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URGENT NEED TO FORM A TASK FORCE TO END BULLYING IN SCHOOLS

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ABSTRACT

School should be a safe place for children to get an education and develop themselves optimally, but violence often occurs in the educational environment itself, one of which is bullying. Research shows that eradicating bullying is the work of all parties, the government, schools, parents, including students. Because bullying in schools occurs in the school environment both inside and outside of school, or online, the biggest initiative is the availability of equipment to address bullying in the school institution. As an implementation of the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture Number 46 of 2023 concerning the Prevention and Handling of Violence in the Educational Unit Environment, an anti-violence/bullying Task Force Team must be formed in educational institutions. However, in its implementation, many schools still do not have this team, and even if they do have it, their performance is still not optimal.

Keywords: Bullying, School, Task Force, Child Protection

INTRODUCTION

Education etymologically comes from the word *paedagogie* from Greek, consisting of the word "pais" meaning child and "again" meaning to guide, *paedagogie* means guidance given to children. In Roman education comes from the word "educate" which means to bring out something that is from within. While in English education is termed "to educate" which means to improve morals and train intellectuals. In terms of language, the definition of education means guidance carried out by someone (adults) to children, to provide teaching, moral improvement and intellectual training. The responsibility of educational institutions in guiding, teaching and making students better, positions the institution in a difficult position in giving sanctions when a child commits a violation or acts that are detrimental to others.

School should be a safe place for children to get education and develop themselves to the fullest, but violence often occurs in the educational environment itself. According to data released by the Online Information System for the Protection of Women and Children (SIMFONI-PPA), from January to February 2024 the number of cases of violence against children has reached 1,993.¹ This number may continue to increase, especially when compared to cases of violence that occurred in 2023. According to the National Commission for Child Protection (Komnas PA), throughout 2023 there were 3,547 complaints of cases of violence against children. Meanwhile, according to the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI), from January to August 2023, there were 2,355 cases of violations of child protection. Of that number, 861 cases occurred in educational units. In detail, children as victims of sexual violence cases were 487 cases, victims of physical and/or psychological violence 236 cases, victims of bullying 87 cases, victims of educational facility fulfillment 27 cases, victims of policies 24 cases. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (Kementerian PPPA) stated that in 2023, there had been 2,325 cases of physical violence against children. The large number of cases of violence against children that occur in educational units needs to be a concern for all parties, including students, educators, education personnel, and residents of educational units. Because educational units are the second place for children to spend their time. Therefore, educational units must be a safe and comfortable place for children. Any form of violence that occurs in the educational unit environment must be prevented and addressed properly. Because this violence not only has a bad impact on children in obtaining a decent education, but also has a bad impact on their mentality.²

To prevent and address violence against children in educational units, the government through the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia (Kemendikbudristek) has enacted Ministerial regulation Number 46 of 2023 concerning Prevention and Handling of Violence in Educational Units (PPKSP). The Ministerial regulation PPKSP is intended to strengthen prevention and handling of violence in educational units by expanding the scope of targets to students, educators, education personnel, and residents of educational units. This policy was issued to ensure that residents of educational units are safe from various types of violence. If we look at Ministerial regulation, there are at least three areas of prevention and handling that need to be carried out, namely in the areas of governance, education, and facilities and infrastructure. In these three areas, there is the role of educational units and the role of local governments. In the area of governance, the role of educational units is to create regulations and programs, implement non-violent learning environment, form a team to prevent and handling violence (TPPK), and involve school residents (parents/guardians). Meanwhile, the role of the regional government is: to prepare and stipulate regional head regulations regarding PPKSP, allocate budgets, facilitate and foster educational units, form Task Forces, and involve the community.³

Research proves that eradicating bullying is the work of all parties, the government, schools, parents, including children. Because bullying in schools occurs in the school environment both inside and outside of school, or online involving the school environment, the biggest initiative is the availability of equipment to address bullying in the school institution. As an implementation of the Ministerial regulation PPKSP, a PPKSP Team must be formed in educational institutions. However, in its implementation, many schools still do not have this team, and even if they do have it, their performance is still not optimal.⁴

DISCUSSION

Bullying has become a disturbing act for children in Indonesia, some cases even causing death. The Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) reported that Indonesia ranks in the top 5 in the world for bullying cases in schools. The results of the PISA survey showed that as many as 41.1% of Indonesian students had experienced bullying,

¹Online Information System for the Protection of Women and Children, <https://kekerasan.kemenpppa.go.id/ringkasan>

²Achmad Muchaddam Fahham, Violence Against Children in Educational Units, Parliamentary Analysis Center, Expertise Agency of the Secretariat General of the Indonesian House of Representatives, 2024. https://berkas.dpr.go.id/pusaka/files/isu_sepekan/Isu%20Sepekan---I-PUSLIT-Februari-2024-190.pdf

