Research Paper

Exploring the Interplay of Cyberbullying, Resilience and Body Image Issues in Adolescents

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ABSTRACT

The study aims at assess the interplay of cyberbullying, resilience and body image issues in adolescents. A sample of 150 students (male = 64, female = 86) was drawn from New Delhi, questionnaire was given as CYBVICS, BIQ and CD-RISC-10. T-tests indicated no significant gender differences in male and females. In correlation analysis; non-significant positive correlation emerged between cyberbullying victimization and resilience as well as non-significant negative correlation between cyberbullying victimization and body image issues. However, there was a significant positive relationship between resilience and body image issues meaning that higher levels of resilience are associated with reduced concerns about physical appearance. These findings highlight the necessity of developing resilience for handling adolescents body images problems. Further research implications are mentioned.

Keywords: *Cyberbullying, Resilience, Body Image Issues*

In the contemporary world, the spread of technology has changed the way adolescents interact, communicate and view themselves. However, this era of digitization presents several challenges that affect adolescents regarding cyberbullying, resilience and body image.

Adolescence is a crucial period in one's life when physical, emotional and social aspects undergo intense changes. During this phase, adolescents are highly susceptible to cyberbullying impact that can greatly affect their emotions, mental health standards as well as body image (Fardouly & Vartanian 2016). The digital age has witnessed an alarming increase in cyberbullying which refers to using information and communication technologies (ICT) by an individual or group of individuals to insult others online (Kowalski et al., 2014). Cyberbullying has also been linked to poor body image, low self-esteem, and increased sensitivity to mental health disorders such as depression and anxiety (Fardouly & Vartanian, 2016; Rodgers & Melioli, 2016).

According to studies, victims of Cyberbullying have more negative perceptions about their physical appearance which leads to more body dissatisfaction. (Rodgers & Melioli, 2016).

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Conversely, resilience has been identified as a protective factor that can offset the adverse effects of cyberbullying on body image and mental health (Duong & Bradshaw, 2014). Key resilience factors such as strong social support, self-confidence, and emotional regulation abilities can help protect against the detrimental consequences of cyberbullying (Duong & Bradshae,2024). Developing and strengthening these resilience traits through targeted programs and support networks is critical for improving teens' overall well-being.

Theoretical framework

Theory of Social Comparison this theory suggests that people tend to assess themselves in terms of their attributes, including physical appearance by making comparison with others which can result to dissatisfaction of body image (Festinger, 1954; Tiggemann & Slater, 2014). Disinhibition Effect: According to this theory, people lose inhibitions online due to absence of face-to-face interaction and perceived anonymity that would make them more likely to hurt people than they actually do offline (Kowalski, 2014). Social Cognitive theory emphasizes the influence of social modeling on behaviour. For instance, young people can reflect on how they should deal with cyberbullying or body issues as seen from other individuals. Supportive and encouraging characters such as fellow students, parents and teachers act as a shield for teenagers against bullying online and unhealthy ideals of beauty (Bandura, 1986).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Low body esteem, low social self-efficacy, and poor social support are significantly related to victimization through cyberbullying (Olenik-Shemesh & Heiman, 2017). Self-esteem and resilience may serve as protective factors in the possible reciprocal relationship between cyberbullying and social anxiety (Burns, 2017).

The role of resilience has been broadly investigated. Resilience is seen as a factor moderating the relationship between fatalism and being a victim of cyber bullying in some studies (Navarro et al., 2018) while according to Brighi et al. (2018), this variable mediates cybervictimization on emotional symptoms. With respect to its association with resilience Peker and Yalçın (2023) explained that there were positive correlations among it, active coping tactics, as well as use of social network concerning incidents of cyberbullying victimization.

Furthermore, there is literature on mental health outcomes as well as achievement at school relative to cyberbullying with mediating roles played by resilience (Sam, 2020). Besides, research findings indicate that elevated levels of resilience can prevent depression symptoms or decreased life satisfaction due to cyber bullying victimization (Santos et al., 2021).

