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## ATTITUDE TOWARD BULLYING AS DOMINANT FACTOR RELATED TO BULLYING BEHAVIOR IN ADOLESCENTS (*PLANNED BEHAVIOR THEORY APPROACH*) IN BULULAWANG

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#### ABSTRACT

Background: Bully is a term used to describe a bullying offender. Bully can cause adolescents to be antisocial, to be less empathetic, dominant, impulsive, irritable, and prone to violent behavior. The handling of bullying cases still focuses on the victim. It takes a behavioral theory approach to maximize interventions to reduce and prevent bullying behavior in adolescents. The Planned Behavior Theory approach consists of external and internal behavioral factors of the bully. Objective: To explain factors related to bullying behavior based on Planned Behavior Theory approach, which consists of attitude toward bullying, peer group proximity, and self-esteem. Methods: Quantitative observational analytic study with cross sectional approach. The sample of this research was students who tend to be bully in SMP Negeri 2 Bululawang, 135 samples were obtained by stratified random sampling. Univariate analysis was used to analyze socio demographic characteristics and each research variables. Multivariate analysis of ordinal logistic regression was used to find out the most dominant factors. Results: Ordinal logistic regression results showed that attitudes toward bullying increased the risk of 9 times bullying behavior in adolescents (OR = 9.036, p = 0.000). On the other hand peer group proximity decreased the risk of 4 times bullying behavior in adolescents (OR = -4.058, p = 0.015) and self esteem was not dominant factor. Conclusion: Factors in accordance with Planned Behavior Theory associated with bullying showed that attitudes toward bullying were the most dominant factor associated with bullying behavior of adolescents.

KEYWORDS: Bully, Planned Behavior Theory, Bullying Behavior.

#### INTRODUCTION

Bullying is an action done by an individual or a group by exploiting the use of power and authority to another person who is physically and mentally weaker.<sup>[1]</sup> Bully is a term used to describe bullying offender, victim is an individual who is the subject of the bullying, and reinforcer is an individual who witnesses and enjoys the bullying.<sup>[2]</sup> WHO data showed that 42% of boys and 37% of girls in 40 developing countries were involved in the bullying case.<sup>[3]</sup> A survey conducted at Minesotta America on 162.034 primary and junior high schoolaged children, obtained the result of 47% of students that had ever committed bullying to other students.<sup>[4]</sup> Meanwhile, in 628 high school students in Jakarta, there were 20.9% students who had conducted bullying within the school area and 12.3% had conducted bullying outside the school environment.<sup>[5]</sup>

Adolescents who engage in bullying behaviors have a risk for mental health disorders.<sup>[1]</sup> During this time the bullying that occurred like the iceberg phenomenon that only a few cases can be revealed, while the other major parts have not been revealed.<sup>[6]</sup> Students who become the bullies show a lack of empathy, dominance, impulsivity, and tend to invite others to be hostile.<sup>[7]</sup> Bullies show some harmful behaviors, namely: easily offended, destructive, tend to conduct violent behavior in solving a problem.<sup>[8]</sup> 60% of bullies will have an antisocial personality that can make the adolescents to be lack of empathy for others.<sup>[9]</sup> Bullying occurring in Indonesia is still widely found in adolescents due to the absence of government policies that specifically regulate the bullying.<sup>[10]</sup> In addition it is also necessary cooperation of related parties in order to prevent and minimize the chances of bullying.<sup>[11]</sup> The focus of handling the bullying behavior is still focused on the victims. In fact, it needs to be directed to the bully as the main actor.<sup>[1]</sup>

Mental health nurse can provide preventative and curative intervention toward the bullies in order to decrease the number of bullying incidence and its negative effects.<sup>[12]</sup> It requires exploration and factor analysis with behavioral approaches to provide a strong theoretical basis for nurses appropriate interventions.<sup>[13]</sup>

