From Screens to Classrooms: How Cyberbullying Alters University Learning Dynamics

[1] * **Narges Shahbaz**

[1] University of Education, Pakistan, Pakistan.
[1] nargesshahbaz20137@gmail.com
(*Corresponding author)

Abstract. Despite growing recognition of cyberbullying as a critical concern, the existing literature primarily focuses on its psychological consequences, with limited exploration of its nuanced effects on academic engagement and social dynamics within higher education contexts, particularly in urban Pakistan. This study aims to examine how cyberbullying influences university learning environments, with an emphasis on female students' experiences. Adopting a qualitative case study design, data were collected through in-depth, semi-structured interviews with four female undergraduate students who have directly experienced cyberbullying. Thematic analysis revealed three interrelated themes: disruption of victims' emotional stability and personality traits, deterioration in academic performance, and the complex interplay of parental and peer involvement in coping strategies. Findings indicate that persistent online harassment leads to withdrawal from social and academic participation, decreased motivation, and diminished trust in institutional support systems. Familial support is often limited due to generational and cultural gaps, while close friendships provide the primary emotional buffer. Simultaneously, peers and classmates may exacerbate social exclusion through rumor propagation, highlighting the layered dynamics of social networks in victimization and adaptation processes. The study underscores the necessity of targeted cyber-safety education, structured support mechanisms within universities, and initiatives to enhance parental awareness, providing actionable insights for policymakers, educators, and higher education administrators.

Keywords: Cyberbullying, Learning Environment, Qualitative Research, Psychological impact, Digital harassment, Academic performance.

INTRODUCTION

As the world continues to get increasingly digital, cyberbullying has emerged as a deeply rooted threat to the psychological safety and academic welfare of university students globally. As higher education institutions adopt more online platforms for learning, communication, and collaboration, the vulnerability of students, particularly young adults and women, to cyber harassment continues to increase. This study, conducted from a qualitative approach in the education field, is of global significance because it investigates the lived experiences of university-level victims of cyberbullying, how such incidents erode learning environments, erode student confidence, and impact academic performance (Slamet, 2024; Slamet et al., 2024). The conclusions drawn in this research contribute to the global discourse on creating safe, inclusive, and caring environments for learning through cross-cultural responses and institutional measures to address cyber bullying among university students across the globe.

In the context of Pakistan's dynamic educational setting, cyberbullying on the level of universities remains a relatively unattended but highly potent issue, especially for female students who must deal with scholastic pressure along with socio-cultural restraint (Al-Rahmi et al., 2022). This qualitative case study nested within the home realities of public universities in Lahore is of ultimate significance as it investigates the specific forms, settings, and effects of cyberbullying experienced by women students. It aims to highlight the ways in which online harassment not only affects academic success but also affects students' mental health, class participation, and overall interaction with the learning context (Zhu et al., 2021). The findings of this research are expected to guide Pakistani universities, policymakers, and student welfare services in developing effective preventive measures, reporting procedures, and awareness campaigns tailored to the unique cultural and technological environment of Pakistani universities. These days, the rapid evolution of information and communication technologies in the digital age has not merely altered how individuals interact but also changed the dynamics of educational environments. Technology has increased access to learning materials and information but also enabled new types of harassment (Nosko et al., 2010), one of which is very critical and concerning cyberbullying. Cyberbullying, or systematic and deliberate abuse by means of electronic technology such as mobile phones, social media platforms, and email, is a danger to the psychological well-being, social life, and academic performance of students in universities.

At the university level, since students are expected to develop intellectual maturity and self-draft, the intrusion of cyberbullying into their lives can result in fearfulness, nervousness, low self-esteem, social rejection, and ultimately academic disengagement (Kim et al., 2022). Women students are generally more vulnerable to online abuse due to prevailing gender biases and social stigmatization. Despite the growing body of research on cyberbullying among secondary school, there remains an evident gap in the understanding of how it impacts the learning environment in institutions of higher learning, especially from the perspectives of those who have directly experienced it. This study, grounded in the education discipline and guided by a qualitative case study approach, will seek to explore the impact of cyberbullying on the learning environment at the university level (Islam & Habib, 2021; Slamet & Basthomi, 2024, 2025). It will explore how victims of cyberbullying navigate their academic journeys, the psychological and emotional consequences they endure, and how such experiences shape their sense of safety, belonging, and support in their academic communities. Based on qualitative analysis of in-depth interviews with female university students who have been cyberbullied, this research aims to contribute a rich and empathetic account to their lived experiences. In voice-giving to these participants, the research contributes to the broader conversation on student wellbeing, equity, and inclusion at the university (Martínez-Monteagudo et al., 2019). The research also highlights the need for the institution to develop policies, preventive interventions, and support

systems addressing cyberbullying and fostering an empowering and safe learning environment for all students.

Over the past decade, numerous international and regional research studies have attempted to understand the rising trend of cyberbullying and its impact on students in learning settings. (Drane et al., 2020) research identified the psychological impacts of cyberbullying on adolescents, including depression, anxiety, and decreased academic motivation. While their research has set the foundation knowledge regarding cyber victimization, it focused on secondary school students and was a quantitative study that failed to address the experience and situational nuances of the university student population. Similarly, (Wang et al., 2025) have explored peer victimization on the web and its relationship with disengagement from studies, but they relied on survey data from North American universities and therefore could not extend the results to varied cultural settings and gender-sensitive contexts like those realized in Pakistan. In the South Asian context, studies by authors such as (Faye et al., 2011) and others have documented cyberbullying as an ethical and social emergency for the emotional health of students. Nevertheless, work tended not to pay adequate attention to the way that experiences translate to long-term academic disturbance or disengagement. Moreover, much of the available research in Pakistan has been more concerned with prevalence rates than causes, mechanisms, and effects on the academic environment (Bernardo et al., 2020). Most importantly, qualitative research that is centered on the views of female university students, who can be disproportionately affected due to societal taboo, digital gender divides, and weak institutional responses, has been a significant lacuna.

Thus, while previous research has contributed valuable statistical and theoretical analysis, it has been narrowed in scope, method, and local relevance (Elsafoury et al., 2021). Current research makes efforts to cover that gap using the qualitative case study approach to the study of the lived experiences of women victims of cyberbullying at public universities in Lahore and thereby to offer a richer textured and locally applicable understanding of its impact on the learning culture.

Problem Statement

More recently, communication digitalization has redefined the pattern of student-to-student interaction in schools to come out with new forms of psychological and emotional disturbance, most notably cyberbullying. While conventional bullying is more scattered, anonymous, and accessible, cyberbullying occurs more diffused beyond the boundaries of an institution and formal control. Despite the increasing global interest, the phenomenon remains an under-researched field in the sphere of higher education, particularly in the institutional and cultural environments of universities in Pakistan. University women students are vulnerable to cyber victimization, which has far-reaching effects on their academic achievement, emotional well-being, classroom engagement, and feelings of safety in the learning environment. However, earlier research has largely focused on quantitative information and general trends, often not engaging with the lived lives, individual narratives, and socio-cultural context of the victims. Significant gap by examining the influence of cyberbullying on the learning environment within the university context through a qualitative case study design. With the focus on female students in public universities in Lahore, this research endeavors to capture the psychological, academic, and social effects of cyberbullying from the perspective of the victims themselves. The call to build safer, more inclusive learning and digital spaces is urgent, yet policy response and institutional support are feeble or absent due to a lack of context-specific, qualitative knowledge. This study therefore investigates the intricate and often voiceless impact of cyberbullying on the learning experience and attainment of university students with a view to shaping more responsive institutional policies and systems of support.

