

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE AND CYBERBULLYING VICTIMIZATION ON INTERPERSONAL VIOLENCE AMONG YOUNG ADULTS

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Abstract

Background:

This study looked at how media use and being a victim of cyberbullying and violence between people are connected among young adults. Media use is a part of our lives now because a lot of people use Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat and Facebook. Media use has changed the way we interact with each other. We also get worried, about media use. How it can affect our minds and behavior. Media use is something we need to think about because it can affect adults and the way they behave.

Method: A cross-sectional correlational research design of a quantitative nature was employed. The sample consisted of 249 people between the ages of 18 and 25 years, collected from Rawalpindi and Islamabad, Pakistan through a non-probabilistic convenience sampling technique. Data were collected using the Social Media Use Scale. (Tuck & Thompson, 2024), Cyber-Victimization Scale (CYBVICS; Buelga et al., 2019), and Dispute Tactics Scale (CTS; Straus, 1979).

Results: The findings disclosed a significant helpful link between social networking sites engagement and experiences of online harassment, along with the relationship between cyberbullying victimization and occurrences of interpersonal aggression. Multiple regression analysis revealed that the utilization of social networking sites and online harassment was a strong forecaster of interpersonal violence, where cyberbullying victimization served as the a more significant indicator. However, no significant differences between genders were found in regarding social media use, experiences of cyberbullying, or interpersonal violence within the attendees.

Conclusion: The results indicate that when young adults are deeply engaged with media and encounter negative experiences related to cyberbullying, they tend to act in unkind ways. We must instruct individuals on media usage and put an end to cyberbullying. Online harassment impacts individuals' emotions and actions. We need to educate individuals about media to help them steer clear of cyberbullying and its negative consequences. If individuals exercise caution, there will be reduced cyberbullying on media. Cyberbullying is an issue that requires attention, and we must address it by educating individuals on social media usage and implementing measures to thwart cyberbullying. Individuals must recognize media to protect themselves and clear for the adverse influences of cyberbullying.

INTRODUCTION

The way in which we connect has transformed significantly due to stages such as Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat, and Facebook. These tools can assist persons in keeping connections. They can be operated to harass individuals on the cyber space. This problem is linked to various forms of violence that happen among individuals. Unnecessary use of the internet and social media can result in occurrences of online harassment, particularly among youth. Social media utilizes online platforms that enable individuals to communicate, share content, and create communities. Individuals can utilize these tools to communicate with their relatives, connect with colleagues, and share updates about their lives. Despite all the positive features of social media, online bullying remains a substantial problem. It entails causing pain to individuals repetitively, and it's simple to accomplish since people can conceal their true selves and reach their targets whenever they wish. Online bullying can manifest as unkind messages, excluding individuals, and revealing personal information without permission. This can mount a great sense of fear and separation in those being bullied, as negative remarks about them may continue online indefinitely. When individuals are hostile to one another, it may involve exploitation, which refers to causing emotional harm.

We observe incidences like this in the media, and they greatly influence young individuals. It shows the dangers of extreme media use, such as the possibility of being bullied online. Research indicates that bigger time spent online links with a higher likelihood of encountering or perceiving bullying. When individuals are hostile to each other online, it can result in amplified violence and violence in real life. Studies have shown that individuals who extremely engage with media are at a higher risk of being targeted by online bullies. These individuals often have negative feelings about themselves. Tend to be more emotional, which may result in them being more violent when interacting with others face-to-face. Cyberbullying remains a worry on social media and is linked to how individuals take part with one another on Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat, and Facebook. The

effect of media goes beyond simple meeting; it increases the risk of cyberbullying and is linked to mental health issues like anxiety and depression. These issues can badly affect actual behaviour. This study aims to examine the connections between media usage, cyberbullying, and aggression in adults. It seeks to offer viewpoints for educators, policymakers, and mental health specialists to create strategies. Understanding these links is crucial for tackling the impacts of social media.

