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CYBERBULLYING AGAINST MINORITIES ON SOCIAL MEDIA – ARE YOUNG PEOPLE IN SOUTH EASTERN EUROPE WILLING TO REPORT?[1]

Abstract

The aim of the paper is to investigate how willing students in South Eastern Europe are to report cyberbullying against minorities on social media, whether this willingness differs in terms of socio-demographic characteristics, and its relation to the willingness to report other types of crime. The research was conducted by using the quantitative method on a nonprobability sample of 1419 students from the post-socialist countries of South Eastern Europe (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Hungary, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia). The results of the descriptive and multivariate statistical analysis indicate that students are, in the majority of cases, not willing to report cyberbullying against minorities on social media, and the willingness to report does not differ in terms of socio-demographic characteristics (place of birth, socio-economic status, field of study, year of study and college success), except for the country of residence, where differences have been determined.

Keywords: willingness to report crimes, cyberbullying, minorities, South Eastern Europe, students.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary network society, as coined by Castells (2000: 70), a significant part of everyday life takes place online. It is no wonder that social life is also represented on the Internet, the best example being online social media, which have been expanding rapidly (Bahondia, Khamparia, Pendey, & Prajapat, 2019).

Willard & Steiner (2007) define cyberbullying "harassment when occurring on the Internet, it involves the use of information and communication technologies such as mail, mobile

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phones, defamatory websites, blogs etc., with the intention of deliberately, repeatedly and hostile attacking an individual or a group of individuals" (according to Rad, Dughi, Roman, & Ignat, 2019: 3). Research on cyberbullying has increased considerably; yet, not in to the same extent in all parts of the world (Ruangnapakul, Salam, & Shawkat, 2019). Despite the increased research, experts point to the need for addition research since cyberbullying is a relatively new and insufficiently explored phenomenon (Kasahara, Houlihan, & Estrada, 2019).

Given that there is a lack of research on cyberbullying, this paper is devoted to that very phenomenon. A particular characteristic of this paper is that emphasis is placed on the reaction of the environment to cyberbullying, i.e. it investigates willingness to report cyberbullying, moreover, a special type of cyberbullying, the one against minorities, which has not yet been researched in South Eastern Europe and will certainly contribute to the scientific discourse on violence, cyberbullying and protecting minorities from violence.

2. REPORTING CRIME

Official crime records are the least reliable of all statistical indicators related to social matters (Giddens, 2007: 216). For that reason, there is a need for additional research on behavior related to reporting and willingness to report various types of crime. In order to present a more accurate picture of the crime that actually occurred, conducted are so-called victimization surveys, in which respondents are asked whether they were victims of a particular type of crime and whether they have reported it to the police (Abercrombie, Hill & Turner, 2008: 175; Haralambos & Holborn, 2002: 366; Wittebrood & Junger, 2002). According to such surveys, there are various factors affecting a person's decision to report a crime or not. For instance, there is a difference in willingness to report in terms of sociodemographic characteristics, i.e. women (Skogan, 1984; McAra & McVie, 2005; Beck & Yulia, 2004; Piliavin & Briar, 1964; Weitzer & Tuch, 2005), people of a lower socio-economic status (Avdija & Giever, 2012) or of younger age (Finkelhor & Ormord, 1999; Bickman, 1976; Low & Durkin, 2001; McAra & McVie, 2005; Hopkins & Newstone, 1992;) are less willing to report crime. Furthermore, people who trust the police more will be more willing to report crime (Avdija & Giever, 2010; Hart & Colavito, 2011; Pavlović & Vinogradac, 2019a; Sparks & et. al, 1977 according to Skogan, 1984, Tolsma, Blaauw & Grotenhuis, 2012; Levitt, 1998). The decision to report crime can also be affected by various emotional and cognitive factors, such as fear or shame (Gottfredson & Gottfredson, 1980; Greenberg & Beach, 2004), as well as conformity, in the sense that people with a higher level of conformity will be more willing to report crime (Pavlović & Cajner Mraović, 2019).

In addition, the type of crime also affects one's decision to report crime, for example property crimes are most reported (Bowles, Reyes & Garoupa, 2009; Cohen, 2005; Garoupa, 2001; Lee, Clancey & Fisher, 2013; Pavlović & Vinogradac, 2019a), whereas crimes against sexual freedom are the least reported (Akers & Kaukinenm, 2009; Bachman, 1998).

There are several models for studying willingness to report crime. The economic model assumes that, when deciding whether to report or not, a reporting person will take into account possible damage, i.e. gain from reporting. This models is mostly present in case of property crimes (theft, robbery and the like), where a person takes financial gain, i.e. damage into account. Nevertheless, there are also non-economic dimensions of the economic model, such as time needed to report (Goudriaan, 2006: 16). For that reason, crimes such as prostitution, illegal gambling or drug abuse, where there is no victim and where both sides gain, are almost never reported (Abercrombie, Hill & Turner, 2008). The psychological model assumes that a victim of crime has several behavioral options when making a decision to report crime, by using a cost-benefit calculation and yet, the decision cannot be fully rational when emotions are taken into account (Goudriaan, 2006: 17). The sociological model, on the other hand, takes into consideration the social context in which a particular crime occurred and in which a reporting person is situated (Rennison, Dragiewicz & DeKeseredy, 2013; Wisnieski et al. 2013). A model combining all of the three stated models is the multilevel Socio-Ecological Model since crimes do not occur in a vacuum and are part of a dynamic interaction in a social environment (Goudriaan, 2006: 20).

