



CYBER BULLYING AMONG UNDERGRADUATES IN A NIGERIAN UNIVERSITY: OCCURRENCE AND IMPACT ON THEIR SELF-IMAGE

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This study explored the impact of cyber bullying on undergraduates' self-image. The study also investigated whether respondents' views will vary based on their age, gender, purpose of using the internet, duration of internet usage and average time spent online. **Design/Methodology:** The study adopted descriptive research design of correlational type using simple random sampling procedure to select a sample of 419 respondents. A self-developed three sectioned questionnaire entitled "Cyber bullying and Self-image Questionnaire (CBSIQ)" was employed to gather data. Data collected were analysed using percentages, Pearson's Product Moment Correlation and Univariate Analysis of Variance. **Findings:** The findings showed that majority of the undergraduates (82.1%) experienced low level of cyber bullying and 66.8% of the respondents reported negative self-image. The findings also showed significant positive relationship between the experience of cyber bullying and negative self-image of respondents ($r=.161, p < 0.01$). Respondents' views regarding the influence of cyber bullying on self-image did not differ on the basis of their age, gender, purpose of using the internet, length of years in using the internet, and the amount of time spent online. **Implication:** Based on the findings of this study, there is a need for school counsellors to introduce self-image development skills training in the orientation programme organised for the undergraduates regardless of their age, gender, purpose of internet use and length of years in using the internet

KEYWORDS: Cyber Bullying, Self-Image, Undergraduates

1. INTRODUCTION

The ease of access to modern information and communication technologies such as mobile phones and computers has re-oriented human social relationships in a variety of ways, particularly among enlightened adolescents who are currently turning the technology into essential means of communication. Nigeria is one of the developing countries that is integrating the use of cutting-edge mobile devices as it thrives globally. More than 101.7 million Nigerians are anticipated to use mobile internet by 2021 (Ceci, 2021). During the corona pandemic, several enterprises and agencies, including higher and lower education institutions, have boosted their use of mobile internet. Despite the fact that it has several benefits for human interactions, education, healthcare, and commerce, it has also been accomplished by its negative characteristics. With the increase in online teaching and learning in Nigerian universities, the number of hours spent on the internet by undergraduates has increased as a matter of necessity. Studies (Olumide et al., 2015, Englander, 2018) have found that teenagers who are 'heavy cell phone users' are more likely to engage in bullying, as well as to be bullied online. Meyer (2019) emphasised that cyber bullying is a unique feature that might be especially harmful to victimised youth. Individuals who are subjected to cyber bullying can get an unrestricted number of vexing messages over a variety of networks (chat rooms, social networking sites, emails, etc.) and channels.

Cyber bullying is defined as a form of aggression including the use of information and communication technologies such as mobile phones, video cameras, email, and web pages to harass or disgrace another person. It is the systematic and voluntary exploitation of others, with terrible consequences for victims. According to researchers (George & Odgers, 2015), cyber bullies frequently employ swear words (showing wrath), insults, jokes, mobidity, and phone names.

Researchers (Popovac & Leoschut, 2012) have also observed that cyber bullying is an extension of traditional bullying in schools, although it varies in

some significant and concerning aspects. Cyber bullying, for example, is largely anonymous (Belsey, 2007; Slonge & Smith, 2008; Meter & Bauman, 2018). The anonymity of this phenomenon (cyber bullying) is the most dangerous component of it since the bully lacks the fear of being discovered, which aids in controlling behaviour; and when this is the case, the cyber bully may behave in ways that they would not in a face-to-face meeting. Unlike traditional bullying, the aggressor knows who the victim is, but the victim often has no idea who is bullying him or her.

Bullying behaviour in Nigeria has also evolved from a physical face-to-face encounter in the school yard to a more psychologically devastating experience. According to Ada et al. (2016), this type of bullying is a huge problem in Nigerian higher educational institutions because it occurs indirectly through electronic media (Smith, 2014). Cyber bullying can also take many forms, such as sending hurtful or threatening messages to a person's email account or cell phone, spreading rumours online through texts, posting hurtful or threatening messages on social networking sites or web pages, stealing a person's account information to break into their account and send damaging messages, pretending to be someone else online to hurt another person, and taking unflattering pictures of a person and spreading them online (Meter & Bauman, 2018; Smith, 2014).

