

# Are daily spiritual experiences, self-esteem, and family harmony predictors of cyberbullying among high school student?

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### Abstract

Currently, the incidence of cyberbullying increase widespread among children and adolescents in Indonesia. One of eight parents stated that their children have been victims of abused and humiliation through online media. As many as 55% of parents said they knew one child experienced cyberbullying. This study aims to investigate cyberbullying related to daily spiritual experiences, self-esteem and family harmony. Present study also explores the factors that lead to the emergence of the cyberbullying phenomenon among high school students. Cross sectional method was used in this study. ANOVA was also used for data analysis. A total of 150 high school students from three schools in Yogyakarta involved randomly in the study. The results show that there was a significant difference in the level of family harmony and the experience of being a victim among perpetrators with non-perpetrators. The result also found that the perpetrators of cyberbullying who have done more than two times (several times) have high level of family harmony, while the perpetrators who only do one or two times have lower level of family harmony. The implication of study was discussed further.

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**Keywords:** cyberbullying; daily spiritual experiences; family harmony; self-esteem

## **Are daily spiritual experiences, self-esteem, and family harmony predictors of cyberbullying among high school student?**

### **1. Introduction**

The growth of internet usage in Indonesia continues to increase. If in 2010 the average user of internet in major cities in Indonesia were still around 30-35 percent, in 2011 the average number of internet users increased to 40-45 percent. According MarkPlus Insight (2011) the number of Internet users in Indonesia in 2011 has reached 55 million people, from the previous year reached 42 million. The growth of Internet users in Indonesia were still dominated by young people from the age 15-30 years. In each of the cities surveyed by MarkPlus Insight, about 50 percent to 80 percent of Internet users were young people (Markplus, 2011).

Communication technologies over the Internet bring many positive benefits, including ease of obtaining unlimited information. In the other side internet has also brought some negative impacts such as pornography, cybercrime and cyberbullying (Tokunaga, 2010). Cyberbullying is a form of harassment and humiliation through the virtual world (Juvonen & Gross, 2008). Cyberbullying is bullying that transforms into cyberspace (Vandebosch & Van Cleemput, 2008; Juvonen & Gross, 2008). The difference between cyberbullying with bullying is in the context of media where the abuse and humiliation happen (Smith et al., 2008; Slonje & Smith, 2008; Agatston, Kowalski, & Limber, 2007).

Previous study that conducted in urban Canadian adolescents showed from 177 respondents as much as 54% were victims of bullying, and more than a quarter was victims of cyberbullying. Other results showed from 1 of 3 teenagers committed bullying, while 15% of them never did it. 60% of cyberbullying victims were girls, while 52% of perpetrators of cyberbullying were boy (Li, 2007b). The majority of victims of cyberbullying never reported his case to the other adults such as teachers or parents (Li, 2007b).

Further research by Li (2007a) on a sample of adolescents Canada and China of 461 respondents found the teens, some 31.2% of teenage boys and 26.3% of adolescent girls become victims of cyberbullying. A total of 21.9% in teenage boys and 13.4% in adolescent girls are involved in the act of cyberbullying. Victims of cyberbullying 133, 1 in 5 (21.8%) of respondents were victims of cyberbullying via email, one-third (30.8%) experienced cyberbullying through chatrooms, and about 13% through the mobile phone. One third (30.9%) experienced cyberbullying with improved communications technology other media or mixed (facebook, twitter, yahoo Messenger).

Several previous studies indicated what media used by the perpetrators of cyberbullying to attack their victims. Some 20.4% bullies did it by email, 27.8% through chatrooms, 5.6% via mobile phone, and 39.4% did through other media or mixed (SMS, Facebook, BB) (Li, 2007a). The frequency of cyberbullying on the victims are following 54.9% experienced cyberbullying approximately 4 times, 20.3% were 4-10 times, and 21.1% of them more than 10 times. While the perpetrators of cyberbullying, 30.5% did approximately 4 times, 43.4% did between 4-10 times, and 20.7% did more than 10 times (Li, 2007a). In Germany from a sample of 1987 respondents teen showed that 5.4% of respondents reported a victim of cyberbullying, while 14.1% had occasional cyberbullying. From 77 perpetrators, 63 were also victims of bullying at school (Riebel, Jager, & Fischer, 2009).

