

STRATEGIES FOR HANDLING BULLYING IN EDUCATION

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Abstract

Bullying is a serious problem that continues to plague educational environments at various levels. This phenomenon negatively affects students' physical, emotional and academic well-being. This study aims to examine various effective strategies in dealing with bullying in schools. The research method used was literature review. The main strategies include the development of a comprehensive anti-bullying policy, staff and student training, implementation of evidence-based prevention programmes, and creation of a positive school culture. The results showed that a combination of these strategies can significantly reduce the incidence of bullying and increase students' sense of safety at school. The study concludes that addressing bullying requires long-term commitment and co-operation from all relevant parties to create a safe and supportive learning environment for all students.

Keywords: Handling Strategy, Bullying, Education.

Introduction

Bullying has become a serious problem that threatens the well-being and safety of students in educational institutions around the world. Bullying is deliberate and repeated aggressive behaviour, perpetrated by an individual or group against a perceived weaker or vulnerable victim. It involves an imbalance of power, whether physical, social or psychological, and aims to hurt, intimidate or humiliate the victim. (Rigby, 2021). This phenomenon not only negatively affects the victim, but also affects the perpetrator, witnesses, and the entire school community. In Indonesia, bullying cases continue to increase from year to year. According to data from the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI), there was a 36% increase in bullying case reports in 2018 compared to the previous year. (Şen & Doğan, 2021).

Bullying can take many forms, including physical, verbal, psychological, social exclusion, rumour spreading, and cyberbullying through digital media. These behaviours generally occur consistently over a period of time and can result in significant negative impacts on the victim's emotional, psychological, and academic well-being. (Khasanah et al., 2023)..

The impact of bullying on victims can be very serious and long-term, affecting various aspects of their lives. Psychologically, victims of bullying often experience decreased self-esteem, anxiety, depression, and in extreme cases, can lead to suicidal thoughts or actions (Jin, 2023). They may develop social fears, difficulty in building healthy relationships, and lose trust in others. Sleep disturbances, changes in eating patterns, and psychosomatic symptoms such as headaches or stomachaches are also common. These emotional impacts can last long even after the bullying stops, affecting the victim's mental health into adulthood. (Nasution et al., 2022).

In academic and social contexts, victims of bullying often experience reduced performance at school due to difficulty concentrating and lack of motivation. They may avoid school activities, experience decreased participation in class, or even refuse to go to school at all, which can lead to missed lessons and social isolation. (Lohmeyer & Threadgold, 2023).. The ability to interact with peers and form friendships may also suffer, leading to loneliness and feelings of isolation. In the long term, the experience of bullying can affect the development of social skills, confidence in professional situations, and even future career success (Sitopu et al., 2024); (Guna et al., 2024); (Fawait et al., 2024); (Syakhrani & Aslan, 2024).

Meanwhile, bullies are also at risk of developing long-term behavioural problems and difficulties in establishing healthy social relationships. Although awareness of the dangers of bullying has increased, many educational institutions still struggle to implement effective coping strategies. Challenges include; Lack of comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of bullying, Limited resources and training for school staff, Difficulties in identifying and reporting bullying cases, Complexity of handling cyberbullying in the digital age and Limited involvement of parents and communities in prevention efforts. (Chiu, 2020).

Given the complexity of the problem, a multidimensional approach involving various stakeholders in education is required. An effective strategy should include aspects of prevention, intervention and recovery, as well as consider the local socio-cultural context (Nery et al., 2020d)..

This research examines various bullying coping strategies that have been developed and implemented in various countries, with a focus on their applicability in the Indonesian educational context. Through a comprehensive literature review, this research is expected to provide valuable insights for educational practitioners, policy makers, and researchers in an effort to address the problem of bullying in schools.