Research Objectives

The main objective of this qualitative case study is to investigate and comprehend the effect of cyberbullying on the learning environment at the university level, with specific emphasis on female students in public universities. The study aims to attain the following specific objectives:

1. To investigate the personal experiences of university students who have been victims of cyberbullying.
2. To determine the forms, sources, and channels of cyberbullying faced by students in the university setting.
3. To investigate the psychological, emotional, and academic impacts of cyberbullying on victims' participation, performance, and involvement in the learning environment.
4. To explore the social and institutional reactions to cyberbullying in university settings, including support mechanisms and preventive strategies.
5. To suggest recommendations for the establishment of a safer and more welcoming digital and learning environment for university students based on victims' real-life experiences.

This research makes a valuable addition to the newly developing body of literature about cyberbullying and its impacts on the higher education setting, here considered qualitatively within the Pakistani context. Through the everyday lives of female university students, the research presents deep, nuanced understandings of psychological, emotional, and academic disruptions caused by cyberbullying, a subject that is often underemphasized in mainstream education research. The findings will inform teachers, university administrators, policymakers, and internet safety advocates about the multifaceted issues faced by students in a technology-driven learning environment. Furthermore, the research provides localized prevention, intervention, and support recommendations that are culturally appropriate and pragmatically effective for the university system. It also offers a model for subsequent qualitative research and case studies into online safety and emotional well-being within learning environments, thus contributing to the pedagogical discourse regarding cyberbullying in developing countries.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Cyberbullying is now a complex and rapidly evolving social issue that poses significant threats to the well-being of students and the learning environment. As higher education becomes increasingly technology-oriented, cyberbullying has outgrown the traditional definition of bullying by invading individual online environments—thus, blurring the line between learning and personal life. Scholars such as (Xu et al., 2022) emphasize that anonymity and persistence on online sites enhance the emotional and psychological damage to victims, leading to anxiety, depression, and withdrawal from academic studies. (Cantone et al., 2015) adds that cyberbullying disrupts the learner's concentration, sense of security, and ability to learn academically.

Literature indicates that female university students are particularly vulnerable to cyber harassment, with studies like the Youth Internet Safety Survey (YISS) reporting higher levels of digital aggression among women. (Gilbert et al., 2020) find a high correlation between online victimization and poorer academic performance among college-age women, citing the long-term impact of continuous exposure to abusive online communication. However, even though such studies provide rich statistical and psychological insight, they are primarily based on quantitative data, thereby excluding the detailed, personal narratives that characterize personal experience (Shin & Choi, 2021). There are scant qualitative studies that investigate the extent to which cyberbullying

affects the educational environment at the university level, particularly in developing countries such as Pakistan, where cultural boundaries, social shame, and digital literacy levels may further augment reporting and assistance. (Oksanen et al., 2022) work requires more context-specific and richly nuanced studies that explore not just prevalence but lived experience and coping strategies as well. In addition, much previous work has been grounded in Western contexts, with few considering gender, culture, and institutional response intersectionality in South Asian schools.This literature gap justifies the requirement of a case study approach that, besides putting forward affected voices, considers the institutional learning environment in which cyberbullying occurs (Vlaanderen et al., 2020). By using a qualitative approach, the present study responds to a more nuanced understanding of how cyberbullying alters the scholarly engagement, psychological resilience, and interpersonal relationships among female university students in Lahore. It benefits from existing theoretical approaches and corrects the weaknesses of earlier studies, offering context-specific, actionable insights for teachers, administrators, and policy makers (Zhang et al., 2023).

In addition to the global research context, there have been a series of regional studies attempting to explore cyberbullying within the Pakistani context, though many of them remain underdeveloped or lack methodological rigor. As per a study by (Crespi et al., 2021) on cyber bullying of Punjab university students, there was widespread trend of silence and normalization, especially by female students who typically fear reputation damage or institutional inertia. Based on their study, they also demonstrate that students scarcely report officially since they do not trust university authorities and lack cyber safety (Jenaro et al., 2021). But their reliance on survey studies limits scope for an understanding of personal narratives and emotional impacts of such experiences. Similarly, (López-Meneses et al., 2020) researched the psychological impacts of cyberbullying upon students in urban cities, reporting excessive stress and isolation from scholastic and social life. But this study lacked a deep examination of the university environment as a socio-educational context that could both mitigate or exacerbate these impacts. Moreover, earlier research tends to isolate cyberbullying as an isolated experience rather than as a phenomenon based on more universal social dynamics (Pichel et al., 2021) such as gender hierarchies, digital culture, peer relationships, and institutional response mechanisms. Literature also indicates a significant theoretical lack in linking cyberbullying with educational theory that examines learner engagement, motivation, and persistence (Tokunaga, 2010). Constructivist and socio-cultural theories of learning suggest that a safe, participatory climate for learning is the center of academic growth. Cyberbullying, if it goes unchecked, contradicts these axioms outright, creating psychological barriers to mental engagement and collaboration. (Ye et al., 2022) Social Learning Theory also sheds light on the mechanisms through which students emulate aggressive behavior witnessed on the internet and consequently influence the overall classroom environment and institutional climate.

This research intends to fill these gaps through the presentation of a qualitative, context-rich portrait of how cyberbullying is affecting the learning environment at the universities in Lahore, Pakistan. Through the narratives of women victims, this study aims to uncover not only the psychological and academic effects but also the ways in which learners respond to their learning experiences under digital hostility (Bussu et al., 2023). The findings of this study can be utilized to guide student support systems, digital safety initiatives, and pedagogies that build a more compassionate and resilient learning community. The urgent need for more education-oriented, gender-aware, and locally grounded research that bridges the divide between online and offline worlds. In the process, it sets the stage for a case study that is not just academically significant but institutionally and socially transformative (Erdur-Baker et al., 2010). There exists an ever-growing number of qualitative studies that bring attention to the importance of lived experiences in understanding the nuance of cyberbullying in educational environments. Studies such as that of Kowalski and (Han et al., 2023) employed interviews and focus groups to explore victims' narratives and illustrate the ways that cyberbullying influences students' sense of belonging, emotional well-

being, and engagement within school life. It is such research that suggests fear of judgment, victim-blaming, and social exclusion may discourage victims from reporting the incidents or participating in class discussions and group work (Iwendi et al., 2023). Nonetheless, such research is largely Western and may fail to account for all socio-cultural differences that make up the dynamics of cyberbullying among South Asian societies, especially where honor, family honor, and gender are more salient factors on individual behavior.

