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license**SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION IN EDUCATION: THE
ROLE OF TEACHERS IN CREATING A BULLY-FREE
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Nasution No. 105, Bandung 40614, Indonesia*Correspondence E-Mail: rlatifadinar@gmail.comDOI: <https://doi.org/10.30598/baileofisipvol1iss2pp192-203>**ABSTRACT**

This study explores the dynamics of social transformation in educational settings by focusing on the role of teachers in fostering a bully-free school environment. The research seeks to identify the forms, causes, and handling strategies of bullying, as well as to understand the contributions of teachers in addressing such behaviors. Employing a qualitative descriptive approach with a case study design, data were collected through classroom observations and in-depth interviews with teachers and students. Data analysis involved reduction, display, and conclusion drawing, supported by methodological and source triangulation to ensure validity. The findings reveal that bullying behaviors in schools manifest in both verbal and physical forms, including name-calling, unauthorized borrowing of belongings, insults involving family members, hitting, and other forms of physical contact. These actions are often rooted in family-related factors and are reinforced by media exposure, particularly through television and mobile phone content. Teachers play a pivotal role in managing bullying by implementing direct intervention strategies, facilitating moments of reflection such as ritual ablution, and providing platforms for dialogue and resolution. In severe cases, professional counseling services within the school are activated to support affected students. This research highlights the significance of teacher responsiveness and culturally adapted conflict resolution in transforming school climates. Its novelty lies in examining how character education programs can be practically integrated with anti-bullying strategies in the classroom. The study recommends further exploration involving schools with diverse backgrounds across Indonesia to broaden the understanding of bullying prevention efforts. These insights contribute to the advancement of social sciences and humanities, particularly in educational reform and the promotion of safe learning environments.

Keywords: Bullying Prevention, Character Education, School Culture, Social Transformation In Education, Teacher Intervention

INTRODUCTION

The advancement of technology in the development of global civilization, particularly in the realm of education, has influenced various fields, including student behavior. The impacts of the modern era encompass multiple aspects, including the emergence of deviant behavior (Abdillah et al., 2020; Bowes et al., 2019). Bullying serves as a concrete example of deviant actions that can pose risks. The culture of bullying often manifests in school environments, involving acts of seniority perpetrated by irresponsible individuals or groups in power (Yusuf et al., 2019). These

actions usually occur repeatedly and provide satisfaction to the perpetrators. Bullying is a severe issue that disrupts the world of education globally and requires special attention from educators and parents (Hartati et al., 2020). Victims of bullying not only come from more powerful groups but often affect children with physical disabilities, who become targets of ridicule and mockery from bullies (Laurensius et al., 2019; Wicaksono et al., 2021). Other triggering factors for bullying involve power imbalances, exposure to social media containing embarrassing information, popularity, and a desire to harm others. This becomes especially crucial in elementary school, where sensitivity and misunderstandings among peers can become a serious problem (Annisa et al., 2022; Subroto, 2021).

Bullying cases are a frightening reality in Indonesia, involving educational levels from elementary schools to universities. According to the Programme for International Students Assessment (PISA, 2018) research, Indonesia ranks fifth highest among members of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) with a percentage of approximately 22.7%. This ranking indicates that Indonesia is the fifth highest out of 78 countries as a nation with the highest bullying rates, affecting 41.1% of students. This figure surpasses the global average (Borualogo & Casas, 2022). Beyond facing bullying, students in Indonesia also experience various forms of harassment. About 22% admit to being insulted, while 18% have experienced theft. Furthermore, 18% report being pushed by peers, 15% have encountered intimidation, and 19% have experienced exclusion (E. Hidayati, 2020; Ramadhanti & Hidayat, 2022). Additionally, 14% of students in Indonesia feel threatened, and 20% have been subjected to spreading rumors by bullying perpetrators. This situation requires serious attention from educators, parents, and the community. Addressing bullying cases not only needs to happen at the school level but also requires collaboration among various parties to create a safe and supportive educational environment for all students in Indonesia (A. I. Saleh & Ishizaka, 2021).

According to Jasra Putra, a Commissioner from the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI) focusing on civil rights and children's participation, incidents involving students who died from kicks and students losing fingers due to cruel acts by fellow students are extreme and fatal examples of physical and psychological bullying that often occur in school environments (Putra & Dendup, 2022). Over nine years, from 2011 to 2019, there were a total of 37,381 complaints related to violence against children associated with bullying, both in the educational environment and on social media. The documented number of reports reached 2,473, and the trend shows a continuous increase (Borualogo & Casas, 2021; Wicaksono, 2023). Without special attention, the situation is predicted to worsen, with the potential emergence of more bullying victims. The educational environment, especially the role of teachers and parents as the main foundation for children, is responsible for preventing and addressing bullying cases.

