

Factors Associated with Bullying Prevalence among Secondary School Students in Selected Schools, Selangor.

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Abstract- This cross-sectional study aims to investigate the factors associated with the prevalence of bullying among secondary school students in selected school Selangor. This present study was conducted with a quantitative descriptive approach and was conducted in selected school area, Selangor, Malaysia. Total respondents that participate in this study were 236, consists from 3 different secondary school in Selangor which is SMK Seksyen 7, 9 and 11. The participants were aged from 13 years old to 15 years old and represent each school. The students were selected by simple random sampling method for this study. A questionnaire in this study related to socio demographic, socio- economy status (SES), family relationship status (FRS) and self-esteem (SE) were adapted with minimal modifications to suit with the study. The questionnaire was distributed among 3 selected school. Result: Most of the respondents were male (70.3%) and female (29.7%) with the Malay ethnicity is 229 (97.0%). For categorical data, descriptive analysis was used in order to obtain frequency and percentage. One- way ANOVA, logistic regression and Chi Square were used to determine the association between independents variables and prevalence of bullying among secondary school students in Shah Alam. The prevalence of bullying in this study was 129, (54.7%) for “No” and 107 (45.3%) for “Yes”. Analysis shows that there is significant result in age ($p < 0.001$), types of family ($p = 0.02$) and types of school ($p = 0.001$). Also, there is no significant result in family relationship status ($p = 0.27$) and level of self-esteem ($p = 0.83$). Conclusion: Despite all the research regarding bullying already being conducted, the bullying cases among secondary school student keep rising. In conclusion, this study shows that family relationship (FRS) and level of self-esteem (SE) were not significantly associated with the prevalence of bullying among secondary school students [1–4].

Index Terms- Prevalence of Bullying, Secondary School, Associated Factors

I. INTRODUCTION

Bullying activities are a major problem in the modern world and it's currently very popular among youngsters nowadays. As per the Cambridge Dictionary, bullying refers to the conduct of an individual who intentionally harms, scares a smaller or weaker person and frequently compels victim to undertake actions against their will [1]. Meanwhile, according to a study by Jan, A., & Husain, S. (2015), they describe bullying as a redundant, monotonous, and destructive power based on the behaviors of students [2]. Bullying also was defined as any unwelcome violent action by a child or a group of youths who are not siblings or romantically involved with the victim and which involves an apparent or perceived power imbalance and is repeated frequently or is very likely to repeat (Rezapour et al., 2019) [3]. On the other hand, Coloroso (2008) in Silvia et al., (2022) study defined bullying as planned, hostile behavior with aimed for develop fear and causing harm to others by using a threat for further aggression [4].

Even bullying cases got broad attention, however it's look like the bullying cases never meets an end. Bullying activities always give a negative short and long-term effect on the victims, perpetrators and by standers (Munjiat et al., 2022) [5]. Bullying is a complex topic with severe repercussions. It can adversely impact an individual's mental health, self-esteem, relationships, and motivation to live. Moreover, victims of bullying may develop feelings of rejection, exclusion, isolation from peers, low self-esteem, depression, anxiety, and in extreme cases, even death [6].

Bullying can exist in several forms such as physical, verbal, social or cyber bullying and can happen due to various reasons. Research on bullying is still ongoing because it's not easy to develop a better understanding of bullying concepts in society and at the same identify any children that need help, no matter whether they are the ones who are being bullied or the ones who are doing bullying

activity. This is because bullying has an impact on everyone including those who are bullied, those who bully and those who witness bullying. Bullying is a persistent issue, prevalence varies depending on the study location or group (Shamsi et al., 2019) [7]. This study attempts to explore the association between family relationships status (FRS), socioeconomic status (SES) and self-esteem (SE) towards the factor associated with the prevalence of bullying activities among secondary school students in selected school, Selangor. Therefore, this study intends to add more evidence to the bullying activities and fill the gaps. This study will provide the findings which will prevent the bullying among secondary school students. This study will also provide the current bullying incidents as well as the problem-solving process that is directly related to the bullying among secondary school students [8–10].

II. METHOD

This study adopted a cross-sectional quantitative design to explore the factors associated with bullying among adolescents. The structured approach allowed the researcher to collect measurable data and evaluate the relationships between variables systematically [8]. The target population consisted of Form 1 to Form 3 students from three public secondary schools in selected school, Selangor which are: SMK Seksyen 7, SMK Seksyen 9 and SMK Seksyen 11, comprising a total population of 2140 students. Using Raosoft (2019) with a 95% confidence level and a 50% response distribution, the required sample size was calculated as 326. However, researcher manage to get the sample of 236 from three schools. SMK Seksyen 7 recorded the highest participation with 99 students. This strong turnout provides a wide view of the students' experiences and helps strengthen the overall findings. SMK Seksyen 11 contributed 84 students, reflecting a solid level of involvement that supports reliable comparison with the other schools. Meanwhile, SMK Seksyen 9 had 53 respondents, which, although lower, still offers meaningful insight into the school's student population. Together, these figures offer a balanced distribution of participants across the three schools, allowing the study to capture a mix of perspectives from different areas within the district. The simple random sampling method was introduced in this study.

