

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SELF-ESTEEM AND SOCIAL SUPPORT ON CYBER BULLYING BEHAVIOR

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Abstract. This research aims to explore the relationship between self-esteem and social support on cyberbullying behavior among students. The research participants consisted of 120 students aged 18–22 years, 55 women and 65 men selected using purposive sampling techniques. Data collection was carried out using three instruments, namely the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale to measure the level of self-esteem, the Social Support Questionnaire to assess social support, and the Cyberbullying Behavior Scale to measure the intensity of cyberbullying behavior. The regression analysis results show that self-esteem has a significant negative effect on cyberbullying behavior ($\beta = -0.202$, $t = -2.091$, $p = 0.039$), which means that the higher an individual's self-esteem, the lower their tendency to commit cyberbullying. In contrast, social support had a significant positive effect on cyberbullying ($\beta = 0.196$, $t = 2.031$, $p = 0.045$), indicating that in some cases, certain social supports can increase involvement in cyberbullying. The simultaneous regression test shows that both variables contribute significantly to cyberbullying ($F = 3.115$, $p = 0.048$). The results of this research emphasize the importance of developing intervention programs that focus on increasing self-esteem and positive social support as preventive measures in reducing cyberbullying behavior among students.

Keywords: *Self Esteem, Social Support, Cyber Bullying Behavior.*

I. INTRODUCTION

With the advancement of time, information and communication technology continues to develop to meet the needs and interests of its users. One technology that is now widely used is the Internet. The Internet is currently a very urgent part of everyday life, especially for students. Various activities previously carried out in person, such as discussing, learning to access information, and looking for a partner, can now be accessed via the Internet in an attractive format. The Internet allows users to obtain information from various corners of the world without restrictions.

Apart from that, the Internet is also a means of communication that knows no boundaries of space and time, which makes it possible for anyone to communicate anytime, anywhere, with anyone. Currently, Indonesia is ranked fourth in the world in terms of the number of internet users [1]. Based on data in 2023-2024, the number of individual internet users in Indonesia reached 212.9 million people, which is equivalent to around 77% of the country's total population. This ranking places Indonesia below China, India, and the United States, which have a larger number of users [2]. However, despite these many benefits, there are some users who misunderstand the function of the Internet, so they tend to ignore interactions in the real world because they are too immersed in the virtual world. This shift in function has had a number of negative impacts on internet use. According to Smith, cyberbullying is an aggressive act carried out intentionally by an individual or

group through electronic contact, which occurs repeatedly and over a certain period of time against victims who find it difficult to defend themselves [3]. Cyberbullying uses electronic media to carry out its actions [4]. Kowalski & Limber (2013). cyberbullying is defined as a form of bullying that occurs through the use of electronic channels. This includes bullying acts carried out through various platforms such as instant chat, email, chat rooms/groups, websites, online games, and social media [5]. Cyberbullying behavior is increasingly worrying along with the increasing use of social media, which makes it easier for perpetrators to spread insults, threats, or manipulation anonymously and with a wider reach. Based on general criteria, cyberbullying includes actions such as sending insulting messages or comments, sharing the victim's personal information without permission, committing public insults on digital platforms, or isolating someone socially in cyberspace through neglect or exclusion. Studies show that the impact of cyberbullying can be more severe than traditional bullying because it is persistent, difficult to remove, and can be accessed at any time by the victim, leaving them trapped in prolonged emotional distress.

Self-esteem is an individual's assessment of themselves, which is influenced by the ways in which other people value and accept them. Individuals who have high self-esteem usually show good self-confidence and the ability to face problems. On the other hand, individuals with low self-esteem tend to be less active, feel less confident, and have difficulty expressing themselves [6]. Self-esteem, or what is often called self-esteem,

can be interpreted as an individual's assessment of himself, which reflects the extent to which a person feels valuable, capable, and accepted by others. Based on various theories, individuals who have low self-esteem tend to be more susceptible to carrying out negative actions, including cyberbullying. The results of research by Anggoh et al. (2019) at De La Salle Catholic University, Manado, researched the relationship between self-esteem and social support and bullying behavior among children in orphanages [7]. The results show that both self-esteem and social support have a significant relationship to reducing bullying behavior in general, providing effectiveness that is relevant for the cyberbullying context. The results of research by (Anifa, 2022) Indonesian University of Education examining the relationship between self-esteem and cyberbullying behavior on social media during the pandemic show that low self-esteem will contribute to an increase in cyberbullying tendencies [8].

