



Local government efforts to prevent bullying in learning environments

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Abstract: Bullying in the educational environment is currently increasingly widespread in formal education environments ranging from elementary school to university level. Data from the last four years, 2019-2022 shows a very significant increase with the following details, 2019: 11,057 people; 2020: 11,287 people; 2021: 14,517 people; 2022: 21,241 people. As an effort to prevent bullying in the formal education environment, the government in collaboration with UNICEF Indonesia has created a bullying prevention program called the roots program, as a form of prevention and reduction of bullying that occurs in the formal education environment. As a form of the North Sumatra provincial government's efforts to prevent bullying in the formal education environment, the North Sumatra provincial education office held technical guidance (bimtek) for teacher facilitators of the anti-bullying roots program at the high school, vocational and special school levels throughout the province of North Sumatra. The activity was held on October 13, 2023, this activity was the first activity carried out by the provincial education office in Indonesia for the sustainability of the Roots program. Since the implementation of the roots program in 2021 in driving schools in Indonesia. This research uses a qualitative approach using the analytic description method, data collected through in-depth interviews and observations of the activities carried out. The results of this study show a positive trend of regional concern in preventing bullying that occurs in the formal education environment in North Sumatra.

Keywords: Bullying, Increase in bullying cases, North Sumatra provincial education office.

Introduction

Currently, bullying often occurs in the school environment in Indonesia. Bullying that occurs in the school environment today is caused by the culture of seniority that is still always found in almost all schools from elementary school level, to university level in Indonesia (Awaru & Syukur, 2019; Bell et al, 2019; Hodgins & McNamara, 2019; Sokantat et al, 2021; Suhendar & Halimi, 2023). The lack of attention from the government in overcoming bullying cases is also one of the causes, so that until now bullying still often occurs in school environments in Indonesia (Hodgins et al, 2020; O'Higgins, 2020; Gomez et al, 2021; Keashly, 2021; Sabramani, 2021). Based on data from the last

four years, 2019-2022 shows a very significant increase with the following details, 2019: 11,057 people; 2020: 11,287 people; 2021: 14,517 people; 2022: 21,241 people (Borualogo & Casas, 2022; Wicaksono, 2023; Zaneva et al, 2023). These numbers show that 2022 was the highest level of bullying cases that occurred in the educational environment in Indonesia.

So far, no research has been conducted that discusses the awareness and efforts made by the relevant local governments in preventing bullying in the school environment in their area. Research that is often carried out always discusses the acts of bullying that occur in the school environment, and the number of victims of bullying in the school environment and the

readiness of teachers to prevent bullying in their school environment, (Dardiri et al, 2020; Hasanah et al, 2022; Yosep et al, 2022), currently no one has fully discussed the role of local governments in implementing bullying prevention policies in the school environment in their area. A bullying prevention program has actually begun to be created by the Indonesian government in collaboration with UNICEF Indonesia called the roots program. The roots program began to be tested in 2017, but its implementation in schools only began in 2021, and the implementation of this roots program was only implemented in junior high schools, high schools, and vocational schools that were included in the driving schools (Stickl et al, 2020; Mayer et al, 2021). When compared to developed countries in Europe, where these countries have early implemented bullying prevention programs evenly throughout the school environment in their country, starting from elementary school to college level. Bullying prevention programs in European countries are known as CEPIDEA and KiVa, both of which have been implemented in Finland, the

UK, and Italy (Loon & Kaufman, 2023; Caviola, 2020).

The purpose of this research is to find out the extent of the involvement and concern of local governments in taking action to prevent bullying in schools in their area. This research also aims to see the extent of the involvement and concern of the North Sumatra government in taking action to prevent bullying in schools in North Sumatra.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is an aggressive act or action carried out repeatedly by individuals or groups to others with the aim of hurting, intimidating and dominating their victims (Yanwar et al, 2020; Annisa et al, 2022; Das & Patra, 2022; Agustiniingsih & Yusuf, 2023). Bullying can be of various types, from physical, verbal and relational bullying, this all occurs due to one of the factors of the power imbalance that occurs between the perpetrator and the victim (Jeffrey & Stuart, 2020; Johansson & Englund, 2021; Menin et al, 2021; Harrison et al, 2022; Xu et al, 2022).

