Analysis of The Factors Contributing to The Prevalence of Cyberbullying Threats

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Abstract: The article presents some results of scientific and practical research conducted to improve the system of protection of information and psychological security of youth of Uzbekistan from the threat of cyberbullying. All factors influencing the spread of cyberbullying were carefully studied, and as a result of the study of endopsychic defense mechanisms of the individual in protection from cyberbullying, psychological factors of the spread of cyberbullying incidents in society were identified.

Keywords: Cyberbullying, factors of the state level, factors of the public level, factors of the individual level.

Introduction: Nowadays, the level of communication among people around the world, including even minors, through the global Internet information network is growing day by day. The Internet provides all of us with limitless opportunities, while at the same time presenting an invisible yet powerful array of dangers and threats within the virtual space. This virtual network offers a wide range of conveniences for interaction and communication among its users. However, many users of the Internet are not even aware that the threats and dangers present may outweigh its opportunities. One such threat is cyberbullying.

In both international and national academic circles, the phenomenon of cyberbullying has been interpreted in various ways depending on its categorical and phenomenological content. Within the framework of our research, we have formulated the following authorial definition of cyberbullying based on the "security studies" approach: "Cyberbullying can be defined as the deliberate and repeated influence on the

mind of another person through the Internet or information and communication technologies, with malicious intent — such as intimidation, discrimination, hateful suggestions, threats, blackmail, defamation, and similar acts."

The difference between this definition and those found in other scholarly works lies in the fact that it considers cyberbullying as a "threat to security." In other studies, this phenomenon has been treated as a social event, a conflict, misconduct, or pressure within interpersonal relationships.

Research conducted globally — including international studies by the United Nations , the Ministry of Education of South Korea , research across Europe , and studies carried out in Saudi Arabia — indicates that cyberbullying is becoming increasingly widespread among adolescents and is being recognized as a serious threat to the information-psychological security of young people. These studies show that its negative consequences are on the rise.

In today's conflict-ridden era, not only young people, but also humanity are living under the influence of a large amount of information of various content and essence, the cessation of information communication is also perceived by the individual as a psychologically abnormal state and causes mental disorders in the individual's psyche. The fact that information is indicated as the cause of situations associated with the loss of mental peace in psychological consultations indicates the urgency of the process of protecting the information and psychological security of the individual from various threats.

Currently, in many developed countries of the world, special laws are being created to organize measures to combat cyberbullying, that is, to ensure the safety of individuals on the Internet, and there is a need to improve them.

In our republic, in recent years, we have observed an increase in the threat of cyberbullying among adolescents, and cyberbullying causes deep psychological disorders in various areas of the psyche, resulting in consequences of a pedagogical, psychological, and sociological nature. Cyberbullying There have been cases of suicides and crimes committed by young victims . In Uzbekistan, there is a need to establish prevention and diagnostics of cyberbullying, and to organize technical, legal and psychological assistance to participants affected by cyberbullying . After all, each of us feels the power of various influences distributed through the Internet, which threaten the information and psychological security of the youth of Uzbekistan. As President Sh.M. Mirziyoyev noted, "… the nature and scale of modern threats have changed significantly. Ecological and natural disasters, water and food shortages, cyberattacks, new methods of undermining sovereignty and economic stability are growing threats ." The Internet, a global information network, has provided every user with the opportunity to disseminate information, which justifies the necessity of protecting young people from the threats of cyberbullying and developing skills in them to protect themselves from the threats of cyberbullying, and the relevance of the dissertation work.

METHODS

Based on the results of theoretical and practical research on the threat of cyberbullying to the information and psychological security of young people, we studied the factors influencing the emergence of the threat of cyberbullying and classified them at the individual, societal and state levels, and deeply analyzed the psychological factors in them . In particular, the factors at the individual level that cause the threat of cyberbullying are:

• appearance, for example, physical weakness, obesity, visual impairment, speech impairment, etc.;

• negative interpersonal and problem-solving skills;

• negative self-evaluation and low self-esteem;

• positive attitude towards violence;

• weak social skills and low levels of empathy;

• Lack of understanding about the concept of cyberbullying and unawareness of protective coping strategies.

