

Psychoeducation of Assertive Communication to Improve Bullying Prevention Knowledge in Junior High School Students

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ABSTRACT

Objective: This psychoeducational activity aims to increase understanding related to bullying and assertive communication in SMPN 1 Purwosari students. **Method:** The method used in this psychoeducational activity uses the lecture method by psychologists, accompanied by pre-post-test evaluation, to measure participants' understanding. **Results:** The data analysis technique used the T test paired sample T-test, with a result of 0.001, meaning that there was a significant difference in participants' understanding before and after psychoeducation. **Novelty:** The psychoeducational approach and the use of paired sample T-test for measuring understanding before and after the activity may contribute to the novelty.

INTRODUCTION

School is a place of education to foster knowledge and help form a positive personal character. The implementation of effective and efficient education is influenced by the conducive atmosphere created by all school members, be it principals, teachers, students and other school staff. In fact, the goal of education has not been fully achieved, because there are still cases of deviation of violent behavior carried out among adolescents that require attention from various parties.

The number of cases of violence that occurs in schools raises concerns that violence can be considered a normal and natural thing in society. Violence that occurs at school or often referred to as bullying is a form of aggressive behavior. Bullying is a form of violence and aggressive nature of students at school. Bullying can come from peers, seniors, or upperclassmen and even teachers and school staff themselves Mujiyanti. Bullying by teenagers usually occurs at school, but it is possible to also occur at home, play environment and anywhere. Bullying is usually between upperclassmen against underclassmen, or superiors against subordinates in an institution or workplace. Victims of bullying usually want to take revenge on the perpetrator, but because they do not have the strength to do so, it is very rare to take revenge.

Bullying or bullying is defined as any form of violence or criminality that is committed deliberately and continuously with the aim of hurting or bringing down a weak person [1]. Bullying activities carried out by adolescents against their peers include mocking, spreading, gossiping, giving nicknames, hurting, ostracizing, scaremoving, and even physically attacking. Bullying in the adolescent environment is currently the focus

of public attention. Bullying is one of the negative behaviors where people in authority regularly coerce, bully, harass, corner, and hurt weak people. Verbal bullying includes insulting, yelling, giving false nicknames, slander, and publicly humiliating others. Physical bullying includes hitting weak people, strangling, and punching, while mental bullying includes ignoring and isolating people, and cyberbullying includes receiving threats or negative messages through social media.

Bullying is a form of child abuse committed by peers to a "lower" or weaker (child) to gain certain benefits or satisfaction. The culture of bullying in the name of seniority still continues to occur among students at school, usually this bullying occurs repeatedly, some are even carried out in a planned manner. According to Barbara Coloroso, bullying is a hostile act that is carried out consciously and intentionally that aims to hurt, such as intimidating through the threat of aggression and causing terror. It also includes planned and spontaneous actions that are real or almost invisible, in front of someone behind the friendship, carried out by a child or a group of children, Yuyarti.

Victims of bullying prefer to remain silent and not report the treatment they receive to others. Information and complaints about bullying behavior in victims are usually known from parents or from people around them. There are also victims who report it themselves but after receiving bullying treatment for a long period of time, Hardhiyanti, Panjaitan, & Arya. This is in line with the findings of Benitez & Justicia who explain that victims of bullying behavior are usually passive and never react aggressively. When the victim always acts passively as expected, the bully will continue to commit acts of bullying to the victim. Passive behavior carried out by the victim or people around them who know about the act of bullying will only increase other acts of bullying. One of the prevention of bullying in victims is the ability to communicate and be assertive.

Based on the results of the Community Need Assessment (CNA) with interview and survey methods, verbal bullying is still found at school, such as mocking, insulting friends, and threatening friends. In addition, there is also non-verbal bullying, such as hitting friends and stepping on friends' heads.

The consequences of bullying have immediate and long-term impacts, both for the perpetrator and the victim [2]. Victims of bullying experience decreased academic achievement, increased loneliness, poorer health, and higher levels of anxiety compared to non-victim students. Bullying can also lead to mental health problems such as depression, suicidal thoughts, suicide attempts, and parasomnia. Peer victimization in early adolescence is associated with substance abuse, delinquent behavior, and adjustment difficulties throughout mid to late adolescence [3]. Being a bully increases the likelihood of engaging in violence in adulthood, engaging in criminal activity, and experiencing lower employment status compared to uninvolved peers [4].

Assertive communication can improve interpersonal skills, social skills, empathy, and assertiveness so that it can reduce bullying and its impact on adolescents [5]. Previous research has shown that individuals with assertive communication skills can defend themselves assertively but remain respectful, thus reducing the risk of repeatedly becoming a victim of bullying [6]. Assertive communication skills can help adolescents

involved in bullying issues to find self-identity, improve social interaction, and develop healthy communication skills, which require a targeted approach to self-development. This ability can reduce bullying in adolescents and reduce various problems that arise due to bullying.

