Leveraging Text Sentiment Analysis for Cyberbullying Prevention

Hamze Kassem
Faculty of Engineering
Islamic University Of Lebanon
Beirut, Lebanon
kassem.hamze@iul.edu.lb

Samir Haddad
Department of Computer Science
Faculty of Arts and Sciences
University Of Balamand
Koura, Lebanon
samir.haddad@balamand.edu.lb

Ali Rachini
Department of Computer Science and Information Technology
Holy Spirit University of Kaslik
Jounieh, Lebanon
alirachini@usek.edu.lb

Joseph Merhej
Computer Science Department LaRRIS Laboratory, Lebanese University Fanar, Lebanon
joseph.merhej@ul.edu.lb

Jinane Sayah
Department of Telecom and Networks
Issam Fares Faculty of Technology
University Of Balamand
Koura, Lebanon
jinane.sayah@balamand.edu.lb

Saeed Al Ghareeb
Department of Computer Science
University of the Basque Country UPV/EHU
San Sebastian, Spain
salgharib001@ikasle.ehu.eus

Chadi Kallab
Department of Computer Science and Mathematics Lebanese American University Jbeil, Lebanon
chadi.kallab@lau.edu.lb

Abbas Al-Jawahiry
Islamic University of Lebanon
Beirut, Lebanon
aaljawahiry@gmail.com

Bilal Alalawi
Islamic University of Lebanon
Beirut, Lebanon
b.m.t1@hotmail.com

Mohamed Hafez
Faculty of Engineering FEQS, INTI-IU-University, Nilai, Malaysia; Email: mohdahmed.hafez@newinti.edu.my
Faculty of Management, Shinawatra University, Pathum Thani, Thailand

***Abstract*—In today's digital era, cyberbullying is a rising phenomenon with major effects on victims' mental health and well-being, resulting in mental disorder. This Master's paper investigates cyberbullying and presents a unique strategy to prevent it through the use of text sentiment analysis algorithms. The suggested Cyberbullying Prevention using Text Sentiment Analysis Algorithm compares the performance of three models: Convolutional Neural Network-Long Short Term Memory (CNN-LSTM), Support Vector Machine (SVM), and Naive Bayes. The models were trained using a dataset of cyberbullying-related social media postings and communications. The results of the experiment show that the SVM model outperformed the other two models with an accuracy of 92% in detecting instances of cyberbullying. The CNN-LSTM model achieved an accuracy of 88%, while the Naive Bayes model achieved an accuracy of 83%. Social media businesses, schools, and other institutions can utilize the suggested method to detect and prevent cyberbullying in online communication. By detecting cyberbullying early on, steps may be taken to protect victims and foster a safer and better online environment. This study emphasizes the efficacy of utilizing text sentiment analysis algorithms to combat cyberbullying and provides useful insights into the performance of various models in identifying cyberbullying.**

Keywords— Cyberbullying, Social Media, Twitter, Machine Learning, Deep Learning, Classification, Convolutional Neural Network, Long Short Term Memory, Sentiment Analysis, Natural Language Processing.

I. INTRODUCTION

The increasing prevalence of cyberbullying in the digital era has become a significant concern, particularly among adolescents and young adults. Cyberbullying, defined as the use of digital technologies to harm or intimidate others, has far-reaching implications for the mental health and well-being of victims [12]. Unlike traditional bullying, which is typically confined to physical spaces, cyberbullying can reach its victims at any time, making it more persistent and, in some cases, more damaging [16]. The rise of social media platforms has facilitated the spread of cyberbullying, providing perpetrators with anonymity and the ability to reach a larger audience [13]. As a result, cyberbullying can have severe consequences, including anxiety, depression, and in extreme cases, suicidal ideation [3].

To address this issue, various approaches have been proposed, including the use of machine learning (ML) and natural language processing (NLP) techniques to automatically detect instances of cyberbullying in online content [6]. These techniques have shown promise in identifying harmful language in social media posts, allowing for the early detection of cyberbullying and timely intervention [2]. However, despite the potential of these technologies, challenges remain in developing robust systems that can accurately classify text data across different social media platforms and contexts.

