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Social Media Use Intensity, Cognitive Emotion Regulation, and Bullying Behavior among Junior High School Students: A Multiple Regression Analysis

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Abstract

This study aimed to examine the effects of social media use intensity and cognitive emotion regulation on bullying behavior among junior high school students. The increasing use of social media among adolescents has raised concerns regarding its psychological and behavioral impacts, particularly bullying behavior in educational settings. This study employed a quantitative non-experimental design using a multivariate approach with multiple linear regression analysis. The research was conducted at SMP Negeri 1 Jatiroto, East Java, Indonesia, involving 61 students selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected using questionnaires measuring social media use intensity, cognitive emotion regulation, and bullying behavior. The data were analyzed using SmartPLS version 4 through descriptive statistics, assumption testing, t-test, F-test, coefficient of determination, and multiple linear regression analysis. The findings revealed that social media use intensity had a positive and statistically significant effect on bullying behavior ($p = 0.025 < 0.05$). In contrast, cognitive emotion regulation did not significantly affect bullying behavior ($p = 0.904 > 0.05$). Simultaneously, both variables significantly influenced bullying behavior ($p = 0.001 < 0.05$), although the model explained only 7.7% of the variance. The novelty of this study lies in integrating digital behavior and emotional regulation perspectives in explaining bullying behavior among adolescents. This study contributes theoretically to educational psychology and practically provides insights for schools and policymakers in developing digital literacy, emotional awareness, and anti-bullying programs in the digital era.

Keywords: social media use intensity, cognitive emotion regulation, bullying behavior, adolescents, cyberbullying, digital behavior

Introduction

The rapid advancement of digital technology has fundamentally transformed patterns of communication and social interaction among adolescents, particularly through the widespread use of social media platforms. In contemporary society, social media has become an inseparable part of students' daily lives because it facilitates communication, information exchange, self-expression, and the construction of virtual social networks (Ema Rizky Ananda, n.d.). In Indonesia, the increasing accessibility of smartphones and internet services has accelerated adolescents' engagement

with digital platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube. Data Indonesia reported that active social media users in Indonesia reached approximately 167 million people in January 2023, equivalent to 60.4% of the national population (Hermila et al., 2023). This phenomenon indicates that adolescents are increasingly exposed to intensive digital interactions capable of influencing their emotional, behavioral, and social development.

The growing intensity of social media use among adolescents presents both opportunities and challenges within educational contexts. On the one hand, social media enables students to access information rapidly, enhance communication, and develop creativity. On the other hand, excessive and uncontrolled social media use may generate various negative consequences, including misinformation dissemination, declining interpersonal sensitivity, emotional instability, cyber aggression, and weakening social ethics among students (Aqiilah et al., 2023). Previous studies also revealed that emotional conditions and behavioral responses of social media users are strongly influenced by patterns of online interaction and digital exposure (Umami & Rosdiana, 2022). In educational settings, these conditions become increasingly concerning because adolescents are still undergoing psychological and emotional development, making them more vulnerable to maladaptive behavior emerging from digital interaction.

One of the most concerning consequences of uncontrolled social media use is bullying behavior among adolescents. Bullying refers to repetitive aggressive behavior conducted physically, verbally, psychologically, or digitally by individuals or groups toward weaker individuals who are unable to defend themselves (Duwita et al., 2024). Bullying behavior may manifest in various forms, including physical bullying, verbal harassment, relational aggression, psychological intimidation, and cyberbullying (Oktavia, 2023). The emergence of digital communication platforms has intensified bullying practices because harmful behavior can now occur anonymously and continuously through online interactions. Previous research demonstrated that social media significantly contributes to bullying behavior among students (Nur Fitrah et al., 2024). Similarly, the Federation of Indonesian Teachers Association (FSGI) reported that bullying cases in Indonesian educational institutions increased substantially in 2023, with junior high schools recording the highest prevalence of bullying incidents (Noya et al., 2024). These findings indicate that bullying behavior among adolescents remains a serious educational and psychological issue requiring comprehensive scholarly investigation.

The relationship between digital interaction and bullying behavior has also been widely discussed in international studies. Kowalski et al. (2014) explained that cyberbullying has become one of the most dominant forms of adolescent aggression in the digital era due to the rapid development of social networking technologies. Likewise, Hinduja and Patchin (2010) emphasized that excessive digital interaction and cyberbullying exposure may negatively affect adolescents' psychological well-being, including increased emotional distress, social anxiety, and aggressive tendencies. These findings suggest that

intensive social media engagement potentially contributes to bullying behavior through repeated exposure to hostile online communication and virtual social conflict.