According to Saptandari & Adiyanti, assertive behavior is the middle point and the main way for adolescents to avoid becoming victims of bullying. This is referred to as the middle point because assertive behavior is able to prevent victims from retaliating against bullying with other violent behaviors and prevent victims from passive behavior towards the perpetrator. Assertive behavior makes the bully intimidated because he is aware of the strength possessed by the victim. In addition, assertive behavior in witnesses to bullying acts, also referred to as *bystanders*, has an influence in preventing bullying.

This psychoeducational activity to improve assertive communication aims to provide an understanding to all participants about bullying and strategies for handling bullying prevention through assertive communication.

RESEARCH METHOD

Form of Activity

This form of psychoeducational activity consists of the following three stages:

1. Preparation Stage: conducting *Community Need Assessment*, preparation of tools and materials, preparation of psychoeducational places.
2. Core Activities: filling out pre-tests, presenting material on bullying and assertive communication strategies, discussion sessions, filling out post-tests, filling out evaluations of psychoeducational activities.
3. Closing: strengthening and motivating participants to apply the knowledge they have learned.

Activity Objectives

This psychoeducational activity is aimed at 58 students of SMPN 1 Purwosari Class 7I and 8K.

Training models and success measurement

Psychoeducational activities are carried out by the lecture method by psychologists. An indicator of the success of this activity is when there is an increase in understanding among participants regarding the material presented, namely about assertive communication to prevent bullying, which is obtained from the measurement tool of the understanding test about assertive communication and bullying.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The analysis of data in this psychoeducational activity begins with determining in advance whether the data obtained is normally distributed. For the normality test of the data, the *Shapiro-Wilk normality test was used*, with the criteria of data being said to be normally distributed if the significance value of p was greater than 0.05 (>0.05).

Table 1. Normality test results.

Test of Normality (Shapiro-Wilk)			W	p
Pretest Comprecy	-	Posttest Understanding	0.977	0.348

Based on table 1 above, $p = 0.348 > 0.05$, which means that the data is normally distributed.

Table 2. Paired sample t-test test results.

Paired Samples T-Test								
Measure 1	Measure 2	t	Df	p	Mean Difference	SE Difference	Cohen's d	SE Cohen's d
Pretest Comprecy	Posttest Understanding	-3.442	57	0.001	-1.190	0.346	-0.452	0.167

Based on Table 2 above, there is a difference between pre and post tests, with an average difference of -1,190 (Mean Difference), t afternoon = 3,442, $p = 0.001 < 0.05$. Cohen's value d showed a small effect of 0.167, meaning that there was a difference between before and after psychoeducation. This shows that the implementation of psychoeducation has an impact on changing participants' knowledge.

Discussion

This psychoeducation aims to increase the understanding of junior high school students about assertive communication to prevent bullying. The results showed that psychoeducation was effective in increasing participants' knowledge regarding the importance of improving assertive communication to prevent bullying in the school environment.


Figures 1. Psychoeducation at SMPN 1 Purwosari.

Assertive communication is a communication skill that allows a person to express their opinions, feelings, and needs clearly and confidently, without hurting or harming

the other party. These skills play an important role in building healthy social relationships in the school environment. One strategy that is considered effective for dealing with bullying cases is to improve students' understanding and skills of assertive communication skills. By having this ability, students can voice their stance firmly while still respecting others, so that they are able to protect themselves from bullying and prevent bullying behavior [7]. Assertive abilities that are well developed in students allow them to resolve conflicts in a positive and constructive manner, while also lowering the likelihood that they engage in bullying behavior towards peers.

Students who have assertive communication are able to express their opinions and feelings straightforward and firmly, without hurting or violating the rights of others [8]. Assertive students generally have a higher sense of confidence in communicating and are able to deal with various social situations better. This ability allows them to set healthy boundaries in social relationships. This means that they can avoid harmful bullying behavior because they are able to convey their needs and opinions appropriately and safely [9], [10], [11], [12]. In addition to providing personal benefits in building positive relationships, these skills also contribute to the creation of a safer and more supportive environment, both at school and in life outside of school [13], [14], [15].

CONCLUSION

Fundamental Finding : Based on the results of this psychoeducational activity, it can be concluded that the results of this psychoeducational activity are in accordance with the implementation method. By providing this psychoeducation, students have an understanding of bullying and assertive communication strategies. The results of the comprehension questionnaire analysis showed significant results, which showed that these psychoeducational activities have improved students' understanding of bullying and assertive communication. **Implication :** These findings imply that structured psychoeducational interventions can be an effective approach in enhancing students' social-emotional learning, particularly in addressing sensitive issues like bullying and assertiveness. **Limitation :** However, the conclusions are based solely on one psychoeducational implementation, which may limit the generalizability of the results to broader populations or different educational contexts. **Future Research :** Future research should explore the long-term impact of such psychoeducational activities and examine how repeated or integrated sessions may influence students' behavioral change and emotional resilience across diverse school settings.

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