

Coping Strategies for Bullying: A Phenomenology of Student Perceptions

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Abstract

Efforts to reduce bullying in schools can be made by making strategies. However, so far, the strategies to overcome bullying are still seen from the teacher's point of view, and we need to see strategies to overcome bullying from students' perceptions. This study aims to find students' strategies for overcoming bullying. This research uses a qualitative approach with the type of phenomenology. The informants were high school and vocational high school students in Java. Data were collected through interviews, forum group discussions, and open-ended questionnaires. Data analysis used interactive analysis techniques. Data validity used triangulation of sources and techniques. The results showed that students' strategies to overcome bullying were carried out through social environment, internal factors, and external factors. The most effective strategies to overcome bullying are reporting to parents, teachers, or other students, being indifferent, establishing positive friendships, and focusing on the goals to be achieved. Supporting factors for the success of this strategy are the support system, guidance and counseling, and school socialization regarding anti-bullying. The inhibiting factors are school rules that still need to be firm, school culture that has not changed, and there is still an assumption that bullying is regular.

Keywords: *strategies bullying, phenomenology, student perceptions*

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INTRODUCTION

Education in Indonesia is still always focused on various efforts to improve in many ways, one of which is the case of student mental health, especially in schools. Mental health is closely related to morale in Indonesia. Mental health is one of the keys for students to achieve maximum achievement. Intimidation by one person to another can cause mental health problems. Mental health or well-being is a term that is difficult to translate but can be substantially interpreted as adult well-being that is closely related to well-being and peace in psychological and functional terms, including sub-constructs such as self-acceptance, positive relationships, autonomy, and life goals (Nurhayati et al., 2022)

A person's mental health can be disturbed if they get some stimulation, including unpleasant treatment from others. This unpleasant treatment is included in bullying behavior. Bullying is a phenomenon that occurs everywhere, including in educational and school environments. Bullying can be defined as aggressive or hostile behavior that is carried out deliberately, repeatedly, and continuously with the aim of hurting or injuring other people both physically and psychologically. Bullying is also commonly known as bullying or "risak," where bullying is included in the category of violence (Al-Raqqad et al., 2017; Koyanagi et al., 2019; Rochma & Nuryono, 2017). There are various forms of bullying behavior (Irvan Usman, 2015), including (a) physical bullying, such as stepping on feet, kicking, spitting, cheating, pinching hitting; (b) non-physical or verbal bullying, such as shouting, mocking, insulting, calling by names other than their names, spreading gossip or untrue issues, slandering, and humiliating in public; (c) mental/psychological bullying, such as silencing, ostracizing, sneering, glaring or humiliating.

Bullying is an act that not only has a physical impact but also causes various other impacts that can affect the mental and psychological health of bullying victims. The impact of bullying behavior can be very diverse; victims of bullying tend to have internal problems such as anxiety, depression, and stress disorders and even the desire to end their lives or commit suicide (Kim et al., 2020; Nurhayati et al., 2021, 2022). Related to the tremendous impact of bullying, it is essential to know the perceptions of students regarding bullying cases that occur in their schools, as well as students' strategies for overcoming bullying that occurs at school.

Perception is a person's process of understanding things that are around him or his environment through the five senses that are influenced by experience so that he is aware of what has been observed, which ultimately affects his attitudes and behavior (Akrim & Sulasmi, 2020). In addition, the perception process which is a process by which individuals know and realize an object based on a stimulus that feels it. So, student perception here is a description of the understanding of students' experiences related to a particular event experienced by students, such as bullying behavior or actions they have experienced.

The role and various forms of support from parents, peers, and schools in overcoming bullying are vital because they function as protective factors to maintain the mental health of students who are victims of bullying and perpetrators of bullying. Victims and perpetrators of bullying need a support system that can strengthen students mentally and psychologically in dealing with various problems that occur in their lives. This is in accordance with (Biswas et al., 2020), which states that the risk factors associated with bullying victims are comprehensive and include family dynamics, school factors, and peer support. In addition, the Student Student Health Survey (GSHS) reports that monitoring and attention from parents and schools can reduce the risk of children being victims of bullying. Efforts to reduce bullying in schools can be made by making the right strategy. However, so far, the strategy to overcome bullying is still seen from the teacher's point of view and needs to see strategies to overcome bullying from the perception of students (Camodeca & Goossens, 2005). In addition, only a few students dare to report and seek help from adults at school. Therefore, it is necessary to study strategies to overcome bullying based on students' perceptions.

