

Parental Involvement in Social Support (A Case Study of Bullying Victims Among Junior High School Students Reported to the Integrated Police Service Center (SPKT) of Palembang Police Department)

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Abstract

Purpose: This study aims to examine parental involvement in providing social support to bullying victims among junior high school students who reported cases to the Integrated Police Service Center (SPKT) of Palembang Metropolitan Resort Police (Polrestabes Palembang). The research addresses the critical need to understand how parental support influences the psychological recovery of children experiencing bullying.

Method: The research employed qualitative observation method to gain in-depth understanding of emotional development and communication patterns of children who are victims of bullying.

Practical Applications: The observation was conducted in a private room at SPKT after the victim completed the suspect report form, focusing on social interactions, facial expressions, emotional responses, and daily communication skills.

Conclusion: Bullying has serious psychological impacts on victims, including anxiety, depression, and suicidal thoughts. Victims tend to withdraw and feel isolated. Polrestabes Palembang has implemented educational outreach and counseling in schools to prevent and address bullying cases. Parental involvement proves crucial as a protective factor in children's recovery process.

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Introduction

The Palembang Metropolitan Resort Police (Polrestabes Palembang) operates as a key component of the South Sumatra Regional Police (Polda Sumatera Selatan), with jurisdiction spanning Palembang city and its surrounding areas. As the capital of South Sumatra Province and a major metropolitan center, Palembang faces numerous complex social, security, and public order challenges. The city's high population density, coupled with rapid economic growth and urbanization, necessitates a professional, responsive, and humanistic police force capable of addressing diverse community needs.

Polrestabes Palembang fulfills critical roles in maintaining public security and order (harkamtibmas), law enforcement, protection, guidance, and community service provision. Its organizational structure includes specialized units such as the Criminal Investigation Unit, Narcotics Investigation Unit, Traffic Unit, and the Integrated Police Service Center (SPKT), which serves as the primary public access point for reporting criminal incidents. Through the SPKT, Polrestabes Palembang aims to deliver services that are fast, transparent, and accountable, aligning with the National Police's transformation toward a "Presisi" Police Force (Predictive, Responsible, Transparent, and Fair).

Despite these institutional efforts, bullying remains a persistent social issue among junior high school students in Palembang, with many cases reported to the SPKT. According to SPKT data, bullying frequently occurs due to factors including physical or appearance differences, lack of social skills, unsupportive family environments, unresponsive schools, social media influence, and insufficient peer relationships. As Olweus (1995) defines, bullying constitutes deliberate, repeated behavior involving power imbalance, while Coloroso (2007) characterizes it as intimidation by someone stronger against someone weaker.

The psychological consequences of bullying on victims are severe and long-lasting, often manifesting as anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, and academic disruption. Junior high school students, who are in a critical developmental stage, are particularly vulnerable to these effects as they navigate identity formation and social relationships. During this sensitive period, parental involvement serves as a crucial protective factor in children's emotional regulation and social development.

However, parental responses to bullying incidents vary significantly. Some parents remain unaware of their children's victimization, while others hesitate to report incidents due to social stigma concerns. Conversely, an increasing number of parents actively seek institutional support by reporting bullying cases to the SPKT. This variation in parental involvement highlights the need for deeper understanding of how family support systems contribute to children's recovery from bullying trauma.

Drawing from Attachment Theory (Bowlby), Social Support Theory (Cobb, 1976; House, 1981), and Resilience Theory (Werner & Smith, 1982), this study examines how parental involvement in social support systems affects bullying victims' recovery process. The research specifically investigates cases reported to the SPKT of Polrestabes Palembang, focusing on how parental engagement influences victims' psychological resilience and recovery outcomes.

This investigation holds significant societal importance as it addresses a critical gap in understanding the family's role within the broader child protection ecosystem. By identifying effective parental support strategies, this research aims to contribute to more comprehensive anti-bullying interventions that integrate family, school, and community resources, ultimately fostering safer environments for children's development.

Method

This study employed a qualitative case study approach with direct observation as the primary data collection method to examine parental involvement in social support for bullying victims among junior high school students. The research design was specifically chosen to gain an in-depth understanding of the emotional development and communication patterns of children who are victims of bullying, allowing the researcher to capture authentic behaviors

and emotional expressions in natural settings.

