

Bullying Policies in High Schools: Implications for Educational Policy and Student Well-being

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Abstract: *Bullying in schools, especially at the Senior High School (SMA) level, is a serious issue that negatively impacts students' mental health and academic achievement. This study evaluates anti-bullying policies implemented in senior high schools and analyzes their implications for educational policy and student welfare. Data show an increase in bullying cases in Indonesia, despite various prevention policies and programs that have been implemented. Factors that contribute to bullying behavior include family conditions, social environment, and media. This study uses data analysis methods from the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI) and previous studies to gain a deeper understanding of the dynamics and impacts of bullying. The results show that despite prevention efforts, more effective and comprehensive strategies are still needed. This study suggests the implementation of character education and mental health counseling that are more integrated into the school curriculum to reduce bullying incidents and create a safer and more conducive educational environment.*

Keywords: *bullying, secondary school, mental health, education*

Bullying di sekolah, terutama di tingkat Sekolah Menengah Atas (SMA), merupakan isu serius yang berdampak negatif pada kesehatan mental dan prestasi akademik siswa. Penelitian ini mengevaluasi kebijakan anti-bullying yang diterapkan di SMA dan menganalisis implikasinya bagi kebijakan pendidikan dan kesejahteraan siswa. Data menunjukkan peningkatan kasus bullying di Indonesia, meskipun berbagai kebijakan dan program pencegahan telah diberlakukan. Faktor-faktor yang berkontribusi terhadap perilaku bullying meliputi kondisi keluarga, lingkungan sosial, dan media. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode analisis data dari Komisi Perlindungan Anak Indonesia (KPAI) dan studi-studi terdahulu untuk mendapatkan pemahaman yang lebih mendalam tentang dinamika dan dampak bullying. Hasil menunjukkan bahwa meskipun ada upaya pencegahan, masih diperlukan strategi yang lebih efektif dan komprehensif. Penelitian ini menyarankan implementasi pendidikan karakter dan penyuluhan kesehatan mental yang lebih terintegrasi dalam kurikulum sekolah untuk mengurangi insiden bullying dan membentuk lingkungan pendidikan yang lebih aman dan kondusif.

Kata kunci: *intimidasi, mekolah menengah, kesehatan mental, pendidikan*

Introduction

Bullying in schools is still a problem that often arises and is an important concern in the world of education, especially at the Senior High School (SMA) level. Bullying not only has a negative impact physically and psychologically on the victim, but can also disrupt the learning process and social development. students. Based on data from the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI), the number of bullying cases in schools has increased every year. In the period from 2011 to 2019, there were 2,473 reports related to bullying in educational environments and social media, with a continuing upward trend (KPAI, 2020).

The impact of bullying on student welfare is very significant. Students who are victims of bullying tend to experience decreased academic achievement, low self-confidence, depression, and can even encourage deviant behavior such as violence or suicide (Prasetyo, 2011). In addition, an unsafe and uncomfortable school environment due to bullying can disrupt the overall learning climate, which ultimately affects the quality of education.

In response to this problem, a number of anti- bullying policies have been implemented in schools, including at the high school level. These policies include school rules, prevention programs, socialization activities, and disciplinary enforcement for bullies. The government, through the Ministry of Education and Culture, has also issued regulations and guidelines to prevent and handle bullying in the school environment. Article 28B paragraph (2) of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia emphasizes that every child has the right to protection from violence and discrimination, and has the right to live, grow, and develop.

However, despite the various policies that have been implemented, cases of bullying in schools are still high. This raises questions about the effectiveness of existing anti- bullying policies. Have these policies succeeded in reducing the number of bullying cases? Has its implementation been in accordance with the expected goals? What factors influence the success or failure of these policies?

Evaluation of anti- bullying policies in high schools is important to identify the strengths and weaknesses of existing policies. By conducting an evaluation, it can be seen to what extent the policy is effective in preventing and handling bullying cases, as well as how it impacts student welfare. In addition, evaluation can also provide input for the development of more effective educational policies that are oriented towards student welfare.

