

# Cyberbullying victimization among young adults: The role of emotion regulation and self-esteem as protective factors

## *Cyberbullying victimization* pada dewasa muda: Peran regulasi emosi dan harga diri sebagai faktor protektif

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### ABSTRACT

Cyberbullying victimization among young adults has become a relevant psychosocial issue, as social media use and the intensity of digital interactions have increased. This condition highlights the importance of examining psychological factors, such as emotion regulation and self-esteem, which are associated with individuals' vulnerability to becoming victims of cyberbullying. In order to address this issue, this study aimed to analyze the influence of emotion regulation and self-esteem on cyberbullying victimization among young adults in West Java. A quantitative approach was employed involving 385 young adults aged 18–25 years selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected using the Emotion Regulation Questionnaire (ERQ), Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES), and Cyberbullying Victimization Scale (CBV) and analyzed using multiple regression analysis. The findings indicated that emotion regulation and self-esteem had significant effects on cyberbullying victimization, both independently and simultaneously. Furthermore, both variables accounted for 30.2 percent to explaining the variance in cyberbullying victimization, while the remaining 69.8 percent was explained by other, unexamined psychosocial factors. These findings suggest that emotion regulation and self-esteem are associated with experiences of cyberbullying victimization among young adults, highlighting the need for greater attention to individuals' psychological dynamics in efforts to prevent and address cyberbullying.

### ABSTRAK

Cyberbullying victimization pada dewasa muda menjadi isu psikososial yang semakin relevan seiring tingginya penggunaan media sosial dan intensitas interaksi digital. Kondisi ini mendorong pentingnya kajian mengenai faktor psikologis, seperti regulasi emosi dan harga diri, yang berkaitan dengan kerentanan individu menjadi korban perundungan siber. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pengaruh regulasi emosi dan harga diri terhadap cyberbullying victimization pada dewasa muda di Jawa Barat. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif terhadap 385 dewasa muda berusia 18–25 tahun yang dipilih menggunakan teknik purposive sampling. Data dikumpulkan menggunakan Emotion Regulation Questionnaire (ERQ), Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES), dan Cyberbullying Victimization Scale (CBV). Analisis data dilakukan menggunakan regresi berganda. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa regulasi emosi dan harga diri berpengaruh signifikan secara parsial maupun simultan terhadap cyberbullying victimization. Kedua variabel memberikan kontribusi sebesar 30,2 persen dalam menjelaskan varians cyberbullying victimization, sedangkan 69,8 persen sisanya dijelaskan oleh faktor lain di luar model penelitian. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa regulasi emosi dan harga diri memiliki keterkaitan dengan pengalaman cyberbullying victimization pada dewasa muda, sehingga diperlukan perhatian terhadap dinamika psikologis individu dalam upaya pencegahan dan penanganan perundungan siber.

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Social interactions in modern society are influenced by the development of digital technology. The increasing accessibility of the internet and the growing use of social media have created new communication spaces that enable individuals to interact without the constraints of distance and time. However, these developments have also been accompanied by an increase in digitally mediated aggressive behaviors, one of which is cyberbullying. According to Smith et al. (2008), cyberbullying refers to aggressive behavior that is intentionally and repeatedly done through electronic media, addressing individuals who have difficulty defending themselves. When an individual becomes the target of such behavior, the condition is referred to as cyberbullying victimization, which is defined as the experience of being subjected to aggression, humiliation, threats, or other harmful acts through digital media (Patchin & Hinduja, 2015).

Apart from regular bullying, cyberbullying can occur at any time, spread rapidly, and allow perpetrators to remain anonymous, consequently exposing victims to more complex psychological distress. Research by Nixon (2014) shows that cyberbullying victims are prone to increased risk of having anxiety, depression, stress, social isolation, and emerging suicide ideation. Furthermore, Kowalski et al. (2014) found that cyberbullying victimization is also associated with various psychological and social adjustment problems, including reduced psychological well-being, increased loneliness, and deterioration in interpersonal relationship quality. These findings indicate that cyberbullying has become a significant psychosocial issue in the digital era.

