
TEACHER TRAINING TO HANDLE BULLYING IN INDONESIAN SCHOOL

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Abstract

There are several students in Indonesia who have suffered from injury or even died because of bullying. As a consequence, school teachers in Indonesia need to be trained to handle and prevent bullying. This essay examines the importance of pre-service and in service teacher training in order to reduce and prevent bullying in school in Indonesia by examining the problem of bullying, discussing the effects of it and providing areas of training to help teachers to tackle bullying. There are several reasons why bullying becomes serious problem in school. First of all, bullying is a complex task for teachers because it is difficult to identify and, teachers find it difficult to differentiate between bullying and fighting or horseplay. Moreover, teachers lack the knowledge and skills to handle bullying. Bullying has negative effects not only on victims but also on bullies. Victims feel lonely, depressed, and often have low self-esteem, while bullies often exhibit sign of bad temper or depression. Areas of teachers pre- service and in- service training are 1) assisting teachers to differentiate between bullying and fighting or horse playing 2) developing skills to communicate with bullies and to manage classrooms where bullying occurs. In conclusion, teacher training is a good solution to tackle bullying at school in Indonesia because teachers are in the front line to solve this problem.

Keywords: bullying; handle bullying; teacher training to handle bullying

Abstrak

Tulisan ini mengkaji pentingnya pelatihan sebelum dan sesudah menjadi guru untuk mengurangi dan mencegah bullying di sekolah Indonesia dengan menganalisa masalah bullying, mendiskusikan akibat akibatnya dan menyediakan pelatihan untuk membantu guru mengatasi bullying. Ada beberapa alasan mengapa bullying menjadi masalah yang serius di sekolah. Pertama, Bullying merupakan masalah yang rumit bagi guru untuk mampu mengidentifikasinya, dan membedakannya dengan perkelahian atau gurauan biasa. Selanjutnya, para guru masih memiliki wawasan dan keterampilan yang kurang memadai untuk mengatasinya. Bullying memiliki efek yang negatif tidak hanya pada korban bullying namun juga pada para pelaku Bullying itu sendiri. Korban merasa terisolir, stress dan sering memiliki rasa percaya diri yang rendah. Sementara itu, para pelaku Bullying sering menunjukkan tanda temperamental dan depresi. Dengan demikian, area training yang dibutuhkan sebelum dan sesudah menjadi guru adalah pendampingan para guru untuk a) membedakan antara Bullying dengan Perkelahian biasa atau gurauan b) pengembangan keterampilan guru untuk berkomunikasi dengan pelaku dan mengelola kelas dimana Bullying itu terjadi. Kesimpulannya, training guru menjadi solusi yang tepat untuk mengatasi Bullying di sekolah-sekolah di Indonesia karena guru berada di garis terdepan untuk menyelesaikan permasalahan ini.

Kata Kunci: bullying; mengatasi bullying; pelatihan guru untuk mengatasi bullying

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Introduction

Bullying endangers students because it can hinder their social - emotional development. In Indonesia schools context, bullying actually often happens but it is just realized. People are aware of it because there are several students who have suffered from injury and even died. This is a serious case. However, when bullying is conducted by students in the classroom, teachers sometimes do not realize. The reason is bullying happens when teachers are not in the classroom anymore because of the school hour transition. When teachers know that bullying happens, they do not tackle it seriously. This is because they believe that bullying is a common case between students. For example, if there is a student who is kicking others, they believe that this fighting is only temporary and these students will be good friends again later.

In addition, some teachers in Indonesia also still apply physical punishment as the main way to discipline students. For example, they hit students on their back, hand or bottom. They ask their students to run around the school yard for certain times. They still believe that this violence can make students do not want to repeat their bad behavior again. Because aggressive behavior is still thought as common case in Indonesia, bullying becomes a complicated problem for teachers to handle. Therefore, school teachers in Indonesia need to be trained to handle and prevent bullying. So, they would be aware of bullying when it happens. This essay examines the importance of pre-service and in service teacher training in order to reduce and prevent bullying at school in Indonesia. First, the bullying problem at school will be examined, and followed by a discussion of the effects of bullying. After that, this essay provides information about important knowledge and skills that should be provided in the teacher training to help teachers to tackle bullying.

Statement of the problem

The problem underpinning this study is that teachers in Indonesia have not yet achieved the level of teacher competency as decreed by the education system. One of the reasons is because they are poorly trained and do not have the skills and knowledge to meet their students' needs. As a result, schools fail to ensure that positive student learning outcomes are produced (Naia, 2005).