The presence of social media in human life has brought significant impacts, which can be positive by facilitating global information access but also brings serious negative consequences (Borualogo et al., 2020; Dardiri et al., 2020). Particularly for children, especially those in elementary school who need guidance in using social media, the risk of exposure to violent

behavior, violent content games, and television shows leading to similar outcomes is a reality that needs attention (Hasbullah, 2022; L. N. Hidayati & Amalia, 2021).

In this context, it is acknowledged that social media can be one of the main contributing factors to bullying. Children can be exposed to various unhealthy behaviors through media, which can then influence their interactions in daily life (Abdul Ghofur et al., 2022; Kusumawaty et al., 2022). Parents play a crucial role in guiding their children to use home media. For instance, concrete cases of bullying that can be encountered through television often involve instances like a student being attacked by close friends, incidents of family violence such as a father beating a child to death, and various other bullying cases that are frequently highlighted (Dwiningrum et al., 2020).

According to Fatimah et al. (2021), bullying behavior can have serious physical and psychological impacts on the victims. Some symptoms resulting from the dangers of bullying include fear, anxiety, withdrawal behavior, inability to socialize, fear of crowds, a tendency to remain silent, and experiencing tremors. These negative impacts encompass various aspects of the victims' lives, worsening their quality of life (Afdhal, 2016). The effects stemming from bullying behavior can manifest in diverse ways, both physically and psychologically. In a physical context, bullying victims may experience headaches, dizziness, vomiting, and eating disorders that affect overall health (Afdhal, 2023; Afdhal & Ramdhan, 2023). Meanwhile, the psychological impacts include insomnia, severe depression, antisocial behavior, and frequent anger, and may escalate to self-harm and even suicidal thoughts (Kurniawan & Astuti, 2021; Rahayu et al., 2020).

Several studies have been conducted to investigate the role of teachers in addressing bullying cases, covering various aspects and contexts. First, a study by Devi & Yulianandra (2023) titled "The Implementation of Roots Program in Overcoming Bullying in Schools: A Case Study in Jakarta" highlights the role of early childhood education (PAUD) teachers in facing bullying against children with speech disorders from their peers. Then, a study by Kurniasih et al. (2020) examined the efforts of fourth-grade teachers in addressing bullying cases. This research reveals various strategies applied by teachers to counteract bullying among fourth-grade students, especially in the context of cyberbullying.

Another study by A. Saleh et al. (2021) focuses on the role of classroom teachers in guidance and counseling, emphasizing personal, social, and learning aspects, while not as much in terms of career development as students are still at the first-grade level of secondary school. Kurniati et al. (2023) investigated the role of teachers in addressing bullying among upper-grade students, identifying teachers as figures providing guidance, advice, direction, and mentoring to students. In a study conducted by Noboru et al. (2021), it was found that bullying intervention techniques involve an individual approach to both victims and perpetrators, with steps such as summoning students, listening to their stories, providing advice, and imposing sanctions or penalties. Ali et al. (2022) found that coordination with parents, the formation of study groups, instilling a sense of togetherness, and classical or personal guidance are effective ways to address student bullying behavior. Lastly, a study by Borualogo et al. (2020) titled "Bullying Victimization

in Elementary School Students in Bandung City” indicates that the teacher’s role in addressing bullying involves creating a safe and enjoyable school culture, with a focus on developing non-cognitive skills for students to resist intimidating behavior.

Considering the serious dangers arising from bullying behavior, as outlined earlier, this issue becomes highly urgent and requires immediate attention in every school environment. Although many studies have been conducted on bullying, there is a lack of specific information about the strategies used by teachers to address and prevent bullying behavior in a more specific and in-depth manner. In the context of the novelty of this research, the researchers aim to provide a detailed overview of the strategies employed by teachers in dealing with bullying cases, particularly in SDIT XX Bandung. This study not only focuses on identifying the issues but also attempts to provide concrete solutions by describing school programs that have implemented character education as a guide for other schools. The research goal extends beyond merely identifying strategies used by teachers but also seeks to provide deep insights into the approaches taken to address and prevent bullying behavior at the elementary school level.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study is directed as qualitative research, chosen by the researcher to deeply depict the phenomena experienced by the research subjects. The qualitative approach was selected to provide a more holistic and detailed overview of student behavior in the context of bullying both inside and outside the classroom, as well as the role of teachers in guiding them during the learning process (Kim et al., 2017). To analyze student behavior carefully, this research employs a case study strategy. This approach allows the researcher to understand the context and dynamics in specific situations, such as within the classroom environment and the interaction between students and teachers. Through the case study, the research can explore various aspects related to the bullying phenomenon.

