



Mindfulness, and bullying behavior tendencies among adolescents

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Abstract

This study aims to determine the relationship between mindfulness, and tendencies toward bullying behavior. This study uses correlational quantitative research methods. The number of samples in this study was 350. The sampling technique is non-probability sampling. Meanwhile, the measuring instruments used in this study were the Adolescent Peer Relations Instrument-Bully/Target (APRI-BT), and the Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ). The results obtained show that mindfulness was found to be negatively correlated with the bullying behavior tendencies ($r = -.147^*$). The limitation of this study is that it does not apply screening to respondents who can become research participants, so students who can become research respondents are not necessarily bullies. For further research, it is better to be able to show data on bullying as perpetrators or as victims, because in this study it does not show data on respondents as victims. Future research can also try to test the effectiveness of mindfulness training to reduce the tendency of bullying behavior in students because, in this study, it was proven that mindfulness is negatively correlated with the tendency of bullying behavior.

Keywords: mindfulness, bullying, adolescents

Introduction

The phenomenon of bullying behavior is a part of juvenile delinquency in adolescence (Ilham *et al.*, 2021) ^[17]. Bullying is a problem of global concern (Putri *et al.*, 2015) ^[29]. Bullying is a frightening experience that is usually faced by many teenagers at school (Garret, 2014) ^[12]. In addition, according to the UNICEF (Ijazah, 2020) ^[16], bullying is aggressive behavior in the form of abuse of power perpetrated by a person or group against another person, which can result in repeated physical, psychological, and social damage, which often occurs in schools and other places where children gather, including social media. In this case, bullying seems to be a sub-culture that is inherent in society and has penetrated various sectors of life, be they social, cultural, political, or security threats (Erismon & Karneli, 2021) ^[9].

Cases of bullying are an iceberg phenomenon; the cases that stick out appear to be few, but in fact there are many, rooted in tradition, passed down from generation to generation, and often not monitored by schools and parents (Fachrosi, 2016) ^[10]. The prevalence of bullying, especially in schools, is increasing every year and occurs in various countries around the world (Erismon & Karneli, 2021) ^[9]. Based on data from UNESCO, which involved 144 countries, it was revealed that 16.1% of children had been victims of physical bullying (Borualogo & Gumilang, 2019) ^[5]. Then, based on data released by the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (Komisi Perlindungan Anak Indonesia, 2017) ^[19], according to a survey by the International Center for Research on Women (ICRW), Indonesia is a country that occupies the top position of cases of bullying in schools at the Asean level, namely 84%, followed by Nepal and Vietnam (79%), Cambodia (73%), and Pakistan (43%).

Bullying behavior that occurs naturally has various impacts, not only for victims but also for perpetrators; according to

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Wahyuni *et al.*, (2019) ^[33], bullying has a negative impact on perpetrators and victims. The same thing was conveyed in research conducted by Darmayanti *et al.*, (2019) ^[6], which stated that the impact of bullying was not only on victims but also on the perpetrators of bullying and the victims of bullying, but the biggest impact of bullying was experienced by victims of bullying (Wahyuni *et al.*, 2019) ^[33], where the negative impacts experienced were for the short and long term (Dewi, 2020) ^[7]. The short-term impact caused by bullying behavior is that the victim becomes depressed because of experiencing bullying and has decreased interest in doing school assignments given by the teacher, while the long-term consequences for victims of this bullying are difficulties in establishing good relationships with friends and peers and always having anxiety about unpleasant treatment from their friends (Dewi, 2020) ^[7].

In addition to causing an impact, a behavior is also triggered by its causal factors. The factors that cause bullying (Mujtahidah, 2018) ^[24] are basically divided into two categories: internal and external factors. Internal factors include personality characteristics and having experienced violence as a past experience, and external factors that cause violence are environment and culture (Mujtahidah, 2018) ^[24]. Rigby (2002) ^[30] explains that individuals who are involved in acts of bullying, both as perpetrators and victims, are inseparable from the personality they have (Pertiwi, 2019) ^[28], whereas most people who are targets of bullying usually have weak personalities and are unable to fight back against people who bully them (Pertiwi, 2019) ^[28]. The results of research conducted by Diyantini *et al.*, (2015) ^[8] showed that most children (58.2%) had experienced bullying at school, but there was no significant relationship between the characteristics and personality of the child. In this case, the personality types used are extrovert and introvert. The results of this study are

different from the results of research conducted by Putri *et al.*, (2015) [29], which found that adolescents with extrovert personality types, the majority, have high levels of bullying behavior.

