



# Unraveling the Impact of Verbal Harassment as Social Delinquency on Indonesian Adolescents

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## Abstract

During social delinquency, social distancing measures led to a significant rise in verbal harassment targeting adolescents in Indonesia. This study employs a descriptive-analytical approach and collects data through an online questionnaire administered to adolescents aged 11 to 24, with a total population of 182 individuals and a sample size of 182 respondents. The analytical tool used in this research includes the Childhood Experiences of Harassment Questionnaire (CEVQ) to measure verbal harassment experiences from peers and parents. Data analysis techniques include descriptive statistics and qualitative content analysis, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon. Findings revealed that adolescents, particularly girls, were more vulnerable to verbal harassment, resulting in heightened anxiety, depression, and feelings of inadequacy. Parental verbal harassment significantly affected cognitive development, self-confidence, and problem-solving skills in adolescents, highlighting the deterioration of their social and psychological conditions due to prolonged isolation during the pandemic. The implications of this study emphasize the necessity for interventions to address verbal harassment both within family settings and schools, underscoring the importance of psychological support for affected adolescents. Communities, schools, and families must collaborate to create safer, more supportive environments for adolescent mental health while establishing educational programs to raise awareness about the effects of verbal abuse among parents and the broader community.

## INTRODUCTION

Social delinquency has brought about unprecedented challenges across various fields, particularly impacting mental health and overall well-being. In Indonesia, the increased incidences of social delinquency have led to heightened isolation among adolescents (Bilu et al., 2023). A critical development period characterized by the need for social connection and interaction (Almeida et al., 2021). Such isolation causes adolescents to experience fatigue, anxiety, and loneliness, increasing their susceptibility to verbal harassment. During this period, there has been a concerning rise in verbal harassment directed at

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adolescents, which poses significant threats to their mental health. Studies indicate that verbal violence, often manifested through insults, threats, or belittling remarks, can lead to severe psychological consequences, including anxiety, depression, and a decline in self-esteem (Albikawi, 2023; Radell et al., 2021). For instance, research has highlighted the correlation between loneliness exacerbated by social delinquency and increased susceptibility to verbal harassment among adolescents (Foster et al., 2017; Pires & Almeida, 2023).

The detrimental effects of social deprivation on adolescent development have been well-documented, emphasizing the urgency of understanding the implications of increasing social delinquency (Orben et al., 2020). Furthermore, a systematic review revealed a significant impact of social delinquency measures on the psychological well-being of youths, underscoring the need for targeted interventions (Minozzi et al., 2021). The connection between verbal abuse and detrimental mental health outcomes has also been explored in various contexts. For example, research has examined how verbal harassment aggravated existing mental health issues among adolescents while analyzing the link between verbal abuse and lowered self-esteem in college populations (Badriyah et al., 2023; Budiawan & Alvianus Dengen, 2024; Yun et al., 2019). This research is urgently needed to explore the dynamics of verbal abuse during such a turbulent period, especially considering the vulnerability of adolescents to psychological distress. By focusing on the nuances of verbal harassment experienced in various contexts, including within families and peer groups, this study aims to understand its effects on adolescent psychosocial development better.

The utilization of tools like the Childhood Experiences of Violence Questionnaire (CEVQ) will help illuminate the prevalence and impact of verbal harassment (Turner et al., 2020), thereby reinforcing existing theoretical frameworks that connect verbal violence to adverse mental health outcomes. Previous studies, such as those conducted by Walsh et al., (2008), have identified the impact of parental verbal abuse on adolescents' self-concept. However, this research adds a new dimension by analyzing various sources of verbal harassment, including peers and other social environments, and exploring the broader social context as a triggering factor for such behavior.

Additionally, while the research by Cahyani et al., (2022) emphasizes the impact of verbal harassment on children's mental health within the home context, this study broadens the scope by focusing on the emotional responses and behaviors of adolescents in more crowded and diverse social environments. This research also employs the Childhood Experiences of Violence Questionnaire (CEVQ), which is more comprehensive in measuring experiences of harassment compared to the tools used in earlier studies (Tanaka et al., 2012). Consequently, this research enhances the existing literature and offers new insights into how verbal harassment contributes to the psychological challenges faced by adolescents during social difficulties. The findings are anticipated to serve as a foundation for developing more effective interventions tailored to the needs of adolescents.

