



## **The Phenomenon of Hatred in Adolescents: A Systemic-Relational Study and Alternative Intervention Strategies**

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### **Abstract**

The prevalence of hatred among adolescents, spanning schools, families, communities, and cyberspace, is a significant issue that requires further research, especially among Indonesian youth in the school environment. This qualitative study investigates hatred in adolescents using a systemic relational paradigm and alternative intervention strategies. Through in-depth interviews with five participants and a focus on three hate themes, it was found that all participants had experienced hatred, leading to distancing themselves from and severing connections with their haters. Some participants reported long-term trauma and feelings of anger and threat. They committed to reducing hatred and redirecting their focus to positive aspects, acknowledging the harmful effects of nurturing hatred. Relational hatred arises from family conflicts, particularly those involving parents, and social conflicts that induce trauma, emphasizing the crucial role of the family and social environment in prevention and intervention efforts. Addressing the phenomenon of hatred among adolescents is crucial to protecting both haters and those who are hated, providing an opportunity for counsellors and other supportive figures to implement suitable interventions.

Keywords: Hatred, systemic-relational paradigm, adolescence, intervention strategies

### **Introduction**

Hatred among adolescents is a severe and widespread problem that plagues schools worldwide, especially those contained in hate speech (Kansok-Dusche et al.,

2022). However, not many related studies have explored it in Indonesia. This research wants to explore the experiences of adolescents related to hatred and relate them to the systemic relational paradigm. Data in Indonesia show that much hatred is expressed on social media, especially in religion and politics (George, 2016). The behavior of the haters is usually done verbally or nonverbally. Verbal hatred is in the form of hate speech on social media, such as dirty talk, insults, and harassment (Mawarti, 2018). Another form of hate speech carried out by bias-based cyberbullying involves repetitively hurtful acts online and attempts to belittle or harass someone specific to an identity-based characteristic (Hinduja & Patchin, 2022). It has severe consequences for victims of all demographics (ElSherief et al., 2021) and usually leads to intolerance, giving rise to hate speech. Among the most critical risks that can threaten life and social communication in the virtual world is violence circulating in cyberspace. Things happened, such as distorting facts, spreading lies, violent discourse, and incitement. Virtual spaces become a place for expressions of violence and hatred instead of increasing awareness of combating and preventing them (Abdallah Tani & Alrasheed, 2023). Thus the policy on the use of virtual space is highly emphasized to minimize the negative impacts that arise.

The phenomenon of hatred in cyberspace can also be called cyber hate. A study shows that adolescents supporting technical countermeasures to deal with cyber hate are less likely to become victims, perpetrators, or victims offenders (Wachs, Machimbarrena, et al., 2022). In contrast, adolescents who feel powerless or support retaliatory efforts to overcome cyberhate demonstrate a higher likelihood of engaging in cyberhate as either victims, perpetrators, or perpetrator victims. Furthermore, adolescents who support close support as a coping strategy show a lower probability of becoming a victim abuser, and adolescents who support proactive coping show a higher probability of becoming a victim (Wachs, Machimbarrena, et al., 2022).

The impact of cyber hate, especially those related to violence, can affect mental health, such as anxiety and depression in victims (Wachs, Gámez-Guadix, et al., 2022). Traditional approaches often focus on perpetrators' nature and attitudes toward victims. This approach ignores the social and interpersonal dynamics of social media, in which individuals gain social approval from like-minded friends to commit hate speech and are rewarded for their antagonism towards equally hated targets by providing friendship and social support that increase the well-being of perpetrators while deepening their

prejudices (Walther, 2022). From these studies, it can be concluded that the relationship between adolescents influences the occurrence of cyberhate. Furthermore, adolescents who support preventive and curative efforts will be able to minimize cyberhate.

