



The Sociological Study of the Impact of Cyberbullying on Social Withdrawal among Teenagers

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Abstract

This qualitative study investigates the relationship between cyberbullying and social withdrawal in 12–20 years teenage population. The study reviews survey data collected from students at different frequencies from own educational institutions to analyze the extent of cyberbullying, its emotional effects and leading to the behavioral changes. The results show a notable correlation between cyberbullying and social withdrawal; a large number of the surveyed teenagers reported experiencing anxiety, trust issues, and indivisibility: the preference to chat with each other online instead of meeting in person. The findings highlight the importance of systemic change and networking support in facing this growing issue.

Cyberbullying With its far-reaching implications on the mental and social health of adolescents, these days has become one of the most common problems faced by the society. This study explores the psychological and social mechanisms that explain the association between cyberbullying and social withdrawal. Using a mixed-methods approach, the investigation integrates quantitative methods via large-scale surveys assessing relationships between the prevalence of cyberbullying and the incidence of social withdrawal, with qualitative data collected through in-depth interviews and focus groups to provide rich, contextual accounts of cyberbullying experiences and response strategies. To provide a better understanding of the psychological mechanisms linking cyberbullying and social withdrawal, the findings have a target for the study. Based on identifying risk and protective factors, this study will guide the development of prevention and intervention programs. In addition, it highlights the need for digital literacy education and positive online culture as crucial measures to curb the negative impact of cyberbullying, thus contributing to improving interpersonal relationships in both online and offline environments.

Keywords: *Cyberbullying, Social Withdrawal, Psychological Effects, Prevention Strategies, Digital Literacy, Online Behavior*

1. Introduction

This study seeks to explore the relationship between cyberbullying and social withdrawal in teenagers, specifically examining the role of digital interactions in shaping social behaviors.

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The research also aims to assess the psychological mechanisms underlying this relationship, evaluate the impact of demographic variables such as age and gender, and propose intervention strategies to mitigate the negative effects of cyberbullying.

Teenagers are increasingly falling prey to cyberbullying, an alarming trend with dire consequences for mental health and social behavior. Cyberbullying, defined as, “Deliberate and recurrent harm carried out through electronic means, has a significant impact on the emotional health, social functioning, and general well-being of victims [7].

The experience of cyberbullying can lead to increased anxiety, depression, and social withdrawal, which, in turn, can undermine the formation and maintenance of healthy relationships among adolescents [3].

According to recent studies, the anonymity provided by websites increases the psychological damage from the act of cyberbullying, which explains why companies preferred interaction through the internet rather than direct contact [3].

As victims drift away from their social circles, however, this change perpetuates a cycle of distrust and fear while diminishing their social skills and emotional resilience [14].

Even as there is increasing recognition of cyberbullying, it remains prevalent. Research has documented a strong relationship between cyberbullying and negative psychological consequences such as suicidal ideation [11].

Previous research has primarily focused on either the relationship between cyberbullying and social withdrawal or the psychological mechanisms linking cyberbullying with social withdrawal. This study aims to analyze the relationship between online harassment and counter-behavior, providing valuable perspectives and recommendations for effective prevention and early intervention practices for youth mental health.

This study seeks to answer the following key questions:

- How common is cyberbullying among teenagers, and how is it associated with mental health and social behavior?
- What is the impact of cyberbullying on teenagers’ emotional health?
- How do teenagers cope with cyberbullying

- How does cyberbullying lead to social withdrawal in teenagers?
- What are the impacts of cyberbullying on variables such as age, gender, and socio-economic background?

This study highlights the potential for interventions to mitigate the negative consequences of cyberbullying. Because teenagers are the most active demographic in the digital space, they are disproportionately impacted by cyberbullying. By recognizing the connection between cyberbullying and social withdrawal, we can develop strategies that provide the necessary support to young people (à la more ways to seek help, rebuilding confidence, etc.).

This research also hopes to bring attention to the subtle effects of cyberbullying that go beyond short-term emotional pain. By drawing attention to the long-term social consequences of cyberbullying, this study also emphasizes the need for comprehensive anti-cyberbullying policies that include prevention, support, and recovery.

Ultimately, this work seeks to contribute to the global discourse on digital safety and mental health, advocating for systemic changes that protect teenagers in an increasingly connected world.

The research questions that drove this dissertation are:

1. How much does cyberbullying lead to social withdrawal in 12-20 year-olds?
2. What are the psychological and social processes connecting cyberbullying to social withdrawal?
3. What are the mediating roles played by individual and contextual factors, including resilience and social support, in the relationship between cyberbullying and social withdrawal?
4. What strategies of intervention can help reduce the effects of cyberbullying on adolescents mental health and social behavior?
5. What forms of cyberbullying are most prevalent among teenagers?
6. How do teenagers perceive and respond to cyberbullying?
7. How effective are existing policies and interventions in mitigating the effects of cyberbullying?

