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Loneliness and Suicidal Ideation among under Graduate Cyber bullying Victim Students of Ranchi Town in Jharkhand

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Abstract

This paper examines the prevalence of loneliness and suicidal ideation and find out the relationship between loneliness and suicidal ideation among cyber bullying victims of Ranchi town in Jharkhand. The data collected by stratified random sampling was based on two sub-group of gender (male and female) and stream (science and arts). The sample of 100 under-graduate students was drawn from different colleges of Ranchi town in Jharkhand. The Loneliness Inventory by Uma and Meenakshi (2008) and suicidal ideation scale by Sisodia and Bhatnagar (2011) were administered to the selected sample. The findings revealed that prevalence of loneliness is higher among female and science stream students of cyber bullying victims as compared to male and arts stream victims. Prevalence of suicidal ideation is also higher among female and science stream students of cyber bullying victims as compared to male and arts stream victims. Loneliness and suicidal ideation were found positively correlated.

Keywords: cyber-bullying victims, loneliness, suicidal ideation, under-graduate students

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Introduction

Information and communication technology, in addition to conveniences it has brought to daily life, hosts several harmful activities such as internet addiction, pornography, violence and cyber bullying since the opportunities created by information and communication technology are unlimited and uncontrolled and can be used with no restriction (Turan, Polat, Karapirli, Uysal and Turan, 2011; Arıcak, 2011). Of these harmful activities, cyber bullying, due to its extensive and negative effects, is becoming not only a widespread problem but also a major public health problem (Arıcak, 2009). It is also described as deliberate and repeated harm performed via mediums such as mobile phones, e-mails, Internet chats, social media and personal blogs (Patchin & Hinduja, 2006). Olthof, Goossens, Vermande, Aleva, and van der Meulen (2011) define cyber-bullying as a strategic behavior of an individual to dominate another individual or a group of individuals. Cyberbullying may take various forms, such as, sending mean messages to a person's mobile phone, e-mail or social media accounts, spreading malicious rumors online, and sexting, that is circulating sexually suggestive pictures or messages about a person with the intention to hurt or humiliate someone.

Although there is no personal contact between the victim and the bully, people bullied suffer psychological harm, and develop such problems as depression, unhappiness, low self-esteem, anxiety and sleep disorders (Arıcak, 2009; Walker, Sockman, Koehn and 2011; Sahin, 2012). Another health problem caused by the extensive use of information and communication technologies in the society is the feeling of loneliness experienced by the young adult population. As a result of spending a lot of time in the virtual environment, people break away from the real world and create a world of their own (Timisi, 2000; Özen and Korukçu Sarıcı, 2010; Paul, Smith and Blumberg, 2012). Kraut *et al*. (1998) state that the Internet, a powerful communication tool, has replaced the social activities and strong ties of real life, and that people

tend to virtual social activities and leave the real social life (Kraut, Patterson, Landmark, Kiesler, Mukophadhyay and Scherlis, 1998). High school and college youth prefer the Internet to establish social interaction with each other, which, in return, decreases their educational performance, prevents them from developing social skills, and causes them to experience communication problems in the later stages of their lives, to establish poor relationships with parents and friends, to lose their wellbeing and to become lonely (Sanders, Field, Diego and Kaplan, 2000, Cagır and Gurgan, 2010). These individuals suffer a more intense feeling of loneliness when they cannot receive adequate social support, which, in return, prevents them from exhibiting healthy behaviors and thus affects public health (Özen and Korukçu Sarıcı, 2010).

The negative impact of cyber-bullying has led researchers to investigate predictors of cyber-bullying (Ang, 2015). According to the Socio-Ecological Theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1977), cyber-bullying victimization is likely to originate or be maintained over time as a result of the interplay between intra- and inter-individual factors (Cross, Lester & Barnes, 2015; Fullchange & Furlong, 2016; Moon et al., 2015; Swearer and Hymel, 2015). Several studies have informed that adolescents who are shy, experience difficulties in social interactions, have no or few friends, are either dislike or socially withdrawn, and who report feelings of loneliness are more likely to become cyberbullying victims (Alvarez-García, et al., 2015; Navarro et al., 2015; Tarablus et al., 2015; Zhou et al., 2013). Available studies have shown that cyberbullying victimization is linked to family characteristics, such as poor parent-children relationships, lack of parental emotional support, infrequent and poor parental monitoring, sibling warmth and family cohesion (Chang et al., 2015; Ortega-Barón, Buelga & Cava, 2016; Safaria, 2015; Ybarra & Mitchell, 2004).

