Peer Victimization (Externalizing Behaviors) and Psychological Adjustment among Adolescents:
Moderating Role of Non-Confrontation and Solution-Oriented Conflict Management Strategies

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Abstract

Adolescence is the period of transition between childhood and adulthood. In this period children are going through many changes including physical and psychological. Peer victimization is likely to develop psychological adjustment difficulties. The study's main objective is to explore the moderating role of conflict management strategies in peer victimization and psychological adjustment among adolescents. The sample was selected through a non-probability convenient sampling technique The sample comprised 500 adolescents from different educational institutions with an age range from 10-19 years. A cross-sectional design was used to study the relationship between the variables. The data was collected with the help of self-reported measures i.e., the Multidimensional Peer Victimization scale by Joseph and Stockton (2018), Resolving Conflicts in Relationship (RCR) by Thayer (2008), Youth Externalizing Behavior Screener (YEBS) by Aslam (2018). The results of the study show a significant association between study variables. Conflict resolution strategies emerge as a significant moderator between peer victimization and psychological adjustment. The findings of the study suggest that solution-oriented conflict management strategies tend to be a protective factor for victimized adolescents and non-confrontation conflict management strategies are helpful for adolescents' psychological adjustment.

Keywords: Psychological Adjustment, Victimization, Behavior, Conflict

1. Introduction

Adolescence is a stage of life between the ages of 10-19 (WHO, 2020). Adolescence is a time of rapid growth for an individual in terms of their physical, cognitive, and psychological maturation. Peer support holds a significant role in a healthy personality and psychological development just like that peer victimization aid in developing psychological adjustment difficulties. In order to combat this issue of peer victimization, conflict management strategies operate favorably such that victimized peers with increased abilities of conflict management suffer less than those with inferior conflict management skills (Marceau et al., 2015). Peer victimization might manifest in the form of abusive language, physical altercations, body shaming, name-calling, slang words, etc (Cooley & Fite, 2016; Desjardins & Leadbeater, 2011). Throughout cultures, peer victimization is widespread. Most often, it happens in classrooms or playgroups. 10%-30% of kids reported experiencing various types of bullying at school (Janicke et al., 2009).

In Pakistan, peer victimization is common among high school students, 85% of girls and 94% of boys reported victimization whereas 66% of girls and 85% of boys reported participation (Masood et al., 2022) which occurs in the form of psychological, physical or verbal abuse, hostility, insulting remarks and actions, negative signals, body language, seclusion from peers, and verbal or physical assault (Jan & Husain, 2015). Bullying at school or in any other academic setting has a damaging long-term effect on mental health, according to research done (Hong & Espelage, 2012). 20% to

30% of young adults suffer peer victimization, which is defined as recurring experiences with unpleasant actions on the part of one or more people at work (Brendgen, 2018). Bullying may happen at home or in the family when parents, relatives, or spouses are either bullied or bullies themselves (Ahmed, 2018). Many studies on teenage peer victimization have been conducted during the last three decades. Yet, bullying by siblings or even parents can result in peer victimization at home (Tucker et al., 2014). The lack of available assistance, even at home, it has greater detrimental effects on mental health (Espelage et al., 2012).

Conflict Management behaviors process of lessening the negative impact of numerous problems by overcoming the conflicting ideas brought on by peer victimization. Conflict is an inevitable part of adolescence. Adolescents' social environments expand to include more encounters, which raises the possibility of conflict in an increasing number of peer relationships (Madariaga et al., 2017). In such a situation, effective conflict management skills ought to be inculcated in adolescents to refrain from negative impacts. Effective conflict management results in positive impacts on adolescents' psychological well-being. Ineffective conflict resolution in adolescents has a negative impact on both mental and overall emotional health (Wang et al., 2020a). As a result, a significant developmental issue for teens is learning how to handle conflict (Keener et al., 2019). Adolescents with effective conflict management skills have higher psychological adjustment qualities than those with ineffective conflict resolution skills.