When it comes to students, the research has shown that the decision to report is affected by collective efficacy (Hart & Colavito, 2011), where there is no difference in willingness to report in terms of field of study and college success (Pavlović & Cajner Mraović, 2019).

3. RESEARCH AIMS AND HYPOTHESES

The aims of this paper are:

1. to investigate whether there is willingness among students of post-socialist countries of South Eastern Europe to report cyberbullying against minorities on social media;
2. to investigate whether there is a difference in willingness to report cyberbullying against minorities on social media considering socio-demographic characteristics (country of residence, place of birth, socio-economic status, field of study, year of study, college success);
3. to investigate whether there is a correlation between willingness to report cyberbullying against minorities on social media and general willingness to report crimes.

According to the aims, the following hypotheses were constructed:

H1: There is no willingness to report cyberbullying against minorities on social media among students in post-socialist countries of South Eastern Europe

H2: There is a statistically significant difference in willingness to report cyberbullying against minorities on social media considering socio-demographic characteristics

H2.1. There is a statistically significant difference in willingness to report cyberbullying against minorities on social media considering country of residence

H2.2. There is a statistically significant difference in willingness to report cyberbullying against minorities on social media considering socio-economic status

H2.3. There is a statistically significant difference in willingness to report cyberbullying against minorities on social media considering field of study

H2.4. There is a statistically significant difference in willingness to report cyberbullying against minorities on social media considering year of study

H2.5. There is a statistically significant difference in willingness to report cyberbullying against minorities on social media considering college success

H3: There is a positive correlation between willingness to report cyberbullying against minorities on social media and general willingness to report crimes

4. METHODOLOGY

The method of research was the quantitative method of survey. The instrument for collecting data was an online questionnaire. The online surveying method was selected because it has proven to be one of the best when researching the student population because they have significant experience with this type of research (Vehovar, Lozar Manfreda & Callegaro, 2015: 25-26). The *online* survey also increased the feeling of anonymity and security (Kosinski et al., 2015), which is very important when exploring sensitive topics. Therefore, the questionnaire was posted in college student *Facebook* groups and data was collected during February and March, 2019. The questionnaire and the research were approved by the Ethics Committee of Croatian Studies, University of Zagreb.

4.1. Participants

The research was conducted on a nonprobability sample consisting of 1419 students from seven countries in South Eastern Europe (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Croatia, Hungary, Macedonia, Slovenia and Serbia). The structure of participants as well as the structure of students in the population by country can be seen in Chart 1.
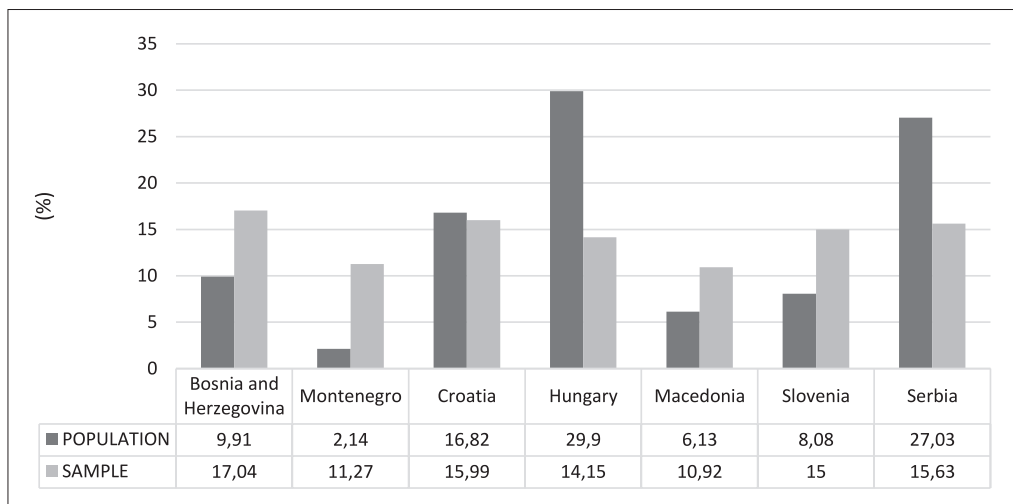
Chart 1. Distribution of students by country[2]

Respondents were both men and women while most of the participants were women (79.4%). Furthermore, represented in the sample are participants from different places of birth. The structure of participants' places of birth can be seen in Chart 2. The place of birth of participants is different, most of the participants are from a *capital city* (24.3%) and the smallest share of participants are from a *village* (15.1%). The sample also contains participants from *smaller town* (19.8%), *city of medium size* (17%), *larger city* (22.2%) and those who were born outside of country (1.6%). Most participants perceive their socio-economic status as *good* (61.4%), and the smallest share of participants perceive themselves as *very poor* (2.3%), while the rest of participants perceive their socio-economic status as *very good* (27%) or *poor* (2.3%) (Chart 3).