Regarding bullying behavior itself, bullying behavior is a behavior that has a very negative impact on all parties, especially for victims and perpetrators of bullying themselves (Pertiwi, 2019) [28]. So efforts to reduce bullying behavior are needed to reduce the negative impacts that exist. In contrast to bullying behavior, which is characterized by impulsivity and a lack of empathy, mindfulness increases empathy and a sense of caring for others (Abid *et al.*, 2017) [1]. According to Jon Kabat-Zinn, mindfulness is nothing but awareness (N. Hidayati, 2018) [15]. Mindfulness is generally defined as a state of being attentive and aware of what is happening in the moment (Olpin & Hesson, 2021) [27]. In addition, according to Hidayati (2018) [15] mindfulness is awareness that is raised by giving attention intentionally, in a certain way, continuously, in the present moment, and without giving judgment. Where attention is a process of growing appreciation for fullness every time we live (Olpin & Hesson, 2021) [27]. Evidence shows that there is a relationship between mindfulness and bullying behavior (Faraji *et al.*, 2019) [11], where a study conducted by Abid *et al.* (2017) [1] on children showed that mindfulness and bullying behavior are negatively correlated with each other, where children who tend to have high levels of bullying behavior have low levels of mindfulness, and vice versa. The results of this finding are different from research conducted on employees showing that mindfulness does not significantly regulate the effects of bullying on emotional fatigue and employee resilience (Anasori *et al.*, 2020) [2].

Based on the description above, it is explained that the phenomenon of bullying still often occurs among adolescents, and it is also explained that Jakarta is the province with the highest level of bullying cases in Indonesia. In addition, several previous studies stated that there was a relationship between mindfulness and bullying; however, previous research also stated that there was no relationship between mindfulness and bullying. Therefore, researchers are interested in examining whether bullying has a relationship with a tendency toward bullying behavior, which is said to be good for research related to bullying.

Literature review

Bullying definition

The American Psychological Association (APA, 2013) [3] defines bullying as "a form of aggressive behavior in which someone intentionally and repeatedly causes another person injury or discomfort. Bullying is aggressive behavior in the form of abuse of power perpetrated by a person or group against other people, so that it can result in repeated physical, psychological, and social damage, which often occurs in schools and other places where children congregate, including social media (Ilham *et al.*, 2021) [17]. Mishna (2012) [23] defines bullying as aggressive behavior that can be channeled either directly or indirectly, either verbally, physically, psychologically, or in relationships.

According to Kuykendall (2012) [20], bullying is defined as an act in which one person or a group has more power and repeatedly attacks other people who are weaker with the aim of hurting, stressing, and fearing. Randall (in Rigby, 2002) [30]

defines bullying as an aggressive behavior that appears intentionally with the aim of hurting others both physically and psychologically. Furthermore, Dewi (2020) [7] states that bullying is a condition in which there has been an abuse of power by individuals or groups with the aim of hurting other people.

Based on the description above, it can be concluded that bullying is an aggressive behavior that is carried out either directly or indirectly, either verbally, physically, or otherwise. Then this bullying behavior is also an abuse of power by a person or group of people with bad goals.

Bullying behavior in Jakarta adolescents

Previous research has found that bullying behavior in children, especially teenagers, has occurred in Jakarta (Wiguna *et al.*, 2016) [34] with the percentage of bullies being 4.6% bullying inside school, and 7.5% bullying outside school. Bullying itself, based on previous research, has begun to be seen when children are at an early age with a percentage of 35%, with gender itself having no impact on bullying; but boys are more likely to engage in physical bullying; and in terms of age it was found that bullying would be more visible in children who were 6 years old (Hartati *et al.*, 2020) [13]. Based on the survey, it was also found that Jakarta is the third city that reports the most incidents of bullying after Yogyakarta and Surabaya which rank first and second (L. N. Hidayati & Amalia, 2021) [14]. Based on previous research (Yusuf *et al.*, 2019) [35], which has collected data since 2015, it has also found that school adolescents in Indonesia tend to experience a relatively high prevalence of bullying with causes of bullying caused by various factors depending on personal and environmental factors. Research conducted by Lesmana and Febrianto (2020) [21] found that self-esteem and gender prejudice are the causes of bullying occurring among adolescents in Jakarta, especially bullying that is done digitally or cyberbullying.

