

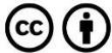
School-Based Bullying Prevention in Indonesia: A CIPP Evaluation of the Roots Program

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Submitted: 2026-06-09 Revised: 2026-07-20 Published: 2026-08-05 Keywords: Bullying Prevention, CIPP Evaluation, Peer-Led Intervention, Roots Indonesia Program, School Climate Copyright holder: © Author/s (2026) This article is under:  How to cite: Jamain, R. R., Sulistiyana, S., Arsyad, M., & Rusandi, M. A. (2026). School-Based Bullying Prevention in Indonesia: A CIPP Evaluation of the Roots Program. <i>Bulletin of Counseling and Psychotherapy</i>, 8(2). https://doi.org/10.51214/002026082022000 Published by: Kuras Institute E-ISSN: 2656-1050	ABSTRACT: Bullying remains a persistent challenge in schools, undermining students' well-being and the development of safe and inclusive learning environments. This study evaluated the implementation of the Roots Indonesia Program at SMPN 4 Alalak, Barito Kuala Regency, using the Context, Input, Process, and Product (CIPP) evaluation model. A qualitative program evaluation design was employed, involving 13 purposively selected informants comprising one principal, two teachers, two program facilitators, four student change agents, and four student participants. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, observations, and document analysis and analyzed thematically based on the CIPP framework. Trustworthiness was ensured through triangulation, member checking, and an audit trail. The findings indicate that the program addressed the school's need for bullying prevention and supported the development of a safe, inclusive, and child-friendly school environment. Implementation was supported by trained facilitators, student change agents, adequate resources, and active stakeholder involvement. Activities followed program guidelines through structured modules, peer-led activities, anti-bullying campaigns, Roots Day events, and regular monitoring. Positive outcomes included a 4.97% increase in the diversity climate indicator, a 3.84% increase in the school safety climate indicator, improved leadership, communication, empathy, and prosocial behavior among student change agents, and a reduction in bullying cases from 20 in 2023 to 10 in 2024 and one in 2025. Overall, the program was implemented effectively and contributed to bullying prevention and a more positive school climate. Sustained stakeholder support, systematic monitoring, and regeneration of student change agents are essential for long-term impact.
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INTRODUCTION

Bullying remains one of the most persistent and concerning problems in educational settings worldwide. Defined as repeated aggressive behavior involving an imbalance of power between perpetrators and victims, bullying can occur in physical, verbal, relational, and cyber forms. A growing body of evidence indicates that bullying victimization is associated with a wide range of adverse psychological, social, and educational outcomes for students. Victims of bullying are more likely to experience anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, emotional distress, and impaired social

adjustment compared to their non-victimized peers (Arseneault, 2017; Zhang & Chen, 2023). Furthermore, bullying is increasingly recognized as a major public health and educational concern because of its widespread prevalence and its detrimental effects on students' well-being, learning experiences, and developmental outcomes (Fraguas et al., 2021; Gaffney et al., 2019). Recent scholarship also emphasizes that bullying is distinguished from ordinary conflict by intentionality, repetition, and an imbalance of power, and should be understood as a systematic abuse of power within peer relationships (Menesini & Salmivalli, 2017; Andrews et al., 2023).

Beyond its psychological consequences, bullying has substantial implications for students' academic experiences and educational attainment. Students who experience bullying often report lower levels of school engagement, reduced academic motivation, increased absenteeism, and lower academic achievement (Christ et al., 2025; Román & Murillo, 2011). Longitudinal evidence further suggests that the consequences of bullying may persist into adulthood, affecting mental health, social functioning, and educational outcomes long after the bullying experiences have occurred (Arseneault, 2017). Consequently, bullying is no longer viewed merely as an interpersonal conflict among students but rather as a complex educational and social problem that requires comprehensive and sustainable prevention strategies (Fraguas et al., 2021).

The occurrence of bullying is closely associated with the broader social environment in which students interact. School climate has been identified as one of the most influential contextual factors affecting both the prevalence of bullying and the effectiveness of prevention initiatives. A positive school climate is characterized by supportive teacher–student relationships, mutual respect, clear behavioral expectations, and a strong sense of safety and belonging among school members (Wang & Degol, 2016). Schools that cultivate positive climates tend to report lower levels of peer victimization and violence, better student engagement, and improved academic outcomes (Thapa et al., 2013). Moreover, bullying prevention programs are more likely to succeed when implemented within supportive school environments that encourage positive peer interactions and collective responsibility for student well-being (Baraldsnes, 2020; Low & Van-Ryzin, 2014). Contemporary evidence further indicates that school climate functions not merely as a background condition, but as a modifiable ecological mechanism that can strengthen or weaken prevention outcomes (Arango et al., 2024).

