The effect of Instagram posts` Cyberbullying on Passive aggression of Egyptian youth

Social Learning Theory

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Introduction

The paper titled "The Effect of Instagram Posts' Cyberbullying on Passive Aggression of Egyptian Youth: Social Learning Theory" examines the relationship between cyberbullying on Instagram and the passive aggression exhibited by Egyptian youth. This research study aims to shed light on the impact of cyberbullying on the mental well-being of young individuals, particularly in the context of Egypt. The paper begins with a literature review that delves into the concept of cyberbullying, its various forms, and the detrimental effects it can have on victims, including depression and even suicidal thoughts. The review also explores the prevalence of depression and its symptoms, emphasizing the need for awareness, support, and education to address this critical mental health issue. Drawing upon the Social Learning Theory, the paper proposes that youth can learn aggressive behaviors through observation and imitation. It suggests that exposure to cyberbullying on Instagram can influence the passive aggression displayed by Egyptian youth, leading to a range of negative consequences. To test this hypothesis, the paper describes the research methodology, which employs a quantitative approach and utilizes a survey distributed through Google Forms. The survey collects data from Egyptian university students, focusing on their experiences with Instagram, cyberbullying, and passive aggression. The results of the survey are then analyzed and presented to provide insights into the hypothesized relationship. The paper concludes by discussing the implications of the study's findings and its limitations. It also offers recommendations for future research, including the need for further understanding of the targeted age group, exploration of Instagram's policies on bullying, and the importance of raising awareness about the detrimental effects of cyberbullying on mental health. Overall, this paper aims to contribute to the existing body of knowledge on the effect of cyberbullying on passive aggression among Egyptian youth and emphasize the need for proactive measures to address this issue. By better understanding the relationship between cyberbullying and its impact, researchers, educators, and policymakers can work together to create a safer online environment and promote mental well-being among young individuals.

Literature review

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is harassing, intimidating, or harming people via electronic communication, including online forums, text messages, emails, and social media platforms. It entails using technology to shame, degrade, disseminate rumours, intimidate, or threaten people or organizations. Cyberbullying may take many forms, such as sending harsh messages or remarks, posting humiliating images or videos without permission, disseminating false information, fabricating identities, or banning someone from online networks or organizations. Cyberbullying is distinguished by its anonymity and potential for a considerable audience, among other things. Bullies might conceal themselves behind anonymous accounts or fictitious identities, making it challenging for victims to recognize or confront them. In addition, the viral nature of internet information makes it possible for offensive remarks or pictures to spread quickly, reaching a large audience harming the victim's reputation, and causing them great mental pain. Cyberbullying can have serious, long-lasting effects. Victims' emotional and psychological damage may include melancholy, anxiety, low self-esteem, suicidal thoughts, and depression (Patchin & Hinduja, 2015).

Suicide

.It is a complicated issue with many underlying causes, such as mental health concerns, social isolation, personal crises, and other problems contributing to its development. *Suicide* is a major global public health issue affecting the victim and their family, friends, and community. A comprehensive strategy that incorporates community support, early intervention, accessible mental health services, and mental

health awareness is needed to prevent suicide. It can be easier to spot those in danger by recognizing risk factors and warning signals, such as expressing feelings of helplessness, withdrawing from social interactions, giving away goods, or broaching the subject of death (*The Definition of Suicide on JSTOR*, n.d.).

Depression

An array of physical and emotional symptoms, including persistent feelings of melancholy, a lack of interest in or enjoyment from activities, and depression, are some of the most frequent mental health disorders. It influences millions of individuals globally and may significantly disrupt everyday life and general well-being. A person with depression experiences more than just sadness or difficult times. It is a complicated disorder that may be brought on by a confluence of biological, psychological, environmental, and hereditary variables. A persistently low mood, lack of energy, changes in eating and sleep habits, trouble focusing, feelings of worthlessness or guilt, and thoughts of self-harm or suicide are all common signs of depression. It recognizes that depression is a genuine and severe disorder and that getting care from a specialist is essential. Helping people with depression also requires supporting them from family and friends, fostering a supportive atmosphere, and advocating for mental health awareness and education (Angst & Dobler-Mikola, 1984).

