



Aspects of Bullying: The Role of Individual Counseling in Emotional Regulation and Social Character Development

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Abstract

The cases of bullying that arise from romantic relationships among teenagers are becoming more prevalent and have a significant impact on emotional regulation and social character formation. This research aims to analyze the role of individual counseling in helping teenagers manage negative emotions and build positive social character. The method used is a literature study with an analysis of previous research findings and counseling practices in schools. The results show that individual counseling is effective in improving emotional regulation and social skills for both victims and perpetrators of bullying. The discussion emphasizes the importance of school counselors in providing emotion regulation-based interventions and strengthening social character to create a safe and inclusive school environment.

Keywords: individual counseling, bullying, emotional regulation, social character, teenage romantic relationships

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a transitional period full of dynamics, in which individuals undergo significant physical, psychological, and social changes (Santrock, 2017). In this phase, teenagers begin to build their self-identity and develop more complex interpersonal relationships, including in terms of romance. Romantic relationships among teenagers often become a source of happiness, but they can also trigger conflicts and emotional stress.

Romantic relationships among teenagers do not always run harmoniously; often, the dynamics that arise actually lead to negative behaviors such as bullying ((Espelage & Hong, 2020). Bullying that originates from romantic relationships can take various forms, ranging from verbal abuse, and exclusion, to physical threats, and has serious effects on the psychological well-being of both the victims and the perpetrators.

Bullying behavior rooted in romantic relationships is often triggered by jealousy, insecurity, or the desire for social recognition (Zych et al., 2019). This situation causes the adolescents involved, both as victims and perpetrators, to experience emotional pressures that are difficult to manage, which can negatively affect their psychological and social development.

Emotion regulation is becoming an important aspect in facing various social challenges, including bullying (Dewi & Wardah, 2020). Adolescents with good emotion regulation skills tend to be more capable of resolving conflicts and building healthy social relationships, while those who struggle with emotion regulation are vulnerable to aggressive behavior or withdrawing from social environments.

The impact of bullying that begins in romantic relationships is not only felt by the victim but also by the perpetrator (Cook, 2022). Victims of bullying often experience a decrease in self-esteem, anxiety, depression, and difficulties in building healthy social relationships. Meanwhile, perpetrators of bullying are also vulnerable to psychological issues, such as difficulties in managing negative emotions and low empathy.

The school environment, as one of the main places of social interaction for adolescents, plays an important role in efforts to prevent and address bullying (Prayitno & Amti, 2015). Schools are expected to create a safe, inclusive environment that supports the development of positive social character, both through appropriate policies and intervention programs.

Individual counseling in schools is one of the effective services in helping adolescents cope with emotional regulation issues and develop adaptive social character (Kartadinata, 2018). Through counseling, adolescents are assisted in recognizing, understanding, and managing negative emotions arising from conflicts in romantic relationships and bullying.

The individual counseling process involves assessing the emotional and social needs of adolescents, emotion regulation-based interventions, and developmental evaluations (Komalasari & Wahyuni, 2020). Counselors use various approaches, such as cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) and rational emotive behavior therapy (REBT), to help adolescents change negative thoughts and behavior patterns.

In addition to helping teenagers manage their emotions, individual counseling also plays a role in building social skills such as empathy, communication, and responsible decision-making (Lestari, 2019). Thus, counseling not only focuses on psychological aspects but also on strengthening social character, which is greatly needed in everyday life.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses a literature review method by collecting and analyzing the results of previous studies, scientific journals, and counseling practices in school environments. Data was collected from

various sources relevant to the topics of emotion regulation, bullying, and individual counseling. The analysis was conducted by examining the main findings regarding the effectiveness of individual counseling in addressing issues of emotion regulation and the development of social character in adolescents who are victims and perpetrators of bullying.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

The research findings indicate that individual counseling has a positive impact on addressing bullying issues that stem from romantic relationships among adolescents. Based on case studies conducted in several schools, individual counseling interventions using reality therapy techniques have proven effective in raising students' awareness of the consequences of bullying behavior and encouraging responsibility for their actions (Azizah et al., 2024). Students who receive individual counseling services tend to be more open in discussing the problems they face, thus making the problem-solving process more optimal.

