FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH BULLYING BEHAVIOUR IN ADOLESCENTS AGED 13-15 YEARS OLD

Hartati, Mikawati[*], Rizky Pratiwi, Suryani, Weni Siatang

Bachelor of Nursing Program, Nurse Professional Education, Diploma of Nursing Program
STIKES Panakkukang, Makassar, Indonesia

[*] *Email: mikawati.skp@gmail.com*

Abstract

Bullying behavior is a form of negative aggressive behavior exhibited by individuals or groups of children, involving physical or psychological disturbances. This phenomenon frequently occurs in schools and other places where children interact and can develop in any social context where human interaction exists. This study aimed to identify factors associated with bullying behavior at SMP YP PGRI Disamakan Makassar. A quantitative approach was employed using a cross-sectional design in an analytical survey. The sample was selected using proportional stratified random sampling. Subject characteristics data were collected through questionnaires, and data analysis was performed using the Chi-Square test. The results revealed significant associations between self-control and bullying behavior ($\rho = 0.000$, $\alpha = 0.05$), peer influence and bullying behavior ($\rho = 0.000$, $\alpha = 0.05$), as well as social media usage and bullying behavior ($\rho = 0.000$, $\alpha = 0.05$). The study concluded that self-control, peer influence, and social media usage significantly influence bullying behavior at SMP YP PGRI Disamakan Makassar. This study recommends that the school organize educational programs to raise students' awareness of the impacts of bullying behavior.

Keywords: bullying behaviour, peers, self-control, social media

FAKTOR – FAKTOR YANG BERHUBUNGAN DENGAN PERILAKU BULLYING PADA REMAJA USIA 13 - 15 TAHUN

Abstrak

Perilaku *bullying* merupakan bentuk perilaku agresif negatif yang dilakukan oleh individu atau kelompok anak-anak yang melibatkan gangguan fisik maupun psikologis. Fenomena ini sering terjadi di sekolah dan tempat lain di mana anak-anak berinteraksi, serta dapat berkembang di mana pun terdapat hubungan sosial antar manusia. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi faktor-faktor yang berhubungan dengan perilaku bullying di SMP YP PGRI Disamakan Makassar. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan desain *cross-sectional* dalam survei analitik. Sampel penelitian diambil menggunakan teknik *proportional stratified random sampling*. Data karakteristik subjek dikumpulkan melalui kuesioner, dan analisis data dilakukan menggunakan uji *Chi-Square*. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan adanya hubungan yang signifikan antara kontrol diri dan perilaku *bullying* ($\rho = 0,000$, $\alpha = 0,05$), teman sebaya dan perilaku *bullying* ($\rho = 0,000$, $\alpha = 0,05$), serta media sosial dan perilaku *bullying* ($\rho = 0,000$, $\alpha = 0,05$). Kesimpulan penelitian ini adalah terdapat hubungan yang signifikan antara kontrol diri, pengaruh teman sebaya, dan penggunaan media sosial terhadap perilaku bullying di SMP YP PGRI Disamakan Makassar. Penelitian ini merekomendasikan agar pihak sekolah mengadakan kegiatan penyuluhan untuk meningkatkan kesadaran siswa tentang dampak perilaku *bullying*.

Kata kunci: kontrol diri, media sosial, perilaku *bullying,* teman sebaya

INTRODUCTION

Bullying behavior among adolescents aged 13-15 years is a multifaceted issue influenced by individual, familial, and social factors. One critical aspect linked to bullying is mental health, particularly suicidal ideation and self-harm. Adolescents involved in different subtypes of bullying, such as relational bullying, often exhibit higher rates of suicidal thoughts and behaviors. Peng et al. (2020) highlighted that relational bullying significantly correlates with increased suicide risk due to feelings of thwarted belongingness, a concept central to the Interpersonal Theory of Suicidal Behavior. Similarly, studies conducted in Ghana and Liberia have underscored the independent association between bullying victimization and suicidal behaviors among adolescents, reaffirming the severe mental health consequences of bullying (Aboagye et al., 2021; Okobi, 2023).