RESEARCH METHODS

Type of Research

The study used a qualitative approach with a type of phenomenology. Phenomenology (Mu'ammar, 2017; Nugrahani, 2014) is a data analysis model that seeks understanding by conducting participant observation, open interviews, and personal documents. The phenomenon to be analyzed is related to strategies to overcome bullying from the student's perspective.

Participants and Research Setting

The participants of this study were high school and vocational high school students who had experienced bullying and who had not experienced bullying. This research was conducted in Java, Indonesia, which is represented by several regions, namely the Special Region of Yogyakarta, DKI Jakarta, Central Java, West Java, and East Java. Data was collected through informants by interviewing and looking at the results of Google forms determined by simple random sampling. Interviews were conducted with three students, and the total number of participants who filled out the Google form was 109 students. When researchers sought information through teachers at school, students who had experienced bullying were identified. Then, the researcher traced who was involved and who had experienced bullying. In this case, students who did not experience bullying in senior high school were also interviewed as an additional perspective on strategies to overcome bullying from the student side.

Data collection

Data were collected through interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs), documentation, and open-ended questionnaires with the help of Google Forms to get answers from students in Java. Interviews were conducted to explore data on the types of bullying experienced by students when bullying occurs, where bullying occurs, who the perpetrators are, and strategies to rise and try to overcome bullying while at school. FGDs were conducted to obtain confirmation, definition, and explanation of data interaction from a discussion of a group of participants, as well as to find out practices and events related to bullying cases at school.

Data Analysis

Data analysis used Miles Huberman and Saldana's interactive analysis technique, which consisted of data condensation, data presentation, and conclusion drawing or verification. To find themes, relationships between themes, and conclusions. Activities in qualitative data analysis are carried out interactively and take place continuously until completion so that the data is saturated. The interactive model (Matthew B. Miles, 2014) is referred to as follows:

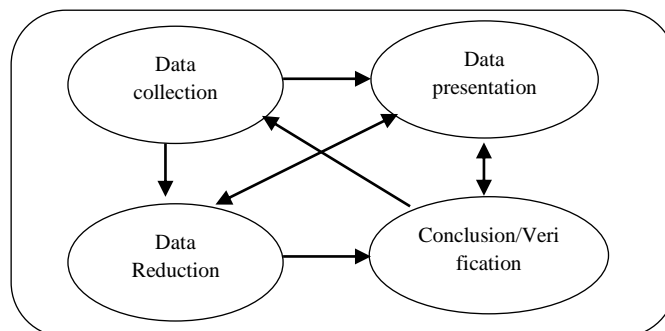


Figure 1 Components of the Interactive Data Analysis Model

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Definition of Bullying

Students interpret bullying with a variety of different meanings, including bullying, using power to hurt others, destroying someone's mentality, demonizing someone, humiliating others, physical and non-physical violence, extortion, mocking, ostracizing, threatening, demeaning, humiliating, cornering, berating, hurting from the strong to the weak and slandering someone. The purpose of bullying is to make the victim hurt and sad, bring down other people's mentality, not want to be rivaled, and make other students uncomfortable and suffer intentionally.

Bullying Perpetrators and Victims

Based on the results of interviews and google forms, students who have been bullied are 18%, with a total of 20 students, and those who are not bully perpetrators are 82%, with a total of 89 students. Data related to bully victims was obtained from Google Forms. Eighty-two students are victims of bullying, which is 75%, and 82 students are not victims of bullying or feel they have never been bullied, 24% or 27 students. The students interviewed stated that the three of them had never been bullied. However, of the three students interviewed, two students stated that they were victims of bullying, and one student claimed to have never experienced bullying. Bully perpetrators include classmates, younger siblings, older siblings, teachers, and even their own families.

Types of Bullying

The types of bullying that students have experienced include cyberbullying, physical, verbal, and social. Each student has a different experience; some only experience social bullying, some experience cyberbullying as well as physical and verbal. Students who have experienced cyberbullying are 5 people (5%), 23 people (21%), 51 people (47%), 22 social people (20%), and never bullied as many as 8 students (8%).

Students' Feelings When Experiencing Bullying

Students who experience bullying convey that the feelings they have are very diverse, including 1) Good self-defense, such as ignorance and mediocrity; 2) Mental problems, such as anxiety, fear, low self-esteem/inferiority/lack of confidence, not being able to make peace with yourself, depression, depressed, resentment, insomnia, over thinking; 3) Hopelessness: feeling alone, disappointed, feeling helpless, discriminated against.

