Journal of Research in Social Science and Humanities (2025); 5(1): 1
DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.47679/jrssh.v4i1.

ISSN 2809-3356 (print), ISSN 2807-3916 (online)

RESEARCH ARTICLE

The Relationship Between Emotion Regulation and Cyberbullying Behavior Among Students at SMKN 1 Kaidipang

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Published online: 25 June 2025

Abstract

This study aims to examine the relationship between emotion regulation and cyberbullying behavior among students at SMK Negeri 1 Kaidipang. Cyberbullying is a form of digital aggression that is prevalent among adolescents and is often triggered by negative emotions and poor emotional management skills. The research adopts a quantitative approach using a correlational survey method. The sample consisted of 37 students selected through purposive sampling. The research instruments included an emotion regulation scale based on Gross's theory and a cyberbullying behavior scale referring to aspects identified by Hinduja and Patchin. Data analysis using Pearson correlation revealed a significant negative relationship between emotion regulation and cyberbullying behavior ($r = -0.483$; $p = 0.002$). This indicates that the better students regulate their emotions, the lower their tendency to engage in cyberbullying.

Keyword: Emotion Regulation, Cyberbullying Behavior, Vocational High School Students

Introduction

The development of information technology today has become highly advanced and accessible, turning into a lifestyle for people all over the world, including in Indonesia. One of the most common uses of information technology is the emergence of various social networking sites, such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp, and many others. This advancement also affects the right to express opinions. However, some individuals misuse social media to express negative content, including hate speech, which can incite hostility and attack the dignity of individuals or specific groups (Sa'idah et al., 2021).

Bullying on digital platforms is often referred to as cyberbullying. Teenagers tend to be more vulnerable to involvement in cyberbullying because they can easily intimidate others online at any time without restrictions. They may use the internet to seek information or continuously harass others without facing immediate consequences for their actions (Labina et al., 2018).

In the digital era, social media has become an essential part of students' lives. However, issues such as cyberbullying, the spread of hoaxes, and privacy violations often stem from a lack of awareness about internet safety and ethical use. This situation highlights the need for digital literacy education for the younger generation, especially vocational high school (SMK) students who actively use social media. In recent years, social media use among vocational students has increased. Social media has become a vital part of students' daily lives due to easier internet access through mobile devices and the affordability of data packages (Ikasari et al., 2025).

Cyberbullying can occur among groups who know each other as well as among individuals who are strangers. Cyberbullying is considered more dangerous than traditional bullying because victims often cannot identify the perpetrator. The impact of cyberbullying is not only felt by the victims but also affects the perpetrators themselves (Afifa et al., 2021).

Cyberbullying behavior is often driven by a sense of mischief or joking, but such actions can unknowingly constitute cyberbullying. Common forms of cyberbullying among teenagers on social media include insults, sarcasm, verbal abuse, mockery, threats, discrimination, harassment, hate speech, and other negative remarks that involve sensitive issues such as religion, ethnicity, race, and social groups. In addition, cyberbullying behavior among teenagers also includes uploading photos without consent, posting harsh comments on stories, and responding to posts using offensive language (Jannah & Setiyowati, 2024).

Estimating the prevalence of cyberbullying and its victims remains challenging. According to the 2019 report by the National Center for Education Statistics and the School Crime Supplement from the Bureau of Justice Statistics, 16 percent of students aged 12 to 18 who reported being bullied at school during the academic year had experienced cyberbullying. The 2019 Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported that about 15.7 percent of high school students experienced cyberbullying in the 12 months prior to the survey. A study conducted in the United States involving nearly 4,000 students in grades 6 through 8 found that 11 percent had been victims of cyberbullying in the past two months, 4 percent had been perpetrators, and 7 percent had been both victims and perpetrators of cyberbullying (Mitsu & Dawood, 2022).

