

# Academic Resilience of Students Who are Bullied

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# Academic Resilience of Students Who are Bullied

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**Abstract.**

Bullying in schools is a long-standing phenomenon throughout the world. This study aimed to understand the factors that cause a student to be bullied, the level of academic performance of students being bullied, and whether the level of academic performance relates to being bullied. Understanding the factors that lead to bullying can help in handling bullying cases in elementary schools. This study used correlational quantitative research methods to determine the relationship between variables and used descriptive analysis to determine the factors that result in bullying. Data were collected using a bullying behaviour questionnaire and an academic achievement scale. The research population was elementary school students in Grades 4 and 5 in five sub-districts of Semarang City who were selected through an accidental sampling technique. The leading reasons for bullying from the perspective of non-bullying victims were undesirable behaviours (31.58%), students who are usually bullied (12.28%), and students who have a smaller body (10.53%). The intensity of being a victim of bullying does not affect the level of student academic performance. Although certain students are often victims of bullying, these students still have high academic performance.

**Keywords:** academic performance; bullying; elementary school students

## 1. Introduction

Bullying at schools is a long-standing phenomenon throughout the world. Someone who used the term bullying was Olweus (1) (2) which refers to attacks from stronger children against weaker children. Program for International Students Assessment (PISA) noted that in 2018, 41% of students in Indonesia admitted that they had experienced bullying. The Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI), revealed that elementary school students mostly dominated the cases of bullying against children. It is known, there are 25 cases or 67 percent recorded by KPAI both from cases submitted through direct and online complaints during January to April 2019.

The data from KPAI is also supported by reports of bullying cases in elementary schools by several mass media in Indonesia, such as Surya.co.id, which revealed that there was a case of bullying in the Gresik square against elementary school students

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which resulted in body injuries (3). Another case occurred in Jambi. This case happened to SN, an elementary school student whose her friends bullied because SN did not want to give them a cheat (4) (5). In February 2020, Detikcom also exposed a case of bullying to an elementary school student in Sleman (6).

If the case is explored further, bullying cases in elementary schools may still occur in Indonesia. According to Retno (KPAI's Commissioner for Education), the reported cases of bullying will become an iceberg phenomenon. The reason is that the number of unreported bullying cases is unknown (7). The number of bullying cases will affect the education condition, especially at the elementary level. The condition of education at the elementary level will be worrying. One of the impacts of bullying is that children will experience school phobia (8). A bully wants to show their weak academic achievement and displeased attitude towards the school environment (9). Meanwhile, the impact on victims of bullying is that victims will make a lot of external attributions and give up easily when they get assignments from the teacher. So that the teacher will judge the student as a student with low ability in learning (10).

It is known that there are academic similarities between perpetrators and victims of bullying. Both of them have a low academic achievement and will give up more quickly when faced with academic tasks. Thus, both perpetrators and victims of bullying have low academic resilience because they cannot get up quickly when dealing with academic problems. Solicha et al. (11) stated that there are many victims of bullying who fail academically but there are also some of them who are trying to get back up.

Resilience is a dynamic process that affects a person's ability to adapt and successfully overcome chronic stress and adversity. Resilience plays a role in the process of negotiating, adapting, or effectively managing a significant source of stress or trauma (Windle in (11). Research examining the relationship between bullying and resilience has not been widely conducted, and the findings include: (a) students with a strong resilience profile are less likely to engage in aggressive behavior or bullying than individuals with low resilience levels; (b) bullying is reduced if social skills are improved in the victim, and (c) resilience to bullying increases if students have peers or family members that they can talk to (12). This study wants to know the factors that cause bullying, the level of academic resilience of students involved in bullying, and whether bullying behavior is related to the level of academic resilience in students.

Bullying comes from English, namely from the word bull which means a bull who likes to butt here and there (13). This term was finally taken to describe a destructive action in contrast to other countries, such as Norway, Denmark, and Finland, which mention bullying with the term mobbing. The original term comes from the UK, namely

mob, which describes a group of anonymous people who have a large number and engage in violence (1) (28). At the same time, Schwartz et al. (15) call bullying the term victimization. Bush et al. (16) added peer exclusion and victimization to describe bullying behavior.

Tattum (17) views bullying as a desire to hurt. Most of these actions must involve an imbalance of power. A person or group who is a victim of bullying is those who do not have power. The treatment of this action occurs repeatedly, and the victim is attacked unfairly. Bullying differs from other aggressive actions because aggressive actions involve attacks that are only carried out on one occasion and in a short time. While bullying usually occurs continuously over a long period, so the victim is constantly in a state of anxiety and intimidation. This is supported by the statement from Djuwita, (18) that bullying is the use of power or force to hurt a person or group so that the victim feels depressed, traumatized, and helpless. The event may occur repeatedly.

