



Impact of Cyber Bullying on Female Education at University Level

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Abstract: The purpose of this study was to examine the extent of cyber bullying among female university students on their campuses. Mostly girls have been targeted in the field of social media. The study focused only the girl students of university of AWKUM. Study showed that how cybercrimes effects on a girl's students' life, three female students from university provided the information for this study. The findings indicate that on university campus, female students were frequently threatened and subjected to blackmail. As a result of their concern about appearing immoral, 70% of the students chose not to tell their families about these instances because they belong to Pushton society. Because of this, young girl prefers to suffer in silence, which prevents students from using cyberspace freely and interferes with their academic life. The results also showed that the female students had little faith in law enforcement and knew nothing about the regulations in place to protect them from online abuse. In order to stop cyber stalking of young women on a national basis, it is advised that university launch awareness programs and set up a distinct body. According to the study's findings, the majority of female students think social media has made their daily lives more difficult.

Keywords: Cyber Bullying, Female Students, Pakistan

1.Introduction

Millions of people utilize social networking sites like Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp, and YouTube. Many of them have incorporated information from these sites into their routines. Creating online groups of people with similar interests or pastimes is the aim of a social network service. The websites enable users to create online profiles, share data, photos, blog posts, audio clips, etc. Users are encouraged to identify other members of the system with whom they have a relationship after joining a social network. Depending on the website, terms like friends, contacts, and fans are used to describe these connections. According to Pellegrini, Bartini, and Brooks (1999), the bi-directional validation of friendship was necessary on the majority of social networks. Cyber bullying, also known as online bullying, is a form of stalking and harassment that takes place online and

involves threatening and intimidating the victim. Online bullying can take many different forms, including sending threatening or abusive emails, making threats, using blackmail, and spamming (Ellison & Akdeniz, 1998). According to Olumide, Adams, and Amodu (2015), most victims of cybercrime are female, indicating that this epidemic is specifically gendered. It has a significant impact on them and raises the possibility of continued exploitation, which could result in suicide (Citron, 2009).

Cyberspace technology is quickly gaining ground in Pakistan. Today, it is vital to use social media, like Facebook, Twitter, Popular social media platforms that have an impact on Pakistani youth include WhatsApp, Viber, and Instagram. Online harassment of women is one issue that has arisen as a result of technological improvements, but social media expansion has also brought forth more issues. In Pakistan, online harassment of women is a relatively new phenomenon that often goes unreported, although having a considerable detrimental impact on females (Memon et al., 2015). According to Magsi, Sahito, and Magsi (2016), the use of popular social media has gotten worse for them. Indirect communication has long been a source of harassment for Pakistani women. Women are the worst victims of cyber harassment, blackmail, and extortion, which is becoming a widespread problem (Shahid, 2014).

Over 65% of Pakistan's internet users are between the ages of 18 and 29, and women in this group are particularly exposed and unprotected (Bandial, 2015). Unfortunately, the extensively utilised social media platforms are not strictly regulated; users can freely access private material such as papers and photographs, and they frequently disparage prominent figures and celebrities on the basis of their caste, religion, or creed. Pakistan has a very patriarchal society, which makes it difficult for women to obtain justice there (Agarwal, 1994; Dube, 1998; Jejeebhoy & Sather, 2001; Therborn, 2004). These obstacles include rape, domestic abuse, and cyber bullying (Niaz, 2003; Zaman & Zia, 2012). Because of the low standing of women in society, harassment may get worse with time. According to reports, cyber bullying has become more prevalent in Pakistan and its perpetrators are able to get away with it; as most attempts are made in secret, women are reluctant to report the crime and instead choose to ignore it (Shahid 2014; Bandial 2015).

According to Shahid (2014), cyber bullying is frequently experienced by students in higher education in Pakistan. In order to determine the magnitude of the harassment experienced by young female students, it is crucial to look into this matter further on this level. The type of cyber bullying is examined in the current study, as well as the amount of stalking of female students at AWKUM university. According to the studies that have already been done, further research is needed to determine why women are harassed on social media and why they don't report offences that would otherwise ruin their lives. We're curious to find out how frequently women face cyber-harassment during their academic careers, how they respond to it, and what effects it has on them.

1.2 Problem Statement

All throughout the world, cyber bullying is growing daily. Under Pakistan's educational system in particular, students can become more involved in bullying by using technology more frequently. In these difficult courses, those that prioritise grades can only guarantee excellent work. As well as this, students ought to observe what they do. If a pupil's performance in school is compromised, then the student as a whole is at risk. Inquiring into student cybercrime is the goal of this investigation. The aim of this research is to examine the impact of cyber bullying on female education at university.

