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## Algerian Influencers And Phenomena Of Cyberbullying An Analytical Study Of Two Youtube Vlogs

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**Résumé :** Cette étude descriptive et quantitative se penche sur l'escalade inquiétante du cyberharcèlement dans les sphères de la recherche psychologique et sociale, soulignant son expansion via les médias numériques et les contenus produits par les influenceurs. Ce phénomène préjudiciable, prévalent sur de multiples plateformes, engendre des conséquences psychosociales notables. De nature récurrente historiquement, sa prévalence s'est accentuée avec l'adoption des technologies avancées et l'essor des réseaux sociaux.

Cette recherche explore les manifestations du cyberharcèlement chez les influenceurs algériens à travers une analyse de contenu de leurs vlogs pour identifier la nature et les stratégies du cyberharcèlement observé. Les analyses révèlent une présence fréquente d'humour dépréciatif visant l'apparence physique, accompagnée d'insultes intrusives et de violations de la vie privée. Contrairement aux formes traditionnelles de harcèlement, le cyberharcèlement se caractérise par une propagation rapide et une persistance accrue, une diffusion facilitée par la permanence numérique des contenus et leur impact significatif sur les utilisateurs. L'étude met également en évidence une victimisation disproportionnée des femmes, cibles de tactiques telles que la diffamation, le harcèlement électronique et l'exclusion sociale.

**Mots-clés :** Influenceurs, Cyberharcèlement, YouTube, Vlogs, Algérie, Médias numériques.

**Les Influenceurs Algériens Phénomènes De Cyberharcèlement Algériens  
Étude Analytique De Deux Vlogs Sur Youtube**

**Abstract:** This quantitative descriptive study examines the burgeoning issue of cyberbullying within the domains of psychological and social research, with a particular focus on its proliferation across digital media and content produced by influencers. Cyberbullying has become a dominant adverse phenomenon across various platforms, leaving profound psychological and social ramifications. Historically endemic, the prevalence of cyberbullying has been exacerbated by the integration of advanced technologies and online social networks.

This research explores the manifestations of cyberbullying among Algerian influencers, employing content analysis to elucidate the nature and strategies of cyberbullying in their vlogs. Findings indicate that such content often features derogatory humor targeting appearances, invasive name-calling, and privacy breaches. Cyberbullying distinguishes itself from traditional forms by its enhanced capacity for rapid dissemination and enduring impact, facilitated by the digital permanence of content and its profound influence on users. The study reveals that women are disproportionately targeted, employing tactics such as defamation, electronic harassment, and social exclusion.

**Keywords:** Influencers, Bullying, Cyberbullying, YouTube, Vlogs.

### **Introduction:**

The advent of online social networks has fundamentally transformed the landscape of internet functionality, catalyzing shifts towards interactive user engagement and content creation. This digital revolution has given rise to influencers – individuals who command significant digital followings and whose content often remains unregulated, potentially embedding negative influences particularly affecting youth and adolescents. This situation presents numerous ethical concerns.

While cyberbullying is not a novel occurrence, its proliferation has been significantly facilitated by digital technologies, which enhance its visibility and impact. Influencers, wielding considerable appeal, often perpetuate content that leverages digital tools for repeated personal attacks and scandal dissemination.

The pervasive nature of cyberbullying has been documented globally, with virtual environments offering a conducive platform for its perpetration. According to the Digital Report Algeria 2024, YouTube ranks as the second most frequented website in Algeria with 22,88 million users, indicating a substantial user base susceptible to cyberbullying influences.

Although social and psychological research has traditionally dominated the discourse, this study adopts a media-centric perspective to probe into the cyberbullying content propagated by Algerian influencers on YouTube, guided by the following questions:

- 1-What publishing methodologies are employed by influencers Youcef Bardahm and Si FaTeH?
- 2-What forms of cyberbullying are discernible among these two Algerian influencers?

- 3-What distinctive characteristics define cyberbullying among these influencers?
- 4-What are the predominant cyberbullying themes within the sampled content?
- 5-What strategies underpin the cyberbullying content produced by these influencers?

