

## Cyberbullying Victimization and Suicidal Ideation: Exploring Help-Seeking Behavior as a Moderating Factor

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### ABSTRACT

*Background: Cyberbullying and suicidal ideation are ongoing social issues in Indonesia. The purpose of this study is to investigate the influence between cyberbullying and suicide ideation, as well as the role of help-seeking behavior as a moderator variable. Methods: This study involved 454 Indonesian adolescents. The JAMOVI 2.5.3.0 software analyzed data through descriptive statistics, regression, and mediator analyses. Results: 38.5% of teenagers encountered cyberbullying for more than 6 months to the present, 38.5% in the past month to the present, and had suicidal ideation in the last 12 months. Cyberbullying victims are more likely to have suicidal ideation. Additionally, 384 (84.6%) of the female respondents reported having experienced cyberbullying, compared to only 70 (15.4%) of the male respondents. Help-seeking behavior as a moderator in the relationship between cyberbullying victimization with suicidal ideation. A sig value is 0.369 ( $p < 0.01$ ).*

*The hypothesis was rejected, indicating that help-seeking behavior, as a moderator, had no meaningful influence on the connection between cyberbullying victimization and suicidal ideation. It means that, when a person experiences cyberbullying victimization, whether they have low or high help-seeking behavior, their suicidal ideation remains high. Conclusion: These findings imply the study highlights the challenges adolescents face in seeking help for mental health issues, often due to cultural stigma and a lack of accessible resources of adolescents who are cyberbullied and engage in suicidal behavior.*

**Keywords:** cyberbullying victimization, suicidal ideation, help-seeking behavior, JAMOVI.

### INTRODUCTION

Cyberbullying, a harmful consequence of social media use, significantly affects adolescents. It is characterized by intentional and repeated actions using technology to embarrass, harass, or threaten individuals (1,2). Various forms of cyberbullying include spreading false information, sharing embarrassing images, and direct harassment (3). This form of bullying often leads to severe psychological distress, including anxiety, depression, and even suicidal ideation among victims (4). In Indonesia, approximately 80% of adolescents report experiencing cyberbullying, with many victims suffering from long-term mental health issues (5,6).

Adolescents are particularly vulnerable to cyberbullying due to their emotional and social

developmental changes, which can lead to increased anxiety and depression (7). Many young people lack effective coping mechanisms to address negative experiences online, exacerbating feelings of distress and isolation (8). The prevalence of cyberbullying is not only a concern in Indonesia but is a global issue, with significant rates reported in Europe as well (9). In Indonesia, research has shown that a significant percentage of students report negative emotional impacts, with many experiencing anger, sadness, and heightened stress due to cyberbullying (10).

Despite the documented impacts of cyberbullying, there remains a gap in understanding its specific influence on suicidal ideation among Indonesian adolescents. While help-seeking behavior is recognized as a positive coping strategy, those affected by cyberbullying often hesitate to seek support (11). This reluctance can be attributed to various factors, including stigma and lack of awareness about available resources (12). Addressing cyberbullying requires a multifaceted approach, including enhancing mental health education and promoting supportive environments that encourage help-seeking among young people.

## OBJECTIVES

Referring to the research questions, some research objectives can be presented, namely to:

1. Identify the influence of cyberbullying victimization on suicidal ideation among Indonesian adolescents
2. Ascertain the role of help-seeking behavior as a moderator in the relationship between cyberbullying victimization with suicidal ideation among Indonesian adolescents.

## METHODS

The population involved are late adolescents aged between 18 and 25 years old from various ethnic, religious, and socio-demographic backgrounds. The focus of the study is adolescents in Indonesia. From the entire population, a total of 454 respondents were selected to participate in this study through stratified and purposive sampling methods. The respondents involved answer the questionnaire through the form provided and the collected data will be analyzed using JAMOVİ 2.5.3.0 version.