The important thing, in this case, is not only knowing the actions taken, but also the impact of these actions on the victims. For example, a student pushes his friend's shoulder violently. From this case, if the students who are encouraged feel intimidated even if their actions are done repeatedly, then bullying behavior has occurred. If the encouraged students are not afraid or intimidated, the action cannot be considered bullying (13).

According to Sullivan, (19), bullying must also be distinguished from other aggressive actions or behaviors. The difference is that it can't be said to be bullying if only someone is teasing someone else jokingly. they only fight once. Then there will be violent actions or fights that do not aim to cause destruction or damage either materially or mentally. In addition, bullying cannot be said if it includes criminal acts such as assault with sharp weapons, physical violence, serious acts to harm or kill, serious theft, and sexual harassment that is carried out only once. In 1999 Olweus (14) (1) (2) stated that bullying has three criteria, namely (a) there is aggressive behavior or intention to hurt, (b) the behavior is repeated and repeated, (c) there is an imbalance of power. Bullying researchers in the world more widely accept this definition of Olweus. Broadly speaking, the term bullying in different languages and countries indicates different bullying behavior and has different categories.

Operational definitions of resilience vary. In general, resilience is a complex construction and it usually defined as the achievement of positive outcomes, adaptations or developmental milestones in facing significant adversity, risk, or stress. The different concepts of resilience are described as: (a) the protection process, (b) interaction of protection and risk, and (c) conceptual tools in predictive models. These concepts

include resilience, optimism, competence, self-esteem, social skills, achievement, and the absence of pathology in facing difficulties (20).

Martin (21) defines academic resilience as dealing effectively with academic setbacks, stress, and learning pressures. Academic resilience refers to a student's capacity to overcome acute or chronic difficulties seen as a significant attack on the educational process. Resilience has been defined as the process, capacity, or outcome of successful adaptation, especially in challenging or threatening circumstances (21).

One common approach in studying academic resilience is to distinguish resilient and non-resilient students based on academic results or teacher perceptions and then identify the personal characteristics that distinguish the two groups. Students with academic resilience have greater academic confidence, stronger self-concept, higher self-esteem, and greater self-efficacy. In addition, resilient students are more likely to have long-term goals, greater involvement in extracurricular activities, and higher levels of engagement (22).

This study aims to determine the level of academic resilience of students who are victims of bullying and to find out whether bullying behavior is related to the level of student resilience. In addition, the study is also to find out the main factors of students who are victims of bullying from the perspective of victims, perpetrators and witnesses.

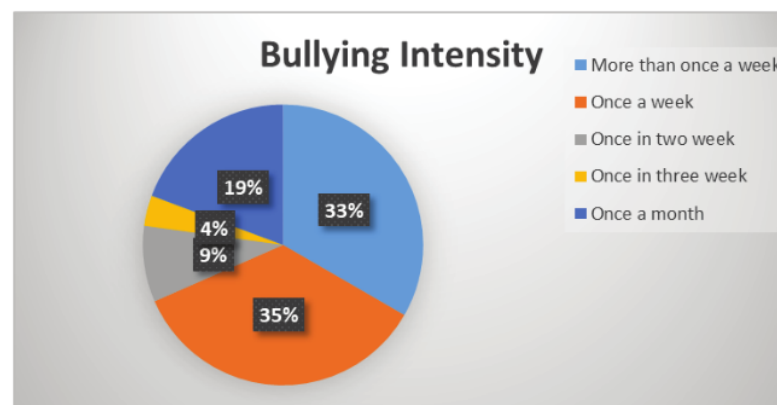
## 2. Method

This study uses correlational quantitative research methods to determine the relationship between variables and uses factor analysis to determine the factors that cause bullying. Data were collected using a bullying behavior questionnaire and academic resilience scale compiled by the researcher. The study population was elementary school students in six sub-districts of Semarang City, namely Banyumanik District, Genuk District, Gunung Pati District, West Semarang District, Central Semarang District and Candisari District, which were taken using accidental sampling technique for elementary school students in Grades 4 and 5. 300 questionnaires were distributed from six sub-districts. The number of subjects eligible to be analyzed consisted of 57 students who were victims of bullying and 84 students who were non-bullying subjects for a total of 141 students. Data analysis used product-moment correlation analysis using SPSS 26 software and factor analysis was carried out descriptively from the collected data.

## 3. Result and Discussion

### 3.1. Results

Based on the data, the intensity of bullying victims from research subjects who experienced bullying more than once a week were 19 students, experienced once in a week there were 20 students, once in two weeks there were 5 students, once in three weeks there were 2 students and once in a week. one month there are 11 students. The percentage of bullying victims' intensity can be seen in Figure 1 below:



**Figure 1:** Bullying Intensity on Student Bullying Victims.

The correlation data between academic resilience scores and victims of bullying shows a sig value of 0.376, indicating no significant correlation. The Pearson correlation value is  $r_{xy} = -0.120$ , so the correlation value is negative with meager strength. Thus, there is no relationship between the intensity of a victim of bullying and the resilience level of victims of bullying. The average level of resilience of bullying victims is 61.7, which is included in the high category.