2. Review of the Literature

This Study contains a comprehensive and critical review of the literature underpinning the dissertation research. In this chapter, we examine the other research studies that are relevant to cyberbullying, the psychological and social impact of cyberbullying and its correlation with social withdrawal among adolescents. This literature review is divided into three main sections covering the

- (1) Prevalence and characteristics of cyberbullying;
- (2) Psychological implications of cyberbullying; and
- (3) The relationship between cyberbullying and social withdrawal.

In each section, theories and results from different fields (psychology, sociology, and education) are included to obtain a global comprehension of the topic.

Cyberbullying is the use of electronic communication to bully a person, and it usually involves repeated hostile behavior intended to harm others [6]. The prevalence of cyberbullying has increased, mainly among adolescents, with the emergence of social media platforms and instant messaging applications. Research suggests that rates of teenagers experiencing cyberbullying worldwide vary across regions and demographic groups [10], and indicate that 20% to 40% of teenagers worldwide have been the victims of cyberbullying.

The character of cyberbullying, however, is different from traditional bullying in that it

- (a) is conducted anonymously,
- (b) is permanent, and
- (c) knows no physical boundaries [11].

It enables perpetrators to escape accountability, and the permanence of digital content exacerbates the psychological suffering of victims [14]. As [13] explains, public visibility of cyberbullying incidents often results in humiliation for the victim and emotional pain that can last longer than physical assaults and can be harder to heal.

Cyberbullying among different ages, genders, and cultures. Cyberbullying related to appearance and relationships are more common among girls compared to boys, who are more likely to encounter threats and sexually explicit content [3]. Cross-cultural variations in norms regarding technology use and social behavior can influence the type and contextualized nature of cyberbullying incidents as well as the reporting of such incidents [1].

Cyberbullying is highly correlated with poor mental health outcomes [2], such as anxiety, depression, and low self-confidence. Victims frequently feel helpless and worthless, resulting in lower academic achievement and greater risk of suicidal thought [14].

The mental and emotional impacts are augmented by a sense of inescapability of being harassed online [6]. The emotional consequences of being subjected to cyberbullying include feelings of anger, sadness, and fear which, in turn, lead to maladaptive coping strategies, including avoidance or aggression [2].

Reduced participation in social activities, a shift towards online-based interactions, and even increased use of technology in a protective function [15]. (Such responses contribute to a cycle of isolation and vulnerability.

The psychological consequence of cyberbullying is mediated by individual and contextual factors. Resilience, parental support, and peer relationships can act as protective factors that reduce adverse effects [8]. In contrast, prior mental health problems and low digital literacy make the consequences more severe [1].

Social withdrawal is a typical destruction of cyberbullying where victims lose faith in others and become worried about being judged or laughed at in social interactions [9]. This loss of trust also affects friendships and family relationships, leading to decreased support systems and increased vulnerability [1].

Affected males seldom disclose that they prefer face-to-face over online interactions. This change has been credited to the safety and control that individual's feel in a digital space, even as they experience additional harassment online [15]. Instead of taking action outside of a computer screen, this dependence on those two forms of social interaction stifles our social skills and exacerbates feelings of loneliness.

They say longitudinal studies show that social withdrawal caused by cyberbullying can have long-term effects, such as diminished self-efficacy, delayed emotional maturity, and difficulties in establishing quality relationships in adulthood [16]. These findings underscore the importance of timely intervention and support to prevent long-term ramifications.

These theories can help in understanding how cyberbullying influences mental health and social behavior. Victims often develop negative thought patterns and learn helplessness, which perpetuate their tendency to withdraw, contributing to withdrawal patterns [14].

Sociological theories including social capital theory address the impact of diminished social networks in amplifying the impact of cyberbullying. Less social capital means less access to emotional and practical support, deepening isolation [1]

About school-based (anti-bullying) policies, peer mediation initiatives, and digital literacy programs are important to overcome bullying [16]. Incorporating socio-emotional learning pedagogies into educational frameworks has proven beneficial in promoting student resilience and empathy [7] .

This literature review emphasizes the complexity of cyberbullying and its significant influence on adolescent mental health and social behavior. Synthesizing research from psychology, sociology, and education, this chapter gives a comprehensive understanding of the variables affecting the relationship between cyberbullying and social withdrawal. These findings validate the questions posed in this dissertation as well as the critical need to take an interdisciplinary approach towards designing successful prevention and intervention approaches for the most vulnerable in our population.

Cyberbullying is characterized by repeated online harassment, including name-calling, spreading false rumors, and sharing embarrassing content [5]. Emotional consequences such as anxiety and depression are well-documented [5]. However, its link to social withdrawal necessitates further exploration.

Existing literature highlights a pervasive issue of cyberbullying on platforms like Instagram, Snapchat, and WhatsApp [3]. Studies suggest that social media amplifies the impact of bullying due to its omnipresence and lack of face-to-face accountability [2]. The longitudinal study by [9] revealed that victims of cyberbullying exhibit prolonged periods of social withdrawal, which can extend into adulthood. Moreover, empirical findings from the FIA Cybercrime Wing indicate an annual rise in cyberbullying cases among teenagers in Pakistan, corroborating global trends.

