Relationship between Bullying and Social Anxiety and Withdrawal among Adolescents

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Abstract: Studies looking at the relationship between bullying and social anxiety have been mainly conducted in developed countries, and little is known about relationships and social withdrawal. The purpose of this study was to analyze the relationship between bullying, social anxiety, and social withdrawal among adolescents. This study used a quantitative method with a cross-sectional study design. Data were obtained from simple random sampling of 157 adolescents. All participants completed measures of bullying, social anxiety and social withdrawal. Data were analyzed using the Spearman rho correlation test with a level of significance <0.05. Results from this research found a strong relationship between bullying and social anxiety in adolescents ($r = 0.628$). The same result was identified between bullying and social withdrawal among adolescents ($r = 0.538$). It can be concluded that bullying has a negative impact on the social lives of the participants. The government and public should be aware of this issue and create a campaign to minimize the negative impact of bullying in today's society.

1 BACKGROUND

Violent acts often occur in the school environment and can be experienced by students, teachers, and other members of school staff (Alia, 2009). One example of these acts of violence is bullying. The psychological impact experienced by victims are an unwillingness to meet with the perpetrators who have carried out the bullying, an unwillingness to follow learning activities together, feelings of fear and anger, and a wish to avenge the experience. Teens who experience bullying tend to be anxious or uneasy because of the offender who has bullied them. The anxiety they experience makes it uncomfortable to participate in the classroom, outside the classroom, or outside the school environment. Bullied teens want to spend more time in the classroom and their desire to follow activities outside the classroom decreases, along with their confidence (Novalia, 2016). Bullying leads to loss of security and comfort, making victims fearful, depressed, threatened, unwilling to communicate or socialize within the environment, reluctant to go to school, achieve lower academic grades, anxious socially, lonely, experience low self-esteem, suffer physical health complaints, run away from home, use alcohol and drugs, and even commit suicide. However, previous studies have not yet addressed social anxiety and social withdrawal in depth.

The occurrences of bullying in the United States are reported to affect 2,027,254 adolescents "moderately", and 1,681,030 teenagers "frequently". Bullying behavior in school-age adolescents in the United States is classified as the highest ranking as number one from the top ten health problems that often occur in adolescents (Dewi, 2014). Data from the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI) mentioned that, from 2012 to 2015, of 2,000 children across Indonesia, as many as 87% experienced cases of violence, including bullying (Setyawan, 2015). Preliminary study data conducted by researchers using written and oral interviews on April 15, 2017, found that 80% of 10 students in grades VII and VIII often experienced bullying. Teenagers are often verbally bullying through calling their parents nicknames, abusive calls and being called names that make them feel hurt and angry. Victims of bullying also feel the physical actions of people such as being hit, or having their head pushed forward. They experience feelings of fear and become afraid of the social environment. As many as 70% of victims

prefer not to leave the classroom or withdraw from their friends.

According to Eriksen and Einarsen (2004), in their psychosocial development, adolescents must solve crises that occur during adolescence. During adolescence, this is called a crisis between identity and identity vagueness. If an adolescent fails to cope with a crisis, they will become unsure of themselves, and become separated from social relationships, or may develop exaggerated behavior regarding their own self-importance, thus becoming extreme. The impact of bullying can be psychological, social, and physical. The social impact that arises in victims of bullying cause a lack of confidence a reluctance to socialize with friends. Victims often withdraw from the social environment because of bullying (Sejiwa, 2008). Research conducted by Novalia (2016) states that victims of bullying tend to isolate themselves from the social environment, causing them to become anti-social. Victims often want to move schools due to the discomfort in socializing with friends. Bullied adolescents feel lonely, have no friends, and become isolated. Adolescents feel that no friend wants to play with them. Teenagers who have experienced bullying tend to hide their problems and do not talk about the problems they are experiencing with their parents or other people who care close to them. Victims of bullying have characteristics of fear, tend to dislike themselves, and tend to stay at home after school. Teenagers who are victims of bullying will spend a lot of time thinking about how to avoid distractions in school (Wiyani, 2012).

