

Exploring Modes, Strategies, and Psychosocial Consequences of Cyberbullying Perpetration and Victimization Among University Students

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The purpose of the study was to explore modes, strategies, and consequences of cyberbullying perpetration and victimization among university students. In-depth interviews of 14 volunteer university students (8 male and 6 female) were conducted who volunteered to participate in the study in which 10 participants were “cybervictims” whereas 4 were “cyberbully-victim”. Interview guide was used for conducting unstructured interviews. Thematic analysis of the interviews revealed different experiences in cyberspace with respect to gender and role (cybervictim and cyberbully-victim) in experiencing cyberbullying and cyber-victimization. Three themes emerged that is psychological consequences (emotional, behavioral, and cognitive), social consequences (family and peers), and change in lifestyle (online, offline, and academic). Facebook was found to be the most prevalent mode of cyberbullying. The cyberbully-victim participants derived more happiness while bullying and had revengeful attitude; whereas, cybervictims experienced more depression, increased family surveillance, social isolation, and became aware of negative consequences of social networking sites, became more vigilant and conscious in cyberspace. Moreover, the consequences reported by cyberbully-victim were distrust on security settings, low academic achievement, and their peers learnt from their cyberspace experience. Perception of cyber-victimization was different across gender and its psychological impact was more pronounced for girls than boys. The results and implications were discussed in Pakistani context.

Keywords. Cyberspace, strategies, psychosocial consequences, cyberbullying perpetration, cyberbullying victimization

Cyberbullying is an emerging problem since information and communication technologies have become part of daily life of

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university students (Faucher, Jackson, & Cassidy, 2014). Along numerous benefits, modern online technology also posits dangers and risks in cyberspace. The rate of cyberbullying is increasing worldwide (Slonje & Smith, 2008). Threatening or harassing others by sending threatening and shameful messages, spreading fake rumors, and posting identifying information in cyberspace are common bullying practices (Li, 2007). According to estimated statistics provided by Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA; 2017, July 19) there were 114.7 million mobile phone users. In Pakistan, out of all internet users, more than 65% of age range is between 18 to 29 years and women are more unprotected and vulnerable for victimization in cyberspace (Bandial, 2015, September 15). The menace of cyberbullying is getting strong with increasing number of social media networks, where youth share their life experiences and innovative ideas to seek popularity and acceptance among their peers and social circle. Unfortunately, they do not acknowledge that excessive use of social media is making them more vulnerable to harassment and bullying online, where the negative consequences are unfathomable and at times irreparable (Lavanya & Prasad, 2014).

Cyberbullying is repeatedly harassing an individual with an intention to harm, embarrass or damage by using digital technology (Beale & Hall, 2007; Beran, Rinaldi, Bickham, & Rich, 2012; Bhat, 2008; Patchin & Hinduja, 2006). Mobile phones and internet devices are used for sending or sharing of confidential or unpleasant emails, instant messages, picture or videos with victims, and spreading such material to others too. Most commonly used modes are chat rooms, personal online blogs, polling sites, and social networking sites (Kowalski, Limber, & Agatston, 2007). Girls mostly use more instant messaging, e-mail or chatrooms; while, boys prefer to post photos and videos online for electronic bullying (Menesini, Nocentini, & Calussi, 2011). Flaming, harassment, denigration, impersonation, trickery, exclusion, cyber stalking, etc. are a few strategies of cyberbullying (Willard, 2007). Cyberbullying consequently lead to internalizing and externalizing problems like, anxiety, depression, self-harm, suicide ideation, suicide attempts, fighting, vandalism, and substance use problems among victims (Elgar et al., 2014).

Cybervictims experience hostile and embarrassing behaviors by the perpetrator in cyberspace (Wright, 2015) including social exclusion, verbal assaults, humiliation, identity theft, physical threat, and abusive emails (Wolak, Mitchell, & Finkelhor, 2007; Ybarra & Mitchell, 2004). Kowalski et al. (2007) found strong relationship between cyberbullying and cyber-victimization than traditional bullying and traditional victimization, as cyberspace provides a safer

and easier venue for both perpetrator and victim to get revenge than in traditional bullying (Mishna, Khoury-Kassabri, Gadalla, & Daciuk, 2012). Nevertheless, perpetrators and victims of both traditional bullying and cyberbullying equally experience depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, self-reported health problems, and low academic achievements (Kowalski & Limber, 2013). However, cybervictims experience more depression, anxiety, phobic anxiety, and paranoia than matched control group among university students (Bottino, Bottino, Regina, Correia, & Ribeiro, 2015; Medrano, Lopez-Rosales, & Gámez-Guadix, 2017; Raskauskas & Stoltz, 2007; Schneider, O'Donnell, Stueve, & Coulter, 2012; Schenk & Fremouw, 2012). Cyber-victimization is significant predictor of cyberbullying perpetration (Roberto, Eden, Savage, Ramos-Salazar, & Deiss, 2014). Victims in cyberspace indulge into cyberbullying perpetration out of anger (Pabian & Vandebosch, 2016). Therefore, current study was aimed to study experiences of perpetrator, victim, and bully-victim.