A complex and troubling topic is the link between cyberbullying, depression, and suicide. Even though not all instances of cyberbullying result in depression or suicide, there is evidence to support a strong association between these two issues. Cyberbullying can significantly impact a person's psychological and emotional health. Depression can be exacerbated by the constant bullying, humiliation, and social isolation victims endure. Cyberbullying has harmful repercussions beyond the

internet and affects a person's everyday life and sense of self. Continuously receiving offensive remarks and online criticism can undermine self-worth, foster feelings of worthlessness, and intensify already present emotional vulnerabilities.

Consequently, depression might make someone more vulnerable to suicidal thoughts and actions. A person's vision of their situation may be distorted by the extreme melancholy, hopelessness, and despair that come with depression, leading them to believe that suicide is a viable option for easing their suffering. Cyberbullying and depression can interact destructively since the constant online abuse worsens the mental pain and increases the likelihood of self-harm or suicide (Martínez-Monteagudo et al., 2020).

Instagram cyberbullying frequently consists of passive-aggressive aspects. Passive aggressiveness is a pattern of behaviour in which people show hatred, rage, or other unpleasant emotions without confronting the problem. Passive hostility may take many different forms regarding cyberbullying on Instagram. The use of covert or veiled insults, caustic remarks, or backhanded compliments is a typical example of passive-aggressive cyberbullying on Instagram. Individuals may use passive-aggressive strategies to insult or disparage people without attacking them while maintaining a facade of innocence or credible denial. This may be accomplished by writing thoughtful captions, insightful remarks, or even private direct messages. The practice of social exclusion or manipulation is another example of passive-aggressive behaviour on Instagram. This may be purposely excluding someone from group interactions or chats, disregarding their postings or remarks, or committing covert social sabotage. Using these techniques, cyberbullies can cause emotional injury to their victim while being passive and non-aggressive.

On Instagram, indirect rumour, gossip-, or false-information-spreading is another sort of passive-aggressive cyberbullying. Cyberbullies may purposefully distribute or comment on information that indirectly targets the victim rather than overtly criticizing them, damaging their reputation, or giving them emotional pain, and recognizing that passive-aggressive cyberbullying may be just as damaging and damaging as more overt kinds of hostility is vital. (Schultze-Krumbholz et al., 2018).

Theoretical Framework

Albert Bandura created the Social Learning Theory, a psychological paradigm that strongly emphasizes the value of peer observation and imitation in the learning process. This idea claims that people learn new behaviours, attitudes, and emotional reactions through observation, imitation, and the results of their activities. It implies that learning can occur through vicarious experiences and direct personal experiences.

The Social Learning Theory makes several underlying presumptions concerning human behaviour:

1. Observational learning: People learn by seeing how others behave. By seeing how others behave and taking note of the results, they can pick up new information and abilities.
2. Modelling: People are more prone to copy behaviour that they find enjoyable, practical, or relevant to their objectives. Additionally, kids are more inclined to emulate the actions of people they look up to or who act positively.
3. Reinforcement: Behaviour's repercussions affect its propensity to be repeated. People are more inclined to emulate or steer clear of certain behaviours if they see them being rewarded or penalized for them.

4. Self-Efficacy: People's attitudes toward their capacity to carry out a specific behaviour impact their behaviour. Greater motivation and perseverance in learning and behaviour modification correlate with higher self-efficacy levels.

Now to examine the connection between the social learning theory and the effect of cyberbullying on Instagram on kids in Egypt who exhibit passive aggression, Instagram cyberbullying is the term for using the social networking site Instagram to harass, threaten, or degrade other people. Indirect and non-confrontational manifestations of animosity or rage are called passive aggression. The following ways in which these behaviours relate to the Social Learning Theory:

1. Observational learning: Instagram users in Egypt may see examples of cyberbullying, such as offensive remarks, rumours being circulated, or the uploading of offensive content. They could pick up these hostile behaviours through observation and imitate them.

2. Role modelling: If influential or well-known Instagram users participate in cyberbullying, Egyptian adolescents may view them as role models and be more prone to replicate such behaviours.

3. Positive reinforcement: The results of cyberbullying, such as attention, social status, or dominance, can be a positive reward for people who engage in such behaviours. Seeing these effects may make it more likely for people to copy cyberbullying behaviour.

