# FACTORS RELATED TO BULLYING IN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN PADANG CITY

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# ABSTRAK Abstract:

Bullying can occur at all educational levels and in social settings, with 75.9% of adolescents having experienced it. This study aims to identify factors related to bullying behavior among students at SMPN 24 and SMP Muhammadiyah 5 in Padang City in 2025. Using a quantitative cross-sectional design, 266 students were sampled from a population of 790 through proportionate random sampling. Data were collected via questionnaires and analyzed using the chi-square test from October 2024 to April 2025. Results showed that 54.1% of students had a high level of bullying behavior. Contributing factors included negative attitudes (p=0.000), poor school environment (p=0.000), low peer support (p=0.020), and strong influence of social media (p=0.000). As bullying levels are high, it is recommended that schools implement monthly education programs addressing the causes, impacts, and prevention of bullying to raise awareness among students and teachers and discourage the normalization of such behavior.

#### Abstrak:

Perilaku bullying dapat dilakukan dan dialmi oleh semua kalangan baik di tingkat SD, SMP, SMA maupun di lingkungan sosial. Sebagian besar (75,9%) remaja pernah mendapatkan perilaku bullying. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui faktor-faktor yang berhubungan dengan perilaku bullying pada siswa/i SMPN 24 dan SMP Muhammadiyah 5 Kota Padang tahun 2025. Metode pada penelitian ini menggunakan Penelitian kuantitatif dengan desain cross-sectional terdiri dari 266 sampel dari 790 populasi. Teknik pengambilan sampel yaitu proportionate random sampling menggunakan kuisioner dan dianlisis uji chi-square. Penelitian dilakukan pada bulan Oktober 2024 hingga April 2025. Hasil analisis univariat diketahui lebih dari separuh (54,1%) siswa memiliki perilaku bullying kategori tinggi. Faktor yang berhubungan dengan perilaku bullying pada siswa/i SMPN 24 dan SMP Muhammadiyah 5 Kota Padang adalah sikap negatif (p=0,000), lingkungan sekolah kurang baik (p=0,000), peran teman sebaya yang kurang berperan (p=0,020), pengaruh media sosial tinggi (p=0,000). Perilaku bullying di SMPN 24 dan SMP Muhammadiyah 5 memiliki katogori tinggi. Disarankan kepada pihak sekolah memberikan edukasi dan informasi mengenai perilaku bullying setiap bulan secara berkala, dimulai dari dampak, penyebab dan cara mencegah atau menangani perilaku bullying. Tujuannya agar masyarakat sekolah termasuk guru paham mengenai konteks bullying dan tidak menganggap perilaku bullying ini hal biasa.



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## INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a transitional phase from childhood to adulthood that involves changes in various aspects such as biological, psychological, and cultural. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines adolescence as development from the appearance of secondary sexual characteristics to the attainment of sexual and reproductive maturity, the process of achieving mental maturity and adult identity, and the transition from socio-economic dependence to independence[1]. The age range of adolescence varies depending on culture and its intended use. Adolescence is a transitional phase marked by physical, psychic, and psychosocial changes, often accompanied by emotional outbursts that are difficult to control, making adolescents highly vulnerable to violence, depression, defiance, and other aggressive behaviors. One of them is bullying[2].

Bullying is a repetitive act involving physical, psychological, social, or verbal attacks, in which the perpetrator is in a relatively stronger position situationally for their interest or satisfaction. Bullying is an form of aggressive behavior characterized by harsh attitudes[3]. Let's Help Children Avoid Bullying is a publication by the Ministry of Education and Culture that categorizes bullying into four types: physical, verbal, social, and cyber. In line with this publication, the Indonesian Ministry of Health (Kemenkes RI) also categorizes bullying into four types[4]. 2023, UNESCO (United In Educational, Scientific **Nations** Cultural Organization) stated that over 30% of students worldwide are victims of bullying, which has serious short- and longterm impacts, such as decreased academic performance, increased dropout rates, and worsened physical and mental health[5]. Over the past three years, the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI) recorded about 119 bullying cases among adolescents in 2021. In 2022, this number rose to 226 cases. Throughout 2023, KPAI

reported approximately 329 bullying cases in educational institutions in Indonesia[6].

