



Verbal Bullying and Its Effects on Social Relations of High School Students in Mataram Municipality

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Abstract. This study aims to find out the forms of verbal bullying, and their effects on the social relations of high school students in Mataram Municipality. This research used descriptive qualitative methods, and the samples were determined by using *purposive* and *snowball sampling* techniques to look at research objects or targets and focus on empirical characteristics. The research instruments were the researcher himself, and some research questions corresponded to the research needs. The data were obtained through primary research sources, meaning the data coming from the firsthand or people who are directly involved in bullying practices. Data collection techniques were carried out through triangulation methods (observation, interview, documentation studies, and focus group discussions). Analytical techniques performed were data reduction, data display, and final conclusion drawing. The results showed that: 58.5% of high school students in Mataram Municipality experienced bullying, or in other words, they were victims of verbal bullying. 80% of high school students in Mataram Municipality were bullied verbally in the form of labelling such as fat, ugly, black, stupid, short, curly, narrow, poor, effeminate, and berated with negative words, and often in the form of dubbing someone with the name that leads to physical deficiencies. 72.3% of bullying behavior occurred in the school environment. 75.4% of verbal bullying actions in High Schools in Mataram Municipality were dominated by men. There are several effects of verbal bullying that directly affect high school students in Mataram Municipality, including the emergence of a sense of inferiority, being quiet, not being able to express himself or his opinions in a friendly environment, conflicts between students, poor communication established in the student social environment, resulting in social relations in the school environment is not harmoniously established which finally has an effect on the non-peaceful school conditions.

Keywords: Verbal Bullying · Social Relations · Education

1 Introduction

Education functions to shape every student so that they can be accepted by the community where they live. However, to date, education in formal schools only emphasizes

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A. Amrullah et al. (Eds.): ACCESS 2021, ASSEHR 686, pp. 118–130, 2023.

https://doi.org/10.2991/978-2-494069-21-3_14

academic success without paying attention to success in shaping students' personalities. The world of education, especially formal education, must be able to create peaceful school conditions. A peaceful school has nine criteria: being free from conflict and violence, having peace, being comfortable and safe, being able to work together, accommodating, having obedience to rules, being able to internalize religious values and having good relations with the community [1].

Learning at the school level should be able to instill knowledge and provide a sense of security to students. These have been mandated in Article 54 of Law Number 23 of 2002 concerning Child Protection which explains that "every student who is in a school environment is required to be protected from acts of violence that may occur. Involving teachers, school administrators, or their friends in educational institutions". However, the facts state that the violence level in education is increasing. Data from the Indonesian Ministry of Health [2] revealed that 50% of school-age children reported having experienced acts of violence (bullying) at school. Acts of violence, better known as bullying, occurring in the world of education have become a separate problem for the education system in Indonesia.

Indonesian Child Protection Commission (henceforth KPAI) has collected 26,000 child cases related to legal violations from 2011 to 2017 from the public. Bullying cases rank first with 34%, followed by family and parenting problems as much as 9%. There were 253 cases of bullying consisting of 122 cases as victims and 131 cases as perpetrators [3]. The results of the 2017 national discussion organized by the character school development committee explained that many schools in Indonesia have cases of bullying, even though this bullying case is verbal bullying. Violence in the form of bullying can be in physical disturbances such as verbal threats, insults, and labelling of someone. Meanwhile, acts of bullying also occur in various social media. Although physical bullying and cyber bullying often receive great attention, social and verbal bullying is the form that is more often experienced by students [4].

The results of the study describe that there are several variables or methods created in an environment where bullying tends to occur, namely: low discipline methods, non-educational punishments, low-quality classroom conditions, disorganized classroom and school rules, and student social structures characterized by with antisocial behavior [5]. The results of the study explain that bullying can also have an effect on student absence from school, decreased academic achievement, and physical and mental health disorders [6]. The results of the study explain that both boys and girls have the same potential to become victims of sexual harassment, but in terms of experiences and events that often occur, girls are more at risk of experiencing cross-gender sexual harassment situations [7]. In several research studies, it is explained that women may be more at risk of experiencing verbal or social intimidation than men [8].