At the societal level, the contributing factors include:

• Parenting styles that are overly restrictive or excessively protective;

• Negative behaviors of parents, authoritarian control, low levels of support, and frequent punishment;

• Incomplete families (e.g., single mothers or fathers);

• Tolerance towards aggressive behavior;

• Passive attitude of victims and lack of problem-solving skills, such as remaining silent;

• Lack of response from society members or active support for aggressors, denial of the existence of cyberbullying;

• Lack of awareness among specialists working with youth regarding the threats and forms of cyberbullying;

• Increasing virtualization of youth life, where online communication has taken a stable place within

the "pyramid of needs."

At the state level, the factors are as follows:

• Underdeveloped legal framework to regulate social relations associated with cyberbullying;

• Absence of a separate legal or declarative definition of cyberbullying, which limits the ability to identify such incidents;

• Lack of specific criteria to classify types of cyberbullying, identify its perpetrators, and procedural standards for providing help to victims;

• Insufficient cooperation between non-governmental, non-profit, and international organizations with state educational institutions in organizing preventive training programs on cyberbullying.

According to the results of the empirical research, the following psychological factors at the individual level were identified as influencing the spread of cyberbullying:

1. Anonymity and the ability to engage in cyberbullying at any time;

2. Problems within the cognitive sphere of an individual's psyche;

3. Specific issues within the emotional-volitional and motivational-need domains of the individual;

4. Behavioral management-related psychological difficulties;

5. Presence of negative communication attitudes and low communicative tolerance scores.

Each Factor Is Driven by Underlying Causes and Social Influences

Each factor contributing to cyberbullying is influenced by specific causes and social environments, which have been studied in depth. Notably:

1. Anonymity and the Ability to Engage in Cyberbullying at Any Time

Today, access to the Internet is nearly universal. Even young children actively use various gadgets and mobile devices, enabling them to distribute content online. Users can communicate across social networks without using their real names, with no time constraints or limitations. The ability to remain anonymous online provides individuals with the opportunity to engage in cyberbullying at any time.

A victim of cyberbullying can suffer 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and may not feel safe even at home. A few keystrokes can expose hundreds or thousands of people to the act of humiliation. Unlike traditional bullying, cyberbullying requires no face-to-face interaction or physical force, making it more convenient for perpetrators and more widespread among both youth and adults.

Moreover, in the upbringing process, parents often try to suppress aggression in children through force or restriction. As a result, unresolved emotional issues can lead to psychological problems, including emotional suppression and the inability to process feelings in a healthy way. These conditions may later prompt individuals to express their aggression anonymously online.

2. Problems in the cognitive sphere of the personality psyche. The lack of competence, culture and legal awareness in young people to use the Internet, ignorance of the existence of penalties for mockery on the Internet, the dissemination of personal information without their consent, and ignorance of the fact that in a certain way it is a violation of the generally recognized rights of a person lead to cyberbullying. There are many such examples. In many cases, those responsible admit that they do not know the legal assessment of this situation. Indeed, there is not enough propaganda about this in school textbooks and social networks. They do not know that the inability to fully understand the situation of a person who is subjected to cyberbullying, as a result of the insult, can lead to a deplorable situation for the victim and his relatives, and even cause the death of the victim, that is, to serious consequences. Insufficient awareness of legal liability criteria and even ignorance of existing ones remain one of the reasons for the widespread spread of cyberbullying. Respondents who participated in the empirical study were asked, "Are you aware that messages (SMS, MMS, videos, broadcasts, etc.) distributed on social networks and messengers with the aim of humiliating, humiliating, insulting and intimidating another person are cyberbullying?" 29.3% answered yes, and 70.7% answered no. Thus, awareness and propaganda work on cybersecurity and cyberbullying prevention is weak.

