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The Efforts of Guidance and Counseling Teachers in Addressing Bullying Behavior Among Grade VII E Students at UPTD SMPN 16 Kupang

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Abstract: *Bullying among junior high school students harms their psychological well-being, social relationships, and learning. This study aims to describe the efforts of guidance and counseling (BK) teachers in handling verbal and physical bullying among Class VII E students at UPTD SMPN 16 Kupang. A descriptive qualitative approach was used. Data were collected through interviews with nine informants: four BK teachers, three victims, and two perpetrators, and were analyzed through data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The results show that bullying took the form of verbal bullying (mocking, name-calling, insulting, harsh words, and mocking parents' names) and physical bullying (pushing, pinching, hitting, and taking belongings). BK teachers handled the cases by gathering information from the students involved separately, giving classical guidance and information services, providing individual counseling to victims and perpetrators, and collaborating with homeroom teachers, subject teachers, and parents. These findings show that the BK teacher's role is important in preventing and handling bullying at school.*

Keywords: *bullying; verbal bullying; physical bullying; guidance and counseling teacher*

Abstrak: *Perilaku bullying pada siswa sekolah menengah pertama berdampak buruk bagi kondisi psikologis, hubungan sosial, dan proses belajar. Penelitian ini bertujuan mendeskripsikan upaya guru Bimbingan dan Konseling (BK) dalam menangani bullying verbal dan bullying fisik pada siswa Kelas VII E UPTD SMPN 16 Kupang. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara dengan sembilan informan, yaitu empat guru BK, tiga siswa korban, dan dua siswa pelaku, kemudian dianalisis melalui reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa bullying berupa bullying verbal (mengejek, memberi julukan, menghina, kata-kata kasar, dan mengejek nama orang tua) dan bullying fisik (mendorong, mencubit, memukul, dan mengambil barang teman). Guru BK menangani kasus tersebut dengan menggali informasi dari siswa yang terlibat secara terpisah, memberikan bimbingan klasikal dan layanan informasi, melaksanakan konseling individual bagi korban dan pelaku, serta berkolaborasi dengan wali kelas, guru mata pelajaran, dan orang tua. Temuan ini menunjukkan pentingnya peran guru BK dalam mencegah dan menangani bullying di sekolah.*

Kata kunci: *bullying; bullying verbal; bullying fisik; guru bimbingan dan konseling*

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Introduction

Schools should be safe places where students can learn and develop. However, bullying behavior continues to occur frequently in school environments, including at the junior secondary school level. Bullying is aggressive behavior carried out repeatedly by an individual or group who perceives themselves as more powerful than a weaker party, with the intention of causing harm (Olweus, 1993). Bullying takes various forms, including verbal bullying, such as teasing, insulting, calling someone offensive names, and making threats, as well as physical bullying, such as hitting, kicking, pushing, and damaging the victim's belongings (Coloroso, 2007 ; Sejiwa, 2008).

During early adolescence, students are highly sensitive to peer acceptance. Bullying at this stage can cause victims to feel afraid, anxious, inferior, reluctant to attend school, and unable to concentrate. Meanwhile, perpetrators are at risk of continuing to exhibit aggressive behavior if they do not receive appropriate intervention.

Guidance and counseling teachers play a strategic role in addressing these problems. Through information services, classroom guidance, individual counseling, group guidance, and group counseling, guidance and counseling teachers can help victims recover and assist perpetrators in recognizing and changing their behavior (Prayitno & Amti, 2013). They also collaborate with homeroom teachers, subject teachers, school principals, and parents.

Several previous studies have demonstrated this role. Rovisa & Ernawati (2021) found that guidance and counseling teachers at SMP N 1 Kasihan Bantul implemented preventive measures through classroom guidance and curative measures by investigating the underlying causes and providing counseling to bullying perpetrators. Nimala & Anisa (2024) identified verbal and physical bullying at UPTD SMP Negeri 1 Mendo Barat. The efforts undertaken by guidance and counseling teachers included both classroom-based and non-classroom-based programs, while the obstacles encountered involved insufficient school support, limited knowledge, and time constraints. The present study extends these findings by focusing on a single class, namely Grade VII E at UPTD SMPN 16 Kupang, and gathering perspectives from guidance and counseling teachers, victims, and perpetrators.

Based on preliminary interviews with the guidance and counseling teacher, bullying in Grade VII E was identified in both verbal and physical forms. Verbal bullying included teasing, unwanted nicknames, insults, and abusive language, whereas physical bullying involved pushing, pinching, and hitting. The research problem is formulated as follows: What efforts do guidance and counseling teachers undertake to address verbal and physical bullying among Grade VII E students at UPTD SMPN 16 Kupang? The purpose of this study is to describe the efforts made by guidance and counseling teachers to address these forms of bullying.