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2 Data for structure of population was downloaded from the official statistical offices for each country: *Agencija za statistiku BiH, Uprava za statistiku Crna Gora, Državni zavod za statistiku, Hungarian Central Statistics Office, State Statistics Office, Statistični urad, Republički zavod za statistiku*
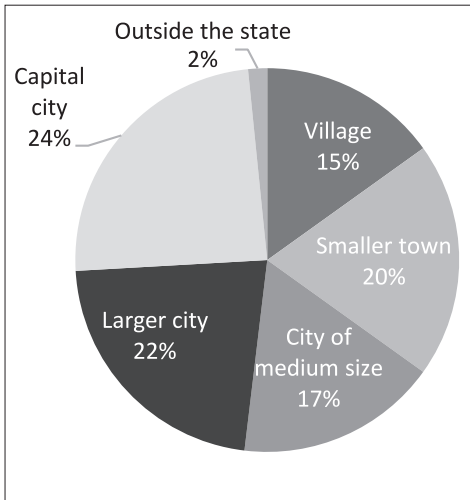
Chart 2. Place of birth
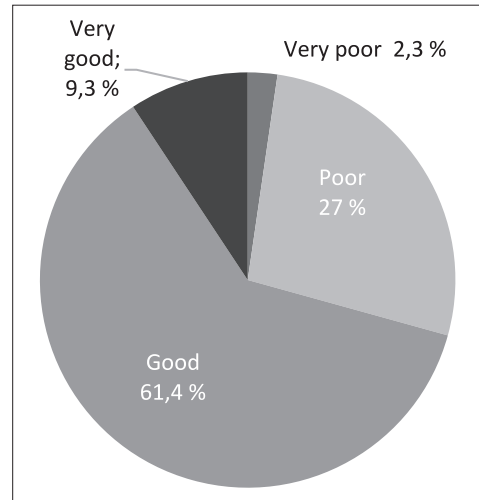
Chart 3. Socio-economic status

As the research was conducted among the student population, it is important to mention socio-demographic characteristics related to studying. Therefore, the structure of survey participants by field of study can be seen in Chart 4.

	Biomedicine and health	Biotechnical sciences	Social sciences	Humanities	Interdisciplinary areas of science	Natural sciences	Technical sciences	Arts
■ %	13,7	3,4	49,4	14,8	3	4,8	9,4	1,5

Chart 4. Field of study

Chart 5. Year of study

Chart 6. Perceived college success

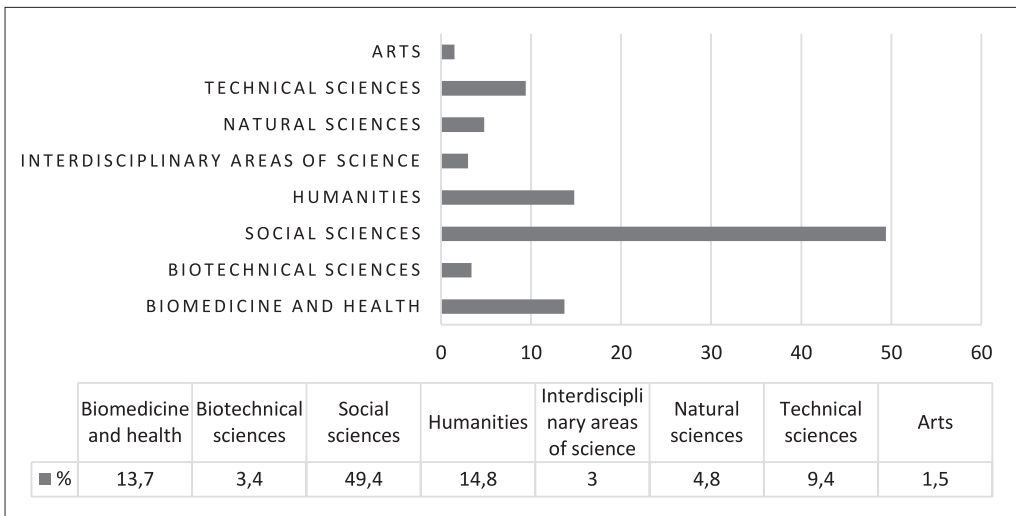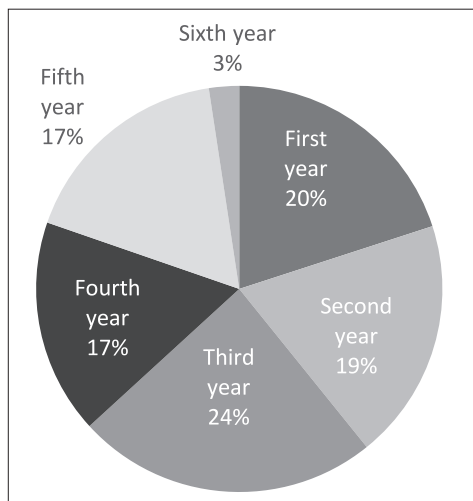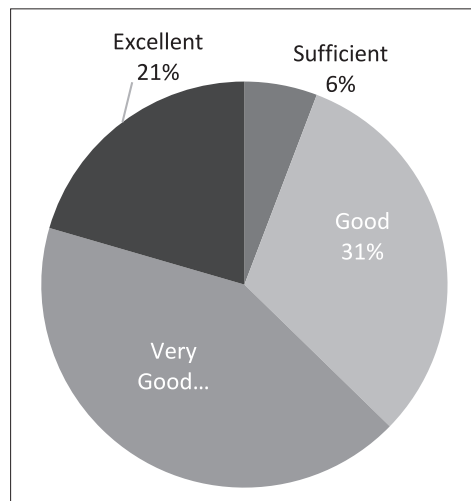As can be seen in Chart 4, most of the participants are studying in the area of *social sciences* (49.4%) and the smallest share of participants are students of *art* (1.5 %). Furthermore, the sample contains students from the following fields: *biomedicine and health* (13.7 %)*, humanities* (14.8%)*, technical* (9.4%)*, natural* (4.8%) and *biotechnical* (3.4%) *sciences* as well as *interdisciplinary areas of science* (3%)*.*

As all of participant are aged from 18 to 35, it was more appropriate to present the age structure by study year of participants. The structure of study year can be seen in Chart 5.