The factors that influence bullying are quite complex, including individual aspects such as biological conditions and temperament, as well as environmental factors such as family, peers, school, and media (Yusuf Fahrudin, 2012). Differences in terms of social class, economy, religion, gender, ethnicity, and the environment such as disharmonious families and unsupportive school situations can also trigger bullying (Astuti, 2008). Therefore, in order for anti- bullying policies to be effective, it is necessary to consider these factors comprehensively.

Previous studies have discussed the phenomenon of bullying and its impact on students (Astuti, 2008; Prasetyo, 2011), but studies that specifically evaluate anti-bullying policies at the high school level are still limited. Therefore, this study aims to assess anti-bullying policies implemented in high schools and analyze their impact on educational policies and student welfare.

It is expected that the results of this study can contribute to efforts to prevent and handle bullying in schools, as well as assist related parties in formulating more effective and sustainable policies. In addition, this study also aims to raise awareness of the importance of creating a safe school environment and supporting the overall development of students.

Research methods

This study is a systematic literature study, aimed at collecting and analyzing literature related to anti-bullying policies in high schools and their implications for educational policies and student well-being. First, database selection was carried out through trusted academic databases such as PubMed, ERIC, Google Scholar, and JSTOR, which provide extensive sources on educational policies and mental health. The search strategy was developed using keywords such as "anti-bullying policies", "high school", "student welfare", "education policy", and "Indonesia", to ensure the relevance of the literature to the research topic.

exclusion criteria were applied, with the requirement that the literature should specifically discuss anti-bullying policies at the high school level, their effectiveness, and their impact on students, and be published within the last ten years to ensure data relevance. The literature search and selection process was conducted by reviewing the title, abstract, and full content, ensuring compliance with the established inclusion criteria ("Yuhanas & Subroto, 2024").

Analysis and synthesis of the selected literature were then conducted to identify general patterns, trends, and lacunae in the existing research. A qualitative approach was used in the evaluation and synthesis of information, with the aim of assessing the effectiveness of the implemented anti-bullying policies ("Sari et al., 2022"). The results of this literature analysis are discussed by considering their practical implications for educational approaches and policies in high schools. From this analysis, recommendations for the implementation of more effective anti-bullying policies and suggestions for further research that can support more informed and targeted policy making are made.

With this methodology, this study is expected to provide an in-depth analysis of anti-bullying policies and their implications for students' well-being and academic achievement, providing valuable insights for policy makers, educators, and researchers in an effort to improve a safe and supportive educational environment for all students (Handayani et al. 2020)

Results and Discussion

Bullying is a complex social phenomenon and a major concern in the world of education. The word "bullying" comes from the English word "bull," which refers to a bull, symbolizing aggressive and dominant behavior. Etymologically, bullying refers to the act of oppressing or disturbing a weaker individual. According to Olweus (1999), bullying is a psychosocial problem characterized by repeated acts of degrading and insulting others, with negative impacts on both the perpetrator and the victim, where the perpetrator has greater power than the victim. Riauskina, Djuwita, and Soesetio (2005) explain that bullying in schools is aggressive behavior that is carried out repeatedly by one or a group of students who have power over other weaker students, with the aim of hurting.

Bullying cases in education in Indonesia still occur with significant frequency. Based on records from the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI), throughout 2021 there were 17 cases of bullying involving students and educators. In 2022, there was a tragic case where Bintang Tungkaji, a 13-year-old Madrasah Tsanawiyah (MTs) student in Kotamobagu, North Sulawesi, died after being bullied by nine of his friends. This case underscores how serious the impact of bullying is and the importance of efforts to deal with it effectively.

