


Exploring Challenges and Solutions to Prevent and Overcome Bullying Behavior Among Vocational School Students

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INTRODUCTION

Bullying is a psychosocial issue that entails continuously utilizing one's position of authority to disparage and ridicule people. Bullying happens when someone is subjected to unfavorable behavior from one or more other people regularly over an extended period (Olweus, 1993).

The World Health Organisation (WHO) defines bullying as aggressive behavior in which a person or group abuses their power or force against another individual. These actions frequently have serious negative effects, including ongoing harm to one's physical, mental, and social well-being. Bullying incidents are not just found in school environments; they also happen in places where kids congregate and on social media, which broadens the impact of the problem (Kanda & Suci Rosulliya, 2024).

Bullying has emerged as one of the world's most concerning issues, particularly for young people. According to statistics, 36 bullying incidents were reported in South Korea during a given period (Isfaizah et al., 2023). In contrast, bullying cases increased significantly in Japan, rising from 198,108 in 2012 to 70,000 new cases in 2013 (National Mental Health and Education Centre, 2006). According to a 2018 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) survey, 41% of Indonesian students reported having experienced bullying, indicating that the problem is also a national one. Up until August 2023, the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI) reported 2,355 instances of child protection violations, 87 of which involved bullying. The remaining crimes include sexual assault, physical assault, and several other offenses related to child care (Masyrafina, 2023). It proves that bullying is a significant problem that needs careful consideration from a range of parties.

A person's physical or mental health can be harmed by bullying, which includes a variety of actions such as harassment, exclusion, intimidation, and abuse of power. From elementary school to college, this activity can take place at every educational level (Kanda & Suci Rosulliya, 2024). Bullying has extremely negative effects on the victim as well as the social environment. In addition to bodily illnesses like headaches, stomachaches, and strained muscles, victims often experience psychological problems like hopelessness, worry, and disturbed sleep. According to Lestari and Pasilaputra (2024), this syndrome may impair the victim's academic performance, motivation for learning, and sense of security. According to research, being the victim of cyberbullying is linked to several negative consequences, such as anxiety, sadness, and poor academic performance (Kowalski et al., 2014).

The factors that contribute to bullying are comparatively distinct. According to Wicaksono et al. (2021), social media, school, socialization, and the family environment can all have an impact on bullying. According to Wardah dan Auliah (2020), bullying behavior is also influenced by personality, popularity, and economic circumstances. Verbal bullying, including insults, taunts, and derogatory nicknames, is the most prevalent type of bullying in schools (Asri et al., 2022). Furthermore, cyberbullying is more common and can take many forms, including offensive remarks, hostile messages, and the dissemination of embarrassing content (Wardah & Auliah, 2022). Bullying's effects can be divided into three main categories: psychological, emotional, and physical. It is common for victims to feel alone and to lose confidence in themselves. The victim develops emotional sensitivity, withdraws, and fears social interaction. At the same time, victims frequently experience severe stress, fatigue, and noticeable food issues (Asri et al., 2022).

Numerous preventive measures have been suggested by earlier research. Nurdiana et al. (2021) promoted the creation of bullying-prohibition school policies. Information service programs can improve kids' comprehension of the consequences of bullying and the value of respect for one another, according to Saputra (2022). Additionally, Wiyani (2017) and Andriawan et al. (2023) emphasized the value of guidance teachers and counseling as agents of proactive change in fostering students' character and dealing with bullying. According to recent research, school-based anti-bullying initiatives are successful when they include components like parent education and strict disciplinary measures, which reduce bullying by 20–23% and victimization by 17–20% (Ttofi & Farrington, 2011).

According to research by Hertz et al. (2017), school-based anti-bullying initiatives that include parents, teachers, and students can effectively lower bullying rates. This implies that preventing bullying requires a comprehensive strategy. According to research by Hinduja and Patchin (2019), social media contributes significantly to the development of cyberbullying, which calls for particular preventative measures. It highlights the fact that bullying is not just a problem in educational settings but also online forums. According to research by Espelage et al. (2018), bullying risk might be raised by social and family characteristics such as strained family ties and a lack of social support. This implies that these factors should be considered in order to implement effective interventions.

Bullying incidents in the recent past underline how important these preventative actions are. Two noteworthy occurrences in Indonesia in 2023 attracted national attention. Five junior high school students in Cimahi physically attacked their classmates; the incident was captured on camera and shared on social media. A Banjarmasin high school student who had experienced trauma from being a victim of bullying stabbed his classmate. These two incidents highlight how important it is to have a systematic approach to preventing and dealing with bullying, especially in school settings.

