources needed to support faculty members in preventing or managing cyberbullying. Throughout the study, cyberbullying (CB) refers to messages which recipients’ perceive as targeted, aggressive, intimidating, derogatory, defamatory, sexist, harassing, or bullying; disseminated via various forms of electronic media (e.g., cellular phone, email, discussion groups, chat groups, and polling websites such as ratemyprofessors.com). This definition does not include incidents that occur face-to-face or “in-person” (e.g.,
slapping, hitting, shouting) within close physical proximity of the target, but does include Skype® whereby parties can visualize each other through an electronic screen.

1.2. Purpose of this Research

The purpose of this research study is to explore faculty members’ experiences of having harmful messages sent to them, or about them by students via electronic media. In my view, this issue is concerning on two fronts; not only for the detrimental effects such an event can have on targeted individuals, but for the implications it can have on them thereafter. For example, in the immediacy of the situation, victims’ responses may vary in terms of their knowledge and ability to manage the incident, their emotional or physical effects experienced, their knowledge or ability to report their experiences to others, their resilience in coping with what has happened, and their awareness that such an incident can be harmful. Of equal consideration, in the aftermath of a stressful event, targeted individuals may encounter further personal, relational, or professional challenges. This raises questions in terms of how targeted faculty members process such an incident, maintain their sense of safety on campus, or maintain their confidence to engage students thereafter, and finally, how targeted faculty members cope, recover, or move forward from such an experience. In the absence of therapeutic support measures lies the potential for targeted faculty members, affected by CB, to return to their role of teaching while processing unresolved distress. Although this study is faculty-focused, the implications for faculty, students, and the learning environment cannot be disregarded.

Given the complexity of ways in which faculty members can encounter CB by students, this study serves to illuminate faculty members’ experiences with this phenomenon. This information sets the foundation for institutions of HE to commence the dialogue that is needed to develop measures of prevention, intervention, and support.
1.3. Significance of the Study

1.3.1. Background

Scholars argue that the landscape of post-secondary education is shifting in the complexity of student misconduct incidents, and in more extreme cases, violence (Nicoletti & Spencer-Thomas, 2010). Studies suggest that student aggression, incivility, and contra-power harassment toward faculty members is not a new phenomenon, but may in fact be pervasive throughout higher education (Appleby, 1990; Boice, 1996; Kearney & Plax, 1992; Keashly & Neuman, 2010; Lampman, 2012; Lampman et al., 2009; Luparell, 2004; Meyers, Bender, Hill, & Thomas, 2006; Schmidt, 2010). For example, in a study of 399 faculty members (Lampman et al., 2009), participants reported incidents of students shouting or screaming at them (29.1%), receiving threatening email and phone messages (23.7%), and hostile, inappropriate, or defamatory comments submitted by students on “end of term” faculty evaluations (47%). For faculty members, the classroom may exist in “traditional” or “virtual” formats, adding complexity to the plethora of ways and multitude of platforms through which students may easily and anonymously exhibit frustration toward targeted faculty members.

With the rapid influx of Information Communication Technology (ICT) over the past two decades, the interplay of student-faculty exchange within a learning environment can now extend beyond traditional classroom walls to the virtual world with electronic media such as email, blogs, chat rooms, and websites (Belsey, 2008; Campbell, 2005; Shariff, 2008; N. Willard, 2003). While such mediums provide ample opportunity for positive student-faculty engagement, empirical findings report that they have also served as a conveniently covert platform for bullying—a term coined as “cyberbullying” (Beale & Hall, 2007; Brown et al., 2006; Li, 2007; Patchin & Hinduja, 2006; Shariff, 2008; Smith et al., 2008; Ybarra & Mitchell, 2004).

As the classroom serves as the “workplace” for post-secondary faculty members, some may consider such a setting, focused primarily on learning, as a relatively safe workplace haven. However Spencer-Thomas and Nicoletti (2010) argue that faculty members, given their responsibility for making decisions that have an impact on students’ lives, can be vulnerable targets of workplace violence. For example, tensions can mount during exam periods, placing faculty members at risk when students who feel
overwhelmed and disgruntled, choose to retaliate against faculty members for their poor grades. Further, while predictable class schedules and publicly posted faculty office hours serve to enhance accessibility of faculty members for students, this creates ample opportunity for aggressors’ who intend to inflict harm (Spencer-Thomas & Nicoletti, 2010). Where conflict may have initially surfaced in the classroom, electronic polling sites serve as an equally convenient, anonymous platform to enact aggression by submitting defamatory comments about targeted individuals. For faculty members, such comments may be submitted on end of term evaluations or public sites (e.g., Ratemyprofessors.com), an act that could have negative implications for the targeted individuals.

In terms of workplace safety and maintaining a healthy learning environment, one must question not only how faculty members mitigate student misconduct that unfolds through virtual settings, but also how targeted faculty members manage when faced with on-line student aggression. Likewise, what measures of support are in place to assist faculty members, how do they cope, and what implications or impact are they likely to encounter in the aftermath of such incidents? Although one might anticipate that faculty members (generally guided by institutional policy in managing student misconduct), would report CB incidents to administrators, some studies suggest that faculty members may in fact avoid reporting incidents of student aggression for fear of student retaliation or repercussions from administrators (Boice, 1996; Luparell, 2004). Yet left unreported, accountability is averted and the impetus for subsequent attacks remains undeterred. Unresolved cyberbullying may shift the learning environment from a place for enriched learning to a zone fraught with uncertainty and fear of being attacked for both targets and bystanders alike (Hinduja & Patchin, 2007).

In terms of impact, cumulative findings from the broad scope of research on workplace and K-12 bullying report that victims of face-to-face bullying can suffer detrimental physical and psychological effects, including suicidal ideation and violence to self or others (Einarsen, Hoel, Zapf, & Cooper, 2003; Hoel, Faragher, & Cooper, 2004; Mikkelsen & Einarsen, 2002; Namie, 2003a; Randall, 2001; Tehrani, 2004). This aligns with K-12 CB research (Beale & Hall, 2007; Li, 2007; Patchin & Hinduja, 2006; Shariff, 2008; Smith et al., 2008) suggesting that targeted victims experience detrimental effects in the form of anxiety, anger, depression, and suicidal thoughts (Brown et al., 2006;
Ybarra & Mitchell, 2004). While empirical evidence specific to CB of faculty members by students in HE appears to be scarce in comparison to a greater number of studies on bullying in workplace and K-12 settings, Nicoletti, Spencer-Thomas, and Bollinger (2010) contend that bullying not only persists in post-secondary institutions, but can be a precursor to campus violence.

In terms of empirical evidence, as previously discussed, we know that bullying exists in workplace and academic settings, with negative and often debilitating effects for targeted individuals. Further empirical findings report that CB in workplace settings (Baruch, 2005; Privitera & Campbell, 2009), K-12 settings (Beale & Hall, 2007; Li, 2007; Patchin & Hinduja, 2006; Shariff, 2008; Smith et al., 2008) and post-secondary settings (Beran et al., 2012; Walker et al., 2011) can have equally concerning detrimental effects on victims. With limited empirical evidence examining the issue of cyberbullying in post-secondary education, it is difficult to ascertain the scope of cyberbullying across the campus community, let alone among populations specific to students, faculty members, administrators, or employees. With few studies to inform the development of institutional policy and practice, administrators are challenged to implement appropriate measures of support for campus constituents, while faculty members are left to determine how to mitigate such incidents. Yet, given the level of accountability and responsibility required of faculty members to uphold a healthy learning environment, it stands to reason that faculty members should be adequately prepared in the early recognition, effective intervention, and prevention of student cyberbullying.

1.3.2. Significance: Practice, Theory, and Policy

This study serves to acknowledge targeted faculty members’ experiences of cyberbullying by students and the impact that it had on their lives. The study also promises to inform the literature on the phenomenon of cyberbullying of faculty members by students in post-secondary education, based on the first-hand perceived experience of targeted faculty members. Finally, based on targeted faculty members’ testimonials of their experiences, this study promises to provide a foundation from which institutional resources such as policy and education can be developed to assist in the early recognition, prevention, and management of cyberbullying in post-secondary education.
1.4. Research Questions

The overarching research question asks “How do targeted faculty members perceive their experience of having harmful electronic messages (cyberbullying) sent to them or about them by undergraduate students in post-secondary education, and what impact did the experience have on them? The five research sub-questions that were used to further explore and greater understand faculty members’ experiences with this phenomenon include:

1. What knowledge did targeted faculty members have about various forms of online media?
2. How did faculty members who received at least one CB message from a student within the past 24 months, perceive that experience?
3. What self-perceived, self-reported impact did targeted faculty members’ most serious CB experience(s) from a student(s) have on them?
4. How did targeted faculty members respond to their most serious CB incident(s)?
5. Based on the perception of targeted faculty members, what support measures need to be in place in order for faculty members to manage student-to-faculty targeted CB effectively?

These questions were used to form the design of the study, data collection, final analysis of the data, and summary of this research study.

1.5. Study Design

An exploratory mixed methods research study design was used for data collection, employing both quantitative and qualitative methods to capture the reality of faculty members who have personally experienced cyberbullying by students. This design enables examination of the social and relational complexities of this issue, which might not otherwise be achieved using one solitary qualitative or quantitative approach (Bryman, Becker, & Sempik, 2008; Creswell, 2008c). Although this study poses questions that explore ‘how’ faculty members perceive their individual and unique experience(s) of student cyberbullying, this ‘one-time’ survey reflects the timeframe from
within which the data was obtained, and for this reason causality cannot be established from the findings.

### 1.6. Definition of Concepts

Scholars suggest that the scarcity of literature on student aggression or bullying toward faculty members, in either face-to-face or electronic platforms may be attributed to the lack of agreement on definitions. *Bullying* has been used extensively across the literature to describe a form of intentional, targeted, interpersonal aggression by a person who uses power or fear to coerce others, whereas *incivility*, and *contra-power harassment* have been used to describe student-to-faculty aggression, and *cyberbullying* signifies aggression or bullying exhibited through electronic media (see Table 1.1).

**Table 1.1 Definitions of Various Forms of Bullying and Cyberbullying**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Research</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bullying</td>
<td>A form of intentional, targeted, interpersonal aggression by a person who uses power or fear to coerce others.</td>
<td>(Agervold, 2007; Carney, 2000; Einarsen et al., 2003; Espelage &amp; Swearer, 2003; Lutgen-Sandvik, Tracy, &amp; Alberts, 2007; Nation, Vieno, Perkins, &amp; Santinello, 2007; Olweus, 1972).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To persecute or oppress by force or threats...a person who uses power to coerce others by fear.</td>
<td>(Barber, 2001).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Repeated, unwanted psychological, physical, sexual abuse or harassment.</td>
<td>(MacIntosh, 2006).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relational bullying</td>
<td>The bully’s intent is to damage the target’s friendship network through social manipulation or spreading of rumors.</td>
<td>(Cowie, Naylor, Rivers, Smith, &amp; Pereira, 2002).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overt bullying</td>
<td>Physical or verbal acts in the form of hitting, shouting, pushing, and generally inflicted toward/on the targeted individual.</td>
<td>(Monks &amp; Smith, 2006; Spears, Slee, Owens, &amp; Johnson, 2009).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Covert bullying</td>
<td>Acts designed to fracture relationships by spreading rumors, gossip, social exclusion and/or isolation.</td>
<td>(Monks &amp; Smith, 2006; Spears et al., 2009).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term</td>
<td>Definition</td>
<td>Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incivility</td>
<td>Behaviour that can range from incidents of minor discourtesy to blatant acts of aggression or violence, with potential to sabotage the learning environment and harm those who comprise it.</td>
<td>(Baldridge, 2008; Boice, 1996; Clark &amp; Springer, 2007a; Cortina, Magley, Williams, &amp; Langhout, 2001; Goodyear, Reynolds, &amp; Gragg, 2010; Kolanko et al., 2006; Lampman, 2012; Lampman et al., 2009; Luparell, 2004; Meyers et al., 2006; Pearson &amp; Porath, 2005).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contrapower harassment</td>
<td>Occurs when students’ exhibit unexpected, disrespectful, aggressive, bullying or violent behaviour towards faculty in attempt to assert power over the faculty member.</td>
<td>(DeSouza, 2010; Lampman et al., 2009; Spears et al., 2009).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobbing</td>
<td>A group of aggressors target one or more individuals.</td>
<td>(Olweus, 1972; Sperry, 2009).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyber-bullying</td>
<td>Repetitive, defamatory, bullying, harassing, or discriminatory messages sent by a person or group, towards or about an individual via electronic media. Harm is repeated, willful, and inflicted through electronic media. Intentional, aggressive acts committed by a person or group towards an individual who feels defenseless, by means of electronic media. Acts which may involve individually or publically posting offensive, derogatory, defamatory messages, or disclosing personal information or photographs, with intent to humiliate the target.</td>
<td>(Belsey, 2008; Campbell, 2005; Hinduja &amp; Patchin, 2008; Slonje &amp; Smith, 2008; Smith, 2009; Smith et al., 2008; Spears et al., 2009).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overt Cyber-bullying</td>
<td>The bully’s identity is not concealed when targeting the victim. Messages (text, email) sent directly to the target. Semi-public messages sent to several parties via email. Publicly defaming via blogs or websites.</td>
<td>(Palfrey &amp; Gasser, 2008; Spears et al., 2009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Covert Cyber-bullying</td>
<td>Indirect social and relational manipulation, exclusion, and isolation of friendships by spreading rumors, defaming, or writing derogatory messages without the target knowing that is it unfolding.</td>
<td>(Palfrey &amp; Gasser, 2008).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyber-harassment</td>
<td>Use of communication devices such as cell phones or the internet to send threatening or excluding messages to exert power over someone.</td>
<td>(Beran et al., 2012)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As previously mentioned, for the purpose of this study, the term cyberbullying will encompass intentional or unintentional harmful, aggressive, intimidating, offensive, derogatory, defamatory, sexual, or bullying message(s) sent by a student(s) to or about a faculty member via electronic media. This does not include incidents that occur ‘in-person’ (e.g., slapping, hitting, shouting) within direct physical proximity, but will include Skype® whereby both parties can see each other through an electronic screen. It must be acknowledged that given the scope and speed with which electronic messages can travel, some authors argue that incidents may not necessarily need to be ‘repeated’ to have a harmful or debilitating effect on the individual (Spears et al., 2009).

1.7. Study Delimitations

Delimitations of the study warrant discussion in terms of the breadth and depth of issues that are examined. The study is delimited to student-to-faculty CB in one Canadian post-secondary institution. This decision stems from my first-hand experience as a faculty member with CB by students and my belief that faculty members play a key role in the recognition and mitigation of various forms of student misconduct.

In order to circumscribe the study, it is essential to consider what is and what is not included within its scope. Firstly, while it is equally important to understand cyberbullying of faculty members by students from both students’ (aggressor) and faculty members’ (target) perspectives, given the breadth and scope required to conduct a study of both agents, I have chosen to specifically focus on self-identified, self-selected faculty members who perceived themselves to have been targets of CB by students. It is important to note that the research study framework takes into consideration the factors that might influence a student to engage in cyberbullying behaviour, and those that may influence the impact experienced by targeted faculty members. Nonetheless, it is the faculty members’ perceptions that are the focus of this study.

Secondly, given the focus on students as the “cyberaggressor” and faculty members as the “targets” or recipients of cyberbullying messages, this study does not draw information from other populations within the same institution or other institutions. Considering the matrix of interactions that can occur between campus constituents (e.g.,
students, faculty members, administrators, support staff and other employees) and the number of ways in which cyberbullying can be committed toward others, the focus of this study, leaves all other interactions of cyberbullying for future research studies. Further, even though some faculty members may have witnessed cyberbullying of fellow peers (e.g., receiving an aggressive or threatening email message copied to more than one party), or may have known other faculty members who alleged to have encountered cyberbullying, study information is drawn from faculty members who have personally experienced cyberbullying by students. In keeping with this scope of limitation, this study does not examine cyberbullying of faculty members who became bullies or cyberbullies as a result of first being a target themselves.

Thirdly, in accordance with the definition provided to participants in the online survey, cyberbullying must be perceived by the participant as intimidating, aggressive, defaming, demeaning, or bullying behaviour. This definition does not include minor acts of ‘incivility’ (e.g., late attendance or lack of participation in on-line discussion groups, late submission of assignments, or interrupting others). The various electronic platforms through which cyberbullying can occur includes cellular phone, email, blogs, discussion groups, Skype®, websites, or chat rooms, thereby also excluding “traditional” forms of “in-person” aggression or bullying (e.g., shouting, threatening, hitting).

Fourthly, this mixed methods study with a predominant qualitative component was designed to explore faculty members’ experience(s) of cyberbullying for the intent purpose of developing greater understanding of this phenomenon, rather than establishing prevalence or correlation between factors. From a preventative standpoint, in order to understand the support measures that may be needed by cyberbullied faculty members, it would helpful to know how targeted faculty members’ interpreted and responded to the incidents, the implications it had on them in terms of their role as a teacher, and their perception of how to manage such incidents with students. These questions can be answered by drawing from the first-hand experience of faculty members who have been targeted with cyberbullying by students.

Finally, personal subjectivity and researcher bias of the issue exist in that while serving in various roles as a faculty member within the post-secondary system, I have personally received electronic messages from students, which I perceived to be
aggressive, intimidating, and bullying. While this experience may enable me to gain greater insight as the researcher into the participants’ cyberbullying experiences, scholars caution that the findings should reflect the participants’ experiences rather than a fabrication of the researcher’s bias (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Marshall & Rossman, 1999). Miles and Huberman (1994) argue that the research findings and conclusions drawn from the data rest more with the participants than with the researcher. Further, researcher bias can be minimized by leaving a clear audit trail of the research process, being aware of one’s assumptions, and considering alternative conclusions (Miles & Huberman, 1994). In keeping with this view, I have identified that the potential for bias exists, and taken steps to minimize this bias (discussed in Chapter 3). Further, I acknowledged my researcher bias, and monitored this throughout the entirety of this research study.

1.8. Potential Limitations

This study was conducted at one post-secondary institution in Canada, recently transitioned from a “college-university” to “university”, with unique demographics in terms of the variety of certification, diploma, degree, and trades or technology programs offered at each campus. Research participants represent currently employed, self-identified, self-selected faculty members who perceive to have experienced cyberbullying by students. As this study describes the CB experiences of some faculty members employed at one undisclosed Canadian university (pseudonym MU), at one point in time, the findings are therefore not generalizable to: a) other faculty members at MU who did not respond to the survey, b) other universities, c) to other faculty members in other universities or post-secondary institutions, or d) to students in post-secondary institutions.

The purposeful sampling approach used for this study enabled the selection of faculty members who self-reported as having personally encountered cyberbullying by students—an approach intended to provide information-rich cases from which insight about the phenomenon could be drawn (Patton, 2002a). A potential limitation of the methods used in this study may exist in that participants’ experiences of cyberbullying were self-reported, based on their individual interpretations of these events, and
individuals may differ in their perception of what constitutes cyberbullying. For example, the wording and definitions provided within the online survey could be interpreted differently by individual participants. Further, the study did not “verify” the information provided by participants by asking for a copy of their alleged cyberbullying messages, nor did it obtain confirmation from the alleged aggressors that the incidents had occurred. These limitations were offset by providing online survey respondents with the opportunity to describe their cyberbullying experiences, and by asking interview participants’ to review their transcripts for authenticity of the information provided. In asking participants to share their individual experiences, qualitative research assumes that multiple interpretations are possible, and valued (Miles & Huberman, 1994)

The site selection proves paradoxical in both the advantages and disadvantages of conducting research with faculty participants within the institution where I am also employed as a faculty member. While some participants may feel a sense of trust and greater degree of comfort in disclosing sensitive information to a fellow faculty peer (as opposed to an investigator they do not know), to the contrary, some faculty members may view this as a deterrent. For example, potential participants may feel apprehensive about encounters with the researcher in future meetings or other campus work, and to whatever degree they have been affected by their cyberbullying experience, reliving the effects may factor into their decision. Although the online survey was designed to ensure participants’ anonymity, I considered the possibility that some participants might not feel comfortable to answer certain questions for fear that I (familiar with the institution) might recognize their identity by the details provided in some responses (e.g., their age, program of teaching, campus). For example, if a respondent were greater than 70 years of age and teaching within a small department, the individual may fear that such information could reveal their identity.

Additionally, as the investigator and recipient of respondent-sensitive and perhaps concerning information, I recognized the potential for such information to have an impact on me, and the subsequent importance of attending to my own self-care during the research process. Of equal importance, was being mindful of my interpretations of the information provided by participants, both in conjunction with, and in isolation from my own CB experiences. For example, details of participants’ CB experiences could trigger memories of my own CB experiences. It is therefore important
to acknowledge when this happens, and ensure that my interpretations of the participants’ testimonials are verified by the respective faculty members. Although these limitations can be anticipated at the onset of the study, threats to validity and trustworthiness are best discussed upon completion of the study, when both the foreseeable and unexpected limitations have come to fruition.

1.9. Dissertation Overview

The next chapter provides an overview of the relevant theoretical and empirical literature applied during the construction of this study. The phenomenon of bullying and cyberbullying will be examined to develop greater understanding of the typology, prevalence, and impact of such behaviour. Given the complexity of the issue, bullying has been explored across a broad scope of criminology, psychology, and social relational perspectives, with equal diversity in application to relational, developmental, power, and victimology theories. This study examined cyberbullying through the lenses of power and victimology. Chapter 3 focuses on the study design, and more in-depth discussion of the methods, procedures, instruments, and intended data analysis. The research findings are discussed in Chapter 4, with Chapter 5 discussing the summary and conclusions of the study, followed by the recommendations for policy, practice, and research.
Chapter 2.

Literature Review

This study recognized that student-to-faculty targeted cyberbullying comprised three domains of literature including: “cyberbullying” (a form of bullying) and victimization of faculty members (a subset of academic bullying and a subset of workplace bullying). This chapter begins with a review of definitions, followed by a discussion of the empirical literature on “workplace” bullying, “academic” bullying (faculty-targeted), and cyberbullying within the school sectors. Although various theoretical constructs have been used by scholars to explain the phenomenon of cyberbullying, this study examines student-to-faculty targeted cyberbullying from the theoretical frameworks of “power” and “victimization.” Across this landscape of literature, victim impact surfaced in discussions of the effects that various forms of bullying can have on targeted individuals. While this is not a psychologically focused study, the detrimental effects that have been reported in studies of workplace bullying and cyberbullying, led me to consider that faculty members who encountered cyberbullying by students, might experience negative effects and be viewed as victims. Review of the victimology literature served to assist in developing the research questions, as well as explain what happens to CB targeted individuals.

The chapter closes with a review of the research paradigm, followed by an overview of the conceptual framework that was used to guide the research questions and the study design. This study began with my belief that the perceptions, interpretations, and meanings that arise from peoples’ lived experiences are both unique and relevant to each individual. In order to gain a greater understanding of faculty members’ experiences with student-to-faculty targeted cyberbullying, this study employed a mixed methods approach.
2.1. Empirical Literature

2.1.1. Definitions

Historically, research on workplace bullying surfaced during the 1980’s under Henrik Leymann who conducted studies on the impact of bullying and mobbing on targeted individuals (Namie, 2003b). Leymann (1996) differentiated “conflict” from “bullying” in describing bullying as a social interaction where an individual is frequently targeted by one or more persons over a period of months, rendering the targeted individual to feel helpless. Following this time period, definitions of bullying addressed four key elements: intensity, repetition, duration, and a power disparity (Einarsen et al., 2003; Lutgen-Sandvik et al., 2007).

Within the context of post-secondary education, while student-to-faculty targeted cyberbullying research is fairly new, traditional (offline) forms of aggression toward faculty have been more frequently explored. From this body of work, definitions have emerged to differentiate the various types of aggressive behaviours. For example, incivility refers to behaviours that range from minor discourtesies to more blatant acts of aggression (Clark & Springer, 2007a; Goodyear et al., 2010; Kolanko et al., 2006; Lampman, 2012; Lampman et al., 2009; Luparell, 2004; Meyers et al., 2006), and contra-power harassment has been used to describe students’ use of disrespectful, aggressive, bullying, or violent behaviours to assert power over faculty members (DeSouza, 2010; Lampman, 2012; Lampman et al., 2009).

The phenomenon of cyberbullying has gained considerable international attention with more abundant discussions and definitions emerging from K-12 sector studies. Although cyberbullying definitions vary, researchers agree that it is repeated, intentional, harmful acts (Hinduja & Patchin, 2008); committed by via electronic media (e.g., email, websites, cellular phones); to target individuals who cannot easily defend themselves (Campbell, 2005; Slonje & Smith, 2008; Smith et al., 2008; Spears et al., 2009; Vandebosch & Van Cleemput, 2009; von Marées & Petermann, 2012). This may involve individually or publicly posting messages that constitute defamation, bullying, harassment, or discrimination; in addition to disclosing personal information, or writing offensive, vulgar or derogatory statements (N. Willard, 2003); or photographs (Smith, Mahdavi, Carvalho, & Tippett, 2006).
Cyberbullying may be viewed as a “covert” form of traditional bullying since perpetrators can attack their victims from behind the screen of an electronic device. Yet Palfrey and Gasser (2008) suggest that cyber-aggressors can use overt and covert forms of cyberbullying to effectively torment their victims. For example, in making no attempt to conceal their identity, overt cyberbullies can inflict harm by: sending messages (e.g., text, email) directly to the target; sending semi-public messages to several parties (e.g., sending personal information about the target to other parties by email); or publicly humiliating a victim via a polling website (Palfrey & Gasser, 2008).

Conversely, covert cyberbullying involves indirect social and relational manipulation, exclusion, and isolation of friendships by spreading rumours, defaming, or writing derogatory messages without the target knowing the aggressor’s identity (Spears et al., 2009). Findings from studies of adolescents (Cassidy, Jackson, & Brown, 2009; Kowalski, Morgan, & Limber, 2012) suggest that cyberbullying may occur as an act of its own entity, or as an extension of traditional forms of bullying.

Similar to the offline bullying literature, “power” and “repetition” also surface in definitions and discussions of cyberbullying. However some scholars (Grigg, 2010; Slonje & Smith, 2008; Vandebosch & Van Cleemput, 2009; von Marées & Petermann, 2012) argue that, given the nature of cyberbullying, power and repetition are more difficult to define. For example, a single cyberbullying message (e.g. email or YouTube) can be posted to, or about an individual, yet be further disseminated and therefore viewed several times by multiple parties—one message, yet multiple events (Grigg, 2010; Slonje & Smith, 2008; Vandebosch & Van Cleemput, 2009; von Marées & Petermann, 2012). Dooley, Pyzalski & Cross (2009) contend that repetition in cyberbullying is difficult to operationalize since victims and perpetrators may have different perceptions of the event, as well as of the impact. Further, since online messages can be widely disseminated and have permanence on some sites, one act of cyberbullying toward an individual can be harmful at many levels.

Conceptualizing and assessing power imbalance is also complicated because power comes in many forms (Dooley et al, 2009). Contrary to the physical power held of traditional bullying, cyberbullying affords the power of technology, invisibility, and anonymity (Dooley et al., 2009; Slonje & Smith, 2008). While physical or offline bullying
can be averted by targeted individuals, the anonymity of CB serves to heighten the aggressor’s power by absolving perpetrators of accountability, effectively catching the victim off guard, and assuring permanence of some messages (Grigg, 2010; Kowalski & Limber, 2007; Kowalski, Limber, & Agatston, 2008; Ševčíková & Šmahel, 2009; Spears et al., 2009; Vandebosch & Van Cleemput, 2009). Further, the distance and anonymity of online media may “disinhibit” aggressors to post messages which they might not do in offline interactions (Froese-Germain, 2008; Patchin & Hinduja, 2011; N. Willard, 2003). Disinhibition afforded by online media, enables those who feel disempowered in the offline world to express their thoughts more liberally, resulting in either positive or negative effects for recipients of the messages (N. Willard, 2003).

As previously mentioned, for the purpose of this study, the term cyberbullying encompasses aggressive, intimidating, offensive, derogatory, defamatory, or bullying message(s) sent by a student or group of students, toward or about a faculty member via electronic media. Although definitions of both bullying and cyberbullying comprise the common element of intentional perpetrator aggression and power directed toward an individual, this study does not include intent within the definition that is provided to participants. At minimum, cyberbullying is comprised of two agents—the individual who commits the act, and the recipient of the aggressor’s behaviour. While online messages may in fact be interpreted as harmful by a faculty member, in absence of aggressors’ testimonials about the allegations of cyberbullying, it is difficult to establish, let alone verify intent.

2.1.2. Bullying: Workplace Sector

Since Leymann’s (1990) research on “workplace” bullying and the impact on targeted individuals began in the 1980’s, studies now span across several countries in search of developing further understanding of this phenomenon. On the international front, research studies from various countries report a range of prevalence rates for workplace bullying. Where Swedish studies reported prevalence rates of 3.5% (Leymann, 1996) to 5% (Hansen et al., 2006); Norwegian studies reported rates from one to 10% (Einarsen & Raknes, 1997; Einarsen & Skogstad, 1996); Finnish studies reported rates from one to 32% (Björkqvist, Österman, & Hjelt-Bäck, 1994); and Danish studies reported rates from 1.5% to 14% (Agervold & Mikkelsen, 2004; Mikkelsen &
Conceivably, the range in prevalence rates between studies may be a reflection of the type of survey instrument used, variation in definitions provided, or individual interpretation of definitions and questions by participants.

### 2.1.3. Cyberbullying: An Overview

In review of the cyberbullying literature, I learned that electronic media can have both positive and detrimental consequences for users. Hinduja and Patchin (2008) argue that online communication exchanges can be beneficial in terms of the ease of access and speed with which messages can be sent, in addition to the potential that it affords youth to learn the social and emotional skills necessary to navigate life. Online communication also proves favorable for those who fear the social disapproval or judgements that may surface in face-to-face interactions (Suler, 2004).

However, just as electronic media enables lucrative opportunities for development and learning in the school setting, it can also serve as a platform for risk-taking behaviour and harmful interactions (Suler, 2004). Cyberbullying behaviour can manifest through a multitude of mediums at any time of day or night, both instantly and simultaneously, with the potential to have significant effects on targeted individuals. With strategic timing, cyberbullies are not only able to orchestrate an attack, but in apprising others of their plan—ensure that others witness the victim’s response. Further humiliation for the victim exists in the potential for bystanders—vested purely in the opportunity for notoriety, capture the attack on video and post it to the internet.

Finally, given the invisibility and anonymity afforded by online media, recourse for targeted individuals remains limited. Beale and Hall (2007) contend that holding cyberbullies accountable for their actions is fraught with difficulty. For example, even though a harmful email message can be traced to an account, it is hard to prove: a) who accessed the account, b) who wrote the text, or c) who actually sent the message to the victim. Websites create equal opportunities to defame, torment, or humiliate a targeted individual, without the target having any knowledge of the event. Through this platform, the cyber-bully can incite others to engage in cyberbullying by soliciting for a greater number of hurtful postings or by inviting others to rate personal characteristics about the target (e.g., attractiveness, popularity, weight, or sexual orientation). Beale and Hall
(2007) contend that this ease of access, combined with the potential to disseminate harmful information privately and globally, the invisibility and anonymity afforded the perpetrator, and the inability for victims to escape, makes cyberbullying more harmful than traditional forms of bullying. Ybarra and Mitchell (2004) concur that such intricacies create a unique base of power that differentiates traditional bullying from cyberbullying, where perpetrators are not only able to avert in-person confrontations, but can quickly and effectively inflict a substantial degree of harm on a victim, without fear of being caught.

Table 2.1 provides an overview of the modalities used by aggressors to cyberbully others (Beale & Hall, 2007; Campbell, 2005; Campbell, Spears, Cross, & Slee, 2010; Monks, Robinson, & Worlidge, 2012). Table 2.2 provides examples of the ways in which cyberbullying can occur (Willard, 2005).

### Table 2.1 Forms of Electronic Media Used To Cyberbully (Campbell, 2005; Beale & Hall, 2007)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Electronic Medium</th>
<th>Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cellular Phone</td>
<td>• Texting defamatory messages to an individual, sharing their return messages with others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Leaving harmful messages in voicemail.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Capturing real-time embarrassing and potentially harmful video or photographs of an individual and sending to others or posting to the internet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td>• Sending harmful messages to the target, anonymously.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Shouting, using profane language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Harassing the target with repeated harmful or mean-spirited messages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Forwarding or ‘blind-copying’ messages from / about the target to others without the target’s knowledge or consent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Websites</td>
<td>• Creating or participating in a polling site designed to ‘rate’ a target’s characteristics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Sending video or photographs to websites (e.g., YouTube).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chat Rooms</td>
<td>• Enable conversations about a target while purposefully excluding others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instant Messaging</td>
<td>• Immediate delivery of harmful messages to or about targeted individuals.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some scholars (Kowalski et al., 2012; Paul, Smith, & Blumberg, 2012; von Marées & Petermann, 2012) suggest that just as new forms of online technology continue to evolve, so does the potential for cyberbullying. It is important to acknowledge
that while this study was being conducted, new technologies likely emerged, and for this reason the information contained in Table 2.1 and Table 2.2 is not likely complete.