The research subjects were selected through purposive sampling, focusing on junior high school students who had officially reported bullying incidents to the Integrated Police Service Center (SPKT) of Palembang Metropolitan Resort Police (Polrestabes Palembang). The primary case subject was VAR, a 14-year-old male student from SMP Negeri 6 Palembang, who had experienced persistent bullying since the middle of his first year in junior high school. VAR was accompanied by his mother and grandmother during the reporting process, as his father was away on business.

Data collection was conducted over approximately one full day in a private room at the SPKT facility, immediately following the subject's completion of the suspect report form in the criminal investigation unit. The observation protocol was designed to systematically document four key aspects: social interactions, facial expressions, emotional responses, and daily communication skills. Prior to observation, ethical clearance was obtained from Polrestabes Palembang authorities, and informed consent was secured from both the participant and his accompanying family members.

The observation process utilized a structured field note template based on established emotional and behavioral indicators relevant to bullying victims. The researcher documented both verbal and non-verbal behaviors, with particular attention to emotional triggers, coping mechanisms, and interpersonal dynamics between the victim and accompanying family members. To ensure data reliability, the observation was conducted by two trained researchers who independently recorded their observations, which were later compared and triangulated.

Data analysis followed the Miles and Huberman (1994) model for qualitative data analysis, consisting of three concurrent activities: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. The raw observational data was first transcribed and organized into thematic categories based on recurring patterns in emotional expression and social interaction. These categories were then refined through constant comparison techniques to identify key themes related to parental involvement in social support. The analytical process included negative case analysis to challenge emerging patterns and ensure comprehensive interpretation.

To enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings, the research incorporated member checking, where preliminary interpretations were shared with the participants for validation. Additionally, an external auditor reviewed the analytical process to minimize researcher bias. The final interpretation focused on understanding how parental presence and engagement influenced the victim's emotional expression and willingness to disclose bullying experiences during the official reporting process.

Result

The case study was conducted at the Integrated Police Service Center (SPKT) of Palembang Metropolitan Resort Police (Polrestabes Palembang) with a focus on documenting parental involvement in social support for bullying victims among junior high school students. The primary subject of this research was VAR, a 14-year-old male student from SMP Negeri 6 Palembang who had experienced persistent bullying since the middle of his first year in junior high school.

The observation was implemented over approximately one full day in a private room at the SPKT facility, immediately following the subject's completion of the suspect report form in the criminal investigation unit. The research team documented VAR's social interactions, facial expressions, emotional responses, and daily communication skills through systematic field notes and observational checklists. VAR was accompanied by his mother and grandmother during the reporting process, as his father was away on business. Key findings from the observation revealed significant patterns in VAR's emotional and social responses:

Figure 1. Reporting & Investigation



Source: Private Documentation, 2025.

1. Nonverbal Communication Patterns. VAR consistently displayed restlessness when emotionally distressed, particularly through repetitive foot movements when on the verge of crying. His facial expressions became notably serious when recounting bullying incidents, and he consistently directed his gaze downward during emotional moments, indicating feelings of insecurity and emotional suppression. These nonverbal cues provided critical insights into his internal emotional state that he struggled to express verbally.
2. Emotional Expression Challenges. The subject demonstrated significant difficulty in articulating his emotional experiences. When recalling bullying incidents, VAR would become visibly frustrated, with his voice gradually rising in intensity while clenching his fists. His emotional responses often culminated in uncontrollable crying, requiring extended periods of emotional stabilization before he could continue sharing his experiences. This pattern highlights the profound psychological impact of prolonged bullying on adolescent emotional regulation.
3. Limited Social Interaction Scope. VAR's social interactions were remarkably restricted, with meaningful engagement limited to only two individuals: NA (a childhood friend since kindergarten) and his grandmother NB (a retired civil servant who had cared for him since age three). He deliberately avoided broader social circles and crowded environments, demonstrating a protective withdrawal behavior common among bullying victims. This selective social engagement pattern indicates the development of significant social anxiety following repeated victimization.
4. Parental Involvement Dynamics. While VAR was accompanied by his mother during the reporting process, the observation revealed minimal direct emotional support from her during distressing moments. Instead, his grandmother provided consistent emotional comfort and reassurance. This dynamic reflects VAR's home environment where both parents are preoccupied with their careers, resulting in limited parental attention and emotional support. The grandmother has served as the primary emotional anchor in VAR's life since early childhood.
5. Cognitive Functioning with Emotional Barriers. Despite demonstrating good cognitive potential, VAR exhibited significant delays in processing and responding to questions during conversations. This cognitive-emotional disconnect appears to be a direct consequence of his bullying trauma, as he requires additional time to process questions while managing underlying emotional distress.