Table 1. Classification of bullying actions

Types of Bullying	Definition	Form of action
Physical Bullying	Bullying that is committed by physically abusing the victim.	1) Beating 2) Kicking
Verbal Bullying	Bullying that uses harsh words, insults, threats, and verbal abuse	1) Cussing 2) Insulting 3) Threatening 4) Harass
Relational Bullying	Bullying that involves actions to damage a person's social relationships	1) Backstabbing 2) Slander
Cyber Bullying	Bullying that occurs in cyberspace, and involves communication technology	1) Defamation 2) Slander 3) Posting negative comments on social media

Based on the classification of table 1 above, it shows that there are four types of bullying that often occur in today's society. Bullying can essentially occur in various places ranging from work, social, educational environments, and even in cyberspace (Estévez et al, 2020; Forssell, 2020; O'Higgins, 2020; Kintonova, 2021; Palaghia, 2021;). However, what needs to be a concern at this time is the bullying that often occurs in the school environment, considering that the school

environment should be the most comfortable place to gain knowledge and not a place where acts of violence occur (Calp, 2020; Taylor et al, 2020; McMahon et al, 2020; Proctor et al, 2021; Sujarwo et al, 2021). So in this case, there needs to be special attention from the government, especially local governments, because local governments actually have a very vital role in preventing bullying in the school environment in their area (Fatimah et al, 2021; Okamura et al, 2021; Man et al, 2022).

Duties and functions of local governments in bullying prevention

Local governments have a vital function and role in regulating everything in their area, from development, education to handling cases that occur in their area (Adamowicz & Zwolińska, 2020; Liu et al, 2020; Elander et al, 2022; Navarro & Velasco, 2022; Laksana, 2021). One of the cases that should be of concern to the government, especially the local government, is the bullying that occurs in the educational environment (Chaux et al, 2009; Stuart et al, 2011; Adnan et al, 2021; Arhuis et al, 2021; Kaur & Saini, 2023). Cases of bullying that occur in the educational environment have now occurred frequently and have troubled the entire community (Skarstein et al, 2020; Ferfolja & Ullman, 2021; Burleigh & Wilson, 2022; Dowdell et al, 2022; Qwabe et al, 2022). Bullying that occurs in the educational environment always takes victims in every incident (Van Verseveld et al, 2021; Okagbue et al, 2022; Wójcik et al, 2022), and even fatalities often occur, caused by physical injury or trauma experienced by victims, so that victims of bullying do not hesitate to commit suicide to end their lives (Chowdhury, 2020; Sarfo et al, 2022; Sekar & Fauzia, 2023).

Table 2. Percentage of bullying cases from elementary to senior high school level in 2023

School Level	Percentage of Cases
Elementary school	25%
Junior high school	25%
Senior High School	18,75%
Vocational High School	18,75%
Madrasah tsanawiyah	6,25%
Boarding School	6,25%

Table 2 above shows the percentage of bullying cases that occurred in Indonesia throughout 2023, where elementary and junior high school levels are the highest, namely 25% of bullying

cases that occurred throughout 2023. The bullying prevention program that has been implemented by the Indonesian government in collaboration with Unicef Indonesia has begun to be implemented in 2021, which is named the roots program (Prasetyarini et al, 2022; Devi & Yulianandra, 2023; Swastikaningsih et al, 2023). The roots program, which began to be implemented in 2021 until now, is only implemented in driving school environments and even then only at the junior high, high school and vocational school levels that are connected to the driving school program (Stickl et al, 2020; Mayer et al, 2021).

Method

In this study using a qualitative approach using the analytical description method. Qualitative research is research that aims to understand the phenomena experienced by the subject directly in the field. This research also has a characteristic that is found in its purpose: describing special needs by providing an understanding that has meaning and symptoms and compiling data obtained in the field. Qualitative research is also more focused on general principles and manifestations of symptom units found in human / community life (Sugiyono, 2017). In this approach, social reality is holistic / comprehensive, complex, dynamic and full of meaning (Creswell, 2014).

Research Participants

The sample used in this study consisted of 2 different respondents: Head of the North Sumatra Education Office and Head of the Character Strengthening Center. The research sample was selected directly by the researcher with the consideration that the sample had a connection with the efforts of the North Sumatra regional government in carrying out the prevention of bullying in the school environment in North Sumatra, so that their understanding was needed in revealing diverse views through the sample description which will be included in table 3.

