

## Bullying behavior among students

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### ABSTRACT

This study aimed to investigate whether communication patterns, peers' involvement and gender different can be the predictors of adolescent bullying behavior. This study involved 193 adolescents of grade 8 and 9 with the most adolescents of 14 years old who had filled in questionnaires. The results showed the prevalence of adolescent involvement in bullying which was 62.69%. Parental communication patterns have an OR = 1.64 (95% CI=0.87-3.09). Peers involvement in bullying behavior (OR=1.92; 95% CI=1.01-3.66). Adolescent girls were more involved in bullying behavior (59.59%) compared to adolescent boys (OR=3.32; 95% CI=1.69-6.54). Poor parental communication patterns, peers influence negatively predict to the bullying behavior in adolescent. Bullying is higher in boys than girls where as boys has a greater chance of bullying than girls. Therefore, bullying intervention programs are needed in schools.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Bullying [1-4] is defined as a subcategory of interpersonal aggression characterized by three criteria, namely intentionality, repetition, and imbalance of power with the aim of teasing, humiliating, hitting, social exclusion and isolating victim. With these characteristics, bullying is often defined as the systematic abuse of power by peers. This is recognized globally as a complex and serious problem. Abuse of power is the main difference between bullying and other forms of aggression and seriously affects the lives of some young children. Adolescents can be bullies, victims, and bully-victims [5].

Bullying is a serious public health problem due to the impact of bullying felt by both bullies and victims. Many studies on bullying have been carried out by various countries but the prevalence of bullying in each country is different. The prevalence of bullying is 48.5% in Ontario [6], prevalence bullying in Australia was reported that 34% of boys had engaged in bullying behavior and 58% of girls [7], in China was reported the incidences bullying, bullying others and witnessing bullying are 26.10% at elementary school, 9.03% at middle school and 28.90% at high and vocational [8]. The results of the study [9] stated that 25% claimed to be involved, 13% were victims of bullying, 8% were bullies, and 4% were bully-victims. Meanwhile in Indonesia it is reported that 49% of adolescents are victims of bullying [10].

Current thinking now reflects an understanding of bullying as a social and cultural phenomenon related to serious long-term consequences both physically and psychologically for bullies, victims, and bully-victims [11]. bullying has been linked to anxiety [12], depression [10, 13], bully-victims are at increased risk suicidality among young people, whereas risk of antisocial personality disorder for bullies [14]. Physical bullying is associated with suicide ideation and relational bullying was associated with suicide attempts [15].

Bullying victimization in adolescents is associated with poor social relationships, economic difficulties, and poor quality of life perceptions at the age of 50 years [16]. Bullying is also associated with poor academic performance, stressful school climate, and poor social relations in the school environment [17].

The school environment, peers, and family are important components in adolescent life [17]. The school is indicated as one of the spaces that allows violence and intimidation that is contrary to what is expected from the school context, namely as a space for socialization and protection [18]. Peer refusal, low parental monitoring, more time spent by teenagers outside the home were found to be associated with aggressive behavior [19]. While parental monitoring and awareness can provide greater protection for adolescents against the risk of online harassment [20]. Parental involvement in adolescent social relations such as parents know with whom their children socialize is predicted as a protective factor for adolescents not to be involved in victimization [21]. Conversely, poor quality adolescent attachment to parents and peers predicts bullying and victimization [22].