4. Self-Efficacy: Instagram cyberbullying exposure may affect Egyptian youths' perceptions of their self-efficacy. They could feel more self-sufficient to engage in

such behaviours if they see others effectively participating in cyberbullying without suffering negative consequences.

In conclusion, the social learning theory proposes that Egyptian adolescents may acquire and mimic cyberbullying behaviours via observation, modelling, reinforcement, and the growth of self-efficacy. This hypothesis offers a framework for comprehending the possible effects of exposure to Instagram cyberbullying on Egyptian youth's passive aggressiveness.

<u>Hypothesis</u>

H1: If youth get exposed to cyberbullying, then the higher suicide rates are.

H2: The more cyberbullying is being dealt with, the more exposure to high depression rates

H3: The exposure to Instagram cyberbullying posts leads to passive aggressiveness

<u>IV:</u> Instagram posts cyberbullying

<u>DV:</u> Passive aggression behaviour

Operational definitions

Instagram Cyberbullying

Instagram cyberbullying is harassing, intimidating, or physically or mentally harming someone via the social networking site Instagram. It involves using several digital techniques, including making disparaging comments online, sending obscene or threatening messages, starting rumours, distributing humiliating images or videos, setting up phone accounts to humiliate or impersonate individuals, and inciting others to engage in bullying. The victim of cyberbullying on Instagram may experience serious repercussions, such as fear, worry, sadness, and low self-esteem. Due to the possibility of the bullying behaviour being public and even going viral, it can also affect their personal and social lives. Additionally, victims of cyberbullying may find it challenging to escape the damaging effects of the behaviour due to the permanence of online postings.

Self-harm

Self-injury, sometimes called self-harm, describes intentional actions of causing bodily hurt or injury to oneself. In most cases, it serves as a coping technique or a means for people to deal with emotional anguish, intense emotions, or sadness that they may find challenging to express or manage in other ways.

Self-harming behaviours might include cutting, burning, scraping, beating, or purposely inflicting wounds or bruises. These behaviours are not intended to be suicide attempts but rather to temporarily escape from or find solace from mental distress. Some people may self-harm covertly, while others may show their wounds to others as a cry for help or a means to express their inner agony.

Physical Harm

Self-harm is causing direct physical harm to one's body to inflict discomfort, release pent-up emotions, or evoke a specific emotional reaction.

Self-harm is frequently linked to underlying mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, borderline personality disorder, or problems stemming from traumatic experiences. Understanding that self-harm is a significant problem and indicates that someone is experiencing severe mental distress and may need professional support and assistance.

Seeking help from a mental health professional, counsellor, or other healthcare experts who can offer appropriate direction, treatment, and support is essential if you or someone you know is self-harming.

Passive-aggressive behaviour

A series of hidden, subtle, or passively hostile acts or attitudes that people use to show their negative emotions, rage, or resistance is known as passive-aggressive behaviour. Passive-aggressive people may use various strategies to convey their annoyance or unhappiness indirectly and frequently non-confrontational rather than directly facing or addressing the problems or conflicts they are feeling.

The following are typical instances of passive-aggressive behaviour:

1. Procrastination: Intentionally putting off or putting off work or obligations as a strategy to show displeasure or opposition.

2. Sarcasm and Backhanded Compliments: Making jokes or compliments with undertones of criticism or criticism.

3. Silent Treatment: Avoiding eye contact or refusing to communicate as a measure of punishment or control.

4. Indirect Blaming: Passing the buck or assigning blame without explicitly addressing the problem.

5. Indirect sabotage: Taking actions that undercut or interfere with processes without blatantly acknowledging them.

6. Withholding Information: Will-fully withhold crucial information or specifics from others to frustrate or confuse them.

7. Subtly Expressing wrath: Using passive-aggressive messages, gestures, or facial expressions to indicate wrath or hate subtly.

Relationships, workplaces, and other social contexts can become tense, confusing, and frustrating due to passive-aggressive behaviour. It frequently results from a wish to stay out of trouble or from a fear of confrontations. Assertiveness, conflict resolution techniques, and open and honest communication are frequently used to address passive-aggressive behaviour.

Indirect communication

The term "indirect communication" describes a form of communication in which people convey their ideas, emotions, or intentions without being overtly obvious or direct. It delivers messages subtly through clues, nonverbal signals, or ambiguous language, frequently leaving the intended meaning open to interpretation or necessitating the audience to draw that conclusion.