**Table 2.2.** Ways of Cyberbullying (Coyne, Chesney, Logan, & Madden, 2009; Dooley et al., 2009; Willard, 2007b)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Terminology</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flaming</td>
<td>• Sending angry, rude messages privately or as a group to one or more persons.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harassment</td>
<td>• Sending repeated offensive messages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denigration</td>
<td>• Posting mean, untrue, or harmful messages about a person.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyber stalking</td>
<td>• Consistent threats to harm or intimidate, to the degree that the target fears for his or her safety.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masquerading</td>
<td>• Pretending to be someone else and sending material to make that person look bad.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outing / Trickery</td>
<td>• Soliciting personal and potentially embarrassing information from a person, then sending the information to other people, or posting it publicly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exclusion</td>
<td>• Purposefully leaving a targeted individual out of a group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impersonation</td>
<td>• Using another person’s identity to post harmful messages to or about someone to damage the reputation of the target.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Happy-slapping</td>
<td>• Degrading videos are taken by a bystander and then forwarded to other people’s phones or posted on a website.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexting</td>
<td>• Sending or receiving sexually suggestive or sexually explicit nude or semi-nude images or video by cell phone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slambooks</td>
<td>• Websites aimed at degrading or hurting someone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Griefing</td>
<td>• Deliberate harassment of others in online games.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 2.1.4. Cyberbullying in the Workplace

While cyberbullying research has become more expansive across the K-12 sector, only a few studies have explored workplace cyberbullying. In attempt to measure traditional bullying and “cyber” bullying, Privitera and Campbell (2009) conducted a study of male employees belonging to the Australian Manufacturing Workers’ Union. Findings suggest that approximately 33% of respondents reported repeated negative acts over the previous six months, 25% reported more than one negative act toward them weekly, while 11% of respondents had experienced some form of cyberbullying by email, phone, or both on at least a weekly basis (Privitera & Campbell, 2009). Further, victims who experienced cyberbullying had also experienced traditional forms of bullying (Privitera & Campbell, 2009).
In another study, Baruch (2005) reported that while 13.6% of employees encountered face-to-face bullying, 9.2% of employees in a USA-based Multi-National Corporation experienced bullying through e-mail. Negative effects were experienced by targeted individuals in the form of decreased job satisfaction, anxiety, performance, absenteeism, and intent to leave, for victims of both e-mail and conventional bullying (Baruch, 2005). Baruch (2005) contends that e-mail as a less personalized and easy to access medium, provides an additional avenue for abusive behaviour. Although findings affirm that cyberbullying exists within workplace settings, with few studies to draw upon, the ability to ascertain the incidence, prevalence, and impact of cyberbullying specific to the workplace context remains limited.

2.1.5. Cyberbullying within School Sectors

Within the K-12 sector, studies of cyberbullying (Beale & Hall, 2007; Beran & Li, 2007; Cassidy, Brown, & Jackson, 2012a; Cassidy et al., 2009; Clark et al., 2012; Hinduja & Patchin, 2008; Kowalski et al., 2008; Kowalski & Limber, 2013; Ševčíková & Šmahel, 2009; Smith et al., 2006; Smith, 2012; Smith et al., 2008; Willard, 2007a), and cyber-harassment (Beran et al., 2012; Grigg, 2010; Hinduja & Patchin, 2008) suggest that this behaviour can have negative implications on targeted individuals. Prevalence rates of cyberbullying and cybervictimization vary depending on the type of definition provided, the type of informant assessed (e.g., peers, victims, teachers), the age group studied, and the gender of participants (von Marées & Petermann, 2012). Some scholars contend that K-12 cyberbullying has become more frequent and widespread over the past decade (Cassidy, Brown, & Jackson, 2012b; Cassidy et al., 2009; Li, 2006; Smith et al., 2008; Sourander et al., 2010). A review of cyber prevalence rates concluded that cyberbullying victimization rates ranged from 10% to 40% depending on the parameters under investigation (Tokanaga, 2010). More recent studies have reported similar findings. For instance in a study conducted on 1092 Italian adolescents, cyberbullying prevalence rates ranged from 5.1% to 7.6% (Menesini, 2012).

An Australian study (Sakellariou, Carroll, & Houghton, 2012) of 1,530 primary and secondary school students reported that 11.5% had encountered at least one incident of cyberbullying in the school year, with 8-10 years of age being the most likely to encounter this form of bullying. Further, Patchin and Hinduja (2012) report that after
reviewing 35 peer-reviewed published papers, on average approximately 24% of the students had been cyberbullied and 17% admitted to cyberbullying others. Based on this review, depending on the population sampled, the definition of cyberbullying, and how cyberbullying is measured, approximately 25% of adolescents have encountered some form of cyberbullying (Hinduja & Patchin, 2012; Patchin & Hinduja, 2012). Hemphill et al. (2012) found that students’ prior engagement with relational aggression was the main predictor for both traditional and cyber bullying. Further precursors of traditional bullying included academic failure and family conflict.

Just as workplace bullying has drawn international attention, research suggests that bullying within the academic sector warrants equal concern, as studies report that those who engage in traditional (off-line) or online bullying during their K-12 school years, may engage in these behaviours when they enter the post-secondary education system (Beran et al., 2012; Clark & Springer, 2007a; Clark et al., 2012). For instance, Walker, Sockman, and Koehn (2011) found that 40 to 50% of students who had been bully-victims or bullies in high school repeated this behaviour in post-secondary institutions. Both the K-12 school and workplace sector literature suggest that environments where interpersonal disparity, competitiveness, and power dynamics exist, can serve as fertile ground for various forms of bullying (Luzio-Lockett, 1995; Spataro, 2002).

2.1.5.1. Cyberbullying: Post-secondary Students

As previously mentioned, while studies of cyberbullying among K-12 students have increased over the years, there are fewer studies to draw from with focus on cyberbullying committed by post-secondary students. Findings from studies that have examined cyberbullying among post-secondary students (Aricak, 2009; Clark et al., 2012; Englander, 2008; Finn, 2004; Nardone, 2010; Wensley & Campbell, 2012; Willard, 2003; Zhang, Land, & Dick, 2010) suggest that cyberbullying may continue from K-12 into early adulthood—a time when several students enter post-secondary education. Although few studies have been conducted to explain the extent to which cyberbullying continues from high school to university, evidence suggests that it does occur. For instance, one study of post-secondary students reported that 7% of university students had perpetrated cyber-harassment (Leenaars & Rinaldi, 2010) while another study reported that 11% of university students were cyberbullied (Walker et al., 2011). More recently, a study was
conducted on a sample of Canadian and American University students (n=1368) to
determine whether off-line and on-line harassment in high school was related to
harassment in university (Beran et al., 2012). Based on study findings, 33.6% of the
university students were victimized by cyber-harassment in high school (8% perpetrated
the act), while 8.6% were cyberbullied in university (4.1% were the perpetrator) (Beran et
al., 2012). Englander (2008) argues that cyberbullying by post-secondary students may
be due to a lack of education and awareness. Based on these findings, we know that
cyberbullying exists in K-12 settings, and that some students who committed
cyberbullying in their primary or secondary school years, continued to do so in post-
secondary education. We also know that bullying, which may have surfaced within the
classroom setting, can easily transcend to the online platform. What we don’t know, is
the degree to which student-to-faculty targeted cyberbullying exists, and the impact that
it has on targeted faculty members.

2.1.5.2. Cyberbullying: Post-Secondary Faculty Members

Clark et al. (2012) argue that incivility in higher education, of which cyberbullying
is just one form, is occurring at a concerning rate, Beran et al. (2012) argue that
cyberbullying behaviour may transfer from high school to post-secondary settings
because students entering university (18 to 25 years of age) are at a developmental
stage where adolescent behaviours can prolong into early adulthood. While some
students have used public polling websites (e.g., campusgossip.com) to rate or gossip
about fellow students, faculty polling sites (e.g., ratemyprofessors.com) serve as an
opportunity to rate or post comments about their teachers. Although some polling
websites (e.g., ratemyprofessors.com) have implemented user-guidelines, and provide
targeted individuals with the opportunity to post a rebuttal, or request removal of the
comments, it is questionable as to how helpful such recourse may be when harmful
comments are posted. For example, in order for a comment to be removed, the faculty
member must be aware of the posting, and there is no assurance that postings will be
removed. Further, once posted, it is difficult to know how many persons have viewed the
site, and in the absence of removal, harmful messages could be posted for an extensive
period of time.

In addition to the harmful messages that can be posted to polling websites, ICT
enables electronic devices (e.g. cellular phones, tablets, computers) to capture real-time
photographs or videos of targeted individuals, then edit the content, and post the final product to numerous internet sites—without the target knowing what happened (Beale & Hall, 2007; Campbell, 2005; Campbell et al., 2010; Monks et al., 2012). Table 2.3 illustrates some of the cyberbullying research that has focused on post-secondary institutions in various countries.

Table 2.3. Cyberbullying Research: Post-secondary Sector

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Scholarly Work</th>
<th>Post-secondary student/faculty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>• Beran, Rinaldi, Bickman, &amp; Rich, 2012</td>
<td>Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Leenaars &amp; Rinaldi, 2010</td>
<td>Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>• Ševčíková &amp; Šmahel, 2009</td>
<td>Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>• Dílmaç, 2009</td>
<td>Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Aricak, 2009</td>
<td>Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>• Clark et al. 2012</td>
<td>Students and Faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Clark et al. 2012</td>
<td>Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Englander, 2008</td>
<td>Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Minor, Smith, &amp; Brashen, 2013</td>
<td>Student-to-Faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Schenk &amp; Fremouw, 2012</td>
<td>Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Walker, Sockman, &amp; Koehn, 2011</td>
<td>Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>• Wensley &amp; Campbell, 2012</td>
<td>Students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.1.6. Impact on Targeted Individuals

2.1.6.1. Impact of Bullying: Workplace and School Sectors

The literature on workplace bullying suggests that victims of bullying can experience health challenges as well as psychological harm in the form of severe emotional reactions of fear, anxiety, helplessness, shock (Adams & Crawford, 1992; Einarsen et al., 2003; Keashly & Harvey, 2005; Matthiesen & Einarsen, 2004), depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (Leymann, 1996; Leymann & Gustafsson, 1996; Namie, 2003b; Scott & Stradling, 2001), and worse, attempted suicide (Leymann, 1990).

Notably, the literature on student-to-faculty bullying reported similar findings. For example, Luparell (2004) reported that faculty members who had encountered
aggressive student behaviours experienced detrimental effects in the form of: physical and emotional challenges (e.g., sleep deprivation, recurrent flashbacks, diminished self-esteem, or loss of confidence in teaching), feeling threatened for their personal safety or the safety of family members or peers, and in some cases—post-traumatic stress. In attempts at mitigating the problems, some faculty members experienced an escalation in the aggressive student behaviour, or retaliation in the form of poor faculty evaluations at the end of term (DeSouza, 2010).

Based on findings from earlier research, Boice (1996) suggests that further victimization may occur when faculty members report the difficulties they have encountered with students, and learn that others perceive them as “over-reacting” or incompetent. Boice (1996) contends that the fear of being judged as incompetent may deter some faculty members from discussing or reporting their experience of aggression or bullying by students. Luparell (2004) reports that faculty members may choose not to report aggressive student behaviours for fear that students might retaliate by submitting poor faculty evaluations, a factor which could impede opportunities for tenure. Yet failure to report aggressive behaviours may perpetuate the problem, as in absence of intervention, students’ aggressions could escalate in frequency and intensity toward violence (DeSouza, 2010).

2.1.6.2. **Impact of Cyberbullying: Workplace and School Sectors**

Currently there is a paucity of empirical research focused on cyberbullying within the workplace sector (Privitera & Campbell, 2009). In one study, Baruch (2005) explored adverse online behaviour and its impact within a large multi-national corporation. Findings suggest that despite its ease of access and quick rate of exchange between parties, e-mail lacks the important social cues such as tone of voice and eye contact, which are essential components commonly used when interpreting messages. Interpretation of the email message rests purely with the perception of the recipient, and lack of social cues makes this medium ripe for misinterpretation and misunderstanding (Baruch, 2005).

Within the school sector, Monks et al. (2012) conducted a study to examine primary school students’ perceptions of cyberbullying versus traditional bullying; reporting that approximately 75% of the participants (n=220) perceived cyberbullying to
be “as upsetting” or “more upsetting” than in-person bullying (Monks et al., 2012). In another study, 37% of cyberbullied students felt sad or hurt by the incident while 57% felt angry (Beran & Li, 2007). Studies report that K-12 students who were cyberbullied encountered: academic difficulties in the form of low marks, poor concentration and absenteeism (Beran & Li, 2007; Beran & Lupart, 2009; Brown et al., 2006; Kowalski & Limber, 2013); anxiety, fear, and helplessness (Bauman, 2010; Beran & Li, 2005; Juvonen & Gross, 2008; Kowalski & Limber, 2013; Låftman, Modin, & Östberg, 2013; Mishna, Khoury-Kassabri, Gadalla, & Daciuk, 2012; Tomşa, Jenaro, Campbell, & Neacşu, 2013); substance use, eating disorders (Dehue, Bolman, & Vollink, 2008; Fosse & Holen, 2006); as well as anger, depression, and increased tendency to violate against others (Brown et al., 2006; Perren, Dooley, Shaw, & Cross, 2010; Vossekuil, Fein, Reddy, Borum, & Modzeleski, 2002). Moreover, studies of bullying and cyberbullying found that bullying and cyberbullying victimization was associated with an increase in suicidal ideation and attempted suicide (Bauman, Toomey, & Walker, 2013; Hepburn, Azrael, Molnar, & Miller, 2012; Klomek et al., 2013; Kowalski & Limber, 2013; Schneider et al., 2012). In a later study, scholars acknowledged that cyberbullying may not of itself lead to suicide, but rather exacerbate victims’ existing feelings of hopelessness and difficulties with coping, which may contribute to thoughts of self-harm (Patchin & Hinduja, 2012).

While studies of cyberbullying within the post-secondary sector remain limited, findings share similarities with K-12 studies in terms of the impact it can have on targeted individuals. For example, in a study of 1368 university students, participants who had encountered cyberbullying at least once or twice while in post-secondary education reported feeling: angry (32%), sad or hurt (21%), embarrassed (20%), or anxious (18%) “a few or more times” (Beran et al., 2012). Further, while approximately 13% reported crying, a similar number felt afraid, and some (9.97%) blamed themselves for the incident (Beran et al., 2012). From an academic standpoint, some participants experienced difficulties poor concentration (17.95%), low achievement (9.97%), and absenteeism (7.69%). This study determined that cyberbullying and cybervictimization can transfer from high school to the post-secondary setting.

Although the aforementioned studies report the impact that cyberbullying can have on K-12 and post-secondary students, it is conceivable that cyberbullied faculty
members could also experience some of these effects. The literature on student aggressions towards faculty members informs that faculty members may feel reluctant to disclose or report difficult encounters with students, for fear of retaliation from the student(s), or being viewed as incompetent by peers and administrators (Boice, 1996). The act of cyberbullying and the implications it can have on targeted individuals has been examined through various theoretical constructs, which leads to the next section in exploring cyberbullying through the theoretical lenses of power and victimization.

2.2. Theoretical Underpinnings

Cyberbullying of student peers has been explored from the theoretical perspectives of relational aggression (Jackson, Cassidy, & Brown, 2009), social dominance theory (Walker et al., 2011), domain theory (N. Willard, 2003), social rank theory (Beran & Li, 2007), and general strain theory (Hinduja & Patchin, 2007). While these theories have been useful in explaining cyberbullying within the context of relational power that can exist peer-to-peer (non-hierarchal) between students, this study differs in that the power relationship is student-to-faculty focused (contra-hierarchic).

This chapter explores three prevalent themes that have surfaced across the cyberbullying literature and relate to student-to-faculty targeted cyberbullying: power relations between students and faculty members (Grigg, 2010; Kowalski et al., 2012; Monks et al., 2012; Vandebosch & Van Cleemput, 2009; Walker et al., 2011); disinhibition of online aggressors (Mason, 2008; Snakenborg, Acker, & Gable, 2011; Suler, 2004; von Marées & Petermann, 2012; Willard, 2003); and victimization of targeted individuals (Cassidy et al., 2009; Dooley, Gradinger, Strohmeier, Cross, & Spiel, 2010; Hinduja & Patchin, 2007, 2010; Li, 2007; Monks et al., 2012; Ortega, Elipe, Mora-Merchán, Calmaestra, & Vega, 2009; Smith et al., 2006; Smith, 2009; Smith et al., 2008; von Marées & Petermann, 2012; Walker et al., 2011; Ybarra & Mitchell, 2004). To illuminate the power relations that exist for students and faculty members in post-secondary institutions, Foucault's (1977) analysis of power will be reviewed, followed by a discussion of the victimology literature as it relates to the impact that cyberbullying can have on targeted individuals.
2.2.1. Power Relations: Students and Faculty Members

2.2.1.1. Foucault’s Analysis of Power

Foucault (1977) argues that power can be used to regulate the behaviour of others—a factor that proved useful during the seventeenth century when sophisticated measures of power were used to control society. Foucault (1977) differentiates between sovereign power, used by a discernible authority (e.g., a king exercising power over citizens), and disciplinary power which is used by individuals in the daily interactions that surface amongst themselves. While the immediate and forceful use of sovereign power enabled a king to control those who resisted, disciplinary power was less forceful, yet more complex in the ways that it was exercised and fostered compliance of subjects (Foucault, 1977). Foucault (1980) argues that while disciplinary power can be repressive, it can be productive as well:

If power were anything but repressive, if it never did anything but to say no, do you really think one would be brought to obey it? What makes power hold good, what makes it accepted, is simply the fact that it…produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, and produces discourse. (p.119)

Foucault (1994) suggests that multiplicities of power exist and serve to support one another, overlap, and reciprocate in meeting individual or collective needs. The multiplicities of power include: a) capacitive power (goal oriented, physical, instrumental) b) power relations (between individuals and groups), and c) communicative power which is symbolic or written (Foucault, 1994). Foucault (1994) believes that educational institutions exemplify the multiplicities of power which constitute regulated systems, in terms of:

Disposal of its space, the meticulous regulations that govern its internal life: the different activities that are organized there, the diverse persons who live there, or meet one another, each with his own functions, his well-defined character—all these things constitute a block of capacity communication—power. Activity to ensure learning and the acquisition of aptitudes or types of behaviour works via a whole ensemble of regulated communications (lessons, questions and answers, order, exhortations, coded signs of obedience, differential marks of “value” of each person and of the levels of knowledge) and by means of a whole series of power processes (enclosures, surveillance, reward and punishment, the pyramidal hierarchy). (p. 136)
Further, the relationship of power within the regulated systems is exemplified in post-secondary education by the position that faculty members hold and the lack of students’ voices in matters of curriculum, assignments, and grades. Shor (1996) argues that post-secondary institutions have a unilateral hierarchy that is standard practice where faculty members have control of knowledge, while students may only have the opportunity to voice their opinions on course evaluations. The student-faculty power relationship reflects the dominance of hierarchy and lack of democracy in social institutions (Shor, 1996).

Foucault (1982) contends that within the context of culture, there are different ways or modes of objectification in which people are transformed into subjects. One of these ways—*dividing practices*, occurs when:

…the subject is divided inside himself or divided from others. This process objectifies him. Examples are the mad and the sane, the sick and the healthy, the criminals and the “good boys”…It soon appeared to me that while the human subject is placed in relations of production and of signification, he is equally placed in power relations which are very complex. (Foucault, 1982, p.778)

Within the context of post-secondary education, the relationship of the advantaged and less-advantaged may transcend to faculty members and students. For example, faculty members may be perceived by students as advantaged in that they evaluate students’ performance and allocate grades, which can have implications for students’ academic success or recognition. Conceivably, students may be objectified by the grades which they receive—a numeric indicator which (within the context of the post-secondary education system or the workforce) reflects one’s intelligence. For example, academic grades determine which students can advance (pass) in the post-secondary system, and which students cannot (fail); with further ramifications of who can graduate and who cannot. Students who achieve high grades are afforded the credentials to move beyond post-secondary education into the career workforce, whereas students with low grades may have to settle for other, less lucrative options.

Foucault (1982) argues that the forms of resistance or oppositions of power in relationships exist (e.g., the power of men over women, administration over people) and must be explored to understand “power relations” (Foucault, 1982). (To these
comparative examples, given the hierarchal nature of post-secondary education, I would add the power relationship of faculty members and students). Foucault posits that: such struggles are not confined to one political or economic context; the aim of the struggles may be the effects that the power has on subjects; the struggles are immediate in that people resist the power that is closest to them or have an impact on them; the status of the individual is challenged; individuals are in opposition of the effects of power which are linked to knowledge, qualification, and competence; and further, power ignores who subjects are as individuals (Foucault, 1982).

In keeping with Foucault’s view of power relations: a) the aim of students’ struggles may be connected to the power that faculty members have in determining how students should “think” and “behave”, b) students may resist against faculty members (the power that is closest to them and has an impact on them, c) students’ status (academic grades) can be threatened (faculty members can allocate failing grades), d) students may be in opposition of the effects of faculty members’ power, and e) students may believe that they are ignored as individuals and must conform to the post-secondary system. Further, Foucault (1982) argues that the effects of power are linked with knowledge, competence, and qualifications. It is conceivable that in the student-faculty relationship, faculty members may be perceived as having more power based on the credentials required of faculty positions. In turn, students may attempt to influence faculty members’ decisions with regard to the allocation of grades. In terms of power relations, Foucault argues:

This form of power applies itself to immediate everyday life which categorizes the individual, marks him by his own individuality, attaches him to his own identity, imposes a law of truth on him, which he must recognize and others have to recognize him. It is a form of power which makes individuals subjects. There are two meanings of the word “subject”: subject to someone else by control and dependence; and tied to his own identity by a conscience of self-knowledge. Both means suggest a form of power which subjugates and makes subject to. (Foucault, 1982, p. 781)

Foucault (1982) advances this argument by suggesting that “power” designates relationships between people, and power relations are intertwined with relationships of communication, and objective capacities (finalized activities). Adopting this view, student-to faculty targeted cyberbullying can be explored from the context of the power
relationship that exists between faculty members and students, such that students, as
subjects of the post-secondary school system, are both monitored and evaluated by
faculty members. The communication exchanges that occur between faculty members
and students may include face-to-face interactions within the classroom setting, or online
exchanges through various modes of electronic media. Communication between
students and faculty members may consist of consultations about course work, or
deliberations over assignment criteria and grades. While students have the opportunity
to disagree or voice their concerns, faculty members enact the final decision.

This brings us to Foucault’s argument that educational institutions constitute “a
block of capacity-communication-power” in terms of the use of its space, regulations
governing its internal life, and diversity of individuals’ attending (Foucault, 1982, p. 787).
Through systems of regulation, communication (curriculum, policies and procedures,
differentiating marks of individuals’ “value”) and series of power processes (reward,
punishment, enclosure, monitoring, hierarchy), members of the academic community
either adopt and comply, or resist the ways of the system (Foucault, 1982). The
phenomenon of student-to-faculty targeted cyberbullying can be explained by the power
processes which are embedded within the institutional hierarchies and structure. Faculty
members, charged with delivering the curriculum and evaluating students’ performance
hold power over students who generally conform to the curriculum standards. Although
students may attempt to negotiate with faculty members over the type of assignments
provided, deadline for submission of assignments, or grades, for the most part, students
are expected to conform to the regulations which have been established by the system.
Foucault states “the exercise of power is not simply the relationship between partners, it
is a way in which certain actions modify others….power exists only when it is put into
action (Foucault, 1982, p. 788).

Foucault (1982) argues that relations of power involve relations of strategy. And
relations of strategy are employed in three ways: a) by designating a means to achieve
an end, b) the way one seeks to have advantage over others, and c) determining the
means to minimize an adversary’s advantage, which reduces them to giving up. Further,
power relationships imply a strategy of struggle, and between a relationship of power
and a strategy of struggle, confrontation may surface between parties (Foucault, 1982).
Based on this premise, the act of cyberbullying can be viewed as an expression of
students' struggles within the context of post-secondary institutions, and one's resistance to institutional conformity. For example, students who are challenged with poor grades may perceive faculty members to be the source of their problems, and strategize to negotiate assignment criteria or grades. If these strategies fail, students may employ alternate strategies to resist the academic system and those who deliver it.

2.2.1.2. **Disinhibition and Retaliation**

Students can shift an imbalance of power by using the “power of technology” to post information about their targets (Dooley et al., 2009). Thus, student-to-faculty targeted cyberbullying exemplifies students’ attempts at exercising power in response to faculty members’ actions. Further, some scholars contend that cyberbullying, as an act of aggression, can be motivated by revenge (Hinduja & Patchin, 2009, 2010; Sanders, 2009). This type of action is generally exercised in response to a perceived wrongdoing or injustice, and serves to satisfy the need for justice (Gollwitzer, 2009). For example, Raskauskas and Stoltz (2007) reported that students who engaged in cyberbullying did so for a few reasons including getting even with someone who made them angry, responding to an argument by displaying technological skills, or simply for entertainment. In another study of academic bullying, grades were a “critical motivator” for student-to-faculty targeted bullying behaviours, (McKay et al., 2008).

When students fail to achieve their academic desires, online media serves as a relatively safe platform to voice their concerns, or worse—inflict harm on those who they consider to be responsible for their problems. Scholars argue that the anonymity and invisibility afforded by online media may “disinhibit” users to say or do things that they would not otherwise do in face-to-face exchanges (Suler, 2004; Willard, 2003). The disinhibition enabled by electronic platforms can have both positive and negative results, one of which includes a sense of invincibility for engaging in harmful communication toward others (Snakenborg et al., 2011; Willard, 2003). Willard (2003) adds that online platforms allow those “who feel disempowered in the real world to express their thoughts more effectively” (Willard, 2003. p. 74). As a result, it becomes easier to engage in anti-normative behaviour (e.g., shouting, using profanities) in online text.

It is therefore conceivable that the post-secondary students, frustrated with their academic outcomes, and disinhibited by the electronic keyboard, may find it easier to
express their frustrations in an email message or a faculty polling site, than having a face-to-face discussion with faculty members. Similarly, faculty members, upon reading an email message that lacks social cues, may interpret the words contained within the message in a number of ways. Although faculty members may hold power in terms of implementing the curriculum and allocating grades, students can shift the imbalance of power by posting defamatory comments about faculty members’ performance on end-of-term faculty evaluations.

In terms of power differentials that can exist between students and faculty members, it is conceivable that students may perceive themselves to hold less power than faculty members. Although students might have an occasional opportunity to provide feedback, clearly students have the right to contest course schedules, assignment rigor, and assignment grades. It is conceivable however, that they may fear unfavorable consequences for doing so, and given the academic pressure to achieve higher grades, may resort to more convenient measures for resolve.

To the contrary, faculty members may perceive students to have a certain degree of power, given their ability to provide either favorable or unfavorable feedback on end-of-term faculty evaluations—which when reviewed by administrators, may be used to determine professional advancement. Just as defamatory comments posted to online faculty evaluations can be detrimental to faculty members, defamatory comments posted on faculty polling websites (e.g., rateyourprofessors.com) can be viewed by a broader audience. Further, students can also solicit other students into posting harmful comments about faculty members on a polling website (e.g., Prigden v. University of Calgary). With the aid of online media, students can shift the power dynamic by waiting until the end of term to anonymously and effectively defame faculty members.

2.2.2. Victimization of Targeted Faculty Members

Historically, the word *victim* stems from the Latin word *victimia* which was used initially during the 1400s in reference to the sacrificial animal offered to a deity; later during the 1600s with reference to a person who had been tortured or killed, and then during the 1700s in reference to oppressed people (Scott, 2011). *Victim* by the most general definition refers to people to whom harm has occurred. From a legal standpoint,
the Criminal Code of Canada (CCC), *victim* refers to any person of an alleged offence (CCC, S.2, ‘victim’), while a traditional approach defines *victim* as “one who is killed, injured, or otherwise harmed by another” (Scott, 2011, p. 2). Nicoletti and Spencer-Thomas (2010) propose that victims may be selected by ‘choice’ or by ‘chance’ where: a) victims of choice have prior history with the aggressor and are generally targeted for an intent purpose (e.g., accessibility or retaliation), and b) victims of chance tend to be subjects caught in the path of an aggressor’s attack. Victims are further differentiated as: a) primary by directly experiencing harm, b) secondary as a witness or person who rescued the primary victim (e.g., friends, relatives, peers), and c) tertiary as people who assist others who have been affected by the incident (Nicoletti & Spencer-Thomas, 2010).

Strobl (2010) argues that while society generally views the victim as someone inflicted by an unfortunate injustice, this view may not be held by their significant others. Conversely, in some cases, even though significant others may view the targeted individual as a victim, the target may not perceive themselves in the same manner (Strobl, 2010). The author argues that victimization poses four possibilities in the way people perceive someone to be a victim in terms of an actual victim, where both the target person and others perceive the target as ‘victim’; a non-victim, where neither the targeted person or others perceive the target as a victim; a rejected victim, where although the targeted person perceives they are a victim, others do not; and finally a designated victim, where although the targeted person does not believe they are a victim, others consider the target to be a victim (Strobl, 2010). Studies of victimization suggest that targeted individuals may not only experience repeated victimization upon reporting an incident, but consider their credibility to be in question with the successive and repetitive questioning by family members, support persons, and investigators (Burgess, Regehr, & Roberts, 2010; Scott, 2011b; Shoham, Knepper, & Kett, 2010). Scott (2011) describes this as a form of secondary victimization, often encountered by victims during rape investigations where the believability of the victim plays a key role in the perception of others as they attempt to clarify or verify an incident.

### 2.2.2.1. Faculty Members as Victims

Spencer-Thomas and Nicoletti (2010) argue that post-secondary faculty members are especially vulnerable to aggression and violence given the role they play in
making decisions that affect students’ lives, their accessibility to students, and long working hours (Spencer-Thomas & Nicoletti, 2010). It is feasible that faculty members may be subjected to aggression or bullying by students at various times throughout a teaching term when responding to tensions between students, issues of misconduct, or poor academic performance (Nicoletti & Spencer-Thomas, 2010).

With regard to victim typology, several studies have been conducted to develop greater understanding and commonalities of victim characteristics (Aquino & Byron, 2002; Aquino, Grover, Bradfield, & Allen, 1999; Coyne et al., 2000; Tepper, 2000). Collective findings (Aquino & Byron, 2002; Aquino & Lamertz, 2004; Smith et al., 2008) suggest that bullied victims are generally characterized by low self-esteem, submissive demeanor, physical weakness, shyness and unassertive personality, have few friends, lack ‘power’ or ‘popular’ friends; leaving the person vulnerable to the aggressive nature of the bully. Literature on workplace bullying suggests that victims may develop a negative outlook on life, and upon exhibiting signs of sadness or insecurity, be viewed as weak and easy targets for others (Aquino & Lamertz, 2004). Further denigration to one’s self-esteem and opportunities for victimization can occur when labels that have been attached to targeted individuals travel across the organization (Crawford, 1999). Although targeted individuals may remain vigilant in anticipation of impending attacks, a sense of guilt may arise from being unable to defend themselves, or avert the attack (Randall, 2001). Given these findings, it is conceivable that cyberbullied faculty members may also lose confidence, portray insecurity, be labeled as “weak” and subsequently be viewed as an “easy” target for further bullying. Yet, not all targeted individuals perceive or respond to bullying in the same way, which might be attributed to the way in which they interpret stressful situations, or view themselves as victims (Glasø, Matthiesen, Nielsen, & Einarsen, 2007; Olff, Langeland, & Gersons, 2005). Olff et al. (2005) argue that individuals who perceive stressors as a “threat” rather than a “challenge” may experience an increased stress response. Further, Løkke Vie, Glasø, and Einarsen (2011) found that self-labelling as a victim can make the effect of bullying more significant by influencing the targets sense towards potential stressors and their subsequent ability to cope with further incidents.

Cumulative findings (Clark & Springer, 2007; Boice, 2000; Frey Knepp, 2012; Luparell, 2004; Nworie & Houghton, 2008; Twale & De Luca, 2008) report that
interpersonal conflict between students and faculty members has the potential to significantly impact faculty members, students, and the overall learning environment. Further, most incidents involved issues of student performance in terms of the provision of grades, faculty feedback on assignments, or grading protocols. Luparell (2007) asserts that behaviours ranging from minor incivilities (e.g., arriving late for class) to highly aggressive, overt threats, can endanger targeted faculty members’ well-being. Lusignan and Marleau (2010) postulate three components that contribute to the victimization of faculty members such that: 1) the potential exists for perpetrators, 2) there is a purpose for targeting the faculty member (e.g., access, visibility, what the faculty member symbolizes), and 3) there is an absence of measures to protect the targeted faculty member from victimization. Keeping with this view, as academic pressures and inability to cope fuel students’ frustrations, online media not only affords the platform to aggress against others, but with anonymity assured, targeted individuals are limited in taking action.

As targets of cyberbullying, faculty members may face detrimental effects of victimization at several levels. Beale and Hall (2007) contend that with: 1) the scope and speed a message can travel, 2) the number of parties it can engage, 3) the mediums through which a message can be sent, and 4) the anonymity afforded aggressors—victims may relive the hurtful experience every time they view the message, without ever knowing the identity of the perpetrator. As previously mentioned, the ability to conceal one’s identity proves advantageous for perpetrators with minimal risk of capture (Kowalski et al., 2008; Ševčíková & Šmahel, 2009). Meanwhile, the target is left to wonder who committed the attack and when they will strike again (Spears et al., 2009).

Within the academic workplace, faculty members may feel sandwiched between the forces of power held by students and the powers of academic culture. Twale and De Luca (2008) suggest that the academic workplace is competitive, and while some may sanitize student-to-faculty incivility as a reality of the current academic environment, targeted individuals may perceive “poor performance student evaluations” as detrimental to their eligibility for advancement. For those who have ambitions of securing tenure, faculty reputation is important as their peers navigate for higher advancement, publications, grants and other forms of recognition that could gauge one’s success. Further, although institutions purport to value individualized achievement, academic
freedom, and collegial relationships among peers, professional rank (status) is achieved on individual merit and tensions can surface as the competition intensifies (Twale & De Luca, 2008). Moreover, the institutional expectation for promotion and tenure cultivates an environment of competition, dominance, and power that enables bullying. Faculty members’ stressors may cross over to students, who in feeling over-powered by the academic system, respond with defamatory faculty evaluations—documents which may be reviewed by administrators, who determine not to afford advancement.