Cyberbullying victimization are prominent in young adults, particularly college students and active social media users. Young adults ranged from 18 to 25 years old are in emerging adulthood phase, characterized by identity exploration, the need for social acceptance, and frequent interpersonal interactions (Arnett, 2000). According to the 2023 survey conducted by the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII), internet users in Indonesia are predominantly individuals aged 19–34 years, with an internet penetration rate of 97.17 percent (APJII, 2023). Furthermore, data from APJII show that West Java is the province with the second-highest number of internet users in Indonesia, with an internet penetration rate of 82.73 percent, representing approximately 41.3 million users out of a total population of 50.25 million. (APJII, 2023).

This high level of digital activity increases individuals' opportunities to engage in various forms of online interaction, including cyberbullying victimization. A study by Putri & Kusdiyati (2023) involving university students in West Java found that the intensity of social media use was associated with greater involvement in cyberbullying. Similarly, Samsiah & Sumaryanti (2023) reported that cyberbullying among young people in Bandung has emerged alongside the increasing use of social media and the high degree of anonymity in digital interactions.

The phenomenon of cyberbullying victimization among young adults in West Java has shown an increasing trend in recent years. Data from the Southeast Asia Freedom of Expression Network (Ridwan, 2026) indicate that West Java recorded the highest number of Online Gender-Based Violence (OGBV) cases in Indonesia in 2025, with 504 reported cases, and remained the province with the highest number of complaints in early 2026, with 148 reported cases (GoodStats, 2026). Individuals aged 18–25 years constitute the group most vulnerable to experiencing cyberbullying and OGBV (Ridwan, 2026). The most frequently

reported forms of abuse include doxing, online harassment, non-consensual dissemination of private content, and intimidation through social media and digital communication platforms (SAFE-net, 2026).

Several incidents have also attracted public attention, including the bullying case involving participants in the Medical Specialist Education Program (PPDS) at the Faculty of Medicine, Padjadjaran University and Hasan Sadikin Hospital, which involved psychological pressure through digital communication groups since 2023 (Siswandi, 2024). Another notable case was the mass doxing of KIP-K scholarship recipients at various universities in 2024 (IPB University, 2024). In addition, a bullying case involving students of Parahyangan Catholic University (UNPAR), which was circulated through digital videos, illustrates how social pressure in digital environments can exacerbate victims' psychological distress (Ramadhan, 2020).

Mharchelya & Sukmawati (2023) found that experiences of social media-based bullying among university students were associated with social pressure, emotional distress, and psychological vulnerability. These findings suggest that cyberbullying victimization among young adults is not merely an issue of digital interaction, but also has the potential to affect mental health, social relationships, and psychological development during emerging adulthood. Therefore, further research is needed to identify psychological factors associated with individuals' vulnerability to cyberbullying victimization, providing a foundation for the development of more effective preventive strategies and psychological interventions.

Cyberbullying victimization is influenced by various internal psychological factors, including emotion regulation and self-esteem (Kowalski et al., 2014). Gross & John (2003) define emotion regulation as an individual's ability to manage and modify emotional responses in order to maintain adaptive functioning. Within the framework of the Emotion Regulation Questionnaire (ERQ), emotion regulation comprises two primary strategies: cognitive reappraisal and expressive suppression. Cognitive reappraisal enables individuals to reinterpret situations in a more rational manner, whereas expressive suppression refers to the ability to control emotional expressions in stressful situations.

In the context of rapidly evolving digital interactions that are often characterized by emotionally triggering content, emotion regulation plays a crucial role in helping individuals manage negative emotional responses when confronted with social pressures in digital environments (Gross & John, 2003). Conversely, less adaptive emotion regulation strategies may increase individuals' vulnerability to cyberbullying victimization (Nesin et al., 2025).