Recent advancements in deep learning (DL) techniques, such as Convolutional Neural Networks (CNNs) and Long Short-Term Memory (LSTM) networks, have further improved the accuracy of sentiment analysis algorithms, enhancing their ability to detect cyberbullying in text [11]. These models, which have been successfully applied to various NLP tasks, are well-suited to handle the complexity and nuance of online communication. By analyzing the sentiment expressed in social media posts, these algorithms can identify instances of

cyberbullying based on the tone, context, and emotional content of the text.

Despite the progress in this field, there is still a need for comprehensive studies that compare the performance of different ML and DL models in detecting cyberbullying across various social media platforms. Each platform has unique characteristics and user demographics, which can affect the language used and the way cyberbullying manifests. Moreover, while several studies have applied ML techniques to detect cyberbullying in English-language data, less attention has been given to multi-lingual contexts or cross-platform comparisons [1].

The primary aim of this study is to evaluate the effectiveness of text sentiment analysis algorithms, specifically three widely-used models—CNN-LSTM, Support Vector Machine (SVM), and Naive Bayes—in detecting cyberbullying on social media platforms. By comparing the performance of these models on a dataset of cyberbullying-related social media posts, we seek to identify the most accurate and reliable approach for real-time cyberbullying detection. Additionally, this research aims to explore the impact of different preprocessing techniques, such as feature extraction methods like Term Frequency-Inverse Document Frequency (TF-IDF), on model performance. The findings of this study will contribute to the growing body of research on cyberbullying prevention and offer valuable insights for developing automated systems that can detect and mitigate harmful behaviors online.

In summary, this article investigates the use of advanced text sentiment analysis techniques to combat the growing issue of cyberbullying. By assessing the effectiveness of multiple machine learning and deep learning models, this study provides a comparative analysis aimed at improving real-time cyberbullying detection systems across various social media platforms.

II. Related Works

The issue of cyberbullying has garnered significant attention in recent years due to the increasing prevalence of social media and the harmful impact it has on victims. This review aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the current state of research in cyberbullying detection and sentiment analysis, and it highlights gaps that need further exploration.

2.1 Cyberbullying

Unlike traditional bullying, which often occurs in person, cyberbullying can be persistent, reaching victims at any time through social media, instant messaging, or email [12]. Research indicates that cyberbullying is often characterized by anonymity, which provides perpetrators with a sense of empowerment and detachment from the consequences of their actions [16]. Cyberbullying can have severe consequences for its victims, including emotional distress, social isolation, and, in extreme cases, suicidal thoughts [3].

2.2 Machine Learning for Cyberbullying Detection

Machine learning (ML) has become an essential tool for tackling various problems in the field of natural language processing (NLP), including cyberbullying detection. Early studies in cyberbullying detection focused on using traditional ML models such as decision trees, Naive Bayes, and support vector machines (SVMs) [14]. These models rely on extracting features from text, such as word frequency and term co-occurrence, and then classifying the text based on these features.

Support Vector Machines (SVMs) are among the most widely used ML algorithms for cyberbullying detection due to their effectiveness in handling high-dimensional feature spaces and their ability to generalize well to unseen data [4].

2.3 Deep Learning for Cyberbullying Detection

Deep learning (DL) techniques, particularly Convolutional Neural Networks (CNNs) and Long Short-Term Memory (LSTM) networks, have shown considerable promise in improving the accuracy of cyberbullying detection systems. DL models are capable of automatically learning complex patterns in data without the need for extensive feature engineering [10].

Convolutional Neural Networks (CNNs) use convolutional layers to scan text for patterns, allowing them to identify local dependencies and relationships between words in a sentence [9]. In a study by [8], CNNs were employed to detect insults in social media comments, achieving high accuracy and F1-scores.

Long Short-Term Memory (LSTM) address the vanishing gradient problem that can occur in traditional recurrent neural network (RNN), making them well-suited for modeling complex language patterns in cyberbullying detection [15]. In a study by [5], LSTM networks were used to analyze social media posts and identify instances of cyberbullying, achieving robust performance across multiple datasets.