Several factors have been suggested to motivate individuals' cyber bullying behaviours, including retribution, detestation, and the desire to deflate the victim's knowledge. That is owing to envy (Hoff & Mitchell, 2009) the nature of cyber bullying (anonymity) to feel or demonstrate power, for ego enhancement, having already suffered bullying, and for fun. Attention seeking, peer influence, alcohol/drug abuse, believing it is normal to indulge in it, a lack of skills to settle problems and cover up one's flaws, and prejudice against the victim's race, religion, or sexual orientation are all motivating factors (Topçu, 2014).

The findings of studies on gender disparities in cyber bullying perpetration have not been consistent.

According to Barlett et al. (2014), female students engage in cyber bullying mostly through sharing secrets they have been told, gossiping about persons in the virtual world, assaulting the individual's personality or sexual identity, or labelling people as untrustworthy. According to Keith and Martins (2005), females engage in a more relational sort of cyber bullying than males. This could be due to cultural norms and gender role expectations. Calvate et al., (2010), on the other hand, had previously discovered that more guys, 48 percent, had participated in at least one act of cyber bullying compared to 40 percent of the girls. The researchers also discovered differences in bullying behaviours; boys were more likely to film and distribute images of physical aggression and also images of embarrassing and sexual nature. One possible explanation for a heightened inclination in boys is a difference in gender role socialisation, specifically a potential difference in amount of empathy (Topcu & Erdur-Baker, 2012). Barlett and Coyne (2014) discovered that age mediates gender differences, with females reporting more cyber bullying during early adolescence and boys reporting more in late adolescence.

Researchers have revealed a curvilinear link among kids, with the maximum engagement rates happening between 12-15 years of age (Kowalski, Giumetti, Schroeder & Lattanner, 2014; Tokunaga, 2010). (Kowalski, Giumetti, Schroeder & Lattanner, 2014; Tokunaga, 2010). Despite the fact that certain researchers, including Pichel, Foody, O'Higgins, Feijóo, Varela, and Rial (2021), have discovered that cyber bullying victimisation can continue to rise in late adolescence.

According to Pichel et al., (2021), cyber bullying tends to peak between the ages of 14 and 15 before declining during adolescence. Although social networking and gaming sites technically require users to be at least 13 years old, it is worth noting that one in every four (25.1 percent) of those extremely young kids has lately been cyber bullied (i.e., in the last 30 days).

Based on the intensive use of the internet, Yang and

Tung (2007) reported that students are connected to internet for 12.1 to 21.2 hours a week. According to Rice, Petering, and Rhoades (2015), at least three hours of Internet use per day was connected with both cyber bully perpetration and victimisation. Also, studies (Lei & Wu, 2007; Subrahmanyam & Lin, 2007) found that adolescents use the Internet primarily for amusement and communication rather than academic goals. Adolescents commonly communicate through the internet and frequently identify themselves differently while talking, which may expose them to victimisation or perpetration.

Cyber bullying is a common phenomenon in Nigeria (Akor, 2012; Oyewusi & Orolade, 2014; Okoiye, Anayochi & Onah, 2015; Olumide, Adams & Amodu, 2015; Ada, Okoli, Obeten & Akeke, 2016). According to Olumide, Adams, and Amodu (2015), 39.8 percent of respondents have been bullied online, and 21.0 percent have been both victims and perpetrators. Phone calls (63.5 percent), chat rooms (44.9 percent), (38.5 percent) to follow SMS. The majority of the kids were cyber bullying perpetrators, and the correlates of perpetration were history of cyber victimisation and everyday internet use. Ada, Okoli, Obeten, and Akeke (2016) found a significant frequency of cyber bullying at Nigerian higher educational institutions in a similar study.

Researchers (Notar & Padget, 2013; Hertz & Wright, 2013) discovered that cyber bullying has a negative impact on the psychological well-being of young people. Cyber bullying victims report more social and emotional problems, such as isolation and emotion management issues compared to traditional bullying victims (Ak, Zdemir & Kuzucu, 2015; Elipe, Mora-Merchán, Ortega-Ruiz, & Casas, 2015). Students who are victims of cyber bullying are more likely to suffer from sadness, anxiety, and substance addiction (Palermi, Servidio, Bartolo & Costabile, 2017). According to Deschamps and McNutt (2016) and Nixon (2014), victims of cyber bullying had increased suicide ideation/behavior, social isolation, mental illness, physical symptoms, and school anxiety.

