

# The Prevalence of Bullying Cases in High Schools Medan City

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## Abstract

Bullying in schools is a global phenomenon that is increasingly receiving serious attention from various parties, including the government, educators, and the community. This study aims to analyze the prevalence and characteristics of bullying among high school students in Medan City, as well as the factors that influence the incidence of bullying. The method used in this study is quantitative with a random sampling technique of 300 students spread across several high schools in Medan City. The questionnaire in this study was adapted from the Olweus Bullying Questionnaire (OBQ) 2007 as a data collection tool and then analyzed using excel software to identify victims of bullying, students' experiences related to the type of bullying experienced and its frequency. The results showed that 41.3% of students (124 out of 300 students surveyed) reported having been victims of bullying. The majority of victims were female students (78 students), with the most commonly experienced form of bullying being nonverbal bullying (social exclusion and spreading rumors). The research found that females were more vulnerable to nonverbal bullying, while males experienced verbal and physical bullying more frequently.

**Keywords:** Bullying; Nonverbal; Psychological impact; Medan City.

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## Introduction

Bullying cases in schools are a global phenomenon that is getting serious attention from various groups, including the government, educators, and society (Nasution, 2023). According to the World Health Organization (UNISEF, 2021), bullying can have a negative impact not only on the mental and physical health of victims, but also on their social development. These impacts can be long-term and affect an individual's ability to interact socially and cope with stress (Ardi et al., 2023; Putra, 2023; Putra & Ahmad, 2020; Putra & Ardi, 2024; Syukur et al., 2024; Einarsen & Mikkelsen, 2002; Wolke & Lereya, 2015). Bullying that occurs in the school environment has the potential to damage students' self-confidence

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and psychological well-being, which in turn can interfere with their learning process (Putra & Hariko, 2023; Abdelaziz & Harraz, 2021; Ishrat & Hameed, 2024). Data from the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia shows that around 30% of students in Indonesia have experienced bullying in the school environment (Camodeca et al., 2003). This phenomenon is of particular concern, especially in big cities that have a large number of students, such as Medan City. This city, as one of the largest cities in Sumatra, is not immune to bullying issues that continue to be a challenge in the world of education. Therefore, it is important to conduct an in-depth study on the prevalence of bullying cases in senior high schools in Medan City to understand the scale and nature of this problem, as well as to find more appropriate solutions.

Bullying in schools can take many forms, including verbal, physical, and nonverbal (Firman & Ersya, 2023; Listiani et al., 2024; Trisnani & Wardani, 2016). Previous research shows that verbal and nonverbal bullying are the most common among adolescents (Nansel et al., 2001). Verbal forms of bullying usually involve insults or ridicule carried out in front of classmates, while nonverbal bullying can take the form of ostracizing or giving certain demeaning gestures to victims (Hasanah et al., 2024; Wahyuningsih, 2016). Both types of bullying have an equally large impact on adolescent psychology, as it can damage their self-image and worsen their social relationships (DeLara, 2016; Lian et al., 2018). Olweus (1993), an effective bullying prevention program should involve not only students, but also teachers, parents, and the school community as a whole. In Medan City, despite various bullying prevention programs implemented by the school and local government, the number of bullying cases still shows an alarming trend. Recent data from the Medan City Education Office shows that about 27% of high school students reported experiencing some form of bullying during the last school year. This reflects that although awareness of bullying has started to increase, there are still many challenges to be faced in creating a safer and more inclusive school environment. By understanding the prevalence and characteristics of bullying in high schools, it is hoped that more effective measures can be taken in addressing this issue. This study aims to identify the number and types of bullying experienced by high school students in Medan as well as the factors that influence its occurrence, both internal factors such as students' personality and external factors such as family and friendship environment

In addition, the importance of this study also lies in the long-term impact that bullying can have. Victims of bullying often experience mental health problems, such as depression and anxiety, which can continue into adulthood (Slee & Mohyla, 2014). Further research shows that individuals who have been bullied are more likely to experience mental disorders later in life. Such impacts not only affect the individual victim, but also potentially damage the quality of their relationships with others (Einarsen & Mikkelsen, 2002; Wolke & Lereya, 2015). Therefore, this research is not only important to understand the prevalence of bullying, but also to provide deeper insights into how bullying can disrupt students' social and emotional development. With a deeper understanding of this impact, it is hoped that various parties, including schools, parents and the government, can work together to create more effective policies to prevent and address bullying in educational settings. With a holistic and sustainable approach, it is hoped that bullying cases can be reduced and students can develop better in a supportive school environment.