The development of communication technology around the world, including in Indonesia, has been remarkably rapid (Awalia et al., 2022) The Central Statistics Agency (BPS) reported that the Information and Communication Technology Development Index (IP-TIK) grew by 4.96%, increasing from 5.07 in 2018 to 5.32 in 2019 on a scale of 0 to 10. Recently, Indonesian netizens have been labeled as the most impolite internet users in Southeast Asia. Based on survey data conducted by Microsoft in 2020, Indonesia ranked 29th out of 32 countries surveyed in terms of digital civility, placing it at the lowest rank in Southeast Asia (Rasyid et al., 2023). Bullying behavior on social media remains a common phenomenon in everyday environments and across different social groups. According to research conducted by Polling Indonesia in collaboration with the

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Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII, 2024.), around 53.7% of internet users reported having been victims of bullying on social media in 2020.

Interviews conducted on March 6, 2025, revealed that several students admitted to having engaged in cyberbullying behavior. These actions were often driven by feelings of hatred and anger toward others, without considering the mental health impact on the victims. In some cases, victims reported not wanting to attend school or even considering dropping out. Additionally, cyberbullying was also motivated by feelings of superiority, with perpetrators believing they were better than others due to academic achievements or coming from a well-respected family background.

One student shared that if they received the latest gossip, they would spread it within their social circle and initiate discussions about the person involved. Another student admitted to creating a fake account to stalk others and post negative comments. A student also recounted a conflict over a romantic issue in which a peer was accused of stealing someone's partner, prompting the student to create a post with a sarcastic caption and tag the person directly. Friends joined in the comments to mock the victim further. Forms of cyberbullying that occurred included making sarcastic or insulting social media posts and tagging the person involved, posting negative comments about others, creating and sharing stickers of someone's face deemed "funny" in group chats, insulting peers within private messaging groups, and more all of which worsened the situation. Beyond these incidents, cyberbullying is also prevalent in online gaming environments. Many players fall victim to verbal abuse from fellow gamers, receiving harsh insults such as "burden," "orphan," "noob," and various other derogatory remarks. This behavior often occurs without control due to the anonymous nature of in-game interactions, making perpetrators feel more free to insult or belittle others without facing any real consequences.

A study conducted by (Elisa Larrañaga, Raúl Navarro, 2018) involving 1,062 adolescents aged 12 to 19 in Spain, reported that some cyberbullying perpetrators were positively influenced by positive emotions specifically, a sense of satisfaction. This means that the higher the satisfaction felt when engaging in cyberbullying, the greater the individual's tendency to become involved in such behavior. This is because perpetrators may perceive their actions as humorous or believe that the victim deserves the harassment. Meanwhile, research conducted by (Utama, 2022) involving 382 adolescents—comprising 208 high school students and 103 university students revealed that negative emotions, such as shame, were significantly and negatively correlated with cyberbullying. Conversely, positive emotions like pride played a negative role in cyberbullying, indicating that the more an individual feels proud either due to exceptional competencies or academic achievemen the lower their desire to engage in cyberbullying behavior.

Instagram and WhatsApp have had a significant impact on daily life. One of the emerging issues is cyberbullying, which frequently occurs among teenagers. Cyberbullying can take the form of insults or attacks through digital media, posing serious risks to the victim's mental health. At SMK Negeri 1 Kaidipang, several students have been involved in cyberbullying, either as victims or perpetrators. These incidents are often triggered by negative emotions such as anger or hatred. The forms of cyberbullying include sarcastic remarks or insults on digital platforms, which negatively affect the learning environment and student well-being.

In essence, the challenges and pressures faced in daily life can serve as stepping stones for teenagers to become more mature in their actions. Adolescents demonstrate good emotional regulation when they are able to critically assess a situation before reacting emotionally. Research by Ubaidillah found that the emotions experienced by teenagers can significantly influence their decision-making. Poor emotional regulation can lead teenagers to make impulsive decisions without considering the consequences, resulting in inappropriate choices (Hasmarlin & Hirmaningsih, 2019). (Widowati, 2020) stated that human beings are naturally social creatures who need others to share their feelings, express emotions, and seek help. For many, social media serves as an effective tool to fulfill social needs that may not be met in everyday life. However, social media can also be used to spread rumors that destabilize situations and cause harm, potentially leading to "emotional contagion," which increases users' susceptibility to negative psychological effects.