Location of Bullying

On average, students experience bullying at school, in class, and in the community. This is in accordance with research conducted by Ariefa that aspects of bullying incidents occur at home, school, and society (Efianingrum et al., 2021; Efianingrum, 2020). Schools, as a place of education for students, ideally provide protection and a safe place for students. A comprehensive approach to a positive school environment that emphasizes student well-being and strengthens norms of inclusiveness and diversity is essential in preventing bullying.

Impact of Bullying

Students who experience bullying will feel or get the impact caused, including 1) Mental disorders such as insecurity, suspicion, overthinking, depression, trauma, anxiety, and timidity (Fear of having friends, fear of being stared at by strangers); 2) Withdrawal from the social environment: quiet, lazy to go to school, constantly remembering the incident when bullied, inspire the spirit to move forward, be more careful in choosing friends (be vigilant), depressed, desperate, more motivated to be better, and inferior; 3) Fear and discomfort if you are in one place with the bully, less interested in exploring new things, becoming someone afraid of something, loss of self-confidence, becoming someone who has a grudge against the perpetrator, the value of the lesson decreases, always afraid if you will meet other people, students become less / do not care about the surrounding environment.

Strategies for Overcoming Bullying

Student strategies to overcome bullying are carried out in several ways, namely:

1. Social environment, namely finding better friends, ignoring and forgetting (ignoring bad words), avoiding or staying away from people who make them uncomfortable.
2. Internal (Individual) factors, namely reading articles about self-love on the internet, trying to make peace with the situation, defending yourself in the right way and not bullying, fighting back, being yourself, strengthening yourself, calming yourself, honing your potential (occupying yourself with positive things, proving that victims of bullying are not what others think and showing achievement); forgive (knowing and understanding that the bully is not better than the bully victim and telling parents to be given advice and motivation); focus on future goals; respond positively (looking for distractions from evil thoughts about yourself such as listening to songs, praying, exercising, watching television broadcasts).
3. External factors include seeking help by reporting bullying incidents and actions experienced by teachers, friends, or parents. The role of the teacher here is expected to be able to implement various learning processes to make students happy and comfortable by doing various creativity and innovation in the learning environment in order to create a conducive environment so that, hopefully, there will be no reason for students to bully. Teachers can also make students feel more comfortable by sharing with them; this can be done by communicating frequently with students. Teachers must also cooperate with parents so that they can detect student problems more comprehensively related to bullying. Students can also be used as anti-bullying ambassadors to help monitor and as a place to convey student complaints related to bullying cases at school.

Most Effective Strategies for Overcoming Bullying

Students reported that the most effective strategies to help them overcome their bullying experiences were 1) reporting to parents, teachers, or other students; 2) being indifferent; 3) establishing positive peer relationships and focusing on their goals. This strategy also has supporting factors, namely 1) having people who support (support system) such as friends, parents, and teachers; 2) the existence of guidance and counseling; and 3) the school conducting anti-bullying socialization. The inhibiting factors of the strategy to overcome bullying, according to students, include 1) School rules that still need to be firm, 2) School culture that has not changed, and 3) There is still an assumption that bullying is regular.

Discussion

Students' perspectives regarding the definition of bully are actions that hurt someone who is carried out intentionally, both physically and mentally / emotionally, by several groups or several people continuously, by insulting, which causes feelings of discomfort, mental damage, depression, social withdrawal and even trauma and a sense of helplessness. This is in line with research conducted by other researchers where bullying is interpreted as a direct expression of systemic problems, school climate, culture, and values (Ansary et al., 2018). Bullying is considered a common form of violence in schools.

School, as an ideal institution as a place to learn many things, should be able to create a school culture that makes students comfortable and safe at school. It turns out that more students are victims of bullying than bully perpetrators. Bully perpetrators include classmates, younger siblings, older siblings, teachers, and even their own families. On average, students experience bullying at school, in the classroom, and the community. This means that bully victims experience more bullying actions in the school environment, and students who become victims will become a fun target for bullies if there is no attention from the school.

Students have different experiences related to bullying; some only experience social bullying, and some experience cyberbullying as well as physical and verbal. Based on the data obtained, the majority of bullying experienced by students is verbal, followed by physical and social bullying. Verbal bullying is carried out by making fun of students, insulting them, and even

berating them. Physical bullying is done by insulting the shape of the body, such as a fat body or a face with acne, while social bullying is done by ostracizing friends or not wanting to make friends.