1.3 Significance of the Study

A lookup for cyberbullying is provided here. In addition to positive elements, students at all levels in Pakistan who use social networking sites like Facebook, WeChat, and WhatsApp also have negative effects on their academic performance. The scope and nature of cybercrime among college students will be examined in this study using current data. The calm environment of the institution is severely disturbed by the evil students who harass the decent pupils. Bullying is seen as a social issue in almost every society. Promoting culture and

ideas in public life is one of the university's objectives, reflecting society as a whole. Bullying is a widespread issue at universities, particularly in Pakistan. The pupils are significantly impacted by this condition.

1.4 Research Objectives

- To study the perception of university female students regarding cyber bullying.
- To understand coping the strategies within the context of cyber bullying.

2. Literature Review

The term "bullying" was first used in 1530. Bullying is described as occurring when an individual or group of individuals (the bullfighter) repeatedly targets or threatens a person (the victim) over an extended period of time, using direct or indirect malicious behaviour that may have an adverse effect on the victim (either physically or emotionally) (Inamullah, 2014). People have required to deal with bullies on a constant basis since the beginning of time. Whatever the case, innovation tends to move things forward, just like anything else. Some pre-adults and adults are now essentially unable to avoid being badgered by their coworkers at work and in school due to the advancement of web-based living and innovation. Cyber bullying is this social marvel that has gained widespread recognition. According to Stacey (2009), there are eight distinct types of cyber bullying, including blazing (online arguments), provocation (sending offensive messages), denigration (posting tattle), pantomime, trip (sharing people groups' insider information), duplicity (getting someone to share mysteries), rejection, and cyber stalking. The study shows how cyber bullying discourses, relationships between the contexts, and recurrence of online hostility all exist. The majority of the participants indicate that they are concerned about the digital crimes brought on by daily activities conducted online. In any event, a sizable portion of the members had been unable to refrain from disputing the proclamation of thinking about the offences the digital applications. On the other hand, when analysts argue that bullying is a form of online harassment, a sizable number of participants agree with the assertion and have been open to the idea that harassment is a significant form of online harassment in today's society. While the other members of the group did, they disagreed with the accusations of serious harassment. A significant number of the young women members agree with the justification that they believe the internet-based world is actively contributing to the true wrongdoing of cyber bullying at the point when experts discuss the role of social media applications in the spread of digital wrongdoings. Through these announcements, we may estimate the total amount of internet-based activity that contributes to the fundamental issues of violations that are produced by the extra and increased employments of digital applications (Nixon, 2014). As defined by Butler (2016) in the Oxford Dictionary, it designates a somebody who habitually threatens or harms other people. The majority of the literature on bullying, which has been examined for approximately 40 years, agrees that bullying is caused by a power imbalance between the powerful aggressor and the weak victim (Menesini & Salmivalli, 2017). On the other hand, cyberbullying can occur anywhere. On sometimes, it occurs while travelling to and from college. Bullying-related victimisation is pervasive in all age groups. Every day, bullying affects students, and the issue is just growing worse. According to Gordon and Forman (2018), bullying can transpire in many settings such as the workplace, classroom, or internet, yet it can still lead to disastrous consequences in all of them.

2.1 Hypothesis

The effects of cyber bullying on female university students can be profound. Affected individuals may have reduced academic performance, anxiety, depression, and even a higher dropout rate. Their overall educational experience and accomplishments may be impacted by the emotional toll, which may make it difficult for them to concentrate on their studies, participate in class discussions, and engage in extracurricular activities. Studies reveal that cyber bullying can have significant psychological impacts and may necessitate the provision of

support systems to enable impacted students to manage their emotions appropriately.

2.2 Effects of Cyber Bullying on Girls

Understanding the impact of cyber bullying on female victims is particularly important. In the first section of this writing audit, we focused on the socioeconomics of the harassers and their victims; in this section, we'll focus on the long-term effects and harm it causes to the victims as well as the various types of cyber bullying. Although the methods used vary, the long-lasting effects that harassment has on the victims are essentially the same.

To ignore the harasser and stay away from them is the easiest strategy to get rid of the problem. However, since cyber bullying occurs online and the victims are often children or young adults, pursuing the issue would be difficult. To stop cyber bullying, the guardians must go forward. A working adversary of tormenting approach should exist in universities. Students should seek professional guidance if they come across such circumstances. You should be aware that the subject in question and the tyrannical jerk both need guidance (Tenbrunsel et al., 2010).