Two validated instruments were used. The first was the Socio-economic and Family Relationship questionnaire (SEFR), adapted with permission from Azmi et al. [9]. It consisted of sections on socio-demographic characteristics, SES, family relationship status and previous experiences of bullying. The second instrument was the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES), which measured the respondents' level of self-esteem using 10 items rated on a Likert scale. The questionnaires were provided in both English and Malay. Prior to the main data collection, a pilot study involving 50 respondents was conducted at SMK Seksyen 15, yielding a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.87, indicating good internal reliability.

Data were collected using self-administered paper questionnaires that were distributed by the teachers. Students were briefed on the purpose of the study and were required to obtain guardian consent before participating. Completed questionnaires were returned within one week, and the researcher-maintained communication with teachers throughout the process to ensure smooth data collection. Inclusion criteria included Malaysian citizenship and enrolment in Forms 1 to 3 in one of the selected schools, while non-Malaysian and upper-form students were excluded. In this study, the total number 236 student from SMK Seksyen 7, Seksyen 9 and Seksyen 11 in Shah Alam already responded in this study. The distribution of 300

Samples among students is divided into equal numbers, which are a hundred samples from for each school. The questionnaires were given to the teachers. The teacher first gives an explanation related to the questionnaire, where the students should answer the question with their families at home. Before students answer this questionnaire, students must obtain permission from the guardians. There, the guardian must sign the permission to answer the questionnaire at the same time as being a respondent for this study. The time given to students to return completed questionnaires is 1 week. Researchers from time to time get in touch with the teachers involved to find if there are any problem related to the status of data collection.

Data were analysed using IBM SPSS version 27. Descriptive statistics summarised demographic distributions. One-way ANOVA was applied to compare mean scores across groups. Chi-square tests examined associations between categorical variables, and logistic regression explored predictive relationships between FRS, SE and bullying prevalence.

III. FINDINGS

A total of 300 questionnaires were distributed to Form 1–Form 3 students in SMK Seksyen 7, 9, and 11, and 236 were returned. The majority of respondents were from SMK Seksyen 7 (41.9%), followed by SMK Seksyen 11 (35.6%) and SMK Seksyen 9 (22.5%). Most were 13 years old (35.2%), with the smallest group being 14-year-olds (30.5%). In terms of ethnicity, the sample was predominantly Malay (97%), with small proportions of Indian (1.7%) and others (1.3%). Gender distribution showed a higher number of male students (70.3%) compared to females (29.7%). For religion, the vast majority identified as Islam (97.9%), with only 0.8% categorised as other religions.

Summary of Socio-Economy Status (SES)

For socio-economic status. Most fathers had education at the institute, college, or university level (70.0%), while only a very small number had no formal education (0.8%). In terms of occupation, the largest group of fathers worked in government agencies (46.2%), and only 4.7% were not working. For mothers, the majority also had institute, college, or university education (74.2%), with only 1.7%

having no formal education. Regarding employment, 40.7% of mothers worked in government agencies, while 14.0% were self-employed.

Household income data showed that the highest proportion of parents earned more than RM5000 (37.3%), and the smallest group earned between RM4000–RM4500 (12.7%). Most parents were married (87.7%), with only 2.1% being single or deceased. In terms of family type, more than half of respondents came from nuclear families (55.1%), while only 1.3% lived with grandparents. Overall, the socio-economic profile of the respondents indicates that most families have a stable educational and employment background, with both fathers and mothers largely attaining higher education and working within government sectors. Household income levels suggest that a substantial proportion of families fall within the higher-income category. The majority of parents are married, and most students come from nuclear family structures, reflecting generally secure and supportive home environments. This SES pattern may contribute to the overall stability of the students' family and schooling context.

Summary of Family Relationship Status (FRS)

Result for FRS presents the frequency distribution for the family relationship items, measured using a five-point Likert scale. For the statement “my parents allocated time to spend with me,” the highest response was strongly agreed (41.9%), with no respondents choosing strongly disagree. Most students also strongly agreed that they feel a sense of ease and security with their parents, with 70.8% selecting this option and none selecting strongly disagree.