In Indonesia, bullying remains one of the most common forms of violence experienced by students in educational settings. Recognizing the urgency of this issue, the government enacted the Regulation of the Minister of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology Number 46 of 2023 concerning the Prevention and Management of Violence in Educational Institutions. The regulation emphasizes preventive, responsive, and restorative approaches to creating safe, inclusive, and child-friendly learning environments. This policy reflects the understanding that bullying and other forms of school violence are influenced not only by individual characteristics but also by peer relationships, school culture, and institutional practices. Therefore, effective prevention requires the active involvement of all members of the school community.

Concerns regarding bullying and violence against children are also evident at the regional level. Reports from child protection agencies in South Kalimantan indicate that bullying continues to be among the most frequently reported forms of violence involving children. In Barito Kuala Regency, concerns about violence and bullying among school-aged children have reinforced the need for schools to adopt systematic prevention strategies and strengthen safe and inclusive learning environments. These conditions highlight the importance of implementing evidence-based interventions that address not only individual behaviors but also the broader social norms that influence students' interactions.

As part of national efforts to prevent bullying and school violence, UNICEF, in collaboration with the Indonesian government through the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, developed the Roots Indonesia Program. The program is an evidence-based and

adolescent-driven anti-bullying intervention that empowers students to become agents of Change who promote positive social norms, empathy, prosocial behavior, and peer support within their schools. Students identified as influential within their social networks participate in structured sessions to identify bullying-related issues, design solutions, and implement school-wide campaigns and activities such as Roots Day. Through this peer-led approach, the program aims to foster a positive school culture that discourages bullying and encourages respectful relationships among students (UNICEF, 2020). The original social-network logic underpinning Roots is supported by experimental evidence showing that mobilizing socially influential students can shift peer norms and reduce conflict across school networks (Paluck et al., 2016).

The conceptual foundation of the Roots Indonesia Program is consistent with peer-led intervention theory, which emphasizes the powerful influence of peer networks on adolescent attitudes and behaviors. Research on peer-based bullying prevention programs such as KiVa has demonstrated that empowering socially influential students can reduce bullying, strengthen defending behaviors, and increase peer support for victims (Kärnä et al., 2011; Saarento & Salmivalli, 2015). Meta-analytic evidence also indicates that school-based anti-bullying programs can effectively reduce bullying behavior when implemented comprehensively and supported by positive school climates and active stakeholder involvement (Fraguas et al., 2021; Gaffney et al., 2019). These findings provide a strong rationale for implementing the Roots Indonesia Program as part of broader efforts to promote safe, inclusive, and child-friendly schools. Individual-participant meta-analytic findings also show that intervention effects vary across students, underscoring the importance of context-sensitive implementation and monitoring (Hensums et al., 2023).

The Roots Indonesia Program has been implemented in many schools across Indonesia, including schools participating in the Sekolah Penggerak initiative. SMPN 4 Alalak, located in Barito Kuala Regency, has implemented the program since the 2023/2024 academic year and has completed two cohorts of student change agents. Although previous studies have examined aspects of program implementation, participant experiences, and perceived effectiveness, comprehensive evaluations of the program remain limited. Existing studies often focus primarily on outcomes and do not adequately assess whether the program addresses contextual needs, uses sufficient resources, is implemented as planned, and achieves its intended objectives. Moreover, empirical evidence regarding the implementation of the Roots Indonesia Program within the context of Sekolah Penggerak schools remains scarce. The limited number of context-sensitive evaluations is particularly important because implementation quality, school characteristics, and participant profiles may explain why anti-bullying programs produce heterogeneous effects across settings (Gaffney et al., 2021; Hensums et al., 2023).

To address this gap, a comprehensive evaluation framework is needed. The Context, Input, Process, and Product (CIPP) evaluation model developed by Stufflebeam and Zhang (2017) provides a systematic approach to assessing educational programs through four interconnected dimensions. The model enables evaluators to examine the relevance of program goals to identified needs (context), the adequacy of available resources (input), the quality of implementation (process), and the extent to which intended outcomes are achieved (product). By evaluating these dimensions simultaneously, the CIPP model provides a comprehensive understanding of program effectiveness and generates evidence-based recommendations for program improvement and sustainability (Frye & Hemmer, 2012). Therefore, this study aims to evaluate the implementation of the Roots Indonesia Program at SMPN 4 Alalak in Barito Kuala Regency using the CIPP evaluation model.