Peer victimization experiences, particularly in late adolescence, have been shown to negatively affect psychological adjustment (Cillessen & Lansu, 2015). Adolescent victims of peer victimization have been shown to have low levels of social competence, low levels of social acceptability, and overall inferior interactions with their classmates. They are also typically not well adjusted to the socioeconomic class they belong to (Bruyn et al., 2010).

Furthermore, peer victimization has been linked to indicators of psychological adjustment (McDougall & Vaillancourt, 2015a). Similar conclusions have been reached on the influence of peer victimization on self-perception. According to Glauer and Lohaus (2015), victimization is especially associated with low self-esteem and low self-efficacy in teenagers. Teenagers who have subservient peer interactions and low self-esteem are less likely to have satisfying, long-lasting relationships with others and to undergo psychological changes as a result, according to recent study (McDougall & Vaillancourt, 2015).

1.1 Conflict Management and Peer Victimization
Peer victimization causes psychological problems in adolescents, but these problems can be mitigated if they use a solvent dispute resolution method. Adolescents who use solution-oriented tactics are more likely to cope well with disagreements, which may enhance their peer connections (Q. Gao et al., 2017; Thayer et al., 2008). Adolescents who seem to be solution-oriented in crises, for example, tend to exhibit high care for others, which can progress to enhanced closeness in peer interactions (Betts et al., 2013; Branje et al., 2009; Q. Gao et al., 2017; Thayer et al., 2008), which benefits their psychological adjustment. Thus, problem-solving methods may assist victimized adolescents in creating and maintaining a reasonably pleasant atmosphere for their emotional well-being (Marroquín & Nolen-Hoeksema, 2015). It is not clear what circumstances lead adolescent students to decide to ask teachers for assistance when conflicts arise, but teachers can be one option for resolving issues at school (Aceves et al., 2010; Herge et al., 2016b; Povedano et al., 2015).

Researches have shown most students tend to go for solution-oriented reconciliation techniques when a conflict arises. Put collectively, it is acceptable to claim that a solution-oriented reconciliation technique may be a defensive feature that helps to lessen the negative consequences of peer victimization. Controlling and non-confrontation, on the other hand, may function as aggravating elements that exacerbate traumatized youth's psychological adjustment challenges. Furthermore, there are conflicting data about gender differences in peer victimization and psychological adjustment. One report revealed that victimization was more deeply linked with solitude in guys than in girls (Aceves et al., 2010; Herge et al., 2016b; Povedano et al., 2015). Most investigations found no gender differences in the relationships (Catterson & Hunter, 2010; Khan, 2014; Liu et al., 2018). In terms of conflict resolution tactics, when a disagreement is challenged, males tend to employ polite and respectful approaches, whilst females tend to utilize solution-oriented techniques (Wheeler et al., 2010).

1.2 Conflict Management and Psychological Adjustment
People can respond to disagreement in either a constructive or harmful way (Branje et al., 2009; Wang et al., 2020a). Constructive reconciliation often entails problem-solving actions such as relearning about the other person's interests and planning ahead of time on how to resolve the issue (Thomas, 1992; Wheeler et al., 2010). Destructive reactions, on the other hand, typically involve deception or aversive habits of conduct (Olson & Braithwaite, 2004), which can intensify disagreements and harm relational integrity (Overall & McNulty, 2017; Thayer et al., 2008).

In Pakistan, the component of conflict resolution is understudied, particularly in comparison to peers. The relevance of conflict resolution is demonstrated by the fact that throughout adolescence, the resolution of disagreements between friends and colleagues plays a critical role in the development of anxiety. Previous findings

further support that if the dispute is severe and long-lasting, it can lead to a variety of mental health issues (Bano et al., 2019). Three major conflict management techniques: solution orientation, controlling, and non-confrontation, were employed in the majority of conflict research (Kim-Jo et al., 2010; Thayer et al., 2008; Wheeler et al., 2010). Amongst the tactics, solution-orientation is seen to be the most beneficial (Thayer et al., 2008; Wheeler et al., 2010). It involves actions such as direct discussion regarding disputes that try to find a settlement to the problem. Researchers discovered that a solution-oriented methodology is likely to make a large and favorable impact on people's quality of life (Marceau et al., 2015; Wang et al., 2020a).