For the item “my parents always ready to listen to me,” the most common response was uncertain (37.3%), while only 1.7% strongly disagreed. When asked whether they receive full attention from parents when support is needed, 37.3% agreed and none strongly disagreed. Regarding the statement “I feel that my presence in the family is meaningful,” 38.1% strongly agreed, while 1.3% strongly disagreed. For the final item, “I am content with the love and support provided by my family,” more than half (57.2%) strongly agreed, with the lowest responses recorded for strongly disagree and disagree at 1.7% each. The overall findings indicate that most respondents experience positive and supportive family relationships. A large proportion consistently reported feeling secure, valued, and emotionally supported by their parents. Although some students expressed uncertainty about their parents' attentiveness, the levels of disagreement across all items were minimal. These results suggest that the majority of students come from households with strong communication, emotional connection, and parental involvement, contributing to a generally healthy family environment.

Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES)

For self-esteem based on Rosenberg Self-Esteem scale (RSES). The highest number of respondent's self-esteem is having a normal self-esteem, which is 152 (64.4%), meanwhile the lowest score is respondents with high self-esteem, only 4 (1.7%) following with the respondents with low self-esteem group is 80 (33.9%). The findings indicate that most respondents fall within the normal self-esteem range, suggesting a generally healthy level of self-worth among the students. A smaller proportion reported low self-esteem, and only a very small number demonstrated high self-esteem. Overall, the results reflect a balanced pattern of self-esteem, with the majority maintaining moderate confidence while a notable minority may require additional support to strengthen their self-perception.

The association between sociodemographic, socio-economy (SES), family relationship status (FRS) and self-esteem (SES) with the prevalence of bullying among secondary school students

Variable Category	Specific Factor	Statistical Value	Test / p-value	Interpretation
Sociodemographic	School	$\chi^2 = 37.92$	<0.001	Bullying prevalence differs significantly across schools.
Sociodemographic	Age	$\chi^2 = 45.72$	<0.001	Age is strongly associated with bullying involvement.
Socio-Economy (SES)	Status Household income	$\chi^2 = 7.95$	0.05	Income level shows a significant association with bullying.

IV. DISCUSSION

The findings revealed several meaningful patterns regarding bullying among adolescents. Male respondents represented a larger proportion of bullying involvement, which aligns with previous research indicating that boys are more likely to engage in direct physical bullying, partly due to traditional gender roles and social expectations [10], [11]. The significant association between age and bullying suggests that bullying patterns evolve through adolescence. Students aged 14 recorded higher bullying rates, consistent with the notion that physical bullying gradually decreases with age while other forms such as relational or online bullying may emerge [12], [13].

Family type demonstrated a significant association with bullying prevalence. Literature shows that family structure, parenting practices and home stability strongly influence adolescent behaviour [14]–[19]. Adolescents raised in stable households with strong parental monitoring may be less likely to engage in or experience bullying. Conversely, inconsistent family environments may contribute to behavioural challenges. School type also played a significant role, with differing environments contributing to varied levels of bullying.

Research indicates that public schools, particularly those with larger populations and diverse socioeconomic backgrounds, often report higher prevalence of bullying [20], [21].

Despite expectations based on previous literature, family relationship status (FRS) did not show a significant association with bullying involvement. Although strong family ties are known to support emotional regulation and behavioural stability [22], [23], this study suggests that students' experiences of family relationships may vary widely, thus affecting the measurable impact. Similarly, self-esteem did not show a significant relationship with bullying. Studies have shown mixed results, with some reporting low self-esteem as a risk factor for victimisation and others suggesting that bullies may display high yet fragile self-esteem [24]–[28]. These mixed findings imply that bullying is influenced by complex interactions among social, emotional and environmental factors, rather than by any single variable alone.

V. CONCLUSION

The outcomes of this study show that there are significant and non-significant result between socio demographic, socio-economy status (SES), family relationship status (FRS) and self-esteem (SE) factors with the prevalence of bullying among secondary school students in Shah Alam, Selangor. In other words, this may indicate that every individual might involve with the bullying activities due to another factors. This is because each individual has a varying level of ability to deal with diverse situations.

By having this study, it able to spread awareness about factors that may influence an individual with another bullying factors. This is because, sometimes students or community didn't realize another possible factor that may influence or contribute in the bullying behavior and consequences. Therefore, by having this study, we also able to enhance awareness about the bullying incidents in Malaysia, especially to the student, school, teacher, parents and Malaysia government. Ongoing research related to bullying may help decrease the bullying cases among secondary school student. At the same time, this may improve the quality of individuals, government, school and every person that directly or indirectly involve.

As a recommendation, future research also might be considered to continue this study with a large sample size and explore more in depth on this matter in order to get the best outcomes. Besides that, since the data was being collected via hard copy questionnaire, we believe our survey should be simpler to understand, and the amount of questions asked could be reduced. Lastly, all the findings had responded to the research question and all the objectives in this study had been achieved.

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