

Bullying Behaviour Intensity Reviewed from the Perception of School Climate on High School Students

Intensitas Perilaku Bullying Ditinjau dari Persepsi Iklim Sekolah pada Peserta Didik Sekolah Menengah Atas

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Abstract

This study examines the intensity of bullying behaviour based on the perception of school climate among high school students. The sample of this study is 243 students from grades 10 and 11 of one of the private schools in Kecamatan Medan Sunggal, Medan who were randomly selected by using disproportionate stratified random sampling. Data were collected using an Indonesian adaptation and translation of the MDS3 Climate Survey scale to measure school climate perception and the Bullying and Cyberbullying Scales for Adolescents (BCS-A) perpetration dimension to measure the intensity of bullying behaviour. The collected data were then analysed using correlational statistical techniques and Spearman's rho correlation test. The data analysis showed a negative correlation with the value of -0.508 ($p < 0.05$), which indicates a moderate correlation between the variable of school climate perception and bullying behaviour intensity, where the negative correlation means that the better the perception of school climate, the lower the bullying behaviour intensity, and vice versa, where the lower the perception of school climate, the higher the bullying behaviour intensity.

Keyword : *bullying behaviour intensity; high school students; school climate perception.*

Abstrak

Penelitian ini meneliti tentang intensitas perilaku bullying ditinjau dari persepsi iklim sekolah pada peserta didik tingkat Sekolah Menengah Atas (SMA). Sampel pada penelitian ini adalah 243 peserta didik tingkat X dan XI salah satu SMA Swasta yang terletak di Kecamatan Medan Sunggal, Kota Medan. Sampel dipilih secara acak menggunakan teknik disproportionate stratified random sampling. Data dikumpulkan menggunakan adaptasi dan terjemahan Bahasa Indonesia dari skala MDS3 Climate Surey untuk mengukur persepsi iklim sekolah dan skala Bullying and Cyberbullying Scales for Adolescents (BCS-A) dimensi perpetration untuk mengukur intensitas perilaku bullying. Data dianalisis menggunakan teknik statistik korelasional Spearman's rho. Hasil analisis data menunjukkan bahwa terdapat korelasi negatif sebesar -0,508 ($p < 0,05$) yang dapat disimpulkan bahwa terdapat korelasi sedang variabel persepsi iklim sekolah dengan intensitas perilaku bullying, dengan korelasi negatif yang berarti semakin baik persepsi iklim sekolah maka semakin rendah intensitas perilaku bullying dan sebaliknya, rendah persepsi iklim sekolah maka semakin tinggi intensitas perilaku bullying.

Kata Kunci : intensitas perilaku bullying; persepsi iklim sekolah; peserta didik SMA.

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BACKGROUND

Education is a deliberate and planned attempt to create a learning process that enables students to actively develop their potential to possess spiritual religious strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble character, and skills that are needed by themselves and society (Pristiwanti et al., 2022). In Indonesia, the government implements a twelve-year compulsory education program, which is Elementary, Junior High School, and Senior High School or equivalent (Iranisa & Nasution, 2022). The Senior High School level plays an important level of education for students to continue their education into the higher education level or to enter the workforce (Taufik, 2024).

The process of learning in achieving educational goals is influenced by various factors, including internal factors such as physical and psychological aspects and external factors such as location and facilities, as well as social factors such as teachers and peers that can serve as both supportive and inhibiting factors in the learning process (Busa, 2023; Siswati & Saputra, 2023). The Central Bureau of Statistics of Indonesia (BPS) and UNICEF report shows that the percentage of male students becoming a victim of bullying is bigger than female students (Annur, 2023) with the form of bullying such as property-damaging, being mocked, spreading of bad rumors, being ostracized, ordered around, hit, and threatened (Annur, 2024).

At the end of 2023, there was a bullying happened in an Islamic High School (Madrasah Aliyah or better known as MA) in Medan, the capital of North Sumatra, where the victim reported being forced to suck on sandals, eat mud as well as leaves and twigs (Utomo & Susanti, 2023). Shortly after that, at the beginning of 2024, a bullying case went viral as it occurred in one of the international schools in Serpong, Tangerang, Banten, where the victim experienced violent acts resulting in bruises, abrasions, and cigarette burn marks (F. Rahmawati, 2024). Another bullying case also occurred in Kediri, East Java even resulted in death of the victim (Lumbanrau, 2024).