The quality of education in Indonesia is still low because many schools are unable to prepare students with the necessary knowledge and skills to compete in these times of education reform. This is reflected in the results of the Third International Mathematics and Science Study Repeat (TIMSS-R) test in which Indonesian students' achievements in reading, science and mathematics was at the 32nd and 34th level (Naia, 2005). Based on this data, it is not surprising when Dwidjo (2010) states that the low quality of student outcomes is a direct consequence of the low quality of teaching. He goes on to argue that the achievements of Indonesian students are still low when compared with those from the countries that have recently become independent (Dwidjo, 2010). In addition, Danim and Suparno (2009) also mention the fact that at the present time many students still have poor learning achievements in Indonesian schools. Therefore, there is an urgent need to improve their learning outcomes.

Based on a Centre for Teaching Quality (CTQ) survey, all educators, teachers and administrators agreed that the empowerment of teachers is the essential factor that can influence students' learning outcomes (Berry, *et al.*, 2010). There are two factors that influence students' learning achievement. An internal and external factors. Talent, interest, motivation, intelligence are several examples of internal factors, whereas, facilities, school atmosphere or environment, media, teachers' quality are included in an

external factors (Syah, 2012). Bullying can be a hindrance and a problem for students (from the external factor) to reach high students achievement. Therefore, empowering teachers to be able to handle bullying can be one of the relevant solutions to improve poor student achievement.

The aims of this study are:

- To discuss why do teachers need to be trained to reduce and prevent bullying in Indonesian schools.
- To analyze the effects of Bullying.
- To examine what areas of teacher training to handle Bullying.

Relevant studies

There are several studies discussed how teachers should understand bullying and, how they are able to overcome this problem when it happens. First, a study conducted by Piotrowski & Hook (2008). This study examines Bullying and violence in schools and what teachers should know and do to prevent and handle bullying. Second. The study undertaken by Feinberg (2003) that analyzed the practical ways for teachers in order to have a good understanding in preventing and intervening Bullying. Then, a study by Beran (2006), with the topic '*Preparing teachers to manage school bullying: The hidden curriculum*'. This study is about some steps for teachers to organize school free from Bullying. Those are several studies that examine the essential ways that teachers should know and apply to manage the classroom where Bullying happens. All of those studies suggested the essential of teacher training to handle bullying.

Method

This study will review the recent literature on bullying and teacher's training to answer the

research questions above. Data were collected by analysing and synthesising materials from text books, conference papers, theses, dissertations and journal articles. Google Scholar and also Flinders University's online databases such as Informit, ProQuest, ERIC (CSA) and SAGE Journals Online were also used to collect current data on the topic of bullying and teacher's training. The main data unavailable from Flinders University databases were obtained through the library's document delivery service. In addition, for the background of the study, it was also necessary to use the information from the world wide web, from Indonesian journals and newspaper articles to explain what happens in Indonesia.

Discussion and interpretation

This chapter discusses and interprets key findings from the literature review. It is important to give a complete information about bullying and teacher's training to answer the three research questions posed above.

Reasons for conducting teacher training to handle Bullying

There are several reasons why bullying has become serious case in school. The first problem is that bullying is often conducted in the classroom without teachers' awareness (Dake, 2003). Based on Beran (2006) "teachers were unaware that 10 of 17 children were bullied". This is also one of the problems of teacher in Indonesia to tackle bullying. Based on my experience of teaching at school, a good example of this is a case of bullying which happened at an elementary school in Indonesia. one student pinned up a piece of a paper on the back of an other female student without her awareness with a message saying " Be careful! a crazy girl". This happened in the classroom when teacher was writing materials on board. When it was time for break, this girl went to canteen. She did not

understand why all the students along the school street were looking at her and laughing at her. Finally, the girl realized the reason and she was very embarrassed. The bully behaved badly to this victim many times in different ways. This case became complicated because on the one hand, the victim felt so ashamed and depressed, whereas on the other hand, often students whether bully or bystanders thought that it was just a joke. Moreover, this happened without teacher's awareness and the victim did not report the incident to him / her.

The second serious problem is that most primary school teachers in Indonesia find that it is difficult to differentiate between bullying and horseplay or fighting. According to Beran, these action are similar (Beran, 2006). A good example of this problem is when there was a student gave degrading comment or mocking him or her, teachers and bystanders thought that this was kidding because this seemed funny. Although it happened to the same victim many times, most teachers did not regard this case as a serious case. Moreover, several teachers might include physical bullying as a fighting. So, punishing both of fighters is the way taken by teachers to solve this problem. It means that teachers did not realize that the one of the student was a victim who needed help or assistance from adults.