As part of psychoprophylactic measures, it is advisable to provide youth groups and parents with information on the rules and time of using the Internet, instructions for communicating on social networks, strategies for preventing cyberbullying, booklets, wall newspapers, pictures, handouts with information about cyberbullying, show short films, and place rules and clear instructions in educational institutions. In this regard, it is very important to follow the laws of influencing the mind and give the right instructions to the individual's mind. It is advisable to provide special recommendations in the media for parents to protect their children from the threat of cyberbullying, and to place them in the form of notes in the courtyards of educational institutions.

3. Emotional-Volitional and Motivational Issues in the Individual's Psyche

Adolescents may not fully understand their own or others' emotions, leading them to participate in or spread cyberbullying. From statistical analysis and survey data collected during our research, it became evident that many young people use the Internet without a clear purpose. They go online simply to pass time or for entertainment, which sometimes results in mocking others or sharing harmful videos.

Therefore, it is essential to introduce practical psychology lessons in schools to develop skills such as identification, reflection, empathy, and causal attribution from an early age.

Based on research into how adolescents spend their free time, it was found that many do not manage their time effectively. A lack of supervision or pedagogical guidance leads to motivational and emotional problems. Currently, 18.4% of youth see the Internet as a close friend, 7.4% associate it with sports, 66.8% use it for entertainment, and 7.4% view it as a tool for earning money.

The fact that the Internet serves as a means of recreation for 66.8% of young people indicates a high probability of cyberbullying spreading in the near future. (See Figure 1)
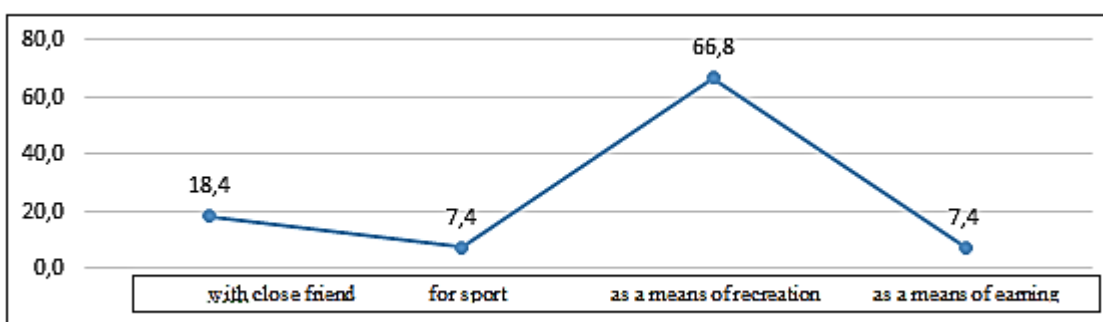

Figure 1. Motivations for using the Internet.

33.4% of young people who participated in the survey said they spend up to 1 hour, 46.4% said they spend up to 2-3 hours on the Internet. 7.9% said they spend 3-5 hours, 9.9% said they spend 5-7 hours, and 2.4% said they spend more than 7 hours continuously on the Internet. Using the Internet for more than 2-3 hours a day creates Internet addiction. As a result of the increase in communication via the Internet, the lack of awareness of cyberbullying increases the risk of committing it and becoming a target of threats. Young people who engage in cyberbullying are more likely to commit its more severe forms of social consequences (cyberstalking, sexting, happy-slepping) in the future.

In particular, according to research by Chinese scientists, playing computer games for a long time leads to a slowdown in brain activity. In particular, the thinking ability, creative potential and ability to control emotions of a person who plays computer games for two hours a day are significantly weaker than those of people who do not play. Experts call this condition the "game brain phenomenon". According to the results of an electroencephalogram examination conducted by Chinese scientists on 240 men and women aged 6 to 29 using the latest technology, the brain of a person who plays computer games for a long time is significantly different from the human brain in a