Planned Behavior Theory as a behavioral theory gives a structured consideration about internal and external factors that affect bullying behavior. Attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavior control are factors that influence behavior.<sup>[14]</sup> The attitudes of adolescents in Planned Behavior Theory show a certainty about the consequences that will be obtained from a behavior. It will also be manifested strongly in behavior if there is an evaluation about the benefits and the pleasure gained in doing such behavior.<sup>[15]</sup> The attitude of adolescents in supporting bullying behavior is related to bullying behavior in adolescents.<sup>[16]</sup> The proximity of peer groups will form the subjective norm for adolescents. Peers will form an emotional closeness between adolescents so that, if a teenager does not have such a bond will tend to regard others as unimportant and will become a bully.<sup>[10]</sup> This is supported also by research titled "The Role of Peer Attachments and Normative Beliefs about Aggression on Traditional Bullying and Cyberbullying" which finds that the attachment and support among group members is related to bullying behavior. On the other hand, self-esteem that will affect perceived behavior control. Adolescents with low self-esteem tend to engage in bullying behavior as compensation for their low self-esteem.<sup>[18]</sup>

Bullying behavior is more prevalent in schools that are located in the suburbs. Specifically, in cultural mixing area.<sup>[19]</sup> Schools that have students with different languages of communication that students use in communicating, different skin colors, or different hair colors are often found in bullying behaviors among their students.<sup>[20]</sup> SMP Negeri 2 Bululawang is located in subdistrict of Bululawang which consists of Madura and Javanese people. Out of 15 adolescents in SMP Negeri 2 Bululawang, 11 of them had conducted verbal, physical and psychological bullying to their friends within the school environment. Because of that conditions, the researcher considers it necessary to conduct research on factors related to bully behavior based on Planned Behavior Theory approach.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

## Study design

This research was a quantitative research. The design used was observational analytic with the cross-sectional approach. This research was conducted in SMP Negeri 2 Bululawang, Malang Regency from December 15<sup>th</sup> until 27<sup>th</sup> on January 2018 for about 2 weeks. Independent variables included attitude toward bullying, peer group proximity, and self-esteem. Dependent variable was bullying behavior in adolescents. Study hypothesis was attitude toward bullying, peer group proximity, and selfesteem based on Planned Behavior Theory had significant relationship with bullying behavior in adolescents.

## Setting

Samples are marked using their respective absent numbers to facilitate the randomization process. Simple randomization procedures 5 to 6 students will be taken on each class that has been previously coded according to the student's absence number.

At grade 1, shuffle matching is done by researcher to get 45 students as research sample. Furthermore, at level 2 and 3 also conducted shuffle lottery to get 45 research sample and total of all sample of research that is 135 student. Students who are sampled are accompanied by researchers to get an explanation of the research process in a reading room in the school library and given informed consent for parents and signed by parents. In 1 day taken about 10 samples and each given 10 minutes to answer.

## **Research subject**

The sample in this study are students who tend to be dominant as bully. The number of samples taken was 135 people. This research used probability samples with stratified random sampling. Inclusion criteria for this research consisted of: 1)  $7^{th}$ ,  $8^{th}$ , and  $9^{th}$  grade students that more dominants as a bully, 2) Willing to be a respondent, 3) Living with both biological parents. On the other hand, exclusion criteria for this research consisted of: 1) Students who were suffering from illnesses while at the time of data collection, 2) Students who did not get permission from parents, with a signature of informed consent.

## Instrument

This study used a questionnaire of respondents data covering age, gender, parental education level, parental job status, experience achieving academic achievement, the most frequently accessed information medium, and experience being a victim of bullying. This study using the questionnaire as the instrument, for the bullying attitudes, peer group proximity and self-esteem. All the questionnaires are confirmed to have obtained author permission from the author. The translation process has been done in the Language Training Center, Ikatan Alumni of Brawijaya University. Data were collected directly from the survey by using a questionnaire about attitude against bullying, which was modified from a questionnaire of The Bullying Attitudes Questionnaire (BAQ) that consisted of 10 statement items.<sup>[21]</sup> The proximity of the peer group questionnaire is the modification of the Inventory of Parents and Peer Attachment-Revised questionnaires. It consisted of 12 statement items.<sup>[22]</sup> Self-esteem questionnaire modified the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale questionnaire which consisted of 10 statement items.<sup>[23]</sup> Bullying behavior questionnaire was the modification of Bullying Behavior Scale questionnaire. It consisted of 12 item

