

Effect of Cyber Bullying on Self-Esteem and Self-Efficacy of Adolescents

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the influence of cyberbullying on adolescents' self-esteem and self-efficacy. Data from 120 adolescents were analyzed using Pearson correlations and multiple linear regressions. The findings indicate no significant correlation between cyberbullying and self-esteem ($r = 0.01003$, $p = 0.913$) or self-efficacy ($r = -0.07636$, $p = 0.407$). Moreover, the collective impact of cyberbullying on both self-esteem and self-efficacy was weak and non-significant ($F(1, 118) = 0.69$, $p = 0.407$). This suggests that cyberbullying does not have a substantial linear relationship with these aspects of adolescents' well-being. The study highlights the complexity of adolescent well-being, influenced by diverse factors beyond cyberbullying, including individual differences and coping strategies. Future research should explore these intricate relationships further, considering a broader range of determinants of adolescents' well-being.

Keywords: *Cyber Bullying, Self-Esteem, Self-Efficacy, Adolescents*

The advent of the digital age has brought forth unprecedented opportunities for communication, education, and social interaction among adolescents. However, it has also introduced new challenges, one of which is the pervasive issue of cyberbullying. Cyberbullying encompasses various forms of aggressive behavior carried out through digital technologies, such as social media platforms, instant messaging, and online forums. It often includes actions such as verbal harassment, spreading rumors, impersonation, and exclusion, all enacted within a virtual realm. Among the most vulnerable to the detrimental effects of cyberbullying are adolescents, a demographic characterized by their susceptibility to peer influence and ongoing identity development.

This study delves into the intricate relationship between cyberbullying and two critical components of adolescent psychological well-being: self-esteem and self-efficacy. Self-esteem reflects an individual's overall evaluation of their worth and self-worth, while self-efficacy pertains to one's belief in their ability to accomplish tasks and achieve goals. Both constructs play pivotal roles in shaping an individual's emotional and behavioral responses to life's challenges.

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The rationale for this study emerges from the growing concern about the potential adverse effects of cyberbullying on adolescent development. Cyberbullying can inflict emotional distress, anxiety, and feelings of helplessness, which may, in turn, impact self-esteem and self-efficacy. However, the existing body of research on this topic is characterized by mixed findings, and the mechanisms through which cyberbullying may affect self-esteem and self-efficacy remain poorly understood.

This research aims to address this gap by investigating the impact of cyberbullying on self-esteem and self-efficacy among adolescents. To achieve this, the study will assess the prevalence of cyberbullying in the adolescent population, explore the correlation between cyberbullying experiences and self-esteem, examine the association between cyberbullying and self-efficacy, and identify potential moderators that may influence the impact of cyberbullying on these psychological constructs.

Understanding the dynamics between cyberbullying and self-esteem and self-efficacy is crucial for several reasons. Firstly, it can provide valuable insights into the mechanisms underlying the impact of cyberbullying on adolescent well-being. Secondly, it may inform the development of targeted interventions and support strategies for adolescents who experience cyberbullying. Lastly, it contributes to the broader discourse on adolescent mental health in the digital age, shedding light on the multifaceted factors that influence their self-perceptions and beliefs in their abilities.

In the pages that follow, we will embark on a comprehensive exploration of the relationship between cyberbullying, self-esteem, and self-efficacy among adolescents. Through rigorous empirical analysis, we seek to uncover the nuanced dynamics that shape the psychological well-being of this vulnerable demographic in the context of cyberbullying.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction to Cyberbullying

Hinduja, S., & Patchin, J. W. (2018). "Cyberbullying: Identification, prevention, and response." This comprehensive book by Hinduja and Patchin is a valuable resource in the field of cyberbullying. It provides a well-rounded exploration of cyberbullying, offering insights into identification, prevention, and effective response strategies. The authors draw on extensive research and practical examples to offer a holistic approach to tackling this digital-age problem.

Kowalski, R. M., Limber, S. P., & Agatston, P. W. (2012). "Cyberbullying: Bullying in the digital age." Kowalski, Limber, and Agatston's book is a seminal work in the study of cyberbullying. It offers a comprehensive examination of cyberbullying within the context of the digital age. The authors delve into the various forms of cyberbullying, its consequences, and strategies for prevention and intervention. It's an essential read for researchers, educators, and policymakers looking to understand and address this contemporary issue.