All years of study are equally represented in the sample: *first* (20%), *second* (19.2%), *third* (24%), *fourth* (17.1%), *fifth* (17.3) and *sixth* (2.4%) year (Chart 5). Sixth year is the least represented in the sample because most colleges have five-year programs and only few have six-year programs (e.g. medicine). According to Chart 6, most of the survey participants perceive their college success as *very good* (42.2%) and *good* (31.5%). Furthermore, 20.5% of participants perceive their success as *excellent,* while 5.8% perceive their success as *sufficient.*

4.2. Instrument

The research instrument was the online questionnaire. It contained question about socio-demographic characteristics in its introductory part – sex, age, socio-economic status, field of study and college success. Furthermore, the questionnaire contained a set of 10 *vignettes* e.g. short descriptions of hypothetical situations in which participants of the survey had to picture themselves as the victim or a witness of a particular crime. After reading short descriptions of hypothetical situations, they were asked to answer, on a scale from 1 to 4, to which extent they would be willing to report a specific crime (1- I

am absolutely certain that I would not report, 2- I am certain that I would not report, 3 – I am certain that I would report, 4 – I am absolutely certain that I would report). In total, 10 vignette claims made up an average linear combination of the variable *General willingness to report crime* (Cronbach α=0.816), where a higher score represents a higher willingness to report crime. One of the hypothetical situations described a situation in which someone abuse minorities on social networks. This variable is *willingness to report cyberbullying among minorities on social networks*.

5. RESULTS

5.1. Results of descriptive statistics

In Chart 7, shown are frequencies of answers to *vignettes* about cyberbullying against minorities and expressed willingness to report in a hypothetical situation. As depicted, 22.9 % of all respondents claim that they are absolutely certain that they would not report cyberbullying against minorities on social networks. Furthermore, 51.5% of respondents are certain that they would not report cyberbullying against minorities in a hypothetical situation, which is total of 74.4% of respondents who are no ready to report cyberbullying against minorities on social networks. On the other hand, there are only 25.6% students who are willing to report cyberbullying on social networks (16.7% of them are certain that they would report and 8.9% of them are certain that they would report). According to Chart 7, in general, there is no willingness to report cyberbullying in post-socialist countries of South Eastern Europe.
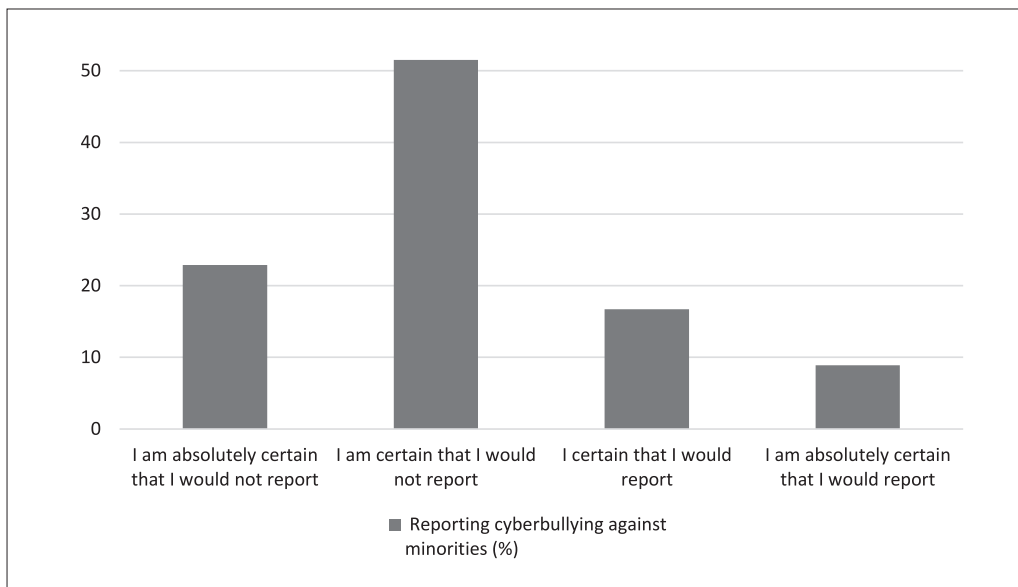
Chart 7. Frequencies of willingness to report cyberbullying of minorities on social networks

