

A Survey of Student Bullying Bystander Behavior on Dayah (Islamic Boarding School in Aceh)

Dwi Iramadhani^{1*}, Misran Adifullah¹, Muhammad Naufal Akbar¹, Muhammad Aulia Zikri Marpaung¹, Muhammad Athaya Rizqilla¹, Mumtazia Wildan Al Muttaqi²

¹Psychology Department of Medicine Faculty, Malikussaleh University

, ²Faculty of Engineering, Informatic Engineering Departments, Malikussaleh University
Kampus Utama Jl. Cot Tengku Nie, Reuleut, Muara Batu, Aceh Utara, 24355 – Indonesia

e-mail dwi.iramadhani@unimal.ac.id

*Correspondence author

Abstract:

Bystander plays an important role in the occurrence of bullying. This study, aims to analyse students' bystander behaviour in bullying situations especially in dayah. 200 Dayah students in North Aceh Regency was being sample. The sampling technique used is purposive sampling. The bystander behavior scale was developed and modified by Thornberg & Jungert (2013) in the form of pro-bullying bystander, passive bystander, defender bystander. The scale has gone through the content validity stage with the Aiken's V with range of 0.825 - 0.930 The data indicates that, among 40 students at Dayah, some display pro-bullying behavior, 73 act as passive bystanders, and 87 take on the role of defenders in bullying situations. While most students are inclined to be defenders, a significant number also engage in passive bystander or pro-bullying behaviors. When broken down by gender, 13 male students exhibit pro-bullying behavior, 24 show passive behavior, and 24 take the role of defenders. For female students, 27 show pro-bullying tendencies, 49 act as passive bystanders, and 63 adopt the defender role. Overall, students are generally more likely to be defenders, though there is still a considerable presence of passive or pro-bullying behavior. Comparing males and females, males exhibit higher pro-bullying tendencies, while females are more likely to adopt passive bystander roles. Females are more likely to assume the defender role in bullying situations than males. Gender differences in how students respond to bullying, with males tending toward pro-bullying behaviors and females more often stepping in to defend others.

Keywords: *Bystander Behavior, Boarding School, Dayah, Bullying, Aceh, Bullying at school, Student Bystander Behavior Scale*

1. Introduction

Adolescence is a transitional period from childhood to adulthood. Adolescence usually has great energy and turbulent emotions, but imperfect self-control. A person is declared an adolescent in the age range of 10-19 years who is experiencing physical, emotional and social changes and is easily exposed to mental health problems due to exposure to poverty, abuse and violent behavior (Agisyaputri, 2023). According to Hurlock (in Yuliani, 2018) Adolescence is a transitional period in the human life span that bridges childhood with adulthood. Adolescents also have developmental tasks at this stage such as accepting physical conditions, understanding sex roles and the process of emotional maturity (Hertinjung, 2022). During this period, the psychological condition of students/adolescents becomes very unstable (Budiman, 2021). Bullying itself causes a very negative impact on its victims which can cause depressed and uncomfortable conditions for victims (Puspita, 2018).

Bullying is aggressive behavior demonstrated by repetition and power imbalance (Bakar, 2021). Bullying is a social phenomenon that often occurs in schools or educational institutions. KPAI (2020) stated that there were more than 2,473 cases of bullying that occurred at school in the period 2011-2019. Bullying behavior is caused by individual factors, family factors, socio-cultural factors, peer group influence factors, and environmental factors at school (Lesmono, 2020).

In the case of bullying, it is not only the victim who experiences bad behavior but the bullying incident can also affect students who are not involved but witness (bystander) the bullying incident. Students who feel they have no power to stop bullying behavior can have an impact on accepting bullying behavior and becoming a bad school culture (Raskauskas et al., 2010). Bystander is a party that plays an important role in the occurrence of bullying, bystander also plays an important role in whether or not bullying behavior is repeated (Halima et al, 2021). The presence of bystanders reinforces the occurrence of bullying

behavior. Bystander behavior can vary when bullying behavior occurs, including defending (defender), supporting behavior (reinforcer), or outsider (Yulianto & Paranti, 2014).

Dayah in Aceh is a traditional Islamic educational institution that aims to guide students (Aneuk Dayah, santri) to become human beings with Islamic personalities, who are able to become useful people for the nation and state and religion (Usman, 2021). Dayah is a formal institution that acts as a provider of education which aims to create a cadre of ulama who are very competent in building the mindset of the community (Ar-Rahmany, 2022). In particular, dayah is a typical Acehnese educational institution that aims to regenerate ulama (Buto, 2016). The word dayah comes from zawiyah which means corner, this refers to the pattern of Islamic religious education during the time of the apostleullah who taught the companions in the corners of the mosque (Alwi, 2021).