Previous research (Violenta, 2021) has shown that both positive and negative emotions can play a role in cyberbullying and that emotional regulation is associated with cyberbullying behavior. Cyberbullying often stems from negative emotions. Individuals with good emotional regulation skills are better able to control themselves and avoid engaging in harmful behavior, especially when under stress. If negative emotions are properly regulated, strategies such as cognitive reappraisal and expressive suppression can transform those negative feelings into neutral or even positive ones, thus reducing the likelihood of cyberbullying. Therefore, the ability to regulate emotions significantly affects a person's capacity to direct their behavior constructively and avoid cyberbullying. Developing emotional regulation is crucial to help individuals express emotions appropriately in various situations.

Further research by Widyayanti et al. (2022) concluded that there is a negative relationship between emotional regulation and cyberbullying behavior among early adolescents at MTs Al-Islam Limpung Batang. This indicates that the more positive one's emotional regulation, the lower the likelihood of engaging in cyberbullying, and vice versa. Similarly, a study by Septiningtyas and Tobing (2024) found a significant correlation between emotional regulation and cyberbullying behavior. They explained that adolescents with strong emotional regulation skills are more likely to resolve conflicts constructively and avoid making impulsive decisions. Such individuals tend to better understand the consequences of their actions and restrain themselves from engaging in cyberbullying. These skills also contribute to forming more positive social relationships in digital environments. Adolescents who can manage their emotions are more capable of expressing anger with self-control, avoiding rude or disrespectful behavior in posts or messages, and refraining from disruptive actions such as spreading secrets, deception, or belittling peers on social media platforms. In contrast, a lack of emotional control may trigger cyberbullying behaviors like sending offensive messages, sharing private information, or deceiving friends online.

In conclusion, the development of information technology and social media has significantly impacted adolescents' lives, including the rise of cyberbullying cases among students. Cyberbullying—manifesting as insults, mockery, or ridicule on digital platforms—can seriously harm victims' mental health and disrupt the learning environment. This behavior is often driven by negative emotions such as anger and hatred, as well as a lack of awareness regarding the ethics of social media use. This study is important for understanding the causes and effects of cyberbullying and exploring ways to prevent it. By teaching adolescents how to manage their emotions effectively, the incidence of cyberbullying can potentially be reduced. The research also aims to provide valuable insights for parents, teachers, and schools on how to support adolescents in interacting positively through digital platforms.

The study conducted by oleh (Widyayanti et al., 2022) concluded that there is a negative relationship between emotion regulation and cyberbullying behavior among early adolescents at MTs Al-Islam Limpung Batang. This means that the more positive an individual's emotion regulation is, the lower their tendency to engage in cyberbullying behavior, and vice versa poor emotion regulation is associated with an increased likelihood of cyberbullying. Similarly, research by (Septiningtyas, s & Tobing, D, 2024) revealed a significant relationship between emotion regulation and cyberbullying behavior. They found that adolescents with strong emotion regulation skills are more likely to handle conflicts constructively and avoid impulsive decisions. These individuals are also more capable of understanding the consequences of their actions and restraining themselves from engaging in cyberbullying. Such skills help adolescents build more positive social relationships in online environments. Those who can control their emotions are better able to express anger with self-control, avoid rude or inappropriate behavior in statuses or text messages, and refrain from disruptive behaviors such as spreading secrets, deceiving, or demeaning friends on social networking sites. Therefore, adolescents' inability to manage their emotions may trigger cyberbullying behavior, such as sending offensive text messages, spreading secrets, or deceiving friends on social media platforms.

In conclusion, the development of information technology and social media has had a significant impact on the lives of adolescents, including an increase in cyberbullying cases that frequently occur among students. Cyberbullying, which may take the form of insults, mockery, or ridicule through digital media, has the potential to damage the victim's mental health and disrupt the learning environment. Such behavior is often triggered by negative emotions

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such as anger and hatred, as well as a lack of awareness regarding ethical use of social media. This study is important for understanding the causes and impacts of cyberbullying and for identifying ways to prevent it. By teaching adolescents how to regulate their emotions, it is hoped that incidents of cyberbullying can be reduced. This research will also provide valuable insights for parents, teachers, and schools on how to support adolescents in interacting positively through digital platforms.