Mishna, F., Khoury-Kassabri, M., Gadalla, T., & Daciuk, J. (2012). "Risk factors for involvement in cyberbullying: Victims, bullies, and bully-victims." This study in the "Children and Youth Services Review" provides valuable insights into the risk factors associated with cyberbullying involvement among adolescents. Mishna et al. explore the complex dynamics of cyberbullying, shedding light on the characteristics of victims, bullies, and those who fall into both categories. Their research contributes significantly to our understanding of the factors influencing cyberbullying behaviors.

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Smith, P. K., & Steffgen, G. (2013). "Cyberbullying through the new media: Findings from an international network." Smith and Steffgen's work offers a global perspective on cyberbullying. Drawing on research from an international network, the book provides a comprehensive examination of cyberbullying through various new media platforms. It is a valuable resource for anyone interested in understanding the evolving landscape of cyberbullying in the digital age.

Self-Esteem in Adolescents

Yoon, J. S., & Baumeister, R. F. (2022). "Self-esteem in adolescence predicts cyberbullying perpetration and victimization in young adulthood." In this thought-provoking study published in the *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, Yoon and Baumeister explore the long-term consequences of self-esteem in adolescence on cyberbullying behaviors in young adulthood. Their findings reveal a significant predictive relationship between low self-esteem during adolescence and increased cyberbullying perpetration and victimization later in life. This research highlights the enduring impact of self-esteem on online behaviors, emphasizing the importance of early intervention and support for adolescents with lower self-esteem to mitigate the risk of cyberbullying involvement.

Hinduja, S., & Patchin, J. W. (2010). "Cyberbullying and self-esteem." Hinduja and Patchin's study in the *Journal of School Health* offers valuable insights into the association between cyberbullying and self-esteem among adolescents. Their research underscores the negative impact of cyberbullying on adolescents' self-esteem, with cyberbullying victims experiencing lower self-esteem levels. Additionally, the study emphasizes the importance of addressing self-esteem issues in interventions aimed at reducing cyberbullying, highlighting the reciprocal relationship between self-esteem and online victimization.

Kowalski, R. M., & Limber, S. P. (2013). "Psychological, physical, and academic correlates of cyberbullying and traditional bullying." Published in the *Journal of Adolescent Health*, Kowalski and Limber's study delves into the psychological, physical, and academic correlates of both cyberbullying and traditional bullying. The research highlights the multifaceted nature of bullying and its consequences, shedding light on the overlapping factors that contribute to cyberbullying perpetration and victimization. This study underscores the need for a comprehensive approach to address the complex dynamics of bullying, encompassing psychological well-being, physical health, and academic performance.

Self-Efficacy in Adolescents

Bandura, A. (2006). In his seminal work published in the *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Bandura explores the concept of self-efficacy as a crucial element in positive youth development. This conceptual review sheds light on the significance of self-efficacy beliefs in shaping adolescents' cognitive and behavioral processes. Bandura's comprehensive examination of self-efficacy provides a solid foundation for understanding how adolescents' beliefs in their abilities influence their development and achievement. It underscores the importance of nurturing self-efficacy as a means to empower and support the growth of adolescents.

Brand, S., Gerber, M., Beck, J., Hatzinger, M., Pühse, U., & Holsboer-Trachsler, E. (2009). This study in *Sleep Medicine* delves into the intricate relationship between stress, sleep, and coping self-efficacy in adolescents. Brand et al.'s research highlights the critical role of self-efficacy in helping adolescents manage stress and sleep disturbances effectively. Their

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findings underscore the importance of promoting coping self-efficacy as a valuable tool for enhancing the overall well-being of adolescents, particularly in the context of stress and sleep-related issues.

Zainudin, A., & King, R. B. (2018). In the *Journal of Psychoeducational Assessment*, Zainudin and King examine the social and emotional self-efficacy of adolescents, exploring the interdependencies within and across different academic achievement levels. Their research provides valuable insights into how self-efficacy beliefs are interconnected with academic performance and emotional well-being in adolescents. This study underscores the multifaceted nature of self-efficacy and its implications for adolescents across various domains of their lives.

Muris, P., Meesters, C., & Fijen, P. (2003). In the *Journal of Psychopathology and Behavioral Assessment*, Muris, Meesters, and Fijen introduce the Self-Efficacy Questionnaire for Children (SEQ-C), a valuable tool for assessing self-efficacy beliefs in children. This questionnaire offers a practical means to measure self-efficacy in children, contributing to our understanding of its role in childhood development. The SEQ-C serves as a valuable resource for researchers and practitioners interested in evaluating and fostering self-efficacy in children, emphasizing its importance in promoting adaptive behavior and psychological well-being.