### **Objectives of the Study:**

The primary aim of this study is to delineate the cyberbullying content dynamics among Algerian influencers by:

- Identifying the specific publishing practices utilized in the vlogs of Youcef Bardahm and SI FATEH.
- Unveiling the strategic approaches embraced by influencers within their cyberbullying narratives.
- Documenting the principal cyberbullying themes prevalent in the influencers' content.
- Examining the prevalent forms of cyberbullying within the study sample.

### **Significance of the Study:**

This study is significant due to the extensive impact and popularity of influencers, coupled with the escalating prevalence of cyberbullying in digital content. It aims to provide a nuanced understanding of cyberbullying as a contemporary aggressive communicative phenomenon within the digital sphere, thereby contributing to the broader discourse on digital ethics and the mitigation of cyberbullying impacts.

### **Conceptual Definitions for the Study:**

#### **1. Influencers:**

Influencers on social media are a distinct group of digital content creators distinguished by their substantial online followings, which positions them as pivotal figures for brand collaborations (Duffy, 2020, p.1). These digital influencers, often considered micro-celebrities, have garnered extensive followings and typically utilize this social capital to access financial resources. They strategically engage with the algorithms that dictate social media visibility to expand their entrepreneurial ventures (Kelley Cotter, 2019, p.896).

#### **2. Bullying:**

Bullying is defined by Mousa and Mohamed Farhana as deliberate conduct intended to inflict physical, verbal, psychological, or sexual harm, typically by a more powerful individual against a weaker one (Ben Dada & Fariha, 2021, p.223). Rigbi describes bullying as comprising a desire to harm, harmful actions, a power imbalance, repetition, an unjust use of power, and a

clear enjoyment by the perpetrator in dominating and controlling the victim (Hassi & Charara, 2020, p.67). This definition underscores that bullying involves various forms of harm and is not necessarily the outcome of ongoing conflict but may be characterized by provocations, vulgar language, rumors, or feigned concerns. Victims often lack the ability to defend themselves due to the oppressor's strength or their own lack of psychological resilience (Al-Qahtani, 2023, p.71). The primary aim of bullying is to inflict harm, whether physical, psychological, emotional, or verbal, and can include threats of physical violence, extortion, civil rights violations, assault, or battery (Boumachta, 2021, p.155).

### 3. **Cyberbullying:**

Cyberbullying lacks a consensus definition due to the diversity in researchers' terminologies and the wide range of actions that constitute this form of aggression. Bill Belsey, a Canadian educator and anti-bullying activist, defines cyberbullying as the use of information and communication technologies to perpetuate deliberate, repeated, and hostile behavior by an individual or group, intended to harm others (Madouri & Zeghdoudi, 2020, p.15).

Grigg articulates that cyberbullying involves intentional harm through electronic means aimed at damaging individuals or groups, irrespective of their ages, and includes committing offensive acts such as contempt or other unwelcome behaviors (Grigg, 2010, p.143).

Miller and Hufstedler describe it as harassment executed via technological means on social media platforms such as MySpace, Facebook, emails, chat rooms, mobile messages, webcams, and blogs (Amro Mohamed, 2017, p.205).

In this study, cyberbullying is interpreted as an extension of traditional bullying through the modern medium of vlogs, which includes a series of repeated negative behaviors aimed at intentionally harming the victim in various forms.

### 4. **Vlogs:**

Fawzi Sharit defines visual blogging, or vlogging, as a format restricted to video content, with the term 'vlogger' referring to the content creator. The collection of these video blogs on social media platforms is termed the 'video sphere,' a concept first introduced in 2002 (Hamal & Messaadi, 2021, p.85).

For the purposes of this study, 'vlogs' encompasses an array of YouTube videos that broadly address the issue of cyberbullying and are posted by Algerian content creators.

