

Exploring the Perception of Social Media Users about Cyberbullying: Consequences for Mental Health

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ABSTRACT

Aim of the Study: The aim of study was to explore the perception of social media users about cyberbullying consequences for mental health. The study investigate that what social media users describe the consequences of cyberbullying.

Methodology: The study conducted using quantitative methodological plan to explore the perceptions of social media users about cyberbullying: consequences for mental health. The study was conducted in Rawalpindi and Islamabad, Pakistan and population of the study was university students including male and female. Using purposive sampling, data was collected from (n=175) social media users living in Rawalpindi and Islamabad.

Findings: The finding showed the effects of cyberbullying on mental health were very hazardous specifically on female social media users like depression, anxiety and sleep distances. These findings yield crucial knowledge concerning the adverse impact of cyberbullying on the psychological well-being of social media users.

Conclusion: The study confirmed the association between cyberbullying and increasing anxiety, low self-esteem, sleep issues, and mistrust over online interactions. In short, this research offers strong proof that cyberbullying is anathema to mental health. It must, therefore, be tackled through a multi-faceted response, including policies to reform the cyberspace; access to mental health care for affected victims; and raising public consciousness about the drawbacks of cyberbullying.

Keywords: Cyberbullying, Female Perception, Social Media, Mental Health.

1. INTRODUCTION

The 21st century is called the digital era or technological epoch. There are too many types of harassment in our society but the new type of harassment or violence is called cyberbullying (Safdar et al., 2024; Syed et al., 2023; safdar, 2023). It involves sharing, uploading, or spreading harmful, inaccurate, and harsh posts regarding about others. Cyberbullying can involve someone personal private data that can be leading unethical, shame, discomfort or mortification (Li et al., 2024; Peng et al., 2024).

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This type of harassment or violence mostly occur in social media platform like Facebook, Instagram and also in gaming. Cyberbullying effects on mental health. It causes anxiety, depression, self-esteem, social withdrawal, sleep disturbances, disturb academic or work performances. Many peoples go in depression because of cyberbullying. Many victims done suicide because of cyberbullying. Most of female are affected by cyberbullying. All over the world 2.3 percent male attempting suicide and 7.5 percent are affected by cyberbullying (Gan et al., 2024). Female mostly goes in depression and affected 8their mental health. Cyberbullying is the common issue in South Africa. Cyberbullying is confronted by females and it is the most dangers. (Ebere Chukwuere et. al 2017; Yang 2024; Hong et al., 2024). Cyberbullying is mostly done in Facebook or WhatsApp's. Female faced the most cyberbullying as compared to males (Marcum et., 2012). When a female is intimidated, abused insulted, shame and attacked by someone. Cyberbullying is caused from internet, social media platforms or mobiles phones.

1.1 Problem Statement

It is a phenomenon that is known to target women or men who use social network sites, growing to a global concern for their mental health. Cyberbullying created a paradigm of adverse effects both psychologically and physically which leads toward increases in depression, anxiety, restlessness, and sensitivity. With this imminent increase in the prevalence of cyberbullying readily on digital platforms like Facebook, WhatsApp, and Instagram, it even makes the worst hit on mental health. Most times, victims suffer psychological distress due to online maltreatment; that is made possible by the digital technology of mobile phones and social media platforms. There are forms of cyberbullying found in scam messages and offense calls added to the already existing damage of emotional and psychological suffering.

1.2 Significance

This research is all the more relevant for women that are social media users, due to its emphasis on the vast differences caused by cyberbullying to mental and physical health consequences. Cyberbullying negatively interferes with daily life: sleeplessness, stress, and serious depression are the sequelae. In altogether very rare instances, continuous psychological harassment provokes a victim into entertaining thoughts of suicide. The study brings the consequences of cyber harassment into public consciousness and emphasizes the need for action so that proactive measures can be taken. In addition, these findings provide a great deal of further guidance to policy developers, law enforcement, and technical firms in formulating more cogent and well-targeted strategies to combat cyberbullying to promote a safer digital environment for all digital users.