Several previous studies have investigated the relationship between social media and bullying behavior; however, most studies focused primarily on general social media exposure rather than specifically examining the intensity of social media use as a determinant of bullying behavior. Santika (2024), for instance, investigated the influence of peers and social media on students' bullying attitudes and found that social media did not significantly affect bullying behavior among students at MTsN 4 Blitar. Nevertheless, the study mainly discussed social media exposure in general without exploring dimensions of social media use intensity such as frequency, duration, emotional involvement, and psychological attachment to digital platforms. Consequently, inconsistencies in previous findings indicate that the relationship between social media use intensity and bullying behavior remains inconclusive and requires further empirical investigation.

Conceptually, social media use intensity refers to the level of frequency and duration of individuals' engagement with internet-based communication platforms used for social interaction and information sharing (Aminatus Widya P., 2022). According to Andarwati, social media use intensity includes aspects of duration and frequency in operating social networking applications (Achmad & Dewi, 2022). Furthermore, attention, appreciation, duration, and frequency constitute important indicators in measuring social media intensity (Sa & Rosyadi, 2022). The increasing intensity of social media use among adolescents is strongly influenced by information-seeking behavior, hedonic motivation, and the desire to establish social belonging within online communities (Kezia Kusumaisna, 2023). Excessive digital exposure potentially shapes adolescents' emotional and cognitive patterns through repeated interaction with provocative content, social comparison, and virtual conflict.

From a theoretical perspective, Social Learning Theory explains that individuals tend to imitate behaviors repeatedly observed within their social environments, including digital environments. Adolescents who are continuously exposed to verbal aggression, humiliation, hate speech, and online hostility may gradually normalize such behaviors and reproduce them in offline interactions. In addition, General Aggression Theory suggests that repeated exposure to provocative stimuli may influence cognitive processing, emotional arousal, and behavioral responses, thereby increasing aggressive tendencies among adolescents. Runions and Bak (2015) further explained that online moral disengagement and uncontrolled emotional responses significantly contribute to cyber aggression and bullying behavior in digital environments. Therefore, intensive social media use may become a substantial predictor of bullying behavior, particularly among adolescents with inadequate emotional regulation skills and low digital literacy competencies.

Besides social media use intensity, emotional regulation also plays an important role in influencing bullying behavior among adolescents. Rigby

argued that adolescents involved in bullying behavior generally demonstrate emotional instability and difficulties in controlling emotions (Palupi et al., 2025). Similarly, Jennifer and Cowie emphasized that poor emotion regulation can become a contributing factor to aggressive and bullying behavior among students. Emotion regulation refers to individuals' ability to manage emotional experiences appropriately, control impulsive reactions, and respond adaptively to emotionally challenging situations (Adisty Nur Fauziyyah et al., 2024). Adolescents who fail to regulate emotions effectively are more likely to exhibit anger, hostility, impulsivity, and aggressive behavior toward peers.

Among various emotional regulation constructs, cognitive emotion regulation (CER) has become an important psychological framework for understanding how adolescents cognitively manage emotional experiences and stressful situations. Cognitive emotion regulation refers to conscious cognitive strategies employed by individuals to process emotionally arousing information and regulate negative emotional experiences (C et al., 2025). CER enables individuals to reinterpret stressful experiences, maintain emotional stability, and reduce maladaptive emotional reactions after unpleasant situations (Rengkong & Pesau, 2023). Garnefski et al. (2001) emphasized that cognitive emotion regulation plays a crucial role in determining individuals' emotional adjustment and psychological well-being after experiencing stressful events. Likewise, Gross (2015) explained that emotional regulation significantly influences individuals' social behavior, interpersonal interaction, and aggressive responses.

Cognitive emotion regulation strategies are generally classified into adaptive and maladaptive categories. Adaptive strategies include acceptance, positive refocusing, refocusing on planning, positive reappraisal, and putting situations into perspective. Conversely, maladaptive strategies involve rumination, catastrophizing, self-blame, and blaming others (Dinar Saputra et al., 2025). Adolescents who predominantly employ maladaptive emotional regulation strategies are more vulnerable to emotional impulsivity, anger expression, and aggressive social behavior. Consequently, inadequate cognitive emotion regulation may contribute directly or indirectly to bullying behavior among adolescents. Although several studies have examined the relationship between emotional regulation and bullying behavior, research specifically investigating cognitive emotion regulation in relation to bullying behavior among junior high school students within Indonesian educational settings remains relatively limited.