With regards to the impact on the victim of cyberbullying, Grading et al. (2009) found that the victim of bullying and cyberbullying had poor adjustment such as reactive aggression, instrumental aggression, depression and somatic symptoms. Additionally Grading et al. (2011) found that the victim of cyberbullying were more at risk for mental health problem and drug abuse, especially trigger suicide attempts.

Victims of cyberbullying experienced and showed increasing emotional distress and behavioral acting out.

Some of the negative effects of both types of bullying (school bullying and cyberbullying) were decline in school performance, decrease involvement in schools, increase in depressive symptoms, suicidal ideas, self-injury, suicide attempt and suicide attempt who got medical care (Schneider et al., 2012). Some negative effects were also increasing psychological distress (depression, suicidal ideation, self-injury, and suicide attempts) either among cyberbullying victims as well as school bullying victims (Schneider et al., 2012).

Teenagers who become victims of cyberbullying showed a decrease in the concentration of learning, increase school absent, and a decrease in school achievement (Beran & Li, 2007). From 432 respondents teens found 42% of respondents have never experienced cyberbullying, whereas 58% experienced cyberbullying more than once. As many as 37% of respondents reported became a victim of cyberbullying and also school bullying (Beran & Li, 2007).

Several factors that are associated strongly with cyberbullying hypothesized that daily spiritual experiences, family harmony, and self-esteem. Patchin and Hinduja (2010) found from 1963 junior high students in the United States have low self-esteem. Currently, study on cyberbullying in Indonesia is still forgotten, the lack of published paper was the indication of it. The purpose of this study was to examine whether there is a difference between spiritual daily experiences, burly self and family harmony between cyberbullying actors and not actors, and between the victim and not the victim of cyberbullying.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Cyberbullying

The concept of cyberbullying is different from the concept of bullying. Bullying occurs in the context of school (Besley, 2009), but cyberbullying occurs on cyber media such as internet and cell phones (Dooley, Pyzalski, & Cross, 2009). Sometimes cyberbullying is considered as online bullying, electronic bullying and internet harassment (Dooley, Pyzalski, & Cross, 2009). According Dehue, Bolman, and Vollink (as cited in Tokunaga, 2010) there are three requirements that must be met for a situation that is categorized as cyberbullying. First, the action must be repeated, the second, involving psychological abuse, and last, done on purpose. Some definitions of cyberbullying have been raised by many experts including, Besley (2009) defines cyberbullying as the use of information and communication technologies to support repetitive actions, deliberate, and hostile by individual or group that is intended to harm others.

Tokunaga (2010) has summarized from several existing definitions of cyberbullying. Tokunaga (2010) defines cyberbullying as all actions performed through electronic media or other digital media by individuals or groups that contain hostile, abuse, or aggressive messages or communicate repeatedly intended to harm, and disrupt others. In the experience of these cyberbullying, identity of the offender can be known or anonymous. Cyberbullying can happen via electronic communication media in school; but in general these cyberbullying occur outside the school environment (Griezel, Craven, Yeung, & Finger, 2008). This study used the Tokunaga's definition as an operational definition in understanding the occurrence of cyberbullying.

### 2.2 Factors that affect Cyberbullying

Several factors were found to correlate with cyberbullying among adolescents, namely:

- a. Age. Some research indicates that cyberbullying occurred at age 15-18 years (Goebert et al., 2011, Li, 2007, Schneider et al., 2012).
- b. Gender. Several previous studies showed perpetrators of cyberbullying often committed by male students, and victims of cyberbullying are also more common in boys, compared with girls (Smith et al., 2008; Slonje & Smith, 2008; Agatston, Kowalski, & Limber 2007).