METHODS

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative evaluative approach using the Context, Input, Process, and Product (CIPP) model developed by Stufflebeam and Zhang (2017). The CIPP model was selected because it enables a comprehensive evaluation of a program through four key dimensions: context, input, process, and product. A qualitative approach was adopted to gain an in-depth understanding of the implementation of the Roots Indonesia Program, the factors facilitating or hindering its implementation, and its perceived impacts on stakeholders.

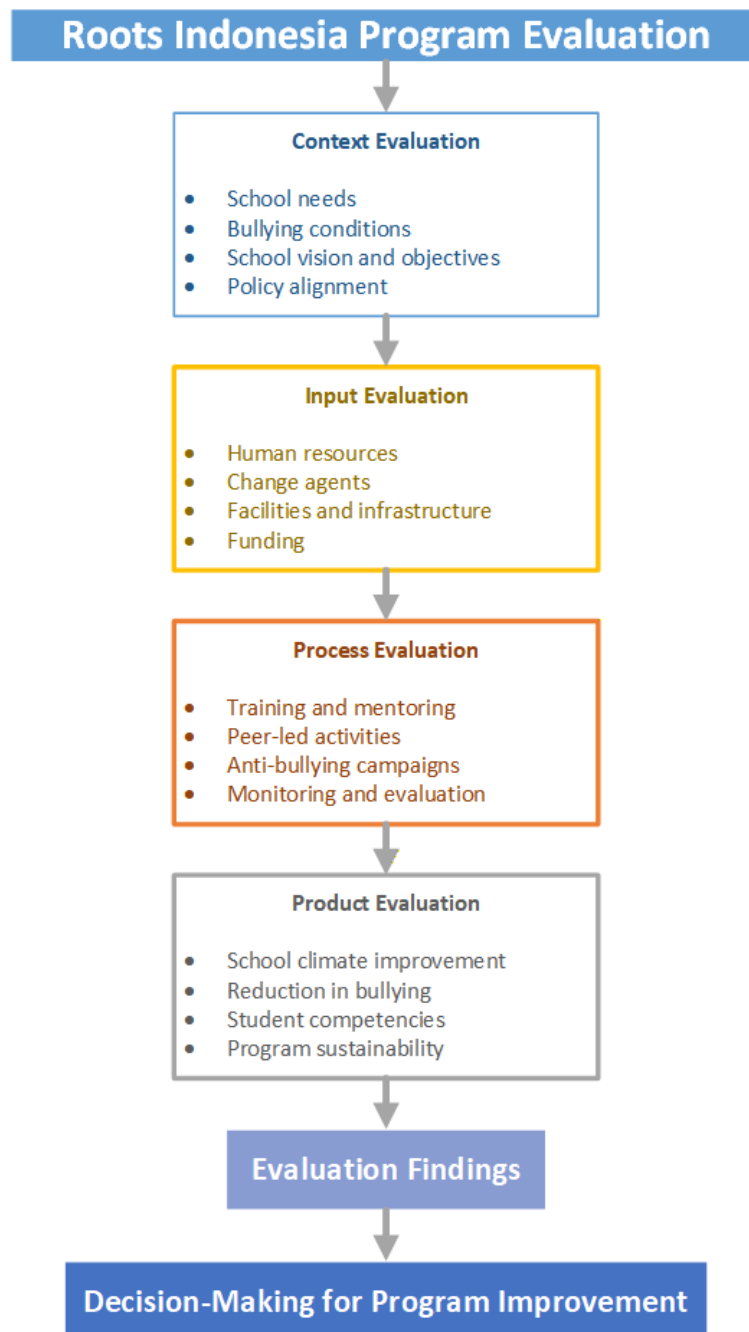


Figure 1. Research Design

Study Site

The school was selected because it is one of Indonesia's *Sekolah Penggerak* (Driving Schools) that has implemented the Roots Indonesia Program since the 2023/2024 academic year as part of its efforts to prevent bullying and foster a safe, inclusive, and child-friendly school culture.