The participants in this online study were Indonesian nationals, between the ages of 18 and 25, and had personal experience being the victims of cyberbullying. The research sample consisted of 18 to 25-year-old individuals who experienced suicidal thoughts as a result of cyberbullying. 454 volunteers from all throughout Indonesia participated in this study. Purposive sampling will be used in the questionnaire used to gather data for this investigation. A questionnaire was used to gather data from respondents.

Proposed in 2007 by Cohen, Manion, and Marrison (13) a table formula that indicates that roughly 384 respondents are needed can be utilized, according to Krejcie Morgan (14), if the population size is unknown. 454 persons took part in the study, of whom 384 (84.6%) were women and 70 (15.4%) were men. Purposive sampling was the sampling method utilized. The study test was completed and submitted to the Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia Ethical Commission before data collection. There are UKM PPI/111/8/JEP-2024-145 official letters providing ethical clearance. The researcher distributed the scale via a Google form after contacting Indonesian campuses and passing the ethical test. Jamovi 2.5.3.0 software was used to process the data.

Cyberbullying Scale, The Cyberbullying scale which is a form of cyberbullying proposed by Willard (15) consists of seven forms of cyberbullying, namely: Flaming, Online Harassment, cyberstalking, denigration, masquerade, outing, and exclusion.

Suicidal Ideation on the Beck Scale One often used tool to measure suicidality is the Beck Scale for Suicidal Ideation (BSSI). Nevertheless, the psychometric properties of the BSSI are not well documented in Persian. This study looked at the BSSI's factor structure, validity, and reliability in Tehran's general population. One of the most often used tools for assessing suicide is the Beck Scale for Suicidal Ideation (BSSI), which is administered 12.7 times annually on average (16, 17).

The General Help Seeking Questionnaire (GHSQ) assesses future help-seeking behavioral intentions and has supplementary questions to assess past help-seeking experiences. The rationale for the development of the GHSQ and psychometric characteristics are described in Wilson, Deane, Ciarochi and Rickwood (18). The GHSQ was successfully used in conjunction with the GHSQ to measure help-seeking across different time contexts, sources of help, and types of problems.

Future help-seeking intentions are measured by listing several potential help sources and asking participants to indicate how likely it is that they would seek help from that source for a specified problem on a 7-point scale ranging from no intention to seek help to a very high likelihood of seeking help. Note that the specific sources of help listed, the future period specified, and the type of problem can be modified to be appropriate to the particular research objectives.

**RESULTS**

Overall, this has analyzed and reported all the results of the study to answer the hypothesis to be tested in this study. Briefly, exploratory using JAMOVI version 2.5.3.0. Additionally, reports of internal reliability analysis are relatively satisfactory with Cronbach's alpha values. Next, the frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation were reported for all four constructs tested in this study. Then, data analysis continues with a JAMOVI process to assess the unidimensionality, validity, and reliability of all the constructs involved before modeling the causal influence between the constructs in the moderator model.

Table 1 Model Fit Measures

Overall Model Test						
Model	R	R <sup>2</sup>	F	df1	df2	p
1	0.332	0.110	56.025	1	452	< .001

Table 2 Analysis of the influence of Cyberbullying victimization on suicidal ideation

Predictor	Estimate	SE	t	P	Standard Estimate
Intercept	-1.723	0.7683	-2.24	0.025	
Cyberbullying	0.130	0.0174	7.48	< .001	0.332

In the analysis of JAMOVI, as many as two sets of outputs, description analysis and moderator system, were obtained from the JAMOVI process and all research hypotheses were tested and explained based on these two outputs. The JAMOVI version 2.5.3.0 analysis results shown based on the data above, the F value is 56.025 and the significance level is 0.01 (P < 0.05) the hypothesis is accepted, meaning that there is a very significant relationship between Cyberbullying Victimization and Suicidal Ideation. The effective contribution of the Cyberbullying Victimization variable to Suicidal Ideation is 11.0% (100% - 11.0% =, 89.0%). 89.0% is influenced by other variables.

