



## Emotional Wounds That Leave Scars: Case Study of the Emotional Development of Adolescents Who Experience Bullying

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### ABSTRACT

The emotional wounds of teenagers who experience bullying are a concern. In the midst of this period of change, *bullying* can appear as a haunting shadow and leave deep emotional scars for the victims. The impact of *bullying* is not only physical wounds but also leaves deep emotional scars for the victims. This research aims to explore the impact of the emotional wounds experienced by teenagers due to the bullying they experience. Data obtained from a review of literature related to this topic. The results of the analysis show that the emotional wounds experienced by teenagers include low self-esteem, anxiety, loneliness, suicidal thoughts, self-isolation and depression. These findings illustrate how bullying affects the emotional aspects of teenagers in their daily lives, especially in their social relationships and learning.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a period of human development in which individuals experience significant emotional, physical and social transitions. In the midst of this period of change, *bullying* can emerge as a haunting shadow and leave deep emotional scars for its victims. Previous research suggests that experiences of bullying can have long-term impacts on the emotional well-being of individuals, especially adolescents. However, there is still a need to understand more deeply how the experience of bullying affects the emotional development of adolescents in the longer term. *Bullying* can occur repeatedly on a large or small scale. The resulting emotional wounds are no different from physical wounds, they leave scars that remain and influence the way teenagers view themselves, other people and the world around them (Sukawari in Octaviany and Ramadan 2023). Teenagers who are victims of *bullying* are more at risk of experiencing various health problems, both mental and physical. *Bullying* behavior at school experienced by teenagers is basically caused by various factors and in various forms. *Bullying* behavior that occurs at school can take various forms including verbal harassment, physical violence, and alienation (Mohan and Bakar, 2021).

Bullying behavior can cause teenagers' development in academic and non-academic fields to be disrupted. The factors that cause bullying are internal and external factors. External factors are factors that come from outside the individual, such as influences from the environment. Meanwhile, internal factors come from within the individual, such as preferring to remain silent (Wahani, Isroini, and Setyawan, 2022). In addition, 4 main factors were found that influence bullying: personality factors (Thronberg and Jungert, 2017), family (Mazzone and Camodeca, 2019), school environment and adverse children's experiences (Reisen, Viana and Neto, 2019). Physical bullying often causes victims to experience injuries that look like cuts and bruises and are real so it is difficult to recognize them. Non-physical bullying is sometimes more difficult to detect and identify because of the damage it causes. Physical or non-physical bullying can make teenagers feel hopeless so that those who experience it try or even succeed in committing suicide. The following are various forms of bullying as follows: 1) physical bullying (called direct bullying/aggression) includes choking, biting, scratching, spitting, chewing or all other forms of physical attacks and intimidation including damaging someone's property, 2) psychological bullying (called indirect bullying/aggression) is an attack "inside" the person being targeted. The aim is to harm individuals who have been attacked but have no physical signs. Psychological bullying is often considered less dangerous but can be as damaging as physical bullying (Sullivan, 2010)

This research aims to understand in depth how *bullying* can affect teenagers' emotional development. By focusing on one or several individuals who have experienced *bullying*, this research will examine: The forms of bullying experienced by teenagers, whether verbal, physical or *cyberbullying*; The emotional impacts caused by *bullying*, such as anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, and fear, are coping mechanisms used by teenagers to deal with emotional wounds resulting from bullying. As well as the role of parents, teachers and peers in helping teenagers who experience bullying. It is hoped that the results of this research will provide a more comprehensive understanding of how *bullying* can affect teenagers' emotional development. This understanding can help stakeholders, such as parents, teachers and counselors, in developing appropriate strategies to prevent bullying and help teenagers who experience it to recover and develop optimally.

## 2. METHODS

This research method was carried out using a qualitative approach. Qualitative research method is research used to examine a natural object where the researcher is the key instrument, data collection techniques are carried out in combination, data analysis is inductive, and the results of qualitative research emphasize meaning rather than generalization (Sugiyono, 2014). The approach model in this research is the case study approach. A case study is a model that focuses on "bounded system" exploration of a special case or a special part in detail by extracting data in depth. Various sources of information that are rich in context are used for data mining (Creswell, 2015).

Data collection techniques in qualitative research include observation, interviews and documentation studies. Interviews were conducted to find out and complete the data and to try to get precise and accurate data (Prasanti, 2018). Observation is a strategy and method of collecting data through observations during ongoing activities. This research uses observation techniques to obtain data. This observation uses ordinary observations and the instrument uses an observation sheet (Oktaviany and Ramadan, 2023). To conduct this research, the author interviewed a participant with the initials S, a 5th grade student at SDN 123 Panorama.