Participants

Participants were selected using purposive sampling based on their direct involvement in the planning, implementation, and participation in the Roots Indonesia Program. A total of 13 participants were involved in the study: one principal, two teachers involved in the program, two Roots Program facilitators, four student change agents, and four students who received the intervention. The characteristics of the participants are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Characteristics of Study Participants

Participants	Number
Principal	1
Teachers involved in the program	2
Roots Program facilitators	2
Student change agents	4
Students receiving the intervention	4
Total	13

Participants were selected because of their direct involvement in planning, implementing, facilitating, or receiving program activities, as well as their ability to provide relevant information regarding the implementation and outcomes of the Roots Indonesia Program. Data collection was conducted from July to August 2025.

Ethical Considerations

This study was conducted after obtaining a research recommendation from the Research and Community Service Institute of Lambung Mangkurat University through Research Recommendation Letter Number 258/UN8.2/PP/2025. In addition, permission to conduct the study at the school environment was obtained from the Principal of SMPN 4 Alalak, Barito Kuala Regency.

Prior to data collection, all participants were informed about the purpose, procedures, benefits, and their right to participate in the study voluntarily. Informed consent was obtained from all participants before interviews and data collection. To maintain confidentiality and privacy, participants' identities were anonymized using codes in all interview quotations and research reports. All data collected were used solely for academic and research purposes.

Data Collection Techniques

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, observations, and document analysis to obtain comprehensive information regarding the implementation of the Roots Indonesia Program.

Semi-Structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with all study participants using an interview guide developed based on the CIPP evaluation components. The interviews aimed to explore participants' perceptions, experiences, and assessments regarding program needs, resource availability, implementation processes, and program outcomes.

Observation

Non-participant observations were conducted during various Roots Program activities, including the implementation of learning modules, student change agent activities, anti-bullying campaigns, and Roots Day events. Observations were conducted to capture how the program was implemented in practice and to examine interactions among members of the school community during program activities.

Documentation

Documents analyzed included the Roots Program modules, activity reports, photographic documentation, monitoring and evaluation reports, and Education Report Card (*Rapor Pendidikan*) data related to diversity climate and school safety climate indicators. Document analysis was used to corroborate and enrich findings obtained through interviews and observations.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using thematic analysis following the procedures proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006), which included: (1) familiarization with the data through repeated reading of interview transcripts and field notes; (2) generating initial codes; (3) identifying major themes; (4) reviewing and verifying themes; (5) defining and naming themes; and (6) producing the research report. The identified themes were subsequently organized according to the four components of the CIPP evaluation model: context, input, process, and product.

Trustworthiness

To enhance the credibility and reliability of the study findings, several trustworthiness strategies were employed, including triangulation, member checking, and audit trails. In qualitative research, these strategies are essential for establishing credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transparent theme development (Nowell et al., 2017).

Triangulation

Triangulation was achieved through multiple data sources and methods, namely interviews, observations, and document analysis. Findings from one source were compared with those from other sources to increase the consistency and accuracy of the interpretation.

Member Checking

Member checking was conducted by confirming interview summaries and interpretations of the findings with several participants to ensure that the results accurately reflected their experiences and perspectives.

Audit Trail

The researcher systematically documented the entire research process, including data collection, coding procedures, data analysis, and the interpretation of findings and conclusions. This documentation was maintained to ensure transparency and to allow the research process to be reviewed and traced if necessary.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Context Evaluation

Program Needs and Alignment with School Goals. The interview findings and document analysis revealed that the Roots Program was implemented in response to the school's need to create a safe, inclusive, and bullying-free learning environment. Prior to program implementation,

the school experienced various forms of bullying, including verbal bullying, social exclusion, and student conflicts that had the potential to develop into bullying behaviors.

The principal explained that the Roots Program had produced a tangible impact on bullying prevention efforts within the school:

"...I highly appreciate the Roots Program that has been implemented at SMPN 4 Alalak for two cohorts. The program has had a tangible impact in reducing bullying incidents. This success is reflected in the improvement of the diversity climate indikator and the significant decline in bullying cases, contributing to the development of a healthy school, a safe school, a child-friendly school, and an inclusive school..." (Principal, interview, 2025).

Document analysis indicated that the Roots Program aligns with SMPN 4 Alalak's vision of creating a comfortable learning environment free of discrimination while supporting the implementation of child-friendly, inclusive education. The program also supports the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum by promoting student well-being, fostering project-based learning, and developing students' social-emotional competencies. Furthermore, the program objectives were considered relevant to the school's needs for supporting students' personal, social, academic, and career development. A summary of the context evaluation results is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Context Evaluation Findings

Aspect	Findings
Program Needs	High need for bullying prevention
Goal Alignment	Supports personal, social, academic, and career development
Curriculum Alignment	Supports the Merdeka Curriculum and student well-being
Alignment with School Vision	Supports a safe, inclusive, and child-friendly school

Input Evaluation

Readiness of Program Resources. The findings indicated that the Roots Program was supported by adequate human resources, facilities, infrastructure, and financial resources. Program implementation involved the principal, two certified Roots Program teacher facilitators, national facilitators, and student change agents selected based on their social influence within the school community. A total of 30 students were selected as change agents and received training on bullying identification, prevention, and intervention.

