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From Home to Digital Space: Mapping the Culture of Family Verbal Violence in Adolescent Cyberbullying

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Abstract - Cyberbullying among adolescents is often examined through technological and psychological perspectives, while the role of family communication as a cultural space shaping aggressive behavior has received less attention. Verbal violence within the family as a communication practice is assumed to contribute to an increased risk of adolescent involvement in cyberbullying. This study used a descriptive survey method with a questionnaire instrument. Data were collected from 1,481 high school students in four cities in Indonesia: Mataram, Pontianak, Medan, and Makassar. The questionnaire investigated exposure to violence within the family, verbal violence practices in the form of negative labeling and harassment between family members. Data were analyzed descriptively to identify dominant patterns of verbal violence culture in family communication. The results showed that most adolescents were exposed to violence, especially arguments within the family. In addition, they experienced verbal violence through negative labeling based on physical characteristics, habits, and traits, which reflect asymmetrical power relations within the family hierarchy These findings indicate that a culture of verbal violence in the family has the potential to be the root of adolescent aggressive behavior in the digital space. This study recommends the importance of a cultural and family approach, particularly empathetic communication in developing strategies and literacy models for preventing cyberbullying.

Keywords: Adolescents; Cyberbullying; Family communication; Power relations: Verbal violence.

Introduction

The results of the National Survey on the Life Experiences of Children and Adolescents conducted by the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection in 2021, show that children aged 13-17 years experience emotional violence throughout their lives. Women experience more emotional violence than men, in urban and rural areas. The types of emotional violence experienced include bullying from adults, bullying from peers, and cyberbullying (Susilowati, 2022).

Cyberbullying is not a problem to be taken lightly. This is because cyberbullying can have a tremendously negative impact on its victims, ranging from mental, physical, and emotional. Many victims of cyberbullying end up experiencing depression, anxiety, and self-harm, even committing suicide due to being unable to accept the cyberbullying perpetrated against them by many people

(Imanisa et al., 2025; Unicef, 2020). Similarly, research by *Asosiasi Penyelenggara Jasa Internet Indonesia* (APJII), and Polling Indonesia, found that approximately 49 percent of netizens have been victims of bullying on social media, and 31.6 percent of them admitted to often ignoring the behavior and doing nothing (APJII, 2020).

Bullying and cyberbullying are serious problems, which must be understood in the cultural context in which bullying occurs. Indonesia, as a country that tends to adhere to a high power distance culture, allows more oppression to occur compared to countries with low power distance (Murwani, 2023; Murwani & Dewi, 2019). Apart from that, Indonesia is also a country with an honor culture. In honor culture, reactions with revenge are common, so in honor culture, individuals are ready to defend social honor (Erişti & Akbulut, 2019). Culture may facilitate or constraint the channeling of expression through violence as a means of social control.

Previous studies have shown that bullying and cyberbullying are influenced by individual factors, situational factors and proximal factors - emotional aspects and the impact of cyberbullying (Livazović & Ham, 2019). Individual factors that influence bullying behavior are gender, age and personality. Research indicates that gender plays an important role in cyberbullying behavior (Marinoni et al., 2023). Male and female adolescents exhibit different responses to cyberbullying. Studies in China show that males experience cyberbullying more frequently and tend to use aggressive humor in daily life (Huang et al., 2023). Research also shows that male have higher abilities when it comes to revenge and confrontation (Erişti & Akbulut, 2019), whereas female are more inclined toward avoidance and preventive strategies (Larrañaga et al., 2016), preferring indirect forms to avoid aggression (Makri-Botsari & Karagianni, 2014).

Situational factors influencing bullying include power ownership , low parental and teacher supervision, and the quality of family and peer relationships (Larrañaga et al., 2018; Livazović & Ham, 2019). Possession of power creates the potential for bullying. This happens when someone feels they have power, there tends to be dislike, hatred, neglect and denigration of other people who are considered unequal (Bergmann & Baier, 2018).