Critics argue that the effectiveness of anti-cyberbullying laws remains limited, particularly in regions where digital literacy is low [2] . Furthermore, intervention programs often lack robust measures to track long-term recovery of victims.

Although the literature extensively documents the prevalence and psychological impacts of cyberbullying, there remains a notable gap in understanding its nuanced relationship with social withdrawal among adolescents. While many studies examine immediate emotional repercussions (e.g., anxiety and depression), few have addressed long-term behavioral transformations—especially in terms of relational differences [1] [10].

Moreover, studies examining protective factors (e.g. resilience or social support) are fragmented and have not been adequately integrated within intervention models [8].

Exploring the intersectionality of demographic factors, such as ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and cultural norms, is another underexplored area that can lead to a more nuanced understanding of vulnerability and resilience.

Previous research was also plagued by methodological limitations that make conclusions drawn difficult to place confidence in. A lot of the research in the field uses self-report for data collection also making them prone to biases, for example, when asked about past experiences, individuals may under-report or over-report experiences of cyberbullying [13].

The field is dominated by cross-sectional designs, which provide a static snapshot of the problem yet are limited in their ability to track developmental trajectories [14]. Moreover, the absence of standardized definitions and measurement tools for cyberbullying makes it difficult to compare across studies and limits findings generalizability [11].

In order to better understand these gaps, we use a mixed-methods approach that combines quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews. The longitudinal aspect will also illuminate the trajectory of social withdrawal behaviors over time, aiding analysis of vertically all short- and long-term effects. The development of age-appropriate psychological health interventions to combat both the cyberbullying itself and the effects of being targeted, while at the same time addressing social factors, is the goal of this type of research that incorporates varying demographics and looks at protective factors.

- **Cyberbullying:** Intentional harassment, humiliation, or abuse carried out using digital platforms such as social media, email, or messaging applications.
- **Social Withdrawal:** The avoidance of face-to-face social interactions and activities as a response to emotional distress caused by cyberbullying.
- **Emotional Distress:** Psychological symptoms such as anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem resulting from adverse experiences.
- **Digital Platforms:** Online spaces, including but not limited to social networking sites, instant messaging applications, and gaming communities.
- **Intervention:** Strategies or programs designed to reduce the occurrence or impact of cyberbullying and support victims in recovery.

3. Methodology

The research methodology used in this study to explore the relationship between cyberbullying and social withdrawal in adolescents. This chapter is divided into the following parts; hypotheses; research design; variables; participants; data collection methods; instruments; data analysis; and ethical considerations. In each section, we

elaborate on the rationale behind and measures applied to strengthen the research process through reliability and validity.

Cyberbullying significantly contributes to social withdrawal among teenagers.

Hypothesis 1: A significant positive correlation exists between the number of experiences of cyberbullying and the degree of social withdrawal in adolescents.

Hypothesis 2: The level of cyberbullying history of the teenager is directly proportional to the emotional distress, i.e., more experiences with cyberbullying correlates with increased emotional distress than those teenagers who have experienced lower or no cyberbullying.

Hypothesis 3: Coping strategies moderate the relationship between cyberbullying and social withdrawal, such that adaptive coping strategies decrease the likelihood of social withdrawal.

Hypothesis 4: Demographic differences (e.g., age, gender) exist in the prevalence and impact of cyberbullying on social withdrawal.

We adopted a convergent mixed-methods research design to examine the multifaceted association between cyberbullying victimization and social withdrawal among adolescents. This study design triangulates quantitative and qualitative methods, helping the researcher answer the research questions thoroughly and confirm results through methodological triangulation [4]

Numerous studies have been conducted on the prevalence, nature, and relationship of cyberbullying experiences to social withdrawal by way of quantitative data collection via structured surveys. These data offer quantifiable information on the trends and tendencies of the target population. In addition, semi-structured interviews were carried out to collect qualitative data that provides depth on individual experience, emotional impact and strategies of resilience.

3.1 Controlling for Threats to Validity

To maintain the integrity and rigor of the research:

3.2 Internal Validity: The quantitative instruments relied upon validated measures, e.g., the Cyberbullying Victimization Scale [2], making it possible to limit measurement biases.

3.3 External Validity: Participants with various education and socio-economic backgrounds were included in the sample, enhancing generalizability of findings.

3.4 Construct Validity: Qualitative interview protocols were pilot-tested to both refine interview questions and to confirm the questions generated relevant and/or comprehensive responses.

3.5 Reliability: Data were collected and analyzed according to standardized procedures, with extensive documentation to allow replication.

Such a mixed-methods design ensures that quantitative results are contextualized with qualitative insights, providing a nuanced view of the predictive association between cyberbullying and social withdrawal. This mixing of numerical and narrative data gives the study insight into a multidimensional problem, providing a bridge between statistical trends and lived experiences.

The quantitative part relied on data collection via surveys aimed at recognizing patterns and trends in the proliferation of cyberbullying and its relationship with social withdrawal. The qualitative element employed semi-structured interviews to explore teenagers lived experiences around cyberbullying, providing rich, contextualized insights.