Bullying at vocational schools is a severe issue that needs to be addressed seriously. According to research conducted at SMK TI Pembangunan Cimahi, bullying behavior can take the form of verbal, physical, or cyberbullying, and its causes can be traced back to individuals, social relationships, and families. According to research, bullying at SMK TI Pembangunan Cimahi can take several forms, including verbal, physical, and cyberbullying. Bullying is caused by a variety of causes, including

familial, social contact, and individual issues. According to the study's findings, bullying is a severe issue that calls for extensive intervention and preventative measures.

Study Aim

This study looks at the problems and remedies meant to stop and deal with bullying among Banjarmasin City vocational school pupils. The findings of this study are expected to improve counseling services in educational institutions and significantly improve educational policy.

METHODS

Design

This research employs a qualitative methodology utilizing an interpretative paradigm and a case study design. The interview technique is used to address research inquiries. Prior to the commencement of data collection, the researcher elucidates the study's objectives to potential participants and solicits their consent for participation. After obtaining the participants' agreement, they were requested to complete a questionnaire soliciting their background information. This technique offers a preliminary overview of participant characteristics and enables subsequent interviews.

The interview was conducted in two phases. The initial phase consists of a written interview, wherein participants respond to research inquiries informed by their experiences and perspectives. The second stage involves a face-to-face interview to verify data and elucidate any material inadequately addressed in the written interview. Face-to-face interviews are arranged according to a mutually agreed-upon time and location between the researcher and the participant. Each interview session lasts 30 to 60 minutes and is documented via a recording application on a smartphone to guarantee data precision. The recordings are subsequently listened to multiple times and meticulously transcribed for analytical purposes. All interviews are conducted in Indonesian, enabling participants to articulate their viewpoints quickly and clearly. This method seeks to achieve a comprehensive understanding of the topic under investigation.

Participants

This research involves guidance and counseling teachers who serve in Vocational High Schools, including State Vocational Schools and Vocational Schools managed by non-governmental foundations. Before recruiting volunteers, the researcher met with prospective participants to explain the research goal and ask them about their desire to participate. Prospective participants were provided thorough information about their potential benefits from engagement in this study. The researcher further underlined that participation is voluntary, and individuals can resign at any moment if they feel uncomfortable or have other activities that cannot be abandoned.

A total of four guidance and counseling teachers were recruited as research participants. They consisted of two teachers from State Vocational Schools and two from Private Vocational Schools in Banjarmasin City. In reporting the study results, the researcher employed the initials to safeguard the secrecy of the participants' identities. Participants' data is appropriately kept per the norms of research ethics. This approach was taken to preserve the anonymity of participants while increasing their trust and comfort during the research procedure.

Table 1. Participants demographics.

No	Name (Not real)	School Type (Initial)	Years of Service (Years)
1	Yuni	Vocational Public School 1/VPS1	>10
2	Warni	Vocational Public School 2/VPS2	>10
3	Yanto	Vocational Private School 3/VPS3	>10
4	Fatmah	Vocational Private School 4/VPS4	>10

Data Collection Methods

Written interviews followed by semi-structured interviews obtained data. The data is generally grouped into two categories: (1) problems in efforts to avoid bullying behavior among vocational school students. (2) solutions to avoid bullying in numerous Banjarmasin City vocational schools. The semi-structured interview guide's formulation, which will be conducted in person, is grounded in Rigby's (2012) assertion that bullying stems from a desire to harm. This drive is shown in actions that inflict suffering upon an individual. Actions are executed by a dominant individual or majority group and performed frequently, with the perpetrator exhibiting irresponsibility and deriving enjoyment from the act. Bullying is the exertion of power to harm an individual or group through verbal, physical, or psychological means, resulting in feelings of depression, trauma, and helplessness in the victim.

Before collecting data, the researcher will first create personal closeness with the individuals. Participants must give all the necessary details. Researchers believe that when an emotional connection has been formed between researchers and participants, interviews become more accessible, and participants feel comfortable. In addition, interviews were done by considering flexible time and settings for participants and researchers. Before the data was analyzed, the research participants were given the option to review the interview data (member checking) to build data trustworthiness and maintain ethics in (re)constructing data (Harvey, 2015).

Data Analysis

Before concluding, the acquired data were evaluated using thematic content analysis (Fullana, Pallisera, Colomer, Pena & Perez-Buriel, 2014). This strategy is focused on comprehending the content of the tale transmitted by the participants, not just the narrative framework. The purpose is to discover participant problems, experiences, and insights based on themes relevant to the study question.