Lack of or no supervision from parents and teachers is a situational factor that has the potential to cause bullying and cyberbullying. Shao's research results show that low levels of parental supervision and high levels of family conflict are risk factors that cause children to become victims of cyberbullying (Shao et al., 2023). Furthermore, close family relationships are a situational factor that influences bullying behavior. Although some studies indicate that good relationships with family and friends are correlated with lower levels of psychological stress (Escario et al., 2022; Horwitz et al., 2015; Rodriguez-Rivas et al., 2022), the quality of family communication is considered a protective factor against cyberbullying for both victims and perpetrators (Buelga et al., 2017). Research on students in Spain also indicates that adolescents who are victims or perpetrators of cyberbullying have less open communication with their parents than students who are not involved in cyberbullying (Gómez-Ortiz et al., 2019).

The role of parents in preventing children's involvement in bullying and cyberbullying is very important, as recommended by several studies. Violent practices carried out by parents, such as physical punishment and verbal abuse, lack of attention and communication with children, lack of autonomy for children, and excessive behavioral control, can increase children's vulnerability to becoming victims of bullying (Gómez-Ortiz et al., 2016). Conversely, a positive family environment, parental interaction, mediation in technology use, parental supervision and monitoring, are correlated with low cyberbullying among children and adolescents (Rodríguez-Ruiz et al., 2023).

Cultural factors also contribute to shaping how individuals learn, interpret, and reproduce aggressive behavior. Family, school, and social environment serve as primary cultural agents guiding behavioral norms (Barlett et al., 2014). Cross-cultural studies in Asian societies such as China, Taiwan, and South Korea show significant differences in the prevalence and patterns of cyberbullying across cultures (Barlett et al., 2014; Chen & Chen, 2020; Jungup et al., 2020; Park et al., 2021). Research by Barlett et al. (Barlett et al., 2014, 2023) found that the culture in which victims of bullying live influences their behavior. Culture influences each individual's behavior, both directly and indirectly. Cultural factors can be variables that explain the behaviors displayed by cyberbullies and also the reactions shown by victims. Culture plays a crucial role in individuals learning aggressive and defensive behaviors. An individual's immediate environment, namely family, school, and social environment, guides behavior according to the culture in which they live (Barlett et al., 2014).

Culture is a force that guides individuals to behave in accordance with their culture when faced with bullying situations. This tends to be more prevalent in societies with higher collectivist values. In collectivist cultures, individuals should prioritize the community over themselves (Barlett et al., 2014). Therefore, mapping bullying and cyberbullying from a cultural perspective is crucial. Cyberbullying cannot be addressed solely through a technological determinism approach but requires cultural analysis. Given Indonesia's collectivist and honor-based cultural orientations, culturally sensitive and family-centered approaches are necessary, particularly for adolescent populations.

Previous studies tend to view family conflict and low parental supervision as situational risk variables. This study fills this gap by examining how verbal violence—as an everyday patterned communication practice—is internalized and reproduced by adolescents in digital spaces, grounded in communication theory rather than behavioral psychology alone. This study aims to examine bullying and cyberbullying behavior within the family environment.

This research focuses on the family environment, based on the assumption that children learn norms and behaviors primarily from their families. The family environment is a key factor in the psychological development of children and adolescents. The significance of this research is that it can contribute to the development of a culturally grounded cyberbullying literacy model and an integrated policy strategy involving the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education; the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection; and the Ministry of Communication and Digital.

Theoretical Framework

Cyberbullying as Aggressive Behavior

Cyberbullying and face-to-face bullying (traditional bullying) are both aggressive behaviors intended to harm others. Some experts define cyberbullying as deliberate, repeated, and cruel actions by an individual or group to harm others. However, others question whether bullying must involve the intention to harm others, whether it must be repeated, and so on (Yubero et al., 2017) .

According to Smith in Yubero et al. (2017), the differences in the characteristics of cyberbullying with face-to-face bullying are as follows: (1) cyberbullying requires certain technological specializations; cyberbullying is a form of indirect aggression, because the perpetrator of bullying is invisible and unknown; (2) the perpetrator of bullying does not see the reaction directly. (3) the perpetrator of cyberbullying is less empathetic towards the victim; (4) the diversity of roles of the perpetrator of cyberbullying is more complex than the face-to-face experience; (5) the potential audience for cyberbullying is larger, (6) people who search via the internet have access to the victim 24 hours 7 days, while face-to-face searches have limited access. Cyberbullying has four main components: deliberate aggressive behavior; repeated incidents; an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim; and the use of technology (Barlett et al., 2023).