Table 4 Simple slop estimate test moderator effect (CBV-SI) Cyberbullying Victimization on Suicidal Ideation

	Estimate	SE	95% Confidence Interval		Z	p
			Lower	Upper		
Average	0.130	0.0174	0.0953	0.164	7.42	<.001
Low (-1SD)	0.147	0.0251	0.0978	0.196	5.85	<.001
High (+1SD)	0.112	0.0271	0.0589	0.165	4.13	<.001

Note. shows the effect of the predictor (Cyberbullying) on the dependent variable (SuicidalIdeation) at different levels of the moderator (HelpseekingBehavior)

Based on Tables 1 and 2 and Figure 1, it was found that cyberbullying victimization did not have a significant influence on suicidal ideation when the moderator construct was present in the equation. Therefore, the analysis continues through comparison with the direct model without the presence of the moderator construct.

Table 3 Test moderator effect (CBV-SI) Cyberbullying Victimization on Suicidal Ideation

Variables	Estimate	SE	Lower	Upper	Z	P
Cyberbullying	0.12953	0.01743	0.09537	0.16369	7.432	<.001
Help-seeking behavior	-0.01080	0.01505	-0.04031	0.01870	-0.718	0.473
Cyberbullying*Help seeking behavior	-0.00104	0.00115	-0.00330	0.00123	-0.898	0.369

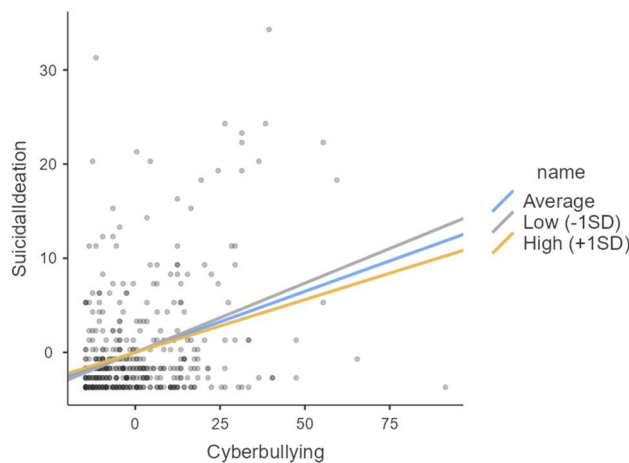


Figure 1 Simple slop post of moderation help-seeking behavior (CBV – SI)

The table above shows a sig value of 0.369 ( $p < 0.01$ ). The hypothesis was rejected, indicating that Help-Seeking Behaviour, as a moderator, had no meaningful influence on the connection between Cyberbullying Victimization and Suicidal Ideation. It means that, when a person experiences cyberbullying victimization,

whether they have low or high help-seeking behavior, their suicidal ideation remains high.

## DISCUSSION

In 2018, Indonesia had 123 million internet users, ranking 6th globally, and this number is projected to rise to 204.7 million by 2024, placing Indonesia third after China and the U.S. By 2024, internet penetration is expected to reach approximately 79.5% of the population, up from 64.8% in 2018, with men making up 50.7% and women 49.1% of users. The majority of social media users are from Generation Z (34.4%) and millennials (30.6%), with urban areas accounting for 69.5% of internet users (19).

While the Internet offers various advantages, including access to information and social support (20,21,22,23), it also presents significant drawbacks. Negative effects include exposure to inappropriate content, cybercrime, and cyberbullying, which can lead to serious psychosocial issues such as increased anxiety and depression (24,25). Cyberbullying, in particular, can occur at any time, differentiating it from traditional bullying that typically takes place during school hours (26).

The rise in cyberbullying has led to increased concerns about its impact on youth mental health, particularly in light of rising suicide rates in Indonesia (303% increase reported by the National Health and Morbidity Study) (27). This study targets late adolescents aged 18-25 across Indonesia to explore the relationship between cyberbullying victimization, suicidal ideation, and depression as mediating factors, with help-seeking behavior as a moderator. This research is the first of its kind in Indonesia, validating key components related to cyberbullying and mental health.