Table 3. Description of research participants

No	Respondents	Sample Description
1	Head of the North Sumatra Education Office	Is a policy maker in the education environment throughout North Sumatra.
2	Head of Character Strengthening Center	Tasked with carrying out the preparation of technical policies and implementation in the field of character strengthening in carrying out its duties as organizing the following functions: the function of preparing technical policies in the field of character strengthening, the function of implementing character strengthening, coordinating and facilitating the

implementation of character strengthening, monitoring, evaluating and reporting functions in the field of character strengthening.

Research Procedure

In this research, data was collected through in-depth interviews and observation of the activities carried out. In-depth interviews were used to obtain respondents' views and perceptions regarding the effectiveness of the implementation of the North Sumatra regional government policy in implementing efforts to prevent bullying behavior in the educational environment in North Sumatra.

Research Analysis

The data analysis process involves two main approaches, the first is data from in-depth interviews which are analyzed using a qualitative approach. The second stage, analyzing documentation, using a holistic approach, this research aims to provide in-depth insight into the application applied by the North Sumatra regional government in implementing policies in preventing acts of bullying in the educational environment.

Result

Perception of the Head of the North Sumatra Education Office

As an effort to prevent bullying in the North Sumatra education environment, the North Sumatra regional government through the North Sumatra education office made efforts to prevent bullying in the North Sumatra education environment through organizing technical guidance (bimtek) for teacher facilitators of the anti-bullying roots program at the high school, vocational and special school levels throughout the province of North Sumatra. The program created by the North Sumatra provincial education office aims to prevent acts of bullying that occur in the North Sumatra education environment. The analysis carried out has the aim of being able to find out the extent of the efforts of the North Sumatra provincial education office in implementing the bullying prevention program in the North Sumatra education environment.

The interview conducted by the researcher with the head of the North Sumatra education office aims to find out the extent of the efforts taken by the North Sumatra provincial education office as an effort to prevent bullying that occurs in the educational environment in North Sumatra.

Based on the interviews conducted, it can be seen that:

"the commitment of the North Sumatra Provincial Education Office in boosting the acceleration of the formation of TPPK (Violence Prevention and Handling Team) in all education units in North Sumatra Province, and the target of the North Sumatra provincial education office is that by the end of October all of us will form TPPK, the roots technical guidance held in North Sumatra province was held in six districts / cities of North Sumatra Province, namely Medan City, Binjai City, Tebing Tinggi City, Serdang Bedagai Regency, Asahan Regency, and Deli Serdang Regency. The North Sumatra provincial education office in this case will always play an active role in conducting anti-bullying programs by preparing the necessary resources including one of the main programs is the implementation of the Roots technical guidance, where this roots technical guidance will continue to all districts / cities in North Sumatra province ". (Head of North Sumatra Education Office)



Figure 1. Opening of roots technical guidance at the North Sumatra provincial education office

Figure 1 shows the implementation of the opening of the roots guidance program conducted by the North Sumatra provincial education office which was held on 13 October 2023 at the North Sumatra provincial education office, Medan City. The roots guidance was attended by the head of the North Sumatra provincial education office, the Head of the Character Strengthening Center, and several related officials who attended the opening of the roots guidance activities.

Findings from the results of interviews and observations conducted by researchers on the bullying prevention program carried out by the North Sumatra Provincial Education Office in implementing bimtek roots as an effort of the North Sumatra provincial education office in making prevention efforts in the North Sumatra

education environment. The problem that occurs from the implementation of the roots guidance is that the activities carried out are still not optimal because the implementation of the roots guidance is the first roots guidance carried out in Indonesia, namely in North Sumatra Province.

Perception of the Head of the Character Strengthening Center

The Center for Character Strengthening (PUSPEKA) is one part of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research that is tasked with supporting the vision and mission of the Ministry of Education and Culture in creating an advanced Indonesia that is sovereign, independent, and has a personality through the creation of a Pancasila student profile that is critically reasoning, creative, independent, faithful, devoted to God Almighty, and has noble morals, mutual cooperation and global diversity.

As a prevention of bullying in the educational environment in Indonesia, Puspeka also has a very important role, because Puspeka is an extension of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research in collaborating with Unicef Indonesia in designing the roots program as an effort to prevent bullying that occurs in the educational environment in Indonesia.

