

Research Article

Cite this article: Humaizi, Mohamad, B., Ananda, S., & Pratiwi, E. R. (2025). Framework for Bullying Mitigation Through the "Harmonious Ambassador" Campaign in Secondary Educational Institutions in Medan City. *Educational Process: International Journal*, 14, e2025082.
<https://doi.org/10.22521/edupij.2025.14.82>

Received January 15, 2025

Accepted March 05, 2025

Published Online March 09, 2025

Keywords: Harmonious ambassador, school anti-bullying campaign, bullying mitigation

Author for correspondence:

Humaizi

✉ humaizi@usu.ac.id

✉ Universitas Sumatera Utara, Medan, Indonesia



OPEN ACCESS

© The Author(s), 2025. This is an Open Access article, distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>), which permits unrestricted re-use, distribution, and reproduction, provided the original article is properly cited.

Framework for Bullying Mitigation Through the "Harmonious Ambassador" Campaign in Secondary Educational Institutions in Medan City

Humaizi^{ID}, Bahtiar Mohamad^{ID}, Sofiari Ananda^{ID}, Endah Rundika Pratiwi^{ID}

Abstract

Background/purpose. This study aims to develop and assess the effectiveness of a sexual harassment handling model through the "Courageous Campus" campaign, which is based on educational outreach in higher education institutions in Medan city. The urgency of this campaign is underscored by the increasing cases of sexual harassment in the academic environment, which not only threaten security but also affect the comfort and academic achievement of students.

Materials/methods. The methodology employed in this study involves a qualitative approach, utilizing participatory and non-participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and focus group discussions to gather data. Data were analyzed using NVivo software to facilitate the coding and categorization of main themes, which helped in identifying significant patterns and insights related to the campaign's impact on raising awareness about sexual harassment.

Results. The results indicate that the educational campaign has successfully increased awareness and engagement within the campus community in efforts to prevent and handle sexual harassment. Notable behavioral and policy changes at the university concerning sexual harassment issues point to the effectiveness of the campaign in fostering a change in campus culture towards greater safety and inclusivity.

Conclusion. The findings suggest that integrating educational initiatives with strong legal protection and psychological support is crucial as part of a comprehensive strategy to combat sexual harassment on campus. The research underscores the necessity for a holistic and participatory approach in the campaign, which can significantly influence the creation of a safer learning environment.

1. Introduction

Bullying in secondary schools is a significant and complex social issue, not only in developed countries but also in Indonesia, including Medan City (Dardiri et al., 2020). These acts of bullying, whether verbal or physical, often occur repeatedly and exhibit an imbalance of power between perpetrator and victim (Jeffrey & Stuart, 2020). According to data from the Ministry of Education and Culture, approximately 50% of students in Indonesia have been victims of bullying during their school years (Borualogo & Casas, 2021). This fact underscores the urgency for strategic and systemic interventions to tackle bullying incidents, particularly in secondary schools. A structured and integrated prevention campaign is crucial to create a safe and harmonious school environment (Park, 2023).

The success of bullying prevention efforts in schools largely depends on the involvement of all school components, including students, teachers, and staff (Sullivan et al., 2021). According to previous research, a bullying prevention program that involves students as agents of change or "ambassadors" against bullying can significantly reduce the frequency and intensity of bullying actions. Research by Smith (2016) also emphasizes the importance of a sustained anti-bullying campaign that not only raises awareness but also encourages student participation in combating negative behaviors at school. Thus, a campaign-based approach like "Harmonious Ambassador" can serve as an effective tool in shaping more positive social norms within the school environment (Berchiatti, 2022; Wallace, 2024).

The objective of this research is to develop a bullying mitigation framework through the "Harmonious Ambassador" campaign implemented at SMA Negeri 19 Medan. This campaign promotes the empowerment of students as anti-bullying change agents actively addressing bullying. The aim is for students to no longer be passive observers but active participants in preventing and responding to bullying at school. Previous studies indicate that approaches involving students as change agents can significantly impact reducing bullying behaviors. Therefore, this framework is expected to provide strategic guidance in designing more effective bullying prevention programs in Medan's secondary schools.

Previous research, such as Gusfre, Støen, and Fandrem (2023), explore the overlooked issue of bullying by teachers, which has profound implications for student well-being and necessitates comprehensive school policies that specifically address teacher-student interactions as part of anti-bullying strategies. Similarly, Weinreich and colleagues (2023) investigate the intersection of bullying with learning disorders and psychiatric comorbidity, highlighting the complex needs of vulnerable students and the necessity for interventions that consider these multifaceted relationships to effectively support affected students and reduce bullying incidents.