normal state. Such people often have damage to the activity of the forebrain. 20 percent of the test participants were engaged in computer games for more than two hours a day, and in all of them the forebrain appeared to be inactive. Experts have called such a "head" "gaming brain", and in about 40 percent of the subjects, the activity of the forebrain was observed to be slowed down. Scientists have called this state of the brain "half-gaming brain". The characteristic features of the owner of a "gaming brain" can be seen in the appearance of signs of severe fatigue in facial expressions, inability to concentrate, memory impairment, decreased ability to read, understand and write, lack of interest in society and the lives of others, indifference to events and lack of personal opinion, inability to control mood and quick temper . It is known from medicine that the forebrain is "responsible" for a person's creative abilities, thinking, as well as controlling emotions. Damage to this function in the brain and the inability to control mood can lead to cyberaggression. In order to prevent negative consequences, it is advisable to limit the duration of online gaming and use by young people to less than 2 hours, or more precisely, half an hour.

4. The presence of specific problems in the field of behavior control of the individual psyche is one of the

factors of cyberbullying. In particular, according to the results of theoretical and practical studies of this factor, it was observed that aggressive behavior formed in childhood, as a character trait, is preserved in the later stages of ontogenesis. In general, aggression exists in a person as an instinctive behavior aimed at self-defense and the struggle for survival, and the relationship between different positions of bullying participants and indicators of aggressive behavior was studied. From the table below, we can see that when the participant who initiated bullying showed a positive correlation in the value of increased aggression (p=0.135: r<0.05). Olweus (2006), in his

review of Scheithauer risk factors, emphasizes that the initiator, the one who starts the bullying, engages in intimidating, hitting, excluding others from activities, and spreading rumors.

It can be seen that there is a negative correlation between the level of confidence in the value between the defender scale and the indirect aggression scale (p=-0.127: p<0.05), between the anger scale and the verbal aggression scale (p=-0.125: p<0.05) (p=-0.166: p<0.01). That is, participants with low levels of indirect aggression , verbal aggression, and anger are more likely to participate in the defender role. (See Table 1).

Table 1

Correlation between different positions of bullying participants and indicators of aggressive behavior (Spearman test, n=350)

Correlation								
	Physical aggression	**Indirectly aggression**	**Anger**	**Negative relationship**	**Alamzadeh**	**Suspicion**	**Verbal aggression**	**Guilt heat**
Initiator	0 .075	- 0.030	**0.135** *	0 .012	0.025	0 .103	0 .011	- 0.045
Assistant	0 .043	0 .064	0 .064	- 0.032	0 .024	- 0.031	- 0.005	0 .072
Defender	- 0.031	**- 0.127** *	**- 0.125** *	- 0.020	0 .031	- 0.007	**- 0.166** **	- 0.005
Sacrifice	0 .052	0 .058	- 0.025	0 .004	0 .053	**0.118** *	0 .051	0 .071
Observer	0 .020	- 0.090	- 0.016	0 .046	- 0.018	0.017	- 0.016	**- 0.132** *

**. Correlation reliability level at 0.01 value . r < 0.01

*. Correlation reliability level at 0.05 value . r < 0.05

There is a negative correlation between the observer scale and the guilt scale (p=-0.132: p<0.05) in the level of confidence in the value. This shows that the feeling of guilt decreases in individuals participating in the role of observers during bullying. Unexpressed, forbidden emotions that arise in communicative relationships in adolescents, and the failure to eliminate conflictogens in a timely manner, can be interpreted as one of the causes of aggression. With age or through systematic education and practical psychological training, they learn to control their aggressive behavior or not to reveal it to others.

Today, in cyberbullying groups, individuals who are addicted to the Internet may experience a state of "collective unconsciousness" and commit severe forms of cyberbullying under the influence of the "online disinhibition" effect (loss of inhibitory control in the brain). In this case, a person may engage in cyberbullying "just for fun" or under the influence of the "online disinhibition" mentioned above. The "online disinhibition" effect applies to all three situations, that is, it can cause specific problems in the cognitive sphere of the individual's psyche, in the emotional and need-motivational sphere, and in the sphere of behavior

management. Or, conversely, problems in these spheres can cause the "online disinhibition" effect.

the "Bullying System" and the " Victim Behavior Propensity Study" methodology conducted on the subjects was analyzed (see Table 2).