Recent educational studies increasingly emphasize the importance of strengthening students' character formation, emotional intelligence, and ethical behavior in responding to digital-era challenges. Educational institutions are expected not only to improve students' academic achievement but also to cultivate emotional maturity, empathy, and responsible digital behavior. Previous studies demonstrated that value-based educational practices significantly contribute to students' behavioral development and social discipline. Research concerning character strengthening through religious educational activities found that moral habituation and positive

interaction patterns can effectively shape students' emotional attitudes and social behavior (Subaidi et al., 2024). Similarly, hidden curriculum strategies implemented in Islamic boarding schools were found to contribute significantly to fostering moderate character, empathy, and social responsibility among students (Salim et al., 2024). These findings reinforce the importance of integrating emotional regulation, character education, and digital ethics into preventive efforts against bullying behavior in educational institutions.

Empirical observations conducted at SMP Negeri 1 Jatiroto revealed that nearly all students actively use social media platforms, particularly TikTok, Instagram, and Facebook. Some students are even intensively involved in digital content creation and live-streaming activities. Teachers and counseling staff reported that verbal bullying remains one of the most common behavioral problems among students despite continuous educational efforts promoting ethical social media use and anti-bullying awareness. These conditions demonstrate the urgency of examining how social media use intensity and cognitive emotion regulation influence bullying behavior among junior high school students.

Based on the theoretical and empirical considerations above, this study aims to examine: (1) the effect of social media use intensity on bullying behavior among junior high school students; (2) the effect of cognitive emotion regulation on bullying behavior among junior high school students; and (3) the simultaneous effect of social media use intensity and cognitive emotion regulation on bullying behavior among junior high school students. This study contributes theoretically by integrating perspectives of digital behavior and emotional regulation in explaining adolescent bullying behavior. Practically, the findings are expected to provide insights for educators, school counselors, parents, and policymakers in developing preventive strategies to strengthen students' emotional competence, digital ethics, and anti-bullying education in the digital era.

Method

This study employed a quantitative non-experimental research design using a multivariate approach with multiple linear regression analysis. Quantitative research is considered appropriate for examining causal relationships among variables through objective measurement and statistical procedures (Naufal & Apriani, 2025). The non-experimental design was selected because the study did not involve manipulation or treatment of variables; instead, it focused on analyzing naturally occurring relationships among social media use intensity, cognitive emotion regulation, and bullying behavior among students. Multiple linear regression analysis was utilized because this statistical technique enables researchers to examine the simultaneous and partial effects of more than one independent variable on a dependent variable (Ihzaniah et al., 2023). In addition, multiple regression

analysis is widely applied in educational and behavioral research to identify predictive relationships among psychosocial variables (Field, 2018).

This study was conducted at SMP Negeri 1 Jatiroto, East Java, Indonesia. The population consisted of all students enrolled in grades VII, VIII, and IX during the 2025/2026 academic year. Population refers to the entire group or elements possessing characteristics relevant to the objectives of the study (Jailani & Jeka, 2023). The sampling technique employed in this study was non-probability sampling using purposive sampling with a judgment sampling approach. Non-probability sampling refers to a sampling method in which not all members of the population have equal opportunities to be selected as research participants (Jailani & Jeka, 2023). Purposive sampling was considered appropriate because the study specifically targeted students who actively engaged with social media and demonstrated emotional regulation characteristics relevant to the research objectives. Creswell and Creswell (2018) explained that purposive sampling enables researchers to select participants who possess specific characteristics considered most relevant to the phenomenon being investigated.

The sample consisted of 61 students selected based on predetermined inclusion criteria. The criteria included: (1) students who possessed at least two active social media accounts; (2) students who used social media more than three times per day; and (3) students who experienced difficulties controlling negative emotions when receiving criticism, sarcasm, or unfair treatment. These criteria were established to ensure that participants possessed sufficient experience related to intensive social media use and emotional responses associated with bullying behavior. The determination of the sample size also considered the adequacy requirements for multivariate regression analysis, where the number of participants should sufficiently represent the variables analyzed to avoid statistical bias and instability of regression coefficients (Hair et al., 2022).

