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EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND ATTITUDES TOWARD CYBERBULLYING: A PSYCHOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

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Introduction

In the modern digital era, the internet and social media have become essential parts of everyday life, especially among young people. Technological development has created many opportunities for communication, education, and entertainment. However, together with these positive aspects, the number of psychological problems in virtual environments has also increased significantly. One of the most serious issues is cyberbullying, which involves insulting, threatening, humiliating, or psychologically pressuring individuals through electronic platforms such as social networks, messengers, and online communities [1: 12].

Unlike traditional bullying, cyberbullying can occur anonymously, spread rapidly, and continue continuously without time or location limits. Victims often experience depression, anxiety, stress, social isolation, and decreased self-esteem [2: 45]. Adolescents are particularly vulnerable because their emotional systems are not yet fully developed, making them more sensitive to criticism and humiliation in online spaces [3: 67].

Psychological studies indicate that emotional intelligence plays an important role in human behavior and communication. Emotional intelligence refers to the ability to understand, manage, and regulate one's emotions while also understanding the emotions of others [4: 29]. Individuals with high emotional intelligence demonstrate empathy, emotional control, and constructive conflict-resolution skills, reducing the likelihood of aggressive online behavior [5: 53].

Therefore, this study aims to analyze the psychological relationship between emotional intelligence and cyberbullying and to examine the importance of emotional intelligence in preventing cyberbullying among youth.

Methods

This research is based on qualitative theoretical analysis. Scientific books, academic articles, and psychological studies related to emotional intelligence and cyberbullying were comparatively reviewed. The study focused on:

- Theoretical foundations of emotional intelligence;
- Psychological characteristics of cyberbullying;
- Emotional and behavioral consequences of cyberbullying;
- The role of emotional intelligence in preventing online aggression.

The analysis included international psychological theories developed by Mayer and Salovey, Daniel Goleman, Bar-On, and other researchers in the fields of emotional intelligence and cyber psychology [6: 18].

Components of Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence consists of several interconnected psychological components:

Components	Description	Psychological Importance

Self-awareness	Understanding one's emotions and mental state	Helps control stress and impulsive reactions
Emotional regulation	Managing emotions effectively	Reduces aggression and conflict
Empathy	Understanding others' feelings	Improves online communication
Motivation	Internal drive toward goals	Increases resilience
Social skills	Effective communication abilities	Strengthens healthy relationships

Table 1. Main Components of Emotional Intelligence

Research suggests that emotional intelligence significantly affects social adaptation and psychological well-being [7: 81].

Results

The findings demonstrate that emotional intelligence and cyberbullying are closely interconnected. Individuals with high emotional intelligence are more likely to:

- control their emotions effectively;
- avoid impulsive online behavior;
- demonstrate empathy;
- communicate respectfully in virtual environments;
- resolve conflicts constructively.

In contrast, individuals with low emotional intelligence often show:

- impulsiveness;
- emotional instability;
- poor empathy;
- aggressive communication;
- increased online hostility [8: 94].

The study also identified major psychological consequences of cyberbullying among adolescents.

Psychological Effects of Cyberbullying	Impact on Youth
Depression	Emotional sadness and hopelessness
Anxiety	Constant fear and stress
Sleep disorders	Psychological instability
Social isolation	Withdrawal from communication
Low self-esteem	Negative self-image
Suicidal thoughts	Severe emotional trauma

Table 2. Psychological Consequences of Cyberbullying

Research findings confirm that cyberbullying negatively influences academic performance, family relationships, and social activity [9: 41].

Diagram: Relationship Between Emotional Intelligence and Cyberbullying

HIGH EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

↓

Better Emotional Control & Empathy
↓
Healthy Online Communication
↓
LOWER CYBERBULLYING RISK
LOW EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE
↓
Impulsiveness & Aggressive Behavior
↓
Online Conflict and Hostility
↓
HIGHER CYBERBULLYING RISK

Figure 1. Psychological Relationship Between Emotional Intelligence and Cyberbullying

Discussion

The findings indicate that emotional intelligence is one of the key psychological factors in preventing cyberbullying. Empathy development decreases the likelihood of causing emotional harm to others because empathetic individuals better understand the psychological consequences of online aggression [10: 57].

Furthermore, social media anonymity reduces responsibility and increases aggressive behavior. Some adolescents perform actions online that they would never demonstrate in real-life communication [11: 102].

Psychological interventions aimed at improving emotional intelligence may significantly reduce cyberbullying behavior. Such interventions include:

Psychological Training Programs

Special training programs can teach adolescents:

- emotional regulation;
- empathy development;
- stress management;
- conflict-resolution skills.

These programs help reduce aggressive online behavior and improve psychological resilience [12: 73].

Media Literacy Education

Media literacy is another important preventive factor. Young people should learn:

- online ethics;
- digital responsibility;
- internet safety;
- respectful online communication.

Such education increases awareness of virtual risks and promotes healthy online behavior [13: 49].

Family and Educational Institutions

Parents, teachers, and school psychologists play an essential role in identifying cyberbullying situations early and organizing preventive measures. Emotional support from adults helps adolescents cope with online psychological pressure [14: 88].

Psychological Support Services

Providing professional psychological counseling to cyberbullying victims is crucial for restoring mental health and emotional stability [15: 33].

Conclusion

In conclusion, emotional intelligence is an essential psychological factor that ensures emotional stability, healthy communication, and social adaptation. Individuals with developed emotional intelligence are more capable of controlling emotions, demonstrating empathy, and avoiding aggressive online behavior.

Cyberbullying remains one of the most dangerous psychological problems in the digital era. It negatively affects the mental health of young people and may lead to severe emotional consequences such as depression, anxiety, social isolation, and suicidal thoughts.

Therefore, implementing emotional intelligence development programs, increasing media literacy, strengthening psychological education, and promoting healthy virtual communication are among the most important strategies for preventing cyberbullying in modern society [16: 115].

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