## 2. RESEARCH METHOD

This research used cross-sectional studies. Each class, which was consisted of 34 students grade 8-9, was divided into 6 sub-classes. Sample was taken randomly using inclusion criteria such as adolescents living with parents. Respondents were selected by proportional stratified random sampling where each sub-class was represented by 16 students with a total of 193 students. We adopted bullying behavior questionnaire and parental communication patterns from previous studies [23, 24]. Data analysis includes univariate analysis to describe the characteristics of each variable. Bivariate analysis was performed using the Chi square test to determine the relationship between the variables studied. Variables with p values less than 0.25 in the bivariate analysis were included in the multivariate analysis using logistic regression analysis.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 3.1. Respondent characteristics

This study involved 193 school teenagers. Of the 193 respondents, there were 38 boys (48.72%) and 66 girls (57.39%) who had 14 years of age as illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1. Characteristics respondent by aged of adolescent

Characteristics	Boys (n=78)		Girls (n=115)	
	n	%	n	%
Age				
12	2	2.56	2	1.74
13	29	37.18	44	38.26
14	38	48.72	66	57.39
15	7	8.87	3	2.61
16	2	2.56	0	0.00

### 3.2. Frequency distribution of variables

The results of univariate analysis in this study explain the frequency distribution of each study variable. 115 (59.59%) were girls. The frequency distribution results in Table 2 shows that respondents who involved in bullying were 121 respondents (62.69%). Respondents who have poor parental communication patterns are 105 respondents (54.40%) and respondents who have friends who play a negative role are 94 respondents (40.41%). Boys are more likely to involve in bullying behavior as presented in Table 3.

Table 2. Distribution frequency bullies, parental communication patterns, peer's influences and gender

Varibales		Frequency (n=193)	Percentage (%)
Bullying behavior	Yes	121	62.69
	No	72	37.31
Parental communication patterns	Poor	105	54.40
	Good	88	45.60
Peers' influence	Negative	94	48.70
	Positive	99	51.30
Gender	Boys	78	40.41
	Girls	115	59.59

Table 3. Distribution frequency bullying behavior, parental communication patterns and peer's influences by gender

Variables		Boys (n=78)		Girls (n=115)		Total	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
Bullying behavior	Yes	62	79.49	59	51.30	121	62.69
	No	16	20.51	56	48.70	72	37.31
Parental communication patterns	Poor	62	57.69	60	52.17	88	45.60
	Good	16	42.31	55	47.83	105	54.40
Peers' influence	Negative	47	60.26	47	40.87	94	48.70
	Positive	31	39.74	68	59.13	94	51.30

### 3.3. Bivariate analysis

Bivariate analysis was conducted to determine the relationship between variables of communication patterns and the role of peers with bullying behavior. Chi square analysis showed relationship between parental communication patterns, peers' influence dan gender with bullying behavior (Table 4).

Table 4. Chi square analysis of bullying behavior and parental communication pattern, peers' influence and gender

Variables		Bullying behavior		Total N	P Value
		Yes	No		
Parental communication patterns	Poor	73	32	105	0.032
	Good	48	40	88	
Peers' influence	Negative	69	25	94	0.002
	Positif	52	47	99	
Gender	Boys	62	16	78	0.0001
	Girls	59	56	115	

### 3.4. Multivariate analysis

This analysis was conducted to determine the predictors of bullying based on parental communication pattern, peers influence and gender. Poor parental communication between parents and youth have a 1.64 times chance to become a bullying compared to teens who have good communication patterns with parents but are not statistically significant. Adolescent who have friends with positive roles are likely to protect adolescents from bullying and are statistically significant (OR=1.92; 95%CI=1.01-3.66). Adolescent boys had a risk of 3.32 times greater to carry out acts of bullying compared to adolescent girls and were statistically significant as illustrated in Table 5.

Table 5. Logistic regression of bullying behavior and parental communication pattern, peers influence and gender

Variables		Bullying behavior		Unadjusted OR (95%CI)	Adjusted OR (95%CI)
		Yes	No		
Parental communication patterns	Poor	73	32	1.90*	1.64
	Good	48	40	(1.01-3.58)	(0.87-3.09)
Peers' influence	Negative	69	25	2.49**	1.92*
	Positif	52	47	(1.31-4.79)	(1.01-3.66)
Gender	Boys	62	16	3.68***	3.32**
	Girls	59	56	(1.83-7.62)	(1.69-6.54)