In addition to emotion regulation, self-esteem has also been identified as a factor associated with cyberbullying victimization (Patchin & Hinduja, 2010). Rosenberg (1965) defines self-esteem as an individual's evaluation of their own worth and value. Individuals with low self-esteem tend to be more sensitive to social rejection and are more likely to internalize negative comments encountered in digital environments. In contrast, individuals with high self-esteem generally demonstrate greater psychological resilience when coping with online social pressures (Crocker & Park, 2004).

Previous studies have extensively examined the contribution of internal psychological characteristics to individuals' vulnerability to cyberbullying victimization. Patchin & Hinduja (2010) investigated the relationship between self-esteem and experiences of cyberbullying among 4,414 young adults in the United States using a quantitative survey method. Their findings indicated that individuals with lower levels of self-esteem were at a substantially

greater risk of becoming victims of online bullying. Focusing specifically on the emerging adulthood period, Balakrishnan & Fernandez (2018) examined the impact of self-esteem on involvement in cyberbullying among 614 young adults in Malaysia through a quantitative correlational approach. The results confirmed that low self-esteem significantly predicted higher levels of cyberbullying victimization during emerging adulthood.

From the perspective of emotional functioning, Nesin et al. (2025) investigated the role of emotion dysregulation in vulnerability to victimization among 875 active internet users in emerging adulthood using quantitative mediation analysis. Their findings demonstrated that individuals who were unable to regulate negative emotions adaptively were more likely to become targets of cyberbullying victimization during digital interactions. In the Indonesian context, Adam & Alwi (2018) examined the influence of self-esteem on susceptibility to cyberbullying victimization among 112 university students in Surakarta using a quantitative causal-comparative design. The results indicated that students with lower self-esteem were considerably more vulnerable to becoming victims of cyberbullying.

Furthermore, Muzdalifah & Deasyanti (2020) investigated the influence of negative emotional states on involvement in cyberbullying among 245 university students in Jakarta using a quantitative descriptive approach. Their findings revealed that emotional instability during emerging adulthood was positively associated with a higher likelihood of experiencing bullying on social media platforms. Taken together, Mharchelya & Sukmawati (2023) examined the simultaneous relationship between emotion regulation, self-esteem, and susceptibility to cyberbullying victimization among 130 young adults using a quantitative correlational design. The results demonstrated that young adults with high self-esteem and stable emotion regulation abilities possessed stronger internal resilience, enabling them to better cope with and mitigate the adverse effects of cyberbullying victimization.

While the studies discussed have provided valuable insights regarding the determinants of cyberbullying victimization, several important research gaps remain. First, most studies have examined self-esteem and emotion regulation separately or only partially when predicting cyberbullying victimization among young adults. Second, the majority of existing research has focused on young adult populations. Studies involving individuals in emerging adulthood in Indonesia have been limited to students from specific institutions, thereby restricting the ability to capture the broader psychosocial dynamics of young adults who actively use social media, particularly in regions with high levels of digitalization such as West Java. Third, research investigating the simultaneous effects of emotion regulation and self-esteem on cyberbullying victimization among young adults in Indonesia, especially in West Java, remains relatively limited. Given that West Java is one of the provinces with high rates of internet and social media usage and has experienced an increase in cases of cyberbullying and other forms of digital violence among young adults.

The developmental characteristics of emerging adulthood, including identity exploration, a strong need for social acceptance, and intensive digital interaction, may contribute to psychological dynamics that differ from those of other age groups. In response to these gaps, this study provides a novel perspective by simultaneously examining emotion regulation and self-esteem as psychological factors influencing cyberbullying victimization among young adults in West Java. This study is expected to provide empirical contributions to the development of digital psychology research and to serve as a foundation for preventive efforts and psychosocial interventions related to cyberbullying among young adults.