Objectives and Hypotheses

The primary objectives are to: (1) Analyze the connection between cyberbullying victimization and social media usage; (2) Assess the correlation between cyberbullying victimization and interpersonal violence; (3) Investigate the combined predictive effect of these factors; and (4) Explore potential gender differences across all variables.

These objectives are directly followed by hypotheses, which expect large gender-based differences as well as significant positive relationship between usage, victimization, and violence.

METHOD

Research Design

This research utilized a quantitative, cross-sectional correlational methodology. This method was appropriate as it allowed for the analysis of the relationship between variables without any alterations. To assess the relationship between social media usage and victimization from cyberbullying regarding interpersonal violence, the data was collected simultaneously and spontaneously.

Sample

A total of 249 people took part in this study. These people were adults they were between 18 and 25 years old and they used social media a lot. Most of the people who took part in the study were from Rawalpindi and Islamabad, in Pakistan. We chose these people for the study because it was easy to get to them and we did not have a lot of time. We

used a method where we just picked people who were available to take part in the study.

Study Procedure

Participants filled out a 36-item questionnaire, which had 33 questions about scales and 3 questions about their background. They then looked at a consent form. Got a detailed explanation of how the study would work and how their data would be used. It usually took them, around 5 to 10 minutes to finish the questionnaire.

Assessment Measures

Social Media Use Scale

The Tuck and Thompson social media use scale was made by Alison B. Tuck and Renee J. Thompson in 2024. They made the Social Media Use Scale to see how people use media. The Social Media Use Scale is useful for seeing how social media can affect people. Social Media Use Scale can help us understand how social media can affect people when they are bullied online. The Social Media Use Scale has five questions. The results of the Social Media Use Scale show that it is a tool because it has high internal consistency with Cronbach's alpha values over 0.70.

Cyber-Victimization Scale (CYBVICS)

Buelga. Others made the Cyber-Victimization Scale in 2019. The Cyber-Victimization Scale has 18 questions that ask how often young people are bullied online. The Cyber-Victimization Scale checks for types of abuse like being harassed and humiliated on social media. The Cyber-Victimization Scale uses a 5-point scale from Never to Too Often. The Cyber-Victimization Scale is reliable because it has a Cronbach's alpha of

around 0.93.

Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS) Questionnaire

The Conflict Tactics Scale is a questionnaire that is used. The Conflict Tactics Scale checks for violence and conflict in relationships. The Conflict Tactics Scale used here has 10 questions. People say how often they do things. They use a 5-point scale: Never, Often and Always. The Conflict Tactics Scale is reliable because it has Cronbach's alpha values, between 0.70 and 0.85. This means that the Conflict Tactics Scale measures what it is supposed to measure, which is good.

Statistical Plan

SPSS-21 examined survey data, verifying for absent values and variable labels. Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha. The Pearson correlation and regression examined the connections between interpersonal violence, social media, cyberbullying, and gender disparities, which were assessed using an Independent Sample T-Test.

Ethical Considerations

The people in charge at the psychology department at NUML, Islamabad said it was okay to do the research. They made sure the people taking part in the research knew what they were getting into and that their secrets were kept safe. The person doing the research was the one who got to see the information and they made sure nobody else could get to it. When they were done looking at the answers they threw away the papers so nobody could use the information for anything than learning more about the subject. The research at NUML, Islamabad was only done to learn more, about the subject matter.

RESULTS

Table 1

Reliability Analysis of the Combined Instruments

Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
33	.82

The result of internal consistency reliability showed that the scale demonstrated high reliability. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the 33-item scale was $\alpha = .82$, indicating acceptable to good internal consistency among the items in the scale.

Table 2

Correlation Between Social Media Usage Scale (SMUS) and Cyberbullying Victimization Scale (CVS)

Correlations			
	Variables	SMUS	CVS
SMUS	Pearson Correlation	1	.267**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	249	249
CVS	Pearson Correlation	.267**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	250	250

* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The results of the Pearson correlation analysis indicated a notable positive association between the use of social media and experiences of cyberbullying victimization, $r(248) = .27$, $p < .01$. This suggests that increased social media use

correlates with greater instances of cyberbullying victimization among participants. The correlation coefficient indicates a weak to moderate positive connection between the two variables.