In his analysis of cyberbullying effects (Murshed et al., 2022), identified emotional disorders, grade decline, and exclusion as key effects being felt by university students. His work highlighted how indiscriminate harassment online could lead to long-term mental illness effects like anxiety, depression, and suicidal ideation. But although powerful, his work also calls for further empirical (Potyrała & Tomczyk, 2021), case-level investigation that includes situational variables like institutional support, student subculture, and family background, particularly in developing countries. Similarly, research by (Qureshi et al., 2023) emphasized that cyberbullying is cyberbullying as an individual issue but also a systemic concern that reflects the digital ethics, organizational structure, and support systems within an organization. They suggest reforms in education, training modules, and intervention programs for the development of cyber-safe classrooms. Despite having their sophisticated model, there exists a lacuna in applying such models to non-Western university settings (Soler-Costa et al., 2021), especially where technology is growing rapidly but regulatory as well as psychosocial support infrastructure is lagging.

Moreover, research suggests that most of the universities, and particularly in Pakistan, lack sophisticated cyberbullying policies or fail to apply those that do exist properly. According to a recent review conducted by the Digital Rights Foundation (Yang et al., 2021), most students are unsure where and how to report harassment online, and university administrations try to downplay such reports as external or personal matters. Such administrative inattention contributes to an unhealthy online culture where perpetrators become emboldened, and victims are left powerless. Hence, there is a pressing need for qualitative research that engages students' voices and experiences to inform contextually appropriate policy and practice (Dwijendra et al., 2021). This case study aims to contribute to the literature with first-hand account information from cyberbullied female university students in Lahore. Taking a qualitative approach, the study aims to examine how this impacts their emotional well-being, academic focus, peer relationships, and overall attitude towards the learning environment (Helfrich et al., 2020). In doing so, it fills the critical gaps that existing research lacks and offers significant recommendations to policymakers, educators, and digital literacy advocates at the university level.

METHOD

Methodology offers research design, data collection process, recruitment of participants, ethical concerns, and data analysis methods used in this qualitative case study. The methodology is specially tailored to study and explore the experiences of university students affected by cyberbullying and how it influences their learning environment.

Research Design

The study used a qualitative case study methodology, which is most appropriate to examine intricate social phenomena such as cyberbullying in schools. Unlike quantitative research that aims at statistical generalizability, qualitative research pursues rich understanding, interpretation, and meaning making from the perspective of those who experience it. In this study, the emotional, psychological, and academic dimensions of cyberbullying are examined in the specific context of university life. The case study research design is particularly useful because it enables the researcher

to focus on a bounded system well-defined group of individuals in a specific context—to examine the problem from a holistic, qualitative angle. Cyberbullying is highly contextual and affectively charged a problem, in that it is difficult to boil it down to numbers alone.

The qualitative case study allows the participants to narrate their own stories, voice their own feelings, and describe how their experiences shaped their study engagement, their mental well-being, and their interpersonal relationships. Through the employment of semi-structured interviews and reflective participation, this method allows one to investigate the power dynamics, gender, online activity, and institutional responses in a more empathetic and holistic manner. Furthermore, it challenges exploration of the ways in which such experiences make their learning spaces subtle yet significant influences on their learning environments. Choosing female students at a university in Lahore for focus was strategic as well since this group tends to be especially exposed in digital as well as education spaces due to cultural, social, and gendered forces. By narrowing the research focus to this specific population and setting, the study aims to produce meaningful and rich information that can inform university-level policies and interventions. Case study approach, therefore, not only embodies the essence of the research interpretive paradigm but also allows voices of such less heard and marginal communities to take center stage in how they are encountered in mitigating complex effects of cyberbullying at universities.

Research Paradigm

This research is based on the interpretivist paradigm, which states that reality is not objective or absolute but is created and constructed by individuals and personal experience and perspective. Interpretivism acknowledges that human conduct, especially in complex social phenomena like cyberbullying, cannot be fully understood by limiting analysis to strict, numerical data. Instead, meaning is created through the deep, lived experiences of individuals who encounter and respond to their social world. It is for this reason that interpretivism is particularly suitable in studying the impact of cyberbullying on university students, as it concentrates on their subjective experiences and unique viewpoints.

By adopting an interpretivist stance, the study hopes to examine the way female students from Lahore interpret and make sense of their experience of cyberbullying within the school setting. Such a paradigm will assist the researcher in learning about how the victims feel the effects of the emotional, psychological, and academic trauma of such situations. It further offers a means of gaining insights into cultural and contextual variables influencing their response. Unlike generalizing outcomes to the population at large, the goal in this case is to acquire in-depth understanding of the realities of the individual and interpret the significance participants assign to their own experience. This fits the qualitative scope of the study as well as the use of interviews as a primary source of data collection. Further, interpretivism fosters empathetic interaction between the participants and researchers, which is necessary when addressing sensitive topics like cyberbullying. Building rapport and trust with the interview respondents results in their providing honest responses, allowing collection of authentic, rich, and reflective data to be feasible. Such involvement allows the researcher to gain a more profound understanding of participants' emotional lives and the significance they assign to their experiences. Overall, the interpretivist paradigm allows for a solid philosophical foundation for researching the complex realities of cyberbullying in higher education, allowing the research to contribute meaningfully to the education discipline and inform context-driven interventions.

Population and Sampling

The population under study is female university students in Lahore who have experienced cyberbullying personally during their course of study. This population was chosen because the growing incidence of online harassment among female students in higher education is where the intersection of academic pressure, online interaction, and gendered vulnerabilities comes together to create a very unsafe space. Focusing on this specific group of individuals allows the research to delve into the effects of cyberbullying on not only the individual welfare of the victims but also on their participation and achievement within the educational setting. Female students were specifically targeted to elicit their unique voices, which are often overlooked in broader debate concerning cyberbullying within universities.

A purposive sampling strategy was employed to ensure representation of those with firsthand and significant experience with cyberbullying. This non-probability sampling method is optimally suited to qualitative research as it prioritizes depth over breadth, selecting participants based on their potential to offer detailed, pertinent, and reflective information. The criteria for selection were possessing a Master's degree as minimum, being enrolled in a reputable university in Lahore, and having experienced one or more cyberbullying incidents. These were some of the key requirements to have participants with cognitive maturity, self-insight, and communication skills so that they could share their experience in depth. Four female participants were ultimately selected for in-depth interviews. They were between the ages of 25 and 30, which further ensured that they were able to provide reflective and rich accounts of their experiences. Each participant had a unique story shaped by individual, academic, and socio-cultural backgrounds, contributing to the study's understanding of the problem. This focused sample size was deemed sufficient for a qualitative case study in that it allowed for a detailed, in-depth examination of every case while at the same time highlighting common themes and patterns. The data accrued from the participants reported here constitutes solid evidence to the broader implications of cyberbullying for the learning environment at higher education institutions in Pakistan.