Initial findings indicate that cyberbullying victimization can heighten suicidal thoughts, even in the absence of depression. Out of eight hypotheses tested, six were supported, underscoring the complex relationship between cyberbullying, depression, and suicidal ideation. The study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of these dynamics, contributing to existing literature and offering insights for interventions to support affected youth.

This study surveyed 454 late adolescents aged 18 to 25 across Indonesia, predominantly students from various regions including Java, Sumatra, Kalimantan, Sulawesi, Bali, and Papua. The majority of respondents were women, with Javanese and Muslims constituting the largest demographic groups, though various other races and religions were also represented. Most respondents were undergraduate students, with some pursuing postgraduate studies, and the majority were 19 years old. Social media usage was common, with 42.1% of participants having used these platforms for over six months.

Cyberbullying poses serious mental health risks, as evidenced by several studies linking it to anxiety, depression, substance abuse, and suicidal thoughts (28,29). Bauman (30) found that adolescents who experienced cyberbullying reported higher mental distress and a tendency toward violent behavior. Victims often face diminished concentration, absenteeism, and poor academic performance (31). Research indicates that both traditional bullying and cyberbullying can lead to similar negative outcomes, including emotional distress and somatic symptoms (29).

Furthermore, various studies have established connections between cyberbullying and emotional, social, and academic challenges (31; 32). Factors such as age, gender, and internet usage patterns have been identified as predictors of cyberbullying victimization (31,33). Increased online activity has been correlated with a heightened risk of encountering cyberbullying, emphasizing the complex dynamics at play in these interactions (34).

### 1. The Influence of Cyberbullying Victimization on Suicidal Ideation

The articles collectively highlight the profound impact of cyberbullying on suicidal ideation, underscoring the necessity for effective interventions and support systems for affected adolescents. Research indicates that cyberbullying victimization is significantly associated with elevated levels of suicidal thoughts, with one study showing that 21.1% of adolescents experienced suicidal ideation, particularly among those victimized online

(35,36,50). Victims are reported to be 2.50 times more likely to contemplate suicide compared to their peers, emphasizing the long-term mental health consequences of cyberbullying (37).

Cyberbullying can create overwhelming emotional burdens, leading to feelings of helplessness and hopelessness that significantly increase suicidal ideation. Victims often feel trapped by relentless online harassment, which exacerbates their emotional distress and contributes to despair (38,39). This study confirms that those victimized by cyberbullying face a markedly higher risk of suicidal thoughts, reinforcing previous research on the connection between these two issues.

A critical factor in this relationship is the intense psychological distress caused by the harassment. Victims frequently endure humiliation in public online spaces, leading to profound emotional pain and feelings of powerlessness (40). The anonymity and 24/7 nature of cyberbullying further intensify this distress, as victims are exposed to constant harassment, potentially leading them to view suicide as their only escape (39).

Social rejection and isolation also play significant roles in increasing the risk of suicidal ideation among cyberbullying victims. Adolescents who are ostracized often feel lonely and abandoned, factors strongly associated with suicide risk (41). In Indonesia, where social harmony is highly valued, being ostracized can lead to a deep sense of shame and prolonged emotional distress (42).

Hopelessness has emerged as a critical factor linking cyberbullying victimization to suicidal ideation. Victims often feel that their situation is inescapable, which can drive them to suicidal thoughts as a way to end their suffering (43). The persistent nature of harassment reinforces this sense of entrapment, deteriorating their mental health.

Additionally, perceived social support plays a crucial role in moderating the impact of cyberbullying on suicidal ideation. Adolescents lacking support from family or peers are at a higher risk of experiencing suicidal thoughts (44,52). In contrast, those with a strong support system are less likely to feel isolated and hopeless, thereby reducing their risk of suicide.