Research by Davis (2005) mentions that bullying behavior can cause depression in the perpetrators and victims of bullying. The most extreme psychological impact of bullying is the emergence of psychological disorders such as social anxiety, fear, depression, the desire to commit suicide, and symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder. Feelings of social anxiety arise in the victim by thinking about what the perpetrator did to them. This condition makes the victim hesitant, nervous, anxious, suspicious, or unsure with activities and are surrounded by feelings of helplessness (Princess, Laking, & Treasaden, 2012). Psychologically, victims of bullying experience trauma and worry in social environments. They fear that they will experience bullying again (Novalia, 2016). Social anxiety can lead to anger, stress, and depression. Adolescents who experience social anxiety can develop feelings of hatred towards themselves and others. Social anxiety can also hinder what one wants to do. Therefore, over time it will affect social relationships, friendships, achievement at school, among other things (Suryaningrum, 2008).

The purpose of this study was to analyze the relationship between bullying, social anxiety, and social withdrawal among adolescents.

2 METHODS

This research used a correlational design with a cross sectional approach. The total population in this study were 247 students. The number of samples used were from 157 students. A simple random sampling technique was used by the researchers. The instrument used in this study was a modified bullying questionnaire from the measuring bullying victimization book, and perpetration and bystander experiences were written by the national center for disease control and prevention (2011). The social anxiety instrument was modified from research by Riskadina (2016) with the title *"The Relationship Between Body Image and Social Anxiety Trends in Early Youth"* and for social withdrawal instrument was modified from research Kirani (2016) with the title *"Relationship of Peer Group with Social Withdrawal in Early Adolescence"*. The data were collected and analyzed using Spearman Rho test.

3 RESULT

Table 1 describe the characteristics of respondents in this study, are as follows: the majority (100) of respondents were aged 14 years (63.7%). The population comprised of 104 male students (66.3%) and 53 female students (33.7%).

The results showed that most of the bullying that was experienced by students in grades VII and VIII was mild or moderate, amounting to 64 people (40.8%). Regarding social anxiety, the number of respondents that claimed to frequently experience moderate levels of social anxiety was 74 (47.1%). Most respondents

Table 1: Relationship between of bullying and social withdrawal.

Respondent Characteristics	n	%
Age		
12 years old	4	2.5
13 years old	53	33.8
14 years old	100	63.7
Total	157	100
Sex		
Male	104	66.3
Female	53	33.7
Total	157	100

Table 2: The relationship between bullying and social anxiety.

Bullying	Social Anxiety						Total	
	Mild		Moderate		Severe			
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Mild	28	17.8	33	21	3	1.9	64	0.7
Moderate	10	6.4	40	25.5	14	8.9	64	40.8
Severe	0	0	1	0.7	28	17.8	29	18.5
Σ	38	24.2	74	47.2	45	28.6	157	100
Spearmen Rho r = 0.628 p = 0.000								

Table 3: The relationship beetwen of bullying and social withdrawal.

Bullying	Social withdrawal				Total	
	negative		positive			
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Mild	45	28.7	20	12.7	65	41.4
Moderate	25	15.9	38	24.2	63	40.1
Severe	7	4.5	22	14	29	18.5
Total	77	49.1	80	50.9	157	100
Spearman Rho r = 0.538 p=0.000						

acknowledged that they felt worried and anxious in the social environment after being bullied, hence their lack of confidence. Furthermore, there were 80 students (51%) who experienced social withdrawal.

Table 2 showed the results of the statistical analysis using the Spearman rho correlation test showed a significance level <0.05 gained the result p = 0.000. This suggests that there is a significant relationship between bullying and social anxiety in adolescents. The value of the coefficient correlation (r) = 0.628 indicates there is a strong relationship between bullying and social anxiety in adolescents. Table 3 showed the results of the statistical analysis using the spearman rho correlation test showed a significance level <0.05 gained the result p = 0.000. This suggests that there is a significant relationship between bullying and social withdrawal in adolescents. The value of the correlation coefficient (r) = 0.538 indicates there is a moderate relationship between bullying and social withdrawal in adolescents.