The impact of bullying is not only felt by the victims but also has adverse effects on the perpetrators. Perpetrators often exhibit low levels of empathy in social interactions, abnormal behaviors, hyperactivity, and anti-social tendencies. They are also more vulnerable to emotional and mental health issues, often more so than the victims[7].

According to Lawrence Green's 1980 theory, an individual's health behavior is influenced by predisposing, enabling, and reinforcing factors. Predisposing factors knowledge, include attitude, religiosity; enabling factors consist of infrastructure and school climate; and reinforcing factors include the roles of peers, and social parents, media. Knowledge is suspected to be one factor influencing bullying behavior. Broadly, the knowledge is understanding information about something acquired through experience or study[8]. Study in Palembang found a significant correlation adolescent knowledge between bullying behavior[9].

Attitude is another factor that may trigger bullying behavior. Attitude is an individual's readiness to act. A positive attitude encourages positive behavior[10] [11]. School climate is another contributing factor. Many factors contribute to bullying behavior, including socio-cultural, school environment, and peer groups. More negative school climate corresponds with higher bullying rates, and vice versa[12]. Peers affect the lives of adolescents. Peer influence significantly contributes bullying behavior. Peer groups facing challenges at school can have a negative impact. Ideally, school peers should be "partners" in achieving educational goals, but in practice, many students engage in bullying due to peer pressure. There is a significant relationship between pressure and the incidence of bullying in adolescents [13] [14].

Social media also influences bullying behavior. With the rapid pace globalization, many aspects of life, economy, politics, socio-cultural, and science have advanced significantly. Technology has altered lifestyle patterns to be faster and more practical. While the internet offers easy access to information, much of it is unfiltered and hard to control. Social media, in particular, can have both and negative impacts, bullying being one of the negative consequences[15].

From 2019 to 2023, the Integrated Center for Women and Children Protection Services of Padang City recorded 260 cases of child abuse. Between 2020 and 2023, they recorded 12 reported bullying cases based on reports from parents and schools. In 2023, the age group most affected was 15-year-old middle school students with the most cases in Lubuk Begalung District (5 cases)[16].

SMPN 24 Kota Padang, located on Jl. By Pass Lubuk Begalung Nan XX, it is the public junior high school with the most students in Lubuk Begalung District. Accredited with an "A" rating, the school has received many national and local awards and is the first school in Padang to receive a national Adiwiyata (eco-school) award. The school has 776 students. According to an interview with a guidance counselor at SMPN 24, many students have committed bullying, primarily physical and verbal, with records showing two physical and 20 verbal bullying cases in the past year. SMP Muhammadiyah 5 Kota Padang, located in Cengkeh Nan XX, is the largest private junior high school in Lubuk Begalung. Also accredited "A", it is a top private school in Padang and West Sumatra. A preliminary observation and interview with a guidance counselor at SMP Muhammadiyah 5 revealed that, in 2024, there were six verbal bullying cases in Grade VII and 1 in Grade VIII. The research aims to determine factors related

to bullying behavior among junior high school students.

The selection of two schools, SMPN 24 Padang City and SMP Muhammadiyah 5 Padang City, as the research locations, differentiates this study from previous research. By having representatives from public and private schools respondents, the information obtained will better reflect the general conditions of junior high school students. Furthermore, no research has combined knowledge, attitudes, school environment, influence, and social media variables in a single analysis, providing new insights that could enrich research on bullying.

# **RESEARCH METHOD**

This research used a quantitative analytical study with a cross-sectional approach. The dependent variable in this research is bullying behavior, while the independent variables are knowledge, attitudes, school environment, the role of peers, and social media. The population in this study was students of classes VII, VIII, IX at SMPN 24 and SMP Muhammadiyah 5, Padang City, totaling 790 people. The number of participants in this study was 266. The sample size in this study was calculated using the Slovin formula. The calculation results obtained a minimum sample size of 194 students for SMPN 24 and 72 students for SMP Muhammadiyah 5 Kota Padang. The sampling technique used proportional random sampling. Researchers determined each respondent using a lottery method per class, by entering the student's absence number and randomly selecting them using a random name picker application available online. Selected respondents must then meet the inclusion criteria, namely being present at the location during the study and willing to be respondents. For exclusion criteria, if the respondent did not complete the questionnaire completely. Bivariate statistics data analysis using the Chi-Square test.