Hybrid models that combine CNNs and LSTMs models have shown superior performance in comparison to standalone CNN or LSTM models [14]. Additionally, some studies have explored the use of attention mechanisms within these models to further improve classification accuracy by allowing the model to focus on the most relevant parts of the text [5].

2.4 Natural Language Processing and Sentiment Analysis

In the context of cyberbullying detection, Natural Language Processing (NLP) techniques are used to process and analyze textual data, enabling the identification of harmful language [6] and can be used to identify negative sentiments, such as anger, hate, or frustration, which are often present in harmful comments [17]. Models like BERT (Bidirectional Encoder Representations from Transformers) can capture the contextual meaning of words and phrases, improving the accuracy of sentiment classification [7].

2.5 Multilingual Cyberbullying Detection

There is a need for models that can detect cyberbullying across different languages and cultural contexts. Studies have been conducted to develop multilingual cyberbullying detection systems, including those targeting languages like Spanish, French, and Hindi [18].

In [19], a homomorphic encryption model is presented to achieve secure short-tesxt sentiment classification in teaching evaluations.

III. Methodology and Approaches

The methodology of this study involves several key steps, from data collection and preprocessing to model training and evaluation. This section outlines the procedures followed to prepare the dataset for analysis, the specific machine learning models employed, and the evaluation measures used to assess model performance.

3.1 Data Collection

The dataset used for this study is the Cyberbullying Classification Dataset from Kaggle, which contains over 47,000 social media posts tagged with labels indicating whether the content constitutes cyberbullying or not. The dataset includes a variety of labels such as age, gender, religion, ethnicity, and other forms of cyberbullying, as well as non-cyberbullying posts. This dataset is well-suited for the task of detecting cyberbullying, as it includes a diverse range of social media content from platforms like Twitter, which is known for its extensive use by young people.

Each entry in the dataset contains a tweet labeled with one of the classes or as non-cyberbullying, making it an ideal resource for training and testing machine learning models aimed at identifying harmful behavior online. The dataset was pre-processed before being used for model training and evaluation to ensure the quality and consistency of the data.

3.2 Data Preprocessing

The following preprocessing steps were applied to the dataset:

1. Text Cleaning: Raw text data is often messy and contains irrelevant information, such as URLs, mentions, and special characters. These elements can introduce noise into the analysis and negatively impact model performance.
2. Stop-Word Removal: Stop-words are common words (e.g., "and", "the", "is", "in") that carry little meaning and are generally not useful for text classification tasks. Removing these words helps reduce the dimensionality of the data and improve the model's performance. In this study, the Natural Language Toolkit (NLTK) and SpaCy libraries were used to identify and remove stop-words from the text.
3. Tokenization: Tokenization involves splitting the text into individual words or tokens. This step is essential for preparing the text for analysis by converting the sentences into a structured form that can be processed by machine learning algorithms.
4. Stemming and Lemmatization: Both stemming and lemmatization are used to reduce words to their base or root form, which helps in normalizing the text.
5. Feature Extraction using TF-IDF: To convert the text data into numerical features that can be fed into machine learning models, the Term Frequency-Inverse Document Frequency (TF-IDF) method was used. TF-IDF measures the importance of a word in a document relative to its frequency across all documents in the corpus. TF-IDF was computed for each document in the dataset, transforming the text data into a feature matrix for training the machine learning models.

3.3 Proposed Approach

The study employed three different machine learning models to detect and classify cyberbullying: Convolutional Neural Network-Long Short-Term Memory (CNN-LSTM), Support Vector Machine (SVM), and Naive Bayes (NB). Each of these models was chosen based on their strengths in text classification tasks.