A meta-analysis conducted by Kowalski, Giumetti, Schroeder, and Lattanner (2014) indicated that there is a strong relationship of normative belief about aggression and moral disengagement with cyberbullying perpetration, whereas stress and suicidal ideation are linked with cyberbullying victimization. Cyberbullying perpetration and victimization is equally prevalent in both gender (Leung, Wong, & Farver, 2017). However, there are differential cyberbullying related experiences that make it a unique gendered phenomenon. Women experience more cyber-victimization than their counterparts (Olumide, Adams, & Amodu, 2015) and male students indulge more in cyberbullying perpetration than female students. In Pakistan, female cybervictims are more susceptible to experience anxiety as compared to male university students (Musharraf & Anis-ul-Haque, 2018a, 2018b). Nevertheless, the meta-analysis revealed mixed findings across gender in Australia, Asia, Europe, and North American (Kowalski et al., 2014). Across the globe much research have been carried out on cyberbullying (see e.g., Kim Colwell, Kata, Boyle, & Geogiades, 2018; Kowalski et al., 2014; Leung et al., 2017; Olumide et al., 2015), however, there is dearth of research on cyberbullying perpetration and victimization in Pakistan that deserves attention in this technologically fast moving world.

Social media is the need of hour for the youth of Pakistan. Most popular social media in Pakistan are Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, WhatsApp, and Viber. With the advancement of technologies, cyber harassment has also increased which has made female users more vulnerable, however, there is much under-reporting of the cases (Memon, Mahar, Dhomeja, & Pirzado, 2015). Perpetrators can easily

escape in most of the cases because of anonymity and usually female victims are unwilling to report their case and rely on ignoring it (Bandial, 2015; Shahid, 2014, April 17). Female university students are frequently blackmailed and threatened. Nevertheless, the fear of being labeled as immoral mostly restricts students to conceal such incidents from their families. Consequently, they prefer to remain silent and refrain from using cyberspace freely that has negative impact on their academic life (Shahid, 2014, April 17). Cyberbullying perpetration and victimization negatively affect the quality of life among adolescents in Pakistan. Unlike female victims, male victims are more open to share their experiences (Umm-e-Habiba, 2016). Male cybervictims experience more behavioral problems, whereas female cybervictims experience more emotional problems (Kim et al., 2018).

In Pakistan, a research was conducted to study the effects of cyberbullying among university students and revealed that they experience adverse effects on social life, threat to academic achievements and career (Munawar, Inam-ul-Haq, Ali, & Maqsood, 2014). Magsi, Sahito, and Magsi (2016) found that experiencing cyber-victimization through indirect communication on social media is continuous source of pain to Pakistani women. Cyberbullying perpetrators experience suicidal behaviors, whereas cyberbully-victim and cyberbullies experience psychological distress, aggressive tendencies, and engage more in illegal behaviors (Schenk, Fremouw, & Keelan, 2013). In current era, Kim, Boyle, and Geogiades (2017) posited that one contributing factor of more turbulence in adolescence as compared to adults is cyber victimization. In their study the cybervictims reported poor mental health as compared to those individuals who were not exposed to cyber-victimization. Over the last decade, cyberbullying has become a source of serious social health problem all over the world.

Therefore, the purpose of present study was to explore the modes, strategies, and consequences experienced by university students in cyberbullying perpetration and victimization. Findings were explored along status of participants in cyber-space that is victim only and both perpetrator and victim status, however, gender based experiences are also looked into. Phenomenological research design was used to explore phenomenon from participants' perspective. Only volunteer participation was sought as research had sensitive nature and it was made open for the participants to approach researcher if they wanted to participate to share their personal experiences candidly. Present study helped to explore the phenomenon indigenously that may

provide a guideline to make prevention and intervention programs in future. Following are the objectives of the study to explore:

1. The mode and strategies utilized by university students for cyberbullying perpetration and victimization.
2. Psychosocial consequences of cyberbullying perpetration and victimization among university students.
3. Variation in experiences across status in cyber space as both cyberbullying perpetrator-victim and victim only among university students.

Method

Research Design

Present research is based on phenomenological research approach to explore the modes, strategies, and consequences of cyberbullying perpetration and victimization. Thematic analysis was used as method of analyzing data.

Sample

Volunteer participation was sought to collect the qualitative data from students ($N = 14$) of public and private universities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad. This is Study 2 of M.Phil research of first author (Kanwal, 2018). Study 1 was quantitative; during data collection, students were introduced about Study 2 (current study which is qualitative interview based) that if anybody wanted to share their in-depth personal experiences, they could contact first author via email. The inclusion criteria for this study was, only those participants who were using smartphone/internet and having age 18 years or more and were willing to share their personal experiences of cyber-victimization, involvement in cyberbullying perpetration or both. Therefore, in the present study only volunteer participants made the sample of the study. Finally, participants who had status of “only cyber victim” ($n = 10$) and “both cyber perpetrator-victim” ($n = 4$) approached the first author. None of the “only cyber perpetrator” approached, hence, study did not include “cyber perpetrator only”. Total 25 participants contacted out of which 14 were interviewed as the saturation point had reached. The male ($n = 8$) and female ($n = 6$) participants having age range 19 to 25 years ($M = 21.07$, $SD = 1.97$) participated in present study. Participants reported that they spent more than three hours online other than studies. All participants were

using Facebook account. Around 50% of the participants were having unknown friendships on different social networking sites (SNSs).

