

The Role of Guidance and Counseling Teachers in Overcoming Bullying in Lalong Kindergarten

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ARTICLE INFO

Keywords: Guidance and Counseling, Bullying, Education

Received : 5 January

Revised : 23 February

Accepted: 23 March

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to describe the role of guidance and counseling teachers in addressing bullying at Lalong Kindergarten, North Tinangkung District. The type of research used is descriptive qualitative research. Data collection techniques were carried out through interviews, observation and documentation. The subjects of the study were grade B teachers as guidance and counseling teachers, perpetrators of bullying and victims of bullying. The results of the study indicate that teachers have carried out their duties as counselors, guides/facilitators, motivators, prevention agents, mediators, as well as collaborators and coordinators. Teachers provide guidance and counseling services by involving the school and parents. Teachers do not discriminate against perpetrators of bullying and victims of bullying are also protected and their security and confidentiality are maintained. Thus, guidance and counseling teachers play a very important role in efforts to handle bullying cases

INTRODUCTION

Education is an institutional activity (such as a school or madrasah) that serves to enhance a person's development in understanding knowledge, habits, behavior, and so on, both formally and informally. Even self-teaching is also part of education (Safari, 2020). Early childhood education can help shape a child's character, intelligence, and social skills, preparing them for the next level. A child's character, skills, religious beliefs, morals, and interests will demonstrate their potential (Wati, 2025). Education is expected to shape children's personalities better. However, recently, there has been a surge in criminal cases in the educational sector. One case that requires special attention is bullying.

Bullying can occur because the perpetrator perceives it as a tradition, an opportunity for revenge, an outlet for anger, envy, and a demonstration of power over others (Zahra & Pramono, 2024). On the other hand, it states that bullying is aggressive behavior that is deliberately carried out repeatedly to hurt someone, either physically, emotionally or socially (Agung, 2024).

According to the 2018 National Survey of Life Experiences of Children and Adolescents (SNPHAR) by the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (KPPPA), 3 out of 4 children and adolescents who had experienced one or more types of violence reported that the perpetrators were friends or peers (UNICEF, 2020). This indicates that the perpetrators are none other than those closest to them. According to the 2018 PISA (Program for International Student Assessment) study, 41% of 15-year-old students had experienced bullying at least several times a month. Types of bullying include being hit by peers and being used as errand boys by other students, having personal belongings taken or destroyed, being threatened, being teased by other students, being ostracized in social situations, and even spreading slander or harmful rumors (UNICEF, 2020).

With the frequent occurrence of bullying cases in schools, there is concern that children will emulate these practices. Young children are naturally excellent imitators, making it crucial to monitor them to prevent them from adopting inappropriate behavior. Therefore, it is crucial for young children to receive guidance and counseling to prevent unwanted incidents. Guidance and counseling is an interactive and integrated process between a counselor and an individual or group aimed at helping an individual or group achieve their potential in personal, social, educational, and career areas (Vienlentina, 2024).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Guidance and counseling is a crucial way to educate children about their growth and development, preparing them to become better individuals in the future (Haryani, 2024). Research shows that guidance and counseling teachers play a crucial role in providing counseling services between victims and perpetrators of bullying by mediating between individuals, thereby increasing the self-confidence of students who are victims of bullying (Mahyani & Hasibuan, 2024a). Other research shows that guidance and counseling teachers play a role in preventing and addressing verbal bullying in schools by providing comprehensive counseling to all students. (Astuti, 2023a)

Based on observations at Lalong State Kindergarten, North Tinangkung District, Banggai Regency, several children exhibited bullying behavior, particularly verbal bullying, which frequently involved teasing and teasing, especially when the victim made a mistake, leading to tears. This, of course, impacts the child's psychological state, leading the victim to be reluctant to attend school. To address this and prevent it from becoming a habit, guidance and counseling are necessary. Therefore, the researcher is interested in taking the title "The Role of Guidance and Counseling Teachers in Addressing Bullying in Schools."

METHODOLOGY

The type of research used in this study is a qualitative descriptive research. The data sources used are primary data, namely teachers and early childhood at Lalong State Kindergarten, North Tinangkung District, as well as secondary data, namely documents related to the school. The subjects of this study were class B teachers and class B students who were directly involved in bullying behavior, victims of bullying and bystanders of bullying. The selection of targets in this study depends on the researcher by looking at the targets to be selected/purposive. Data collection techniques used were observation, interviews and documentation. And data analysis techniques used were by means of data reduction, data presentation, conclusions and data verification. This research was conducted at Lalong State Kindergarten, North Tinangkung District, Banggai Islands Regency and was carried out for approximately one month from January 23, 2026 to February 25, 2026.