Family as a Place for Socialization & Reproduction of Verbal Violence

The family is the first environment where children learn values, norms, and communication patterns. Violent verbal communication practices within the family—such as name-calling, negative labels, and verbal abuse—serve as a platform for socialization and a mechanism for normalizing verbal violence. Previous research has shown that harsh, hierarchical, and minimally dialogue-based family communication patterns correlate with an increased risk of children engaging in bullying and cyberbullying, both as victims and perpetrators (Larrañaga et al., 2018; Makri-Botsari & Karagianni, 2014).

Children who grow up in a supportive and positive parenting style are much less likely to be aggressive than those who grow up in a harsh and negative family environment. Harsh and negative parenting styles, accompanied by verbal or physical abuse, stimulate aggressive emotions or behavior in children by encouraging children to solve problems aggressively and imitate their parents (Wang & Wang, 2018).

When verbal violence is repeatedly practiced and legitimized within the family environment, it becomes embedded in adolescents' cognitive schemas as an acceptable communication mode. This internalization process facilitates the reproduction of violence in other social contexts, including peer interactions and digital environments. Furthermore, unequal power relations between parents and children indicate that parents possess authority that makes verbal violence communication a form of disciplinary instrument applicable within the family. Repeated verbal violence has the potential to shape

children's cognitive schemas, causing them to perceive verbal violence as an acceptable form of communication.

Li et al. (2023) argue that children who frequently experience abuse learn to view abusive interactions as normal and acceptable, and this behavior can interfere with the ability to develop adaptive coping styles, all of which can be risk factors for becoming victims of verbal violence. Power relations in this study refer to asymmetry of authority between parent and children, and between older and younger siblings. This asymmetry enables the superior party to use verbal violence as an instrument of control, discipline, and behavioral regulation within the family hierarchy.

Conceptual Model

This conceptual model illustrates family culture shapes verbal violence as everyday communication practices, which are internalized by adolescents and reproduced in digital interactions. This model does not assume strict linear causality. Other factors such as peer influence, digital literacy, parental supervision, and individual personality characteristics may act as moderators or mediators in this pathway

Family Culture
↓
Verbal Violence Practices in the Family
↓
Internalization of Aggressive Communication Patterns
↓
Cyberbullying Behavior in Digital Spaces

Material and Methodology

This study uses a descriptive survey method to provide an overview of trends, attitudes, or opinions of a population, by taking a sample from that population with the aim of generalizing or drawing conclusions to the population (Creswell, 2014). The descriptive survey in this study was used to map the patterns, tendencies, and characteristics of verbal violence communication among adolescents in families.

The use of a self-administered questionnaire instrument for adolescents allowed the researcher to systematically document respondents' practices and experiences regarding verbal violence within the family (Bryman, 2016)). The population in this study was high school, with the following considerations: 1) high school students are included in the teenage age category; 2) high school students are digital native which is assumed to be born and grow in a new technological era; 3) high school students have the potential to become perpetrators and victims *cyberbullying*.

Respondents

Respondents were selected using a multistage sampling approach. The first stage is to determine various high schools in each city. School selection is carried out in coordination with the Provincial Education Office or the Provincial Education and Culture Service. This first stage produces selected high schools in each city. The second stage, selecting samples from selected schools, namely each school was taken from classes X, XI, and XII. A total of 1,481 senior high school students from Mataram, Pontianak, Medan, and Makassar participated voluntarily in this study. Respondents were assured of anonymity and confidentiality, and informed that their responses would not be accessed by parents or teachers. The self-report questionnaire was completed within 30–45 minutes.