In order to express their ideas or wants, people may use context, tone of voice, body language, or inferred messaging. They may refrain from making direct remarks or engaging in conflicts for various reasons, such as cultural conventions, a fear of

conflict, a desire to preserve peace, or a conviction that the receiver should understand without specific communication.

Indirect communication examples include:

1. Hinting: Subtle hints or recommendations instead of outright requests or requests for something.

2. Nonverbal Cues: Expressing meaning or emotions nonverbally, such as through facial expressions, body language, or gestures.

3. Sarcasm: Indirectly expressing criticism or disapproval through irony, mocking, or funny remarks.

4. Using the passive voice results in less direct accountability or action by obscuring the topic of the statement.

5. Asking questions that indicate a need or want without clarifying the inquiry.

6. Giving comments or criticism in a circumstantial manner as opposed to directly addressing the problem.

Direct communication often results in misconceptions or confusion since the listener may need help understanding the intended message. When analysing indirect communication, it is critical to understand the cultural setting and individual communication preferences. Clarity and understanding may increase in interpersonal and professional situations by promoting open and straightforward communication.

Research Type:

The quantitative research approach is primarily concerned with the collection and analysis of data in a numerical format. The primary objective of this type of research is to develop robust measurements for the statistics being examined. This approach is characterized by its emphasis on numerical data, the quantification and measurement of this data, and the

evaluation of the results through statistical analysis, as noted by (Watson, 2015). Furthermore, this method is particularly useful for studying and understanding specific individuals or norms within a community or group. It provides a means to comprehend these elements through the use of numerical data and statistical results. By employing this approach, researchers can gain a more objective and quantifiable understanding of the phenomena under study. This can be particularly beneficial when attempting to identify patterns, trends, or correlations within the data, which can then be used to make predictions or inform decision-making processes.

In essence, quantitative research offers a systematic and structured way to gather and interpret numerical data, providing a solid foundation for making informed conclusions about the subjects of study. It's a powerful tool for researchers aiming to gain a comprehensive understanding of specific aspects within a community or group, using figures and statistics to present their findings.

Method of data collection: Data collection for this study will be conducted through a survey. As noted by F Scheuren in 2004, the primary function of a survey is to gather data from a specific group or sample population. This data can then be used to measure or analyze any aspect of interest related to that group.

The choice to use a survey as the primary data collection method was made for its simplicity and convenience. Surveys provide an efficient way to reach out to the individuals whose input is needed for the study. They allow for the collection of data from a large number of people in a relatively short amount of time, and they can be easily distributed to the target population.

In this case, the survey will be directly handed to the individuals from whom the information is required. This method ensures that the right people are answering the questions about the

groups under study. It also allows for a more controlled distribution and collection process, ensuring that the data gathered is as accurate and relevant as possible.

In essence, the use of a survey in this study is not only a practical choice but also a strategic one. It facilitates the efficient collection of data, while also ensuring that the information gathered is directly relevant to the research questions at hand.

Method of gathering data: Data for this study will be collected through an online survey, specifically using Google Forms. The survey will be disseminated through various, WhatsApp and Instagram stories

Online surveys offer several advantages over traditional paper-based surveys. As highlighted by Taylor and Francis in 2006, online surveys streamline the process of data collection, making it quicker and more straightforward. Instead of waiting for respondents to fill out and return paper forms, online surveys allow for immediate responses that can be easily compiled and analyzed. Moreover, the use of popular social media platforms for distribution enhances the reach of the survey, potentially attracting a wider and more diverse group of respondents. This method of distribution also allows for easy sharing and forwarding of the survey, further increasing its reach. In addition, online surveys reduce the potential for data entry errors that can occur with manual input from paper surveys. They also offer the convenience of participating at a time and place that suits the respondent, which can lead to higher response rates. In essence, the use of an online survey via Google Forms and its distribution through WhatsApp, and Instagram stories, combines the power of digital technology and social media to facilitate efficient and effective data collection for this study.

Population: Egyptian university students from October University for Modern Sciences & Arts, Ain Shams University and Arab Academy for Science, Technology and Maritime Transport University (ASST).