2.2.2.2. Victim Recourse

Considering the detrimental effects that have been reported by cyberbullied victims, it is possible that targeted faculty members might feel overwhelmed and confused about how to respond to the incident. Further, depending on the severity of the attack, they may be in the process of addressing the issue with the student, reporting to administrators, and interpreting institutional policies or procedures, while dealing with the physical and emotional effects of the experience. The price attached to victimization is not restricted to emotional and physical pain, but may extend further to distressing financial burdens for both the victim and their significant others (Muscat, 2010). In terms of taking action, given the symptoms that may be experienced by bullied victims, it is questionable whether a victim under duress would feel confident to pursue administrative or legal action, let alone endure the anguish they may experience in what could result in a lengthy and painful process. Studies of student-to-faculty targeted incivility (Appleby, 1990; DeSouza, 2010; Goodyear et al., 2010; Luparell, 2004, 2007; Meyers et al., 2006), suggest that faculty members may not feel confident to report such incidents.

In some cases, post-secondary institutions have attempted to hold students accountable for posting defamatory messages to online sites. For example, in the Prigden versus University of Calgary case, some students created a Facebook® page designed to post defamatory comments about one professor ("Prigden v. University of Calgary," 2010). Students’ comments reflected disappointment with grades, in addition to allegations that the professor was inept and incompetent. Ten students were prosecuted by the University of Calgary for posting comments to the site and found guilty of non-academic misconduct. Thereafter, two students took the case to court citing that the University was not a Charter-free zone. Consequently, the Alberta Court of Appeal
over-ruled the University, affirming that the Charter of Rights and Freedoms protects the rights of free speech for students. The faculty member no longer teaches at the institution.

Studies of workplace bullying suggest that targeted individuals may experience a sense of shame (Lewis, 2004; Menesini & Camodeca, 2008), accompanied by depression, anxiety, degradation, humiliation, and in some cases, Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (Einarsen & Mikkelsen, 2003). Ahmed and Braithwaite (2005) argue that both the victim and the bully may feel a sense of shame, yet differ in how this is experienced. While victims may feel shame through self-critical thinking, bullies being less likely to acknowledge their shame, may bottle it up or displace it toward others (Ahmed & Braithwaite, 2005). Further, shame management can be adaptive or maladaptive, and when managed poorly can interfere with one’s ability to regulate social controls. Morrison (2006) contends that shame management is comprised of two factors: a) acknowledgement, which is conducive to healthy relationships, and b) displacement, which is maladaptive. In order to be adaptive, harm toward others must be acknowledged, responsibility must be taken for the harm, and making amends for one’s actions, all of which are equally connected to one’s associated feelings of shame (Morrison, 2006).

Conversely, while the opportunity to take responsibility and make amends for misbehaviour enables shame to be processed in a more therapeutic manner, mismanaged shame can result in escalation of anger (Ahmed & Braithwaite, 2005; Morrison, 2006). The practice of restorative justice serves to empower the victim through: acknowledgement of the victim’s experience and doing so in the presence of the perpetrator, with both parties supported by self-selected members of their social community (family, friends). The process of shaming requires confrontation of the perpetrator by the victim through a supportive process that affirms the bullying behaviour is not condoned by the community, but in a way that is supportive and respectful to all parties (Morrison, 2006).

Restorative justice is intended to bring the target and perpetrator together for the purpose of informing the perpetrator of the impact the incident had on the victim, and hearing the victim’s statement of preferred form of retribution for the offence committed
with the overarching theme of restoring the community to harmony (Muscat, 2010; White, 2010). In terms of student-to-faculty targeted cyberbullying, this requires that aggressors can be identified, and targeted faculty members are willing to be present and engage with their aggressors. Conversely, it also requires that aggressors, once identified, would be willing to engage with the faculty member. Ideally, in the restorative justice process, perpetrators are held accountable for their actions and comply with the victim’s requests—a process believed to assist the victim in repairing harm (Muscat, 2010; White, 2010). Added to this, the victim may be provided the opportunity to engage in other therapeutic modalities such as crisis intervention debriefing, counselling, or support groups relative to the nature of the offence (Muscat, 2010).

Where practices of the past have centered on what could be perceived as ‘punishment and control’ through prescriptive policy and consequence, restorative justice purports to reinforce relationships of collaboration, with emphasis on behavioural education to shift behavioural compliance. The process of acknowledging the impact on the victim while holding the perpetrator accountable, and providing equal opportunity to make amends creates a nexus for dialogue between parties. However, considering the limited amount of empirical evidence on student-to-faculty targeted cyberbullying, the rate with which technology and electronic mediums are advancing, and the impact of cyberbullying on targeted individuals—the need for further research is substantiated.

2.2.3. Research Paradigm: Social Constructivism

Merriam (1998) argues that the research paradigm and the research method are closely linked. Through examination of faculty members’ experiences with cyberbullying by students, this study attempts to expose and document specific elements of the experience, inclusive of the impact that it had on them. I believe that such an experience exists within the social and cultural context of groups and the relational interplay that occurs between people. Just as participants play a central role in sharing the perceptions and interpretations of their cyberbullying event, as the investigator, I play a central role in gathering and interpreting the data—interpretations which may be influenced by how I have come to know and understand the phenomenon of cyberbullying. Whether target or investigator, the realities or meanings held to be true can be based on the experience from which the meaning was constructed.
While some forms of research may assume that there is one objective reality, qualitative research assumes that there are multiple realities—the world is not one objective thing but rather a function of a variety of personal interactions and perceptions (Merriam, 1998a). Stake (1995) contends that qualitative researchers support the belief that knowledge is constructed rather than discovered, and the world we know is a human construction. These understandings emerge not only from our experience, but also through being informed by others as to what the world is (Stake, 1995). Human construction of knowledge begins with exposure to stimuli, interpretation of that stimuli, and the meaning thereof. New perceptions mix with old, and some become generalizations (Stake, 1995). Stake argues that we may conceive of three realities: a) external reality that stimulates us and we know nothing but our interpretation of the stimuli, b) experiential reality formed from the interpretations of stimuli, and c) rational reality stemming from a universe of integrated interpretations. Further, while each human being has his or her own version of the three realities, these are ever changing and may be influenced by the views of other people (Stake, 1995).

Constructivism originated as a psychological theory about knowledge and learning based on the work of Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky, suggesting that knowledge and meaning-making is emergent, developmental, and constructed by social and cultural interactions (Fosnot & Perry, 2005). Meaning is not simply passed onto others but rather evolves from individuals’ engagement in various societal experiences, discourses, interpretations, and reflections. Although two people may be in the same experience at the same time, their perceptions are not identical because the conceptual structures attached to “meanings” are unique to individuals’ experiences (Fosnot & Perry, 2005). Constructivists believe that people form multiple realities which are shaped by language and the cultural constructs within which they exist—constructions which have implications on their lives and the relational interplay that unfolds with others (Patton, 2002).

Keeping with this view, constructivism provides a lens through which the complexity of student-to-faculty targeted cyberbullying can be further understood such that constructivism, as a more naturalistic form of inquiry, emphasizes the value of the participants’ experience or perspective and the meaning held within that perspective (J. W. Creswell, 2008c). An individual’s perception of cyberbullying may be embedded in
what *bullying* means to them and their experience with the phenomenon. For example two faculty members could simultaneously receive the same “angry” email message from a student (e.g. the message contained text written in bold font, exclamation marks, and occasional words of profanity), yet vary in their perception and interpretation of the message. While bold font, exclamation marks, and profane language may be perceived as a harmless expression of frustration to one individual, it could also be interpreted as “aggressive”, “bullying”, or “threatening” by another. In exploring faculty members’ experiences of cyberbullying by students, this study shares Patton’s (2002) view that the way people perceive experiences and establish meaning of the world around them are unique, valid, and worthy of regard.

### 2.3. Conceptual Framework: Cyberbullying

The conceptual framework for this study considers cyberbullying to be an act comprised of two agents—the student as sender (aggressor) of the electronic message, and faculty member (target) as both recipient and interpreter of the electronic message (see Figure 2.1). The shaded sections of the following diagram represent the foci of this study, commencing with the agents (students and faculty members), electronic medium through which the act took place, and form of bullying behaviour (cyberbullying), followed by the implications for targeted faculty members (impact).
Figure 2.1. Conceptual Framework: Student-to-Faculty Cyberbullying

The conceptual framework illustrates the study’s scaffolding of constructs in relation to faculty members’ experiences of cyberbullying from the perspective of faculty members who perceive to have had at least one aggressive, intimidating, or otherwise harmful message sent to them or about them by a student(s) via electronic media.
Information will be gathered using online survey and individual interview formats to explore the message: a) media (e.g., email, blog, polling site, cellular phone text message), b) type as interpreted by faculty members (e.g., harassing, aggressive, threatening, defamatory, sexist, bullying), c) duration (one incident, or repeatedly), and d) impact of the message on recipients. Both the online survey and interview questions assist in gathering information about the faculty members’ responses (e.g., thoughts, feelings, and actions) prior to, and during the event. The instruments also assist in obtaining information pertaining to the physiological, emotional, relational, and professional effects experienced by participants following the event, including the duration of such effects.

This study recognizes that the perception and interpretation of a cyberbullying event, the response, and the impact, may vary significantly between individuals. Further, depending on one’s perception of the event, so may the course of action taken and the support measures sought vary between targeted individuals. The study will inform the course of action taken (e.g., referring to policy, reporting the experience to the Dean), support measures sought (e.g., confiding in friends, family, peers, counselling), and whether or not they were perceived to be helpful. Anticipating the possibility that some targeted faculty members might not implement a course of action, seek support or have a positive experience with the course of action taken, participants were asked what measures of support need to be in place to assist faculty members in preventing, recognizing, and managing cyberbullying by students. The study gives voice to targeted faculty members, acknowledges their experience, and provides a foundation from which they can inform administrators and colleagues alike of what can happen, and what is needed in terms of institutional support to recognize, manage, and hopefully prevent student-to-faculty targeted cyberbullying.

2.4. Summary

Although this study is centered on faculty members’ experiences of cyberbullying by students, it acknowledges that the act of cyberbullying involves at minimum two agents (students and faculty members), with each agent having his or her individual perception of the experience. As such, to discuss a cyberbullying experience as lived by
both agents would vastly exceed the scope of this study. In order to more fully understand the phenomenon of student-to-faculty targeted cyberbullying, literature was drawn from studies of bullying across the workplace and academic sectors, typology, impact on targeted individuals, and victimology. The next chapter discusses the study methodologies, mixed methods design, instrumentation, research questions, and approach for data analysis; closing with an overview of the study’s strengths and limitations.
Chapter 3.

Methodology

This chapter describes the methodology for this study, commencing with an overview of the research questions, followed by a discussion of the study design, research methods, population and sample, as well as the instrumentation. Thereafter, the data collection procedures and process for analysis of each research question is provided. Finally, the chapter addresses issues related to validity, reliability, and trustworthiness.

In order to develop a greater understanding of faculty members’ experience and the impact of cyberbullying by students in post-secondary education, this study gathered information from faculty members who perceived to have personally encountered such incidents. Consistent with qualitative research, the primary objective of this study was to “understand the meaning of an experience” (Merriam, 1998a, p. 16). Faced with the challenge of few publications specific to this topic, studies of workplace bullying and cyberbullying were drawn upon to determine the most useful methodology for this unique study focus.

Merriam (1998a) contends that qualitative researchers are interested in the process, meaning, and experience of a phenomenon; namely how people make sense of their lives, and how they interpret these experiences. Further, qualitative research is exploratory, inductive and concerned more with how things happen, and the meaning it has for people. As previously discussed, an important consideration in exploring how targeted faculty members experience the phenomenon of cyber-bullying, includes recognition that people vary in their individual perceptions and interpretations of words and messages. Merriam (1998) argues that the research paradigm is linked very closely to the research method. My decision to use the mixed methods approach was based on the complexity of this issue, in addition to the need to capture, as accurately as possible,
participants’ perceptions of their lived experience with cyberbullying (CB) by students. The following section addresses the research questions which were designed in alignment with the study’s conceptual framework.

3.1. Research Questions

The overarching research question for this study asks:

• How do faculty members at a Canadian University (MU) perceive their experience of having harmful electronic messages (cyberbullying) sent to them or about them by undergraduate students, and what impact did it have on them?

Sub-questions for the study include the following:

1. What knowledge did targeted faculty members have about various forms of online media?

2. How did faculty members who received at least one CB message from a student within the past 24 months, perceive that experience?

3. What self-perceived, self-reported impact did targeted faculty members’ most serious CB experiences from a student have on them?

4. How did targeted faculty members respond to their most serious CB incidents?

5. Based on the perception of targeted faculty members, what support measures need to be in place for faculty members in order to manage student-to-faculty targeted CB effectively?

In order to answer the over-arching research questions and sub-questions, the following research design was implemented.

3.2. Research Design

Given the complexity of the research phenomenon, this study used a mixed methods approach in recognition that both quantitative descriptive data and more enriched qualitative data were needed to answer the research questions. In mixed methods studies, the research questions are answered through an integration of
qualitative and quantitative methods. For this study, the online survey questionnaire posed both open and closed-ended questions, while the individual interview questions were open-ended and qualitative in nature.

Across the literature, studies of workplace bullying and cyberbullying have adopted qualitative and quantitative approaches using surveys, interviews, and focus groups to gain further understanding of the phenomenon. For example, Luparell (2004) interviewed 21 nursing faculty to explore faculty members’ experiences with student aggression and incivility in higher education, while Jackson, Cassidy, and Brown (2009) used closed-ended and open-ended survey questions to capture K-12 students’ experiences with bullying and cyberbullying in school. In another cyberbullying study, Agatson, Kowalski, and Limber (2007) conducted interviews through focus groups with 148 students from two middle schools and two high schools. Over the past decade, cyberbullying research has broadened from generally descriptive analyses to examining associations between cyberbullying and risk factors (Espinoza & Juvonen, 2013). In search of descriptive data, traditional paper-based, as well as web-based survey methods dominated the early cyberbullying research studies, with only a few studies employing interviews or focus groups (Espinoza & Juvonen, 2013). Although this study is unique in focusing on student-to-faculty targeted cyberbullying (as opposed to the student-to-student cyberbullying focus of past studies), similarities exist in both exploring individuals’ experiences of cyberbullying, and employing surveys as well as interviews to obtain information. Espinoza and Juvonen (2013) argue that given the multitude of contexts and mediums within which cyberbullying occurs, the online environment should also guide the selection of methods.

Given the sensitive nature of the issue and recognition that some faculty members may have difficulty recounting or disclosing their experiences, the research process was carefully considered. Discussing issues of victimization can be very difficult for some individuals and qualitative approaches provide the platform to disclose sensitive issues, enabling targeted individuals’ voices to be heard (Mishna & Van Wert, 2013). Further, qualitative approaches allow the researcher to create an environment that is conducive to the participants’ needs consisting of warmth and openness to assist them in feeling more at ease in discussing their difficult experiences (Mishna & Van Wert, 2013).
First, in keeping with this view, the research questions were designed to provide information that would serve to benefit the respondents (e.g., acknowledging their experiences, identifying effective support measures), campus constituents, and administrators. Second, the instruments enabled participants to provide general information prior to the more detailed, sensitive information pertaining to their experience, and finally, the site selection was based on a premise of trust, in believing that some faculty members may feel more comfortable confiding in a researcher who had familiarity with the issue, as well as the institution of study. In essence, while a mixed methods approach seemed most beneficial in answering the research questions, the possibility existed that more in-depth information could be gained by accessing one population (faculty members), within one post-secondary institution.

The following section discusses how the mixed methods approach was used to collect the research data and answer the research questions, as well as the strengths and weaknesses of the design.

### 3.2.1. Mixed Methods Approach

Creswell (2008) describes four mixed methods research designs which include: a) *triangulation* with the concurrent collection of quantitative and qualitative data bearing equal importance; b) *embedded* with concurrent simultaneous collection of quantitative and qualitative data; c) *explanatory* with sequential collection of quantitative followed by qualitative data; and d) *exploratory* with concurrent collection of qualitative and quantitative data. This study employed a two-stage exploratory mixed methods design by first gathering on-line survey data, followed by individual interviews.

The process of implementing an online survey questionnaire (gathering both qualitative and quantitative data) followed by the second-stage interviews (qualitative) can be depicted as a *quan+qual → QUAL* design (Morse, 2010). Collins, Onwuegbuzie, & Jiao (2007) provided a mixed methods design model illustrating the sampling scheme and sampling size (see Figure 3.1 below) which when applied to this study depicts the: 1) the time over which the study unfolded (sequential), 2) the sample in relation to other aspects of the study (identical sample population), and 3) the scheme (Collins et al., 2007).
Of further consideration in the research design was the collection, mixing, and interpretation of data for this mixed methods approach. Tashakkori and Teddlie (2009) contend that in mixed methods research, the quantitative and qualitative approaches are mixed across the stages of the study. Mixing of the quantitative and qualitative strands occurs when they have been combined and integrated, a process which can occur at four points during the study—the design, data collection, data analysis, and interpretation phases (Morse & Niehaus, 2009). For this study, mixing occurred when: a) both quantitative (online-survey) and qualitative (online survey and individual interviews) approaches were embedded within the design, b) a second set of data was collected from the interviews, c) both sets of data had been analyzed, and d) during the final stage of data interpretation. In addition to providing descriptive and qualitative data, this approach served to inform development of the research instruments which focused primarily on student-to-faculty targeted cyber-bullying.

Developing a visual model of the research design enables the researcher to determine the best method, any additional components of the design, and how it should all fit together (Ivankova, Creswell, & Stick, 2006; Morse, 2010). As such, a visual model proved useful in organizing this study as well as establishing the points of interface or links in the study (Ivankova et al., 2006). The visual model representing the sequential mixed methods design for this study is illustrated in Table 3.1.
### Table 3.1 Visual Model of Sequential Mixed Methods Research Design

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Procedure</th>
<th>Product</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Survey Instrument Development | • Expert Panel  
  • Pilot Test                                                               | • Web-based survey instrument  
  • Descriptive data + text data                                                |
| Quan + Qual Data Collection   | • Web-based survey using closed and open-ended questions  
  • Sample Population A                                                          | • Descriptive data + text data                                              |
| Quan + Qual Data Analysis     | • Data screening and analysis  
  • Coding and thematic analysis of survey text box data                          | • Descriptive statistics  
  • Codes and themes  
  • Missing data  
  • Similar and different themes                                                 |
| QUAL Data Collection          | • Conducted individual interviews using open-ended questions  
  • Smaller sample from original group of participants                           | • Voice recorded interviews  
  • Data transcribed then reviewed and validated by participants for authenticity |
| QUAL Data Analysis            | • Coding and thematic analysis of the transcripts.  
  • Verification of transcript data by interview participants                     | • Descriptive coding to identify common concepts, categories, sub-categories.  
  • Similar and different themes and categories                                    |
| Connect Quan + Qual and       | • Triangulation                                                            | • Transcript codes reviewed for inter-rater reliability                      |
| QUAL components               |                                                                           |                                              |
| Integrating Quan + Qual and   | • Interpretation and explanation of the quantitative and qualitative       | • Discussion  
  QUAL results                                                                     | results                                                   |
  • Discussion  
  • Implications  
  • Future Research                                                             |

Note: Adapted from Ross (2010) (who adapted from Ivankova et al., 2006).
3.2.2. Strengths and Weaknesses of the Methods

3.2.2.1. Strengths and Weaknesses of Surveys

Teddle and Tashakkori (2009) contend that survey questionnaires can be beneficial in providing quick turnaround between implementation and interpretation of data. As well, surveys can be both cost-effective and helpful in measuring participants’ views. More specifically, Evans and Mathur (2005) argue that online survey instruments can be beneficial given the capacity to reach a large number of people, the flexibility of formats (e.g., survey or survey URL link embedded within an email), and the convenience afforded of respondents. Further, online survey questionnaires may be considered easy to complete in light of the diverse formats from which questions can be designed (e.g., multiple choice, yes/no response, open-ended text responses, Likert scale). Finally, online surveys prove beneficial in the ease of data analysis, and low administration costs (Evans & Mathur, 2005).

While there are several advantages to using survey instruments, Teddle and Tashakkori (2009) argue that they may be detrimental in generating a low response rate, or fail to capture certain aspects of data. While Evans and Mathur (2005) outline several advantages in using online surveys, these also carry the risk of low response rates. For example, surveys embedded within or linked to recipients’ email servers may be perceived as “junk mail” and therefore be deleted. In terms of technological ability, some recipients may lack knowledge of how to use online modalities and choose not to respond. Further, since completion of an online survey hinges on adequate functioning of several factors (e.g., the scope and speed of the server, appropriate internet connections, the electronic device, participants’ abilities to navigate the technology), any malfunction could disrupt the process. Also, some studies (Juvonen & Gross, 2008; Patchin & Hinduja, 2006) using web-based recruitment have resulted in female-dominated samples (Espinoza & Juvonen, 2013). Finally, given the absence of face-to-face contact, the impersonal nature of online surveys limits respondents’ opportunities to clarify questions, and the researcher’s ability to probe for more in-depth information. It is therefore imperative that self-administered online survey questions are clear, and the instructions are easy to understand (Evans & Mathur, 2005).
3.2.2.2. **Strengths and Weaknesses of Interview Methods**

Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) argue that interviews can be beneficial not only in capturing measurements of participants’ attitudes or perceptions, but allowing the researcher to further explore aspects of the participants’ responses. Interviews not only afford the researcher a more personal approach to gathering information which might not otherwise be observed, but also enables participants to disclose detailed personal information to the interviewer (Creswell, 2008). Further, interviews allow participants the opportunity to provide detailed information using their own words and expressions—thereby authenticating their stories. Espinoza and Juvonen (2013) contend that interviews serve to answer research questions that surveys cannot capture. Keeping with this view, it would be difficult to capture information about faculty members’ experiences of cyberbullying by students using survey questions alone, given the limited amount of information currently available about this phenomenon.

However, despite such attributes, individual interviews also pose challenges in that they can be more time consuming and, similar to online surveys, may also generate a low response rate. Added to these issues, the interview process can also be expensive, and allows greater possibility of interviewer bias (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). Further, Creswell (2008) argues that the information obtained in an interview has the potential to be “filtered” by the perceptions and interpretations of the interviewer—thereafter reported as study data. The possibility also exists that participants may be influenced by the interviewers’ presence or demeanor, and provide information based on what they believe the interviewer wants to hear (Creswell, 2008).

Since strengths and weaknesses can exist in online survey questionnaires and individual interviews, this study sought to ensure that the strengths were complementary and weaknesses did not overlap significantly—a principle of mixed methods research which Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) consider to be an extremely important principle. While questionnaires serve to provide quick turnaround, cost-effectiveness, and measure participants’ views, interviews capture measurement of attitudes, enable further probing by the researcher, and provide greater depth of information (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). In this regard, the instruments complemented each other. Conversely, where questionnaires may generate a low response rate, or miss certain
elements of data, individual interviews may be more time consuming, expensive, and allow interviewer bias (Teddle & Tashakkori, 2009).

By having this awareness, measures were implemented to minimize the weaknesses, yet maximize the strengths of the data collection instruments. For example, to enrich the data, both open-ended and closed questions were provided in the online survey, while a semi-structured interview question format was used for the individual interviews. Further, as recommended by Evans and Mathur (2005) survey weaknesses were also offset by: a) using the secure faculty email system and attaching the survey link to the email (to offset privacy and security issues), b) providing clear information about the study (to offset questions about implementation, and uncertainties about the survey questions), and c) sending email reminders to participants (to offset a low response rate).

3.2.2.3. Strengths and Weaknesses of Mixed Methods

The mixed methods approach does not simply connect both quantitative and qualitative strands, but integrates or merges both sets of data to provide a better understanding of the research problem (Creswell, 2008). In this study, quantitative data were drawn from a campus population of approximately 1,040 faculty members (54% males, 46% females). This procedure was followed by obtaining qualitative data through individual interviews conducted on a smaller population of volunteer participants from the online survey group. The concurrent sets of data serve to offset the weaknesses of each instrument such that the larger number of online survey respondents offset the smaller number of interview participants and the detail provided from the interviews can offset the limitations of general responses from the survey—a process that Creswell (2008) argues strengthens triangulation. The quantitative descriptive data obtained from the online survey questionnaires followed by the qualitative interviews enabled gathering of more in-depth information on some participants’ experiences with the cyberbullying by students, the impact of the experience and the support measures needed. This approach is consistent with Palys (1997), who argues that the use of both quantitative and qualitative methods serves to enhance the breadth and depth of the research findings.
Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) argue that the quality of answers to a research question in mixed methods research is dependent on the quality of data obtained—such that researchers must capture participants' perceptions accurately. Collection of the online survey data and more in-depth information from the interviews, followed by comparison of both sets of findings to explore faculty members' experience(s) of cyberbullying, added breadth and depth across the research strands (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). This design involved examination of the issue within one institution comprised of four geographically and demographically separate campuses—factors which were originally perceived to enhance the dimension of the design and depth of analysis for the findings. However, as discussed in chapter 4, this enhancement did not come to fruition.

3.3. Population and Sampling

The population for this study consisted of faculty members who had recently served in the role of teaching students at one of the 92 post-secondary institutions in Canada. For the purpose of preserving the institution’s anonymity, the site will hereafter be referred to as MU. This post-secondary institution was chosen based on: a) the sensitivity of the issue being disclosed by participants, b) the importance of ensuring participants were comfortable with the investigator, and c) the need to obtain answers to the research questions as close to the source of student-to-faculty targeted cyberbullying. I believed that it may be more comfortable for research participants to disclose sensitive information to someone who had some connection with the faculty within the institution. The institution was also selected for the unique demographic of having: a) geographically separate sites comprising one institution, b) traditional academic, as well as trades and technologies programs, c) certification, diploma, and degree programs, in addition to d) culturally diverse populations at each campus.

Convenience sampling was used to invite approximately 1040 MU faculty members to participate in the study during the winter term of 2012. The selection criteria required participants to be currently employed with MU and subscribed to the MU all-faculty email distribution system. Recognizing that some individuals might encounter cyberbullying by students while acting in various roles, the first criterion served to ensure
that all study participants were currently employed as faculty members at MU, for the purpose of capturing faculty members’ perceived experiences of cyberbullying by students. For example, the study did not intend to gather information about CB encounters by students while serving in an administrative role. The second criterion enabled faculty participants to be recruited through the all-faculty email distribution system as a select population from within the general population of campus constituents (e.g., staff members, students, administrators) who would be accessed through the general all-campus constituent email distribution system.

3.4. Instrument Design and Data Collection

3.4.1. Online Survey

Online survey questionnaire and individual interview formats were chosen for the purposes of ensuring the participants’ anonymity. Creswell (2008) suggests that using or adapting instruments from prior studies to develop research instruments can enhance reliability and validity of the instrument. As previously mentioned, given the lack of research specific to faculty targeted cyberbullying, questions were adapted from instruments used in three previous studies: a) incivility and bullying of faculty in higher education (Lampman et al., 2009), b) faculty workplace bullying (Keashly & Neuman, 2008), and c) K-12 cyber-bullying (Cassidy et al., 2009). For example, to capture the context of faculty targeted cyberbullying, the original K-12 CB survey questions were modified from the existing "K-12 student" focus, to the newly devised “faculty” focus. Likewise traditional forms of bullying (e.g., hitting, shouting) were modified to the more specific cyber bullying focus (bullying via electronic media).

Overall, the online survey consisted of a combination of 44 open-ended and closed questions designed to capture factual and attitudinal data pertaining to faculty members’ experiences of cyberbullying (see Appendix A). A definition of cyberbullying was provided in both the letter of introduction and at the onset of the online survey questionnaire to assist participants in understanding the types of behaviour which might constitute cyberbullying. Quantitative questions were used to establish the frequency of cyberbullying experiences, the form of electronic media used to send the message, a typology of effects, the duration of both the event and effects, a typology of support, and
how faculty members perceived the effectiveness of support measures received. While quantitative questions provided the participants with rating matrix, “yes or “no” response, and pull-down response options, qualitative questions provided participants the opportunity to provide more detailed information within in a text-box. For example, the open-ended qualitative questions asked how faculty members perceived their experience of cyberbullying, the impact of the experience, and support measures needed to manage such incidents. The survey also contained 12 questions of varied design (e.g., comment boxes, closed questions, and pull-down choice) to gather demographic information.

### 3.4.1.1. Scholar Review and Pilot Review

Litwin (2003) argues that ‘pilot’ testing a survey instrument with a small sample of people is important when developing a new instrument, adapting a previous instrument or using it in a new population. Pilot testing serves to enhance face validity by having the instrument reviewed by a group of untrained individuals for the purpose of informing whether the questions are easily understood, how the survey flows, and how long it takes to complete. While pilot testing can be beneficial in establishing face validity, content validity involves a more organized review of the instrument by persons who have expertise in the subject matter (Litwin, 2003). Campanelli (2008) encourages researchers to consult with experts when designing or adapting research instruments to gain an experienced view of the issue and generate critical thinking for the researcher designing the instrument. Recognizing that the online survey would need to be adapted to capture the unique focus of student-to-faculty targeted cyberbullying in this study, both an expert review and pilot review were conducted to enhance content validity and face validity of the survey instrument.

Campanelli (2008) posits that although expert review has benefits in exposing potentially problematic factors such as the flow of questions, cognitive aspects for respondents, and potential issues for data analysis—results are dependent on experts’ abilities. Taking this view into consideration, scholars were approached based on their contributions to: a) incivility and bullying of faculty in higher education (Dr. S. Lampman, Dr. J. Neuman, and Dr. L. Keashly), b) cyberbullying in K-12 Sectors (Dr. W. Cassidy), and c) relational interplay that unfolds in electronic media and shapes social practice (Dr. K. McDevitt). Once the experts had reviewed the study information and provided consent
they were able to access an adapted version of the online survey questionnaire enabling them to insert comments about individual questions, in addition to their overall impression about the instrument (see Appendix B: Scholar Review Email Invitation; Appendix C: Scholar Review Email Survey Link). Each reviewer brought a wealth of expertise in examining the questions as they related to the context, population and phenomenon being studied. Following two successive expert reviews and the subsequently adopted revisions, content validity of the survey instrument had been achieved.

Thereafter, a pilot review was conducted to achieve face validity of the instrument. Face validity provides the degree to which an instrument measures what it claims to measure, but the review is conducted by an audience with less experience in the subject matter, than those selected for content validity (Litwin, 2003). Upon receipt of SFU ethics approval, an email invitation (containing study information, the link for providing consent, and survey link) was sent to a convenience sample of 10 graduate students (two doctoral cohorts) who had served as faculty members in various post-secondary institutions within regional proximity of the institution of study. Pilot review participants were asked to provide comments about the survey questions (text boxes provided) and their overall impression of the instrument.

The participants reported that the survey was easy to use, the questions were easy to understand, and were likely to capture faculty members’ experiences of cyberbullying by students in post-secondary education. Participants’ suggestions were carefully considered throughout both rounds of review and revisions. When I was satisfied that the pilot review and face validity process were thorough and complete, I finalized the instrument for study implementation. The following section describes the process involved in recruiting research participants, as well as developing the interview questions and conducting the individual interviews with respondents.

3.4.2. Recruitment Procedure

Prior to recruitment, a letter of approval was obtained by both the institution’s Human Resources Department and Information Technology Department granting
permission to access the MU all-faculty email distribution list for the intent purpose of informing and recruiting faculty members for this study.

Following ethics approval from Simon Fraser University and MU (see Appendix D), an email invitation containing the study information was sent to MU faculty members for review (see Appendix E: *Letter of Introduction*, Appendix F: *Online Survey Consent Form*, Appendix H: *Individual Interview Letter of Information*, Appendix I: *Individual Interview Consent Form*). The information explained how to access the online survey consent form and survey questionnaire, as well as provide consent, and exit the documents. In terms of obtaining the participants’ consent, faculty members were asked to review the *Letter of Consent*, affording the options of either: a) declining to participants by clicking the link to exit the document (this action opened a message thanking the reader for reviewing the documents), or b) clicking the link to proceed to the survey (thereby opening the online survey database). Once the online survey opened, the first survey question (yes/no option) asked respondents whether they wanted to proceed with answering the survey questions. While selecting the yes response affirmed consent and allowed participants to continue with the survey questions, selecting the no response closed the survey followed by a message thanking the respondent for taking the time to consider participation in the study. The convenience sampling selection process used in this study is commonly used in mixed methods research to gather valuable information from a small population of participants with expertise on the issue being studied (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009).

Both the email invitation and the consent form apprised MU faculty members that participants could withdraw from the study at any time without any consequence to them, and the summarized study findings would be shared with MU faculty members upon completion of the study. Study invitation reminders (see Appendix G: *Invitation Follow-up Email*) were sent to faculty members on a weekly basis until closure of the study on March 30, 2012. Security of the participants’ information was assured with the online survey instrument being held within the *SFU Online Survey* database, housed on a secure server in Canada.

The last section of the online survey informed respondents of the opportunity to participate in an individual interview, and asked if they would be interested in
participating in this second phase of the study. A response of yes subsequently linked participants to a separate survey website enabling them to provide contact information, and their preference of either an in-person or telephone interview. A response of no closed the questionnaire which was followed by a notice thanking the reader for taking time to review the information. The participants were assured that the contact information which they had provided on the second website could not be linked in any way to their online survey questionnaire responses. The invitation to participate in an individual interview remained open for the same time period as the online survey. Once contact information had been provided by the interview participants, an interview consent form was sent to their email address. Recognizing that some participants might feel uncomfortable expressing emotion during a face-to-face interview, the option of having a telephone interview was also provided. With closure of the discussion on the study instruments and process of implementation, the process used for data analysis will follow.

3.4.3. Individual Interviews

Creswell (2007) contends that multiple sources of information, including interviews are effective in collecting data for qualitative research by allowing participants to express their views on the research topic. Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) contend that just as the survey findings can serve to develop or revise the interview question, the interview data can add depth to the survey findings. The interview questions were designed to capture targeted faculty members’ experiences of cyberbullying by students, by first asking what they experienced, how the experience affected them, and what support measures were sought.