In terms of facilities, the school had adequate resources to support program implementation, including classrooms, counseling rooms, LCD projectors, Roots Program modules, presentation materials, and collaborative media used in anti-bullying campaigns and Roots Day activities (Figure 1). Program funding was supported through the Performance-Based School Operational Assistance Fund (BOS Kinerja), with budget planning involving various school stakeholders.

The findings also demonstrated strong support from various stakeholders, including the principal, subject teachers, the counseling team, school supervisors, parents, the school committee, and students. Such involvement was identified as one of the key factors contributing to the successful implementation of the program. The results of the input evaluation are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Input Evaluation Findings

Component	Findings
Human Resources	Principal, national facilitators, and two certified teacher facilitators
Change Agents	30 students with strong social influence

Facilities and Infrastructure	Roots modules, LCD projectors, counseling room, campaign media
Funding	Performance-Based School Operational Assistance Fund (BOS Kinerja)
Stakeholder Support	Principal, teachers, counseling staff, supervisors, parents, school committee, and students

Process Evaluation

Implementation of the Roots Program. Document analysis showed that the Roots Program was implemented systematically through 12 main activities conducted in sequential stages. These activities included program orientation, strengthening group identity, understanding bullying, developing leadership and effective communication, fostering healthy social relationships, promoting constructive conflict resolution, promoting positive behavior, developing anti-bullying agreements, simulations or role-playing, school-wide campaigns, Roots Day implementation, and program evaluation. All activities were implemented according to the planned schedule and were systematically documented.

Interviews with teacher facilitators indicated that student change agents actively participated in all activities and successfully carried out their role as disseminators of anti-bullying messages among their peers.

“...Student participation in the Roots Program was reflected in their role as change agents who promoted anti-bullying values within the school. They were actively involved in campaigns, peer counseling activities, and various initiatives aimed at preventing bullying. In addition, they served as role models for other students and encouraged their peers to take part in creating a bullying-free school environment...” (Teacher Facilitator, interview, 2025).

Campaign activities were conducted through group discussions, posters, social media platforms, and Roots Day events involving the entire school community.

The program’s monitoring and evaluation were conducted regularly by teacher facilitators under the supervision of the principal and the school supervisor. Findings from monitoring activities were used as a basis for improving and refining program implementation in subsequent cycles. The stages of program implementation are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Stages of Roots Program Implementation

Stage	Activity Focus
1	Introduction to the Roots Program
2	Group Identity and Awareness
3	Understanding Bullying
4	Leadership and Effective Communication
5	Healthy Social Relationships
6	Conflict Resolution
7	Positive Behavior
8	Anti-Bullying Agreement
9	Role Play
10	Anti-Bullying Campaign
11	Roots Day
12	Program Evaluation

Documentation findings indicated that the implementation of the Roots Program followed a sequential process: selection of student change agents, training and mentoring, implementation of core program activities, anti-bullying campaigns, organization of Roots Day, and monitoring and evaluation. These implementation stages formed an integrated program cycle, as illustrated in Figure 2.



Figure 2. Flow of Roots Program Implementation at SMPN 4 Alalak

Product Evaluation

Impact of the Program on School Climate and Student Behavior. The evaluation findings demonstrated that the Roots Indonesia Program had a positive impact on both school climate and students' social competencies. Based on data from the Education Report Card (Rapor Pendidikan), the diversity climate indicator increased by 4.97%, while the school safety climate indicator increased by 3.84%. These findings suggest improvements in the school climate, particularly in terms of inclusivity, diversity, and perceived safety. Changes in school climate indicators are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. School Climate

Indicator	Change
Diversity Climate	+4.97%
School Safety Climate	+3.84%

The improvement in school climate was also reflected in participants' perceptions. A teacher facilitator noted that students became more aware of respectful interactions and were more willing to intervene when witnessing bullying behavior.

"...Changes in student behavior and school climate can be observed through the Education Report Card data, which showed improvements in the school inclusivity and diversity climate indicators. These findings were further supported by counseling unit records indicating a decline in bullying cases within the school..." (Teacher Facilitator, interview, 2025).