1.3 Psychological Adjustment and Peer Victimization

Belonging to a peer group is important for a person's psychological development throughout adolescence, although in certain circumstances this cannot be achieved owing to the unfriendly conduct of peers. The term "hostile attitude" encompasses a variety of behaviors, such as excluding someone from participation in group activities or spreading untrue stories, in addition to physical, verbal, emotional, and psychological bullying (Espelage et al., 2013). The psychological adjustment a person may have made with the help of a peer group is obscured by this peer victimization. Also, being victimized by peers reduces the likelihood of subsequent psychosocial adjustment for the teenager (Espelage et al., 2012). Peer victimization and bullying have been associated to a worse degree of psychosocial adjustment, according to several studies, despite the fact that many reasons can cause poor psychosocial adjustment (Nansel et al., 2001a).

Numerous studies have demonstrated that bullying and victimization results poor psychosocial adjustment, particularly emotional issues and behavioral issues (Arseneault et al., 2006; Craig, 1998; Nansel et al., 2001; You & Bellmore, 2012). Studies that demonstrate the reverse direction of effect are also available. In addition to this, Glew et al., (2005) discovered that kids with emotional issues have more chances to face various forms of bullying. Veenstra et al., (2005) shown that adjustment issues including aggression and social isolation were closely associated to bullying in the same field. Furthermore, Wolke et al. (2000) discovered that children who experienced direct bullying (such as punching, kicking, or shoving) had much higher rates of behavioral issues, hyperactivity and sensitivity, conduct issues, and less prosocial behavior.

1.4 Transactional Model of stress

Theories of emotion based on transaction model of stress claims that appraisal, which is defined as "a judgement of the personal importance of a specific interaction between the individual and the environment," mediates all emotional experiences (Lazarus 1991, p. 820). People utilize two types of assessment to determine whether an experience is stressful (Mitchell et al., 2015).

In the initial assessment, individuals understand if the incident is deleterious to their wellbeing or beneficial. People evaluate their competence to address the situation during secondary appraisal. Assessments are influenced by both person and environment elements, i.e., within a specific encounter, person and environment traits interact to increase or decrease the likelihood of particular appraisals. After that, appraisals result in coping behaviors, which are actions taken to control both the environmental demands (problem-focused coping) and the feelings brought on by those demands (emotion-focused coping). As people learn new knowledge, coping actions in turn lead to reappraisals, which in turn inspire further coping behaviors. As a result, evaluation and coping have an ongoing mutually beneficial relationship (Lazarus & Folkman 1984 as cited in M. E. Mitchell et al., 2015).

1.5 The Dual concern Model

The Dual Concern Model (Blake & Mouton) serves as the foundation for the majority of conflict management research. The model essentially contends that there are two factors that influence people's behavioral intentions with regard to conflict-handling tactics (Azeredo et al., 2015; De Dreu et al., 2000; Pruitt & Carnevale, 1993; van Breukelen et al., 2004). Five conflict management styles are then defined by these dimensions of "concern about self" and "concern about other" (a) integrating-high concern for self and for other, (b) avoiding-low concern for self and for other, (c) dominating-high concern for self and low concern for other, (d) obliging-low concern for self and high concern for other, (e) compromising-moderate concern for self and for other. According to the model, people choose between several conflict management philosophies when they are faced with conflict situations based on these two concerns, and their level of worry. The notion is consistent with our study, which shows that the frequency of conflicts and conflict resolution strategies resemble victimization.

2. Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework of this study shows how conflict resolution predict and moderates the relationship between adolescent psychological adjustment and peer victimization. Adolescent peer victimization leads to inefficient psychological adjustment, which may be resolved by employing efficient conflict management techniques.
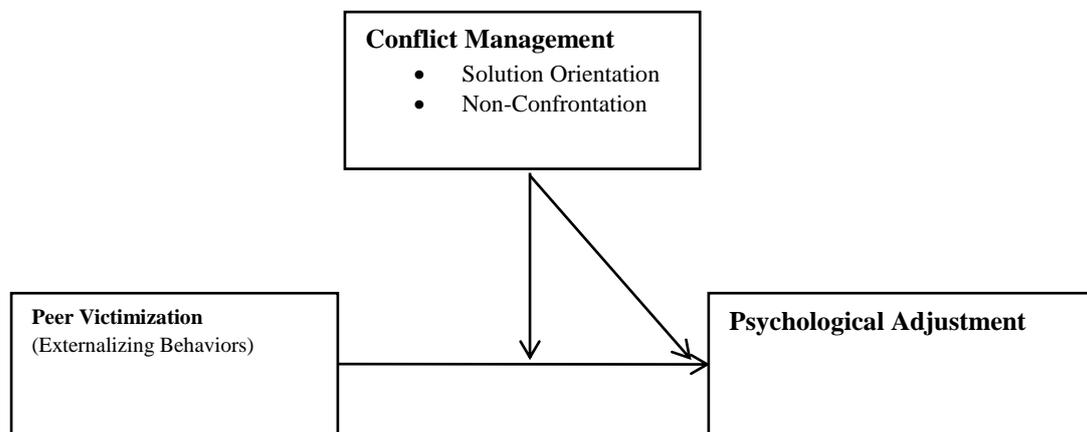
Fig. 1 Conceptual Model of the study

3. Rationale

A significant stressor that can affect students' mental and physical health is peer victimization. Peer victimization is more common in middle school or the early adolescent years since this is the period when kids are developing the self-definition and self-esteem that will affect their adult lives. Therefore, the rationale of the study is to better understand teenage peer victimization, its impact on psychological adjustment, and the contribution of conflict management techniques to the management of these effects. Peer victimization has been extensively studied, but in the west. In order to coincide with western research, there is a vacuum in the literature which could be filled by this study. Discussing about Pakistan, peer victimization or bullying is not treated as it should be since it has a far greater impact on adolescents' psychological well-being than it did in the past. Adolescents are seeking therapies due to peer victimization and lack conflict resolution skills. Ineffective psychological adjustment is the outcome of a lack of conflict management abilities. So, this research is carried out to examine such teenagers' experiences using certain measures. Teenagers from academic institutions are subjected for data collection. This study further explores the different strategies used by adolescents to overcome conflict raised by peer victimization and effect of these strategies on their psychological adjustment. In terms of peer victimization and dispute resolution techniques, eastern and western cultures differ significantly from one another. The ways in which victims are exploited differ between eastern and western cultures. Studies undertaken in western cultures that demonstrate peer victimization is more common among boys also support this. Yet, girls and women are more susceptible to peer victimization and manipulation in eastern culture. This study's methodology assisted in identifying cultural variations in peer victimization and dispute resolution techniques.

4. Method

Objectives

The objectives of this research include:

1. To find the association and predictive role of peer victimization, conflict Management and psychological adjustment among adolescents.
2. To explore the moderating effect of conflict management strategies on the association between peer victimization and psychological adjustment among adolescents.

Hypotheses

Hypotheses of the current study are:

1. There is positive relationship between peer victimization and psychological adjustment among adolescents.
2. Conflict management strategy (non-confrontation & Solution-oriented) will moderate the effect of peer victimization (Externalizing Behaviors) and psychological adjustment among adolescents.

Sample

The sample comprised of 500 adolescents from different educational institutes by using convenient sampling technique. The inclusion criterion comprised of age range 10-19 (WHO, 2020).

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

1. Adolescents ages ranging from 10-19 were included.
2. Adolescents who were going to any educational institute were included.
3. Adolescents above age 19 were excluded from the sample.

Operational definitions

1. Peer Victimization

Peer victimization is the brutal behavior of peers towards other peers in group or classroom. This behavior can be less or more intense. It involves ragging, bullying, racial comments, unprovoked physical fights etc. Peer victimization is the

intentional use of authority by one or more peers on a regular basis in an effort to cause harm or discomfort on another person (Olweus, 1993).