The phenomenon of hatred is closely related to social relations. The roots of hatred are embedded in a social context. Social conditions and group conflict play an essential role in the evolution of hatred (Sternberg & Sternberg, 2008). The Systemic-Relational (SR) paradigm has the concept that values related to the social-ecological system (SES) must be placed first, not at the constituent component level, but at the SES level as an integrated unit (de Wet & Odume, 2019). Hatred is also related to moral values (Wachs, Bilz, et al., 2022). One study described that parents' morality is related to children's moral intelligence (Afiah & Haramain, 2022). Thus, individuals in a social system must hold the values that apply to their social sphere. Concerning hatred of other people, it will be studied based on concepts in a systemic relational paradigm to show a relationship between two or more individuals that can influence one another.

In phenomenological studies in Indonesia, until now, no scientific research has explored the phenomenon of hatred in adolescents associated with a systemic-relational paradigm. So the purpose of this study is to explore the experience of adolescents in giving meaning to hatred associated with a systemic-relational paradigm.

### *Methods*

This research method is qualitative with a phenomenological design. This study aims to describe participants' experiences with the phenomenon of hatred (hatred). This research focuses on how participants interact with the world of phenomena and interpret phenomena about hatred. This research was conducted in Malang City. Five participants were included with the characteristics of having experiences related to hate and being perpetrators or victims. The research instrument is a semi-structured interview guideline developed from three components of hatred: the negation of intimacy, passion and commitment.

Data collection procedures used in-depth interviews through focus group discussions (FGD) and semi-structured instruments. The FGD process was recorded after obtaining permission from the participants. Recordings are transcribed verbatim, with a code used for each participant to maintain anonymity. Furthermore, the

participant's name is written with initials (P1-P5) to maintain the anonymity of the participants who participated in this study. Data analysis in this study used phenomenological analysis, which was carried out in three stages. The first is to read the transcript thoroughly to gain an in-depth understanding of the data, highlight essential responses, and make important notes. The second is coding the data openly and sequentially, and the third is grouping the codes according to themes and sub-themes based on the participants' answers. Checking the validity of the research data used triangulation of data sources which was carried out by checking participants.

## Discussion

This study explores the meaning of adolescent experiences related to hate which will then be discussed based on a systemic relational paradigm study. Themes related to hatred include three things, namely, the negation of intimacy, passion, and commitment. The results section presents research findings according to the themes and sub-themes generated in the data analysis process, further described as follows.

### 1. Theme 1 Negation of Intimacy

The first theme that will be explained is the negation of intimacy or the rejection of closeness to the hated person by the five participants. All participants stated that they experienced hatred with those closest to them, such as family and friends. The meaning of the participants' hateful experiences is described as follows.

For participants, hatred is an unpleasant experience that often occurs in life. Each of them has experienced hatred expressed in different ways. A person who experiences hate tends to distance himself physically and emotionally from the person he hates. As experienced by the first participant (P1), who interpreted hatred towards one of her family members because she was discriminated against too often since childhood, she thinks it is better to keep his distance from people she hates because it will help him maintain mental health. It aligns with other participants, for example, participant 2 (P2), who stated, "*For me, if he always brings bad influences, maybe she does not want to, there is no need*". P2 experiences hatred with friends who show negative behavior toward themselves and other friends, so according to P2, it would be better if he kept his distance from people who could negatively influence others.

Furthermore, participant 3 (P3) also chose to stay away to avoid the pain of being bullied by someone who then incited their classmates to take the same action. In this case, it means that prejudice plays a role in spreading hatred (Koirikivi et al., 2023). The same thing was experienced by Participant 5 (P5), who experienced physical bullying or body shaming by her friends. P5 stated, *"I hate conditions like that, especially in a school environment where I have to go to school every day"*. From the statements of the two participants who experienced bullying from their friends, keeping their distance was the safest choice they could make.

Unlike the case of Participant 4 (P4), who experienced hatred towards friends and family members. She feels treated less than she should with friends, and the feedback she gets from their friendship is harmful or not as expected. This experience makes P4 tired and resentful of her friends. Then regarding family, P4 feels too demanding, which makes him feel tired and resentful. It makes the P4 want to keep friends and family at arm's length. P4 stated, *"I am tired but can still communicate with people I hate. If it is a friend, he is the one who broke off the relationship, so I do not want to either. Whether it is the family who wants it or not, I do not want it"*. Here P4 can be away from friends because they can cut ties but with their families because they have to interact daily. Thus, all participants prefer to keep their distance from people they hate regardless of whether they can do it.