School-age cyber victims were found to be at a higher

risk of depression (Perren et al., 2010; Gradinger et al., 2009; Juvonen & Gross, 2008), psychosomatic symptoms such as headaches, abdominal pain, and sleeplessness (Sourander et al., 2010), and behavioural issues such as alcohol usage (Mitchell et al., 2007). Cyber bullying victims report feeling uncomfortable and alienated at school and at home, as has been documented in studies of face-to-face bullying. Cyber bullying can cause considerable emotional and psychological harm, leading to students acquiring low self-esteem, a negative self-concept, and being less effective in their engagement with the environment (Sourander et al., 2010). According to O'Brien and Moules (2013), cyber bullying can have an impact on victims' self-image.

The personal vision or mental picture that an individual has of himself or herself is referred to as self-image (Nair, 2016). Self-image can also be defined as the cognitive realm of an individual's self-evaluation (Wosik-Kawala, 2007). Self-image is a "internal dictionary" that describes the self's traits, such as intelligence, beauty, and ugliness, as well as talent, selfishness, and kindness. These traits form a collective depiction of individual assets (strengths) and liabilities (weaknesses) as they are seen (Nair, 2016). According to Bailey (2003), there are four types of self-images: self-image resulting from how an individual sees himself/herself; self-image resulting from how others see the individual; self-image resulting from how the individual perceives others see them; and self-image resulting from how the individual perceives the individual sees oneself.

Self-image is not the same as self-concept or self-esteem. The entirety of an individual's ideas and feelings with reference to himself as an object is referred to as self-concept. It is a person's overall perception of who he or she believes he or she is. Self-esteem, on the other hand, relates to a person's emotions of self-worth or the value they place on themselves, whereas self-image refers to how an individual sees themselves, both physically and intellectually, but it does not have to be accurate (Rosenberg, 2015). Self-image is similar to self-concept but is less comprehensive. A person's self-image is based on how they see themselves, but self-

concept is a more thorough evaluation of the self, based mostly on how a person sees, values, thinks about, and feels about oneself (Ackerman, 2021; McLeod, 2008).

A person's self-image develops over time and is shaped by the experiences they have had. A positive and negative self-image possesses a number of qualities. Feeling confident; comparing themselves positively with peers; being contented with how they look and believing in their own ability; and receiving positive feedback from friends and family on looks and abilities are some of the characteristics of a positive self-image, whereas negative self-image characteristics include doubting one's own ability; comparing themselves negatively with peers and images on social media/TV/magazines; and receiving negative comments from friends and family on looks and abilities (Singh & Dhillon, 2020; Frisen, Berne & Lunde, 2014).

In the past, age and gender disparities in self-esteem were more common than differences in self-image, but only a few researchers looked at age differences in self-image. Webster and Tiggemann (2003) discovered, for example, that the link between self-esteem and negative self-image or body dissatisfaction was larger in women aged 35 to 49 ('middle age' group) than in women aged 20 to 34 ('young adulthood') or 50 to 65 ('older adults'). Although age disparities in self-esteem patterns are stable across genders, several research have found that girls exhibit slightly higher age differences than males (Orth, Trzesniewski & Robins, 2010; Robins, Trzesniewski, Tracy, Gosling & Potter, 2002).

An individual's attitude toward himself/herself, particularly his/her appearance, is a crucial component of one's total image of self and is significantly related to psychological and physical well-being (Vilhelmsson, Kristjansdottir & Ward, 2012). Negative self-image is a serious issue that jeopardises the psychological health of both young men and women (Ackard, Fulkerson & Neumark-Sztainer, 2007). People who have been insulted or taunted about their appearance are more likely to exhibit body dissatisfaction (Ackard et al., 2007).

Victims of cyber bullying reported being mocked about their physical appearance by their peers via social media and electronic messages, and as a result reported having low body esteem or being unhappy (Frisen et al., 2014). Unfortunately, being unhappy with one's own self-image had detrimental consequences such as depression symptoms (Rawana, Morgan, Nguyen & Craig, 2010).

In today's image-dominated world, one of the most important factors of social standing is physical attractiveness; hence, positive self-presentation in social media is primarily directed toward visual components of self-image. Photographs in the social media sphere have evolved into images designed to elicit acclaim from an often-invisible audience. The goal of both the content and the method of presentation of images is to project the development of an ideal self and to gain social acceptability. In a circumstance when people receive contradicting feedback, this may have a negative impact on their self-image (Frisen et al., 2014).