Method

The approach used in this study is a quantitative approach. The population in this study consisted of 37 students who had engaged in cyberbullying at SMK Negeri 1 Kaidipang. The sample was selected using a non-probability sampling technique, specifically purposive sampling, which involves selecting participants based on specific criteria relevant to the research objectives. The sample characteristics were determined as students who actively use social media and have previously engaged in cyberbullying behavior. This technique was chosen because not all members of the population had an equal chance of being selected, and the selection was conducted selectively to ensure representativeness of the issues being studied.

Data collection techniques in this study utilized two types of data sources: primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained directly from the field through observation, interviews, and questionnaires distributed to adolescent students at SMK Negeri 1 Kaidipang. Meanwhile, secondary data were gathered from indirect sources such as books, theses, and journals relevant to the research topic. The primary focus of data collection in this study was on primary data obtained directly from respondents at the research site.

The data analysis technique in this study was carried out in two main stages: univariate and bivariate analysis. Univariate analysis was used to describe each research variable in general through frequency and percentage distribution, which was then presented in table form. Meanwhile, bivariate analysis aimed to examine the relationship between the independent and dependent variables using a correlation test. Prior to this, hypothesis testing prerequisites were conducted, including a normality test (using the Shapiro-Wilk method due to the sample size being less than 50) and a linearity test (through the deviation from linearity test). The hypothesis test was conducted using the Product Moment Correlation, with decisions based on the significance value (p-value), where a relationship is considered significant if $p < 0.05$.

Results and Discussion

Univariate Analysis

Univariate analysis is used to describe or depict the collected data as it is, without the intention of making general conclusions or generalizations. The characteristics of the respondents in this study include age and gender. The results of the analysis are described as follows:

Table 1. Age Characteristics

Age	Frequency	Percentage
15–16	19	51.35%
17–19	18	48.65%
Total	**37**	**100%**

Based on the table above, the results of the study show that the majority of respondents fall within the 15–16 years age category, with a frequency of 19 individuals. The 17–19 years age group includes 18 individuals.

Table 2. Gender Characteristics

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	7	18.92%
Female	30	81.08%
Total	**37**	**100%**

Based on the table above, the study results show that the majority of respondents are female, with 30 respondents, while 7 respondents are male. For age characteristics, 19 respondents are aged between 15–16 years, and 18 respondents are aged between 17–19 years. Thus, the total number of respondents in this study is 37 individuals.

Descriptive Statistical Test

Based on the results of data analysis on **Emotion Regulation** and **Cyberbullying** using SPSS version 20, the descriptive statistical data are presented in the table below:

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev
Emotion Regulation	14	28	20.16	3.484
Cyberbullying	26	47	38.81	5.873

From the table above, it can be concluded that the descriptive statistical data for the Emotion Regulation variable show a minimum value of 14, a maximum value of 28, a mean of 20.16, and a standard deviation of 3.484. Meanwhile, for the Cyberbullying variable, the minimum value is 26, the maximum is 47, the mean is 38.81, and the standard deviation is 5.873.

Variable Categorization

The levels of **Emotion Regulation** and **Cyberbullying** among students at SMK N 1 Kaidipang are categorized by the researcher into three levels: **low**, **moderate**, and **high**. This classification is determined based on the **mean** and **standard deviation (SD)** values. Using these values, the researcher defined the classification levels using the following standard:

Table 4. Categorization Norm Formula

Category	Classification Formula
Low	X < (Mean – 1 SD)
Moderate	(Mean – 1 SD) ≤ X < (Mean + 1 SD)
High	X ≥ (Mean + 1 SD)

Based on this categorization norm, the research respondents are divided into three categories for each variable. The classification for each variable is shown in the table below:

Table 5. Categorization Norm

Category	Emotion Regulation	Cyberbullying
Low	X < 23	X < 23
Moderate	23 ≤ X < 37	23 ≤ X < 37
High	X ≥ 37	X ≥ 37

Table 6. Categorization Results

Category	Score Range	Emotion Regulation		Cyberbullying	
		Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Low	X < 23	24	75.7%	0	0%
Moderate	23 ≤ X < 37	9	24.3%	14	37.8%
High	X ≥ 37	0	0%	23	62.2%
Total		**37**	**100%**	**37**	**100%**

The table shows that the highest percentage for emotion regulation is in the low category, while cyberbullying is most prevalent in the high category. A total of 24 respondents (75.7%) fall into the low category for emotion regulation, while 9 respondents (24.3%) are in the moderate category. For cyberbullying, 23 respondents (62.2%) fall into the high category, and 14 respondents (37.8%) are in the moderate category.