Table 1. School Sample & Number of Respondent

No	City	School sample	Number of respondent
1	Mataram	SMAN 1, SMAN 5, SMAN 9, SMAN 11, SMAK Kesuma, SMA Nurul Jannah	310
2	Pontianak	SMAN 4, SMAN 6, SMAN 8, SMAN 9, SMAN 11, SMA Imanuel, SMA Al Azhar, SMA Mujahidin	366
3	Medan	SMAN 1, SMAN 4, SMAN 10, SMAN 11, SMA Santo	400

		Thomas, SMA Harapan Medan, SMA Cahaya Medan, SMA Kemala Bayangkari	
4	Makassar	SMAN 2, SMAN 3, SMAN 8, SMAN 11, SMAN 14, SMA Gamaliel, SMA Kartika Chandra Kirana, SMA Islam Athirah	405
		Total	1.481

Source: Research data, 2023

Respondent Background. First, respondents provided information on sociodemographic characteristics (gender, age, religion, and ethnicity). Furthermore, to determine their background, the questionnaire also asked about the types of social media used and duration of daily use.

Violence Exposure in Family. Violence exposure in the family was investigated through three questions: (1) frequency of arguments among adults in the home; (2) experience of treats directed at family members; (3) exposure to physical assault at home.

To investigate negative labeling which is considered as a form of verbal bullying, the questionnaire categorizes negative labeling into three, namely: (1) labels referring to the physical body; (2) labels referring to habits; (3) labels referring to traits or character.

The questionnaire asked 'has the respondent received labels from family members?'. If the answer is 'yes', the respondent is asked to state the label they received, and to name the family member who provided the label. Likewise, the questionnaire asked 'do respondents label family members?'. If the answer is 'yes', the respondent is asked to name the label given to the family member, and to name the family member who was given the label by the respondent.

To identify bullying in the family, this study also asked respondents, 'have they ever been verbally abused by family members when they made a mistake'. If respondents answered 'yes', they were asked to state the type of abuse received from family members, and to name the family member who abused them. Similarly, the questionnaire asked ‘has the respondent ever verbally abused a family member?” . If the answer is 'yes', the respondent is asked to state the type of abuse given to family members, and to name the family member who was verbally abused by the respondent.

Analysis. Data analysis was conducted descriptively to identify information regarding the respondent's background, bullying in the family, and the respondent's involvement in cyberbullying. The results of the data analysis are presented in a frequency table.

Result and Discussion

Respondent Background

Out of a total of 1.481 respondents, 54.83 percent respondents were female, 45.17 percent were male. The age range of respondents was between 14-19 years.

The majority of ethnicities in the city of Mataram are Sasak, Balinese, Chinese and Javanese. Ethnic groups in the city of Pontianak are predominantly Malay, Chinese and Bugis. Respondents in the city of Medan were dominated by Batak and Malay tribes. Meanwhile, the majority of respondents in Makassar are Bugis and Malay ethnic.

The data collected shows that all students access the internet every day, including social media. Some schools implement rules limiting the use of cell phones in class. In more detail, the 1.481 respondents, on average, spent 4-6 hours accessing the internet every day.

The social media most frequently used by respondents are: 1) TikTok 2) Instagram; 3) WhatsApp; 4) YouTube. On average, respondents use these four social media 4-6 hours a day. For Line, Facebook, X (Twitter) media, not all respondents have these social media accounts. For respondents who have Line, Facebook, X (Twitter) accounts, the average usage time is 1-3 hours.

Exposure to Family Violence

Exposure to violence in the family environment, consisting of : arguments, threats and attacks. Exposure to violence can influence children's involvement in cyberbullying behavior.

The research results show that the majority of respondents were exposed to quarrels within the family. 39.95 percent witnessed an argument in the past year. 16.35 percent in the last month, even 4.26 percent were exposed to quarrels almost every day.

Regarding exposure to violence in the form of threats, 25.21 percent experienced threats in the last year, and 3.31 percent were exposed to threats every day. The frequency of daily exposure to threats in the family environment can affect children's cognition. Meanwhile, exposure to attacks showed that 78.12% of respondents had never seen an attack at home. 14.75% of respondents were exposed to attacks in the last year.