**Methodological Approach:**

This study adopts a quantitative descriptive framework, commonly referred to as "Descriptive Studies." This approach is integral to the empirical examination of phenomena, specifically analyzing current states of events, phenomena, attitudes, and opinions to derive insightful conclusions. Such studies are prevalent in media and communication sciences due to their efficacy in examining direct interactions between the public and media (Abdel Hamid, 1998, p.1).

The research utilizes a descriptive survey method, characterized by its focus on recording, analyzing, and interpreting phenomena based on adequately gathered data concerning the phenomena and their elements. This method involves systematic procedures that define the data types, sources, and collection methods (Abdel Hamid, 1993, p.123). The objective is to document and analyze manifestations of cyberbullying within Algerian influencers' vlogs, using content analysis as the primary tool. Content analysis, as conceptualized by Bernard Berelson, is a method aimed at providing a systematic, objective, and quantitative description of the manifest content of communications (Angers, 2006, p.137).

Mohamed Abdel Hamid further elaborates that content analysis involves methodological steps designed to uncover latent meanings and the relational dynamics of these meanings through an objective and organized quantitative scrutiny of the content's manifest attributes (Ben Morsli, 2010, p.98).

Given the specific research needs and objectives, it was necessary to tailor the content analysis tool for application in a context differing from traditional media, namely social networks and video blogs. This adjustment addresses the unique presentation and content forms in these mediums. Despite a dearth of studies specifically addressing content analysis in social networks and blogs, we developed an electronic content analysis form that adheres to standard content analysis methodology while accommodating the medium's characteristics and the study's aims. Operational definitions were crafted for each analytical category to ensure precise measurement and control, as outlined below:

**1. Formal Categories - How it is conveyed:**

These categories pertain to the format in which the blogs are presented on YouTube, focusing specifically on those managed by Youcef Bardahm and Si FaTeH.

- **Language Category:**

This identifies the nature of the language employed, differentiating among Algerian colloquial, a mix of colloquial and French, and blends of colloquial with other dialects and languages.

- **Presentation Style Category:**

This examines the methods used to display blog content, including animation, the use of real-life characters, and videos accompanying text or images.

## 2. **Content Categories - What is conveyed:**

These categories delve into the specifics of the vlog content within the study sample:

- **Topic Category:**

This identifies the themes of bullying discussed in the vlogs, such as bullying against celebrities, educators, football players, and certain political issues.

- **Forms of Bullying Category:**

This defines the types of bullying employed by Algerian influencers in their content, segmented into electronic harassment, electronic aggression, defamation, and the exposure of victims.

- **Bullying Strategies Category:**

This categorizes the tactics of cyberbullying as depicted in the vlogs, including satire and electronic dialogue, expressions of rage and contempt, and the use of humor.

### **The study sample :**

Sampling in scientific research involves selecting a representative segment of the research population through defined methods to ensure an accurate reflection of the larger group. Sampling is particularly useful in large populations where comprehensive studies are impractical due to logistical, cost, or time constraints, allowing for the extrapolation of the sample findings to the broader phenomenon (Haddad, 2019, p.33).

For the analytical part, a systematic random sampling method was chosen as it is most suited to this type of study. This approach begins with the random selection of an initial sample from the vlogs, followed by the selection of subsequent samples at consistent temporal intervals. Utilizing a cyclical method for systematic random sampling, the researcher is afforded the flexibility to choose each subsequent sample day based on the sequence established from the initial selection. This strategy results in the formation of an artificial week

constructed from the researcher's selections, thereby ensuring a structured and representative sampling across the study period.

The steps involved in selecting the analytical study sample were as follows:

1-Two vlogs were selected from YouTube, chosen for their high follower count and view rates, which align with the study's objectives. These vlogs are managed by Si FaTeH, with 1.99 million subscribers (available at: Si FaTeH's YouTube Channel), and Youcef Bardahm, with 1.16 million subscribers (available at: Youcef Bardahm's YouTube Channel).

2-The study spans a period of one and a half months, from February 15 to April 1, 2024.