The analysis process begins with the repeated reading of interview transcripts to understand the profound significance of the stories communicated by the participants. Each transcript is then methodically classified according to themes, subthemes, and potential new themes arising from the data. This analysis allows researchers to classify and categorize the data into more precise themes, supporting responses to previously defined research questions. With a thematic analysis technique, this study intends to examine and construct a systematic comprehension of the qualitative data that has been acquired.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULTS

The Challenge of "Joking" Perception in Bullying

A series of comprehensive interviews with guidance and counseling instructors at Vocational High School Banjarmasin uncovered several key themes concerning preventing and managing bullying behavior within the school setting. Thematic data analysis used inductive coding to discern notable patterns in participant experiences and insights. This analysis found two primary themes: (1) obstacles in preventing bullying behavior among vocational school students and (2) strategic strategies to address bullying behavior in diverse vocational schools. These studies offer comprehensive insights into the intricacies of bullying issues in educational institutions and outline measures to foster a safer and more conducive learning atmosphere.

Addressing bullying behavior in Vocational High Schools entails numerous intricate issues. A primary difficulty is the view among students who frequently regard bullying as only a benign "joke" despite the potential for severe repercussions. This attitude constitutes a substantial barrier to prevention initiatives since students often undervalue the detrimental effects of bullying on victims. Interviews with guidance and counseling teachers revealed that "students perceive bullying behavior as mere joking and mutual exchanges among peers" (Yuni, face-to-face interview, June 1, 2024).

Another educator said that "students often perceive it merely as a jest, disregarding their peers' emotions" (Warni, face-to-face interview, June 2, 2024). This perspective indicates that kids' awareness of the detrimental impacts of bullying is insufficient.

The findings are supported by data obtained from extensive interviews with 20 students at the Student in Serang City. A considerable proportion of students regard bullying as a widespread occurrence in schools. This action is sometimes considered a joke or a method of expressing friendship (Sari & Muslihah, 2020). This viewpoint suggests that a culture that regards bullying as humor poses a substantial barrier to addressing such behavior. Nugroho et al. (2020) investigated bullying within pesantren environments and found that it is often regarded as humor, a traditional method for orienting new students, or a source of entertainment stemming from demanding academic pressures and insufficient resources. These findings are noteworthy as they illustrate that the perception of bullying as humor is widespread in both public schools and faith-based educational institutions. Adinda et al. (2024) similarly noted that bullying in educational institutions often presents as a form of joking among students. Sartana and Afriyeni (2017) determined that cyberbullying is frequently committed for amusement, vengeance, or anonymity provided by the digital realm. It intensifies the problem since the perpetrator feels challenges in being identified, hence feeling empowered to partake in bullying conduct. This issue underscores the need for organized efforts to educate youngsters about the harmful effects of bullying, particularly in schools and online contexts.

Challenges of the Social Environment and Social Media

A fundamental issue in addressing bullying behavior is students' tendency to underestimate its harmful consequences. This challenge is increasingly complex due to the influence of the social milieu and social media, which perpetuate a culture of bullying. In the digital era, bullying extends outside educational environments and proliferates on online platforms, posing significant challenges for monitoring by schools and parents. Discussions with guidance and counseling experts revealed that overseeing student engagement on social media often presents difficulties. It arises from the environmental factors affecting students and the number of their social media accounts (Fatmah, face-to-face interview, June 5, 2024). Students in vocational schools proficient in social media are frequently more vulnerable to ongoing bullying. Social media fosters an unregulated atmosphere that enables the spread of bullying behavior. The anonymity afforded by cyberspace often encourages perpetrators to partake in detrimental actions without fear of repercussions. As a result, victims experience psychological anguish and significant social shame.

Contemporary cyberbullying includes broader pressures, not only from peers but also from many entities within the internet. Harahap and Sampurna (2024) assert that this substantially impacts the mental health of victims, who often endure emotional and psychological challenges due to social media assaults. The complexity of these challenges requires deliberate efforts to create an environment that supports the advantageous use of technology. Hariguna et al. (2023) argue for steps to cultivate a secure social media ecosystem through implementing digital education programs and enhancing technological literacy to encourage judicious social media usage among students.