Research Methods

The study in this research uses the literature method. The literature research method is a systematic approach to collecting, evaluating, and analysing information from various written sources relevant to a particular research topic. This process involves a comprehensive search through academic databases, scientific journals, books, research reports, and other reliable sources to identify, synthesise, and critique existing knowledge related to the research problem. (Fadli, 2021); (Setiowati, 2016). Researchers use this method to build an in-depth understanding of the state of the art in their field of study, identify gaps in existing knowledge, formulate relevant research questions, and build a theoretical foundation for further research. (Syahran, 2020).

Results and Discussion

Bullying Prevention Strategies

Bullying prevention strategies involve a comprehensive approach that covers various aspects of school and community life. One of the main strategies is education and awareness raising. This involves educational programmes aimed at students, teachers, school staff, and parents about what bullying is, its effects, and how to recognise it. (Elipe et al., 2023).. Anti-bullying workshops, seminars and campaigns can help create a culture that does not tolerate bullying behaviour. It is also important to teach children social-emotional skills, such as empathy, conflict resolution and effective communication, which can help prevent bullying behaviour and build more positive relationships. (Aisyah, 2023).

The establishment of clear policies and procedures in schools is also a key component in bullying prevention. Schools should have clear protocols for reporting bullying incidents, handling reports, and providing appropriate consequences for perpetrators. These policies should be clearly communicated to the entire school community and consistently enforced. (Herlinawati & Rindaningsih, 2024).. In addition, creating a safe and inclusive school environment is essential. This could involve better supervision of high-risk areas, such as playgrounds or corridors, as well as the promotion of a school culture that values diversity and kindness. (Nery et al., 2020d)..

Active involvement of students in bullying prevention efforts is also very effective. Programmes such as peer mentoring, where older students mentor younger ones, or anti-bullying student groups, can empower students to become agents of change in their schools. Encouraging students to speak up when they witness bullying and providing support to victims is also important. Programmes that promote student leadership and student-led anti-bullying initiatives can help create strong social norms against bullying (Chen et al., 2023).

Cooperation between schools, families and communities is also an important component of an effective bullying prevention strategy. Parents should be involved in prevention efforts, provided with information about the signs of bullying, and

encouraged to communicate openly with their children about their experiences at school. (Salpiati, 2024). Collaboration with community organisations, law enforcement, and mental health professionals can provide additional resources and support for prevention efforts. The use of technology and social media to promote anti-bullying messages and provide safe reporting platforms can also be an effective strategy, especially in addressing cyberbullying. (Achanta, 2023).

Furthermore, continuous monitoring and evaluation is an important aspect of bullying prevention strategies. Schools and communities need to regularly assess the effectiveness of their anti-bullying programmes and make necessary adjustments. This can involve anonymous surveys to students and staff, analyses of bullying incident data, and feedback from various stakeholders. (Vidensky et al., 2024). Flexibility in approach is essential, given that bullying can change form over time, especially with the development of technology. Adapting strategies to address new trends, such as the increase in cyberbullying, is crucial to ensure long-term effectiveness.

Bullying Intervention Strategies

Bullying intervention strategies are steps taken to stop bullying behaviour in progress and deal with its effects.

The first step in bullying intervention is early identification and rapid response to incidents. This involves training school staff, teachers and students to recognise the signs of bullying and report it immediately. Schools should have a clear and easily accessible reporting system, including an option for anonymous reporting. Once an incident is identified, immediate action must be taken to stop the behaviour and ensure the safety of the victim. (Elipe et al., 2023).

Effective interventions require an individualised approach for both perpetrators and victims of bullying. For the perpetrator, this may involve counselling, education about the impact of their behaviour, and the implementation of appropriate consequences. It is important to understand the root causes of bullying behaviour and address them. For victims, psychological and emotional support is essential. This may include counselling, social skills training, and strategies to build resilience. In some cases, professionally guided mediation between the perpetrator and the victim could be part of the intervention process (Vidensky et al., 2024).

Effective bullying interventions involve the entire school community. This includes holding class or school meetings to discuss incidents, reinforce anti-bullying values, and encourage active bystander attitudes. Character education programmes and empathy training can be integrated into the curriculum. It is also important to involve parents or guardians in this process, both in addressing their child's behaviour and in supporting the school's overall efforts to create a safe and inclusive environment. (Aia-Utsal & Kõiv, 2023).