On the other hand, Kenny, McCoy, and O'Higgins Norman (2023) advocate for a "Whole Education Approach" to inclusive education, which integrates planning, policy, and provision to foster an inclusive and respectful school environment that naturally mitigates bullying. Complementing this, Sansait, Aguilin-Saldaña, and Retiracion (2023) examine how different school environments—public versus private—affect the efficacy of bullying prevention strategies, underscoring the importance of tailoring interventions to the unique contexts of individual schools to effectively address bullying.

These studies collectively reveal a critical gap in current anti-bullying research and practice: the need for integrated and contextualized anti-bullying frameworks that are adaptable to diverse educational settings and sensitive to the specific dynamics of bullying incidents, including those initiated by authority figures. There is a pressing need for research that not only explores the effectiveness of student-centered campaigns like the "Harmonious Ambassador" but also examines how such programs can be effectively implemented across various types of schools to accommodate different student needs and institutional capacities. This would ensure that anti-bullying initiatives

are both comprehensive and pragmatic, providing real-world solutions to a pervasive educational challenge.

The primary hypothesis of this research is that the "Harmonious Ambassador" campaign, involving students as change agents, can significantly lower bullying rates at SMA Negeri 19 Medan. This hypothesis is supported by the fact that active student involvement in anti-bullying campaigns has been proven to influence school social norms, particularly in terms of reducing tolerance towards bullying behavior. Research by Beitz (2022), and Hollis (2022) demonstrates that initiatives empowering students through ambassador or change agent programs effectively foster safer and more inclusive school environments. Consequently, enhancing the 'Harmonious Ambassador' campaign is anticipated to provide concrete and sustainable solutions for the prevention of bullying in secondary schools.

2. Literature Review

2.1. *The Concept of Harmonious Ambassador*

In this research, the concept of the "Harmonious Ambassador" serves as a strategic intervention designed to mitigate bullying in secondary schools by empowering students to take active roles in reshaping their social environment. The initiative involves selecting and training students to become leaders and advocates against bullying, thus embodying the roles of change agents within their school. These ambassadors are tasked with promoting positive behavior, increasing awareness about the harm caused by bullying, and fostering a supportive community where bullying is openly discussed and addressed. The program emphasizes the importance of peer influence in the school setting, leveraging the power of student-led initiatives to create a more inclusive and respectful atmosphere. By equipping students with the skills and knowledge to challenge bullying behaviors and support their peers, the Harmonious Ambassador program aims to cultivate a school culture where respect and empathy are core values upheld by all members of the school community.

The Harmonious Ambassador program not only targets the interactions within the school's microsystem but also seeks to influence the broader mesosystem by involving teachers, parents, and school administrators in supporting these student ambassadors. This holistic approach ensures that the ambassadors' efforts are reinforced by the entire school community, enhancing the sustainability and impact of the initiative. By creating a network of support that transcends the student body to include all stakeholders within the educational ecosystem, the program aims to instill enduring change that can effectively reduce the prevalence of bullying. This approach aligns with ecological systems theory by addressing the multiple layers of influence that affect students' behaviors and interactions, ensuring a comprehensive strategy against bullying that is embedded in the school's structure and culture.

2.2. *Theoretical Framework*

In the theoretical framework of the document, Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory provides a multifaceted lens through which to examine the dynamics of bullying within educational environments. This theory posits that human development is influenced by different types of environmental systems that interact with each other. The microsystem, which includes the school, peers, and family, directly interacts with the individual and is the first layer where bullying behaviors and prevention strategies can be directly observed and addressed. This emphasizes the importance of creating supportive interpersonal relationships within schools, where teachers and peers play pivotal roles. The direct interactions within the microsystem can significantly shape students' behaviors and attitudes towards bullying, highlighting the need for interventions that engage these immediate social contexts.

Expanding from the microsystem, the mesosystem involves the interconnections between the microsystems, such as the relationships between family environments and educational settings, which can also influence bullying behavior and responses to it. The exosystem, including the broader social and economic conditions that do not directly touch the individual but can affect the microsystem, like school funding or community values, indirectly impacts how resources are allocated for bullying prevention programs. Furthermore, the macrosystem, which encompasses the overarching cultural and societal norms, shapes the broader cultural attitudes towards bullying and the appropriate preventive measures. This layered interaction suggests that effective bullying prevention needs a comprehensive approach that transcends the immediate educational setting to include community and societal engagement. By applying Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, this study aims to develop a deeper understanding of how various environmental systems interact to either perpetuate or mitigate bullying, thereby guiding the design of more effective anti-bullying interventions within schools in Medan.