Emotional Challenges and Self-Management in Puberty

Adolescence is recognized as a transitional phase from infancy to maturity. According to Piaget's theory of cognitive development, this phase represents a change from concrete operational thinking to formal operational thinking, during which adolescents acquire the capacity for abstract and logical reasoning (Neviyarni, 2020). The alterations during this period encompassed substantial cognitive, physical, psychological, and social dimensions. Physical transformations, including accelerated growth, frequently induce discomfort, insecurity, or a decline in self-confidence among adolescents.

The hormonal changes throughout puberty psychologically influence teenage emotions, including the emergence of attraction to the opposite sex and variable mood swings. This syndrome frequently induces bewilderment and worry and may even lead to stress or despair. Socially, adolescence is defined by the quest for identity and the aspiration to establish a secure role within the social milieu. During this transition period, kids frequently encounter numerous issues, including bullying, which significantly affect their well-being (Nafisah et al., 2024).

Emotional difficulties are a significant factor during puberty. Students' capacity for emotional regulation and self-control is underdeveloped, resulting in challenges when confronting negative urges (Linda et al., 2024). This condition can exacerbate the issue, particularly without sufficient environmental support. Interviews with guidance and counseling educators indicate that vocational school students in puberty frequently struggle with emotional regulation and self-control, resulting in disputes or undesirable actions (Yanto, face-to-face interview, June 7, 2024).

The development of children and teenagers is a pivotal phase in life that significantly impacts the quality of adult life. In contemporary education, developmental issues are becoming increasingly intricate due to multiple elements, including societal pressure, technological influence, and evolving educational regulations (Lainah et al., 2022; Triyanto, 2020). Consequently, comprehending teenagers' difficulties during this transitional phase is crucial for developing a more effective and supportive educational strategy.

Socialization Through Classical Services

The socialization process regarding bullying is facilitated through traditional informational services in schools, where detailed materials on various forms of bullying and their effects on students are disseminated. Additionally, during MPLS activities, this material is presented along with the repercussions of bullying peers. According to the findings from interviews with Guidance and Counseling educators, "Delivering traditional socialization regarding bullying and its consequences through conventional services, disseminating information, and employing diverse methodologies such as lectures, video presentations, role-playing, and focus group discussions." Face-to-face interview for Warni#2 on June 8.

Classical guiding services are fundamental services that operate as preventive measures, also called preventive words. Bahri, S. (2020). Classical tutoring services designed to avoid bullying have demonstrated considerable efficacy. Research findings (Soleman, 2021) indicate that classical guidance can reduce bullying behavior. The study's conclusions (Ru'iyah, S., 2022) suggest that nearly all orphanage residents exhibit reduced bullying potential after engaging with classical guidance through films.

In addition to utilizing videos, Guidance, and Counseling, Teachers can offer a range of traditional services, including digital-based conventional services. Digital service platforms coupled with social media are referred to as enemy platforms. The Zedemy platform is an alternative for developing conventional service modules to reduce cyberbullying (Putro, H. Y. S. et al., 2022). Implementing traditional service modules will encourage kids to engage with intriguing technological platforms, thereby reducing instances of cyberbullying (Rachman et al., 2021). The Zedemy platform offers social media facilities, facilitating socialization among friends and groups based on shared interests, knowledge, and preferences.

The Role of WhatsApp Hotline for Bullying Reports

In the dynamic digital age, information and communication technology has transformed human interaction and communication across all facets of life (Fajriah & Ningsih, 2024). This technological transition induces substantial alterations in communication modalities via many digital platforms, including social media, websites, podcasts, online videos, and instant messaging applications like

WhatsApp. This medium has emerged as a prevalent instrument for communicating diverse ideas, particularly in initiatives to prevent and address bullying inside educational settings.

To address bullying incidents, school counselors offer their personal WhatsApp numbers to the pupils they guide. This initiative seeks to facilitate reporting bullying incidents experienced or observed by students. During socialization, kids receive information regarding the necessary actions to take if they encounter or observe bullying within or beyond the school environment. Students must promptly report to the guidance and counseling instructor (BK) for support. The curriculum has demonstrated efficacy, as numerous kids express increased comfort in disclosing their issues to BK teachers.