Table 2

Correlation between different positions of bullying participants and symptoms of victim behavior (Spearman test, n=350)

Correlation							
	Answers social ability	**Aggressive category of victim**	**Active category of victim**	**The initiator category of the victim**	**Weak category of victim**	**The victim's in - laws not to be category**	**Implement increased victimhood**
Initiator	- 0.071	0 .077	0.007	- 0.006	- 0.093	**- 0.126** *	- 0.026
Assistant	- 0.036	**0 .140** **	**0 .151** **	0.025	**0 .208** **	- 0.021	**0 .178** **
Defender	**0 .154** **	- 0.006	- 0.090	0.065	- 0.005	- 0.050	0 , 1 69
Sacrifice	- 0.029	- 0.094	- 0.071	- 0.051	0 .004	0.009	0.035
Observer	0 .008	**0.121** *	- 0.006	- 0.024	0.017	0 .081	0 .095

**. Correlation reliability level at 0.01 value . r < 0.01

*. Correlation reliability level at 0.05 value . r < 0.05

Initiator scale and victim non-crisis There is a negative correlation between the scales of the category (p=-0.126: p<0.05). This indicator indicates a decrease in the tendency to non-crisis behavior in a person in the initiator position of bullying. In individuals of the non-crisis category of the victim at the norm level, a tendency to drink alcohol, indecisiveness in dating, gullibility, indifference, along with these traits, one can see the presence of fragile moral principles that reinforce the lack of personal experience or its neglect. Such individuals tend to idealize people, justify the negative behavior of others, and do not perceive danger. There is a positive correlation between the scale of the helper and the category of the victim of aggression (p=0.140: p<0.01). The category of victim-aggressive includes those who are prone to getting into unpleasant and life-threatening situations as a result of their aggression in the form of provocative behavior (insults, slander, ridicule, etc.) to a high degree . Intentional creation or incitement of a conflict situation is inherent in their nature. There is a positive

correlation between the scale of the helper and the active category of the victim (p=0.151: p<0.01). Selfless, socially approved and often expected behavior is characteristic of the active category of the victim . This includes individuals who are subject to criminal actions of the aggressor due to their positive behavior. Such people demonstrate positive behavior in conflict situations, constantly, sometimes due to their official position or as a result of the expectations of others. This type of person considers it unacceptable to remain indifferent to the conflict, even if it means losing their health or life. The consequences of such actions are not always understood. They are courageous, determined, vigilant, principled, sincere, kind, demanding, ready to take risks, and excessively self-centered. They cannot tolerate the actions of those who disrupt public order. They often overestimate themselves. They are individuals with positive motives in their behavior between the helper scale and the weak category of the victim (p=0.208: p<0.01). This type includes individuals who do not resist, do not resist the offender for various reasons. In particular, age, physical weakness,

helplessness, cowardice, fear of responsibility for their illegal or immoral actions. Such individuals are characterized by a tendency to dependent behavior, obedience, justifying the aggression of others, and forgiving everyone.

Auxiliary scale and Positive correlations between the implemented victimization scale (p=0.178: p<0.01) indicate that this type of victim behavior is present in participants in the supporting position in bullying. There are positive correlations between the defender scale and the social acceptability of responses scales (p=0.154: p<0.01). This indicator emphasizes the characteristics characteristic of the defender. In particular, the positive and close (p=0.154: p=0.169) indicators of the social acceptability of responses and the implemented victimization scales meet the requirements of the lie scale. After all, the defender is

characterized by the following behaviors: he supports the victim, calms down, encourages, and tries to stop the violence.

the observer scale and the victim's aggression category scales (p=.121: p<0.05). This indicator justifies the possibility that the participant in the observer position may have an increased tendency to low-level aggressive behavior . People in the subnormal aggressive behavior category are characterized by a decrease in motivation for success, a high frequency of sudden events, good self-control, a desire to comply with accepted norms and rules, stability in maintaining attitudes, interests and goals, as well as quick to get upset.