Bullying behavior can be caused by several factors. One of the factors that this research wants to raise is personality characteristics, and this is based on previous research that has examined the role of personality on bullying tendencies in Indonesian youth (Pertiwi, 2019) [28]. This research is supported by other research (Zhang *et al.*, 2021) [36], which also shows that personality plays a role in the possibility of bullying behavior at school. Based on previous research (Nurfadilah & Listiyandini, 2017) [26] conducted on adolescents in Jakarta, it was found that the level of youth bullying can be lower if adolescents at school have high levels of mindfulness and empathy within themselves. Therefore, mindfulness can be one of the basic variables that can contribute to lower rates of bullying among adolescents at school.

Mindfulness definition

Mindfulness is rooted in Buddhist philosophy and is a form of skill that can help individuals have awareness and not be reactive to what is happening right now (Maharani, 2016) [22]. Mindfulness is a way of directing attention (Baer *et al.*, 2006) [4]. Kabat-Zinn (2003) [18] notes that mindfulness includes attitudes of compassion, interest, friendliness, and openness to experiences that are observed in the present, regardless of how pleasant or aversive they may be (Baer *et al.*, 2006) [4].

Mindfulness is generally defined as a state of being attentive and aware of what is happening in the moment, and

mindfulness is the process of cultivating an appreciation for the fullness of every moment we live (Olpin & Hesson, 2021) ^[27]. Furthermore, Savitri and Listiyandini (2017) ^[31] stated that mindfulness is an increase in awareness by focusing on current experiences (present-moment awareness) and non-judgmental acceptance.

Then, according to Olpin and Hesson (2021) ^[27], mindfulness is also a process of learning how to be fully present in all experiences while being less judgmental and reactive. Mindfulness practices include self-reflection, acceptance, self-care, and opening up to adversity without avoidance (Olpin & Hesson, 2021) ^[27]. Based on the descriptions above, it can be concluded that mindfulness is a state in which a person focuses full attention on things that are happening right now without focusing on things that have happened or will happen.

Facets of mindfulness

Baer *et al.* (2006) ^[4] divided mindfulness aspects into five facets developed in the Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ) instrument. These facets include observing, describing, acting with awareness, not judging inner experience, and not reacting to inner experience.

Observing means that an individual pays attention to or is present in various internal and external experiences. Observing is also a person's ability to pay attention to perceptions, feelings, and thoughts. This includes experiences involving sight, sound, smell, sensation, cognition, and emotion (Baer *et al.*, 2006) ^[4]. Based on the results of previous studies, the observing aspect is the main element of mindfulness. Describing means that an individual can label or describe a feeling, sensation, or experience with words. Act with awareness is an individual tendency to provide awareness and presence at every moment of activity carried out. In other words, a person focuses attention on activities and is able to avoid distractions. This contrasts with the difference between automatic thoughts and behaviors, where the individual's attention will be focused on something else and not on the present moment, which is often referred to as automatic pilot. Non-judging of inner experience is an aspect of mindfulness that has the meaning of an individual's tendency not to criticize the thoughts and feelings of the experiences encountered but to accept them sincerely without making judgments. Non-reactivity, or no reaction, is when the individual lets thoughts and feelings come, then releases them without getting carried away in these feelings, and reacts to the experiences and thoughts they encounter. This dimension can also be defined as a person's ability to understand and pay attention to his own feelings, emotions, and thoughts without reacting to them.

The hypothesis to be proven in this study consists of:

- Ho: There is no relationship between Mindfulness and the tendency of bullying behavior in adolescents.
- H1: There is a relationship between Mindfulness and the tendency of bullying behavior in adolescents.

