Article Review: "Contribution Threat Perception, School Climate and Prejudice as

Mediator to Student's Cyber Aggression"

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This study attempted to determine the factors that have the potential to influence student cyber aggression among high school students in multiple Indonesian cities (Mardianto et al., 2023, p. 1). The factors examined were threat perception, prejudice, and school climate.

Social Science Principles

This article adhered to social science principles like empirical research, objectivity, and theory development. Bhandari (2023) defined "empirical research" as research that gathers and analyzes data about human behavior and social phenomena using methods such as surveys, experiments, interviews, and observations and then applies statistical methods for analysis (p. 74). The study collected data using web-based survey responses (Mardianto et al., 2023, p. 3). These responses were then analyzed using established statistical methods. Bhandari's (2023) "objectivity" referred to the effort of scientists to avoid having bias influence their work, something accomplished using rigorous research protocols, measurement instruments, and research replication (p. 74). Mardianto et al. (2023) presented hypotheses, assigned variables, measured relationships of variables, and sought to test their hypotheses through statistical measurements that would reject null hypotheses. These methods serve to limit human biases. Finally, the study strived towards "theory development" in generalizing the results in a conclusion that explains the phenomenon of cyber aggression and points toward a direction for future research.

Hypotheses, Methods, and Data Analysis

Mardianto et al. (2023) presented four hypotheses:

- There is a significant contribution of threat perception to cyber aggression behavior among students
- There is a significant contribution of school climate to cyber aggression behavior among students
- There is a significant contribution of threat perception to adolescent cyber aggression through prejudice
- There is a significant contribution of school climate to cyber aggression behavior through prejudice

Mardianto et al. (2023) defined threat perception as "negative attitudes toward other groups based on . . . in-group perception by individuals [toward] representatives of the out-group [whose existence] is perceived as a threat" (p. 2). Conflicts on social media can result from these negative attitudes, possibly caused by or leading to cyber aggression. School climate referred to the composite of students, parents, and faculty and their interactions (Mardianto et al., 2023, p. 2). Both threat perception and school climate on their own, and through the mediator of prejudice, were examined in this study, attempting to explain cyber aggression in students.

The structural equation model (SEM) was used to analyze the data collected through surveys. This model uses latent variables inferred from the survey data and establishes relationships among them. SEM allows for variables that can include mediators, such as prejudice in this study, sitting between independent and dependent variables. These mediators contribute part or all of the total effect (Pahlevansharif, 2021).

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Hypothesis testing was conducted by comparing P-values to an alpha value, or level of significance, of 5% (Mardianto et al., 2023, p. 4). P-values measure the probability of an event, or more extreme event, occurring if a null hypothesis were true. P-values less than 0.05 are generally accepted as sufficient to reject a null hypothesis and accept a hypothesis (Tenny. S. & Abdelgawad, I., 2024).

Relation to Cybersecurity as a Social Science

This article demonstrated many of the topics covered in class. One example was its use of hypotheses. The study authors posited four suspected variable relationships that they wished to test. This use of independent and dependent variables represents a second topic discussed in class, that independent variables cause dependent variables (the effects). Data in the study was collected using surveys, a common practice in cybersecurity social science studies, also covered in class. Finally, class content mentioned how cyberbullying, directly examined in this study, can be connected to learned behavior. The study presented linkages between school climate and threat perception and cyber aggression (Mardianto et al, 2023, p. 4). According to Mardianto et al. (2023), school climate "refers to the quality and character of students, which is based on the interaction of students, parents, and school, also how norms, goals, and values are applied in interpersonal relationships" (p. 2). In other words, behavior is learned from teachers and peers, to include in-group and out-group dynamics, and causes the final effect of cyber aggression.

Marginalized Groups

Racial and ethnic minorities can find themselves as members of out-groups, prime targets for cyber aggression. Mardianto et al. (2023) reviewed existing literature supporting risk factors associated with membership in these groups (pp. 1-3). The study then sought to establish how threat perception, with prejudice as a mediator, contributed to cyber aggression (Mardianto et al, 2023, p. 2).

While this study took place in Indonesia, the notion that the threat perception examined could apply to racial minorities in the United States, where stereotypes like assumed criminality are sometimes associated with citizens of color, driving fearful and sometimes violent responses, is applicable. Further, inherent prejudice towards racial minorities in the U.S. by some is of obvious concern to the targeted groups and is a potential precursor to discrimination or aggression. This study points to an unfortunate universality of aggression and prejudicial behavior across different countries, and it is possible that lessons for mitigation could be learned that could be applied in the United States.

Another one of the study's conclusions was that school climate does likely affect levels of cyber aggression. Under-resourced schools in disadvantaged neighborhoods are likely to provide a school climate that adds cyber aggression to the list of effects that distract from learning. Low-income groups of all races may experience this disproportionately given wealth disparities and the unequal distribution of tax bases in the United States, which would be expected to lower the quality of schools' environments.

Conclusion and Overall Societal Contributions

The study's findings determined that there is a significant contribution of threat perception to cyber aggression behavior among students, of school climate to cyber aggression behavior among students, of threat perception to adolescent cyber aggression through prejudice, and of school climate to cyber aggression behavior through prejudice, supporting all four hypotheses (Mardianto et al, 2023, pp. 5-6).

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These results are illustrative of the need for maintaining a school climate that is free of violence, and by fostering an environment that is engaging and supportive of learning for all groups. Investment in improving school climate can be expected to remediate cyber aggression to some degree. Additionally, prejudice might be stamped out by breaking down in-group/out-group dynamics in schools as much as possible. Educational institutions should strive to do this through integrative learning and group projects that keep groups from becoming too insular. As evidenced by the study's results, both of the above prescriptions should lessen the chances of cyber aggression taking root in schools.

References

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