5. The presence of negative communicative attitudes, which give low indicators of communicative tolerance. The relationship between bullying participants and communicative attitudes was examined. (See Table 3).

Table 3

The relationship between different positions of bullying participants and the level of communicative tolerance (Spearman test, n=350)

	Correlation								
	The rest of you individuality understanding	Seeing oneself as a benchmark in assessing people's individual	In the evaluation determination and conservatism	To mitigate or hide unpleasant feelings that arise from lack of	The desire to recreate a partner and re-educate	The desire to adapt to the partner, to make him more	Not knowing how to forgive mistakes that cause inconvenience and	Inability to tolerate physical or mental discomfort from one's partner	Inability to adapt to the character, habits, attitudes, or aspirations of others
Initiator	-0.078	-0.013	**0.113** *	0.047	-0.032	0.02	0.031	0.027	0.045
Assistant	-0.093	**- 0.154** **	-0.042	-0.008	-0.055	-0.079	-0.014	-0.012	**- 0.113** *
Defender	-0.029	0.084	-0.027	-0.008	-0.036	**0.113** *	-0.093	**- 0.172** **	0.061
Sacrifice	0.073	0.066	0.091	-0.092	0.088	0.03	-0.07	-0.053	-0.013
Observer	-0.028	0.043	-0.067	-0.1	**- 0.112** *	0.002	**- 0.144** **	-0.099	-0.071

**. Correlation reliability level at 0.01 value . r < 0.01

*. Correlation reliability level at 0.05 value . r < 0.05

A negative correlation has been found between the

Initiator scale and the Rigidity and Conservatism in Evaluation scale (p = -0.113; p < 0.05). For the initiator,

the tendency to regulate the expression of individuality by others increases, as does the demand for uniformity that aligns with their internal world. This is particularly reflected in criticism toward external characteristics such as appearance, nationality, gender, and profession.

A negative correlation was also found between the Helper scale and the Self-as-Standard scale (p = -0.154; p < 0.01). Indeed, those in the role of a bullying accomplice demonstrate a lower tendency to see themselves as a standard and find it difficult to adapt to others' personalities, habits, attitudes, or aspirations. Therefore, they are more likely to submit to the demands of a stronger participant, namely the initiator. Moreover, a negative correlation (p = -0.113; p < 0.05) was also recorded between the Helper scale and the Inability to Adapt to Others' Traits and Aspirations scale.

There is a negative correlation between the Defender scale and the Inability to Tolerate a Partner's Physical or Psychological Discomfort scale (p = -0.172; p < 0.01). This trait is more pronounced in individuals adopting the defender position, meaning that the defender is motivated to protect the victim precisely because they cannot tolerate the victim's vulnerability. A positive correlation (p = -0.113; p < 0.05) is observed between the Defender scale and the Desire to Adapt the Partner to Oneself scale, where the defender, driven by a desire to help the victim, tries to adapt the victim's attitudes to their own.

A negative correlation has been found between the Observer scale and the Desire to Adapt the Partner to Oneself scale (p = -0.112; p < 0.05), as well as between the Observer scale and the Inability to Forgive Mistakes that Caused Problems scale (p = -0.144; p < 0.01). This suggests that participants who take the observer position in bullying are less likely to desire to adapt others to themselves or to forgive mistakes that caused the problem. This is reflected in thinking patterns such as, "The victim is to blame."

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis of the psychological factors affecting the system of protecting youth from cyberbullying threats, it can be concluded that cognitive issues within an individual—especially adolescents' lack of awareness about the concept of cyberbullying, motivational deviations in internet use, difficulties in behavioral regulation, and unresolved negative communication attitudes in interpersonal interactions—all contribute to the widespread prevalence of cyberbullying threats among young people.

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