

The Impact of School Bullying on Children's Boldness in Classroom Participation in Grade VI at MI Ky Ageng Giri, Demak District, Demak Regency

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Article Info	Abstract
Keywords: Bullying, Classroom Participation, Children's Courage, Mental Health	Bullying in schools is one of the factors that can interfere with children's mental and academic development. The purpose of this study is to evaluate the effect of bullying on children's courage in participating in class, especially when asking questions, answering questions from teachers, and interacting with peers. The methodology applied was a qualitative approach by conducting in-depth interviews involving elementary school teachers. The results obtained from the research show that children who experience bullying often experience a decrease in self-confidence, increased social anxiety, and fear of negative judgment from their peers. This directly contributed to their low levels of engagement in the classroom. The findings highlight the importance of action on the part of schools to create a safe, inclusive and bullying-free learning environment, so as to support children's courage to be more active in the learning process.

INTRODUCTION

Bullying, frequently referred to as harassment, is a persistent form of harsh behavior directed toward weaker or defenseless individuals by those possessing greater power or authority (Mardiastuti, 2022). Bullying behavior often leads to negative actions associated with criminal behavior. While there are numerous definitions of bullying and such actions can be perpetrated by anyone, they occur frequently among adolescents, who tend to have fewer stable emotions. Furthermore, bullying takes place across various settings and times without age limitations. It can occur within the home environment, schools, workplaces, communities, and virtually anywhere else (Santoso et al., 2023).

According to UNICEF, bullying behavior can be identified through three aspects: intent (to cause harm), repetition over time, and an imbalance of power (Island et al., 2021). Bullying can also be categorized into four types: verbal, non-verbal, psychological, and cyber. Verbal or physical bullying includes actions such as hitting, kicking, or damaging the victim's property. Meanwhile, non-verbal bullying encompasses actions such as insults, reproaches, or mockery directed at the

victim. Within the psychological category, bullying can manifest through threats, isolation, or publicly humiliating the victim. On the other hand, online bullying or cyberbullying involves spreading false information, uploading embarrassing photos on social media, sending threatening messages via chat applications, posting hurtful comments on social media, or publishing embarrassing and painful matters regarding the victim. Bullying inflicts severe adverse effects, particularly on the victims as well as the perpetrators themselves.

Based on data from the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI), from 2011 to 2014, there were 369 recorded cases of bullying. However, in 2015, the number of bullying cases increased to 478. In 2016, the figure declined to 328. The Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia, Anies Baswedan, stated that 84% of children in Indonesia have experienced violence, while 70% of children in Indonesia have also acted as perpetrators of violence within the school environment (Hatta, 2022). Bullying has profound effects on all individuals involved. Victims may face physical injuries and mental health issues, such as low self-esteem, shame, trauma, fear of going to school, and even suicidal ideation. Perpetrators of bullying potentially perceive violent behavior as normal and consequence-free, which may lead them to become criminal offenders and face social difficulties in adulthood. On the other hand, bystanders of bullying are not immune to its consequences; they may feel threatened, experience psychological distress, and lose concentration during learning due to the fear of becoming the next victim (Kemendikbud, 2021).

A similar situation can be observed in the learning process across various elementary school levels. This condition is apparent in the learning activities at MI Ky Ageng Giri, located in Demak District, particularly among the sixth-grade students. During the learning process, a number of students were identified who tend to exhibit passivity and lack the self-confidence to ask questions, answer teacher inquiries, or simply share their opinions in front of the class. This issue has become a primary concern for teachers, especially since it is known that some of these passive students had previously experienced bullying from their peers, in both verbal and social forms. One case involved a sixth-grade student who had been emotionally harmed at their previous school. Despite having transferred to a new school, this student still demonstrated a fear of appearing in front of the class, was reluctant to interact with classmates, and refused to answer the teacher's questions. This situation indicates that the effects of bullying can persist in the long term and affect a child's boldness in the learning process. Through observations and discussions with the classroom teacher, it is evident that the experienced bullying has a direct impact on student engagement in learning activities, thereby affecting the classroom atmosphere and the overall effectiveness of education.