Meanwhile, bullying occurs for various reasons, including they: a) feel capable of getting what they want [9]; b) are aggressive and impulsive, regard bullying as cool and fun; c) have a relatively low level of empathy; d) think that some people (different ethnic groups or ethnic groups) deserve to be bothered; e) feel unappreciated by others; f) boring school atmosphere. A number of factors contribute to bullying, and one of them is how teachers manage classrooms and respond to inappropriate student behavior [5]. The results of the study reveal that bullying or intimidation affects academic achievement

of students experiencing it because it reduces student's interest to be in school and no motivation to learn [10].

Social relations are relationships with causal properties between humans, and they influence each other in their social life. Social interaction activities are dynamic patterns in order to bring together individuals or groups as well as relationships occurring from individuals to certain groups [11]. Social interaction is not only in the form of cooperation, but can be in the form of action, competition, and conflict. Social interaction has aspects affecting the occurrence of more general social relations, namely [12]: social contact and communication. a) Social contact can be in the form of events related to individual social relationships with other individuals. Social contact is in the form of physical contact, as well as symbolic contacts such as a smile, or a handshake. Social contact can be positive or negative. b) The communication aspect is the delivery of information, ideas, concepts, and knowledge from one person to another through responses and stimuli.

Bullying behavior in educational institutions, especially formal schools, is a phenomenon that has to be a concern for all parties. Acts of intimidation or violence can be a reflection that the education system in Indonesia has not been able to instill the values of equality and justice without distinction. Along with the increasing cases of violence occurring in the school environment, this problem is included in the serious category and a clear mapping is needed so that all parties can contribute in suppressing the occurrence of bullying in educational institutions. The problems above are evidence that there are rampant cases of bullying occurring in the world of education. Educational units have a role in shaping character through learning, building good social relations, and transferring knowledge, values, and skills. However, various problems as a result of deviations from these values in the implementation occur around us. Increasing cases of bullying that afflict students is a form of the school's lack of control in supervising student behavior, and the lack of social relations created by schools through a positive school climate.

UNICEF data shows that Indonesia ranks first in cases of violence against children in schools with a percentage of 84% [13]. The results of the study by Kartikosari and Setyawan [14]; Juwita and Kustanti [15]; Yandri [16]; Harahap and Ika Saputri [17] stated that almost every school in Indonesia had bullying cases while the forms of bullying that were rife among students include forms of psychological violence, exclusion, and verbal violence such as mocking and hitting. Nursasari [18]; Fildzah Rudyah Putri [19]; Manumpil, Ismanto, and Onibala [20] identified cases of bullying behavior that often occurred in the school environment. Research from Carrera, DePalma, and Lameiras [21] explains that men have a greater opportunity to bully women.

Several previous studies only focus on violence or bullying in general in the school environment, while our research focuses on verbal bullying and students' social relations in the school environment. Researchers tried to do research related to verbal bullying and its effect on social relations of high school students in Mataram Municipality. The aim is to find out the forms of verbal bullying, and their impact on the social relations of high school students in Mataram Municipality.

2 Methods

This study applied a qualitative research approach with the aim of revealing verbal bullying and its effect on social relations in students in detail and specifically at high schools in Mataram Municipality. The researcher started with the nature of the reality to be studied, so that a reality that was close to the social aspect was built and had a close relationship between the researcher and the subject being studied. Qualitative research is as a form of correlation to find and show causal conditions, phenomena, contexts, conditions, influences, and strategies/interactions [22]. The researcher applied descriptive qualitative methods, and the samples were determined by using purposive and snowball sampling techniques to look at research objects or targets and focus on empirical characteristics. This research was conducted to find out the actualization, social reality, and perception of a person through his/her confession which may not be revealed through measurements with instruments in general or even a list of questions that have been prepared in advance. Data collection techniques in this study were as follows; 1) observation; 2) semi-structured interviews; and 3) documentation. The data analysis technique used was an interactive model, namely [23]: data reduction, data display, and conclusion. The validity of the data test was carried out using the triangulation technique as follows; 1) triangulation of data sources, carried out by searching for data from many sources of respondents, informants, and research subjects; 2) triangulation of data collection methods (observations, interviews, documentation studies and focus group discussions (FGD)); 3) triangulation of theories by examining relevant theories, not using a single theory but multiple theories. Then at the final stage, the researcher checked the correlation category in the study, so that it could produce a conclusion that would become a general design.