Through efforts made by the North Sumatra regional government in organizing technical guidance (bimtek) for Roots anti-bullying program teacher facilitators at the high school, vocational and special school levels, which was held on Tuesday 17/10/2023 to Friday 20/10/2023 in six districts / cities in North Sumatra Province, namely Medan City, Binjai City, Tebing Tinggi City, Serdang Bedagai Regency, Asahan Regency, and Deli Serdang Regency.

Based on the efforts made by the North Sumatra Provincial government in preventing bullying, the Head of the Character Strengthening Center gave a very, very extraordinary appreciation to the North Sumatra Provincial government, in this case the head of Puspeka stated:

"North Sumatra is the first province to organize the Roots technical guidance in collaboration

with Puspeka, this is a good practice so we hope that in the future it can also be implemented and become an example for other provincial and regional offices. Because this roots program has been implemented for approximately 2 years starting from 2021-2022, where this roots program has encouraged 34, 14 percent of education units to form violence prevention teams" (Head of the Center for Character Strengthening).

The findings from the results of interviews and observations conducted by researchers on the efforts of the North Sumatra Provincial Government, related to efforts to prevent bullying in the North Sumatra Provincial environment, are very good. Because North Sumatra is the first Provincial Region to conduct anti-bullying prevention guidance in the school environment at the high school, vocational and special school levels, in 6 City Districts in North Sumatra. Based on the good conditions created by the current North Sumatra provincial government, there are also important problems that we must pay attention to together, namely regarding the equity of the application of the Roots program in the environment of high schools, vocational schools, and special schools in North Sumatra Province, because this Roots program in its application is only connected to schools that become driving schools.

Environmental conditions of Schools in North Sumatra that Implement the Roots Program

The implementation of the Roots program in the school environment at the high school, vocational and special school levels is still uneven, the problem is that the Roots program is currently still being implemented in secondary schools that are incorporated into the driving school program only. North Sumatra Province is currently a secondary school, especially for high schools and their equivalents, which are incorporated into the driving school program can still be counted because the number is still small. Some high schools and vocational schools in North Sumatra Province that have joined the driving school program for the 2021-2023 period will be displayed in the following table.

Table 4. High schools and vocational schools in North Sumatra that have implemented the Roots program

No	School Name	District/City
1	Dr. Wahidin Sudirohusodo Private Senior High School	Medan City
2	Harapan Mandiri Private Senior High School	Medan City
3	Kalam Kudus Christian Private Senior High School	Medan City
4	Muhammadiyah 2 Medan Private Senior High School	Medan City

5	Gajah Mada Private Senior High School	Medan City
6	An Nizam Private Senior High School	Medan City
7	State Senior High School 19 Medan	Medan City
8	State Senior High School 12 Medan	Medan City
9	Al Azhar Private Senior High School Medan	Medan City
10	Primbana Private Senior High School	Medan City
11	State Vocational High School 4 Medan	Medan City

Table 4 shows the number of high school and vocational schools in North Sumatra Province that have implemented the Roots Program in their school environment. The eleven schools are dominated by schools in Medan City. Based on the amount of data presented in Table 4 above, it clearly shows that the implementation of the Roots Program in the education environment of North Sumatra Province has not been evenly distributed until now.

Barriers to Implementation

In the process of implementing the Roots program, it is actually not as difficult as imagined. Because at the beginning of this Roots program was a collaborative program between the government and Unicef Indonesia in making efforts to prevent bullying in the educational environment in Indonesia, this roots program began to be tested in 2017, but the trial process was stopped because in 2019 Indonesia and the world experienced a long pandemic, so that at this time required students to do online learning at home for almost 2 more years.

In 2021, when the covid 19 pandemic storm has begun to subside, and teaching and learning activities have begun to be carried out with an offline system (partly face-to-face, and partly online), the roots program will be implemented again. However, in 2021, this roots program was only tested in secondary schools starting from the junior and senior high school levels that were connected to the driving school program.

Although it has begun to be implemented in 2021, in the driving school environment, the obstacle to this Roots program lies in the distribution and sustainability of its application. The reason is that the distribution of this roots program in the following years has been very slow, then the lack of attention from the local government regarding the sustainability of the program that has been implemented in the driving schools is not clear.