Data collection in this study was conducted through questionnaires and limited interviews. Interviews were carried out with guidance and counseling teachers as well as information and communication technology teachers to obtain preliminary information regarding students' social media use patterns and bullying behavior within the school environment. Meanwhile, questionnaires were employed as the primary instrument for measuring the research variables quantitatively. Questionnaires are systematic data collection instruments consisting of structured statements or questions designed to obtain participants' responses objectively (Jailani, 2023). Three questionnaires were administered in this study, namely: (1) the social media use intensity questionnaire; (2) the cognitive emotion regulation questionnaire; and (3) the bullying behavior questionnaire.

The social media use intensity instrument was developed based on dimensions proposed by Andarwati, including frequency and duration of social media use (Achmad & Dewi, 2022), as well as indicators of attention, appreciation, duration, and frequency (Sa & Rosyadi, 2022). The cognitive

emotion regulation instrument was conceptually adapted from the Cognitive Emotion Regulation Questionnaire (CERQ) developed by Garnefski et al. (2001), which measures adaptive and maladaptive cognitive strategies used in regulating emotional experiences. Meanwhile, the bullying behavior instrument was constructed based on indicators of verbal, physical, relational, psychological, and cyberbullying behavior among adolescents (Oktavia, 2023). Prior to data collection, all instruments underwent content validation through expert judgment involving educational and psychological research experts to ensure the appropriateness of indicators and item clarity.

This study employed a five-point Likert scale to measure participants' responses. The Likert scale is widely used in social and behavioral research because it allows respondents to express levels of agreement toward particular statements systematically (Simamora, 2022). The response categories included strongly agree (5), agree (4), neutral (3), disagree (2), and strongly disagree (1). The use of the Likert scale enabled participants' perceptions and behavioral tendencies to be transformed into quantitative numerical data suitable for statistical analysis.

Instrument validity and reliability testing were conducted prior to hypothesis testing to ensure the accuracy and consistency of the measurement instruments. Construct validity was examined using outer loading values and Average Variance Extracted (AVE), while reliability testing employed Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability coefficients. According to Hair et al. (2022), an instrument is considered valid when factor loading values exceed 0.70 and AVE values are greater than 0.50. Furthermore, reliability coefficients above 0.70 indicate satisfactory internal consistency of research instruments. These procedures were necessary to ensure that all indicators accurately represented the latent constructs measured in this study.

Data analysis was conducted using SmartPLS version 4 through Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) procedures. PLS-SEM is a multivariate statistical technique used to analyze relationships among latent variables and their indicators simultaneously (Hatta Setiabudhi, 2025). PLS-SEM was selected because it is suitable for predictive research models, relatively small sample sizes, and data distributions that may not meet strict normality assumptions (Hair et al., 2022). In addition, PLS-SEM is widely recommended for exploratory and predictive behavioral research because it emphasizes variance explanation and prediction accuracy rather than covariance confirmation.

The analysis procedures consisted of two major stages, namely measurement model evaluation and structural model evaluation. The measurement model evaluation assessed construct validity and reliability through convergent validity, discriminant validity, Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability, and AVE values. Subsequently, the structural model evaluation examined relationships among variables through path coefficients, coefficient of determination (R-square), effect size (f-square), predictive

relevance (Q-square), and hypothesis significance testing using bootstrapping procedures. Hypothesis testing was conducted based on t-statistics and p-values with a significance level of 0.05. In addition, multicollinearity testing was performed using the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF), while heteroscedasticity testing employed the Breusch-Pagan test. VIF values below 10 indicated the absence of multicollinearity problems, whereas significance values above 0.05 in heteroscedasticity testing indicated homoscedastic residual distribution (Akbar et al., 2023).

Because PLS-SEM belongs to the family of non-parametric statistical approaches, this study did not require strict assumptions of multivariate normality (Hatta Setiabudhi, 2025). This characteristic makes PLS-SEM particularly appropriate for educational and behavioral studies involving relatively small samples and complex psychosocial variables. Therefore, the use of SmartPLS in this study was considered methodologically appropriate for examining the predictive relationships among social media use intensity, cognitive emotion regulation, and bullying behavior among junior high school students.

Results and Discussion

Results

This study aimed to examine the effects of social media use intensity and cognitive emotion regulation on bullying behavior among junior high school students. The study was conducted at SMP Negeri 1 Jatiroto with a total sample of 61 students. The research instrument consisted of 36 statement items distributed across three variables, namely social media use intensity, cognitive emotion regulation, and bullying behavior. The results of the study are presented through assumption testing, descriptive analysis, hypothesis testing, coefficient of determination analysis, and multiple linear regression analysis.

