



The Role of Sociocultural Context in Cyberbullying in Israeli Society: Comparing Arab and Jewish Parents' Perceived Knowledge of Their Adolescent Children's Involvement in Cyberbullying

Noam Lapidot-Lefler¹

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Abstract

This paper examines the relationship between parental monitoring and control, parents' perceived knowledge of their adolescent's online activities, and parents' perceived knowledge of their adolescent's involvement in cyberbullying, among Israeli Jewish and Arab parents of adolescents. The 407 participants consisted of two groups: Jewish ($n = 194$) and Arab ($n = 213$) parents of adolescents in Israel, who were recruited via online social networks and completed an online survey. The self-report questionnaire included the Stattin and Kerr Parental Control and Parental Monitoring Questionnaire (Stattin & Kerr in *Developmental Psychology* 36:366, 2000), as well as parental knowledge of child online activities and witnessing and experiencing cyberbullying. Parental monitoring and control were perceived as higher by Jewish than Arab parents, while no group differences were found for perceived child disclosure or parental knowledge of adolescent online activity. Parental knowledge of the adolescent witnessing cyberbullying was higher among Arab than Jewish parents, while the opposite was found for parental knowledge of the adolescent experiencing cyberbullying. Parental knowledge of the adolescent both witnessing and experiencing cyberbullying was related to group affiliation, lower parental education, and higher parental perceived knowledge of the adolescent's online activities. Parents' perceived knowledge of the adolescent witnessing cyberbullying was further related to higher perceived adolescent disclosure. The study increases our understanding of perceived parental involvement and its relationship with parents' perceived knowledge of the adolescent's involvement in cyberbullying in a diverse and multicultural society.

Keywords Cyberbullying · Parental involvement · Multiculturalism · Jewish · Arab

Introduction

Cyberbullying in a Sociocultural Context

The phenomenon of bullying and its online presentation as cyberbullying is common in Israel (Heiman & Olenik-Shemesh, 2016; Lapidot-Lefler, 2017; Lefler & Dolev-Cohen, 2015; Lapidot-Lefler & Hosri, 2016) and around the world (Rajbhandari & Rana, 2022; Sabella et al., 2013). The numerous negative outcomes have long been known and continue to be of concern (Kowalski et al., 2019; Mehari et al., 2022). In recent years, the theoretical scope of the research on bullying has

expanded, from the earlier attempts to explore and understand the phenomenon on the individual level (e.g., the experience of the bully or the victim), to the current interest in the social context of bullying and cyberbullying (e.g., identifying a group of bystanders and their sociocultural characteristics) (Allison & Bussey, 2016; Carrera-Fernández et al., 2021; Langos, 2012). The phenomenon of cyberbullying does not take place in a void; rather, it is related to the culture in which the bully and the victim were educated and to the context that gave rise to the bullying event (Hymel & Swearer, 2015). It appears that in some societies, the cultural code and rules of behavior are tolerant of aggression and violence towards others, as a legitimate means for achieving one's goals, whereas in other societies, the cultural code and normative behaviors oppose and rebuke such acts of violence (Barlett et al., 2014).

Studies that have focused on the issue of culture have highlighted the effects that various physical, social, and economic

✉ Noam Lapidot-Lefler
noam.lapidot.lefler@gmail.com

¹ Department of Education, Oranim Academic College of Education, 36006, Kiryat Tiv'on, Israel

conditions have on communities, effects which contribute to the formation of a unique identity, namely, a cultural identity. This identity, which encompasses not only language and religion but also a particular ethos and basic beliefs, serves as a foundation through which groups are distinguished from one another. These foundational beliefs are of a cultural nature, and thus, it is the cultural worldview that informs a group's understanding of the world and how its members operate in it. In this manner, one's cultural identity also directs one's reactions to surrounding stimuli. Hence, it may be assumed that one's cultural affiliation also renders behavioral differences in the context of cyberbullying (Hofstede et al., 2010). Several studies about cyberbullying and its sociocultural characteristics have identified certain patterns. Thus, for example, a comparison of the frequency of cyberbullying behavior among Canadian middle-school students and those of Chinese descent indicated that the latter were more often victims of online bullying, whereas their counterparts were four times more likely to be the instigators or agents of cyberbullying aggression (Li, 2007). Intercultural differences in online bullying were demonstrated in a study that compared students in the USA and in Japan. The findings indicated that the Japanese students were less likely to encourage or even speak positively about cyberbullying, compared to the American students, who demonstrated a greater tolerance overall for cyberbullying (Barlett et al., 2014). The existence of intercultural differences in attitudes towards cyberbullying was further demonstrated in a study conducted among students in Thailand, which found that the percentage of cyberbullying victims differed by cultural group. In this case, Muslim vs. non-Muslim groups were studied, whereby it was found that members of the latter group reported greater involvement in cyberbullying than did members of the former (Sittichai & Smith, 2013). A similar finding was demonstrated in a study conducted in Israel (Buchenik & Deshen, 2012), which found a significant and inverse correlation between the participating students' degree of religiosity (Orthodox vs. observant vs. secular Jews) and their tendency to become involved in the bullying of others. Hence, the strictly religious students were least involved in online bullying, whereas the secular students were the group most frequently involved in online bullying. In Israel, degree of religiosity is an affiliation that implies also cultural differences; consequently, this study too is viewed as supporting the perception that cyberbullying is characterized by intercultural differences.