According to interviews with guidance and counseling educators, a strategy implemented is to "Establish a hotline via a WhatsApp number for students facing bullying, in addition to promoting discipline in bullying prevention" (Yuni, face-to-face interview, June 10, 2024). Another educator stated, "Services are accessible 24 hours a day through chat, voice note, phone, or students may directly approach the BK teacher at school to report bullying incidents" (Warni, face-to-face interview, June 25, 2024). This stage illustrates the significance of technology-driven innovation in establishing efficient communication pathways between students and counselors. Alongside WhatsApp, another prospective technological innovation is creating a dedicated program to address bullying. Anwara (2024) made the BEASTRO (Be a Stronger) application, intended as a platform for socialization, education, and services for bullying consultation and complaints. The application comprises four primary features: Be A Voice, Be Smart, Counseling, and Call Center. The Be A Voice feature encourages victims or witnesses of bullying to report incidents they encounter via the application. The Be Smart feature educates users on the definition of bullying, its various forms, and the measures that may be implemented to address this issue. The Counseling tool enables users to seek direct consultation regarding the bullying issues they are experiencing. Simultaneously, the Call Center feature offers emergency assistance or addresses technical issues within the program.

By incorporating technology to prevent and address bullying, utilizing programs like BEASTRO, and essential communication platforms like WhatsApp, educational institutions may foster a safer and more supportive atmosphere for students. This innovation facilitates access to reporting while enhancing the preventive strategy through education and mentorship.

Implementation of Rules and Consequences

Anti-bullying regulations have been introduced in Senior High School Banjarmasin as a proactive strategy to mitigate bullying. According to an interview with guidance and counseling educators, "The code of conduct for bullying prevention in our school has been enacted due to its significant classification with maximum points." All forms of bullying are classified as serious" (Yuni, face-to-face interview, July 3, 2024). The implemented system utilizes the SP (Warning Letter) protocol, which comprises three tiers: SP 1, SP 2, and SP 3. Each level is tailored to the student's problem description (Yanto, face-to-face interview, July 10, 2024). Guidance and counseling educators additionally offer follow-up through individual therapy for pupils implicated in bullying incidents.

National policies further reinforce the government's initiatives to combat bullying in educational settings. The Minister of Education and Culture has promulgated Regulation Number 82 of 2015 about the Prevention and Countermeasures of Violence in Educational Institutions (Permendikbud 82 of 2015). This policy establishes a secure, pleasant, and enriching educational atmosphere for pupils. This policy is implemented at the school level by legislation addressing bullying. Sulaeni (2024) asserts that anti-bullying punishment constitutes a legal normative framework to prevent bullying. This code of conduct delineates the prohibition of bullying, categorizes the types of bullying, outlines consequences for offenders, specifies reporting procedures, and describes recovery mechanisms for victims. This policy is communicated to students,

teachers, staff, and parents via multiple methods, including new student orientation and school communication platforms.

Schools respond to bullying incidents with prompt and decisive measures, including conducting investigations, imposing sanctions on offenders, and assisting victims. Abdi et al. (2024) observed that schools engage other entities, such as law enforcement or child protection organizations, particularly in instances of bullying that entail illegal activities. At SMA IT Mentari Ilmu Karawang, the management stage entails the homeroom teacher issuing an initial reprimand. Should the behavior persist, guidance and counseling educators will assume responsibility for management, potentially involving parental engagement, issuance of warning letters, or collaboration with external entities if deemed a serious matter (Bagaskara et al., 2024). The inquiry is conducted impartially by engaging all relevant parties, including the victim, perpetrator, and witnesses. The school offers counseling services to assist the victim in mitigating the psychological effects they have endured (Sunarso & Kn, 2022). Upon substantiation of a bullying incident, the offender will face disciplinary measures following the school's anti-bullying policy, which may range from suspension to financial penalties, contingent upon the gravity of the offense. Educational institutions also offer intervention for offenders via counseling and rehabilitation programs to facilitate the comprehension of their errors and amend their conduct.

External intervention is essential when bullying entails significant physical violence or poses a threat to the victim's safety. In such instances, the school collaborates with law enforcement or child protective organizations to report the occurrence and facilitate the investigation. This participation guarantees that criminal acts of bullying are addressed appropriately, following relevant legal protocols.

Anti-Bullying Campaign: Implementation in Schools

Schools have implemented proactive measures to prevent and address bullying incidents by establishing anti-bullying task forces, ambassadors, and organizations. Interviews with guidance and counseling educators reveal that a definitive measure implemented is the establishment of an "anti-bullying task force" and the formation of an "anti-bullying group," which is to be communicated to all students (Fatmah, face-to-face interview, July 5, 2024; Warni, face-to-face interview, July 6, 2024). This task force administers multiple initiatives, including socialization, anti-bullying campaigns, and direct case management. The program engages multiple stakeholders, including school administrators, educators, support staff, counselors, parents, and kids, to guarantee the efficacy of its execution.