Family dynamics also contribute significantly to bullying behaviors. Poor parental supervision and limited communication within families are prominent risk factors for adolescents becoming bullies or victims. Kustanti (2024) emphasized that inadequate family support often compels adolescents to seek validation or belonging in peer groups that may promote bullying. Furthermore, negative parenting styles have been linked to increased pro-bullying behaviors among adolescents, as documented by Alvarez-Subiela et al. (2022). This indicates that family environments characterized by inadequate support or hostile parenting practices can exacerbate bullying tendencies.

The influence of peer relationships on bullying dynamics is profound. Adolescents navigate complex social hierarchies where bullying often serves as a mechanism to gain or maintain perceived popularity. Research by Guy et al. (2019) revealed that bullies frequently enjoy elevated social status within their peer groups, perpetuating a cycle where bullying becomes normalized and socially reinforced. Protective factors, such as supportive peer relationships, can mitigate the risks of bullying victimization, underscoring the need for fostering positive social connections among adolescents (Quintana-Orts & Rey, 2018).

Substance use further complicates the issue of bullying. Adolescents engaged in drug use are more likely to experience bullying, either as perpetrators or victims, highlighting the interconnectedness of risky behaviors and social dynamics (Osborne, 2023). Addressing substance misuse alongside bullying can provide a more comprehensive approach to intervention.

The phenomenon of bullying has severe implications in educational settings, with both victims and perpetrators facing mental and social challenges that may extend to suicidal tendencies (Muhopilah & Tentama, 2019). Despite the gravity of these consequences, bullying is often trivialized as mere joking or normalized aggression, as noted by Siregar et al. (2023). Waliyanti and Swesty (2021) emphasized that bullying is a repeated aggressive behavior by individuals or groups intended to harm physically or emotionally weaker individuals. This abuse of power is not restricted by gender or age and often manifests in schools, where adolescents are the primary perpetrators and victims.

Bullying also has a cultural and linguistic dimension. The term itself originates from the English word "bull," symbolizing aggression, and in Indonesian, it can be associated with terms like "menyekat," derived from "sakat," meaning to disturb or hinder others (Dewi, 2020). This contextual understanding is crucial for addressing bullying in diverse cultural settings.

Data from SMP YP PGRI Disamakan Makassar highlights the prevalence of bullying, with reports of students frequently mocking and harassing peers. Teachers noted that many students exhibit poor behavior, disobey school rules, and lack parental attention, contributing to disruptive conduct at school. According to interviews with school counselors, familial neglect and a lack of discipline are among the factors exacerbating bullying incidents.

Factors influencing bullying behaviors include self-control, peer dynamics, and the impact of social media. Adolescents with low self-control often engage in risky behaviors and are more prone to bullying, as indicated by research from Setiawan and Alizamar (2019). Peer group influences are equally significant, as adolescence is a period of identity formation where individuals seek belonging within groups that may condone bullying (Bulu et al., 2019). Social media further amplifies the reach and intensity of bullying, removing spatial and temporal boundaries, and necessitating vigilant monitoring and intervention (Hidayati et al., 2020).

The widespread prevalence of bullying globally underscores its status as a pressing public health and educational issue. For instance, physical bullying affects 34.2% of adolescents in Nigeria, while 40.5% of students in the United States report exposure to bullying. In Indonesia, data from the KPAI indicates that 87.6% of children have experienced bullying in schools, with significant proportions perpetrated by peers, seniors, and even teachers (Ningsih & Sari, 2018).

Comprehensive intervention strategies are essential for addressing the multifaceted nature of bullying. These strategies must include fostering supportive family environments, promoting positive peer relationships, enhancing self-control among adolescents, and addressing the influence of social media and substance use. Only by tackling these interconnected factors holistically can the prevalence and impact of bullying among adolescents be effectively mitigated.

