# Psychological Egoism in Cyberbullying

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*Abstract:* Nowadays, cyber bullying is becoming a hot topic among all the people in the world. After learning about psychological egoism and altruism, the author became curious about the correlation between the psychological activities of the perpetrators in the process of cyber bullying and psychological egoism. The present study examines the relationship between perpetrators in cyber bullying and the theory of psychological egoism based on existing literature and data. This paper mainly explores the purpose of the perpetrator and the relevance of psychological egoism whether the perpetrator is doing it for his own interests. This essay indicates that the purpose of perpetrators in cyber bullying does have a relation to psychological egoism.

*Keywords:* cyber bullying, victim, perpetrators, psychological egoism

## 1. Introduction

Nowadays, with the progress of science and technology, social media appears more and more frequently in people's lives, while it actually brings the negative effect which is cyber bullying to some people. Broadly speaking, some people will attack others recklessly on the Internet, like leave a bad comment on a message board. Nowadays, the phenomenon of cyber violence is very serious. One survey shows bullying and suicide among a sample of 2,700 Native American middle and high school students aged 12-17 years, conducted by Sammer Hinduja and Justin W. Patch in 2016[1]. So far, there are few studies in this area, most of which are about the psychology of victims or do not link cyber violence with psychological egoism. Psychological egoism is about all human actions that are ultimately aimed at avoiding some personal loss or gaining some personal benefit(or both), either in the short run or in the long term(or both). This paper will discuss the psychological egoism in the role of cyber bullying. This study explores the main forms of psychological state and psychological egoism of abusers when they commit violence and plays a popular science role for society and people, so that people can better understand the psychological state of themselves and others when they commit cyber bullying.

## 2. Cyber Bullying

Many young people will attack others recklessly on the internet just like making bad comments on other people's social media and posting some unfriendly pictures. For example, many teenagers will attack others online for their idols. Many people suffer from cyber bullying as they have mental health problems like depression or anxiety. This paper will discuss the manifestation of cyber violence,

which is to attack others with bad words on the network, leaving bad words on others' message boards, and so on.

## 2.1. Cyber Partner Abuse

There is a kind of bullying action called cyber partner abuse. Cyber partner abuse is the use of technology, including text messages, social media, and other electronic devices, to perpetrate psychological abuse against one's partner[2]. In a recent study, two-thirds of cyber bullying victims also experienced dating violence[2]. Specifically, this phenomenon is viewed as an Internet inhibitor. The developers of psychology can feel depression and use fake strategies in their real life, which makes them more likely to threaten people with societies than threat to their own personal threats. The threat of humiliation can be played on social media. Criminals can publicly insult or insult their partners or threaten to announce embarrassing photos or inappropriate[2]. Some of the victims don't want to satisfy oral abuse or continue to be repeatedly tortured to encourage them to react to crime[2]. In a survey of 65 young people who are using the Internet, 17% took action, and in the state, facilities have shown fear about what their partners would do if they didn't respond, and 10% of those people are being intimated through social media or other ways to communicate. The perpetrators threaten their victims by sending them sexually explicit photos similar to nude photos. They threaten their victims that they will send naked pictures to their friends or family if the victim is disobedient. Picard found that 22% of teens reported being asked to do something they didn't want to do by the Internet or mobile phone. Pressure to engage in physical sex is a common aspect of online abuse between intimate partners[2].

## 2.2. General Actions of Cyber Bullying

A more common form of cyber bullying is using social media like Facebook or Instagram. In addition, that will cause a problem called "facebook depression". These two words mean the depression caused by some activities on Facebook. Firstly, Facebook depression can be caused by dominant activities like posting an offensive message on another person's Facebook wall or adding a negative comment under a photo. Some users may not respond to such comments or retaliate against the attacker's Facebook wall. The user may not be "unfriendly" or "block" aggressive users (especially if it is possibly direct personal connection). Secondly, facing a clear and correct positive impression from Facebook's friends increases the ability to assess comparability and the risk of negative assessment. Facebook offers more opportunities and makes people feel like losers. That causes the possibility of having depression[3].

## 3. The Actions of Psychological Egoism

Actually, there are two types of egoism, namely psychology and ethics: one is purely descriptive, which believes that human behavior is essentially inseparable from egoism; the other is normative, which should be egoism. Egoism, which is fundamentally an act of self-care, is shaped as a moral motive for moping and / or providing a reason[4]. The most important thing that separates egoism from altruism is that egoists avoid actions that do not contribute to their own well-being, while altruists avoid actions that are not for the benefit of anyone other than their own[5]. The author believes that people do a lot of things because of psychological egoism. The author admits that people sometimes do things because of altruism, but she thinks people do a lot of things because of mental egoism because they want to do something more beneficial to themselves.

McConnell thinks psychological egoism to be the view that "human nature is such that no person can perform an act unless he believes that it is in his best interests". While Simpson suggested: "if someone thinks that logical egoism can do anything and thinks it is in their own interests, they should

accept the idea of trying." On the contrary, psychological egoism believes that a person can do something only if he does not think that his behavior is contrary to his best interests(that is, if he does not think that he is in his best interests or from his own perspective, this is equivalent to the other choices he can choose from), then if a person thinks that he can actually do something and he can actually do something, he tries to do it[6].