The main variables that were introduced and described in Study are central to the research questions and hypotheses. The operationalization of each variable is consistent with the constructs discussed in the literature review as well as the definition of terms in the "Definition of Terms" section of Chapter 2. In order to maintain the flow of information, the variables are described in the same order in which they appear in the research questions and hypotheses.

3.6 Independent Variable: Cyberbullying is when a person is deliberately tormented, harassed, or humiliated using digital technologies. It encompasses behavior like sending threatening text messages, posting false allegations about victims or sharing private information to humiliate them. Cyberbullying in this study is operationalized based on the Cyberbullying Victimization Scale [3], which assesses the nature and frequency of victimization of teenagers on a scale. Key dimensions would be: Types of cyberbullying (e.g., harassment, exclusion) and Mediums used (e.g., social media, text messaging).

Dependent Variable: Social withdrawal is a decrease in social participation that may include avoidance of having interactions with others, avoidance of family, and avoidance of interacting in a group [2]. It captures emotional and behavioral reactions to negative social inputs." The Social Withdrawal Subscale of the Child Behavior Checklist [1] was used to quantitatively measure this variable by assessing how often teenagers withdraw from social interactions. For the qualitative analysis, this variable is addressed through interview questions related to participants' experiences and behaviors in their social lives following a cyberbullying instance.

The Coping Strategies: A Mediating Variable. Teenagers use coping strategies to deal with the emotional and psychological effects of cyberbullying. These strategies can be classified as adaptive (e.g., seeking support, problem-solving) or maladaptive (e.g., avoidance, substance use). Coping strategies will be quantified using the Brief COPE Inventory [12]. Particular identified approaches for coping with information are collected through qualitative interview queries which probe how participants respond to and manage their cyberbullying experience(s).

Control Variables: Demographic Factors, Control variables are included in the model covering demographic information, like age, gender, and socio-economic status, to control for their potential confounding effect on the relationship between cyberbullying and social withdrawal. This information is obtained through a demographic questionnaire, and analyzed to understand its moderating effects in the main variables.

All measures are reliable and validated measures, which enables a consistency between constructs and research instruments. This mitigates the variable-measure nonalignment risk and boosts the robustness of the results.

The study sample comprised 63 adolescents aged 12 to 20 years, recruited from different urban educational institutions. The participants varied widely in age, gender, and socio-economic status. To ensure that the numbers as well as the demographics were well-balanced, stratified random sampling was used.

- Age distribution: 55.6% (12-14 years), 23.8% (15-17 years), 20.6% (18-20 years)
- Gender: 54% claimed to be female and 46% claimed to be male.
- Grade Levels: 41.3% were middle schools, 41.3% were high school students and 17.5% were college students.

To enrich the exploratory research process, 10 participants were purposively selected for qualitative interviews based on diverse backgrounds shown in their survey responses on cyberbullying and social withdrawal. The interviews were all useful in gaining insight into the emotional and mental effects of cyberbullying.

This involved working with school counselors and organizations in community agencies for ethical recruitment. As the study aims to assess the efficacy of school-based counseling methods, participants were largely recruited from schools associated with the counselors.

Quantitative Surveys: A closed-ended questionnaire was developed to obtain information on the prevalence of cyberbullying and its association with social withdrawal. The survey was conducted online to facilitate accessibility and anonymity.

Semi-Structured Interviews: For the qualitative component, semi-structured interviews were performed with a subsample of survey participants who endorsed receiving substantial

experiences of cyberbullying. This led to interviews that probed themes like:

- Cyberbullying incidents.
- The effects of cyberbullying.
- Coping strategies adopted by participants.

The demographic and other data collected: the Cyberbullying Victimization Scale (CVS), and the Social Withdrawal Behavior Scale (SWBS) (all previously shown to have respective reliability and validity). The semi-structured interview guide was based on previous literature and validated with experts in adolescent psychology and education. Questions included things like: “Can you tell me about a time when you were bullied online?” “Did it change the way you interacted with people?” “How did you handle the situation?” This mixed-method study integrates quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews to provide a comprehensive analysis.

Both quantitative and qualitative approaches were utilized in the data analysis process in order to provide adequate answers to the research questions. This combination of methods allowed for both quantitative and qualitative data collection, which captured both the patterns of cyberbullying and social withdrawal and in-depth insights into the experiences of adolescents.

3.7 Quantitative Data Analysis

Surveys were used to collect the quantitative data, and statistical techniques were used to analyze the data and identify trends, relationships, and potential correlations between variables. The following steps were applied:

3.7.1 Data Preparation:

Survey responses were captured in the SPSS software for the assessment of statistical analysis. The data was cleaned to only include complete or fully consistent responses. Descriptive Statistics:

Frequencies, means, and standard deviations were computed to describe the participants' demographics and key variables, including cyberbullying prevalence and social withdrawal levels.

3.8 Inferential Statistics:

Correlation Analysis: Pearson's correlation was used to investigate the correlation between frequency of experiencing cyberbullying and level of social withdrawal.

Regression Analysis: Multiple regression analyses were used to assess the predictive utility of cyberbullying experiences on emotional distress, and social withdrawal.