Multicollinearity and Heteroscedasticity Tests

The first stage of analysis involved multicollinearity and heteroscedasticity testing. These tests were conducted to ensure that the regression model met the statistical assumptions required for multiple linear regression analysis. The multicollinearity test was used to determine whether correlations existed among the independent variables, while the heteroscedasticity test was performed to examine whether residual variances differed across observations within the regression model. The results of the multicollinearity test are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Multicollinearity Test Results

Variable	VIF
X1	1.401
X2	1.401

Table 1 shows that the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values for both independent variables, namely social media use intensity (X1) and cognitive emotion regulation (X2), were 1.401. These values were below the threshold value of 10, indicating that no multicollinearity problem existed among the independent variables. Therefore, the regression model fulfilled the multicollinearity assumption. The results of the heteroscedasticity test are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Heteroscedasticity Test Results

	P Value
Breusch-Pagan Test	0.221

Based on Table 2, the Breusch-Pagan test produced a probability value (p-value) of 0.221, which was greater than the significance level of 0.05. This finding indicates that the residual variances were homoscedastic, meaning that no heteroscedasticity problem was detected in the regression model. Therefore, the regression assumptions were statistically satisfied.

Descriptive Analysis

Descriptive analysis was conducted to provide an overview of the research data, including the mean values, minimum scale scores, maximum scale scores, and missing data for each variable. The descriptive statistics are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Descriptive Test Results

Variable	**Missings**	**Mean**	**Scale Min**	**Scale Max**
X1	0	3.176	1.750	4.375
X2	0	3.311	1.278	4.389
Y	0	1.702	1.000	2.700

Based on Table 3, all variables showed zero missing values, indicating that all respondents completed the questionnaires without incomplete responses. The mean score for social media use intensity (X1) was 3.176, with a minimum scale score of 1.750 and a maximum scale score of 4.375. Meanwhile, the mean score for cognitive emotion regulation (X2) was 3.311, with a minimum scale score of 1.278 and a maximum scale score of 4.389. The bullying behavior variable (Y) obtained a mean score of 1.702, with a minimum scale score of 1.000 and a maximum scale score of 2.700.

Furthermore, category determination analysis was conducted to identify the level of each variable based on interval scores derived from the minimum and maximum scale values. The results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Variable Category Determination Results

Variable	Interval	Score Range	Mean	Category
X1	0.875	1.750–2.625 (Low)	3.176	Moderate
		2.626–3.500 (Moderate)		
		3.501–4.375 (High)		
X2	1.037	1.278–2.315 (Low)	3.311	Moderate
		2.316–3.352 (Moderate)		
		3.353–4.389 (High)		
Y	0.567	1.000–1.567 (Low)	1.702	Moderate
		1.568–2.134 (Moderate)		
		2.135–2.700 (High)		

Table 4 indicates that the mean score of social media use intensity (X1) was 3.176, which fell within the interval range of 2.626–3.500 and was therefore categorized as moderate. This finding suggests that the students demonstrated a moderate level of social media use intensity. Similarly, the mean score of cognitive emotion regulation (X2) was 3.311, which also fell within the moderate category range of 2.316–3.352. Thus, the participants demonstrated a moderate level of cognitive emotion regulation. Furthermore, the mean score of bullying behavior (Y) was 1.702, which fell within the interval range of 1.568–2.134, indicating a moderate level of bullying behavior among students.

Partial and Simultaneous Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis testing in this study involved the t-test (partial test) and F-test (simultaneous test). The t-test was conducted to determine the partial effects of each independent variable on bullying behavior, whereas the F-test was used to examine the simultaneous effects of the independent variables on the dependent variable. The results of the t-test are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. T-Test (Partial Test) Results

Variable	P Value
X1	0.025
X2	0.904
Intercept	0.049

Based on Table 5, the probability value (p-value) for social media use intensity (X1) was 0.025, which was lower than the significance level of 0.05. This result indicates that social media use intensity had a positive and statistically significant effect on bullying behavior among students. Therefore,

the hypothesis stating that social media use intensity significantly influences bullying behavior was accepted.

In contrast, the probability value for cognitive emotion regulation (X2) was 0.904, which exceeded the significance level of 0.05. This result indicates that cognitive emotion regulation did not have a statistically significant effect on bullying behavior among students. Consequently, the hypothesis stating that cognitive emotion regulation significantly influences bullying behavior was rejected. The results of the simultaneous F-test are presented in Table 6.