statements.<sup>[24]</sup> A score less than equal to 20 means less supportive attitude toward bullying, a score of 21-30 means a sufficiently supportive attitude toward bullying and a score of over 30 means a supportive attitude toward bullying. A score less than equal to 24 means less close to a group mate, a score of 25-36 means being close enough to a group mate and a score of more than equal to 37 means very close to a group mate. A score less than equal to 20 means having a low self-esteem and more than equal to 21 means having a high self-esteem. Test the validity and reliability questionnaire attitude to the respondents, the proximity of peer groups and selfesteem, took 20 respondents of junior high school students in MTS Nurul Huda Bantur Malang Regency. The questionnaire used is valid and reliable with the values of 0.863, 0.858 and 0.881 respectively.

#### **Ethical consideration**

This study was approved by the Ethics Committee on Faculty of Medicine, Brawijaya University with letter number 436 / EC / KEPK-S2 / 12 / 2017. Written informed consent was obtained from all respondents. data collection by giving questionnaires to students in SMP Negeri 2 Bululawang as respondents. Prior to the research, informed consent and explanation of the research process were given to parents as decision makers. Respondents filled in questionnaires accompanied by a researcher or research assistant. The data collection process took approximately 5 until 10 minutes for each respondent.

#### Data analysis

Attitude towards bullying is divided into 3 categories, very supportive attitude towards bullying, quite supportive attitude towards bullying and less supportive attitude towards bullying. For peer group proximity there are very close to peer group, quite close with peer group, and less close to peer group. self-esteem consist of high and low self esteem. Almost same as attitude towards bullying, the bullying behavior is divided into high, medium and low bullying behavior. The data of sociodemography characteristic was analyzed by using descriptive univariate analysis. The bivariate analysis used Spearman Rank test with  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  to determine the relationship between attitude toward bullving, peer group proximity, and self-esteem based on Planned Behavior Theory with bullying behavior in adolescents. Multivariate analysis used ordinal logistic regression tests to determine the Odd Ratio (Risk) of dependent variable and dominant factor influencing bullying behavior in adolescents.

#### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The results of this study are shown in frequency distribution of characteristics and research variables. Frequency distribution of respondent characteristics based on characteristics and research variables are shown in table 1.

No	Characteristics	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)		
	Age of the respondents				
1	12	19	14.1		
	13	41	30.4		
	14	50	37		
	15	25	18.5		
	Total	135	100		
	Sex				
2	Male	84	62.2		
Z	Female	51	37.8		
	Total	135	100		
	Experience of achieving academic performance				
3	No	82	60.7		
3	Yes	53	39.3		
	Total	135	100		
	Most frequently used informational media				
4	Internet	21	15.6		
	Television	14	10.4		
5	Social Media (Face Book, Black Berry Messenger, Whatsapp, Instagram, etc)	100	74.1		
	Total	135	100		
	Experience of being the vitim of bullying				
	Never	16	11.9		
6	Had ever become a victim of bullying	119	88.1		
6	Total	135	100		
	Being mocked	58	48.7		
	Being shunned	10	8.4		

 Table 1: Respondent characteristics and research variables.

	Being hit	23	19.3		
	Being laughed at	28	23.5		
	Total	119	100		
No	Variables	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)		
	Attitude toward bullying				
1	Very supportive attitude towards bullying	68	50.4		
	Quite supportive attitude towards bullying	54	40		
	Less supportive attitude towards bullying	13	9.6		
	Total	135	100		
	Peer Group Proximity				
	Very close to peer group	12	8.9		
2	Quite close with peer group	33	24.4		
	Less close to peer group	90	66.7		
	Total	135	100		
	Self-esteem				
3	High self-esteem	60	44.4		
5	Low self-esteem	75	55.6		
	Total	135	100		
	Bullying behavior				
	High bullying behavior	68	50.4		
4	Medium bullying behavior	55	40.7		
	Low bullying behavior	12	8.9		
	Total	135	100		

The survey result presented in Table 1 showed that the majority of the respondents were 14<sup>th</sup> years old (50%), most of them are male (62.2%) where they have never previously gained experience achieving academic achievement (60.7%). Most of them get bullying-related content from social media like Face book, Whatsapp, Instagram, Black Berry Messanger etc and and only a few of them have never experienced being bullied (11.9%). Being mocked is the treatment most experienced by the respondents (48.7%). Most

respondents' attitude towards bullying is very supportive attitude towards bullying (50.4), followed by most peer group closeness and self-esteem of respondents are in less close to peer group and low category. Respondents in this study mostly had high bully behavior (50.4%). The result of bivariate analysis between relationship between attitude toward bullying, peer group proximity, and self-esteem based on Planned Behavior Theory with bullying behavior in adolescents are shown in Table 2.