The results of the Levene's Test test with a Sig value of  $0.034 < 0.05$ , the data variance for non-bullying and bullying victims is not homogeneous. Based on Equal variances assumed, Sig (2-tailed)  $0.115 > 0.05$  so  $H_0$  is accepted and  $H_a$  is rejected. Thus, there is no difference in the level of resilience between non-bullying students and students who are victims of bullying. It can also be seen from the mean non-bullying of 59.1667 compared to the mean of bullying victims of 61.7018, thus the difference is only 2.5351.

Based on the data that has been collected, 12 factors cause students to become victims of bullying both from the point of view of non-bullying and from the point of view of victims of bullying. More details data can be seen in the table below:



TABLE 1: Factors Causing Bullying.

No	Factors Causing Bullying	Victim %	Non Bully %
1	Usually bullied	21,05	12,28
2	Smaller body	14,04	10,53
3	Weaker physically	12,28	8,77
4	Unpleasant behavior	12,28	31,58
5	Skin color difference	12,28	3,51
6	Quiet type	10,53	5,26
7	More beautiful or more handsome	7,02	1,75
8	Poorer	3,51	1,75
9	Richer than friends	3,51	1,75
10	Unpleasant physical appearance	1,75	-
11	Including smart kids	1,75	3,51
12	Another answer	-	19,3

Based on the data above, the biggest difference factor causes bullying, namely between victims of bullying and perpetrators and witnesses of bullying. According to the perception of victims of bullying, the main factor that causes someone to become a victim of bullying is that children are used to being bullied. Meanwhile, from the perception of the perpetrators and witnesses, the main factor is the victim of bullying.

Generally, have unpleasant behavior. In the victim's perception, the factor of unpleasant physical appearance and including smart children is the smallest factor for students to become victims of bullying. Meanwhile, from the perception of the perpetrators and witnesses, there are several.

The factors that have the least influence on students who are victims of bullying are those students who are prettier or more handsome, poorer and richer than their friends. The interesting thing is that students who are used to being bullied in the perception of perpetrators and witnesses are a factor causing the two students to become victims of bullying. Thus, there are actually similarities in the factors that students become victims of bullying, namely students are accustomed to being victims of bullying.

### 3.2. Discussion

There are differences in the factors causing bullying between victims and non-victims of bullying. For victims of bullying, the main factor that causes students to experience bullying is because students are used to being bullied (21.05%). This is in accordance with Graham's (23) opinion that bullying victims will always be future victims. Meanwhile,

another factor that causes students become the victims of bullying in the perspective of victims is that they are smaller (14.04%), physically weaker (12.28%), have different skin color (12.28%) and their behavior is considered inappropriate. The factor of a smaller and weaker body is the causative factor in accordance with the opinion of Olweus (24), which explains the characteristics of victims of bullying as children who are physically and psychologically weaker than the actor.

The causes of bullying from the perspective of non-bullying victims are: unpleasant behavior (31.58%) is the highest factor, the second factor is someone who is used to being bullied (12.28%) and the other factor is someone who is smaller (10.53%). When viewed from the data about the factors causing bullying both from the perspective of victims and from the perspective of students who are not victims, students who are usually bullied will become the main factor for a child to become a victim of bullying on an ongoing basis. Habits of being a victim, smaller body size than friends, physically weak indicate a child's position that is more so that he has the potential to become a victim of bullying (25).

The results showed that the intensity of students being bullying victims did not affect student resilience. The results showed that the intensity of students being victims of bullying had no effect on student resilience. This is different from the opinion of Moore & Woodcock (15) which explains that victims of bullying have low self-esteem and levels of resilience and low levels of resilience. From these results, it can be explained that student behavior is influenced by the environment and personality of the student. This follows Bandura's (26) (1999) opinion that human behavior has a reciprocal relationship with personality and the environment. Thus, student resilience is also influenced by the student's environment. The student environment includes the local community's social environment and culture. Widiarto, Suminar & Hendriani (27) explain that cultural values influence bullying behavior. Students of Javanese ethnicity tend to maintain harmony and easily accept their condition. This value system causes students to get up quickly when they are facing problems.

## 4. Conclusion

The intensity of being a victim of bullying did not affect the level of student resilience. Even though students often become victims of bullying; these students have high academic resilience. This shows that student achievement is not affected even though that student is a victim of bullying. The main factors of students becoming victims of bullying from a victim's perspective and from a non-victim perspective are that they are



usually bullied, unpleasant behavior, smaller students and has a weaker physique, as well as skin color difference.

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