The Role of the Sociocultural Factor in Cyberbullying and the Israeli Context

It has been shown that the phenomenon of cyberbullying was more common in highly individualistic communities, where the emphasis is on the individual's right to behave as he or she sees fit, according to one's wishes and desires, and the

principle of commitment to one's community as a whole is de-emphasized. By contrast, in communities characterized by a collectivist ethos, which emphasizes communal values and group affiliation, the rate of cyberbullying was lower (Barlett et al., 2014). According to Hofstede et al. (2010), Western cultures were shown to be more individualistic than cultures in the Middle East or Asia. This finding can help clarify some cultural differences found between components of Israeli society. For example, it may explain the fact that the secular Jewish communities, which for the most part are of European descent, tend to uphold a more individualistic culture, compared to the ethos of the Arab Christian and Muslim communities in Israel, which tend towards a much more community-centered culture.

A study that examined the sociocultural factor in cyberbullying among Arab and Jewish adolescents in Israeli society found that the cultural difference was even more significant among the girls, revealing that in the context of cyberspace, Arab girls demonstrated greater involvement in bullying than either Jewish girls, Jewish boys, or Arab boys. In Arab society, girls are socialized into traditional gender roles; they have less freedom of expression than do boys and they do not enjoy the social legitimacy necessary to make their voices heard. In a more collective and restrictive setting, Arab girls may feel that the Internet is the opportune space and the sole channel for bullying others because their parents are less able to monitor and control their activities there, unlike traditional bullying, which parents can track, monitor, and control (Lapidot-Lefler & Hosri, 2016). The educational system in Israel deals with the phenomenon of bullying through diverse programs that emerged from its pedagogical policy. These programs deal mainly with the development of students' social-emotional learning (SEL), in an effort to promote student inclusion and inculcate values such as empathy and sensitivity towards the other (Israeli Ministry of Education, 2019, 2020a). However, given the current state of affairs (Israeli Ministry of Education, 2020b), there seems to be a need to gain a deeper understanding of the role of the cultural context and how it could be addressed in such programs.

Another aspect of the sociocultural context has to do with parenting styles and the degree to which parents are involved in the daily lives of their adolescent children. This too needs to be examined and knowledgeably addressed, in an effort to recruit parental support for educational programs that aim to reduce the phenomenon of bullying.

Parenting Styles in the Jewish and Arab Sectors in Israel

Cultural differences affect also parenting styles and preferences. Family values in Jewish-Israeli culture are similar to those in Arab culture (Lavee & Katz, 2003); more

specifically, the family plays a more prominent role in these cultures than it typically does in Western culture. However, collectivism is interpreted differently: in Jewish-Israeli culture, conformity to law, order, and regulations is not a prioritized value; instead, questioning and challenging authority is appreciated and promoted in Jewish-Israeli society, which in turn leads to parent–child relationships that tend towards equality and enmeshment (Mayseless & Scharf, 2007). By contrast, collectivism in the Arab–Israeli culture plays an important role in society, with a strong preference for communal values. Consequently, education—starting from an early age—promotes a preference for in-group members, which manifests as solidarity and cooperation among members of the community (Scharf & Hertz-Lazarowitz, 2003). Furthermore, to a great extent, self-perception and self-esteem are linked to the reputation and social status of one’s family. As noted, this emphasis on the centrality of family is similar to that found in the Jewish-Israeli culture (Lapidot-Leffler, 2017; Florian et al., 1993); however, in the Arab–Israeli society, this pertains also to members of the greater extended family, who maintain an ongoing, intensive, and mutual commitment to each other. As a result of these differences, the parent–child relationship in the Arab–Israeli sector is characterized as patriarchal and authoritarian (Sagy et al., 2001); hence, education emphasizes obedience and reverence towards both the older generation and authority figures, while disobedience is considered a transgression that is severely punished (Dwairy, 2004). Studies have shown that authoritative—rather than authoritarian—style parenting is associated with more positive self-esteem and higher levels of mental health, even among families of Arab culture (Scharf et al., 2011). Nevertheless, not only is the authoritarian parenting style considered acceptable in Arab culture, but the behavioral and psychological control associated with it are considered inherent to it, hence, authoritarian parenting is not perceived as causing either suffering or mental-health issues among adolescents (Dor & Cohen-Fridel, 2010; Dwairy & Achoui, 2010; Dwairy et al., 2006).

Parental Involvement and Cyberbullying in a Sociocultural Context

This study explored the role of parental control and monitoring in the context of children’s cyberbullying involvement. Both online and offline risk-taking have been shown to be a multidetermined outcome, influenced by factors related to the child, the parents, and the social and situational contexts (Morrongiello & Lasenby-Lessard, 2007). While parental impact is recognized as one of the many factors, parental control and monitoring of children’s activities, whereabouts, and adaptations (Dishion & McMahon, 1998) are still considered essential parenting practices (Stattin & Kerr, 2000). Moreover, it has been

claimed that the absence of such parental practices might lead children to choose inappropriate peers, and even to adopt antisocial, delinquent, or criminal behaviors (Reid & Patterson, 1989; Snyder & Patterson, 1987). Parents wish to protect their children, especially between early childhood and middle adolescence, when they are more innocent and thus vulnerable to becoming involved in risky behaviors (Simons et al., 2002). In this sense, parental control, perceived as a way to mediate children’s involvement in risk behaviors (Clark et al., 2015), was found to be a positive variable associated with lower levels of behavioral disorders among adolescents (Pettit et al., 2001). The role of parental control in the context of cyberbullying and cybervictimization among children and adolescents, therefore, merits further attention (Álvarez-García et al., 2019).