 Table 2: Results of bivariate analysis independent and dependent variable.

No	Variable	Bullying behavior		
INO		R	р	
1	Attitude toward bullying	0.867	0.001	
2	Peer group proximity	-0.556	0.001	
3	Self-esteem	-0.468	0.001	

Based on the data analysis of the attitude towards bullying, peer group proximity, and self-esteem through Spearman Rank correlation test, the researchers obtained the p- value results of 0.001, 0.001, 0.001, respectively. Therefore,  $H_0$  was rejected, which meant that there was a significant relationship between attitude towards bullying, peer group proximity, and self-esteem with bullying behavior in adolescents.

Correlation value was obtained from three variables, which was equal to 0.867, -0.556, and -0.468, respectively, which indicated that the strength of the relationship was very strong and indicated positive direction of the relationship on attitude variable to bullying. Positive direction had a direct relationship, it meant that the higher the supportive attitude toward bullying behavior of adolescents, the higher the bullying behavior would be. In the variable of of peer group proximity and self-esteem, it was shown that the strength of the relationship was in the medium category with the negative direction of the relationship, which indicated an opposing direction relationship. The adolescents who had a close friendship in a peer group and a good self-esteem would have a lower bullying behavior. The result of multivariate analysis are shown in Table 3.

No	Variables	P value	OR	95% Confidence Interval		D Sauana
140				Lower Bound	Upper Bound	R Square
1	Attitude towards bullying	0.000	9.036	4.680	13.391	0.421
2	Peer group proximity	0.015	-4.058	-7.336	-0.781	
3	Self-esteem	0.661	-1.651	-9.022	5.719	

 Table 3: Results of multivariate analysis.

The result of multivariate analysis showed that the dominant variable related to bullying behavior in adolescents in SMP Negeri 2 Bululawang was attitude towards bullying and peer group proximity. The result of analysis obtained Odd Ratio (OR) from the variable of attitude towards bullying with the value of 9.036 which meant that the factor of attitude towards bullying would increase adolescent risks which was equal to 6 times of bullying behavior in adolescents. In the variable of peer group proximity, it was found that the Odd Ratio (OR) value was -4.058, which meant that the peer group proximity would reduce the risk which was equal to 4 times of bullying behavior in adolescents. r square showed that value of 0.421 which means the model of ordinal logistic regression can explain the relationship of independent and dependent variables of 0.421 and the rest is explained by other variables that are not in the model.

Bullying behavior in adolescents was something that was seen as not taboo anymore to be done by the adolescents where adolescence was a very dynamic period to seek one's identity and the need of recognition from various circles. The most appropriate adolescent behavioral approach used was Planned Behavior Theory which consisted of three major components of attitude, subjective norms and behavioral control.<sup>[25]</sup> Spearman Rank analysis test showed that there was a significant relationship between the attitude towards bullying behavior with bullying behavior of adolescents with pvalue of 0.000 and positive correlation value of 0.867. From the result of multivariate analysis, it was found that attitude was one of the most dominant variable related to bullying behavior (OR: 9.036, 95% CI 4.68-13.39) with p-value of 0.000 <0.05. These results suggested that adolescents who had a supportive attitude toward bullying behavior would increase the risk of 9.036 times greater for bullying behavior compared with adolescents who had less supportive attitude towards bullying behavior. A study conducted by Heirman and Walrave<sup>[26]</sup> found that there was a positive relationship between the attitude of adolescents with the conducted bullying behavior. Attitude was the most important factor as a determinant of an adolescent in doing bullying behavior where an adolescent who had a positive attitude toward bullying would have 6 times greater risk as a bully.