Instruments

Demographic sheet and unstructured interview guides were used for data collection. Two separate interview guides for cyberbullying perpetration and cybervictim were formulated based on past literature. The unstructured interview guides consisted of seven different questions and probing questions as well. Questions were formulated to explore modes, strategies, and consequences of cyberbullying perpetration and victimization. The interview guide was revised after every interview on the basis of new information explored like “*What is your reaction when you receive a wrong call for making friendship or harass someone by sending text message or call?*”

Procedure

Formal consent of the participants was obtained for conducting interviews. How sample was accessed, it is already mentioned in Sample section. University students who volunteered to participate were contacted and appointment for interviews was fixed according to the convenience of the participants. They were willing to meet in their university campuses. Permission was sought for audio-recording the interviews. They were assured that information obtained would be used for research purpose only and would be kept confidential. Rapport was built before taking interview. The in-depth interviews were conducted where they were asked to share their lived experiences as cybervictim and both as cyberbully-victim and perpetrator. Demographic sheet was also filled by the participants before interview. Interviews were conducted in English and *Urdu* languages (as per the convenience of participant) from February to March 2018. After each interview participants were thanked for their cooperation. Audio-recorded interviews were transcribed for thematic analysis. After taking interviews, participants were provided information about cyberbullying and where they could get help, if they experienced such type of problems next time in their life. They were also guided for counseling channels, if needed.

Results and Discussion

For qualitative analysis, interviews were transcribed and translated from Urdu to English. Thematic analysis was carried out. Total 129 codes were generated under different categories and themes

on the basis of qualitative data. Two independent raters who were PhD scholars in Psychology having research work on cyberbullying, requested to evaluate and show their agreement for codes and categories under respective theme. In case of disagreement, they were requested to suggest change and placement of codes and categories under recommended themes. The Cohen's kappa was calculated to measure level of agreement between two raters by using SPSS-22. The coefficient of Cohen's kappa of present coding ($\kappa = .91$) indicates almost perfect agreement between both raters according to the criteria given by Landis and Koch (1977).

The scheme of reporting results is as follows: "**Bold text**" indicates the experiences related to cyberbullying perpetration, "simple text" indicates the experiences of cyberbullying victimization, and "*italicized text*" indicates the experiences involving both cyberbullying perpetration and victimization. The participants were assigned codes as BVM for Bully-Victim Male, BVF for Bully-Victim Female, VF for Victim Female, and VM for Victim Male.

Modes and Strategies of Cyberbullying Perpetration and Victimization

Modes and strategies through which participants got involved in cyberbullying perpetration and experienced victimization are explored. Modes are the medium used for cyberbullying perpetration and experiencing victimization among participants, whereas strategies are the ways or methods that participants through those media for cyberbullying perpetration and experienced victimization.

Table 1

Modes and Strategies of Cyberbullying Perpetration and Victimization (N = 14)

Themes	Categories	Codes
Modes	Internet and Social media	<i>Facebook</i> <i>WhatsApp</i> <i>Instagram</i> <i>Twitter</i> <i>Snapchat</i> KICK
	Cellular media	Internet calls <i>Phone calls</i> <i>Text messages</i>
Strategies	Social media account	Hacking of social media accounts

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Themes	Categories	Codes
		Generate fake account
		Using different Facebook accounts
		<i>Online friendship from fake accounts</i>
		Misuse of social media accounts
		Identity theft
		Added in unknown WhatsApp group
	Messaging and comments	Vulgar messages to victim's friends
		Unsolicited messages
		Threatening messages
		Online blackmailing
		Comments on physical appearance
		Humiliating messages
		Request message on Facebook
		Teasing others online
		Hurting messages to victim's friends
	Sexting	Sexually explicit photos
		<i>Sexual explicit messages</i>
		Suggestions from sexual pages
		Tagging on sexual videos
		Nude photos
	Photos	Misuse of photos
		Photoshop or editing pictures
		Take screenshot of photos
		Capture photos without consent
		Sharing photos and chat
	Phone calls	Threatening voice calls on cell number
		Threatening call on landline number
		Threatening messages on cell number
		Hurting comments on call
		Prank phone calls

Note. Simple text for experiences related to cyberbullying victimization; Bold face words for experiences related to cyberbullying perpetration; Italicize words for both cyberbullying perpetration and victimization.

Modes of cyberbullying perpetration and victimization. The modes of cyberbullying and victimization are further divided into 2 categories that are internet and social media and cellular media, further coded and discussed subsequently (see Table 1).

Internet and social media. The internet and social media is the first category of modes of cyberbullying perpetration and victimization which is further divided into different codes. The personal factor explained by the participant BVF1 reported that “For sake of fun or to tease any friend, I used to create fake IDs on Instagram, or on Ask, or create fake Facebook account, or used to call him from random phone numbers.” Facebook among all social networking sites is mostly used for cyberbullying among participants. With the advancement of technology, cyberbullying behaviors increase by using electronic devices, mobile phone, and internet are the modes of cyberbullying (Smith, Mahdavi, Carvalho, & Tippett, 2006). Anonymity perception from user’s perspective influences cyberbullying perpetration. Social media is a tool which assists a user to increase anonymity perception and likelihood of cyberbullying perpetration (Barlett, DeWitt, Maronna, & Johnson, 2018).

The participant BVM10 reported that “We purchase minutes on internet through online shopping and then tease anyone by calling, wherein user cannot detect that the caller is from Pakistan or from any foreign country.” The cyberbullying is prevalent among different age groups. Awareness of cyberbullying is very important among adolescents and young adults to protect and fight against it. It becomes so easy to harass someone in cyberspace by using technology like cell phone or internet. Those who are proficient to use social media get a platform to bully others in cyberspace. The intentions behind cyberbullying are to harm others or fun seeking (Makhulo, 2018).

