Analyzing Cyberbullying with Dark Triad Theory and Zen's Communication Psychology Perspective

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ABSTRACT. The phenomenon of cyberbullying is multidimensional, contextual, and even cultural. Therefore, the perspective of communication psychology asked to discuss cyberbullying from various perspectives, including the Eastern mindset. This paper aims to describe the mechanism of cyberbullying by dialoguing the perspective of the Dark Triad Personality theory as a Western view with the Zen tradition in Eastern philosophy to see human personality.

KEYWORDS: Cyberbullying, Dark Triad Theory, Zen Communication Psychology

Introduction

The rapid sophistication of the latest information and communication technology has made it easier for every user to express and interact. Self-presentation to self-branding has been practiced by every netizen easily and even fun through various social media platforms. Every netizen's enthusiasm for different exciting things, including himself, is so easy to display or exhibit to cyber audiences thanks to the existence of social media. Even social and personal transformations move quickly, develop and grow. It is enough for a social media user to have hundreds, thousands, to millions of virtual friends and followers, so he can quickly transform into a well-known person and has social influence.

The daily reality in the world of social media, especially in Indonesia, shows that there is a dark side, primarily the phenomenon of bullying and hate speech. Even so, the frenetic use of social media does not always indicate a positive and transformative face. The latest report on the Digital Civility Index (DCI) by Microsoft, which measures the level of digital politeness of world internet users when communicating in cyberspace, shows that Indonesian netizens or netizens rank the lowest in Southeast Asia (Indonesia News Center, 2021; Dewi, 2021). Or, in other words, the least polite in Southeast Asia. In research released by Microsoft on February 11, 2021, the politeness level of Indonesian netizens has deteriorated by eight points to 76, where the higher the politeness level, the worse it is.

The survey, which has entered its fifth year, observed around 16,000 respondents in 32 regions, which were completed from April to May 2020. According to the survey results, three factors influence the risk of politeness in Indonesia. The first is hoaxes and fraud. In this factor, the highest score with 47 percent. Second, the hate speech factor is at 27 percent. Third, the discrimination factor is 13 percent. Culture influences what people communicate, to whom they communicate, and how they communicate. Conceptually, communication processes occur in specific cultural contexts, with unique normative beliefs, assumptions, and shared symbols (Leonard et al., 2009). Surprisingly, as if agreeing with the results of Microsoft's survey, shortly after its release, thousands of Indonesian netizens immediately invaded the comments column on Microsoft's Twitter and Instagram accounts until the giant company locked the comments column for both of its social media accounts.

How to understand and find the solution to impoliteness among Indonesian netizens who belong to Eastern civilization on the internet from the perspective of communication psychology? It is the question to be answered in this paper. In psychology, the mechanism of action that violates social norms and moral values by engaging in behaviors such as lying, cheating, stealing, or even bullying can be explained by the theory of the Dark Triad Personality described by Paulhus & Williams (2002). The adaptation theory on the behavior of netizens is expected to explain the presence of negative phenomena in the world of social media.

Meanwhile, the solutions offered will be built in a dialogue between Zen teachings as one kind of Eastern psychology. The term "Eastern psychologies" cannot easily be found in online encyclopedias. Instead, the more common terms are "Asian psychology" and "indigenous psychology." Asian psychology (AP) refers to a "movement" in which Asian psychologists strive to have an expanding role in the science of psychology, which is dominated by Western influence (Sundarajan, 2014). Adapting Zen view on personality can be defined as a form of eastern psychology.

Cyberbullying and Dark Triad Personality Theory

Everyone has the potential to do evil. Under certain circumstances, the pattern of crimes is explained by three personality traits. According to Paulhus and Williams (2002), Dark Triad Personality is three domains of socially aversive personalities and manipulative characters (widely associated with crime). These three play a key role in many acts that violate norms.

In line with Paulhus & William, the results of research by Ziggler Hill & Marcus (2016) and Rauthmann (2012) state that the Dark Triad personality is consistently associated with behaviors that show interpersonal relationship difficulties and socially destructive behaviors such as aggression, manipulation, and exploitation. Likewise, a meta-analysis study conducted by Muris, Merckelbach, Otgaar, and Meijer (2017) and O'Boyle, et al. (2013) found that the Dark Triad personality is closely related to negative psychosocial behavior. According to them, the results of this research are hardly surprising because the Dark Triad is partly defined by evil and antisocial behavior.

The three Dark Triad Personalities consist of narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy. Each of the Dark Triad's personality concepts has its historical roots and definitions. The term narcissism is rooted in the character Narcissus in Greek mythology. He is a young hunter fascinated by his beauty and grace and worships her. The concept of narcissism in science, especially psychology, was further popularized by Sigmund Freud through his work "The Ego and Its Relation to the Outside World." Narcissism occurs when someone thinks he is the greatest, the most important, and considers others inferior to him.