Qualitative methods, as outlined by Lambert & Lambert (2021) and Vaismoradi et al. (2018), are considered an approach grounded in positivistic philosophy, where the researcher plays a key role as the instrument to explore and interpret data. Informant selection is done through the purposive sampling technique, where the researcher intentionally selects informants based on specific considerations related to the case study and research objectives. This research employs data collection techniques through observation and interviews. Observations are conducted to observe field data related to student bullying behavior and the efforts of teachers in addressing the issue. Interviews are conducted in-depth, engaging both teachers and students in question-and-answer sessions to gather further information about the strategies teachers use to confront bullying behavior at SDIT XX Bandung.

To ensure the validity of the obtained data, this research involves validation through two main approaches, namely member checks and source and technique triangulation. Member checks are conducted by asking the research subjects to sign the interview data as a form of

consent and confirmation of the accuracy of the information provided. Meanwhile, source and technique triangulation is carried out by comparing the interview results with data obtained from observations and documentation. This approach ensures that the obtained data is consistent and accountable. The data analysis technique used involves several stages, including data reduction to simplify information, data display to visualize findings, and verification to confirm the results of the analysis.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Forms of Bullying Behavior at SDIT XX Bandung

Based on the research conducted at SDIT XX Bandung, it is evident that bullying behavior takes various and diverse forms, occurring in various contexts, both during the learning process and outside the classroom. The issue of bullying often starts from trivial matters and motives to disturb, creating less conducive dynamics within the school environment. One notable example is the commotion when students line up to enter the classroom. Shoving from behind and intentionally grabbing a friend's shoulder from behind creates an unsafe and uncomfortable situation. Additionally, inside the classroom, seemingly harmless actions, such as a male student flying paper airplanes, can have serious consequences, leading to disturbances and even tears from female students who feel disturbed.

The problem becomes more complicated when there is name-calling and insults among students. Using derogatory and demeaning terms creates tension among classmates, even leading to more serious disputes. In many cases, misunderstandings and feelings of offense among students become the main triggers for conflicts, often culminating in verbal arguments and confusion among students.

AFK, a 10-year-old student, provides a bitter testimony about the bullying experiences he has endured in the school environment. He reveals that he is often a victim of bullying by being called demeaning names related to his parents. AFK experiences significant psychological impacts due to these actions, which not only harm him emotionally but also disturb his psychological well-being. Apart from being called by his parents' names, AFK also faces mockery and insults from fellow students. These rude and demeaning remarks create an unsafe environment and make him feel isolated among his classmates. This experience adds additional pressure to AFK's mental health, considering his very young age.

The information from AFK paints a poignant picture of the serious impact of bullying behavior, which not only creates an insecure atmosphere in the school environment but can also lead to long-term psychological consequences for the victim. Almost in line with AFK, 11-year-old FYS also experiences similar issues. FYS reveals that he is often the target of bullying behavior involving shoving from behind and intentional grabbing of his shoulders by classmates of the opposite gender. This situation creates an unsafe and uncomfortable environment for FYS, causing uncertainty and anxiety while at school. The shoving from behind and intentional

shoulder-grabbing create emotional and physical pressure on FYS. These actions not only harm him physically but also have significant psychological effects, disrupting his overall well-being. FYS feels discomfort and anxiety due to this situation, which should ideally be a safe and supportive learning environment.

Based on the collected data, it can be identified that forms of bullying in the school environment involve various actions, including name-calling, nicknames, and unpleasant behaviors. In the learning environment, bullying actions can include calling peers with derogatory nicknames or borrowing items without permission. Additionally, bullying actions also encompass calling and using parents' names, which can have significant psychological impacts on the victims. Physically, there are more aggressive forms of bullying, such as hitting, grabbing shoulders and bodies, and even stepping on feet. These findings reflect the diversity of bullying actions that occur in the school environment, both verbally and physically, creating an unsafe and uncomfortable environment for students.

The results of this research are also consistent with previous studies conducted by Abdillah et al. (2020). In their research, Abdillah et al. (2020) identified various forms of bullying behavior, including physical actions such as hitting, kicking, and damaging the victim's belongings. Additionally, Abdillah et al. (2020) also noted other bullying behaviors, such as teasing, social isolation, and disturbances related to sexual, racial, religious, and national issues. The study by Wicaksono et al. (2021) significantly contributes by reinforcing the previous research findings. In their study, Wicaksono et al. (2021) highlighted various forms of student misconduct in Indonesian elementary schools. Some identified behaviors include smoking, violating school rules such as not wearing the uniform on the designated day, and playing during class hours.