Self-esteem is one of the important factors that can influence an individual's tendency to commit or become a victim of cyberbullying. Feelings of insecurity or lack of self-confidence, individuals with such feelings are at risk of being involved in cyberbullying behavior. Cyberbullying behavior generally has characteristics such as aggressive behavior, low levels of empathy, the need to dominate, and exposure to violence or abusive behavior, both verbal and non-verbal, on social media. They may also have difficulty regulating emotions, have poor social skills, or face peer pressure to demonstrate dominance. On the other hand, someone with high self-esteem tends to have better emotional control, so their risk of cyberbullying is relatively lower. Someone with low self-esteem tends to be more easily influenced by social pressure and has a higher risk of engaging in aggressive behavior in cyberspace [4].

Students are in a developmental transition period that is full of challenges, both academically, socially, and emotionally, so they are vulnerable to the negative impacts of cyberbullying, such as a decrease in psychological well-being and academic achievement. Based on several recent studies, the prevalence of cyberbullying among students and teenagers in Indonesia shows significant numbers. A national survey revealed that around 45.35% of individuals admitted to being victims of cyberbullying [9]. In addition, social support from peers and the surrounding environment can be protective against cyberbullying behavior.

Social support Refers to information or what is commonly known as feedback obtained from other people, where the community is awarded affection, respect, involvement, and concern for positive communication [10]. Peer friends are a crucial source of emotional support during the adolescent transition period [11]. Peer support is defined as the stage where individuals provide and receive assistance, which is based on mutual understanding, mutual respect, and empowering each other in the same situation through support, friendship, empathy, sharing, and assistance. Ali et al. (2015) define peer support as interactions based on similar experiences that aim to provide a sense of connectedness, emotional reinforcement, and practical advice. This is often done through direct communication or online platforms, where participants

can share their personal challenges [12]. Keles et al. (2020) highlight that peers are an important support group, especially in adolescence and young adulthood. This support includes interactions that provide social validation, increased self-confidence, and the ability to share challenges in a safe environment [13]. Strong social support helps individuals feel accepted and valued, thereby reducing the likelihood of engaging in aggressive actions or becoming a victim [14].

Based on the problems above, researchers want to know whether there is an influence of self-esteem and peer social support on cyberbullying behavior among students in Malang City. Therefore, this research aims to see and find out the influence of self-esteem and peer social support on cyberbullying behavior among students in the city of Malang. The theoretical benefit of this research is that it will provide insight into research related to cyberbullying behavior. Meanwhile, the practical benefit is to emphasize that self-esteem and social support from peers have a significant negative influence on cyberbullying behavior, as well as being a basis for socialization for students on campus to understand and respect themselves (self-esteem) and provide social support as a measure of protection and prevention against cyberbullying behavior.

II. RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses a quantitative research design. The subjects involved in participating in this research were 120 students aged between 18 and 22 years from various study programs in Malang City, consisting of 55 women and 65 men.

In this research, subject criteria were determined using purposive sampling techniques to ensure relevance to the research objectives. The sample selection technique used is purposive sampling, which selects a group of subjects based on certain characteristics or criteria that are considered to have strong relevance to the characteristics of the population it self [15]. The research subjects were active students aged 18–22 years, and the subjects came from various study programs. This age selection is adjusted to the developmental phase of students who are often involved in online social interactions, making it possible to observe cyberbullying behavior.

In addition, subjects were selected based on their willingness to participate in the research, including filling out instruments consisting of the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale to assess the level of self-esteem, the Social Support Questionnaire to measure social support, and the Cyberbullying Behavior Scale to assess the frequency and intensity of cyberbullying behavior. Subjects must also have experience or activities related to the use of digital technology or social media so that the measurement results can reflect real conditions related to cyberbullying behavior among students.

This research approach was designed to obtain a sample that fits the research characteristics so that the data obtained can provide in-depth insight into the relationship between self-esteem, social support, and cyberbullying behavior.

The instruments used included the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, Social Support Questionnaire, and Cyberbullying

Behavior Scale. All data were explained using the SPSS (Statistical Program for Social Science) version 26.

Data analysis techniques use descriptive statistics and multiple linear regression analysis. Descriptive statistics are used to describe the characteristics of sample data, such as the distribution of values and variable averages. Linear regression analysis was used to evaluate the relationship between the independent variables (self-esteem and social support) and the dependent variable (cyberbullying behavior). This analysis involves a partial test for each independent variable and a simultaneous test to determine the combined contribution of the independent variables to the dependent variable, with parameters such as beta coefficient, t-value, and significance level (p-value).