The next problem is that bullying -- especially verbal bullying-- is difficult to be identified in Indonesia. For instance name-calling is very common in Indonesia. For example, students are eager to call others with bad or negative name-calling. If the student is fat, so other students label him or her "Fatso". If the student have told lie, they label this student as a liar. The initial of name calling can also be revealed from family or play ground. Therefore, before going to the school, the child had already called with his / her name calling. People argue that it shows close relationship among friends,

and most Indonesian people including teachers do not realize that it was part of verbal bullying. However, this type of bullying can have a negative effect on the development of social-emotion of victims.

In addition, there are different types of bullying also means that teachers may get difficult to identify bullying when it occurs. This is why bullying is a complex task for teachers to tackle (Piotrowski, 2008). Bullying is not only in the form of physical harassment but also verbal and emotional harassment and each type may have different effect on the victims.

Furthermore, teachers in Indonesia lack the knowledge and skills to handle bullying. Carlson & Horne (2004) have stated that many teachers ignore bullying because of lacking skills and knowledge to handle this case. They have also stated that this problem also can cause teachers not to deal with bullying. Their opinion is supported by Beran who has stated that teachers feel that they have less support, time and resources to address bullying successfully. (Beran, 2006). In the case of bullying in school in Indonesia, some teachers in Indonesia may be not aware if bullying happens. In contrast, some of them may know when this occurs. However, they may think that this is a common case and they do not want to intervene due to lacking the knowledge and skills. Moreover, if they want to intervene bullying committed by their students, they might fail, and they need help to handle it. These become the reasons to give training for teachers in order to have ability to tackle bullying at school.

Effects of Bullying

Bullying is dangerous not only for victims but also for bullies. Victims feel lonely and depressed, and often have low self- esteem, while bullies often exhibit signs of bad temper or become temperamental, depressed, having big potential to commit crime. (Beran & Shapiro,

2005). Moreover, according to Beran (2006) victims may experience anxiety, become overweight or suffer from phobias. In my point of view, it is because bullying happens over time and victims may take out their stress by consuming a lot of food. Bullies tend to commit more serious crime in the future than other students (Piotrowski & Hoot, 2008). In my opinion it is very possible for bully to be a criminal because their bad temper and unstable emotion.

Teacher Training

Teacher training to broad teachers' skills and knowledge is an effective way to tackle bullying (Carlson & Horne 2004, p. 260). Because of this, recent studies suggest giving the first priority to provide teacher training on bullying (Carlson & Horne, 2004). Moreover, according to Piotrowski & Hoot, (2008), teachers urgently need training to identify and understand the cause, effect and how to handle bullying. In addition, "Many teacher training programs is focus on academic – related content with less time available to discuss socio-emotional development of children" (Beran, 2006). Similarly, in Indonesia, the largest proportion of in – service teacher training is in the academic aspect especially in the aspect of curriculum and methodology, while in pre – service teacher training, there is a training about children psychology development, but there is no management behavior training. Therefore, it might be beneficial to conduct not only pre-service teacher training but also in-service teacher training on bullying. Moreover, according to Carlson & Horne (2004) many literatures stresses the effectiveness of combining pre-service and in-service teacher training.

Areas of Training

In order to prevent and tackle bullying at schools, there are two mains areas of teacher training on bullying. First of all is assisting

teachers to differentiate between bullying and fighting or horse playing because both appear similar. Many teachers in Indonesia cannot differentiate between physical bullying and fighting or horse playing. Because of this reason, teachers should know what is definition of bullying, so that they can differentiate between bullying and horse playing or fighting. Bullying means repetitive aggression committed by perpetrator against a victim (Crothers & Kolbert, 2008). Olweus in Esch (2008) defines bullying as bad behavior or actions such as physical harassment, mocking which was done repeatedly overtime between students who have imbalance of strength. From definitions above, it can be concluded that in bullying, the action is conducted repetitively or over time and the victims have weaker power than the bullies. In contrast, in horse playing, the action is for a joke that happens between two people or more who have the same power, while in fighting, this reaction is to defend oneself from the rival. In addition, fighting or horse playing may be spontaneous reaction. I agree with Beran (2006) who has stated that if there are two children with the same strength arguing or fighting, it is not bullying.

Moreover, teachers should know about types of bullying because in my opinion, different type of bullying has different way or approach to tackle. There are three types of bullying. Firstly is Physical bullying. It means physical contact that can hurt the victim, such as kicking, hitting, etc. The second is emotional bullying. It can be defined as aggression that is committed without words, such as alienation. The last is verbal bullying or relational aggression, such as name calling, mocking, and gossiping. (Piotrowski & Hoot, 2008). O'Connell in (Beran, 2006) categorized physical and verbal bullying as direct bullying, while emotional bullying is included as indirect bullying. Besides, teachers should also know about cyber bullying that is actually a new form

of previous emotional and verbal bullying. Fauman (2008) has stated that cyber bullying is bullying through the use of technology, such as the Internet, pager, and cellular phones. In addition, it is usually anonymous, might be balance power between bullies and victims and do not need to do repetitively because it has already wide spread.

