

Bullying Prevention in SD Hargomulyo I, Gunung Kidul, Special Region of Yogyakarta

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Abstract

Background of The Study: Bullying is a form of aggressive behavior that often occurs during childhood and adolescence, potentially impacting students' psychological and social development.

Purpose and scope of the paper: This community service initiative aimed to enhance fifth-grade students' knowledge and preventive attitudes toward bullying through an interactive and visually engaging educational program conducted at SDN Hargomulyo I, Gunungkidul.

Methods: The program involved 24 fifth-grade students and was carried out in three stages: a pretest to assess baseline knowledge and attitudes, delivery of educational material using animated videos and interactive presentations, and a posttest to measure changes after the intervention. Due to the small sample size and non-parametric data characteristics, the Wilcoxon test was used for statistical analysis.

Results: The intervention resulted in a significant improvement in both knowledge and attitudes toward bullying. The mean knowledge score increased from 4.50 to 5.67 ($p = 0.000$), while the mean attitude score improved from 20.75 to 23.13 ($p = 0.002$).

Conclusion: The interactive educational program was effective in increasing students' awareness and rejection of bullying. These results underscore the value of early, participatory, and visually supported educational strategies in fostering a safe and inclusive school environment. The program model is suitable for replication in other schools as part of broader character education and bullying prevention efforts.

A. Introduction

Bullying is a form of adolescent behavior that deviates from social norms or is considered one of the behaviors that conflict with social norms (Noya et al., 2024). This behavior is characterized by the intention to cause harm, is repeated, and involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim (UNICEF, 2024). The perpetrator of bullying deliberately causes suffering—physically, verbally, or emotionally—and does so repeatedly to a victim considered weaker (UNICEF Indonesia, 2020).

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This bullying phenomenon is inseparable from the dynamics of adolescent development, a period marked by various life changes. Adolescence is a transitional phase full of physical, emotional, and social changes (Lutfi et al., 2021). Emotional instability due to hormonal changes makes adolescents prone to anxiety, loneliness, and restlessness (Suryana et al., 2022). The inability to manage these emotions often drives adolescents to release stress through aggressive behaviors such as bullying.

A UNESCO report shows that more than 30% of students worldwide have been victims of bullying, which negatively impacts academic achievement, physical and mental health, and increases the risk of dropping out of school (UNESCO, 2023). WHO/Europe reports that while direct bullying at school has remained relatively stable since 2018, cyberbullying has increased alongside digitalization, with 6% of adolescents admitting to being perpetrators (8% male, 5% female) and 11% as victims (World Health Organization, 2024). In the United States, all student respondents in a survey reported having experienced, witnessed, or been aware of bullying incidents during the 2021–2022 academic year. The most common forms were rumor-spreading (13%) and mocking (11.9%). Students were most often bullied because of their appearance (32.7%), followed by race (13%), disability (9.7%), ethnicity (9.4%), gender (9.2%), sexual orientation (8.9%), and religion (5.8%) (Institute of Education Sciences, 2024).

In Indonesia, based on the National Survey on the Life Experiences of Children and Adolescents (SNPHAR) conducted by the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection in 2021, around 14% of boys and 11% of girls aged 13–17 years, both in urban and rural areas, had experienced physical violence during childhood. Peers were the main perpetrators of physical violence against boys in this age group, both in their first and most recent experiences. Furthermore, 15.7% of males and 7.2% of females aged 18–24 had experienced physical violence before the age of 18. Notably, 14.75% of males and 6.21% of females in this same age group had experienced more severe forms of physical violence, such as being hit, kicked, or burned, before reaching 18 years of age (KPPPA RI, 2021).

Bullying can occur anywhere—at school, the workplace, home, in the community, and on social media (Ahmad, 2021). In 2023, data from the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI) recorded 2,355 child protection violations from January to August 2023, with 861 cases occurring in educational settings. Of these, there were 487 cases of sexual violence, 236 cases of physical or psychological violence, 87 cases of bullying, 27 cases related to educational facilities, and 24 cases related to policy (Pusat Analisis Keparlemenan Badan Keahlian Setjen DPR RI, 2024).

According to data compiled by the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI) and the Indonesian Teachers' Union Federation (FSGI), bullying remains a threat to children in school environments. The most common types of bullying experienced by victims are physical bullying (55.5%), verbal bullying (29.3%), and psychological bullying (15.2%). In terms of educational level, elementary school (SD) students were the most frequent victims (26%), followed by junior high school (SMP) students (25%), and high school (SMA) students (18.75%) (Sekolah Relawan, 2024). Children who fall victim to bullying can suffer various negative effects such as physical injury, psychological disorders, decreased self-confidence, trauma, social isolation, and even suicidal thoughts.

