

Increasing Cyberbullying Awareness through Cognitive Behavior-Based Spiritual Counseling: Systematic Review

Febri Wandha Putra^{1*}, Triave Nuzila Zahri², Rima Pratiwi Fadli³, Ade Maharani⁴, Maulana Hamid Abdillah⁵

¹²³⁴⁵ Departement of Guidance and Counseling, Faculty Education, Universitas Negeri Padang, Indonesia

*Corresponding author, e-mail: febrianputra@fip.unp.ac.id

Abstract

One of the negative impacts is the increasing phenomenon of cyberbullying today. Cyberbullying cases occur in almost all countries around the world. Individuals who engage in cyberbullying tend to have low self-awareness. This study aims to identify the impact of cognitive behavioural spiritual counselling in increasing awareness of cyberbullying. A systematic review was conducted over the past five years using the keywords “cyberbullying, cyberbullying awareness, spiritual counselling, cognitive behaviour” and the population, intervention, comparison, outcomes, and study design (PICOS) in the Scopus database (187 articles), Willey (69 articles), and Science Direct (70 articles) published in the past five years using the keywords “cyberbullying, cyberbullying awareness, spiritual counselling, cognitive behaviour”. The selected articles were those using quantitative and longitudinal research methods published between 2019 and 2024, where the study participants were adolescents who had either engaged in or witnessed cyberbullying. A total of 30 articles met the inclusion criteria for this review. Based on the results of the article review, it was found that awareness of cyberbullying can be increased through cognitive behaviour-based spiritual counselling services. Cognitive behaviour-based spiritual counselling services aim to help individuals identify various physical, emotional, and spiritual responses, enabling clients to redefine themselves and enhance their understanding and rational beliefs by eliminating irrational thoughts.

Keywords: Cyberbullying, Cyberbullying Awareness, Counseling Spiritual, Cognitive Behavior.

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Introduction

The rapid development of information technology has changed the pattern of people's lives in terms of information fulfilment (Bauman & Yoon, 2014). All forms of information can be received and disseminated quickly and even difficult to control. With the development of technology, it cannot be denied that humans are increasingly ‘spoiled’ with various technological sophistication, starting from the emergence of mobile phone communication devices to smartphones equipped with various features and internet technology (Sullivan, 2012; West, 2015). But on the other hand, there are not a few losses in the form of negative things that accompany the use of this Information Technology. One of the negative impacts of advances in information technology is the emergence of the phenomenon of Cyberbullying among children and adolescents (Calvete et al., 2016; Rivituso, 2014).

Oxford English Dictionary (OED) (1989) states that cyberbullying refers to the use of information technology to bully people by sending or posting intimidating or threatening texts. Furthermore, cyberbullying is the use of internet technology to hurt others in a deliberate and repeated manner (Abaido, 2020; Burnham et al., 2011; V. H. Wright & Burnham, 2012). Meanwhile, according to Wilard (2007) states that cyberbullying is the act of sending or posting harmful or cruel messages that are another form of social cruelty using the internet or other information communication technology. On the other hand, experts agree to define cyberbullying as a form of intimidation that perpetrators do to harass their victims through technological devices (West, 2015; M. F. Wright, 2018). Perpetrators want to see someone hurt, there are many ways that they attack the victim with cruel messages and disturbing images that are shared to humiliate the victim for others to see (Watts et al., 2017; Weber & Pelfrey Jr, 2014).

The forms and kinds of cyberbullying are very diverse, ranging from uploading photos or making posts that embarrass the victim, making fun of the victim to accessing other people's social networking accounts to threaten the victim and create problems such as threats through social media and creating websites to spread slander (Wang et al.,

2019; Watts et al., 2017). Furthermore, Wilard (2007) added that there are various forms of cyberbullying perpetrated by perpetrators to victims, including Flaming, a person sends text messages to others on social media in the form of rude words containing frontal angry messages. Harassment, a person sends nuisance messages to others on social media in the form of disrespectful words or pictures and videos on an ongoing basis. Denigration, a person, spreads untrue information or other people's vices on social media with the aim of damaging reputation or good name. Impersonation, a person sends unkind messages to the victim on social media in the form of texts, photos, or videos by pretending to be someone else. Outing, where someone sends and shares confidential information or private photos of another person. Trickery, when someone persuades the victim to get the person's secrets or private photos. Exclusion, someone deliberately excludes another person from a chat group or deletes a friendship on social media. Cyberstalking, a person sends harmful messages such as threats or intimidating messages to others through social media. The motivations of the perpetrators are also very diverse, sometimes just for fun or just playing (joke), want to seek attention, there are also angry, frustrated and want revenge (Shaikh et al., 2020; Smith et al., 2008; Wang et al., 2019).