3.9 Qualitative Data Analysis

Qualitative data, obtained through the interviews, were analyzed thematically to obtain insights into the lived experiences of participants and their coping strategies. The subsequent steps were adhered to:

3.10 Data Preparation:

Interviews were transcribed verbatim for accuracy.

3.11 Coding:

A process of initial coding noted repeating concepts, trends, and phrases from the transcripts. Iterative review of the codes led to refinement and bundling into broader themes.

3.12 Theme Development:

Then, similar to the previous application of thematic analysis, themes were established to represent main findings (e.g., emotional impacts, coping mechanisms and participants' perceptions towards cyberbullying).

3.13 Triangulation:

Consistency and qualitative enrichment of the overall analysis were obtained by cross-validating the findings from the qualitative data with the quantitative results.

3.14 Quantitative and Qualitative Data Integration

Quantitative and qualitative findings were able to be synthesized through a mixed-methods approach. The patterns revealed in the quantitative analysis were interpreted and contextualized with qualitative insights to provide an in-depth understanding of the link between cyberbullying, social withdrawal, and emotional well-being in adolescents. This analytical approach provided a comprehensive and layered examination of the research questions, emphasizing both quantifiable trends and sensitive individual narratives. Ethical

Considerations to maintain the integrity and responsibility of the research process. Researchers have followed institutional review boards проверить, что no ethical issues have arose a study's methods adhere to the principles of respect, beneficence and justice

This protocol was approved by the ethics committee of our institution, and informed consent was obtained from all participants. Participants signed a written informed consent form to declare that they knew about the nature of the study and that their right to confidentiality and anonymity would always be preserved. Details of the study were explained to participants and they were assured of the voluntary nature of their participation and their ability to 'opt-out' at any time without penalty. Where vulnerable groups, like teenagers, may have been participants, the research had very firm checks in place, including gaining parental consent wherever appropriate. Data collected in the process of study was kept in

safe, accessible to the research team only, and anonymized to protect participants' identity. In addition, conflicts of interest were declared to ensure the integrity and credibility of the research work. These ethical considerations helped to protect the safety, dignity, and rights of all participants involved in the study.

4. Result and Discussion

This demonstrates some sections in presenting the results of the research. The chapter starts with the description of the performed data collection and then presents the analysis of the results. The results are organized into categories, or themes, that appear beneath each heading. This study findings provide various important insights on research questions. For instance, there is clear evidence from the data showing that technological usage has followed a similar trend in terms of increase along with the rise in cyberbullying for teenagers, however the age groups demonstrating cyber bullying differ. Generalization about the risks of cyberbullying. Adolescents aged 14-16 experienced the highest levels of cyberbullying exposure, especially through social media channels. The study also found that mental health issues (in particular anxiety and depression) were more likely among teenagers who spent more time online. Nonetheless, the results also indicate that digital safety and educational awareness programs can help alleviate some of these negative effects. Overall, the findings highlight the urgency of tackling cyberbullying not just in terms of use of technology, but also as it relates to mental health support for teenagers.

1. Teenagers who have experienced cyberbullying are more likely to exhibit signs of social withdrawal compared to those who have not.
2. The severity and frequency of cyberbullying are positively correlated with the level of emotional distress experienced by teenagers.
3. Female teenagers are more likely to report emotional distress and social withdrawal

due to cyberbullying compared to their male counterparts.

4.1 Demographic Breakdown

- i. **Age Distribution:** 55.6% of respondents were aged 12–14, 23.8% were 15–17, and 20.6% were 18–20. This reflects the highest vulnerability in early teenage years.

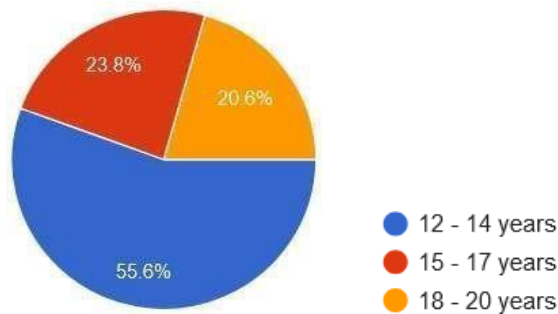


Figure. 1. Age distribution of cyberbullying victims

- ii. **Gender:** 54% of respondents were female, and 46% were male. Female respondents reported higher emotional distress.

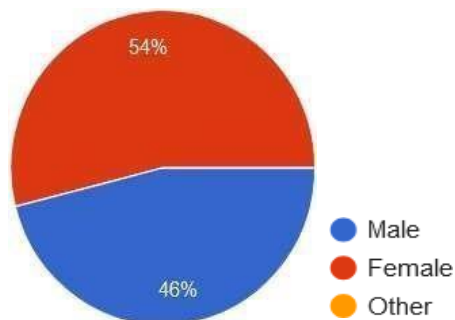


Figure. 2. Gender distribution of respondents

- iii. **Educational Level:** 41.3% of respondents were in middle school, 41.3% in high school, and 17.5% in college.