By taking the aforementioned backgrounds into consideration, this study aims to examine the effects of emotion regulation and self-esteem on cyberbullying victimization among young adults in West Java. It is hypothesized that emotion regulation and self-esteem influence cyberbullying victimization both individually and jointly among young adults in West Java.

## **2. METHODS**

### **Research Design**

This study employed a quantitative, cross-sectional survey design within an explanatory research framework to examine the effects of emotion regulation and self-esteem on cyberbullying victimization among young adults in West Java. The study variables consisted of emotion regulation and self-esteem as predictor variables, and cyberbullying victimization as the dependent variable. Data were collected through a survey using psychological scale questionnaires that had been adopted and adapted in accordance with established psychological measurement standards.

### **Participants**

The population of this study consisted of male and female young adults aged 18–25 years residing in West Java. This study employed a non-probability sampling method, which is a sampling technique that does not provide an equal chance for every member of the population to be selected (Sugiyono, 2021). Specifically, purposive sampling was used, whereby participants were selected based on predetermined criteria that aligned with the objectives of the study (Sugiyono, 2021). The inclusion criteria for participants were as follows: (1) Aged 18–25 years; (2) Residing in West Java; and (3) Actively using social media. Data were collected online through a Google Form distributed via student networks and social media platforms to reach individuals who met the study criteria. As the population size was not known with certainty, the minimum sample size was determined using Cochran's formula (Sugiyono, 2021). Based on the calculation, the minimum required sample size was 385 participants, and all respondents who met the inclusion criteria were included in the study.

### **Instruments**

This study utilized three psychological instruments: the Emotion Regulation Questionnaire (ERQ), the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES), and the Cyberbullying Victimization Scale (CBV). The ERQ used was the Bahasa Indonesia version adapted by Radde et al. (2021), while the RSES was adopted from the Bahasa Indonesia version developed by Alwi & Razak (2022). Therefore, the retranslation process was not conducted for both scales; however, pilot testing was performed to ensure the validity and reliability of the instruments within the context of the present study. Whereas the CBV scale was adapted by the researchers based on the dimensions of cyberbullying victimization proposed by Lee et al. (2017). The adaptation process included translation, expert judgment, pilot testing, item discrimination analysis, and reliability assessment.

The ERQ was originally developed by Gross & John (2003). The scale consists of two dimensions, including cognitive reappraisal and expressive suppression, comprising a total

of 10 favorable items. An example item for the cognitive reappraisal dimension is, "When I want to feel more positive emotions, I change the way I think about the situation," whereas an example item for the expressive suppression dimension is, "I control my emotions by not expressing them." The scale employs a seven-point Likert response format ranging from: (1) Strongly disagree; (2) Disagree; (3) Somewhat disagree; (4) Neutral; (5) Somewhat agree; (6) Agree; and (7) Strongly agree. The pilot test results indicated that all items met the item discrimination criteria, with corrected item-total correlation coefficients ranging from 0.602 to 0.877. The instrument also demonstrated excellent internal consistency, with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.919, indicating that it is suitable for measuring emotion regulation among young adults.

The RSES, originally developed by Rosenberg (1965), is a unidimensional scale consists of eight items, including five favorable items and three unfavorable items. An example of a favorable item is, "On the whole, I am satisfied with myself," whereas an example of an unfavorable item is, "At times, I feel useless." The scale employs a four-point Likert response format consisting of: (1) Strongly disagree; (2) Disagree; (3) Agree; and (4) Strongly agree. The pilot test results indicated that all items met the item discrimination criteria, with corrected item-total correlation coefficients ranging from 0.423 to 0.568. The reliability analysis demonstrated good internal consistency, with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.791, indicating that the scale is suitable for measuring self-esteem among young adults.

