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Study on Bullying among Children:

Case in an Islamic Primary School

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***Abstract*—The reality was that there were still many students who bullied their peers. Therefore, the focus of this study was to identify the characteristics of bullying, the characteristics and the impact of perpetrators, and how to deal with it in an Islamic primary school. This descriptive qualitative study, used four segments of key informants. They were the principal, classroom teachers, the perpetrators and victimized students. Data were collected through interviews and observations. Data analysis was performed by testing the validity of the data through triangulation. The results of the study discovered that there were two types of bullying that occurred in schools, namely verbal bullying in the forms of mocking the victim and social bullying in the forms of excluding the victim. Social media was a sort of popular tool of bullying. The school's response was to call the perpetrator, warn not to repeat, and if it happened again, the teacher would give educational sanctions. In resolving the bullying on social media, efforts are made for deliberations between guardians of students and those who were fighting for the sake of creating a conducive social climate at school so that it was gradually eliminated.**

Keywords—bullying, cvhildren, primary school

I. INTRODUCTION

Bullying is a sort of deviant behavior that is intentionally carried out by someone who feels stronger against a weak person in order to threaten, frighten or unhappy the victim, and usually occurs repeatedly. The forms of bullying in this study are verbal bullying by gossiping, yelling, teasing and criticizing; and social bullying by isolating, discriminating, intimidating, and keeping silent.

School is one of the socialization institutions for human development. Whether good or bad, most people still remember important school moments throughout their life span [1,2]. Therefore, it is a concern if elementary schools become an environment where bullying occurs. Because behavior is formed based on modeling obtained from the environment, both social and non-social [3,4]. The perpetrators of bullying also have an increased risk of crime, alcohol abuse, and delinquency, while victims are at risk of experiencing depression and self-esteem problems when they grow up [5]. Meanwhile, peer groups are getting more and more attention because they are a source of peer victimization. Violence in schools is a form of aggressive behavior to hurt others such as bullying, sexual violence, abuse of sexual activities, and various student behaviors that refer to hostile attitudes towards fellow students in the school environment [6]. Beattie [7] explains that bullying is a systematic abuse of strength and is categorized as aggressive behavior by peers who do it repeatedly and is characterized by unbalanced/unequal strength (victims have weaknesses in self-defense). So bullying at school is a form of aggressive behavior that is abused by peers in the school environment.

The number of bullying perpetrators that is higher than the number of bullying victims indicates that the victims are not equal to the perpetrators. Bullying is not just looking at the perpetrators and the victims [8]. The phenomenon of bullying is not only seen from the point of view of individual perpetrators and victims, but it focuses more on the social aspects that underlie the phenomenon [9]. The social climate is often an indicator of several phenomena that arise in society [10]. Victims experience violence [1] because they are considered outside the social circle of the bullying.

Bullying is a social phenomenon, so Oleos [11] defines it as a psychosocial problem by repeatedly insulting and humiliating others and having a negative impact on the perpetrator. Bullying victims become targets because the perpetrators have excess power. Olweus [11] and Schott [12] mapped three factors as the trigger for bullying. The three elements are acts of individual aggression, social violence, and dysfunctional group dynamics. Bullying is an aggressive act, both physically and verbally, which is done by an individual. These actions are repeated, and there is an imbalance strength between the perpetrator and the victim. The difference of strength in this case refers to the perception of physical and mental capacities. In addition, such differences also exist in the number of perpetrators and victims [12].

Bullying behavior at the elementary school level, was still not handled comprehensively. One of the causes was the understanding lack of educators and the community regarding child bullying at school with their peers. The repeated naughty actions of students were actually bullying behavior, but there were still many educators and the public who considered such actions as common natural [6,13].

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The results of preliminary observations by researcher found that there were also indications of bullying behavior among students from the upper classes. The unstructured interview revealed that children who look quiet in the class were the impact of the bullying behavior of their classmates. Seeing that this was happening and did not get serious attention or treatment from various parties, and by looking at the existence and worsening of cases of bullying, this problem was very crucial to get attention and treatment. These were important issues concerning the comfort of students in carrying out activities at school for the sake of gaining knowledge every day. Students were usually in school for about seven to eight hours. If it was accumulated for six days, meaning that the students were in school for approximately 42-48 hours. This will certainly give great pressure or constant anxiety to those who had been victims of bullying.

If students felt depressed or uncomfortable while in school because of the bullying they receive, then the lessons in class would be difficult to follow naturally and could have an impact on learning outcomes while in school. Based on the explanation described above, the researcher wanted to conduct this research with the aim of identifying the characteristics of bullying, the perpetrator characteristics and their impact on the victim, and on how the teachers resolved the bullying problems at the school.

II. METHODS

The qualitative descriptive approach was the choice of this study. As is well known, qualitative research is a scientific activity to collect data systematically, sort it according to certain categories, describe and interpret data obtained from interviews or casual conversations, observation and documentation [14,15].

The research stages began with the discovery of a unique case, the process of its occurrence, theory as a tool to guide researchers to understand phenomena, and ended with findings. The aim is to gain an in-depth understanding of the behavior, interaction processes, meaning of actions, values, and experiences of an individual or group, all of which take place in a natural setting.

This study chose SDI Riyadlul Mubtadiin Kedok Village, Turen District, Malang Regency as the main setting. The school is at the elementary level and applies Islamic values it adheres to. The location is in a sub-district outside Malang city so that it is rural in nature, which reflects the characteristics of the people of East Java who are generally community-based.

Informants who were the sources of important information as needed to pursue the aforementioned research purposes. Key informants were from four different positions viz. school head, teacher, student as the perpetrators, student as victims, and parents. These people should had known and had varieties of information needed for knowing in depth about the problem being studied.

