

Impact Of Social Media On College Students: A Psychological Review

Dr. Lande S. D.

Assistant Professor (Marathi Department)
Mhatma Phule A. S. C. College, Panvel, Dist. Raygad

Abstract:

The present research paper highlights on ‘**Impact of Social Media on College Students: A Psychological Review**’ which has huge significance in the field of psychology. The murder is the second leading cause of death for young people, and exposure to violence has a negative impact on youth mental health, academic performance, and relationships. The researcher shows that youth violence, including bullying, gang violence, and self-directed violence, increasingly occurs in the online space. The researcher reviews that the literature on violence and online social media, and show that while some forms of online violence are limited to Internet-based interactions, others are directly related to face-to-face acts of violence. Central to our purpose is uncovering the real-world consequences of these online events, and using this information to design effective prevention and intervention strategies. The researcher discusses several limitations of the existing literature, including inconsistent definitions for some forms of online violence, and an overreliance on descriptive data. Finally, he acknowledges the constantly evolving landscape of online social media, as well as discusses implications for the future of social media and youth violence research.

Key-Words: *Media, Violence, College Students*

Introduction:

The present research paper highlights on ‘**Impact of Social Media on College Students: A Psychological Review**’ which has huge significance in the field of psychology. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, homicide is the second leading cause of death for young people, oftentimes as the result of a conflict between peers. In 2010, an average of 13 young people was victims of homicide every day, and many more were victims of nonfatal violence. In recent years an increasing number of studies have investigated the ways in which the Internet and social media facilitate acts of violence against children and adolescents (e.g., King, Walpole, & Lamon, 2007; Perren et al., 2012; Tokunaga, 2010). Social media has become recognized as a vehicle through which youth perpetuate acts of violence against their peers, such as bullying, harassment, dating aggression, and gang-related crimes. In addition, social media has also been used as a vehicle for inflicting self-harm—most notably, cyber-suicide (Cash, Thelwall, Peck, Ferrell, & Bridge, 2013; Hinduja & Patchin, 2010; Ruder, Hatch, Ampanozi, Thali, & Fischer, 2011).

The overarching developmental task of adolescence, identity formation (Sales & Irwin, 2009), is inherently marked by adolescents’ developing sexuality and interest in romantic attachments (Collins, 2003). Today’s youth are avid users of social networking sites—e.g., Twitter. Approximately 90% of adolescents use the Internet regularly while 70% have a user profile on at least one social networking site (Subrahmanyam, Garcia, & Harsono, 2009).

Research suggests that adolescents use the online environment to explore matters important to them in their off-line lives (Subrahmanyam et al., 2009). Acts of face-to-face verbal and physical aggression are still more common than online attacks. Research suggests that most children and adolescents (65–91%) report little or no involvement in violence on social media sites (Kowalski & Limber, 2007; Williams & Guerra, 2007; Ybarra, West, & Leaf, 2007). Electronic forms of youth violence, do, however, represent a growing public health problem in need of additional research and prevention efforts (David-Ferdon & Hertz, 2007). To illustrate, according to Patchin and Hinduja's (2013) research, which consisted of a random sample of 4441 youth between the ages of 10 and 18 from 37 school districts, approximately 20% of youth in 2010 reported experiencing cyber-bullying victimization, and 20% reported bullying others through cyberspace at some point in their lifetimes. Social media sites such as Face-book, and Twitter and MySpace previously have provided unmonitored and uncensored environments, which can easily expose youth to illegal activities and/or violent behaviors (King et al., 2007). Online communications are characterized by a greater degree of anonymity, which research has linked to increased hostility in interpersonal interactions (McKenna & Bargh, 2000).

Despite the increasing concern with youth violence and social media, empirical data describing this relationship is limited. Existing research does suggest that frequent exposure to violent activities and behaviors through social media has a detrimental psychosocial effect on children and adolescents (Marcum, Higgins, & Ricketts, 2010; Ybarra, Espelage, & Mitchell, 2007; Ybarra, West, et al., 2007). Additionally, research indicates that youth who perpetrate aggression through social media are more likely to endorse a belief that violence against peers is a normative behavior (Hinduja & Patchin, 2013; Williams & Guerra, 2007). However, little is known about how the effects of youth experiences with violence via social media compare to the effects of traditional forms of violence.