Bullying is an intentional, conscious, on-purpose, repeating act that characterized by a power imbalance, systematic, and organized actions in the purpose of hurting the others (Irmayanti & Agustin, 2023) and is a common behaviour among the adolescents (Sari et al., 2022; Thomas et al., 2019). Siswati and Widayanti state that bullying is a behaviour that disturbs those who are weaker by insulting, extorting money, and physical violence if their desires are not met, which can lead to physical fights and has a negative impact both physically and psychologically on those who become victim (Fatimatussahro & Suseno, 2018). Bullying can be occurred in various forms, such as verbal, physical, relational, and cyberbullying (Thomas et al., 2015).

Bullying behaviour consists of four aspects, namely (1) the verbal aspect which relates to words like cursing, insulting, mocking, defamation, calling someone with unpleasant nickname, and the others; (2) the physical aspect that involve physical contact between the perpetrator and the victim such as hitting, spitting, slapping, pushing, and the other physical contacts; (3) the relational aspects that relates

to harmful behaviour that can damage relationship with the others, such as ignoring, ostracizing, group rejecting, and the others; and (4) cyberbullying which a form of bullying that being done (Irmayanti & Agustin, 2023; Thomas et al., 2019).

Bullying can be triggered by several factors. According to research by Antoni & Gusti (2020) on students in Kabupaten Solok, West Sumatra, school climate is the most significant factor that can trigger a bullying behaviour. The same thing is expressed by Magfirah and Rachmawati (Amri & Zulharmaswita, 2018), school climate is a significant factor that triggers a bullying. School climate refers to the perception of students to their school environment, encompassing physical and social environment, which include their experience in school, such as safety aspects, engagement, and school environment (Bradshaw et al., 2014). According to Cohen et al., the school climate includes student's experiences related to school life, such as interpersonal relationships that exist within the school (Maharani & Borualogo, 2022). In general, school climate is a perception of students regarding their interaction with both physical and social environments at school.

Research conducted by Kurniawan & Astuti (2021) towards 136 students found that school climate has a significant role in bullying behaviour with t-value of -7.605 with significance of 0.000 ($p < 0.01$). Another study by S. W. Rahmawati (2016) on 723 students in DKI Jakarta also showed a significant correlation between school climate perception with bullying with an r-value of -0.224 ($p < 0.01$), indicating that the stronger the positive school climate perception, the lower likelihood of students showing bullying behaviours and vice versa.

School climate consists of four aspects, namely (1) the safety aspects, which relate to the risk and safety of students during their activities in school (social-emotional safety, physical safety, and substance use); (2) the engagement aspects, which relates to the connectedness to all party of the school (relationships, respect for diversity, and school participation); and (3) the environment aspects which includes the learning community at school, encompassing the physical environment like the shape and the condition of the school building like the size and layout and also the social environment such as rules and school policies (physical environment, academic environment, wellness, and disciplinary environment) (Bradshaw et al., 2014).

Bullying behaviour was also found in one high school in Medan, North Sumatra. Various efforts have been made to prevent bullying from occurring and serve a deterrent effect for the perpetrators in the school, such as regular awareness campaigns, establishing an anti-bullying and violence task force in collaboration with the student's council (OSIS), and implementing a point-deduction system that could lead to expulsion from the school. However, bullying cases still occur at the school. Numerous studies have been made to examine the negative impact of bullying on its victims. Various research has also explored the influence of school climate perception on bullying behaviors, yet it is still difficult to find similar studies, especially in the Medan city area.

This research examines how bullying behaviour is reviewed by the perception of school climate among high school students in one of the high schools in Medan. The alternative hypothesis (H_a) of this research is that there is a negative correlation between school climate perception and bullying behaviour among high school students. The null hypothesis (H_0) of this research is that there is no correlation between school climate perception and bullying behaviour among high school students. This research is also an additional reference for reporting bullying behaviour because this matter is still becoming a major issue in education and a challenge discussed in the educational sector in Indonesia. This research also presents additional data associated with bullying behaviour and school climate perception for developing policies in school and educational sectors.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research is conducted using a descriptive quantitative method. The goal of this research is to examine the correlation between school climate perception and bullying behaviour among high school students. The dependent variable of this research is the intensity of bullying behaviour, and the independent variable is the perception of the school climate. The dimensions reviewed from the school climate perception are safety, engagement, and environment, whereas the dimensions reviewed from the bullying behaviour are verbal, physical, relational, and cyberbullying.