³ibid

⁴Stephanus Aranditio, Task Force Performance Not Yet Effective in Preventing Violence in Education, [kompas.id](https://www.kompas.id/baca/english/2024/08/20/en-kinerja-satgas-belum-efetif-preventing-violence-in-education), 2024, <https://www.kompas.id/baca/english/2024/08/20/en-kinerja-satgas-belum-efetif-preventing-violence-in-education>

far above the PISA average of 23%.⁵ Bullying Cases in Schools Increase During 2023, from January to August 2023, there were 2,355 cases of violations of child protection, of which 837 cases occurred within the scope of educational units. The types of violence that occurred were 87 cases of children who were victims of bullying, 27 cases of children who were victims of educational policies, 236 cases of children who were victims of physical and/or psychological violence, and 487 cases were children who were victims of sexual violence. From data collected by the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI) and the Federation of Indonesian Teachers' Unions (FSGI), the types of bullying that victims often experience are physical bullying (55.5%), verbal bullying (29.3%), and psychological bullying (15.2%). Meanwhile, for the level of education, elementary school students are the most victims of bullying (26%), followed by junior high school students (25%), and high school students (18.75%). Therefore, the seriousness of the government and various parties is very much needed. Given that the number of bullying victims could be greater because not all are reported. Parents, teachers, and government agencies play a role in supervising and educating school children from an early age.

From the facts above, it can be seen that the school environment, which should be a safe and supportive place for all students to learn, is still haunted by bullying and other acts of violence. Bullying is one of the acts that should not occur in the school environment. This is because bullying experienced by a student from an early age can have serious long-term negative impacts. Many cases of depression, anxiety, eating disorders, and even suicide are related to the experience of bullying victims. In addition, students who are victims of bullying often experience decreased academic achievement and poor social interactions. They feel afraid, isolated, and unsafe in the school environment that should be a place for them to grow and learn.⁶ Bullying that often occurs in the school environment can also change students' perspectives about school, they consider school as a place that is no longer safe and comfortable for them, so that not a few students are afraid of becoming victims of bullying and feel reluctant to go to school. This can certainly affect their attendance and participation in learning activities at school.

Bullying is acts or written or spoken words intended to intimidate or harass a person or to cause physical harm to a person or his or her property.⁷ In general, the crime of bullying or harassment is identically known as an act of violence against children. In the case of bullying that occurs in schools, bullying is aggressive behavior that is carried out repeatedly by a person/group of students who have power, against other students or students who are weaker, with the aim of hurting the person.⁸ According to Unicef, bullying can be identified through three characteristics, which are it is done intentionally (to hurt), occurs repeatedly, and there is a difference in power. A bully does intend to hurt the victim, either physically or psychologically.⁹ Legally, based on Article 1 number 16 of Law 35/2014 concerning child protection, violence is any act against a child that results in physical, psychological, sexual misery or suffering, and/or neglect, including threats to commit acts, coercion, or unlawful deprivation of liberty.¹⁰

In cases of bullying, concrete handling is needed, which directly addresses the problem. Because bullying of students occurs in the school environment, it is appropriate if the main movement starts from the school. There must be a special section that thinks about how to address bullying in each school with several unique cases. Therefore, to face this challenge, the formation and role of the Anti-Bullying Team or Task Force in all schools is very necessary. The Anti Bullying Team consists of teachers, school employees, and students who are committed to fighting bullying and creating a safe and inclusive school environment. As a general guideline, the Ministerial regulation has provided a special reference for the formation of the Violence Prevention and Handling Team, hereinafter abbreviated as TPPK, which is a task force team formed by educational units to carry out efforts to Prevent and Address Violence in educational units.¹¹

This team will be tasked with implementing Prevention and Handling of Violence in the educational unit environment (TPPK). In carrying out its duties, TPPK has the following functions:

- a. submitting proposals/recommendations for Violence Prevention programs to the head of the educational unit;
- b. providing input/suggestions to the head of the educational unit regarding safe and comfortable facilities in the educational unit;
- c. implementing socialization of policies and programs related to Prevention and Handling of Violence together with the educational unit;
- d. receiving and following up on reports of alleged Violence;

⁵McComas, W. F, Program for International Student Assessment (PISA). The Language of Science Education, 2018, pg. 79–79. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-6209-497-0_69

⁶Zhang, Yunqi, A Review on the Impact of Bullying in Schools, Lecture Notes in Educational Psychology and Public Media, 42, 2024, pg. 90-94. 10.54254/2753-7048/42/20240814.

