RESEARCH ARTICLE

CHARACTER FORMATION OF BULLYING VICTIM STUDENTS WITH A PSYCHOEDUCATIONAL APPROACH

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ABSTRACT

Bullying in schools has become a serious concern due to its negative impact on students' mental, emotional, and social development. This phenomenon hinders learning, damages character, and can lead to long-term psychological issues. This study employs a literature review approach to explore effective strategies for preventing bullying, particularly through psychoeducation. Psychoeducation plays a crucial role in helping students recognize bullying, manage emotions, develop social skills, and restore self-confidence. This approach also encourages students to internalize moral values and act responsibly. The analysis reveals that psychoeducation not only supports the recovery of victims but also creates a conducive school environment free from violence and promotes character building. Implementing psychoeducation is expected to break the cycle of bullying and produce a generation that is more empathetic, caring, and inclusive.

Keywords: Bullying, psychoeducation, character building, education, trauma..

INTRODUCTION

The increasing cases of violence that befall school-age children today are very worrying for educators and parents. Schools, which are supposed to be a place for children to learn and form positive characters, often become fertile ground for bullying practices, making children feel afraid to go to school.

Bullying or often called *Bullying* According is a deliberate act or behavior that is aggressive, carried out repeatedly by a certain group of individuals or individuals against someone who is unable to defend themselves for a sustained period of time.(Goodwin, 2010)

This act of bullying can be physical, verbal, or psychological and often has a devastating impact on the victim of bullying. Bullying problems can hinder the learning process and character

development of students, and can have a long-term impact on the mental and emotional well-being of victims.

This bullying phenomenon has become a cycle that continues to repeat. Each generation tends to adopt similar behaviors in response to stressful situations, so these behaviors are inherited and developed into a culture of violence.

What is also concerning is that the public in general still considers that bullying in the school environment is just a form of child delinquency that usually occurs and is a normal behavior of students when interacting with their peers.

Some of the consequences of bullying include: i) impact on the individual's life, including psychological disorders and negative perceptions

of the victim who are not accepted by their peers, ii) impact on academic life, such as a decrease in academic grades, and iii) impact on social behavior, where the victim of bullying tends to be isolated from their peer group (Masdin, 2013)

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that bullying is a behavior that can be detrimental to both the perpetrator and the victim. Handling and preventing bullying requires comprehensive policies. In this regard, the involvement of all elements of the school, including teachers, students, principals, and parents, is indispensable to raise awareness of all parties about the negative impact of bullying

Therefore, it is important for students to have the ability to recognize, identify, and be aware of the existence of bullying behaviors in their daily activities. In addition, it is no less important to provide knowledge on how to deal with bullying, both when they witness the incident and if they become a victim. By equipping students through psychoeducation about the dangers of bullying and overcoming trauma for those who have experienced bullying, it is hoped that they can increase awareness and concern in maintaining their safety at school and the surrounding environment.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study was designed with a literature study to detail and understand the formation of the character of students who are victims of bullying with a *psychoeducational* approach.

This research explores the latest literature that discusses effective educational strategies to prevent bullying in various contexts, especially in school environments.

Data collected from the literature is analyzed using content analysis methods to identify trends, findings, and perspectives that can be the theoretical and practical basis for relevant and useful development

DISCUSSION

Character is a representation of a person's behavioral values rooted in belief in God Almighty, relationships with oneself, interactions with fellow humans, and adaptation to the environment, which is reflected in ways of thinking, attitudes, speech, and actions that are in accordance with religious norms, laws, social ethics, customs, cultural values, and beauty. (Khulashah, 2023)

Good character according to Thomas Lickona includes an understanding of good things, which encourages the determination to practice kindness, and real actions to do good. Good character includes aspects of knowledge, attitudes, and motivations, as well as behaviors and skills that reflect kindness. Furthermore, Thomas Lickona explained that character is related to moral understanding, moral attitudes and moral actions. (Lickona, 2015)

The importance of character building not only includes aspects of morality, but also involves the development of social skills, leadership, and the ability to overcome life's challenges. Therefore, a comprehensive education needs to pay serious attention to the formation of students' character so that they not only become intellectually intelligent individuals, but also have morality and positive values.

An individual's behavior is influenced by the environment, as stated in conditioning theory, which states that a person's character is formed through interaction with the environment. To develop a strong character, it is important for one to grow up in an environment that promotes good moral values. This process requires cooperation from all sectors, including families, schools and all members of the community. (Wening, 2012)

Bullying can have consequences on a child's physical and mental health. The physical impact involves the possibility of bruises, cuts, and the like on the child's body. On the other hand, the psychological impact includes the child's discomfort when going to school, the tendency to be shy, and feeling depressed by the situation

Bullying can also impact psychiatric disorders, such as excessive levels of anxiety and deep

feelings of loneliness, which can develop as a result of the bullying experience. The social self-concept of bullying victims gets worse because they feel rejected by their peers, and often they experience repeated failures in building friendships, especially when they are the target of bullying by their own close friends. (Rigby, 2003) (Baron, Robert A..., Donn Byrne. Alih Bahasa: Ratna Djuwita,dkk., 2005)

There are various theories related to character formation, one of which is a theory initiated by a psychologist, Lawrence Kolhberg, called Lewrence Kohlberg's theory of morality.