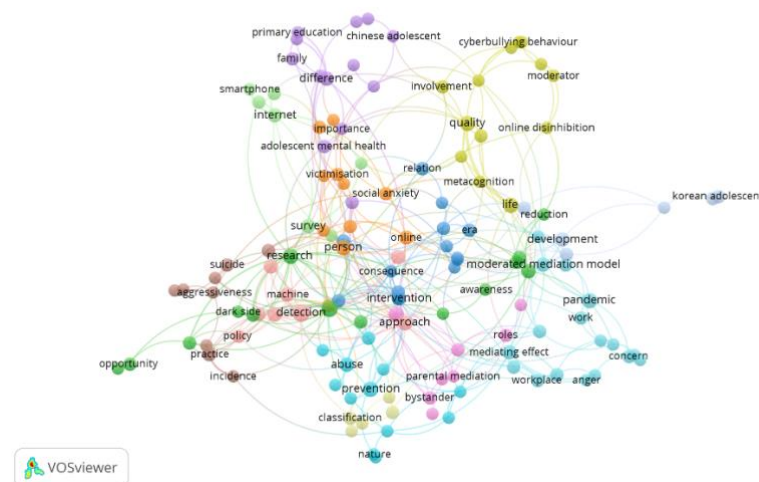


Figure1. Patterns and Impacts of Cyberbullying on Adolescents

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Cyberbullying cases are like the iceberg phenomenon, where only a few cases are seen in public while there could be many cyberbullying cases, because someone who receives a form of cyberbullying usually prefers not to tell others (Kowalski & Toth, 2018; Patchin & Hinduja, 2006, 2012, 2015). In other words, if cyberbullying behaviour in adolescents is not immediately resolved properly, it is feared that negative behaviour will emerge which has fatal consequences (Ma et al., 2024; Movahedi et al., 2024). So preventive actions must be taken immediately to overcome these problems. One of the actions that can be taken is to reduce cyberbullying behaviour by increasing cyberbullying awareness through cognitive behaviour-based spiritual counselling. Cognitive Behavioral Based Spiritual Counseling is an integrative therapeutic approach that combines principles of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) with clients' spiritual beliefs and practices. This modality aims to enhance the effectiveness of traditional CBT by incorporating spiritual elements that resonate with the client's values and worldview. Cognitive Behavioral Based Spiritual Counseling involves modifying standard CBT techniques to include spiritual beliefs and practices. This integration can help clients find meaning and motivation in their treatment, potentially leading to faster recovery, improved adherence to therapy, and reduced relapse rates..

Method

A synthesis of relevant studies on the impact of cognitive behavioural counselling on cyberbullying awareness was conducted through a systematic review. The Joanna Briggs Institute's Centre for Review and Dissemination and Guidelines were used to evaluate the quality of the research using the PRISMA checklist. Keywords were used with Boolean operators (AND, OR, NOT, or AND NOT).

SCOPUS, WILEY, and SCIENCE DIRECT were used as electronic databases to conduct a comprehensive literature search of published studies. Additionally, further articles were identified by searching through the reference lists of previously identified articles. Inclusion criteria were studies that i) used quantitative or qualitative research designs, ii) were written in English within the last five years (2019–2024), and iii) involved adolescents. In the search, the terms “cyberbullying”, “cyberbullying awareness”, “spiritual counselling”, “cognitive behaviour”, and “adolescent” were used. After the search process, articles were selected based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria listed in Table 1.