The dependent variable in this research is cyberbullying behavior, which refers to the act of using digital technology to intimidate, harass, or harm other individuals verbally, visually, or psychologically. This behavior is measured using the Cyberbullying Behavior Scale, which assesses the frequency and intensity of cyberbullying behavior. The higher the subject's score on this scale, the higher the frequency and intensity of cyberbullying behavior carried out by the individual, and vice versa. The independent variable of this research includes self-esteem, namely an individual's evaluation of himself, which includes self-confidence, self-esteem, and a positive view of personal abilities. This variable is measured using the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale. Higher scores indicate higher levels of self-esteem, while lower scores indicate lower self-esteem. Next is the social support variable, which refers to an individual's perception of the help they receive from their social environment, whether emotional, rewarding, informational, or instrumental. Social support is measured through the Social Support Questionnaire, evaluating the extent to which students feel socially supported by their environment. The higher the score obtained, the higher the level of social support the student feels, and vice versa.

This research explores the relationship between the two independent variables (self-esteem and social support) and the dependent variable (cyberbullying behavior) in students. Purposive sampling was used in this study to determine the criteria for selected subjects based on age (18–22 years) and active participation in the study. Measurements are carried out using standardized psychometric scales.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Data analysis in this research went through two main stages: prerequisite test and hypothesis test. At the feasibility test stage, normality tests and linearity tests were carried out to ensure that the data met the assumptions required for regression analysis. The normality test is carried out using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov method to check whether the data distribution approaches a normal distribution. The test results show that the data is not completely normally distributed. However, based on the opinion of Priyatno (2010), data with more than 30 subjects can be considered close to a normal distribution (large sample assumption), so this research can still be continued [16]. With

a total of 120 subjects, the normal distribution assumption was met. In addition, a linearity test was applied to ensure a linear relationship between the independent variables (self-esteem and social support) and the dependent variable (cyberbullying behavior). The results of the linearity test show that the relationship between the two independent variables and the dependent variable is linear, with a significant F value..

TABLE I.
F Test Results

Variabel	Mean Square	F	p
Self-esteem (X ₁) Dukungan sosial (X ₂) - Perilaku Cyberbullying (Y)	30.242	3.115	0.048

Simultaneous analysis with regression shows the results that the two independent variables together contribute significantly to the dependent variable, with a value of $F = 3.115$ and $p = 0.048$. The F value (3.115) indicates the strength of the model. Although significant, the relatively small F value indicates that this model has limited influence in explaining the dependent variable. Meanwhile, the p -value = $0.048 < 0.05$, which shows that the regression model is statistically significant. This means that there is a significant relationship between the independent variables (social support and self-esteem) and the dependent variable (cyberbullying behavior). These findings provide an empirical basis that both self-esteem and social support play an important role in influencing cyberbullying behavior in students.

Table II.
T Test Results

Variabel	Beta	t	p
Self-esteem (X ₁) – Perilaku Cyberbullying (Y)	-0.202	-2.091	0.039
Dukungan sosial (X ₂) - Perilaku Cyberbullying (Y)	0.196	2.031	0.045

At the hypothesis testing stage, linear regression analysis is used to test the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable. Partially, self-esteem shows a significant negative influence on cyberbullying behavior with a beta coefficient value (β) = -0.202, $t = -2.091$, and $p = 0.039 < 0.05$. This shows that the higher the level of self-esteem, the lower the tendency to commit cyberbullying. On the other hand, social support has a significant positive effect on cyberbullying behavior with a beta coefficient value (β) = 0.196, $t = 2.031$, and $p = 0.045 < 0.05$, which indicates that an increase in certain social support can be related to an increase in cyberbullying behavior.

The results of this study show that self-esteem and social support both significantly influence cyberbullying behavior, both partially and simultaneously. The partial regression value for self-esteem shows a significant negative influence, while

social support shows a significant positive influence on cyberbullying behavior. Overall, these findings provide insights for designing campus-based interventions aimed at increasing self-esteem and social support as preventive measures against cyberbullying.

Self-esteem is an evaluation that individuals make of themselves, including feelings of self-worth, confidence in their abilities, and views about their pride. Self-esteem plays a significant role with a negative beta coefficient ($\beta = -0.202$), $t = -2.091$, and $p = 0.039 < 0.05$. This shows that the higher the level of self-esteem, the lower the tendency to commit cyberbullying, or the opposite can be interpreted as the lower the self-esteem, the greater the possibility of someone being involved in cyberbullying.

