

Nearly half of women who use social media say they have been sexually victimised

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These are findings being presented on Thursday 13 July at the British Psychological Society's 30th Psychology of Women conference in Windsor by Megan Kenny from University of Huddersfield.

A total of 261 women aged 13-72 took part in an anonymous online survey about their online experiences, with 46 per cent reporting sexual victimisation. The most frequent experience was being asked to share sexual images of themselves, followed by receiving unsolicited sexual images and requests to talk about sex.

Of those questioned 41 per cent had experienced threatening [behaviour](#) online, the most common being receiving offensive messages, 38 per cent had experienced humiliating contact and 15 per cent had experienced sexual, threatening or humiliating contact.

Some participants admitted being perpetrators of cyberviolence, with 13 per cent admitting to [sexual behaviour](#) and 12 per cent admitting to threatening and humiliating behaviours.

The research also revealed that as a result of cyberviolence women reported negative feelings about themselves and perpetrators, [women](#) also developed coping strategies to manage such negative contact which include the use of humour and defiance, as well as minimising behaviour and reporting indifference.

Ms Kenny said, "These results suggest that cyberviolence via social [media](#) is a problem for female social media users, across various [social media](#) platforms and has lasting offline consequences. If you are a victim of this kind of behaviour document everything using screenshots, making note of dates and report the individual to the platform in the first instance. If you believe you are at serious risk of harm, ensure you have documented as much as possible and contact the police."

Provided by British Psychological Society

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