The anti-bullying task force aligns with the government's initiative via the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project, incorporated in the new curriculum, and the Roots Program endorsed by UNICEF. The Roots program enlists peers as catalysts for change to promote a constructive influence on bullying behavior. Thirty selected kids from each school, designated as change agents, underwent rigorous training throughout 15 sessions. They possess the competencies to successfully disseminate information against bullying, establish commendable values, and advocate for constructive activities inside educational institutions (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2023; Gusman et al., 2023). The campaign incorporates innovative strategies, like anti-bullying posters, artistic performances, and group discussions, to communicate anti-bullying themes effectively and engagingly (Rena et al., 2021).

The presence of change agents at the Senior High School in Banjarbaru yields a substantial positive effect. The outcomes attained encompass enhanced comprehension among students regarding the concept of bullying and its repercussions, increased bravery among victims to report incidents of bullying, and a reduction in severe bullying behaviors, such as submerging peers in pools or utilizing parental names for mockery (Gusman et al., 2023). The initiative fosters a safer and more supportive educational atmosphere for pupils. Alongside a campaign-oriented strategy and

socialization, anti-bullying initiatives are executed in Islamic educational institutions by fostering Islamic values. Principles such as solidarity, empathy, respect for diversity, and fairness constitute the foundation for student character development. This program's execution encompasses establishing anti-bullying organizations, facilitating talks and workshops, and coordinating creative events using students as peer educators (Sholeh, 2023). This strategy emphasizes the prevention and management of bullying and seeks to cultivate an ethically responsive generation that fosters an inclusive educational atmosphere.

Cooperative initiatives among governments, educational institutions, and organizations such as UNICEF illustrate the significance of a comprehensive strategy in addressing bullying. By involving kids as catalysts for change, harnessing cultural and religious values, and employing innovative techniques, anti-bullying initiatives can effectuate substantial transformation in the school environment. It affirms that bullying prevention involves regulation and dedication from all facets of schooling.

Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that bullying in vocational schools is influenced not only by individual factors but also by the social environment, school culture, and technological advancements. The perception of bullying as a joke reinforces this permissive culture towards this negative behavior, so continuous education is needed.

The social environment and social media expand the scope of bullying, so adaptive supervision and education strategies are needed. Emotional challenges during puberty also increase the risk of bullying behavior, so the role of BK teachers is very important in providing support and guidance.

Socialization through classical services and the use of technology, such as WhatsApp, has proven effective in increasing students' understanding and the confidence to report. Clear and consistent implementation of regulations, along with the involvement of students as agents of change, can create a safer and more inclusive school environment.

Cooperation between schools, governments, and organizations such as UNICEF strengthens bullying prevention and handling efforts holistically. This approach emphasizes not only the legal and disciplinary aspects but also the formation of character and positive values among students.

Implications

The results of this study have important implications for education practitioners, particularly guidance and counseling teachers, in designing comprehensive bullying prevention and intervention programs. Ongoing education about the impact of bullying, both through classical and digital services, is indispensable to changing student perceptions and building a positive school culture.

The use of technology, such as the WhatsApp hotline and reporting app, can expand students' access to help and support. The implementation of clear and consistent regulations, along with the involvement of students as agents of change, can enhance the effectiveness of anti-bullying programs. Cooperation with external parties, such as governments and international organizations, can strengthen bullying prevention efforts nationally. This research also emphasizes the importance of a holistic approach that involves all stakeholders in the school environment.

Limitation

This research has several limitations. First, the number of participants in the study, including the Counseling Guidance teachers involved, is relatively small (four people), so the findings may not be generalized to the entire population of Counseling Guidance teachers in Indonesia. Second, this study focuses solely on the perspective of Counseling Guidance teachers and does not directly involve

students as the main participants. Third, this study is qualitative, so the results are more exploratory and cannot be used to test causal relationships statistically.

CONCLUSION

Bullying among vocational school students is often trivialized as humor, perpetuating harmful behaviors both online and in person. Social media platforms amplify these challenges by providing anonymity, while adolescents' emotional vulnerabilities demand supportive environments fostered by educators and counselors. Effective prevention strategies include classical services that disseminate anti-bullying messages, technology-based reporting mechanisms like WhatsApp hotlines, and clear regulations with consequences that safeguard victims and rehabilitate offenders. Peer-involvement initiatives, such as the Roots Program, further cultivate positive school cultures by integrating cultural and ethical values into the character education curriculum. Ultimately, a holistic approach that encompasses education, technology, policy, and community collaboration is crucial for creating safer and more inclusive vocational schools.

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