3 Results and Discussions

3.1 Results

Respondents' or research informants' characteristics include gender, bullying incidence, bullying treatment, bullying location, bullying perpetrators (bullies), and forms of bullying can be seen in Figs. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6.

The Fig. 1 shows that the respondents or informants are 34% male and 66% female. From the figure, it can be seen that the female gender dominates this study. There are two strong reasons why around 66% of women participated as informants in the study. The first reason is that women are victims of bullying occurring in the school environment. Second, their interest arises because they are witnesses or have seen acts of bullying occurring in the school environment.

Figure 2 describes informants who have experienced acts of bullying. As many as 58.5% of informants have experienced bullying, and the remaining 41.5% have never experienced bullying. If we look carefully, 58.5% of informants have experienced bullying. In other words, the percentage above shows that most of them are victims of bullying.

Figure 3 shows that high school students in Mataram Municipality experienced verbal bullying. 80% of students experienced verbal bullying from colleagues or other

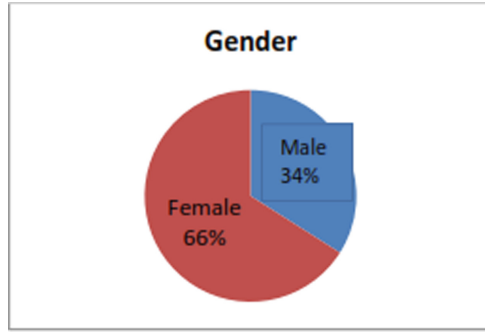


Fig. 1. Respondent based on Gender

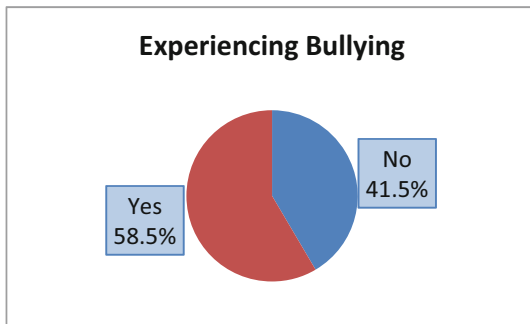


Fig. 2. Informants Experiencing Bullying

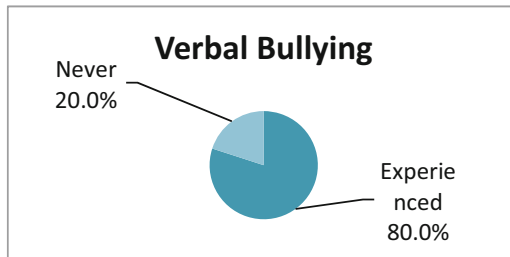


Fig. 3. Students Experiencing Verbal Bullying

people while 20% of students did not experience verbal bullying. The high percentage of students experiencing verbal bullying indicates that bullying behavior occurring to high school students in Mataram Municipality is at the level of serious cases that need to be handled by various parties.

Figure 4 shows high school students in Mataram Municipality received verbal bullying as much as 72.3% when they were in the school environment; 21.5% experienced bullying in the community, and 6.2% when they were at home. The high percentage of