Cellular media. The cellular media is the second category of modes of cyberbullying perpetration and victimization which is further divided into different codes. It is elaborated by the participant BVF1 “I have also sent prank text or calls to a large number of people through my current number.” Different forms of cyberbullying occurs through phone calls, text messages, photos/video clips by using mobile phones and through emails, chat rooms, instant messaging, and blog socializing networks by using internet (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2014; Smith et al., 2008). Cyberbullying is a public health concern in 21st century. The increasing usage of smartphone and networked computers is due to advent and excessive usage of social media among young adults. They become more tolerant for experiencing negative effect in cyberspace as compared to decide for disconnection from internet (Ferrara, Ianniello, Villani, & Corsello, 2018). Conventional perpetrator are physically stronger, while cyberbullying perpetrators are more expert technologically and better able to access victims in cyberspace, maintain their own anonymity, repetitively victimize others includes identity theft,

hacking of account, infecting virus in victim's personal computers, impersonation or posting embarrassing or hurting content (Aboujaoude, Savage, Starcevic, & Salame, 2015).

Strategies of cyberbullying and cyberbullying victimization.

The strategies of cyberbullying and victimization is further categorized into 5 categories that are social media accounts, messaging and comments, sexting, photos, and cellular media, further coded and discussed subsequently.

Social media account. The social media account is the first category of strategies of cyberbullying perpetration and victimization which is further divided into different codes. Using social media accounts is explained by the participant VM3 as "Friends asked me to like an ad by clicking. As I clicked on ad, I observed changes in my ID. Then I came to know that my Facebook ID has been hacked and after some time, it was not opening. The password had been changed." Social media provides a mode and hacking of social media accounts used as a strategy to victimize others and involved in online anti-social behaviors that involve misuse of user's identifying information after hacking (Donner, Marcum, Jennings, Higgins, & Banfield, 2014; Duarte, Pittman, Thorsen, Cunningham, & Ranney, 2018). Majority of students were not aware of the negative consequences of their privacy in cyberspace, hence, become victims of such strategies of hacking that is by clicking or liking the ads on Facebook. Privacy policy clearly states that disclosing personal information to third parties in cyberspace may explicitly breach the privacy of a user. Private companies may advertise on Facebook along with ghost profile for every Facebook user (Sarkar, Narani, Oommen, Alam, & Jaleel, 2012). Due to the popularity of mobile usage, the users blindly trust on devices and are least mindful about the privacy in cyberspace. Android and Apple manufacturers clearly mention and educate on their devices about threats, mobile malwares, apps permission, and unsafe mobile phone applications. There is a need that every user should learn and vigilantly protect their smartphone devices through proper security settings available on devices and use in safe locations where secure Wi-Fi connections are available to secure their personal information or data (Evans, 2018).

Messaging and comments. The messaging and comments is the second category of strategies of cyberbullying perpetration and victimization, which is further divided into different codes. The verbatim of participant VF14 "I'm going to be on TV and some stories will be made on me. I was so afraid, because of all the messages sent to me by him." There are different strategies of electronic bullying that girls use more like instant messaging, e-mail or chatrooms; while

boys prefer to post photos and videos online as a strategy for electronic bullying (Menesini et al., 2011). Menesini and Spiel (2012) have conducted a systematic review, which indicates that among children and adolescents this form of bullying has emerged with the propagation of modern digital technologies, which researchers have referred to as cyberbullying, electronic bullying or internet bullying. Cyberbullying perpetrator intentionally and repeatedly attack another individual by using electronic means. Such attacks are done in a variety of ways like offensive e-mails or text messages; verbal abuse through chat rooms or instant messaging; sharing other's photos or videos on mobile or websites; exclusion from social networks or misusing other's IDs, and personal information on different social networking sites.

Participant VF7 reported that "Before hacking my account, he sent me a message in the beginning, I liked your appearance, means that he has seen my picture which was displayed as DP. Then he said to me that I liked your appearance in first instance, but now I will marry you." Wang, Moon, Kwon, Evans, and Stefanone (2010) reported that both genders are more eager to initiate friendship with profile owner of opposite sex with attractive photo. The gender differences exist as men are more willing to be virtual friends with visually anonymous female profile owners (no visual cue or photo) than anonymous male counterparts.

Sexting. The sexting is the third category of strategies for cyberbullying perpetration and victimization, which is further divided into different codes and explained by the participant VF12 as "Someone sends me his personal photo or picture of his private parts. If he seeks personal question, if I very openly tell it, that what's your breast size? What's your chest size? Talks such vulgar conversation." Adolescence is a stage of life in which psychosocial and psychosexual development set in. During this transition the adolescent become confused to manage sexual development and maturation process. With the advancement and increased use of technology, adolescents access or get exposed to sexual content online to channelize their sexual urges and desires. Sexting is an online sharing of sexually explicit content either in the form of nude photos, video or message by using social media. Gender differences also exist as sexual expectancies revealed positive attitude towards sending sexts among men (Harris & Steyn, 2018). Men engage in sexting with women may be to fulfill their sexual desires.