Attitudes to bullying in this case will affect the behavior of adolescents to perform bully behavior because of the attitude of interaction is a belief that the behavior is done is a good behavior and evaluation results obtained will benefit themselves or not endanger themselves in the form of pleasure and happiness and the feeling of satisfaction earned after doing so. Attitude is a positive and negative feelings of an individual towards an object where the main concept in establishing an attitude is trust. Teenagers who believe in a behavior that can produce good or positive things then adolescents will become positive individuals vice versa.<sup>[27]</sup>

In accordance with the results of this study found that most of the attitude of adolescents to bullying behavior has a supportive attitude toward bullying behavior as much as  $\overline{68}$  people or 50.4% of respondents and as many as 100 teens or equal to 74.1% mandapat information about bullying content from social media such as Face Book, Black Berry Messenger, Whatsapp, Instagram. This data shows the role of media in this social media, will build cognitive as a belief in adolescents, that bully behavior is fun, it is commonplace, so there is an evaluation from teenagers, that doing bully behavior is fun. This condition is supported by the fact that in SMP Negeri 2 Bululawang there is no clear rules or warning given by the school through teachers, regarding bullying behavior by teenagers, so this is considered as something allowed by the students themselves. This fact is consistent with data obtained by Apsari<sup>[28]</sup> which found that many cases of bullying behavior of teenagers in schools because there is no special regulation that regulates the bully behavior.

In Planned Behavior Theory, the individual attitude was the result of the interaction process of individual beliefs to perform the action, based on the learning outcomes of the obtained information and followed by the evaluation process about the results that would be obtained when performing the action. The stronger the attitude of a person, the greater the chance of an individual to practice his ideas in the form of behavior.<sup>[29]</sup> In the variable of attitude towards bullying behavior, the researchers obtained the result that the cognitive indicator with high category was attitude indicator, with a total of 74 respondents or equal to 54.8%. These data indicated that the learning outcomes of the information sources that had been accessed by individuals would affect the individual's cognitive about bullying behavior and the ability to evaluate the results to be obtained after conducting the bullying behavior.

Most respondents of this research, namely 50 respondents or 37% of respondents were adolescents aged 14 years, where the lowest age of bully-actor respondents were 12 years. It can be seen that the older the age, the more supportive the attitude towards

bullying would be, which caused higher bullying behavior. It was supported by a study which suggested that younger adolescent would tend to be the victim of bullying and the older adolescent would tend to use his/her power to conduct a bullying to younger age groups. It was because there was a belief that the older adolescent would be more flexible in using his/her strength against younger adolescents in. In this case, by doing bullying behavior.<sup>[30]</sup>

The next most dominant variable associated with bullying behavior in adolescents was peer group proximity. There was a significant correlation between peer group proximity and bullying behavior of adolescents in bivariate analysis with p-value of 0.000 and negative correlation value of -0.556 and multivariate analysis (OR: - 4.058, 95%, CI-7.34 - -0.78). This result showed that the variable of peer group proximity was one of the most dominant factor related to bullying behavior. It was shown from p-value of 0.015 <0.05. Adolescents with peer group proximity would lower the risk of 4.058 times of bullying behavior in adolescents compared with adolescents with less peer group attachment. This result was in accordance with research conducted by Hemphill, Kotevski<sup>[31]</sup> who found a negative relationship between the peer group proximity towards the bullying behavior of adolescents. Adolescents who had close friendship would lower the risk of 1.4 times of bullying behavior in adolescents. In the results of this study obtained the results that most of the 59 respondents or equal to 86.8% of adolescents have a close proximity of peer groups with low category and have high bully behavior. The results of this study are in accordance with research conducted by Karina, Hastuti<sup>[32]</sup> who found that the majority of adolescents in public schools are 58.9% and the majority of adolescents in private schools 54% in Bogor City have a close proximity of peers. This result shows that adolescents with peer group closeness will tend to be followed by high bully behavior.