3.4.3.1. Interview Preparation

All interviews were held at a date, time, and location deemed suitable by the participant, and in-person interviews were requested by each participant. A copy of the Individual Interview Letter of Information (see Appendix I), Individual Interview Consent Form (see Appendix I), and the Individual Interview Questions (see Appendix J) were distributed to interested respondents via their MU email address (hard copies of the documents were also provided at the interview). Participants were informed that if any information was disclosed during the interview that led me to believe that an individual’s
safety was at risk, I would report the information to the appropriate authorities. For example, in the event that a research participant received a cyberbullying message from a student indicating intent to harm a campus constituent, I would not only advise the participant to report the information to the proper campus authorities, but would warn campus security of a person’s intent to place others in imminent danger.

To ensure anonymity of the information provided by all research participants throughout all stages of the interview process, neither the true names of participants nor information linking to their true identity was disclosed. Anonymity was achieved by allocating a pseudonym code (letter and number) to each participant at the onset of their interview, for the purpose of citing quotes within the interview transcripts. True names and corresponding pseudonym code numbers were known only to me and the participant. Further, the master list containing the true name and pseudonym codes of each participant were stored in a secure locked filing cabinet, in a locked office, separate from the transcribed interview documents, and accessible only to the primary investigator.

Scholars concur that it is essential for the researcher to establish rapport at the onset of the interview phase—assuring interview participants that trust and respect of both the participant as an individual, and the information they disclose, are highly regarded (Bean, 2006; DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). The interview format being one of the most widely used formats for qualitative research, generally takes anywhere from 30 minutes to several hours to complete (Creswell, 2008; DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). In keeping with this view, I believed that the delicate nature of the issue warranted conducting the interview in a way that allowed participants to feel comfortable with their environment, and not feel rushed. The participants were contacted prior to their interview to confirm the date, time, and location preferred as well as discuss any questions or concerns pertaining to the study. Great care was taken to ensure the participants were comfortable prior to, and during the interviews.

3.4.3.2. Conducting the Interview

After a brief welcome, introduction, and general conversation to create a relaxing environment, information about the interview process was provided. Participants were informed that participation in the study was completely voluntary and could be
discontinued at any time without any consequence to them. Once the interview questions and the consent form had been reviewed, more in-depth information about the interview process was provided (e.g., what to do if they had any questions, needed a break, wanted to suspend the interview). Participants were also informed that when the one-hour interview time allotment had lapsed, they would have the option to continue or end the interview at their discretion.

Once consent had been obtained, the interview process and recordings began. Aside from asking the interview questions or clarifying information, I chose to remain silent. Active listening skills were employed as a measure of conveying interest in the participants’ stories, and acknowledging individuals’ experiences by responding with gestures (nodding, maintaining eye contact) to not only communicate empathy and understanding of their circumstances, but to maintain a comfortable environment for them to continue.

During the course of the interviews some participants became distressed as they recounted the difficulties of their cyberbullying experiences. This distress generally manifested in the form of emotional responses such crying, struggling (e.g., fidgeting, nervousness, and long pauses of silence) as though cautious in choosing their words. During these moments it was important to acknowledge their distress, yet to do so without disrupting their natural way of processing such emotions. I responded by nodding in silence, or offering a tissue if they began to cry—mindful of the fact that individuals need to process difficult moments in their own way and in their own time. Using a calm, relaxed, open, and accepting demeanor conveyed my acceptance of their vulnerability—void of reaction, opinions, comments, or judgements. The decision to avoid interrupting opinions during these difficult moments was based on my perception that individuals’ emotional struggles are an integral and relevant component of both the healing process and lived experience.

Upon completion of each interview, recordings were transferred to a security-enabled flash-drive, then deleted from the laptop computer media hard drive. Thereafter, both the flash-drive and the tape recordings were stored in a private locked filing cabinet. In keeping with the need to maintain as close a connection as possible with the
participants’ cyberbullying experience(s), I chose to conduct the interviews, transcribe all interview recordings, and thematically code the first round of transcript data.

On a personal note, while transcribing the interview recordings, I found myself recounting each interview—vivid images of the facial expressions, tone of voice, emotional responses and difficulties disclosed by each participant. In reliving the participants’ testimonials, I determined it best to conduct one interview per day, complete transcription immediately following the interview, and scribe the data verbatim void of editing or interpretation, to enhance the integrity and authenticity of the interview process. Further, an encrypted copy of the transcript was sent to the individual participant for review and verification of the information which they had provided. Once verified and signed as authentic, the documents were returned to me. Once the research study concluded, and all data from the recordings were summarized, the master list of participant names and corresponding pseudonym codes were destroyed to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of the sources of information provided.

3.4.4. Strengths and Weaknesses of the Instruments

Although the expert review and pilot review of the online survey proved beneficial in developing questions that served to answer the research questions, the instrument was not without challenges. Limitations surfaced with the online survey instrument in both the length of survey questions (some participants did not respond) and the inadvertent timing-out of the data base server which resulted in closing of the survey prior to the one-hour timeframe. Notably the expert reviewers did not express concern about the number of questions, nor the one-hour time allotment. It is plausible that some of the open-ended questions which asked respondents to elaborate on their cyberbullying experiences, may have deterred some participants from answering those questions. Further, given the small response rate for the pilot review (4 members of a graduate study cohort group), it is possible that the number of survey questions (44 in total, with some “please explain” questions) may have exceeded the timeframe that some potential respondents considered reasonable. This drawback was substantiated after two pilot participants expressed concern that the survey was “too long”, arguing that they had been “closed-out” of the survey for exceeding the survey time allotment. Moreover, although these respondents informed that the survey questions were “very
interesting”, they described being timed-out as “extremely frustrating”. Recognizing the potential implications that being timed-out could have on both the response rate and the collection of data, the survey database settings were modified to resolve the issue.

Detriments to the study were threefold, such that first, the nature of the study was very sensitive and placed participants in a position of encountering questions that could evoke painful memories. Yet such difficulties could be offset by participants’ willingness to share their CB experiences as an intent to effect change. Just as some targeted faculty members may be deterred by the anxiety of re-visiting painful memories, others may view participation in the study as an opportunity to share their experience in hope that the findings would lead to a positive outcome—either personally, professionally, or institutionally. Secondly, in recognizing that the survey questions could trigger anxiety, it was imperative to minimize any difficulties with the instrument itself. For example, I considered how receiving an invitation to participate in a study which may evoke painful memories, then encountering difficulties while answering questions, may create further frustrations or harm rather than benefits for attempting to share the experience. Further, the valuable information provided by the respondent would be lost—data significant to answering the research questions and developing greater understanding of this phenomenon.

3.5. Data Analysis

Creswell (2009) argues that data obtained from quantitative and qualitative components can be useful in establishing connections between both sets of findings, such that information gained from the interviews will add breadth and depth to the survey findings. Further, Bazely (2010) argues that integration of mixed methods data is both necessary and acceptable, a process generally achieved by using computer software that combines or converts the qualitative and quantitative data. Programs used in mixed methods research include programs designed for qualitative data analysis and text analyses, in addition to spreadsheets and databases (Bazeley, 2010). The next section provides an overview of how the individual research questions were answered in accordance with the online survey data and the individual interview data. This is followed by a description of how the data was integrated following the collection phase of the
study (see Appendix K: *Data Analysis of Research Question*) for a more detailed description of the individual research questions, corresponding survey questions, source of the questions, and intended data analysis).

### 3.5.1. Online Survey Data Analysis

Microsoft Excel 2007® computer software was used to analyze the online survey quantitative data as well as the interview transcript coding of qualitative data. The process of analyzing the quantitative data began by downloading the online survey questionnaire data from the SFU web survey database into a Microsoft Excel 2007® spreadsheet. The online survey questionnaire was closed after the total number of survey responses were reviewed for missing data. Since the online survey was comprised of both closed-ended questions to generate descriptive data, and open-ended questions with text boxes for more detailed responses (qualitative data), Microsoft Excel 2007® worksheets were created to separate the quantitative data from the qualitative data. Appendix K: *Data Analysis of Research Questions* provides an overview of the research questions, and the method of data analysis intended for each question.

The cyberbullying online survey questionnaire was first analyzed to gather demographic information such as the age, gender, years of experience teaching, and rank of faculty respondents. Microsoft Excel 2007® Data Analysis Toolpack was used to obtain descriptive statistics (e.g., mean, mode, and frequency) for this demographic data. Descriptive statistics were also used in establishing the type of electronic medium used and participants’ awareness of various forms of electronic media, in addition to the prevalence, severity, and typology of cyberbullying incidents. Further, pivot tables were used to determine the relationship of age, gender, and years of experience teaching, in comparison to the impact experienced, and the support measures needed by targeted faculty members.

During the first round of analysis, the data was isolated into four categories including the type of electronic medium used to convey the message; the severity of message received (harassment, bullying, violence); the impact of the incident on the faculty member (physical, emotional, relational, and professional), and the course of action taken by participants. All survey findings were converted into bar graph charts.
Qualitative data from the open-ended question text boxes were entered into a Microsoft Word table document, then analyzed for similarities in concepts, categories, and sub-categories. This information was used as a cross-comparison with the individual interview data.

I anticipated that by using open-ended questions in both the online survey and individual interviews, resultant data may hold a variety of meanings ranging from: a) single meanings, b) common concepts, or c) a group or collection of patterns. Although important meanings can come from single instances or repetitions of patterns, the discovery of meaning often involves a search for patterns and consistencies within the data (Stake, 1995). Keeping with this view, the qualitative data from the online survey text box responses were searched to isolate patterns and consistencies and the interview transcripts were analyzed to isolate concepts, categories, and sub-categories in the process of descriptive coding. The codes were then transferred to a Microsoft Excel 2007® Excel workbook to determine the frequency of codes, which is described in more detail in the following section.

3.5.2. Individual Interview Data

As previously mentioned, the individual interviews were recorded, transcribed, and returned to the participants for review—an important step in verifying clarity, credibility, and validity or trustworthiness of the transcribed text (Merriam, 1998b). Once transcribed and verified, as the principal investigator, I reviewed each transcript several times— an important first step, according to Merriam (1998b), in gaining an overall sense of the participant’s experience, then streamlining the focus to capture significant statements or quotes. Coding of the transcript data for this study involved a five-step process which moved from a holistic approach to examining individual sections, then back to a holistic review of the data. I used sentence and paragraph analysis to sort through the text in identifying concepts, categories, and codes.

The first round of transcript data analysis used a process of open coding to: a) insert all transcript text into a table column, b) determine which segments of transcript text were pertinent to the research study, c) separate the pertinent segments of data from the original text into a column, then d) determine the underlying meaning or
concept of each data segment. Boeije (2010) argues that open coding is beneficial for
the initial organization of data by establishing the fragments of data, assigning labels
along the margins of the transcript, then analyzing the labels or themes for similarities
and relevance to the research questions. This process is beneficial in sifting dominant
components from those that may be less important, further reducing, reorganizing, and
streamlining the data (Boeije, 2010). This review of the transcript data was repeated
three times before developing a preliminary list comprised of 23 main concepts.

The second step involved organizing the research questions and the participants’
responses in accordance with each question. This organization and sorting of data was
strategic in both developing a table to separate the interview questions and
corresponding responses into sections, but also in designing columns within the table to
sort the data into: a) original transcript text, b) pertinent segments of the text, c) concepts
corresponding to the pertinent segments of text, and d) categories within the concepts.
Pertinent segments of data were therefore easy to isolate and categorize. This process
is consistent with the first stage of coding qualitative research transcripts, recommended
by scholars (Merriam, 1998b; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009) in not only sorting the text,
naming commonalities, and constructing categories, but in identifying recurring themes,
patterns, or concepts that emerge from the data. The allocation of concepts, categories,
and sub-categories is reflective of the process coined as “descriptive coding” (Saldaña,
2009). For example in this study, general concepts were determined by looking at each
statement and questioning the underlying meaning held within that statement. For
example, transcript text describing an “angry” email message was placed under: a) the
concept of “message”, b) the category of “electronic media”, then more specifically c) the
sub-category of “Email.”

At this point in the process, I noticed that the coding concepts were very similar
to several components of the study’s conceptual framework. Although I had initially
intended to use an inductive process in coding the data, I now realized that the
similarities between the coding concepts and the conceptual framework concepts were
likely due to the fact that as the primary investigator, my thought process was closely
connected to each phase of the research study, and therefore influential in the emergent
coding concepts. I was further convinced upon reviewing the qualitative coding literature
(Creswell, 2008a; SAGE Publications (2008); Saldaña, 2009), that the coding technique
which I had not only used but so closely aligned with the research questions, was in fact most consistent with descriptive coding—a process used readily in qualitative research and deemed suitable for novice researchers (Saldaña, 2009). The second step of coding was completed by reviewing all participants’ responses for each of the research questions three times to ensure that pertinent segments of data had been highlighted in italics, and correlated with a corresponding concept, category, or sub-category. This process resulted in eight concepts, and 25 categories—a total of 28 codes delineated from the transcript data.

While comfortable with my novice level of expertise to separate the original transcript text into pertinent segments of data, general concepts, and a few categories, I recognized both the complexity of information provided and subsequent importance of enhancing rigor with a more detailed coding process. The third step of coding was therefore completed in partnership with a more experienced coder (Inter-coder A) to enhance expertise and credibility to the critique and coding of transcript data. Inter-coder A began by reviewing the transcript of one participant and the study’s conceptual framework. This step was followed by review of the coding document to establish the accuracy of the codes, concepts, and categories in relation to meaning held by each pertinent segment of transcript text. The third step of coding discussion and negotiation with Inter-rater A resulted in refining the coding table from 23 concepts to five concepts including: the “CB event”, 2) “CB message”, 3) “faculty response” to the event, 4) “impact” of CB on faculty, 5) “support” for faculty and 6) “CB knowledge.” Some of the remaining concepts were then moved into categories, with further delineation into sub-categories. Final revisions during this phase included refinement to six concepts, 22 categories, and 32 sub-categories—resulting in a total of 44 codes.

The fourth step of coding resulted in discussion, negotiation, and mutual agreement with Inter-rater A that several revisions were required (e.g., refine existing categories, develop new concepts, categories, and sub-categories) to capture and accurately reflect the multiple meanings held within the transcript data. For example, while some concepts were too general, other categories were too similar and needed to be merged. Further, an “Antecedents” concept was created to decipher responses that occurred prior to a CB incident (e.g., low marks, student conduct issues) from those which occurred following a CB incident (e.g., confronting the student, reporting the
incident). Upon completion, categories with the highest frequency rates (e.g., “faculty thoughts” [79]) were delineated into newly created categories or sub-categories. Revisions during this round of coding resulted in seven concepts, 26 categories, 52 categories, and three sub-categories—a total of 60 codes.

Using the new codes, categories, and sub-categories, Inter-coder A conducted a partial second round of coding on a second interview participant’s transcript data. The second round of discussions and negotiations resulted in the greatest number of mutually agreed codes, categories, and sub-categories. Subsequent revisions were then applied across each of the interview participants’ transcripts, with the intent of returning to complete the remainder of the coding for the second participant. However, as Inter-coder A was not able to continue, a second person (Inter-coder B) with extensive experience in coding qualitative research data was recruited to resume the coding process.

Step 5 of the coding process began by reviewing the descriptive coding process to date, including the most current revision of the transcripts and the study’s conceptual framework, with final agreement the coding concepts, categories, and sub-categories were all closely aligned with the study’s conceptual framework. Since all four participants’ experiences were very unique, we proceeded to code the data commencing with interview questions 1, 4, and 5 across all participants, followed by interview questions 1, 2, 3 and 5 of one participant. Redundant concepts and categories were combined, while some categories and sub-categories were expanded. For example, the “response” concept needed to be further delineated into: a) a “student” category, b) an “institutional” category, and c) a “faculty” category. Each category was further refined into sub-categories of: a) actions, b) feelings, and c) thoughts. The final level of refinement involved developing 11 new micro-categories pertinent to participants’ actions.

Revisions were also made to the Impact concept, by renaming the emotional-psychological category to emotional, then delineating this category into subcategories of emotional responses (e.g., tears, avoidance, fear, recurring memories, minimizing the incident), to capture the detail of descriptions provided by participants. The six main concepts consisted of: 1) Perceived Antecedents (factors which occurred prior to the
incident), 2) Event (form of aggression toward faculty members), 3) Message (type of media used by the student to aggress against faculty members), 4) Faculty Response (immediate and chronological in relation to the incident after it occurred), 5) Impact (more prolonged effect as a result of the incident), and 6) Recommendations (for faculty the institution, and students). The fifth step of coding concluded with a high level of confidence in the six concepts, 18 categories, 47 sub-categories, and 56 micro-categories—totalling 91 codes across the transcript data.

The sixth step of coding (in collaboration with Inter-coder B) resulted in further refinement and revisions, however these were fewer in number than the aforementioned round. This round of discussion and negotiation began with a greater number of agreements across the transcript data in terms of the codes and pertinent segments of text. Despite the fluidity of this discussion, we recognized once again that additional sub-categories and micro-categories were crucial to capturing and accurately reflecting the information provided by participants in the transcript data. Cumulatively, the sixth step of coding resulted in four additional sub-categories, with three micro-categories added to the sub-categories—totalling 98 codes across the document.

Discussion and negotiation during the seventh step of coding resulted in agreement to embed three additional sub-categories to the coding data. These three minor revisions resulted in a final total of 103 codes across the document, and agreement that we had reached saturation in our discussion and negotiation as well as refinement of codes to accurately represent the meaning held by the voices of participants (see Appendix R: Interview Coding Transcript Table: Impact and Recommendations for a sample of the coding tables that were created). The seventh and final stage of inter-rater coding concluded in mutual agreement, and with a high level of confidence that: a) throughout each round of coding, the transcript data had been re-coded with all agreed-upon codes, b) the codes were based on the conceptual framework, c) the transcript data and codes reflected the conceptual framework, and d) we had reached the level of saturation whereby the transcript data would be useful in answering the research questions. Sentence and paragraph analysis were used for data analysis of the transcripts, in addition to identifying frequencies of the codes to establish prominent themes.
The process of segmenting the data into categories, naming the categories with codes or labels, reassembling or synthesizing the data, then transforming the data into findings with theoretical sensitivity is imperative for qualitative data analysis (Boeije, 2010). This stage of reviewing the data for the purpose of making connections between the categories and synthesizing the findings is consistent with selective coding, which serves to establish a core theoretical phenomenon (Boeije, 2010). While analysis of the transcript data is explored in Chapter 4: Data Analysis, synthesizing the data into theoretical frameworks is discussed in Chapter 5: Summary, Discussion and Conclusion.

3.5.3. Trustworthiness

An important step in establishing credibility of qualitative inquiry is to ensure: a) rigorous methods have been employed, b) credibility of the researcher has been established, and c) philosophical belief in the nature of qualitative research (Patton, 2002). Rigorous methods were used in this study to yield data that were systematically analyzed for both the online survey and interview transcripts. For example, both an expert review and pilot review were conducted prior to implementation of the online survey instrument, and once collected, the survey data was analyzed for both descriptive and qualitative components.

Further, following completion of the individual interviews, the recordings were transcribed and all participants reviewed and verified their transcripts for authenticity. Thereafter the transcript data was coded and negotiated by three individuals for inter-rater reliability until a high level of confidence had been achieved that the codes both accurately reflected the voice of participants, and were in alignment with the conceptual framework. These factors served to enhance inter-rater reliability.

According to Creswell (2007), an important first step in establishing credibility of the researcher and unpacking the phenomenon of study is for the researcher to acknowledge their personal experience with the phenomenon. As a faculty member currently employed within an institution of HE, I have served in various faculty roles such as classroom teaching, student placement coordinator, and program coordinator. Within each of these roles I have encountered incidents which I consider to be cyberbullying, most of which occurred after posting grades or addressing issues of student
performance with a student. The incidents generally involved an angry or defamatory email message or defamatory comments posted to online faculty polling sites. However, at the time of these incidents, intent on resolving the issue with the student, I do not believe I recognized the negative effects that these experiences had on me.

Further to establishing credibility of the researcher, credibility of the quantitative and qualitative research methods was attained with the mixed methods approach used to answer the research questions. For example, Research Question #1 examining the type, medium, severity, and duration of cyber-bullying was answered using open and closed-style questions in the online survey questionnaire. The answers were further enriched when interview participants were given the opportunity to describe the incidents and elaborate on their experiences.

Credibility of the research questions was also enhanced by adapting survey questions from instruments that had been used in previous workplace bullying and cyber-bullying research studies. For example, the experience of "faculty-targeted" cyberbullying was captured by modifying questions from the Cyber-bullying Questionnaire (Cassidy et al., 2009) which had been implemented in previous studies to explore K-12 student-to-student cyber-bullying. Research Question #2 examining the impact (physical, psychological, relational, and professional) of cyber-bullying incidents on targeted faculty members, in addition to research question #3 on how faculty members responded to the most severe cyber-bullying event, was explored using both open and closed-ended survey questions.

The final component of rigour involved systematically analyzing the data for similarities or outliers between the online survey and interview findings. This process included a search for divergent themes, patterns, or contrary explanations between three parties during the coding process of transcript data—a process which Patton (2002) argues is essential in establishing credibility of qualitative enquiry.

3.5.4. Study Limitations

Limitations of this study include: the number and range of topics that could feasibly be covered with an online survey questionnaire, the participants' perceptions of the questions which ultimately elicit a response, and bias of the researcher entering into
the question format. Given the matrix of behaviours that could potentially be perceived as cyberbullying, the online survey did not provide an all-encompassing list of cyberbullying behaviours as options for respondents to choose from. Further, while some respondents might perceive themselves as victims of cyberbullying, others may not consider themselves to be a target of such behaviour until having reviewed the study information package which provided examples of cyberbullying behaviours.

Although survey questionnaires offer participant anonymity and coverage of a large population sample, the data can be limited in: a) participants’ abilities to elaborate or clarify each question, b) the potential for misinterpretation of the questions, and c) lack of availability of the investigator to clarify questions for participant (Palys, 1997). For this reason both the instructions provided to participants and the survey question format must be explicitly clear (Creswell, 2008; Palys, 1997). Arguably, challenges can also exist in the meaning that is drawn from study findings when interpreting survey and interview data (Bean, 2006; Creswell, 2008). As Patton (2002) contends, designing appropriate, interesting, and meaningful questions can be challenging. Further, email distribution of study information can generate a low response rate if recipients choose not to access or open their email—a factor potentially improved by sending email reminders and placing the survey online for ease of access. Additional considerations include the uncertainty or unpredictability of lucrative response rates (e.g., few versus several participants), and inability for the researcher to clarify questions for participants—all of which Palys (1997) suggests may result in “response rates between 10 - 40 percent” (p. 146).

Creswell (2008) argues that descriptive statistics and qualitative findings are dependent upon the number of respondents, yet the sensitive nature of this research topic may have deterred some faculty members from participating. For example, when asked to describe an experience of bullying, regardless of how gently this question may be posed, participants are prompted to revisit difficult moments including the emotions experienced at that time. Anticipation of re-experiencing painful memories may be too difficult for some faculty members to consider participation in such a study. Further, those who experienced negative effects or trauma from prior bullying or cyberbullying encounters may fear further harm. Based on empirical evidence of the long-term effects of acute and severe stress disorders (APA DSM-IV, 2000; Carney, 2000; Ehlers & Clark,
2000; Johnson & Stein, 2011; Lampman et al., 2009; Luparell, 2004) faculty members who were previously traumatized by bullying may experience triggering of that experience during the questionnaire or interview process. Finally, although faculty members may not have experienced online bullying themselves, the possibility exists that they may be affected by having witnessed bullying of someone they know.

Additional study limitations may exist in terms of the credibility or validity of the instruments used. As previously mentioned, the Cyber-bullying questionnaire (Cassidy et al., 2009), Negative Consequences Scale (Keashly & Neuman, 2008; Lampman et al., 2009), and the MSU Workplace Behaviour Survey (Keashly & Neuman, 2008) have been used in previous studies. Although these instruments have been tested in: a) student populations to examine traditional bullying and cyber bullying in the K-12 sector; b) student-to-faculty populations examining traditional bullying in the HE sector; and c) adult bullying within the workplace—to date, the instruments have not been tested on student-to-faculty targeted cyberbullying in higher education. Internal and external validity refers to “the integrity of the conclusions that are generated from a piece of research” (Bryman, Becker, & Sempik, 2008, p. 30). It is important to ensure that scores from the instrument make sense, are meaningful, and enable the researcher to draw conclusions from the sample population (Creswell, 2008). This is explored further in discussion of the data analysis and findings in Chapter 4.
Chapter 4.

Findings

This study was designed to gather information about faculty members' perceived experiences with cyberbullying by undergraduate students, the impact that it had on them, and the support measures needed. While the online surveys provided descriptive and qualitative data, the individual interviews added more in-depth qualitative information about participants' individual experiences with this phenomenon. This chapter has been organized into six sections, beginning with the demographic findings, then followed by the online survey and corresponding interview findings which successively answer each of the research questions.

4.1. Demographic Information

Approximately 1040 faculty employees at “XX” University (hereafter referred to as MU) in Canada received an invitation to participate in this research study, from which 36 faculty members (3.5%) completed the online survey and 4 respondents (.38%) participated in the face-to-face interviews. Those who responded “yes” (n=22) to having experienced “at least one incident of cyberbullying within the last 24 months” (hereafter referred to as CB-targeted) were asked to complete the CB-focused questions, and those who responded “no”, were asked to skip to the demographic questions (e.g. age, gender, citizenship) at the end of the survey. Table 4.1 provides an overview of the demographic findings.
Table 4.1  Demographic Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographics</th>
<th>Respondents (n=36)</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>CB Targeted (n=22)</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Citizenship</td>
<td>Canadian by birth</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Immigrant</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commonly spoken language</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No response</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>(n=36) M\text{age}=51.45 SD=10.2</td>
<td>(n=22) M\text{CB\text{age}}=52.5 SD=8.31</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-29 years</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39 years</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49 years</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59 years</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; than 60 years</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender: MU faculty</td>
<td>Male (478, N=1040)</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female (564, N=1040)</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey participants' gender</td>
<td>Male (8, n=36)</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>(n=22)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female (27, n=36)</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>Male (6, n=22)</td>
<td>27.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No answer (1, n=36)</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>Female (15, n=22)</td>
<td>68.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years teaching at MU (n=36)</td>
<td>M_{\text{yrMU}}=10.84</td>
<td>SD= 8.08</td>
<td>M_{\text{CB\text{yrMU}}} =12.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years teaching in HE (n=36)</td>
<td>M_{\text{yrHE}}=15.12</td>
<td>SD= 8.2</td>
<td>M_{\text{CB\text{yrHE}}} =16.69</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rank : Most serious CB</td>
<td>Non-regularized</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>incident at MU (n=19)</td>
<td>Reg. Full-time</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reg. Part-time</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Instructor</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rank: Most serious CB incident (at institution)</td>
<td>Project/Contract</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Associate Prof.</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assistant Prof.</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Full Professor</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Instructor</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cyber-aggressor(s): Participants' Most Serious CB Message (n=19)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aggressors' age</th>
<th>21 years or less</th>
<th>13%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>22-29 years</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30-39 years</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>40-49 years</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aggressors' gender</th>
<th>Male only</th>
<th>44%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Females only</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male and female</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gender unknown</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The overall group of respondents (n=36) were predominantly female, 40 years of age or older, held Canadian citizenship by birth, and reported “English” was their “most
commonly spoken” language (see Table 4.1). The interview participant group (n=4) consisted of 3 females and 1 male faculty member.

Interestingly, although online platforms afford anonymity to aggressors, in this study, most CB-targeted faculty members (79%, n=19) knew the aggressor’s identity; 37% for “some CB messages”, and 42% for “all CB messages.” From the information that was provided by those who knew the CB-aggressors’ identity, aggressors ranged between 20 and 50 years of age, most were less than 30 years of age (82%), and 44% were males acting alone (see Table 4.1).

4.2. RQ 1: Faculty Members’ Awareness of Online Media

In order to answer research question one, the overall group of participants (n=36, 3.5%) were asked to rate their awareness (e.g., not aware, a little aware, moderately aware, very aware) of various forms of online media. In order to avoid confusion, faculty polling sites (e.g., Ratemyprofessors.com®) will be referred to as “Ratetheprofessor.X”

While the overall group of respondents (n=36) reported to be most aware of email (100%), video sites such as YouTube® (94%), Skype (83%), cell phone texting (81%), public faculty polling sites (e.g., Ratetheprofessor.X) (94%), and social networking sites (76%), they were least aware of student polling sites (58%). Even though most respondents were familiar with social networking sites, the following comment depicts the unrest that exists about engaging with students on such sites:

A student...sent me an invitation to be “friended” on Facebook... am not really familiar on the technology... had to really think about it... didn’t want to put myself in a vulnerable situation where the student ...discloses some information. I decided to keep distance from the student... don’t want to be hurt... don’t know if there are guidelines... has a lot of implications... some that I probably don’t know or can’t foresee. (IP Carol)

Further to keeping abreast of the ever-expanding technology of online platforms, participants also expressed concern about the ramifications of posting harmful messages about faculty members to online platforms.
4.3. RQ 2: Participants’ Cyberbullying Experiences

From the overall group of respondents, 22 (61%) participants reported having at least one CB message (e.g., aggressive, intimidating, harassing, defamatory, humiliating, sexist, bigoted, racist, or bullying) within the past 24 months. From this group of respondents, most were female (68%), greater than 40 years of age (84%), and had greater than 10 years of post-secondary teaching experience (82%), which suggests that CB-targeted faculty members were not novice post-secondary education faculty members.

4.3.1. CB Messages: Frequency, Content, Most Recent Occurrence

CB-targeted faculty members most commonly received their CB messages via email (65%, $M_{email}$=4.6, SD 4.72) and faculty polling sites (50%, $M_{fpol}$=3.6, SD 3.05). In terms of frequency, most CB incidents occurred “once or twice” (75%, n=22), then “3 or more times” (28%, n=22), followed by “3 or more times, repeatedly for several months” (5%, n=22). With regard to content, most CB messages contained: derogatory or sarcastic remarks (62%, n=22), demands for higher grades (62%, n=22), demands to reduce the difficulty of assignments (59%, n=22), or challenged the faculty members’ authority (50%, n=22). Finally, when asked about their most recent CB experience: 33% (n=22) occurred “over 1 year ago” or “within the past year”; 29% (n=22) occurred “within the past 6 months”; with only 5% encountered “within the past month.” There were no reported CB incidents within one week of the study.

4.3.2. Participants’ Most Serious Cyberbullying Experiences

From those who had encountered at least one CB incident in 24 months (n=22), 19 (86%) reported experiencing “at least one significant or serious CB incident” that had a negative effect on them—74% (n=19) of which occurred at MU, and 26% (n=19) occurred at another post-secondary institution. In terms of rank, at the time of their most serious CB incident, 63% (n=19) held fulltime employment, 42% were instructors, 21% were associate professors, 10% were full professors, and 5% were assistant professors.

When asked how recently their most serious CB experience occurred, most participants responded “more than one year ago” (61%, n=19). In terms of duration,
there was a fairly even distribution between incidents that persisted for: “less than 1 week” (37%, n=19) and “1 week to 1 month” (32%, n=19), followed by “1 week to 6 months” (26%, n=19), and fewer that lasted for longer than 6 months (5 %, n=19). No one reported serious CB incidents that persisted for more than one year.

With regard to factors which may have contributed to their most serious CB incident, the most common precursors included: students’ dissatisfaction with grades (79%, n=19), student misconduct issues (32%, n=19), and assignment criteria (26%, n=19) (see Appendix L).

Both the online survey and the interview participants’ testimonials provided greater insight into the various methods used by aggressors to elevate their marks. For example, just as Carol informed that “some students…use words in their messages to threaten or coerce me into changing their grade”, Barbara disclosed that she had received some “aggressive…angry…angry email messages” from a student who initially failed an assignment, then received a zero-grade for plagiarizing the re-write. Further to exploring the factors which may have contributed to CB-targeted faculty members’ most serious CB incidents, Research question 2 also explored the type of CB messages that were perceived as “serious.”

From a list of options, the words “disrespectful”, “aggressive”, “rude”, and “defamatory” were most commonly selected by survey respondents to describe their most serious CB message. Of concern, approximately 40% perceived their most serious CB message to be threatening or bullying (see Figure 4.1). When asked to rate “how bothered” they were by their most serious CB incident, 68% (n=19) were “very bothered”, while 16% (n=19) were “moderately” or “a little” bothered by their most serious CB experience.