- c. Personality. Previous research showed that self-esteem plays a role in the occurrence of cyberbullying. Study by Patchin and Hinduja (2010) found low self-esteem on both victims and perpetrators of cyberbullying. Most likely low self-esteem encourage teenagers doing the bullying to boost his self-esteem, while low self-esteem in cyberbullying victims cause inability to be assertive when face against cyberbullying.
- d. Spirituality. Previous studies showed that daily spiritual experiences have a relationship with a reduction in total alcohol consumption, increase quality of life and improved psychosocial status (Underwood & Teresi, 2002). Effects of spiritual experience and religiosity show positive results. Study conducted by Noor (2008) showed a significant interaction between work experience, age, and religiosity in predicting psychological welfare among Malay Muslim women. Later studies conducted by Kasberger's (2002) showed that religious coping decreases the amount of stress response and the use of religious coping was positively correlated with the level of adjustment after divorce on young adults from divorced parents.

### 2.3 Daily Spiritual Experiences

According Spinks (Subandi, 1988) every individual have a religious instinct, the instinct to hold the worship of a transcendent force outside him. This instinct encourages individual to perform religious rituals, and believe that there is a supernatural nature. The term religion is often replaced by other terms such as religious, religio (UK), religie (Netherlands), religio (Latin) or dien (Arabic). The word comes from the Latin religio that religare which means binding (Driyakara, as cited in Subandi, 1988) or bonds (Nasr, 1983). The term was later equated with the term religion in which there are various rules, obligations that must be adhered to and implemented by its adherents.

Religion itself is not a single thing, but it is a system that consists of several aspects (Dittes, as cited in Lindzey & Aronson, 1975). Hurlock (1973) say that religion consists of two elements, namely the element of faith in the teachings of religion and elements of the implementation of these teachings. While Spinks (Subandi, 1988) mentions that religion includes beliefs, customs, traditions, rituals, and also individual experience.

The difference in religiosity and spirituality lies in religiosity is associated with the process of carrying out the teaching of religion, while spirituality is associated with deepening and meaning things like appreciation will be transcendent spiritual values, the meaning of life, and the existence of life (Underwood & Teresi, 2002). Definition of daily spiritual experiences is individual perception will spiritual experiences that happened associated with things that are transcendent and the meaning of life.

Previous studies showed that daily spiritual experiences have a relationship with a reduction in total alcohol consumption, increase quality of life and improved psychosocial status (Underwood & Teresi, 2002). Effects of spiritual experience and religiosity show positive results. Holland and Neimeyer (2005) found that higher daily spiritual experiences most likely have lower physical, cognitive, and emotional stress. Ellison and Fan (2008) shows that there is a positive relationship between daily spiritual experiences with the psychological wellbeing.

### 2.4 Family harmony

Families generally described as a unit of kinship which is also the dwelling unit which is characterized by the presence of economic cooperation, and has the function to continue the descent, socialize or educating children, and protect, care for and help weaker family members such as infants, children or the elderly (Widjaja, 1986). Murdock (Zanden, 1988) defines the family as a unit of a group whose members are linked through kinship, marriage or adoption and living together, to cooperate economically and caring for family members who are weak (infants, children and the elderly). Collins (1986) explains that the family is the smallest social unit of human beings, which has an important function in human survival. The family is not alone sufficient human psychological needs such as compassion, love, and attention, but also physical needs such as eating, drinking, or

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shelter. The family itself according to its composition is divided into two kinds: first nuclear family (family nuclei) which only consisted of father-mother / or single parents and their children. Second, the extended family (extended family), which includes both close relatives of the father and mother as a grandmother, grandfather, uncle, aunt, uncle, aunt, sister-in-law, brother in-laws, nephew and others (Zanden, 1988). Family harmony is characterized by cohesive relationships, open communication and warmth among family members. The more harmony exists in a family, the more positive the relationship and communication between family members.