2. Conflict Management
The ability or practice of normalizing any form of issue is known as conflict management. Conflict management lessens the adverse effects of arguments in a circumstance that creates discord. The term "conflict management" refers to a procedure used to resolve a disagreement, argument, or other type of conflict between individuals or groups (Putnam, 1983; Thayer, 2008).

4. Psychological Adjustment
A person's psychological adaptation to a shift or event that alters their way of life is known as psychosocial adjustment (Anderson, Keith, & Novak, 2002). Psychological adjustment describes one's level of functioning in daily life and their subjective sensation of discomfort (Arslan, 2017).

5. Instruments
5.1 The Multidimensional Peer Victimization Scale (Joseph, S., & Stockton, H. 2018)
A 24-item self-report survey called the Multidimensional Peer Victimization Scale (MPVS) was developed. This scale's subscales include: (1) Physical victimization: examining how often the child has experienced physical harm, such as being struck or kicked, (2) Verbal victimization: examining verbal abuse, such as calling names or making fun of, (3) Social Manipulation: Using information about certain children's bad social actions to incite others against the child; (4) and property attacks, which include issues related to the loss or theft of goods (5) Electronic Victimization (6) Social Rebuff. Participants were asked to rate how frequently they had each of the victimization experiences throughout the school year on a three-point Likert scale (0 = not at all, 1 = once, and 2 = more than once). Scores on the victimization subscale vary from 0 to 8, while total victimization scores can range from 0 to 48. Higher ratings show that a youngster has experienced more peer victimization occurrences. Cronbach's alpha coefficient for physical victimization a=0.78, for verbal victimization a=0.78, for social manipulation a=0.81, for attacks on property a=0.79, for electronic a=0.81 for social rebuff a=0.84.

5.2 Resolving Conflict in Relationships (RCR) (Thayer, 2008)
The scale used to assess conflict management is self-reported. Non-confrontation, solution-orientation, and control are its three subscales. It has 29-items in total. A five-point rating scale with the options (1 = Not at all, 2 = A little, 3 = Occasionally, 4 = Quite a little, and 5 = Very often) were required from respondents to choose a response. For non-confrontation, Cronbach's alpha reliability is a =.79, for solution-orientation, a =.83, and for control, a =.76.

5.3 Youth Externalizing Behavior Screener (Gökmen Arslan, 2018)
Youth Externalizing Behavior Screener (YEBS) is A 12-item scale designed to measure external problems of psychological adjustment. It has three subscales; conduct problems, hyperactivity and attention problems. The respondent is asked to rate on a four-point rating scale, possible answers included (1 = almost never, 2 = Sometimes, 3 = Often and 4 = Almost Always). Internal consistency reliability coefficient of YEBS is .72 to .83. For subscale Conduct Problems is a = .72, Hyperactivity is a = .77 and for Attention Problems is a = .83.

6. Research design
A cross-sectional design was used to study the relationship between peer victimization, psychological adjustment and conflict Management among adolescents.

7. Procedure
For carrying out a Quantitative Research topic "Role of Peer Victimization and Conflict Management in Psychological Adjustment among Adolescents" was selected. For data collection participants were selected from different schools and colleges. Participants age ranging from 10 to 19 years old (Adolescents) were selected through non-probability convenient sampling. Informed consent was taken from participants over the age of 16 while consent form was taken from parents below age 16. They were given right to withdraw at any point. They were ensured that their confidentiality will be maintained.

8. Ethical Consideration
Research received "Institutional Review Board" approval (IRB). The participants received informed consent that including information about the study, their ability to withdraw consent at any time, and the confidentiality of the information they submitted. The participants were given the assurance that their information would only be utilized for academic reasons.