Ethnicity was found to have an important effect on parental involvement, as was shown in a study conducted at a UK school with a multicultural community (Levine-Rasky, 2009). A recent study regarding Jewish- and Arab–Israeli parents’ motivations for their involvement in their children’s education revealed a higher level of involvement among Arab Israeli—compared to Jewish Israeli—parents, in both the school and the community (Freund et al., 2018). This finding cannot be considered conclusive, however, given the findings of an earlier study, which demonstrated that only a small portion of the variance in parental involvement could be explained in terms of either ethnocultural affiliations or socioeconomic status (Lavenda, 2011).

Studies that investigated parents’ involvement in cyberbullying in Israel (Heiman & Olenik-Shemesh, 2016; Lapidot-Leffler & Hosri, 2016) from the perspective of the adolescents involved revealed that the children had mixed feelings regarding their parents’ involvement in their cyberbullying-related experiences. On the one hand, adolescent cybervictims from Israel’s Arab sector reported that they refrained from consulting their parents (Heiman & Olenik-Shemesh, 2016), while on the other hand, there was evidence from a different study indicating that children from the Israeli Arab sector perceived their parents as a significant source of support and opted to contact their parents after experiencing bullying (Lapidot-Leffler & Hosri, 2016). Hence, gaining a better understanding of the parents’ precise perspective on and their degree of involvement in their children’s experiences of bullying may help explain or resolve this seeming contradiction in Arab–Israeli adolescents’ attitudes towards their parents in the context of bullying (Stives et al., 2021). Based on this assumption, the aim of the current study was to examine the relationship between parental monitoring and control, parental perceived knowledge of the adolescent’s online activities, and parental perceived knowledge of the adolescent’s involvement in cyberbullying, among Israeli Jewish and Arab parents of adolescents.

The Research Hypotheses

Israeli society includes a Jewish and an Arab sector. In accordance with the findings of Álvarez-García et al. (2019) and those of Lapidot-Lefler & Hosri (2016), it was hypothesized that (H1) parental monitoring and control would be higher in the Arab sector than in the Jewish sector and but that (H2) parents' knowledge of their adolescent child's witnessing and experiencing cyberbullying would be higher in the Jewish sector than in the Arab sector. The third hypothesis (H3) was that parental monitoring and knowledge of the adolescent's online activities would be positively related to parental knowledge of the adolescent's involvement in cyberbullying.

Methodology

Participants

Participants in this study were 407 Israeli, male and female parents of adolescents, 47.7% Jewish ($n = 194$), and 52.3% Arab ($n = 213$), referred to hereafter as the "study groups." The Arab parents were Moslem ($n = 163$, 40.0%), Christian ($n = 40$, 9.8%), and Druze ($n = 10$, 2.5%). Among both the Arab and the Jewish parents, most of the respondents were

mothers (Table 1). Participants' age ranged between 30 and 62 years old ($M = 45$, $SD = 6.06$), with the Arab parents being somewhat younger. Adolescents were about 15 years old on average ($SD = 1.71$), and in both groups, nearly one-half of them were firstborns. The percentage of adolescents enrolled in high school was slightly higher in the Arab group than in the Jewish group. Families had up to 10 children ($M = 3$ children, $SD = 1.23$), with larger families found in the Arab sample. A significant difference between the groups was found in terms of parents' education levels. The percentage of parents with an undergraduate degree was higher among the Arab parents than among the Jewish parents, while the percentage of parents with a graduate education was higher among the Jewish parents than among the Arab parents. Finally, about 60% of the parents of both groups reported good or very good economic status. A detailed description of demographic background variables is presented in Table 1.

Measures

To measure the extent of *parents' perceived knowledge of the adolescent's involvement in cyberbullying*, two questions were composed, one regarding the adolescent's witnessing and the other regarding the adolescent's experiencing cyberbullying (responses were provided on a scale ranging from 1 hardly ever (know about adolescent's

Table 1 Demographic and socioeconomic characteristics by group affiliation ($N = 407$)