Cyber bullying is one of the problems that undergraduate students in Nigeria face, (Olumide et al., 2015, Ada et al., 2016), and it has created health concerns (Okoiye, Anayochi & Onah, 2015). As a result, studies such as Plichta, Pyalski, and Barliska (2018) concentrated on how teenagers self-image impairments predisposed them to cyber bullying. Similarly, Martnez-Monteagudo, Delgado, Garca-Fernández, and Ruz-Esteban (2020) discovered that a high degree of sadness and stress increases the likelihood of becoming a victim of cyber bullying. They also discovered that undergraduates' psychological, emotional, and social adaption predisposes them to cyber bullying experiences. However, little or no attention was paid to the impact of cyber bullying on undergraduates' self-image, particularly in Nigerian universities, and this is the vacuum that this study filled. Filling this gap identified in the literature would assist in expanding knowledge of the impact of cyberbullying on self-image thereby, intimating counsellors and other stakeholders on the need to address the self-image of undergraduates who are victims of cyberbullying. The objective of this study is to analyse the

relationship between cyberbullying and self-image of undergraduates in Nigeria and the power of cyberbullying on the positive and negative self-image of undergraduates for being a victim of cyberbullying in Nigerian universities. Considering the limited number of prior studies in this area, this study seeks to find out:

- i. undergraduates' perception of their self-image
- ii. undergraduates' experience of cyberbullying
- iii. how cyberbullying experience impacts undergraduates' self-image
- iv. if the variables of age, gender, what they use internet for, and the length of time spent online moderate the impact of cyberbullying experience on respondents' self-image

Research Questions

The study answered two research questions stated thus:

1. What is self-image of undergraduates in the Nigerian university?
2. What is the level of cyber bullying experienced by undergraduates in the Nigerian university?

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested in the study:

1. There is no significant relationship between the self-image and cyber bullying experience of undergraduates in the Nigerian university.
2. Gender, age, length of years in using the internet, amount of time spent on line, and what internet is use for will not significantly affect the influence of cyber bullying on self-image of undergraduates in the Nigerian university.

2. METHODOLOGY

This is a descriptive survey of the correlational variety. The survey approach is best suited for gathering information from a representative sample

of the target population as well as establishing relationships between or among several sorts. In this study, the population consisted of all undergraduate students in the study area, which was estimated to be fifty thousand (50,000) students, and a sample of 420 respondents was chosen. Required sample size of 357 is suggested by Research Advisor (2006) for population of this magnitude, however, a total of 420 undergraduates was selected to cater for attrition. A random sample technique was used to choose five out of the fifteen (15) faculties in the area of study, which included Agriculture, Arts, Education, Life Sciences, and Social Sciences faculties. Similarly, 84 respondents were chosen at random from each of the faculties. The respondents were stratified based on gender, age, length of years in using the internet, amount of time they spent on line and what they use the internet for.

A researchers designed questionnaire entitled: "Influence of Cyber Bullying on Self-Image Questionnaire (ICBSQ), which was validated by five experts in the Department of Counsellor Education, University of Ilorin. A test re-test reliability was carried out on the instrument and reliability coefficient of 0.75 and 0.72 were obtained for sections (B & C) on experience of cyberbullying and cyberbullying impacts on self-image respectively, which made the instrument suitable for the study.

The questionnaire was based on a four-point Likert Type scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree(D), Strongly Disagree (SD), and it was used for scoring with the highest score for each item being four (4) and the lowest being one (1). Sections A, B and C of the instrument were analysed using percentage, and Pearson's Product Moment Correlation and Univariate Analysis of Variance were used to test the formulated hypotheses at 0.05 significance level.

3. RESULTS

Table 1 shows that females make up the bulk of participants in this study, with 240 (57.3 percent) of the population sample, while males make up just 179 (42.7 percent). Students aged 21–25 years had the highest participation rate (274, 65.4 percent),

followed by participants aged 16–20 years (110 (26.3 percent), while participants aged 26 years and above have the lowest participation rate, accounting for just 35(8.4 percent) of the total sampled population.