The impact of bullying will be experienced in the form of mental disorders, withdrawal from the surrounding environment, and fear and discomfort if they are in one place with the bully. Other impacts that arise can be detailed as follows, including depression, trauma, mental disorders, and loss of self-confidence. A bully victim can have a drastic change in character depending on how to react; the bully victim himself can commit crimes to vent his anger. The mentality of previously small students is that they are more down, and the thought arises that no one dares to help students at that time because everyone is afraid of the bully.

Creative learning strategies must be owned by teachers to significantly reduce bullying among students (Dwiningrum et al., 2020; Nurhayati et al., 2020). This can be done in 3 ways, namely 1) At the school level, it is necessary to strengthen knowledge and must be expertly constructed; 2) At the class level; and 3) At the individual level. This is in accordance with the results of the study that students' strategies to overcome bullying are carried out in several ways, namely: 1) Social environment, by finding better friends, ignoring and forgetting (ignoring bad words), avoiding or staying away from people who make them uncomfortable. 2) Internal factors (Individual), namely students must have good personal resilience, where the ability of a student to remain calm and assertive in every situation; this can be done by calming down, honing potential (occupying themselves with positive things, proving with achievements; learning to forgive and having firm principles. 3) External factors, namely students must be willing to seek help by reporting bullying incidents and actions experienced to teachers, friends or parents. This may be challenging for students who are not used to conveying their problems to others, so external factors from other people, such as teachers, friends, or parents, can often communicate with children or students and friends in the classroom to anticipate bullying behavior. Bullying (Levine & Tamburrino, 2014) can be addressed in the early years during preschool and elementary school. Students need to be taught about tolerance and what it means to accept others for who they are. By providing children with culturally relevant images, role models, and texts and exposing them to backgrounds different from their own, they will expect individuals to be unique and celebrate those differences. Other strategies that schools can do (Nurhayati et al., 2020) are 1) integrate every learning that occurs in the classroom, 2) After every prayer, the adhan is always delivered (7-minute lecture), 3) Convey moral values through the scripture literacy program (Ma'rufah et al., 2020; Nurhayati, 2022; Siswoyo et al., 2020), 4) Implementing cooperative learning, 5) Facilitating positive activities such as extracurricular activities, 6) Establishing orderly socialization during flag ceremonies and student orientation as well as through slogans and signs at school, 7) Take an individual approach to students, 8) There is a reward and punishment strategy. Based on some of the strategies above, it can be used as a reference for overcoming bullying at school, both from the school, teachers, and students.

The most effective strategies, according to students, to help overcome bullying experiences that have been experienced are 1) reporting to parents, teachers, or other students; 2) being indifferent; 3) establishing positive friendship relationships; and focusing on the goals to be achieved. A sound support system, including school culture, a supportive family environment, and healthy friendships, must also support these factors. The inhibiting factors of strategies to overcome bullying, according to students, include 1) School rules that still need to be firm, 2) School culture that has not changed, and 3) There is still an assumption that bullying is a common thing. Therefore, cooperation between schools, families, and communities is needed where social relationships are built through various social activities by strengthening aspects of non-cognitive abilities to reduce bullying in schools. Teachers can acquire creative teaching strategies by attending courses and training programs. Schools need to prepare anti-bullying school policies, and parents should also understand more about bullying and its impact on their children. Good cooperation from the educational environment, namely family, school, and community, can reduce bullying experienced by students both as perpetrators and as victims (Källmén & Hallgren, 2021).

CONCLUSIONS

The researcher concluded that students have begun to understand the meaning of bullying; most students have been victims of bullying; the types of bullying that students have experienced include cyberbullying, physical, verbal, and social. Students' strategies to overcome bullying are carried out in several ways, namely through the social environment, internal factors (Individual), and external factors. The most effective strategy to overcome bullying is to report to parents, teachers, or other students, be indifferent, establish positive friendships, and focus on the goals to be achieved. Supporting factors for the success of this strategy are the existence of a support system, guidance and counseling, and school socialization regarding anti-bullying. The inhibiting factors are school rules that still need to be firm, school culture that has not changed, and there is still an assumption that bullying is a common thing. Future research can focus on parents' strategies in dealing with bullying experienced by their children at school; this is important so that we also know the strategies from the parents' side with a broader perspective.

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