




The Relationship Between Cyberbullying and Suicidal Ideation in Adolescent Girls The Mediating Role of Perceived Maternal Acceptance and Perceived Burdensomeness

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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

The authors rely heavily on the Interpersonal Theory of Suicide to justify the mediating role of perceived burdensomeness. However, thwarted belongingness, which is a core construct of the same theory, was omitted from the model. The manuscript should provide a stronger theoretical rationale for excluding this construct and explain why perceived burdensomeness was prioritized over other interpersonal theory components.

In the paragraph discussing maternal acceptance, the authors argue that “maternal acceptance appears particularly important during adolescence.” This assertion is theoretically plausible; however, no justification is provided for excluding paternal acceptance. Given contemporary family systems perspectives, the rationale for focusing exclusively on mothers should be elaborated in greater depth.

The final paragraph of the Introduction identifies several gaps in the literature; however, the manuscript does not formulate explicit research hypotheses. I recommend adding a dedicated paragraph presenting directional hypotheses for all direct and indirect pathways, which would substantially improve the theoretical coherence of the SEM model.

Table 3 reports significant direct effects for all hypothesized pathways. However, confidence intervals for these standardized coefficients are not provided. Reporting 95% confidence intervals alongside β coefficients would improve statistical interpretation and align with current SEM reporting standards.

The mediation analysis presented in Table 4 reports indirect effects and bootstrap confidence intervals. Nevertheless, the manuscript does not compare the relative strength of the two mediators. A formal comparison of indirect effects would clarify whether perceived burdensomeness or maternal acceptance is the more influential mechanism linking cyberbullying to suicidal ideation.

Authors revised and uploaded the document.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

In the Study Design and Participants subsection, the authors indicate that “several educational districts of Tehran were randomly selected,” yet no information is provided regarding the exact number of districts, schools, classes, or participants selected at each stage of sampling. Providing a detailed sampling flowchart or sampling procedure description would improve methodological transparency and reproducibility.

The authors report that students with “severe psychiatric disorders” were excluded. However, no information is provided regarding how these disorders were identified (clinical interview, school records, self-report, or parental report). The exclusion procedure should be described more rigorously because it directly affects sample validity.

The manuscript reports that data from 520 participants were collected but only 498 were retained for analysis. The statement “after screening for missing data, response inconsistencies, and multivariate outliers” is insufficient. Please report the exact number of cases removed for each reason and specify the criteria used for identifying multivariate outliers (e.g., Mahalanobis distance threshold).

A significant methodological concern arises from the use of the Cyberbullying Scale. The authors state that only the second section assessing “cyberbullying perpetration behaviors” was administered, yet the theoretical framework repeatedly discusses cyberbullying exposure and victimization. The manuscript should justify why perpetration rather than victimization was measured and explain how this aligns with the study’s conceptual model.

The psychometric evaluation of the instruments focuses primarily on fit indices and internal consistency. Given the use of latent variable modeling, additional evidence of convergent validity (e.g., AVE values) and discriminant validity (e.g., Fornell-Larcker criterion or HTMT ratios) should be reported.

The Data Analysis section indicates that assumptions of normality, linearity, multicollinearity, and multivariate outliers were examined. However, the manuscript does not present the results of these diagnostic analyses. Including VIF values, tolerance statistics, skewness/kurtosis ranges, and outlier diagnostics would strengthen confidence in the SEM findings.

In the Findings section, demographic information is relatively limited. Variables such as socioeconomic status, parental education, family income, school type (public/private), and academic achievement may be highly relevant to both cyberbullying and suicidal ideation. Consider providing a more comprehensive demographic profile and examining potential group differences.

Table 1 demonstrates statistically significant correlations among all study variables. However, the manuscript does not discuss the possibility of common method variance resulting from exclusive reliance on self-report measures. I recommend conducting and reporting a Harman single-factor test or a more advanced common method bias assessment.

Although Table 2 presents acceptable global fit indices, no information is provided regarding factor loadings of the observed indicators. The measurement model would be substantially strengthened by including a table reporting standardized factor loadings, standard errors, and significance values for all indicators.

The paragraph introducing Figure 1 states that “the model accounted for a substantial proportion of variance in suicidal ideation,” yet no R^2 values are reported. The authors should explicitly report explained variance for suicidal ideation, perceived burdensomeness, and perceived maternal acceptance.

Authors revised and uploaded the document.

2. Revised

Editor’s decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief’s decision: Accepted.