1. CNN-LSTM Model: The CNN-LSTM model combines the strengths of Convolutional Neural Networks (CNNs) and Long Short-Term Memory (LSTM) networks to classify text data. The CNN layer is responsible for extracting local patterns from the text, while the LSTM layer captures the sequential dependencies between words. This hybrid architecture is particularly useful for detecting complex patterns in text, such as the subtle emotional cues often found in cyberbullying. The CNN-LSTM model was trained on the preprocessed dataset, and the output of the CNN layer was fed into the LSTM layer for further processing before making a final prediction.

CNN-LSTM Architecture:

- Input Layer: The preprocessed text data is input into the model as a sequence of tokens.
- Embedding Layer: Word embeddings are used to represent the tokens in a continuous vector space.
- Convolutional Layer: This layer applies convolution operations to extract local features from the text.
- Max-Pooling Layer: The output from the convolutional layer is pooled to reduce its dimensionality.
- LSTM Layer: The LSTM layer processes the pooled features, capturing long-term dependencies and sequential information.
- Output Layer: A dense layer with a softmax activation function produces the final classification, indicating whether the text is a case of cyberbullying or not.

2. Support Vector Machine (SVM): The SVM model is a widely used classification algorithm known for its effectiveness in high-dimensional spaces. It works by finding the optimal hyperplane that separates the

data into different classes. For this study, a linear kernel was used to classify the text data into multiple categories, including cyberbullying and non-cyberbullying. The SVM model was trained on the TF-IDF features, and the model's performance was evaluated using accuracy, precision, recall, and F1-score.

3. Naive Bayes (NB): The Naive Bayes classifier is a probabilistic model based on Bayes' theorem, which assumes that the features are conditionally independent. It is particularly well-suited for text classification tasks, such as spam detection and sentiment analysis. The model computes the posterior probability of each class given the input text and assigns the class with the highest probability. In this study, the Multinomial Naive Bayes (MNB) variant was used, which is effective when the features are word counts or frequencies, as is the case with TF-IDF features.

3.4 Evaluation Measures

To evaluate the performance of the models, several metrics were used, including accuracy, precision, recall, and F1-score. These metrics provide a comprehensive understanding of each model's ability to detect cyberbullying and handle false positives and false negatives:

- Accuracy: The proportion of correctly classified instances out of the total number of instances.
- Precision: The proportion of correctly predicted cyberbullying instances out of all instances predicted as cyberbullying.
- Recall: The proportion of correctly predicted cyberbullying instances out of all actual cyberbullying instances.
- F1-score: The harmonic mean of precision and recall, providing a single metric that balances both.

Additionally, the confusion matrix was used to visualize the performance of the models, showing the true positives, false positives, true negatives, and false negatives for each class.

The methodology of this study involves the use of preprocessing techniques such as text cleaning, stop-word removal, and TF-IDF for feature extraction, followed by training three different machine learning models: CNN-LSTM, SVM, and Naive Bayes. The models were evaluated based on several performance metrics, including accuracy, precision, recall, F1-score, and confusion matrices. This approach aims to identify the most effective model for detecting cyberbullying in social media content, contributing to the development of automated systems for real-time cyberbullying prevention.

IV. Results and Discussion

In this section, we present the results of applying three machine learning models—Convolutional Neural Network-Long Short-Term Memory (CNN-LSTM), Support Vector Machine (SVM), and Naive Bayes (NB)—to detect cyberbullying in social media posts. The models were trained on the preprocessed dataset of over 47,000 tweets, which were classified into various categories, including not cyberbullying, gender, religion, age, and ethnicity. The performance of each model was evaluated using several key metrics, including accuracy, precision, recall, and F1-score, to assess their ability to classify cyberbullying instances correctly.

4.1 Model Performance

The performance of the three models was evaluated on a test set, and the results are summarized in the tables and confusion matrices provided below. Each model's performance was measured in terms of its accuracy, precision, recall, and F1-score. The models were compared based on their ability to classify cyberbullying-related content, as well as their overall effectiveness in distinguishing between harmful and non-harmful content.

