

PROBLEMS AND IMPACT OF BULLYING IN THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

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ABSTRACT

Adolescence is a critical developmental phase marked by significant physical, emotional, social, and psychological changes. This study explores the role of strategy and guidance counsellors in supporting adolescents, particularly in addressing bullying in schools. Strategy, defined as a planned pattern of actions, is essential for fostering positive outcomes in educational settings. Guidance counsellors, with specialized knowledge in counselling, are crucial in providing support and mitigating conflicts. Bullying, a form of juvenile delinquency involving repetitive, intentional harm by someone with greater power, poses severe risks to adolescents' well-being. Understanding bullying dynamics and implementing strategic interventions can help create a supportive environment for adolescents. This study underscores the importance of a coordinated approach involving educators, counsellors, parents, and the community to address the challenges of adolescence, promote healthy development, and ensure the safety and well-being of students.

Key word: problem, impact, bullying, school, environment

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a developmental phase between childhood and adulthood. During this period, adolescents undergo emotional, social, physical, and psychological maturation. It is also a stage that must be navigated with various challenges. In their developmental tasks, adolescents will pass through several phases with varying levels of difficulty, making it crucial to understand these tasks to prevent conflicts that can arise in daily life, which can be very challenging for society to handle correctly. Adolescents experience rapid physical growth and changes, including the development of secondary sexual characteristics. Puberty is a key milestone during this period (Sawyer et al., 2012). Cognitive abilities advance, allowing adolescents to think more abstractly, reason logically, and plan for the future. This stage involves the maturation of executive functions and improved problem-solving skills (Steinberg, 2014).

At this stage, adolescents' psychological condition is highly unstable, as it is a period of self-identity exploration. They are usually curious and eager to try new things they see or learn from their surroundings, including family, school, friends, and the broader community. Each adolescent processes and responds to new knowledge based on their personality. Therefore, the surrounding environment plays a vital role in shaping an adolescent's personality.

Every adolescent has the potential to achieve a mature personality, enabling them to face life's challenges appropriately within their environment. However, this potential will not develop optimally without adequate physical and environmental support. In forming an adolescent's personality, there are always influencing factors, namely risk factors and protective factors. Risk factors can be individual, contextual (environmental influence), or result from interactions between the individual and their environment. When combined with psychosocial vulnerability and resilience, these risk factors can trigger specific emotional and behavioral disorders in adolescents.

Conversely, protective factors explain why not all adolescents with risk factors will experience behavioral or emotional problems or develop certain disorders. Rutter (1985) explains that protective factors modify, change, or strengthen an individual's response to various environmental challenges. These protective factors interact with risk factors, with the outcome determining whether behavioral or emotional problems or mental disorders will develop later on.

Weak emotional stability can lead to problems among adolescents, such as bullying, which has resurfaced in the media. Violence in schools is like an iceberg phenomenon, with only a small part visible above the surface. It will continue to recur if not addressed properly and

consistently from its root causes. The culture of bullying (violence) in the name of seniority still persists among students. Due to its troubling nature, the government is urged to address this issue seriously. Bullying is a form of child abuse perpetrated by peers on someone (a child) who is 'lower' or weaker to gain certain advantages or satisfaction. Bullying usually happens repeatedly and can even be systematic.

Given the widespread cases of bullying in educational institutions in Indonesia, particularly in school environments, the author has chosen to explore the theme related to bullying behavior in the educational system.

THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

A) Bullying

The term "bullying" comes from the English word "bull," meaning a bull that likes to ram things around. This term has been adopted to describe destructive behavior. Unlike other countries like Norway, Denmark, and Finland, which refer to bullying as "mobbing" or "mobbing," in Indonesian, "bully" means an intimidator or someone who harasses the weak. Although this foreign term may be unfamiliar to us, the behavior has long existed in our environment. According to Sutji Prihatinningsih in the journal "Juvenile Delinquency," Coloroso defines bullying as oppression. He asserts that bullying always involves the following four elements:

1. Imbalance of Power: Bullying is not a competition between siblings or a fight between equals. The bully may be older, bigger, stronger, more verbally skilled, of higher social status, or from a different race.