According to Chart 8 and descriptive statistics, there is less willingness to report cyberbullying against minorities on social networks than reporting crimes in general. Descriptively, students from North Macedonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina are most ready to report cyberbullying against minorities on social networks while Hungary, Slovenia and Croatia are the least willing to report. The ANOVA and *Games-Howell post-hoc* test will show whether there are statistically significant differences between countries.
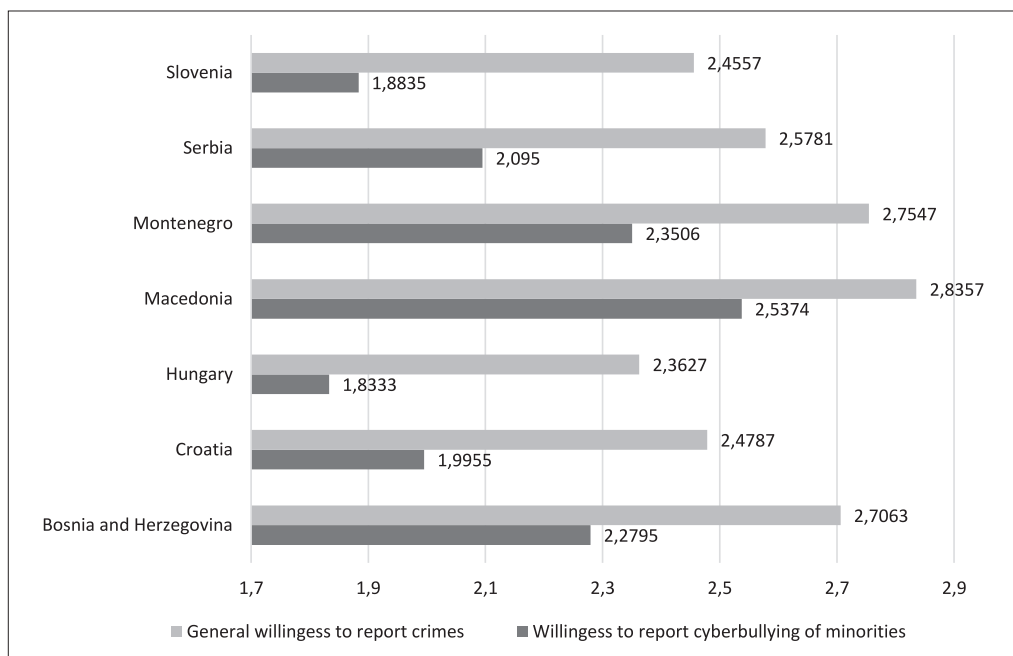
Chart 8. Willingness to report cyberbullying against minorities on social networks in relation to general willingness to report crimes by country

Whether there is a statistically significant correlation between willingness to report cyberbullying against minorities and general willingness to report crimes will be investigated by using the Pearson coefficient of correlation (Table 1).

Table 1. Pearson coefficient of correlation – Willingness to report cyberbullying against minorities on social media and general willingness to report crimes

		General willingness to report crimes	Willingness to report cyberbullying against minorities on social media
General willingness to report crimes	Pearson Correlation	1	0,696**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0,000
Willingness to report cyberbullying against minorities on social media	Pearson Correlation	0,696**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,000	

* p<0,05

As can be seen in Table 1, there is a statistically significant positive correlation between general willingness to report crimes and willingness to report cyberbullying against minorities on social media (0,696**), which means that, if a person is willing to report crimes in general, he or she will also be willing to report cyberbullying against minorities on social media. Although there is a correlation between general willingness to report crimes and willingness to report cyberbullying against minorities, descriptive statistics shows that participants of the survey are more willing to report crimes in general while they are less willing to report cyberbullying against minorities on social media.

5.2. ANOVA

Given the obtained results (F=17,105 along with df_1=6 and df_2=1371, and p<0,001), the null-hypothesis is refuted and it can be concluded that there is a statistically significant difference in willingness to report cyberbullying against minorities in post-socialist countries in South Eastern Europe (Table 2). The difference between countries will be demonstrated after the *Games-Howell post-hoc test.*

Table 2. Table of ANOVA summary for willingness to report cyberbullying against minorities and countries in South Eastern Europe

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	70,996	6	11,833	17,105	<0,001
Within Groups	948,427	1371	0,692		
Total	1019,422	1377			

* p<0,05

5.3. Multiple comparisons

Table 3. Results of Games-Howell post-hoc tests of willingness to report cyberbullying against minorities and countries of South Eastern Europe

(I) Country	(J) Country	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Montenegro	-0,07117	0,09594	0,990	-0,3558	0,2135
	Croatia	0,28396*	0,08081	0,009	0,0446	0,5233
	Hungary	0,44614*	0,08125	0,000	0,2054	0,6869
	North Macedonia	-0,25794	0,10546	0,184	-0,5711	0,0553
	Slovenia	0,39598*	0,07831	0,000	0,1640	0,6280
	Serbia	0,18445	0,07589	0,188	-0,0404	0,4093
Montenegro	Bosnia and Herzegovina	0,07117	0,09594	0,990	-0,2135	0,3558
	Croatia	0,35513*	0,09193	0,003	0,0822	0,6280
	Hungary	0,51732*	0,09232	0,000	0,2432	0,7914
	North Macedonia	-0,18677	0,11421	0,660	-0,5259	0,1523
	Slovenia	0,46715*	0,08974	0,000	0,2006	0,7337
	Serbia	0,25563	0,08764	0,058	-0,0048	0,5160
Croatia	Bosnia and Herzegovina	-0,28396*	0,08081	0,009	-0,5233	-0,0446
	Montenegro	-0,35513*	0,09193	0,003	-0,6280	-0,0822
	Hungary	0,16218	0,07648	0,342	-0,0644	0,3888
	North Macedonia	-0,54190*	0,10183	0,000	-0,8445	-0,2393
	Slovenia	0,11202	0,07335	0,728	-0,1053	0,3293
	Serbia	-0,09951	0,07076	0,798	-0,3091	0,1101
Hungary	Bosnia and Herzegovina	-0,44614*	0,08125	0,000	-0,6869	-0,2054
	Montenegro	-0,51732*	0,09232	0,000	-0,7914	-0,2432
	Croatia	-0,16218	0,07648	0,342	-0,3888	0,0644
	North Macedonia	-0,70408*	0,10218	0,000	-1,0078	-0,4004
	Slovenia	-0,05016	0,07384	0,994	-0,2690	0,1687
	Serbia	-0,26169*	0,07127	0,005	-0,4729	-0,0505

Table 3. (suffix)