Method

Research Design and Setting

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach to obtain an in-depth understanding of the efforts made by guidance and counseling (GC) teachers to address bullying behavior (Moleong, 2018). The research was conducted at UPTD SMPN 16 Kupang over a two-month period, from September to October.

Participants, Sample, or Data Sources

The study involved nine informants, consisting of four guidance and counseling teachers (Mrs. T, Mrs. K, Mr. Y, and Mr. I), three students who had experienced bullying (A, B, and R), and two students who had engaged in bullying behavior (G and D). These informants were selected based on their relevance to the research focus, particularly their knowledge of or involvement in bullying incidents at the school. To maintain confidentiality, the identities of all informants were concealed by using initials.

Instruments and Measures

Data were collected through interviews with guidance and counseling teachers, students who had experienced bullying, and students who had engaged in bullying behavior. The interviews explored the forms of bullying encountered, the efforts undertaken by guidance and counseling teachers to address bullying, and the experiences of the students involved. Data trustworthiness was assessed through source triangulation by comparing information obtained from the guidance and counseling teachers, victims, and perpetrators.

Procedure and Research Ethics

Data collection was conducted through interviews with the nine informants during the research period. Information was obtained from guidance and counseling teachers, students who had experienced bullying, and students who had engaged in bullying behavior to develop a comprehensive understanding of the issue from different perspectives. Throughout the research process, the informants' identities were protected by using initials when presenting the findings. Research authorization, informed consent, and parental consent for student participants were to be handled in accordance with the ethical procedures applicable to the study.

Data Analysis

Data analysis followed three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing, as outlined by Sugiyono (2016). Data

reduction involved selecting, organizing, and summarizing interview information relevant to the research objectives. Data presentation consisted of systematically describing the findings to identify patterns related to bullying behavior and the efforts made by guidance and counseling teachers to address it. Conclusion drawing involved interpreting the findings to formulate an overall description of the teachers' efforts. Source triangulation was employed to examine the consistency of information obtained from guidance and counseling teachers, victims, and perpetrators.

Results and Discussion

Results

The interview findings are presented according to the forms of bullying, the efforts undertaken by guidance and counseling (GC) teachers, and students' experiences.

Forms of Bullying. The four GC teachers reported that bullying in the school occurred in both verbal and physical forms. Mrs. T identified verbal bullying as teasing, giving unwanted nicknames, insulting others, and using abusive language, while physical bullying included pushing, pinching, hitting, and excessively bothering peers. Mrs. K added that the most frequent forms of bullying were teasing, unpleasant name-calling, and social exclusion. Mr. Y identified teasing, insults targeting physical appearance, threats, pushing, and hitting, whereas Mr. I reported hitting, pushing, taking other students' belongings, teasing, insulting others, and giving unwanted nicknames.

Table 1. Forms of Bullying Identified in Grade VII E

Forms of Bullying	Observed Behaviors	Sources
Verbal	Teasing, giving offensive nicknames, insulting others (including comments about physical appearance), using abusive language, making threats, mocking parents' names, and excluding peers	Mrs. T, Mrs. K, Mr. Y, Mr. I; students A, B, R, and D
Physical	Pushing, pinching, hitting, excessive bothering, and taking other students' belongings	Mrs. T, Mr. Y, Mr. I; students A and B

Efforts of Guidance and Counseling (GC) Teachers. The efforts undertaken by GC teachers to address bullying can be classified into four steps. First, gathering information. GC teachers summon the students involved individually to establish the chronology and underlying causes of the incident without immediately imposing punishment (Mrs. T, Mrs. K, and Mr. Y). Mr. I adopts a personal approach by allowing students to share their stories first. Second, preventive measures through information services and classroom guidance covering the definition of bullying, its various forms, its impact on victims, the distinction between joking and bullying, and ways to build positive relationships with peers. Third, individual counseling. Victims are supported in overcoming their fear of speaking up, feelings of inferiority, and tendency to withdraw from social interactions, while perpetrators are helped to recognize their wrongdoing and understand the victims' feelings, develop self-control, and change their behavior. Fourth, collaboration and follow-up involving homeroom teachers, subject teachers, and parents when the problem cannot be resolved through counseling or bullying behavior continues to recur.