In the school environment, bullying can be classified into six main types according to Astuti's research (2008). First, Direct Physical Contact includes physical aggressive actions such as hitting, pushing, biting, pulling hair, pinching, scratching, or damaging other people's belongings. Second, Direct Verbal Contact involves hurtful words, such as insulting, cursing, accusing, slandering, publicly humiliating, or spreading gossip. Third, Direct Non-Verbal Behavior, which includes demeaning facial expressions or body movements, such as a cynical look or an insulting facial expression. Fourth, Indirect Non-Verbal Behavior, which is an action that makes someone feel ignored or excluded, such as isolating or not acknowledging their existence. Fifth, Cyber Bullying involves using digital media to attack, such as making negative comments, spreading derogatory videos, or defaming people through social media. Finally, Sexual Harassment includes physical or verbal actions with sexual connotations that degrade the dignity of the victim. Each of these forms of bullying has serious consequences for the victim, affecting their mental, emotional, and social health.

In addition to bullying, there are various other negative behaviors that often appear in the school environment. Based on research at SDN Keboansikep 01 Gedangan Sidoarjo, negative student behavior was found such as disturbing friends during learning, teasing with inappropriate names, showing emotional behavior such as being easily angered and acting rudely, being a provocateur by inciting friends to do negative actions, getting involved in fights, playing truant, talking dirty, being noisy during class hours, violating school rules, and often going in and out of class without permission.

The causes of bullying and negative student behavior vary widely and are interrelated. Ariesto (2009) stated that family factors play an important role in shaping children's behavior. Children from troubled families, such as parents who often give excessive punishment or households filled with tension and conflict, tend to imitate the aggressive behavior they witness at home. Lack of attention from parents, divorce, or economic difficulties can also make children feel neglected, so they seek attention through negative

behavior. Environmental and social factors also have a big influence. Children often engage in bullying behavior to gain recognition from their peers. If they hang out with friends who have bad behavior, they tend to imitate that behavior (Wahani et al. , 2022). An unfavorable social environment, such as poverty or areas with high crime rates, also increases the risk of bullying . In addition, social media and television play a role in shaping children's behavior. Shows that show violence or aggressive actions are often followed by children (Saripah , 2006).

Individual factors, such as personal traits, emotional control, and motivation levels, also influence students' tendency to engage in negative behavior. Mustamu et al. (2020) found that discipline and motivation have a strong relationship with adolescent mental health. Students who have difficulty controlling their emotions or have low motivation are more likely to exhibit undesirable behavior. School factors also play an important role. Lack of firm action from the school against bullying cases can worsen the situation (Riauskina et al. , 2005). Schools that do not have clear rules or do not enforce sanctions for negative behavior can give the impression that such actions are acceptable. In addition, an unsupportive school environment and a lack of concern for student welfare can be factors that trigger bullying.

Bullying and negative behavior have serious impacts on adolescent mental health. Victims of bullying often experience psychological problems such as depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, stress, and suicidal thoughts (Davis, 2005). They also tend to experience social isolation, difficulties in interpersonal relationships, and decreased academic achievement. Cornell Research et al. (2013) showed that bullying can be a determining factor in low academic achievement and increase the risk of dropping out of school. Bullies are also negatively impacted. They are at risk of experiencing psychological disorders such as antisocial behavior, hyperactivity, and problems in social relationships (Skrzypiec et al. , 2012). Ongoing aggressive behavior can lead them to legal problems and difficulties in social adjustment as adults.

Research by Azzahro and Sari (2021) shows a link between psychosocial factors and the risk of depression in adolescents. Academic pressure, conflict in interpersonal relationships, and uncertainty about the future can trigger depression. Adolescents who experience this condition tend to withdraw from social interactions, lose motivation, and face obstacles in optimizing their potential. Riantiarno et al. (2023) emphasized the importance of mental health education for adolescents. Adolescents are often faced with various mental health problems such as anxiety, depression, eating disorders, and stress that are influenced by various factors. This education plays a role in increasing adolescents' understanding of mental health, recognizing signs of problems, and encouraging them to seek help if needed.

