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The Influence of Communication and Counseling Guidance By Teachers on Bullying In Smp Negeri 2 Gunungsitoli Barat

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Abstract: This study explores the influence of communication and counseling guidance on bullying behavior at SMP Negeri 2 Gunungsitoli Barat. Bullying cases in this school are still quite high, with around 60% of students reporting having experienced or witnessed bullying. This study used quantitative and qualitative approaches, with a purposively selected sample of 30 students. Data were collected through observation, questionnaires, and documentation. The results showed that good communication between teachers and students significantly reduced the incidence of bullying. Students with good communication only experienced 5 cases of bullying, while students with poor communication experienced 4 cases out of a total of 5 students. In addition, counseling guidance proved to be effective in dealing with students' emotional problems, although limited human resources were the main obstacle in its implementation. This study emphasizes the importance of effective communication and adequate counseling services as strategies to reduce bullying behavior in schools. The findings are expected to be the basis for better policy formulation in creating a safe and comfortable school environment for all students.

Keyword: Bullying, communication, counseling guidance, SMP Negeri 2 Gunungsitoli Barat, school.

INTRODUCTION

Bullying behavior in schools has become a pressing issue in education, especially in Indonesia. Cases of violence involving children are increasingly occurring in the school environment, which should be a safe place for them to learn and develop. Schools, which are expected to be an arena for character building and personal development, often become a fertile ground for dangerous bullying practices. This phenomenon not only creates fear among students, but also adversely affects their psychological and physical development (Amanda, 2021; Astuti, 2018; Bu'ulolo, Zagoto, & Laia, 2022).

Bullying, defined as an act of bullying or violence against another individual, has become a serious problem in many schools, including in Indonesia. It not only damages the mental and physical health of the victim, but can also lead to tragedies such as suicide. Lack of human resources (HR) in terms of communication management and counseling guidance in schools is often the main cause of bullying (Nasution, 2017; Creswell, 2018). Astuti (2018) in her book *Reducing Bullying* states that the factors that cause bullying include a lack of human resources, impulsive emotional levels of children, environmental influences, and weak interpersonal communication. The lack of effective communication between teachers, students, and parents is one of the root causes of bullying behavior (Amanda, 2021; Fakhrani Idzni & Azmi Saragih, 2022).

Communication is one of the important elements in preventing and controlling bullying behavior in schools. According to Hanani (2017), effective communication between teachers and students can build closeness and familiarity, which is an important foundation in creating a safe and comfortable learning environment. Good communication also serves as a medium to understand students' feelings and emotions, allowing teachers to provide appropriate guidance in overcoming their problems (Hanani, 2017; Anugrah & Kresnowiati, 2017). In this context, counseling guidance becomes one of the important tools that can be used to deal with the emotional problems of students who are vulnerable to bullying (Febrini, 2020; Gunawan, 2018).

Counseling guidance is an interactive process that occurs in a face-to-face relationship between counselors and clients, which in the school context usually involves counseling guidance teachers (BK) and students. The purpose of counseling guidance is to help students overcome various problems they face, including academic, social, and emotional problems (Gunawan, 2018; Lubis, Simarmata, & Muhazir, 2021). Febrini (2020) emphasized that counseling guidance not only plays a role in solving problems faced by students, but also as a medium to accommodate and manage students' emotions, so that they can respond to situations in a more positive and constructive way.

SMP Negeri 2 Gunungsitoli Barat, located in Gunungsitoli Barat Sub-district, Gunungsitoli City, is one of the schools facing serious challenges related to bullying. Based on initial observations conducted by the author, it was found that there is a lack of effective communication management and counseling guidance in this school, which has an impact on the high incidence of bullying among students (Sejiwa, 2020; Kemendikbud, 2014). These observations revealed that bullying behavior in this school occurs in various forms, ranging from physical violence, teasing, to intimidation carried out by students who have power or are feared by other students.

There are several factors that influence the prevalence of bullying in SMP Negeri 2 Gunungsitoli Barat. First, thuggish behavior that is often shown by some students, such as fighting, mocking, and showing disrespect for teachers and parents (Astuti, 2018; Sarmiati et al., 2020). Second, the existence of student groups formed with the aim of increasing solidarity, but instead become a trigger for unhealthy relationships and bullying actions (Bu'ulolo, Zagoto, & Laia, 2022). Third, acts of threat and bullying by students who have "power" over other students, even over teachers, which shows the weakness of school authority in dealing with bullying (Hanani, 2017; Lubis, Simarmata, & Muhazir, 2021).