Loneliness and cyber bullying

Loneliness results from perceived deficiencies in an individual's social relationships, is a subjective experience, and is unpleasant and distressing (West, Kellner, & Moore-West, 1986). Previous research has shown that loneliness is associated with increased Internet use, including problematic Internet use (Appel, Holtz, Stiglbauer, & Batinic, 2012; Ang, Chong, Chye & Huan, 2012; Morahan-Martin & Schumacher, 2003; Stickley et al. 2014)). Lonely adolescents may go online to look for companionship, emotional support, or to try to avoid negative moods associated with loneliness. Although some of those youths can find resources to deal with loneliness when they are online, other adolescents who spend time on the Internet are also exposed to a number of potential risks, e.g. cyberbullying (Shin & Ahn, 2015). Different studies have found a clear correlation between cyberbullying victimization and feelings of loneliness (Heiman, Olenik-Shemesh & Eden, 2015; Schoffstall & Cohen, 2011). Among them, whereas some have found that loneliness was a significant predictor of cybervictimization (Olenik-Shemesh, Heiman & Eden, 2012; Şahin, 2012), other shown that loneliness was a significant predictor of traditional victimization, but not for cybervictimization (Brewer & Kerlake, 2015; Brighi, Guarini, Melotti, Galli & Genta, 2012). As the results from available studies are mixed, further research is needed to understand the association between loneliness and cyberbullying victimization. Evaluation of studies regarding cyber bullying and loneliness has revealed that there are very few studies conducted on the issue of cyber bullying and loneliness among undergraduate students and that cyber bullying and loneliness among undergraduate students have not been investigated in India. Therefore, the present study aims to evaluate the prevalence of cyber bullying victimization and is exposed to loneliness they suffer.

Suicidal ideation and cyber bullying

The investigation looks at the degree to which a nontraditional type of companion hostility- cyber bullying- is additionally identified with suicidal ideation among young people. In 2007, a random sample of 1,963 middle-scholars from one of the largest school districts in the United States completed a survey of Internet use and experiences. Youth who experienced traditional bullying or cyber bullying, as either an offender or a victim, had more suicidal thoughts and were more likely to attempt suicide than those who had not experienced such forms of peer aggression. Also, victimization was more strongly related to suicidal thoughts and behaviors than offending. (Sameer Hinduja and Justin W.Patchin 2007). Hinduja & Patchin, 2009 investigated the relation between cyberbullying and suicidal ideation and reported a phenomenon recently

termed cyberbullicide-suicide indirectly or directly influenced by experiences with online aggression. In a recent JAMA Pediateics meta-analysis, Van Geel and colleagues (2014) also found the relation between peer victimization, cyberbullying and suicidal ideation in children and adolescents.

Objectives

The objectives of the study were following:

- To study the prevalence of loneliness and suicidal ideation among male and female cyber-bullying victims
- To study the prevalence of loneliness and suicidal ideation among science and arts student of cyber-bullying victims
- To find out the relationship between loneliness and suicidal ideation

Hypotheses

- The prevalence of loneliness may differ among male and female cyber-bullying victims
- The prevalence of suicidal ideation may differ among male and female cyber-bullying victims
- The prevalence of loneliness may differ among science and arts students of cyber-bullying victims
- The prevalence of suicidal ideation may differ among male and female students of cyber-bullying victims
- Loneliness and suicidal ideation may be positively correlated with each other among the total sample of cyber-bullying victims

Sample

The sample for the present research consisted of 100 undergraduate students of cyber-bullying victims. The sample selected from different colleges of Ranchi town. Stratified random sampling technique was used for the sample selection. The stratification was based on two groups of gender (male and female) and stream (pure science and arts/social science). Thus the research design was based on 2 x 2 factorial design. In each of the 4 strata- 25 cases were selected randomly. The total no of cases were 100. The sample Units is presented below:

Research design

Research design is given below in table 1.

Table-1.

Sub-groups	Male	Female
Pure science stream	25	25
Arts	25	25
Total	50	50
	Total	100

Tools

The following tools were used to achieve the goal of present study.

