

Impact of Cyberbullying Victimization, Depression, Perceived Coping Self Efficacy and Psychological Flourishing Among College Students

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ABSTRACT

India reports the third-highest online bullying rate among the global cyber bullying list. Cyber bullying is an aggressive, intentional act carried out by a group or individual, using electronic forms of contact, repeatedly and overtime against a victim who cannot easily defend him or her-self. Depression is a common and serious medical illness that negatively affects how you feel, the way you think and how you act. Depression causes feelings of sadness and/or a loss of interest in activities once enjoyed. According to Fredrickson and Losada, "flourishing is living within an optimal range of human functioning, one that connotes goodness, generatively, growth, and resilience." Self-efficacy is the belief in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to manage prospective situations. Among 50% of the Indian population is adolescents, in that 77% of them were affected by any form of cyber bullying. This study investigates the relationship between cyber bullying, depression and the coping self-efficacy and psychological flourishing among students. The study is carried with 100 students with age range of 18-21 years. The standardized tools will be used for the study. Based on the research objectives, statistical techniques will be used. The result, Discussion, and Conclusion will be included in the full paper.

Keywords: *Cyber bullying victimization, Flourishing, Coping Self efficacy, Depression*

"Unless and until our society recognizes cyberbullying for what it is, the suffering of thousands of silent victims will continue." –Unknown

Cyber bullying is an aggressive, intentional act carried out by a group or individual, using electronic forms of contact, repeatedly and overtime against a victim who cannot easily defend him or her-self. Cyber bullying is defined as "willful and repeated harm inflicted through the use of computers, cell phones or other electronic devices", Patchin and Hinduja. Cyber bullying is bullying that takes place over advanced gadgets like cell phones, computers, and tablets. Cyber bullying can happen through SMS, Content, and apps or online in social media, forums, or gaming where people can see, take

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part in, or share content. Cyber bullying incorporates sending, posting, or sharing negative, harmful, untrue, or harmful content around someone else. It can incorporate sharing individual or private data around somebody else, causing embarrassment or humiliation. A few cyber bullying crosses the line into illegal or criminal behavior.

According to research conducted by Symantec, nearly 8 out of 10 individuals are subject to the different types of cyber bullying in India. Out of these around 63% faced online abuses and insults, and 59% were subject to false rumors and gossips for degrading their image. 50% of women residing in prime Indian cities are a victim of online abuse, according to a survey by Feminism. India reports the third-highest online bullying rate among the global cyberbullying list.

Fifty-four percent of the teenagers used Facebook and WhatsApp, 53% used Instagram, 33% used chat rooms, and 30% used Twitter at the slightest once a day. Out of the 50 members, 20% (10 youngsters) had been victims of cyber bullying, while only 6% (3 teens) admitted to being the cyber bully.

The most common places where cyber bullying happens are: Social Media, such as Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp and Twitter SMS too known as Content Message sent through devices Instant Message (utilizing gadgets, email supplier administrations, apps, and social media informing features) Email.

According to Willard (2004), cyberbullying can take different forms, with the primary forms ranging from flaming to harassment, to cyberstalking. The following list gives a formal definition for each form:

- **Flaming**—Sending angry, rude, vulgar messages directed at a person or persons privately or to an online group.
- **Harassment**—Repeatedly sending a person offensive messages.
- **Cyberstalking**—Harassment that include threats of harm or is highly intimidating.
- **Denigration** (put-downs)— Sending or posting harmful, untrue, or cruel statements about a person to other people.
- **Masquerade**—Pretending to be someone else and sending or posting material that makes that person look bad or places that person in potential danger.
- **Outing and trickery**—Sending or posting material about a person that contains sensitive, private, or embarrassing information, including forwarding private messages or images — engaging in tricks to solicit embarrassing information that is then made public.
- **Exclusion**—Actions that specifically and intentionally exclude a person from an online group.

Nearly 1 in 6 (15%) of online teens said they had experienced unwanted forwarding of private communication. **Older teens** say they are more likely to have had someone forward or publicly post private messages.