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## Method

This research uses descriptive quantitative method, the quantitative method was chosen because it provides a clear and measurable picture of the bullying phenomenon through numerical data that can be further analyze (Firman, 2018). Descriptive in this study aims to provide in-depth information about the types of bullying, the frequency of occurrence, and the impact on students, without intervening or changing the variables studied. The population in this study consisted of 300 high school students spread across several high schools in Medan City. Sampling was conducted using random sampling technique to ensure wider data representativeness and free from bias. By using random sampling, each student has an equal opportunity to be selected as a sample, so that the results of the study can be generalized to the entire population of high school students in Medan City. The questionnaire used in this study was adapted from the Olweus Bullying Questionnaire (OBQ) in 2007. The questionnaire consisted of various questions covering the type of bullying experienced by students (e.g., verbal, physical, or social bullying), the frequency of occurrence, and the impact of the bullying on students.

Data collection was conducted by distributing questionnaires to students in several high schools in Medan City on September 20, 2024 for one week. The questionnaires were distributed directly to students with clear completion guidelines to ensure proper understanding of the questions asked. After the data was collected, data analysis was conducted using statistical software such as Excel to calculate the percentage and frequency distribution of each variable studied. The analysis techniques used included descriptive analysis to describe the characteristics of the respondents and the phenomenon of bullying that occurred. Percentages were calculated to identify the proportion of students who experienced bullying, as well as the most common types and frequency of bullying events. Data were also analyzed to determine the relationship between bullying experience and other factors, such as gender. The results of this analysis were then presented in the form of tables, graphs, and easy-to-understand descriptions to illustrate an overview of the prevalence of bullying in Medan City high schools.

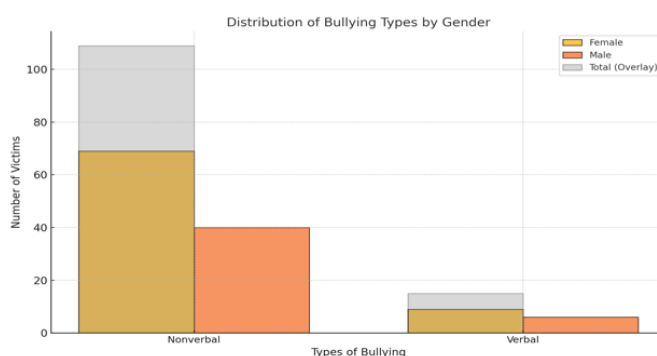
## Results and Discussion

Based on research conducted on 300 students as a population, 124 students were found to have been victims of bullying. The data can be seen from the following table.

**Table 1. Recapitulation of Student Results Victims of bullying**

Gender	Number of Bullying Victims	Nonverbal Bullying	Verbal Bullying
Female	78	69	9
Male	46	40	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>15</b>

Based on the data obtained, of the 78 female students who reported being victims of bullying, 69 students (88.5%) experienced nonverbal bullying, such as social exclusion and spreading rumors, while the other 9 students (11.5%) experienced verbal bullying. Meanwhile, of the 46 male students who were victims of bullying, 40 students (87%) experienced nonverbal bullying, and 6 students (13%) experienced verbal bullying. Overall, there were 124 students who reported being victims of bullying, with the majority (109 students or 87.9%) experiencing nonverbal bullying, while only 15 students (12.1%) were victims of verbal bullying. This finding shows that nonverbal bullying is the most dominant type of bullying experienced by students, both female and male. In addition, there were more female bullying victims than male bullying victims, although the percentage of bullying types experienced was relatively similar between the two groups. The proportion of verbal bullying was slightly higher in male students (13%) compared to females (11.5%), but overall, nonverbal bullying was the main concern as it dominated the reported cases



**Figure. 1 Diagram of Data Recapitulation of Students Victims of bullying**

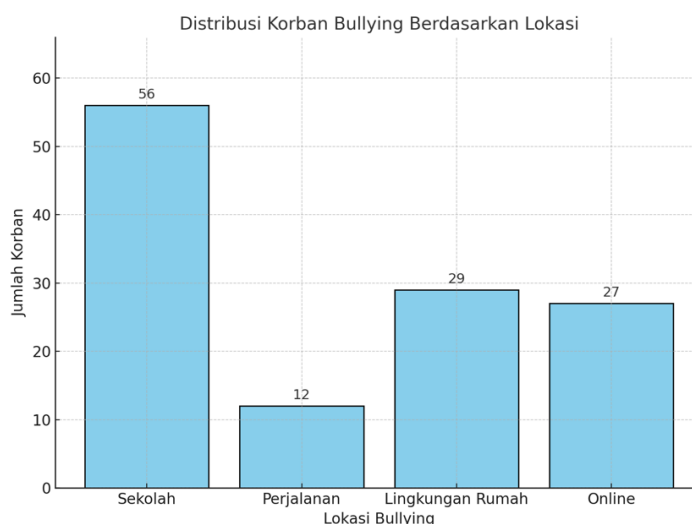
Furthermore, the questionnaire results were analyzed by recapitulating the location of students experiencing *bullying*, the data can be seen in the following table.