The pivotal research question guiding this study is: How have increasing instances of social delinquency influenced the prevalence of verbal harassment among adolescents in Indonesia and what are the implications for their psychological well-being. Furthermore, this study seeks to assess the long-term effects of verbal harassment on adolescents' cognitive development, emotional resilience, and overall mental health.

Additionally, this study's implications go beyond immediate observations; they significantly contribute to ongoing discussions in psychology concerning

adolescent well-being. By providing empirical evidence and informed insights, this research seeks to guide policymakers, educators, and mental health professionals in developing effective interventions to address verbal harassment within families and social environments and protect adolescents' mental health in present and future contexts.

## METHODS

The methodology employed in this research is a descriptive-analytical approach utilizing survey methods (Kaputra et al., 2021; Oktavia et al., 2023; Rasdiany et al., 2024; Zainal et al., 2022). It specifically adopts a quantitative process that facilitates the systematic collection and analysis of data. This approach is deemed appropriate for the study as it enables researchers to measure the prevalence and impact of verbal harassment experienced by adolescents during social delinquency through structured questionnaires. The data analysis was conducted using quantitative and qualitative methods to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the verbal harassment experienced by adolescents (Amnda et al., 2020; Ardiningrum et al., 2021; Ishtiaq, 2019; Ritonga & Wirtati, 2025). For quantitative analysis, descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, and mean scores were computed to highlight the prevalence of various forms of verbal harassment reported by respondents (Bhandari, 2022; Fávero & Belfiore, 2019).

This statistical approach enabled the researchers to summarize the sample's demographic characteristics, identify patterns, and draw comparisons across different subgroups (age, sex, and geographic location). To enrich the quantitative findings, qualitative content analysis was applied to the open-ended responses, allowing for thematic coding and interpretation of participants' narratives about their experiences with verbal harassment. This dual-method analysis not only provides a robust examination of the phenomena but also facilitates a deeper exploration of the emotional and psychological implications that verbal harassment has on adolescents, thereby yielding a richer understanding of the issues at hand.

The research began with careful planning and design, where the primary objectives were defined, and research questions were formulated to focus on the impact of verbal harassment on adolescents' mental health. The researchers selected the Childhood Experiences of Violence Questionnaire (CEVQ) for measuring various forms of victimization, including both physical and verbal harassment among adolescents (Afifi et al., 2020; Fitriani et al., 2022; Yondris & Fitriani, 2022; Yu et al., 2021). This choice was supported by the questionnaire's comprehensive nature and established reliability in capturing the nuances of such experiences, as highlighted in prior studies.

To ensure diverse demographic representation, a sampling procedure targeted adolescents aged 11 to 24 from multiple provinces in Indonesia, such as South Sulawesi, North Sulawesi, and DKI Jakarta. The total number of respondents amounted to 182, with a significant majority being female (69.3%) and predominantly in the late adolescent phase (ages 19 to 24), comprising 92.7% of the sample. This demographic overview is essential as it captures a broad spectrum of experiences related to verbal harassment across different regional contexts, enriching the overall understanding of the issue. Data was collected through an online questionnaire between January and February 2024. The instrument consisted of both closed and open-ended questions. Closed questions provided quantifiable data, while open-ended questions let participants express their experiences and emotions about verbal harassment narratively. This combination of question types enhances the study by

integrating quantitative data with qualitative insights, facilitating a clearer understanding of the severity and patterns of verbal harassment.

For data analysis, the researchers employed descriptive statistics to summarize the characteristics of the respondents and the frequency of verbal harassment incidents. This analytical technique aids in elucidating the prevalence of verbal harassment across different demographics and educational levels. Additionally, the findings were analyzed to assess the implications of verbal harassment on the mental health of adolescents, explicitly focusing on emotional disturbances, self-esteem issues, and social withdrawal. This aligns with previous research that has demonstrated a connection between verbal abuse and adverse psychological outcomes (Litasari et al., 2022).

In summary, the research methodology is meticulously designed to address the specific research questions regarding the prevalence and impact of verbal harassment on adolescents in Indonesia during social delinquency. By employing a well-structured questionnaire and appropriate analytical techniques, this study aims to contribute valuable insights into adolescent mental health, underscoring the urgent need for effective interventions to combat verbal abuse and support impacted individuals.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the author's analysis related to the characteristics of respondents in the study, this study examined the impact of verbal abuse on adolescents in Indonesia during social delinquency. The total number of participants in this study was 182 people, with the majority being female, namely 135 respondents, or 74.2% of the sample. In contrast, male respondents amounted to 47 people or 25.8%. This gender distribution shows a prominent dominance of female adolescents in this study, which may reflect a higher vulnerability to the experience of verbal abuse, as highlighted in previous research (Badriyah et al., 2023).