3-A systematic sampling schedule was established, selecting four weeks per month for data collection. Sampling commenced on Saturday of the first week and continued with Sunday of the subsequent week, progressing similarly through the period. This schedule generated a synthetic sample comprising seven distinct days spread over eight weeks. On each designated day, a comprehensive 24-hour analysis was conducted, during which all videos uploaded during that day were evaluated to ensure a thorough assessment of the sample's content. This methodological approach facilitated a structured yet exhaustive examination of the digital content within the defined sampling framework.

## **Results of the study:**

### **1-Formal Categories:**

- **Language Utilization:**

The study delineates a significant predominance of Algerian colloquial dialect, constituting 56.66% of the vlog content, followed by a combination of Algerian colloquial and French at 24.88%, and a mix with other languages and dialects at 16.46%.

These findings underscore the prevalence of the colloquial dialect as the principal medium of communication, resonating with the everyday vernacular of the general populace and enhancing the accessibility of the vlogs' content. The linguistic diversity observed points to a broader cultural openness and a dynamic linguistic interchange within the blogosphere. Furthermore, the competitive presence of French, historically associated with urbanity and elevated social status within Algerian society, underscores a complex linguistic landscape that warrants further investigation into the Arabic language's deteriorating status amidst this linguistic diversity .

- **Presentation Style:**

Distinct differences in posting styles are evident between Youcef Bardahm and Si FaTeH. Bardahm adopts an innovative approach, integrating cartoon animations that merge reality with fictional representations to creatively address social issues. This method, characterized by the strategic alteration of narrative elements and enhanced by digital effects, facilitates an environment conducive to cyberbullying. Bardahm's vlog specifically targets various public figures and educators through recurring caricatures that encapsulate non-verbal bullying dynamics.

Conversely, Si FaTeH's approach involves portraying himself in diverse familial roles, subtly critiquing societal attitudes, especially towards women.

These results indicate a shift from the anonymity typically associated with cyberbullying to a more overt and personalized style of content delivery, suggesting the need for more robust regulatory measures to address these emerging forms of digital aggression.

## **2-Content Categories:**

### **-Cyberbullying Forms in Vlogs:**

- **Electronic Harassment:**

Electronic harassment is the predominant form of cyberbullying in the vlogs under study, encompassing a substantial segment of cyberbullying instances. It typically manifests as derogatory, demeaning, and harsh messages targeting victims, frequently public figures such as artists and social media influencers, including notable individuals like Warda Charlemonti, Elissa, and Ali Ben Cheikh, along with sports figures such as the national football team's coach and players. Youcef Bardahm's vlog utilizes animated representations to mimic and ridicule these figures, often extending to derogatory nicknaming. This form of harassment also encompasses discussions on personal histories and past behaviors of the victims, subtly fostering their social and digital exclusion.

- **Photo Posting:**

Displaying unflattering photos accounts for 41.50% of cyberbullying activities and is particularly enabled by the digital environment, which supports this aggressive behavior. This approach enhances the bullies' capabilities to inflict harm beyond verbal aggression, yielding impacts that are both deeper and more severe. The comparative study by V. Kubiszewski, R. Fontaine, K. Huré, and E. Rusch highlights the significant psychological and social impacts of cyberbullying, noting its potentially greater harm compared to traditional forms. Furthermore.



statistical evidence presented by Al-Chourok newspaper regarding the perception of cyberbullying in Algeria supports this thesis, indicating that 51% of respondents believe cyberbullying to be more harmful than conventional bullying forms (Boumachta, 2021, p. 155).

Si FaTeH leverages photos in his videos not merely for content illustration but to pique viewer curiosity, thereby enhancing engagement and profitability.

- **Defamation and Secret Disclosure:**

The disclosure of private or embarrassing information about celebrities constitutes 25.77% of observed cyberbullying forms in this study. This considerable percentage reflects a misuse of communication technologies in a Muslim society that traditionally values the sanctity of personal reputation and privacy, indicating a shift in sociocultural dynamics driven by technological misuse. This suggests a shortfall in effective socialization efforts, which should be addressed through more rigorous scientific studies rather than merely theoretical solutions.