The observational data collected during this case study provides compelling evidence of the serious psychological impact of bullying on adolescent victims and the critical role of

consistent emotional support in the recovery process. VAR's case illustrates how limited parental involvement, despite formal reporting of the bullying incident to authorities, can hinder a victim's ability to process trauma and rebuild social confidence.

This research documented the tangible outcomes of bullying on a victim's daily functioning, including academic disruption, social withdrawal, and emotional dysregulation. The evidence gathered through direct observation at the SPKT facility demonstrates how institutional reporting of bullying incidents represents only the first step in a victim's recovery journey, with parental involvement serving as a crucial factor in determining the effectiveness of subsequent intervention and healing processes.

Discussion

The findings from this case study at the SPKT of Polrestabes Palembang reveal critical insights regarding parental involvement in social support systems for bullying victims, with significant implications for child protection frameworks. This research demonstrates that while institutional reporting mechanisms through police channels represent an important step in addressing bullying incidents, the effectiveness of recovery processes is substantially influenced by the quality and consistency of parental involvement.

One of the most significant observations from this study is the disconnect between formal reporting of bullying incidents and actual emotional support provided at home. VAR's case illustrates that even when parents take the proactive step of reporting bullying to authorities, their daily emotional engagement with the victim may remain limited. This finding aligns with research by Olweus (1995) and Coloroso (2007), which emphasizes that bullying intervention requires comprehensive support systems extending beyond institutional reporting. The observation that VAR primarily relied on his grandmother for emotional support, despite his mother's presence during the reporting process, underscores the complexity of parental involvement—physical presence alone does not equate to meaningful emotional engagement.

From a theoretical perspective, these findings strongly support Attachment Theory (Bowlby), which posits that secure emotional bonds with caregivers serve as foundational protection against psychological trauma. VAR's case demonstrates how inconsistent parental attention can undermine a child's ability to process traumatic experiences, resulting in emotional suppression and social withdrawal. This observation is particularly concerning given that junior high school represents a critical developmental period where adolescents are forming their identity and social competencies, as highlighted by Erikson's Psychosocial Development Theory.

The study also reveals important implications for institutional responses to bullying cases. While Polrestabes Palembang has implemented educational outreach and counseling programs in schools, these initiatives might be significantly enhanced through stronger collaboration with families. The current system appears to treat the reporting process as a discrete event rather than integrating it into a continuum of care that includes family support components. This represents a missed opportunity to leverage the SPKT as not just a reporting mechanism but as a gateway to comprehensive support services.

A notable positive outcome observed was VAR's ability to maintain communication with his childhood friend NA and grandmother NB, suggesting that even limited supportive relationships can serve as protective factors. This finding resonates with Resilience Theory (Werner & Smith, 1982), which identifies specific protective factors that can mitigate the effects of adversity. However, the narrow scope of VAR's social interactions also highlights the potential long-term consequences of bullying, including social anxiety and restricted relationship formation that may persist into adulthood if not adequately addressed.

Several challenges emerged during this research that warrant attention. First, the reluctance of many parents to report bullying incidents due to social stigma concerns creates a significant barrier to early intervention. Second, the lack of standardized protocols for

assessing and addressing the psychological needs of bullying victims during the reporting process limits the effectiveness of institutional responses. Third, the absence of follow-up mechanisms to ensure continued support for victims after the initial reporting creates gaps in the protection continuum.

To address these challenges, we recommend the development of a more integrated response system that connects police reporting with school-based support services and family counseling. Polrestabes Palembang could establish formal partnerships with school counselors and child psychologists to create a referral system that ensures victims receive comprehensive support. Additionally, implementing mandatory parental education sessions during the reporting process could help parents understand their critical role in the recovery process and equip them with practical strategies for supporting their children.