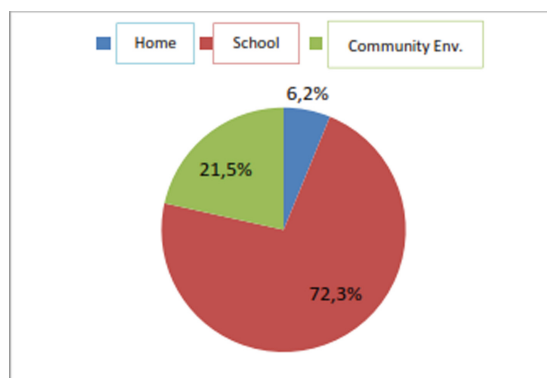


Fig. 4. Location Where Verbal Bullying Occurred

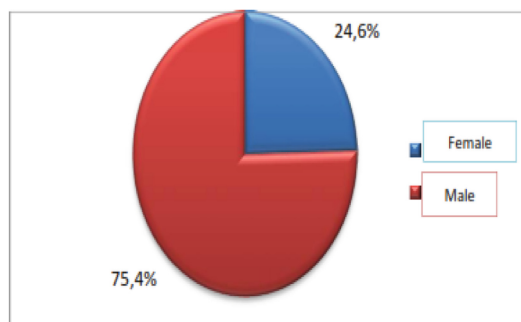


Fig. 5. Verbal Bullying Perpetrators

verbal bullying occurring in the school environment indicates that the school environment is an unsafe place for students.

Figure 5 shows that 75.4% of male students are perpetrators of verbal bullying in the school environment, while 24.6% are female.

Figure 6 shows that 96.9% of students experienced verbal bullying such as being mocked, berated, called nicknames, and so on. Meanwhile, 3.1% experienced physical bullying such as being pushed, grabbed, hit, pinched, pulled, and kicked. Verbal bullying that is done or experienced by high school students in Mataram Municipality is very varied. The forms of verbal bullying experienced by students are very diverse, even the high school students explained that “verbal bullying is experienced quite often starting from ridicule from friends, even insulting the victim’s physical condition”.

Another informant also explained that “the bullying that they get often comes from the teacher who teaches. The informant explained that he was called stupid because he could not answer the questions that were done in front of the class”. Forms of verbal bullying as above look like a simple action for individuals who do bullying. But the act of cursing, or labeling someone is a very serious act. If verbal bullying is allowed to

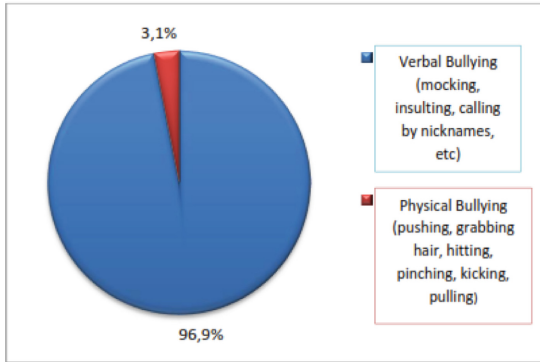


Fig. 6. Verbal Bullying Forms

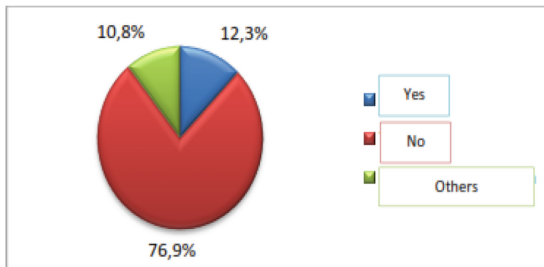


Fig. 7. Reporting of Verbal Bullying Acts

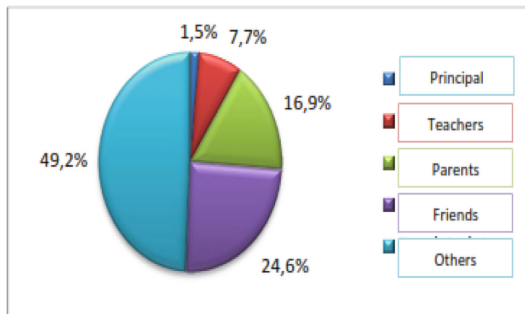


Fig. 8. People where Students Report Bullying

continue in the school environment, it can create non-conducive learning conditions in the school environment.

Figure 7 shows that 76.9% of students experiencing acts of verbal bullying in the school environment never reported bullying that happened to them. 12.3% of students reported their acts of verbal bullying. Meanwhile, 10.8% of high school students in Mataram Municipality gave other responses.

Figure 8 shows that 1.5% of students who experienced acts of verbal bullying complained or reported the incident they experienced to the principal. 7.7% of students reported to the teacher; 16.9% of students reported to their parents; 24.6% of students reported to their friends, and 49.2% of students chose others. From the Fig. 8, it can be seen that the percentage of informants' responses or respondents is very different. This shows that students experiencing acts of verbal bullying in the school environment do not get good handling by the school. The low percentage of students who become victims of bullying report bullying to the school. The second-highest percentage of students prefer to tell or report bullying to their peers. This condition cannot be allowed to continue. The school should be able to provide solutions and assistance for victims of bullying in the school environment.