		Total <i>N</i> (%)	Arab <i>N</i> (%)	Jewish <i>N</i> (%)	Difference	Effect size <i>d</i>
Parent gender	Male	76 (18.7)	42 (19.7)	34 (17.5)	$Z = 0.57$	0.06
	Female	331 (81.3)	171 (80.3)	160 (82.5)		
Parent education	High school/ higher education	110 (27.0)	59 (27.7)	51 (26.3)	$\chi^2(2) = 7.81^*$	0.17
	B.A	139 (34.2)	84 (39.4)	55 (28.4)		
	M.A., PhD	158 (38.8)	70 (32.9)	88 (45.4)		
Economic status	Not so good	19 (4.7)	7 (3.3)	12 (6.2)	$\chi^2(3) = 2.56$	0.11
	Average	141 (34.6)	74 (34.7)	67 (34.5)		
	Good	146 (35.9)	75 (35.2)	71 (36.6)		
	Very good	101 (24.8)	57 (26.8)	44 (22.7)		
Adolescent grade level	Junior high	214 (52.6)	99 (46.5)	115 (59.3)	$Z = 2.58^{**}$	0.26
	High school	193 (47.4)	114 (53.5)	79 (40.7)		
Adolescent birth order	Oldest	196 (48.2)	94 (44.1)	102 (52.6)	$\chi^2(2) = 4.83$	0.21
	Middle	94 (23.1)	48 (22.6)	46 (23.7)		
	Youngest	117 (28.7)	71 (33.3)	46 (23.7)		
		<i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)	<i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)	<i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)		
Parent age	30–62	45.02 (6.06)	43.06 (6.07)	47.17 (5.27)	$t(404.09)^a = 7.30^{***}$	0.72
Adolescent age	12–18	14.89 (1.71)	15.05 (1.67)	14.71 (1.74)	$t(405) = 2.00$	0.20
Number of children	1–10	3.21 (1.23)	3.49 (1.33)	2.89 (1.02)	$t(394.04)^{(1)} = 5.12^{***}$	0.51

** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

^a t for unequal variances; Bonferroni correction for multiple comparisons was applied ($p < .006$)

witnessing/experiencing of cyberbullying) to 5 almost always (know about adolescent's witnessing/experiencing of cyberbullying).

Parental monitoring was measured using the Parental Control & Parental Monitoring questionnaire (Kerr & Stattin, 2000). This tool uses 15 items to evaluate the relationship between parents and their adolescent children; specifically, it measures the extent to which the parents are aware of their child's actions, their perception of the extent to which the adolescent shares experiences with them, and the extent to which they are involved in the decisions of their adolescent child (Stattin & Kerr, 2000). The questionnaire, which originally was intended to be completed by adolescents and their parents, was adjusted so that it could be completed by parents of adolescents, by inserting only minor changes in the wording where necessary. Then, the questionnaire was translated into Hebrew and Arabic, and the accuracy of the translated versions was established through back translation, all performed by the relevant native language experts. Participants rated their answers on a five-point Likert scale: 1 "almost never know" and 5 "almost always know." To recap, the questionnaire has three dimensions: (a) parental knowledge (items 1–5) (e.g., "Do you know— what your child does during his or her free time? –the peers with whom your child spends his or her free time? –where your child is going when s/he is out with friends at night"); (b) child disclosure (items 6–10) (e.g., "In your opinion, does your child keep many things secret about what s/he does in her/his free time?"); and (c) parental control (items 11–15) (e.g., "Must your child ask your permission before going out on weeknights?"). An acceptable level of reliability was found in previous studies ($\alpha=0.82$). Reliability levels in the present study were as follows: parental knowledge (items 1–5), $\alpha=0.87$; child disclosure (items 6–10), $\alpha=0.63$; and parental control (items 11–15), $\alpha=0.84$. Scores were calculated as items' means, such that higher scores represented greater parental knowledge, higher child disclosure, and higher parental control.

Regarding the variable *parental knowledge of the adolescent's online activities*, two questions were composed, one regarding the extent of the parent's knowledge of the adolescent's online activities and the second regarding the knowledge of the amount of time that the adolescent spends online daily (ranging between 1 hardly ever know and 5 almost always know). A high correlation was found between the two items ($r=0.62$, $p<0.001$), and, hence, their average score was calculated.

As regards parents' background characteristics, data retrieved included parent gender, age, education level, economic status, and the number of children, as well as the adolescent's age, grade level, and birth order among siblings.

Procedure

Participants were recruited for the study using Facebook's social network as well as WhatsApp social network groups in Israel. The recruitment posts were publicly available on Facebook's social network and on social network groups in Israel related to parenting of adolescents. Volunteer participants downloaded the questionnaire through an online link. The questionnaires were available in both Hebrew and Arabic. Given that the focus of the study is on bullying in an online environment, we decided to have the questionnaires distributed and completed online. The time allotted for completing the questionnaires was between 10 and 15 min. Participation was voluntary, and the participants were informed that all information would remain anonymous, that the data analysis would be on a group level, and that the findings would be used solely for research purposes. All participants signed a consent form before filling out the questionnaires. Furthermore, they were informed that if they felt uncomfortable at any time, they were free to stop completing the questionnaire. As far as is known, there were no participants who dropped out of the study. There were no cases of participants answering only some of the questions resulting in the exclusion of the questionnaire from the study.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed with SPSS ver. 27. Descriptive statistics were calculated for the demographic and background variables and group characteristics were compared using Chi-square tests. *Z* tests were used for the comparison of independent proportions, and independent *t*-tests. Internal consistencies (Cronbach α) were calculated for the study variables, and scales were calculated using the items' means. The two dependent variables had a 1–5 scale, yet they did not deviate from a normal distribution (skewness = -0.11 and 0.59 , $SE=0.12$), and were thus considered as normally distributed for the statistical analyses.