The population of this research is grade 10 and 11 students in one of the private high schools located in Kecamatan Medan Sunggal, Medan, with the total amount of students being 848 students. The sample is determined by Isaac and Michael's table (Yusuf, 2017) with a 5% margin of error, resulting in a sample of 243 students, who were then randomly selected using a distratified stratified random sampling method. The research was conducted in May 2024 after obtaining permission from the school's principal. Data were collected after students filled out the informed consent and were directly supervised by the Counseling teacher of the school.

The variable of school climate perception is measured using Maryland's Safe and Supportive Schools (MDS3) Climate survey that was developed by Bradshaw et al. (2014). The instrument of the scale is based on the US Department of Education's model for school climate which focuses on the interrelated concept of safety, engagement, and the environment. The MDS3 Climate Survey has been translated to Bahasa Indonesia and adapted into Indonesia setting, with the reliability test showing the Cronbach's alpha value of

0.882, indicating that the scale is comprehensive and efficient in measuring school climate perception among high school students in Indonesia (Kaplan & Saccuzzo, 2017; Wyandini et al., 2020). The MDS3 Climate Survey consists of 56 statements with response options strongly agree = 4, agree = 3, disagree = 2, and strongly disagree = 1 for favourable statements, and reverse scoring applied for unfavourable statements.

The variable of bullying behaviour intensity is measured using the Bullying and Cyberbullying Scale for Adolescents (BCS-A) perpetration dimension that was developed by Thomas et al. (2019). The items were developed based on the revised version of the Olweus Bully-Victim Questionnaire, the Peer Relations Questionnaire, and the Forms of Bullying Scale. The scale has also undergone a translation and adaptation process. The Indonesian version of the scale shows a composite reliability value above 0.70 that indicates the BCS-A scale is able to measure bullying behaviours among adolescents in Indonesia (Santhoso et al., 2023).

The perpetration dimension of the BCS-A scale consists of 13 statements, including the dimensions of verbal, physical, relational, and cyberbullying. The scale was measured using frequency options, which are several times a week = 4, about once a week = 3, every few weeks = 2, once or twice = 1, and I didn't do this = 0. The collected data was then examined using the IBM SPSS Statistics software with non-parametric statistic test Spearman's rho to understand the correlation between the school climate perception and the intensity of bullying behaviour.

RESEARCH RESULTS

The subject of this study is 243 students from grades 10 and 11 of one of the private schools in Kecamatan Medan Sunggal, Medan. The characteristics of the subjects are stated in Table 1.

Table 1. Characteritics of the Respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Grade	10	124	51%
	11	119	49%
Total		243	100%
Sex	Female	133	55%
	Male	110	45%
Total		243	100%

A descriptive analysis was conducted to examine the research results. Descriptive statistics are provided for both hypothetical and empirical values. Statistical indicators to describe the data are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Hypothetical Score				Empirical Score			
	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Mean	SD
School Climate Perception	56	224	140	28	119	210	168.1	16.174
Bullying Behaviour Intensity	0	52	26	8.67	0	21	2.99	3.633

The value of descriptive statistics is categorized to gain the pattern visibility of the subjects. Data are categorized into the groups of low, medium, and high for the variable of school climate perception and never, low,

medium, and high for the variable of bullying behaviour intensity. The categorization results are presented in Table 3 and Tabel 4.

Table 3. Categorization of School Climate Perception

Range	Category	N	Percentage
$x < 112$	Low	0	0%
$112 \leq x < 162$	Medium	92	37.86%
$x \geq 162$	High	151	62.14%

The descriptive statistics show that most respondents, totalling 151 respondents (62.14%) have a positive perception of school climate, while the remaining 92 respondents (37.86%) have a moderate perception of school climate. This

indicates that there are some aspects of the learning experiences and school life that still can be improved. Meanwhile, no respondents showed a low or negative perception of school climate.