Furthermore, Wicaksono et al. (2021) also documented several other behaviors, including hiding a friend's belongings, fighting, being difficult to control, asking for money from friends, skipping school or being absent without explanation, arriving late to school, lying, being mischievous, disturbing friends, and calling friends by their parent's names. Additionally, uploading inappropriate images on social media platforms such as Facebook was also identified as one of the forms of student misconduct in their study. These findings indicate that student misconduct can be multi-dimensional, involving various aspects of behavior that pose challenges to the school environment. Considering the various forms of student misconduct identified, holistic preventive measures and interventions can be taken to create a more positive and safe learning environment for all students in Indonesian elementary schools.

The Causes of Bullying Behavior at SD XX Bandung

Several informants provided explanations regarding the causes of bullying in the school environment. The main identified factor is exposure to television and mobile device content. Many students are exposed to inappropriate content for children, especially violent scenes in movies. This phenomenon illustrates that bullying behavior can be influenced by what they

witness and imitate from mass media. Thus, the influence of inappropriate content can play a significant role in shaping student behavior in the school environment. SS, a 38-year-old 5th-grade teacher, conveyed that the primary factor causing bullying in the school environment is exposure to television and mobile device content. According to her observations, many students are exposed to inappropriate content, particularly violent scenes in movies, YouTube content, games, and the like. SS emphasized that the influence of mass media, especially through electronic devices, can impact the mindset and behavior of students at school.

Another factor considered a strong cause of bullying is bad habits brought from home to school. An unfavorable home environment, such as conflicts among family members or a broken home condition, can create emotional instability that affects students' behavior at school. Disruptions occurring at home, including from parents, neighbors, and friends, are also seen as triggers for bullying behavior. MP, a 30-year-old 4th-grade teacher, revealed that another factor considered a strong cause of bullying is bad habits brought from home to school. According to her observations, an unfavorable home environment, such as conflicts among family members or a broken home condition, can create emotional instability that impacts students' behavior at school. MP highlighted that disturbances occurring at home, whether from parents, neighbors, or friends, are also considered triggers for bullying behavior. According to MP, negative experiences at home can shape inappropriate behavioral patterns in the school environment.

This explanation is reinforced by the research findings presented by Borualogo & Casas (2022). According to them, bullying and harassment are often depicted as funny or acceptable behaviors in certain contexts. Some examples of how media portrays intimidation include reality TV, specific talk shows, "shock jock" radio hosts, as well as popular films and video games. All of these are often exploited in ways that belittle and support bullying behavior.

In situations where children are raised at home with experiences of rejection or witnessing abuse in the family environment, bullying and harassment are often seen as acceptable survival strategies. They may believe that the world is hostile and view retaliation as a tool to protect their survival. In some cases, family members may use mockery and criticism as a form of parenting, or the media plays a role in influencing how someone perceives bullying actions. The significance of media influence in shaping perceptions of bullying is also discussed in the research by Borualogo & Casas (2022). They emphasize that the images and messages conveyed by the media have a significant impact on how individuals understand and respond to bullying behavior. This indicates that media not only reflects social reality but can also shape the norms and values surrounding this phenomenon.

This research is reinforced by A. I. Saleh & Ishizaka (2021), who state that parenting styles, school climate, negative social environments, and media such as the internet, television, and other electronic media have a negative impact on child development. One of the emerging impacts is deviant behavior, aggression, and a tendency to engage in violence. Wicaksono's study (2023) also highlights factors contributing to bullying behavior. Violations that end in physical punishment, for example, can leave deep trauma for the victim and become a trigger for bullying.

An ineffective education system at school is also considered a factor that can cause or worsen the bullying phenomenon. The last factor emphasized is the influence of the environment and society, especially social media and electronic media, which have a significant impact on individual behavior, including bullying behavior (Borualogo & Casas, 2021).

It's important to understand that these factors do not stand alone but are interconnected and can mutually influence each other. Parenting patterns at home can affect the school climate, and both can interact with media influences to shape children's behavior. In other words, a holistic and collaborative approach is needed to address the issue of bullying, involving cooperation between families, schools, and communities to create an environment that positively supports child development.

The Role of Teachers in Creating a Bully-Free School

The results of the research, involving observations and interviews with various informants, indicate that the school implements bullying prevention strategies through the implementation of various character education programs and the cultivation of manners and morals. At SDIT XX Bandung, teachers also employ specific strategies in tackling bullying. This approach includes understanding the root of the problem, imposing sanctions on bullying perpetrators, providing guidance, offering services, and issuing warnings as preventive measures.