RESULTS

The bullying behavior that occurred at Lalolng State Kindergarten, North Tinangkung District, Banggai Islands Regency was verbal bullying. Verbal bullying is a form of bullying that involves verbal abuse, even spreading slander, and is done consciously (Pradana et al., 2025). Research found that some children teased and insulted their peers for trivial reasons, such as being late in completing assignments, even shouting insults, causing other children to join in the teasing, and the victims of the teasing often ended up crying at school. While seemingly trivial, this indirectly fosters bullying behavior, which, if not addressed, can escalate to more severe levels.

Researchers concluded that children who were victims frequently missed school, appeared depressed, and even experienced reduced interest and self-confidence. They also appeared to have less social interaction with others. These are serious consequences that require attention to prevent more serious consequences, such as depression and excessive anxiety. This is not impossible, as there have been cases where children experiencing excessive depression have acted irrationally.

"I often receive reports from children when someone is crying. After I inquire, it turns out there are children making fun of the victim. At first, I thought it was a normal and normal thing for children. But I was wrong. The children

actually escalated the situation. In fact, it wasn't just one victim; several students were often made to cry." (w/principal/22/01/26/wk/10.15).

The principal's statement further strengthens the suspicion that bullying behavior begins with simple actions, which, if left unchecked, can escalate into more serious habits. Today, it might be verbal bullying, but in the future, it could escalate into physical bullying. Furthermore, it could escalate into cyberbullying, which is certainly undesirable.

"At our school, there are three students who frequently engage in bullying behavior: two boys with the initials FK and RT, and one girl with the initials ZZ. All three enjoy teasing and laughing at their friends when they do something wrong. This often provokes other students to join in the laughter. As a result, the victims become insecure, afraid, embarrassed, and even cry" (w/gbk/22/01/26/wk/09.15).

Based on research findings through interviews, observations, and documentation, it can be concluded that the guidance and counseling teacher at Lalong Kindergarten has made maximum efforts to address bullying behavior, including counseling students who engage in bullying. The guidance and counseling teacher, who is also the class B teacher, has attempted to foster empathy and encourage bullies to share their peers' feelings. He has also directed bullies' strengths in a positive direction, maintained their self-esteem, been patient with bullies, not cornered, and treated bullying with compassion.

The researcher concluded that classroom teachers can play a crucial role in addressing bullying behavior. Teachers can provide guidance and counseling to students experiencing problems. Teachers have also fulfilled their duties as moderators, facilitators, guides, and advisors. The results of the interventions indicate that positive changes have been seen in both victims who have not fully recovered and perpetrators who have begun to change their behavior to avoid repeating their mistakes.

"In dealing with bullying, the first thing I do is conduct an initial assessment and observation. Then I consult with the student's parents. I then provide counseling to the perpetrator to determine the cause, provide guidance, and of course, involve the parents. And for the victim, I continue to provide support to restore their self-confidence, communicate with their parents, and ensure they are safe." (w/Gbk/28/01/26/wk/11.15)

Teachers employ strategies that provide guidance and counseling to both perpetrators and victims of bullying. They also frequently remind all Class B students about the consequences of bullying and the importance of mutual respect. Teachers are also encouraged to always supervise students during recess and pick-up to avoid unwanted situations. However, the class teachers also conveyed several challenges, including limited time, which necessitates continued improvement in their guidance and counseling skills.

"To prevent bullying from recurring, we will hold a classroom service on anti-bullying and develop an anti-bullying policy with the principal. However, this will of course require collaboration with teachers and parents. (w/principal/3/2/26/wk/10.30)

DISCUSSION

There are several forms of bullying. First, physical bullying. Physical bullying encompasses all forms of violence involving physical contact, such as hitting, kicking, pushing, and pinching. This type of bullying often involves damaging the victim's belongings. Second, verbal bullying, often overlooked, involves teasing, insults, and harsh comments intended to embarrass and hurt others. Third, social bullying. This type of bullying is more subtle and often occurs behind closed doors, but it significantly impacts the victim's social life, such as excluding someone from their group, spreading slander, and making them feel unwelcome or unwanted. This can lead to students feeling lonely and lacking self-confidence. Fourth, cyberbullying involves bullying conducted through social media, such as threatening to share embarrassing photos or videos or creating fake accounts intended to ridicule someone. As a result, victims feel threatened and unsafe even at home and away from school. (Agung, 2024).