Based on results such as the perspective of the family system's view, something causes somebody to hate, among others, conflict with parents. \_ Research results disclose that parental conflict can be predicted lower child prosocial behavior and higher peer rejection. Peer rejection was predicted by children's emotional insecurity, especially with their dad. This finding aligns with the emotional security hypothesis and highlights the importance of the father-son relationship for developing positive peer relationships (Lux & Walper, 2019). It can be seen in the phenomenon of hatred in P1, which originates from family factors and affects trust in their peers. P1 only chooses friends who can be trusted and is reluctant to help other friends who are felt to be less trustworthy. Thus the positive factor of family involvement greatly influences mental health care for teenagers (Muddle et al., 2022), and in the family system, problems can be overcome with a family approach. It also depends on the role of the family therapist in providing interventions.

The phenomenon of hatred experienced by the participants not only made them want to keep their distance but also wanted to separate or break off the relationship with the person they hated. As experienced by P1, P3, P4 and P5. P1 stated, *"It is true because now it does not look like that, so it is fortunate not to be seen. If it is still visible, maybe I do not like being angry anymore, then I can hate it, okay?"* This statement shows that P1 feels better when separated from the people she hates. Likewise, P3 stated, *"Yes, it was like that, sure, if you remember that time, remember that time yes, there was a little hurt, and when he stayed, he also hated it"*. P1 and P3 feel that being together will cause negative emotions, so parting ways with people they hate is the best thing.

P4 also wanted the option to separate from the person she hated, who stated that *"We used to be close friends, but now we are not close, but if the family is in the same scope, that is how it is. Do not want to force yourself to leave the house or stay at home with other people I hated"*. In line with P4, P5 also wants to be separated from people she hates because she feels terrible if she continues to interact. P5 stated, *"I do not want to go to school because I am afraid my father will finally want to move me to Bandung"*. From the statement, P5 shows the desire to leave, which means wanting to break off relations with people who are hated because they continue to be bullied.

Concerning systemic relational theory, the haters tend to avoid hated people, p That can raise estrangement in relationships. Importance In building closeness with others, each needs to understand that close relationships can act as important "social cohesive tools", which can help people cope with the uncertainties of their world that are constantly changing (Edwards, 2009), including changes in social dynamics. With cohesion, the social need is built To relieve conflict and existing hatred. \_

## 2. Theme 2 Passion

Theme 2 relates to passion, which means the participant's desire to express intense anger or fear in response to threats. It means that the hatred experienced by participants impacts the emotional response shown in various ways.

In P1, feelings of anger were shown when she felt compared to and even felt abandoned by those closest to her, namely family members, as in his statement, *"Maybe that is why I think it is different, different than maybe considered not good, maybe thrown away"*. P1 also revealed that she gets angry when he remembers people he hates. This is

different from the experience of P2, which is related to hatred towards his friend but more angry emotions shown to himself, as shown in the statement, " *Yes, I am angry maybe I am more emotional, it is just me like I cannot say it, Later when I am angry wrong with her*". What she is experiencing cannot be expressed to people she hates because she feels that if she is angry, it is wrong. Still, at a particular moment, if it is felt that the behavior of the person he hates is detrimental to other people, he will kindly remind him. She will kindly remind her whether it can change his behavior.

Feelings of anger and threat were not too visible in P3, who preferred to remain silent when poorly treated by her friends. P3 only feels sad and hurt when bullied by her friends. P3 also questions the reasons for her friend's behavior, but P3 can only keep her feelings to herself. Like P5, who could not show her anger but preferred to remain silent when she received body shaming from her friends, feelings of threat were shown when he felt she was not strong enough to stay in school, so he wanted to. Move to a new school. In addition, P4 also did not show much anger or feel threatened but felt disappointed and tired of the treatment of her friends and family.