Table 2. Efforts of Guidance and Counseling Teachers in Addressing Bullying

Efforts	Activities	Target Group
Information Gathering	Meeting with students separately to ask about the chronology and causes of the incidents	Victims and perpetrators
Prevention	Information services and classroom guidance	All students
Intervention	Individual counseling	Victims and perpetrators
Collaboration and Follow-Up	Collaborating with homeroom teachers, subject teachers, and parents	Cases that remain unresolved or recur

Experiences of Student Victims. Student A felt deeply disturbed by being frequently teased, having their parents' names used as a subject of jokes, and having their belongings taken without permission. Student B experienced teasing, insults, and the forced taking of personal belongings under the pretext of joking, which caused feelings of embarrassment and inferiority. Student B usually shared these experiences with close friends or trusted teachers. Student R was frequently called "attention seeker" and felt embarrassed, offended, and disrespected, particularly when the nickname was used in front of

other students. Student R hoped that peers would stop using unpleasant nicknames.

Experiences of Student Perpetrators. Student G initially regarded the behavior as joking without any intention to hurt others. Upon further reflection, Student G realized that not all peers respond positively to the same jokes and expressed a willingness to apologize and be more careful when speaking. Student D teased peers by calling them "attention seeker" or using their parents' names because D felt annoyed when classmates became noisy in the teacher's absence. Student D admitted acting on personal initiative, recognized that the teasing caused emotional harm, and acknowledged the need to learn emotional self-control and express dissatisfaction in more appropriate ways.

Discussion

The forms of bullying identified in Grade VII E are consistent with the classification of verbal and physical bullying proposed by (Olweus, 1993 ; Coloroso, 2007 ; Sejiwa, 2008). Verbal bullying was the most prevalent form, as all guidance and counseling (GC) teachers and all interviewed students reported teasing, name-calling, or insults, including mockery involving parents' names. Physical bullying, such as pushing, pinching, and hitting, was reported by the GC teachers, whereas student victims more frequently described verbal harassment and the forcible taking of their belongings. These findings are similar to those of Nimala & Anisa (2024), who also identified verbal and physical bullying, including pushing, hitting, and bothering peers.

The difference in perceptions between perpetrators and victims was clearly evident. Student G regarded the behavior as mere joking, whereas victims such as Students B and R experienced embarrassment, feelings of inferiority, and a sense of being disrespected. This highlights the importance of information services that distinguish joking from bullying, as implemented by Mrs. K through classroom guidance. Furthermore, Student D engaged in teasing because of frustration with peers' behavior, indicating that perpetrators also require assistance in managing their emotions and expressing dissatisfaction in healthy ways.

The efforts undertaken by GC teachers were consistent with guidance and counseling services, including information services, classroom guidance, and individual counseling (Prayitno & Amti, 2013). Rather than imposing immediate punishment, the teachers first investigated the underlying causes, interviewed victims and perpetrators separately, and involved homeroom teachers and parents when necessary. This approach aligns with the findings of Rovisa & Ernawati (2021), who identified preventive measures through classroom guidance and curative interventions involving investigations into the causes of bullying and counseling for perpetrators. Following the intervention process, Students G and D began to recognize the consequences of their behavior and expressed a willingness to improve their attitudes.

This study has several limitations. The data were obtained exclusively through interviews, making it impossible to conclusively determine whether students' behavior had actually changed. The study also did not explore the obstacles encountered by GC teachers, although Nimala & Anisa (2024) identified challenges involving insufficient school support, limited knowledge, and time constraints. These aspects could be examined in future research.

Conclusion

The findings indicate that bullying in Grade VII E at UPTD SMPN 16 Kupang occurs in both verbal and physical forms. Verbal bullying includes teasing, name-calling, insults, abusive language, threats, and mocking students' parents' names, while physical bullying involves pushing, pinching, hitting, and taking other students' belongings. The efforts undertaken by guidance and counseling (GC) teachers include gathering information by interviewing the students involved separately, providing information services and classroom guidance as preventive measures, conducting individual counseling for victims and perpetrators, and collaborating with homeroom teachers, subject teachers, and parents when necessary.

The findings also reveal that bullying victims experience embarrassment, feelings of inferiority, and a sense of being disrespected, whereas perpetrators begin to recognize the consequences of their behavior and express a willingness to improve their attitudes. These findings highlight the importance of a comprehensive approach to bullying prevention and intervention within schools. Future research should examine the obstacles encountered by GC teachers and assess changes in students' behavior through direct observation.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Author Contributions (Optional)

The author was responsible for conceptualization, methodology, investigation, data collection, data analysis, interpretation of

findings, and writing the original draft. The author also reviewed and approved the final version of the manuscript.

Generative AI Disclosure

Generative AI tools were used to assist with language translation, grammar refinement, and manuscript preparation. The author remains fully responsible for the accuracy, originality, integrity, and final content of the manuscript.

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