Handling bullying and negative student behavior requires a comprehensive approach involving various parties. Schools as educational institutions play a major role in creating a safe and supportive environment. According to Riantiarno et al. (2023), mental health education has been shown to be effective in increasing adolescent understanding and awareness. Schools can adopt anti- bullying and character education programs as part of their curriculum. Teachers also have a significant role in identifying and addressing negative

student behavior. Afiyani et al. (2019) recommends a personal approach from teachers, such as providing guidance, motivation, and implementing educational sanctions. Teachers are expected to build positive relationships with students, understand their backgrounds, and create an inclusive classroom atmosphere.

The family plays an important role in the development of children's behavior. Mustamu et al. (2020) emphasized how vital positive parenting, discipline, and motivation are to support adolescent mental health. Parents should improve communication with their children, provide attention, and create a harmonious home atmosphere. With the right support and guidance, children can learn to better manage their emotions and behavior. The use of guidance and counseling services in schools should be maximized. Mawaddah and Prastya (2023) highlighted the importance of screening and early detection of mental health problems in adolescents. School counselors can provide appropriate interventions, help students overcome the challenges they face, and encourage positive development.

The implementation of Pancasila values, especially the second principle that emphasizes "Just and Civilized Humanity," is very important in the formation of students' character. By instilling the values of humanity, justice, and politeness, it is hoped that students can respect others, develop empathy, and avoid negative behavior. Bullying and negative behavior among students is a complex problem with many dimensions. Various causal factors are interrelated, ranging from individual aspects, family, social environment, to school. The impact of this problem is not only felt by the victims and perpetrators, but also affects the climate in schools and society at large.

Research shows that adolescents are a group that is vulnerable to mental health problems due to bullying (Azzahro & Sari, 2021). Academic pressure, hormonal changes, and the search for self-identity during adolescence can worsen this condition. Therefore, early intervention and effective prevention efforts are needed. Schools as educational institutions must be proactive in dealing with bullying. This can be done by creating a positive school culture, implementing clear anti-bullying policies, and involving the entire school community in prevention efforts. Teachers need to be trained to recognize the signs of bullying and have skills in classroom management and effective intervention.

Families should also be actively involved in this effort. Parents need to build good communication with their children, understand the challenges they face, and provide emotional support. Democratic and affectionate parenting can help children develop healthy social and emotional skills. The media plays a vital role in educating the public about the dangers of bullying and the importance of adolescent mental health. Public campaigns and educational programs can raise public awareness and encourage better behavioral changes.

The application of Pancasila values in character education also plays an important role. The second principle of Pancasila teaches about just and civilized humanity, respects human rights, and emphasizes the importance of mutual respect. Therefore, character education should be an inseparable part of the learning process, so that students are not only academically intelligent but also have good morals and ethics. Collaboration between schools, families, and communities is essential to create an environment that supports adolescent mental and social development. Intervention and prevention programs need to be designed comprehensively and sustainably, involving various stakeholders.

Further research is also important to dig deeper into the factors that contribute to bullying behavior and formulate effective intervention strategies. Research that focuses on solutions and practical approaches will help in developing more appropriate and positive impact programs. Overall, addressing the problem of bullying and negative behavior among students requires commitment and cooperation from all parties. With the right approach, it is hoped that a young generation can be formed that is mentally healthy, has a strong character, and is ready to face challenges in the future. Teenagers who grow up in a positive environment will be better able to make constructive contributions to society and the nation.

Conclusion

Bullying in education is a complex problem that requires multidimensional intervention, considering its diverse root causes and the serious impacts it causes for both perpetrators and victims. Various factors such as family, social environment, and school conditions play a role in increasing the risk of bullying behavior. The impact of bullying is very significant on adolescent mental health, including depression, anxiety, and other potential psychological disorders that can affect their academic achievement and social interactions. Effective prevention and handling efforts require collaboration between schools, families, and the wider community. Character education and mental health counseling in schools, as well as the use of media for education, are crucial in creating a supportive and safe environment. Through the implementation of comprehensive policies and a proactive approach, it is hoped that bullying can be minimized, thereby creating a young generation that is mentally healthy, ethical, and contributes positively to society.

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