METHODS

This study utilizes a qualitative method to understand the experiences of students who are victims of bullying. According to Sugiyono, a qualitative research method is an approach applied to explore natural situations, as opposed to experiments, where the researcher functions as the primary instrument. Data collection techniques are carried out through a triangulation or combined approach, data analysis is inductive, and qualitative research focuses more on meaning rather than making generalizations. Authors recognize that qualitative research possesses descriptive characteristics and tends to rely on analysis; the deeper the analysis performed, the higher the quality of the research outcomes (Safrudin et al., 2023). Qualitative research aims to understand, seek meaning behind the data, and discover empirical, logical, and theoretical truths (Safrudin et al., 2023).

The subjects in this study were sixth-grade students at MI Ky Ageng Giri, Demak District, who experienced bullying. Additionally, the homeroom teacher was also involved as an additional informant to enrich the obtained data. Participant selection was conducted through purposive sampling, which is the selection of participants based on specific criteria relevant to the research

objectives. This research was conducted during the odd semester of the 2025/2026 academic year at MI Ky Ageng Giri, Demak District, Demak Regency, Central Java. The data collection techniques used in this study were: 1) In-depth interviews, conducted with the teacher to obtain more detailed information regarding the bullying experiences and their impact on students' boldness in classroom participation; 2) Direct observation in the classroom to observe student behavior during the learning process.

To ensure data validity, this study employed source and technique triangulation. Source triangulation was performed by comparing data obtained from the teacher and parents, while technique triangulation was carried out by comparing interview and observation results to ensure the consistency and credibility of the information obtained. According to Miles and Huberman (Zulfirman, 2022), the qualitative data analysis model is interactive and consists of three main components: (1) data reduction, (2) data display, and (3) conclusion drawing/verification. These three components are interconnected and occur continuously throughout the research process. This process allows researchers to compare, evaluate, and establish the direction of conclusions based on the analyzed findings. The explanation of each component within the context of this study is as follows:

Data collection in this study was conducted through in-depth interviews with the homeroom teacher who had direct understanding of the students experiencing bullying, direct observations of student behavior in class, and documentation such as teacher notes or incident reports. The information obtained formed the analytical basis for understanding how bullying affects students' boldness to actively participate in class. Data reduction is the process of simplifying and selecting essential information from the raw data that has been collected. In the context of this study, the researcher selected interview results with the teacher, observation notes, and relevant documents directly related to the impact of bullying on student participation. Irrelevant information was set aside to sharpen the focus of the analysis in accordance with the research objectives.

Data display was performed in the form of a systematically arranged descriptive narrative. The data were organized based on major themes, such as the forms of bullying observed by the teacher, changes in student behavior during the learning process, and the teacher's response to the bullying cases. This facilitated the researcher in identifying relational patterns between bullying and students' boldness in class. Conclusion drawing is the final stage of the analytical process. Conclusions were derived from data that had been analyzed and verified by comparing data collection techniques, namely interviews, observations, and documentation. Consequently, the researcher could formulate a profound understanding of how bullying affects students' boldness to interact and participate within the classroom.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

School bullying represents a form of violence that exerts a negative impact on students' psychological well-being, particularly regarding self-confidence and the boldness to participate in class. A sixth-grade student at MI Ky Ageng Giri, who was previously a victim of bullying at their former school, experienced behavioral changes. The student became quiet, withdrew from their social environment, and was reluctant to actively engage in the learning process. Furthermore, the student appeared hesitant when asked to answer questions, lacked confidence when speaking in front of the class, and tended to be passive in group discussions. Recognizing this condition, the homeroom teacher provided personal guidance through motivation and emotional approaches to help rebuild the student's self-confidence. The teacher also reprimanded and educated the perpetrators of bullying to ensure they understood the adverse impacts of their behavior and desisted from repeating it. Based on these circumstances, the authors are interested in further examining how the bullying experienced by the student at their previous school affects their boldness in active classroom participation, as well as the role of teachers in helping restore the

psychological state of bullied student victims at MI Ky Ageng Giri (Moh Anang Zulqurnain & Mohammad Thoha, 2022).