Table 1: Demographic Distribution of Respondents

Variables	Frequency	Percent
Gender		
Male	179	42.7
Female	240	57.3
Total	419	100.0
Age		
16-20yrs	110	26.3
21-25yrs	274	65.4
26yrs and above	35	8.4
Total	419	100.0
Internet Usage		
News	54	12.9
Learning	176	42.0
Social Interaction	111	26.5
Communication	44	10.5
Entertainment	34	8.1
Total	419	100.0
Time spent on Internet		
Less than an hour	69	16.5
1 - 5 hours	153	36.5
6 hours and above	197	47.0
Total	419	100.0
Years of Internet Usage		
Less than a year	34	8.1
1 - 5 yrs	154	36.8
6 - 10 yrs	173	41.3
Over 10 yrs	58	13.8
Total	419	100.0

Table 1 also shows that individuals are divided into five groups based on their internet usage. Participants who use the internet for Learning account for 176 (42.0 percent) of the total respondents, followed by those who use it for Social Interaction, who account for 111 (26.5 percent), 54 (12.9 percent) of the total sample, 44 (10.5 percent) of the total, and 34 (8.1 percent) of the total respondents. Participants who use the internet for Entertainment account for 34 (8.1 percent). According to Table 1, participants who

spent 6 hours or more make up the majority of the sample, accounting for 197 (or 47.0 percent) of the total sampled population. Despite the fact that 153 (36.5 percent) of the participants spend 1 – 5 hours on the internet, 69 (16.5 percent) of them spend less than an hour. The table finally divided the participants into four groups based on the amount of years they had been using the internet. On this basis, the greatest number of participants, 173 (41.3 percent) have spent 6 – 10 years using the internet, followed by those who have spent 1 – 5 years, 154 (36.8 percent), while 58 (13.8 percent) of the participants have spent more than 10 years using the internet, with the smallest number being those who have spent less than a year, 34 (8.1 percent) of total participants.

Research Question 1: What is self-image of undergraduates in Nigerian university?

Table 2: Undergraduates' Self-Image

Level	Frequency	Percentage
Negative	280	66.8
Positive	139	33.2
Total	419	100

Table 2 revealed that majority of the undergraduates (66.8%) had negative self-image while 33.2% of the undergraduates had positive self-image.

Research Question 2: What is the level of cyber bullying experienced by undergraduates in Nigerian university?

Table 3: Undergraduates' Level of Cyber bullying Experienced

Level	Frequency	Percentage
Low	344	82.1
Moderate	70	16.7
High	5	1.2
Total	419	100

Table 3 showed that majority of the respondents (82.1%) reported low cyber bullying experience, 16.7% of the respondents reported moderate level of cyber bullying experience while 1.2% of the respondents reported high level of cyber bullying experience.

Hypotheses Testing

Hypothesis 1: *There is no significant relationship between the self-image and cyber bullying experience of undergraduates in Nigerian university.*

Table 4: Pearson's Correlation Results showing the relationship between cyber bullying and self-image of University of Ilorin undergraduates

Variables		Cyber bullying	Self-Image
Cyber bullying	Pearson Correlation	1	.161**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	419	419
Self-Image	Pearson Correlation	.161**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	419	419

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4 showed that the correlation between cyber bullying and self-image is 0.161, which is significant as $p < 0.01$ level for 2-tailed test based on 419 complete observations. It is therefore observed and concluded that: cyber bullying and its influence on self-image have a statistically significant linear relationship ($r = .161$, $p < 0.01$). Also, the direction of the relationship is positive (i.e., cyber bullying experience and self-image of participants are positively correlated), meaning that these variables tend to increase together (i.e., the greater the cyber-bullying experience, the greater the influence on self-image). Hence, there is a significant relationship between the self-image and cyber bullying experience of undergraduates in Nigerian university.

Hypothesis 2: *Gender, age, length of years in using the internet, amount of time they spent on line, and what they use the internet for will not significantly affect cyber bullying influence on self-image of undergraduates in Nigerian university.*

Table 5 showed the results of the Univariate Analysis of Variance of the respondents' demographic data on influence of cyber bullying on self-image. The table

revealed that gender ($df = 1$, $F\text{-value} = 0.02$, $p = .865$), age ($df = 2$, $F\text{-value} = 0.33$, $p = .719$), what they use the internet for ($df = 4$, $F\text{-value} = 2.04$, $p = .089$), amount of time they spent on line ($df = 2$, $F\text{-value} = 0.12$, $p = .882$), length of years in using the internet ($df = 3$, $F\text{-value} = 2.61$, $p = .052$) did not significantly affect respondents' views on cyber bullying influence on self-image of undergraduates in Nigerian university.