After the initial intervention, ongoing follow-up is essential. This involves monitoring the situation to ensure bullying does not continue or switch forms, as well as evaluating the effectiveness of the intervention strategies used. Schools should regularly review and update their anti-bullying policies and procedures based on experience and feedback. (He, 2024). In addition, it is important to establish long-term support systems for victims and perpetrators to prevent future incidents and aid the recovery of all parties involved.

As cyberbullying cases increase, intervention strategies should include a digital component. This involves education about online safety, digital etiquette, and how to recognise and respond to cyberbullying. Schools can implement online monitoring systems, liaise with social media platforms, and provide digital resources for reporting and support. It is also important to teach students about digital footprints and the long-term consequences of their online behaviour. (Nurhayati, 2024).

Comprehensive bullying interventions often require collaboration with external parties. This may include working with psychologists, social workers, or professional counsellors to provide additional support. In more serious cases, it may require the involvement of law enforcement. Additionally, collaboration with anti-bullying organisations, research institutions, or community programs can enrich intervention strategies with best practices and additional resources. (Fahudi & Romadlon, 2023).

Thus, an effective bullying intervention strategy requires a holistic and multifaceted approach. This includes rapid identification and response, individualised treatment for perpetrators and victims, involvement of the entire school community, continuous follow-up and evaluation, integration of digital components to address cyberbullying, and collaboration with external parties. The key to success lies in consistency, long-term commitment and flexibility to adapt to changing social and technological dynamics.

Bullying intervention is not just about stopping specific incidents, but also about creating broader cultural change that promotes respect, empathy and inclusivity. By implementing comprehensive and sustainable intervention strategies, schools and communities can significantly reduce incidents of bullying, support the well-being of all students, and build safer and more positive learning environments.

Post Bullying Recovery Strategies

The first step in post-bullying recovery is to provide adequate psychological support. This involves individual or group counselling sessions led by trained professionals. The aim is to help victims process their experiences, cope with trauma, and rebuild self-confidence and self-esteem. Approaches such as Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) or Eye Movement Reprocessing and Desensitisation Therapy (EMDR) can be used to address anxiety, depression or PTSD symptoms that the victim may be experiencing. (Cheng et al., 2024).

Bullying often damages victims' social relationships, so it is important to help them rebuild positive social connections. This could involve peer mentoring programmes, support groups, or structured social activities to facilitate positive interactions. Teaching social skills, such as assertiveness and conflict resolution, is also important. Schools or communities can organise activities that encourage inclusivity and empathy, helping victims feel accepted and supported by their environment. (Muhassin & Hidayati, 2023).

Bullying often has a negative impact on the victim's academic performance. Therefore, recovery strategies should include additional academic support, such as peer tutors or tutoring sessions. In addition, encouraging victims to explore and develop their talents or interests can go a long way in rebuilding self-confidence. Participation in extracurricular activities, clubs, or creative projects can provide a positive diversion and help victims find new strengths within themselves (Nery et al., 2020c).

Recovery from bullying is a process that takes time. It is important to have a long-term monitoring system in place to ensure the victim's continued well-being. This could involve regular check-ins with the school counsellor, regular evaluation of academic and social development, and ongoing communication with parents or guardians. In some cases, referrals to external mental health services may be required for continued support. It is also important to prepare coping strategies in case of future triggers or difficult situations, ensuring the survivor has the necessary tools and support to overcome potential challenges. (Nery et al., 2020a).

Empowering victims of bullying to become advocates for themselves and others can be an important part of the recovery process. This could involve training on their rights, how to report bullying incidents, and strategies to stand up for themselves and others. Encouraging victims to participate in anti-bullying campaigns or peer support programmes can help them turn a negative experience into something positive and meaningful. This process not only helps in personal recovery but also contributes to the prevention of future bullying. (Lohmeyer & Threadgold, 2023).