Sexting is a complex and online gendered phenomenon. The engagement in such behavior depends upon the gender and relationship between sender and receiver, and women receive more

sexts and face negative consequence than men. Type of relationships can be like romantic partners, friends/peers, online friends, and strangers. Sexting is being predicted by online risk taking behaviors, age, pubertal timing, socio-economic status, family, and peer support. Online risk taking is the strongest predictor of sexting, where receiver can be a stranger or online friend which perpetrator have never met offline (Buren & Lunde, 2018). Sexting is a type of cyberbullying (Powell & Henry, 2014) executed through different social media like Facebook, WhatsApp, Viber, Imo, etc. It can be direct and indirect. Direct sexting is that in which male perpetrator who is in a better position or senior, sends text messages and ask female victim to meet offline; harass young female both physically and sexually. On the other hand, indirect sexting refers to sharing of immoral content in the form of dirty jokes, photos, videos and different formats of audio-visual modes. Sometimes bullying gets converted into harassment as when male perpetrator take sexual or immoral advantage of such situation.

In Pakistan, women experienced more indirect sexting further deriving discussion on such topics in immoral context (Magsi et al., 2016). With the advancement of information communication technologies, men take sexting as an easy tool for bullying women. Sometimes, such bullying changes into violence such as blackmailing, threats, and other deviant behaviors (Srivastava, 2012). During such situations, women feel more helpless due to sociocultural and complex legal processes. This may be because of economic, legal, and social deprivation in Pakistan (Khan & Daniyal, 2018). A participant BVF1 reported that “I made an Instagram account of a person. I threatened him to post all his nudes? He replied that he never posted full nudes, so from where I got it.” Research indicates that revenge porn is very common among ex-partners to take revenge and defame publically or blackmail the victim, which have a negative consequences experienced by the victim (Sabillon, Cano, Cavaller, & Serra, 2016).

Photos. The photos is the fourth category of strategies of cyberbullying perpetration and victimization which is further divided into different codes. BVM2 narrated as “I threatened her, that “the pictures and information that you have shared with me pertaining to your personal life”, I may inform about it to your close relatives or friends who do not have information about it, and regarding our mutual interaction and other details too.” Results indicated that women are more sensitive about their personal pictures when they get viral as compared to men, whereas men use this strategy to threaten and blackmail through viral photos, as they do not perceive it a crime. Comparatively, men are less cautious of self-disclosure, sharing or

uploading photos, and videos online. Therefore, making photos viral publically is a preferred strategy of cyberbullying. Furthermore, men are more likely to get friendship with visually anonymous female profile owners, whereas women are more cautious in cyberspace (Menesini et al., 2011; Wang et al., 2010). The menace of cyberbullying among youth is increasing due to the acceptance of the role as a victim or a bystander in cyberspace (Dinakar, Reichart, & Lieberman, 2011).

Another participant VF11 reported that “He renamed my ID, and gave it a vulgar name. My picture was displayed and wherein some undesirable people were added, and that ID still exists.” Facebook is a social networking site, which allows people to communicate with heterogeneous network of friends by using multiple features like sharing photos, updating status, commenting on post of others, etc. Usage of different Facebook features and disclosure through them affect relationship between friends, in general (Ledbetter et al., 2011; Ellison, Steinfield, & Lampe, 2007; Joinson, 2008) and specific type of friends (Bazarova, Taft, Choi, & Cosley, 2012; Sosik & Bazarova, 2014). In cyberspace, posting of photos depend upon the different types of relationship closeness to sender that is companionship, intimacy, and support. The frequency and disclosure of photos increases on Facebook as relational closeness increases (Houghton, Joinson, Caldwell, Marder, & Collins, 2018).

Phone calls. It is the fifth category of strategies of cyberbullying perpetration and victimization which is further divided into different codes. VF7 explains “He came outside my house at 2’O clock night, and called me to come on roof to listen the voices coming from the horn. He said that he was standing outside my house”. He also reported that, “His car was there. He did not know exact address of my house, but remained standing nearby my house. When he gave horn after coming at night, its sound could be heard in my house and then often at night he started calling on my landline phone continuously.” A perpetrator used different strategies for victimization such as text messages, pictures/video clips (via mobile phone camera), phone call (via mobile phones), email, chat room, instant messaging, and SNSs (Smith et al., 2006).

Consequences of Cyberbullying Perpetration and Victimization

The psychological, social, and change in lifestyle are consequences of cyberbullying perpetration and victimization as explored among cyberbully-victim and cybervictims.

Table 2
Psychological Impact of Cyberbullying Perpetration and Victimization (N = 14)

Themes	Categories	Codes
Psychological impact	Emotional effects	Depression
		Short temperedness
		Intolerance
Stubbornness		
Regret		
Stress		
Going crazy		
Weeping		
Feel shame		
Guilt		
	Cognitive effects	Suicidal ideation
		Inferiority complex
		Shocked
		Feeling hurt
		Deriving happiness
		Lack of sympathy
		Uncaring
		Unemotional
		Anger
		Aggression
	Behavioral effects	Traumatic experience
		Feel insecure
		Fear of defamation
		Disappointment
		Learned helplessness
		Afraid of men/boys
		Negative thinking about men/boys
		Not taking as serious
		Doubtful
		Suspiciousness
	Over thinking	
	Revengeful attitude	
	Negative thoughts	
	Vigilant and conscious	
	Wastage of time	
	Spoil special events	
	Learned from previous cyber victimization	
	Rationalization of behavior	
	Get strong	
	Lack of interest in extracurricular activities	

Continued...

Themes	Categories	Codes
		Avoid social gatherings
		Self-blaming
		Challenging behavior
		Sense of achievement
		Reacting assertively

Note. Simple text for cyberbullying victimization; Bold face words for cyberbullying perpetration; Italicize words for cyberbullying perpetration and victimization.