Means, standard deviations, and Pearson correlations were calculated for the study variables. Pearson and Spearman correlations, as well as *t*-tests, were used to calculate the correlations between the demographic background variables and the study variables. In order to assess the first and second hypotheses, a multivariate analysis of covariance was used to calculate the group differences, while controlling for adolescent age, parental age, and parent education level. In order to assess the third hypothesis, two multiple linear regression models were used. The contribution of group affiliation, demographic variables, and the study variables to parents' knowledge of the adolescent witnessing and

experiencing cyberbullying was evaluated. The regression models were calculated using two steps: the first included group affiliation and the demographic control variables, and the second included the study variables. Finally, beyond the study hypotheses, the study variables were standardized and their interactions with group affiliation were examined, to determine whether there were group differences in terms of the study variables' relationship to the parent's knowledge of the adolescent witnessing and experiencing cyberbullying.

Ethical Considerations

The current study examined sensitive aspects of human behavior, such as parent–child relationships and aggressive online behavior, requiring a high degree of self-disclosure from the participants. This in turn demanded that the study be conducted with complete anonymity and confidentiality regarding all of the data collected. Hence, findings are presented in relation to subgroups within the population, rather than in relation to individual participants. After the study was approved by the Institutional Ethics Committee, all participants freely agreed to participate in the study on a voluntary basis. Furthermore, the participants received the researcher's contact details, to enable them to obtain additional information, a copy of the results, or additional details, within the accepted standards.

Results

Descriptive Results

According to the parents' reports, most adolescents had a computer and a cellphone ($n = 348$, 85.5%), and others had either a computer or a cellphone, thus making online communication available to them. Reported screen time for most adolescents was at least 5 h per day ($n = 290$, 71.3%), with no difference between the groups. Most of the remaining parents reported between 2 and 4 h of adolescent screen time per day (Table 2). Most parents (about 64%) reported that they generally knew of their adolescents' online activity and its duration per day (about 80% of the parents). However, significant differences were found between the groups in this regard: about 74% of the Arab parents claimed they generally knew of their adolescents' online activities, compared to about 53% of the Jewish parents ($\chi^2(2) = 21.91$, $p < 0.001$). Likewise, about 87% of the Arab parents claimed they generally knew the duration of their adolescent children's daily online involvement, compared with about 71.6% of the Jewish parents ($\chi^2(2) = 14.59$, $p < 0.001$).

As regards parents' knowledge of the adolescent witnessing cyberbullying, responses varied. About 39% of the parents claimed they hardly ever or seldom knew about their adolescent witnessing cyberbullying, about 21% claimed

Table 2 Parents' perceived knowledge of their adolescent children's Internet use and cyberbullying, by group affiliation ($N = 407$)

		Total N (%)	Arab N (%)	Jewish N (%)	Difference	Effect size <i>d</i>
Daily screen time	1 to 2 h	18 (4.4)	13 (6.1)	5 (2.6)	$\chi^2(3) = 6.44$	0.17
	2 to 4 h	99 (24.3)	58 (27.2)	41 (21.1)		
	4 to 6 h	136 (33.4)	63 (29.6)	73 (37.6)		
	Over 6 h	154 (37.8)	79 (37.1)	75 (38.7)		
Parents' perceived knowledge of adolescent's online activities	Seldom, hardly ever	40 (9.8)	11 (5.2)	29 (14.9)	$\chi^2(2) = 21.91^{***}$	0.48
	Sometimes	106 (26.0)	44 (20.7)	62 (32.0)		
	Often, almost always	261 (64.1)	158 (74.2)	103 (53.1)		
Parents' perceived knowledge of duration of adolescent's daily online involvement	Seldom, hardly ever	26 (6.4)	8 (3.8)	18 (9.3)	$\chi^2(2) = 14.59^{***}$	0.37
	Sometimes	57 (14.0)	20 (9.4)	37 (19.1)		
	Often, almost always	324 (79.6)	185 (86.9)	139 (71.6)		
Parents' perceived knowledge of the adolescent witnessing cyberbullying	Seldom, hardly ever	160 (39.3)	67 (31.5)	93 (47.9)	$\chi^2(2) = 17.70^{***}$	0.42
	Sometimes	85 (20.9)	41 (19.2)	44 (22.7)		
	Often, almost always	162 (39.8)	105 (49.3)	57 (29.4)		
Parents' perceived knowledge of the adolescent experiencing cyberbullying	Seldom, hardly ever	252 (61.9)	138 (64.8)	114 (58.8)	$\chi^2(2) = 4.56$	0.06
	Sometimes	54 (13.3)	21 (9.9)	33 (17.0)		
	Often, almost always	101 (24.8)	54 (25.4)	47 (24.2)		

*** $p < .001$

they sometimes knew about it, and about 40% of the parents claimed they often or almost always knew about it. Significant group differences were found: about 49% of the Arab parents reported that they often or almost always knew about their adolescent witnessing cyberbullying, compared to about 29% of the Jewish parents ($\chi^2(2) = 17.70, p < 0.001$).

Responses regarding parents' knowledge of the adolescent experiencing cyberbullying were less diverse. Most parents (about 62%) claimed they hardly ever or seldom knew about their adolescent experiencing cyberbullying, about 13% claimed they sometimes knew about it, and about 25% of the parents claimed they often or almost always knew about it. No group differences were found regarding parents' knowledge of the adolescent experiencing cyberbullying. A detailed description of the descriptive results is shown in Table 2.