Effective recovery also involves education and training for the victim's neighbourhood. This includes teachers, school staff, peers, and even parents. This training should focus on how to recognise the signs of bullying, how to respond appropriately, and how to create a safe and inclusive environment. The implementation of a strong and consistent anti-bullying policy in the school or community is also important to prevent recurring incidents and provide a sense of security for the victim. (Meyer, 2020).

As such, Recovery after bullying is a complex process that requires a holistic and sustainable approach. Effective strategies should include psychological support, restoration of social relationships, academic strengthening, talent development, as well as victim empowerment. It is also important to involve the entire community in this process, through proper education and training. With a combination of individualised

support, community involvement, and strong policies, victims of bullying can not only recover from their traumatic experiences, but also grow into stronger and more resilient individuals. Finally, an effective recovery strategy focuses not only on addressing the impact of bullying that has already occurred, but also on creating a safer and more empathetic environment for everyone in the future.

Implementation of Anti-Bullying Policy

Effective implementation of anti-bullying policies starts with the development of a comprehensive and clear policy. This policy should include a clear definition of what constitutes bullying, including cyberbullying. It should also establish reporting procedures that are easily accessible and understood by all parties, including students, staff, and parents. The policy should detail the consequences that bullying perpetrators will face, as well as the steps that will be taken to protect and support victims (Wibowo & Nurmala, 2023). It is also important to include prevention and early intervention strategies in this policy. The policy development process should involve various stakeholders, including students, teachers, school administrators and parents, to ensure that the policy reflects the needs and values of the school community.

Once the policy is developed, the next crucial step is thorough socialisation and training. All members of the school community, including students, staff and parents, should be educated on the content of the policy and how to implement it. Specific training should be provided to school staff on how to recognise the signs of bullying, how to respond appropriately to incidents, and how to support both victims and perpetrators. (Rahmi, 2024). Students also need to be involved in education sessions on the impact of bullying, the importance of empathy, and how to be an active "upstander" to prevent and report bullying. Socialisation can be done through various channels, such as school assemblies, orientation sessions, pamphlets, and school digital platforms. It is important to ensure that this information is delivered consistently and updated regularly. (Saiz-Alvarez, 2021).

Effective implementation of anti-bullying policies requires a robust monitoring and evaluation system. Schools should have mechanisms in place to track bullying incidents, including the type, frequency, and location of occurrences. This data should be analysed regularly to identify trends and areas that require special attention. Periodic evaluation of the effectiveness of the policy is also important, for example through anonymised surveys of students and staff. (AYDIN & AY, 2023). The results of these evaluations should be used to adjust and improve the policy and its implementation strategies. In addition, schools need to have a specialised team responsible for overseeing the implementation of the policy, handling reports of bullying, and ensuring that appropriate action is taken in each case. Transparency in this monitoring and evaluation process is also important to build the school community's trust in the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy. (Hollis, 2021).

Effective implementation of anti-bullying policies often requires collaboration with external parties. Schools can partner with community organisations, psychologists, or professional counsellors to provide additional support and expertise in dealing with complex cases of bullying. Cooperation with authorities such as the police is also important, especially in cases involving serious threats or illegal activities. (Iskandar & Priyana, 2024). In addition, schools can collaborate with other educational institutions to share best practices and resources in implementing anti-bullying policies. The involvement of local media can also help in disseminating anti-bullying messages to the wider community, creating greater community awareness and support. (P.C. & B.K., 2022).

More and more schools are adopting a restorative approach in dealing with bullying cases. This approach focuses on restoring relationships and understanding, rather than solely on punishment. In practice, this can involve a facilitated meeting between the perpetrator and the victim of bullying, where the perpetrator is given the opportunity to understand the impact of their actions and take responsibility for repairing the damage they have caused (Hollis, 2021). Restorative approaches can also involve the whole school community in creating a more inclusive and supportive environment. Although this approach requires more time and resources, it often results in more sustainable behaviour change and helps build a more positive school culture (Fahudi & Romadlon, 2021). (Fahudi & Romadlon, 2023)..