Machiavellianism personality is taken from the name of the Italian renaissance philosopher, writer, and historian, Niccolo Machiavelli. In his book Il Principe (The Ruler), Machiavelli encourages, recommends, manipulates, or even persuades kings to take action to save their position through careful planning. If necessary, it could involve cruel and immoral acts such as the execution of political opponents or exploitation. When psychologists call someone with a "High Mach" personality, they mean they behave in a highly manipulative manner.

The third concept, psychopathic personality, is rooted in psychiatry, characters that show long-lasting antisocial behavior, reduced empathy and remorse, and courageous and courageous behavior.

How did the Dark Triad personality play a significant role in social media behavior, including cyberbullying? Safaria, et al. (2020) discuss a positive relationship between each component of the Dark Triad Personality (narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy) and cyberbullying behavior. Such research found that the type of Machiavellianism proved to be the most influential predictor of cyberbullying behavior. In other words, Machiavellianism is a personality type that tends to commit cyberbullying. Statistical calculations of intercorrelation and multiple regression analysis between personality types and cyberbullying variables prove this.

Overall, all Personality types in the Dark Triad are influential in determining cyberbullying behavior to some extent. Psychopathy ranks second as a significant predictor in terms of the tendency of adolescents to commit cyberbullying, followed by narcissistic variables. This finding is different from previous research conducted by Goodboy & Martin (2015), which stated that psychopathy is the most important predictor in determining cyberbullying behavior.

Other research conducted by Pabian, Becker, and Vandebosch (2015) also found that the Dark Triad personality correlates with cyber-aggression behavior among adolescents who interact intensively on Facebook. Of the three types of Dark Triad, psychopathy has a significant correlation with cyber-aggression. Meanwhile, Machiavellianism has a substantial correlation with the intensity of using Facebook. Furthermore, the intensity of using Facebook is closely or significantly related to cyber-aggressive behavior.

Zen Psychology View on the Cyberbullying

The dynamics of the three personality types in the Dark Triad are not easily cured, considering that the three also seem to "compete" in various aggressive behaviors in cyber media. Therefore, the psychological solution offered is not enough to conquer the three but also to balance them so that they decrease or disappear together. In this context, ideas and visions of life in balance with all dimensions of the self in Zen as an Eastern philosophical tradition are worthy of being part of a psychological approach to overcoming aggressive behavior in cyberspace.

Zen has three basic principles (Wattimena, 2015). First, freedom from all thoughts that arise. That is, one does not see all the thoughts that occur as objective truths but as mists that come and go. Thoughts are not reality but fragile and constantly changing symbols. Thinking critically and repeatedly in dealing with the flood of information and convenience in social media is another Zen practice for this self-awareness.

Second, freedom from language and tradition leads directly to the true identity of humans. Zen, as much as possible, does not use words, language, and concepts in its practice. In a way, Zen Masters use language to transcend language itself. The third is freedom from all philosophy, teachings, and spirituality. All philosophies, teachings, and spirituality aim to organize human personal and social life. It all starts with forming a particular way of thinking. However, all of these forms of teaching are different, creating tension and conflict with one

another. People return to their natural point when all these teachings are let go. In the context of negative behavior on social media, the willingness of each social media user to distance himself from his various primordial affiliations and interact authentically in the world of social media can reduce negative behaviors by the Dark Triad.

Zen is a significant part of Transpersonal Psychology, a study of humanity's highest potential, recognition, understanding, and realization of states of consciousness that unite spiritual and transcendent (Mujidin, 2005). According to Transpersonal Psychology, the central concept of humans is that humans have not only psycho-physical, psycho-cognitive, or psychohumanistic awareness but also have the deepest and highest awareness of their nature. Efforts to constantly seek the balance between these various dimensions in cyberspace can break the chain of cyberbullying behavior and other cyber impoliteness.

Conclusion

Several studies have shown that in the world of social media, the personality of the Dark Triad is significantly correlated with various aggressive and antisocial behaviors in cyberspace. Three Dark Triad Personality personalities, which consist of narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy, are closely related to negative psychosocial behavior. Even the Dark Triad is partly defined by evil and antisocial behavior. Each of these types seems to compete to be an essential predictor in cyberbullying cases.

Against this phenomenon, psychologically, the Transpersonal Psychology approach, which uses three ways of self-awareness and self-balancing in the Zen tradition, can be an important weapon to eradicate negative behavior, especially cyberbullying. Transpersonal Psychology through Zen is not as popular as a psychology school. It may be because psychology tries to maintain its scientific side and negates the trans position in personality. However, humans are multidimensional creatures, so a multifaceted approach is also needed.

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