The survey participants provided more in-depth information about the type and severity of CB messages, including allegations of discrimination, sexism, and faculty incompetence:

The email contained...allegations of discrimination...did not treat her the same as others...due to her religion or culture. (SR 2)
The message alleged...I was the worst instructor...called my credentials into question." (SR 3)

Further elaboration comes from the following multi-faceted comments about CB messages that contained explicit language and were perceived by faculty members as threatening:

I received several email messages...referring to me as a bitch. (SR 9)
An anonymous email was sent from a fabricated server....address line was "fuk"(my first and last names @yahoo.ca"...claiming I marked students too hard...nobody gave a crap about what I was teaching them...threatening how students would treat me if they found me walking alone down the street...indicated that...nine other students from the class were watching [him or her] writing the email...the message was very erratic...I was extremely shaken by this email. (SR 8)

Figure 4.1. Participants’ Descriptions of Serious CB Messages
Both the type of defamatory comments that were posted to online faculty evaluation sites (accessible to the Dean), and faculty polling sites such as Ratetheprofessor.X (accessible to the general public) shared similarities. For example, the first testimonials depicts the “disrespectful”, “defamatory” nature of comments that were posted to an online faculty evaluation, while the second testimonial illustrates the type of message that was posted to both an online faculty evaluation and a faculty polling site:

I received disrespectful comments about my ability to teach...on the online faculty evaluation... it was reviewed by the Dean. (SR 10)

One student solicited several students to submit unfavorable comments about my teaching...to the on-line course evaluation...and to [Ratetheprofessor.X]. (SR 11)

The most prevalent themes that emerged from the interview participants’ descriptions of their most serious CB incidents included: angry or inflammatory messages, disrespectful, rude, or offensive messages, dishonesty, allegations of faculty incompetence, defamatory comments, and bullying or threatening messages. The following comments depict the type of CB messages that were perceived by participants as angry, aggressive, bullying, or harassing:

The online faculty evaluation comments were mean...unsubstantiated...intended to hurt...and they did. (IP Debbie)

The angry emails...it was harassment...it was repeated...and escalated...in-person. (IP Barbara)

The email messages...threatened to call the press, file a legal complaint...intimidate me into changing the grade...to me that is bullying. (IP Carol)

While most respondents’ CB experiences were confined to online platforms, some incidents escalated from angry email messages to an in-person confrontation. For example, similar to Barbara who received an angry email message that escalated to “shouting at me in my office”, Andrew received a defamatory email that escalated to “shouting and berating me during an exam.”
Further to providing in-depth information about the type of CB messages that were received, CB-targeted faculty members also informed of the impact that their most serious CB experiences had on them.

4.4. RQ 3: Impact of Serious CB Messages

The online survey and individual interview findings revealed that study participants experienced detrimental physical, emotional, relational, and professional effects following their most serious CB experiences (see Figure 4.2). The duration of negative effects as well as the degree of distress experienced by the respondents were also reported.

![Detrimental Effects Experienced by CB-Targeted Participants](image)

**Figure 4.2. Detrimental Effects Experienced by CB-Targeted Participants**
4.4.1. Physical and Emotional Effects

Following their most serious CB experiences, the detrimental physical and emotional effects that were most commonly experienced by the overall group of CB-targeted respondents (n=19) included: “difficulty sleeping” (74%), “felt significantly anxious or distressed” (68%), and “tried to avoid thinking about it” (58%). While 5% (n=19) of the participants reported that their most serious CB encounter was a positive experience, most (95%, n=19) did not share the same view. Most compelling, 26% (n=19) had thoughts of retaliation toward the CB-aggressor, and one respondent (female) reported having thoughts of self-harm.

Interestingly, approximately half of the male (n=6) and female (n=13) respondents reported that they felt confident to respond to their most serious CB incident, and the most common negative effects reported by male and female respondents were somewhat similar. For example male respondents (n=6) most commonly reported “feeling significantly anxious or distressed (80%), followed by approximately half who reported “difficulty sleeping”, “poor concentration”, “avoided the aggressor”, or “felt depressed”. Female respondents (n=13) most commonly reported “difficulty sleeping” or “avoided thinking about it” (85%); followed by “significantly anxious or distressed”, “more irritable than normal” (70%); then “sudden emotional responses”, and “fear of being alone with or contacting the aggressor” (53%) (see Appendix S: Negative Effects and Gender Differences). The following comments illuminate the physical and emotional effects that were experienced by female interview participants upon reading their most serious CB messages:

I felt tension...tension like a knot in my stomach when it happened. (IP Carol)

I felt sick....sick to my stomach...lost sleep over it ...bothered me tremendously...my confidence was shattered. (IP Debbie)

Common categories that emerged from the participants’ descriptions of how they felt about their most serious CB messages included: “surprised”, “bothered or upset”, “shocked”, “shattered”, “threatened”, “defenceless”, and “disappointed.” The following comment reflects how bothered or upset one male interview participant was by the experience:
The whole thing was completely foreign to me...it was very upsetting...felt threatened...shocked...I was trying to help the student. (IP Andrew)

The impact of CB on targeted individuals was visible to me during the interviews as some participants became emotional when describing what they had experienced. For example, further to being emotional at the time of the incident, Debbie began to cry during the interview when describing the comments that had been posted to an online faculty evaluation:

I was away for the weekend...sitting in a coffee shop... There were a few people in close proximity to me...I really felt physically ill with the one comment that I read...I felt the tears coming, and felt ill, and a woman sitting across from me leaned over...said to me: ‘Oh no...you've just received some really bad news’...I thought ... this emotion...it's showing on the outside too... I got up and left. But I kept thinking about it... I looked at it again after I got home... it was just really upsetting...It is bothering me again now as I tell you how it happened (crying).

Further to the emotional responses that were mentioned, the concepts: “recurring memories of the incident”, “minimizing the incident”, and “justification of the aggressor’s behaviour” were also raised. For example, although Debbie acknowledged the impact the CB incident had on her, she tried to minimize the situation in stating: “It was probably not as bad as it can be...like other people experience”; as well as rationalize the incident: “I have a lot of experience...should be able to handle...this disgruntled student who isn’t happy with their mark...” Added to the dimension of negative effects, this participant also experienced recurring memories of her most serious CB incident:

I was emotional when I thought about it...couldn’t just let it go....one bad comment ...had such an effect on me...it really bothered me....I was fine, up until I started doing this interview and then all of those emotions came back up again. It’s like reliving it again. However I will be fine... and I have put it behind me. (IP Debbie)
4.4.2. Relational and Professional Effects

In addition to the emotional impact of CB, this study found that CB had negative implications with regard to the participants’ (n=19) relationships with students (74%), colleagues (37%), Deans or administrators (37%), family members (32%) and friends (11%). Some interview participants became emotional (e.g., tearful, fidgeting, struggling with their words) when describing the difficulties they had encountered with students following their CB experiences. For example, Andrew stated: “I was a little unsure about how to interact and react with that student and other students after the [email] incident …I thought … I had a good rapport with students”. Carol commented: “My encounters with cyberbullying tell me that getting involved too close with students can work against you”, and SR 14 wrote: “I rarely give students extra consideration now. Those I help seem to be the ones most likely to react by bullying me, like the student who threatened me.”

Further to encountering difficulties in their relationships, some of the participants (n=19) encountered professional difficulties such as: “loss of desire to go to work” (68%), “loss of productivity” (53%), and “felt like quitting” (53%) (see Figure 4.3).

![Figure 4.3. Professional Effects of CB on Participants](image)

As well, approximately half of the respondents lost confidence in their ability to work with students or manage student misconduct—factors which could create
difficulties when tensions surface in the classroom. When asked to describe any “other” professional ramifications, SR 15 wrote: “I lost respect in the support offered by counselling services and administrators…their avoidance of dealing with the issue and supporting faculty.” As well, SR 17 described how defamatory comments posted on Ratetheprofessor.x resulted in a multitude of consequences including: “lower class enrollments, section cancellations, rescheduling and re-assignment challenges...lost prep time...all of which affected me.”

4.4.3. How Long the Negative Effects of CB Persisted

In addition to exploring the type of negative effects that were experienced by CB-targeted faculty members (n=19), this study also explored how long the effects persisted, ranging from: “a few days”, “1 to 8 weeks”, “2 to 5 months”, “6 to 12 months”, or “longer than one year.” Table 4.2 provides an overview of the frequency of detrimental negative effects experienced, in relation to the duration of time that they persisted. (A table depicting specific negative effects, and the corresponding duration can be found in Appendix M. Graphic illustrations of these findings can be found in Appendix N.)

Table 4.2. Negative Effects: Type and Duration of Negative Effects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Negative Effects Experienced (n=19)</th>
<th>Duration of Negative Effects Encountered (n=19)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Few Days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You had physical responses when you thought about the incident</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You had thoughts of self-harm</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You had thoughts of retaliation toward the CB aggressor</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You saw a mental health professional</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt embarrassed to discuss the incident</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You suffered from stress-related illnesses (e.g. migraines, stomach problems)</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You had difficulty concentrating during class or at work</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You were more irritable than normal</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Negative Effects Experienced (n=19)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Negative Effects Experienced</th>
<th>Duration of Negative Effects Encountered (n=19)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Few Days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You had sudden emotional responses when reminded of the incident (e.g., crying, shouting, anger)</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You felt physically afraid of the aggressor</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You were afraid to be alone with the aggressor</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You avoided making contact with the aggressor</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You felt depressed</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You tried to avoid thinking about the incident</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You felt significantly anxious or distressed</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You had difficulty sleeping</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal relationships suffered</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional relationships suffered</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You lost confidence in your ability as a teacher</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on this study’s findings, the negative effects that most commonly persisted “for a few days” included: “avoided the aggressor”, “difficulty sleeping” and “increased irritability”; for “one to eight weeks” included “difficulty sleeping” and “increased irritability”; for “two to five months” included “felt significantly anxious or distressed”, and “sudden emotional responses”; and for “six to 12 months” included “fear or avoidance of the aggressor.” Further, the most common negative effect that persisted for “greater than one year” included “tried to avoid thinking about it.”

I was also struck by the negative effects that were common to all categories, ranging from “a few days” to “greater than 1 year”, including: “fear of the aggressor”, “avoided the aggressor”, “had sudden emotional responses” “tried to avoid thinking about it”, and “had physical responses when reminded of the incident.” Notably, while “thoughts of retaliation towards the aggressor” persisted from one week to greater than one year, “thoughts of self-harm” persisted for more than one year for one participant.

Further to the negative effects that were common to all categories, I was intrigued by the negative effects that lasted for greater than 2 months, and was
interested to know whether any of the respondents had experienced multiple (three or more) negative effects. Based on the findings, some participants (n=19) had three or more physical or emotional effects persist for: one to eight weeks" (25%); two to five months (10%), six to 12 months (15%), and more than one year (21%). Most compelling, 15% of the respondents (n=19) had more than 10 negative effects persist for greater than one year, following their most serious CB experience. Notably, 16% (n=6) of the male faculty members, and 15% (n=13) of the female faculty members reported more than 10 negative effects that persisted for more than one year.

Although “thoughts of retaliation towards the aggressor” (26%, n=19), and “thoughts of self-harm” (5%, n=19) were reported by some CB-targeted participants, others (5%) reported that their most serious CB incident was “a positive learning experience.” Notably, those who reported “thoughts of retaliation” had multiple negative effects (three or more), that persisted from “1 to 8 weeks” to “more than 1 year.” Similarly, the participant who had “thoughts of self-harm” had multiple negative effects that persisted for greater than one year.

Of particular concern, some CB-targeted faculty members encountered detrimental physical and emotional effects for several weeks or months, suggesting that they may have experienced these effects while attempting to fulfill their role as a faculty member. Further, some faculty members encountered difficulties in their relationships with students, peers, administrators, and family members. Negative professional implications were also incurred, as some participants lost confidence in their ability to teach, lost their desire to teach—or worse, quit their jobs.

4.5. RQ 4: Response to Cyberbullying

In order to answer research question 4, the participants were asked how they responded to their most serious CB incident, the resources that were sought (e.g., educational programs, institutional policy or procedures), and whether the support measures were helpful.

There was a fairly even distribution between CB-targeted faculty members (n=19) who felt comfortable to respond to the incident (47%), and those who did not (42%).
Although 47% had some knowledge of CB-aggression, harassment, or bullying behaviours, and 58% saw signs that CB might occur, or knew where to report such incidents (53%), only 37% “knew what to do.” Further, few respondents (32%) knew which policy or procedure to follow, and only 16% had received some form of training in how to manage student misconduct. Appendix O: Course of Action provides an overview of the course of action that was taken by respondents and the resultant outcome.

When asked what course of action was taken, the participants (n=19) most commonly: “consulted with colleagues” (84%), “sought support from friends or family members” (74%), or “reported the incident to an immediate supervisor” (74%). Based on this study’s findings, approximately 40% of the respondents attempted to involve the students in resolving the problem, yet few reported this course of action to be successful. For example, of those who attempted to discuss the incident with the student (42%), only 16% reported a satisfactory outcome; or asked the aggressor to stop (43%), only 11% had a satisfactory outcome, and finally, attempted to involve the student in finding a resolution (42%), only 5% had a successful outcome. For CB-targeted faculty members, the course of action that was most commonly reported as “successful” included the support that was sought from colleagues or friends (68%), and of those who sought support from an administrator or faculty members (42%), only 5% found this course of action to be successful.

4.5.1. Reporting Cyberbullying Incidents

In essence, CB-targeted faculty members were more successful in reporting their most serious CB incident to colleagues or an immediate supervisor, than in reporting it to senior administrators, or attempting to resolve it with the student. When faculty members lack clarity in what constitutes CB, the reporting process, or whether CB incidents will be taken seriously, they may be less likely to report such incidents, as suggested in the following excerpts:

I didn’t report it...didn’t know who to report the incident to, or if there was any point. (SR 19)

Nasty comments on faculty rating websites are probably not considered bullying by others...one is meant to "suck it up"...and not care. (SR 20)
Further to experiencing uncertainties, the expectation held of faculty members to manage student conflict effectively, and the fear of further victimization can also deter targeted individuals from reporting CB incidents:

I did not report it...had fear of further victimization. Administrators may not act on it, or if they do...may be detrimental to the faculty member who reports it. (SR 23)

After all...I'm in my 40's...many years of teaching...this one bad comment...should be able to handle it. (IP Debbie)

Finally, I was not only struck by the participants' attempts to involve the student in resolving their most serious CB incident, but as well, the attempts to rationalize or minimize the event.

I remember thinking...this was just a difficult student...hopefully it won't happen again...in retrospect I should have reported this. (IP Andrew)

I believed I could manage the situation...didn't think it was very serious. (SR 18)

Despite the aforementioned attempts to downplay their cyberbullying experiences, some participants adopted a range of responses toward the cyber-aggressors, as discussed below.

4.5.2. Participants’ Responses to Cyber-aggressors

Faculty members’ actions toward the aggressor most commonly varied between approaching the student, distancing themselves, rationalizing the incident, or educating the student. For example, according to Barbara, “They need to learn... wait and pull them into a face-to-face conversation about what is going on...then the bullying attempt has failed.” While at one time Carol preferred to address CB incidents with students, she informed: “I have changed my approach and not allow myself to get too friendly...not unfriendly, but I work within the ...protocols of the institution." Less frequent approaches included informing the student of institutional resources, ignoring the CB incident, complying with the student.
Some participants expressed uncertainty about how they had responded when their most significant CB experience occurred. For example, although Barbara forwarded a student’s CB messages to the Dean, she was not sure if this was the appropriate course of action to take, citing “I didn’t have the student’s permission.” Debbie was also uncertain about responding to an online CB message, stating: “I don’t know if it warrants immediate action…it’s anonymous …how do we stop students from posting harmful messages about others on the internet”?

4.5.3. Participants’ Coping Strategies

Interview participants provided more in-depth information about the measures that were used to cope with CB incidents—namely determining how to interpret or respond to CB messages, and setting boundaries for students. The following comments illustrate the coping strategies that were used by participants to cope with CB messages:

Faculty shouldn’t take it personally…the message isn’t about me…the student hasn’t learned how to respond to an authority in an appropriate way.” (IP Barbara)

I don’t have to read them…if I receive an evaluation and there are only a few responses, I just won’t open it up. (IP Debbie)

Further to the above strategies, another approach was to reflect on the incident and consult with colleagues prior to responding to the CB message, or to ignore the incident entirely.

4.5.4. Participants’ Views of CB Messages

The interview participants expressed several views about CB messages in general, and the implications that online modalities can have on the learning environment. For example, some respondents considered faculty polling sites such as “Ratetheprofessor.X” to be harmful, given the ease with which defamatory messages can be posted, the extent to which they can be viewed, and the anonymity afforded the aggressor. Further, online modalities enable impulsive reactions of posting harmful messages when tensions arise. The challenges that faculty members face with the influx
of various teaching modalities, and the inevitability that conflict will occur, were particularly resonant in "participants' thoughts" as follows:

With technology and its many changes, this [cyberbullying] will continue to happen...cyberbullying is now a part of our profession, and it is very complicated...the world is changing and the faculty-student relationship is changing. (IP Carol)

Communication through the internet lends to even less clarity and people may have knee-jerk responses to what is just a difference in communication...in and between cultures. (IP Barbara)

Further to exploring the participants’ most serious CB experiences, this study also gathered information about how satisfied CB-targeted respondents (n=19) were with the support measures that were available at MU, at the time of their most serious CB incident.

4.6. RQ 5: Institutional Support Measures

Using a Likert scale (ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree"), the participants were asked to rank various support measures such as institutional policy, CB education, and personal services (e.g., counselling) that may have been available at MU at the time of this study. A graphic illustration of how the CB-targeted respondents ranked the support measures at MU can be found in Appendix P.

4.6.1.1. Institutional Policy, Procedures, Sanctions, and Support at MU

When asked to rank the institutional policies and procedures at MU, few CB-targeted respondents (11%, n=19) agreed that: a) cyberbullying, harassment, and sanctions are clearly stated in MU policy, b) sanctions deter CB or harassment behaviours, or c) faculty members receive adequate training on how the student conduct and harassment policies and procedures are applied and enforced. Similarly, few agreed (21%) that the student conduct policy and procedures are well-communicated, or that faculty know the behaviours addressed in these policies. Finally, most respondents (79%) agreed that students can get away with CB at MU, yet in terms of support, only
11% agreed that support measures are easy to access, and fewer (5%) agreed that they are effective.

Common themes from the transcripts included gaps in “institutional policy”, “CB education”, and “support services”—all of which posed challenges for the participants in preventing and managing CB incidents effectively. For example, in terms of educating students, Andrew argued “There isn’t anything that I know of about cyberbullying, or misusing Facebook, and the consequences for doing so” in the student handbook. With regard to CB policy, confounders exist in both the language of policy and the process for disseminating new policy, since neither the “student conduct” nor “harassment” policies address CB behaviours. Carol explained:

Our [policy language] is far too broad ...difficult to apply...current process is not effective... if cyberbullying were a new policy...it is sent out by email...faculty members are overwhelmed with all the email messages...can’t learn a policy with a two-minute window to review it... understand it, or put it into effective practice. (IP Carol)

Further, some participants argued that policy and education go hand in hand as Carol explained: “Policy and procedure is nothing if we don’t educate our faculty members on what [cyberbullying] is and what to do about it.” The harmful effects incurred from CB, in conjunction with the lack of resources available to faculty members, was an added concern. Carol argued “Cyberbullying is very complicated…has a lot of implications on the person who experiences it.” Andrew argued that CB-targeted faculty members should not feel at fault or incompetent when CB happens, suggesting: “When teachers are hired that they should have training…it is important to know that faculty members are supported when they feel threatened.”

4.7. Participants’ Recommendations

Further to gathering information about the institutional policies and support measures that currently exist at MU, respondents who had encountered at least one incident of CB within the past 24 months (n=22) were asked to list the “3 most important measures of support , (e.g., education, policy, counselling)” that would be needed for
faculty members to manage CB effectively. Figure 4.4 depicts the first, second, and third priority support measures that were suggested by CB-targeted respondents.

![Bar chart showing priority support measures](image)

**Figure 4.4. Participants’ Top-priority Recommendations**

### 4.7.1. Institutional Policy, Education, and Counselling Support for Faculty Members

Survey text-box responses were thematically coded to identify both similarities and outliers. Based on the information provided by the CB-targeted participants (n=22), the most common: “first priority” measure was “clearly written, well-communicated CB policies and procedures”; “second priority” measure was “CB education for faculty members”; and finally, the most common “third priority” support measure was “counseling services” and “CB education for faculty members.” The recommendations identified among the top three priorities by the greatest number of respondents included CB education for faculty members (75%, n=22), followed by clearly written policies and procedures (65%), and sanctions to deter CB (43%).

Some overlap occurred in the first and second priority recommendations, in calling for clearly written institutional policy and the provision of CB education for faculty members. Notably, “counselling services” (e.g., debriefing and focus groups) was identified as a third priority recommendation. These findings suggest that CB-targeted participants perceived institutional policy and CB education as higher priority support...
measures than counselling services. Further research would need to be conducted in order to understand what this means. Additional recommendations included: support from administrators, CB education for students, providing a “contact person” for formal CB complaints, involvement with law enforcement personnel when CB incidents occur, and review as well as reporting of CB incidents on an annual basis.

Similar themes were evident in the transcript data as interview participants most commonly expressed the need for “clearly written CB policies and procedures”, and “CB education” for students and faculty members alike, in addition to counselling and support groups to assist targeted individuals in processing their CB experiences. Andrew argued that upon hire, all faculty members would benefit from CB education such as “Information... what to do... how to respond... supports [for] faculty members... guidelines about the professional boundaries of [online media].” Given the leadership role and responsibility held of faculty members to manage student misconduct effectively, Barbara argued: “Faculty need to know how to respond to incidents of student aggression... to role model ...how to behave...students learn a lot from faculty members.”

Further to enhanced CB policies and education, interview participants identified similar recommendations to the survey participants. For example, Both Andres and Carol viewed counselling as necessary, however Carol cautioned that while counselling is essential for some, it may not be considered a viable option for those who fear being judged that “something is wrong with them.” Alternatively, Carol suggested establishing CB support groups for faculty members to “Share their learning...disclose their experience, not be judged...be safe...don’t feel so alone...should not be ashamed that it has happened.”

Support from administrators (e.g., Deans, Chairs, immediate supervisors, senior administrators) and faculty association representatives were named as essential components in assisting faculty members with cyberbullying. Carol explained: “Ensure that Chairs, Deans, and administrators know what to do, are consistent...there for support... a channel to communicate this to... administrators to take complaints seriously.’

Finally, when asked which resource (at MU or elsewhere) was the most helpful in supporting them through their most significant CB experience, 45 % (n=22) of the
participants responded “colleagues”, followed by counselling (13%), intervention from the Dean (13%), and intervention from the VP Academic or campus security (7%). Some of the participants (7%, n=22) reported that they did not receive support from the Dean, or Faculty Association representatives, and 7% of the respondents reported that none of the support measures sought were helpful.

4.7.2. Support for Students: CB Education and Counselling

In addition to the support measures recommended for faculty members, another common theme that was generated from the transcripts pertained to support measures that should be in place for students. For the purpose of enhancing students’ awareness of CB, participants called for education programs to inform of: CB behaviours, CB policy and procedures, as well as sanctions for engaging in CB behaviours—all of which may serve to prevent or deter CB. Interview participants also stressed the importance of providing support services to assist cyberbullied students in processing their experience and managing the detrimental effects incurred. Barbara claimed that “Students need the same information that faculty members receive...to know what cyberbullying is...and how to respond...where to go...what to do”, to which she added “I think cyberbullying is happening a lot more as student-to-student, than student-to-faculty.” According to Carol, CB education not only informs of the issue, but can empower individuals in their ability to manage CB incidents: “Educate, inform and empower students and faculty to be sure that after the process of education, they are ready to rationalize situations and not to incur harm.”

4.7.3. Further Research

Interview participants also called for more research to inform the literature about cyberbullying within the post-secondary sector. Some participants expressed concern that prior to participating in this study, they not only lacked awareness of CB, but lacked awareness of being cyberbullied. For example, Carol claimed: “I realized in reading your research proposal that I too had been a victim of cyberbullying and that this was a great opportunity to participate.” This study provided an opportunity for CB-targeted faculty members to disclose as well as reflect on their CB experiences. According to participants, the findings serve to enhance institutional practice by informing of what
constitutes CB, the impact that it can have on targeted individuals, and the support measures that are needed. For example, Debbie claimed: “This is really important research...needs to get out in the open to assist faculty members in how to manage it when it happens”, and Carol stated: “Your study is long overdue. It will improve this institution and the practice for faculty in years to come.”

4.8. Summary

This chapter provided the detailed quantitative and qualitative findings from the online survey questionnaires and the individual interviews. The findings answered the five research questions addressing the nature of targeted faculty members’ cyberbullying experiences in terms of their perception of the factors that constitute CB, the platform used by aggressors, and precursors to such events. It also provided an account of the impact that cyberbullying can have on targeted faculty members, as voiced by those who have personally endured detrimental physical, emotional, relational, and professional effects. Further, participants’ testimonials shed light on not only the support measures that were sought at the time of their most serious CB incident, but also recommended for other faculty members in managing CB effectively. In order of priority, CB-targeted participants’ recommended clearly written, well-communicated institutional policy and sanctions to deter CB, CB education for faculty members and students alike, as well as administrative support for targeted individuals.

Chapter 5 discusses the study findings in relation to the overarching research question, in addition to the conceptual framework, theoretical framework, and the literature. This discussion is followed by the implications that these findings will have for institutional policy, practice, and future research. The chapter closes with discussion of the study limitations.
Chapter 5.

Summary and Discussion

This final chapter begins with an overview of the research problem and the methods used in the study, followed by a discussion of the findings and how these relate to prior research as well as the theoretical frameworks which were addressed in Chapter 2. The chapter concludes by exploring the implications for practice, policy, and theory, in addition to considerations for future research.

5.1. The Research Problem

This study explored faculty members’ perceived experiences of having harmful messages sent to them, or about them by post-secondary students via electronic media. Although student-to-faculty targeted mistreatment has been documented in research on post-secondary education, as noted in Chapters 1 and 2, the area of students’ online aggression toward faculty members is in need of examination. Both personal experience and anecdotal evidence from colleagues affirms that CB of faculty members exists, yet in the absence of empirical evidence, it is difficult to know how to intervene, let alone understand the implications that such incidents can have on targeted individuals, and how to support them.

5.2. Summary of the Findings

Using the primary research question dimensions (CB messages, impact of CB on participants, support measures at MU, and participants’ recommendations), the summary of findings begins with an overview of the demographic data and discussion of information. This is followed by the most compelling findings that were generated from
In terms of demographic findings, from the population sample of MU faculty members, 36 participants (3.5%, N=1040) responded to the online survey, from which 22 (2.1%, N=1040) reported having had at least one cyberbullying incident within the past 24 months (referred to as CB-targeted), and 19 (1.8%, N=1040) reported having experienced “at least one serious CB incident” over the span of their post-secondary teaching career. The CB-targeted group of respondents (n=22) were predominantly English speaking, female (68%), over 40 years of age (72%), had greater than 10 years of post-secondary teaching experience (81%), and held fulltime positions (e.g., regularized, full professor, or associate professor). These characteristics suggest that CB-targeted participants were not novice to teaching in the post-secondary sector. Putting the gender differentiation into context, at the time of this study, the gender of faculty members employed at MU was closely distributed with 46% (478, N=1040) males, and 54%, (564, N=1040) females. As well, CB was most commonly encountered via email, online faculty evaluations, and online faculty polling sites, yet it is plausible that CB messages may have been posted to other online platforms, without the targeted faculty members’ knowledge.

From this study we know that some faculty members at MU received CB messages that ranged in frequency, duration, and the severity of content. However the most compelling findings pertain to the negative physical, emotional, relational, and professional effects that were reported by CB-targeted individuals—some of which bear resemblance to the American Psychiatric Association Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders-IV-TR™ (2000), (hereafter referred to as APA DSM-IV-TR™) criteria for ASD and PTSD. While most participants’ negative effects lasted for a few days or “1 to 8 weeks”, 34% (n=19) of the participants’ experienced negative effects for greater than one year. The more concerning yet less frequent detrimental effects included thoughts of retaliation (26%) and thoughts of self-harm (5%). Given the duration that some detrimental effects persisted, it is plausible that some CB-targeted faculty members may have been processing their most serious CB experience, and trying to cope with the negative effects experienced, in tandem with fulfilling their teaching responsibilities. Relational and professional implications included having difficulties in
their relationships with students, colleagues, or administrators after their most serious CB incident. Further, loss of confidence in both their ability to teach, and to manage issues of student misconduct, as well as loss of desire to go to work, were also reported by CB-targeted respondents.

Notably, even though most participants reported that they thought CB might occur, less than half of the participants felt confident to respond to it, knew who to report it to, how to manage it, or which institutional policy to follow. In terms of the course of action, most respondents consulted with colleagues, friends, or an immediate supervisor—the most helpful of which was reported to be colleagues. The majority of respondents held the belief that students can get away with cyberbullying at the institution of study. Those who did not report the incident based their decision on fear of further victimization, expectations of being able to manage such incidents, and fear that their complaints would not be taken seriously. As a first, second, and third priority recommendation, the participants called for: clear, well-communicated policy, procedures, and sanctions to deter cyberbullying behaviours, in addition to CB education, and implementation of support measures for targeted individuals.

The following section begins with a brief discussion of some aspects of the cyberbullying reported in this study as compared to prior research findings. The section then provides a more in-depth discussion of the most compelling findings that emerged from this study.

5.3. Discussion of the Findings

With regard to the demographic information, it is interesting that in this study, cyberbullied faculty members were predominantly English speaking, female, over 40 years of age, and held permanent faculty positions. Contrary to some study findings that young, non-white, and low-status faculty members encountered more incivility (Alberts et al, 2010; Alexander-Snow, 2004; Nilson & Jackson, 2004), findings from this study converge with prior research on workplace bullying in HE (Keashly & Neuman, 2008), and cyber-harassment in HE (Vance, 2010), whereby cyberbullied individuals were commonly over 35 years of age. Further, Vance’s (2010) study reported that all nursing
faculty respondents were female (which could be attributed to the prevalence of women in the nursing profession). In contrast, the male-female faculty population at MU was more evenly distributed. As well, CB-targeted participants most commonly had more than 10 years of teaching experience. These findings mirror Lampman et al.’s (2009) contrapower harassment findings that “experienced” female faculty members (e.g., eligible for tenure, have a doctoral degree, more years of teaching experience) were more vulnerable to hostile or disrespectful student behaviours—47% of which occurred in online faculty evaluation platforms.

This study found that email and online faculty polling sites were the most prevalent platforms used by aggressors to commit CB, which share similarities with studies of classroom incivilities (Alberts, Hazen, & Theobald, 2010), workplace bullying (McKay et al., 2008), and contra-power harassment (DeSouza, 2010; Lampman, 2012; Lampman et al., 2009). For example, Lampman’s (2012) study found that approximately one third of faculty members encountered hostile comments on course evaluations. This finding may be attributed to students and faculty members’ familiarity with email and online evaluation sites, as both platforms are commonly utilized in post-secondary institutions.

The type of CB messages reported by study participants (e.g., aggressive, demeaning defamatory comments, or demands for higher grades) also shared similarities with prior studies (Alberts et al., 2010; Clark et al., 2012; DeSouza, 2010; Lampman et al., 2009; Vance, 2010). For example, in Vance’s (2010) study, faculty respondents encountered name calling, verbal insults, rude or belittling comments, unprofessional remarks, gossip or malicious rumors, and comments that challenged the faculty members’ authority, or excessively or aggressively questioned their decisions. Likewise, Lampman’s (2012) study found that faculty members encountered online bullying (e.g., screamed at, threatened, or accused of discrimination)—including threats of harm, violence, or death. Consistent with Lampman’s (2012) findings, in this study CB-targeted faculty members received messages containing profane language, false or defamatory allegations, and threats of harm. While the type of CB messages received by CB-targeted faculty members mirror prior research findings, this study provided more in-depth information about the severity and impact of CB messages.
5.3.1. The Impact of CB on Targeted Faculty Members

The most compelling findings from this study pertain to the type, duration, and impact of CB messages. Based on this study’s findings, CB messages from students had detrimental physical, emotional, relational, and professional effects on most CB-targeted faculty members that persisted from a few days to more than one year. Although the majority of CB messages (80%) were encountered once or twice, and most (approximately 80%) persisted for less than one month, the negative effects experienced by some targeted individuals were profound. The most common detrimental physical effects reported in this study included “had difficulty sleeping” and “stress-related illnesses”, consistent with prior research (Lampman et al., 2009; Luparell, 2007; Namie, 2003b). The most common detrimental emotional effects included: “felt significantly anxious or distressed”, “felt depressed”, “more irritable with others than normal”, and “had difficulty concentrating”—which mirror prior CB and workplace bullying findings (Beran & Lupart, 2009; Beran et al., 2012; Brown et al., 2006; Lampman et al., 2009; McKay et al., 2008; Namie, 2003b). As well, approximately half of the respondents reported “fear of the aggressor” or “fear of being alone with the aggressor”, which parallel prior post-secondary CB research findings (Beran & Li, 2005; Beran et al., 2012; Juvonen & Gross, 2008; Lampman et al., 2009; Mishna et al., 2012). Although the male – female response rate was not evenly distributed, male respondents (n=6) most commonly reported feeling significantly anxious or distressed, depressed, or decreased concentration, while female respondents (n=14) most commonly reported thoughts of retaliation, avoidance, increased irritability, sudden emotional responses, fear of the aggressor, and poor concentration. Both male and female respondents sought support from a mental health professional.

While face-to-face bullying affords the target a certain degree of warning that an attack is about to occur, CB aggressors can strike without the target’s knowledge that a CB message has been posted to an online site. When the unsuspecting target opens the online message, they are not only affected by the hurtful comments, but may be further humiliated by discovering that others have viewed it as well. For example, one study participant began to cry when describing how “shocked” and “physically ill” she felt while reading the words that had been used to describe her teaching ability in an online faculty evaluation—an evaluation that had also been reviewed by the Dean. Finally, negative
effects in the form of avoidance (e.g., tried not to think about it, avoided the aggressor) were also reported by study participants—findings which are consistent with the effects that were reported by faculty members in Lampman et al.’s (2009) study of contra-power harassment.

Further to the physical and emotional effects reported, some participants reported thoughts of retaliation toward the aggressor, and thoughts of self-harm, which also share similarities with previous K-12 CB studies (Brown et al., 2006; Hinduja & Patchin, 2010, 2012; Vossekul et al., 2002). Although some participants had thoughts of harm, contrary to the academic workplace bullying research (McKay et al., 2008), none of the participants in this study reported that they felt “angry” about their CB experiences. Even so, while this study did not ask the participants to explain what “retaliation” or “self-harm” involved, and few respondents reported these effects, the plausible implications of such thoughts are concerning.