#### **RESULT**

Study found that more than half (54.1%) of the students exhibited a high level of bullying behavior, nearly half (42.1%) had low knowledge, nearly half (44.7%) had a negative attitude toward bullying behavior, nearly half (46.6%) experienced a poor school environment, nearly half (42.5%) had peer influence that played a minimal role, and more than half (53.4%) were highly influenced by social media (Table1).

Table 1.
Descriptive Statistics for Variable

Variable	f (%)	
Bullying Behavior	•	
High	144(54.1)	
Low	122(45.9)	
Knowledge		
Low	112(42.1)	
High	154(57.9)	
Attitude	, , , ,	
Negative	119(44.7)	
Postive	147(55.3)	
School Environment		
Poor	124(46.6)	
Good	142(53.4)	
Peer Role		
Less Involved	113(42.5)	
Involved	153(57.5)	
Social Media	, , , ,	
High	142(53.4)	
Low	124(46.6)	

The results of bivariate analysis showed that there was no relationship between knowledge and bullying behavior (p-value = 0.303). There was a significant relationship between attitude and bullying behavior (p-value = 0.000, POR = 11.220). There was a significant relationship between school environment and bullying behavior (p-value = 0.000, POR = 2.519). There was a significant relationship between peer influence and bullying behavior (p-value = 0.020, POR = 1.853). Additionally, there was a significant relationship between social media influence and bullying behavior (p-value = 0.000, POR = 5.747) (Table 2).

Table 2.
Bivariate Analysis

Variable	<b>Bullying Behavior</b>		p Value
	High f (%)	Low f (%)	-
Knowledge			
Low	56(50.0)	56(50.0)	0.303
High	88(57.1)	66(42.9)	
Attitude			
Negative	99(83.2)	20(16.8)	0.000
Postive	45(30.6)	102(69.4)	
School			
Environment			
Poor	82(66.1)	42(33.9)	0.000
Good	62(43.7)	80(56.3)	
Peer Role		, ,	
Less Involved	71(62.8)	42(37.2)	0.020
Involved	73(47.7)	80(52.3)	
Social Media	` /	` /	
High	104(73.2)	38(26.8)	0.000
Low	40(32.3)	84(67.7)	

#### **DISCUSSION**

This study conducted on 266 respondents found that 54.1% of students exhibited high bullying behavior. This indicates that more than half of the students have a high tendency to engage in bullying, which can have profound impacts on and mental health the learning environment. This finding is in line with a survey conducted by UNESCO (United Educational, Scientific Nations Cultural Organization) in 2019, which reported that bullying occurs among children worldwide, with the lowest rate in Tajikistan (7%) and the highest in Samoa (74%). Globally, on average, more than 30 percent of students aged 13 to 15 experience bullying regularly. Furthermore, one in five students (19%) faces bullying almost every day or every other day at school[17]. In 2023, UNESCO also reported that more than 30% of students worldwide are victims of bullying[5].

Field observations support the high rate of bullying behavior among students in this study. It is attributed to the lack of reinforcement from schools in understanding the context of bullying, insufficient supervision by the school, especially guidance and counseling (BK) teachers toward bullying victims, and the victims' reluctance to report incidents due to fear of the perpetrators. Furthermore, technological advancement and the high use of social media among teenagers, including the respondents, are likely contributing factors to the increase in bullying and cyberbullying cases.

Bullying has become increasingly and serious prevalent concern. particularly in educational settings, where schools often serve as the stage for such actions. Bullying can lead to feelings of insecurity, depression, social isolation, and severe psychological distress. This issue represents a form of psychosocial disorder marked by repeated actions of belittling and humiliation, where the perpetrator possesses more power or influence than the victim. With technological advancements, bullying is no longer limited to direct interactions but has expanded into social media[7]. A study conducted in Chile on students from grades 7 to 9revealed that individuals who experience bullying are more likely to report symptoms of depression, such as persistent sadness and hopelessness, which tend to worsen as the frequency of bullying increases. This victim role is also associated with a rise in suicidal thoughts and plans[18].