\*<0.05; \*\*<0.01; \*\*\*<0.001; Pseudo R2=0.09

This study was conducted to identify the relationship between communication patterns of peer influence and adolescent gender with bullying behavior. Bullying can happen to anyone, both men and women. Teenage boys are more at risk of being bullied compared to adolescent girls. The percentage of male bullying behavior is greater than that of women where men are more at risk of becoming bullies (12.1% in men and 4.8% in women) [25, 26]. Boys are reportedly involved in bullying compared to teenage girls. Boys are significantly more likely to be bullies in school than girls [27]. Boys are more often involved in all types of intimidation incidents especially physical intimidation while young women are involved in verbal and emotional bullying [28]. In cases involving "talking about someone behind them"; in this situation, girls are more often involved as bullies than boys. As for victimization, boys are more directly physical victims than girls, while girls are more often the subject of dangerous gossip [29].

Teenagers who do bullying are due to many factors between socioeconomic factors, incomplete families such as single parents and children from broken home families. Some students claimed that their communication patterns with their parents were closed. Teenagers feel afraid to tell about problems experienced, often get harsh treatment from parents like being hit and often witnessing their parents fight. Meanwhile, their parents tend to be authoritarian, punitive and unsupportive and have less family cohesiveness which influences children to have bullying behavior [30, 31]. Student involvement with bullying is associated with aspects of family context and domestic violence [32].

Parents who often apply negative communication such as sarcasm, the child will get used to this attitude and tend to apply it in their social life. Children will also have a tendency towards bullying if parents do not provide affection and direction regarding positive attitudes [33]. Parental involvement [34] and high parental monitoring [35] provide a tendency to decrease adolescent involvement in bullying. Adolescents who have poor quality of attachment with parents and peers are reported predictors of bullying and victimization [22]. Parental support and poor supervision by fathers are found to be risk factors for adolescent boys to become bullies and victims [17].

Peers can have both positive and negative influences on adolescent behavior. Peer pressure is one of the causes of bullying behavior among adolescents in school, because adolescents, actively interact with their social environment as part of their identity development process. The results of this study indicate that peers who play a high negative role can lead to high bullying behavior at school. Adolescents want to behave in the same way as their peers so they think that bullying is normal and often witnesses their peers bullying. Peers who have a poor understanding of the effects of bullying can have a negative influence on adolescents [36]. Whereas good relationships with teachers, positive peer relationships and perceptions of academic achievement are protective factors [8]. Children who experience high peer rejection rates, internalization problems, and lower quality parent-child relationships contribute to persistent victimization [37].

Adolescents carry out bullying actions in order to get awards from friends and be accepted in the group. Peer have influence with bullying behavior where if peer influence is good then bullying behavior is low and if peer influence the less good peer then the bullying behavior that occurs is high [38]. Unhealthy peer relationships and a lack of support from the social environment will have a significant impact on the risk of bullying [39].

Bullying can be happened among children, adolescents and adults and has serious impact on health. The intervention program is needed to reduce bullying behavior. Mental health problems that arise early can pose a risk for experiencing psychiatric disorders in adulthood [40]. Prevention focuses not only on victims of bullying but also on perpetrators and bully-victims. Failure to prevent fundamental problems experienced by the three groups (bullies, victims of bullying, and bully-victims) can cause problems due to bullying [41]. Intervention for adolescent victims of bullying to reduce the risk of bullying by considering gender, type of bullying, and providing interpersonal support [15]. Parental involvement in monitoring children [20] and school involvement such as promoting a positive school environment, enhancing peer relationships at school, preventing and combating bullying is very important [36, 42].

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Poor communication patterns between parents and adolescents can cause adolescents to become perpetrators of bullying. Adolescents who have friends with positive roles have opportunities as a protective factor against bullying. Male gender has a greater chance of bullying than female. The existence of bullying intervention programs can minimize the incidence of bullying in schools.

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