2. Desire to Hurt: In bullying, there are no accidents or mistakes. Exclusion is not accidental. Bullying means causing emotional pain or physical injury, involving actions that can hurt, and giving the bully satisfaction from the victim's suffering.

3. Threat of Further Aggression: Bullying is not intended to be a one-time event but is repetitive or tends to be repeated.

4. Terror: This element emerges as bullying escalates. Bullying is systematic violence used to intimidate and maintain dominance. Terror is both a means and an end of bullying.

B. Types of Bullying

Bullying manifests in various forms, each having distinct characteristics and impacts on the victim. Physical bullying involves direct bodily harm such as hitting, kicking, or pushing, often leaving visible injuries and psychological trauma (Smith, 2016). Verbal bullying includes name-calling, teasing, and making derogatory remarks or threats, which can erode the victim's self-esteem and sense of security (Olweus, 1993). Social or relational bullying aims to damage someone's social relationships or status, involving tactics like spreading rumors, exclusion from groups, and social isolation, which can lead to long-term emotional distress and loneliness (Espelage & Swearer, 2003). Cyberbullying is a growing concern in the digital age, where perpetrators use electronic means such as social media, texting, and email to harass, threaten, or embarrass their victims, often anonymously, making it pervasive and relentless (Patchin & Hinduja, 2006). Each type of bullying can have severe and lasting effects on the mental health and well-being of individuals, underscoring the importance of comprehensive prevention and intervention strategies (Hinduja & Patchin, 2010). Understanding these different forms of bullying is crucial for developing effective policies and support systems to protect victims and foster a safe and inclusive environment.

C. Causes of Bullying

Bullying is often driven by complex interactions of individual, familial, and societal factors. **Individual factors** include traits like aggression, the need for dominance, or low empathy (Espelage & Swearer, 2003). **Familial influences** such as parenting styles, domestic violence, or lack of emotional support can contribute to bullying behaviors (Olweus, 1993). **Societal factors** encompass cultural norms that tolerate violence, peer pressure, and media influences that glorify aggressive behavior (Swearer et al., 2010). Understanding these multifaceted causes is essential for developing effective prevention and intervention strategies.

CONCLUSSION

Adolescence is a critical developmental phase characterized by significant physical, emotional, social, and psychological changes. Understanding the complexities of this stage, including the inherent challenges and the potential for conflicts, is essential for providing appropriate support and guidance to adolescents.

A well-defined strategy plays a crucial role in addressing these challenges. Strategy, defined as a deliberately planned and established pattern of actions to achieve specific objectives, can be effectively applied in educational settings to foster positive outcomes. This involves creating a structured plan that considers the goals, participants, content, processes, and supporting means necessary for effective implementation.

Guidance counselors, who possess specialized knowledge and competencies in guidance and counseling, are integral to this process. Their role is to provide full responsibility and support to students, helping them navigate the complexities of adolescence. Counselors must be well-equipped with theoretical and practical knowledge, decision-making skills, a passion for their work, and the ability to collaborate and uphold ethical standards.

One significant issue that arises during adolescence is bullying, a form of juvenile delinquency. Bullying, defined as repetitive, intentional harm inflicted by someone with greater power, poses serious risks to the emotional and psychological well-being of adolescents. Understanding the dynamics of bullying, including the imbalance of power, desire to hurt, threat of further aggression, and terror, is crucial for developing effective interventions.

Addressing bullying in schools requires a comprehensive approach that involves educators, counselors, parents, and the broader community. By implementing strategic measures and fostering a supportive environment, it is possible to mitigate the impact of bullying and promote the healthy development of adolescents.

In conclusion, a strategic and well-coordinated approach, supported by knowledgeable and dedicated guidance counselors, is essential for addressing the challenges of adolescence. By understanding and addressing issues such as bullying, we can create a safer and more supportive environment for adolescents to thrive and develop into well-adjusted adults.

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