Thus the feelings that arise both at P1-P5 are different. P1 felt more angry and disappointed because she felt abandoned and compared, P2 felt angry and annoyed at herself for not being able to express her frustration towards the person she hated, P3 felt sad and hurt because of the bullying she experienced, then P4 showed more feelings of disappointment with friends and family, and P5 felt more angry, hurt and traumatized by the body shaming done by her friends.

Besides feeling angry and threatened, some participants experience intense fright of threats. Like in P3, who expressed an intense fear that traumatized her "*It is uncomfortable when I think about him, maybe yes, the impact of that person now is that I feel afraid to meet new friends, so I am afraid if I am afraid other people will not do it*" This is in line with what was experienced by P4, where she felt the impact of the hatred she experienced towards the people closest to her, which affected the way he managed his emotions to this day, as expressed by P4 "*often angry at people because maybe my house also often digitonin so I often take it out*" P4 do not experience more intense fear but consistent repercussions for those closest to them for being treated emotionally.

Furthermore, for P5, because what he experienced caused prolonged trauma, he experienced intense fear from the hatred he experienced, such as his statement, "*I do not want to go to school because I am afraid*". This shows that the incident experienced severely impacted her life. P5 also revealed that from the incident he experienced, she felt it was too late to progress both in academic and non-academic fields.

Related to the association, the hatred that arises against someone can occur due to sentiment from the existing social environment, and hatred towards other people can cause feelings of anger and also be threatened, as in the case of hatred towards Asian Americans about the 2019 coronavirus disease (Koba, 2021), where Americans have sentiments towards Asians resulting in acts of rejection and violence. It is also related to the phenomena in P3 and P5, where they both get sentiments from other people resulting in bullying and body shaming behaviour. Others perceive P3 and P5 as distinct individuals, and this is socially reproduced so that the underlying negative behaviour emerges.

From a relational-systemic perspective, causal relationships are related to emotions/feelings and actions. Cause and effect are defined as linear. That is, something can affect something else directly and in one direction (Cottone, 1992). For example, one person cannot cause another person to do something in the context of social interaction, so two or more people are needed for interaction to occur. When one person influences another, he or she is simultaneously or recursively influenced. In the phenomena experienced by participants, the behaviour of one individual can impact other individuals, and individual perceptions of the events experienced affect emotions. In this case, for example, the bullying behaviour experienced by P3 and P5 can make them think about whether something is wrong with them. So they get adverse treatment that encourages them to hate the perpetrator and experience feelings of anger, sadness and hurt.

Feelings of hatred that result in trauma have another negative impact on an individual's life, and traumatic experiences can prevent the natural development of the individual's personality towards an integrated unit, or disrupt integration, can cause a split along fault lines between major personality systems (Lesley & Varvin, 2016). It is in line with P5's experience, which revealed that he felt unable to develop academically and non-academically because of the trauma he experienced.



### 3. Theme 3 Commitment

Theme 3 relates to commitment characterized by awareness of devaluation and reduction through the humiliation of hated people. The goal is to inflame hatred or change the thought processes of the people of a society so that its members will understand the hated group of people in a way that is not valued. Several results related to commitment participants, among other things, devaluation awareness related to how committed the mind of someone who hates is towards the person he hates. In P1, she thinks that hating someone for too long is not beneficial, as in his statement, *"Yes, if I think this way of him, I will not get anything. If I still hate that person, I do not feel guilty. Alternatively, something like that, well, it is useless to think about it so much"*. Apart from that, P1 also thinks about acceptable or unacceptable reasons for hating, such as her statement, *"Yes, if the reason is good, make it an excuse, maybe you can be caught like that, how come it can be like that. this, but if the reason is illogical, then it is natural to hate it"*. In line with P2, which stated that hating harms oneself, as in her statement, *"if we continue to hate, maybe we will be carried away by emotions that will harm us, that is why we are rich in angry emotions, if we are angry, we express something certain ruthless, really, so I am afraid that our words will hurt person."* From statements P1 and P2, there is a commitment related to the idea that hating and having negative emotions towards people we hate for too long is useless to ourselves and can even harm others.