Table 1: *Mental Health Impact of Cyberbullying on Female Social Media Users*

Category	Percentage Affected
Emotional Distress	67%
Anxiety	58%
Depression	52%
Low Self- Esteem	45%
Social Withdrawal	38%

Source: Patchin, J. W., & Hinduja, S. (2020). *Cyberbullying: Identification, Prevention, and Response*. Routledge.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Hafeez (2014) conducted research about Cyber Harassment and its Implications on Youth in Pakistan. This study aim was to various ways of harassment on social media and social effects on the lives of youth of Pakistan. Using quantities research design, the researcher conducted survey from the (n=100) youngsters who were actively using social media. The researcher collected data from male and female. The researcher conducted that mostly young people suffer from cyber harassment in Pakistan. The

researcher advised to the parents and organization to overcome the issue of cyber harassment and also government should take steps to banned the such social media apps to prevent sexual harassment.

Ali and Shahabuddin (2022) conducted research about The Relationship between Cyberbullying and Mental Health among University Students. Aim of the study was to identify the comprehensive impacts of cyberbullying on mental health of university students and to examine how they neglected their studies. The researcher includes the 326 boys and girls of university students and researcher used the descriptive correlational techniques. The researcher collected data from boys and girls of the different of university students. The study found that do more researchers about cyberbullying in Arab areas. The researcher concluded that the person of every age aware about the cyberbullying through programs, universities schools, office and colleges.

Evangelio et. al. (2022) conducted research about cyberbullying in elementary and middle school students: A systematic review. This study aim was to analyze the studies on cyberbullying between elementary and middle school students (Grade 1-8) from 2016 to 2020 and compared between high school students. The researcher conducted a systematic search and using PRISMA guidelines and to promote quality and reliability. They identified through database searching (n=905) and their recorded screen (n=822) and studies include in the systematic review (n=32+12=43). The researcher advised to students at (early age) these began to socialized with their age fellows and used social media for their education.

Cowie (2013) conducted research about Cyberbullying and its impact on young people's emotional health well-being. Aim of the study was to examine how the cyberbullying impacts on children's and young people. The study analysis the effects based on studies and data. The researcher examines the effectiveness of common responses to cyberbullying. The study conducted a survey of 23,420 children and young people, result found that their never get cyberbullying however 5% of people get cyberbullying in a week and 4% once or twice a month and 10% less often. The researcher conducted that Whatever beneficial technological tool for cyberbullying, we can't avoid that it's an interpersonal issue that rooted in social context.

Maurya et. al. (2022) conducted research the effects of cyberbullying victimization on depression and suicidal ideation among adolescents and young adults: a three year cohort study from India. This study aim was to explored the cyberbullying victimization on depression and idea of suicide among teenagers and young people. Using research design, the researcher conducted survey in two populated areas of India Uttar Pradesh and Bihar by Population Council under the guidance of Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India. The first wave was conducted in 2015–2016, and the follow-up survey was conducted after 3 years in 2018–2019. The researcher found that It is very significant to address the cyberbullying and related mental health problems raise awareness of online harassment among teenagers and young people.

Edwards et. al. (2016) conducted research about Cyberbullying, Race/Ethnicity and Mental Health Outcomes: A Review of the literature. Aim of the study was to analyze the recent research on the cyberbullying on Hispanic, Asian and African American adolescents, exploring a disparity in comprehension that how cyberbullying effects the youth of color evaluated to the white peer. The study conducted a survey with middle school students (10-18years) about cyberbullying and race/ethnicity in youth. The study also looked the 15 articles on it. The researcher found that cyberbullying was a very important issues in youth.

Nixon (2014) conducted research about Current perspective: the impact of cyberbullying in adolescent health. This study aim was to analyzed the effects and showed for the future studies. The study found that the impacts of cyberbullying on youth are depression, anxiety, sleep distributions etc. that are very dangerous for their health. This study conducted from female and male. The researcher advised to give education in schools, universities and community at very big scale for reduced the cases of cyberbullying effects on youth.