The CBV scale was adapted by the researchers based on the dimensions of cyberbullying proposed by Lee et al. (2017), including verbal/written bullying, visual/sexual bullying, and social exclusion. The scale consists of 27 items, including 24 favorable items and 3 unfavorable items. An example of a favorable item is, "I have received threatening statements through email or text messages that made me feel unsafe," whereas an example of an unfavorable item is, "I have never been excluded from online group activities in a way that made me feel left out." The scale uses a five-point Likert response format consisting of: (1) Never; (2) Rarely; (3) Sometimes; (4) Often; and (5) Very often. The pilot test results showed that all items met the item discrimination criteria, with corrected item-total correlation coefficients ranging from 0.397 to 0.850. The reliability analysis indicated excellent internal consistency, with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.954, demonstrating that the scale is appropriate for measuring cyberbullying victimization among young adults.

## **Data Analysis**

Assumption tests were conducted as prerequisites for regression analysis, including tests of normality and linearity, to ensure that the statistical assumptions were met prior to hypothesis testing. The normality test was performed to determine whether the data were normally distributed, whereas the linearity test was conducted to verify the existence of a linear relationship between the predictor variables and the dependent variable. Subsequently, multiple regression analysis was employed to examine the effects of emotion regulation and self-esteem on cyberbullying victimization.

As the study involved two predictor variables, the analysis included partial tests (t-tests) to assess the effect of each predictor on cyberbullying victimization individually, as well as a simultaneous test (F-test) to evaluate the combined effects of emotion regulation and self-esteem on the dependent variable. In addition, the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) was

calculated to determine the extent to which emotion regulation and self-esteem explained the variance in cyberbullying victimization. All statistical analyses were performed using SPSS Statistics version 24.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### Results

The assumption tests conducted in this study included tests of normality and linearity. Normality was assessed using the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test. Data were considered normally distributed if the significance value exceeded 0.05. As presented in Table 1, the Kolmogorov–Smirnov significance value was 0.000 ( $p < .05$ ), indicating that the data were not normally distributed. Nevertheless, according to Widhiarso (2012), normality is not an absolute requirement for regression analysis when the sample size is large. Kerlinger & Pedhazur (1987) likewise argued that analysis of variance and regression procedures can still be performed even when the assumption of normality is not fully satisfied.

**Table 1.** Normality test (Kolmogorov–Smirnov)

Variable	Statistic	df	Sig.
Unstandardized Residual	0.067	385	0.000

Linearity testing was conducted to verify the existence of a linear relationship between the predictor variables and the dependent variable. A relationship is considered linear when the significance value in the Linearity row is less than 0.05. As shown in Table 2, the significance value for the linearity of emotion regulation was 0.000 ( $p < .05$ ), indicating a linear relationship between emotion regulation and cyberbullying victimization. Similarly, Table 3 shows that the significance value for the linearity of self-esteem was 0.000 ( $p < .05$ ), indicating that the relationship between self-esteem and cyberbullying victimization was also linear.

**Table 2.** Linearity test between emotion regulation and cyberbullying victimization

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Linearity	20,536.486	1	20,536.486	35.707	0.000
Deviation From Linearity	65,247.396	41	1,591.400	2.767	0.000
Within Groups	196,695.894	342	575.134		

**Table 3.** Linearity test between self-esteem and cyberbullying victimization

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Linearity	76,988.087	1	76,988.087	181.574	0.000
Deviation From Linearity	52,850.552	23	2,297.850	5.419	0.000
Within Groups	152,641.138	360	424.003		

Hypothesis testing was conducted using multiple regression analysis through partial tests (t-tests) and a simultaneous test (F-test). The level of significance was set at  $p < .05$ . The results of the partial tests presented in Table 4 indicate that emotion regulation had a significant effect on cyberbullying victimization ( $p = .000$ ). Similarly, self-esteem was found to have a significant effect on cyberbullying victimization ( $p = .000$ ).