9. Results

Table 1 Descriptive statistics and correlation among multidimensional peer victimization scale, resolving conflicts in relationship scale, youth externalizing behavior screener among adolescents (N=500)

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1.Physical	5.62	1.12	-													
2. Verbal	5.61	1.38	-.31	-												
3. Social	5.66	1.47	-.61	.18**	-											
4.Property	5.61	1.52	-.11*	.07	-.00	-										
5. Electronic	6.18	1.11	-.09	-.12**	-.03	-.10*	-									
6. Social rebuff	5.95	1.21	.29**	.03	.01	-.03	.14**	_								
7. Non confrontation	39.63	4.34	.06	.07	.02	.02	-.06	.02	_							
8. Solution oriented	35.16	4.33	.01	-.08	-.01*	-.09*	-.08*	-.01	-.03	_						
9. Control	39.62	3.81	-.05	-.18**	-.08	-.04	-.24	.05	-.05	.29**	_					
10. Conduct problem	14.24	2.10	-.07	.12**	.20**	.09*	-.02	-.31**	.08	-.07	-.09**	-.10*	-.05	-		
11. Hyper-activity	8.34	1.41	.13**	.16**	.06	.01	-.07	-.03	.13**	.07	-.01	-.17**	.02	.14**	_	
12. Attention problem	13.08	1.56	.01	.17**	.03	-.01	-.11*	-.05	.15**	.05	.03	.01	.11*	.11*	.25**	-

*p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001

Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics and correlation among variables under study. It also reflects that solution-oriented conflict management has weak negative correlation with social victimization, attacks on property and electronic victimization. While control conflict management has negative correlation with verbal victimization. Externalizing behaviors (Conduct problem, hyperactivity and attention problem) have correlation with conflict management strategies.

Table 2 Moderating effects of conflict resolution strategies (Non-Confrontation) on the relationship between peer victimization and psychological adjustment (externalizing behavior) among adolescents (N=500)
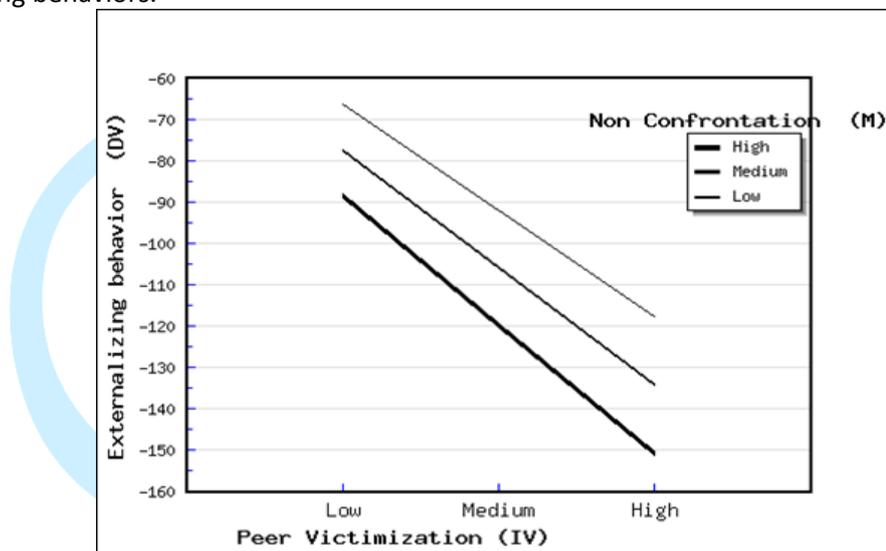
	Externalizing Behavior			
			95% CI	
Predictors	*B*	t	LL	UL
Constant	35.71	256.7***	35.44	35.98
PV	-.32	-.7.48***	-.41	-.02
NC	.12	3.81***	.05	.18
PV*NC	-.07	-6.84***	-.09	-.05
R^2	.17			
ΔR	.78			
F	34.2			
ΔF	46.71			

***p<.000, **p<.01, *p<.05

Note PV=Peer victimization, NC= Non Confrontation

Tables 2 displays that conflict management strategy (Non confrontation) is significant moderator for peer victimization and psychological adjustment (externalizing behavior). Further, table reports that interaction between peer victimization and non-confrontation management strategy serves as a negatively significant predictor for psychological adjustment (externalizing behavior).