METHODOLOGY

Aim

to assess the relationship between cyberbullying, resilience and body image issues among adolescents.

Objectives

- To study the correlation between cyberbullying and body image issues in the digital context.
- To explore how resilience correlates with body image issues as a meditating protective factor.

- To examine gender differences between male and female.

Hypothesis
- H1: There will be significant positive correlation between cyberbullying and the development of body image issues among adolescent
- H2: There will be significant positive correlation between resilience and body image issues.
- H3: There will be gender difference between the male and female.

Variables
- Cyberbullying
- Resilience
- Body Image Issues

Tools Description
1. **Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale 10-Item:** This scale has shown good internal consistency (alpha coefficient of Cronbach's α = 0.85) and reliability, test-retest (r = 0.87), convergent and discriminant validity in assessing resilience among adolescents (Campbell-Sills & Stein, 2007).
2. **CYBVICS Cyber-Victimization Scale:** It is a measure of cyberbullying victimisation that has demonstrated strong psychometric properties such as high internal consistency (Cronbach's α = 0.92) and construct validity, which makes it a reliable and valid instrument for assessing the existence of cyber-bullied victims of teenagers (Çelik et al.,2012).
3. **Body-Image Questionnaire (BIQ):** The BIQ shows good internal consistency (Cronbach's α= .88), temporal stability ([r.sub.tt] = .90) and also concurrent evidence about its validity on body image disturbances in adolescents (Mendelson et al., 2001).

RESULTS
T test
Table 1 T test between male and female across study variables

	Mean	**SD**	**T**	**Sig. (2 tailed)**	**Result**
Cyberbullying victimization					
male	27.34	10.44	1.75	.08	NS
female	30.70	13.70			
Resilience					
male	17.19	8.68	1.28	.20	NS
female	18.95	7.93			
Body image issues					
male	57.94	10.65	1.30	.18	NS
female	55.51	11.76			

NS-Not significant, S-Significant

Table one represents the t statistics between males and female on Cyberbullying victimization, Resilience, Body image issues. There is no significant difference in the Cyberbullying victimization, Resilience, Body image issues between the two sample groups.

Correlation analysis
Table 2 Pearson's correlation between study variables

		1	2	3
1	Cyberbullying victimization	-	.11	-.12
2	Resilience	.11	-	.18*
3	Body image issues	-.12	.18*	-

*Correlation is significant at 0.05 level

Table two represents the coefficient of correlation between Cyberbullying victimization, Resilience, Body image issues. The association between Cyberbullying victimization and Resilience is not significant and positive. The association between Cyberbullying victimization and Body image issues is not significant and negative. The association between Resilience and Body image issues is significant and positive.

DISCUSSIONS

The conclusion of the present study stated that cyberbullying victimization had no significant connections with resilience or body image difficulties (H1) didn't support hypothesis. This may contradict previous research that has highlighted the link between cyberbullying and negative body image (Olenik-Shemesh & Heiman, 2017). One possible explanation for this could be the role of other mediating factors, such as self-esteem and social support, which may influence the relationship between cyberbullying and body image. Further research is needed to explore these potential mediating variables.

Resilience did appear to be a major component related with reduced body image concerns. (H2) The result supported the hypothesis. This finding aligns with the existing literature, which suggests that resilience can serve as a protective factor against the negative consequences of cyberbullying, including poor body image (Brighi et al., 2018; Peker & Yalçın, 2023).

There is no gender difference between male and female. (H3) didn't support sthe hypothesis as due to a smaller number of participants and unequal ratio of male female.

These findings highlight the significance of fostering resilience in adolescents as a strategy of addressing body image problems, which are common throughout this developmental time.

Further studies should delve deeper into understanding the processes by which resilience promotes body image problems, as well as look at other characteristics that may mediate the link between cyberbullying, resilience, and body image difficulties.

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