This phenomenon can be explained through the theory that individuals with low self-esteem often feel less confident or do not have a strong sense of self-worth, so they try to divert this feeling of dissatisfaction into aggressive behavior online. Research by Garaigordobil and Machimbarrena (2017) also supports these findings, where they found that negative self-esteem is strongly correlated with an increased risk of becoming a perpetrator or victim of cyberbullying [17].

Social support Refers to information or feedback provided by other people, where people show affection, respect, involvement, and concern for positive communication [10]. Social support shows a significant influence on cyberbullying behavior with a positive beta coefficient ($\beta = 0.196$). Specifically, these findings reflect that inappropriate and unhealthy social support will actually increase an individual's risk of engaging in cyberbullying. Such as peer groups that encourage aggressive behavior or condone cyberbullying may increase a person's risk of engaging in these acts. Research by Kowalski et al. (2014) stated that negative social groups or group pressure can trigger a person's involvement in cyberbullying behavior, although social support is generally considered a protective factor [18].

Research by Panian and Vandebosch (2016) revealed that peer support sometimes strengthens aggressive responses in victims. Support containing justifications for aggressive actions may increase the likelihood that victims retaliate against bad behavior online. In this context, victims feel supported in seeking revenge or venting frustration through cyberbullying, making them both perpetrators and victims in an ongoing cycle [19].

This research aims to determine the influence of self-esteem and social support on cyberbullying behavior, both partially and simultaneously. The results of the data analysis show that self-esteem and social support have a significant effect on an individual's tendency to engage in cyberbullying. Partially, self-esteem has a significant negative influence on cyberbullying behavior with a beta coefficient (β) of -0.202 , $t = -2.091$, and $p = 0.039$ ($p < 0.05$). These findings suggest that individuals with high levels of self-esteem are less likely to engage in cyberbullying, whereas individuals with low self-esteem are more prone to do so. This phenomenon can be explained through the theory that individuals with low self-esteem often have feelings of lack of worth or self-confidence,

so they try to divert this feeling of dissatisfaction into bold, aggressive actions.

Social support, on the other hand, shows a significant positive influence on cyberbullying behavior with a beta coefficient (β) of 0.196 . This means that social support, which is usually a protective factor if the support is inappropriate, such as support from groups that support or facilitate aggressive behavior, actually increases the risk of individuals being involved in cyberbullying. Similar to the research of Kowalski et al. (2014), negative social group pressure can trigger engagement in bold, aggressive behavior. Peer support that justifies aggressive actions can trigger victims to take revenge boldly, thereby reinforcing the cycle of aggression in the form of both perpetrator and victim [18].

This is reinforced by the results of an interview with one of the subjects, an RN, who conveyed his experience as both a perpetrator and a victim of cyberbullying. The subject admitted, "At first, I felt insulted and belittled on social media. Therefore, my close friends said I should 'fight back' in the same way. The perpetrator supported me by replying to negative comments with sharper words. At first, I thought that was true, but after a while, I felt like a different person who I wanted to be was just constantly angry." This experience shows how pressure from social groups can lead individuals to engage further in the cycle of cyberbullying.

Data collection was carried out through quantitative surveys and in-depth interviews. When conducting interviews, one of the main challenges is gaining the trust of the subjects to share their experiences. Most subjects feel embarrassed or afraid of being judged, especially when the victim realizes that they are actually a victim who also turns into a perpetrator in some situations. However, after building trust, the interview actually provided quite in-depth answers about the psychological and social dynamics behind this behavior. In addition, the indirect observation process through social media provides a real picture of negative interaction patterns, which are often supported by comments from peer groups. Many individuals feel "accepted" by their group through cyberbullying behavior, which is a challenge for intervention efforts. Social support, on the other hand, shows a significant positive influence on cyberbullying behavior with a beta coefficient (β) of 0.196 . This means that social support, which is usually a protective factor if the support is inappropriate, such as support from groups that support or facilitate aggressive behavior, actually increases the risk of individuals being involved in cyberbullying. Similarly mentioned in the research of Kowalski et al. (2014), negative social group pressure can trigger engagement in bold, aggressive behavior. Peer support that justifies aggressive actions can trigger victims to take revenge boldly, thereby reinforcing the cycle of aggression in the form of both perpetrator and victim [18].

IV. CONCLUSIONS

This research aims to show that self-esteem and social support have a significant influence on cyberbullying behavior. Self-esteem has a significant negative influence, where

individuals with low self-esteem are more susceptible to being involved in cyberbullying. In contrast, social support shows a significant positive influence on cyberbullying behavior, especially if the support comes from groups that justify or encourage aggressive actions. These findings reveal that the quality of social support is very important in determining its influence on a person's behavior, especially in the context of aggression.

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