## 2.5 Self-esteem

Self-esteem is aspects of self-evaluation, the extent to which we judge ourselves in a positive or negative and good or bad. Self-esteem can be said as to how far we assess and appreciate the overall self. Self-esteem divided into several dimensions such as cognitive skills, physical skills, or social skills. The development of self-esteem is form along with our experiences from the interaction with the social environment. For example, if in the past we were a lot of achievements to be proud of, then this experience will be the basis of the development of self-esteem. Positive self-esteem is formed by the achievements that we have gained in the past, so the more we earn achievements the more construct positive self-esteem (Mussen et al., 1994). Self-esteem is a result of our achievements in the past, so it is important for us to reach the achievements of our own to boast that our self-esteem is more positive. On the contrary, the past experience of failures will form and causes negative self-esteem. According to Fleming & Courtney (1984) self-esteem is formed of three psychosocial factors and two physical factors. Three psychosocial factors are self-regard, trust-social (social-confidence), and the ability/achievement school (school ability). Two physical factors that appearance and ability.

Rosen, Terry, and Leventhal (1982) explain that people with low self-esteem have more trouble when facing problems or obstacles. They show low coping strategies and competencies. According to Rosen et al. (1982) this difficulty is due to the two types of negative self-perception: first, people with low self-esteem have a higher level of fear when facing threats/problems compared with those who have high self-esteem. Second, people with low self-esteem regard themselves as person who lacks adequate skills to deal with a problem. As a result, they are less likely to take preventive action and have a fatalistic belief that they cannot do anything to prevent a bad problem in their lives. Their belief in their ability to solve the problem is low, so they tend to withdraw from the problem and not deal with the responsibility.

## 2.6 Hypothesis

Based on the explanations above, this study proposes some hypotheses, namely:

- There is a difference in the daily spiritual experiences, self-esteem, and significant family harmony between the perpetrator and not the perpetrators of cyberbullying.
- There is a difference in the daily spiritual experiences, self-esteem, and significant family harmony between the victim and not the victim of cyberbullying.
- There is a daily relationship of spiritual experiences, self-esteem and family harmony with cyberbullying.

## 3. Method

### 3.1 Research design

This study used a quantitative approach through survey method (Creswell, Clark, & Garrett, 2008; Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). Quantitative research is used to examine the relationship between the study variables that cyberbullying with family harmony, self-esteem and daily spiritual experiences. In addition, this study will examine the differences in the level of daily spiritual experiences, self-esteem and family harmony on the

perpetrator and not the perpetrators, and victims of cyberbullying and not the victim.

### 3.2 Subject

Simple random sampling was used to collect the data. Respondents were taken from three high schools in Yogyakarta. A total of 150 students involved in this study. Research procedure starts by sending a permit letter to take data. Once permission is obtained from the school, then the process of data collection can be performed.

### 3.3 Data analysis

Manova was used to test the theoretical relationship proposed in this study. The data were processed using the statistical software program.

### 3.4 Measurement

Cyberbullying, daily spiritual experiences, self-esteem, and family harmony were used to collect the data. Validity and reliability of questionnaires was examined with Cronbach alpha. The result of reliability shows that all questionnaires achieved a satisfactory level. Table 1 below shows the results of Cronbach Alpha.

**Table 1**

*The results of Cronbach alpha*

Variables	Cronbach alpha
Family harmony	.778
Daily spiritual experiences	.881
Self esteem	.791
Cyberbullying victimization	.837

## 4. Results

Before the data were analyzed by MANOVA, the data normality should be achieved. Kosmogorov-Smirnov method was conducted to test the normality data. Table 2 below shows the results of normality test.

**Table 2**

*The results of the data normality test*

No	Variables	p-value
1	Family harmony	.148
2	Daily spiritual experiences	.058
3	Self esteem	.052

The homogeneity test showed that the data is homogeneous. Table 3 below shows the results of the homogeneity test.

**Table 3**

*Homogeneity of research data*

Box M	F	p-value
22.156	1.0001	.457

The result of descriptive analysis about cyber-victimization experiences from respondents shows that 60% (90) of students have never experienced cyberbullying, while 22% (33) of students had experienced one or two times, 14% (21) students experienced cyberbullying more than twice, 3.3% (5) students experienced cyberbullying three-four times a week, and 0.7% (1) students experienced cyberbullying almost every day. Table 4 below shows the descriptive analysis of cyber-victimization.