Table 3

Correlation Between Cyberbullying Victimization (CVS) and Interpersonal Violence (CTS)

Correlations			
	Variables	CVS	CTS
CVS	Pearson Correlation	1	.555**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	249	249
CTS	Pearson Correlation	.555**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	249	250

* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The findings indicated a statistically significant moderate positive correlation ($r(248) = .56$, $p < .001$) between experiences of cyberbullying victimization and instances of interpersonal violence. This result suggests a connection between increased interpersonal violence among

participants and a greater frequency of cyberbullying victimization. Consequently, individuals affected by cyberbullying tend to indicate increased levels of violent interactions or encounters.

Table 4

Multiple Regression Analysis Predicting Interpersonal Violence (CTS)

		Standardized Unstandardized Coefficients		Coefficients		
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	2.838	1.973		1.439	.152
SMUS						
		.224	.071	.170	3.153	.002
CVS						
		.374	.040	.510	9.443	.000

a. Dependent Variable: CTS

The findings indicated that using social media and encountering cyberbullying were both important positive indicators of interpersonal violence. The use of social media was a significant predictor of interpersonal violence ($\beta = .17$, $t(247) = 3.15$, $p = .002$), showing a link between greater social media usage and elevated levels of interpersonal violence. Likewise, being a victim of cyberbullying significantly predicted interpersonal violence ($\beta = .51$, $t(247) = 9.44$, $p < .001$). This indicates that

victims of cyberbullying reported increased levels of interpersonal violence. Furthermore, cyberbullying victimization was revealed to be a higher predictor of interpersonal violence, while having a bigger standardised beta value ($\beta = .51$) than social media usage ($\beta = .17$). Overall, the findings indicate that both elements are crucial in explaining young adults' interpersonal violence.

Table 5

*Independent Samples t-Test for Gender Differences***Independent Samples Test**

Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means							
F	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval of the Mean Std. Error Difference							
		Sig. (2-	Difference	Difference	t	Df	tailed)		
		Lower	Upper						
SMU Equal variances	.530	.469	.200	68	.842	.345	1.725	-3.097	3.786
S assumed									
Equal variances not assumed		.203	25.151	.841	.345	1.699	-3.154	3.844	
		.276	-.407	68	.685	-1.278	3.139	-7.542	4.986
CVS Equal variances	1.205								
assumed									
Equal variances not assumed		-.375	21.982	.712	-1.278	3.412	-8.353	5.798	
		.537	-.251	68	.803	-.625	2.490	-5.593	4.343
CTS Equal variances	.385								
assumed									
Equal variances not assumed		-.229	21.791	.821	-.625	2.726	-6.281	5.031	

The results showed no significant gender difference in social media usage, according to the results ($t(68) = 0.20$, $p = .842$). Similarly, neither cyberbullying victimization ($t(68) = -0.41$, $p = .685$) nor interpersonal violence ($t(68) = -0.25$, $p = .803$) showed a significant gender difference.

These results imply that there were no appreciable differences between male and female participants' levels of social media use, experiences as victims of cyberbullying, or instances of interpersonal violence. Therefore, among the young people in the sample, gender was not shown to have a significant impact on the research variables.

DISCUSSION

This study discovers the relationships between media use, come across with online harassment, and peer aggression in young adults. The outcomes confirm our assumptions, showing that

online experiences can intensely affect the feelings and actions of early adults.

Major outcomes show a link between social media use and come across cyberbullying, with a correlation of .267. This specifies that the longer individuals engage with media, the greater the likelihood of facing online bullying. Frequent media occurrence raises the probability of encountering negative online experiences such as getting hateful remarks and facing harassment. Additional research showed by Kowalski and colleagues, it is said that problems related to social media commonly arise due to cyberbullying.