The phenomenon in P3 related to bullying traumatized her quite a bit, as in her statement, *"If you think about it, maybe yes, the impact is now that I am afraid to make new friends, so I am afraid of other people does not accept me"*. Even so, P3 thinks it is better to keep quiet, and if there is an opportunity to ask, she will ask why her friends are bullying her.

In P4, regarding the hatred he experienced, he chose not to think about it too much, but because several people had to touch each other daily, negative thoughts and feelings would always arise. If so, P4 will tell the story with a trusted person. In line with P4, the phenomena that occur in P5 show incidents of hatred that cause trauma in life. However, P5 thinks not to hate for too long or drag on, like his statement, *"Yes, thinking about that person makes us very uncomfortable, if I remember until now it is uncomfortable only for the feeling of hatred to be somewhat less"*. P5 is aware of the

impact of the incident, as stated in its statement, "*The impact was very severe both mentally and physically*". However, she tried to keep suppressing the hatred she felt.

In essence, most of the participants' statements about devaluing awareness did not want to think about it for too long because they realized that it was useless for them. They also tried to suppress the feelings of hatred they were experiencing.

Besides awareness devaluation, participants also take actions related to the hatred they experience. In P1, he is more committed to being silent, keeping everything to himself, and not having direct contact with people he hates, as in his statement, "*I usually keep it to myself, but when someone talks like that, what do they do?*" P1 feels that the treatment of hated people is only towards her so that others cannot experience the same thing. She will only talk about hatred toward people who are truly trusted without inviting other people to hate too. In contrast to P2, who is committed to talking directly to people she hates when her behavior harms other people, such as her statement, "*If, for example, he is the same as other people and harms other people too, maybe if I can, I can tell it carefully, so he can also give positive things to everyone again too so she does not continue to be negative like that, maybe huh?*" P2 is more open to talking to other friends about how she feels without inviting other people to hate her too, only to express her feelings of anger and resentment.

Furthermore, P3's commitment was related to the hatred she experienced because of bullying, and she committed to remaining silent because she felt that her other friends had been instigated by people she hated, so she also hated P3. However, she feels deep trauma from the treatment of the people she hates until now. In line with P5, who also experienced trauma due to body shaming by people she hates, he is more committed to being silent when she hates someone, only to keep it to herself.

In P4, it relates to people she hates; if it is a friend, she prefers to be indifferent and no longer wants anything to do with that person. However, when it comes to family, she sometimes approaches it by joking even though she does not like it. Then P4 also took more religious actions to overcome her hatred, as in his statement, "*If in the interpretation of al, tazim take ablution water even though you hate it, you get angry like that, right, because when grandma was still there, she said if you do not like people just take ablution water like that*"

Thus, most participants had different commitments to overcoming hatred, and some kept it to themselves, communicated directly with people they hated, and took a personal approach, if it was a family or religious approach.

In the theory of social relations related to illocutionary, just social agreements are a crucial element for understanding social relations in conventional illocutionary (Sharma, 2021). However, in the various phenomena experienced by the participants, there was no fair social agreement that gave rise to the problem of hatred. It is possible due to various factors, such as gender roles and power relations embedded in social construction. The point is that in an unjust social environment, the kinds of social agreements essential to illocutionary are challenging to enforce. In addition, what appears to be a social agreement may result from systemic oppression perpetrated against certain groups.

Regarding the problem of hate, the role of the family as a support system is needed, mainly to prevent the negative impacts that arise. One study shows that limited support for family-directed services can prevent direct involvement in extremist groups. In contrast, family-directed services can indirectly influence this by strengthening family members' resilience and, thus, their ability to engage with family members. In addition, professionals working with families where one of the members is on the path of developing an extremist ideology should continually reflect on their professional behaviour and develop a narrative approach to reduce resistance (Haugstvedt, 2022). Thus if it is applied to the phenomenon of hatred in adolescents, the role of the family can be carried out by providing moral support and strengthening the family's resilience so that adolescents avoid becoming perpetrators or victims of the effects of the phenomenon of hatred.