RESEARCH MODEL



2.1 Theoretical framework

This study is grounded in Social Learning Theory (SLT) as proposed by Albert Bandura (1977) to explore female social media users' perceptions of cyberbullying and its mental health consequences. SLT suggests that individuals acquire behaviors, attitudes, and emotional reactions through observation, imitation, and modeling. Within the context of social media, this theory helps explain the perpetuation of cyberbullying behaviors and the internalization of negative experiences by victims, leading to mental health issues. Bandura (1977) emphasizes the significance of observational learning in behavior formation, suggesting that exposure to aggressive or harmful online content may influence users to replicate such behaviors or experience psychological distress. The concept of reciprocal determinism (Bandura, 1986) further supports this, highlighting how personal factors, environmental contexts, and behaviors mutually influence one another. This cycle suggests that victims of cyberbullying may develop mental health challenges, such as anxiety, depression, or low self-esteem, due to repeated exposure to negative online interactions. Moreover, Cognitive Behavioral Theory (CBT) complements SLT by addressing the role of cognitive distortions in exacerbating mental health outcomes. According to Beck (1976), negative online interactions, such as cyberbullying, may lead to maladaptive cognitive processes that worsen anxiety, depression, and stress. By integrating SLT and CBT, this framework underscores the dynamic relationship between social learning, cognitive responses, and emotional outcomes in shaping female users' perceptions of cyberbullying and its psychological impact. This dual-theoretical approach offers a comprehensive understanding of how such experiences affect mental health, which can inform preventive strategies and mental health interventions.

2.2 Research Objectives

1. To explore the relations of social media use and cyberbullying among the genders.
2. To examine the relations of social media use and cyberbullying among the different age groups.
3. To discover the relations of social media use and cyberbullying among the various education level.
4. To investigate overall perception about cyberbullying among social media users.

3. METHODOLOGY

This research adopted quantitative methodological plan to explore the perceptions of social media users about cyberbullying: consequences for mental health. Quantitative research is extremely good for researchers that search to measure postures, manners or views and centralize decision from a big selection population (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). By utilizing this strategy, the research aimed to collect organized systematic data that can be numerically examined to recognize, arrangement and relationship among who suffered cyberbullying and emotionally well-being results. Quantitative research design is productive in offering observable and equivalent data, which vital for evaluating the occurrences and the effects of cyberbullying surrounded by female users (Bryman, 2016). This technique services the gathering of criterion reactions along with questionnaire, guaranteeing stability and dependability in the outcomes (Babbie, 2022).

3.1 Population

The population for this study includes of male and female digital communities (social media) participants living in the cities of Pakistan Islamabad & Rawalpindi. The urban areas were chosen because their heterogeneous population statistics structure and increased online adoption level, which confirm a further typical selection of digital communities (social media) participants. It contains an academy pupil, adolescent specialist & different male and female who used social media, as they are additional probable to involve energetically with social media & who suffered digital cyberbullying (Lenhart et al., 2015). This population is significant due to the research goals to comprehend uncommon event and emotional well-being consequences in the city's session.

3.2 Sampling Frame

It includes male and female adolescent from colleges & universities in Rawalpindi & Islamabad. Universities were selected as fundamental areas for data gathering due their present approach to a huge, varied cluster of male specifically female digital communities who suffered from cyberbullying. By aiming at university students, the research also takes the viewpoints of social indigenous who are profoundly interconnected into digital environments. The acceptance of many colleges & universities confirm that the sample represent diversity in social, cultural, and fiscal matter history, provide to further complete insight of the problems (Saunders et al., 2019).

3.3 Sample Size and Technique

A total of 175 reactions were gathered adopting sampling procedure. Accessibility sampling was chosen because its productivity and availability, permitting the investigator to collect data rapidly from respondents who were easily obtainable and inclined to reply (Etika et al., 2016). While accessibility sampling may restrict the extensiveness of results, it provides important understanding, particularly in investigative study on delicate theme like cyberbullying. The sample size of 175 is enough for performing purposeful numerical evaluations and recognizes patterns within the data.

3.4 Data Collection

Data were collected through organized systematic questionnaire utilizing the table (Likert) to evaluate the perceptions of male and female social media users about cyberbullying and its consequences on mental health. The questionnaire spread digital (online forms) in targeted audiences to secure accessibility and widen to the larger group.

