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Cybervictimization and Disordered Eating Among Adolescent Girls: A Structural Equation Model of Appearance Comparison, Body Dissatisfaction, and Self-Esteem

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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

In the participant description, the authors report that the final sample included “exactly 648 adolescent girls,” but no a priori sample-size or statistical-power analysis is provided. Please include a power analysis based on the anticipated model complexity, number of latent variables, estimated parameters, expected effect sizes, and desired statistical power. A simulation-based Monte Carlo power analysis would be preferable for this model, particularly because several specific serial indirect effects are relatively small and may require larger samples for stable estimation.

In the eligibility criteria paragraph, the inclusion criterion of “self-identifying as a girl” requires further methodological clarification. Please explain how gender identity was assessed, whether sex assigned at birth was measured, and whether transgender girls were included. This information is important for interpreting the sample and for understanding whether the measures, body mass index standardization procedures, and sex-specific developmental assumptions were applied consistently and inclusively.

In the description of the Eating Attitudes Test–26, the manuscript reports that 23.0% of participants exceeded the screening threshold of 20. Because the EAT-26 is a screening instrument rather than a diagnostic measure, this point is correctly

acknowledged; however, the manuscript should additionally report whether behavioral items concerning binge eating, vomiting, laxative use, or significant weight loss were assessed. The prevalence statement should be interpreted cautiously, and the authors should avoid referring to these participants as having clinically significant eating disorders without confirmatory assessment.

In the Data Analysis section, the authors state that "cases with substantial missing information were excluded, whereas the remaining missing responses were handled using full-information maximum likelihood estimation." Please define the threshold used to classify missingness as substantial, report the number of cases excluded specifically for missing data, and provide results from Little's test or another evaluation of the missing-data mechanism. The assumption that data were missing at random should not be asserted solely from the small percentage of missing responses.

In the paragraph describing the confirmatory factor analysis, all individual items from five instruments were apparently included as indicators, producing a very large model with 74 observed indicators. Please explain whether item-level modeling, parceling, or scale subdimensions were used, because the reported degrees of freedom and fit statistics should be reproducible from the specified model. If item parcels were used, the parcel-construction procedure and theoretical justification must be reported. If all items were modeled individually, the authors should discuss estimator performance, computational stability, and the possibility of inflated model complexity.

Authors uploaded the revised manuscript.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

In the ethics paragraph, the manuscript states that "written informed consent was obtained from parents or legal guardians when required by provincial and school-board regulations." This wording is too general for a study involving minors across three provinces. Please specify the consent model used in each province and school board, including whether active parental consent, passive consent, mature-minor consent, or adolescent assent procedures were applied. The authors should also provide the research ethics board name, approval number, and procedures for responding to participants who disclosed severe eating-related symptoms, self-harm risk, or acute distress.

In the Data Collection Tools section, cybervictimization was assessed during "the previous two months," while body dissatisfaction was assessed over "the previous four weeks," and the other measures appear to assess general or current tendencies. These inconsistent reference periods may weaken the conceptual correspondence among the variables. Please justify the use of different temporal frames and discuss whether the observed associations reflect overlapping experiences. Alternatively, consider harmonizing the assessment periods or acknowledging temporal incongruence more explicitly as a measurement limitation.

In the paragraph describing the European Cyberbullying Intervention Project Questionnaire, the authors indicate that item scores were summed and later model cybervictimization as a latent construct represented by all 11 items. Please provide evidence regarding the factor structure of the victimization subscale in this Canadian adolescent sample. The manuscript should report whether the construct was modeled as unidimensional, whether ordinal item estimators were considered, and whether any items displayed low loadings, sparse response categories, or residual dependence. The use of robust maximum likelihood with ordinal frequency responses also requires stronger justification relative to weighted least squares estimation.

In the description of the Physical Appearance Comparison Scale–Revised, the manuscript states that the instrument captures comparisons with "peers, social media users, celebrities, influencers, and other individuals." Please verify that all these comparison targets are directly represented in the administered scale. If the original items do not explicitly distinguish online and offline targets, the text should not imply that the measure is a social-media-specific appearance-comparison instrument. The authors should reproduce the exact construct definition used in the analysis and clarify whether any wording was adapted for adolescents or digital contexts.

In the Body Shape Questionnaire paragraph, the manuscript describes the 16-item version but does not identify the precise validated version, scoring range, or evidence supporting its use among Canadian adolescent girls. Please specify the version

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name, citation, response coding, and interpretive conventions. The authors should also explain whether measurement invariance has previously been established across adolescent age groups or cultural backgrounds and whether the scale assesses general body dissatisfaction or primarily weight- and shape-related concerns.

Authors uploaded the revised manuscript.

2. Revised

Editor's decision after revisions: Accepted.
Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.

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