Table 6. F-Test (Simultaneous Test) Results

	P Value
Total	0.000
Error	0.000
Regression	0.001

Table 6 shows that the probability value for the regression model was 0.001, which was lower than the significance level of 0.05. This finding indicates that social media use intensity and cognitive emotion regulation simultaneously influenced bullying behavior among students. Therefore, the hypothesis stating that both independent variables simultaneously affect bullying behavior was accepted.

Coefficient of Determination Analysis

The coefficient of determination analysis was conducted to examine the proportion of variance in bullying behavior explained by the independent variables included in the regression model. The results are presented in Table 7.

Table 7. Coefficient of Determination Test Results

	Y
R-square	0.108
R-square adjusted	0.077
Durbin-Watson test	2.225

Based on Table 7, the adjusted R-square value was 0.077, indicating that social media use intensity and cognitive emotion regulation collectively explained 7.7% of the variance in bullying behavior among students. The remaining 92.3% of the variance was influenced by other variables not included in the present study. Additionally, the Durbin-Watson value of 2.225 indicated that no serious autocorrelation problem existed within the regression model.

Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

The final stage of analysis involved multiple linear regression analysis. The regression model is illustrated in Figure 1.

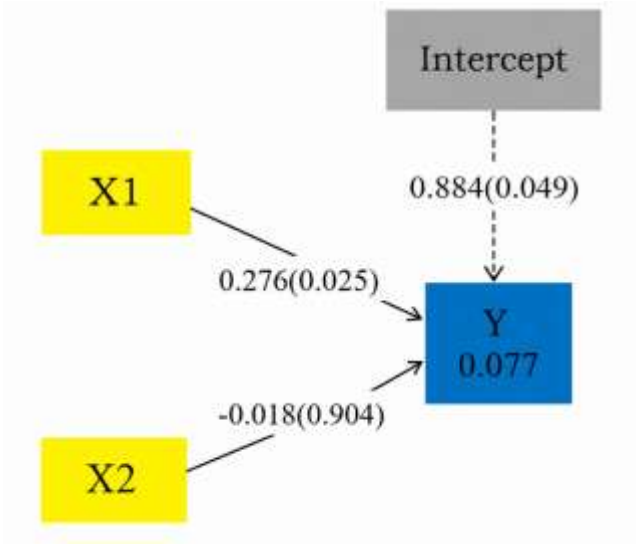


Figure 1. Multiple Linear Regression Analysis Model

The regression analysis results demonstrated that the constant (intercept) value was 0.884, with a significance value of 0.049 ($p < 0.05$). This finding indicates that when both independent variables, namely social media use intensity (X1) and cognitive emotion regulation (X2), were assumed to be constant or equal to zero, bullying behavior (Y) still retained a baseline value of 0.884. Therefore, bullying behavior among students was not entirely explained by the independent variables examined in this study.

Furthermore, the regression coefficient for social media use intensity (X1) was 0.276, with a significance value of 0.025 ($p < 0.05$). This result indicates that social media use intensity positively and significantly influenced bullying behavior among students. In practical terms, every one-unit increase in social media use intensity was associated with an increase of 0.276 in bullying behavior, assuming that the other independent variable remained constant. This finding suggests that higher levels of social media use intensity tend to increase the likelihood of bullying behavior among junior high school students.

In contrast, the regression coefficient for cognitive emotion regulation (X2) was −0.018, with a significance value of 0.904 ($p > 0.05$). Although the coefficient indicated a negative relationship, suggesting that higher cognitive emotion regulation tended to reduce bullying behavior, the effect was statistically insignificant. Therefore, cognitive emotion regulation could not be considered a significant predictor of bullying behavior within the context of this study.

Discussion

This study aimed to examine the effects of social media use intensity and cognitive emotion regulation on bullying behavior among junior high school students. The findings revealed that social media use intensity had a positive and statistically significant effect on bullying behavior, whereas cognitive emotion regulation did not demonstrate a statistically significant effect. Furthermore, the simultaneous analysis showed that social media use intensity and cognitive emotion regulation collectively influenced bullying behavior among students, although the explanatory power of the model remained relatively low. These findings indicate that bullying behavior among adolescents is influenced by multiple psychological, social, and environmental factors beyond the variables examined in this study.