Sample type: non-probability purposive sampling is a sort of sampling strategy in which participants are chosen based on the researcher's knowledge and judgment about the population. When a select fraction of the population contains the features or experiences relevant to the study issue, this approach is frequently utilized. Purposive sampling relies heavily on the researcher's competence in selecting participants. The researcher must grasp the goal of the study as well as the types of knowledge and experiences that participants should have in order to offer useful data. This strategy is especially beneficial when participants must satisfy specified requirements or when the researcher is searching for a specific perspective.

Sample size: 50 to 100 respondents to fill the survey.

This survey is made for academic purposes which is testing the hypothesis made on the topic of the effect of Instagram cyberbullying on passive aggressive behavior and it`s side effects.
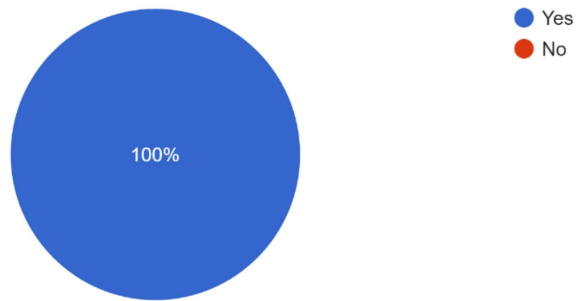
Method of application: Google Forms survey

Results

H1: If more youth get exposed to cyberbullying, then the higher suicide rates are.

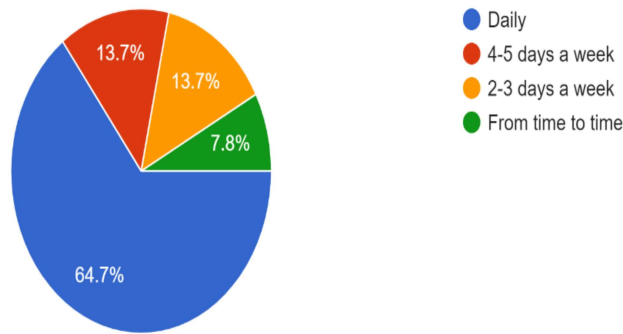**Figure one:**

Do you use Instagram?

51 responses

100% of the respondents which are 51 answered that they use Instagram

Figure two:

How often do you use Instagram?
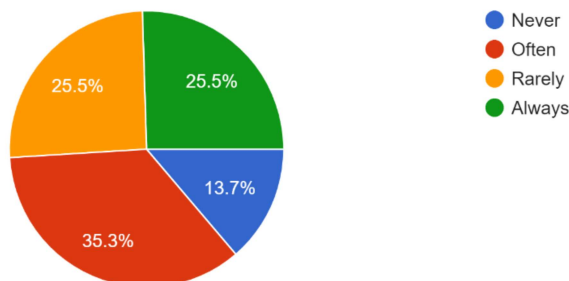51 responses

About 64.7% which are 33 of the respondents answered that use Instagram daily, 13.7% which are 7 of the respondents answered that they use Instagram 4-5 days a week, 13.7% which are 7 of the respondents answered that use Instagram 2-3 days a week and 7.8% which are 4 of the respondents answered that use Instagram from time to time.

Figure three:

How frequently do you witness cyberbullying on Instagram?
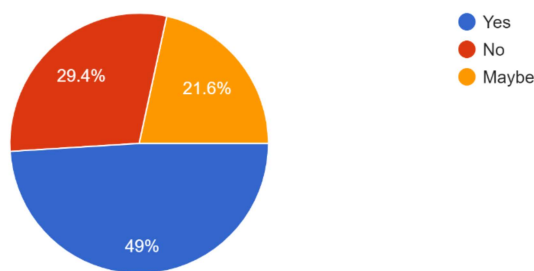51 responses

About 35.3% which are 18 of the respondents answered that they witness Instagram cyberbullying often, 25.5% which are 13 of the respondents answered that they witness Instagram cyberbullying always and 13.7% which are 7 of the respondents answered that they never witness Instagram cyberbullying.