Psychological flourishing is defined as by Dr. Lynn Soots, “Flourishing is the product of the pursuit and engagement of an authentic life that brings inner joy and happiness through meeting goals, being connected with life passions, and relishing in accomplishments through the peaks and valleys of life.”

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Psychological flourishing is a to flourish means to live within an optimal range of human functioning, one that connotes goodness, generativity, growth, and resilience (Fredrickson & Losada, 2005)

Keyes' (2006) conceptualization of flourishing thus refers to it as positive functioning manifested in healthy relationships, resilience in the face of personal challenges, and engagement with the world. Hence, the state of flourishing reflects a life lived with high levels of emotional well-being (Keyes & Haidt, 2003)

Victims of cyberbullying can encounter symptoms of depression, including pity, loneliness, insecurity, poor self-esteem, academic decline, feelings of not having a place, and self-destructive thoughts and behavior.

Coping self-efficacy (CSE) beliefs refer to an individual's beliefs about one's ability to cope with external stressors. Efficacy beliefs can determine whether people will invest effort, and how long they will persist in their effort in the face of obstacles and aversive experiences. People with higher levels of CSE beliefs tend to approach challenging situations actively and persistently, whereas those with lower levels of CSE beliefs tend to direct more considerable energy to manage increasing emotional distress (Bandura, 1997).

A high level of coping self-efficacy tends to create an adaptive approach leading individuals to view tasks or situations that require high efforts as challenging and as positive experiences. Whereas, when CSE perceptions are low, it is more likely that individuals perceive the same tasks or situations as stressful and more significant energy is directed to manage the increasing emotional distress.

According to Hamm (2017) "There were consistent associations between exposure to cyberbullying and increased likelihood of depression," Depression (major depressive disorder) is a common and serious medical illness that negatively affects how you feel, the way you think and how you act. Fortunately, it is also treatable. Depression causes feelings of sadness and/or a loss of interest in activities once enjoyed. It can lead to a variety of emotional and physical problems and can decrease a person's ability to function at work and at home.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Qian hu et al. (2010) conducted a study on "Cyber bullying and depression among Chinese college students: A moderated mediation model of social anxiety and neuroticism". The study was conducted among 476 college students to investigate the relationship between cyber bullying perpetration and depression, the mediating role of social anxiety, and the moderating role of neuroticism. The results show that there is a cyber bullying perpetration had a greater impact on depression for college students with lower levels of neuroticism and the predictive function of social anxiety or depression was stronger for individuals with low levels of neuroticism.

Wang et al. in 2009 conducted a study to bullying and cyber bullying. This study was conducted among 7,508 students in grades 6-10 through self-report questionnaires. The questionnaires included questions about sociodemographic variables, bully/victim, parental support, and number of friends. From the study it was concluded that 12.8% percent said it was physical, 36.5% said it was verbal, 41 % was relational, and 9.8% was cyber. They

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found that higher parental support correlated with less bullying. And peer influence had correlated with more bullying.

Patchin and Hinduja (2006) conducted an online survey involving 384 respondents who were under 18 years of age. Their results showed that various forms of bullying occurred online, including being ignored (60.4%), disrespected (50.0%), called names (29.9%), threatened (21.4%), picked on (19.8%), made fun of (19.3%), and having rumors spread about them (18.8%).

Lara et al.(2010) conducted a nonexperimental study in which undergraduate students recent-onset major depressive episode received course credit for their research participation. Eighty-four students (51% Caucasian, 86% female) were followed for 26 weeks to assess whether various psychosocial factors predicted the short-term course of major depression. The authors found that within the 26-week period of no treatment, 68% of the college students who were initially depressed recovered. Among those who recovered, 21% relapsed by the end of the 26-week period into another major depressive episode. Lara had concluded that college students with depression may sometimes spontaneously recover and relapse and that harsh discipline in childhood was significantly associated with higher mean levels of depression at follow-up and relapse but not with recovery.

Ongen (2010) examined the relation between coping strategies and depression among 543 adolescents. Results reveal that those who use low levels of both coping strategies report more symptoms of depression than those who use high levels of both coping strategies, approachers and avoiders.