**Table 4.** *Multiple regression coefficients (t-Test)*

Predictor	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
Constant	-9.036	7.544	–	-1.198	0.232
X <sub>1</sub> (Emotion Regulation)	0.540	0.135	0.174	3.995	0.000
X <sub>2</sub> (Self-Esteem)	2.147	0.192	0.488	11.193	0.000

The regression equation obtained is in Equation 1 (Eq. 1).

$$Y = \alpha + b X_1 + b_2 X_2$$

$$Y = -9,036 + 0,540 (X_1) + 2,147(X_2) \quad (\text{Eq.1})$$

The constant value of -9.036 represents the predicted level of cyberbullying victimization when emotion regulation and self-esteem are assumed to be zero. The regression coefficient for emotion regulation was 0.540, indicating that for every one-point increase in emotion regulation, cyberbullying victimization increased by 0.540 points, assuming all other variables remained constant. The regression coefficient for self-esteem was 2.147, indicating that for every one-point increase in self-esteem, cyberbullying victimization increased by 2.147 points. The positive coefficients suggest that both predictor variables were positively associated with cyberbullying victimization, meaning that higher levels of emotion regulation and self-esteem were associated with higher levels of cyberbullying victimization.

Furthermore, the results of the simultaneous test presented in Table 5 indicate a significance value of 0.000 ( $p < .05$ ), demonstrating that emotion regulation and self-esteem jointly had a significant effect on cyberbullying victimization.

**Table 5.** *Simultaneous test (F-Test)*

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	85,227.467	2	42,613.734	82.526	0.000
Residual	197,252.310	382	516.367		
Total	282,479.777	384			

The coefficient of determination test results is presented in Table 6. The R Square value of 0.302 indicates that emotion regulation and self-esteem collectively accounted for 30.2 percent of the variance in cyberbullying victimization, while the remaining 69.8 percent was explained by other factors not examined in the present study.

**Table 6.** *Coefficient of determination*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of Estimate
1	0.549	0.302	0.298	22.724

## Discussion

This study aims to examine the effects of emotion regulation and self-esteem on cyberbullying victimization among young adults in West Java. Through multiple regression analysis, the results indicated that self-esteem and emotion regulation simultaneously had a significant effect on cyberbullying victimization. The results of the partial tests (t-tests) further indicated that both variables independently showed a significant positive effect on individuals' likelihood of becoming victims of cyberbullying. These findings suggest that

variations in the level of cyberbullying victimization experienced by young adults in West Java can be meaningfully predicted by the quality of their self-evaluation and their capacity to regulate emotions.

Emotion regulation is theoretically defined as an individual's ability to manage, evaluate, and modify emotional responses in order to remain adaptive when facing particular situations (Gross & John, 2003). In the context of digital interactions, regulating emotion is especially important, considering social media provides rapid and highly visible social evaluations, negative comments, and interpersonal conflicts. The findings of this study indicate that emotion regulation is positively associated with cyberbullying victimization, suggesting that emotion regulation does not necessarily function as a direct protective factor against experiences of cyberbullying. Individuals with stronger emotion regulation abilities may remain actively engaged in social relationships and digital environments, thereby increasing their exposure to various forms of online interaction, including cyberbullying victimization (Kowalski et al., 2014; Putri & Kusdiyati, 2023). Consistently, Nesin et al. (2025) argued that victimization experiences in digital environments are not solely influenced by individuals' ability to regulate emotions, but also by the intensity of internet use, including the extent of exposure to online interactions. Therefore, while emotion regulation may help individuals cope with digital social pressures, it does not necessarily prevent experiencing cyberbullying victimization.

In addition to emotion regulation, self-esteem was also found to have a significant positive effect on cyberbullying victimization. According to Rosenberg (1965), self-esteem refers to an individual's evaluation of their own worth and value. In general, self-esteem is often regarded as a protective factor against psychological distress. However, during the emerging adulthood stage, individuals tend to experience greater social involvement and a stronger need for social recognition, including through social media platforms (Arnett, 2000)

Individuals with higher levels of self-esteem may demonstrate greater engagement in digital social activities, such as actively interacting with others, engaging in self-presentation, and expanding their social networks through digital platforms. Consequently, they may also face greater exposure to social evaluation and online conflicts (Balakrishnan & Fernandez, 2018; Kowalski et al., 2014). Similarly, Putri & Kusdiyati (2023) found that higher levels of social media activity were associated with greater involvement in cyberbullying among university students. Therefore, in the present study, self-esteem does not appear to function directly as a protective factor against cyberbullying victimization; rather, it may be associated with increased digital social engagement among young adults, which in turn may heighten their exposure to cyberbullying experiences.

