

# Cyberbullying Exposure and Rejection Sensitivity as Predictors of Social Withdrawal

Ahmet. Kutsal<sup>1</sup>, Syarifah. Maisarah<sup>2\*</sup>, Camila. Viteri<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Department of Psychology, Necmettin Erbakan University, Seydisehir Vocational School, Konya, Türkiye

<sup>2</sup> Faculty of Social Sciences & Liberal Arts, Department of Psychology, UCSI University, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

<sup>3</sup> Department of Educational Psychology, Universidad San Francisco de Quito, Quito, Ecuador

\* Corresponding author email address: [symaisarah@ucsiuniversity.edu.my](mailto:symaisarah@ucsiuniversity.edu.my)

## Editor

## Reviewers

Azizuddin Khan

Professor, Psychophysiology  
Laboratory, Department of  
Humanities and Social Sciences  
Indian Institute of Technology  
Bombay, Maharashtra, India  
aziz@hss.iitb.ac.in

**Reviewer 1:** Azade Abooei

Department of Counseling, Faculty of Humanities, University of Science and Art,  
Yazd, Iran. Email: [a.aboeei@tea.sau.ac.ir](mailto:a.aboeei@tea.sau.ac.ir)

**Reviewer 2:** Roodabeh Hooshmandi

Department of Psychology and Counseling, KMAN Research Institute, Richmond  
Hill, Ontario, Canada. Email: [roodhooshmandi@kmanresce.ca](mailto:roodhooshmandi@kmanresce.ca)

## 1. Round 1

### 1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

Consider providing numerical values or effect sizes in the abstract to substantiate the claim that rejection sensitivity was the "stronger predictor." This enhances transparency and scientific rigor.

You might strengthen this paragraph by integrating a specific psychological theory of adolescent development (e.g., Erikson's psychosocial stages) to ground the behavioral interpretation.

The rationale for selecting Malaysian adolescents is not well-articulated. Expand on why this population is particularly relevant for studying cyberbullying and RS (e.g., digital media penetration, collectivist culture).

Clarify whether the exclusion of the perpetration scale was based on psychometric concerns or conceptual alignment with your study goals.

Consider providing a formula or example item to illustrate how the composite score is derived. This helps validate interpretability for readers unfamiliar with RSQ scoring.

Include grade-level distribution or SES indicators to deepen the demographic profile, especially since socioeconomic factors could influence exposure to cyberbullying.

The inclusion of skewness/kurtosis or histograms would offer a more robust assessment of variable distributions and normality.

Add details about assumption checks for multivariate normality or outlier influence, as these are critical for regression integrity.

Though the F-statistic is strong, the manuscript should include a short interpretation in the text about what this value implies about model fit beyond significance.

Explicitly compare beta values and explain what a 0.21 or 0.17 unit increase in social withdrawal means in practical or clinical terms.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

### 1.2. *Reviewer 2*

Reviewer:

It would improve clarity to distinguish between general RS and context-specific subtypes (e.g., appearance-based, race-based, or online RS) earlier, rather than waiting until paragraph five.

The reference to cognitive distortions is appropriate, but the article would benefit from citing a cognitive-behavioral theory or model (e.g., Beck's cognitive triad) to anchor the argument.

This mention of biological variables is underdeveloped. Consider briefly acknowledging how hormonal or genetic vulnerability may interact with psychological traits like RS to affect social outcomes.

Be cautious with wording—"confirm" implies causality. Given the cross-sectional design, rephrase to reflect correlation/prediction rather than confirmation.

Consider integrating more Asian-region literature or local Malaysian studies to strengthen contextual validity.

This interpretation is strong. However, support it by referencing a trait theory (e.g., Five-Factor Model) or adding psychometric reliability data from your sample.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

## 2. Revised

Editor's decision: Accepted.

Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.