Table 1. Inclusion and exclusion criteria with PICOS

Criteria	Inclusion	Exclusion

Population	Adolescent	No Adolescent age
Intervention	Spiritual Counseling, Cognitive Behavior	Apart from Spiritual Counseling, Cognitive Behavior
Outcome	Cyberbullying awareness, Mental health, emotional problems,	No relevant Cyberbullying awareness, mental health, emotional problems
Study type	Cross sectional, longitudinal study	A randomized controlled trial, a clinical trial, or a quasi-experimental design systematic or qualitative study, literature reviews
Publication type	Peer reviewed original studies	Non peer-reviewed studies
Publication years	2019 - 2024	Pre 2019
Language	English	Language rather than English

We conducted a review based on the year of publication, the database used, the study population, the description of cyberbullying, the level of cyberbullying awareness, and the impact of cognitive behavioural counselling in improving cyberbullying awareness based on the results of the review for each full text. Authors independently screened titles, abstracts, and full-text articles, and used the full-text version to determine final inclusion in the review based on relevance to the question, study quality, level of evidence, and several other factors. Each selected article was evaluated, and key findings were extracted into evidence tables summarising the procedures and findings of the publication

Result and Discussion

Cyberbullying Awareness

Adolescents who perceive cyberbullying as a form of entertainment rather than bullying believe that the victim should not feel negative emotions, that the incident is meant to be funny and is not meant to hurt (Crosslin & Golman, 2014; Duman & Yilmaz, 2021). Elçi & Seçkin (2019); Horzum & Ayas (2013) It is argued that the lack of direct contact between cyberbullying perpetrators and victims leads to reduced emotional bonds related to feelings of regret and empathy held by cyberbullying perpetrators. Feelings of remorse are an indicator of an individual's awareness of the negative consequences of harmful actions for the victim. Interacting anonymously in an internet environment leads to low self-awareness in individuals and can cause them to react impulsively and aggressively towards others in that environment (Tosun & Akcay, 2022; Yurdakul & Ayhan, 2023). It is predicted that adolescents' awareness of the negative consequences of cyberbullying will influence their perceptions, motivations and attitudes towards cyberbullying behaviour, and thus the propensity to engage in cyberbullying (Kalender, 2018; Lim et al., 2023). Moreover, the fact that adolescents are knowledgeable about the cyberbullying they may face online and are aware of the possible risks is crucial in terms of taking precautions to protect themselves from and cope with cyberbullying (Lim et al., 2023; Quayyum et al., 2021; Tanrikulu et al., 2015).

Along with the rise of cyberbullying among school students, some researchers have begun to investigate the reasons for cyberbullying and how it can help raise school students' awareness about cyberbullying. Many researchers are organising programmes to educate students and their families about cyberbullying, raising awareness and the necessary regulations at school and at home to tackle this growing problem.

Cognitive Behavior-Based Spiritual Counseling to Increase Cyberbullying Awareness

Spiritual counselling is the development of the counsellor's interpersonal skills to assist individuals in uncovering their physical, emotional and spiritual responses so that they are able to redefine themselves through these responses towards a more sublime self (Gall et al., 2011; Pohan et al., 2024). Spiritual counseling integrates religious and spiritual elements into psychological counseling to address clients' spiritual needs and promote overall well-being. This approach is particularly relevant in healthcare settings, where it helps patients cope with illness and existential crises (Gonçalves Júnior et al., 2024; Matise et al., 2018).

Spiritual counselling can be an effective therapeutic treatment when the underlying understanding, behaviour and beliefs of the counsellor are explored appropriately (Nadatien et al., 2024; Nur et al., 2023). This can be attributed to three aspects of the background of counselling for spiritual wellness, namely: a) The conceptual basis of spiritual wellness at a psychological level. b) The interactional relationship between spiritual wellness and the dimensions of general wellness. c) Certain conditions or events of spontaneity and other activities that can foster spiritual awareness and spiritual growth. (Abdel-khalek, 2024; Batzler et al., 2024). In its implementation process, spiritual counselling consists of three stages namely: a) initial, b), exploration, c) helping (Abu Shahim et al., 2023; Alshareef & Alfuqaha, 2024; Gladding & Crockett, 2019).