(I) Country	(J) Country	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
North Macedonia	Bosnia and Herzegovina	0,25794	0,10546	0,184	-0,0553	0,5711
	Montenegro	0,18677	0,11421	0,660	-0,1523	0,5259
	Croatia	0,54190*	0,10183	0,000	0,2393	0,8445
	Hungary	0,70408*	0,10218	0,000	0,4004	1,0078
	Slovenia	0,65392*	0,09986	0,000	0,3570	0,9508
	Serbia	0,44239*	0,09797	0,000	0,1509	0,7338
Slovenia	Bosnia and Herzegovina	-0,39598*	0,07831	0,000	-0,6280	-0,1640
	Montenegro	-0,46715*	0,08974	0,000	-0,7337	-0,2006
	Croatia	-0,11202	0,07335	0,728	-0,3293	0,1053
	Hungary	0,05016	0,07384	0,994	-0,1687	0,2690
	North Macedonia	-0,65392*	0,09986	0,000	-0,9508	-0,3570
	Serbia	-0,21153*	0,06790	0,032	-0,4127	-0,0104
Serbia	Bosnia and Herzegovina	-0,18445	0,07589	0,188	-0,4093	0,0404
	Montenegro	-0,25563	0,08764	0,058	-0,5160	0,0048
	Croatia	0,09951	0,07076	0,798	-0,1101	0,3091
	Hungary	0,26169*	0,07127	0,005	0,0505	0,4729
	North Macedonia	-0,44239*	0,09797	0,000	-0,7338	-0,1509
	Slovenia	0,21153*	0,06790	0,032	0,0104	0,4127

* p<0,05

Using the *Games-Howell post-hoc* test (Table 3), it can be seen among which South Eastern European countries there is a statistically significant difference in the willingness to report cyberbullying against minorities. According the table, there is statistically significant difference between Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia (*p*=0,009), Hungary (*p*<0,001) and Slovenia (*p*<0,001) where students from Bosnia and Herzegovina are more willing to report cyberbullying against minorities. There is also a statistically significant difference between Montenegro and Croatia (*p*=0,003), Hungary (*p*<0,001) and Slovenia (*p*<0,001) in the way students from Montenegro are more willing to report cyberbullying against minorities on social networks. Furthermore, there is a statistically significant difference between Croatia and North Macedonia (*p*<0,001) where students from Croatia are less willing to report cyberbullying against minorities. There is a statistically significant difference between Hungary and North Macedonia (*p*<0,001) and Serbia (*p*<0,001)

where students from North Macedonia are more willing to report. In addition, there is a statistically significant difference between Slovenia and Serbia in the manner that Serbians are more ready to report cyberbullying against minorities. To conclude, in this research, students from North Macedonia are the most willing to report cyberbullying against minorities, and students from Hungary are the least willing to report. All differences can be seen in the ANOVA Chart down below:
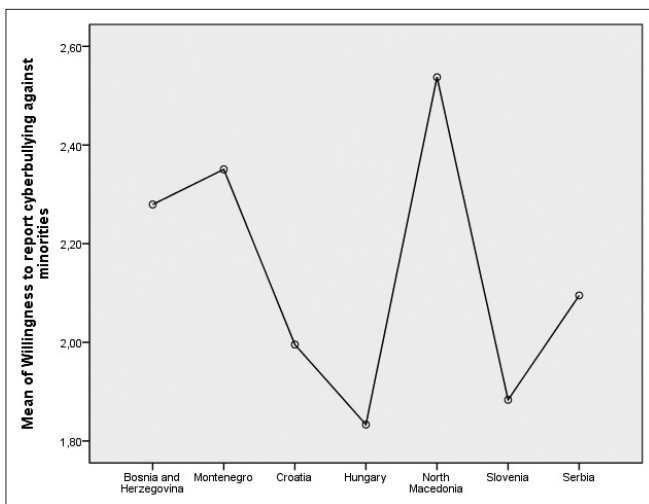

Chart 9. ANOVA Chart for arithmetic mean for willingness to report cyberbullying against minorities and countries in South Eastern Europe

According to Table 4 of the ANOVA summary for arithmetic means for willingness to report cyberbullying against minorities and place of birth in South Eastern Europe (*p*=0,282), there is no statistically significant difference in willingness to report cyberbullying against minorities considering place of birth. In other words, students who were born in different countries of different sizes have equal will to report cyberbullying against minorities.

Table 4. Table of ANOVA summary for willingness to report cyberbullying against minorities and place of birth in South Eastern Europe

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	4,597	5	0,919	1,253	0,282
Within Groups	989,114	1348	0,734		
Total	993,711	1353			

* p<0,05

There is no statistically significant difference in willingness to report cyberbullying against minorities considering socio-economic status according Table 5 of ANOVA summary for arithmetic means for willingness to cyberbullying against minorities and place of birth in South Eastern Europe (*p*=0,059). In other words, students with different socio-economic status have equal will to report cyberbullying against minorities.

Table 5. Table of ANOVA summary for willingness to report cyberbullying against minorities and socio-economic status in South Eastern Europe

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	5,525	3	1,842	2,484	0,059
Within Groups	1010,513	1363	0,741		
Total	1016,038	1366			

* *p<0,05*

Furthermore, there is no statistically significant difference (*p*=0,954) in willingness to report cyberbullying against minorities considering field of study (Table 6), which means that students who study social sciences, biomedicine and health, humanities, technical, natural, biotechnical sciences and interdisciplinary areas of science have an equal willingness to report cyberbullying against minorities on social media.

Table 6. Table of ANOVA summary for willingness to report cyberbullying against minorities and field of study in South Eastern Europe

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1,546	7	0,221	0,301	0,954
Within Groups	980,923	1335	0,735		
Total	982,469	1342			

* *p<0,05*

According to Table 7, there is no statistically significant difference in willingness to report cyberbullying against minorities on social media considering year of study.