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**Table 4***The frequency of cyberbullying experiences*

Answer	Frequency	%
Never	90	60%
One/two times	33	22%
Several times	21	14%
Often	5	3.3%
1 most every day	1	0.7%
Total	150	100%

While the result of the descriptive analysis regarding the frequency of cyberbully (as perpetrator) are as follows: 75.3% (113) of students never do cyberbully, while 16% never did cyberbully (once or twice), 8.7% (13) students did cyberbully more than twice. Table 5 below describes the frequency of cyberbully.

**Table 5***The Frequency of cyberbully*

Answer	Frequency	%
Never	113	75.3%
Once/two times	24	16%
1 Several times	13	8.7%
Total	150	100

The manova analysis showed that there were differences in family harmony ( $F = 3.870$ ,  $df = 2$ ,  $p = .023 < .05$ ) and the experience of being victims of cyberbullying ( $F = 8.908$ ,  $df = 2$ ,  $p = .000 < .05$ ) between perpetrators with not perpetrator. However, no significant differences are found in self-esteem and daily spiritual experiences between the perpetrator and not perpetrator. The results of hypothesis testing on cyberbullying victim reveal no significant differences. Table 6 below shows the average value of the perpetrator and not the perpetrator cyberbully at the level of family harmony and the experience of being a victim of cyberbullying.

**Table 6***Manova results about cyberbully perpetrators*

Variables	df	F	Sig.
Daily spiritual experiences	2	.860	.425
Family harmony	2	3.870	.023
Self esteem	2	2.346	.099
Cyberbullying	2	8.908	.000

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**Table 7***Manova results in terms of victims of cyberbullying*

Variables	df	F	Sig.
Daily spiritual experiences	4	.836	.505
Family harmony	4	.910	.460
Self esteem	4	.326	.860

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From Table 7 above shows that there is no difference in the daily spiritual experiences, family harmony, and self-esteem among the victims of cyberbullying and not the victim.



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**Table 8**

*The result of regression analysis*

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	189.431	3	63.144	2.301	.080

From Table 8 above shows that there is no relationship between the daily spiritual experiences, family harmony, and self-esteem with cyberbullying victimization.

**Table 9**

*The mean of family harmony and cyberbullying victimization on perpetrator*

	Status	Mean	SD	N
Family harmony	Never	38.3717	5.08533	113
	Once/twice	35.3333	3.23925	24
	Several times	38.1538	5.44436	13
Cyberbullying victimization	Never	11.5310	4.75295	113
	Once/twice	14.8750	5.26937	24
	Several times	16.5385	6.91153	13

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From Table 9 above shows differences on family harmony scores between students who never do cyberbully with students who did it. The family harmony scores between students who never done cyberbully several times are similar. The results also suggest that students who several times did cyberbully were from a harmonious family.

## 5. Discussion

Based on Anova analysis shows that hypothesis is partially significant. There were differences in the level of family harmony between perpetrator and not perpetrators. There were also significant differences in the experience of being victims between the perpetrator and non-perpetrator. Finding showed that perpetrators come from harmonious family. Finding also found that perpetrators were also cyberbully victims. One of previous study that involved 1454 respondents found that 72% of respondents reported experiencing at least one incidence of cyberbullying, 85% of them also experienced bullying at school (Juvonen & Gross, 2008). The type of cyberbullying that most often experienced by respondents is insulting and name-calling (Juvonen & Gross, 2008).

Bauman's (2010) study from 221 adolescent respondents in rural areas the Southwestern United States, found that 1.5% respondents were the perpetrators, 3% and 8.6% were cyberbullying victims and also perpetrators. The current study confirms two previous studies that showed perpetrators were also victims of cyberbullying. This phenomena show that revenge motivation lead a victim of cyberbullying to bully others in cyberspace. Cyberbullying occurs in virtual world, the nature of activity is not directly face to face. This nature contributes to the victims to bully back when he/she was bullied by others.