Normality Test

Based on the research findings, grouping can be conducted by referring to categorization criteria based on the assumption that the research subjects' scores are normally distributed. The results of this study are explained as follows:

Normality Test

The normality test is a fundamental procedure conducted before further data analysis. Normally distributed data are often used as a basis for certain statistical tests, although not all tests require data to be normally distributed. The normality test serves to assess whether the sample data follow or approximate a normal distribution (i.e., the data distribution is not skewed to the left or right). This distribution underpins many quantitative phenomena in both natural and social sciences.

In this study, the normality test was conducted using the **Shapiro-Wilk** technique with the assistance of **SPSS version 20 for Windows**. Data are considered to be normally distributed if the p-value is greater

than 0.05, and not normally distributed if the p-value is less than 0.05. The results of the normality test are presented in the following table:

Table 7. Normality Test Results

Variable	SW-Z	p-value	Description
Emotion Regulation	0.976	0.592	Normal
Cyberbullying	0.943	0.056	Normal

Based on the table above, the normality test results show that the Shapiro-Wilk score for the emotion regulation variable is 0.976 with a p-value of 0.592 ($p > 0.05$), while the score for the cyberbullying variable is 0.943 with a p-value of 0.056 ($p > 0.05$). Since both variables have significance values greater than 0.05, it can be concluded that emotion regulation and cyberbullying are both normally distributed.

Linearity Test Results

The linearity test is a method used to examine whether the distribution of survey data exhibits a linear pattern. This test was conducted using the *Compare Means Test for Linearity* with the help of SPSS version 20 for Windows. The results of the linearity test are presented in the following table:

Table 8. Linearity Test Results

Variable	Linearity Coefficient (F)	Deviation from Linearity	p-value	Description
Emotion Regulation – Cyberbullying	12.972	0.150	0.002	Linear

As shown in the table above, the linearity test for the variables *emotion regulation* and *cyberbullying* produced a significance value of 0.002 ($p < 0.05$), which means that the relationship is statistically significant. This indicates a significant linear relationship between the independent variable (emotion regulation) and the dependent variable (cyberbullying).

Pearson Product Moment Correlation Test

The correlation technique used in this study is the *Pearson correlation test*, performed using SPSS version 20 for Windows. The results of the hypothesis testing are shown in the table below:

Table 9. Hypothesis Testing Results

Variable	r	r^2	p-value	Description
Emotion Regulation – Cyberbullying	-0.483	0.233	0.002	Significant

Based on the table above, the correlation analysis shows a p-value of 0.002 ($p \leq 0.05$) with a correlation coefficient (r) of -0.483 and a coefficient of determination (r^2) of 0.233. This means that the emotion regulation variable contributes 23.3% to cyberbullying behavior. These results indicate a significant negative correlation between emotion regulation and cyberbullying behavior. In other words, students with higher emotional regulation tend to show a lower tendency to engage in cyberbullying. Conversely, lower emotional regulation is associated with higher levels of cyberbullying behavior. Thus, the proposed hypothesis is accepted.

Discussion

This study aimed to analyze the relationship between emotion regulation and cyberbullying behavior among students at SMK N 1 Kaidipang. The results of statistical analysis revealed a significant negative relationship between emotion regulation and cyberbullying behavior among the students. This is evidenced by a negative correlation coefficient (rxy) of -0.483 with a significance level of 0.002 ($p < 0.05$), indicating an inverse relationship. These findings suggest that the higher the students' ability to regulate their emotions, the lower their involvement in cyberbullying behavior. Conversely, the lower their emotional regulation ability, the higher their tendency to engage in cyberbullying at SMK N 1 Kaidipang.

Based on the descriptive analysis of the emotion regulation scale, the results showed that the majority of students at SMK N 1 Kaidipang fell into the low emotion regulation category, with 28 students (75.7%). Meanwhile, 9 students (24.3%) were in the moderate category, and none were in the high category. This indicates that most respondents have a limited ability to manage their emotions effectively. Furthermore, the descriptive analysis of the cyberbullying behavior scale revealed that most students were categorized as high in cyberbullying behavior, with 23 students (62.2%) falling into this category, and 14 students (37.8%) in the moderate category. There were no respondents in the low cyberbullying category. These findings indicate that the majority of respondents display a high tendency toward cyberbullying behavior.