- **Humiliation:**

This tactic, employed to diminish and degrade, particularly targets celebrities, adversely affecting their public image and popularity. Youcef Bardahm's publications, which target figures like Shiraz Al-Anabiya and Hicham Cook, among others, utilize this form of cyberbullying effectively, comprising 18.33% of the instances.

- **Electronic Anger:**

Comprising 15.33% of the cyberbullying forms, this category involves the dissemination of aggressive electronic messages in response to perceived slights or criticisms, highlighted by Bardahm's interactions with sports analysts and national football team players.

These cyberbullying categories can be systematically classified into two primary groups: verbal and non-verbal bullying. Each facet reinforces and amplifies the intended derogatory messages. Verbal bullying serves to consolidate the meaning of non-verbal communications, enhancing the coherence and impact of the messages. Conversely, non-verbal messages deepen the intended meanings, embedding them more firmly in the audience's consciousness, thereby exacerbating the psychological and social impacts of cyberbullying

### **Key Themes of Cyberbullying in the Content of Video Blogs in the Study Sample:**

- **Cyberbullying Against Celebrities:**

Analysis reveals that cyberbullying targeting celebrities, including influencers, artists, athletes, and other public figures, constitutes the most significant portion of the study's cyberbullying content. Notably, the data suggest a marked prevalence of cyberbullying against female celebrities compared to their male counterparts. The "ANNUAL BULLYING SURVEY 2020" by Ditch the Label reports that over a four-year period, women were targets of 56% of cyberbullying incidents, as opposed to 41% targeting men (Ditch the Label, 2020, p. 10).

This disparity underscores a broader societal issue where women are disproportionately victimized by cyberbullying, a trend that is particularly pronounced in developing and Arab nations due to distinct cultural and social dynamics.

- **Cyberbullying Against Educators and Football Players:**

This theme attracted considerable attention from Algerian influencers, accounting for 24.66% of cyberbullying interactions, particularly during the African Cup of Nations. The educator category, particularly within Youcef Bardahm's content, remains consistently present.

- **Cyberbullying Against Transgender Individuals:**

Cyberbullying targeting transgender individuals comprised 9.66% of the incidents. This behavior reflects widespread societal condemnation within the Algerian context, shaped by prevailing religious, cultural, and social norms. Influencers' responses often involve contempt and denigration, mirroring general societal attitudes towards this group.

### **Strategies Used in Cyberbullying Content Across Vlogs:**

- **Satire and Electronic Dialogue:**

These strategies constitute 41.66% of the adopted approaches within the analyzed content. Influencers utilize electronic dialogue to confront victims, often involving derogatory remarks and disclosure of personal details within a dialogic framework aimed at justifying online hostility. Satire serves as a prevalent format for this aggressive behavior, reflecting its analogues in direct confrontations.

- **Humor:**

Humor accounts for 39.66% of the strategies employed and is recognized as one of the more sophisticated techniques, requiring a higher degree of creativity than spontaneous behavior. This strategy is particularly evident in

Youcef Bardahm's vlog, which addresses social issues through a satirical lens, employing cartoon-style presentations to represent real-life scenarios.

- **Anger and Contempt:**

These strategies represent 17.68% of the content, signaling an escalation in aggressive behaviors within the Algerian digital milieu. The representation of cultural norms in the Algerian psyche often manifests in hostile online interactions, where verbal assaults are common responses to opposition or conflict. Research focused on cyberbullying victims highlights the enduring impacts of such behaviors, contrasting sharply with traditional bullying, which typically ceases once the victim leaves the physical environment of the conflict.

- **Characteristics of Cyberbullying in Algerian Influencers' Vlogs:**

Our analytical review identified several distinct characteristics:

**-Innovation in Terminology:** Influencers have developed new terms to articulate their cyberbullying tactics against various celebrities.