The study conducted by Chan (2005) assess and described the depressive symptoms and coping strategies of 161 Chinese adolescents using the Beck Depression Inventory (BDI) and the ways of coping Questionnaire (WCQ). They found that over 64 percent of the adolescents are in the depressed range and nine percent in the severely depressed range. For general depressive symptom level, Chinese adolescents appear to have higher mean BDI score than US adolescents and Chinese young adults. Their depressive symptoms levels are found to relate to avoidant coping strategies as well as low self-esteem and reduced social support.

Howell (2009) found that flourishing students were less likely to procrastinate, had higher levels of self-control, adopted a mastery-approach towards their goals, and reported higher levels of academic performance.

Results from Hatell (2011) study also suggest that vitality is directly related to reports of well-being and positive adjustment in college students, which may enhance the understanding of factors that lead to success in college and promote the facilitation of vitality interventions.

Tompson and Dass (2000) discuss that coping self-efficacy enhances persons' task interests, persistence, willingness to exert efforts, and, ultimately, task performance. The researchers investigated the relative contribution of simulations and case studies for improving students' self-efficacy in strategic management. Using pre and post-test data from a sample of 252 students, the authors concluded that simulation results led to significantly greater improvements in self-efficacy than case studies.

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Galyon et al (2012) conducted a study on 165 undergraduate students investigating the relationships among coping self-efficacy and students' class participation, examination performance. He found a stronger relationship between coping self-efficacy and exam performance than with class participation. However, coping self-efficacy levels were relatively the same among students with high, medium, and low academic achievements.

Operational Definition

- **Cyber Bullying:** Cyberbullying can be defined as "Willful and repeated harm inflicted through the use of computers, cell phones, and other electronic devices.
- **Depression:** Depression (major depressive disorder) is a common and serious medical illness that negatively affects how you feel, the way you think and how you act.
- **Psychological Flourishing: Flourishing** is "a state where people experience positive emotions, positive **psychological** functioning and positive social functioning, most of the time," living "within an optimal range of human functioning."
- **Coping Self Efficacy:** Psychologist **Albert Bandura** has defined self-efficacy as one's belief in one's ability to succeed in specific situations or accomplish a task. One's sense of self-efficacy can play a major role in how one approaches goals, tasks, and challenges. Coping self-efficacy (CSE) beliefs refer to an individual's beliefs about one's ability to cope with external stressors.

Objective of the Study

The main aim of the study is to investigate the relationship between cyberbullying victimization, depression and the coping self-efficacy and psychological flourishing among students.

Hypothesis of the Study

- There is a significant relationship between cyber bullying and depression.
- There is a significant relationship between psychological flourishing and coping self-efficacy.
- There is a significant relationship between psychological flourishing and depression.
- There is a significant relationship between cyber bullying and psychological flourishing.
- There is a significant relationship between coping self-efficacy and cyber bullying.
- There is a significant relationship between coping self-efficacy and depression.

METHOD

Participants

The sample consists of 150 students identified from various college in Coimbatore district. The age range of the samples was 18 to 21 years.

Inclusion criteria

- Students who are studying in Coimbatore district
- whose age ranges from 18 to 21

Exclusion criteria

- Adolescents who are above age 22 years.
- Who are having any intellectual disability

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Research Design

Exploratory research design was followed for the present study.

Tools:

- **Cyber Bullying Victimization Scale**
- **Beck's Depression Inventory**
- **Psychological Flourishing Scale**
- **Perceived Coping Self efficacy Scale**
- **The Personal data proforma sheet** containing the component of demographic details will be used to gather the descriptive data from the participants.
- **Cyber Bullying Victimization scale:** This scale was developed by Horzum Mehmet Baric. It has 19 statements. Each statement has four responses: Never, Rarely, Often and Always.
- **BECK'S Depression scale:** This scale was developed by Aron T. Beck (1997). This scale was designed to measure the severity of depressive symptoms that the test taker is experiencing "at that moment." The BDI included 21 items concerning different symptom domains, with four possible answers describing symptoms of increasing severity associated with a score from 0 to 3.
- **Psychological Flourishing Scale:** This scale was developed by Diener, E., et al. (2009). The Flourishing Scale is a brief 8-item summary measure of the respondent's self-perceived success in important areas such as relationships, self-esteem, purpose, and optimism. The scale provides a single psychological well-being score.
- **Perceived coping self-efficacy:** This scale was developed by Chesney et al.,2011. Self-efficacy for coping with threats and challenges was assessed using the Coping Self-Efficacy Scale. It consists of 26 statements, scoring with 10 point likert scale.