Several strategies implemented by the school aim to create positive changes in student behavior. In this context, observations and in-depth interviews with teachers expose various efforts in addressing bullying behavior. Teachers engage in mediating conflicts between involved students, providing time for students to leave the situation, and encouraging them to perform ablution as a means of calming themselves. After creating a conducive environment, teachers seek explanations from both parties, guide the perpetrators to reflect on their actions, and require them to apologize to the victims. If a bullying case reaches a certain severity level, further action is taken by bringing the case to the school's counseling services. This is where the professionalism of guidance and counseling teachers becomes crucial in addressing cases thoroughly and comprehensively.

The necessity of providing guidance and counseling services in every educational institution has been regulated by the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia Number 82 of 2015. This regulation is designed with the main goal of preventing and addressing various forms of violence in the school environment. The articles in this regulation provide guidance on efforts to prevent and handle acts of violence in educational units. Collaboration between parents/guardians, educators, education personnel, school committees, and the community is encouraged in accordance with the prevailing laws in Indonesia. At SDIT XX Bandung, concrete efforts to prevent bullying behavior are carried out through a weekly character project recorded in the student's muthabaah book. This project serves as a character education program where students apply one character value each week. The activity takes place over one week in the classroom and school environment, guided by the

character book that must receive signatures from parents and teachers. SDIT XX Bandung also conducts seminars on manners every Friday, with the hope that these activities can effectively prevent bullying behavior from an early age.

The findings of the study by Borualogo et al. (2020) indicate that one of the steps that teachers can take to address and prevent bullying behavior is to deepen character education and strengthen the religious attitudes of students. This can be achieved through the implementation of lessons derived from the Qur'an, moral education, and the implementation of various character education programs. However, this study has limitations that need to be considered. Although the informants come from schools with an A accreditation that has character education programs, the diversity of knowledge among informants is considered to lack comprehensive coverage of the entire spectrum. Therefore, further research is recommended to involve various schools in Indonesia with character education programs, encompassing a wider range of knowledge and experiences in addressing bullying behavior.

The significance of this research for scholarly development can serve as valuable reference material in efforts to address bullying behavior in the field of education, particularly at the elementary school level. The implications of this research contribute to understanding effective strategies to minimize bullying incidents in the educational environment and can serve as a foundation for further research to deepen the understanding and effectiveness of prevention and intervention efforts for bullying behavior. The research by Dardiri et al. (2020) supports a preventive approach by providing advice to all students and maintaining active communication with parents. At SD Pulai Rima, Hasbullah (2022) strengthens the research findings by demonstrating that addressing student misconduct can be done through a deepening of Islamic teachings, fostering good cooperation among teachers, and establishing positive collaboration among parents. These approaches are considered effective and appropriate solutions for addressing bullying behavior in schools.

CONCLUSION

Based on the data above, it can be concluded that the forms of bullying behavior in the school environment involve various actions, such as calling friends by nicknames or titles, borrowing items without permission, calling names of parents, and verbal actions like throwing notes with sarcasm or using offensive language. Moreover, the physical aspects of bullying include actions like hitting, holding shoulders and bodies and stepping on feet. The causes of bullying behavior originate from the habits of children at home or family factors, while media influence, especially television shows and mobile phones, can reinforce inappropriate violent behavior in children. Teachers have specific strategies for handling bullying cases, such as intervening in conflicts between students, providing break moments by performing ablutions and listening to explanations from all parties involved. If bullying cases reach a serious level, school counseling services will be activated, and guidance counselors will handle the cases with

professionalism. However, this research has limitations, especially in the diversity of informant knowledge, which tends to be limited despite coming from schools with A accreditation and character education programs. Therefore, further research is recommended to involve various schools in Indonesia with character education programs, with the hope of expanding insights and understanding of efforts to address bullying behavior in the educational environment.

ETHICAL STATEMENT AND DISCLOSURE

This study was conducted in accordance with established ethical principles, including informed consent, protection of informants' confidentiality, and respect for local cultural values. Special consideration was given to participants from vulnerable groups to ensure their safety, comfort, and equal rights to participate. No external funding was received, and the authors declare no conflict of interest. All data and information presented were collected through valid research methods and have been verified to ensure their accuracy and reliability. The use of artificial intelligence (AI) was limited to technical assistance for writing and language editing, without influencing the scientific substance of the work. The authors express their gratitude to the informants for their valuable insights, and to the anonymous reviewers for their constructive feedback on an earlier version of this manuscript. The authors take full responsibility for the content and conclusions of this article.

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