Furthermore, interviews with students revealed that participation in the Roots Indonesia Program increased their awareness of the harmful consequences of bullying and strengthened their commitment to promoting anti-bullying values within the school community. One student change agent emphasized that the program helped students recognize that bullying should not be treated as a trivial issue because of its negative impact on victims.

"...I think every school should implement this program. Through Roots Day, students became more aware of the harmful effects of bullying and understood that bullying should not be taken lightly because it can seriously affect victims. I also noticed that students in our school became more aware of the consequences of bullying. After participating in this program, I am

committed to continuing to educate myself and others about bullying prevention and to standing up for victims whenever bullying occurs...”

(Student Change Agent, interview, 2025).

This finding suggests that the program not only enhanced students’ awareness of bullying and its consequences but also encouraged defending behaviors and strengthened their commitment to creating a safer and more supportive school environment. The increased awareness and commitment expressed by student change agents were further reflected in the development of various social and interpersonal competencies. A summary of the competencies developed among student change agents is presented in Table 6.

Table 6. Impact of the Roots Program on Change Agents’ Competencies

Competency	Findings
Self-Confidence	Improved
Leadership	Improved
Effective Communication	Improved
Empathy	Improved
Healthy Social Relationships	Improved
Prosocial Behavior	Improved

Documentation of bullying incidents also showed a declining trend throughout the implementation of the Roots Indonesia Program. As shown in Table 7, the number of reported bullying cases decreased from 20 cases in 2023 to 10 cases in 2024 and to 1 case in 2025. Trends in bullying cases are presented in Table 7.

Table 7. Trend of Bullying Cases at SMPN 4 Alalak

Year	Number of Cases
2023	20
2024	10
2025	1

These findings are consistent with participants’ perceptions that students had become more aware of bullying issues and more willing to support peers who experienced difficulties. Although causal relationships cannot be established within the scope of this qualitative evaluation, the observed improvements in school climate and the decline in bullying cases suggest that the Roots Indonesia Program may have contributed to strengthening anti-bullying awareness, positive peer interactions, and a safer school environment.

Discussion

Context Evaluation: Relevance of the Roots Indonesia Program to School Needs

The findings indicate that the Roots Indonesia Program was highly relevant to SMPN 4 Alalak’s efforts to create a safe, inclusive, and bullying-free school environment. The program addressed an important need within the school context: preventing bullying and promoting positive peer relationships. This finding supports the argument that bullying prevention initiatives are more likely to succeed when they are aligned with the specific needs, priorities, and characteristics of the school environment. Educational interventions that are contextually relevant tend to receive stronger institutional support and are more easily integrated into existing school practices and policies (Frye & Hemmer, 2012; Stufflebeam & Zhang, 2017). This interpretation is consistent with contemporary reviews showing that effective prevention depends on alignment between program components,

school ecology, and the capacities of teachers and other implementers (Menesini & Salmivalli, 2017; van Aalst et al., 2024).

The alignment between the Roots Indonesia Program and broader educational goals, including student well-being, inclusive education, and the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, further strengthened its relevance. Previous studies have shown that bullying prevention should not be viewed solely as a disciplinary issue but as an integral component of creating supportive learning environments that foster students' social, emotional, and academic development (Thapa et al., 2013; Wang & Degol, 2016). In this study, the program contributed to the school's vision of becoming a safe, child-friendly, and inclusive learning environment, suggesting that bullying prevention can support broader school improvement efforts.

The findings also reinforce the importance of considering school climate as a contextual factor in bullying prevention. Positive school climates characterized by respect, inclusiveness, and supportive relationships have consistently been associated with lower levels of bullying and greater student well-being (Baraldsnes, 2020; Wang & Degol, 2016). Therefore, the relevance of the Roots Indonesia Program extends beyond preventing bullying incidents and includes strengthening the social environment that supports healthy student development.

Input Evaluation: The Importance of Resource Readiness and Stakeholder Support

The findings revealed that the successful implementation of the Roots Indonesia Program was supported by adequate human resources, facilities, funding, and stakeholder commitment. The presence of trained teacher facilitators, active school leadership, sufficient infrastructure, and dedicated student change agents provided a strong foundation for implementation. According to the CIPP evaluation framework, program effectiveness is strongly influenced by the availability and quality of resources that support implementation (Stufflebeam & Zhang, 2017).