Kohlberg stated that morality is not something that exists from birth, but can be developed and learned through a learning process. Moral development occurs when individuals gradually internalize social values and norms according to their level of maturity and ability to adapt to the rules or norms that prevail in society. This developmental process involves cognitive aspects, namely an understanding of the concepts of good and bad and right and wrong, which is the basis for moral decision-making. In addition, there is also an affective aspect, which includes moral attitudes and behaviors in applying this knowledge into daily actions. Thus, moral development not only shapes the understanding of individuals, but also directs the real application of these values in their lives (Arifani M R, Sutipyo R, Dzaky F A, 2022).

Psychoeducation is one of the approaches that can support moral development, especially in the context of education. By providing information and education on various psychological aspects such as mental health, emotional management, and social skills, psychoeducation aims to increase individual understanding and awareness of moral values. In the context of education in schools, psychoeducation not only helps students recognize emotions and manage stress, but also encourages them to internalize social norms in a positive way.

Through psychoeducation, students can be guided to understand and apply moral values, both in interpersonal relationships and in more complex situations. This approach is also a strategic tool in recovering from trauma, especially for students who experience bullying or violence, so that they can build resilience, strengthen their self-confidence, and become more morally responsible individuals. Thus, psychoeducation not only helps the moral development of individuals but also creates a conducive school environment and supports the strengthening of students' character.

Psychoeducation is defined as a method to improve or improve an individual's condition that is carried out professionally by combining and harmonizing psychotherapy interventions and educational approaches (Lukens & McFarlane, 2004)

The psychoeducational approach is a method used to provide understanding, skills, and support to students who are victims of bullying. The main goal of this approach is to help students understand the situation they are experiencing, manage emotions, and rebuild confidence and social skills. Here are some ways that a psychoeducational approach can shape the character of students who are victims of bullying:

1. Helping Students Understand and Recognize Bullying

Through psychoeducation, students are taught to understand what bullying is, its types (physical, verbal, social, and cyberbullying), as well as its negative impacts. This understanding helps victims to recognize that the behavior is unacceptable and not their fault. The character formed is self-awareness, the courage to speak, and self-control.

2. Teaching Strategies for Managing Emotions

Psychoeducation provides training to students to manage emotions such as fear, shame, or anger arising from bullying. Techniques such as relaxation, deep breathing, or mindfulness can be used to help them stay calm and focused. The character formed is emotional resilience, self-control, and self-confidence.

3. Practice Social and Communication Skills

Students who are victims of bullying often lose confidence in interacting with others. Psychoeducation helps them build assertive communication skills, such as speaking firmly but politely, as well as developing the ability to seek help from adults. The character formed is courage, interpersonal skills, and independence.

4. Provides Psychological Support

Through a psychoeducational approach, victim students are given the space to share their experiences in a safe and supportive environment. With the guidance of a counselor or teacher, they can process their feelings and begin to recover self-esteem that may have been damaged. The character formed is a sense of security, self-respect, and self-acceptance.

5. Raising Awareness of the Dangers of Bullying

Students are not only educated to protect themselves, but also to be agents of change in the school community. By building a character of empathy and caring, they can engage in creating a bullying-free school environment. The character that is built is empathy, social responsibility, and concern for others.

6. Helps in Character Recovery and Strengthening

Psychoeducation focuses on empowering victims to recover from their negative experiences. Through mentorship and training, students learn not to define themselves based on their experiences of bullying, but as strong and empowered individuals. The character formed is resilience, optimism, and the ability to bounce back.

CONCLUSION

Bullying cases in the school environment are a serious problem that negatively impacts the mental, emotional, and social development of students, both for victims and perpetrators.

This phenomenon, which is often considered normal by the public, has the potential to hinder the learning process, damage character, and cause long-term psychological disorders. Therefore, efforts to prevent and handle bullying require a comprehensive approach through the involvement of all elements of the school, including teachers, students, principals, and parents.

The psychoeducational approach has proven to be an effective method in helping students understand and deal with bullying. Psychoeducation provides information, skills, and psychological support to help students recognize bullying, manage emotions, build social skills, and restore confidence. This approach not only supports the trauma recovery of students who are victims of bullying, but also contributes to the formation of resilient, empathetic, and responsible characters.

By integrating psychoeducation in the school environment, it is hoped to create a conducive and violence-free atmosphere, where students can develop into individuals who are not only intellectually intelligent, but also have strong morality and positive values. This can ultimately break the cycle of bullying that continues to recur, as well as build a more caring and inclusive generation.

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