According to elik & Erguzen (2012), students' inability to complete a portion of their daily homework was one of the primary effects that cyber bullies had on them. While many people believe that the effects of harassment are only sadness or low self-esteem, our analysis shed light on far more shocking difficulties. Additionally, they discovered similar responses from victims of cyber bullying who claimed that they repeatedly failed to pass the same exams in university and had an obsession with falling. These findings show that the long-term harm that a cyber bully inflicts on their victim is typically greater than what the majority can first see.

3. Methodology

For this study, a qualitative research design was adopted. Based on this kind of design, researchers can "identify and categorise themes in the data by collecting data in the form of written or spoken language, or in the form of observations that are recorded in language" (Terré Blanche, Durrheim, & Painter, 2006). Using this kind of design, researchers can more thoroughly study participant behaviour and understand the informational patterns and categories that surface from the data, as suggested by Babbie & Mouton (2001) and Gravetter & Forzano (2012). According to Denzin (1989), a qualitative approach would most likely produce a comprehensive, in-depth assessment of the participants' perceptions, emotions, experiences, and ideas regarding cyber bullying.

According to Moustakas (1994), "what appears in consciousness is an absolute reality while what appears to the world is a product of learning" is how the distinctiveness of phenomenology is described. Phenomenology is a branch of study that, in the words of Langdrige's definition from 2007, "aims to focus on people's perceptions of the world in which they live and what it means to them; a focus on people's lived experience". In order to better understand the phenomenon of cyber bullying, this study will look at it from the viewpoint of people who have bullied others. I engaged in prolonged conversation with university girls' students to collect specific information about their actions and the difficulties they encountered when engaging in cyber bullying. In order to conduct this qualitative study on university cyber bullying, I selected Abdul Wali Khan University.

About 3 female students from Garden campus were chosen to participate in the interview in order to learn what female university students think who had experienced cyber bullying. Consequently, the girls in were questioned throughout the university year 2023. Each interview lasted about 30 minutes, which gave us enough time to conduct in-depth discussions about the subject with the responders.

The interviews followed a systematic interview process, and the subjects were questioned about the types of bullying and harassment that occur on their campuses, as well as their origins, effects, and countermeasures. Since this study deals with sensitive matters, we spent considerable time getting to know our respondents and assuring them that no information about their personal lives—including their studies, classes, or levels—would

be shared.

3. Validity and Credibility

As a qualitative research methodology, IPA relies on participants as the primary data collection tool; therefore, member verification procedures must be implemented to ensure the authenticity and reliability of the study findings. Creswell and Miller (2000) assert that the validity of qualitative studies is influenced by both the researcher's validity standpoint and the study paradigm. Consequently, many researchers have created their own conceptions of validity and embraced concepts, like "trustworthiness" that they think are better suited to qualitative research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Seale, 1999). For the purposes of this research, I'm contrasting trustworthiness with credibility and validity.

The study's section on data collecting describes the Seidman's three-interview strategy as one technique used to guarantee the reliability and validity of the results. Seidman (2006) states that the use of three interviews "incorporates features that enhance IPA study validity." By interviewing participants again over a one- to three-week period, the interviewer can confirm the claims for internal consistency. The researcher was also able to make connections between the experiences of the various people she interacted with throughout this period and compare each participant's comments with the others, ensuring internal consistency. When a participant's statements are internally consistent across time, they get greater credibility (Seidman, 2006). Furthermore, Seidman (2006) asserts that "because the researcher is concerned with the participant's understanding of his or her experiences, the authenticity of what he or she is saying makes it reasonable to have confidence in its validity" for IPA research.

Another strategy to guarantee the study's validity and reliability was triangulation. A researcher triangulates, looking at several data sources, in order to develop a convincing justification of themes (Creswell, 2009). The participants' texts, emails, instant conversations, printed papers, and other computer-mediated communication were among the data sources that were used to identify a topic or themes for this study. Finding themes in data from multiple sources establishes or enhances the study's validity (Creswell, 2009).

Furthermore, member verification was employed to ensure the study's validity and dependability. The opportunity to verify the accuracy of the themes selected and correct factual or interpreted inaccuracies is given to the participant. The validity of an observer's interpretation of qualitative observations is enhanced by member checks (Creswell, 2009).