Based on preliminary data obtained from SMP YP PGRI Disamakan Makassar with the consideration that the school has experienced bullying cases, and data that the number of students in the 2022-2023 school year was 213, the number of class VIII students was 95 people. As for class IX students, there are 118 people. In addition, an interview was conducted with the BK teacher, it was found that students of SMP YP PGRI Disamakan Makassar, the BK teacher said that many students like to mock and bully their classmates. Many students do not behave well and do not obey school rules and not a few students also lack attention from their parents which triggers unpleasant behaviour at school.

METHODS

This study adopted a quantitative research approach with an observational analytic design to explore the factors influencing bullying behavior among students at SMP YP PGRI Disamakan Makassar. The primary goal was to identify the factors that contribute to the occurrence of bullying behaviors within the school environment. A quantitative approach was chosen due to its ability to systematically measure and analyze relationships between various variables, which is essential when investigating complex social phenomena such as bullying (Wulandari, 2022).

The research focused on 213 students from grades VIII and IX during the 2022/2023 academic year. From this population, 139 students were selected as the sample through proportional stratified random sampling. This sampling technique ensures that each subgroup, such as grade level, is represented proportionally, thus improving the representativeness of the sample and reducing potential sampling bias (Tenkorang & Okyere, 2022). This method is particularly useful when studying populations with inherent subgroups, allowing for a more accurate understanding of the factors influencing bullying behavior within these different groups (Wang, 2023).

The study employed four research instruments to collect data. The social media questionnaire assessed the role of social media in influencing bullying behaviors. Given the increasing influence of digital platforms on adolescent interactions, this tool is vital for understanding how online environments may contribute to or help mitigate bullying (Irira & Muneja, 2022). Additionally, a peer questionnaire was used to examine the impact of peer relationships on bullying. Peer influence is a significant factor in adolescence, often determining the social dynamics that foster bullying behaviors (Ahmed et al., 2022). A self-control questionnaire measured the students' self-regulation abilities, as adolescents with lower self-control are more likely to engage in aggressive behaviors such as bullying (Aminah, 2023). Finally, a bullying behavior questionnaire was used to capture various forms of bullying, including physical, verbal, and relational bullying, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the different bullying behaviors in the school setting (Yosep, 2024).

Both primary and secondary data were collected in this study. Primary data were gathered through the questionnaires administered to the students, while secondary data were obtained from school records and interviews with teachers and counselors. This combination of data sources enhances the depth and validity of the findings, allowing for a more robust analysis of the factors contributing to bullying behaviors in the school context (Wulandari, 2022). The data analysis utilized both univariate and bivariate analysis techniques. Univariate analysis provided an overview of individual variables, such as the frequency of bullying behaviors and levels of self-control, while bivariate analysis was employed to investigate the relationships between variables, such as the connection between peer influence and bullying involvement. The Chi-Square Test was used for statistical analysis, as it is a reliable method for examining associations between categorical variables, a common approach in social science research on bullying (Hateriah & Sarkiah, 2023). A significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$ was set to ensure the robustness of the findings.

This research is expected to provide significant insights into the environmental factors influencing bullying among adolescents. Previous studies have underscored the importance of family communication, peer relationships, and the school environment in shaping bullying behaviors (Aminah, 2023). Furthermore, the increasing role of social media in adolescent socialization has been identified as a critical factor in the perpetuation of bullying, both in physical and online contexts (Irira & Muneja, 2022). By examining these factors, the study aims to contribute to the development of more effective intervention strategies that address the root causes of bullying and promote a safer and more supportive school environment for all students (Yosep, 2024).

RESULTS

This study aimed to explore the factors influencing bullying behavior among students at SMP YP PGRI Disamakan Makassar. A total of 139 respondents were included, and the findings provide valuable insights into the characteristics of the students, the impact of self-control, social media, and peers on bullying behavior, and the relationships between these factors.