## 3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### 3.1. Verbal Bullying

The results of the interview with the main subject, namely S, experienced verbal bullying in the environment where he played. The subject said he experienced bullying in the form of false accusations, insults, insults and gossip spread by his cousin. S's cousin did this so that S wouldn't play with his friends and would just play with his cousin. The bullying that happened to him made him feel sad because he couldn't play with his friends. In line with this, Coloroso (Zakiyah, Humaedi and Santoso, 2017) think that Verbal violence is a form of bullying that is often used by both male and female adolescents. Verbal bullying can take the form of insults, name calling, insults, criticism, slander, and statements that contain sexual harassment or advances. In addition, verbal bullying can take the form of confiscation of goods or pocket money, rude telephone calls, letters containing threats of violence, gossip, malicious gossip, false accusations.

### 3.2. Physical Bullying

The participant admitted that S had not experienced physical violence. There are no visible actions such as hitting, kicking, elbowing, and others that cause scars. Meanwhile, physical *bullying* is an act of physical contact between the perpetrator and the victim directly or indirectly (Dianita et al, 2023). Bullying acts that are visible and identifiable among other forms of bullying. Types of physical oppression include choking, hitting, punching, elbowing, kicking, twisting, biting, spitting, scratching, damaging and destroying the victim's belongings and clothing.

### 3.3. Indirect Bullying

The interviews conducted showed that S had experienced bullying. It is known that it started with his cousin spreading an unpleasant rumor or gossip which resulted in him being ostracized by his friends so that the victim was treated badly by his friends. In line with this, Rigby (2002) stated that group bullying is a form of bullying by persuading another person or group of people to exclude someone. Meanwhile, other research states that indirectness is an activity that aims to exclude or reject and distance someone from a friendship group or leave them out of various things on purpose, such as slandering someone by telling lies about

someone so that the person will be judged badly by their friends Solberg and Olweus (Solberg and Olweus) [Magfirah and Rachmawati, 2009](#)).

### **3.4. Impact and Development of Adolescent Emotions**

Based on the research that has been carried out, the results of interviews with R, the main research subject who is an early teenager, were confirmed and strengthened by interviews with supporting subjects who were the homeroom teachers and friends of the teenagers, as well as supported by expert opinions and based on literature studies which were used as references for this research. S becomes less confident in his abilities. When he was about to take part in the competition, he received inappropriate words that made him think, down, sad and had the urge to resign. The homeroom teacher revealed that S was a friendly, kind and shy person. He sometimes always lacks confidence in his abilities. The impact of *bullying* is not only physical injury but leaves deep emotional scars for the victim. Bullying has an impact on victims who experience it, such as having difficulty concentrating while studying, causing their achievement to decrease, low self-esteem, feeling intimidated, not being able to socialize with their environment because they feel unsafe for them, feeling worthless, and hampering teenagers' behavior in self-actualization. The emotional impact of bullying is not only felt by the victim at the time of the incident but can also continue into adulthood. Victims of bullying are more vulnerable to the risk of experiencing mental health problems and unhealthy relationships. In line with this, the impact of *bullying* is not only felt by the victim but also by the perpetrator of the bullying and the victim-perpetrator of bullying.

[Skrzypiec akk \(2012\)](#) stated that they experience problems with abnormal, hyperactive and pro-social behavior when involved in the process of social interaction. Both empathy and abnormal behavior, hyperactive and pro-social behavior are closely related to the perpetrator's response when he is involved with the surrounding social environment. In contrast to victims and perpetrators, their level of mental health disorders is greater than that of perpetrators and victims of *bullying*. They are individuals who commit acts of *bullying* but they also become victims of bullying. Those who are perpetrators and victims of bullying have mental health problems, especially emotional symptoms. Rosen et al (2017) added that they are often socially isolated but do not have close friends or friends and do not have a good relationship with their parents. [Modecki et al \(2014\)](#) explained that victims of *bullying* who experience the physical and verbal violence they receive often become a factor in short-term and long-term trauma. The emotional wounds or trauma they experience can affect their adjustment to the environment, in this case the school environment.