H2: The more the exposure to cyberbullying, the more exposure to high depression rates

Figure four:

Did you ever find yourself or someone you know a victim to cyberbullying?
51 responses

- Yes
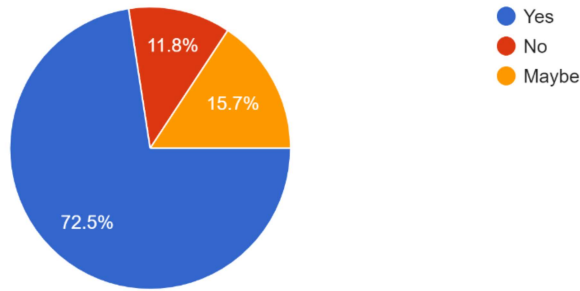- No
- Maybe

29.4% 21.6% 49%

Around 49% which are 25 of the respondents answered that they experienced Instagram cyberbullying, 29.4% which are 15 of the respondents answered that they never experienced Instagram cyberbullying and 21.6% 49% which are 25 of the respondents answered that they may have experienced Instagram cyberbullying.

Figure five:

If yes, have you been bothered by any of the following problems after
36 responses

Little interest or pleasure in doi…	—12 (33.3%)
Feeling down, depressed, or h…	—12 (33.3%)
Trouble falling or staying aslee…	—9 (25%)
Feeling tired or having little ene…	—10 (27.8%)
Poor appetite or overeating	—13 (36.1%)
Feeling bad about yourself	—19 (52.8%)
Trouble concentrating on things	—9 (25%)
Thoughts that you would be bet…	—10 (27.8%)
being so fidgety or restless or b…	—11 (30.6%)

0   5   10   15   20

The questions above are a depression scale questions and the answers show that 51 of the respondents suffer from different levels of depression after they have experienced cyberbullying

H3: The exposure to Instagram cyberbullying posts leads to passive

Figure six:

Have you ever felt angry or aggressive after witnessing or experiencing cyberbullying on Instagram?
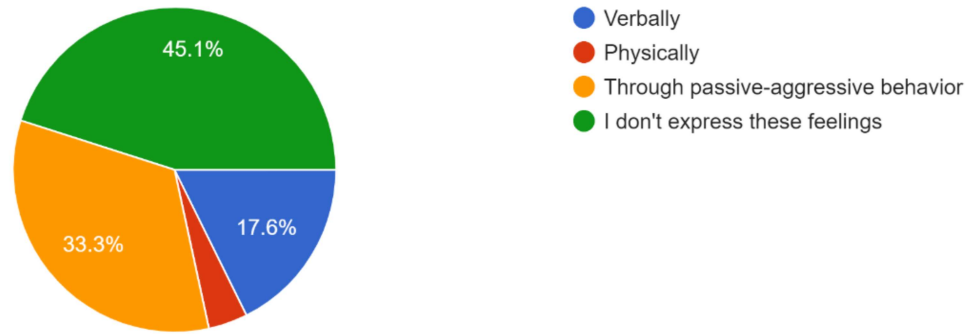51 responses

Around 72% which are 37 of the respondents answered that they felt angry after experiencing Instagram cyberbullying, 15.7% which are 8 of the respondents answered that they may have been mad after experiencing Instagram cyberbullying and 11.8% which are 6 of the respondents answered that they have not been mad after having experienced Instagram cyberbullying.

Figure seven:

If yes, how do you usually express these feelings of anger or aggression?
51 responses

Around 45.1% which are 45 of the respondents answered that they don`t express their feelings after experiencing Instagram cyberbullying, 33.3% which are 17 of the respondents answered that they express their feelings through passive aggressive behaviour after experiencing Instagram cyberbullying, 17.6% which are 9 of the respondents answered that they don`t express their feelings after they have experienced Instagram cyberbullying and only 3,9% which are 2 of the respondents answered that they express their feelings verbally after they have experienced Instagram cyberbullying.

Figure eight:

Do you believe that experiencing or witnessing cyberbullying on Instagram can lead to increased passive-aggressive behavior?