Characteristics of Respondents

Of the 139 respondents, the majority were female, with 83 respondents (59.7%) identifying as female and 56 respondents (40.3%) as male. The age distribution was as follows: 69 respondents (49.6%) were 14 years old, 39 respondents (28.1%) were 15 years old, and 31 respondents (22.3%) were 13 years old. This demographic data helps provide a context for analyzing bullying behavior in different age groups and genders within the school population.

Factors Influencing Bullying Behavior

Self-Control

The results of this study indicate that 51.8% of respondents (72 students) exhibited high self-control, while 48.2% (67 students) exhibited low self-control. High self-control is associated with the ability to regulate one's behavior and emotions, which helps prevent negative actions such as bullying. Students with high self-control are less likely to engage in bullying because they are better able to manage impulsive behaviors. This finding aligns with previous research showing that adolescents with better self-regulation skills tend to exhibit more positive social behaviors and are less prone to aggressive actions such as bullying.

Social Media

In terms of social media usage, 56.1% of respondents (78 students) reported using social media less frequently, while 43.9% (61 students) reported using social media frequently. The impact of social media on bullying behavior is twofold: while social media can provide benefits such as easier access to information and school assignments, it also exposes students to risks, including cyberbullying. The data suggest that frequent social media use is linked to a higher incidence of bullying behavior, highlighting the dual nature of social media in influencing adolescent behavior. This underscores the importance of monitoring and guiding social media use to mitigate its potential negative effects.

Peers

The analysis revealed that 51.8% of respondents (72 students) reported low peer influence, while 48.2% (67 students) experienced high peer influence. The influence of peers on bullying behavior is significant; students who are part of peer groups that condone or engage in bullying behavior are more likely to participate in bullying themselves. The findings emphasize the role of peers in reinforcing bullying behaviors, particularly when bullying is normalized within the peer group. Understanding peer dynamics is crucial for developing strategies to prevent and intervene in bullying at school.

Bullying Behavior

The data indicated that 50.4% of students (70 respondents) engaged in high levels of bullying behavior, while 49.6% (69 respondents) exhibited low levels of bullying behavior. This distribution suggests that bullying is prevalent among the students at SMP YP PGRI Disamakan Makassar. Bullying is not limited to a small group but affects a significant portion of the student population, highlighting the need for comprehensive anti-bullying strategies in the school environment. Bullying behaviors, such as physical, verbal, and social bullying, can have long-term effects on both the victims and perpetrators, making it essential to address these behaviors early.

Relationship Between Self-Control and Bullying Behavior

The Chi-Square test results revealed a significant relationship between **self-control** and **bullying behavior** ($\rho = 0.000$, $p < 0.05$). Students with high self-control were less likely to engage in bullying behavior, with 39.6% (55 respondents) exhibiting low bullying behavior, compared to 12.2% (17 respondents) with high bullying behavior. Conversely, students with low self-control were more likely to exhibit bullying behavior, with 38.1% (53 respondents) engaging in high bullying behavior. This finding suggests that self-control plays a crucial role in mitigating bullying behaviors. Students who can regulate their actions are less likely to resort to aggressive behaviors such as bullying.

Table 1 Relationship between self-control and bullying behavior in students at SMP YP PGRI Disamakan Makassar

Self Control	Bullying behavior				Total		P-value
	Low		High				
	n	%	n	%	n	%	
Low	14	10.1	53	38.1	67	48.2	0.000
High	55	39.6	17	12.2	72	51.8	
Total	69	49.6	70	50.4	139	100	

Relationship Between Social Media and Bullying Behavior

A significant relationship was also found between social media usage and bullying behavior ($\rho = 0.000$, $p < 0.05$). Among students who used social media frequently, a higher percentage engaged in high bullying behavior (32.4%, 45 respondents) compared to those who used social media less frequently (18%, 28 respondents). These results indicate that increased exposure to social media correlates with higher levels of bullying behavior, possibly due to the online environment's facilitation of both direct and indirect forms of bullying, such as cyberbullying.