A. Tools for the screening purpose

- **Personal Data Questionnaire:**

    This questionnaire was prepared by the investigator for collecting information about the respondents name, status of cyber-bullying victimization in the previous half year, gender, stream, class etc.

B. Tools used on selected sample of the research:

- **Loneliness Inventory:**

    This inventory developed by Uma and Meenakshi. R., (2008) under the guidance of Prof. K. Krishna. The inventory was developed for the measurement of loneliness among undergraduate students and Post graduate

students. Nineteen statements representing feeling of loneliness in day to day life, in space and time contexts were prepared with five alternative responses never, rarely, sometime, many a time and always rated as 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 respectively. The range of scores will be between19 to 95. The scores will be totaled and compared with the norms table provided. The individual scoring 36 and below is consider to be having low loneliness and score of 50 and above will be considered with individuals having high loneliness. Otherwise they are moderately suffering from loneliness. The average range is between 37 and 89. The Split- Half reliability coefficient for the whole inventory is 0.84. The reliability coefficient is significant and high. Hence, the tool is a highly reliable one.

- **Suicidal Ideation Inventory:**

Suicidal Ideation Scale developed by **Sisoda and Bhatnagar (2011)** to measure the frequency of suicidal thoughts in University students and may be used to evaluate or monitor troubled students. There are 25 statements with five response alternatives: strongly agree, agrees, undecided, disagree and strongly disagree. The statements are both positive and negative. Positive statements are scored as 5 to 1for responding strongly agrees, agrees, undecided, disagree, and strongly disagree whereas scoring of negative statements is reverse. The higher the score more is the suicidal ideation. The test re-test reliability of this scale is .78.
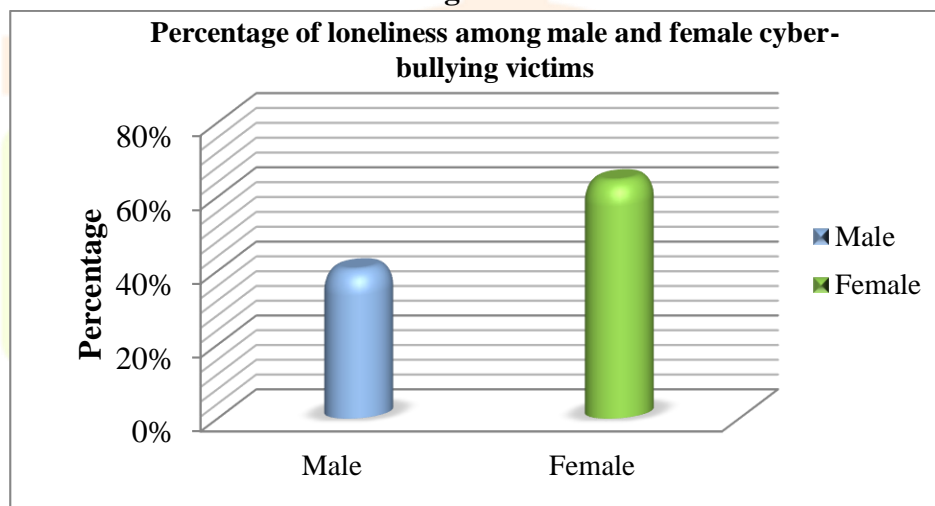
Results

- **Prevalence of loneliness among male and female cyber-bullying victims:**

Table 2: Prevalence of loneliness among male and female

Gender	Total sample	No. of lonely cyber-bullying victims	Percentage(%) of lonely cyber victims
Male	50	20	40%
Female	50	32	64%
Total	100	52	52%