Procedure

The subjects were collected few personal data and then they completed Cyberbullying victimization scale (Dr. Horzum Mehmet Baric,2010) Beck's Depression Scale (Aaron T. Beck,1993) Psychological flourishing scale, (Diener et.al, 2014) and Coping self efficacy scale (Chesney et al.,2011). The subjects were instructed not to omit any statements. The subjects were instructed not to omit any statements.

Statistical Analysis

Data was analyzed with the SPSS for Windows Version 20. Pearson correlation was also used to test the significant relationship between the variables.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 Shows the Correlation Between the Variables

Variables	Cyber Bullying	Depression	Psychological Flourishing	Coping Self Efficacy
Cyberbullying	1	0.598**	-0.775**	-0.092
Depression	0.598**	1	-0.601**	0.105
Psychological Flourishing	-0.775**	-.601**	1	0.113
Coping Self Efficacy	-0.092	0.105	0.113	1

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

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

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DISCUSSION

The result shows that there is strong positive correlation between cyber bullying and depression. The relationship of cyber bullying and depression can be explained by victim's feelings of loneliness, worthlessness, helplessness, failure to seek help, and poor self-image. Cyber bullying victims reported feeling depressed, sad, anger, suicidal ideations, lack of apathy, frustrated and these emotions have correlated with delinquency and interpersonal violence among them. Cyber bullying and depression have a positive correlation because the hurtful actions of a cyber bully are viral; it can unfurl to a large number of people. The consequences can be far-reaching and can permanently damage the psyche of many adolescents (Hinduja & Patchin, 2010). Student victims of cyberbullying are at increased risk of depression, anxiety and substance abuse (Takizawa et al., 2014) Although few studies have investigated the relationship between cyberbullying and depression, existing results suggest that the risks of depression and suicidal ideation are higher in those who have been victimized (van Geel et al., 2014)

The bullied victims often fold into themselves, withdrawing from family members, relatives, and friends. They may spend a lot of time alone as a result of the bullying. They may also be led to believe that being around other people only hurts or that most people are out to cause them pain or emotional harm.

There is a negative correlation between psychological flourishing and depression. Low psychological flourishing has a common characteristic similar to depression such as people experiencing low mood, loss of interest or pleasure, feelings of guilt or low self-worth, disturbed sleep or appetite, low energy, and poor concentration. Recent evidence has shown that higher well-being and flourishing mental health protects against the incidence of mental disorders such as anxiety and depression (Grant et al., 2013)

There is a negative correlation between psychological flourishing and cyber bullying. Cyber bullying involved to a range of negative psychological outcomes including poorer well-being reduced self-esteem, body image dissatisfaction, which has a low psychological flourishing. Cyber bullying research studies shows that across the globe who have focused on the cyber bullying and its correlates of the negative experience on mental health (Zych et al., 2015) (Dr. Andrew K Przyblyki et al 2015) found that cyber bullying were independently associated with lower mental well-being.

There is no correlation between coping self-efficacy and other variables.

CONCLUSION

From the results it can be concluded that cyber bullying and depression has positive correlation. Cyber bullying lead to a lot of psychological issues, affecting the individual's life. Psychological flourishing and depression have a negative correlation as psychological flourishing refers to positive mental health and are inversely proportional to each other. Psychological flourishing and cyber bullying have a negative correlation. There is no correlation between coping self-efficacy and other variables. Awareness campaign must be arranged from schools, colleges about cyber ethics and probable cyber-crimes like economic cheatings, stalking activities, defamatory activities, misusing email and social networking web sites etc.

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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