4 DISCUSSION

The relationship between bullying and social anxiety in adolescence suggests that the more severe the act of bullying, the more severe the social anxiety is, experienced by adolescents. Therefore, according to Erik Erikson's psychosocial development theory, which states that when there is bullying, emotion changes and emotional crises occur impacting on self-adjustment. Therefore, this causes psychological impact, which is social anxiety. Social anxiety can arise because adolescents feel embarrassed and lack confidence. This is because adolescence is a process of transition from childhood to adulthood. New periods for adolescents require new adjustments.

Three teenagers experienced mild bullying but suffered severe social anxiety. One of the respondents admitted being frequently ridiculed by peers; this can be defined as verbal bullying. For adolescents there is a process of adjustment in building social relationships; adolescents are required to mature within social interaction based on the principle of mutual acceptance and giving. If one principle cannot be sustained, it has an impact on the adolescent's development. Hence, adolescents are required to adjust themselves in social relationships. Respondents who experienced mild bullying but experienced social anxiety in the medium category as many as 33 respondents. Based on the parameters of social avoidance and distress-general (social pressure in the form of discomfort and stress experienced by individuals against common social situations). Respondents admitted to being worried about being teased by their schoolmates, so when they were in school they were uncomfortable. This greatly affects adolescents when in the school environment, among others, the impact of learning activities and problems in social relationships.

Adolescents who experience moderate bullying also experience mild social anxiety. Those adolescents, when being bullied, can overcome the bullying by reporting to a counselor teacher or other staff. In a school environment, the counselor teacher is capable of protecting students from threats and problems. In line with this is research conducted by Ndoily, Pratiwi, and Nurwanti (2014) who state that

victims of bullying with a moderate level of social anxiety are capable of interacting with others. In daily life, they tend to be aware when they are going to interact with others. Furthermore, they will also frequently give negative judgments about themselves because they feel incapable or fearful if what they demonstrate is not matched with what others think of them.

The relationship between bullying and social withdrawal in adolescents suggests that the more severe the bullying is, the more severe the social withdrawal experienced by adolescents. This is in accordance with Erikson's psychosocial development theory, which states that bullying causes emotional changes, emotional crises, and ego imperfections, which lead to unsettled self-adjustment. This impacts on social interaction and causes social withdrawal.

Previous research by (Novalia, 2016) states that victims of bullying are reluctant to go to school so they can avoid the perpetrators who have committed bullying. In addition, there are victims who want to move schools because of the discomfort in the school environment. Bullying causes adolescents to become anti-social within the environment.

Some adolescents experience mild bullying yet belong to the positive social withdrawal category. Twenty (12.7%) of respondents experiences this. In adolescents experiencing bullying, an adaptation process with the surrounding environment and for coping are needed so they can adjust. A total of 20 respondents said they have not been able to adapt because of the bullying they have experienced by their peers or seniors.

adapt to the impact after being bullied. They tried to remain friends with their other peers and wereconfident that they would not hurt them. However, some respondents experienced bullying and experienced social withdrawal. This is because when they experienced bullying, they coped negatively by self-blaming and blaming others.

In contrast, as many as seven respondents (4.5%) said that they have experienced severe bullying yet did not experience social withdrawal. Counselor teachers said if adolescents experienced bullying immediate adjustments were made by reporting to the counselor teacher so action could be taken immediately.

5 CONCLUSIONS

From the research results it can be concluded that bullying experienced by adolescents is moderate and mild. Bullying inflicted on the victim is verbal.

Bullying can be caused by poor peer environments and school environments. Adolescents experience moderate social anxiety. Social anxiety can arise because adolescents feel embarrassed or humiliated. For those experiencing social withdrawal, adolescents avoid meeting friends who have bullied them. The more severe the bullying experienced by adolescents, the more severe the social anxiety they experience. The more severe the bullying experienced by adolescents, the more likely it is that adolescents will experience social withdrawal.

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