**Table 1. Characteristics of Respondents**

Characteristics	Total	%
Sex:		
Male	47	25,8
Female	135	74,2
Age:		
Early adolescents (11-15 years old)	4	2,2
Middle adolescents (16-18 years old)	14	7,7
Late adolescents (19-24 years old)	164	90,1
Place (Province):		
Nusa Tenggara Barat	1	0,5
Bali	5	2,7
Gorontalo	3	1,6
Jawa Timur	8	4,4
Papua	1	0,5
Sulawesi Utara	18	9,9
DKI Jakarta	18	9,9
Sulawesi Selatan	121	66,5
Kalimantan Utara	4	2,2
Sumatera Utara	1	0,5
Jawa Tengah	1	0,5
Jawa Barat	1	0,5

The respondents were categorized into three age groups: early adolescence (ages 11-15), middle adolescence (ages 16-18), and late adolescence (ages 19-24). The findings revealed that only 4 participants (2.2%) fell within the early adolescence category, while 14 participants (7.7%) were classified as middle adolescents. The majority, however, belonged to the late adolescence group, encompassing 164 respondents, representing 90.1% of the total sample. This significant concentration of late adolescents underscores the importance of understanding the unique challenges faced by this age group, particularly during a period marked by necessary social isolation.

Furthermore, the geographic distribution of the respondents indicates that the most considerable proportion came from South Sulawesi (66.5%), followed by North Sulawesi and DKI Jakarta, each contributing 9.9%. This diversity in representation is essential for capturing a wide range of experiences related to verbal harassment across different regions in Indonesia. The methodology employed in this research utilized a descriptive-analytical approach, wherein data was collected through an online questionnaire targeting adolescents aged 11 to 24 years, focusing on their experiences with verbal harassment (Yun et al., 2019). This comprehensive demographic overview serves as a foundation for understanding the broader implications of verbal harassment on mental health among Indonesian adolescents during the pandemic.

**Table 2. Verbal harassment**

Verbal harassment	Total	%
The uncomfortable feeling stems from the words of others.:		
1-2 times	64	40,5
3-5 times	42	26,6
6-10 times	15	9,5
More than 10 times	37	23,4
Temporal occurrence:		
Elementary School	23	13,9
Junior High School	21	12,7
Senior School	56	33,4
Graduated from Senior School	20	12,1
Occurring up until now	45	27,3
Verbal harassment perpetrator:		
Close Friends	49	29,5
Acquaintances from school/college/work	101	60,8
Neighbors	3	1,8
Lovers	2	1,2
Others	10	6,6

Table 2 provides a comprehensive overview of the prevalence of verbal harassment experienced by adolescents during social delinquency. The data is categorized into two main sections: the frequency of uncomfortable feelings stemming from the words of others and the temporal occurrence of such harassment across different educational stages. The first section reflects the intensity with which adolescents have encountered verbal harassment. It indicates that a significant portion of respondents, 40.5%, reported experiencing uncomfortable feelings as a result of verbal harassment between



one and two times. Meanwhile, 26.6% of the adolescents indicated facing such incidents between three and five times. A smaller yet noteworthy group, amounting to 23.4%, noted experiencing this form of harassment more than ten times. The lesser frequencies reported, with only 9.5% facing harassment between six and ten times, suggest that while many have had minimal encounters, a concerning number have suffered repeated and possibly more severe instances of verbal abuse.

The second section of the table delves into the educational context of these experiences, categorizing the respondents based on the levels of education they were attending. The data reveals that 13.9% of participants identified their first encounters with verbal harassment during elementary school, while slightly more, 12.7%, reported these experiences during junior high school. Notably, a significant majority (33.4%) indicated that they experienced verbal harassment while in senior high school. This trend may suggest that as adolescents navigate their later years of education, the prevalence of such negative interactions intensifies, possibly influenced by the increased social pressures and conflicts that characterize this developmental stage.