4. RESULT

Table 2: Demographics information of the Respondents

Sr.	Demographics	Options	<i>f</i>	%
1	Gender	Female	124	70.9
		Male	51	29.1
		Total	175	100.0
2	Age of respondent	16-20	16	9.1
		21-25	87	49.7
		26-30	37	21.1
		>30	35	20.0
		Total	175	100.0
3	Qualification	BS	109	62.3
		MS/M.PHIL	35	20.0
		PHD	31	17.7
		Total	175	100.0
4	Which social media	Facebook	30	17.1

platforms do you use mostly	Instagram	47	26.9
	Whats App	63	36.0
	Snapchat	35	20.0
	Total	175	100.0

Table 3: Social Media Use and Cyberbullying (Independent Variable)

Sr.	Questions	Option	f	%	M	S.D.
1.	Social media platforms actively promote awareness about cyberbullying.	Strongly Disagree	25	14.3	3.12	1.171
		Disagree	24	13.7		
		Neutral	42	24.0		
		Agree	73	41.7		
		Strongly Agree	11	6.3		
2.	Physical appearance is a frequently targeted when females are subjected to cyberbullying on social media?	Strongly Disagree	15	8.6	3.47	1.144
		Disagree	21	12.0		
		Neutral	32	18.3		
		Agree	81	46.3		
		Strongly Agree	26	14.9		
3.	Social media platforms provide adequate resources for educating users about the risks of cyberbullying.	Strongly Disagree	15	8.6	3.39	1.093
		Disagree	17	9.7		
		Neutral	48	27.4		
		Agree	74	42.3		
		Strongly Agree	21	12.0		
4.	Reporting tools for cyberbullying on social media are not effective enough.	Strongly Disagree	9	5.1	3.40	1.023
		Disagree	27	15.4		
		Neutral	40	22.9		
		Agree	83	27.4		
		Strongly Agree	16	9.1		
5.	Females face the more cyberbullying on social media as compared to males?	Strongly Disagree	8	4.6	3.80	1.067
		Disagree	12	6.9		
		Neutral	36	20.6		
		Agree	70	40.0		
		Strongly Agree	49	28.0		

Table 4: Cyberbullying effects on Mental Health

Sr.	Questions	Options	f	%	M	SD
Anxiety Level						
1.	I feel anxious about interactions on social media.	Strongly Disagree	33	18.9	2.85	1.157
		Disagree	28	16.0		
		Neutral	52	29.7		
		Agree	57	32.6		
		Strongly Agree	5	2.9		
2.	Cyberbullying has increased my anxiety levels.	Strongly Disagree	25	14.3	3.09	1.205
		Disagree	31	17.7		
		Neutral	35	20.0		
		Agree	71	40.6		
		Strongly Agree	13	7.4		
3.	Social media makes me worry about others'	Strongly Disagree	20	11.4	3.07	1.088
		Disagree	29	16.6		

	opinions of me.	Neutral	52	29.7		
		Agree	66	37.7		
		Strongly Agree	8	4.6		
4.	I feel nervous when posting on social media.	Strongly Disagree	15	8.6	3.27	1.176
		Disagree	36	20.6		
		Neutral	32	18.3		
		Agree	70	40.0		
		Strongly Agree	22	12.6		
5.	Avoid social media to reduce feelings of anxiety.	Strongly Disagree	10	5.7	3.33	1.090
		Disagree	29	16.6		
		Neutral	54	30.9		
		Agree	57	32.6		
		Strongly Agree	25	14.3		
Depression Symptoms						
1.	Cyberbullying has made me feel hopeless or sad.	Strongly Disagree	37	21.1	2.90	1.291
		Disagree	29	16.6		
		Neutral	39	22.3		
		Agree	55	31.4		
		Strongly Agree	15	8.6		
2.	Social media interactions impact my mood negatively.	Strongly Disagree	18	10.3	3.22	1.195
		Disagree	30	17.1		
		Neutral	47	26.9		
		Agree	55	31.4		
		Strongly Agree	25	14.3		
3.	I feel lonely due to negative experiences on social media.	Strongly Disagree	14	8.0	3.14	1.060
		Disagree	31	17.7		
		Neutral	60	34.3		
		Agree	56	32.0		
		Strongly Agree	14	8.0		
4.	Cyberbullying has contributed to feelings of depression.	Strongly Disagree	16	9.1	3.41	1.060
		Disagree	20	11.4		
		Neutral	36	20.6		
		Agree	83	47.4		
		Strongly Agree	20	11.4		
5.	I struggle to stay positive after experiencing cyberbullying.	Strongly Disagree	18	10.3	3.34	1.148
		Disagree	18	10.3		
		Neutral	48	27.4		
		Agree	68	38.9		
		Strongly Agree	23	13.1		
Self-esteem						
1	Negative comments on social media affect my self-esteem.	Strongly Disagree	29	16.6	2.94	1.192
		Disagree	32	18.3		
		Neutral	44	25.1		
		Agree	60	34.3		
		Strongly Agree	10	5.7		
2	Cyberbullying has caused me to doubt myself.	Strongly Disagree	24	13.7	3.03	1.172
		Disagree	33	18.9		
		Neutral	44	25.1		
		Agree	62	35.4		
		Strongly Agree	12	6.9		