The active involvement of school leaders was particularly important. School principals play a critical role in creating institutional commitment, allocating resources, and fostering a school culture that supports program sustainability. Previous research has demonstrated that anti-bullying initiatives are more effective when supported by strong leadership and organizational commitment (Fraguas et al., 2021; Ttofi & Farrington, 2011). In the present study, leadership support facilitated coordination among teachers, facilitators, students, and other program stakeholders.

Furthermore, the involvement of teachers, counselors, parents, school committees, and supervisors reflects the application of a whole-school approach to bullying prevention. This finding is consistent with evidence suggesting that bullying prevention programs achieve greater effectiveness when responsibility is shared across the entire school community rather than concentrated among individual actors (Ttofi & Farrington, 2011; UNESCO, 2019). Such collaborative engagement contributes to the development of consistent anti-bullying norms and strengthens the sustainability of intervention efforts. Updated meta-analytic evidence confirms that whole-school programs are generally effective, although their average effects are modest and vary according to program design and implementation conditions (Gaffney et al., 2021).

Process Evaluation: Effectiveness of the Peer-Led Intervention Approach

The findings indicate that the Roots Indonesia Program was implemented systematically through structured learning modules, campaigns, peer discussions, Roots Day activities, and continuous monitoring. One of the most significant findings concerns the active role of student change agents in disseminating anti-bullying messages and promoting positive social norms among their peers.

These findings support peer-led intervention theory, which emphasizes the powerful influence of peer relationships on adolescent behavior. During adolescence, peers become an important source of social influence, often exerting stronger effects on attitudes and behaviors than

formal authority figures (Saarento & Salmivalli, 2015). Consequently, interventions that utilize socially influential students as change agents may be particularly effective in promoting behavioral change within school settings. Social-network experiments further demonstrate that influential peers can diffuse new behavioral norms beyond the students directly trained by an intervention (Paluck et al., 2016).

The implementation process observed in this study is consistent with evidence from the KiVa program and other peer-based interventions. Research has demonstrated that empowering influential students to model positive behaviors and challenge bullying-related norms can reduce bullying and increase peer defending behaviors (Kärnä et al., 2011; Salmivalli et al., 2011). Through training sessions, campaigns, and Roots Day activities, student change agents at SMPN 4 Alalak were given opportunities to internalize anti-bullying values and disseminate them throughout their peer networks.

The findings suggest that the effectiveness of the Roots Indonesia Program lies not only in the content of the learning modules but also in its ability to leverage peer influence as a mechanism for social change. This observation is consistent with broader evidence from peer-led interventions such as ASSIST, which demonstrated that socially influential students can effectively promote positive behavioral norms among their peers (Campbell et al., 2008).

Product Evaluation: Impact on School Climate and Bullying Prevention

The findings demonstrate that the Roots Indonesia Program contributed positively to improvements in school climate and student behavior. The increase in diversity climate and school safety indicators suggests that the school environment became more inclusive, supportive, and psychologically safe following program implementation. These improvements are important because positive school climates have consistently been associated with lower levels of bullying, stronger student engagement, and improved educational outcomes (Thapa et al., 2013; Wang & Degol, 2016). Recent cluster-randomized evidence similarly shows that multicomponent interventions targeting school climate can reduce peer-reported victimization and improve relevant school-level conditions (Arango et al., 2024).

In addition to improvements in school climate, student change agents demonstrated growth in leadership, communication skills, empathy, self-confidence, and prosocial behavior. These findings highlight the potential of peer-led interventions to strengthen students' social-emotional competencies. Previous research has shown that participation in anti-bullying programs can promote empathy, social responsibility, and positive peer relationships, which are essential protective factors against bullying behavior (Fraguas et al., 2021; Salmivalli et al., 2011).

An important finding of this study was the emergence of defender-oriented attitudes among student change agents. Participants reported increased awareness of the harmful consequences of bullying, a stronger commitment to educating peers, and a willingness to intervene when bullying occurred. Such findings are consistent with peer influence theory and previous studies demonstrating that anti-bullying interventions can strengthen defending behaviors and challenge social norms that tolerate bullying (Kärnä et al., 2011; Saarento & Salmivalli, 2015). Because bystanders often influence whether bullying continues or stops, encouraging defender behaviors represents a critical mechanism for sustainable bullying prevention.