Data analysis was carried out during the research process, from the beginning to the end of the study. The techniques used in the validation of the findings were participation extension, observation persistence, and checking with members involved in the research through triangulation as proposed by Moleong [16] and Natow [17]. Triangulation was done by comparing information or data in different ways [17] As was well known, in qualitative research researchers used interview, observation, and survey methods. To obtain reliable information truth and a complete picture of certain information, researchers used free and structured interviews. Data from interviews and observations were cross-checked for correctness. In addition, researchers also used different informants to check the accuracy of the information. Through various perspectives or views, it was hoped that results that were close to the truth will be obtained. Therefore, this stage of triangulation was carried out if the correctness of data or information obtained from research subjects or informants was doubtful.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

There were three main purposes as previously mentioned in the beginning. Firstly, on the characteristics of bullying. From observations inside and outside the class, we got a picture that the victims looked gloomy and very quiet, to the point that even when invited by friends who had never bullied they did not want to participate, they preferred to be alone in class. The victims of bullying were in the form of loss of self-confidence, social disability, worry, and experiencing physical problems. Meanwhile, the impact on bullies is academic impact, the inability to develop social skills, and the potential to lose emotional control. Similar characteristics were revealed by Havik [18], Smith and Hoy [19].

The results from the interview and observation showed that there were three factors that caused bullying, namely peers, family, and various media impressions. The children group interaction could grow to become friends or enemy each other [8]. Such phenomenon will more crucial to burned depending on the family protection [20] and media facilities [21]. The victim identification process was carried out in which several students were targeted. On the bully itself, were typically occurred verbally by gossiping, yelling, teasing and criticizing; while the socially by isolating, discriminating against, intimidating, and keeping silent. These behaviors may affect seriously to the children development such as in achievement [13,22,23], self-regulation [20,24,25], and able to make progress [26,27].

Both the principal and the class teacher discovered that social media were popular tools to launch bullying at schools. Principal:

> *"Anak SD sudah mengenal Sosial Media menjadi sebuah alat yang sangat diminati dan digunakan pada era sekarang. Namun media tersebut dapat membuat dampak yang berbeda pagi pengguna yang menggunakan sosial media tersebut. Dampak yang dibuat dari para pengguna pun dapat mempengaruhi kehidupan yang dialami orang*

lain sekaligus si pengguna itu sendiri. Salah satu dampak sosial media yang sering terjadi adalah bullying"

(Primary school children are familiar with social media as a tools that are very popular and used today. However, these media can have different impacts on the users who use them. The impact made by users can affect the lives of others as well as the user himself. One of the frequent impacts of social media is bullying).

Class teacher:

"Sosial Media akan baik digunakan apabila memang benar-benar menjadi sebuah kebutuhan pendidikan. Namun media tersebut dapat membuat dampak jelek bagi pengguna dapat mempengaruhi kehidupan yang dialami orang lain sekaligus si pengguna itu sendiri. Apalagi untuk anak usia SD tingkah lakunya dapat saja mencontoh apa yang dilihat, melihat sinetron, Sosmed yang sudah mereka kenal."

(Social media will be best used if it is really needed in education. However, this media can have a bad impact if the user interferes with the lives of others as well as the user himself. Especially for elementary school aged children whose behavior is imitated from what is seen from soap operas, and from social media that they already know.)

Such kind of social media may lead to practice cyberbullying that can be updated and more complicated [28,29].

The second purpose was on the perpetrators and the impact to the victims. The characteristics of the bully were physically stronger than the victim, having authority in their class or school, having small groups. Previous studies also found the similar results [30,31]. Other common characteristics of bullying as found in the studies of Harris, Bear, Chen, Lisbon, and Holst [32] that bullying victims tended to be repeated on and on. This was obtained from observations made during teaching and learning activities in the classroom, during breaks, and when outside the classroom - before entering and after school. The results express how bully influence the psychosocial climate in school life [2,10,33].

All the results of the interviews indicated that the impact on victims who were often bullied generally also felt angry, sad, helpless, frustrated, lonely, and isolated from their environment. When the victims kept on being bullied, such powerless condition made them to the fatal and depressed situation [1,24,32].

The third purpose was on how to get rid of bullying at school. Bully prevention efforts had been implemented by the class teachers. Interviews conducted by researchers revealed that bullying could be prevented by providing advice, invitations, or appeals to all students not to engage in bullying behavior both at school and outside of school. Instilling and exemplifying good attitudes and morals was the right step for a teacher so that all students did not bully. Even so, bullying had not been completely resolved, there were still reports from students and parents. Seemingly, the prevention actions have not touch well into the instructional activities [13,22,34] and the enhancement of the emotional relationship [3,33] among children and their teacher as well.

Although the results of the present study qualitatively provide insight into bully and the related people behaviors, several limitations should be noted that could not be used for generalization as commonly recognized through quantitative studies. Validating measures [26], taking a large sample size than nested into different level [10,33], testing the causal and comparative models would be of benefit for the future studies.

IV. CONCLUSION

Bullying phenomenon, like a pandora box, contains matters that attracts researchers to peel from different aspects and segment of life environment. Bullying behavior in schools has been revealed and then needs attention from teachers, parents, and people in the school environment as a serious problem. It is time to initiate preventive measures to minimize and even eliminate the phenomenon of bullying that occurs in schools in the form of socialization regarding the meaning of bullying and the impact it has on its victims. In addition, there should be special regulations regarding this bullying case, both the perpetrator and the victim are equipped with noble characters, especially those related to tolerance, friendship and loving each other among children.

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