These research findings are consistent with the study conducted by (Risyana, 2020) which states that the rapid development of technology, while bringing many positive impacts, also contributes to negative consequences such as cyberbullying. This includes sending harmful messages in the form of text, images, or videos intended to intimidate others. One of the contributing factors is poor emotion regulation. Furthermore (Arianty, 2018) suggest that adolescents with good self-regulation are more capable of thinking before acting and controlling their impulses. This is supported by a study conducted by (Samodra, P. B., Budiyani, K., & Utami, 2022)which found a significant relationship between emotion regulation and the tendency to engage in cyberbullying among adolescent social media users. This indicates that emotion regulation plays a crucial role in whether individuals engage in cyberbullying behavior. Therefore, improving one's ability to regulate emotions is essential in preventing negative practices such as online bullying or cyberbullying. (Rubiani, A., & Sembiring, 2018) further explained that age is also a determining factor in emotional maturity, stating that older adolescents tend to possess better emotional maturity than younger ones. Adolescents are said to have good emotional regulation when they can channel their emotions into positive actions. However, this ability requires continuous habituation and practice, so adolescents can effectively manage negative emotions and handle various situations calmly.

In addition, (Mawardah, M. & Adiyanti, M, 2017) found that factors other than emotion regulation also influence cyberbullying behavior among adolescents. These include parental neglect, parenting styles, exposure to violence, substance abuse, self-control, and poor adjustment skills. Another study by (Safaria, 2019) revealed that cyberbullying behavior is also influenced by personality traits such as extraversion and secure attachment. This aligns with the current study's findings, which show that better emotion regulation is associated with lower levels of cyberbullying behavior, and conversely, poor emotional regulation correlates with higher levels of cyberbullying. These results support the research hypothesis, which is therefore accepted.

In terms of gender characteristics, this study involved 37 respondents, consisting of 30 female students (81.08%) and 7 male students (18.92%). It was found that cyberbullying behavior was more prevalent among female students than male students. This finding is consistent with (McVean, M. L., & Scott, 2019) who specifically studied female adolescents as cyberbullying perpetrators and found that they were more likely to engage in socially based intimidation (e.g., social exclusion, gossip-spreading) than their male counterparts. The study by (Tokunaga, 2019) also supports this, stating that girls often use passive-aggressive behavior, social manipulation, and exclusive group formation as forms of online bullying. In conclusion, this study confirms that emotion regulation has a significant influence on cyberbullying behavior, although other factors such as social pressure, intensity of social media use, and environmental influences also play a role in shaping such behavior.

Limitation Of The Study

Limitations in research are weaknesses and obstacles that are often encountered by researchers during the research process. The limitation in this study lies in the relatively small number of respondents, which means the results obtained may not fully represent the general population.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the research findings, it was discovered that there is a significant negative relationship between emotion regulation and cyberbullying behavior among students at SMK N 1 Kaidipang. This study indicates that the lower a student's ability to regulate emotions, the higher their involvement in cyberbullying behavior. Conversely, the higher their emotion regulation ability, the lower their likelihood of engaging in cyberbullying.

Based on these results, several recommendations can be made for various stakeholders. For students, it is expected that they can act wisely in their behavior, both within the family and in social settings. Students should also learn to manage and regulate their emotions through positive means, such as channeling anger or frustration into beneficial activities, for example, sports or hobbies they enjoy. For schools, it is advisable to integrate character-building programs as

ISSN 2809-3356 (print), ISSN 2807-3916 (online)

well as social and emotional skills training into both learning activities and extracurricular programs. The role of school counselors is vital in actively identifying and guiding students who have difficulties with emotion regulation or who exhibit aggressive behavior on social media, in order to create a psychologically safe school environment. Meanwhile, future researchers are encouraged to expand upon this study using a mixed-methods approach (quantitative and qualitative) or an experimental design to obtain more in-depth and comprehensive results.

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