51 responses
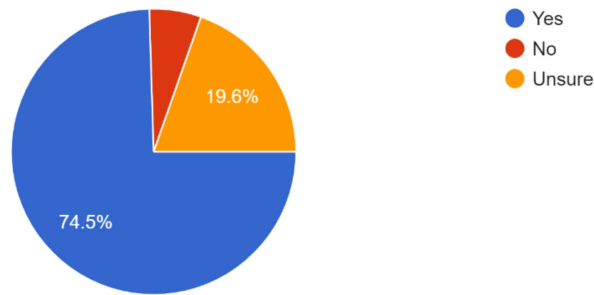
Around 74.5% which are 38 of the respondents answered that Instagram cyberbullying leads to increased passive aggressive behaviour, 19.6% which are 10 of the respondents answered that they unsure if leads to increased passive aggressive behaviour and 5.9% which are 3 of the respondents answered that they don`t think Instagram cyberbullying leads to increased passive aggressive behaviour.

Figure nine:

Have you ever participated in cyberbullying on Instagram, even if it was a one-time incident?
51 responses

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

76.5% 11.8% 11.8%
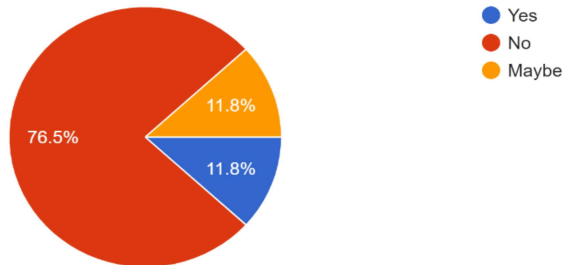
About 76.5% which are 39 of the respondents answered that they did not participate in Instagram cyberbullying, 11.8% which are 6 of the respondents answered that they have participated in Instagram cyberbullying and 11.8% which are 6 of the respondents answered that they may have participated in Instagram cyberbullying.

If yes, what led you to participate in cyberbullying?
6 responses

| Arragonce |
| no |
| It was on a child |
| being bullied by the same person |
| Being bullied first by the same person |
| being bullied in real life and on instagram |

Figure ten:

For those who voted that they have participated in Instagram cyberbullying they were asked why and 3 out of the 6 answered that they have been bullied by that person first, one answered that they did it out of arrogance and one stated they bullied a child.

Conclusion

The results of the survey support the hypotheses that were proposed. The findings indicate that a significant number of youth are exposed to cyberbullying on Instagram, with some experiencing it frequently. This exposure to cyberbullying is strongly associated with negative psychological outcomes such as depression. The survey revealed that all respondents suffer from different levels of depression after experiencing cyberbullying, indicating the harmful effects of this behavior.

Furthermore, the survey suggests that experiencing Instagram cyberbullying can lead to increased levels of passive-aggressive behavior. The majority of respondents reported feeling angry after experiencing cyberbullying and expressed their feelings through passive-aggressive behavior. This demonstrates the negative impact that cyberbullying can have on the emotional well-being and behavior of individuals.

These findings highlight the urgent need for effective measures to prevent and address cyberbullying on Instagram. It is crucial for parents, educators, and social media platforms to work together to raise awareness about the issue and promote strategies for coping with cyberbullying. This may include implementing stronger policies and regulations to address cyberbullying, providing support and resources for victims, and fostering a culture of respect and empathy online.

Future research should focus on understanding the specific experiences and perspectives of Egyptian youth regarding Instagram cyberbullying, as well as exploring intervention strategies to mitigate its negative effects. By addressing cyberbullying effectively, we can create safer and healthier online environments for young people, promoting their overall well-being and mental health.

Recommendation

The next researcher who will use this study as a reference must gather more information on the selected age group which in our case are the youth and how they react with Instagram. The researcher may need to talk to a therapist to ask about the estimated numbers or cases who suffered and still suffer from depression because of cyberbullying. The researcher may research Instagram policies and regulations especially when it comes to rules regarding bullying and how they handle those cases. The researcher needs to look up the awareness campaigns done to raise awareness to this topic and assist how much it affects teenagers.

Limitations

Some of the limitations faced is that the course was taken during the summer so the duration of the course is not the same as taking the course in the regular semester. Finding and gathering respondents for the survey was hard and a restriction for the last phase. Not all the respondents understood the topic or answered accurately. Working on two courses and two projects at the same time made the concentration on this paper 70% not a 100%.

Future studies

For future studies it is recommend to give the research more time and concentration, putting a plan to raise awareness alongside the research, researching the population and sample more to specify the characteristics of the targeted group and how to reach and understand them and picking a bigger variety of choices for the survey. The researcher will need to work on the missing points in this paper.

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