⁷merriam-webster.com, bullying, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/bullying#legalDictionary>

⁸Antonius PS Wibowo, Implementation of Criminal Law in Handling Bullying in Schools. Jakarta: Atma Jaya Catholic University of Indonesia, 2019, pg. 9

⁹Unicef, Bullying: What is it and how to stop it, How to prevent and deal with bullying. <https://www.unicef.org/parenting/child-care/bullying#:~:text=Bullying%20is%20a%20pattern%20of,higher%20risk%20of%20being%20bullied>

¹⁰Law Number 35 of 2014, the first amendment to Law Number 23 of 2002 concerning Child Protection

¹¹Regulation of the Minister of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology Number 46 of 2023 concerning the Prevention and Handling of Violence in Educational Unit Environments Chapter IV Part 1 Articles 24-29

- e. handling findings of alleged Violence in the educational unit environment;
- f. submitting notification to parents/guardians of Students involved in Violence;
- g. examining reports of alleged Violence;
- h. providing recommendations for sanctions to the head of the educational unit based on the results of the examination;
- i. accompanying Victims and/or Reporters of Violence in the educational unit environment;
- j. facilitating assistance by experts or other services needed by Victims, Reporters, and/or Witnesses;
- k. providing referrals for Victims to services according to the needs of Victims of Violence;
- l. providing recommendations for children's education in cases where Students involved in Violence are Children in Conflict with the Law; and
- m. report the implementation of tasks to the Head of the Education Office through the head of the educational unit at least 1 (one) time in 1 (one) year.

In carrying out its duties, the TPPK has the authority to:

- a. summon and request information from the Reporter, Victim, Witness, Reported Party, parents/guardians, companions, and/or experts;
- b. coordinate with related parties in the Prevention and Handling of Violence; and
- c. coordinate with other educational units regarding reports of Violence involving Victims, Witnesses, Reporters, and/or Reported Parties from the relevant educational unit.

Furthermore If we look at how important the tasks and functions of this team are in dealing with bullying, then it should be made an obligation accompanied by strict supervision and administrative sanctions for educational institutions that do not carry it out, with the aim of ensuring the formation of an anti-violence team or in this case, anti-bullying task force as a driving force in the school environment. Because children need legal certainty and guarantee of protection against bullying actions. School institutions in the Prevention and Handling of Violence in the educational unit environment must strengthen governance, implement education about anti-bullying and provide facilities and infrastructure.¹² What must be available in real terms are norms or school regulations regarding bullying. In addition, educational units provide education by disseminating regulations and programs for the Prevention and Handling of Violence in the educational unit environment to all Education Unit Residents and parents/guardians of Students including those with disabilities, and implementing character strengthening through the implementation of Pancasila values as the foundation of the state, and fostering a culture of education without Violence to all Education Unit Residents. Dissemination is carried out during activities to introduce the educational unit environment for new Students, and other activities in the educational unit, through electronic and/or non-electronic media. Educational units provide facilities and infrastructure by ensuring the availability of facilities and infrastructure for: a. implementation of TPPK duties in the form of at least reporting channels, examination rooms, and office stationery; b. security of the learning process; c. security in public spaces such as toilets, canteens, laboratories; d. implementation of education activities for the Prevention and Handling of Violence; and e. security and comfort of other facilities in the educational unit environment. Educational units ensure the level of safety and comfort of buildings, learning facilities, and other public facilities, including the provision of appropriate accommodation for persons with disabilities.¹³

The duties and functions of the anti-bullying task force team cover all aspects, and require good cooperation between schools, parents, children, law enforcement and child protection agencies in order to work effectively. Among the things that need to be emphasized in the regulation is, in the formation of an anti-violence/bullying team in schools is the need for student involvement in the team. In bullying at school experienced by students as victims and/or perpetrators, it requires the student's perspective in understanding the characteristics of bullying behavior and how the best solution can be taken together. In addition to of course strengthening the victim's personal self, where it is very important to build the character and mental strength of bullied children and the support of their environment which can help which strategies are effective or even ineffective. Such as when they suppress their feelings, overreact emotionally, or try too hard to gain social approval from their peers. It is very important to stay calm in the face of bullying is a difficult task and solving their own problems is too difficult for many young people.

Bullying can come from individuals or groups and can also be embedded in the social system of the school (Cowie and Jennifer, 2007). We know that social context plays a significant role in the emergence of bullying behaviour so there are many things that young people can do to prevent it from happening and to deal with it once it has happened. A team of researchers in Finland (Salmivalli et al., 1996) found that most students know when someone is being bullied, but even if they are not directly involved, this means that they play a role in the bullying situation, even if they think it is none of their business. The Finnish researchers identified a number of roles of participants in bullying, not only Bullies and Victims, but also Assistants to the bully, Reinforcers of bullying, Outsiders and Defenders.¹⁴

¹²Ibid, Article 14

¹³Ibid, Articles 15, 18, 21

¹⁴Cowie, Helen, Peer Support as an Intervention to Counter School Bullying: Listen to the Children, Children & Society, 2011, 25, pg. 287 - 292. 10.1111/j.1099-0860.2011.00375.x.