3.2 Discussions

3.2.1 Forms of Verbal Bullying Occurring in High School Students in Mataram Municipality

Verbal acts of violence committed by one person to another are verbal bullying. Bullying in the world of education is included in acts of violence harming others. The act of hurting another person is included in the category of violence. These acts of violence can be carried out with a specific purpose or no purpose. One example is by being the center of attention to seek recognition and the desire to have power in school. If it is carried out continuously, bullying in schools will cause trauma, fear, anxiety, depression, and even death. Bullying in the form of verbal is the type that is often done by bullies. Verbal bullying will be the beginning of other bullying behavior and can be the first step toward further violence.

Verbal bullying occurs in the school environment usually happens to parties who do not have power in their social environment. Verbal bullying occurring in the school environment, especially among high school students in Mataram Municipality, is dominated by men. Male dominance in bullying in schools is around 75.4%. Bullying at school increased significantly among female students (17%) and male students (16%) [24]. This percentage is quite high compared to female domination. This is not in line with the opinion of Hein [7] stating that in general, boys use more physical bullying and girls use relational/emotional bullying more, but both of them use verbal bullying.

Meanwhile, the results of the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) survey revealed that 22% of male and female students experienced acts of bullying and ridicule from other students; 20% of students experienced bullying in the form of bad rumors; and 14% of students experienced bullying in the form of threats from other students. So, overall, there are 41% of school-age students have been victims of bullying by other students in the school environment [25]. Therefore, bullying has various types and patterns, and is more related to the socialization pattern that occurs between boys and girls. In terms of experiences and incidents that often occur, girls are more at risk of experiencing cross-gender sexual harassment situations. The explanation above is supported by the results of other studies showing that male and female students have the same potential for the victimization of bullying [26].

The results showed that there are several characteristics of children who have a greater tendency to be bullies, namely (a) those who care about popularity, have many friends,

and enjoy being a leader among their friends. The bullies are identified as individuals coming from affluent (wealthy) families, and they have a pretty good achievements in school. They usually bully to increase their status and popularity among their friends. (b) They have been victims of bullying. They may also have difficulty socializing, have difficulty keeping up with school lessons, easily get carried away by emotions, feel lonely and depressed, and; (c) They have low self-esteem, or are easily influenced by their friends.

Bullies have a tendency to follow the behavior of their friends who are also bullies, and this is done consciously and unconsciously. Meanwhile, Allen [5] explains that bullying does not occur in a vacuum. A number of factors contribute to bullying, and one of them is how teachers manage classrooms and respond to inappropriate student behavior. This is in line with the results of research showing that most victims of bullying do not report bullying experienced to teachers or the school. Thus, it can be underlined that the low reporting can be identified because teachers and schools are not able to provide solutions and responsive attitudes in managing the classroom and unfriendly school environment conditions. Thus, peaceful school conditions are needed for students experiencing acts of bullying. This is in line with the findings explaining that a positive school climate has a role in moderating the impact of bullying in the school environment [26].

The results of the study explained that around 80% of high school students in Mataram Municipality received verbal bullying acts in the form of labeling such as fat, ugly, black, stupid, short, curly, slanted, poor, effeminate, and scolded with negative words, even the verbal bullying that is often done is to call someone with names that lead to physical deficiencies. It can be said that the occurrence of bullying in the school environment is a process of group dynamics, where there are divisions of roles. Each role played by a bully is as follows: the bully, the bully's assistant, reinforcer, victim, developer, and outsider. Bullies are categorized as leaders, who take the initiative and are actively involved in bullying behavior. Reinforcers are those who are there when bullying occurs, participate in witnessing, laugh at victims, provoke bullies, invite other students to watch and so on. This explanation is in line with the results of a study that found that male students were more likely to be involved as perpetrators of verbal/physical bullying (traditional) and cyberbullying against their friends at school [27].