Bullying behavior is also inseparable from the dayah environment, in general, cases that occur in santri tend to be dominated by cases of bullying originating from gangs or friendship circles, the existence of seniority between seniors and juniors, damaging other people's belongings, mocking each other, being excluded, not making friends and continuing to light fights (Feron et al, 2024). Nst et al. (2023) in their study confirmed that the prevention of bullying behavior can be done by involving three central roles involved in bullying, namely: perpetrators, victims, and bystanders, in this case, active defending behavior in bystanders can be one of the solutions to reduce the high number of bullying in Indonesia. Zahra (2017) in her findings revealed that overcoming bullying through bystanders or observers is quite effective in reducing the occurrence of bullying, what happens when observers participate in handling visits is that observers become bolder when the perpetrator bullies the victim, the observer dares to warn the perpetrator. Therefore, this research aims to see how students' bystander behaviour in bullying situations.

2. Metode

The sample in this study were 200 Dayah students in North Aceh Regency. The sampling technique used is purposive sampling where the characteristics of the sample have been determined based on the characteristics and nature of the population (Winarsunu, 2006). The criteria inclusion are: adolescent (aged 13 – 18 years old), school in dayah, have experience seeing bullying at their activity. The sample consisted of 61 male students and 139 female students. The subject criteria in this study are: (1) Teenagers with an age range of 10-15 years, (2) Currently studying at the Dayah level in North Aceh Regency. The Student bystander behavior scale was developed and modified by Thornberg & Jungert (2013) in the form of pro-bullying bystander, passive bystander, defender bystander. Student Bystander Behavior Scale (SBBS) has alternative answers for each item, namely; Yes/No. The scale consists of 27 items each consisting of 9 aspects. The scale has gone through the content validity stage with the Aiken's V value moving in the range of 0.825 - 0.930. The assessment was carried out by three experts, in the fields of educational psychology, clinical psychology and social psychology. The analysis data was carried out by identifying the highest score in each category: pro-bullying bystander, passive bystander, and defender bystander. The researcher then determined the number of students who achieved the highest score in each category and grouped them accordingly.

3. Result

A study was conducted that surveyed 200 students and measured the frequency of students in each bystander category. The analysis was conducted by looking at the highest score in each category, namely pro-bullying bystander, passive bystander, and defender bystander. The researcher calculated the number of students in each aspect who had the highest score in each aspect and grouped them accordingly. The overall results are as follows:

Table 3.1 Frequency of Students Bystander Behavior

	Frekuensi
Pro - Bullying	40
Passive	73
Defender	87
Total	200

The data presented above indicates that 40 students in Dayah exhibit a proclivity for pro-bullying behaviour. Furthermore, 73 students demonstrate a tendency to act as passive bystanders, while 87 students exhibit a propensity to act as defenders in bullying situations. This finding suggests that the majority of students exhibit a propensity to act as defenders. However, it is noteworthy that a subset of students demonstrate a tendency to adopt passive bystander roles or to engage in pro-bullying behaviours. The study also involved a frequency analysis of student behaviour in bullying situations (i.e. bystander behaviour). The survey data, disaggregated by gender, yielded the following results:

Table 3.2 Frequence of Students Bystander Behavior by Gender

	Frekuensi		Total
	Men	Women	
Pro - Bullying	13	27	40
Passive	24	49	73
Defender	24	63	87
Total	61	139	200

The data presented herein indicates that 13 male students exhibited pro-bullying tendencies, 24 demonstrated passive behaviour in the face of bullying incidents, and 24 assumed the role of defender among a total of 61 students. Furthermore, female students who exhibit pro-bullying tendencies are 27 people, 49 people who act as passive bystanders and 63 people who display defender bystander tendencies. In general, students tend to exhibit behaviours that can be classified as pro-bullying bystanders, passive bystanders, or defender bystanders. To elucidate these variations, the subsequent discourse will delineate the descriptive data pertaining to each bystander behaviour. The data describes are:

Table 3.3 Mean of Students Bystander Behavior

	Min	Max	Mean	Stand-dev
Pro Bullying	0	9	2.935	2.581
Passive	0	9	4.78	2.214
Defender	0	9	5.905	2.231