Data Collection Procedure

The primary method of data collection in this qualitative case study was semi-structured interviews, a tried and tested method of interpretivist research. Semi-structured interviews offer a balance between structured questioning and open discussion, allowing participants to elaborate on their experiences in depth while ensuring that important themes relevant to the study are systematically addressed. This method was particularly effective in laying bare the complexities of cyberbullying's social and emotional facets because the participants were free to narrate the incidents in their own words, articulate their thoughts in response to their feelings, and discuss how the events affected their school activities as well as social interactions.

All the interviews took place in safe, private, and non-judgmental settings to allow trust and emotional safety. Participants were guaranteed total confidentiality, and anonymity was sought and fully observed in some cases. Pseudonyms were used for all the participants to safeguard their identities. All interviews lasted between 45 and 60 minutes and were audio-recorded with the participants' informed consent to enable precision in their narration. The recordings were subsequently transcribed verbatim to facilitate close analysis and thematic coding. In addition to the interviews, the field notes and reflective memos of the researcher were kept throughout the process of data gathering. The supplementary records recorded the non-verbal, tone-of-feeling, and situational observations that augmented the verbal interpretation of data. Reflective memos further provided the opportunity to record personal response, evolving ideas, and critical thinking within the interview process. All together, these data-gathering tools yielded a comprehensive and complex dataset allowing for an overall understanding of the impact cyberbullying has on the learning culture from the perspective of female university students in Lahore.

Instrument

To generate room for deep elaboration of participants' experience, an interview guide was crafted in relation to research aims and was based on what was already known about cyberbullying and its impact on learning settings from the literature. The guide was a series of open-ended questions aimed at inviting participants' own stories and reflections. Questions used in the interview schedule included aspects like the setting and nature of cyberbullying incidents, emotional and psychological response, effects on school studies and attendance at class, changes in relationships with peers, and assistance if any from the schools. In this way, an overall framework was maintained such that while participants were provided utmost liberty of expression, interviews were kept focused on the broader themes related to the study. Prior to starting formal data collection, the interview guide was pilot tested with a single participant who was eligible for the study. The pilot interview was utilized to test the clarity, sensitivity, and appropriateness of questions. The researcher could make minor adjustments through pilot feedback, such as rephrasing questions in simpler language and the maintenance of emotional safety in exploring issues. Refining the guide assisted in assuring that the end instrument was both methodologically robust and ethical, with potential to gather meaningful, rich, and reliable information from the research participants.

Data Analysis

The data collected through semi-structured interviews were examined through thematic analysis, a methodology best suited to the identification of patterns and meaning in qualitative data. The study followed Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase approach, beginning with familiarization, where the audio-recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim and read several times to build a rich understanding of the content. This was followed by generating early codes—labels that reflected significant characteristics of the data that were relevant to the research question. The codes were then clamped into potential categories that revealed connections and shared meanings among the participants' accounts. Later stages involved the researcher, reading and refining the themes through recursive process, going back and forth between data, codes, and emerging themes to check for internal consistency and accuracy. Reflexivity and cross-case comparison throughout maximized credibility and trustworthiness of the findings. Three major themes and sub-themes were ultimately identified to summarize the participants' experiential details of cyberbullying and how it impacted their school and social lives. They were used as the basis upon which to describe the findings and their implications regarding education in general.

Trustworthiness of the Study

In qualitative research, trustworthiness is essential to guarantee the accuracy and authenticity of findings. In the current study, Lincoln and Guba's (1985) criteria for ascertaining trustworthiness were used: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. For determining credibility, the researcher employed members by checking through sharing transcribed data and emerging interpretations with participants so that their experience was correctly being represented. This procedure helped to verify the findings and facilitated any explanations or corrections, thereby enhancing the internal validity of the research. Transferability was aided by dense, vivid descriptions of participants' lives, the educational context, and the research setting, enabling readers to decide for themselves the transferability of findings to similar settings. Dependability and confirmability were ensured through a detailed audit trail for all methodological choices, raw data, coding processes, and reflective memos. In addition, peer debriefing with the academic supervisors and peers gave

alternative meanings and constructive critique, adding balance and objectivity to the presentation of the findings. These in combination added rigor and reliability to the study.

Ethical Considerations

This study was guided by the ethical requirements of the university research ethics board to protect the dignity, rights, and well-being of all the participants. All participants provided informed consent prior to data collection, which indicated the purpose of the study in clear terms, informed them that their participation was voluntary, and their right to withdraw at any time without any penalty. The subjects were also informed about how their information would be handled and what safeguards were there to ensure privacy and confidentiality. A signed consent form was obtained after providing enough time for questions and clarification. To ensure confidentiality and anonymity, all participants were given a pseudonym and none of these were placed in the final report or analysis. Interviews took place in secure, private spaces so that everyone felt at ease. All information created electronically, both audio files and transcripts, were kept on secure devices in their possession accessed by password by them alone by the researcher. Ethical sensitivity was maintained throughout, especially considering the emotionally sensitive nature of cyberbullying, to ensure that participants felt respected, heard, and safe throughout and after the research.

Limitations

Whereas the qualitative case study method provides a rich, detailed insight into participants' everyday lives, it necessarily restricts the generalizability of findings. The sample size of this study—confined to only four purposively chosen female students from Lahore University—is such that the conclusions cannot be generalized to cover all university students, nor even within Pakistan or across the world. This restriction is typical of qualitative research, whose aim is not statistical generality but rather thick, detailed investigation of a particular phenomenon within a delimited setting. Another significant limitation is the use of self-reported data, which can be subject to participants' memory, perceptions, or social desirability bias. Participants might underreport or overreport their experiences of cyberbullying, either consciously or unconsciously. Furthermore, the emotional nature of the subject might have led some participants to withhold some information even with attempts to establish a safe and supportive interview setting. These restrictions, however, are counteracted by the study's strict data gathering and analysis protocols, ethical measures, and value in amplifying marginalized voices and shedding light on the intricate influence of cyberbullying within the local academic environment.

RESULTS

The findings of a qualitative case study that investigated the impact of cyberbullying on the learning environment of the university with specific reference to female students in urban universities. Data were gathered from semi-structured in-depth interviews with four female university students who had personally experienced cyberbullying. From thematic analysis, three main themes emerged from the data, and each of the themes gave profound insights into the psychological, educational, and social effects of cyberbullying in the academic setting.

Theme 1: Fear and Personality Disturbances Among Victims

Each participant had reported feeling extreme psychological distress that was caused by cyberbullying experiences. A major sub-theme that arose was fear, especially the fear of judgment, exclusion, or embarrassment. Victims are typically reported having a generalized sense of insecurity and anxiety, tending to withdraw from social and academic environments.

"I couldn't go to my classes normally. I felt that everyone was staring at me, although they weren't." (Participant 2)

Sub-themes under this category were:

- **Loss of Confidence**: Participants expressed diminished self-worth and a reluctance to participate in academic or extracurricular activities.
- **Feelings of Shame and Isolation**: Cyberbullying led to embarrassment and a conscious effort to avoid interaction with peers and faculty.
- **Unconscious Behavioral Changes**: Some participants experienced episodes of emotional numbness or detachment, stating they felt "lost" or "disconnected" from their surroundings.