3	I feel less confident due to interactions on social media.	Strongly Disagree	20	11.4	3.13	1.192
		Disagree	35	20.0		
		Neutral	42	24.0		
		Agree	59	33.7		
		Strongly Agree	19	10.9		
4	Social media makes me compare myself unfavorably to others	Strongly Disagree	23	13.11	3.23	1.230
		Disagree	23	13.11		
		Neutral	43	24.6		
		Agree	62	35.4		
		Strongly Agree	24	13.7		
5	I feel judged by others on social media	Strongly Disagree	24	13.7	3.05	1.181
		Disagree	31	17.7		
		Neutral	46	26.3		
		Agree	60	34.3		
		Strongly Agree	14	8.0		

Sleep Disturbances

1	I lose sleep thinking about negative interactions on social media.	Strongly Disagree	43	24.6	2.70	1.256
		Disagree	34	19.4		
		Neutral	38	21.7		
		Agree	52	29.7		
		Strongly Agree	8	4.6		
2	Cyberbullying affects my ability to fall asleep.	Strongly Disagree	29	16.6	3.00	1.246
		Disagree	31	17.7		
		Neutral	43	24.6		
		Agree	55	31.4		
		Strongly Agree	17	9.7		
3	I check social media frequently at night, affecting my sleep.	Strongly Disagree	22	12.6	3.22	1.218
		Disagree	27	15.4		
		Neutral	37	21.1		
		Agree	68	38.9		
		Strongly Agree	21	12.0		
4	Disturbing content on social media has impacted my sleep quality.	Strongly Disagree	24	13.7	3.22	1.208
		Disagree	21	12.0		
		Neutral	42	24.0		
		Agree	69	39.4		
		Strongly Agree	19	10.9		
5	I wake up during the night thinking about social media conflicts.	Strongly Disagree	31	17.7	3.03	1.321
		Disagree	33	18.9		
		Neutral	33	18.9		
		Agree	55	31.4		
		Strongly Agree	23	13.1		

Trust in Online Interactions

1	Cyberbullying has made me distrust online interactions	Strongly Disagree	35	20.0	2.86	1.188
		Disagree	26	14.9		
		Neutral	49	28.0		
		Agree	59	33.7		
		Strongly Agree	6	3.4		
2	I hesitate to share personal information online due to cyberbullying.	Strongly Disagree	22	12.6	3.22	1.209
		Disagree	24	13.7		
		Neutral	44	25.1		

3	I feel unsafe interacting with strangers on social media.	Agree	63	36.0	3.44	1.064
		Strongly Agree	22	12.6		
		Strongly Disagree	12	6.9		
		Disagree	19	10.9		
		Neutral	46	26.3		
4	I am cautious about forming online relationships due to cyberbullying	Agree	76	43.4	3.52	1.066
		Strongly Agree	22	12.6		
		Strongly Disagree	13	7.4		
		Disagree	16	9.1		
		Neutral	35	20.0		
5	Negative online experiences have reduced my trust in social media communities	Agree	89	50.9	3.47	1.144
		Strongly Agree	22	12.6		
		Strongly Disagree	17	9.7		
		Disagree	14	8.0		
		Neutral	41	23.4		
		Agree	76	43.4		
		Strongly Agree	15.4	15.4		