Table 2. Frequency of Exposure to Violence in the Family

No	Exposure to family violence	Quarrel (%)	Threat (%)	Attack (%)
1	Never	32,57	54,25	78,12
2	1-2 times in the last year	39,95	25,21	14,75
3	1-2 times in the last month	16,35	12,14	4,71
4	1 time in the last week	6,87	6,09	1,78
5	Almost every day	4,26	3,31	0,64
	Total	100	100	100

Source: Processed primary data, 2023

Culture of Verbal Violence in the Family Environment

The family environment can be the cultural root of cyberbullying behavior. The research results show that high school students experience bullying from family members. Nicknames, negative labels or derisive names are the root of verbal violence or bullying in the family.

The data obtained showed that 79.52% of respondents admitted to receiving labels they considered negative from their parents and siblings. However, it turns out that extended family members such as grandparents, aunts and uncles, and cousins also give negative labels. On the other hand, 64.38% of respondents also gave labels to family members, especially aimed at younger family members such as younger siblings. However, some respondents stated that they gave the label to their parents.

Table 3. Acceptance and Labeling in the Family

No	Reception and labeling	Yes (%)	No (%)	Total (%)
1	Receiving labels from family members	79.52	20.48	100
2	Give labels to family members	64.38	35.62	100

Source: Processed primary data, 2023

Respondents' answers regarding labels received or given to family members were categorized based on: physical characteristics, daily habits, and traits. The research data in table 4 shows that the percentages based on physical labels received or given by respondents to family members are not much different, namely 24.64% and 25.10%. Likewise, labels based on habits, traits, and combinations (physical, habits, traits) have almost the same percentage.

Table 4. Categories of Labels Accepted and Given in the Family

No	Label category	Physique (%)	Habit (%)	Natur (%)	Combination (%)	Total (%)
1	Receiving Labels	24,64 (308)	25,28 (316)	23,36 (292)	26,72 (334)	100 (1250)
2	Give a label	25,10 (254)	27, 67 (280)	25,49 (258)	21,74 (220)	100 (1012)

Source: processed primary data, 2023

The results of the research show that the labels received and given to family members are based on physical characteristics, namely: short, fat body, thin body, black skin, curly hair, long hair, frizzy hair, flat nose, bald, toothless, appearance dirty, and so on.

Labels in the habit category tend to be associated with bad habits, such as being lazy, fussy, stingy, ignorant, and whiny. Labels that are categorized based on traits also tend to have bad traits such as stupid, stubborn, stubborn, fierce, angry.

Table 5. Accepted and Given Labels in the Family

No	Category	Labels and nicknames
1	Physique	midget, short, fat, black, frail, skinny, curly, frizzy, chubby, pug, skinny, petite, toothless, bald, dirty, fat, longish
2	Habit	lazy, fussy, stingy, ignorant, whiny
3	Traits	stubborn, stupid, angry, stubborn, fierce

Source: processed primary data, 2023

This study also identified verbal violence that occurred in the family, in the form of verbal abuse received or given by respondents. The research results showed that 71.50 percent of respondents received verbal abuse from family members. On the other hand, 52.16% of respondents had verbally abused family members. If we look at the form of verbal abuse that is received and given to family members, it tends to be linked to the physical characteristics of the body, habits, character and animals.

Table 6 describes the categories of verbal abuse: physical, habit, character, animal. Respondents often receive verbal abuse from their parents when they are angry. Children are considered not to meet their parents' expectations: lazy to study, undisciplined, engrossed in cell phones, playing online games, and so on.

The form of abuse that respondents receive is also based on physical characteristics of the body, habits, nature and animals such as dogs, pigs, monkeys, buffalo, lions. On the other hand, respondents also curse at unequal family members, such as siblings or cousins. When angry at a parent or older sister, the respondent did not dare to insult the parent directly. The labels received or given also use regional terms or language from the local culture. Giving negative labels has the potential to be the root of verbal violence in children.