Theme 2: Negative Impact on Academic Performance

The emotional impact of cyberbullying had a direct effect on students' academic performance and involvement. Participants indicated:

a. A Noticeable Drop in Grades

The most self-evident academic consequence of cyberbullying from the point of view of the respondents was an observable decrease in their performance. The victims have stated that the emotional distress triggered by constant virtual harassment made them lose interest and get upset about normal study routines. The emotional burden not only kept them away from studies but also drained their mental resources, which otherwise they would have used in studies and assignments. Most of the students reported that, prior to the experience of bullying, they enjoyed satisfactory or even above-average academic performance, but following the cyberbullying episodes, their performance plummeted.

b. Loss of Focus During Classes

Aside from the decline in school performance, students experienced a loss of focus in class. The fear of being teased, judged, or even approached by the bullies hindered them from paying attention to lessons. Their minds were often preoccupied with concern, shame, or obsession with the cyberbullying content being posted on the internet, which prevented them from being completely engaged in learning content. Some participants in certain cases indicated that they would mentally withdraw from the classroom environment, present physically but absent emotionally.

c. Increased Absenteeism

This psychological and emotional weight also resulted in increased absenteeism. Mostly students began to avoid classes altogether, especially if they did not want to encounter their harassers or peers who were aware of the bullying. The classroom, once a place of learning and growth, became a source of discomfort and intimidation.

d. Dread of Participating in Group Discussions or Academic Presentations

This avoidance later gave rise to a strong reluctance to participate in group discussions or academic presentations. Victims indicated feeling intense insecurity and fear of being judged by others. They feared that any engagement could be mocked or misinterpreted, which discouraged them from engaging in academic discussion. As a result, their classroom participation, an essential element of university-level learning, was severely compromised.

e. Harassing Phone Calls and Text Messages

The worst form of cyberbullying experienced by students at universities was harassing phone calls and text messages. Victims lamented the fact that they were sent threatening or anonymous messages not only invading their privacy but also instilling constant fear and anxiety in them. The messages were typically laced with abusive language, personal attacks, or attempts to manipulate and coerce the victim. In a few instances, incessant calls from unfamiliar numbers during school hours or late in the evening disrupted students' daily schedules and sleep patterns. This incessant cyber harassment left victims feeling unsafe and mentally exhausted, significantly affecting their ability to focus on academic responsibilities.

f. Distribution of Embarrassing Photographs/Videos

Another persistent detrimental method used under cyberbullying was the posting of humiliating photos or videos by others without the victim's consent. Study participants indicated that their own photos, sometimes edited or taken out of context, were posted on social networking websites or messaging programs to humiliate them. Online victimization in this way made the participants feel severely embarrassed, avoid social interactions, and isolated. The fear that friends, classmates, or even teachers would view these images made the victims experience a threatening and stigmatizing climate. In some cases, the emotional pain was so extreme that students did not even go to university.

g. Inappropriate Social Media Comments

Besides direct messages and visual content, victims also suffered from inappropriate social media comments. These comments were typically about the victim's appearance, personality, or behavior and were made publicly accessible, thereby distributing the humiliation. The public cyberbullies created a toxic online environment that carried over into the physical learning environment. The victims became overly sensitive to how they were perceived and judged by others, leading to low self-esteem and defiance against social or academic involvement. The joint effect of these cyber victimization experiences directly hindered students' academic performance, emotional stability, and overall university life.

> "Even in class, I would receive anonymous messages. I was never able to focus. I was mentally elsewhere." (Participant 4)

These actions not only diverted students but generated a climate of psychological insecurity that hindered learning.

4.3 Theme 3: Lack of Moral Support from Family and Institutional Stakeholders

Participants repeatedly reported lack of knowledge and understanding from family members, especially parents. A cultural and generational gap hindered open discussion, particularly in matters such as harassment and safety online. Victims were more scared of chastisement than of being offered emotional support or protection.

> "I didn't tell my parents. They would have blamed me or prevented me from studying further." (Participant 3)

On the other hand, close friends proved to be major sources of emotional release and off-the-cuff counseling. Still, peers and classmates in general tended to assist victimization through:

a.   Rumors

The most common and psychologically damaging form of cyberbullying among university students was the spreading of rumors. Respondents described that false and misleading information concerning their private lives was circulated using social networking websites, group chat, and hidden text messages. These rumors commonly involved intimate topics like relationships, conduct, or character and had the intent of ruining the victim's reputation. The emotional price of being the target of such rumors was high, inducing shame, worry, and in some doubt. The victims reported feeling helpless since the false information spread very rapidly, being hard to reverse or challenge in an online environment.

b.   Bullying or Ostracizing Victims

Aside from gossiping, a very large number of students suffered peer bullying or exclusion. Victims indicated that after having been targeted on the internet, they were systematically excluded from class group assignments, social events, and general peer interactions. This exclusion led to feelings of isolation, which had a direct impact on their mental health and academic motivation. In an academic environment where peer relationships and interdependence are prominent, being socially ostracized deepened the emotional scars of the victims even more and made it more difficult for them to interact with their learning community confidently.

c.   Spreading Derogatory Content

Few students went through the spread of derogatory content like memes, photoshopped images, or abusive posts targeting them for ridicule or defamation. These items were publicly shared repeatedly online through social networks, and accordingly, the embarrassment was more open and lasting. Victims also claimed the acute mental anguish of recognizing that classmates or even unknown strangers were making them a target for ridicule. Such public shaming not only shattered their self-concept but also discouraged them from participating in group discussions in their classes or student activities on their campuses. These specific attacks seriously disturbed their sense of safety and belonging within the academic community.

d.   Cross-Cutting Observations

In all the themes, the following trends were noted: the study revealed that victims of cyberbullying became reactive rather than proactive in learning contexts. Instead of being engaged participants in class discussions, initiating group work, or asking questions in class, the victims would respond defensively or passively to the learning context. Their focus was shifted from learning and participation to managing the emotional hurt caused by cyberbullying. This reactive behavior was characterized by deference, fear, and the desire to be invisible in class. Thus, their learning enthusiasm and motivation were greatly hampered. Social withdrawal and academic disengagement emerged as prevalent coping strategies among the victims. In the effort to avoid further bullying or social exclusion, most students chose to withdraw from their peers and avoid collaborative learning activities. They would often not report to school, socialize little, and not participate in extracurricular activities. This withdrawing not only left them emotionally withdrawn but also led to a decline in their studies. Victims were lonely and isolated, and with time, this drained their confidence and drive to excel at school.

Another shocking finding was that the institutional response to cyberbullying cases was either missing or inadequate. Victims also reported that faculty members and university administrations did not take the issue seriously or provide timely support. Grievances were at times ignored, and no proper

procedure was in place to handle cyber harassment in certain cases. This institutional red tape left victims feeling isolated and vulnerable, causing them to shy away from reporting further. The absence of a strong, structured response system facilitated the normalization of cyberbullying within the school community, enabling it to silently fester in its victims. These results identify how cyberbullying significantly influences psychological well-being, academic progress, and integration in the educational setup. Data indicates the need for institutional understanding, supportive environments, and integrating cyber safety studies within higher educational arenas.