Cognitive behavioural theory views that human development is based on the different learning experiences of each individual, the unique experiences provided by the environment, and the individual's understanding of the world of cognition (Dobson & Dozois, 2010; Joyce-Beaulieu & Sulkowski, 2015). Beck (1979); Capuzzi & Stauffer (2016) defines cognitive-behavioural counselling as a counselling approach designed to resolve a counsellor's problem that distorted, negative thoughts and uncomfortable feelings can lead individuals to more serious psychological problems, such as anxiety disorders and even depression

The focus of cognitive behaviour lies on thoughts, assumptions, and beliefs. With cognitive behavioural counselling, individuals are directed to identify, evaluate, and challenge incorrect or maladaptive thought patterns (De Arellano et al., 2014; Muslim et al., 2019; Yüksel & Çekiç, 2019). By changing the state of thoughts and feelings, individuals are expected to change their behaviour from negative to positive. It is a counselling approach that wants to see individuals not only understood through their visible behaviour, but behind the visible behaviour, there are internal processes that are actually the result of cognitive thinking (De Arellano et al., 2014; Putra & Ramli, 2022).

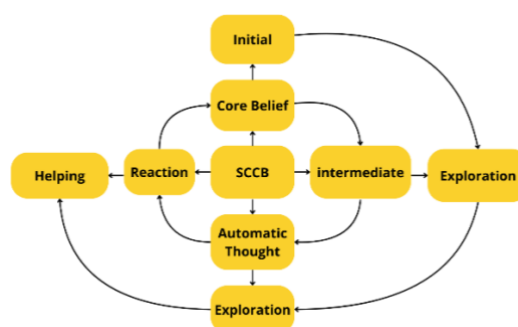


Figure 2. Cognitive Behaviour-Based Spiritual Counselling Service Implementation Model

Cognitive behaviour-based spiritual counselling can guide the use of thoughts and feelings in harmony so that humans have a wise will. There are six emphases of effort in cognitive behaviour-based spiritual counselling, namely religious strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble morals, skills, and spirituality (Hardiman & Simmonds, 2013; Irani et al., 2023; Joslin & Gingrich, 2022; Garandean et al., 2022; Hutson et al., 2021; Rajabi et al., 2017; Swearer et al., 2014; Thorisdottir & Asmundson, 2022). Furthermore, the spiritual counselling approach is more about self-discovery at a higher level of consciousness, beliefs. Meanwhile, there are four dimensions of 'spiritual wellness' that will be achieved in this cognitive-based spiritual counselling, namely (1) meaning of life, (2) intrinsic value, (3) transcendence, (4) community of shared values and support (Porter, 2023). In other words, cognitive behaviour-based spiritual counselling is able to reduce cyberbullying behaviour by helping perpetrators to have 'spiritual wellness' and have the ability to realise themselves meaningfully in the dimensions of life in an integrated and intact manner (Garandean et al., 2022; Hutson et al., 2021).

Conclusion

Cyberbullying has become a worldwide phenomenon. Literally, cyberbullying is an act done by someone to intimidate someone who is weaker than them. Cyberbullying has many forms such as flaming, harassment, cyberstalking, denigration, impersonation, outing and trickery, and happy slapping. In addition, cyberbullying can be done continuously because it is not limited by time and place. Cyberbullying can also lead to criminal acts in the real world. One of the causes of cyberbullying is the lack of awareness of the perpetrators. Lack of awareness makes it easy for perpetrators to abuse others through technology. Therefore, efforts are needed to increase cyberbullying awareness in adolescents.

Cyberbullying awareness is a condition where a person understands the dangers of cyberbullying. Cyberbullying awareness can be increased through cognitive behaviour-based spiritual counselling services. Cognitive behaviour-based spiritual counselling services aim to assist individuals in revealing various self-responses both physically, emotionally, and spiritually as a whole so that clients are able to redefine themselves and are able to increase understanding and rational beliefs by eliminating irrational thinking. With cognitive behaviour-based spiritual counselling, individuals are expected to achieve 'spiritual wellness', namely (1) meaning of life, (2) intrinsic value, (3) transcendence, (4) community of shared values and support. In other words, cognitive behaviour-based spiritual counselling helps clients to have 'spiritual wellness' and have the ability to realize themselves meaningfully in the dimensions of life in an integrated and intact manner

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