The declining trend in reported bullying cases from 20 cases in 2023 to 10 cases in 2024 and subsequently to 1 case in 2025 provides additional evidence of positive program outcomes. Although causal relationships cannot be established within the scope of this qualitative evaluation, the observed reduction is consistent with evidence from international studies indicating that comprehensive school-based anti-bullying interventions can reduce bullying behaviors and improve student well-being (Gaffney et al., 2019; Ttofi & Farrington, 2011). The convergence of quantitative indicators, documentation, and participants' perceptions supports the conclusion that the Roots

Indonesia Program contributed positively to bullying prevention efforts within the school. Accordingly, the downward trend should be interpreted as supportive program evidence rather than definitive causal proof, especially because meta-analyses document substantial heterogeneity across anti-bullying evaluations (Gaffney et al., 2021).

Overall, the findings suggest that the Roots Indonesia Program represents a promising strategy for promoting safe, inclusive, and child-friendly schools. The successful adaptation of a peer-led intervention model within the local educational context demonstrates the potential of student-centered approaches to foster a positive school culture and sustain bullying prevention efforts.

Implications

The findings of this study indicate that the effectiveness of the Roots Indonesia Program depends not only on the presence of student change agents but also on strong institutional support, facilitator readiness, and the active involvement of the entire school ecosystem. Therefore, successful implementation requires policy support from school leadership, adequate facilitator training, sustainable monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, strengthened anti-bullying campaigns through digital media, and a systematic regeneration process for student change agents. These efforts are essential for sustaining the program's long-term impact. Given its positive contribution to improving school climate and preventing bullying, the Roots Indonesia Program has strong potential to serve as an effective and sustainable model for fostering safe, inclusive, and child-friendly schools across diverse educational contexts in Indonesia.

Limitations

This study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting its findings. First, the evaluation was conducted in only one school, SMPN 4 Alalak, limiting the transferability of the results to schools with different characteristics and contexts. Second, the study involved a relatively small number of participants consisting only of stakeholders directly involved in the program, while the perspectives of parents, community members, and policymakers were not included, resulting in a less comprehensive understanding of the program's implementation and impact. Third, the absence of a longitudinal design prevented the evaluation from assessing the sustainability of behavioral changes, improvements in school climate, and the long-term effectiveness of student change agents. Fourth, some findings were based on participants' self-reported perceptions and experiences obtained through interviews, which may have introduced subjective bias despite the use of triangulation through observations and document analysis to enhance trustworthiness. Future research should involve a larger and more diverse sample of schools, include broader stakeholder participation, and adopt longitudinal or mixed-methods approaches to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the long-term effectiveness and sustainability of bullying prevention programs.

CONCLUSION

This study evaluated the implementation of the Roots Indonesia Program at SMPN 4 Alalak using the Context, Input, Process, and Product (CIPP) evaluation model and found that the program was effectively implemented across all evaluation dimensions. From the context perspective, the program addressed the school's need to create a safe, inclusive, and bullying-free learning environment while supporting the objectives of the Merdeka Curriculum and the Sekolah Penggerak Program. From the input perspective, its implementation was supported by trained facilitators, student change agents, adequate facilities, funding, and active stakeholder involvement. The process evaluation demonstrated that the program was implemented systematically through structured learning modules, peer-led activities, anti-bullying campaigns, Roots Day events, and

continuous monitoring and evaluation, with student change agents playing a central role in promoting positive social norms and anti-bullying values among their peers. The product evaluation showed positive outcomes, including improvements in school climate, reflected in increased diversity and school safety indicators, enhanced students' social competencies, and a reduction in bullying cases. Overall, these findings suggest that the Roots Indonesia Program is a promising and effective strategy for bullying prevention and the promotion of a positive school culture. To ensure its long-term sustainability, schools should strengthen collaboration among stakeholders, maintain continuous monitoring and evaluation, and establish a structured regeneration system for student change agents to preserve and expand the program's positive impact.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors gratefully acknowledge the financial support provided by UPABK, Universitas Lambung Mangkurat, for the implementation of this research. The authors also express their appreciation to SMPN 4 Alalak and all participants who contributed to this study.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS STATEMENT

Ririanti Rachmayanie Jamain: Conceptualization, methodology, project administration, investigation, data collection, supervision, validation, Writing original draft, and policy recommendation development. Sulistiyana: Investigation, data collection, formal analysis, report preparation, policy recommendation development, and manuscript review. Muhammad Arsyad: Investigation, data collection, formal analysis, report preparation, policy recommendation development, and manuscript review. M. Arli Rusandi: Data curation, formal analysis, data interpretation, Writing review & editing, manuscript restructuring, visualization, and preparation of the article for publication. All authors contributed to the study, reviewed the manuscript, and approved the final version of the manuscript.

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