[Cornell et al \(2013\)](#) stated that bullying that occurs in adolescents results in high levels of depression, anxiety and suicide as adults. Not only that, they even experience problems in social relationships, worsening economic conditions and even low *well-being* when they reach the age of 50. Apart from that, bullying behavior can result in psychotic conditions that cause irritability, crying and even when interacting with other people, causing excessive fear. Usually victims of bullying will feel safe if they are where they live, at home. Bullying behavior can hinder the victim's activities in daily life and reduce his academic performance and enthusiasm ([Wahani, Isroini, and Setyawan, 2022](#)). Teenage victims of bullying are required to be able to control their emotions so they can interact with other people and face their problems. In this case, teenagers are also expected not to be influenced by negative emotions, and to be able to motivate and modify their emotions, which is an ability that allows individuals to survive the problems they face. If they cannot control their emotions, teenagers tend to think about what is happening to them and this has a psychological impact and can even lead to mental disorders ([Diajeng, Indari, and Mustriwi, 2021](#)).

Rina Mulyani (2014) said that teenagers who are victims of bullying must have good resilience so that teenagers can survive adversity, be able to resist hullyng and can recover from their condition . The class teacher tries to ensure that S can be confident in his abilities and that his achievements do not decline, providing stimulus and providing opportunities so that S develops and shows his abilities. In this case, S won consecutively the coloring competition at SDN 134 panorama and the poetry writing competition. Adolescents who are victims of bullying tend to have difficulty controlling their emotional reactions in the face of failure or difficulty. Adolescents who keep their sadness to themselves because of a lack of trust in their social environment tend to ignore the problems they experience so that adolescents do not learn how to resolve bullying cases which makes this problem protracted and protracted (Zakiyah, Fedryansyah, and Gutama, 2018). The bullying experienced by S certainly had an impact on S's emotional development. However, this did not make him want to commit suicide. Sullivan (2010) believes that suicide is tragic and final. Suicides resulting from bullying are shocking and a harsh indictment of the schools and communities where they occur. Suicide among school-aged teenagers is an issue of great concern. The Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System highlights the proportion of US high school students who experience this and report suicidal ideation and attempts.

In 2015, 17.7% of teens seriously considered attempting suicide, 14.6% made a plan, 8.6% attempted suicide, and 2.8% attempted suicide in a way that should be treated by a medical professional within 12 years. month (Hinduja and Patchin, 2019) . In accordance with this research, related to race and ethnicity as described by Mueller et al (2015), it was found that white adolescents were more likely to attempt suicide than African-American and Hispanic students, although the rate among African-American adolescents has increased significantly since turn of the century. Previous research has classified teenagers who experience serious forms of bullying at school as being most at risk In one study it was found that the emotional profile of victims was characterized by high levels of concern and low levels of clarity and repair, thereby exacerbating victimization. On the other hand, bullies only show a lack of ability to correct emotions (emotion regulation) (Pilar et al. 2022) .

Bullies have a low ability to recognize other people's emotions while victims have low emotional management. Controlling and using emotions is the ability to regulate and change emotions according to the circumstances in which the person is, such as to overcome obstacles in everyday life (Lomas et al. 2012) . The participant with the initials S experienced the impact of bullying, as mentioned above, there were no negative impacts such as influencing S's habits by showing problematic behavior such as smoking, drinking alcohol, breaking rules, theft, property damage and suicide. Additionally, victims experience greater difficulties in school including decreased academic performance, lower achievement regarding school safety and connectedness and reduced engagement in school (Nickerson, 2017) . Thornberg et al. (2019) stated that students explained that bullying was carried out as a way to gain power, influence, status and popularity within their peer group. Bullying is not only about achieving high status but also about maintaining the high position that has been achieved in the social hierarchy. Even though teenagers who are not involved have sympathy for the victim, bullying can still continue because teenagers do not want to experience the same situation as the victim.

Individuals who have higher status are more likely to carry out bullying (Ploega, Steglicha, and Veenstraa 2019) . Research conducted by Yan, Chen, and Huang (2019) found that individuals who tend to be victims of bullying are more likely to be left behind than children who are not left behind. This makes sense because they don't have parents in their daily lives so they don't get enough parental attention and friendship and security so the chances are

greater. Compared with girls who are left behind, boys who are left behind are victims of more oppression but are also involved in more oppression. [Rosen et al \(2017\)](#) added that the factors that cause *bullying* are internal and external factors.