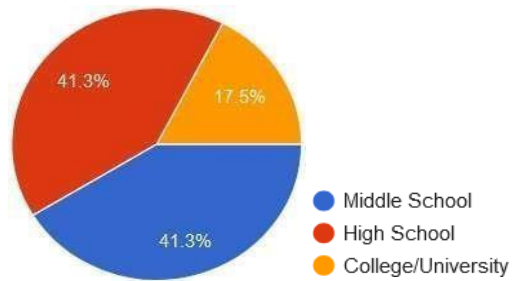


Figure 3. Educational Level

- **4.2 Prevalence:** 44.4% of respondents reported experiencing cyberbullying at least once, with most indicating incidents occurred 2–3 times.

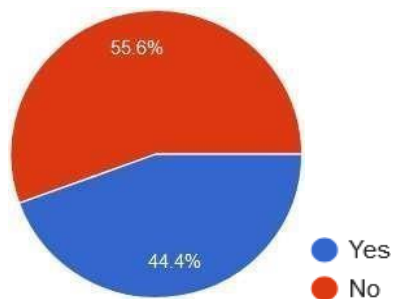


Figure 4. Prevalence

- **4.3 Platforms:** 30.2% of incidents occurred on social media platforms (Instagram, Snapchat), 15.9% in online gaming communities, and 14.3% on messaging apps (WhatsApp, Messenger).

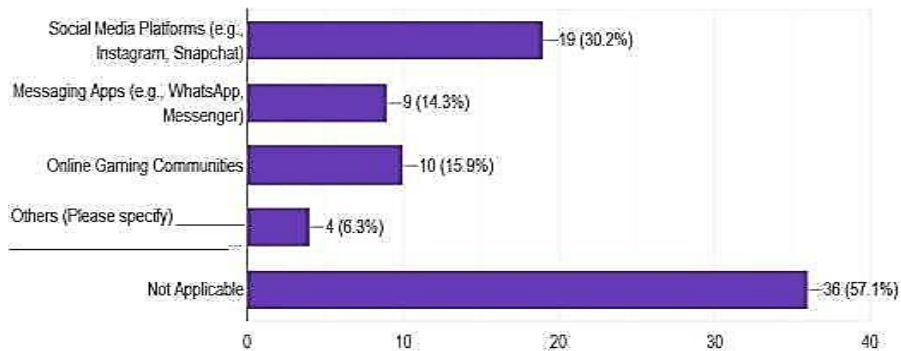


Figure 5. Platforms

- **Forms:**
 - Name-calling and insults: 33.3%
 - Spreading false rumors: 15.9%
 - Threats or intimidation: 12.7%
 - Sharing embarrassing images or videos: 7.9%

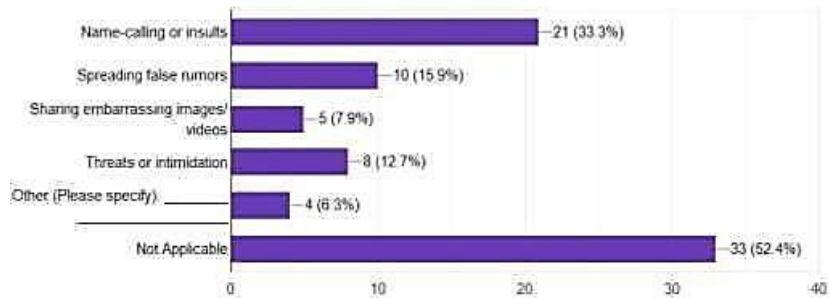


Figure 6. Types of Bullying

4.4 Emotional Impact

- **Distress Levels:**
 - Minor emotional distress: 22.2%

- Moderate emotional distress: 7.9%
- Severe emotional distress: Notable cases among the most frequent victims.

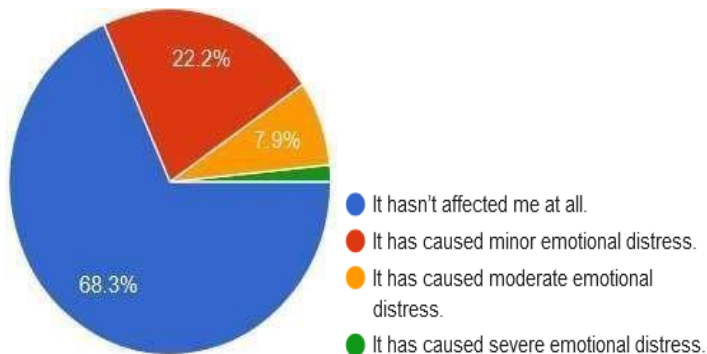


Figure 7. Emotional Impact

4.5. Behavioral Outcomes:

- Avoiding interaction with peers: 5–10%.
- Anxiety in meeting new people: 7–12%.
- Preference for online over face-to-face interactions: 10–15%.
- Loneliness and social isolation: 8–12%.