Theme 4: Social Exclusion and Peer Victimization

The other emergent issue was the breakdown of peer relationships and the beginning of social exclusion. The victims explained a change in how their peers and university colleagues treated them following an incident of cyberbullying. Instead of being comforted, they were frequently laughed at, judged, or even ostracized, making the learning environment hostile and unpleasant.

"Individuals began joking behind my back. Some even forwarded my messages and photos to others, mocking them in school." (Participant 1)

This exclusion also contributed to increased loneliness and helplessness, making students unable to develop study groups or informal peer networks. This exclusion undermined group-based learning, faith in group working, and network building for academia—key ingredients in an efficient university learning environment.

Theme 5: Gendered Nature of Cyberbullying

While not a key issue, gender emerged as a significant factor in participants' narratives. All four victims mentioned that being female made the impact of cyberbullying worse due to the patriarchal and conservative environment of their country. They were more afraid of losing educational opportunities, restrictions at home, and harm to their reputation than they were of the perpetrators themselves.

"Because I am a girl, you can't even talk about what happened. They will accuse you. My brother said to me that I should close all my social media."(Participant 2)

These points towards the intersectional nature of cyberbullying, wherein online harassment is not only a technological issue but also grounded in deeper cultural, gendered, and societal contexts.

Summary of Key Findings

Theme	Impact
Fear and Personality Disturbance	Anxiety, shame, loss of confidence, emotional detachment
Negative Academic Performance	Decreased grades, absenteeism, classroom disengagement
Lack of Support from Family and Institutions	Silence, fear of parental backlash, lack of institutional guidance
Social Exclusion and Peer Victimization	Isolation, bullying by peers, loss of academic collaboration
Gendered Experiences of Cyberbullying	Fear of reputational harm, cultural constraints, unequal access to justice

Interpretation in Context of Learning Environment

The results indicate that cyberbullying has far-reaching effects that transcend the virtual world and reach into the physical learning environment of universities. The study determined that cyberbullying led to an extensive drop in classroom participation and engagement among the victims. Victims would remain silent in class, steer clear of answering questions, and fail to take part in group discussions for fear of being criticized or ridiculed. Their self-confidence was severely shattered, and it became difficult for them to actively take part in academic settings. This withdrawal also affected their own educational success but also deprived the class of diversity of experience and peer interaction, necessary for a cooperative learning environment. Moreover, several of the victims experienced emotional exhaustion, which translated into poor performance academically. The persistent anxiety and stress resulting from online harassment drained their emotional capital to the extent that they could no longer concentrate on school assignments, meet deadlines, or maintain consistency in the rate of their studies. Over time, the psychological pressure influenced their performance in examinations, completion of assignments, and maintaining attention on coursework. Their educational downfall was not indicative of their lack of capability, but rather an effect of persistent psychological pressure. Secondly, social isolation became a survival tactic, which greatly discouraged informal learning experiences.

The victims secluded themselves from peers and classmates, disrupting peer-to-peer interactions that normally encourage cooperative learning and information exchange outside the lecture hall. The isolation, coupled with the psychological trauma caused by cyberbullying, destroyed their sense of safety on campus. Most students explained feeling paranoid, insecure, and emotionally unsafe even in physical learning spaces. This lapse in perceived security and trust also cut them off from the university community, psychologically crushing their academic motivation and overall well-being. Essentially, cyberbullying changes the psychosocial climate of the university. When students are victimized by online abuse, they can no longer view their learning space as safe and nurturing, which subsequently lowers their motivation and ability to learn.

Theme 6: Institutional Silence and Absence of Preventive Measures

Among the most worrisome revelations was the absence of active institutional measures to manage or mitigate cyberbullying. Interviewees reported categorically that universities had no programs to sensitize, complaints offices, and protective services for the victims.

> "I didn't know who to report to. We don't have anywhere in the university to go if something like this occurs." (Participant 4)

This lack of institutional mechanisms for online safety resulted in undue suffering, powerlessness, and in certain instances, victims losing out on lectures or contemplating dropping out. The lack of counseling facilities, specific cyber safety measures, or teacher intervention showed a key lacuna in the role of the university towards making a safe learning space.

a. Cumulative Impact on Learning Environment

Throughout all six of the themes, it became apparent that cyberbullying, the victims of cyberbullying showed reactive rather than proactive behavior during class. Instead of engaging with learning material, initiating questions, or adding to class discussions, they responded passively to learning requirements. This change in behavior resulted from an intense sense of exposure and low self-esteem caused by relentless online harassment. As a result, these students lost opportunities to take charge of their learning, instead seeking instructions or minimal engagement to avoid calling

attention to themselves. Victims tend to use social withdrawal and academic disengagement as significant coping behaviors. Distant and emotionally burdened, they isolated themselves from peer groups, extracurricular clubs, and even informal learning settings. This withdrawal resulted in a cycle of disengagement, as the lack of support and cooperation further eroded their educational standing. Rather than seeking assistance, most victims internalized their trauma, which manifested in decreased motivation, truancy, and in other situations, an utter disinterest in continuing education.

Terrifyingly, the institutional reaction to these occurrences was discovered to be pervasive yet unproductive or absent. Teachers and administrative personnel did not recognize the signs of cyberbullying or did not have the proper procedures in place to act effectively. In none of the incidents covered did a university administrator take significant action to remedy the bullying or support the victim. This silence not only failed to protect the students but also showed a lack of institutional accountability, thus worsening the psychological harm and leaving victims to have to deal with their trauma in isolation. Cyberbullying victims brought their trauma into the classroom. Their capacity to concentrate, articulate themselves, and contribute thoughtfully to academic debate was decreased substantially. These experiences also dissuaded victims from assuming leadership positions, engaging in extracurricular activities, or offering up their ideas in public forums—mainstays of a healthy university life.