The data presented above indicates that students exhibit a high mean value on the defender bystander scale. However, the mean value also indicates a tendency among students to engage in

behaviours that could be classified as either pro-bullying or passive bystander in bullying situations. The study also analysed the mean based on gender. The data is described as follows:

Table 3.4 Mean of Students Bystander Behavior by Gender

	Min		Max		Mean		Stand-dev	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Pro-Bullying	0	0	8	9	3.098	2.863	2.292	2.703
Passive	0	0	9	9	4.098	5.079	2.270	2.130
Defender	0	0	9	9	5.426	6.115	2.283	2.183

Based on data above indicates that male subjects demonstrate a higher mean score with regard to bullying behaviour than their female counterparts. This finding indicates that instances of pro-bullying bystander behaviour exhibited more frequently by male students are perpetrated by men to a greater extent than by women. In contrast, female students exhibited a tendency to adopt a more passive bystander role in comparison to their male counterparts. Furthermore, in the context of defender bystander behaviour, female students demonstrate a greater propensity to assume the role of defender when confronted with bullying situations, in comparison to their male counterparts.

4. Discussion

The study conducted among 40 students at Dayah reveals variations in roles during bullying situations. Some students exhibit pro-bullying behavior, meaning they actively support or participate in bullying. A total of 73 students act as passive bystanders, observing bullying incidents without intervening to stop them. Meanwhile, 87 students take on the role of defenders, actively protecting victims and attempting to stop the bullying. This indicates that the majority of students are inclined to become defenders, which is a positive sign of their moral awareness to oppose bullying. However, a significant proportion of students who remain passive or support bullying highlights the challenges in creating a school environment that is entirely free from bullying behaviors. From the results of this study, the presence of students who are bullying indicates that bullying occurs in dayah. This is in line with the research of Fakhrizal (2023) et al who found that the forms of bullying that occur in MTs Dayah Jeumala Amal which are still experienced by students are; 1) physical bullying in the form of light hitting, 2) verbal bullying in the form of mocking, and 3) social bullying in the form of

social restrictions, verbal bullying in the form of mocking, and 3) social bullying in the form of social restrictions. Salmivalli, Lagerspetz, Björkqvist, Österman, and Kaukiainen (1996) categorized peer bystanders in school bullying into four distinct roles: assistants, reinforcers, defenders, and outsiders. Assistants and reinforcers are bystanders who align with bullies, with assistants actively aiding the bullies and reinforcers supporting them by actions such as laughing or cheering. Many researchers have combined these two roles into a single category referred to as "probully" (e.g., Jungert, Piroddi, & Thornberg, 2016; Chen, Zhang, Zhang, & Deater-Deckard, 2017).

These findings align with previous studies, Seo (2023) that analyzed participant roles in both offline bullying and cyberbullying. The research identified distinct bystander roles, including assistants to the bully and defenders of the victim. This research found A person-centered latent profile analysis identified four distinct categories of participant roles in offline and cyberbullying: (a) low involvement (54%), (b) bully/victim-nondefenders (9.9%), (c) defenders (17%), and (d) offline bullies-cyber outsiders (19.1%). Its conclude, bullying bystander its not only was happening in offline contact but also in online likes cyber activity. Furthermore, Salmivalli et al. (1996) developed the theory of "participant roles in bullying," identifying that students in bullying situations can take on various roles, including perpetrator, victim, passive bystander, defender, or pro-bullying supporter. Their study revealed that passive bystanders often dominate due to fear of retaliation or a lack of perceived responsibility. Gini et al. (2008) also found that defenders often exhibit higher levels of empathy and self-confidence compared to students who are passive bystanders or pro-bullying. On the other hands, Pozzoli and Gini (2010), in their meta-analysis, noted that school environmental factors, such as teacher support and anti-bullying policies, significantly influence the proportion of students who act as defenders rather than passive bystanders.