Table 4. Categorization of Bullying Behaviour Intensity

Range	Category	N	Percentage
$x = 0$	Never	71	29.2%
$1 \leq x < 17$	Low	171	70.4%
$17 \leq x < 35$	Medium	1	0.4%
$x \geq 35$	High	0	0%

In terms of bullying behaviour intensity, there are 71 respondents (29.2%) claiming that they had never done bullying behaviour, 171 respondents (70.4%) showed a low bullying behaviour, and the highest frequency of bullying behaviour was showed by one respondent (0.4%) with a moderate level, where there are no respondents who shows a high intensity of bullying behaviour.

them to join in, on purpose. The data shows that even though students still engage in bullying behaviours, it is not behaviour that happens frequently or regularly in everyday school life.

From one respondent shows a moderate frequency of bullying behaviour; the most frequent bullying behaviour is in a verbal form, where the respondent says mean and hurtful things to someone, and in a cyberbullying form, where the respondent calls someone with mean or hurtful names and leaves someone out of a group or an activity, or did not allow

The Kolmogorov-Smirnov (2-tailed) normality test is conducted to examine the data distribution. The purpose of doing a normality test is to determine whether the variables or residuals in a regression model are normally distributed (Ghozali, 2018). The data distribution can be considered normal if the significance value is above 0.05 ($p > 0.05$) (Suyanto et al., 2018). The result of the normality test is presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Kolmogorov-Smirnov (2-tailed) Normality Test

Unstandardized Residual	Kolmogorov-Smirnov (2-tailed)	
	Statistics	Sig.
	0.32	0.200

From the normality test, the significance value obtained is 0.200 ($p > 0.05$), indicating that the data is normally distributed. Linearity test is conducted to determine whether there is a linear relationship between the independent variable and dependent variable, which is necessary for predicting a specific relationship (Widana & Muliani, 2020).

The basis for determining if certain data are linear is by considering the significance value. If the significance value of linearity is lower than 0.05 ($p < 0.05$) and the significance value of the deviation of linearity is higher than 0.05 ($p > 0.05$), the data can be considered as linear. The result of the linearity test is presented in Table 6.

Table 6. Linearity Test

Variable	F	Sig.	Description
Linearity	77.247	0.000	Linear
Deviation from Linearity	1.142	0.247	Linear

The linearity test result shows a value of linearity 77.247 with significance value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$) and deviation from linearity 1.142 with significance value of 0.247

($p > 0.05$). From the results, it can be said that the school climate perception and bullying behaviour intensity is linear.

A Correlation test then conducted to examine the relationship between the school climate perception and bullying behaviour intensity. The correlation test was conducted using a non-parametric method. The correlation test was conducted using Spearman's rho correlational test, an ordinal coefficient of correlation that used when the data are ranks (Rosalina et al., 2023). There is a correlation between independent and dependent variables if the result of correlation test shows a significant value below 0.05 ($p < 0.05$). The result of the correlation test is presented in Table 7.

Table 7. Correlation Test

Analysis	Correlation	Sig.
Spearman's rho	-0.508	0.000

The correlation test shows a significant value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$), indicating that there is a correlation between the independent variable and the dependent variable with a negative correlation value of -0.508. This result shows that the alternative hypothesis (H_a) is accepted, and the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected, where there is a negative correlation between the school climate perception and bullying behaviour intensity. A negative correlation means the higher value of independent variable the lower dependent variable and vice versa, the lower value of independent variable the higher value of dependent variable. This means that the higher school climate perception among the respondents indicates lower bullying behaviour intensity, and vice versa, the lower school climate perception indicates a higher bullying behaviour intensity among the respondents. The coefficient determination result is presented in Table 8 to determine how much school climate perception influences the bullying behaviour intensity.

Table 8. Coefficient of Determination

R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
0.236	0.233	3.182

The data from the table shows an R square value of 0.236, which indicates that the possibility of bullying behaviour among respondents to occur is 23.6% influenced by the perception of school climate, while the remaining 76.4% is influenced by other factors.