Table 2 Relationship between social media and bullying behavior in students

Social Media	Bullying behavior				Total		P-value
	Low		High				
	n	%	n	%	n	%	
Low	53	38.1	28	18	78	56.1	0.000
High	16	11.5	45	32.4	62	43.9	
Total	69	49.6	70	50.4	139	100	

Relationship Between Peers and Bullying Behavior

Finally, the study found a significant relationship between peer influence and bullying behavior ($\rho = 0.000$, $p < 0.05$). Students with high peer influence were more likely to engage in bullying behaviors (38.8%, 54 respondents with high bullying behavior), whereas those with low peer influence exhibited less bullying behavior (40.3%, 56 respondents with low bullying behavior). The findings emphasize that peer pressure and group dynamics play a critical role in the development and reinforcement of bullying behavior among adolescents.

Table 3 Relationship between peers and bullying behavior at Smp YP PGRI Disamakan Makassar 2023

Social Media	Bullying behavior				Total		P-value
	Low		High				
	n	%	n	%	n	%	
Low	53	38.1	28	18	78	56.1	0.000
High	16	11.5	45	32.4	62	43.9	
Total	69	49.6	70	50.4	139	100	

Based on the results of statistical test analysis using the Chi Square test with reading using the alternative Pearson Chi-Square test, the value of ρ value = 0.000, the ρ value < α 0.05. These results indicate that Ha is accepted. And it can be concluded that there is an influence of peers on bullying behaviour at SMP YP PGRI Disamakan Makassar.

DISCUSSION

The relationship between self-control and bullying behavior among adolescents has gained significant attention in psychological and educational research. This study, conducted at SMP YP PGRI Disamakan Makassar, explores the interplay between self-control, peer influence, family dynamics, and social media use in shaping bullying behavior. The results indicate a complex relationship between these factors, suggesting that self-control plays a pivotal role in mitigating bullying behavior. However, the influence of external factors such as peer dynamics and social media cannot be overlooked.

Self-Control and Bullying Behavior

The findings from this study reveal a significant negative correlation between self-control and bullying behavior. Students with high levels of self-control were less likely to engage in bullying behavior. This aligns with the conceptualization of self-control as the ability to regulate one's emotions and behaviors in social contexts. According to Gufron and Risnawati (2022), self-control enables individuals to manage impulses and navigate complex social situations effectively, reducing the likelihood of engaging in antisocial behavior such as bullying.

Further supporting this relationship, Setiawan and Alizamar (2022) reported that adolescents with high self-control exhibit lower levels of aggression and bullying, as they are more adept at managing their emotions in stressful or confrontational situations. Similarly, Salmi et al. (2020) found that self-control serves as a protective factor against bullying, with higher self-control leading to fewer instances of aggressive behavior. These findings underscore the importance of fostering self-control in students as a preventive measure against bullying.

The Role of Peer Influence in Bullying Behavior

Peer influence emerged as a significant factor in the occurrence of bullying. The study revealed that students with high levels of peer influence were more likely to engage in bullying behavior. This finding is consistent with existing literature, which highlights the substantial impact that peer groups have on adolescents' behaviors, both positive and negative. Jannatung (2016) found that peer dynamics play a crucial role in shaping adolescents' choices to engage in bullying, often driven by the desire to fit in or gain approval from peers.

The presence of supportive peers can mitigate bullying behavior, while negative peer influences exacerbate it. Seo et al. (2017) emphasized that positive peer relationships can act as a buffer against bullying, promoting prosocial behavior and reducing the likelihood of aggressive actions. Conversely, when adolescents are surrounded by peers who engage in or endorse bullying, they are more likely to imitate these behaviors. This highlights the need for interventions that promote positive peer interactions and discourage peer pressure to engage in bullying.

Family Dynamics and Bullying Behavior

Family dynamics also play a crucial role in shaping bullying behavior. Research indicates that parenting styles, particularly authoritarian parenting, are associated with higher levels of bullying behavior in children. Chaux and Castellanos (2014) highlighted that children raised in environments with strict discipline and a lack of emotional support are more likely to engage in bullying. Similarly, Meng et al. (2022) found that children from families with poor emotional management are at a higher risk of exhibiting bullying behavior.