Based on this study’s findings, detrimental effects ranged in duration from “a few days” to “greater than one year”, with some reports of having three or more negative effects last for weeks or months, or even longer than one year (see Table 4.2 and Appendix N). Remarkably, some respondents (15%, n=19) had more than 10 detrimental physical or emotional effects that persisted for longer than one year after their most serious CB incident. The type of negative effects compounded by the length of time that they persisted begs the question as to how faculty members who experienced difficulty sleeping, increased irritability, sudden emotional responses, and felt significantly anxious, managed to cope, especially while fulfilling their teaching responsibilities or mitigating the tensions that can surface in the classroom.

Although this study is not psychologically based, in search of a credible resource to assist me in understanding the aforementioned findings, I was referred to the APA DSM-IV-TR™ (2000) manual. Upon review of the literature I discovered similarities between the negative effects reported by the study participants, and the APA DSM-IV-TR™ (2000) criteria for Acute Stress Disorder (ASD) and Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) which states:

The person has been exposed to a traumatic event in which both of the following were present: a) the person experienced, witnessed, or was
confronted with an event or events that involved actual or threatened death or serious injury, or a threat to the physical integrity of self or others, and b) the person’s response involved intense fear, helplessness, or horror. (p.471)

First, although none of the respondents reported having a “near death” CB experience, 68% (n=19) of the participants were “very bothered” by their most serious CB incident and some messages were perceived as threatening. For example, SR 8 wrote: “An anonymous email was sent threatening how students would treat me if they found me walking alone. I was extremely shaken by this email.” Second, respondents who reported having “3 or more negative effects that lasted for 1-8 weeks”, share similarities with the APA (2000) criteria for ASD which states:

Either while experiencing or after experiencing the distressing event, the individual has three (or more) of the following dissociative symptoms...e) the traumatic event is persistently re-experienced in at least one of the following ways: recurrent images, thoughts, dreams, illusions, flashback episodes, or a sense of reliving the experience; or distress on exposure to reminders of the traumatic event, f) marked avoidance of stimuli that arouse recollections of the trauma (e.g., thoughts, feelings, conversations, activities, places, people), g) the disturbance causes clinically significant distress or impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning or impairs the individual’s ability to pursue some necessary task, such as obtaining necessary assistance or mobilizing personal resources by telling family about the traumatic experience...the disturbance lasts for a minimum of 2 days and a maximum of 4 weeks and occurs within 4 weeks of the traumatic event. (p. 472)

Further, the negative effects that were reported by some respondents (e.g., felt significantly anxious or distressed, depressed, increased irritability, sudden emotional responses when reminded of the incident, fear of the aggressor, avoidance) bear resemblance to the APA DSM-IV-TR™ (2000) ASD criteria. For instance these effects were in evidence when the following participant stated:

I opened the online faculty evaluation and was shocked. Completely shocked...I was just shocked. I felt sick ...sick to my stomach...it was a complete surprise! I didn’t expect it at all ...it bothered me tremendously...my confidence was shattered...and I lost sleep over it...couldn’t stop thinking about it. (IP Debbie)
Third, participants’ reports of “recurring memories” and “sudden emotional responses when reminded of the event” are similar to the APA DSM-IV-TR™ (2000) criteria for PTSD as follows:

Recurrent and intrusive distressing recollections of the event...recurrent distressing dreams of the event...acting or feeling as if the traumatic event were recurring...efforts to avoid thoughts, feelings, or conversations...efforts to avoid activities, places, or people that arouse recollection of the trauma...persistent symptoms of...difficulty falling or staying asleep, irritability or outbursts of anger...difficulty concentrating...duration of symptoms is more than one month...acute if duration of symptoms is less than 3 months...chronic if duration of symptoms is 3 months or more.

(p. 468)

Even though approximately 50% (n=19) of the participants had more than three negative effects that persisted for longer than one month, it is important to acknowledge that the survey instrument was not designed to differentiate between ASD (e.g., symptoms lasted one to four weeks), acute PTSD (e.g. symptoms lasted one to three months), or chronic PTSD (symptoms lasted longer than three months). Even so, it is conceivable that those who had three or more symptoms persist for: “1-8 eight weeks” (26%, n=19; .5%, N=1040), may have experienced ASD or acute PTSD; three or more symptoms for “2-5 months” (10%, n=19; .2%, N=1040) may have experienced acute or chronic PTSD; and those who reported three or more effects for “6-12 months” (15%, n=19; .3%, N=1040), may have experienced chronic PTSD. Both male (16%, n=6) and female (15%, n=13) respondents reported multiple negative effects that lasted for longer than one year. Based on these findings, it is possible that some of the CB-targeted survey respondents may have experienced acute or chronic PTSD when their most serious CB incident occurred.

These findings are important to consider given prior research findings that adolescent victims of traditional bullying or cyberbullying were more likely to have suicidal thoughts or behaviours than those who did not experience bullying (Hinduja & Patchin, 2010). Similarly, studies of workplace bullying (Namie, 2003a; Namie, Namie, & Lutgen-Sandvik, 2009) found that bullied employees experienced negative effects such as disrupted sleep, loss of concentration, severe anxiety, PTSD, clinical depression, and panic attacks. Moreover, Namie (2003b) contends that the detrimental effects of bullying can manifest into greater health problems:
Left untreated, and with prolonged exposure, cardiovascular stress-related diseases can result from pathophysiologic changes to the body that transforms social factors into damaging biological consequences. (Namie, 2003b, p. 3)

In order to contextualize the findings from this study, the prevalence rates of plausible PTSD in this study are relatively low compared to those that were found in a Canadian epidemiological study (Ameringen, Mancini, Patterson, & Boyle, 2008), which reported 9.2% for chronic or “lifetime” PTSD, and 2.4% for “current” (one month) or acute PTSD. This study was not designed to discern ASD or PTSD symptoms, nor did it verify whether the participants had ASD or PTSD symptoms prior to the study—factors which would be beneficial to consider. While the study findings and their similarity to the American Psychiatric Association’s DSM-IV-TR™ (2000) criteria for ASD and PTSD are intriguing, in absence of appropriate testing, the findings warrant further research into this phenomenon.

Finally, this study also found that the perception of being cyberbullied, and the degree to which one can be affected, rests with the individual. For instance, although Barbara stated that she had received some “angry, angry email messages” from students, she did not perceive herself to have been bullied:

My approach in believing that it is not about me is my survival mechanism...students' attempts to bully are just opportunities for them to learn...if they bully they haven't learned...you develop your own strategies for protecting yourself...learning how to manage your own emotional responses.

This study also found that CB-targeted faculty members encountered difficulties in their relationships with the aggressor, other students, colleagues, administrators, and family members. I was struck by the importance that participants placed on having a positive student-faculty relationship, and the emotion that was conveyed when describing the “shock”, “surprise”, and “disbelief” they felt about being cyberbullied by the student—namely due to their belief that they “had a positive working relationship with the student”, and were “trying to help” them. While some respondents changed their approach to teaching or changed how they managed student misconduct, others shifted the boundaries they had once held with students.
In terms of professional implications, some participants lost their desire to go to work, had loss of productivity at work, felt like quitting their job, lost confidence in working with students or lost confidence in their ability to manage student misconduct—findings which converge with prior studies on contra-power harassment, student incivility (Lampman et al., 2009; Luparell, 2007), and workplace bullying in HE (McKay et al., 2008).

Finally, in terms of the impact that CB can have on targeted individuals, the study findings mirror prior studies of workplace bullying, K-12 cyberbullying, academic bullying, and contrapower harassment in the post-secondary sector. The findings also support Spears et al.'s (2009) contention that given the ease with which online messages can be inflicted, as well as the scope and speed that they can travel, CB messages do not necessarily need to be repetitive, to be harmful.

5.3.2. Participants’ Responses to CB

Similar to Luparrel's (2004) study of classroom incivilities, in this study, CB-targeted faculty members believed they had provided “professional”, “constructive” feedback to the students—factors which they claimed were important in preparing and supporting students for the academic rigor of post-secondary education. In terms of reporting the incident, while most respondents consulted with colleagues or an immediate supervisor, 43% (n=19) “ignored” the incident. Of those who reported the incident to senior administrators, few were satisfied with the outcome. These findings share similarities with prior studies of contra-power harassment (Lampman et al., 2009), and classroom incivility (Luparell, 2007). Although Lampman et al.'s (2009) study of contra-power harassment found that female participants sought social support and reported the incident to their department chair or dean more often than men, a gender comparison was not conducted in this study since 68% (n=36) of the respondents were female. Participants who did not report the incident expressed concern that their “complaints would not be taken seriously”, that messages “would not be viewed by others as bullying”, and that “further victimization from students and administrators may be incurred.” This information supports prior student-to-faculty incivility research (Boice, 1996; Luparell, 2004), as well as CB in HE study findings. For example, Luparell (2004) found that faculty members who received poor evaluations endured extensive
administrative reviews that resulted in costly legal fees and further diminished their sense of professionalism and confidence. Similarly, Minor et al. (2013) found that CB targeted individuals feared that reporting or confronting CB may result in not being selected for future teaching opportunities, or that doing so would reduce student retention.

Study participants reported that the current gaps in institutional CB policy, CB education for faculty members and students, as well as minimal resources for targeted individuals not only prevent faculty members from managing CB effectively, but enable students at MU “to get away with CB.” These findings support prior CB research (Kowalski et al., 2008; Minor et al, 2013; Ševčíková & Šmahel, 2009; Ybarra & Mitchell, 2004), suggesting that the ease of access and anonymity afforded CB-aggressors not only enables CB, but prevents aggressors from being held accountable for their actions. It is important to consider the implications for CB-targeted faculty members who, in search of support, discover that institutional policy does not address CB, that support services are not easily accessible, or that services do not meet their needs. In the absence of appropriate support measures, some CB-targeted faculty members reported that they had no recourse, other than to manage the incident themselves, ignore it, or concede to the aggressor’s demands. Similarly, Luparell’s (2004) study found that while some participants chose to resign, others continued to work despite their fear that another incident might occur at any time.

In this study, participants charged administrators with the responsibility of implementing support measures to assist faculty members in managing CB incidents effectively, beginning with clearly written, well-communicated institutional policies and procedures, as well as sanctions that deter CB behaviours. The participants also called for educational resources to prepare faculty members and students in the recognition and management of CB, as well as the negative effects that can accompany such experiences. While faculty members are held with the responsibility of managing student misconduct, there is little provision of training to do so. Finally, the participants argued that support measures must be easily accessible and effective in assisting CB-targeted individuals, commencing with partnerships with counselling services to strategize “best practice” approaches in managing difficult student behaviours, including support groups.
providing safe and non-judgemental environments for disclosing, sharing their experiences.

Consistent with the literature (Alberts et al., 2013; Cassidy et al., 2009), participants stated the need for dialogue within the institution to expose, manage, and find solutions for cyberbullying. From an administrative standpoint, participants argued that CB victims need to know that formal CB complaints will be taken seriously by administrators and faculty association representatives—including a contact person to support CB-targeted individuals through the process.

Both the negative effects experienced and the recommendations that were provided by the participants, share similarities with prior studies on contrapower harassment and incivility in HE (Alberts et al., 2010; DeSouza, 2010; Lampman et al., 2009; Luparell, 2007), workplace bullying in HE (Keashly et al. 2012; McKay, Arnold, Fratzi & Thomas, 2008), and K-12 as well as HE cyberbullying (Beran & Lupart, 2009; Beran et al., 2012; Brown et al., 2006; Cassidy et al, 2012; Cassidy et al., 2009; Minor et al., 2013; Patchin & Hinduja, 2010). The three “top-priority recommendations” that were put forward by study participants mirror McKay et al.’s (2008) CB recommendations in terms of implementing: a) policy and procedures on workplace and online behaviours for faculty members and students, b) education programs for faculty members, students, and campus constituents in the recognition, management, and prevention of CB behaviours, and finally, c) protocols that endorse supportive caring interactions for students and faculty members when using online media. Although Keashly and Neuman (2013) caution that little is known about remediation of bullying in academic settings in terms of implementing policies and practices that are effective, this study considers the participants’ recommendations to be substantive—not only because they converge with prior study findings, but more so because they are based on the lived experiences of faculty members who have personally experienced CB by students, with minimal resources to draw upon.

5.3.3. Theoretical Frameworks

Findings from this study also support theoretical constructs that have been explored across the broad scope of bullying and cyberbullying literature, with regard to
the power dynamics that can exist in relationships, and the implications that bullying can have on victims Foucault (1994) contends that multiplicities of power exist and serve to support one another, overlap, and meet individual or collective needs, one of which includes “power relations.” In keeping with this view, Foucault's notion demonstrates students’ attempts to shift a perceived faculty-over-student power imbalance. Participants' comments reflect the power relationship between faculty members and students when they refer to concepts of respect, hierarchy, power, and authority:

*There is a respectful decorum...between the student and the professor....a hierarchy in the classroom...I have power over the students and I need to respect that and they need to respect that.*  
(IP Barbara)

*It doesn’t matter if they like you as a teacher...they [students] see me as the authority figure that has the power to change their grades.*  
(IP Carol)

Foucault (1982) posits that oppositions of power surface in relationships and peoples' struggles may reflect the power that individuals have on subjects. Further, people resist the power that is closest to them, that has an impact on them, or if the status of the individual is challenged. Faculty members may be perceived as having power over students, given the decisions they must make, which ultimately affect students’ lives. The following excerpt speaks to Foucault’s (1982) notion of the resistance of power:

*Messages by email...disrespectful...aggressive...angry and offensive...to get something they wanted... bullying...using words in their messages to threaten or coerce me into changing their grades, because they believe they deserve the higher grade.*  
(IP Carol)

This study also found that tensions can surface in the classroom and spill over to online modalities when students' expectations for higher grades are not met, or when faculty members confront them with issues of misconduct. Veiled in anonymity, students can post defamatory comments about faculty members to online sites—knowing that such "poor performance" evidence could have negative implications for targeted individuals. Participants explained that dissatisfied students exercise power by voicing
their frustrations through online platforms, all of which have personal, professional, and institutional implications.

These findings support Foucault’s (1982) notion that people tend to resist the power that is closest to them or has an impact on them, and the effects of power are linked with knowledge, competence, and qualifications. The following comments support Foucault’s (1982) contention that power involves relations of strategy whereby one designs a means to achieve an end, which may include taking advantage of others, or reducing an adversary’s advantage, to disempower them into giving up:

Intimidating me into giving a higher grade...they think I would comply because it’s just too much to take... the first time it happened I didn’t really know what to do... felt a tremendous amount of emotions build up... they would come back at me with more aggressive emails...everything just escalated. (IP Carol)

Scholars argue that students can shift the power imbalance by posting information about faculty members (Boice, 1996; Dooley et al., 2009). According to Boice (1996) “some of the most upsetting incidents were the least visible, the least likely to be admitted by teachers...embarrassing...comments on formal evaluations at the end of the semester.” (p.473)—an act which some scholars argue may be motivated by revenge (Hinduja & Patchin, 2009, 2010; Sanders, 2009). The aforementioned comment supports prior research findings that CB aggressors may do so in response to a perceived injustice (Gollwitzer, 2009), or to get even with someone who made them angry (Raskauskas & Stoltz, 2007), as online platforms enable individuals who feel disempowered or perceive an injustice, to express their thoughts freely (Willard, 2003). The aforementioned comment also echoes Aquino and Lamertz’s (2004) contention that targeted individuals may project insecurity, be labelled as “weak” and an “easy target” for aggressors.

Interestingly, while some study participants referred to CB-targeted colleagues as victims, they did not refer to themselves as victims—which may be about targeted individuals’ perceptions of “cyberbullying”, or the stigma attached to the word “victim.” For example, one participant reported that she did not know that she had been cyberbullied until reading the study information packet. The following comment supports
Strobl's (2010) premise that targeted individuals may not perceive themselves as victims, in the way that others may perceive them as victims.

I think it’s also about perception. Two different people can read the same email... one might look at it and say it’s inappropriate where another might have... an emotional response to it... the message isn’t about me, it’s about [the student]... faculty members shouldn’t take it personally, but a lot of people do. (IP Barbara)

Further, although Debbie had received a “very bothersome” comment on a faculty evaluation, she was not sure that it “fit” the criteria for cyberbullying because it “wasn’t super horrible like other people get.” Yet, a few minutes later she began to cry when describing the message:

I don’t know if I would call it bullying...but it questioned my character and professionalism as a faculty member... it really bothered me (crying)... I couldn’t even defend myself. (IP Debbie)

This comment supports Randall’s (2011) contention that bullied individuals often feel ashamed that they were unable to avert the attack or fight back. In a study examining bullying and the impact of shame among faculty members, Lewis (2004) found that participants had difficulty connecting with the term “bullying.” Similar to findings in this study, participants in Lewis’s (2004) study reported feelings of powerlessness, humiliation, inferiority, and withdrawal, which Lewis suggests are stressors that may induce shame. The tendency to avoid reporting one’s experience of bullying is connected to shame which arises from feelings of humiliation and self-repulsion (Trumbull, 2003). Victims of bullying may feel humiliated about what has happened to them, and be ashamed of exposing themselves to administrators because they were unable to avert or manage the situation. Lewis (2004) aptly explains:

The need to relive, dwell upon and anguish over their experiences presents a picture of people who remain connected with what has happened to them long after the bullying has ended. There are clear signs of the embarrassment and shame of being bullied and with being unable to cope with the experiences. As victims, they appear unable or unwilling to let go. Their manifestation of bullying is at best unpleasant and at worst life changing. Throughout these experiences, all participants had difficulty with connecting with the term “bullying.” (p.296)
In keeping with this view, it is plausible that CB-targeted faculty members may have had difficulty connecting with the word “cyberbullied” or “victim” as a means of protecting themselves from feeling further humiliation or shame.

You just can’t tell people about these kinds of incidents...you have to be really careful about who you tell and what you say. (SR 22)

I had fear of further victimization...as the information provided [by administrators] to students may be detrimental to faculty members. (SR 23)

Comments made by the participants in this study mirror findings from prior victimization research, suggesting that targeted individuals may experience further victimization upon reporting an incident (Burgess et al., 2010; Scott, 2011; Shoham, Knepper, & Kett, 2010).

Further to the theoretical constructs of power and victimization, CB of faculty members by students may also be explained by the paradigm shift that has occurred in post-secondary education with regard to institutional factors such as large classes and online courses that may limit faculty members’ connectivity with students (Alberts et al., 2010). As well, students’ expectations of achieving high grades in absence of completing the work that is required for such outcomes may stem from one’s sense of entitlement for high grades and consumerist attitudes to get what they desire (Boswell, 2012; Kopp & Finney, 2013; McNaughton-Cassill, 2013; Nordstrom, Bartels, & Bucy, 2009). Carol aptly captured the essence of this issue in stating that some students “students will do what they can to get what they want…send messages to threaten or coerce me into changing their grades, because they believe they deserve the higher grade”. Although these theoretical frameworks were not explored within this study, some participants’ narratives suggest that such attitudes exist, and thereby warrant further exploration.

As previously mentioned in Chapter 2, there was also evidence that faculty members may be situated between the forces of power held by students and the power of the academic culture, suggesting that defamatory comments posted by students to online faculty evaluations can be detrimental to faculty members’ rank or advancement. While the institution of study did not have a rank and tenure system, but rather a regularized or non-regularized system, concern was expressed about “poor
performance” comments being viewed by the Dean or others. Although an outlier to this study, the following comment illuminates the challenges that a faculty member faced when vying for a tenure track position.

I had received threats from [an administrator] that I would be denied tenure if I didn’t sleep with him. I turned him down. I left the university because of continued harassment for over two years. (SR 31)

5.4. Study Limitations

The two main limitations of this study pertain to the survey instrument and the sample size. For instance one survey question asked the participants to provide “three top-priority recommendations (e.g., policy, education, counselling)” that they believed would assist faculty members in managing CB incidents more effectively. The recommendations that came forward included: 1) clearly written policies and procedures, 2) CB education for faculty members, and 3) counselling for faculty members. Although a few other suggestions were provided, the participants’ recommendations were either coincidentally similar to the example cited in the text of the question, or had been prompted. While the bracketed example was intended to assist participants in writing succinct responses, the wording provided in the example may have influenced their answers. Even so, based on the reported gaps in institutional policy, CB education, and support services for targeted individuals at MU, the participants’ recommendations are substantiated.

The second limitation of the study rests with the response rate (N=1040), from both the survey (3.5%, n=36) and the interviews (.38%, n=4). While the number of respondents is small, the qualitative and quantitative information provided by the study participants provided some compelling findings, all of which satisfied the purpose of this study. For example, the detailed explanations provided by survey respondents added greater insight to the type and severity of email messages that had been received, as well as the rationale for not reporting CB incidents. Moreover, the individual interview testimonials illuminated the power of the pain that CB-targeted faculty members not only experienced at the time of their most serious CB incident, but as well, the resurfacing of
that pain during the course of the interview. Witnessing the participants’ emotional response, seeing their tears, and hearing the tension in their voices, affirmed to me that the CB incidents were not only serious, but had a profound effect on some targeted individuals. Further, witnessing the emotional pain of faculty members, who I perceive as my peers, and to whom I feel a connection, led me to revisit my own cyberbullying experiences. It was disheartening to recognize that while clearly affected by a harmful act, the most difficult component of the CB experience was the participants’ perception that they were only fulfilling their faculty role in trying to help the student—yet were targeted as a result. The qualitative data not only enrich the findings, but enable us to move forward with more inferential and qualitative research to explore the nature of CB in the post-secondary sector.

Of equal importance I considered that the reason for the small response rate may be twofold. First, it could attributed to faculty members’ lack of awareness of cyberbullying, individuals’ interpretation of the definition of CB, or the window of opportunity to conduct the study (30 days as required by the institution). Second, the sensitive nature of the study and the degree to which some CB-targeted faculty members might feel comfortable to participate and therefore revisit their CB experiences provide reasonable explanations as to why some CB-targeted faculty members did not participate in this study.

5.5. Implications and Recommendations

This study recognizes that cyberbullying originates with the individual, manifests as tensions that arise in the student-faculty relationship, and perpetuates within the culture of post-secondary education. In order to eradicate CB from occurring in post-secondary institutions, measures of prevention must go hand in hand with measures of intervention—supporting Klein and Lester’s (2013) view that the most effective “practices are those that focus on education, support, and transformation of climate and culture” (p. 3294).

Cyberbullying is very complex, and may be an outcome of the roles and responsibilities held of faculty members (employees of a hierarchal institutional system).
that are not necessarily homogenous with the role of students as consumers within that system. For example while faculty members contribute to the development of institutional policy, curriculum, and course syllabus that gauge students’ performance, student representation on such committees are few in contrast to the faculty – administrative majority. As well, high school graduates may not be prepared for the academic rigour or expectations held of students in the post-secondary sector. For instance, over the past 10 years of teaching as a faculty member, I have noticed that students’ anxieties commonly escalate prior to midterm or final exams, and following the posting of grades. Some students have difficulty adjusting to the academic rigors of post-secondary education, yet are reluctant to access student resources. As well, even though the first-year students in our program are provided with a document of “student resources”, meet key resource persons face-to-face during orientation, and meet a student counsellor during class time, some students report that personal or cultural constraints deter them from accessing such services. Within the post-secondary system, students are generally evaluated by the same marking criteria despite the diversity of individuals’ learning styles. When faced with failure, it is not surprising that students may view faculty members as the source of the problem, and turn to online platforms to voice their issues.

Twale and De Luca (2008) contend that the hierarchal nature of higher education may enable the bully culture, as deviations from normative behaviors require support mechanisms to exist. The perception of acceptable behavior and personal and social thresholds for normative civil behavior may differ between students and faculty. Just as the perception of acceptable behaviour may vary, the perception of how to respond can differ as well. Wildermuth and Davis (2012) argue that the most powerful forces that contribute to student-to-faculty online aggression include the ease within which online interactions can enable aggression, the difference in perception between faculty members and students as to what is respectful or polite, and the shift in post-secondary culture that is more conducive to aggressive behavior. Turnage (2007) suggests that the absence of social cues in online platforms can enhance disrespectful, manipulative, or aggressive behavior and that some students may view confronting their teachers as normative self-expression. Keeping with this view, while a faculty member may view such acts as bullying, the writer may perceive the act as their right to freedom of speech.
As well, faculty members’ approach to students, attentiveness to discourse, and clarity of classroom conduct may influence students’ perception of the student-faculty relationship (Wildermuth & Davis, 2012). Further complicating the issue, Twale and De Luca (2008) argue that when faculty members’ responses are inconsistent, or when nothing is done, aggressors’ behaviors appear condoned. Finally, CB aggressors may engage in this behavior because they lack empathy to recognize the harm inflicted on their victims (Ang & Goh, 2010; Campbell et al., 2013).

With regard to prevention, it is therefore important to develop greater understanding of why it occurs and how it is perpetuated—namely the root of CB behaviour, the precursors that motivate students to commit CB, and the factors that enable CB to perpetuate. While these components were not explored within the scope of this study, we do know that “students’ dissatisfaction with grades” and “student misconduct issues” were the predominant precursors to the participants’ most serious CB incidents—supporting Hemphill et al.’s (2012) notion that academic failure increase bullying behaviours. It is equally important for faculty members to recognize the factors that can trigger inappropriate behaviours for some students.

Conceivably, CB may be a manifestation of students’ inabilities to cope with academic pressures, to communicate their frustrations in an appropriate manner, to know about and seek student support services, and balance stressors. Until we have greater understanding of the complex factors that motivate students to engage in CB, it is difficult to implement supportive measures to eradicate CB. Clearly, further empirical inquiry is needed in this regard. As well, it is important to understand the confounders that position CB-targeted faculty members in the site of aggressors.

5.5.1. Implications and Recommendations for Policy

At the time of this study, MU had transitioned over a period of approximately eight years from a “college” to a “University College”, then to “University” status. In tandem with each transition came a shift in governance and leadership, including an influx and efflux of senior administrators and managers. Committees were challenged to stay abreast of the continuous and quickly evolving infrastructure. Second, the student conduct policy, as well as the committee charged with reviewing institutional policies,
and the process for reviewing institutional policies were simultaneously placed under review—a hiatus that lasted for several months. Finally, the extant student conduct policy did not address cyberbullying—factors which may have left CB-targeted faculty members with the perception that they had no recourse in manage CB incidents. Yet post-secondary institutions have recourse in the authority and ability to develop policy within the confines of constitutional law for student misconduct to include the type of conduct, procedures for infractions of the code, and sanctions for violations of the code of conduct (Kaplin & Lee, 2007).

Based on the gaps in institutional policy reported and the recommendations brought forward by participants, the second recommendation calls for clearly written, well-communicated institutional policy that describes what CB is comprised of, how to manage CB incidents, and sanctions that deter CB behaviours. In recognition of the impact that CB can have on targeted individuals, scholars have called for policies that: clearly inform what constitutes CB, acclaim disapproval of such behaviour, identify the appropriate reporting mechanisms, and provide sanctions that serve as a deterrent for such behaviour (Campbell, Slee, Spears, Butler, & Kift, 2013; Cassidy et al., 2012a, 2012b; Hartung, 2011; Hinduja & Patchin, 2012; Namie, 2003b). Namie (2003b) argues that organizations need a system that “has coupled recognition training with a prohibitive policy and enforcement mechanism” (p.5). Such a system would be comprised of: values-driven policy, credible enforcement processes, restorative interventions for those at risk, and general as well as specialized education (Namie, 2003b). For Namie (2003b), “values-driven” policies: declare bullying behaviour as unacceptable, extend rights for protection to everyone, contain clear guidelines for taking action, rest under the scope of workplace health and safety, and contain provisions for the documentation of adverse impact. However, Mackey et al. (2008) caution that the solution cannot be restricted to institutional policy alone:

The solution cannot be limited to the introduction of a policy that states that bullying will not be tolerated within an organization. A compliance strategy, relying on codes, regulations, and guidelines, will have little to no effect in changing organizational cultures or subcultures. The solution requires an organizational culture approach wherein policies and guidelines are used to steer individuals in the environment to more appropriate social interactions. (p. 95)
In keeping with this view, scholars of academic bullying (Keashly & Neuman, 2010; McKay et al., 2008), workplace bullying (Namie, 2003a, 2003b), contrapower harassment (DeSouza, 2010; Lampman, 2012), and cyberbullying (Brown et al., 2006; Cassidy et al., 2012a, 2012b; Cassidy et al., 2009; Hartung, 2011) contend that education programs, policy, and protocols that foster constructive healthy social interactions are imperative to addressing bullying. K-12 cyberbullying scholars (Brown et al., 2006; Cassidy et al., 2012b) promote the implementation of “holistic school policies” that emphasize relational caring, kindness, and restorative justice processes in managing cyberbullying.

5.5.2. Implications and Recommendations for Practice

This study’s third recommendation calls for CB education programs that enhance CB awareness and prepare faculty members with the ability to manage CB incidents effectively. Knowing that email, faculty polling sites, online faculty evaluation sites are common platforms for CB will assist in developing guidelines to gauge online behaviours. Informed processes serve to enable faculty members in knowing how to recognize CB behaviours and manage them with greater confidence and competence when they occur. Further, knowing that students’ dissatisfaction with grades and student misconduct issues were common precursors to CB incidents informs dialogue between faculty members and students, peers, and administrators, to then determine what support measures are needed for CB-targets and aggressors alike. The aforementioned recommendations align with Hartung’s (2011) argument that workplace policy must specifically address CB in terms of what it is comprised of and how to manage it. It is equally important to educate employees, enforce CB policy, and investigate all CB complaints (Hartung, 2011).

This study exposes the negative effects that CB-targeted faculty members experienced, and knowing about these effects enables others to understand what can happen, but more so, allows those who have experienced detrimental effects to know that they are not alone. Further, awareness of the negative relational and professional implications that CB can have on targeted individuals (e.g. peers, students, administrators) provides a foundation from which measures of support can be developed. For example, knowing that CB-targeted faculty members might lose
confidence in their ability to teach, lose confidence in their ability to manage issues of misconduct, or feel like quitting their job, provides faculty members and administrators with information to engage in dialogue and potentially develop capacities within the institution for those who experience these effects.

Findings from this study share similarities with studies of K-12 bullying (Dooley et al., 2010; Smith et al., 2008), which found that CB victims were less likely to report CB incidents than traditional bullying victims, for fear of reprisal or further victimization (e.g. teachers might not believe their report, or they may share it with others who in turn retaliate). Faculty members’ reluctance to seek help can be explained by the risks that have been associated with taking such a course of action. Dooley et al. (2010) argue that K-12 schools are challenged to “create an environment (virtual or otherwise) that encourages help-seeking and the reporting of bullying behaviours” (p.204). When the search for support results in unfavorable outcomes, victims can be deterred from pursuing that course of action thereafter (Dooley et al., 2010). Based on the aforementioned findings, post-secondary institutions could benefit from implementing support measures that foster help-seeking behaviours, such as clearly written, well-communicated institutional policies and guidelines to guide targeted individuals in the appropriate course of action, ensuring that an effective reporting mechanism is in place, and support services that are conducive to CB-targeted individuals’ needs.

Although some administrators may consider that this study’s response rate and subsequent findings from this study do not warrant immediate change in institutional policy or practices, Namie (2003a) argues that that any form of workplace bullying warrants concern. Namie (2003a) also contends that employers need to attend to workplace bullying because the fiduciary implications can be costly given that litigation can be substantial, talented employees may terminate employment, and replacement is expensive. Further, health care costs can result in increased premiums for the employers, and in a fear-dominated bullying environment, poor morale can erode employees’ productivity and commitment (Namie, 2003a).
5.5.3. Implications and Recommendations for Further Research

Findings from this study inform that faculty members who experience CB by students can experience detrimental physical and emotional effects, ranging in severity, and lasting from a few days to more than one year. The physical and emotional effects that were reported by respondents raised concern for me, especially upon discovering that some effects appeared to be similar to symptoms cited within the DSM-IV-TR (2000) criteria for ASD and PTSD. It would be helpful to explore whether faculty members who encountered CB by students experienced these disorders. Further, given the implications that negative effects can have on CB-targeted individuals, it would be beneficial to conduct psychologically focused research to broaden both our awareness and understanding of this phenomenon. One respondent argued:

I think this is really important research and I think this needs to get out in the open to assist faculty members in how to manage it when it happens. I will be interested when the findings are shared. (IP Debbie)

In terms of the implications that CB can have on CB-targeted faculty members’ relationships with others, it would be helpful to gather more information from both CB-targeted faculty members’ and CB-aggressors with regard to the student-faculty relationship. It would be interesting to know how the student-faculty relationship changed, and for those who changed their approach to the CB-aggressor, or their approach to teaching, what this involved. As this study is delimited to faculty members’ perceived experiences of CB by students, it would also be helpful to learn more about the aggressors’ perspectives of the faculty members’ most serious CB incidents.

As well, given the survey response rate of 36 faculty members (3.5%, N=1040), and 4 interview participants (.38, N=1040), it would be interesting to see the results of a larger sample size, or different institution of study. The study findings represent the voices of faculty members employed within one post-secondary institution (n=36, 3.5%). They are not generalizable to all faculty members within the institution of study, other populations within the institution, or post-secondary institutions in general. It would be interesting to explore this phenomenon within a different post-secondary institution(s)—findings which would add to the breadth and the depth of the collective body of literature.
specific to the research question: What are faculty members’ perceived experiences of cyberbullying by students, and what impact did it have on them?

Finally, this study adds to the body of cyberbullying literature, as Mishna and Werts (2013) argue that most studies have been quantitative in nature and “there are very few studies that incorporate qualitative methods in the examination of cyberbullying” (p. 5589). The mixed methods approach using an online survey (QUAN+ Qual), complemented by individual interviews (QUAL) proved beneficial in gathering in-depth information about this phenomenon. The qualitative component not only enriched the findings, but supports Mishna and Van Wert’s (2013) notion that “qualitative research can expand and deepen our understanding of cyberbullying and provide direction for future research” (p.5584). Further, this study illuminated how satisfied CB-targeted faculty members were with the course of action taken—addressing Keashly and Neuman’s (2013) concern that few studies of bullying in academia have explored targeted individuals’ perceptions of the effectiveness of actions taken in response to bullying.