The Steps Taken by the Guidance and Counseling Teacher to Address Bullying at Lalong Kindergarten are as Follows

Identification and Early Detection

First, the teacher receives a report from a student, then conducts direct observation using data collection tools and identifies the type of bullying occurring. This requires understanding the root cause before taking action. Initially, the teacher received a report from another child that a child was crying because they were being teased by a friend. The teacher responded casually, believing it was normal. However, a few days later, the same complaint recurred, filed by the FK, RT, and ZZ in turn. This had occurred repeatedly, so the teacher felt it could no longer be ignored.

Protecting and Ensuring the Safety of the Victim

The teacher is obligated to safeguard and protect the victim's safety, and to provide a sense of security and emotional support. The teacher ensures the security and confidentiality of the victim's data during the identification and observation process. Here, the teacher acts professionally for the common good.

Conducting One-On-One Counseling with Victims of Bullying

Teachers conduct counseling with victims of bullying using an individual approach. The first step is to listen to the victim's complaints without blaming, then continue by providing encouragement and empathy to rebuild the child's self-confidence. In this stage, the teacher approaches the victim in a relaxed manner, inviting the child to communicate while playing games. Initially, the victim may find it difficult to interact, which presents a barrier to the counseling process. However, with various efforts, the teacher is finally able to get the victim to interact.

Conducting One-On-One Counseling with the Bully

First, the teacher communicates to explore the reasons why the bully enjoys bullying his peers. The findings suggest that this is largely due to a lack of attention from parents and the external environment. The teacher also demonstrates empathy and demonstrates ways to manage emotions effectively, educates, and fosters consequences in accordance with school rules.

Overall, this holistic approach not only helps students deal with bullying but also empowers them to develop skills useful in everyday life. With the right support, children's self-confidence will be restored and their emotional well-being can improve (Mahyani & Hasibuan, 2024).

Involving Parents

In handling bullying cases, teachers also involve parents by holding meetings, providing education about the impacts of bullying, and developing monitoring strategies together. The challenge faced by teachers was the difficulty of meeting with ZZ's parents because they work in the city, necessitating special appointments. ZZ's parents are only accompanied by his aunt during school.

Classroom Services and Preventative Measures are Provided

The teachers then mediate with the victims and perpetrators, but due to time constraints and parents' busy schedules, this has been delayed. The teachers, along with the principal, are developing an anti-bullying program strategy, which is currently only delivered within the school environment. The principal and teachers plan to expand and collaborate at a higher school level in the future.

Conducting Regular Evaluations

Currently, the principal and teachers plan to evaluate the anti-bullying program strategy. If successful, the program will be continued. If unsuccessful, it will be updated and errors will be identified. Fadil Khaidir (2023) explains that Guidance and Counseling (BK) teachers have a strategic role in providing individual and class guidance services, particularly in educating students about the impacts of bullying. Implementation of this role includes intensive coordination with parents and educators for integrated supervision, as well as strengthening character education through religious activities and other positive collective activities (Astuti, 2023).

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results of research conducted at Lalong Kindergarten in North Tinangkung District, regarding the role of guidance and counseling teachers in addressing bullying in schools, the following conclusions were drawn:

- a. Teachers have maximally fulfilled their roles as counselors, facilitators, preventative agents, collaborators/coordinators, motivators, and mediators, despite constraints such as time and parental availability.
- b. Guidance and counseling services are highly appropriate for addressing children's problems, allowing teachers to build closer relationships with both victims and perpetrators of bullying. Through these services, it is hoped that both victims and perpetrators will maintain their safety and confidentiality, and will also receive support and motivation to improve.

FURTHER STUDY

- a. Teachers are expected to always be ready to face various challenges and be ready to be teachers who can provide services and counseling to students who are having problems.
- b. Schools can provide facilities to support anti-bullying programs.

- c. Parents are expected to always pay attention to their children so that they do not feel deprived of affection and to be good listeners when their children have complaints.
- d. For future researchers, it is hoped that this study can serve as a reference for developing further, better research and can improve the shortcomings of this study.

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