**Table 2. Recapitulation of Student Locations Experiencing *Bullying***

Gender	Number of Bullying Victims
School	56
Travel	12
Home environment	29
Online	27
<b>Total</b>	<b>124</b>

Based on the data obtained, the highest number of bullying victims was reported in the school environment, with 56 students being victimized, which accounted for about 45% of the total bullying victims. The second location with a significant number of victims was the home environment, where 29 students (around 23%) reported being victims of bullying. On the online platform, 27 students (around 22%) experienced bullying based on digital

media or social media. Meanwhile, bullying that occurred during the journey to and from school was reported by 12 students (around 10%). Overall, the total number of bullying victims was 124 students, with the school environment being the most frequently reported location, followed by the home environment, online platforms, and travel. This finding shows that school as the main place of social interaction for students needs more attention to prevent bullying, followed by the need for increased supervision in the home environment and digital platforms. The data can be seen from the following diagram.



**Figure. 2 Diagram of Recapitulation of Data on Students Victims of bullying**

Based on the data obtained, 124 students reported being victims of bullying. The most reported location of bullying occurred at school, with 56 students (about 45% of the total victims). The second location with a significant number of victims was the home environment, where 29 students (23%) experienced bullying. On the online platform, there were 27 students (22%) who were victims of digital-based bullying, such as on social media. Meanwhile, during the journey to and from school, there were 12 students (10%) who reported experiencing bullying. In terms of types of bullying, the data shows that the majority of victims experienced nonverbal bullying (such as social exclusion and spreading rumors), with a total of 109 students (87.9% of the total victims). In contrast, verbal bullying (such as teasing or direct insults) was reported by 15 students (12.1%). When viewed by gender, female students dominated the reports with a total of 78 victims, where 69 students (88.5% of the total female victims) experienced nonverbal bullying, and 9 students (11.5%) experienced verbal bullying. Meanwhile, for male students, there were 46 victims, with 40 students (87%) experiencing nonverbal bullying and 6 students (13%) experiencing verbal bullying.

This is in line with the results of research showing that women tend to be more sensitive to social judgment and more easily influenced by group dynamics (Pranata & Sihombing, 2022). One form of nonverbal bullying that is often experienced by women is social exclusion and spreading rumors (Farida et al.,2024) . Complex group dynamics and social relationships that often involve emotional interactions can make women easier targets in these situations. A higher reliance on social interactions can also increase their vulnerability to bullying that is hardly noticeable to others, but whose impact can be devastating. In addition, women who are victims of bullying often experience more serious

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mental health problems compared to men (Lereya et al., 2015; Turner et al., 2013) . Research shows that women who experience bullying are more prone to depression and anxiety, which can affect their overall well-being (Yusra & Rasimin, 2021) . These negative impacts are not only limited to psychological aspects, but can also affect their academic performance. Victims of bullying often experience decreased self-confidence, which leads to difficulties in learning and establishing healthy social relationships (Anjani et al., 2024; Maliki et al., 2009; Nasution, 2023) . When victims feel isolated or unsupported, they are more vulnerable to mental disorders, which ultimately affect their quality of life (Rigby, 2001; Ringdal et al., 2021).

Another factor that influences the prevalence of bullying among students is the social and cultural norms that exist in society (Campbell et al., 2018) . In some communities, bullying may even be considered part of the normal socialization process (Evans & Smokowski, 2016; Salmivalli, 2010) . This kind of view can leave victims feeling that they have nowhere to turn for help or even talk about their experiences. In an environment where bullying is normalized, victims may feel isolated and not get the support they need. Therefore, it is important to educate the public, especially students and educators, about the negative impact of bullying and the need to create a safe and inclusive environment for all students (Domínguez-Martínez & Robles, 2019; Kutsyuruba et al., 2015) . Bullying education should involve all parties, including students, teachers, parents, and the wider community (Farrington & Ttofi, 2009; O'Moore & Minton, 2004) . Preventive measures, such as workshops on empathy, education on differences, and the importance of respecting others, can be an initial effort in reducing bullying cases in schools. In addition, schools should have clear and firm policies regarding bullying, and provide support channels for students who are victims. This will help create a safer and more comfortable school environment for all students, without exception.

## Conclusion

Based on the results of the study, it was found that bullying is still a significant problem. Of the 300 students surveyed, approximately 41.3% reported having been victims of bullying, with the majority of victims being female students (78 out of 124 victims). Bullying experienced by students generally takes nonverbal forms, such as social exclusion and spreading rumors, which are more commonly experienced by females. The study also revealed that social and cultural factors play an important role in the prevalence of bullying. Women are more vulnerable to nonverbal bullying due to their nature of being more sensitive to social judgment and engaging in more complex social interactions. The impact of bullying, especially for girls, is detrimental, not only in terms of mental health, such as depression and anxiety, but also in their academic performance and social relationships. Therefore, it is important to pay more attention to female victims of bullying and provide adequate psychological support.

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