5.6. Conclusion

This study provided CB-targeted faculty members with the opportunity to give voice to their CB experiences, thereby exposing the implications and complexity of the phenomenon. Participants also gave voice to recommendations that serve to benefit the institution, the learning environment, and campus constituents thereof. Finally, participants’ voices called for more research specific to cyberbullying in post-secondary education—posing the opportunity to explore and develop greater understanding the phenomenon of CB-targeted faculty members’ experiences and the impact of cyberbullying by students in post-secondary institutions.

This study found that faculty members at one Canadian University experienced cyberbullying by students via email and faculty evaluation sites, with students’ dissatisfaction with grades being the most common precursor of CB incidents. CB-targeted faculty members were commonly more than 40 years of age, had more than 10 years of teaching experience, and held full-time faculty positions—suggesting that these
faculty members were not novice to teaching in post-secondary sector. Whether one single incident or repeated events, cyberbullying messages can have detrimental effects on targeted individuals that persist from a few days to more than one year. Most compelling, given the number and type of certain negative effects that share similarities with the APA DSM-IV (2000) criteria, some faculty members may have experienced acute or long-term stress disorders, following their most serious CB incidents.

Although some participants attempted to resolve the incident with the aggressor, few reported a successful outcome. Most participants consulted with colleagues, and reported this course of action to be most successful in terms of support—whereas reporting to administrators was rarely satisfactory. Uncertainty about how to manage the incident, fear of secondary victimization, and fear of being judged as incompetent for not being able to manage the incident, were commonly cited as the reasons for not reporting the incident.

Given the gaps in institutional policy, education, and support measures available for MU faculty members, it is not surprising that the recommendations included implementation of clearly written, well-communicated policy, in addition to CB education for students and faculty, as well as implementation of support services to assist faculty members in managing CB incidents effectively. In order to recognize, prevent, and manage CB effectively, study participants called for educational resources and institutional policy to guide them, as well as counseling services to support those who encounter detrimental effects from CB experiences. The findings not only serve to inform the post-secondary workplace bullying and cyberbullying literature, but provide a foundation from which campus constituents can develop greater understanding of this phenomenon. Finally, from the voices of those who have provided testimonial accounts of their cyberbullying experiences, post-secondary institutions now know that such incidents can have detrimental effects on targeted individuals.

Beyond exposing the effects encountered by CB-targeted faculty members, it is difficult to know if an equitable collaborative process could be developed to reconcile the tensions that can exist between faculty members and students, given the institutional hierarchy that faculty members are charged with that affect students’ lives and the confounders that students may encounter which may delimit their academic success.
Within our leadership role we need to develop faculty members’ capacity to mitigate student discourse with competence and confidence, using a preventative approach that embodies empathy and acknowledges students’ distress—in tandem with enhancing students’ capacity to manage academic stressors and communicate appropriately when faced with difficult outcomes. Even with preventative measures in place, the anonymity afforded by some online platforms, enables aggressors to inflict harm, yet avert capture or consequence. It is therefore essential for targeted individuals to be able to access support mechanisms that meet their individual needs in coping with and healing from the impact. Armed with information that has been provided by those who have first-hand experience, institutions can embark on developing effective institutional support measures for students and faculty members alike.

By exposing faculty members’ perceived experiences of cyberbullying by students and the impact that it had on them, several avenues for future research have emerged. Yet more pertinent to this study, psychology-based studies would assist in learning whether CB-targeted individuals experience acute or post-traumatic stress disorders, and the support measures needed to assist them in healing. Consistent with prior workplace bullying and cyberbullying research recommendations, it would be beneficial to explore how cyberbullying education can be infused into the curriculum to shift and perhaps create a culture of caring, both online and in-person, as technology continues to evolve the faculty-student relationship in post-secondary education.

In closing, there were moments throughout this study when I felt concerned about the severity of CB incidents and the impact it had on the participants. My concern stemmed from my role as a faculty member, and discovering the severity of CB messages that faculty study participants had received, which I perceived to be very harmful—based mainly on the profane language or threats within the messages. Moreover, I was struck by the impact of CB on targeted individuals—not only as reported by the respondents, but also upon bearing witness to their emotional pain and their tears when describing their CB experiences. At times the participants’ stories triggered emotional responses in me, and fighting back my tears, I wondered—if I feel this painful emotion surging up in me, how painful must it be for this faculty member to relive the experience during an interview? I also questioned to what degree these painful CB
memories had on the participants’ overall sense of safety and well-being as faculty members on campus?

All of the respondents were given contact information for support services at the onset of the study, and each interview participant received a follow-up phone call after the interview, to see how they were doing. While each person indicated that they were doing fine, I will not forget the risk taken to share their experiences and inform the literature of this phenomenon. The participants’ stories illuminate the cyberbullying, workplace bullying, and post-secondary bullying literature about post-secondary faculty members’ experiences and impact of having harmful online messages sent to them or about them by students.
References


Jackson, M., Cassidy, W., & Brown, K. N. (2009). "you were born ugly and you’ll die ugly too": Cyber-bullying as relational aggression. *In education, 15*(2).


Wildermuth, S., & Davis, C. B., (2012). Flaming the faculty: Exploring root causes, consequences, and potential remedies to the problem of instructor-focused uncivil online student discourse in higher education. In L. Wankel & C. Wankel (Eds.), Cutting edge technologies in higher education: Misbehavior online in higher education (pp. 379-384). Binley, UK: Howard House.


Appendix A. Online Survey Questions

**Faculty Member's Perceived Experience(s) With Cyberbullying by Students**

- This preview shows all your questions on one page, the actual survey delivery will display one question per page for clarity
- Answer the required questions and click "Submit" to see what the "submitted" questions look like
- Click Edit to change an answer
- Click Close when you are finished previewing

**Faculty Members' Experience(s) With Cyberbullying By Students**

This study examines the experience and impact for faculty members who have had harmful messages (e.g., aggressive, intimidating, harassing, defamatory, demeaning, racist, sexist bullying) sent to them or about them by students via electronic (cyber) media (e.g., email, chat rooms, blogs, social networking sites, Youtube, Ratemyprofessor.com). This survey is comprised of 44 questions, and will take approximately 15-20 minutes to complete. You may withdraw from this study at any time without any consequence to you. If you do not want to answer a survey question, please proceed to the next question. Study findings will be used to inform post-secondary institution on this issue, and assist in developing support measures for faculty members in managing 'cyber' harassment and bullying by students.

**Q1.** Clicking the 'yes' response to this question serves as confirmation of your consent to participate in the online survey entitled 'Faculty Member's Perceived Experience of Cyberbullying By Students In Post-secondary Education'. If you do not want to complete the survey, select the 'no' response to this question, then scroll down to the bottom of the survey and click 'submit'. The survey will then close. Would you like to proceed with answering the questions for this research study online survey questionnaire?

- Yes
- No
Q2. How would you rate your level of knowledge about the following forms of electronic media?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Not aware at all</th>
<th>A little bit aware</th>
<th>Moderately aware</th>
<th>Very aware</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion group</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blog</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cellular phone texting, picture, video</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social networking sites (eg. Facebook)</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Face-to-face sites (eg. Skype)</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty Polling Websites (ratemyprofessor.com)</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video sites (e.g., YouTube)</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AOL Instant Messaging (AIM)</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student polling websites (e.g., juicygossip.com)</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q3. Regardless of your actual experience, how bothered would you be if a student(s) sent an electronic message(s) to you or about you that:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Not bothered</th>
<th>Somewhat bothered</th>
<th>Moderately bothered</th>
<th>Very bothered</th>
<th>Extremely bothered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Questioned your qualifications to teach a course</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Made derogatory or sarcastic comments about you</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demanded you lower the difficulty of your course or assignments</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demanded you increase assignment grades or final course grades</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referred to you in profane language</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violated your personal space (e.g., ask to be ‘friended’ on Facebook) :</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contacted you outside of school without your permission :</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yelled at you online (e.g., discussion groups, skype) :</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contained inappropriate or hostile comments (e.g., end of term course evaluations) :</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spread potentially damaging rumours about you (e.g., drug use, sexual orientation) :</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accused you of racism, sexism, or discrimination in response to undesired grades :</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attempted to bribe you for a higher grade (e.g., money, sex, goods) :</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contained derogatory comments concerning your race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation :</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intimidated or threatened you with legal action or grievance :</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threatened to harm you, your personal property, or others close to you :</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threatened to use a weapon to harm you, or others close to you :</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Made a death threat to you, or others close to you :</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stalked or followed you 'online' :</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acted on cyber-threats made toward you :</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Made comments about your physical appearance</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Made a sexual comment toward you</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Made a sexual proposition toward you</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enquired about your sex life</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Made allegations of improper sexual behavior on your part</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asked you out on a date</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offered sexual favors in exchange for grades</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Displayed themselves in a sexual manner toward you (e.g., skype, video clips, Youtube)</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Q4.** Have you ever had an aggressive, intimidating, harassing, defamatory, humiliating, sexist, bigoted, racist, or bullying message(s) sent to you or about you via electronic media by a student(s)?

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

If you answered 'no' to the previous question, please proceed to Section 4 of this survey. If you answered 'yes' to the above question, please proceed to section 1.0 of this survey.

The term 'Cyberbullying' refers to electronic messages that are aggressive, intimidating, harassing, defamatory, demeaning, humiliating, sexist, bigoted, and threatening.
Section 1.0: Faculty Members' Experience(s) of Cyberbullying By Students:
The following questions address the type, frequency, and duration of cyberbullying experienced by targeted faculty members during their career in post-secondary education.

Q5. During the past 24 months approximately how many times have you had a cyberbullying message(s) sent to you or about you by a student(s) via:
(Please check all that apply. Select N/A if you do not share that medium with students):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>never</th>
<th>once or twice</th>
<th>3 or more times</th>
<th>3 or more times, repeatedly for several months</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online course discussion group, chat room</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cellular phone (text, picture, video, or message)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course blog</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social networking site (eg. Facebook)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Face-to-face site (eg. Skype)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polling website (eg. ratemyprofessor.com)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video site (eg. video cam sent to YouTube)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AOL Instant Messaging (AIM)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q6. Approximately how long ago was your most recent cyberbullying experience by a student(s)?

- [ ] Within the last 24 hours
- [ ] Within the last 7 days
- [ ] Within the last month
- [ ] Within the last 6 months
- [ ] Within the last year
- [ ] More than one year ago
- [ ] Never

Q7. During the past 24 months, approximately how many times have you had a cyberbullying message(s) sent to you or about you by a student(s) that:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>never</th>
<th>once or twice</th>
<th>3 or more times</th>
<th>3 or more times repeatedly for several months</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Challenged your authority as a teacher :</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questioned your credentials or qualifications to teach a course :</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contained derogatory or sarcastic comments about you :</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demanded that you reduce the academic difficulty of your course or assignments :</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demanded that you increase assignment or final course grades :</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Used profane language toward you :</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violated your personal space (e.g., ask to 'friend' you on facebook) :</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contacted you outside of school without your permission :</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yelled at you online (e.g., skype) or through text (e.g., use of bold font, exclamation marks, profanity in anger) :</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spread potentially damaging rumours about you (e.g., drug use, sexual orientation) :</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>never</td>
<td>once or twice</td>
<td>3 or more times</td>
<td>3 or more times repeatedly for several months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accused you of racism, sexism, or discrimination in response to undesired grades :</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attempted to bribe you for a higher grade (e.g., money, sex, goods) :</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Made derogatory comments concerning your race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation :</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threatened to harm your person or property, or others close to you :</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threatened to use a weapon to harm you, or others close to you :</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Made a death threat to you, or others close to you :</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stalked you or followed you 'online' :</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acted on the cyber-threats they made toward you, or others close to you :</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other :</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Q8.** If you checked 'other' for the previous question, could you please explain?

**Q9.** Approximately how many times during the past 24 months have you had a sexually inappropriate message(s) sent to you or about you by a student(s) with:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>never</th>
<th>once or twice</th>
<th>3 or more times</th>
<th>3 or more times repeatedly for several months</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A comment(s) about your physical appearance :</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A sexual comment(s) about you :</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A sexual proposition(s) toward you :</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An inappropriate question(s) about your sex life</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual rumor(s) about you</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An allegation(s) of improper sexual behavior on your part</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A sexist comment(s) toward / about you</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A proposition to go on a date</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An offer of sexual favors in exchange for grades</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A sexual display of themself(yes) toward you (e.g., video clip, Youtube, Skype)</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other sexually suggestive communication</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Q10.** If you checked 'other' for the previous question, please explain:

![Text input box](image)

**Q11.** Have you experienced at least one significant (e.g., had a negative effect on you) incident of cyberbullying by a student(s) during your career as a faculty member in post-secondary education?

- ● Yes
- ● No

If you answered 'no' to the previous question, please proceed to Section 3, question #35 of this survey.
Section 2.0. The most significant cyberbullying experience committed by a student(s) towards you during your career in post-secondary education.
For this set of questions, please think about the most significant (serious, worst) incident of student cyberbullying (aggression, intimidation, defamation, harassment, mocking, sexual attention, threatening) that you have experienced during your career.

Q12.  Did your most significant cyberbullying experience committed by a student occur at this institution?
   • Yes
   • No

Q13.  Please select the response that best represents your faculty rank or position at the institution where your most significant cyberbullying experience occurred:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Kwantlen Polytechnic University</th>
<th>Other College or University</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project or contract faculty member :</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-regularized Type 1 :</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-regularized Type 2 :</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regularized Fulltime :</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regularized Part time :</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor :</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full Professor :</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Professor :</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Professor :</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor :</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other :</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q14. In which 'Faculty', 'Division', or 'School' were you serving as a faculty member for the student(s) who committed your most significant cyberbullying experience? (For example, you were teaching as a Law professor, and the student who committed the act of cyberbullying was a law student. The program would be a Law Program)

- Academic and Career Advancement
- Community and Health Studies
- Arts or Design
- Humanities
- Social Sciences
- Trades and Technologies
- Business
- Science and Mathematics and Applied Sciences
- Engineering
- Medicine
- Law
- Education
- Other

Q15. If you checked 'other' for the previous question, please explain:

Q16. How long ago did your most significant cyberbullying experience occur?

- within the last 24 hours
- within the last 7 days
- within the last month
- within the last 6 months
- within the last year
- more than one year ago
- never
Q17. How long did your most significant cyberbullying experience persist?
☐ 1 day
☐ Less than one week
☐ Less than one month
☐ At least one month
☐ 1-6 months
☐ 6-12 months
☐ More than 1 year
☐ More than 2 years

Q18. Please indicate whether or not you believe the following factors may have contributed to your most significant cyberbullying experience:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student dissatisfaction with assignment grade(s)</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student dissatisfaction with end of term final grade(s)</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student dissatisfaction with course workload</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student dissatisfaction with course schedule</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student dissatisfaction with assignment criteria</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student dissatisfaction with assignment deadlines</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student conduct issues addressed by faculty</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differences in student/faculty styles of communication</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your physical appearance</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your teaching style</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your sexual orientation</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your health or disability</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your rank as a faculty member</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q19. If you answered 'other' to the previous question, please explain:

Q20. Did you know the identity of the student(s) who committed your most significant cyberbullying experience(s)?

☐ Yes, for some messages
☐ Yes, for all messages
☐ No I did not know the student's identity
☐ Not Applicable

If you answered 'no' to the above question, please proceed to question #23.

Q21. What was the approximate age of the student(s) who committed your most significant cyberbullying experience? (Please check all that apply)

☐ 21 or younger
☐ 22-29
☐ 30-39
☐ 40-49
☐ 50 or older
☐ I did not know the age of the student(s)
Q22. What gender was the student(s) who committed your most significant cyberbullying experience? (Please check all that apply)

☐ Only male(s)
☐ Only female(s)
☐ Both male(s) and female(s) committed the act
☐ I do not know the gender of the student(s)

Q23. Considering all cyberbullying incidents committed by a student(s) toward you during your career in post-secondary education, approximately how many times was the student(s): (please write the number of times in the box provided)

Male:

Female:

Other gender:

Gender(s) unknown:

Q24. Which of the following words best describes the most significant cyberbullying incident committed towards you by a student(s): (Please check all that apply).

☐ Mocking
☐ Defamatory
☐ Humiliating
☐ Sexually suggestive
☐ Rude
☐ Uncivil
☐ Disrespectful
☐ Racist
☐ Sexist
☐ Demeaning
☐ Dismissive
☐ Bigoted
☐ Intimidating
☐ Aggressive
Q25. In a few brief sentences, could you please describe your most significant cyberbullying experience committed by a student(s) during your career in post-secondary education?

Section 2.1: The Impact of Cyberbullying By Students On Targeted Faculty Members
For this set of questions, please think about the most significant cyberbullying experience committed by a student toward you as a post-secondary faculty member.

Q26. How much did your most significant cyberbullying experience bother you?

Q27. As a result of your most significant cyberbullying incident, did you experience any of the following effects professionally?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effect</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Loss of productivity at work</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt like quitting your job</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt like you did not want to go to work</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your professional status suffered (e.g., committee work, promotion not granted, research application not granted)</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lost confidence in your ability to work with students</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lost confidence in your ability to manage student conflict</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lost confidence in your ability as a teacher</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other professional consequences occurred</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q28. If you answered 'other professional consequences occurred' to the above question, please explain:

Q29. Please indicate whether or not your most significant cyberbullying experience had the following effects on your relationships:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationships with friends suffered?</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relationships with family members suffered?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationships with colleagues suffered?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationships with your Dean or senior administrators suffered?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationships with your students suffered?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other relationships suffered?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q30. Please indicate whether or not you experienced the following effects as a result of your most significant cyberbullying experience:

<p>| Felt physically afraid of the student(s) who committed the cyberbullying incident(s)? | Yes | No |
| Had difficulty sleeping? | Yes | No |
| Let the class out early or cancelled the class because you were distressed by the aggressor(s)? | Yes | No |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Avoided contact with the student(s) who committed the cyberbullying incident(s)? :</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had difficulty concentrating during class or while at work? :</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt afraid to be alone with the student(s) who committed the cyberbullying incident(s)? :</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt depressed? :</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt significantly anxious or distressed? :</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suffered from a stress-related illness (e.g., migraines, stomach problems)? :</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sought a mental health professional for help? :</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt embarrassed to talk to colleagues about the incident? :</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had sudden emotional responses when reminded of the incident (e.g., crying, anger)? :</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt more irritable toward others than you would normally be? :</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tried to avoid thinking about the experience :</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thought about harming yourself :</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thought about retaliating against the cyberbullying student(s) :</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt it was a positive learning experience :</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt confident in responding to the incident? :</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Q31.** If you answered 'yes' to any of the effects listed in the above question, please indicate approximately how long the effect(s) lasted: (Select 'N/A' if you did not experience that particular effect)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effect</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>a few days</th>
<th>1-8 weeks</th>
<th>2-5 months</th>
<th>6-12 months</th>
<th>more than 1 year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>You felt physically afraid of the student(s) who committed the cyberbullying:</td>
<td></td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You had difficulty sleeping:</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You had difficulty concentrating during class or while at work:</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You avoided making contact with the student(s) who committed the cyberbullying:</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You were afraid to be alone with the student(s) who committed the cyberbullying:</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You felt significantly anxious or distressed:</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You suffered from stress-related illness (e.g., migraines, stomach problems):</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You went to see a mental health professional:</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You felt embarrassed to talk to colleagues about the incident:</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You had sudden emotional responses (e.g., crying, shouting, anger):</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You had physical responses surface when you thought about the incident (nausea, headaches, heart palpitations or chest pain, sweating):</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You were more irritable with others than you would normally be:</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You tried to avoid thinking about the incident:</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You lost confidence in your ability as a teacher:</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal relationships suffered</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional relationships suffered</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thought about harming yourself</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thought about retaliating against the student(s) who committed the cyberbullying</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt it was a positive learning experience</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Section 3: Faculty Members Response To Cyberbullying By Students**
For this set of questions please think about the most significant (worst) cyberbullying experience committed by a student toward you (personally) during your career as a post-secondary faculty member.

**Q32. When your most significant cyberbullying experience committed by a student(s) occurred, did you:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Know what to do?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Know which institutional policy and/or procedure to follow?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Know who to report the incident to?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have any preparation or training on how to manage this type of incident?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>See any signs of student behavior indicating that the incident might occur?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have any knowledge about cyberaggression, harassment, or bullying behaviour?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q33. Please indicate whether or not you chose the following course of action in response to your most significant cyberbullying experience, and how satisfied you were with the outcome:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>did not attempt</th>
<th>attempted and not successful</th>
<th>attempted and successful</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reviewed the institutional policies and procedures to decide what to do:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reviewed the institutional policy and procedures with the student(s):</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reported the incident to your immediate supervisor (e.g., Associate Dean, Dean):</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reported the incident to a senior administrator responsible for faculty members:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reported the incident to a senior administrator responsible for students:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reported the incident to an office of Judicial Affairs for students (e.g., risk management, threat assessment team):</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reported the incident to Employee Assistance Services:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reported the incident to Human Resources:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reported the incident to a faculty association representative (e.g, faculty union):</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Reported the incident to campus security:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Reported the incident to local police authorities:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Changed or dropped assignments / tests because of the incident:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sought legal advise:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Took legal action:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sought the support of friends and family members:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consulted with a colleague:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Acted as if you didn't care:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ignored the incident:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asked the student(s) who committed the cyberbullying to stop:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Went along with the demands of the student(s) who committed the cyberbullying:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attempted to discuss the incident with the student(s) who committed the cyberbullying:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Attempted to involve the student(s) who committed the cyberbullying to find a solution to the problem:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Changed your approach to teaching toward the student(s) who committed the cyberbullying:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Changed your approach to teaching in general:</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Q34. If you did not report the incident(s) to anyone, please explain:

Q35. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding support measures for faculty members at this institution:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Our current policies and procedures on student conduct and harassment have been communicated to all faculty members:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Faculty members are aware of the behaviors that are covered by our current policies:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>policies on student conduct and harassment:</td>
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<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty members receive adequate training about how the policies / procedures on student conduct and harassment are applied and enforced:</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are sanctions in place that deter students from engaging in cyberharassing/bullying behaviours:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Our policies/procedures/practices are effective in preventing cyberbullying from occurring:</td>
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<tr>
<td>If someone files a formal complaint in witnessing or being a target of cyberbullying the complaint will be taken seriously:</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students can get away with cyberharassment/bullying toward campus constituents at our institution:</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our policies clearly state what constitutes cyberharassment/bullying and the consequences for engaging in such behavior:</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are effective support measures in place at this institution for faculty members who have been targeted by cyberbullying:</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The support measures are easily accessible for faculty members who have been targeted by cyber-bullying at this institution:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty members are not well informed of the support measures currently in place for faculty members who have experienced cyberbullying:</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q36. If you answered 'other' to the previous question, please explain:

Q37. In order of priority, please list the three most important measures of support which you believe need to be in place in order for faculty members to manage cyberbullying effectively (e.g., education, policy, counselling)

First priority measure of support:

Second priority measure of support:

Third priority measure of support:

Q38. Of all the resources available to you on or off campus, which resource was the most helpful in supporting you through your most significant cyberbullying experience?

Section 4: Finally, a few questions about you
Please complete the following questions to provide the study with some general information about the population of faculty members who have been targeted with cyberbullying by students.

Q39. Please answer the following questions using the space provided

What is your age?:

How many years have you been teaching at this institution?:

How many years have you been teaching in post-secondary education?:

Q40. What language do you most commonly speak?
Q41. If you checked ‘other’ for the previous question, please specify what your first language is.

Q42. What is your gender?

Q43. Of which country(s) are you a citizen? (please check only one answer)

- Canada, by birth
- Canada, by immigration
- Other (please specify in the following question)

Q44. If you checked ‘other’ for citizenship, please specify what countries other than Canada that you are a citizen.

Invitation To Participate In a Private Confidential Interview About Your Cyberbullying Experience.
The researcher would like to gain further understanding of your experience with faculty targeted cyber-bullying by students in terms of the impact it can have on their lives, and the support measures needed for faculty members in managing such incidents. After you click 'submit' to close this survey, an information box will appear asking if you would like to participate in the second phase of this study involving a confidential, private, individual interview with the researcher. If you want to participate in an interview, please follow the instructions for providing your contact information. The answers which you have provided in this survey, cannot be linked in anyway to your identity, when providing contact information for the individual interview. If you are ready to close this survey and submit your answers, please click the 'submit' button below.
Appendix B. Scholar Review Email Invitation

Dear Dr. (name)

My name is Lida Blizard, and I am currently a doctoral student at Simon Fraser University in the Ed.D. Educational Leadership program about to commence my research study examining the experience and impact of student-to-faculty cyber-bullying on targeted faculty members in higher education. The two-stage study will be conducted with currently employed faculty members in a mid-size university, and involves completion of an online survey questionnaire, followed by a second-phase individual interview with a smaller sample group.

Recognizing your scholarly expertise in (the area of expertise), I would like to know if you would be willing to review my online survey questionnaire entitled Faculty Targeted Cyber-bullying In Higher Education, for the purpose of providing feedback on some specific survey questions, as well as your overall impression of the survey instrument?

I am currently working on refining the instrument that you are being asked to review and am in the final stages of the development. If you agree, I will send you a link to the survey so that you can provide your input. Your generous assistance will be gratefully acknowledged in my dissertation. If you are unavailable to provide your input at this time, I greatly appreciate the time you have taken to review this information, and your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Lida Blizard, doctoral student
Ed.D.: Educational Leadership
Simon Fraser University
Surrey, British Columbia
Appendix C. Scholar Review Email Survey Link

Dear (name of scholar),

I am very grateful that you have agreed to provide your scholarly review of the online survey instrument designed for my doctoral research study, and appreciate that you may be doing this while facing additional time constraints with other commitments. I have drawn from the expertise of scholars with focus in workplace and faculty bullying, and given the medium through which cyber-bullying can manifest, believe your expertise will be highly advantageous to this study as well.

Some survey questions have been adapted from previous studies (bullying, cyber-bullying) for the purpose of streamlining the focus to student-to-faculty targeted cyber-bullying, as opposed to in-person bullying incidents which have been more commonly explored. The online survey questionnaire is comprised of both closed and open-ended questions. You will notice the survey question designed for research study participants, followed by a question designed for those who are reviewing the instrument entitled “Scholars comments or suggestions for the above survey question.” Please insert your comments / suggestions pertaining to the survey question within the text box provided.

Please do not hesitate to contact me, or my senior supervisor Dr. Michelle Nilson, if you have any inquiries about the study or the survey instrument. I am willing to set up a time to discuss any questions by phone, email, or skype if that would work for you. I am hoping to collate the feedback by January 26, 2012, providing that is a suitable time line for you to complete the review.

By clicking on this link Scholar's Review: Faculty Targeted Cyber-bullying Survey you will be able to access the survey instrument which is housed on a secure database at Simon Fraser University.

Thankyou for graciously considering, and agreeing to review this survey instrument.

Sincerely,

Lida Blizard, doctoral student
Ed.D.: Educational Leadership
Simon Fraser University
Surrey, British Columbia
Appendix D. Research Institution “MU” Ethics Approval

RESEARCH ETHICS BOARD

Certificate of Approval

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Researcher Name</th>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lida Blizard</td>
<td></td>
<td>2011-028 Revised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>December 16, 2011</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Institution where Research will be carried out:

Co-Investigators:

Sponsoring Agencies (if any):

Project Title:

Experience and Impact of Student Initiated Faculty Targeted Cyber-bullying

Approval Date:  December 21, 2011
End Date:       December 31, 2012

Certification:

The protocol describing the above-named project has been reviewed by the Research Ethics Board and found to be acceptable on ethical grounds for research involving human subjects.

Chair, Research Ethics Board

This Certificate of Approval is valid for the above term provided there is no change in the research protocol. It is renewable, subject to annual review and approval. A completion report must be filed at the completion of the project.
Appendix E. Research Participant Letter of Information

Cover Letter for Faculty Participation in Research at Kwantlen Polytechnic University

For ED.D Program Completion: Simon Fraser University

Hello, Please allow me to introduce myself:

My name is Lida Blizard and I am a University faculty member completing an Educational Leadership doctoral degree at Simon Fraser University. I will be conducting my doctoral research at University for the purpose of exploring student-to-faculty cyber-bullying in higher education, the impact it has on targeted faculty members, and the support measures needed to manage such events. I will be drawing from the first-hand experience of faculty members who perceive they have been recipients of intimidating, defaming, derogatory, bullying, or threatening messages from students via electronic mediums (eg., email, cellular phone, blogs, chat rooms, discussion groups, and websites such as YouTube and ratemyprofessor.com).

As a research study participant you will be asked to complete a 15-minute anonymous online survey questionnaire that is designed to capture descriptive data such as demographic information, types of electronic media used, effects from the event, and support measures needed. The online survey is housed on a secure SFU Survey Database within a secure server in Canada. Survey data cannot be linked in any way to the true identity of the participant. The last question on the survey will ask if you would like to participate in the second stage of the study, involving a one-hour private confidential interview with the investigator. Given the minimal amount of empirical evidence on cyber-bullying of faculty members within the context of higher education, this study serves to provide a foundation from which faculty members and administrators can develop strategies to ensure early recognition, prevention, and effective management of cyber-bullying in campus settings.
Participation in this study is strictly voluntary. If you would like to participate please read the attached: a) Consent Form: Survey Questionnaire, and b) Consent Form: Individual Interview carefully, and contact me at [redacted] or email [redacted] with any questions or concerns about any aspect of the study. I greatly appreciate your consideration of participation in the study.

Please note: [redacted] has provided consent to Lida Blizard, as both [redacted] University faculty member, and SFU doctoral student to access the [redacted] email distribution list through [redacted] for the intent purpose of informing and inviting faculty member participation in this research study.

Sincerely,

Lida Blizard,
Ed.D. student, Simon Fraser University
Appendix F. Online Survey Consent Form

Simon Fraser University

RESEARCH CONSENT FORM: Survey Questionnaire

Title of Research Project: Perceived Experience and Impact of Student Initiated Cyber-bullying on HE Faculty Members: A Mixed Methods Institutional Case Study

Principal Investigator: Lida Blizard, Ed.D.(cand.) Educational Leadership Higher Education, Simon Fraser University. Senior Supervisor: Dr. Michelle Nilson, SFU.

Application # : KPU Ethics Application: # 2011-028 SFU Ethics Application : #

This consent form explains the research study you are being invited to participate in. Please review this form carefully and address any questions or concerns with me before you agree to participate. You may also ask questions at any time after joining the study. Please see the ‘contact information’ section at the end of this document if you have any questions or concerns about this study. Kwantlen Polytechnic University has provided consent for the researcher to access the ‘all faculty’ email distribution list for the intent purpose of informing and inviting faculty member’s participation in this research study.

Voluntary participation: Your participation in this research project is completely voluntary. You have the right to withdraw from the research study at any time, without any consequence to you. Your decision to withdraw from the study will not jeopardize your employment or income at Kwantlen Polytechnic University.

Purpose of Research Project: The purpose of this research is to gain further understanding of the how faculty members experience messages of an aggressive, intimidating, defaming, or bullying nature delivered by various forms of electronic media from students, and the impact on the faculty member. Study findings will not only facilitate understanding of this phenomenon, but provide information on support measures needed for early recognition, prevention, intervention, and policy development.

Procedures: As a faculty member, your thoughts and perspectives will be very valuable to this study. You are invited to participate in an online survey entitled Student Initiated Faculty Targeted Cyber-bullying Survey. The survey can be accessed by clicking the link provided at the end of this document. By clicking the link, this will serve as affirmation that you consent to participate in the online survey component of this research study. The survey will take approximately 20 minutes to complete. Upon completion of the survey, you will be provided with an opportunity to participate in the second stage of the study involving a confidential interview with the researcher. I will share the summarized
findings of this study with faculty members upon completion of the research study.

Risks of harm/Discomforts/Inconvenience: It must be acknowledged that you may experience uncomfortable memories when revisiting your cyber-bullying experience while you complete the survey questionnaire. If you are experiencing uncomfortable emotions or other effects from sharing your cyber-bullying experience during this study, and would like to talk to someone about what you are experiencing, assistance may be available by contacting the University Employee Assistance provider (Shepell-FGI at 1-800-387-4765), a University Faculty Association representative, or your personal family physician.

Benefits [including compensation if any]: You may indirectly benefit from this study as it not only adds to the limited amount of research on cyber-bullying of faculty members in higher education, but also acknowledges the experience and impact of cyber-bullying on targeted faculty members. Study findings will provide a foundation for the development of programs to assist in the early recognition, prevention, and intervention of cyber-bullying in higher education, as well as support programs in managing the effects of cyber-bullying. Faculty members as well as administrators in higher education may also benefit from your contribution to this study.

Confidentiality: Participation in this research study is strictly voluntary. Survey questionnaires will remain anonymous, and individual interviews will remain confidential in accordance with the legal and ethical responsibilities of the researcher. Information on the survey questionnaires cannot be linked to the true identity of participants. Survey questionnaire data will be stored on the secure SFU Survey Database, within a secure server in Canada. Data will be analyzed and reported as a summary to ensure there is no ability to identify individual research participants or specific organizations. No research participant names will be disclosed at any time. You will not be asked to disclose the name of individuals in the survey questionnaire. (Should you inadvertently disclose a person’s true identity, names will be edited and transcribed to reflect a pseudonym or role such as 'student').

It is my legal and ethical responsibility to inform you that if you share information that leads me to believe there is a real and imminent threat to your person or life, then I must not only encourage you to report the information to the appropriate authorities, but I must also warn the appropriate authorities of the imminent danger to yourself or others. For example in the event that you received a recent message from a student indicating intent to physically harm you or another campus constituent, the researcher would not only be responsible to advise you to report the information to the proper campus authorities, but would also have a duty to warn campus security and University Risk Management of the person’s intent to place others in imminent danger. The information resulting from this research survey may be used in future publications or presentations, as well as my doctoral dissertation. Any identifying information will be removed prior to these publications or presentations. Summarized data findings will be stored in a locked filing cabinet, in a locked office, accessible to the researcher.