Discussion

Efforts of the North Sumatra Provincial Government to Implement the Sustainability of the Roots Program

This research reveals how the efforts made by the North Sumatra Provincial Government in 2023 through the North Sumatra provincial education office, began to design an activity that was to carry out the sustainability of the implementation of the Roots program in the education environment of North Sumatra Province. In October 2023 the North Sumatra provincial education office held technical guidance (bimtek) for Roots anti-bullying program teacher facilitators at the high school, vocational and special education levels in 6 districts in North Sumatra.

The implementation of technical guidance (bimtek) carried out by the North Sumatra provincial government through the North Sumatra provincial education office, was the first activity carried out by the provincial education office in Indonesia for the sustainability of the Roots program. Since the implementation of the roots program in 2021 in driving schools in Indonesia, the sustainability of the roots program until now has not been known how clear it is for its sustainability. However, in October 2023 the North Sumatra provincial government through the North Sumatra Provincial Education Office conducted technical guidance (bimtek) for roots program facilitator teachers at the high school, vocational and special education levels in 6 city districts in North Sumatra Province.

This technical guidance activity for Roots program facilitator teachers at the Senior High School, Vocational High School and Special School levels in 6 City Districts in North Sumatra Province is an effort of the North Sumatra Provincial Education Office in carrying out the sustainability of the Roots program implementation in the educational environment at the Senior High School, Vocational High School and Special School levels in North Sumatra province.

Effectiveness of Roots Program Implementation in Education Environment in North Sumatra

This research also looks at the effectiveness of the implementation of the roots program in the educational environment in North Sumatra.

One of them that is used as an example by researchers is SMA Negeri 19 Medan. SMA Negeri 19 Medan is one of the driving schools that has implemented the roots program for the first time in 2021, until now. SMA Negeri 19 Medan is also one of the leading high schools in Medan City, North Sumatra Province, which has succeeded in implementing the roots program in its school environment, until now the roots program in the SMA Negeri 19 Medan environment is still running, and has received a very positive response in the SMA Negeri 19 Medan environment.

Meanwhile, the implementation of the roots program in other high school and vocational education environments in North Sumatra province has been running since 2021 until now. Its sustainability is still ongoing, and the effectiveness of the implementation of the roots program is very effective and has a positive impact on the environment of these driving schools, while for SMK Negeri 4 Medan, the implementation of this roots program has just been implemented in the SMK environment in 2023.

Reflecting on high schools and vocational schools in North Sumatra Province that have implemented this roots program, where this roots program has a positive impact on the school environment. Because almost all schools in North Sumatra Province that have implemented the roots program in their school environment, have been able to reduce the level of bullying in their school environment from before the implementation of the roots program. So that the roots program is currently expected to be sustainable and equitable in all educational environments in the North Sumatra province.

Conclusion

This study explains how the efforts of the North Sumatra provincial government in collaboration with the North Sumatra provincial education office in preventing bullying in the education environment in North Sumatra. The prevention activity is by holding technical guidance activities (bimtek) to facilitator teachers in 6 districts / cities in North Sumatra. The activities carried out are also an effort of the North Sumatra provincial education office in expanding the application of the Roots program as a bullying prevention program in the North Sumatra education environment.

The program, which was initially tested in 2017, and in the process of its continuation was hampered by the covid 19 pandemic that

occurred throughout the world, therefore the Roots program was resumed its trial implementation in 2021, and its application was only applied in junior high schools, high schools, and vocational schools that were included in the driving school program, and the impact of its application had a positive impact on the environment of these schools. So that based on the positive impact generated from the Roots program, it also made an initiative from the North Sumatra provincial government in collaboration with the North Sumatra Provincial Education Office, to carry out the sustainability of the Roots program in the high school, vocational and special education environment throughout North Sumatra province.

Judging from the scientific point of view and its usefulness, this roots program in its application is very good and its sustainability is needed in overcoming the increasingly high acts of bullying that occur in the educational environment in Indonesia today. With the technical guidance activities (bimtek) made by the North Sumatra provincial government in collaboration with the North Sumatra provincial education office, so that the clarity for the sustainability of this Roots program in the high school, vocational and special education environment in North Sumatra Province is increasingly clear and directed.

Disclosure statement

In the research conducted, the author has no conflict of interest at all and just wants to see an effectiveness of the application of the program studied by the author.

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