Considering the negative impact of bullying on adolescents' mental health, this emphasizes the importance of preventive efforts to reduce the frequency of bullying and provide effective interventions so that victims receive the help and support they need (Arnarsson et al., 2020; Hysing et al., 2021; Kyrrestad et al., 2023; Myklestad & Straiton, 2021). Schools, as educational institutions, should serve as places for character building, where children enjoy interacting with peers through play and learning. However, schools have now become places where negative forces such as bullying can grow. Schools are increasingly becoming environments vulnerable to criminal acts (Ahmad, 2021). Therefore, education about bullying is essential in schools. Anti-bullying education should begin at an early age so that students understand its dangers and consequences (BKKBN, 2023).

At SDN Hargomulyo I, Gunungkidul, bullying is taken seriously due to its negative impact on students' social and emotional development. Bullying remains a crucial issue requiring immediate action, especially with the emergence of several cases in the Gunungkidul area over the past two years (2023–2024), such as severe beatings and verbal abuse that have led to trauma, further emphasizing the urgency for immediate response (Dinas Sosial Pemberdayaan dan Perlindungan Anak, 2024). Early education is vital to help students understand the dangers and consequences of bullying and avoid such behavior.

Based on interviews with the school, bullying prevention and intervention are top priorities to create a safe and comfortable learning environment for all students. Several steps have been implemented, including education on bullying and prevention programs integrated into school activities. Through these efforts, it is hoped that bullying cases will decrease, and the school environment will become more positive and inclusive. Therefore, the interactive education program at SDN Hargomulyo I aims to improve students' knowledge and attitudes in bullying prevention.

B. Methods

This educational activity was conducted at SD Hargomulyo I, Gunung Kidul, with a total of 24 fifth-grade students participating. The educational media utilized included a video and a PowerPoint presentation containing materials on the definition, impacts, and prevention strategies of bullying.

The evaluation instrument consisted of a pre-test and post-test, each comprising six true/false questions designed to assess students' knowledge and attitudes regarding bullying prevention. Sample questions included statements such as "Bullying can cause stress to the victim" and "Addressing bullying is a shared responsibility." Scoring was conducted by awarding 1 point for each correct answer and 0 for incorrect responses.

The activity followed a three-stage procedure: (1) a pretest to measure students' baseline knowledge, (2) delivery of educational content using an animated video from UNICEF Indonesia and an interactive PowerPoint presentation, and (3) a posttest to evaluate changes in knowledge and attitudes. The session was conducted in a single 90-minute meeting. Data analysis was performed using the Wilcoxon signed-rank test to assess the differences between pretest and posttest scores, considering the non-parametric nature of the data and the small sample size.

C. Results and Discussion

1. Results

The bullying education activity conducted at SDN Hargomulyo I addressed a key issue within the elementary school environment-namely, students' lack of understanding regarding the forms of bullying and how to prevent and respond to it. The primary objective of this program was to enhance students' knowledge and attitudes in dealing with bullying. Findings were obtained through the administration of pretest and posttest assessments conducted before and after the educational session. The material was delivered through an interactive presentation and educational video, which employed engaging animations and a participatory discussion approach. Students were given the opportunity to ask questions and share their opinions, contributing to an active learning atmosphere. The evaluation of outcomes was carried out using the Wilcoxon signed-rank test to assess whether there was a significant difference between scores before and after the educational intervention.

The analysis results in Table 1 show a significant increase in knowledge ($Z = -4.613$, $p = 0.000$) and attitude ($Z = -3.128$, $p = 0.002$) after the intervention. The average knowledge score increased from 4.50 to 5.67, while the attitude score rose from 20.75 to 23.13. A p-value less than 0.05 indicates that these changes did not occur by chance, but rather as a result of the intervention. Thus, the intervention was proven effective in improving participants' knowledge and attitudes (Figure 1). In addition, this improvement is also supported by changes in the mean values, which are an important statistical measure for identifying shifts in data distribution (Dahlan, 2020). The increase in knowledge is reflected by the shift in the mean value from 4.50 in the pretest to 5.67 in the posttest, while students' attitudes improved from an average of 20.75 to 23.13.

Table 1. Wilcoxon Test Results of Pretest and Posttest Scores

Variables	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Z	P-value
Knowledge					
Pretest	4,50	3	5		
Posttest	5,67	4	6	-4,613	0,000
Attitude					
Pretest	20,75	12	24		
Posttest	23,13	17	24	-3,128	0,002



Figure 1. Bullying Prevention Education for Students at SDN Hargomulyo 1

2. Discussion

The educational intervention implemented at SDN Hargomulyo I showed consistent and positive results in improving students' knowledge and attitudes about bullying. These findings are consistent with a study conducted at SD Negeri Rajabasa Bandar Lampung, which reported an increase in knowledge from 86.7% to 90%, as well as an increase in attitudes from 36.7% to 56.7% following the educational intervention. Both studies affirm that visual and participatory-based education can enhance students' understanding and encourage preventive attitudes toward bullying (Febriani et al., 2024). In line with this, a study conducted at SD Sidomulyo, Semarang, also showed similar results. After a bullying prevention education program was implemented, there was an increase in knowledge among students in grades IV, V, and VI. Grade IV showed 84.85% of students in the good knowledge category, grade V had 60.7%, and grade VI reached 90.3%. These findings further strengthen the evidence that interactive and communicative outreach programs significantly improve students' understanding of bullying and ways to prevent it (Jumeisya Setiawan et al., 2022).