Figure 2 indicates that if the adolescent is high on peer victimization and non-confrontation strategy then he/she has low externalizing behaviors.

Fig. 2 Graphical representation of moderating effect of conflict resolution strategies (non-confrontation) between peer victimization and externalizing behaviors

Table 3 Moderating effects of conflict resolution strategies (solution oriented) on the relationship between peer victimization and psychological adjustment (externalizing behavior) among adolescents (N=500)
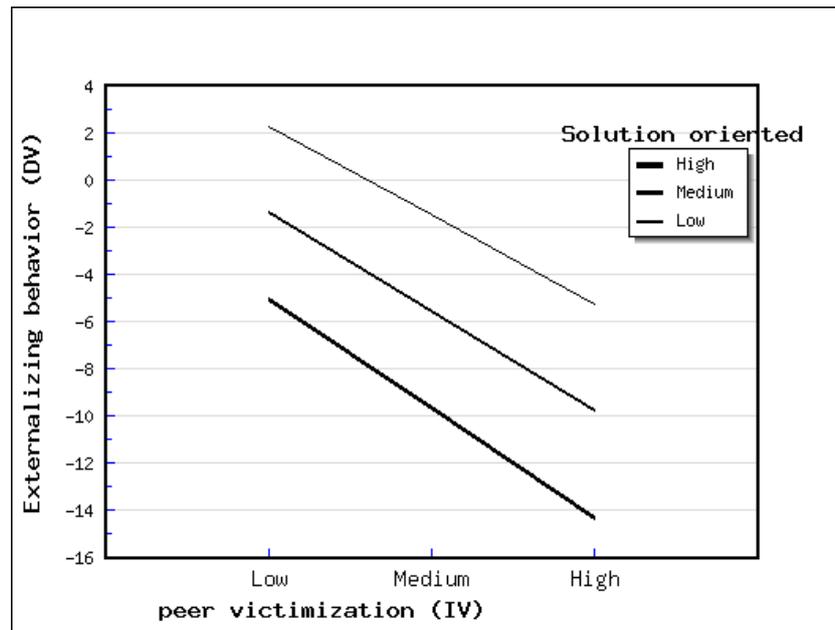
	Externalizing Behavior			
			95% CI	
Predictors	*B*	t	LL	UL
Constant	35.74	244.0***	35.45	36.02
PV	-.23	-5.30***	-.32	-.15
SO	.09	2.70**	.02	.15
PV*SO	-.03	-3.74***	.01	.05
R^2	.09			
ΔR	.25			
F	18.1			
ΔF	13.9			

***p<.000, **p<.01, *p<.05

Note PV=Peer Victimization, SO=Solution Oriented

Tables 3 displays that conflict management strategy (solution oriented) is significant moderator for peer victimization and psychological adjustment (externalizing behavior). Further, table reports that interaction between peer victimization and solution-oriented management strategy serves as a negatively significant predictor for psychological adjustment (externalizing behavior).

Figure 3 indicates that if the adolescent is high on peer victimization and solution- oriented strategy then he/she has low externalizing behaviors.

Fig. 3 Graphical representation of moderating effect of conflict resolution strategies (solution oriented) between peer victimization and externalizing behaviors

10. Discussion

In the current study we investigated the role of peer victimization and conflict management in psychological adjustment of adolescents. It was hypothesized "there will be negative relationship between peer victimization and conflict management style (solution-oriented)". Results showed that subscales of peer victimization such as social victimization, attacks of property and electronic victimization is negatively correlated to solution-oriented conflict management styles. Similarly, control conflict management has negative correlation with verbal victimization. A research conducted by(Spivak; 2016) in which they investigated the different conflict management styles with their relationship to the bullying and cyber victimization of high school adolescents. They reported that adolescents who use more solution oriented conflict management style when they have problems with their peers have at low risk of getting bullied by their peers as compared to the adolescents who used more aggressive approach. Another study conducted by (Özgüç & Tanrıverdi;2018) confirmed the results of study conducted by Spivak. They also stated that ignoring the conflict generated among peer is also an important factor of increasing peer victimization cases.