Aims and Objectives:

The present research work deals with following aims and objectives:

1. To review the existing research findings on the most common types of youth violence in social media: cyber-bullying/victimization, electronic dating aggression/cyber-stalking, gang violence, and cyber-suicide.
2. To know by discussing implications for the future of social media and youth violence research.

Types of violence via social media:**1. Cyber victimization:**

The first major category of social media-involved youth violence is cyber-bullying or electronic bullying. Cyber-bullying is generally defined as a type of bullying involving the use of online or computer-mediated communication, such as Twitter, Facebook, instant messaging, or text messaging (Menesini et al., 2012; Smith et al., 2008). Examples of cyber-bullying include sending insulting or threatening messages, spreading rumors, disclosing personal information, displaying embarrassing pictures, or excluding others during online communications (Perren et al., 2012). Although there appears to be a significant conceptual

overlap between face-to-face bullying and cyber-bullying (Cross et al., 2009; Dooley, Pyszalski, & Cross, 2009), cyber-bullying differs from traditional bullying in that humiliating text or visual materials sent to social media can be permanent and available to the public (Heirman & Walrave, 2008). Moreover, whereas face-to-face bullying is generally characterized by physical dominance, a physical advantage is not necessary in cyber-bullying; perpetrators can instead dominate a victim through knowledge of social media usage, anonymity, and the victim's limited possibilities of defense and few options of escape (Perren et al., 2012).

2. Electronic dating aggression:

Research has demonstrated that by providing individuals with a community of like-minded individuals, social media sites can also motivate them to engage in other at-risk behaviors. In a web-based study conducted in conjunction with Seventeen Magazine Online, CyberAngels, the College of Education at the University of South Florida, and the Department of Child and Family Studies at the Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute, an online survey was developed and placed on the Seventeen Magazine site from May through June 1999 to assess level of Internet use, involvement in varied at-risk behaviors online, incidents involving negative interactions in cyberspace, and perceived mechanisms to promote safety and well-being (Berson, Berson, & Ferron, 2002). The data also confirmed that there was a lack of preventative intervention to create and maintain awareness and safety for adolescents at risk of sexual violence. Moreover, the research uncovered a preponderance of reported online experiences that challenged students to confront choices in conflict with the development of attitudes, values, and social functioning (Berson et al., 2002).

3. Gang violence:

The presence of urban street gangs on social media is a relatively new area of research. In the last five years, criminologists have investigated how and why gang members use social media (Decker & Pyrooz, 2011, Pyrooz, 2012; Knox, 2011; Morselli & Decary-Hetu, 2013; Womer & Bunker, 2010). A gang presence on social media is described as a form of cyber-bullying, but the real-world violence precipitated by gang-related online threats or communications suggests this may be a different phenomenon entirely. While researchers have not settled on a term to describe this phenomenon, recent work uses phrases such as "cyber-banging" a term often used by the police and "Internet banging" (Patton, Eschmann, & Butler, 2013), to describe this unique form of computer mediated communication. This section reviews empirical articles that examine how and why urban gang members use social media.

4. Cyber-suicide:

Cyber-suicide is a self-directed form of youth violence. Definitions of cyber-suicide vary but generally refer to individuals using the Internet to communicate suicidal ideation (Alao, Soderberg, Pohl, & Alao, 2006). Few research studies have examined how frequently or why youth discuss suicide on social media sites. In a study that examined adolescent

suicide statements on My Space, Cash et al. (2013) reviewed 1038 MySpace posts that were collected from publicly available profiles. Profiles were downloaded using a search algorithm which downloaded over 40,000 profiled. Final comments were included/excluded based on the following criteria: “had a public profile; did not self-identify as a musician, comedian or movie maker; had received less than 4000 comments. Findings from this study revealed that youth communicated suicidal thoughts in direct response to negative experiences with personal relationships, substances use, a complicated mental health status which may include thoughts of various methods of suicide. The researchers theorize in this preliminary work that youth expressing suicidal thoughts online may be seeking resources and support as they cope with challenging experiences in their daily life. Researchers also express a concern that social media can create a space for youth to learn about ways of committing suicide and others who have done so, and that online engagement with a prior suicide may even motivate them to replicate the event, a phenomenon known as the Weather effect.

