

EVALUATION OF LINGUISTIC AGGRESSION IN CYBERBULLYING AGAINST WOMEN ON SOCIAL MEDIA IN PUBLIC SECTOR UNIVERSITIES OF PAKISTAN

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ABSTRACT

Internet has brought many changes in human life. This technology has an impact on every sphere of life. It has also had some negative effects on our lives, for instance, cyberbullying (CB). Cyberbullying started in late nineties on online forums. But it caught attention when the first case of suicide was reported in the mid-2000s. In Pakistan and other south Asian countries this phenomenon is growing rapidly. Young people, especially females, are becoming the target of cyberbullying. This research used systematic literature review to study the problem regarding the phenomenon of cyberbullying in relation with linguistic features and prevention strategies. From the detection to the prevention stages, a detailed analysis of existing literature provided an overview of the issue. The next phase of the study will focus on collecting primary data from females who faced the severe effects of CB.

KEYWORDS

Cyberbullying, Cybercrime, Preventions, Methods, Victims, University

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

Numerous studies have affirmed that social media is being used as a new platform by cyber criminals in practicing various kinds of cybercrimes, like phishing (Aggarwal et al., 2012), malware spreading (Yang & Tate, 2012), spamming (Yardi et al., 2010), and cyberbullying (Weir et al., 2011). Cheng et al., conducted a study designed by using a multi-model context on cyberbullying detection (Cheng et al., 2019). Peled (2019) studied the influence of cyberbullying on the academic, social and emotional development of undergraduate students (Peled, 2019). Numerous types of cyberbullying were explained by Watts et al. (2017) including online harassment, flaming, cyberstalking, masquerading, trickery and outing, exclusion and denigration. Similarly, López-Meneses et al. (2020) highlighted some socio-economic factors and socio-environmental factors connected with cyberbullying (López-Meneses et al., 2020). Furthermore, Hamuddin et al. (2020) proposed prevention techniques with regard to anti-cyberbullying that cover promotive, preventive, curative and rehabilitation approaches. Cross-cultural study between Pakistan and Sweden on females revealed that cyberbullying exists in both nations (Imran, 2014). Females in a country like Pakistan seldom report cases of cyberbullying (Magsi et al., 2017). A large number of people are involved in online bullying as revealed by studying two major cities of Pakistan (Musharraf & Anis-ul-Haque, 2018). Unknown men victimize women due to various psychological reasons (Rafi & Sarwar, 2019). Studies has reported that females in the universities are victimized more as compared to males (Bauman, 2013; Holfeld & Grabe, 2012; Kowalski et al., 2019; Mesch, 2009; Wang et al., 2019). Though, based on the evidence from the findings of systematic literature review, the data covers the detection, impacts on mental health, types, and factors of cyberbullying. A few studies also suggested prevention by using online software. Recent cross-cultural research (Carter, 2013; Livingstone et al., 2011; Mishna et al., 2012; Sittichai & Smith, 2015; Smith et al., 2018; Wright et al., 2018) showed that cyberspace is frequently the platform for bullying.

The language used in cyberbullying has many types, including the spread of gossip by phones, using WhatsApp for threatening somebody, creating offensive or menacing remarks through social media, and insulting others on digital platforms (Faucher et al., 2014; Garaigordobil, 2015) has revealed that bullies can use language to condemn, negotiate, irritate, threat, bar, isolate, ridicule, humiliate, chase, expose individual details, or contain antagonistic, disrespectful or contemptuous comments, to harm or upset the sufferer.

However, existing literature is lacking in examining methods and prevention strategies for cyberbullying. This paper will be an attempt to uncover the issue by studying its current methods and practices. Rather than relying on a single aspect, this empirical study will address distinct dimensions involved in cyberbullying.

2. NEXT PHASE

Systematic review of the literature summarized above, provides an overview of the current state of cyberbullying research in Pakistan. By using pre-set inclusion criteria articles were selected to synthesize the existing literature. Three prominent databases were included to target the required literature. The databases included IEEE Xplore, Science Direct and Emerald Insight. Moreover, the search engine Google Scholar was also utilized. Following the next phase of this research, both qualitative and quantitative methods will be used. Data will be gathered by conducting 30 semi-structured interviews and a survey questionnaire from at least 1000 females studying at public sector universities in Pakistan. Thus, it will study the current methods and practices involved in cyberbullying to propose better prevention strategies.

Research methodology is a systematic way to resolve a research problem. In this paper, a mixed method approach will be adopted to analyze information. In qualitative analysis, semi-structured interviews will be used to collect data from female university students. The targeted age group ranges from 18-25 years. The reason for choosing university students is their increased exposure to cyberbullying. The convenience sampling technique will be used to approach the victims. Semi-structured interviews will give an in-depth analysis of the victims' ordeals which will provide a thorough insight of the problem. It will provide an insight of the language manipulation in the digital platforms used to bully people. The findings from the interview phase will be used to develop a survey questionnaire.

3. RESEARCH LIMITATION

The systematic literature review was confined to the last 10 years i.e., in between 2012-2022. To access focused literature, four prominent databases were incorporated: Emerald Insights and Business Source Premier, Google Scholar, IEEE, and Science Direct. Moreover, the sample will be restricted to the age group of 18-25 years. Furthermore, the sample will focus on female students only. This will reduce the chance to explore the responses of all genders.

4. ORIGINALITY

Synthesizing the existing literature at each phase of cyberbullying will make a distinctive contribution in conducting this research. It will bridge the gap by studying existing methods and preventions strategies.

5. PRACTICAL IMPLICATION

Negative effects can be prevented by taking action against both short-term and long-term outcomes. By analyzing the discourse related to this problem from a developing world, this would highlight a variety of aspects involved in cyberbullying and its preventions. The findings may be beneficial for youngsters in educating them about the harmful effects of cyberbullying. It may aid educational institutions in helping cyber victims.

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