The study also discloses a link between facing bullying and aggression among peers. Individuals facing online bullying are more disposed to to respond, as it can suggest emotional state of anger and anxiety, possibly resulting in struggles. Research shown by Patchin and Hinduja further

validates these outcomes. It is said that negative online experiences can effect behavior.

The outcomes show that both media usage and facing online bullying are associated to violence within relationships. Facing online bullying is a more important interpreter of violence than engaging with social media. This shows that negative online involvements can result in behavior. Online bullying can lead to substantial emotional distress, anger, and unhealthy coping mechanisms that may obvious as aggression in real life. The research studied variations in media consumption and cyberbullying between males and females, yet no major differences were exposed. Both genders established levels of engagement and victimization signifying they have equivalent access and experience to online dangers. This faces studies that recognized differences in cyberbullying experiences between males and females. The study highlights the psychological impact of extreme social media activity and cyberbullying on young persons.

IMPLICATIONS

The research shows that young adults who often engage with media are at a higher risk of suffering cyberbullying. This causes them to feel uncomfortable and increasingly intimidating. Therefore, they engage with others in numerous manners. The research highlights the implication of using media thoughtfully. The results are vital for educators, mental health experts, caregivers, and representatives. They assist in establishing a digital space and enhancing emotional health. The study contributes to our understanding of this problem in Pakistan. It specifies topics for exploration, including management emotions and self-worth.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This study should involve persons from across Pakistan and track them over a prolonged period to observe how circumstances evolve. This will help in comprehending the reasons behind cyberbullying and its impact on individual's behavior. We need to study how experiencing anxiety and sadness can increase aggression in individuals to fully hold the dynamics of

cyberbullying. We should study individuals of different ages to determine if cyberbullying evolves with age. Studying individuals who rarely engage with media is also critical. Utilizing methods for our research will lead to an improved understanding of cyberbullying. We need to deliberate what defends individuals from cyberbullying, such as how they achieve issues and whether their parents are alert. We also need to study the impact of media platforms such as Instagram and TikTok on individuals. Utilizing statistics will enable us to recognize the relationship between cyberbullying and aggression. We must explore techniques to prevent cyberbullying in schools and determine if educating individuals about it and supportive their well-being can create an impact. We must continue studying cyberbullying and seek methods to remove it.

LIMITATIONS

Determining whether social media use centrals to cyberbullying and violence is thought-provoking. This is due to the circumstance that the research studies all parts at that moment. The research employs a sampling technique that might not imitate the entire population in town areas such as Rawalpindi and Islamabad. Certain factors that might affect the outcomes, such as feelings and assets, were not regulated. The research depends on individuals being honest, which is not always the case. The research focused only on a single age category. Did not take into account aspects such as social anxiety and pressure that might influence various age groups. A sample size of 249 persons is sufficient. Even so, the outcomes might not be appropriate for all individuals. The research also did not examine how social media habits change over time. Cultural norms can impact the relevance of the findings in various locations. The results of the study might vary in different cities or nations. The use of social media and the issue of cyberbullying are subjects that require examination. The complications of media usage and cyberbullying demand additional exploration. Further research on media consumption and online harassment is compulsory.

CONCLUSION

The study examined the influence of social media on adults, particularly regarding instances of online cruelty among individuals. The longer young adults involve with social media, the greater their chances of suffering online bullying become. When individuals experience online bullying, they are more likely to mistreat others in real life. This directs that when individuals are treated poorly online, they may also begin to behave undesirably in real life. Being targeted online can lead individuals to act aggressively towards others. It can openly affect their emotions and mental well-being. Remarkably, the research exposed that boys and girls engage with media and experience online bullying in equivalent manners. This shows that online bullying on social media and ferocity appear to influence both men and women in a different way. Individuals continue to involve with media repetitively, and cyberbullying remains a substantial issue that requires consideration. Social media and cyberbullying remain worries that require focus, and the examination into media and cyberbullying is critical for grasping the situation.

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