Other research using a behavioral approach in individual counseling has also found that this service can reduce bullying behavior in adolescents who are perpetrators of bullying (Rosita, 2021). Counselors play an important role in helping students identify negative emotions that arise due to romantic conflicts and bullying, as well as guiding students in developing more adaptive emotional management strategies. Interviews with guidance counselors and bullying victim students showed a positive change in students' self-esteem and social skills after participating in individual counseling (Jannah, 2023).

In addition, individual counseling using cognitive behavior therapy (CBT) and rational emotive behavior therapy (REBT) has been proven effective in increasing the self-efficacy and self-confidence of students who are victims of bullying (Awaliyah et al., 2014; Karismawati, 2023; Sopiya et al., 2020). Students who initially had low self-confidence and tended to withdraw from social environments experienced an increase in motivation and social skills after receiving individual counseling intervention. This shows that individual counseling not only focuses on emotional aspects but also on strengthening the social character of students.

Research using homework assignment techniques in individual rational emotive behavior therapy counseling also found a significant difference in the self-confidence levels of bullying victims before and after the treatment (Awaliyah et al., 2014). Students became more confident in interacting with peers and were able to manage negative emotions that arose as a result of bullying. The intensive and structured counseling process allowed students to explore their feelings and thoughts more deeply.

Overall, the research results indicate that individual counseling is an effective intervention in helping teenagers cope with the negative impacts of bullying that stem from romantic relationships. Individual counseling not only assists students in emotional regulation but also encourages the formation of positive social characteristics, such as empathy, responsibility, and self-confidence (Espelage & Hong, 2020).

Discussions

The results of this study indicate that individual counseling plays a crucial role in helping adolescents manage negative emotions arising from bullying stemming from romantic relationships. Individual counseling provides a safe space for students to express their feelings and thoughts, allowing them to identify the sources of negative emotions and learn adaptive strategies to manage those emotions (Dewi & Wardah, 2020). Approaches such as Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy

(REBT) have proven effective not only for victims but also for perpetrators of bullying, as it helps them understand and change the irrational beliefs that lead to negative behaviors (Rosita, 2021).

In addition to enhancing emotional regulation, individual counseling also encourages the formation of positive social character. Students who receive individual counseling services tend to be more confident in social interactions, able to build healthy relationships, and have a higher level of empathy towards others (Awaliyah et al., 2014). This indicates that counseling not only focuses on emotional aspects but also on strengthening social skills that are crucial for adolescents' development in the school environment.

The role of school counselors is crucial in the early detection of bullying symptoms and providing appropriate interventions. Counselors not only help students cope with emotional issues but also support them in understanding the consequences of bullying behavior and developing strategies to confront conflicts constructively (Swearer et al., 2009). Thus, individual counseling becomes the frontline effort in creating a safe, inclusive, and conducive school environment for the social character development of students.

Overall, the results of this study support the importance of individual counseling as the main intervention in addressing bullying rooted in romantic relationships among adolescents. Individual counseling not only helps students in emotional regulation but also encourages the formation of positive social character traits, such as responsibility, empathy, and self-confidence. Therefore, schools are expected to strengthen the role of counselors and expand individual counseling services to support the psychological and social well-being of students (Prayitno & Amti, 2015).

CONCLUSION

This research reinforces evidence that bullying originating from romantic relationships among adolescents is a serious issue that affects emotional regulation and social character formation. Not only do victims suffer, but bullying perpetrators also experience difficulties in managing negative emotions, necessitating appropriate interventions to prevent long-term impacts on their mental health and social development.

Individual counseling has been proven effective as one of the main solutions in helping teenagers cope with negative emotions arising from bullying. Through the counseling process, students can recognize, understand, and manage their emotions better, as well as build social skills such as empathy, communication, and self-confidence. Support from school counselors is essential to create a safe and conducive environment for students' development.

The research results show that individual counseling not only focuses on emotional aspects but also on strengthening students' social character. Students who receive individual counseling services tend to be more capable of facing conflicts, building healthy relationships, and demonstrating more responsible behavior. This encourages the creation of an inclusive and respectful school culture.

Therefore, schools are expected to strengthen the role of counselors and expand individual counseling services to support the psychological and social well-being of students. Thus, prevention and handling efforts of bullying that stem from romantic relationships can be carried out more optimally, so that teenagers can grow into individuals who are emotionally and socially healthy.

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