Figure: 1

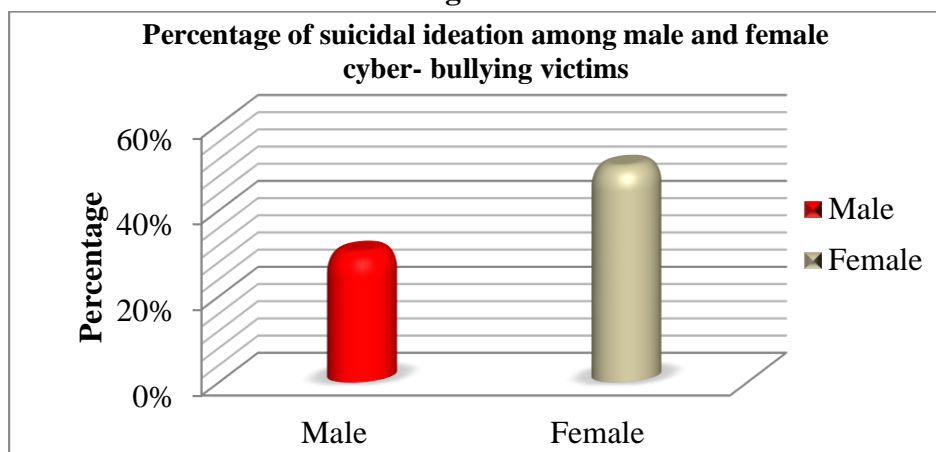Percentage of loneliness among male and female cyber-bullying victims

From the data presented in above table -2 and figure-1 revels that 20 male out of 50 and 32 female out of 50 were found lonely. Person who scored fifty or more on the loneliness inventory were considered as lonely. So, the percentage of loneliness in male was 40% and in female was 64% and the total loneliness in the sample is 52%. It is clear that female victims sample have shown high prevalence rate of loneliness than male. Above results prove the hypotheses-1 'The prevalence of loneliness may differ among male and female cyber-bullying victims sample'.

- **Prevalence of suicidal ideation among male and female cyber-bullying victims**

**Table -3: Prevalence of suicidal ideation among male and female**

Gender	Total sample	No. of suicidal ideation survivor victims	Percentage(%) of suicidal ideation survivor victims
Male	50	15	30%
Female	50	25	50%
Total	100	40	40%

Figure: 2

Percentage of suicidal ideation among male and female cyber- bullying victims

From the data presented in above table -3 and figure-2 revels that 15 male out of 50 and 25 female victims out of 50 were found suicidal ideation survivor. Persons who scored 106 or more on the suicidal ideation scale were considered as suicidal ideation survivor. So, the percentage of suicidal ideation in male was 30% and in female was 50% and the total suicidal ideation in the sample is 40%. It is clear that female cyber-bullying victims sample have shown high prevalence rate of suicidal ideation than male. Above results prove the hypotheses-2 'The prevalence of suicidal ideation may differ among male and female cyber-bullying victims sample'.

Prevalence of loneliness among science and arts students of cyber-bullying victims

Table- 4: Prevalence of loneliness among science and arts students

Stream	Total sample	No. of lonely cyber-bullying victims	Percentage(%) of lonely cyber-bullying victims
Pure Science	50	32	64%
Arts	50	22	44%
Total	100	54	54%