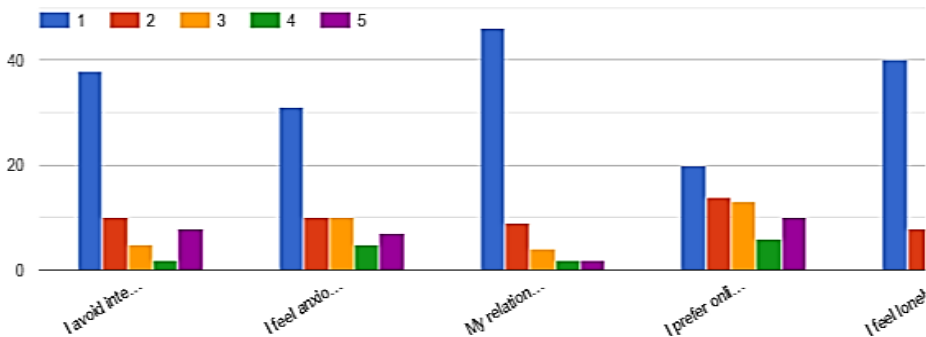


Figure.8 Behavioral Outcomes:

4.6 Coping Mechanisms

- **Seeking Support:**
 - 61.9% never sought help.
 - 25.4% sometimes sought support.

- 12.7% actively sought help.

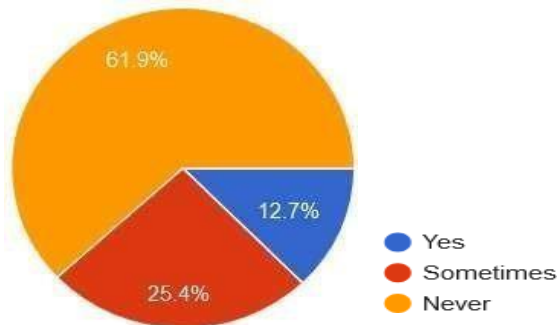


Figure.9 Coping Mechanisms

4.7 Sources of Support:

- Family: 34.9%.
- Friends: 22.2%.
- Online communities: 7.9%.
- Teachers/counselors: 5%.

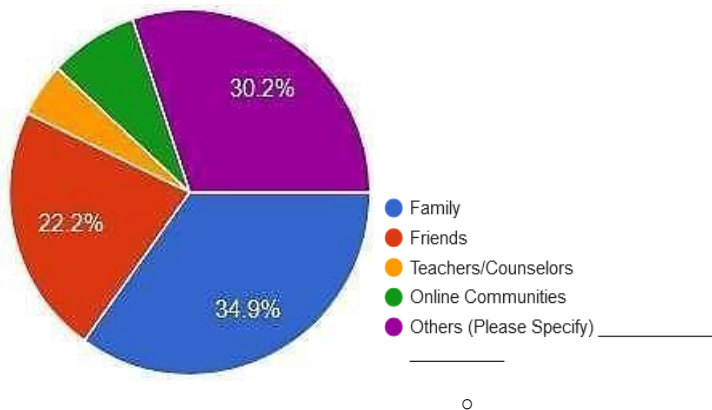


Figure 10. Sources of Support:

4.8 Responses to Cyberbullying

- **Active Measures:**
 - Reporting or blocking the bully: 58.7%.
 - Limiting online activities: 11.1%.
- **Passive Measures:**
 - Ignoring the bully: 47.6%.

- Speaking to a trusted adult: 14.3%.

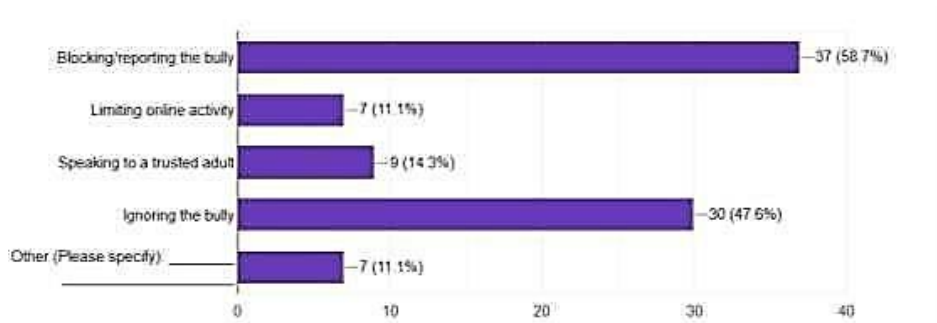


Figure.11: Responses to Cyberbullying

4.9 Correlation with Social Withdrawal

The data revealed a significant relationship between cyberbullying experiences and social withdrawal behaviors. Victims reported increased:

- Avoidance of social gatherings.
- Reliance on virtual interactions.
- Difficulty trusting peers and forming new relationships.

The findings underscore the urgent need for targeted interventions to support teenagers facing cyberbullying and mitigate its long-term effects on their social and emotional well-being. Social withdrawal positively correlates with cyberbullying among teenagers. Victims may suffer anxiety, mistrust, and loneliness, and prefer communication with others online instead of in person. A large proportion of young people do not access help because of stigma, or simply not knowing about what help is available. The study provided some key learnings, including:

4.9.1 Prevalence of Cyberbullying:

34% of teenagers reported cyberbullying (2-3 incidents). The prevalence of cyberbullying was highest in social media platforms (30.2%), followed by online gaming platforms (15.9%) and messaging apps (14.3%).