Table 5: *Correlations among the variables*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	M	SD
Gender	1						1.29	.456
Age	.117	1					2.52	.915
Qualification	.028	.497**	1				1.55	.778
Mostly used social media	.102	.116	.118	1			2.59	.995
SM Cyberbullying (IV)	.129	.292**	.292**	.113	1		17.4571	4.03820
Mental Health (DV)	.166*	.197**	.219**	.100	.435**	1	78.6971	18.47256

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

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

The table presents the descriptive statistics and inter-correlations among the study variables, including gender, age, qualification, the most frequently used social media platform, cyberbullying experiences (independent variable), and mental health outcomes (dependent variable). Pearson correlation coefficients indicate significant associations among several variables. Notably, cyberbullying is positively correlated with mental health concerns ($r = .435$, $p < .01$). Mean (M) and standard deviation (SD) values suggest variation across demographic factors and psychological measures. Age and qualification exhibit moderate correlation ($r = .497$, $p < .01$), while gender shows weaker associations with other variables. These findings provide insight into the interplay between demographic factors, cyberbullying, and mental health.

Table 6: *Sample T-test for gender comparison*

	Test Value = 0					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Gender	37.488	174	.000	1.291	1.22	1.36
D_V	56.357	174	.000	78.69714	75.9411	81.4532

The table presents the results of a one-sample t-test, assessing whether the mean values of the given variables significantly differ from zero. The results indicate a statistically significant difference for gender

($t = 37.488$, $df = 174$, $p < .001$, $M = 1.291$, 95% CI [1.22, 1.36]) and the dependent variable (DV) ($t = 56.357$, $df = 174$, $p < .001$, $M = 78.69714$, 95% CI [75.9411, 81.4532]). These findings suggest substantial deviations from zero for both variables.

Table 7: *One-Way ANOVA for age comparison*

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2977.931	3	992.644	3.010	.032
Within Groups	56397.018	171	329.807		
Total	59374.949	174			

The table presents the results of a one-way ANOVA, evaluating differences among groups on the dependent variable. The analysis reveals a statistically significant effect ($F = 3.010$, $df = 3, 171$, $p = .032$), indicating that at least one group differs significantly. The between-groups variance ($SS = 2977.931$, $MS = 992.644$) contrasts with the within-groups variance ($SS = 56,397.018$, $MS = 329.807$), highlighting meaningful variation across groups.

Table 8: *One-Way ANOVA for Education comparison*

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	7518.714	2	3759.357	12.469	.000
Within Groups	51856.234	172	301.490		
Total	59374.949	174			

The table presents the results of a one-way ANOVA, assessing differences across three groups. The analysis indicates a statistically significant effect ($F = 12.469$, $df = 2, 172$, $p < .001$), suggesting that at least one group significantly differs. The between-groups variance ($SS = 7518.714$, $MS = 3759.357$) is notably higher than the within-groups variance ($SS = 51,856.234$, $MS = 301.490$), highlighting meaningful group differences.

5. DISCUSSION

These findings yield crucial knowledge concerning the adverse impact of cyberbullying on the psychological well-being of female social media users. The findings confirm the association between cyberbullying and increasing anxiety, low self-esteem, sleep issues, and mistrust over online interactions. These results concur with earlier studies that established internet harassment as a severe psychological distress causer among women (Patchin & Hinduja, 2015).

This research uses the Social Learning Theory suggested by Bandura (1977) to explain how cyberbullying in social media affects the mental health outcomes for women. The very nature of this theory maintains that human beings learn behavior through watching and interactive function with others. Thus, repetitive exposure to cyberbullying may predispose women to emotional distress such as anxiety and depression. This research has found that women who are the targets of cyberbullying tend to develop several forms of mental disorders with reference to the present anxiety and depressive symptoms. This supports the earlier findings that online victimization is a serious risk for psychological problems among young women (Kowalski et al., 2018).