Research method

Research design and sampling technique

This study used a quantitative method with a survey research design using a rating scale question in the form of a questionnaire. The unit of analysis in this research is individual adolescents who are currently enrolled at school or university in Jakarta as active students. Based on data obtained from the

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Central Bureau of Statistics, the number of teenagers in Jakarta with an age limit of 10-14 years is 765,642 people, 15-19 years is 710,184 people, and 20-24 years is 784,252 people. In this study, the population used was teenagers in Jakarta, totaling 2,260,078 people. The number of samples in the study was found using the following Slovin formula:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

n: Sample size

N: Population size

e: (*error tolerance*) = 0,01

Based on the calculation using the formula above, the result is 399.946 with an error rate of 5%. Then the number of respondents who will be sampled in this study is close to 400. The number of respondents who will be sampled in this study is close to 400. The number of respondents who were collected in this study was 350 teenagers, so it can be said to be quite close to the desired sample size and can be used for data processing. The sampling technique used in this study is a nonprobability sampling technique. The type of sampling used in this research is purposive sampling. The reason for using this type is because not all samples meet the appropriate criteria for what the researcher will do. Therefore, researchers use a purposive sampling technique by setting certain considerations or criteria that must be met by the samples used in this study. The sample criteria used in this study were adolescents aged 11–20 who were attending school or studying in Jakarta.

Data collection technique

Data collection techniques were carried out using a questionnaire in the form of a scale. The method used by researchers to get answers from respondents is by distributing questionnaires through social media, namely Google Forms. The questionnaire that became the instrument in this study consisted of measuring instruments to measure 3 research variables, namely the Adolescent Peer Relations Instrument—Bully/Target by Solberg and Olweu (2003) ^[32], and the Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ) based on aspects according to Baer *et al.* (2006) ^[4]. Measurement of the three measuring instruments with a questionnaire using a Likert scale.

Research instruments for bullying

In this study, researchers measured the tendency of bullying behavior using the Adolescent Peer Relations Instrument—Bully/Target (APRI-BT) based on aspects according to Solberg and Olweu (2003) ^[32]. The scale used is the scale in Section A, where this scale consists of 18 items, including 6 items of verbal bullying, 6 items of social bullying, and 6 items of physical bullying. This scale uses a Likert scale with 6 points, namely, 1 (never); 2 (sometimes); 3 (once or twice a month); 4 (once a week); 5 (several times a week); and 6 (daily). Responses close to 1 indicate a rare involvement in bullying behavior, while a score close to 6 indicates a high number of frequent involvements in bullying behavior. The individual respondent scales are summed, and the result is the level of bullying behavior tendencies.

Research instruments for mindfulness

In this study, researchers measured the tendency of bullying

behavior using the Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ) based on aspects according to Baer *et al.* (2006) [4], where this scale consists of 39 dimensions, including observing, describing, acting with awareness, non-judging of inner experience, and non-reactivity to inner experience. This scale uses a Likert scale with 5 points, namely, 1 Very Rarely True, 2 Disagree (TS), 3 Neutral (N), 4 Agree (S), and 5 Always True. To get the overall mindfulness value, the sum of each domain can be added together to describe a person's level of mindfulness.

Data analysis technique

Validity test

The validity in this study uses construct validity and content validity. Construct validity is related to the ability of a measuring instrument to measure the meaning of the concept it measures. In this study, the questions from the original measuring instrument used were in English. So, for the translation process, the researcher got help from a sworn translator who helped translate into Indonesian. To test the validity of this construct, the researcher used the expert judgment method as a step for assessing and discussing question items that the researchers had adapted and modified from existing measuring instruments. From the results of expert judgment with six experts, it was concluded that the items used by the researcher were appropriate to use because they had an Aikens V value above 0.75 and were considered feasible to use. To test the validity of the content, the researcher conducted a trial run and then analyzed the items. This analysis was processed using the SPSS 22 program and refers to the results of the corrected item-total correlation from the SPSS output table with a limit of 0.3. That is, the item is declared valid if $r\text{-count} > 0.3$. Whereas items that get a score of <0.3 will be declared invalid and will be aborted.