Table 6. Bullying in the Family

No	Category of verbal abuse	Physique (%)	Habit (%)	Nature (%)	Animal (%)	Combination (%)	Total (%)
1	Receiving abuse	17.08 (192)	20,99 (236)	20,12 (226)	13,70 (154)	28,11 (316)	100 (1124)
2	Giving insults	18,78 (154)	20,97 (172)	19,51 (160)	15,37 (126)	25,37 (208)	100 (820)

Source: processed primary data, 2023

Table 7. Family Abuse Category

No	Category	Abuse
1	Physique	short, fat, black, frail, skinny, curly, frizzy, chubby, pug, skinny, petite, toothless, bald, dirty, fat, longish
2	Habit	lazy, stupid,
3	Traits	stubborn, stupid, angry, ape
4	Animal	dog, pig, demon

Source: processed primary data, 2023

The results of the study showed that labels received and given to family members tended to be associated with physical characteristics. Negative labels for physical characteristics included: short, fat, thin, dark skin, curly hair, long hair, afro hair, flat nose, bald, missing teeth, dirty appearance, and

crybaby. Labels in the habit category tend to be associated with bad habits, such as laziness, nagging, stingy, and mischievousness. Labels categorized by traits also tend to be associated with bad traits, such as stupidity, stubbornness, fierceness, anger, and stupidity.

Discussion

The findings indicate that verbal violence in families is not merely an interpersonal issue but a deeply internalized cultural communication pattern among adolescents. The use of negative labels, nicknames, and abuse, which tend to focus on physical appearance, habits, and character, demonstrates symbolic control over children's physical appearance and identity within family relationships. In a culture that values honor and power relations, these family communication practices are normalized as humor, emotional expression, and discipline; they are not considered verbal abuse (Erişti & Akbulut, 2019). On the other hand, adolescents lack the power to negotiate or reject the negative labels, nicknames, and abuse they receive. As a result, verbal abuse is reproduced horizontally by adolescents against weaker family members, such as their younger siblings. Internalization of verbal abuse helps shape adolescents' cognitive schemas, which view verbal abuse as an acceptable form of communication. Verbal abuse patterns find new channels of expression in the digital space. Thus, cyberbullying is an extension of verbal abuse behavior learned through family communication culture, not simply technological mastery.

This horizontal reproduction pattern exemplifies what communication scholars call 'downward displacement'—when individuals who experience vertical aggression from authority figures redirect their frustration toward those with less power. In the family context, asymmetrical power relations (parents > children > younger siblings) create opportunity structures for this downward displacement. Because adolescents cannot challenge parental authority directly—both due to cultural norms and structural constraints—they instead assert control over younger or less powerful family members, thereby reinforcing the same communication patterns they experienced.

The findings of this study reinforce cross-cultural research showing that the cultural context in which individuals grow up influences how they interpret, display, and react to aggressive behavior (Barlett et al., 2014). While research from Western individualistic contexts emphasizes peer dynamics and bullying anonymity, findings from Asian collectivist societies—including this study—reveal that family-embedded verbal violence creates the foundational cognitive scripts for aggressive digital behavior. This suggests that prevention strategies in collectivist cultures must prioritize family-level interventions rather than peer-focused approaches alone

From a communication studies perspective, verbal violence can be understood not only as individual behavior but as a patterned communicative practice embedded in everyday family interactions. From a socio-cultural perspective, the family is the primary environment where children learn communication norms, values, and behaviors (Barlett et al., 2014). Verbal violence practices within families—such as negative labeling, name-calling, and verbal abuse—serve as mechanisms for normalizing violence. Hierarchical and harsh family communication patterns with limited dialogue contribute to a higher risk of involvement in bullying and cyberbullying (Larrañaga et al., 2018; Makri-Botsari & Karagianni, 2014). Furthermore, unequal power relationships between parents and children, as well as between siblings, allow verbal violence to be accepted as an instrument of control and discipline.

Patterns of aggression and violence cannot be separated from the value systems that structure social relations. Two cultural dimensions that are particularly relevant in explaining the normalization and reproduction of verbal violence within families are collectivism and high power distance. Within the family context, unequal power relations between parents and children, as well as between siblings, allow verbal abuse to be accepted as discipline, humor, or emotional expression. Repeated verbal abuse has the potential to shape children's cognitive schemas that verbal aggression is an acceptable form of communication.

This study also shows that verbal abuse does not occur randomly, but rather follows recognizable patterns of meaning-making, consistent with cultural expectations and relational roles. Negative labeling, verbal abuse, and name-calling serve not only to express emotions but also to demonstrate authority, regulate behavior, and reinforce social boundaries within the family. Unequal power relations between parents and children indicate that parents hold authority, which tends to make communication one-way. Children tend to be recipients of messages rather than active participants in the dialogue. This

asymmetrical communication limits opportunities for clarification, resistance, or negotiation. As a result, verbal abuse becomes normalized as part of everyday interactions. Alternative communication practices, such as empathetic listening, remain underdeveloped.