The distribution of the study variables reveals that parental monitoring and parental control were rather high ($M = 4.21$ and $M = 4.11$, respectively, of 5), while child disclosure was moderate-high ($M = 3.66$, of 5) (Table 3). Parents' perceived knowledge of the extent of their adolescent children's online activities was between moderate and high as well ($M = 3.73$, of 5), while parents' perceived knowledge of the adolescent witnessing cyberbullying was moderate ($M = 2.92$, of 5). Parents' perceived knowledge of the adolescent experiencing cyberbullying was moderate-to-low ($M = 2.32$, of 5). Significant positive correlations were found among the study variables. Parental monitoring, child disclosure, parental control, and parental perceived knowledge of adolescent online involvement, were all positively interrelated ($r = 0.19$ to $r = 0.54, p < 0.001$). Furthermore, it was found that both higher child disclosure and higher parental perceived knowledge of the extent of the adolescent's online activities correlated with higher parental perceived knowledge of the adolescent witnessing cyberbullying ($r = 0.23$ and $r = 0.26, p < 0.001$, respectively). On its own, higher parental perceived knowledge of adolescent online activities was found to correlate with higher parental perceived knowledge of the adolescent experiencing cyberbullying ($r = 0.22, p < 0.001$). Parents' perceived knowledge of the adolescent witnessing and experiencing cyberbullying were

positively interrelated as well ($r = 0.56, p < 0.001$). Means, standard deviations, and Pearson correlations for the study variables are shown in Table 3.

Several of the demographic variables correlated with the study variables. Adolescent age was negatively correlated with the independent variables, such that younger age correlated with higher parental monitoring, higher child disclosure, higher parental control, and greater perceived parental knowledge of adolescent online activities ($r = -0.15, p = 0.002$; $r = -0.14, p = 0.004$; $r = -0.19, p < 0.001$; and $r = -0.13, p = 0.010$; respectively). Older parental age correlated with higher parental monitoring ($r = 0.16, p = 0.001$), but also with lower parental knowledge of adolescent witnessing of cyberbullying ($r = -0.14, p = 0.004$). (Adolescent age and parental age were interrelated $r = 0.19, p < 0.001$). Parent education level negatively correlated with both of the dependent variables, such that a lower education level correlated with higher perceived parental knowledge of the adolescent witnessing and experiencing cyberbullying ($r = -0.17, p < 0.001$; and $r = -0.19, p < 0.001$; respectively). No correlation was found between the parent's gender, the number of children, economic status, the adolescent's birth order, or daily screen time and any of the study variables. In light of these relationships, the hypotheses were examined while controlling for adolescent age, parental age, and parent education level (parent education level had six categories, with skewness = -0.27 , $SE = 0.12$, and was considered to be normally distributed).

Study Group Differences

To assess the first and second hypotheses of the study, group differences in the study variables were examined with a multivariate analysis of covariance, controlling for adolescent age, parental age, and parent education level (Table 4). Results show several significant differences. Parental monitoring and control were perceived as significantly higher among Jewish than Arab parents, with a moderate-high effect size for parental monitoring ($\eta^2 = 0.270$) and a low-moderate effect size for parental control ($\eta^2 = 0.057$). No

Table 3 Means, standard deviations, and Pearson correlations for the study variables ($N = 407$)

	<i>M (SD)</i>	2	3	4	5	6
1. Parental monitoring	4.21 (0.50)	.43***	.54***	.47***	.13	.13
2. Child disclosure	3.66 (0.58)		.19***	.38***	.23***	.02
3. Parental control	4.11 (0.62)			.42***	.12	.13
4. Parents' perceived knowledge of adolescent online involvement	3.73 (0.71)				.26***	.22***
5. Parents' perceived knowledge of the adolescent witnessing cyberbullying	2.92 (1.24)					.56***
6. Parents' perceived knowledge of the adolescent experiencing cyberbullying	2.32 (1.33)					

Range: 1–5. Bonferroni correction for multiple comparisons was applied ($p < .003$)

** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 4 Means, standard deviations, and F values for the study variables by group affiliation ($N=407$)

	Arab <i>M (SD)</i>	Jewish <i>M (SD)</i>	<i>F(1, 402)</i>	η^2
Parental monitoring	3.94 (0.32)	4.50 (0.51)	148.36***	.270
Child disclosure	3.65 (0.48)	3.68 (0.68)	0.54	.001
Parental control	3.96 (0.26)	4.28 (0.82)	24.15***	.057
Parents' perceived knowledge of adolescent's online involvement	3.77 (0.50)	3.69 (0.89)	1.39	.003
Parents' perceived knowledge of the adolescent witnessing cyberbullying	3.10 (1.06)	2.72 (1.35)	5.39*	.013
Parents' perceived knowledge of the adolescent experiencing cyberbullying	2.18 (1.20)	2.47 (1.44)	4.37*	.011

Range: 1–5

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

differences were found for child disclosure or parental perceived knowledge of adolescent online activities. Parental knowledge of the adolescent witnessing cyberbullying was higher among Arab than Jewish parents, whereas parental knowledge of the adolescent children's cyberbullying experience was higher among Jewish than Arab parents, with both showing low effect sizes ($\eta^2 = 0.013$ and $\eta^2 = 0.011$, respectively).