### *Alternative Approaches or Intervention Strategies in the Systemic-Relational Paradigm*

The systemic relational paradigm that focuses on relationships has one approach that can be used as a form of intervention, namely a systemic approach that can be applied to both children and adolescents, in this case involving not only the immediate family but also the wider environment. where the subject lives (Kottorou et al., 2023). Adolescent problems can be overcome using a systemic approach with systemic therapy

(ST), one of which is social anxiety disorder (Hunger et al., 2016). If applied to the phenomenon of hatred in which there are feelings of anger and threat, ST can explain the development of hatred through reciprocal interpersonal interactions. Resentment symptoms can be associated with distancing when interacting with other people, and therapy can increase new interpersonal skills with increased Skills management and solving problems (Maglia, 2020).

The service principles in systemic practice include: 1) focus on the system. In this case, awareness of various systems is critical, especially for the family and the multidisciplinary team that forms the family system (Goldin et al., 2008). 2) Focusing on solutions, not problems. In this case, the focus is on systems organized around problems. 3) Continuing care, in this case, the team provides pre- and post-care care for children/adolescents and families, liaises with community services (schools, mental health services, community support systems) and helps families reconnect to daily life and function (Kottorou et al., 2023). Thus, systemic practices can be carried out to overcome adolescent problems related to social problems (both with family members and peers).

Apart from systemic therapy, another approach that can be used to address mental health problems related to relationships with others is the continuous bond (CB) model of inquiry. In one study, a researcher used narrative and social constructionist ideas to provide an inquiry approach that enables a clinician to understand and respond to the loss of one's culture and relationships due to grief (Draper et al., 2022).

The following approach that can be used to reduce adolescent aggression is non-violent resistance (NVR). This systemic approach works with young people who exhibit aggression and other dangerous behaviour; research findings show that NVR offers a compelling alternative behavioral approach. And acceptable (Mackinnon et al., 2022).

Another family therapy that can be used to help social relationship problems is systemic-dialogical therapy, which provides relevance in the form of individual positional responsibility, namely the responsibility that a person can take regarding his position in the relevant system and context in which a person is embedded in it, as well as the ability to find its place in it (Lini & Bertrando, 2022). In addition to systemic-dialogical therapy, there is also systemic and family therapy. With suitable adaptation, it can be an effective intervention for socially disadvantaged adolescents with a history of

complex trauma and their families (Cobbett, 2022). It is relevant to the phenomena experienced by P1, P3 and P5, where the problems that arise cause trauma in their lives.

In addition to the several approaches and types of therapy above, systemic reflexive exercises called " Collective Cut-Outs " can be a special consideration in providing interventions for mental health problems in supervision and learning. The use of stories, pictures, creativity, and the use of the left hand (right brain) in the context of clinical mental health and focus on their value in reflexive surveillance groups (Adams & Baxter, 2022). It can also be applied to adolescents with emotional disturbances such as hatred and mental health disorders. By exploring experiences related to the individual's relationship with the person he hates, the cut-out pattern can be applied to relationships that are meaningless or detrimental to the individual. However, the focus in providing this intervention is to remain on the condition of the relationship, not the focus on the individual himself.

## **Conclusion**

This study aims to explore the phenomenon of hatred in adolescents associated with a systemic-relational paradigm and alternative intervention strategies. The results show that all participants have experienced hatred with those closest to them, and they prefer to keep their distance from those they hate. Regarding anger and threat, each participant had different feelings; some felt angry, sad and traumatized, while others felt hurt and hatred. Intense fear was experienced by two participants, so that one of them wanted to move to a new place. Regarding the commitment of the participants not to think about the hatred protracted because they realized that this was not useful for them, they also tried to reduce the feeling of hatred they experienced. The phenomenon of hatred is closely related to the systemic-relational paradigm, where this paradigm discusses social system theory and focuses on relationships. Several approaches and intervention strategies from this paradigm can be used to address mental health problems, especially those related to hatred which are part of emotional problems.

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