Psychological impact. It is the first theme of cyberbullying perpetration and victimization is further categorized into 3 categories that are emotional, cognitive, and behavioral impact that are further coded and discussed subsequently.

Emotional effects. The emotional is the first category of psychological impact of perpetration and victimization which is further divided into different codes. Participant VF13 reported as “I just wanted to be grounded, that was I just can’t explain the words, like feel so bad, feel such as that let the earth open and you go in it, as you cannot make eye contact with anyone.” Cybervictims experience depressive symptoms and are more likely to commit suicide (Bauman, Toomey, & Walker, 2013). East Asian male adolescents are more involved in cyberbullying perpetration than female counterparts. East Asian adolescents reported less cyber-aggression due to high parental control and low parental solicitation as compared to European adolescents. Those adolescents who belonged to East Asia were motivated to involve in proactive cyber aggression, whereas European adolescents were involved in reactive cyber aggression (Shapka & Law, 2013).

The verbatim of participant BVM2 indicates that “Thereafter, I felt bad, because I should have left, being highly immature and regret was at my end, very much.” Cybervictims experience depression, anger, sadness, while perpetrators experience remorse. Cyberbully-victim do feel anger, regret, remorse, and empathy for the victim after perpetration and victimization in cyberspace. However, indifferent feelings and less sympathy emerging out of revenge is also reported by cyberbully-victim. Female cybervictims reported more emotional problems than male counterparts after victimization in cyberspace (Balakrishnan, 2018). Recent research indicates that there is a positive relationship between cyberbullying victimization and depression through hopelessness depending upon self-compassion. Self-compassion acted as a buffer between cyberbullying victimization and depression (Chu, Fan, Liu, & Zhou, 2018). Studies indicate that cyberbully-victim experienced more anxiety, depression,

interpersonal sensitivity, and aggression (Kelly et al., 2015; Kokkinos, Antoniadou, & Markos, 2014).

Cognitive effects. It is the second category of psychological impact of perpetration and victimization which is further divided into different codes. Participant VF7 reported “I began to fear from people; at that time I started to fear even my acquaintances and cousins too.” According to VF11 “One of my trauma was that my ID was hacked, it can be misused, it was the first trauma. Second trauma was that, now if my brother re-activates my ID, then my messages those were sent to friends, unknown friends those are added and that boy to whom I talk, if he would see, then what would happen? He will kill me.” Patriarchal society is a major reason for women to become a cybervictim. Women having male friends are despised. Honour is very important and female cybervictims feel ashamed in front of brother and fear honor killing (Halder & Jaishankar, 2011). Low cognitive appraisal for emotional regulation affects psychological health of youth (Kokkinos & Voulgaridou, 2017). In patriarchal society, male members define the respect and honor of female members, which makes her more susceptible to become cybervictims. Beside this, men are taught to be tough, unemotional, dynamic, rational, dignified, and robust, whereas women are expected to be shy, emotional, submissive, sacrificing, compassionate, patient, etc. Women are taught not to raise their voice for the fear of defamation and being stigmatized. Such expectations make women to be self-silenced and ignore their experiences related to victimization and not reporting to significant others (Geetha, 2002).

Behavioral effects. It is the third category of psychological impact of perpetration and victimization which is further divided into different codes and explained by the participant BVM2 as, “I minimized interaction with people, I totally stopped my activities, hobbies, sports, athletics, etc.” Research reveals that increased use of internet among cybervictims compensate the lack of social skills by making new relationships online, search for anonymity, and easy escape from the real world as compared to non victims. Cybervictims adopts very few effective strategies to handle the problem involving friends as compared to non victims. Cybervictims face greater difficulties in social interaction for seeking help and they become socially isolated after experiencing cyberbullying (Navarro, Larranaga, & Yubero, 2018). Furthermore, participant VF7 narrated as “I gave an irrelevant comment perhaps, which should have not been done there. There were a lot of such people, those were unknown and that was obviously public group, so there would have been such type of people.” Cybervictims reported more feelings of embarrassment,

hurt, self-blame, and fear after victimization in cyberspace (Beran & Li, 2005; Price & Dalgleish, 2010). In the light of attribution theory researchers revealed that youth internalize the negative and stressful event of their lives. They characterize it through self-blaming (Prinstein, Cheah, & Guyer, 2005). Patriarchy is the major barrier to justice in cases related to rape, domestic violence or cyber harassment (Niaz, 2003; Zaman & Zia, 2012). Weak social status of women in the society has led to increased cases of harassment.

Table 3

Social Impact of Cyberbullying Perpetration and Victimization (N=14)

Themes	Categories	Codes
Social impact	Family	Fear of family Afraid of brother Increased family surveillance Sharing with family except father Snubbed by family Detachment from family Traced home address
	Peers	<i>Peer support</i> Social isolation <i>Lesson for peers</i> Fight between friends Distrust among friends

Note. Simple text for cyberbullying victimization; Bold face words for cyberbullying perpetration; Italicize words for cyberbullying perpetration and victimization.

Social impact. The social impact, second theme of cyberbullying perpetration and victimization, is further categorized into 2 categories that are family and peers, which are further coded and discussed subsequently.

Family. It is the first category of social impact of perpetration and victimization, which is further divided into different codes. BVM9 said "... this is social media! that has kept us at distance from my whole family. All family members have a lot of problems with this." Adolescents who are engaged in cyberbullying behavior also experience victimization, and previous literature indicates that adolescents do not share their cyberspace experiences with parents might be due to weak emotional bonding with parents and limited parental monitoring (Wang, Iannotti, & Nansel, 2009; Wong, 2010; Ybarra & Mitchell, 2004). Ybarra and Mitchell (2004) reported that

adolescents are more engaged in cyberbullying perpetration after victimization might be due to lack of sharing with parents, distant and/or poor parent-child relationship (Accordino & Accordino, 2011).