Reliability test

The reliability of the measuring instrument is determined by the tool's ability to measure what it measures. This means that whenever the measuring tool is used, it will give the same measurement results. A measuring instrument can be said to be reliable when Alpha Cronbach ≥ 0.6 . In determining the reliability score, the researcher processed the data using SPSS version 22 for Windows. The results of the reliability test of the three measuring instruments are as follows:

Table 1: Mindfulness reliability test

Variable	Cronbach alpha
Observing	0,767
Describing	0,788
Nonjudging	0,801
Nonreacting to inner experience	0,649
Acting with awareness	0,871
Overall Mindfulness as Single Factor	0,892

Table 2: Bullying reliability test

Variable	Cronbach alpha
Verbal bullying	0,886
Physical bullying	0,848
Indirect or social bullying	0,824
Overall bullying as single factor	0,925

Normality test

The normality test is used to measure whether the data obtained is normally distributed or not. So that the selection of statistics can be done correctly. In this study, the normality test was performed using Kolmogorov-Smirnov from SPSS. Data can be said to be normal if it has a significant value greater than 5% ($p > 0.05$).

Correlation test

In conducting this research by testing the hypothesis to see the correlation, strength, or direction of the relationship between variables, it can be done with the Pearson method if the data that has been tested is said to be normal. Meanwhile, the Spearman method is used to process data that is otherwise abnormal.

Findings and discussion

Finding

Based on the data collection that has been carried out by researchers, the following demographic data is obtained:

Table 3: Demographic data descriptive results

	Frequency	Percent
Gender		
Male	131	37.4%
Female	219	62.6%
Total	350	100%
Age		
11-13	20	5.71%
14-16	171	48.86%
17-20	159	45.43%
Total	350	100%
Domicile		
Central Jakarta	48	13.7
North Jakarta	48	13.7
West Jakarta	109	31.1
South Jakarta	72	20.6
East Jakarta	73	20.9
Total	350	100%

The normality test used in this study is to use the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test to determine whether the data obtained is normal or not. The distribution of the data obtained is normally distributed if $p > 0.05$ and not normally distributed if $p < 0.05$. Researchers used the Kolmogorov-Smirnov One-Sample in the SPSS application to test the normality of bullying, mindfulness, honesty-humility, emotionality, extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness to experience.

Table 4: Data normality test results

	Test statistic	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
Mindfulness	.128	.000
Bullying	.132	.000

Based on the table above, it can be seen that the variable obtained a significant value of $p = .000$ ($p < 0.05$), so it can be concluded that the data is not normally distributed. Therefore, in conducting a correlation analysis for the variables in the study, the Spearman correlation type will be used.

Table 5: Results of data correlation analysis

	1	2
1. Mindfulness	1	-
2. Bullying	-.147*	1

* $p < .05$

The results of the correlation test conducted showed that the mindfulness variable had a negative relationship ($r = -.147$, $p < .05$) with the bullying variable. So it can be concluded that the higher the level of mindfulness a person has, the lower the level of bullying. Vice versa, the lower their mindfulness, the higher their level of bullying.

Discussion

In this study, it was found that there was a negative correlation between mindfulness and bullying variables, so it can be concluded that the more mindful a person is, the lower the tendency of someone's bullying behavior. Bullying behavior is usually characterized by impulsive behavior and a lack of empathy (Abid *et al.*, 2017) [1]. Meanwhile, according to Naik, *et al.* (2013), one of the benefits of mindfulness is increasing empathy; therefore, mindful practices can be used to increase empathy for bullies. In addition, mindful practices also function to break the cycle of automatic reactions during negative emotions, which are followed by a decrease in aggressive and impulsive behavior (Faraji *et al.*, 2019) [11].

Conclusion

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that mindfulness has a negative significant correlation towards bullying, so the H1 in this research is accepted and Ho is rejected.

Limitation & further research

The limitation of this study is that it does not apply screening to respondents who can become research participants, so students who can become research respondents are not necessarily bullies. For further research, it is better to be able to show data on bullying as perpetrators or as victims, because in this study it does not show data on respondents as victims. Future research can also try to test the effectiveness of mindfulness training to reduce the tendency of bullying behavior in students because, in this study, it was proven that mindfulness is negatively correlated with the tendency of bullying behavior.

Data availability statement

The research data supporting the findings of this study will be available upon request from corresponding author.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest, financial or otherwise.

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