The survey findings further highlight the level of impact of cyberbullying on the mental health of persons. Interestingly, 11.4% disagreed with the argument that social media gives them anxiety about others' opinions. At the same time, 37.7% of the female respondents stated that they feel anxious when posting on social media. Equally noteworthy is that 83% of the cyberbullied women in the survey indicated that they showed depressive symptoms, thus reporting that online harassment could have dire consequences on psychological well-being. In consonance with a study by Smith et al. (2020), victims of cyberbullying appear to suffer more emotional distress, loneliness, and self-doubt.

In most cases, research identifies female social media consumers who are targeted based on bodily appearances. The research further aligns with existing findings that body shaming and body insults fall under the categories of general online abuse forms (Ditch the Label 2019). Such experiences lead to low self-esteem, greater mental health issues, and withdrawal from social life and emotional anguish. The untrustworthiness of the interaction in the virtual space further fuels the problem because of rampant scams, online harassment, and deception sending female users down to the pit of emotional despair.

At large, the results of this study prove that significant correlation exists between cyber bullying and decline in mental health, particularly among female social media users. The scope of the negative effects of cyber bullying goes beyond the emotional suffering and into psychological and physical wellbeing. These findings indicate that there is a need for a more stringent online policy for security, increased awareness campaigns, and better mental health care for victims of cyber bullying. Future studies should evaluate interventional measures to reduce these adverse effects and create a safer online space for all.

It was found that those uses of social media female targets are usually that of the users based on the discussions of their physical appearance. This agrees with previous research that body shaming and body insults comprise a specific top-level form or category of general online abuse (Ditch the Label, 2019). Such experiences lead to poor self-esteem and increasing mental health issues that finally push one away from social life to depression; distasteful relationships, hollow friendships turn their lives into even filling voids with ambiguity. Untrustworthy interactions in the virtual space further aggravate the problem, because scams, online harassment, and deception only push female users further down into desperation.

Overall, this study validates the important correlation between cyberbullying and the decline in mental health, particularly for many female social media users. The negative effects of cyberbullying are found beyond emotional damage because psychological and physical health can also be affected. These findings highlight the need for stricter online safety policies, awareness campaigns, and better mental health management for victims of cyberbullying. Future studies should engage with measures of intervention that can mitigate these negative impacts and provide a safer space online for all.

6. CONCLUSION

This research strongly emphasizes the weighty negative impact exerted by cyberbullying upon the psychological well-being of social media users. The findings further demonstrate a solid relationship between incidences of cyberbullying and adverse effects upon the psyche, which tilts the scales toward this matter being a growing concern in harassment online and the well-being implications thereof. The test statistics reveal that the victims of cyberbullying have a higher level of psychological distress, denoting anxiety, depression, and lower self-esteem. These conclusions are congruent with previous studies that have consistently found that cyberbullying is associated with emotional distress, social isolation, and, in the extreme instances, suicidal ideation.

Additionally, the research stresses the all-around nature of cyberbullying across numerous online platforms. For these reasons, the increased reliance on computer-mediated communication exposes users to greater risks of online harassment while offering little in the way of redress and support towards alleviating the results. The anonymity and widespread nature of social media further aggravate the situation, since it then becomes so easy to abuse targets without any feeling of consequences until the abuse becomes too horrible to bear. In other words, there needs to be a greater push for policies and measures to curb and turn against cyberbullying.

Psychologically, this research posits the need for the mental health education of victims of cyberbullying and support networks. An alliance among social media platforms, policymakers, and specialists in mental health is required to enhance safety in online spaces through stringent enforcement of content moderation

policies, educational awareness campaigns, and psychological support services. Empowering educational initiatives promoting users' digital literacy and resilience can also mitigate the adverse impacts of cyberbullying.

In short, this research offers strong proof that cyberbullying is anathema to mental health. It must, therefore, be tackled through a multi-faceted response, including policies to reform the cyberspace; access to mental health care for affected victims; and raising public consciousness about the drawbacks of cyberbullying. Future studies should focus on investigating long-term psychological repercussions of cyberbullying and the development of effective counteracting mechanisms aimed at making cyber space safe and friendly for all users.

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Conflict of Interest

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