### **3.5. Types of Victims *Bullying***

Victims who view violent situations as challenges that can be controlled or as threats that cannot be controlled have an impact on how they deal with stress in the long term. The way they view this situation has an impact on the level of stress they experience, especially in terms of the emotions experienced by the victims while experiencing bullying. On the one hand victims may interpret victimization as a highly traumatic critical experience which together with their tendency to withdraw, their weakened self-concept gives rise to depressive symptoms and feelings of loneliness known as passive or submissive victims. Meanwhile, victims who develop negative attitudes towards their peers, resulting in a tendency to be impulsive which gives rise to aggressive reactions towards their attackers, are known as provocative or aggressive victims ([del Moral et al, 2014](#)) . [Vermande et al \(2007\)](#) distinguish three types of bullying victims such as passive victims, reactive aggressive victims and proactive and reactive aggressive victims. Meanwhile, [Salmivalli and Nieminen \(2010\)](#) differentiate victims of *bullying* into six types: 1) victims who are aggressive due to the accumulation of stress which is characterized by reactive aggression from victims who can no longer tolerate teasing, insults, hitting or other things from their friends. 2) provocative victims are provocative teenagers who are annoying or argumentative towards their classmates and teachers. 3) Victims of infection who associate with other people who commit violence and are affected by aggression, in this case become proactive. 4) passive victims who report their situation to adults are considered victims of aggression. 5) academically talented victims who are protected by teachers are a subtype that has the same characteristics as aggressive victims with the provocative subtype ([del Moral et al, 2014](#)) .

### **3.6. *Bullying* Prevention Program**

In the last twenty years all states have passed laws to address bullying in schools, these policies guide system-level, bullying-related actions and interventions ([Hall, 2017](#)) . On the other hand, there is previous research which shows that each subtype of bullying has a major impact on the health and well-being of victims, especially their psychological health, such as a form of relational bullying which has a significant impact on psychological health and well-being and is also proven to cause withdrawal from the environment, depression and anxiety. . Meanwhile, physical bullying is associated with psychological distress and poor emotional well-being regardless of its frequency ([Lomas et al., 2016](#)). The various negative impacts associated with bullying illustrate the need for effective prevention programs and strategies to reduce bullying among adolescents. The impact of bullying subtypes shows that bullying prevention programs need to be carried out to ensure that they can adequately address all types of bullying ([Kennedy, 2020](#)) .

Bullying prevention is carried out with several programs that can be carried out by parties such as the KiVa Anti-bullying Program developed and disseminated in Finland from 2007 until now which was developed based on several models of human social behavior such as Bandura's social-cognitive theory and the complex involvement of peers in bullying in schools by targeting people who are in bullying situations to reduce the social rewards for the perpetrator and reduce their bullying behavior. There is BKiVa Street, which is introduced to middle school teenagers, which is an online forum that provides information on the topic of bullying ([Gaffney, Farrington, and Ttofi, 2019](#)) . Apart from that, Noncadiaintrappola (NoTrap) is a web-based anti-bullying program that has been developed and evaluated in Italian

secondary schools. This intervention engages students actively in its development to promote anti-intimidation. Students were enrolled as peer educators throughout the intervention, moderating the online anti-bullying forum, managing the flow of discussions and responding to user questions and concerns. In addition, peer educators hold workshops offline with participating students to highlight existing issues (Gaffney, Farrington, and Ttofi 2019) .

The Bullying Prevention Program (OBPP) is an anti-bullying program throughout the school with the aim of advancing the school in reducing bullying problems and preventing further incidents of bullying. This program includes elements at various levels, especially school, classroom, individual and community levels. Olweus also said that this intervention component is guided by four main principles, namely that adults both at school and at home should: show a positive attitude and warmth towards students, set firm limits and restrictions on unacceptable student behavior, apply consistent and non-aggressive consequences, and act as a positive and authoritative role model. Olweus and Limber determined that at the school level, OBPP interventions involve the formation of a Coordinating Bullying Prevention Committee (BKPPC) consisting of school staff, parents, and members of the welding community. Incentive training is also provided for staff and regular staff discussion groups (Gaffney, Farrington, and Ttofi 2019)

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The emotional wounds of teenagers who experience bullying are a concern. In the midst of this period of change, *bullying* can appear as a haunting shadow and leave deep emotional scars for the victims. The impact of *bullying* is not only physical wounds but also leaves deep emotional scars for the victims. The results of the analysis show that the emotional wounds experienced by teenagers include low self-esteem, anxiety, loneliness, suicidal thoughts, self-isolation and depression. These findings illustrate how bullying affects the emotional aspects of teenagers in their daily lives, especially in their social relationships and learning

This research is expected to provide an in-depth understanding of the long-term impact of bullying on adolescent emotional development. The results of this research can provide guidance for readers, guidance and counseling teachers and others in designing effective interventions to support adolescents who experience emotional wounds due to *bullying* . With this research, readers of further research can continue by developing detailed methodology, planning data collection and conducting research with predetermined stages.

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