Persons to Contact: If you have any questions or concerns about the study, please contact: Lida Blizard, principal investigator: or email
If you have any concerns about your selection or treatment as a research participant, please contact the following:

1. Dr. Michelle Nilson, Assistant Professor, Faculty of Education, (ph) 778-782-8122 or email mnilson@sfu.ca
2. Dr. Hal Weinberg, Director, Office of Research Ethics, SFU: (ph) 778-782-6593, or email hal_weinberg@sfu.ca
3. Kwantlen Polytechnic University Office of Research and Scholarship: (ph) 

Once you have read this document and determine that you would like to participate in the study, please retain one copy of this consent form for your records and proceed to the survey questionnaire link “continue to survey” below. If you do not want to participate in the study please select ‘exit’.

Thank you for your consideration of participating in this research study.

By clicking on the ‘Continue to Survey’ link, I provide my consent to participate in this study. I understand that if I do not want to answer a question I can proceed to the next question. I understand that I can withdraw from this study at any time without any consequence to me.

Click this link to Continue to Survey

Click this link EXIT if you do not want to participate in this study.
Appendix G. Invitation Follow-up Email

Follow-up Email Reminder to be sent 2 weeks following the initial email invitation

Dear [Redacted] Faculty Members

This is a reminder to please consider participating in the following survey on Student-to-Faculty Targeted Cyber-bullying (receiving intimidating, threatening, or defamatory messages via electronic mediums), which is currently being conducted as a requirement of my doctoral studies at SFU in Educational Leadership Higher Education. Given the sparse amount of research in this area, your responses will not only assist in developing greater understanding of how faculty members experience this phenomenon and the impact it can have on targeted individuals, but also the essential support measures that need to be in place for faculty members to manage such incidents effectively.

Please review the attached information sheet and consent form for further information or clarification. If you have questions or concerns, please contact [Redacted]. All enquiries remain confidential.

You can access the survey by clicking on the link located in the Consent Form. The information you provide is cannot be linked to your identity at [Redacted] University. The survey is located on a secure SFU Survey database housed on a secure server in Canada. All information you provide is anonymous.

Please note: [Redacted] University has provided consent to Lida Blizard, as both [Redacted] University faculty member, and SFU doctoral student to access the [Redacted] ‘all-faculty’ email distribution list through Outlook for the intent purpose of informing and inviting faculty member participation in this research study.

Thank you for taking the time to consider participating in this survey.

Lida Blizard

SFU Doctoral Student: Educational Leadership Higher Education
[Redacted] Faculty CAHS
Appendix H. Individual Interview Letter of Information

Faculty Participation in Research at [Redacted]
For ED.D Program Completion: Simon Fraser University
Faculty Members’ Perceived Experiences of Cyberbullying By Students In Higher Education:
A Mixed Methods Study

Individual Interview Letter of Information

The second phase of this research study serves to enrich the findings of the Online Survey which you have recently completed, by gathering more in-depth information on faculty members personal experience with cyber-bullying by students in higher education. The interview will explore your first-hand experience with this phenomenon, the impact it has had on you, and the institutional support measures needed in order for faculty members to manage such incidents. Cyber-bullying encompasses behaviour such as intimidating, defaming, derogatory, bullying, or threatening messages sent via electronic media (e.g., email, cellular phone, blogs, chat rooms, discussion groups, and websites such as YouTube and rateyourprofessor.com).

Your participation in the second phase of this research study involving an individual interview with the primary investigator is completely voluntary and you may withdraw at any time without any consequence to you. Please review the information contained in this document as well as the Individual Interview Consent Form. Summarized aggregate study findings will be shared with [Redacted] faculty members upon completion of the research study.

In-Person Interview Process:
1. All ‘in-person’ interviews will be held at a date, time, and location suitable to you. At the onset of the interview I will ask you to review the Interview Consent Form, and provide you with an opportunity to voice concerns or ask questions. After questions and concerns have been addressed, you will be asked if you would like to sign the consent form. The interview will commence after the consent form has been signed by the researcher and the participant.
2. If during the course of the interview, re-stirring of emotions or uncomfortable feelings re-surface and you determine that you do not want to proceed, please let me know. I will stop the interview recording and ask if you would like to take a break. Please inform me if you want to stop the interview entirely or if you want to take a break and reconvene at your convenience.
3. You can ask questions or request clarification at any time during the interview, and if you want to discontinue the interview, it will be suspended without any consequence to you.
4. I will honour the interview time commitment by informing you when the one-hour time frame has lapsed and enquire as to whether or not you would like to continue sharing your experience, or suspend the interview.
Telephone Interviews:

If you have chosen to have a telephone interview, the interview will be arranged for a date, time, and location suitable to you. I will call you from a private secure office at the telephone number which you have provided. The interview will be recorded using an electronic telephone recording device. Prior to the interview, you will receive the Individual Interview Consent Form. Once you have reviewed the Interview Consent Form, and questions or concerns have been addressed by the researcher, you will have the option to:

a. scan the signed consent form saved in 'password protect' (password provided by the researcher), and return the scanned document via your email or
b. place the signed consent form in a sealed envelope addressed to Lida Blizard, Confidential Research Study Consent Form, and drop it off at the University Research Office located on the second floor of the University library, where I will pick it up.

Participant's Review of Transcripts:

Once I have transcribed the individual interview recordings, you will have the opportunity to review and edit your individual transcript for authenticity, accuracy, and clarity of information. The two options that you have in obtaining your transcript include:

a. Picking up and returning the transcript in person at a date/time/ private location that is convenient for you,

b. Receiving your transcript as a password protected, encrypted document via your email address, organizing a telephone interview with me to discuss the transcript, followed by returning your password protected, encrypted transcript back to me via email system.

The final stage of transcript review involves sending your revised transcript back to you for final approval. Please note that neither your true name, nor any information linking to your identity will be disclosed by this research study. In lieu of true names, a code (letter and number) will be allocated to you at the onset of the interview process, and the code will be known only to the researcher and the participant.

Please see the Cyber-bullying Interview questions attached to this document for your review.

Lida Blizard
Simon Fraser University doctor student: Ed.D.: Leadership Higher Education
Appendix I. Individual Interview Consent Form

Simon Fraser University
RESEARCH CONSENT FORM: Individual Interview

Title of Research Project: Faculty Members’ Perceived Experiences of Cyberbullying by Students: A Mixed Methods Study

Principal Investigator: Lida Blizard, doctoral student, Ed.D. Educational Leadership Higher Education, Simon Fraser University. Senior Supervisor: Dr. Michelle Nilson, SFU.

Application #: KPU Application # 2011-028 SFU Application #

This consent form explains the research study you are being invited to participate in. Please review this form carefully and address any questions or concerns with me before you agree to participate. You may also ask questions at any time after joining the study. Please see the ‘contact information’ section at the end of this document, should you have any questions or concerns about this study. Kwantlen Polytechnic University has approved the use of the all faculty email distribution list for the purpose of informing and inviting faculty members to participate in this research study.

Voluntary participation: Having participated in the survey questionnaire phase of the research study, you are now invited to participate in an individual interview with the investigator entitled Student Initiated Faculty Targeted Cyberbullying. Your participation in this research project is completely voluntary. You have the right to withdraw from the research study at any time without any consequence to you. Your decision will not jeopardize your employment or income at

Purpose of Research Project: The purpose of this research interview is to gain a more in-depth understanding of the how higher education faculty members experience cyberbullying (messages of an aggressive, intimidating, defaming, or bullying nature delivered by various forms of electronic media) from students, and the impact such incidents had on the faculty member. Interview findings will serve to enhance the survey questionnaire findings, facilitate understanding of this phenomenon, and enable development of support measures for faculty members and administrators in the form of early recognition, prevention, intervention, and policy development.

Procedures: As a faculty member your personal experience and the perspectives you provide during the interview will enrich the findings of this study in terms of providing a detailed account of faculty member’s personal experience with student initiated cyberbullying. This interview cannot be linked in any way to the anonymous online survey questionnaire which you completed at the onset of this study. The option of an ‘in-person’ or ‘telephone’ interview will afford each participant a greater degree of convenience, comfort, privacy, and confidentiality. All ‘in-person’ interviews will be held at a date/time/location suitable to the participant. At the onset of the interview, you will be asked to review the Interview Consent Form, and pose any questions or concerns with the researcher. Once questions and concerns are addressed, you will be asked if
you would like to proceed to sign the consent form. You can ask questions or request clarification at any time during the interview, and if you want to discontinue the interview, it will be suspended without any consequence to you. Once you have signed the consent, the researcher will commence the interview.

All telephone interviews will be arranged for a date/time / private location suitable to the participant, with the researcher conducting the call from a private secure office. Once you have reviewed the Interview Consent Form, and questions or concerns have been addressed by the researcher, you will have the option to: a) scan the signed consent form saved in ‘password protect’ (password provided by the researcher), and return the scanned document via your email to Lida.Blizard@kwantlen.ca, or b) place the signed consent form in a sealed envelope addressed to Lida Blizard, Research Office, and deliver it to the Research Office, where the researcher can pick it up.

Telephone interview participants will have the option of reviewing their own interview transcripts by: a) picking up / returning the transcript in person from the researcher at a date/time/ private location convenient to the participant, or b) receiving the password protected, encrypted transcript via their email address, organizing a telephone interview with the researcher to discuss the transcript, and returning the password protected, encrypted transcript back to the researcher via the email system. Final revised transcripts will be sent to, and approved by, the interview participants using the same options.

To ensure anonymity of the information provided by all research participants throughout all stages of the interview process, neither your true name nor information linking your identity will be disclosed by the researcher. In lieu of your true name, a pseudonym code (letter and number) will be allocated by the researcher at the onset of the interview. True names and corresponding pseudonym code numbers will be known only to the researcher and the participant. The ‘master list’ containing the true name and pseudonym code of each participant will be stored in a secured, locked filing cabinet, in a locked office, separate from the transcribed interview documents, and accessible only to the researcher.

Each interview will be transcribed by the researcher, and you will have the opportunity to review your interview transcript for accuracy and clarity of the information, as well as any editing that you deem necessary. Any request on behalf of the participant to edit or delete transcript information will be honored. Final edited copies will be returned to you for final review and approval. Once the research study has concluded, and all data summarized, the ‘Master List’ of participant names and corresponding pseudonym codes will be destroyed to assist in ensuring anonymity and confidentiality of the ‘source’ of information provided. The researcher will honor the one-hour interview time commitment by informing you when the time frame has lapsed and enquire as to whether or not you would like to continue sharing information, or suspend the interview. Your decision to continue or to suspend the interview will be honored. The interview will be recorded using a voice recording device, which will then be stored in a locked safe, in a locked filing cabinet in a locked office, accessible only by the researcher.

The invitation to participate in this interview process was provided as a link within in the Online Survey Questionnaire. Those who would like to participate in the interview phase of the study, and provide contact information will receive be provided with the Interview Consent Form, and organize a time for conducting the interview in a private, confidential
location that is convenient for the participant. I will share the summarized findings of this study with [REDACTED] faculty members upon completion of the research study.

Risks of harm/Discomforts/Inconvenience: It must be acknowledged that you may experience uncomfortable memories when revisiting your cyber-bullying experience during the interview process. If you experience uncomfortable emotions or other physical or psychological effects as a result of disclosing your cyber-bullying experience during this study, and would like to talk to someone about this, please contact the [REDACTED] Employee Assistance provider (Shepell-FGI at 1-800-387-4765), a [REDACTED] Faculty Association representative, or your personal family physician.

Benefits [including compensation if any]: You may indirectly benefit from this study as it adds to the limited amount of literature on the experience and impact of cyber-bullying on faculty members in higher education. Study findings may assist in providing direction for the development of programs to assist in the early recognition, prevention, and intervention of cyber-bullying in higher education, as well as support programs in managing the effects of cyber-bullying. Current and future faculty members as well as administrators in higher education may also benefit from your contribution to this study.

Confidentiality: Participation in this research study is strictly voluntary. No identifiable information on the interview forms will be shared at any time during or after the completion of the study. You will not be asked to disclose the name of individuals during the course of the interview. (Should a name be inadvertently disclosed by you during the course of the interview, the name will be transcribed to reflect a generalized role such as 'student'). All research participants will be informed at the onset of the interview that if information is disclosed causing the researcher to believe there is an immediate risk to the safety of an individual, the researcher has a duty to report the information to the appropriate authorities. For example in the event that you received a cyber-bullying message from a student indicating intent to physically harm you or another campus constituent, the researcher would not only be responsible to advise you to report the information to the proper campus authorities, but the researcher would also have a duty to warn campus security and [REDACTED] of a person’s intent to place others in imminent danger. In the event that you choose to pursue your cyber-bullying experience with administration, you will be provided with information on how to proceed with that process in accordance with [REDACTED].

All interview tape recordings, transcripts, and summarized data will be stored in a locked safe, in a locked filing cabinet, in a locked office for a period of five years following completion of the study, at which time all interview tape recordings and transcripts will be destroyed. Data will be analyzed and reported as a summary to ensure there is no ability to identify individual research participants or link them to specific campuses. The information results from this research survey may be used in future publications or presentations, as well as my doctoral dissertation. Any identifying information will be removed prior to these publications or presentations. Summarized data findings will be stored in a locked filing cabinet, in a locked office. Once you have read this document, and are interested in participating in an interview, please contact Lida Blizard [REDACTED] or email [REDACTED] to provide your contact information in terms of the most suitable time, date, and location to meet for the interview. Please feel free to
phone me if you have any questions or concerns about this research at any time and please retain one copy of this letter for your records. A copy of this consent form will be provided at the onset of your interview for the purpose of reviewing the information provided above, and answering any questions or concerns that you may have. Your signature on this consent form indicates that you consent to participate in an individual interview with the investigator. Thank you for your consideration of participating in this research study.

Sincerely,

Lida Blizard

I have reviewed the information provided in this consent form and agree to participate in this interview with the investigator, Lida Blizard.
Date: ______________________  Signature: ________________________

Persons to Contact: If you have any questions or concerns about the study, please contact Lida Blizard, principal investigator: (ph) or email

If you have any concerns about your selection or treatment as a research participant, please contact the following:

Dr. Michelle Nilson, Assistant Professor, Faculty of Education, SFU: (ph) or email

Dr. Hal Weinberg, Director, Office of Research Ethics, SFU: (ph) or email

Office of Research and Scholarship:
Appendix J. Individual Interview Questions

Cyberbullying of HE Faculty Members: Interview Questions  
A Doctoral Study for Completion of SFU Ed.D. Leadership Higher Education

Please answer the following questions to the best of your ability, based on your personal experience with student initiated cyber-bullying. This interview will be recorded and will take approximately one hour to complete. If you have any questions or need clarification at any time, please feel free to address these with the researcher. You can withdraw from the interview at any time without any consequence to you. If you do not want to answer a question please indicate that you would like to proceed to the next question.

1. Can you describe a memorable experience that you feel comfortable to share with me, where you had a cyberbullying message(s) sent to you or about you by a student(s) while working as a faculty member in higher education?

2. What did you do when the situation occurred?

3. What effect did your cyberbullying experience have on you?

4. What implications if any, did your cyberbullying experience have on your approach to students after the encounter?

5. What was the most difficult thing about your cyberbullying experience that you feel comfortable to share?

6. In your view, what support measures need to be in place to assist faculty members with:
   a. Early recognition of cyberbullying by students?
   b. Prevention of cyberbullying by students?
   c. Immediate intervention in managing student initiated cyberbullying?

7. Is there anything else that you would like to share with me about your cyberbullying experience?
## Appendix K. Data Analysis of Research Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Survey Question</th>
<th>Instrument Source</th>
<th>Data Analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>RQ 1: Knowledge of Online Media</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1a. Participants’ awareness of online media.</td>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Adapted from: Cassidy, Jackson, &amp; Brown (2009). Students’ Experiences with Cyber-bullying Survey.</td>
<td>Descriptive statistical analysis Correlation between age, gender, and awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1b. How bothered by types of online messages?</td>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Adapted and modified from: Lampman, C. (2012). Aggression, Bullying, Incivility, and Sexual Attention Aimed at Faculty survey</td>
<td>Descriptive statistical analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1d. Most recent CB experience?</td>
<td>6.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Descriptive statistical analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1e. Frequency of CB messages.</td>
<td>7. 8. 9.10.</td>
<td>Adapted and modified from: Lampman, C. (2012). Aggression, Bullying, Incivility, and Sexual Attention Aimed at Faculty</td>
<td>Descriptive statistical analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RQ 2: CB Experiences</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2c. Recency &amp; duration of CB</td>
<td>16. 17</td>
<td>L Blizard</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Question</td>
<td>Survey Question</td>
<td>Instrument Source</td>
<td>Data Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2f. Description of most significant CB incident.</td>
<td>24, 25</td>
<td>L. Blizard (2012)</td>
<td>Frequency Compare with qualitative coding data analysis for similarities / differences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ 4: Response to CB</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Question</td>
<td>Survey Question</td>
<td>Instrument Source</td>
<td>Data Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Compare with qualitative coding data analysis for similarities/ differences |

**Demographic Data**

a. Age, gender, language spoken, citizenship, teaching experience in post-secondary sector.

## Appendix L. Serious Cyberbullying Incidents

### L1: CB Frequency, Duration, Precursors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Most Serious Cyberbullying Incidents</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How Recently Serious CB Incidents Occurred</td>
<td>Within the past 24 hours</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Within the past 7 days</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Within the past month</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Within the past 6 months</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Within the past year</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>More than 1 year</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Duration: How Long Serious CB Incidents Persisted | 1 day | 21% |
|                                                | Less than 1 week                  | 16% |
|                                                | Less than 1 month                 | 16% |
|                                                | At least 1 month                  | 16% |
|                                                | 1 - 6 months                      | 26% |
|                                                | 6-12 months                       | 5%  |
|                                                | More than 1 year                  | 0%  |

| Precursors to Serious CB Incidents: Students’ dissatisfaction with: | Assignment grades | 42% |
|                                                                | Final grades          | 37% |
|                                                                | Student conduct issues| 32% |
|                                                                | Assignment criteria   | 26% |
|                                                                | Course workload       | 21% |
|                                                                | Teaching style        | 21% |
|                                                                | Communication style   | 16% |
|                                                                | Other                 | 16% |
|                                                                | Faculty Gender        | 11% |
|                                                                | Unknown               | 11% |
|                                                                | Assignment deadlines  | 11% |
|                                                                | Faculty rank          | 5%  |
|                                                                | Course schedule       | 5%  |
### Appendix M. Type and Duration of Negative Effects Experienced After Serious CB Incidents (n=19)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A Few Days</th>
<th>1-8 weeks</th>
<th>2-5 months</th>
<th>6-12 months</th>
<th>&gt; 1 year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Avoided the aggressor (56%)</td>
<td>Difficulty sleeping (56%)</td>
<td>Significantly anxious (11%)</td>
<td>Avoided aggressor (11%)</td>
<td>Avoid thinking about it (21%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More irritable than normal (21%)</td>
<td>Increased irritability (16%)</td>
<td>Sudden emotional responses (11%)</td>
<td>Fear of aggressor (11%)</td>
<td>Significantly anxious (16%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty sleeping (21%)</td>
<td>Difficulty concentrating (16%)</td>
<td>Avoid thinking about it (11%)</td>
<td>Fear of being alone with aggressor (5%)</td>
<td>Fear of aggressor (16%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty concentrating (16%)</td>
<td>Fear of aggressor (16%)</td>
<td>Difficulty sleeping (5%)</td>
<td>Physical responses (5%)</td>
<td>Embarrassed to discuss it (16%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fear of being alone with the aggressor (16%)</td>
<td>Avoided thinking about it (11%)</td>
<td>Avoided aggressor (5%)</td>
<td>Sudden emotional responses (5%)</td>
<td>Physical responses (16%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significantly anxious (16%)</td>
<td>Felt depressed (11%)</td>
<td>Fear of aggressor (5%)</td>
<td>Avoided thinking about it (5%)</td>
<td>Stress-related illnesses (16%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sudden emotional responses (11%)</td>
<td>Stress-related illnesses (11%)</td>
<td>Felt depressed (5%)</td>
<td>Significantly anxious (5%)</td>
<td>Difficulty concentrating (16%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fear of aggressor (11%)</td>
<td>Sudden emotional responses (11%)</td>
<td>Physical responses (5%)</td>
<td>Felt embarrassed (5%)</td>
<td>Difficulty sleeping (16%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt depressed (11%)</td>
<td>Thoughts of relation (11%)</td>
<td>Felt embarrassed (5%)</td>
<td>Thoughts of retaliation (5%)</td>
<td>Felt depressed (16%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoided thinking about it (11%)</td>
<td>Avoided aggressor (5%)</td>
<td>Loss of confidence (5%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical responses (5%)</td>
<td>Fear of being alone with aggressor (5%)</td>
<td>Thoughts of retaliation (5%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stress-related illnesses (5%)</td>
<td>Physical effects (5%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lost confidence (5%)</td>
<td>Loss of confidence (5%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

187
Appendix N. Duration of Negative Effects Graphs

Negative Effects That Lasted A Few Days

- Personal relationships suffered: 5%
- Lost confidence to teach: 5%
- Had physical responses: 5%
- Had stress related illnesses: 5%
- Tried to avoid thinking about it: 11%
- Sudden emotional responses: 11%
- Felt depressed: 11%
- Fear of the cyber-aggressor(s): 11%
- Felt very anxious/distressed: 16%
- Fear to be alone with CB aggressor(s): 16%
- Had difficulty concentrating: 16%
- More irritable than normal: 21%
- Had difficulty sleeping: 21%
- Avoided the cyber-aggressor: 56%
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Negative Effects Experienced</th>
<th>Percentage of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional relationships suffered</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal relationships suffered</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lost confidence in teaching ability</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had physical responses</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt embarrassed to discuss it</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fear to be alone with CB aggressor(s)</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoided the cyber-aggressor(s)</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thoughts of retaliation to aggressor(s)</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tried to avoid thinking about it</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had sudden emotional responses</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had stress related illnesses</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt depressed</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More irritable than normal</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt very anxious or distressed</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had difficulty concentrating</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt afraid of the CB aggressor(s)</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had difficulty sleeping</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Negative Effects That Lasted 2-5 Months

- Thought about retaliation toward aggressor(s): 5%
- Lost confidence in teaching ability: 5%
- Had physical responses: 5%
- Felt embarrassed to discuss the incident: 5%
- Saw a mental health professional: 5%
- Felt depressed: 5%
- Felt afraid to be alone with the cyber-aggressor(s): 5%
- Avoided the cyber-aggressor(s): 5%
- Had difficulty sleeping: 5%
- Tried to avoid thinking about it: 11%
- Had sudden emotional responses: 11%
- Felt very anxious or distressed: 11%

### Negative Effects That Lasted 6-12 Months

- Thought about retaliation toward...: 5%
- Tried to avoid thinking about it: 5%
- Had physical responses: 5%
- Had sudden emotional responses: 5%
- Felt embarrassed to discuss it: 5%
- Saw a mental health professional: 5%
- Felt very anxious or distressed: 5%
- Afraid to be alone with cyber-aggressor(s): 5%
- Avoided the cyber-aggressor: 11%
- Felt afraid of the cyber-aggressor(s): 11%

Percentage of Respondents
### Negative Effects That Lasted More Than 1 Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience</th>
<th>Percentage of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thought it was a positive experience</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thought about retaliation toward cyber-</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thought about harming self</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had sudden emotional responses</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal relationships suffered</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afraid to be alone with cyber-aggressor(s)</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoided the cyber-aggressor(s)</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional relationships suffered</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lost confidence in teaching ability</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More irritable than normal</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had physical responses</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt embarrassed to discuss it</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saw a mental health professional</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had stress related illness</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt very anxious/distressed</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt depressed</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had difficulty concentrating</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had difficulty sleeping</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afraid of the cyber-aggressor(s)</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tried to avoid thinking about it</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Percentage of Respondents*
## Appendix O. Course of Action Taken and Outcome

### Outcome Of The Course of Action Taken

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course of Action Taken</th>
<th>Attempted: Successful</th>
<th>Attempted: Not successful</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Changed / dropped assignments</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reported to Employee Assistance Services</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sought legal advice</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changed your approach to student aggressor</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reported to Office Judicial Affairs</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reviewed Policy/procedure with student</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reported to Faculty Assoc. Representative</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changed approach to teaching in general</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reported to campus security</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reported to senior administrator (faculty)</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acted as if I didn’t care</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asked aggressor to stop</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ignored the incident</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attempted to discuss with student</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attempted to involve student in resolution</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reported to senior administrator (students)</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reviewed Policy/procedure for help</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sought support friends / colleagues</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reported to immediate supervisor</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consulted with colleagues</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

192
Appendix P. Support Measures at MU

Participants' View Of Support Measures At MU

- Effective support measures exist for CB faculty: 4%
- Institutional policies/procedures/practices effective in preventing CB: 4%
- Support measures are easy to access for CB victims: 8%
- Policies clearly identify CB behavior and sanctions: 8%
- Sanctions deter CB behaviors: 9%
- Adequate education for faculty on how policies applied/enforced: 9%
- Faculty aware of behaviors under student conduct/harassment policy: 18%
- Student Conduct policy/procedures well-communicated: 18%
- Formal CB complaints are taken seriously: 40%
- Faculty aren't well informed of support measures available: 67%
- Students can get away with CB at MU: 68%

Percentage of Participants Who Were In Agreement
Appendix Q. Research Findings Summary Table: Online Survey Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Online Platforms and Cyberbullying Messages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Faculty Members’ Awareness (n=36)</td>
<td>Most aware of: email (100%), video sites (94%), Skype (83%), cellular phone texting (81%), faculty polling sites (78%), and social networking sites (76%), and discussion groups (72%). Least aware of: student polling sites (9%), Instant Messaging (36%), Twitter (48%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CB Platform Used (n=22)</td>
<td>Email (64%) and faculty polling sites (50%) (e.g., online faculty evaluation sites, public faculty polling sites (e.g., Ratemyprofessors.com).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most Recent CB occurrence (n=22)</td>
<td>(64%) occurred from 6 months to 1 year ago as: 33% occurred more than one year ago, 33% within the past year, and 29% within the past 6 months.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency of CB Messages (n=22)</td>
<td>Most CB messages occurred “once or twice”, followed by “3 or more times” (23%), then “3 or more times repeatedly for several months” (5%).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of CB Messages</td>
<td>Contained: derogatory or sarcastic remarks, demands for higher grades (62%), or demands to reduce assignment or course difficulty (59%).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Most Serious CB Incidents (n=19)**

- At Least 1 Serious CB Experience: 90% (n=19) of participants had at least one serious CB experience that had a negative effect on them. 75% CB incidents at MU, 25% at another institution.
- Rank / Division (n=19): Rank: 53% regular fulltime, 5% full professor, 16% associate professor Faculties of Humanities (25%), Business (25%) and Sciences (20%)
- Most Recent CB Incident (n=19): 61% occurred “more than 1 year ago”, 22% “within the last year”, 17% “within the last 6 months”.
- Duration of Serious CB (n=19): 37% persisted “up to 1 week”, 32% “1 week to 1 month”, 26% “1 - 6 months”, 5% persisted “6 – 12 months”.
- Precursors (n=19): Students’ dissatisfaction with grades (79%), misconduct issues (32%), assignment criteria (26%), course workload (21%).
- Type of CB Message (n=19): Most commonly: “disrespectful” (84%), aggressive or rude (63%), defamatory (53%), and demeaning (47%). Approximately 40% described the CB messages as humiliating, uncivil, dismissive, intimidating, threatening, mocking, or bullying. Approximately 70% reported the CB messages to be very bothersome.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Online Platforms and Cyberbullying Messages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical Effects</td>
<td>Difficulties sleeping (74%), suffered stress-related illnesses (37%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Effects (n=19)</td>
<td>Felt significantly anxious or distressed (68%); depressed, more irritable than normal, sudden emotional responses when reminded of the event, fear of the aggressor, and difficulty concentrating at work (approximately 50%).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fear , Avoidance (n=19)</td>
<td>Tried not to think about it (58%), avoided the aggressor (53%), fear of the aggressor (47%).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harm (n=19)</td>
<td>Thoughts of retaliation toward aggressor (26%), thoughts of self-harm (5%).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relational Effects (n=19)</td>
<td>74% had difficulties with the aggressor(s) or other students; 37% had difficulties with colleagues, administrators, or family members.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Effects (n=19)</td>
<td>Approximately 70% lost their desire to go to work, 53% had loss of productivity at work or felt like quitting their job, approximately 45% lost confidence in their ability to manage student conflict, or their ability to work with students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Effects: Duration (n=19)</td>
<td>23% had effects persist for “a few days”, 23% for “1 to 8 weeks”, 10% for 2 to 5 months, 8% for 6 to 12 months, and 35% had effects for more than 1 year.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Negative Effects Experienced and Duration of Effects

<p>| Lasted a few days (n=19) | Avoided the aggressor (56%); had difficulty sleeping or greater irritability (21%); difficulty concentrating, anxious or distressed, fear of the aggressor (16%). |
| Lasted 1 to 8 weeks (n=19) | Had difficulty sleeping (56%); difficulty concentrating at work, felt significantly anxious or distressed, greater irritability, fear of the aggressor (16%). |
| Lasted 2 to 5 months (n=19) | Felt significantly anxious or distressed, had sudden emotional responses, tried to avoid thinking about it (11%); felt depressed, physical responses, loss of confidence, fear and avoidance of the aggressor, or thoughts of retaliation (5%). |
| Lasted 6 to 12 months (n=19) | Attempted to avoid the aggressor, felt fear of the aggressor (11%); felt significantly anxious, had sudden emotional responses, physical responses, or thoughts of retaliation (5%). |
| Lasted greater than 1 year (n=19) | Tried to avoid thinking about it (21%); had difficulty sleeping, difficulty concentrating, felt depressed, embarrassed to discuss it, loss of confidence, felt significantly anxious, had physical responses (15%); fear and avoidance of the aggressor, personal relationships suffered (11%); had sudden emotional responses, thoughts of retaliation or self-harm (5%). |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Online Platforms and Cyberbullying Messages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Managing CB Incidents</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness of CB Management (n=19)</td>
<td>There were signs that CB might occur (58%); knew what CB consisted of, felt confident to respond to it, knew who to report it to (approximately 50%); knew what to do (37%), knew what policy or procedure to follow (30%), had formal training in how to respond to it (16%).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response To CB (n=19)</td>
<td>Most (84%) consulted with colleagues, 74% sought support from friends or immediate supervisor; 58% referred to policy or procedures (32% satisfied); 42% attempted to engage the student in resolving the problem 45bv(5% satisfied); 43% ignored the incident (10% satisfied).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Institutional Support Measures</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants’ Perceptions of Institutional Support (n=19)</td>
<td>Agreed that: Students can get away with CB at MU (79%), formal CB complaints are taken seriously (48%), faculty aware of behaviours under student conduct and harassment policies (21%), student conduct policies are well-communicated (21%), MU policies and procedures are well communicated (21%), MU policy clearly identifies CB behaviour and sanctions (10%), Institutional policies, procedures, and practices are effective in preventing CB (5%), sanctions deter CB behaviours (11%).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Support Measures (n=19)</td>
<td>Agreed that: There is adequate education for faculty members on how policies / procedures enforced (9%), support measures are easy to access for CB victims (8%), MU faculty members are well informed of support measures (4%), MU has effective support measures for CB victims (4%).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recommendations</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Priority (n=19)</td>
<td>Provide clearly written, well-communicated CB policies /procedures (45%), ensure CB complaints taken seriously by administrators (20%), implement sanctions that serve as a deterrent for CB (13%).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Priority (n=19)</td>
<td>Provide CB education for faculty members (30%), implement clearly written policies and procedures (20%), ensure sanctions that serve as a deterrent (15%), Provide CB education for students (5%).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Priority (n=19)</td>
<td>Provide counselling services for CB targeted faculty members (30%), ensure support from administrators and peers (13%), provide education for faculty members and students (5%).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most Helpful Support Measures</td>
<td>Colleagues (45%), therapist or counsellor (13%), Dean or administrator (13%), VP Academic (7%), Campus Security (7%).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix R. Transcript Codes:
Impact and Recommendations

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<td>4. Impact on CB Targeted Faculty Members</td>
<td>A. Faculty</td>
<td>1. Personal</td>
<td>a. Vulnerable</td>
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<td>a. Nausea, illnesses</td>
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<td>e. Minimize CB incidents</td>
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<td>B. Students</td>
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</table>
Appendix S. Negative Effects and Gender Differences

Female Versus Male Respondents Who Reported Effects

- Felt confident to respond: Females 46%, Males 50%
- Positive learning experience: Females 7%, Males 5%
- Had thoughts of retaliation: Females 30%, Males 20%
- Had thoughts of self-harm: Females 7%, Males 7%
- Avoided thinking about it: Females 33%, Males 33%
- More irritable than normal: Females 33%, Males 33%
- Had sudden emotional responses: Females 53%, Males 46%
- Felt embarrassed to talk about it: Females 0%, Males 0%
- Sought mental health support: Females 23%, Males 33%
- Had stress-related illnesses: Females 38%, Males 33%
- Felt significantly anxious/distressed: Females 70%, Males 80%
- Felt depressed: Females 53%, Males 53%
- Fear of being alone with the student: Females 53%, Males 53%
- Difficulty concentrating: Females 50%, Males 50%
- Avoided the CB agressor: Females 50%, Males 50%
- Class out early/cancelled the class: Females 0%, Males 0%
- Had difficulty sleeping: Females 50%, Males 50%
- Fear contact student: Females 33%, Males 33%