The findings also suggest that community-wide anti-bullying initiatives should move beyond school-based programs to include family-focused components. Workshops on recognizing bullying signs, effective communication with children about difficult experiences, and building emotional resilience could be incorporated into community outreach programs. Such initiatives would align with Social Support Theory (Cobb, 1976; House, 1981), which emphasizes the multi-dimensional nature of support needed for psychological recovery.

This case study, while limited in scope, provides valuable insights that could be scaled to broader contexts. The methodology of direct observation at police reporting centers could be replicated in other urban centers with similar social dynamics. However, future research should incorporate longitudinal tracking of victims to better understand the long-term impact of different levels of parental involvement on recovery outcomes.

The limitations of this study include its focus on a single case and the absence of comparative data from victims with varying levels of parental support. Additionally, the observational nature of the research means that some emotional responses may have been influenced by the presence of researchers. Future studies could address these limitations through mixed-method approaches incorporating both observational data and self-report measures from victims and their families over extended periods.

In conclusion, this research underscores that effective bullying intervention requires a holistic approach that extends beyond institutional reporting to include meaningful parental engagement. By strengthening the connections between police services, schools, and families, communities can create more robust protection systems that address both the immediate and long-term needs of bullying victims. The insights gained from this case study provide a foundation for developing more comprehensive anti-bullying strategies that recognize parental involvement as a critical component of victim recovery and prevention efforts.

Conclusion

This study has examined parental involvement in social support systems for bullying victims among junior high school students who reported cases to the Integrated Police Service Center (SPKT) of Palembang Metropolitan Resort Police (Polrestabes Palembang). The research specifically focused on understanding how parental engagement influences the psychological recovery process of children experiencing bullying, with VAR's case serving as the primary illustration of the complex dynamics between institutional reporting and family support systems.

The findings reveal that bullying has severe and multifaceted psychological impacts on victims, including anxiety, depression, social withdrawal, and emotional dysregulation. Contrary to the common assumption that formal reporting to authorities automatically leads to comprehensive support, this research demonstrates that parental involvement remains the critical determining factor in victims' recovery trajectories. VAR's case exemplifies how limited parental emotional engagement, despite formal reporting of the bullying incident, can significantly hinder the victim's ability to process trauma and rebuild social confidence, even

when institutional mechanisms are in place.

This research makes several significant contributions to the field of child protection and bullying intervention. First, it provides empirical evidence that institutional reporting through police channels represents merely the initial step in a victim's recovery journey, with parental involvement serving as the crucial catalyst for effective healing. Second, it identifies specific behavioral patterns in bullying victims, such as nonverbal communication cues and emotional expression challenges, that can serve as diagnostic indicators for professionals working with affected children. Third, it establishes a theoretical framework connecting Attachment Theory, Social Support Theory, and Resilience Theory to practical anti-bullying interventions in the Indonesian context.

However, this study has certain limitations that should be acknowledged. The research focused on a single case study, which limits the generalizability of findings to broader populations. Additionally, the observational nature of the methodology may have influenced participants' behaviors, potentially affecting the authenticity of emotional expressions documented. The absence of longitudinal tracking also restricts our understanding of long-term recovery outcomes related to varying levels of parental involvement.

Based on these findings, several recommendations emerge for strengthening anti-bullying interventions. Polrestabes Palembang should develop integrated response systems that connect police reporting with school-based support services and family counseling, creating a continuum of care rather than isolated interventions. Mandatory parental education sessions during the reporting process could equip parents with practical strategies for supporting their children's emotional recovery. Furthermore, community-wide anti-bullying initiatives should incorporate family-focused components, including workshops on recognizing bullying signs and building emotional resilience.

Future research should expand upon this foundation by conducting longitudinal studies tracking victims' recovery with varying levels of parental support, implementing mixed-method approaches that combine observational data with self-report measures, and exploring cultural factors that influence parental responses to bullying incidents in diverse Indonesian communities. Comparative studies across different socioeconomic contexts would also provide valuable insights into how resource availability affects intervention effectiveness.

This research underscores that effective bullying intervention requires a holistic approach that extends beyond institutional reporting to include meaningful parental engagement. By strengthening the connections between police services, schools, and families, communities can create more robust protection systems that address both the immediate and long-term needs of bullying victims. The insights gained from this case study provide a critical foundation for developing comprehensive anti-bullying strategies that recognize parental involvement as an indispensable component of victim recovery and prevention efforts, ultimately contributing to safer environments for children's development in Palembang and beyond.

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