Repeated verbal abuse can contribute to the formation of adolescents' self-concept. Negative nicknames and labels associated with physical appearance, habits, or personality traits are symbolic communications about how adolescents interpret their values, norms, and social behavior. Family communication experiences can influence internal perceptions of verbal abuse and how adolescents communicate with others, both offline and online.

The findings of this study reinforce research emphasizing the importance of the family environment in shaping adolescents' involvement in bullying and cyberbullying. Previous research has shown that family conflict, authoritarian parenting styles, and limited parental supervision are associated with a higher risk of aggressive behavior in both offline and online contexts (Buelga et al., 2017; Larrañaga et al., 2018). These findings support prior research, even emphasizing the importance of verbal abuse as a patterned form of family communication, not merely a behavioral risk factor.

Unlike previous research, which primarily addresses family influences from a psychological or behavioral perspective, this study draws on a communication perspective. The prevalence of negative labeling, name-calling, and verbal abuse found in this study suggests that verbal abuse operates as a communication practice in which authority, obedience, and social boundaries are negotiated in family interactions. These findings support communication studies that conceptualize language as a symbolic resource for establishing and maintaining power relationships, rather than as a neutral medium for transmitting messages.

The findings of this study reinforce cross-cultural research in Asian societies that suggests that cultural context influences differences in cyberbullying patterns, which shape how individuals learn, interpret, and reproduce aggressive behavior (Barlett et al., 2014; Park et al., 2021). In collectivist cultures characterized by high power relations, control of verbal communication by authority figures is often legitimized as discipline. When related to the Indonesian context, the findings provide empirical evidence of how collectivist cultural orientations are reflected in everyday family communication practices and reproduced in adolescents' digital interactions.

Similarly, previous research on sibling bullying has shown that exposure to verbal violence within the family increases the likelihood of perpetrating horizontal violence among siblings and peers (Brett et al., 2023). This study also found that adolescents who experienced verbal violence from parents or older family members tended to repeat similar verbal communication behaviors toward younger or less powerful family members. These findings strengthen the argument that cyberbullying is a continuation of communication practices learned within the context of family relationships.

From a communication perspective, the findings of this study integrate with previous research on cyberbullying as a culturally rooted communication phenomenon. Rather than being driven solely by technological capabilities, cyberbullying emerges as an extension of the meaning-making and power negotiation processes learned through family discourse. This research makes a key contribution to the importance of the family's role as an agent of cultural socialization that influences adolescents' involvement in cyberbullying.

Conclusions

The conclusions drawn from this study indicate that verbal violence in family communication is a crucial cultural foundation for adolescent cyberbullying behavior. Patterns of negative labeling, name-calling, and name-calling occur in everyday family communication and can serve as normalized communication practices. These communication patterns shape adolescents' understandings of power, control, and acceptability, which then tend to be reproduced in digital environments, particularly in peer relationships marked by power imbalances. These findings position cyberbullying not simply as a technological phenomenon, but as an extension of communication behaviors learned and reinforced through family discourse.

This study emphasizes the importance of incorporating family-based and cultural communication approaches into cyberbullying prevention efforts. Practically, these findings imply the need for digital literacy programs that engage parents and children as equal partners, focusing on empathic communication, conflict resolution without verbal aggression, and power-aware peer relationships.

School-based interventions should also include family engagement components to ensure consistency between home and school communication norms.

Future research could expand on these findings by using a longitudinal design to examine the causal relationship between family communication patterns and digitally abusive behavior. Furthermore, a qualitative approach could offer more detailed insights into how adolescents interpret and respond to verbal abuse in family and online interactions. This study contributes to communication scholarship by demonstrating that cyberbullying is not merely a behavioral risk factor but a manifestation of learned communication practices rooted in family discourse—a perspective that expands the scope of cyberbullying research beyond psychological and technological determinism.

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