To support this viewpoint of psychological egoism, there is a clear story called the Ring of Gyges. The Ring of Gyges appears in the legend of Republic volume II, making the holder invisible. The shepherd found that he could do whatever he wanted, and when he watches the interaction between the king and the queen, he discovers that the king lacks ruling skills, so he used it to lure the queen of King Candus and thus usurped the throne of Lydia. The moral of this story is that when one can pursue one's desire and escape scrutiny from others, will one still adhere to justice, or is it necessary to adhere to justice? Socrates asked Socrates: "Is justice better than injustice?"[7] This story very well proves that people do things from the viewpoint of psychological egoism. In other words, psychological egoism is about all human actions ultimately aimed at avoiding some personal loss or gaining some personal benefit(or both), either in the short run or in the long term(or both)[8].

## 4.    The Relation Between Psychological Egoism and Cyber Bullying

When we go back to reality, after so many examples of online violence, what do these perpetrators' ideas refer to? Do these perpetrators' ideas refer to psychological egoism? Will these perpetrators benefit from the process of bullying others?

Some people handle other people online because they want a platform to show off their personalities, like what their grumpy personality should have been. Meanwhile, some people bully others online to vent their emotions. For instance, when their favorite team loses, or this one thing that makes them not very satisfied. But some people bully others just because they make them feel like a loser, so they will write some negative comments on other people's message boards. But there is a situation where the abuser does not seem to be so negative because they think the person is harmful to their own interests. They also go to expose others.

In a sense, most of these reasons are related to the interests of the perpetrators themselves. These perpetrators feel that they are beneficial to themselves, whether in an emotional way or in their own rights. According to the definition of egoism, what they do is in line with psychological egoism. In other words , it proves that all human actions are ultimately aimed at avoiding some personal loss or gaining some personal benefit(or both), either in the short run or in the long term(or both)[9].

In this study, it can be determined that violence tendencies and cyber bullying are related because cyber bullying is associated with youth aggression and violence tendencies. In fact, characteristics about bullying are identified as consisting of combat threat to injury and violence such as carrying guns, and after the analysis of the perpetrator's personality characteristics, they will show some behaviors such as loneliness, feel lack of support from society, dissonance, and drug abuse. Some characteristics of violent people are feeling social isolation, lack of social skills or low problem-solving skills. There are some violent people through the Internet to implement some violent behavior to show their personality characteristics[10-12].

It can be seen that violence tendency is positively associated with cyber bullying behavior. In addition to violence trend and online victimization, there is a highly positive correlation between cyber bullying behavior and cyber victimization(SARI, SERKAN VOLKAN, CAMADAN, FATIH) This reveals the violent tendencies of cyber bullying criminals that they hurt people around them, just like bullying people, which is also a disguised form of egoism, for which cyber bullying provides a platform to show the violent trend.

Here is an example of cyber bullying. Because of the very serious COVID-19 in Shanghai, the whole city was controlled by risk control. Citizens can only stay at home, and it is difficult for them

to go out to buy food. A woman in Shanghai's Hongkou District asked Mr. Yu, a delivery worker, to deliver food to her hearing-impaired father in Qingpu District. Due to traffic control, Mr. Yu traveled 27 kilometers for nearly four hours. In order to express gratitude, the citizen found Mr.Yu's WeChat and Alipay transfers were rejected by Mr.Yu. Finally, the woman charged Mr. Yu with 200 yuan. The woman shared the incident on the Internet to express the warm feelings in the world. However, some thought the woman paid the delivery man too little because the delivery man took a big risk to deliver the food. Those people found the girl's social media accounts like Weibo and left bad comments on his message board. The girl tried to defend herself but actually did not work. Three days later, the girl committed suicide after suffering online abuse. Actually, it was definitely an act of psychological egoism. People want to vent their emotions and criticize the girl's behavior. In other words, they think that without this thing, they can make their ideal society better, which relates to their own self-interest.

Another example is Sloan Stephens, 28, who regrets ending the US Open after being beaten by Germany's Kerbel. Her loss has sparked many online personal attacks on her, including racism and sexism against her African-American female identity. In the game, Stephens, in the next set of the situation, was Kerber, who pulled two sets. In previous meetings, Stephens won five against Kerbel and won five straight games. The Internet was full of personal attacks on Stephens after this reversal. On one of the social media platforms, more than 2,000 posts are abusive towards her. Some Internet abusers referred to Stephens as a "monkey" and a "prostitute," threatening to "kidnap and rape her" or break her legs so she would never be able to walk again. That thing can explain the theory of psychological egoism. People felt humiliated that the athlete representing their country had lost, giving them the feeling that they had lost to people from other countries. The basic reason for this behavior is that they want to vent their negative feelings about losing the game and blame everything on the athlete.

Social media can stigmatize people ,and this will lead to bad effects. According to one event that happened in reality, people had uploaded videos of angry judges to YouTube, which made people judge the judge. People feel they can judge the fairness of justice. They feel that the judge will have an impact on their lives, so they attack the stigmatized judge online. The public not only learned of the judge's behavior through means other than public discipline by a judicial conduct commission but also appeared to drive the disciplinary process[13].

## 5.    Conclusion

In conclusion, there is indeed a relationship between psychological egoism and the mental thinking of perpetrators of online violence. Criminals will choose various kinds of cyber violence. Of course, their reasons for cyber violence are also different, but most of the reasons mentioned in this article are derived from psychological egoism, which means the things they do relate to self-interest. They want to profit from it by making their lives better. This paper does not design experimental links, such as a questionnaire survey. In future research, the author will be more inclined to the direction of experiment and practice rather than all discussions based on theory.

## Acknowledgment

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