Table 5: Univariate Analysis of Variance showing differences in the Respondents' Demographic Data on Influence of Cyber bullying on Self-Image

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	23065.34 ^a	164	140.64	1.53	.001
Intercept	248891.19	1	248891.19	2717.91	.000
Gender	2.64	1	2.64	.02	.865
Age	60.62	2	30.31	.33	.719
Internet Use	747.30	4	186.82	2.04	.089
Duration of Usage	22.91	2	11.45	.12	.882
Yrs. of Int. Use	717.70	3	239.23	2.61	.052
Error	23259.89	254	91.57		
Total	966546.00	419			
Corrected Total	46325.24	418			

4. DISCUSSION

The study revealed that majority of the undergraduates (66.8%) had negative self-image. The finding of the study is related to the study of Kearney, Cooke and Tieger (2015) who reported that 68% of teenagers studied felt upset and ashamed in relation to their self-image which could probably be due to undergraduates' interactions or experiences with teachers, friends or family. In this study however, respondents reported negative self-image due to experience of cyber bullying.

The finding of the study also showed that 16.7% of the respondents experienced moderate level of cyber bullying while 1.2% of the respondents experienced high level of cyber bullying. This study is similar to studies of Akor (2012), Oyewusi and Orolade (2014), Okoiye, Anayochi and Onah (2015), Olumide, Adams and Amodu (2015), Ada, Okoli, Obeten and Akeke (2016) who reported occurrence of cyber

bullying in Nigeria. This could be as a result of undergraduates' accessibility to various social media platforms while many of them hide their identity to perpetrate cyber bullying.

The study revealed that there was a significant relationship between self-image and cyber bullying experiences of undergraduates in Nigerian university. The finding is related to the assertion of O'Brien and Moules (2013) who stated that cyber bullying may have effect on victims' self-image. Ghinea and Vladislav (2020), Estevez et al., (2019), Smith (2011) Patchin and Hinduja (2010) found significant relationships between cyber bullying and self-image. Smith (2011) reported that persons with disabilities and persons whose appearance was altered by disability experience were subjected to cyber bullying significantly more often. Also, Sourander et al. (2010) asserted that cyber bullying can cause significant emotional and psychological harm that can result in affected students developing low self-esteem and poor self-concept and becoming less efficacious in their relationship with their environment. Estevez et al. (2019) established that the self-image of a cyber-bully victim is negative compared to that of the perpetrator.

It was found that gender, age, what they use the internet for, amount of time they spent on line, length of years in using the internet did not significantly affect respondents' views on cyber bullying influence on self-image of undergraduates in Nigerian university. This implies that the impact of cyber bullying on undergraduates' self-image is not affected by gender, age, what they use the internet for, amount of time spent online and length of years in using internet. The outcome of the enquiry is in tandem with that of de Vries, Peter, de Graaf and Nikken (2016), who discovered that gender did not moderate the impact of social media usage on self-image of teenage boys and girls. However, the outcome negates the findings of McLean et al., (2019); Mills, Musto, Williams and Tiggemann (2018) who found female self-image to be more negatively impacted when they experience cyber bullying than that of males.

Different researchers (Schneider et.al., 2012; Schenk & Fremouw, 2012; Bonanno & Hymel, 2013) who worked across students of varying school levels (middle, high and college) that cut across age range found that cyber bullying significantly relate to lower self-image in their respondents regardless of their age. The results of the inquiry regarding what they use the internet for is in line with that of Steinsbekk, Wichstrom, Stenseng, Nesi, Hygenand Skalicka (2021) who discovered that it is not what adolescents use the internet for that impact on their self-image, rather the kinds of social media usage determine the negative impacts it has on their self-image. This outcome also relates to the study of Niemz, Griffiths and Banyard (2005) who stated that usage of internet for any means sometimes lead to loneliness and may have opposite effect on self-worth or self-esteem. The finding supports the study of Rohall, Cotton and Morgan (2002) who found that hours spent using the internet for e-mail or other forms of online communication is not associated with self-esteem. The reason for the findings may be that the intensity of cyber bullying experience may not necessarily relate with the amount of time spent online since Paiban et al., (2021) found the intensity of cyber bullying victimization relate to the level of negative self-image.

5. CONCLUSIONS

In this study, it is established that cyber bullying impacts negatively on the self-image of Nigerian undergraduates regardless of their age, gender, time spent online, duration of using the internet and what they use the internet for. The outcomes emphasize the need for future study to inquire how different kinds of cyber bullying impact undergraduates' self-image. Undergraduates, academic staff of universities in Nigeria, counsellors and other professionals, parents, university administrators should take note of the negative impacts of cyber bullying on self-image and subsequent effects.

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