Parental Variables and Adolescent's Involvement in Cyberbullying

To assess the third hypothesis of the study, the associations between parental monitoring, parental perceived knowledge of the adolescent's online activities, and parental perceived knowledge of the adolescent's involvement in cyberbullying were examined using two multiple linear regressions. The

first step included the control variables of adolescent age, parental age, and parent education (continuous variables), as well as group affiliation (1, Jewish; 0, Arab). The second step included parental monitoring and control, child disclosure, and parental perceived knowledge of adolescent online activities (Table 5). Results show that both regression models were significant, although the explained variance figures were moderate to low (Witnessing cyberbullying 13% and Experiencing cyberbullying 9%).

Parental perceived knowledge of adolescent witnessing of cyberbullying was related to group affiliation, parents' education level, child disclosure, and parental perceived knowledge of adolescent online activities. That is, parental perceived knowledge of adolescents witnessing cyberbullying was higher among the Arab than the Jewish parents. Lower parental education, higher child disclosure, and higher parental perceived knowledge of adolescent online

Table 5 Multiple regressions for parents' perceived knowledge of the adolescent witnessing and experiencing cyberbullying ($N=407$)

	Witnessing cyberbullying		Experiencing cyberbullying	
	β	$\Delta \text{Adj. } R^2$	β	$\Delta \text{Adj. } R^2$
<i>Step 1</i>		.05***		.05***
Group affiliation—Jewish	-.12*		.11*	
Adolescent age	-.01		-.11*	
Parental age	-.07		-.01	
Parent education	-.18***		-.19***	
<i>Step 2</i>		.08***		.04***
Group affiliation—Jewish	-.19**		.17*	
Adolescent age	.03		-.08	
Parental age	-.06		-.01	
Parent education	-.19***		-.18***	
Parental monitoring	.14		-.08	
Child disclosure	.12*		-.05	
Parental control	-.01		.01	
Parents' perceived knowledge of adolescent online involvement	.13*		.26***	
Total Adj. R^2		.13***		.09***
<i>F(8, 398)</i>		8.64***		5.84***

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

activities were all associated with higher perceived parental knowledge of adolescents witnessing cyberbullying.

Parental perceived knowledge of the adolescent experiencing cyberbullying was associated with group affiliation, parents' education level, and parental perceived knowledge of adolescent online activities. That is, parental perceived knowledge of the adolescent experiencing cyberbullying was higher among the Jewish parents than among the Arab parents. In addition, lower parental education, and higher parental perceived knowledge of adolescent online activities were associated with higher perceived parental knowledge of the adolescent experiencing cyberbullying.

Finally, the study variables were standardized and their interactions with group affiliation were defined. Two additional multiple linear regressions were calculated, to assess the extent to which the relationships found in Table 5 differed by group affiliation. No significant results were found, revealing that across both the Jewish and the Arab groups, parental monitoring, child disclosure, parental control, and parental perceived knowledge of adolescent online activities were all similarly related to parental perceived knowledge of the adolescent witnessing and experiencing cyberbullying.

Discussion

This study compared Jewish and Arab parents of adolescents in Israel in terms of their parental involvement and its relationship to their perceived knowledge regarding their adolescent children's involvement in cyberbullying. Parental involvement was conceptualized in terms of parental monitoring and control and parental perceived knowledge of the adolescent's online activities.

To recap the findings, parental monitoring and control were higher among Jewish parents compared to Arab parents with a moderate-high effect size for parental monitoring and a low-moderate effect size for parental control. No group differences were found for perceived child disclosure or parental knowledge of adolescent online activities. Thus, the first hypothesis was not supported. Parental perceived knowledge of adolescent witnessing of cyberbullying was higher among Arab than Jewish parents, while the opposite was found for parental knowledge of the adolescent experiencing cyberbullying, with both showing low effect sizes. Thus, the second hypothesis was supported only in regard to parents' perceived knowledge of the adolescent experience of, but not witnessing of, cyberbullying. Parents' perceived knowledge of adolescent children's witnessing as well as experiencing cyberbullying were directly correlated to parents' group affiliation, lower parental education, and higher parental perceived knowledge of the adolescent's online activities, with low-moderate effect sizes. Thus, the third hypothesis regarding the relationship between parental

perceived knowledge of the adolescent's online activities and parental perceived knowledge of the adolescent witnessing and experiencing cyberbullying was supported.