The breakdown of participant roles in bullying situations by gender reveals notable patterns. Among male students, 13 exhibit pro-bullying behavior, 24 act as passive bystanders, and 24 take on the role of defenders. In contrast, among female students, 27 display pro-bullying tendencies, 49 act as passive bystanders, and 63 assume the role of defenders. These findings suggest gender differences in responses to bullying. Female students are more likely to take on the role of defenders, as shown by their higher proportion compared to their male counterparts. However, they are also more likely to display pro-bullying behavior and act as passive bystanders. This duality highlights

the complexity of social interactions and the influence of gendered socialization in bullying dynamics. Male students, on the other hand, are more evenly distributed across the three roles, reflecting less pronounced tendencies toward any particular behavior. A study by Gini et al. (2014) found that male adolescents are more frequently involved in physical bullying, while females tend to engage in relational bullying. This study also found that male adolescents are more likely to be victims of physical bullying compared to females. On the other hands, Research by Gini et al. (2022) indicates that boys are more likely to engage in traditional bullying and cyberbullying, as well as be victims of traditional bullying compared to girls. This study also highlights that social gender inequality contributes to these differences. A study by Gini et al. (2019) in other research also revealed that adolescents perceive gender differences in bullying, with boys more often involved in physical bullying and girls in relational bullying

Overall, students are generally more likely to be defenders, though there is still a considerable presence of passive or pro-bullying behavior. Xie and Ngai (2020) did a research roles of peer bystander in peer bystanders school bullying situations in wuhan china found empathic concern was a robust predictor of defender behaviors. It can be concluded that a highly efficacious strategy to enhance the likelihood of bystanders adopting the role of defender would be to cultivate their empathic concern. The cultivation of students' empathic concern can be achieved through a variety of means, including role-play, video games and the viewing of films (Williford et al., 2012). The research of Xie and Ngai (2020) also suggested that bystanders' reactions can either exacerbate or mitigate bullying incidents, highlighting the need for targeted interventions. The findings of this study also have important implications for practical prevention and peer bystander intervention. This study suggests that separate interventions for different roles of peer bystanders roles of peer bystanders would be effective, including reducing pro behaviour, encouraging defender behaviour and understanding bystander behaviour. Therefore, in line with this research conducted in Dayah (boarding schools with Islamic educational policy), interventions are needed that are close to the socio-cultural conditions of the students and based on Islamic values. This finding is consistent with the results of research conducted by Alwi (2021) from the three integrated dayahs in the city of Lhoksemawe Aceh. The actions undertaken by the dayah included advising, admonishing, reprimanding, and guiding the perpetrators of bullying, as well as administering punishment in

accordance with the applicable regulations in the dayah. However, there is a paucity of bystander intervention support programmes that help students to understand how to be an active bystander or defender. Consequently, further research is required to develop these prevention and intervention actions.

Comparing males and females, males exhibit higher pro-bullying tendencies, while females are more likely to adopt passive bystander roles. On the other hand, females are more likely to assume the defender role in bullying situations than males. This highlights gender differences in how students respond to bullying, with males tending toward pro-bullying behaviors and females more often stepping in to defend others. Pozzoli & Gini (2010) highlighted that girls tend to have higher levels of empathy, which is strongly associated with defending behaviors. They also noted that passive bystanding is common among both genders, often driven by fear of retaliation or a lack of confidence in intervening. Salmivalli et al (2021) underscored the critical role of peer bystanders and how their intervention can significantly impact the prevalence of bullying. Espelage et al. (2012) found that boys are more likely to display pro-bullying behaviors due to the reinforcement of traditional masculine norms, which sometimes glorify dominance and aggression. Girls, on the other hand, are more likely to adopt relational strategies, including defending victims, but may also engage in indirect aggression that aligns with pro-bullying behaviors.

5. Summary

The data reveals that among 40 students in Dayah, some exhibit pro-bullying behavior, while 73 act as passive bystanders, and 87 assume the role of defenders in bullying situations. The majority of students tend to act as defenders, although there is also a notable subset that engages in pro-bullying or passive bystander behavior. A breakdown of male and female students shows that 13 males exhibit pro-bullying tendencies, 24 display passive behavior, and 24 take on the role of defenders. For females, 27 show pro-bullying tendencies, 49 act as passive bystanders, and 63 adopt a defender role. Overall, students are more likely to act as defenders, but there is still a notable occurrence of passive or pro-bullying behaviors. When comparing male and female students, males tend to show higher pro-bullying tendencies, whereas females are more likely to adopt passive bystander roles. In contrast, females are more likely to take on the defender role in bullying situations compared to males. This indicates gender differences in how students respond to bullying, with males showing

more pro-bullying behavior and females more inclined to defend others. Therefore, in line with this research conducted in Dayah (boarding schools with Islamic educational policy), interventions are needed that are close to the socio-cultural conditions of the students and based on Islamic values.

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