Knowledge results from a person's understanding of an object through the senses, acquired through learning activities or information-seeking efforts, whether via formal education or personal experiences. Knowledge encompasses everything an individual can understand and recall after seeing, observing, experiencing, or being taught from birth to adulthood. This knowledge is expected to be a foundation evaluating specific matters objects[10]. In this study, the respondents generally already possessed a high level of knowledge; however, it did not fully function as a means of self-prevention against engaging in bullying behavior. There, 57.1% of students with high

knowledge still engaged in bullying behavior, and no significant relationship found between knowledge bullying behavior. If a teenager's beliefs are shaped in a hostile environment, this can affect the development of their identity and may lead them to commit acts of violence against peers, with consequences that can be felt both now and in the future. On the other hand, if a teenager possesses sufficient and appropriate knowledge, they are more likely to think positively and realize that violence is wrong inappropriate behavior, especially as a form bullying[18]. Comprehensive intensive education about aggressive behavior is necessary inside and outside school. Schools can implement monthly programs that include interactive discussions, case studies, and bullying simulations so that students can better understand the meaning and impact of such behavior. Involving teachers, counselors, and parents is also essential in providing consistent understanding and preventing misconceptions about bullying.

Regarding respondents' attitudes, bullying behavior was more prevalent among students with negative attitudes (83.2%). It was found that there is a relationship between attitude and bullying behavior. There is a relationship between attitudes and bullying behavior because individuals with negative attitudes tend to justify actions that hurt others, both directly and through social media, and have less awareness of the psychological impacts caused to victims. This indicates that attitudes reflect a person's perspective on an action and become the basis that influences behavioral decisions in social interactions. Negative attitudes in this study were caused by (46.3%) respondents feeling that they disagree with touching a friend's sensitive body part being an act of bullying, and (42.1%) respondents also felt that after hurting someone they do not like, they get a certain satisfaction. Societal values and norms shape a person's attitude and evolve along with emotional responses

to stimuli received. Children begin to learn during aggressive behaviors the developmental stage. However, such behaviors are often accepted without a comprehensive understanding of whether they are right or wrong, which can lead children to grow into adults with a tendency toward violence[19]. These issues need to be addressed, particularly regarding students' attitudes. The school should not rely solely on guidance counselors (BK teachers) to provide information about bullying. It is advisable to supplement this with posters highlighting the impacts of bullying and instructions on reporting if students feel threatened or disturbed, as well as pamphlets and leaflets. These materials should be posted on the school's bulletin boards, in individual classrooms, and accompanied by other educational media that all students can fully understand.

Our study found a relationship between school environment and bullying. Students with high levels of bullying behavior were more prevalent among those who perceived the school environment as poor (66.1%) compared to those who perceived it as good (43.7%). The adverse impact of the negative perception of school climate on delinquency through moral disengagement was more substantial in adolescents with lower levels of effortful control. This indicated that the school environment reflects individual values, behaviors, and group norms. From a motivational theory perspective, students' perceptions of the school environment are crucial as they influence attitudes and selfperception, affecting their academic achievement. A positive view of a supportive school environment can help adolescents avoid increased negative emotions and behavioral problems. [20]. A more positive trajectory in students' perceptions of teacher-student relationships, student-student relationships, school safety, and liking of school between fourth and fifth grade was associated with a more positive trajectory in victimization

behaviors, and a more positive trajectory in students' perceptions of fairness of rules in the same period was associated with a more positive trajectory in bullying behaviors. [21].

One of the impacts of bullying in schools is the disruption of the school environment, which in turn contributes to the emergence of bullying behavior. with unsupportive Schools an discriminatory environment are at a higher risk for increased bullying cases. This aligns with a study, who stated that a disharmonious or discriminatory school environment is one of the triggering factors for bullying. An unsupportive school environment can lead students to feel pressured, uncomfortable, and vulnerable to emotional problems[20]. To create an anti-bullying environment, there is a need to cultivate awareness in various areas within the school environment, such as hallways, the school canteen, reading rooms, and in front of classrooms. This awareness can take the form of group counseling sessions conducted by guidance and counseling (BK) teachers, scheduled monthly regularly. These sessions aim to discuss bullying behavior experienced or perceived by students, including perspectives of victims, witnesses, and perpetrators.