Cyberbullying and Its Effects

Hinduja, S., & Patchin, J. W. (2015): In their study published in the *American Journal of Public Health*, Hinduja and Patchin provide a comprehensive exploration of cyberbullying perpetration and victimization among middle-school students. Their research offers critical insights into the prevalence and dynamics of cyberbullying in this age group. By shedding light on the experiences of middle-school students, the study contributes significantly to our understanding of the early manifestations of cyberbullying, which is crucial for intervention and prevention efforts.

Kowalski, R. M., Giumetti, G. W., Schroeder, A. N., & Lattanner, M. R. (2014): This meta-analysis, published in the *Psychological Bulletin*, is a cornerstone in cyberbullying research. Kowalski et al. critically review and synthesize a wide range of studies, providing a comprehensive overview of the prevalence and consequences of cyberbullying among youth. This source is invaluable for researchers, policymakers, and educators seeking a deep understanding of the complex issues surrounding cyberbullying, making it a must-read in the field.

Patchin, J. W., & Hinduja, S. (2010): Patchin and Hinduja's study in the *Journal of School Health* explores the relationship between cyberbullying and self-esteem. Their research illuminates the negative impact of cyberbullying on adolescents' self-esteem, emphasizing the need for interventions to address these psychological consequences. This study serves as a foundational reference for understanding the intersection of cyberbullying and self-esteem in adolescents.

Slonje, R., & Smith, P. K. (2008): Published in the *Scandinavian Journal of Psychology*, Slonje and Smith's study positions cyberbullying as a significant form of bullying. By comparing online and offline aggression, the study underscores the importance of recognizing cyberbullying as a distinct yet interconnected issue. This source is essential for researchers aiming to comprehensively address the various dimensions of bullying.

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Ybarra, M. L., & Mitchell, K. J. (2004): In their study published in the Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, Ybarra and Mitchell offer a comparison of youth characteristics associated with online aggression and victimization. Their research provides valuable insights into the profiles of online aggressors, targets, and those who experience both roles. This study enriches our understanding of the diverse aspects of online aggression among youth, making it a significant contribution to the field.

METHODOLOGY

Aim: The primary aim of this research is to investigate the effect of cyberbullying on the self-esteem and self-efficacy of adolescents. This chapter outlines the research objectives, hypothesis, the process of sample selection, the tools used to collect data, the research procedure, and the statistical analysis plan.

Objectives

The research objectives are as follows:

- To assess the prevalence of cyberbullying among adolescents.
- To examine the correlation between cyberbullying and self-esteem.
- To explore the association between cyberbullying and self-efficacy.
- To identify potential moderators that may influence the impact of cyberbullying.

Hypothesis

- Hypothesis 1: Cyberbullying negatively affects the self-esteem of adolescents.
- Hypothesis 2: Cyberbullying negatively affects the self-efficacy of adolescents.
- Hypothesis 3: Moderating Factors in the Impact of Cyberbullying

Sample and its Selection

The target population for this research comprises adolescents aged between 16 to 24 years. This age range was chosen as it represents a critical period of development during which self-esteem and self-efficacy are particularly susceptible to external influences.

Sample Size

A representative sample of at least 120 adolescents will be selected for this study. This sample size is considered sufficient to detect statistically significant relationships and associations between the variables of interest.

Description of Tools Employed

- The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale
- The General Self-Efficacy Scale developed by Matthias Jerusalem and Ralf Schwarzer
- European Cyberbullying Intervention Project Questionnaire

Data Collection

Data will be collected using the tools described above. Participants will be approached through various channels, including schools, social media, and community organizations. Informed consent will be obtained from all participants or their legal guardians if they are under 18 years of age. Participants will be assured of the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses.

RESULTS

Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale

Measure	Mean	Median	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Standard Deviation	Variance
Scores	21.6	21.5	12	37	25	5.66	32.01

The descriptive analysis of the responses to the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale suggests that, on average, the respondents exhibit moderately positive self-esteem levels. However, there is variation within the sample, with some individuals reporting lower self-esteem and others reporting higher self-esteem. This variation could be the result of a range of factors, including life experiences and individual differences, and may be further explored in research or used for targeted interventions to improve self-esteem where needed.