Peer relationships that are negative or unhealthy and lack the support of the social environment will cause a significant impact on the risk of bullying behavior. Interactions that occur between peers will introduce adolescents to mutual giving and receiving behaviors, which are crucial to build socialization and suppressing aggression.<sup>[33]</sup> The party closest to the adolescent in Planned Behavior Theory was a friend, and peer group proximity would form the norm. This norm was formed from the process of trust, communication and acceptance of groups regarding a view that was considered as true. This norm put social pressure on adolescents to practice behavior. The result of this drive would bring the individual's motivation to follow the norm in the form of expected behavior in the norm. Adolescents who had positive group proximity would form a positive norm and the feeling of safety. Therefore, the tendency to perform negative behaviors like bullying was lower.<sup>[34]</sup> The peer group proximity had been proven to be significantly correlated with the bullying behavior of adolescents. The research conducted by Murphy, Laible<sup>[34]</sup> in 148 adolescents in 2 (two) Senior High School of Mid-Atlantic showed the result that the adolescents' feeling of comfort that was obtained from peer group proximity associated with significant decreases in bullying behavior. The negative direction of the relationship meant that the higher the proximity to the group, the lower the tendency of teens to conduct a bullying.

The last domain that influenced one's behavior was the ability to control the behavior itself (perceived behavior control) that was affected by self-esteem.<sup>[15]</sup> In this study, self-esteem only related to bullying behavior on bivariate analysis with p-value of 0.000 and correlation value of - 0.468. In multivariate analysis, self-esteem was not included in the dominant variable associated with bullying behavior.

Bullying behavior in adolescents would cause adolescents, especially bully, to be risky to deal directly with the police, due to the actions taken as the main effect or secondary effect of bullying. In addition, the use of harmful materials such as marijuana, and alcoholic beverages were also a negative effect on adolescents' behavior due to bullying.<sup>[4]</sup> Adolescents who were involved in bullying, especially the offender, had a 3 times greater risk of unsuccessful completion of education compared with adolescents who were not involved in bullying behavior. In adulthood, adolescents who were bullied in adolescence had 4 times greater risk of failing in salary-setting negotiations in the workplace than adolescents who were not involved in bullying behavior.<sup>[35]</sup>

In this research, verbal bullying was the most frequent form of bullying conducted by the bullies, which was amounted to 87 respondents or 64.4% because verbal bullying was very easy to do and was only considered as joking material for students. In accordance with the results of the research from Wang, Iannotti<sup>[36]</sup> who found that the most frequent form of bullying was verbal bullying, both in women and men, with the percentage of 37.8%. Verbal bullying behavior was mostly done by adolescents because verbal bullying was done very easily. The students who conducted verbal bullying stated that they conducted the verbal bullying without any ill intention (occured accidentally) and it only served as a joking material.

Some actions were needed to be taken to prevent bullying behavior. One of them was by the implementation of school-based anti bullying program. In this program, all the elements in the school, both teachers and students, including parents, to pay more attention and increase an awareness of bullying behavior. This anti bullying program had been proven to be effective in reducing bullying behavior because of the synergy between the students and the parents of the school in preventing the occurrence of bullying behavior. This program consisted of the application of discipline within the school environment, the application of rules governing bullying behavior in schools, and the maintenance of good communication links between the school and parents in adolescent education.<sup>[37]</sup> In addition, measures that could be taken to prevent and reduce bullying behavior were by increasing the understanding of adolescents about bullying behavior through health education conducted by health workers and related offices. Thus, it was expected to change the knowledge or beliefs of students that would affect the attitude of adolescents about bullying behavior. According to Planned Behavior Theory, attitude was a determinant component of an individual's behavior.<sup>[27]</sup> Assertive action needed to be given to adolescents so that adolescents could understand about themselves better and be able to express their opinions without harming themselves or others.<sup>[38]</sup> With assertiveness, it was hoped that the bullies would be able to convey their feelings, especially expressing their anger constructively to others because in general, bully-actors were often associated with an inability to express emotions or anger.[21]

## CONCLUSIONS

Attitude toward bullying, peer group proximity, and selfesteem based on Planned Behavior Theory had significant relationship with bullying behavior in adolescents at SMP Negeri 2 Bululawang. Attitudes toward bullying based on Planned Behavior Theory were the most dominant factor associated with bullying behavior. Further research is also suggested to be developed in adolescents in the home and family environment with the direct involvement of families and communities as sample of the research.

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