In addition, teachers should know how to identify bullying. Based on Clothiers and Kolbert (2008) teachers can identify bullying at school by applying assessment method. The first step is using a list of students name. The second step is classifying students into three different categories: bullies, victims and bystander. However, it is difficult for teachers to categories students. Teachers may make mistakes, and classify students in the wrong group. Teacher might also be subjective. Therefore, to get objective data, teachers should spend long time observing their students not only in the classroom but also in the other places at school such as canteen or playground. (Clothiers & Kolbert, 2008) In my opinion, it is a good way to identify bullying, but it is difficult for teachers in Indonesia to spend a long time observing students because most teachers in Indonesia still give more priority to academic problems and development for their students. It is because, the government standardized score for graduation. There are many students who cannot fulfill this standard score. Consequently, teachers focus on teaching their students in order to have ability to pursue the standard. As a result, teachers often lack time in doing their academic job. Furthermore, it is also because of their responsibility to teach many hours at school or it might be because most of teachers in Indonesia have to teach several classes. However, if they can manage their time effectively, they will be able to practice this strategy.

The following main area of teacher training is developing teacher skills. The first is the skill

to communicate with bullies and to help victims. There are two types of victim assistance. In the short-term, assistance should address specific incidents, while in the long term, counseling should be given to increase victims' self-confidence. Therefore, they can avoid bullying. Moreover, teacher should communicate with bullies to confirm her / his bad behavior and to make them realize that victimization is unnecessary (Crothers & Kolbert, 2008). In addition, according to Beran (2006) teachers need to have good communicative skill to discuss bullying. From his statement, it can be concluded that teachers should be trained in good communication skills in order to make students have better understanding about bullying. As a consequence, the amount of bullying may decline. Furthermore, good communication can strength a good relationship with their students. A good relationship between teachers and students enable their students to deal with bullying problem (Beran, 2006).

Secondly, Teachers should have the skills to manage classroom where bullying occur. Clothiers & Kolbert (2008) have advised teachers how to manage classrooms to prevent bullying by applying guidance approaches lesson, such as books, video and drama about bullying. This approach is very good for students in order to be aware of bullying. If the teachers guide the students to get the information and illustration about bullying through books and CDs, this may be a good way to improve their knowledge about bullying and they may not commit bullying. Moreover, they will know how to get assistance from adult when they become victims. However, materials such as books or video about bullying are still limited in Indonesia. Therefore, teachers should be creative to use drama as a media to educate about bullying to their students. In addition, Clothiers & Kolbert (2008) have suggested teachers to manage classroom effectively by giving a lot of tasks and overlapping activities to their students. As a

result, they are busy and, they do not have time for committing bullying. However, these also may make students become stressed, and they may release their stress by asserting power over one another. In my point of view, teachers should give proportional tasks and activities to their students, so that they will enjoy school time. It is because happy learners tend to do positive things at school.

Moreover, teachers should be able to create in-conducive classroom climate for committing bullying. This is a climate that does not accept bullying. A classroom that accepts bullying discourages victims from reporting incidents to adult (Langdon & Preble, 2008). It means this kind of school climate is effective to encourage every students to be extrovert, assertive and able to protect themselves from bullying. To create conducive classroom climate, teacher should be able to give a good example of behavior to the students and evaluate their behavior. They have to give warning or even punishment for their students' bad behavior and rewarding students for good performance. According to Colvin (2009), teacher behaviors influence their students' behavior. Therefore, their students will follow their footsteps. Moreover, teaching positive behavior to students can be the first step in tackling bullying. (Feinberg, 2003).

Conclusion

Bullying is a serious problem in school because of the potential negative effects, endangering not only victims but also bullies social – emotional development. Teachers in Indonesia have difficulties to identify and differentiate between bullying and fighting or horse playing. Moreover, they are often not aware when bullying occur in school. Therefore, The good solution to handle this problem is providing pre-service and in-service teacher training on bullying to improve their knowledge and skills to handle bullying. This training

should focus on assisting teachers to have a good understanding about bullying by providing information about definition, types and how to identify bullying. In addition, this teacher training would develop their skills to communicate with bullies and victims and to manage classrooms where bullying incidents happen by using materials such as drama as a media to educate students about bullying, by giving proportional tasks and activities to their students and by creating a classroom climate which is in-conducive for students to commit bullying. Thus, teacher training is very important for teachers to tackle bullying because they are in the front line for handling this problem.

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