Concluding Remarks:

This review clearly demonstrates that youth violence—whether bullying, gang violence, or self-directed violence—increasingly occurs in the online space. Electronic youth violence deserves the attention of violence researchers in the criminal, sociologic, medical, and public health domain. However, major limitations with the existing studies constrain our ability to make recommendations about future interventions.

Most importantly, there is a lack of information about the ways in which electronic media can be used not only to perpetrate but also to prevent aggression. For instance, if we change norms about in-person dating violence, will that reduce online dating aggression? If we reduce Internet banging, will it translate into a reduction in in-person gang violence?

Works Cited:

1. Alao, A. O., Soderberg, M., Pohl, E. L., & Alao, A. L. (2006). Cybersuicide: Review of the role of the Internet on suicide. *CyberPsychology & Behavior*, 9, 489–493.
2. Baumeister, R. F., & Vohs, K. D. (2004). Sexual economics: Sex as female resource for social exchange in heterosexual interactions. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 8, 339–363.
3. Berson, I. R., Berson, M. J., & Ferron, J. M. (2002). Emerging risks of violence in the digital age: Lessons for educators from an online study of adolescent girls in the United States. *Journal of School Violence*, 1, 51–71.
4. Blumenfeld, W. J., & Cooper, R. M. (2010). LGBT and allied youth responses to cyberbullying: Policy implications. *International Journal of Critical Pedagogy*, 3, 114–133.
5. Brandtzæg, P. B., Staksrud, E., Hagen, I., & Wold, T. (2009). Norwegian children’s experiences of cyberbullying when using different technological platforms. *Journal of Children and Media*, 3, 349–365.
6. Cash, S. J., Thelwall, M., Peck, S. N., Ferrell, J., & Bridge, J. A. (2013). Adolescent suicide statement on MySpace. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior and Social Networking*, 16(3), 166–174.

7. Collins, W. A. (2003). More than a myth: The developmental significance of romantic relationships during adolescence. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 13, 1–24.
8. Goebert, D., Else, I., Matsu, C., Chung-Do, J., & Chang, J. Y. (2011). The impact of cyberbullying on substance use and mental health in a multiethnic sample. *Maternal and Child Health Journal*, 15, 1282–1286.
9. Hawdon, J. (2012). Applying differential association theory to online hate groups: A theoretical statement. *Research on Finnish Society*, 5, 39–47.
10. Kiilakoski, T., & Oksanen, A. (2011a). Soundtrack of the school shootings: Cultural script, music and male rage. *Young*, 19, 247–269.
11. King, J. E., Walpole, C. E., & Lamon, K. (2007). Surf and turf wars on line: Growing implications of Internet gang violence. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 41, S66–S68.
12. Kowalski, R. M., & Limber, S. P. (2007). Electronic bullying among middle school students. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 41, S22–S30.
13. Patton, D. U., Eschmann, R. D., & Butler, D. A. (2013). Internet banging: New trends in social media, gang violence, masculinity and hip hop. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 29(5), A54–A59.
14. Pelfrey, W. V., & Weber, N. L. (2013). Keyboard gangsters: Analysis of incidence and correlate of cyberbullying in a large urban student population. *Deviant Behavior*, 34(1), 68–84.
15. Perren, S., Corcoran, L., Cowie, H., Dehue, F., Garcia, D., & Mc Guckin, C. (2012). Tackling cyberbullying: Review of empirical evidence regarding successful responses by students, parents, and schools. *International Journal of Conflict and Violence*, 6, 283–293.
16. Smith, P. K., Mahdavi, J., Carvalho, M., Fisher, S., Russel, S., & Tippett, N. (2008). Cyberbullying: Its nature and impact in secondary school pupils. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 49, 376–385.
17. Tokunaga, R. S. (2010). Following you home from school: A critical review and synthesis of research on cyberbullying victimization. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 26, 277–287.
18. Williams, K. R., & Guerra, N. G. (2007). Prevalence and predictors of Internet bullying. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 41, S14–S21. Womer, S., & Bunker, R. (2010). Surenos gangs and Mexican cartel use of social networking sites. *Small Wars & Insurgencies*, 21(1), 81–94.