**-Visibility of Identity:** Contrary to studies suggesting that cyberbullies often conceal their identities, our findings indicate that the identities of cyberbullying influencers are explicitly clear. For example, in FaTeH's vlog, the influencer personally appears, and although Youcef Bardahm employs animated representations, his identity remains unobscured, evidenced by his public recognition by media outlets (El- Nahar Channel).

**-Absence of Oversight:** The virtual environment's lack of stringent oversight and the personalization of online spaces have facilitated the proliferation of hostile behaviors.

**-Technological Proficiency:** The influencers demonstrate advanced technological skills in the nuanced portrayal of non-verbal cyberbullying, especially evident in Youcef Bardahm's vlog, which effectively utilizes animated formats to satirize female celebrities.

**-Continuity and Virality:** Unlike traditional bullying, which can end once the victim enters a safe space, cyberbullying is characterized by its rapid dissemination and persistent presence online, which complicates efforts to control or mitigate its impact. The inherently viral nature of digital environments enables cyberbullying to spread swiftly and widely, with the potential to inflict long-lasting damage on victims as illustrated by the case of Bouchra Ogbi and Amira Ria.

**Main Results Summary:**

-Transformation of Sociocultural Dynamics: Cyberbullying by influencers marks a pivotal shift in the sociocultural fabric of Algerian society, illustrating a

divergence from traditional religious values. This cyber behavior typically includes ridiculing appearances and behaviors, name-calling, and violating personal privacy – actions contravening religious doctrines and cultural norms.

-Nature of Cyberbullying in New Media: Cyberbullying in digital platforms, especially in vlogging, aligns with traditional bullying in its intent to harm. However, it distinctively utilizes advanced communication technologies as conduits for fostering novel forms of aggression. This digital aggression is characterized by viral dissemination, sustained presence, and minimal oversight, contributing to its proliferation in an ostensibly transparent and unregulated environment.

-Manifestations of Cyberbullying by Influencers: Cyberbullying manifests in several forms through influencers, including electronic harassment, defamation, unauthorized disclosure of personal details, photos dissemination, and digital exclusion. These actions reflect a misuse of technological advancements.

-Strategic Communication in Cyberbullying Content: The communication strategies employed in cyberbullying content prominently include humor, electronic dialogue, satire, anger, and contempt. These tactics construct the cyberbullying narrative that perpetuates the behavior.

-Dominant Themes of Cyberbullying: Cyberbullying targeting celebrities from social media, the arts, and sports sectors predominates in Algerian vlogs, overshadowing issues like bullying against transgender individuals, educators, and athletes.

-Gender-Specific Targeting: A significant portion of cyberbullying is directed against female celebrities, highlighting the necessity for a gender-focused axiological analysis of the phenomenon.

-Innovation in Cyberbullying Terminology: The lexicon of new media has evolved, introducing specific terms like "clashing" and "bombing," which describe cyberbullying tactics.

### **Conclusion :**

This study concludes that vlogs by Algerian influencers contain substantial negative content. This trend stems from the extensive freedoms that modern technology grants users in producing and disseminating information without sufficient oversight. This environment has fostered the emergence of influencers – individuals with significant followings who wield influence not defined by clear standards but rather by the extent of their popularity. This situation has led to a widespread proliferation of cyberbullying, altering the sociocultural structure of societies, notably in Algeria, and steering them away from ingrained religious, social, and cultural values. The commonality of mocking, name-calling, and privacy intrusions in many influencers' contents

suggests that cyberbullying poses greater risks due to the lasting visibility and accessibility of digital content, which contrasts with traditional bullying that often ceases once the interaction ends.

Furthermore, the study identifies a variety of cyberbullying forms, from electronic harassment to social exclusion, employed through multiple strategic communications such as humor and electronic dialogue. These strategies result in profound psychological and social impacts on victims. Celebrities, particularly women, emerge as the primary targets, underscoring the need for a gender-focused examination of this phenomenon. The findings also reveal that cyberbullies often view themselves as moral arbiters, particularly over women's behavior, evaluating it against their subjective ideals of womanhood shaped by personal upbringing and cultural environment.

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