The results demonstrated that social media use intensity significantly affected bullying behavior among students. The regression analysis revealed a positive regression coefficient of 0.276 with a significance value of 0.025 ($p < 0.05$), indicating that increasing intensity of social media use was associated with higher levels of bullying behavior. This finding suggests that adolescents who intensively engage with social media platforms are more vulnerable to developing aggressive behavioral tendencies, including verbal bullying, online harassment, and cyberbullying practices. The findings support the assumption that repeated exposure to provocative content, online conflict, social comparison, and hostile digital communication can shape adolescents' emotional responses and social behavior.

This finding is consistent with Social Learning Theory, which explains that individuals tend to imitate behaviors repeatedly observed within their social environments, including digital environments. Adolescents who are continuously exposed to online hostility, hate speech, humiliation, and aggressive communication may gradually normalize such behaviors and reproduce them in offline social interactions. The present findings are also consistent with previous studies conducted by Kowalski et al. (2014), who explained that cyberbullying has become one of the dominant forms of adolescent aggression in the digital era because online environments provide anonymity, broad audiences, and continuous accessibility. Likewise, Runions and Bak (2015) argued that online moral disengagement and repeated digital exposure significantly contribute to cyber aggression and bullying behavior among adolescents.

The findings also strengthen previous research demonstrating that excessive social media exposure negatively affects adolescents' psychological well-being and social behavior. Hinduja and Patchin (2010) found that intensive online interaction and cyberbullying environments increase adolescents' vulnerability to emotional distress, aggression, and social conflict. Similarly, Odgers and Jensen (2020) emphasized that digital environments significantly influence adolescents' emotional experiences and behavioral tendencies because online interaction has become deeply integrated into adolescent developmental processes. Therefore, intensive

social media use should not merely be viewed as a communication activity but also as a psychosocial environment capable of influencing adolescents' emotional stability, social identity, and interpersonal behavior.

Empirical observations conducted at SMP Negeri 1 Jatiroto further support these findings. Interviews with guidance and counseling teachers revealed that nearly all students actively used social media platforms, particularly TikTok, Instagram, and Facebook, with several students intensively involved in digital content creation and live-streaming activities. Teachers also reported that verbal bullying remained one of the most frequently encountered behavioral problems among students despite ongoing educational programs promoting digital ethics and anti-bullying awareness. These conditions indicate that intensive digital interaction potentially increases opportunities for verbal aggression, social conflict, and bullying behavior among adolescents, both online and offline.

In contrast to the findings regarding social media use intensity, cognitive emotion regulation did not demonstrate a statistically significant effect on bullying behavior. The regression coefficient for cognitive emotion regulation was −0.018 with a significance value of 0.904 ($p > 0.05$), indicating that although the relationship was negative, the effect was statistically insignificant. This finding suggests that cognitive emotion regulation alone was insufficient to predict bullying behavior among the students involved in this study. In other words, students possessing relatively good emotional regulation abilities may still engage in bullying behavior due to stronger influences from external social and environmental factors.

This finding differs from several previous studies emphasizing the important role of emotional regulation in aggressive behavior. Gross (2015) explained that emotion regulation strongly influences interpersonal interaction, emotional control, and behavioral responses in social situations. Likewise, Garnefski et al. (2001) argued that maladaptive cognitive emotion regulation strategies, such as rumination, catastrophizing, and self-blame, are associated with emotional and behavioral problems. However, the present study indicates that emotional regulation may not directly influence bullying behavior within the examined context. One possible explanation is that bullying behavior among adolescents is often socially motivated rather than purely emotionally driven. Adolescents may engage in bullying behavior to obtain social recognition, group acceptance, popularity, or dominance within peer groups regardless of their individual emotional regulation capacity.

Another possible explanation relates to the developmental characteristics of adolescents. Junior high school students are still undergoing emotional, psychological, and social development, making their behavior highly susceptible to external influences. Peer relationships, school culture, digital trends, and online social validation may exert stronger influences on bullying behavior than individual emotional regulation abilities. This interpretation aligns with adolescent developmental theories emphasizing

that peer conformity and social identity formation significantly shape adolescent behavior during early and middle adolescence.

The simultaneous analysis demonstrated that social media use intensity and cognitive emotion regulation collectively influenced bullying behavior among students. The F-test showed a significance value of 0.001 ($p < 0.05$), indicating that both independent variables simultaneously contributed to the regression model. Nevertheless, the adjusted R-square value was only 0.077, meaning that the model explained merely 7.7% of the variance in bullying behavior. Consequently, approximately 92.3% of the variance in bullying behavior was influenced by other factors outside the present research model.