The qualitative data, which is founded on in-depth interviews of four female students in a university, provides compelling evidence that cyberbullying has a direct effect of compromising the quality, equity, and inclusiveness of the learning environment at the university level. The results show the necessity of radical systemic changes in how the learning institutions identify, respond to, and forestall cyberbullying. These results not only speak to a significant gap in the literature on cyberbullying in Pakistani higher education but also to the convergence of technology, gender, and institutional responsibility in shaping students' academic trajectories and psychological well-being.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study highlight that cyberbullying has a deep and extremely personal impact on the emotional and academic well-being of university students, particularly female students. The victims reported feeling fear, anxiety, shame, and loss of self-esteem, all of which disrupted academic pursuits. This emotional disturbance tended to lead to withdrawal from both class life and social life at the university, thereby creating a hostile environment for learning. The psychological burden borne by victims is in line with research indicating that emotional safety plays a key role in fostering effective learning. When emotional safety is undermined by cyberbullying, the academic performance and social development of the students are severely affected. Also, the research discovered that the social environment within universities had the tendency to exacerbate the effect of cyberbullying. Even though victims were supported emotionally by close friends, peers and classmates were common perpetrators of mocking, gossiping, and exclusion. The peer relationship dualism contributed to the shattered sense of belonging, making the victims feel more disconnected from the learning community. The reluctance to report experiences to parents, fearing blame or limitation, and the absence of institutional support mechanisms created a gap where students had to manage these traumatic events by themselves. These findings point to the need for university policy and counseling services that address cyberbullying as a systemic issue and not as individual incidents. In a broader education context, this study contributes to the body of knowledge regarding how digital harassment alters the learning environment dynamics. It demonstrates that cyberbullying is not merely a behavioral or disciplinary issue, but a direct obstacle to academic achievement and student retention. The findings require an integrated approach through student awareness programs, parental engagement, institutional policymaking, and teacher training in digital citizenship. By adopting a more active and empathetic strategy, schools can help to restore a secure, welcoming, and supportive

environment where all students, and especially those who are at risk for cyber victimization, can succeed both academically and socially.

CONCLUSION

Qualitative case study has revealed the substantial and complex impact of cyberbullying on the learning environment at the university level, particularly for female students. From in-depth interviews, it was evident that cyberbullying is not only an online annoyance but a deeply rooted problem that interferes with the emotional, psychological, and academic lives of students. The anxiety, fear, and emotional isolation experienced by the participants gravely challenged their capacity to focus on studies, engage in class discussions, and feel self-worth. The study verifies that without the elimination of the pernicious psychological effects of online bullying, a safe and inclusive classroom cannot be established. Most notably unsettling, though, was the absence of genuine support mechanisms for the victims. Friends merely intermittently provided sympathetic ear support, and institutional intervention continued to be nonexistent or small-scale, and families, long past stained by generation rifts and culture stigmatization, also made their articulation more difficult to achieve. Silence repeats in a self-sustaining cycle because the victim senses judgment and increased harassment pending and fails to go to authority to accuse them due to fear of the same. In the academic setting that is supposed to foster development and security, this silence fuels a culture of omission where learning is damaged, and the student experience deteriorates. Lastly determines an urgent need for schools to recognize cyberbullying as a critical barrier to learning. Prevention education, campaigns, and student-focused counseling models are essential steps forward. Universities and colleges must create inclusive policies, train faculty and staff to identify and respond to online harassment, and foster a digital culture of empathy, responsibility, and respect. It is only by acknowledging the gravity of cyberbullying and acting proactively that we can ensure that university campuses remain environments for learning, empowerment, and academic success for students.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings of this study, it is strongly recommended that universities engage in prompt and well-organized actions to deal with the growing trend of cyberbullying. Schools must introduce mandatory awareness workshops and programs that educate students regarding digital ethics, cyber safety, and the psychological impact of online harassment. These programs should be included in freshman orientation programs and maintained throughout the academic year. Furthermore, universities and colleges should establish special cyberbullying response teams consisting of trained counselors, IT support staff, and disciplinary panels to address reported cases with care and precision. Confidentiality and trust-building should form the core of these support systems to enable victims to come forward without fearing judgment or retaliation. The role of parents and teachers must be emphasized in consultation with schools. Outreaches must be undertaken by the universities to engage families and teachers in talking about the internet problems the students are facing at present. Parents must be educated on how to practically and emotionally support them if they are victims of cyberbullying. Teachers and academic advisers should be trained to recognize signals of distress in their students and respond with empathy and practical guidance. Policymakers and university administrations should also ensure that digital safety is incorporated within academic curriculum and students' codes of conduct, hence the creation of a responsible, respectful, and safe online culture within the university environment.

REFERENCES

Al-Rahmi, W. M., Yahaya, N., Alturki, U., Alrobai, A., Aldraiweesh, A. A., Omar Alsayed, A., & Kamin, Y. B. (2022). Social media-based collaborative learning: The effect on learning success with the moderating role of cyberstalking and cyberbullying. *Interactive Learning Environments*, *30*(8), 1434–1447.

Bernardo, A. B., Tuero, E., Cervero, A., Dobarro, A., & Galve-González, C. (2020). Bullying and cyberbullying: Variables that influence university dropout. *Comunicar*, *28*(64), 63–72. https://doi.org/10.3916/c64-2020-06

Bussu, A., Ashton, S.-A., Pulina, M., & Mangiarulo, M. (2023). An explorative qualitative study of cyberbullying and cyberstalking in a higher education community. *Crime Prevention and Community Safety*, *25*(4), 359–385. https://doi.org/10.1057/s41300-023-00186-0

Cantone, E., Piras, A. P., Vellante, M., Preti, A., Daníelsdóttir, S., D'Aloja, E., Lesinskiene, S., Angermeyer, M. C., Carta, M. G., & Bhugra, D. (2015). Interventions on bullying and cyberbullying in schools: a systematic review. *Clinical Practice and Epidemiology in Mental Health: CP & EMH*, *11*(Suppl 1 M4), 58–76. https://doi.org/10.2174/1745017901511010058

Crespi, I., Hendry, B., Fermani, A., & Hellsten, L. A. M. (2021). Extending the current theorization on cyberbullying: importance of including socio-psychological perspectives. *Italian Journal of Sociology of Education*, *13*(3), 85–110.

Drane, C., Vernon, L., & Shea, S. (2020). *The impact of 'learning at home' on the educational outcomes of vulnerable children in Australia during the COVID-19 pandemic*.

Dwijendra, N. K. A., Akhmadeev, R., Tumanov, D., Kosov, M., Shoar, S., & Banaitis, A. (2021). Modeling social impacts of high-rise residential buildings during the post-occupancy phase using DEMATEL method: A case study. *Buildings*, *11*(11), 504. https://doi.org/10.3390/buildings11110504

Erdur-Baker, Ö. (2010). Cyberbullying and its correlation to traditional bullying, gender and frequent and risky usage of internet-mediated communication tools. *New Media & Society*, *12*(1), 109–125. https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444809341260

Elsafoury, F., Katsigiannis, S., Pervez, Z., & Ramzan, N. (2021). When the timeline meets the pipeline: A survey on automated cyberbullying detection. *IEEE Access: Practical Innovations, Open Solutions*, *9*, 103541–103563. https://doi.org/10.1109/access.2021.3098979

Faye, M., Cook, C., Saini, M., Wu, M.-J., & Macfadden, R. (2011). Interventions to Prevent and Reduce Cyber Abuse of Youth: A Systematic Review. *Research on Social Work Practice*, *21*, 1–5.

Gilbert, S. A. (2020). "I run the world's largest historical outreach project and it's on a cesspool of a website." Moderating a Public Scholarship Site on Reddit: A Case Study of

r/AskHistorians. *Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction*, *4*(CSCW1), 1–27. https://doi.org/10.1145/3392822

Helfrich, E. L., Doty, J. L., Su, Y.-W., Yourell, J. L., & Gabrielli, J. (2020). Parental views on preventing and minimizing negative effects of cyberbullying. *Children and Youth Services Review*, *118*(105377), 105377. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2020.105377

Han, J., Liu, G., & Gao, Y. (2023). Learners in the Metaverse: A systematic review on the use of roblox in learning. *Education Sciences*, *13*(3).