This problem raises important questions about the effectiveness of communication and counseling guidance carried out by teachers at SMP Negeri 2 Gunungsitoli Barat. Is the communication carried out by teachers effective enough to prevent bullying? Has the counseling guidance provided by BK teachers been able to overcome the emotional problems of students who are victims or perpetrators of bullying? Or is it precisely this lack of communication and counseling guidance that is the main cause of rampant bullying in this school (Nasution & Abdillah, 2019; Iswanto, 2018).

With this background, the author decided to conduct a study that aims to examine the effect of communication and counseling guidance by teachers on bullying at SMP Negeri 2 Gunungsitoli Barat. This research is expected to make an important contribution in understanding the dynamics of bullying in schools and how interventions through communication and counseling guidance can be used to reduce or even eliminate bullying practices in the school environment (Anugrah & Kresnowiati, 2017; Sukardi, 2020). This research is also expected to provide practical recommendations for schools in improving the quality of communication management and counseling guidance, so as to create a learning environment that is safe, comfortable, and free from bullying.

METHOD

This research was conducted at SMP Negeri 2 Gunungsitoli Barat, Gunungsitoli City, North Sumatra Province, from July to August 2024. The approaches used in this research are quantitative and qualitative approaches. The quantitative approach aims to measure and analyze numerical data related to the variables studied, while the qualitative approach aims to understand the phenomena that occur in depth through exploration and interpretation.

The independent variables used in this study are communication and counseling guidance, which are considered to have a significant influence on the dependent variable, namely the incidence of bullying among students. Based on Arikunto's (2016: 134) view, the population in this study was all students of SMP Negeri 2 Gunungsitoli Barat, and the research sample consisted of 30 purposively selected students, with a composition of 15 male and 15 female students. This sample selection was done to ensure a balanced representation of gender perspectives in the data analysis.

The data collection techniques applied include observation, questionnaire, and documentation. Observations were made to directly observe student behavior and interactions in the school environment. Questionnaires were used as the main instrument in quantitative data collection, designed to measure students' perceptions regarding communication, counseling guidance, and bullying incidents. Documentation was used to collect additional relevant data, such as school records and counseling guidance reports.

The methodological approach used in this study is expected to provide a comprehensive picture of the relationship between communication, counseling guidance, and the incidence of bullying, and produce findings that can be used as a basis for formulating policies and intervention strategies in schools.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research conducted at SMP Negeri 2 Gunungsitoli Barat provides a comprehensive picture of the dynamics of bullying behavior in the school, as well as the important role of communication and counseling guidance in addressing the problem. This study used both quantitative and qualitative approaches, with the aim of exploring the relationship between the independent variables, namely communication and counseling guidance, and the dependent variable, namely the incidence of bullying among students.

Overview of Research Results

Based on data obtained from observations, questionnaires, and documentation, it appears that the incidence of bullying at SMP Negeri 2 Gunungsitoli Barat is still quite high. Questionnaires given to 30 students who became the research sample showed that around 60% of them had experienced or witnessed bullying at school. The most common forms of bullying were verbal taunts, intimidation, and mild physical violence, such as pushing or light punches. In terms of gender, there is no significant difference in the frequency of bullying incidents between male and female students, although the types of bullying experienced tend

to be different. Male students are more often both perpetrators and victims of physical bullying, while female students are more vulnerable to verbal and social bullying, such as ostracism or slander (Creswell, 2018; Bu'ulolo, Zagoto, & Laia, 2022; Zega et al., 2023).

The data also showed that students who had good communication with teachers and friends tended to experience fewer bullying incidents compared to students who felt less attention or support from teachers. This suggests that effective communication between teachers and students is an important protective factor against bullying behavior (Hanani, 2017; Anugrah & Kresnowiati, 2017).

Table 1. Relationship between Communication and Bullying Incidence at SMP Negeri 2 Gunungsitoli Barat

Communication Category	Number of Students	Bullying Frequency
Good Communication	15	5
Medium Communication	10	8
Poor Communication	5	4

From the table above, it can be seen that students who have good communication with their teachers and friends only experienced 5 incidents of bullying out of 15 students. In contrast, students with poor communication, of which there were only 5, experienced 4 instances of bullying. This shows that there is a strong correlation between the quality of communication and the frequency of bullying (Nasution, 2017; Fakhrani Idzni & Azmi Saragih, 2022).

The Role of Communication in Preventing Bullying

Effective communication in the school environment is very important in preventing bullying. Hanani (2017) and Gunawan (2018) stated that good communication between teachers and students can increase emotional closeness which is important in creating a safe and comfortable learning environment. Students who feel close to their teachers tend to be more open in expressing the problems they face, including if they are victims of bullying. In addition, teachers who are able to communicate well can more quickly detect signs of bullying and take appropriate preventive action.