In contrast, supportive family environments, characterized by emotional warmth and involvement, can help children develop better emotional regulation and self-control, thereby reducing the likelihood of bullying. Kustanti and Meng et al. (2022) argue that parental involvement is a protective factor against bullying, suggesting that when parents actively engage with their children's social lives, they can mitigate negative influences from peers or the broader social environment. This reinforces the importance of a holistic approach to bullying prevention that includes strengthening family relationships and encouraging positive parental involvement.

The Influence of Social Media on Bullying Behavior

The role of social media in shaping bullying behavior is increasingly recognized as a significant factor in contemporary adolescent life. The study found that students who frequently use social media platforms were more likely to engage in bullying, with a strong correlation between the frequency of social media use and the prevalence of bullying behavior. This aligns with the findings of Ningsih and Sari Hisar (2020), who noted that social media can serve as both a platform for positive social interaction and a breeding ground for harmful behaviors such as cyberbullying.

The anonymity provided by social media platforms often emboldens individuals to engage in behaviors they might not display in face-to-face interactions. Radliff et al. (2015) argue that the online environment can amplify bullying, as students may feel less accountable for their actions when communicating through digital platforms. This highlights the need for educational programs that not only promote responsible social media use but also educate students on the potential harms of cyberbullying and the importance of empathy in online interactions.

Implications for Intervention and Prevention

The findings of this study suggest that interventions aimed at reducing bullying should focus on enhancing self-control among students, promoting positive peer interactions, and fostering supportive family environments. Programs that teach self-regulation techniques and emotional intelligence could help students manage their emotions and impulses, thereby reducing the likelihood of engaging in bullying behavior. Moreover, schools should implement strategies to address peer pressure and create a culture of inclusion and respect.

In addition, educational initiatives that address the responsible use of social media are essential in preventing cyberbullying. As social media continues to play a central role in adolescents' lives, it is crucial to equip them with the tools to navigate the digital landscape safely and respectfully.

Overall, a comprehensive approach to bullying prevention that includes the promotion of self-control, positive peer relationships, supportive family dynamics, and responsible media use is essential in creating a safe and respectful school environment. Future research should continue to explore the interactions between these factors and develop more effective strategies for preventing bullying in educational settings.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

This study examined key factors influencing bullying behavior among students at SMP YP PGRI Disamakan Makassar, emphasizing the role of self-control, peer influence, and social media. The findings indicate that self-control is a critical factor in minimizing bullying behavior. Students who demonstrated higher self-control were less likely to engage in bullying, suggesting that cultivating strong self-regulation skills is an effective approach to combat bullying in school settings. This highlights the importance of incorporating self-control development into educational programs, as it can significantly reduce aggressive behaviors among students.

The study also found that peer influence plays a pivotal role in shaping bullying behaviors. Adolescents who are surrounded by peers who encourage or normalize bullying behaviors tend to replicate these actions. This underscores the importance of fostering a school culture that promotes positive peer interactions. Interventions that aim to alter peer group dynamics, encourage empathy, and create a supportive school environment can play a significant role in preventing bullying.

Furthermore, the study reveals that social media usage is a significant contributor to bullying. Students who use social media more frequently were found to engage in higher levels of bullying. The pervasive nature of online interactions often emboldens students to act aggressively in ways they might not in face-to-face situations. Therefore, it is crucial to implement educational programs that not only address bullying in the physical school environment but also emphasize responsible social media use. Educating students about the impact of online interactions and encouraging respectful digital communication can help mitigate the negative effects of social media on bullying behavior.

In conclusion, the results of this study emphasize the need for comprehensive interventions that address the individual, social, and digital aspects of bullying behavior. Future research could explore more specific strategies for enhancing self-control, managing peer influences, and regulating social media usage among adolescents. Additionally, schools should continue to develop and implement programs that foster positive social interactions, promote emotional regulation, and educate students about the responsible use of digital platforms.

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