Another study also confirmed that changes in participants' knowledge about bullying after intervention were statistically significant. Participants became more capable of identifying bullying behavior and understanding its impact on victims. The proportion of students correctly answering questions about the seriousness of bullying increased post-intervention. Although all students benefited from increased awareness of bullying and intervention strategies, this knowledge improvement was particularly important for students who witnessed bullying (bystanders) or who may become targets themselves (Ali et al., 2025).

These three studies provide strong evidence that participatory and communicative bullying prevention education—through visual media, group discussions, and interactive quizzes—is effective in improving students' knowledge and fostering anti-bullying attitudes. This supports (Hidayat et al., 2024), who stated that visual and participatory education approaches are effective in enhancing students' knowledge and preventive attitudes toward bullying. The improvement shows that students not only understand the concept of bullying but also begin to adopt attitudes that reject such behavior.

Moreover, these findings reinforce (Notoatmodjo's 2014) assertion that knowledge gained through sensory stimulation and social interaction plays a vital role in attitude formation (Notoatmodjo, 2014). In this context, media such as animated videos and engaging presentations play a major role in capturing students' attention and facilitating understanding. Interactive discussions also help reinforce positive attitudes toward anti-bullying values. This activity contributes to character education and violence prevention approaches in elementary schools. Theoretically, it supports the integration of affective-cognitive approaches in students' moral education (Mandala Putra et al., 2023). Practically, it can be replicated in other schools with appropriate material and media adjustments and integrated into local content curricula or counseling programs to create a safe and bullying-free learning environment.

Furthermore, this approach aligns with the principles of the Health Promoting Schools (HPS) initiative, which has been shown to support the development of healthy and positive behaviors among students, such as increased physical activity, healthy eating, prevention of addictive substance use, and bullying prevention. Therefore, the intervention applied in this study plays an important role not only in bullying

prevention but also in building a healthy school environment that supports the holistic development of students (Noboru et al., 2021).

However, to ensure the sustainability of the expected behavioral changes, bullying prevention education programs need to be carried out regularly and integrated into routine learning. Moreover, initiatives to tackle bullying must consider the connection between schools and the wider community, including the education system, technological developments, and social dynamics (O'Higgins Norman et al., 2022). Therefore, a more comprehensive and holistic educational approach is needed to effectively and sustainably address bullying in schools.

2.1 Implications

This study has important implications for elementary education policy and practice. It demonstrates that even a single-session, visually rich, and participatory educational program can significantly improve students' awareness and attitudes toward bullying. Schools should consider adopting similar modules and embedding them into regular learning schedules or counseling activities to build a safer, more respectful learning environment.

2.2 Research Contribution

This study contributes to the growing body of literature on school-based bullying prevention by providing empirical evidence of the effectiveness of participatory educational methods. It reinforces theoretical frameworks that highlight the importance of engaging students emotionally and cognitively in moral education and character development.

2.3 Limitations

Given the limited duration of the intervention and the focus on short-term knowledge and attitude assessments, future research is recommended to be conducted over a longer period to evaluate whether these improvements lead to actual behavioral changes among students. Moreover, since this study was conducted only at SD Hargomulyo I, replicating the program in other schools is important to test its consistency and to strengthen the generalizability of the findings.

2.4 Suggestions

Considering the limited duration of the intervention and the assessment focus that only covers short-term knowledge and attitudes, it is recommended that future research be conducted over a longer period to evaluate actual changes in students' behavior. Additionally, since this study was conducted in only one school, replication in other schools is necessary to test consistency and enhance the generalizability of the findings.

D. Conclusion

The bullying prevention education program at SD Hargomulyo I proved effective in enhancing students' knowledge and attitudes. The use of visual media and participatory learning methods played a significant role in this success. This approach is highly relevant to be replicated in other schools as part of efforts to create a safe and bullying-free learning environment. Future research is recommended to assess the long-term impact of such interventions and to determine whether improvements in knowledge and attitudes lead to actual behavioral changes among students.

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F. Author Contribution Statement

LH acted as the primary contact and lead author, coordinating the research and manuscript preparation; TN contributed to data collection and analysis as well as report and publication writing; VV assisted with the technical implementation of interventions and data collection (pretest and posttest); EK assisted with the technical implementation of interventions and data collection (pretest and posttest); BH helped with the technical implementation of interventions; TS supported the technical and logistical aspects of the research during interventions and their preparation.

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