The study also revealed that strong interpersonal communication among students can reduce the risk of bullying. Students who have close friends or a solid group of friends experience less bullying, as they get enough social support. Conversely, students who feel isolated or lack friends tend to be the target of bullying, as they are perceived as weak or have no supporters (Anugrah & Kresnowiati, 2017; Hanani, 2017).

Effectiveness of Counseling Guidance in Handling Bullying

Counseling guidance in schools has an important role in dealing with bullying problems, both for victims and perpetrators. According to Gunawan (2018) and Febrini (2020), counseling guidance not only serves as a place to solve problems, but also as a medium to manage students' emotions and develop their social skills. At SMP Negeri 2 Gunungsitoli Barat, the results showed that students who regularly attended counseling guidance sessions had a lower risk of being involved in acts of bullying, both as perpetrators and victims.

However, this study also found that the implementation of counseling guidance in the school still faces several obstacles. One of the main obstacles is the lack of adequate human

resources (HR). With a large number of students and only one or two counseling teachers available, it is often difficult for counseling teachers to give enough attention to each student in need. In addition, not all students have the awareness or desire to attend counseling sessions, due to the negative stigma that counseling is only for students with problems (Nasution & Abdillah, 2019; Lubis, Simarmata, & Muhazir, 2021).

Factors Affecting Bullying

This study identified several factors that influence the prevalence of bullying in SMP Negeri 2 Gunungsitoli Barat. These factors include thuggish behavior, the existence of dominating student groups, and weak school authority in dealing with bullying. Thuggish behavior, such as fighting and taunting, is often carried out by students who have power or are feared by other students. Student groups formed with the aim of increasing solidarity are also often a trigger for bullying, due to the urge to show power or dominance among peers (Astuti, 2018; Bu'ulolo, Zagoto, & Laia, 2022; Zega et al., 2024).

Weak school authority is also an important factor. The author's observations show that some teachers tend to ignore or not follow up on reports of bullying that occur, so the perpetrators feel free to continue their actions without fear of punishment. This lack of authority is often caused by a lack of support from school management or the perception that bullying is a trivial problem that does not need serious attention (Nasution & Abdillah, 2019; Lubis, Simarmata, & Muhazir, 2021).

Table 2. Factors that Influence Bullying in SMP Negeri 2 Gunungsitoli Barat

Factors	Description	Frequency
Thuggery	Fighting, taunting, and intimidating behavior by students with power	High
Dominant student group	Groups formed with the aim of solidarity but trigger unhealthy socializing and bullying behavior	Medium
Weak school authority	Teachers or school management who are not assertive in following up reports of bullying	High

The table above shows that gangsterism and weak school authority are the two main factors that contribute to the high incidence of bullying in this school. The dominating group of students is also an important factor, although the frequency is not as high as the previous two factors.

Implications of Research Results for School Policy

The findings of this study have important implications for school policies in efforts to prevent and handle bullying. First, there is a need to improve the quality of communication between teachers and students. Schools need to organize special training for teachers to improve their communication skills, especially in interacting with students who are vulnerable to bullying. In addition, it is important to create a school culture that supports openness and honesty, where students feel safe to report bullying incidents without fear of negative consequences (Anugrah & Kresnowiati, 2017; Hanani, 2017).

Second, the implementation of counseling guidance must be improved. Schools need to increase the number of counseling teachers or counselors available, as well as eliminate the negative stigma attached to counseling services. This can be done by integrating the counseling program into the school curriculum and making it part of students' routine

activities. In addition, there needs to be cooperation between teachers, parents, and school management to ensure that every student gets the support they need (Gunawan, 2018; Febrini, 2020).

Third, schools need to strengthen their authority in dealing with bullying. This can be done by setting clear and firm rules regarding the consequences of bullying, as well as ensuring that any reports of bullying are taken seriously. Schools also need to hold regular anti-bullying campaigns to raise students' awareness of the negative impact of bullying and the importance of respecting fellow peers (Nasution & Abdillah, 2019; Iswanto, 2021).

Recommendations for Further Research

Although this study has provided valuable insights into bullying behavior at SMP Negeri 2 Gunungsitoli Barat, there are still some limitations that need to be considered. This study was only conducted in one school, so the results may not be generalizable to other schools in different areas. Therefore, further research needs to be conducted in other schools with different characteristics to broaden our understanding of the bullying phenomenon in Indonesia (Nasution, 2017; Creswell, 2018).

In addition, this study highlighted more internal factors that influence bullying, such as communication and counseling guidance. Future research should also explore external factors, such as the influence of social media, family environment, and the role of society in bullying prevention. Thus, we can develop more comprehensive and effective prevention strategies to reduce the incidence of bullying in schools (Bu'ulolo, Zagoto, & Laia, 2022; Fakhriani Idzni & Azmi Saragih, 2022).

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