4.9.2 Types of Cyberbullying:

The most common were name-calling or insults (33.3%), followed by spreading false rumors (15.9%) and threats or intimidation (12.7%).

4.10 Emotional and Social Impact:

Respondents reported some degree of emotional distress (22.2% minimal, 7.9% moderate to severe). About 5-10% of teenagers avoided their peers, were nervous around new people, and favored online networking over in-person socializing. 25.4% developed trust issues which lead to social withdrawal

4.11 Coping Mechanisms:

58.7% reported or blocked the bully, 47.6% ignored the bully and 14.3% told a trusted adult. The most common coping resource was family support (34.9%) and friends (22.2%). This study to date has focused on the substantial effect that cyberbullying has on the mental health of teenagers, highlighting how it affects their social behavior both in the virtual environment and outside of it. Considering how pervasive cyberbullying is, mainly within platforms adolescents engage with frequently, The data does indeed support our hypothesis that cyberbullying has a great impact on social withdrawal, as the victims feel emotional distress, they avoid real-life situations, and they develop trust issues.

4.12. Emotional Distress and Social Withdrawal

The study's findings bolster existing research that has associated cyberbullying with increased anxiety and depression. Even at a more individual level, preferences for online interactions or social withdrawal are strong markers of this psychological scar tissue. Reported by more than a quarter of participants, trust issues add to sense of isolation.

4.13. Coping and Support Systems

Despite some teenagers reaching out for help, a staggering 61.9% failed to seek support, revealing a significant deficit in awareness and access to resources. This reliance on family and friends for support signals the importance of a strong personal network, but low involvement of teachers and counselors — less than 5% — indicates a need for better institutional interventions.

5. Findings:

5.1 Frequency and Severity:

It was determined that as the amount of cyberbullying increased, so did the impact. Teenagers who had repeated incidents were more distressed and withdrawn socially, which suggests the importance of tackling the problem at an early stage.

5.2 Platform-Specific Risks:

Tools Health data collected TOXIC game on Social media existed the most frequent space for cyberbullying indicating that stricter policies and moderation tools were most certainly required. The impact of online gaming communities is also worth examining since they are growing in importance for younger adolescents.

5.3 Have any Additional Findings Summary

Teenage victims of cyberbullying often engage in self-isolation as a coping mechanism. The underreporting and dependence on informal support mechanisms indicate a gap that needs to be addressed in terms of creating awareness campaigns.

Responding emotionally varies, with some adolescents using adaptive coping strategies and others suffering severe distress.

6. Supplementary Findings Discussion

The stigma attached to seeking help illustrates the need for cultural changes that need to happen to encourage discussion over cyberbullying and its impact. Additionally, although educators' roles in offering support are limited, this provides an opportunity for schools to develop and sustain a proactive role in preventing and intervening in cyberbullying. The findings align with Social Learning Theory [4], which suggests that individuals may adopt aggressive online behaviors through observational learning. Moreover, General Strain Theory explains that cyberbullying acts as a stressor that induces emotional distress, potentially resulting in social withdrawal.

Based on the findings, targeted intervention strategies should be implemented, including digital literacy programs to educate students on cyber safety, school-based counseling initiatives to provide psychological support, and peer-led awareness campaigns to encourage bystander intervention in cyberbullying incidents

Some recommendations based on finding are that Policymakers must Introduce or update legislation to penalize offenders and must implement anonymous reporting platforms for victims to seek help safely. Policies must align laws with global digital safety standards for better cross-border action. Educational institute must teach students about online ethics, digital footprints, and cyberbullying awareness. Teachers must be equipped with skills to identify early signs of cyberbullying and intervene. Parent must create a trusting environment where children feel comfortable discussing online experiences. Parents must Use parental control apps but balance monitoring with respect for privacy.

7. Limitations of the Study

7.1 Sampling Limitations:

The sample only included teenagers that attended a specific institution between the ages of 12-20, which limits the applicability of the findings. The study may not fully capture teenagers in rural areas or those lacking access to digital platforms.

7.2 Measures Limitations:

The study relies on self-reported data, which could be subject to bias if people under-reported or over reported their experience. Evaluating emotional impact relied on

preordained categories, and individual responses may have been more nuanced than labeled.

Data Analysis Limitations:

Although qualitative methods allowed for in-depth exploration of the phenomenon, they limited the ability to make causal claims regarding cyberbullying and social withdrawal. Longitudinal studies are quantitative methods which would allow trends to be validated across time and across demographics. In Future work, we will increase the sample size and will discuss more advanced statistical approaches to explore relationships between variables. This study emphasizes the consequences of cyberbullying among teenagers, specifically as they relate to social withdrawal. The results are worrying, with high numbers of cyberbullying, as well as emotional distress and behavior change in victims. This highlights the importance of targeted interventions, systemic support, and collaboration among families, educators, and policymakers as ways to tackle the issue. Further research, including longitudinal studies and intervention-based studies investigating the impact on other online and offline spaces will be essential in working to improve environments for teens.

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