Thus, effective implementation of anti-bullying policies is a complex and ongoing process. It requires commitment from the entire school community, from comprehensive policy development, thorough socialisation and training, to consistent monitoring and evaluation. Collaboration with external parties and the adoption of restorative approaches can strengthen the effectiveness of this policy. Most importantly, the implementation of anti-bullying policies should be seen as an integral part of efforts to create a school environment that is safe, inclusive and supportive of the positive development of every student. With a holistic and consistent approach, schools can significantly reduce the incidence of bullying and build a culture of mutual respect and empathy among students. Ultimately, the success of anti-bullying policy implementation is not only measured by the reduction of bullying cases, but also by the creation of a stronger, more caring school community that is better prepared to face future social challenges.

The Role of Technology in Handling Bullying

Technology has enabled the development of an efficient and accessible online bullying reporting system. This digital platform allows students, parents and school staff to report bullying incidents anonymously and in real-time. Such a system not only simplifies the reporting process, but also helps schools to collect accurate data on the frequency, types and patterns of bullying that occur. (Sartika & Fransiska, 2024);

(Judijanto et al., 2024). With this information, schools can identify trends, target interventions more effectively, and measure the success of their anti-bullying programmes. Some online reporting systems are even equipped with sophisticated data analysis features, allowing schools to generate comprehensive reports and take proactive measures in preventing bullying. (Mahmoudi & Moss, 2021).

Technology also plays an important role in educating and raising awareness about bullying. Various mobile apps and online platforms have been developed to provide information about bullying, prevention strategies, and ways to support victims. These apps often utilise interactive elements, such as quizzes, educational games, and simulated bullying situations, to engage young users and facilitate effective learning. (Siddiqui et al., 2023).. Some apps even offer specialised resources for parents and teachers, helping them understand the signs of bullying and how to respond appropriately. By leveraging technology, anti-bullying campaigns can reach a wider audience and create a greater impact in shaping positive attitudes and behaviours (Green et al., 2023).

Given the prevalence of cyberbullying, social media monitoring technology is becoming an increasingly important tool in anti-bullying efforts. Specialised software can help schools and parents to monitor students' online activities, detect potentially harmful language or behaviour, and identify early signs of cyberbullying. Some monitoring tools even use artificial intelligence to analyse communication patterns and flag suspicious content. (Nery et al., 2020b). While the use of this kind of technology must be balanced with careful privacy considerations, it can be an important component in a comprehensive cyberbullying prevention strategy. Moreover, these technologies can also be used to gather evidence in serious cases that may require legal intervention.

Technology has opened up new opportunities to provide support for victims of bullying through virtual platforms. Online counselling services, virtual support groups, and chatbots specifically designed to provide emotional support have become valuable resources for those who may feel uncomfortable or unable to seek help in person. These platforms offer access to safe, anonymous and readily available support, allowing victims of bullying to get help whenever they need it (Iksal et al., 2024); (Irwan et al., 2024). Some platforms even connect users with professional counsellors or trained peer mentors, providing more personalised and targeted support. By utilising technology to create strong virtual support networks, we can expand the reach of anti-bullying services and ensure that no victim feels alone or has nowhere to turn for help.

Conclusion

Strategies to tackle bullying in education require a comprehensive approach and involve various parties. Key measures include raising awareness about the dangers of bullying, establishing a clear anti-bullying policy, training teaching staff and students,

and creating a positive and inclusive school environment. It is also important to develop effective reporting systems and provide support for victims of bullying. The implementation of evidence-based prevention and intervention programmes is also key in reducing the incidence of bullying in schools.

The success of this strategy depends on the commitment and co-operation of the entire school community, including administrators, teachers, students and parents. A sustained and consistent approach is necessary, given that bullying is a complex issue that requires long-term cultural and behavioural change. By implementing the right strategies and involving all stakeholders, it is hoped that schools can create a safe, supportive and bullying-free learning environment, so that every student can develop optimally both academically and social-emotionally.

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