The effectiveness of parenting strategies is different on the basis of gender and ethnicity. Parental warmth is negatively related with cyberbullying perpetration and victimization. Research identified that as the parental emotional warmth increases, adolescent's disclosure in cyberspace decreases. In addition to this, parental monitoring strategies and its impact on cyberbullying perpetration and victimization was studied and showed that high parental control (e.g., restricting the internet) is not effective to prevent youth from involvement in cyberbullying perpetration and experiencing cyberbullying victimization. Alternatively, collaborative parenting strategy (such as evaluation and co-use) is more beneficial and effective for the prevention of involvement in cyberbullying perpetration and victimization among youth (Elsaesser, Russell, Ohannessian, & Patton, 2017).

Participant VF11 further reported that "My mother imposed restrictions on me, even said, do not meet friends too. She considered that such activity is due to such type of friends and company." Results indicated that parents restrict their female children to meet their peers after victimization. Adolescent's bullying or aggressive behaviors is endorsed or suppressed by cultural norms and values (Chen & French, 2008). Collectivistic culture suppresses the aggressive behavior and value interdependence, reinforce cooperation, and stress upon maintaining social relationships, whereas individualistic culture reinforce independent self-construal, self-reliance, and freedom of choice for adolescents (Matsumoto & Juang, 2004). Hence, avoiding social relationships and interaction because of bullying in cyber-space incur much cost at familial end.

Peers. It is the second category of social impact of cyberbullying perpetration and victimization which is further divided into different codes. Participant BVF1 narrated that "If someone's fake account is generated, then first of all they ask me, that did you generate it? I have not made it, I do not make ... of my friends, etc. Therefore, they ask me to say "I swear to Allah, I did not make", then they get satisfied that it's ok, she did not really make it." Cybervictims experience internalizing problems, adjustment problems, and loneliness that might be due to lack of trust between peers, as they know about their friends' lack of empathy and risky online activities (Fanti, Frick, & Georgiou, 2009; Sasson & Mesch, 2014). The quality of relationship with peers act as a buffer between cyberbullying and internalizing problems (Aoyama, Saxon, & Fearon, 2011). Furthermore, peer

victimization predicts adjustment difficulties through attribution style and generalized trust belief. There is a significant association between social victimization and adjustment difficulties such as loneliness, depression, and social confidence through generalized peer trust belief and positive attribution style (Betts, Houston, Steer, & Gardner, 2017).

According to participant VF7 “My friends tried to help me by all means, I was often in college, he used to stand outside the college, so I started crying. Then my friends asked me to tell someone, share with my brother, or tell your brother. They always tried to help.” Female cybervictims perceive more cyberbullying behaviors which leads to more internalizing problems but peer support is a protective factor to reduce their internalizing problems. Social support acts as a buffer to reduce depression among cybervictims, which positively impacts the wellbeing of college students (Tennant, Demaray, Coyle, & Malecki, 2015).

Table 4

Change in Lifestyle of Cyberbullying Perpetration and Victimization (N = 14)

Themes	Categories	Codes
Change in lifestyle	Online	Fear of internet disconnection
		Add only acquaintances on Facebook
		Aware of negative consequences of SNSs
		Carefully using SNSs
		<i>Distrust on security settings of SNSs</i>
		Uninstall app
		Retrieved account
		Deactivate fake account
		Leave social media usage
		Limited use of social media
		Put strict privacy settings on SNSs
		Report online
		Install caller identifier
		Disconnection with online friends
		Ignore messages
		Blocked perpetrator’s account
		Delete photos from SNSs
<i>Ignore and block wrong callers</i>		
<i>Ignore and block unknown friend requests</i>		
Generate account by Fake name		

Continued...

Themes	Categories	Codes
		Again sharing photos on SNSs
		Misuse of identifying information
	Offline	Left WhatsApp group
		Hide cellphone
		Unplug PTCL connection
		Monetary gain
		Discuss with perpetrator
		Complaint to authorities
	Academic effects	<i>Low academic achievement</i>
		Discontinuation of group studies
		Lack of concentration on studies
		Lack of interest in studies

Note. Simple text for cyberbullying victimization; Bold face text for cyberbullying perpetration; Italicized text for cyberbullying perpetration and victimization.

Change in lifestyle. The change in lifestyle is the third theme of consequences of cyberbullying perpetration and victimization. This theme is categorized into 3 categories that are online, offline, and academic effect, which is further coded and discussed subsequently.

Online. This is the first category of change in lifestyle after perpetration and victimization, which is further divided into different codes and explained by the participant VF11 as “I didn’t use the social media accounts for next two months. Afterwards, I like that now I will be some more vigilant.” Gender plays a significant role in avoidant behaviors of cybervictims, as women were more likely to avoid internet and cell phone as compared to their counterparts (Schenk & Fremouw, 2012). Many cultural and psychological factors limit women from the usage of technology even when they have access (Terry & Gomez, 2010). Another participant VM6 reported that “Now-a-days such type of softwares are available like “true caller” which has been installed. It is beneficial for me, that unknown number is recognized. It finds out caller’s name, that which person is calling. It makes easy for me to predict wrong callers, otherwise I do not pick the wrong calls.” Gender differences exist in technological use. Men have more access to technology, spend more time online, are motivated to develop digital skills through taking technology classes (Cooper, 2006; Correa, 2010; Fallows, 2005; Livingstone & Helsper, 2010; Losh, 2004; Pinkard, 2005; Wilson, Wallin, & Reiser, 2003). This increase in digital skills, therefore, sharply reduce their online risky behavior and cyberbullying perpetration (Von Solms & Van Niekerk, 2013).