Teachers hold a vital role in facilitating the recovery of students who fall victim to bullying, particularly in rebuilding their self-confidence within teaching and learning activities. In this case, the classroom teacher strives to cultivate a safe and comfortable learning atmosphere so that students feel accepted and valued, despite having previously experienced painful treatment from their classmates. The teacher also provides emotional support by greeting the students, listening to their grievances, and regularly offering encouraging words to ensure students feel cared for and not isolated. Additionally, the teacher offers simple expressions of appreciation, such as praise or applause, whenever the student ventures to answer or participate, thereby refostering their self-confidence. The teacher actively accompanies students during the learning process, observes behavioral changes, and provides personal motivation whenever necessary. By designing learning methods that actively involve students and provide them with space to try new things, the teacher endeavors to encourage students' boldness to speak and engage in class. This approach is highly critical so that bullied students can recover gradually and develop their personal potential without being continuously overshadowed by fear or low self-esteem (Jelita & Sholehuddin, 2024).

The opportunity for bullying to occur is greater at school since students spend a significant amount of time there. At the school where the victimized student previously attended, the institution's role is crucial in managing and preventing further bullying (Nurfitriyanti et al., 2024). Although the school had implemented anti-bullying campaigns, the effectiveness of these campaigns remained insufficient in curbing bullying behaviors perpetrated by students. Based on a study by Putri (2022), several steps can be taken to prevent bullying, including: 1) Helping students identify and understand what bullying is and its impacts; 2) Offering advice on ways to confront potential bullying incidents; 3) Building strong relationships and communication between teachers and students; 4) Assisting students in discovering their interests and potential to divert attention from negative behaviors; 5) Providing an exemplar through positive attitudes and behaviors.

According to research by Arraziq & Armansyah (2021), school principals need to adopt firm policies to prevent bullying, which include: 1) Teachers must set an example for students by always speaking kindly and employing positive approaches; 2) Teachers must immediately reprimand or advise students involved in bullying behavior, whether verbal or physical; 3) If students repeat the bullying behavior after being reprimanded, the teacher may impose educational punishments; 4) If students continue to engage in bullying after being punished, they can be referred to the Guidance and Counseling (BK) teacher; 4) If these actions prove unsuccessful, the student will be handed over to the school principal for further handling. Students need to comprehend what bullying entails, as well as the distinction between harmless joking and bullying. Teachers also need to remind students if their jokes have crossed the line and border on bullying behavior. If necessary, teachers must impose sanctions on bullies who persistently repeat their behavior. Furthermore, effective communication between students and school authorities is highly essential. Proximity and a close relationship between teachers and students can deter the occurrence of bullying. Students who become perpetrators of bullying often have personal issues, such as disharmonious family relationships. Teachers should approach these students and serve as a confidant for them to share their stories. By doing so, students who feel noticed and valued are more likely to reduce their bullying behavior.

In addition, the role of the teacher as a role model is paramount. Teachers play an essential part in the recovery of bullied students by creating a safe and supportive learning atmosphere, providing emotional support, and offering appreciation to rebuild self-confidence. Moreover, teachers must also serve as exemplars with wise and attentive attitudes to avoid triggering negative behaviors like bullying. Involving students in positive activities, such as competitions and

extracurricular activities, can also prevent bullying and help students focus on their personal development (Setiawati & Wulandari, 2023).

CONCLUSION

The results of this study indicate that bullying exerts a significant negative impact on students' boldness in classroom participation. Students who fall victim to bullying tend to experience a decline in self-confidence, social anxiety, and a fear of public speaking or answering teacher inquiries, which ultimately hinders their engagement in the learning process. In this context, the teacher's role is highly crucial as a supportive figure who provides emotional guidance, cultivates a safe learning atmosphere, and encourages active participation through positive and appreciative approaches. In addition, the school's involvement in establishing anti-bullying policies, alongside parental support in monitoring children's psychological conditions, is deeply required to prevent and address bullying cases. Therefore, robust collaboration among teachers, schools, and parents is needed to create a safe, supportive, and bullying-free school environment so that every student can learn comfortably and develop optimally.

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