Figure: 3
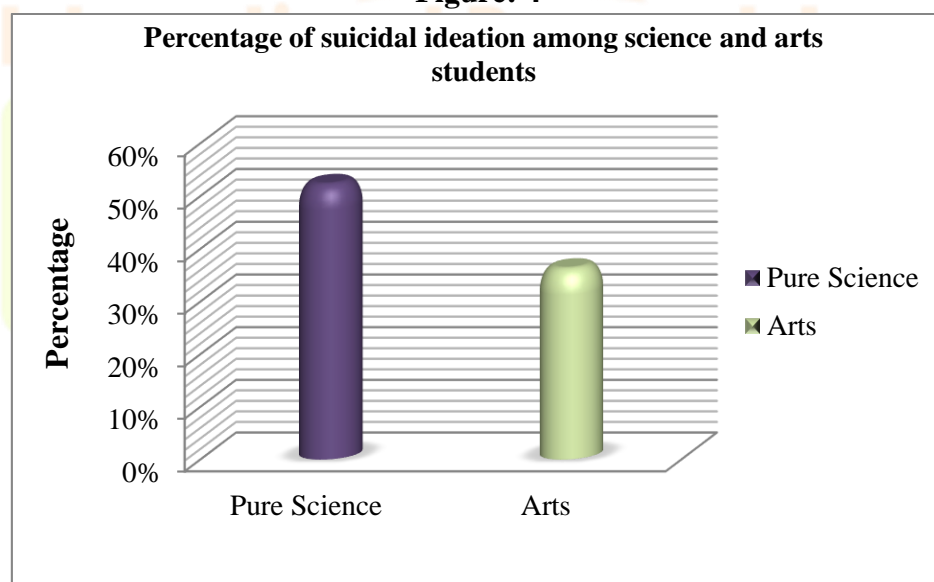
Percentage of loneliness among science and arts students
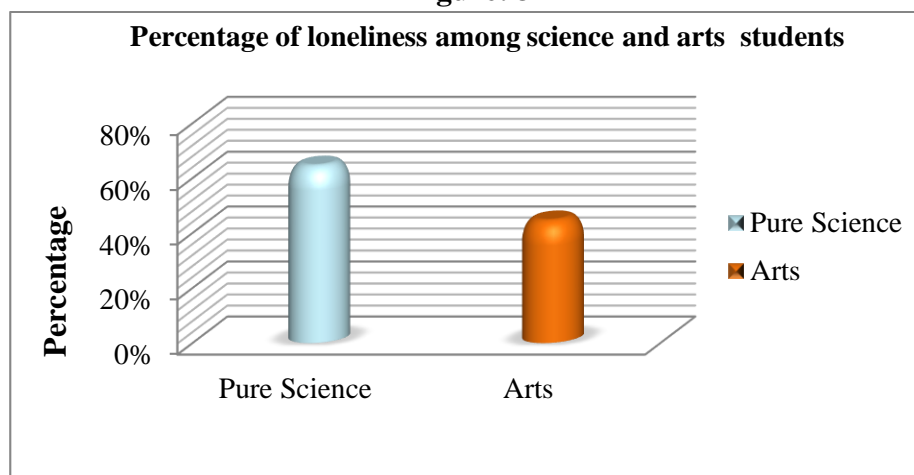
From the data presented in above table-4 and figure-3 revels that 32 science students out of 50 and 22 arts students of cyber-bullying victims out of 50 were found lonely. So, the percentage of loneliness in science students was 64% and in arts students was 44% and the total loneliness in the sample is 54%. It is clear that science stream victims sample have shown high prevalence rate of loneliness than arts. Above results prove the hypotheses-3 'The prevalence of loneliness may differ among science and arts students of cyber-bullying victims sample'.

Prevalence of suicidal ideation among science and arts students of cyber-bullying victims

Table- 5: Prevalence of suicidal ideation among science and arts students

Stream	Total sample	No. of suicidal ideation survivor victims	Percentage(%) of suicidal ideation survivor victims
Pure Science	50	26	52%
Arts	50	18	36%
Total	100	44	44%

Figure: 4

Percentage of suicidal ideation among science and arts students

From the data presented in above table-5 and figure-4 revels that 26 science students out of 50 and 18 arts students out of 50 were found suicidal ideation survivor. These 15 male and 25 female scored beyond 106 and above will be considered with individuals having high suicidal ideation. So, the percentage of suicidal ideation in science victims was 52% and in arts victims was 36% and the total suicidal ideation in the sample is 44%. It is clear that science cyber-bullying victims sample have shown high prevalence rate of suicidal ideation than arts victims. Above results prove the hypotheses-4 'The prevalence of suicidal ideation may differ among science and arts cyber-bullying victims sample'.

Correlation between loneliness and suicidal ideation among the total sample of cyber-bullying victims

Table- 6:

Variables	Coefficient of correlation
Loneliness	0.75%
Suicidal ideation	

The values of coefficient of correlation 'r' in the above table- 4 showed relationships between loneliness and suicidal ideation among cyber-bullying victims. The 'r' value was found 0.75 among the total sample, which was statistically significant in 0.01 levels. Above result has been proved the hypothesis (5) 'loneliness and suicidal ideation may be positively correlated with each other among the total sample of cyber-bullying victims'. This hypothesis has been accepted.

Conclusions:

- Prevalence of loneliness was found higher among female cyber-bullying victims sample as compared to male victims sample.
- Prevalence of suicidal ideation was found higher among female cyber-bullying victims sample as compared to male victims sample.
- Prevalence of loneliness was found higher among science stream cyber-bullying victims sample as compared to arts stream victims.
- Prevalence of suicidal ideation was found higher among science stream cyber-bullying victims sample as compared to male victims sample.
- Significant relationship between loneliness and suicidal ideation among the total sample of cyber-bullying victims.

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