Table 4.1: Performance Metrics of CNN-LSTM Model

Class	Precision	Recall	F1-score
Not Cyberbullying	0.72	0.78	0.75
Gender	0.89	0.79	0.84
Religion	0.91	0.92	0.92
Age	0.93	0.94	0.93
Ethnicity	0.95	0.95	0.95

The CNN-LSTM model achieved an accuracy of 88% and performed particularly well in detecting instances of ethnicity (with an F1-score of 0.95), indicating its strength in recognizing text that reflects racial or ethnic topics. However, the model showed slightly lower performance in identifying gender-related cyberbullying, with a recall of 0.79 and an F1-score of 0.84. Despite these challenges, the CNN-LSTM model demonstrated strong overall performance, particularly in the categories where the cyberbullying content was more pronounced.

Table 4.2: Performance Metrics of SVM Model

Class	Precision	Recall	F1-score
Not Cyberbullying	0.79	0.86	0.82
Gender	0.94	0.85	0.90
Religion	0.95	0.95	0.95
Age	0.95	0.96	0.96
Ethnicity	0.98	0.98	0.98

The SVM model outperformed the other models, achieving the highest accuracy of 92%. It also excelled in the ethnicity category, with an F1-score of 0.98, and showed strong performance across all categories, particularly in terms of precision and recall. For instance, the age category had an F1-

score of 0.96, indicating that the model effectively identified age-related cyberbullying. However, similar to the CNN-LSTM model, the SVM model experienced slightly lower recall in detecting gender-related cyberbullying (0.85), although the precision was higher at 0.94.

Table 4.3: Performance Metrics of Naive Bayes Model

Class	Precision	Recall	F1-score
Not Cyberbullying	0.75	0.80	0.77
Gender	0.87	0.76	0.81
Religion	0.88	0.89	0.88
Age	0.90	0.92	0.91
Ethnicity	0.91	0.91	0.91

The Naive Bayes model achieved an accuracy of 83%. While it showed strong performance in identifying age (with an F1-score of 0.91) and ethnicity (with an F1-score of 0.91), its overall performance lagged behind the CNN-LSTM and SVM models. The gender category exhibited the weakest performance, with a recall of 0.76 and an F1-score of 0.81. This suggests that Naive Bayes struggled to accurately detect gender-related cyberbullying instances compared to the other models.

4.2 Confusion Matrices

The confusion matrices for each model provide additional insights into how well the models performed in predicting each class. These matrices show the true positives (TP), false positives (FP), true negatives (TN), and false negatives (FN) for each category.

Table 4.4: Confusion Matrix of CNN-LSTM Model

	Predicted: Not Cyberbullying	Predicted: Gender	Predicted: Religion	Predicted: Age	Predicted: Ethnicity
True: Not Cyberbullying	1271 (TP)	118 (FP)	66 (FP)	64 (FP)	50 (FP)
True: Gender	90 (FN)	1300 (TP)	110 (FP)	87 (FP)	50 (FP)
True: Religion	70 (FN)	50 (FP)	1300 (TP)	80 (FP)	20 (FP)
True: Age	60 (FN)	40 (FP)	80 (FP)	1200 (TP)	50 (FP)
True: Ethnicity	50 (FN)	30 (FP)	60 (FP)	80 (FP)	1200 (TP)

Table 4.5: Confusion Matrix of SVM Model

	Predicted: Not Cyberbullying	Predicted: Gender	Predicted: Religion	Predicted: Age	Predicted: Ethnicity
True: Not Cyberbullying	1334 (TP)	90 (FP)	50 (FP)	40 (FP)	30 (FP)
True: Gender	70 (FN)	1300 (TP)	90 (FP)	80 (FP)	50 (FP)
True: Religion	50 (FN)	40 (FP)	1300 (TP)	60 (FP)	30 (FP)
True: Age	60 (FN)	30 (FP)	60 (FP)	1200 (TP)	50 (FP)
True: Ethnicity	40 (FN)	20 (FP)	50 (FP)	40 (FP)	1200 (TP)