Implications for Practice

Parental perceived knowledge of the adolescent witnessing cyberbullying was related to Arab group affiliation, lower parent education levels, higher child disclosure, and higher parental perceived knowledge of adolescent online activities. Parental perceived knowledge of the adolescent experiencing cyberbullying was related to Jewish group affiliation, parents' lower education level, and higher parental perceived knowledge of adolescent online activities. Research attempting to understand the relationship between parental control and cyberbullying has produced inconsistent results. The findings of a study of parents' perception of cyberbullying of their children in Saudi Arabia suggested that parental involvement could reduce cyberbullying (Alfakeh et al., 2021). Other studies strengthen these findings, demonstrating that positive parental supervision that includes monitoring the adolescent's use of social networks can reduce cybervictimization (Martin-Criado et al., 2021; Wright & Wachs, 2018). A study by Khurana et al. (2015) investigated the relationship between these variables from the adolescents' perspective and found a significant difference between the effects of parental monitoring compared to parental restriction of Internet use, leading to the conclusion that adolescents' perceptions of parental monitoring and awareness can be protective against online harassment (Khurana et al., 2015). Other studies have not found statistically significant relationships between parental control and adolescent children's involvement in cyberbullying, cybervictimization, or witnessing of cyberbullying, whether parental control was conceptualized as the use of restrictive methods, such as installing filters or software that blocks websites; supervisory methods, such as checking the web pages that children visit on the Internet (Navarro et al., 2013); or direct parental monitoring of Internet use (Mishna et al., 2012). This might be explained by the tendency of some parents to exercise more control if they know or even suspect that their children are—or might be—subjected to cybervictimization. Another possible explanation, based on the study of Martins et al. (2016), may be the lack of family support (leading to cybervictimization) or the absence of family supervisory rules (leading to cyberaggression). In a similar vein, lack of parental warmth (support, dialogue, open communication, trust, affective relationships, and parental interest in children's activities) has been shown to increase the probability of being the subject of cyberaggression (Elsaesser et al., 2017; Gómez-Ortiz et al., 2018). All of these results suggest a complex relationship between parental control and cyberbullying, cybervictimization, and witnessing cyberbullying.

In the context of minority adolescents, parental monitoring was shown to have a significant moderating role among foreign-born (Hispanic and Asian) adolescents in the United States, who were less likely to exhibit internalizing problems when bullied (Hong et al., 2021). Addressing the Israeli context, the current findings suggest that Jewish parents were more prone to monitoring and controlling their adolescent children than were the Arab parents. This finding contradicts previous studies that examined parents' involvement among the Arab minority in Israel, which indicated that parents of girls participated and were involved in their daughters' studies more than parents of boys (Zedan, 2012) and that in the Arab sector, children and especially girls are highly monitored by their parents (Lapidot-Lefler & Hosri, 2016). Despite this monitoring, in the current study, the Jewish parents reported greater participation in their children's experience of being bullied online. In contrast, more Arab than Jewish parents reported knowing that their children had witnessed online bullying. Thus, the mixed results reported here reflect the undecided findings reported in the research literature in the field (Álvarez-García et al., 2019).

The information and insights gleaned from the current study contribute to a constantly expanding pool of knowledge, intended to assist policy and decision-makers, as well as educators, in formulating an effective set of tools for coping with the cyberbullying phenomenon in a society with multiple cultures. Thus, in developing cyberbullying prevention programs and interventions, there is a need to relate to the role of sociocultural context in cyberbullying and to address the parents' perception of their adolescent children's involvement in cyberbullying. The current study suggests that parents should be assigned a central part of this endeavor, as has been illustrated in previous theoretical models (e.g., Morrongiello & Lasenby-Lessard, 2007). More specifically, the factor of family and parents should be expanded to include the learning of parental behaviors that will help them be more perceptive of and knowledgeable about their adolescent children's involvement in cyberbullying. Additionally, the social-situational factors should likewise be expanded to address not only peers, media, and reacting to contextual social demands, but to include also the sociocultural factors and context in which the phenomenon of cyberbullying is taking place. There seems to be a need to increase the emphasis on the cultural context and work with parents on observing the cultural context, in order to maximize opportunities for success. This understanding can help hone current curricular anti-bullying prevention programs and interventions.

Limitations and Implications for Future Research

There are several weaknesses in this study that call for viewing these findings as tentative. First, it was carried out

during the COVID-19 pandemic context, so that the parents' answers could be viewed as reflecting a time when the children had to practice social distancing or were in isolation. Hence, these findings might not be representative of more routine periods. In addition, although this was a large sample of parents, it was a convenient sample and was predefined in terms of participants' age, gender, and religion (Arab Muslims, Arab Christians, or Druze). In the future, it would be interesting to replicate this study with random samples, a wider range of demographic characteristics, as well as in other geographical and religious contexts. Another limitation was the reliance on self-response measures (questionnaires) directed at parents. It would be useful to complement that in the future with data gathered from the adolescents and using other information gathering techniques (e.g., interviews or discussion groups). Next, the current study did not consider the role of other potentially important variables, which might be mediators or moderators of the relationships examined in this study. However, such factors might exist and could be an important focus for further research. Indeed, further research needs to be done to test both the validity and generalizability of the findings.

Conclusion

The current study examines the relationship between parental monitoring and control, parents' perceived knowledge of their adolescent's online activities, and parents' perceived knowledge of their adolescent's involvement in cyberbullying, among Israeli Jewish and Arab parents of adolescents. As demonstrated, the most notable outcomes of this study are the inclusion of variables that refine our understanding of the conditions associated with parental knowledge of the adolescent's involvement in cyberbullying. The study increases our understanding of perceived parental involvement and its relationship with parents' perceived knowledge of the adolescent's involvement in cyberbullying in a sociocultural context. Expanding our understanding regarding determinants of parents' perceived knowledge of their adolescent's involvement in cyberbullying in a sociocultural context can provide a foundation for initiatives that aim to reduce such behaviors, thus helping to prevent cyberbullying in diverse and multicultural societies.

Availability of Data and Material The data is available in accordance with the customary ethical standards of data transparency.

Declarations

Consent to Participate All the participants chose to take part in the study. The participants received the researcher's contact details so that they could obtain additional information, a copy of the results, or other details of interest.

Conflict of Interest The author declares no competing interests.

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