In the Indonesian context, the cultural emphasis on maintaining a positive public image can amplify the effects of cyberbullying. Victims may feel heightened shame due to the public nature of online harassment, which can damage their reputation and deter them from seeking help (45). The stigma surrounding mental health issues further complicates this issue, making adolescents reluctant to discuss their struggles or seek support, ultimately exacerbating their emotional pain and increasing their risk of suicidal ideation.

## 2. The Role of Help-Seeking Behavior as A Moderator in the Relationship between Cyberbullying Victimization with Suicidal Ideation

This chapter examines the moderating effect of help-seeking behavior on the relationship between cyberbullying victimization and suicidal ideation, particularly among adolescents. As cyberbullying becomes more prevalent, its psychological effects, including depression and suicidal thoughts, are increasingly apparent. Research indicates that help-seeking—both formal and informal—can serve as a crucial buffer against the progression from victimization to suicidal ideation. This section will explore the protective role of help-seeking, barriers to seeking help, and the cultural context, especially among Indonesian adolescents.

Help-seeking behavior is essential for interrupting the pathway from cyberbullying victimization to suicidal ideation. Victims often experience feelings of isolation and emotional distress (39,51). By seeking support from parents, teachers, or mental health professionals, adolescents can gain validation and practical strategies to cope with bullying, ultimately reducing the likelihood of suicidal thoughts (46). This study found that participants who engaged in help-seeking were less likely to experience suicidal ideation, aligning with research showing that supportive networks enable better emotional management in the face of bullying (47).

Despite its benefits, many adolescents facing cyberbullying do not seek help due to barriers such as fear of judgment and the belief that help will not be effective (48). These barriers can be particularly acute in cases of cyberbullying, where victims may feel ashamed of their experiences. In Indonesia, cultural factors

such as stigma surrounding mental health can further discourage help-seeking, as adolescents may fear bringing shame to their families (45). This reluctance increases the risk of suicidal ideation by limiting access to necessary support.

The study highlights that help-seeking behavior offers emotional reassurance and coping strategies, helping victims regain control over their situations (49). Help-seeking can take both formal (e.g., counseling) and informal (e.g., talking to friends) forms, with adolescents often preferring informal channels due to stigma (48). However, formal help may be necessary in severe cases, and communities should ensure access to both types of support.

In Indonesia, the cultural stigma around mental health can further inhibit help-seeking, as adolescents worry about the family reputation and the potential shame of disclosing their struggles (45). To counteract these issues, mental health interventions should focus on reducing stigma and creating safe spaces for adolescents to discuss their experiences. Schools and communities must promote open conversations about mental health and provide resources to encourage help-seeking, thus reducing barriers and mitigating the psychological impacts of cyberbullying.

The findings of this study underscore the need for interventions that promote help-seeking as a protective factor against suicidal ideation in cyberbullying victims. Supportive environments should be fostered in schools, encouraging open dialogue about experiences with bullying. Interventions should also target the cultural and social barriers to help-seeking, ensuring adolescents feel empowered to seek support when needed.

Finally, while research on cyberbullying in Indonesia is limited, existing studies indicate a high prevalence of cyber victimization among adolescents. Reports suggest significant awareness among Indonesian parents about the issue, yet minimal research has explored its impact. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for developing effective interventions tailored to the Indonesian context. Overall, help-seeking behavior plays a vital role in moderating the effects of cyberbullying on suicidal ideation, with interventions needing to address cultural and social barriers to promote mental health support.

## CONCLUSION AND FUTURE SCOPE

This study emphasizes the significant association between cyberbullying victimization and suicidal ideation among Indonesian adolescents, particularly college students aged 18-25. Help-seeking behavior serves as a moderating factor, potentially reducing the impact of cyberbullying by providing psychological support.

Further research should focus on targeted mental health programs in universities, promoting resilience, digital literacy, and effective help-seeking strategies. Additionally, cultural and gender-specific factors influencing these behaviors could be explored to enhance intervention efforts.

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