Psychoactive Substance Use and Problematic Internet Use as Predictors of Bullying and Cyberbullying Victimization

# Details

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Risks and harms

## Sample

6237 adolescents between the age of 15 and 22, data was collected in the framework of the ESPAD study

## Implications For Parents About

Parenting guidance / support

## Implications For Stakeholders About

# Abstract

Research exploring the relationship between addictions and experiences of bullying
suggests that problem behaviors may generally be associated with an increased risk of
victimization. The aim of the present study was to examine the role of psychoactive substance
use, excessive Internet use, and social support in both traditional offline bullying and online
Bcyberbullying^ victimization in a nationally representative sample of adolescents (N = 6237;
51% male; Mage = 16.62 years, SD = 0.95). Results demonstrated that traditional bullying
victimization was associated with cyberbullying victimization. Furthermore, psychoactive
substance use and problematic Internet use predicted both traditional bullying and
cyberbullying victimization. Finally, perceived social support was found to be an important
protective factor against both traditional and cyberbullying victimization. However, psychoactive
substance use and problematic Internet use accounted for only a small proportion of
variance in victimization.

# Outcome

4.1% of the respondents reported being victimized by offline and 3.7 by online bullying. No gender differences were found. The victimized group showed higher level of depressive symptoms and lower level of self-esteem. Lack of friend support predicted traditional bullying and low parental support was associated with both types of bullying, so as psychoactive substance use.

"Previous research has proposed that problematic maladaptive behavior of adolescents may
increase the risk of peer aggression, which in turn may increase the risk of victimization
(Gámez-Guadix et al. 2013; Jessor 1991). Using a nationally representative sample of Hungarian
middle school students, the present study provided further empirical evidence for this
hypothesis by demonstrating that drug use and problematic Internet use are weakly but
significantly associated with traditional bullying and cyberbullying victimization. However,
these potentially compulsive and/or addictive behaviors had limited explanatory power for
predicting bullying victimization in either case. These results suggest that potential offline and
online compulsive and/or addictive behaviors are associated with both bullying forms, but
psychoactive substance use and excessive Internet use do not appear to be key variables
underlying bullying victimization." (Ágnes Zsila - Gábor Orosz - Orsolya Király - Róbert Urbán - Adrienn Ujhelyi - Éva Jármi - Mark D. Griffith - Zsuzsanna Elekes - Zsolt Demetrovics: Psychoactive Substance Use and Problematic Internet Use as Predictors of Bullying and Cyberbullying Victimization, Int J Ment Health Addiction (2018) 16:466–479, p: 475.