Offline. This is the second category of change in lifestyle after perpetration and victimization, which is further divided into different codes. Participant VF7 narrated that “When he called on PTCL

number at that time, I got psychologically so disturbed that I started running towards the phone. I fell down and didn't noticed that I am injured or what has happened to me. I just ran towards the phone, and unplugged its wire, so that he could not call. This was my condition at that time." The avoidant behavior of victims maintains anxiety. Generally, girls are taught to avoid in our culture as a coping strategy which maintains their anxiety. The less technological skills might be due to avoidance, which make women more vulnerable to victimization in cyberspace (Saha & Srivastava, 2014).

The participant BVM9 reported that "I said girlfriend is not important, friend is more important, so you will have to spend money on friends. Then we spent his money there." Adolescents who experienced victimization in cyberspace first time consider it as a joke (Shapka, 2012) and do not take victimization serious (Balaji & Chakrabarti, 2010; Hinduja & Patchin, 2012). Similarly, findings also revealed that cyberbullying perpetrator perceived cyberaggression as a joke and do not understand its seriousness and harmful impact (Runions, Shapka, Dooley, & Modecki, 2012), might be due to this reason they engage in such cyberbullying after victimization in cyberspace.

Academic effects. It is the third category of change in lifestyle after perpetration and victimization which is further divided into different codes and narrated by the participant VF13 as "my grades went down at that time. I wasn't able to study. I guess I had my mids after that or finals just after that week and, like my grades literally went down because of, like all the tension and stress in my mind". Moreover, the verbatim of participant VM6 indicates that "Academics got highly affected. We were in same institution and our bonding was very good. We used to study together, so that was a thing which was a combination that was a bonding, which got broken after that." Tokunaga (2010) reported poor peer relationships, internalizing and academic problems faced by the cyber-victims. Both roles in cyberspace, as cyberbullying perpetrator or victim, lead to poor academic performance and behavioral problems (Wright, 2015). Cyber-victimization affects youth more as compared to conventional victimization. Cyberbullying victimization is positively related to emotional problems whereas negatively associated to well-being, low grades, and GPA after victimization (Wigderson & Lynch, 2013).

Conclusion

The present study, therefore, helped to conclude that cultural perspective which added to existing body of literature related to

cyberbullying and victimization. The most prevalent mode of cyberbullying is Facebook among participants. Sexting and viral personal photos are most prevalent strategies among men to blackmail and threaten women. Female cybervictims experience more internalizing problems and peer support is a protective factor to reduce their internalizing problems. Female cybervictims experience fear and shame for the disclosure of their online friendships with boys, which is not acceptable in society. They have to maintain honor and respect of her family, hence, fear honor killing. Moreover, parents restrict female cybervictims to meet their peers after incident of victimization, while, male participants do not disclose their cyberspace experiences to parents. Cybervictims have avoidant behavior of technology usage afterwards which maintains anxiety. Hence, disclosure to family and their support should be promoted to reduce cyberbullying perpetration and victimization. This may be helpful to maintain and increase mental health of young adults.

Limitations and Recommendations

The sample was restricted to only universities of twin cities of Pakistan. Therefore, future study could be designed to collect data from schools and colleges to explore more variability and diversity in the responses. The qualitative data was collected from only volunteers. In future, appropriate screening tool could be used for the selection of participants. The present study did not specify the duration and modes of cyberbullying and victimization. So, future study could be planned by specifying these to explore impact on mental health and lifestyle. The in-depth interviews were taken only from victims and perpetrators, multi-informants such as peers, etc. could also be approached in future. In present research, participants recalled their lived experiences. Memory biases might have affected the reporting of participants in retrospective studies. Study was conducted on only pure cyber-victim and cyberbully-victim, whereas pure cyberbullying perpetrator did not approach the researcher. There is a small sample size, especially, for perpetrator themes; that too from perpetrator-victims which is a different group from ‘perpetrators-only’. Thus, perspective of only cyberbullying perpetrator could also be sought in future.

Implications

In general, clinical practice, the therapists, consider aspect of cyberbullying perpetration and victimization in patients’ life, thus, this research will be helpful for them to understand mental health

consequence and change in lifestyle in context of cyberbullying victimization and perpetration. The present study will be helpful for university students, parents, teachers, and clinical therapists to plan effective strategies for implementing educational opportunities, prevention, and intervention programs developed around appropriate and secure digital use and awareness programs for students in order to prevent students from cyberbullying perpetration and cyberbullying victimization.

Crime in cyberspace is very complex phenomenon, spurt of cybercrime is with the advancement of technology such as Wi-Fi networks, mobile devices, etc. Prevention and protection from cybercrimes starts from micro to macro level. It starts from personal use then organizational, societal, corporate, national, military, and international levels. Cybersecurity helps users for the prevention and elimination of cybercrimes. Technology is not sufficient, integration of different fields is needed to collaborate for the elimination of this curse through training, awareness, cultural, legal, prosecution, and international cooperation (Sabillon et al., 2016).

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