The role of peers shows a relationship between peer influence and bullying behavior. Students with less supportive peer roles (62.8%) are twice as likely to exhibit high levels of bullying behavior compared to those with more supportive peer roles (47.7%). This study found that peers play a significant role in causing bullying. This is because peers play a crucial role as social monitors, social norms, and sources of emotional support in the school environment. When peers are indifferent, reluctant to reprimand, or even allow bullying to occur, the perpetrator feels their actions are accepted and will not face social consequences. Furthermore, a lack of courage or skills among peers to report or assist victims leaves victims feeling alone and unprotected. This situation makes respondents seem to normalize bullying.

Role of peer groups is one of the key factors in an individual's development. When the role of the peer group is low, bullying behavior tends to be low as well. Conversely, bullying behavior may also increase when the peer group plays a strong role. The expected peer influence brings positive contributions to the individual. However, in reality, peer groups often lead children toward negative behavior. It is, therefore, not surprising that children engage in negative actions, including bullying, when they are with their peer group[14]. There is a relationship between peer influence and bullying behavior among students. Research by Laras Putri indicates that peers play a significant role in influencing teenagers to engage in bullying. This is because adolescents are in a stage of identity formation where they seek approval from their surroundings[22]. Peers who frequently engage in violent behavior toward others can influence a child's development. Children tend to imitate such behaviors and act similarly to their peers. Moreover, children from various social backgrounds, both lower and upper classes, are also involved in bullying behaviors to gain recognition acceptance within their social circles. During interactions at school or with friends around their neighborhoods, children are sometimes driven to engage in bullying to prove they are worthy of being accepted into certain groups.

Peer roles can be strengthened within the school environment to minimize the high incidence of bullying. This can be achieved by developing mentoring programs or discussion groups that involve students as agents of change or antiambassadors. Another effort bullving includes revitalizing the Youth Information and Counseling Center (PIK-R) with antibullying programs and collaborating with local health centers to support PIK-R

development. PIK-R can serve as a bridge for agents of change who provide information on healthy friendships for students.

Looking at the influence of social media on respondents, the study found that students with a high influence of social media had a higher prevalence of bullying behavior (73.2%). Excessive use of social media can lead to addiction, which in turn may contribute to depression in students. This depression may then manifest as aggressive behavior in children[15]. Adolescence is a phase where individuals undergo social changes, including a stronger tendency to connect and socialize with peers. Since teenagers spend much of their time with friends, depression triggered by social media is often expressed through aggressive behaviors toward them[2].

The high influence of social media in this study was attributed to the fact that still enjoy uploading some students negative videos of their friends without permission by imitating toxic friendship behaviors seen on social media (36.1%). Furthermore, some parents do reprimand their children for excessive smartphone use to access social media accounts (22.2%). Social media can display various types of content that may trigger bullying behavior, such as violent videos or other aggressive acts. Teenagers with access to social media may intentionally or unintentionally encounter such content. This exposure to violence through social media can lead to aggressive behavior in real life. However, an effort can be made to activate the school's social media accounts to share helpful information, such as weekly quizzes on bullying via Instagram, Facebook, or other popular platforms Students who regularly among teens. participate in these quizzes should be rewarded. In addition, parents should supervise their children's smartphone usage and establish a schedule for social media use to help children balance their academic responsibilities and online activities

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the results of research on factors related to bullying behavior among **SMPN** and students at 24 Muhammadiyah 5 in Padang City, several conclusions were obtained: more than half (54.1%) of the students at SMPN 24 and SMP Muhammadiyah 5 exhibited a high level of bullying behavior; nearly half (42.1%) had low levels of knowledge; nearly half (44.7%) had negative attitudes towards bullying behavior; nearly half (46.6%) experienced a poor school climate; and nearly half (42.5%) were influenced by peers who played a less supportive role.

Considering these research findings, it is recommended that the school provides monthly and regular education information about bullying behavior. starting with the impacts, causes, and ways to prevent or handle bullying. The aim is to ensure that all school community members, including teachers, understand the context of bullying and do not view it as a standard or acceptable behavior.

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