Empowering children and young people to take action through peer support systems has the potential to offer solutions. Peer support is a form of advocacy through training in how to respond to a peer's distress. Peer support takes many forms, but the main approaches are as follows:¹⁵

- a. Befriending programs: where peer supporters are trained to provide friendship or informal support. d Peer mediation: where peer supporters are trained to bring the bully and victim together to resolve their difficulties.
- b. Active listening: where peer supporters are trained in counseling skills to provide emotional support to bullied children.
- c. Peer support methods teach students to take responsibility for their own actions and provide training in a range of interpersonal, social and conflict resolution skills. They also provide opportunities for reflection on self and others through regular supervision.

Cowie and Smith (2010) show how peer support systems not only help individuals deal with the emotional impact of peer rejection and social exclusion, but also create a more positive ethos in the school community. They identified evidence-based strategies, including training programs in active listening, peer mediation and befriending, to address feelings of distress, anger and anxiety. The ability of peer supporters to listen and learn facilitates the recognition and effective management of emotions and is relevant to the development of a caring school community. Cowie and Oztug (2008) and Cowie and others (2008), in their evaluation of the effectiveness of peer support systems in making schools safer, concluded that to make best use of peer support, students should be encouraged and trained to consult with the school population to identify particular issues of concern, common fears and anxieties, and suggestions for creating safer, friendlier school environments. In particular, they recommended that peer supporters should conduct surveys to identify issues of concern, that there should be regular feedback on the impact of interventions such as peer support, and that school supervision (by peers as well as adults) should target specific places (eg, restrooms) and times (breaks and lunch periods) in response to the results of such surveys. The power of peer support is supported by ethological studies of conflict resolution, which suggest that resolution may occur naturally through peer interactions rather than as a result of adult intervention (Killen and de Waal, 2000; Killen and Smetana, 2006). The likelihood of peacemaking increases when conflicting parties (a) share a mutual interest in repairing damage to their relationship and (b) have access to relationship repair mechanisms. In fact, the power of peer support is confirmed by ethological studies of conflict resolution proposing that the solution may arise naturally out of peer interactions rather than as a result of intervention by adults (Killen and de Waal, 2000; Killen and Smetana, 2006).¹⁶

In several schools in Indonesia, anti-bullying task force teams involving students have begun to be implemented, and they believe that there are great benefits in preventing bullying.¹⁷For example, State Primary School (SDN) Tenggulunan in Sidoarjo, East Java formed a Task Force consisting of six students who were dedicated to monitoring, recording, and advising peers on bullying behavior, and reporting their findings to teachers for further action. The Task Force was expected to reduce, if not prevent, bullying. In addition, they involved parents in the program. Before launching the Task Force, the school consulted with parents to ensure their support. This collaboration helped build a strong community-wide commitment to anti-bullying efforts.¹⁸

CONCLUSION

In building a safe education, the role of the Anti-Bullying Task Force team cannot be separated from all parties. Teachers, school employees, and parents must also be actively involved in fighting bullying. Teachers must create a supportive classroom environment, where every student feels accepted and appreciated. School employees can supervise activities in the school environment and report cases of bullying that occur. Parents also need to be actively involved in supporting anti-bullying education and educating their children about good attitudes and respecting others. No less important is the role of the child himself in dealing with bullying. The best way to end bullying is to ensure that children can freely talk about it.¹⁹

The power of peer support is confirmed by studies of the ethology of conflict resolution that suggest that solutions may emerge naturally from peer interactions rather than as a result of adult intervention. There is a need to provide more opportunities for children not only to share their fears and anxieties but also to create possible solutions by volunteering as peer supporters. Implementing peer support into a school-wide policy can create opportunities for bystanders to be proactive in challenging bullying when they see it. Peer supporters can play a role in this process by monitoring social interactions during recess to support individuals who are being targeted and to be vigilant in reporting abusive behavior.

Combating bullying in school environments is not an easy task, but it is essential to creating a safe education for all students. The Anti-Bullying Task Force has a key role in carrying out this mission. With proper detection, effective

¹⁵Ibid

¹⁶Ibid

¹⁷Inovasi, Creating a Safe School: The Success of the Peer Student Program, Inovasi.org, 2024, <https://www.inovasi.or.id/en/creating-a-safe-school-the-success-of-the-peer-student-program/>

¹⁸Ibid

¹⁹Unicef, Bullying in Indonesia: Key Facts, Solutions and Recommendations, Unicef.or.id, 2020

prevention, and fair handling, the Task Force can stop the cycle of bullying and create a better school environment. All parties must unite and work together to ensure that children and adolescents grow up in a supportive environment, free from fear, and full of opportunities to develop optimally, especially in the world of education.

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