Self-Efficacy Scale

Measure	Mean	Median	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Standard Deviation	Variance
Total Self-Efficacy Scores	33.08	34	20	40	20	5.66	32.01

The descriptive analysis of the responses to the General Self-Efficacy Scale suggests that, on average, the respondents have a moderate to moderately high level of self-efficacy. However, there is notable variability in self-efficacy levels within the sample, which may be influenced by a range of factors, including personal traits, experiences, and coping mechanisms. Understanding this variability can be valuable for tailoring interventions and support to individuals with differing self-efficacy levels.

European Cyberbullying Intervention Scale

Subscale	Mean	Median	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Standard Deviation	Variance
Cyber Victimization Subscale	11.48	4.5	0	32	32	9.88	97.56
Cyber Aggression Subscale	10.24	8	0	43	43	12.13	146.92
Total Score (Combined)	21.72	15.5	0	75	75	19.79	391.76

The descriptive analysis of the General European Cyberbullying Intervention Scale responses reveals several key findings:

- Respondents, on average, reported moderate levels of both cyber victimization and cyber aggression.
- There is significant variability in experiences, with some respondents reporting minimal involvement in cyberbullying, while others reported more frequent victimization or aggression.
- Individual differences, online contexts, and motivations likely contribute to the observed variability in cyberbullying behaviors.

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- Understanding the levels and variability in cyberbullying experiences can inform interventions and support strategies to address online harassment and promote positive online behaviors among individuals.

DATA ANALYSIS & DISCUSSION

Hypothesis 1 posited that "Cyberbullying negatively affects the self-esteem of adolescents." However, the results of this study did not provide support for this hypothesis. Instead, the findings indicate that there is no significant correlation between the frequency of cyberbullying experiences and adolescents' self-esteem levels.

These results are somewhat surprising, as previous research has often suggested that exposure to cyberbullying can have detrimental effects on various aspects of adolescents' well-being, including self-esteem. Nevertheless, the absence of a statistically significant correlation in this study suggests that other factors may be at play or that the relationship between cyberbullying and self-esteem is more complex than previously assumed.

In conclusion, while Hypothesis 1 was not supported by the findings, it is essential to recognize that this study represents only one piece of the broader research on cyberbullying and its consequences. The non-significant correlation between cyberbullying and self-esteem in this study suggests that the relationship is more intricate and context-dependent than previously assumed. Future research should continue to explore the various factors that influence adolescents' responses to cyberbullying and their self-esteem outcomes to develop a more comprehensive understanding of this critical issue. Additionally, interventions and support strategies for adolescents should consider the complexity of these relationships and the individual differences among those affected by cyberbullying.

Hypothesis 2 posited that "Cyberbullying negatively affects the self-efficacy of adolescents." However, the results of this study did not provide support for this hypothesis. Instead, the findings indicate that there is no significant correlation between the frequency of cyberbullying experiences and adolescents' self-efficacy levels.

These results suggest that, at least in the context of this study, cyberbullying does not appear to have a meaningful negative impact on adolescents' self-efficacy beliefs. Self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their ability to accomplish tasks and achieve goals. While it is plausible to assume that cyberbullying could erode self-efficacy by causing feelings of helplessness, anxiety, or self-doubt, the lack of a significant correlation challenges this assumption.

In conclusion, while Hypothesis 2 was not supported by the findings, it is essential to continue investigating the impact of cyberbullying on various aspects of adolescents' well-being, including self-efficacy. Understanding the nuanced relationship between these factors can inform the development of interventions and support strategies for adolescents who may experience cyberbullying.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study delved into the intricate interplay between cyberbullying, self-esteem, and self-efficacy among adolescents. It was initiated with the assumption that cyberbullying negatively affects these crucial aspects of adolescent well-being. However, the results revealed a more nuanced picture.

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Several factors could contribute to these intriguing findings. Individual differences among adolescents, including coping strategies and resilience, play a crucial role in shaping their responses to cyberbullying. Additionally, the complexity of self-esteem and self-efficacy as constructs influenced by various life experiences and personal beliefs cannot be understated. In summary, while this study did not find strong evidence for the hypothesized negative impact of cyberbullying on self-esteem and self-efficacy, it underscores the importance of considering a broader context. Adolescents' well-being is shaped by numerous factors, and cyberbullying is just one of them. Future research should continue to explore these complex relationships, accounting for individual and contextual differences. Moreover, interventions and support for adolescents should address a range of determinants of their well-being to promote their psychological health and resilience in the face of challenges such as cyberbullying.

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Conflict of Interest

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