Islam, M. T., & Habib, T. I. (2021). Barriers of adopting online learning among the university students in Bangladesh during covid-19. *Indonesian Journal on Learning and Advanced Education (IJOLAE)*, *4*(1), 71–91. https://doi.org/10.23917/ijolae.v4i1.15215

Iwendi, C., Srivastava, G., Khan, S., & Maddikunta, P. K. R. (2023). Cyberbullying detection solutions based on deep learning architectures. *Multimedia Systems*, *29*(3), 1839–1852. https://doi.org/10.1007/s00530-020-00701-5

Jenaro, C., Flores, N., & Frías, C. P. (2021). Anxiety and depression in cyberbullied college students: A retrospective study. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, *36*(1–2), 579–602. https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260517730030

Kim, J., Lee, Y., & Jennings, W. G. (2022). A path from traditional bullying to cyberbullying in South Korea: Examining the roles of self-control and deviant peer association in the different forms of bullying. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, *37*(9–10), 5937–5957. https://doi.org/10.1177/08862605211067022

López-Meneses, E., Vázquez-Cano, E., González-Zamar, M.-D., & Abad-Segura, E. (2020). Socioeconomic effects in cyberbullying: Global research trends in the educational context. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, *17*(12), 4369. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17124369

Martínez-Monteagudo, M. C., Delgado, B., García-Fernández, J. M., & Ruíz-Esteban, C. (2019). Cyberbullying in the university setting. Relationship with emotional problems and adaptation to the university. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *10*, 3074. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.03074

Murshed, B. A. H., Abawajy, J., Mallappa, S., Saif, M. A. N., & Al-Ariki, H. D. E. (2022). DEA-RNN: A hybrid deep learning approach for cyberbullying detection in twitter social media platform. *IEEE Access: Practical Innovations, Open Solutions*, *10*, 25857–25871. https://doi.org/10.1109/access.2022.3153675

Nosko, A., Wood, E., & Molema, S. (2010). All about me: Disclosure in online social networking profiles: The case of FACEBOOK. *Computers in Human Behavior*, *26*(3), 406–418. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2009.11.012

Oksanen, A., Celuch, M., Latikka, R., Oksa, R., & Savela, N. (2022). Hate and harassment in academia: the rising concern of the online environment. *Higher Education*, *84*(3), 541–567. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-021-00787-4

Potyrała, K., & Tomczyk, Ł. (2021). Teachers in the lifelong learningprocess: examples of digital literacy. *Journal of Education for Teaching International Research and Pedagogy*, *47*(2), 255–273. https://doi.org/10.1080/02607476.2021.1876499

Pichel, R., Foody, M., O'Higgins Norman, J., Feijóo, S., Varela, J., & Rial, A. (2021). Bullying, cyberbullying and the overlap: What does age have to do with it? *Sustainability*, *13*(15), 8527. https://doi.org/10.3390/su13158527

Qureshi, M. A., Khaskheli, A., Qureshi, J. A., Raza, S. A., & Yousufi, S. Q. (2023). Factors affecting students' learning performance through collaborative learning and engagement. *Interactive Learning Environments*, *31*(4), 2371–2391. https://doi.org/10.1080/10494820.2021.1884886

Shin, S. Y., & Choi, Y.-J. (2021). Comparison of cyberbullying before and after the COVID-19 pandemic in Korea. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, *18*(19), 10085. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph181910085

Slamet, J. (2024). Potential of ChatGPT as a digital language learning assistant: EFL teachers' and students' perceptions. *Discover Artificial Intelligence, 4*(1), 46. https://doi.org/10.1007/s44163-024-00143-2

Slamet, J., & Basthomi, Y. (2024). Assessing gamification-based LMS for EFL students: A self-directed learning framework. *Studies in Linguistics, Culture & FLT, 12*(2).

Slamet, J., & Basthomi, Y. (2025). Examining the challenges and opportunities of ChatGPT in EFL education: A systematic literature review. *Journal of University Teaching and Learning Practice, 22*(2), 1-26. https://doi.org/10.53761/deezkh88

Slamet, J., Basthomi, Y., Ivone, F. M., & Eliyanah, E. (2024). Utilizing an SDL approach in designing a gamification-based MOOC to enhance autonomous learning. *Journal of Information Technology Education: Research, 23*, 010. https://doi.org/10.28945/5278

Soler-Costa, R., Lafarga-Ostáriz, P., Mauri-Medrano, M., & Moreno-Guerrero, A.-J. (2021). Netiquette: Ethic, education, and behavior on internet-A systematic literature review. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, *18*(3), 1212. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph18031212

Tokunaga, R. S. (2010). Following you home from school: A critical review and synthesis of research on cyberbullying victimization. *Computers in Human Behavior*, *26*(3), 277–287. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2009.11.014

Vlaanderen, A., Bevelander, K. E., & Kleemans, M. (2020). Empowering digital citizenship: An anti-cyberbullying intervention to increase children's intentions to intervene on behalf of the

victim. *Computers in Human Behavior*, *112*(106459), 106459. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2020.106459

Wang, X., Gao, Y., & Chen, B. (2025). Gender differences in cyberbullying tolerance, traditional bullying victimization and their associations with cyberbullying perpetration among Beijing adolescents. *Child & Family Social Work*, *30*(1), 15–25. https://doi.org/10.1111/cfs.13079

Xu, S., Ren, J., Li, F., Wang, L., & Wang, S. (2022). School bullying among vocational school students in China: Prevalence and associations with personal, relational, and school factors. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, *37*(1–2), NP104–NP124. https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260520907360

Ye, Y., Wang, C., Zhu, Q., He, M., Havawala, M., Bai, X., & Wang, T. (2022). Parenting and teacher–student relationship as protective factors for Chinese adolescent adjustment during COVID-19. *School Psychology Review*, *51*(2), 187–205. https://doi.org/10.1080/2372966x.2021.1897478

Yang, F. (2021). Coping strategies, cyberbullying behaviors, and depression among Chinese netizens during the COVID-19 pandemic: a web-based nationwide survey. *Journal of Affective Disorders*, *281*, 138–144. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jad.2020.12.023

Zhang, Z., Maeda, Y., Newby, T., Cheng, Z., & Xu, Q. (2023). The effect of preservice teachers' ICT integration self-efficacy beliefs on their ICT competencies: The mediating role of online self-regulated learning strategies. *Computers & Education*, *193*(104673), 104673. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2022.104673

Zhu, Y., Li, W., O'Brien, J. E., & Liu, T. (2021). Parent-child attachment moderates the associations between cyberbullying victimization and adolescents' health/mental health problems: An exploration of cyberbullying victimization among Chinese adolescents. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, *36*(17–18), NP9272–NP9298. https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260519854559s