Psychological adjustment will likely to be predicted by peer victimization and conflict management styles. Numerous studies have demonstrated the connection between peer victimization and a variety of adjustment issues, such as loneliness (Boivin & Hymel, 1997 as cited in Bergin and Pakenham, 2016), school-related dread, anxiety, or avoidance (Kumpulainen et al., 1998, as cited in mcdougall and Vaillancourt, 2015), depression, and low self-esteem. Hawker and Boulton's meta-analytic assessment of cross-sectional research that looked at relationships between peer victimization and measures of psychosocial maladjustment was published about a decade ago, in Hawker and Boulton (2000). Over 5,000 youngsters from 23 studies were included in their meta-analysis. The findings revealed that peer victimized children exhibit significantly greater levels of psychological issues, such as despair, loneliness, and anxiety, when compared to their classmates. Higher degrees of peer victimization were also associated with lower levels of social self-concept and overall self-esteem.. Similarly, Across the past ten years, a number of longitudinal studies have looked at relationships between psychological maladjustment indices and peer victimization over time, with time frames spanning from six months to two years (Bond et al., 2001; Dhami et al., 2005; Hanish & Guerra, 2002; Snyder et al., 2003). Recurring peer victimization has been linked in some studies to large long-term increases in maladjustment, but not in others, which have failed to document these relationships. In a similar vein, some research found no link between psychological maladjustment and significant increases in peer victimization (Hodges & Perry, 1999, as cited in Reijntjes et al., 2010), while others found a correlation. For instance, a connection between psychological issues and ensuing increases in victimization was not supported by Bond and colleagues' (2001) research. Recent studies exploring the cross-sectional and longitudinal relationships between peer victimization and psychological adjustment in children are discussed by Storch and Ledley (2005) in their narrative review.

Conflict resolution strategies buffer or boost the effect of peer victimization on psychological adjustment among adolescents." Significant results of moderation analysis are reported in the study. A study conducted by wang et al., (2020) support hypothesis. Results indicated that adolescents who used solution-oriented strategy in response to bully and less likely to experience psychological difficulties. On the other side, non-confrontation act as exacerbating factor.

When suffering from bully, adolescents who used non confrontation strategy usually withdraws from the situation rather than solving problem and seeking help. On the same side it is interesting that non confrontation strategy does not increase externalizing behaviors (hyperactivity, conduct problems and attention problem).

11. Conclusion

Taken together with the previous studies, the current findings indicates that peer victimization is changeable risk factor for low psychological adjustment. Frequent victimization can increase the risk of many psychological problems. The findings of the current study indicates that peer victimization has negative relationship with psychological adjustment. Results of moderation analysis indicated that conflict management strategies (non-confrontation, solution-oriented and control) are moderator between association of peer victimization and psychological adjustment.

12. Limitations

The paucity of Pakistan-related literature on this subject. Therefore, further research is required to determine the factors that influence generativity, other types of life happiness, and social support. Additionally, the data came from the Rawalpindi and Islamabad twin cities. By replicating the current research in additional Pakistani cities, the generalizability of the study's findings will be improved. Personality factors in utilizing coping strategies were also ignored.

The current research favored a quantitative examination due to time constraints. However, it is necessary to get information from adolescents via subjective interviews because doing so will highlight many aspects of adolescents who have experienced peer victimization and will also uncover additional signs of psychological adjustment in adolescents.

13. Implications

The results of the current study have evident practical implications. Protective function of solution-oriented conflict resolution strategies suggests that there should be intervention programs to help victimized youth and solution-oriented strategies to improve psychological adjustment of adolescents. Because control and non-confrontation strategies may aggravate psychological problems of victimized adolescents. This research lays the foundation for future studies that should also investigate whether assess to supportive people can help to amend the negative effects of victimization. Researches over the years has reported that social support can protect people from the harmful effects of negative events in life such as victimization (Davidson & Demaray, 2007). Intervention programs could be designed for awareness about peer victimization, conflict management and psychological adjustment of adolescents.

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Declaration of Conflict

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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