Furthermore Goebert et al. (2011) in his study found from 677 adolescents, one of two respondents have been cyberbullying victims. Adolescent females experienced more cyberbullying victimization through SMS and web. They were also more likely to have symptoms of anxiety, and suicide attempts compared to teenage boys. Schneider et al (2012) also found from 20406 adolescents in Metro West Massachusetts, 15.8% of respondents were victims, and 25.9% of respondents were being bullied at school during the past twelve months. 59.7% of victims were also being bullied at school. 36.3% of bullying victim were also cyberbullying victims.

The impact of cyberbullying on the individual who becomes a victim can be devastating, the negative impact show severe psychosocial and emotional distress. Some effects of depends on the frequency, duration,

and severity of the acts (Tokunaga, 2010). Cyberbullying that occurs occasionally or sometimes has lower long-term effects compared to cyberbullying that occurs continuously (Tokunaga, 2010). While, Beran and Li (2007) found that adolescent victims showed decreasing concentration, increasing school absent, and decreasing school achievement. Goebert et al. (2011) found female adolescents who were victim of cyberbullying show much symptoms of anxiety, and suicide attempts compared to boys.

Victims of cyberbullying usually feel angry, sad, frustrated, and anxious for action actors. This happens due to the perpetrators of cyberbullying using painful ways, by sending threatening, inciting, insulting and degrading messages the victim. These messages are of course raises its own distress at the victim. Further research Schneider et al (2012) found negative effects of cyberbullying that the decline in school performance, decrease involvement in schools, increase in depressive symptoms, suicidal ideas, hurting yourself (self-injury), attempted suicide and attempted suicide that get medical care. Increased psychological distress as a result of cyberbullying (depression, suicidal ideation, self-injury, and suicide attempts) has a higher intensity on the victims of cyberbullying as well as school bullying. Research Patchin and Hinduja (2010) found that low self-esteem on both victims and perpetrators of cyberbullying cyberbullying. Most likely low self-esteem encourage teenagers doing the bullying to boost his self-esteem, while low self-esteem in victims of cyberbullying to be the cause inability to be assertive in action against cyberbullying.

Another factor that is hypothesized to have contributed to cyberbullying is a family climate in which adolescents live and interact. Positive family harmony will create mature child's personality development (Formoso, Gonzales, & Aiken, 2000). This is because the development of child's personality is formed and facilitated in family as the primary environment. The adolescent that comes from negative family climate may likely to show disturbed personality are likely lead to the development of various forms of deviant behavior including aggression and bullying (Espelage, Bosworth, & Simon, 2000). Previous study found that aggressive behavior in young children is very common (Hanish, Kochenderfer-Ladd, Fabes, Martin, & Denning, 2004), this condition need to be adressed by parent because it more likely lead to bullying and other problems with peers. Other study found that parents who were disengaged increases the likelihood to bullying activity; while parents who show warm, care, and involved reduces this likelihood (Espelage, Bosworth, & Simon, 2000). Problems in the family communication and parenting may increase the likelihood of bullying. Several studies showed that child who exposure to family conflict, or parental use of drugs and alcohol, or domestic violence, and also child abuse was related to a greater likelihood of bullying others and also being bullied by peers (Holt, Finkelhor, & Kaufman Kantor, 2007).

## 6. Conclusion

Several previous studies found that family have critical role for developing cyberbullying behavior (Holt, Finkelhor, & Kaufman Kantor, 2007; Espelage, Bosworth, & Simon, 2000). Although in current study found contradictive story; that cyberbully perpetrators comes from harmonious family. This result lead to a question; is family harmony cannot buffer cyberbully behavior among adolescents today? Or the influence of family on cyberbully behavior among adolescent is not strong. This question needs to explore more in further study. Based on the results of this study found as many as 24.7% (37) students have done cyberbully (actor) two or more, while it was 40% (60) students have been victims of cyberbullying in social media. Based on the above data it can be concluded that cyberbullying has become an increasing phenomenon among high school students in Jogjakarta. This result calls authority to do an action for preventing cyberbullying in school. Some activities that can be done to deal with this problem are to organize campaigns of anti-cyberbullying in schools. Through this activity, it may hope to decrease the positive attitudes, and perception about cyberbullying.

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