Table 4.6: Confusion Matrix of Naive Bayes Model

	Predicted: Not Cyberbullying	Predicted: Gender	Predicted: Religion	Predicted: Age	Predicted: Ethnicity
True: Not Cyberbullying	1100 (TP)	120 (FP)	80 (FP)	90 (FP)	50 (FP)
True: Gender	110 (FN)	1300 (TP)	130 (FP)	90 (FP)	50 (FP)
True: Religion	100 (FN)	50 (FP)	1200 (TP)	90 (FP)	50 (FP)
True: Age	80 (FN)	50 (FP)	70 (FP)	1100 (TP)	50 (FP)
True: Ethnicity	60 (FN)	40 (FP)	50 (FP)	50 (FP)	1200 (TP)

4.3 Discussion

The results of the models indicate that while all three performed reasonably well, the SVM model was the most effective in detecting cyberbullying, achieving an accuracy of 92%. This suggests that the SVM model's ability to handle high-dimensional data and its robust generalization capabilities make it particularly suited for this task. The CNN-LSTM model, with an accuracy of 88%, performed well in capturing contextual relationships between words, which is crucial for detecting subtle nuances in cyberbullying language. However, its performance in the gender category suggests that it may struggle with more nuanced forms of cyberbullying related to identity.

The Naive Bayes model, while effective in some categories, was the least accurate with an overall accuracy of 83%. It performed particularly well in the age and ethnicity categories, but its limitations in detecting gender-related cyberbullying highlight the model's challenges in handling more complex cases.

Overall, these results demonstrate the potential of machine learning models in detecting cyberbullying in social media content. The SVM model stands out as the most reliable for this task, although further improvements in model architecture and data preprocessing could enhance the performance of all three models, particularly in cases where the cyberbullying content is less overt.

V. CONCLUSION

The rise of cyberbullying in digital spaces, particularly on social media platforms, poses significant challenges to online safety and mental health. In this study, we explored the potential of text sentiment analysis algorithms for detecting cyberbullying in social media posts. By applying three different machine learning models—Convolutional Neural Network-Long Short-Term Memory (CNN-LSTM), Support Vector Machine (SVM), and Naive Bayes (NB)—to a large dataset of cyberbullying-related social media posts, we aimed to evaluate their performance and determine the most effective approach for real-time cyberbullying detection.

The results of the study indicate that text sentiment analysis algorithms are indeed a powerful tool for identifying cyberbullying, with the SVM model achieving the highest accuracy of 92%. The CNN-LSTM model also demonstrated strong performance, achieving an accuracy of 88%, particularly excelling in capturing contextual relationships within text. The Naive Bayes model, while effective in some categories, had a lower overall accuracy of 83%, highlighting the challenges of applying probabilistic models to complex text classification tasks.

The findings of this study provide useful insights for enhancing the safety of online environments. First, the ability of machine learning models to detect cyberbullying in real-time opens up new opportunities for the development of automated systems that can monitor social media platforms and flag harmful content before it reaches a wider audience. This can contribute to reducing the impact of cyberbullying by enabling timely interventions and offering protection to potential victims.

Moreover, the study underscores the importance of leveraging advanced natural language processing (NLP) and sentiment analysis techniques to address the growing issue of online harassment. By incorporating models that can automatically learn from vast amounts of textual data, such as the CNN-LSTM and SVM models, it is possible to detect even subtle forms of cyberbullying that may otherwise go unnoticed.

However, while the study demonstrates the effectiveness of these algorithms, it also highlights areas for future research. There is a need to refine and optimize the models further, particularly in detecting complex and nuanced forms of cyberbullying, such as those related to identity or indirect harassment. Additionally, expanding the research to include multilingual and cross-platform detection models would provide a more comprehensive solution to the global nature of cyberbullying.

In conclusion, this study contributes to the growing body of research on cyberbullying detection by demonstrating the effectiveness of sentiment analysis algorithms in identifying harmful content. The results not only provide valuable insights into the performance of different machine learning models but also offer practical implications for enhancing the safety of online environments. With continued advancements in machine learning and natural language processing, we are moving closer to developing automated systems that can effectively mitigate the impact of cyberbullying and foster safer online communities.

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