4. 1 Findings and Discussion

Cyber bullying is a widespread problem in campuses. The majority of the sample's students experienced cyber bullying at some point during their time in university. The findings of this research indicate that every girl in every university experienced cyber bullying. The girls were 22 years old on average. This shows the frequency of cyber bullying against female students as well as the motivations, sources, and methods used to harass the students. This research also show how these students were affected by cyber bullying, how they handled the incidences of harassment, and the preventive steps these girls took as a result of being victimized.

According to the findings, the bullying of female students frequently stemmed from a broken relationship that the female students called off. If the girls declined the invitation to begin dating the boys who stalked, they were also followed. Text and WhatsApp messages were the next most popular methods of harassment, followed by Facebook. Typically, harassment starts with telling girls derogatory stories, criticizing them for their appearance, making provocative remarks on their Facebook posts, and pressuring them to meet.

According to studies (Shahid, 2014; Fenaughty & Harré, 2013; Finn, 2004), Young university students are more likely to be victims of cyberstalking, as evidenced by the victims in our sample, whose easily visible online personas and walled communities reside in. Because a young girl who experiences cyber bullying is perceived by society as unethical and raises numerous questions about her morality, many young girls lack the

courage to manage with the situation (Memon). et al., 2015). About 90% of the students in the study area didn't tell their parents about the harassment they experienced on campus. This occurred because they did not believe that telling their parents about the assaults or filing a formal complaint would have any beneficial effects. These pupils endured great suffering in silence as a result, and they remained unsettled for a while. For instance, the vast majority of the sampled students claimed that cyber bullying kept them from studying, hindered their ability to do well on examinations, and caused them to receive poor grades.

10% percent of them acknowledged telling their relatives about the harassment incidents. It's interesting to note that these girls all experienced rapid parental support, which raised their self-esteem. These children claimed that the harassment had ultimately given them greater bravery and confidence; their parents assisted their daughters in coping with the episodes by providing assistance when needed and by contacting the families of the male classmates in an effort to hold the harasser accountable.

But most of the sample students who spoke with their parents about the bullying got the go-ahead to forget about the episodes going forward. This demonstrates the lack of confidence these young women and their families had in the ability of the government to keep them safe, which explains the reluctance of many of the female students in our sample to report harassment they had encountered online. 50 percent of those respondents said that the university had no legal safeguards to protect students from cyber bullying. However, these students reported that they and their peers did not feel unsafe while on campus (outside of the cyberspaces) and that they felt at home there.

5. Conclusion and Recommendation

Abuse of cyber bullying has increased on campuses, where female students are intimidated and blackmailed more often than one may assume. The majority of university students who use the internet are young; they form connections, and when those friendships dissolve, the girl's sole option for retaliation is to harass her online. The young women who avoid becoming friends with male classmates out of concern for potential stalking are likewise not excused; they claim to have experienced harassment for refusing to do so. It has been noted that the family plays a crucial part in dealing with young girl who are being cyber bullying; if the situation is handled correctly, the guy will be punished and the girl will be encouraged to deal with the problem on their own. This is contingent on the harassment being reported in a timely manner, though, as reporting harassment is frowned upon in society where women are expected to be subservient and modest. Female students become discouraged by this and prefer to endure harassment in quiet rather than come forward and expose their families to shame.

In Pakistan, the usage of cyberspaces like the Internet and mobile devices is growing quickly, with young people being the most regular users. Unfortunately, the government still lacks updated legislation to combat cybercrime. In this case, the lack of stricter legislation would put women in the community at greater risk and cause them to continue to experience psychological suffering. A new cyber law has recently been enacted in Pakistan, and it imposes harsh penalties for cybercrime, including jail time and fines (Dawn, 2016). The most important query here, though, is how many women—particularly female university students—are expected to gain from the new policy (Dawn, 2016). Our survey's findings indicate that young women are hesitant to report cyber bullying because they don't trust governmental organizations, but they also don't understand that laws are in place to prevent it.

It is important to plan frequent awareness-raising activities to inform young women about their resources and how to use them in the event of cyber bullying. The awareness-building seminars will teach these students about instances in which offenders were brought to justice, given that a large portion of our respondents were unwilling to report this crime because they believed the culprit would not suffer any penalties. Universities should create a dedicated group to combat female cyber bullying. Strict laws protecting female students and addressing online harassment on campus will increase the possibility of reporting, which will ultimately aid in

managing and controlling cyber bullying.

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