The relatively low explanatory power of the model indicates that bullying behavior among adolescents is multidimensional and influenced by complex psychosocial variables. Previous studies have suggested that bullying behavior may also be affected by parenting styles, peer relationships, empathy, moral disengagement, school climate, exposure to violence, and socio-cultural environments. Therefore, bullying behavior should not be understood solely from individual psychological perspectives but also from broader social, educational, cultural, and digital interaction contexts.

These findings also highlight the importance of strengthening character education, emotional literacy, and digital ethics within educational institutions. Educational environments play a strategic role in preventing bullying behavior by fostering empathy, emotional maturity, social awareness, and responsible digital behavior among students. Previous studies demonstrated that value-based educational practices significantly contribute to students' behavioral development and social discipline. Subaidi et al. (2024) found that religious habituation and character-strengthening programs positively influenced students' moral behavior and emotional attitudes. Similarly, Salim et al. (2024) emphasized that hidden curriculum strategies and value-based educational environments effectively foster moderate character, empathy, and social responsibility among students. Therefore, anti-bullying interventions should involve not only disciplinary approaches but also comprehensive educational strategies integrating emotional development, digital literacy, and character education.

Practically, the findings of this study imply that schools need to strengthen supervision and education regarding healthy social media use among adolescents. Educational institutions should develop preventive programs focusing on digital literacy, cyber ethics, emotional awareness, and anti-bullying education. Counseling services should also provide psychosocial support for students experiencing emotional difficulties, online conflict, and peer pressure associated with digital interaction. In addition, collaboration among schools, parents, and communities is essential for creating supportive educational environments capable of minimizing bullying behavior both online and offline.

This study has several limitations. First, the study involved a relatively small sample size drawn from a single educational institution, limiting the generalizability of the findings. Second, the study relied on self-report questionnaires, which may be influenced by social desirability bias and subjective responses. Third, the regression model explained only a limited proportion of bullying behavior variance, indicating that numerous other variables were not included in the present study. Therefore, future research is recommended to involve larger and more diverse samples, include additional psychosocial variables such as empathy, peer conformity, family communication, school climate, and digital addiction, and employ mixed-method or longitudinal approaches to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of bullying behavior among adolescents.

Conclusion

This study examined the effects of social media use intensity and cognitive emotion regulation on bullying behavior among junior high school students at SMP Negeri 1 Jatiroto. The findings revealed that social media use intensity had a positive and statistically significant effect on bullying behavior among students. These results indicate that intensive engagement with social media platforms contributes more strongly to bullying behavior than previously expected, particularly through repeated exposure to online hostility, aggressive communication, and digital social interaction. In contrast, cognitive emotion regulation did not demonstrate a statistically significant effect on bullying behavior, suggesting that emotional regulation alone may not sufficiently explain adolescents' involvement in bullying practices. These findings challenge the common assumption that bullying behavior is primarily determined by individual emotional control and instead highlight the stronger influence of digital and social environmental factors.

Scientifically, this study strengthens previous findings regarding the relationship between intensive social media use and aggressive behavior among adolescents. At the same time, the study questions the direct predictive role of cognitive emotion regulation in bullying behavior within the context of junior high school students. Furthermore, this study contributes to the development of educational and psychological discussions by integrating perspectives of digital behavior, emotional regulation, and bullying behavior within adolescent educational environments. The findings also enrich contemporary discourse concerning the role of digital interaction and social media culture in shaping students' social behavior in the digital era.

Nevertheless, this study has several limitations. First, the study involved a relatively small sample size drawn from a single educational institution, limiting the generalizability of the findings to broader populations. Second, the study focused on specific variables and relied on self-report questionnaires, which may be influenced by subjective responses and social desirability bias. Third, the regression model explained only a limited proportion of bullying behavior variance, indicating that numerous other

psychological, social, and environmental factors were not included in the present study. Therefore, future studies are recommended to involve larger and more diverse samples, include additional variables such as peer conformity, empathy, family communication, school climate, and digital addiction, and employ mixed-method or longitudinal approaches to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of bullying behavior among adolescents.

Practically, the findings imply that schools should strengthen digital literacy education, emotional awareness programs, and anti-bullying interventions among students. Educational institutions are encouraged to develop preventive strategies emphasizing responsible social media use, cyber ethics, character education, and psychosocial support services. Collaboration among schools, parents, counselors, and communities is also necessary to create supportive educational environments capable of minimizing bullying behavior both online and offline.

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