Overall, the insights from table 2 illustrate not only the frequency of verbal harassment amongst Indonesian adolescents during this tumultuous period but also underscore the critical need for targeted interventions aimed at addressing and mitigating these damaging experiences within educational environments.

**Table 3. Verbal harassment by Parents**

Verbal harassment by Parents	Total	%
Verbal altercations among parents or other household members:		
1-2 times	51	53,13
3-5 times	19	19,79
6-10 times	6	6,25
More than 10 times	20	20,83
Temporal occurrence:		
Elementary School	13	13,54
Junior High School	8	8,33
Senior School	21	21,88
Graduated from Senior School	17	17,71
Occurring up until now	37	38,54

Table 3 presents an insightful analysis of the verbal harassment experienced by adolescents at the hands of their parents or other household members during the social delinquency. The data is categorized into two primary aspects: the frequency of verbal altercations and the temporal occurrence of these experiences in alignment with the respondents' educational stages. The first part of the table illustrates the frequencies of verbal altercations reported by participants. A notable 53.13% of respondents indicated that they had encountered verbal conflicts among parents or household members one to two times. This relatively high percentage suggests that even infrequent verbal disagreements can significantly impact adolescents' emotional well-being. Interestingly, 19.79% of the respondents reported experiencing these altercations three to five times, while 20.83% noted that such disputes occurred more than ten times. Only a tiny fraction, composed of 6.25%, stated they faced verbal conflicts between six and ten times. This distribution underscores the troubling reality that a considerable number of

adolescents are subjected to frequent verbal altercations within their homes, culminating in an environment that may compromise their mental health.

The second section of table 3 explores the temporal occurrence of verbal harassment, shedding light on the stages of education during which these experiences were most prevalent. A striking 13.54% of participants mentioned that these verbal conflicts first occurred during their time in elementary school. This is followed by 8.33% of those who identified their experiences during junior high school. The data reveals a significant concentration of incidents within senior high school, with 21.88% reporting occurrences during this stage. Alarming, a substantial 38.54% of respondents indicated that they continue to experience verbal altercations at home, even after graduating from senior high school.

Overall, the data in table 3 highlight the pervasive nature of verbal conflicts within familial contexts, emphasizing that these experiences are not confined to childhood but often extend into adolescence and beyond. The findings underscore the urgent need for awareness and intervention programs that mitigate the adverse effects of parental verbal harassment, thereby fostering healthier and more supportive family dynamics for adolescents.

**Table 4. Verbal Harassment by Parents**

Verbal harassment by Parents	Total	%
Verbal altercations can occur between parents and their children:		
1-2 times	53	52,48
3-5 times	25	24,75
6-10 times	4	3,96
More than 10 times	19	18,81
Temporal occurrence:		
Elementary School	9	9,18
Junior High School	6	6,12
Senior School	21	21,43
Graduated from Senior School	16	16,33
Occurring up until now	46	46,94

Table 4 provides a detailed examination of the occurrences of verbal harassment inflicted by parents on their adolescent children. The data captures the frequency of such verbal confrontations and the educational stages during which these experiences predominantly occurred, shedding light on the challenging dynamics within family relationships. The first aspect of the table focuses on the frequency of verbal altercations between parents and their children. An overwhelming 52.48% of respondents indicated that they had experienced these conflicts one to two times, highlighting the commonality of such interactions in household settings. This substantial proportion suggests that even a limited number of incidents may be significant enough to impact an adolescent's emotional and psychological well-being.

Furthermore, 24.75% of participants reported encountering verbal altercations three to five times, while 18.81% noted that these confrontations happened more than ten times. Only 3.96% indicated they faced such verbal disputes between six and ten times. The data underscores a concerning reality: a considerable number of adolescents are subjected to repeated verbal conflicts, which can be detrimental to their overall mental health and self-esteem.

The second section of Table 4 delves into the temporal occurrence of parental verbal harassment, categorizing the experiences based on the

respondents' educational stages. A small percentage of experiences began during elementary school, precisely 9.18%, indicating that some adolescents might have encountered such issues early in life. This figure is complemented by the 6.12% who reported these experiences during their junior high school years. The data reveals that a significant proportion of verbal altercations, constituting 21.43%, were reported by respondents who experienced them in senior high school. This trend may reflect the increasing tensions faced by adolescents during a critical period characterized by heightened expectations and pressures.