Table 7. Table of ANOVA summary for willingness to report cyberbullying against minorities and year of study in South Eastern Europe

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	6,817	5	1,363	1,862	0,098
Within Groups	992,305	1355	0,732		
Total	999,123	1360			

* *p<0,05*

Furthermore, there is no statistically significant difference in willingness to report cyberbullying against minorities on social media considering college success of participants (Table 8).

Table 8. Table of ANOVA summary for willingness to report cyberbullying against minorities and college success in South Eastern Europe

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	3,466	3	1,155	1,563	0,197
Within Groups	1010,326	1367	0,739		
Total	1013,791	1370			

* $p<0,05$

Finally, the ANOVA results showed that there is no significant difference in willingness to report cyberbullying against minorities considering socio-demographic characteristics, except country of residence, where ANOVA showed there is a statistically significant difference in willingness to report.

6. DISCUSSION

Given the obtained results, three hypotheses were accepted: H1 – There is no willingness to report cyberbullying against minorities on social media among students in post-socialist countries of South Eastern Europe, H2.1. – There is a statistically significant difference in willingness to report cyberbullying against minorities on social media considering country of residence, and H3 – There is a positive correlation between willingness to report cyberbullying against minorities on social media and general willingness to report crimes. The other hypotheses have been refuted.

It is particularly important to emphasize the worrying figure of 74.4% of respondents who would not report cyberbullying against minorities. There are several possible explanations for this attitude. Firstly, cyberbullying itself, regardless of the specific group of respondents, is mostly not reported, particularly among students, although those who have been victims of cyberbullying themselves are more willing to report (Wozencroft, Campbell, Orel, Kimpton, & Leong, 2015).

Furthermore, the general willingness to report crime is significantly affected by citizens' trust in the police (Kruger et al., 2016), whereas the age group of young people, which is the topic of this paper, generally has a lower level of trust (Bickman, 1976; McAra and McVie, 2005; Hopkins & Hewstone, 1992; Low & Durkin, 2001). An unfavorable circumstance that additionally contributes to the lack of trust in the police is the frequency of participating on social media, as research shows (Sabatini & Sarracino, 2019). For this reason, results indicating a lower level of willingness to report can be expected. An additional reason for

the lack of willingness to report cyberbullying against minorities can be a fear of revenge from the crime perpetrator (Papp, Smith, Wareham, & Wu, 2017).

One of the reasons for a low level of willingness to report cyberbullying against minorities might derive from the fact that cyberbullying itself is not regarded seriously enough. Cyberbullying does not have the characteristics of traditional violence and it presents a somewhat distorted perception of the victim in the eyes of the bully because the bully rarely witnesses the direct reaction of the victim of violence (Strabić & Tokić Milaković, 2012), i.e. the bully is practically unaware of the pain he/she causes to the victim and of the wider public being witness to it. The possible anonymity of the bully is the largest difference between these two types of violence (Kowalski, Limber, Limber & Agatston, 2012; Slonje & Smith, 2008).

Moreover, in a virtual setting where everything is visible to everybody, there is a possibility not to react in order to conform to the opinion of the majority and to be more inclined to a certain social group, especially in the researched young population that still attaches great importance to peer-acceptance (Vejmelka, 2012). Passive observation represents to a certain extent passive support to the bully, and reasons for this type of behavior are, according to Bilić (2013), egoistic motives, pluralistic ignorance, fear of evaluation, diffusion of responsibility and so on. Finally, a crime that occurred on the Internet is generally difficult to detect regardless of reporting. For this reason, the dark figure of all crimes (for example, money or data theft) on the Internet is high (Aebi, 2019).

After becoming better acquainted with social media, one also finds out more about the possibility to report a particular post to an administrator, i.e. to a particular social network that will review the reported content and react in line with the rules of social media usage; in the majority of cases, it will result in a deletion of a certain post or in blocking the activities of a user for a certain period of time. The Community Standards of Facebook can be used as an example. They are divided into: 1) Violence and Criminal Behavior, 2) Safety, 3) Objectionable Content, 4) Integrity and Authenticity and 5) Respecting Intellectual Property.

In the section on *Violence and Incitement*, Facebook, among other things, bans the posting of violent content because goal of their Community Standards are safety, Voice and Equity. (https://www.facebook.com/communitystandards/)

Taking into consideration the simplicity of reporting inappropriate content posted on social media in just a couple of clicks and the extremely low willingness to do so, it is questionable what the situation would be like if the respondents were requested to report that to the police. It should be emphasized that reposting such content does not imply any criminal liability, even if reporting has been unfounded.

From the legal perspective, with the aim of acting preventively, the authors recommend the implementation of the so-called German Act, which requires from all social media to monitor unwanted and insulting content as well as to remove if necessary, and if they fail to do so, they are criminally liable (Roksanić Vidlička & Mamić, 2018).

According to Chart 8 and descriptive statistics, there is less willingness to report cyberbullying against minorities on social networks than to report crimes in general. Such a result is a consequence of not regarding Internet crime as a real form of crime. Internet crime is recognized by part of society only when it involves financial fraud and losses. Social media and disobeying their rules, i.e. cyberbullying on social media are not taken seriously.

North Macedonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina are most ready to report cyberbullying against minorities on social networks while Hungary, Slovenia and Croatia are the least willing to report. The willingness of the respondents in North Macedonia and Bosnia and Hercegovina is the consequence of a greater ethical and religious diversity in society and mutual tolerance, as well as of the presence of some international organizations that conduct monitoring and supervision of those areas (OSCE. 2010; Mihajlova, Bacovska, Shekerdjiev, 2013). In addition, the situation in Slovenia, Hungary and Croatia is not at the same level since those countries have already acceded to the European Union, have completed accession negotiations and the level of supervision in the area of the media has been lowered. North Macedonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina still have not managed to do so, and place, therefore, great effort to meet the conditions of international organizations.

Based on the presented results, refuted were almost all of the hypotheses related to the differences in willingness to report cyberbullying against minorities in terms of socio-demographic characteristics. In other words, all students-respondents are equally (un)willing to report cyberbullying against minorities on social media regardless of their place of birth and socio-economic status, as well as characteristics related to their education field of study, year of study and college success. Therefore, in further research on the topic, attention should be redirected to other factors that could have an impact on the willingness to report. Nonetheless, from aspect of methodology, it is important to stress that people who agree to take part in such research are more willing to report crime (Goudriaan, Lynch & Nieuwbeerta, 2004). Therefore and given the respondent description (see 3.1), it can be conditionally assumed that female respondents, who constitute as much as 79.4% of the sample, are somewhat more willing to report, similar to students of social sciences (49.4%), with a good socio-economic status (61.4%) and very good college success (42%). Since this is only an assumption, there is a need to conduct additional research prior to reaching final conclusions.

6.1. Research limitations

The conducted research has certain limitations that are, at the same time, recommendations for future research. The first and largest limitations refers to the convenience, non-probabilistic sample that the research was conducted on, meaning that the obtained results can only conditionally be generalized from the sample to the population. There is definitely a need to conduct research on a representative probabilistic sample of the general population. Vignette studies also have limitations since they do not take into consideration all factors and the situation is not real, but hypothetical, meaning that the

behavior can differ compared to a situation when a person is really a victim or witness of crime (Goudriaan & Nieuwbeerta, 2007). Moreover, another possible limitation is the insufficient explanation of the concept of reporting cyberbullying in the questionnaire because there is a possibility that respondents did not know whether reporting refers to reporting to a social network or to the police – in the questionnaire, they were only asked whether they would report cyberbullying in a particular situation. The reason for such a question was that the aim of research was to investigate general willingness to report, regardless of type of reporting. There is definitely a need to examine more specifically the willingness to report to the police and to the social network administrator.

7. CONCLUSION

Based on the research results, it has been established that the students-respondents are mostly not willing to report cyberbullying against minorities on social media, and that they differs based on country of residence. In addition, the results have suggested that there is a statistically significant positive relation between general willingness to report crimes and willingness to report cyberbullying against minorities on social media, although the willingness to report cyberbullying is somewhat lower compared to the general willingness to report crimes. It has also been determined that there is no difference in willingness to report crime against minorities on social media in terms of socio-demographic characteristics of respondents. These results indicate that there might be other factors that could influence the willingness to report cyberbullying against minorities on social media, for instance, the cultural context. In general, the research results suggest that there is a need for additional research on the given topic, both in the countries of South Eastern Europe that were already included in the research, as well as in other parts of the world, since cyberbullying is a relatively new, insufficiently researched phenomenon.

The consequences of not reporting cyberbullying against minorities on social media can be diverse and far-reaching. By not reacting to crime in a manner that crime is not reported, there is no possibility to detect crime, to react to it and to prevent it. Victims of cyberbullying can have severe consequences, similar to victims of other types of crime. Consequences are possible both for bullies and for passive observers of cyberbullying who could become cyberbullies over time (Zrilić, 2006).

The fall of the Berlin Wall marked the beginning of an era of civil wars, implosion of countries, as well as Internet conflicts (Walters, 2010). Misuse of the Internet became one of key priorities of the EU, as well as the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2012), while developing a common approach to spot and tackle problem behavior, as it may lead to a radicalization process (Lowe, 2015). There is another important reason for this, related to the consequences of cyberbullying against minorities: In addition to familial, social, gender-based, socioeconomic, psychological, religious, ideological, historical, cultural, political, propaganda factors, radicalization is greatly contributed to by the media, social networks, or the Internet, says Muro (2016). Social networks have become a powerful tool for radicalization as they serve as recruitment assets, live forums, for

psychological warfare, as well as sharing platforms, claimed by the group of authors (Lara-Cabrera, Gonzalez Padro, Benouaret, Faci, Benslimane, Camacho, 2017: 10892). Social networks enable vulnerable individuals to reach radicalized people, hence triggering their own radicalization process (Lara-Carbera et al., 2017: 10892).

Therefore, it is important to act preventively in the sense of reporting cyberbullying, as well as in the sense of cyberbullying itself. As a preventive measure, the authors suggest the promotion of positive values, such as universalism, kindness, compliance, tradition and security that can play a protective role (Bilić 2012). Within the educational system, it is also important to work with children from an early age, which requires school associates who are media competent (Maksimović, Petrović & Osmanović, 2015; Javornik Krečić, Kovše & Ploj Virtič, 2013) and preventive programs, as well as involvement of all those participating in the violence (Kekez & Bilić, 2015; Strabić & Tokić Milaković, 2016; Šincek, Duvnjak & Milić, 2017), in particular of passive observers who should be educated to become the defenders of victims (Bilić, 2013). Moreover, education on the negative impacts of modern technologies is recommended (Nikčević-Milković & Jerković, 2016). Finally, since no crime, including violence, does not occur in a vacuum, it is important to involve everybody – family, schools, institutions and the local community in the prevention programs (Vlah & Perger, 2014) and to promote positive measures and policies.

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