The findings of this study differ in some aspects from classical theoretical assumptions that implies emotion regulation and self-esteem as protective factors against negative psychological experiences. Nevertheless, the results remain consistent with previous research emphasizing the importance of internal psychological factors in cyberbullying victimization. Patchin & Hinduja (2010) found that self-esteem was associated with experiences of cyberbullying among young adult internet users, whereas Balakrishnan & Fernandez (2018) demonstrated that emotional characteristics and self-esteem were related to cyberbullying experiences among young adults. Similarly, Nesin et al. (2025) reported that emotion regulation contributed to cyberbullying victimization among active internet users.

In the Indonesian context, Adam & Alwi (2018) demonstrated that self-esteem was associated with the likelihood of becoming a victim of cyberbullying among university students, while Mharchelya & Sukmawati (2023) found that emotion regulation and self-esteem were jointly associated with susceptibility to cyberbullying victimization. The difference in the direction of the relationships observed in the present study may be attributed to the characteristics of young adults in West Java, who tend to exhibit high levels of social media use. As individuals become more actively engaged in digital interactions, their likelihood of being exposed to online aggressive behaviors may also increase.

However, the combined contribution of emotion regulation and self-esteem, accounting for 30.2 percent of the variance in cyberbullying victimization, indicates that internal psychological factors play a substantial role in predicting vulnerability to cyberbullying. The remaining 69.8 percent may be explained by other external and psychosocial factors, such as social support, personality traits, empathy, and the intensity of social media use (Ma et al., 2024). These findings suggest that psychological resilience in coping with digital pressures is shaped by the interaction of internal and external factors, as well as by individuals' capacity for emotional adaptation and self-evaluation (Lee et al., 2025).

While offering important theoretical contributions, this study has several limitations that should be considered in future research. First, data were collected online through Google Forms using standardized psychological scales completed through self-report measures. This approach may have introduced response bias, including the tendency of participants to provide answers that are perceived as more socially acceptable (social desirability bias). Consequently, respondents' answers may not have fully reflected their actual conditions or experiences. Second, the study was conducted exclusively among young adults in West Java. Therefore, the findings may not be generalizable to young adults in other regions that differ in social and cultural characteristics, as well as in the intensity of digital media use. Third, the finding that emotion regulation and self-esteem accounted for 30.2 percent of the variance in cyberbullying victimization suggests that other influential factors remain unexamined. These may include social support, the intensity of social media use, personality characteristics, self-control, and the quality of interpersonal relationships.

Therefore, future studies are encouraged to incorporate additional variables and involve broader and more diverse samples in order to develop a more comprehensive understanding of cyberbullying victimization among young adults.

#### **4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The findings indicate that emotion regulation and self-esteem exerted significant effects on cyberbullying victimization, both individually and simultaneously. The results revealed positive relationships, suggesting that higher levels of emotion regulation and self-esteem were associated with higher levels of cyberbullying victimization reported by the respondents. These findings suggest that internal psychological factors do not necessarily function as direct protective factors against experiences of cyberbullying; rather, they may be associated with patterns of digital social engagement among young adults. The combined contribution of emotion regulation and self-esteem accounted for 30.2 percent of the variance in cyberbullying victimization, indicating that this phenomenon is also influenced by various other factors beyond the scope of the present study. Therefore, both psychological factors and the broader context of digital interactions should be considered in efforts aimed at preventing and intervening in cyberbullying among young adults.

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