DISCUSSION

This research is to examine the intensity of bullying behaviour based on the perception of school climate among high school students. It was found that there is a significant moderate correlation between students' perception of the school climate and the intensity of bullying behaviour shown by students. This research's findings are consistent with former studies' findings, which show a significant correlation between the perception of school climate and bullying behaviour (Kurniawan & Astuti, 2021; S. W. Rahmawati, 2016). A low school climate perception may trigger a possibility for students to do bullying behaviour, resulting in a disturbance

in the learning process and having a negative impact towards its victims, such as physical injuries and psychological effects like low self-esteem, trauma, fear of going to school, isolation, and even mental health issues that may lead to suicide (Supriyatno et al., 2021).

The intensity of bullying behaviour may vary among studies as it is influenced by many other factors. Besides, bullying not only has a negative impact on its victims but also on its perpetrator since it might disrupt the overall learning experience, and it will also raise a negative perception towards its perpetrator because the perpetrator will be considered a bad influence on school life and society, which later will influence the interpersonal relationship pattern in the future (Rachmawati, 2024). Schools and stakeholders need to build a more positive and better school climate to create a safe and comfortable learning process for all students and maximize their learning outcomes (Wulan & Sanjaya, 2022).

Bullying usually occurs in environments where individuals have no choice or control over the group, they want to be part of (Mohan & Bakar, 2021). The school climate, including both physical and social environment, is one of many factors that can trigger bullying behaviour to occur among students. One of the factors in school climate is the attention given by the teachers to students (Aprianto et al., 2024). Teachers need to be role models that shows empathy, respect, and positive social interaction. Therefore, it will encourage students to grow a positive value within themselves. Open communication can contribute to building a positive school culture of mutual respect. Students can develop a sense of social responsibility that will result in a safer and more supportive learning environment, including reducing the risk of students showing bullying behaviour (Chu et al., 2024).

Another significant factor of school climate in correlation with students showing bullying behaviour is school facilities and cleanliness. Appropriate school facilities, such as a comfortable classroom, a safe playing field, or access to counselling facilities can help in creating a safe environment that supports students' well-being (Francis et al., 2022). If students feel safe and comfortable in the school environment, they can improve their focus on learning and build positive interpersonal relationships, therefore it will reduce the likelihood of bullying cases to occur (Damayanti et al., 2024).

Furthermore, school cleanliness is important to make a healthy and conducive learning process. If one school is dirty and poorly maintained, it can trigger a negative perception and behaviour, including bullying behaviour. A clean school does not just show discipline and care but also creates a sense of belonging and safe perception among students (Maba, 2022). A healthy and conducive learning environment can make students feel valued and protected when they are in a school area, including a sense of protection from any form of bullying (Ere et al., 2024).

The implementation of school rules and policies is also an important factor in preventing bullying behaviour and in keeping a safe and nurturing learning environment. With a

consistent, fair, and unbiased rule and policy implementation, students can understand the boundaries between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour, which is important for their self-regulation. A consistent set of rules can make students understand the consequences of their actions, which helps bullying from occurring (Marchante et al., 2022). With the involvement of all school management, stakeholders, including the community of teachers, staff, and parents, and support from all parties, a school can foster a strong social awareness, discipline, and mutual respect to reduce the risk of bullying (Donoghue et al., 2023).

CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that the school climate perception has a negative correlation towards a tendency of students to engage in bullying behaviour, where the lower the school climate perception of students, the more it will increase the bullying behaviour. Although the bullying behaviour shown by the respondents in this study is not considered high, bullying behaviours still need to be a particular concern to create an optimal learning process. In creating an optimal learning process, the school climate is one of the factors that need to be taken into consideration.

To improve the school climate, schools can develop various activities that make students feel comfortable and enhance their perception of the school climate, such as improving cleanliness in the school environment, upgrading school facilities, providing the latest learning materials, and offering training for teachers to enhance their interaction with students and improve the learning process. New policies can also be designed to reduce bullying cases in schools, aiming to achieve zero bullying cases. This study only focuses on school climate perception, and future studies can explore other factors that can trigger bullying behaviour. These factors may include students' well-being, sex and gender identity, academic achievement, social and economic class, and family factors.

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