Meanwhile, the perpetrators as outsiders are people who know that acts of violence (verbal bullying) occur, but in general, they do not take any action to prevent it, and seem to have no sense of concern. Such conditions often occur in the school environment. The results of the study show that bullying (verbal bullying) was not carried out by a person individually but in groups, and acts of bullying like this are supported by a school environment that is not harmonious. In addition, this happens because there are no strict consequences from the teacher or school. The bully will perceive that his/her behavior is justified and even gives him/her a social identity that makes outsiders proud, such as teachers, students, people who work at school, and parents. Even though they know it, they do not report it, do not prevent it and just let it go. This tradition runs because they feel that this is natural.

3.2.2 The Effect of Verbal Bullying on the Social Relations of High School Students in Mataram Municipality

Bullying that occurs in the school environment has several direct and indirect effects. The results showed that the victims who were the targets of bullying had social development barriers; the bullying subjects felt uncomfortable, then felt inferior and not appreciated by their social environment. This is in line with the results of previous studies which explained that bullying or intimidation affects students' academic achievement because it reduces students' interest in being in school and no motivation to learn [10]. The results of the study reveal that there are several effects of verbal bullying that directly affect SMAN students in Mataram Municipality, including the emergence of a sense of inferiority, being quiet, being unable to express themselves or their opinions in a friendly environment, having conflicts with other students, having poor communication in the student's social environment. These have resulted in social relations in the school environment not being harmoniously established, ultimately having an effect on not creating peaceful school conditions. Meanwhile, the results of another study revealed that the effect of bullying on victims is directly related to poor psychological health and perceived stress [28].

On the other hand, the findings in this study imply that if acts of bullying or verbal bullying continue to dominate or occur in the school environment, then social relations occurring in the school environment will remain in a bad condition (negative). This is because victims of bullying who feel the psychological impact directly will choose to withdraw from their social environment. The impact of verbal bullying cannot be considered simply because it can affect the victim's academic development at school, if not given proper assistance. In line with the finding, the results of other studies show that bullying has negative effects on victims, such as; academic achievement; psychological effects, peer relations; and their future lives [29].

Thus, the effects can be minimized if all elements of the school begin to realize the dangers of the effects of verbal bullying behavior. Schools must be at the forefront of preventing bullying, especially verbal bullying among students, both in the classroom and in the more general school social environment. If schools can become agents of change in relation to bullying, they will be able to create a harmonious and conducive school climate for all school members. Schools can build a friendly, non-bullying school culture. This is in line with what was stated by Soekanto [12] who explains that aspects of social contact and communication can direct the state of mind and the environment or a person's behavior in a positive direction.

4 Conclusion

Based on the results and discussions described, the conclusions of this study are: first, the forms of verbal bullying occurring among high school students in Mataram Municipality are in the form of labeling such as, fat, ugly, black, stupid, short, curly, slanted, poor, effeminate, and scolded with negative words, and often in the form of dubbing someone with the name that leads to physical deficiencies. 80% of high school students in Mataram Municipality experienced verbal bullying. 58.5% of high school students in Mataram Municipality have experienced bullying, or in other words they are victims of verbal

bullying. 72.3% of bullying behavior occurred in the school environment. 75.4% of verbal bullying at the high school in Mataram Municipality was dominated by males. Second, the verbal bullying effects directly affecting high school students in Mataram Municipality are: the emergence of a sense of inferiority, being quiet, being unable to express themselves or their opinions, having conflicts between students, and having poor communication that occurs between students. These have resulted in social relationships in a school environment that is not harmonious which ultimately has an effect on not creating peaceful school conditions.

There are several solutions that need to be considered: first, victims of bullying must be bolder in reporting bullying experienced to parties who are able to provide solutions. Second, parents should always build good and direct communication with children, so that children can be open about what they experience in the school environment, and coordinate regularly with teachers or the school. Third, teachers and schools must be more active in taking steps to prevent bullying in the school environment and be firm in providing sanctions for perpetrators. We, as researchers, hope that research related to bullying in the school environment can be a strategic policy for formal educational institutions to provide guarantees and run a peaceful education by adopting and implementing the values of multicultural education so that the level of violence (bullying), especially verbal bullying, can be prevented together with the cooperation of all elements of education.

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