Most strikingly, an impressive 46.94% of participants reported that they continue to experience verbal altercations with their parents even after graduating from senior high school. This finding highlights the enduring nature of these conflicts and raises concerns about the long-lasting implications such verbal harassment could have on adolescents as they transition into adulthood. Overall, the insights from Table 4 emphasize the need for intervention strategies to address verbal harassment within the family unit. By fostering healthier communication patterns between parents and adolescents, it is possible to mitigate the adverse effects of such negative interactions and support the mental well-being of young individuals.

Based on the research findings regarding the impact of increased verbal abuse experienced by adolescents in Indonesia during the period of social delinquency, this study provides important insights into adolescent mental health issues that are highly relevant in the current social context. This discussion will address the research findings using a narrative approach and relate them to previous theories and studies while answering both research questions (RQ1 and RQ2). The research by [Badriyah et al., \(2023\)](#) shows that during the pandemic, the level of verbal harassment among teenagers did not experience a significant increase. This study argues that some teenagers reported that the period of social restrictions helped them avoid conflict-prone environments and improved the quality of communication within the family because they spent more time together. In this view, the longer time spent with family during the pandemic is seen as an opportunity to rebuild more positive relationships rather than as a trigger for new problems. The discrepancy between our research findings and the study by [\(Badriyah et al., 2023\)](#) raises several questions. One is how each studied region's social and cultural context can contribute to these differences. For example, differences in parenting, community support, and family habits can lead to varying outcomes related to experiences of verbal abuse.

The research results indicate that the social distancing measures implemented during social delinquency significantly influenced the increase in verbal harassment among teenagers. This study is in line with the findings by [\(Bilu et al., 2023\)](#), which state that social isolation leads to a high vulnerability to various forms of harassment, especially among adolescents. Our research found that approximately 46.94% of participants reported ongoing verbal conflicts with their parents, even after completing secondary education. These findings underscore the importance of understanding the internal family dynamics that may be exacerbated by prolonged isolation and emotional conditions leading to increased frequency and intensity of verbal abuse. The stress and coping theory can be applied in this context, where adolescents experience frustration and loneliness caused by social restrictions. This creates an unhealthy interaction atmosphere among family members, exacerbating an already tense situation. Thus, the community's response, especially regarding



communication approaches within the family, becomes critical to addressing this issue.

Related to RQ2, the results show a significant relationship between experiences of verbal abuse and increased levels of anxiety, depression, and feelings of helplessness among adolescents. Verbal abuse from parents has been shown to negatively impact the cognitive development, self-confidence, and emotional resilience capacity of adolescents. These findings are consistent with previous research by Litasari et al., (2022), which states that verbal violence can trigger severe and lasting psychological impacts. By linking these results to psychological development theory, we refer to the socio-emotional development model, which demonstrates the importance of positive parenting in building mental and emotional resilience. Considering the lasting impact of verbal abuse, there is a need for policies that promote healthy communication within families and raise awareness of the adverse effects of harmful communication.

The results of this study not only affirm the importance of addressing the issue of verbal harassment among adolescents but also underscore the need for the implementation of more comprehensive intervention strategies. These measures will not only help the directly affected adolescents but also create a safer and more supportive environment for their mental health in the future. By integrating diverse perspectives and contrasting them with this research, we hope this discussion can provide a more comprehensive picture of the issue of verbal abuse, showcasing the complexity of the situation and various perspectives that may be needed to design more effective interventions in addressing the psychological challenges faced by adolescents. This increases the urgency to investigate further the influence of the socio-cultural context in research on verbal violence, providing tools to create more holistic and targeted intervention models.

## CONCLUSION

This research reveals the significant impact of verbal abuse experienced by adolescents in Indonesia during social delinquency, as evidenced by increased anxiety, depression and feelings of inadequacy, particularly among girls. This study underscores the alarming link between increased social isolation and vulnerability to verbal abuse, in addition to its long-term impact on cognitive development and emotional resilience. Given these findings, future researchers should adopt qualitative and longitudinal approaches to further explore adolescents' nuanced experiences and the long-term effects of verbal abuse on mental health. Further research could also consider a longitudinal approach to assess the long-term impact of verbal abuse on mental health as adolescents move into adulthood. Ultimately, the findings of this study underscore the urgent need for effective interventions and supportive frameworks to reduce the risk of verbal abuse and promote healthier environments for adolescent development.

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