2.3. Previous Research

Recent studies, such as those by Xin (2021) and Frois (2021), address bullying in educational contexts as recurring aggressive behaviors that target less powerful individuals, emphasizing the critical role of educational interventions in mitigating these harmful dynamics. This behavior significantly impacts the mental and emotional development of victims and ultimately deteriorates the social environment at school. Therefore, effective bullying mitigation strategies must include a comprehensive approach that focuses not only on punishing the perpetrators but also on prevention through changing school culture.

Various studies have widely recommended preventive approaches involving students as agents of change or anti-bullying ambassadors. According to Smith (2016), students engaged in this role function as informal leaders who can influence social norms at school. Their involvement helps create an atmosphere where bullying is not accepted by the majority of students. Furthermore, Smith asserts that campaigns involving students as agents of change are not only effective in raising awareness but also in encouraging proactive actions to report or stop bullying incidents.

Anti-bullying campaigns like the "Harmonious Ambassador" can be a powerful prevention strategy. This campaign is designed to empower students to promote positive behavior at school. Recent findings by Alzayani (2021) highlight that proactive student involvement in bullying prevention programs can significantly transform school social dynamics, reducing bullying by fostering a more inclusive and supportive school climate.

3. Methodology

This study utilizes a qualitative case study approach to thoroughly investigate the implementation of the "Harmonious Ambassador" campaign as a strategy to mitigate bullying at SMA Negeri 19 Medan. The case study method was selected due to its effectiveness in capturing the intricate social dynamics and the unique context of program execution within the school. This approach allows for an in-depth exploration of the contributions made by anti-bullying change agents and facilitators within the "Harmonious Ambassador" program towards reducing bullying in the school environment, as highlighted by Yin (2018).

The research population includes members of the Roots Program at SMA Negeri 19 Medan, which encompasses both anti-bullying agents and program facilitators. These individuals are integral to the school's anti-bullying campaign, which focuses on developing awareness and preventive actions against bullying among students. The sample was purposively selected to ensure it accurately represented the individuals deeply involved in the program, comprising five change agents and two facilitators actively engaged in the campaign's implementation.

Data was primarily collected through in-depth interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGD). Semi-structured interviews were employed to probe into the experiences and perspectives of participants regarding their roles in bullying mitigation through the "Harmonious Ambassador" program. Meanwhile, FGDs facilitated a deeper understanding of group interactions and the dynamics during the campaign's implementation, adhering to best practices in qualitative research, as suggested by Weyant (2022) and Creswell & Creswell (2022). To ensure the validity of these instruments, an expert judgment process was carried out involving education and psychology experts who assessed the appropriateness of the questions used in the interviews and FGDs. Additionally, the reliability of these instruments was verified through pilot interviews at a school not included in the study, focusing on the consistency of participant responses, as per Khan and Abedin (2022).

The initial data collection stage involved obtaining written informed consent from all participants after they were fully informed about the research objectives and procedures. Each interview was conducted face-to-face and lasted between 45 to 60 minutes, while FGDs were held with groups of anti-bullying agents to collect comprehensive insights about the program's challenges and successes. All interviews and FGDs were recorded and transcribed verbatim to guarantee the accuracy of the data collected.

Data were processed using thematic analysis, which involved systematic examination to identify and categorize key themes that emerged from the interviews and FGDs. This method, recommended by Braun and Clarke (2022), is particularly effective in identifying thematic patterns that are pertinent to the research objectives. The data were organized into thematic categories and each theme was analyzed in detail to explore the interrelations among the roles of anti-bullying agents, facilitators, and the overall effectiveness of the "Harmonious Ambassador" program in curbing bullying at SMA Negeri 19 Medan.

4. Results

4.1. Stages of Selecting the "Harmonious Ambassador"

The selection of Harmonious Ambassadors at SMA Negeri 19 Medan was designed as a comprehensive process to ensure that selected students could effectively fulfill their roles in mitigating bullying. Each stage of the selection process plays a crucial role in shaping change agents who possess commitment, skills, and positive influence within the school environment. Based on interview and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) data, here is an analysis of each stage in the Harmonious Ambassador selection process.

1. Program Socialization

The socialization stage successfully increased the school community's understanding of the goals and benefits of the Harmonious Ambassador program. Based on interviews with students and teachers, it was revealed that this socialization provided in-depth insights into the importance of the students' roles in bullying prevention. Many students felt encouraged to participate, viewing the program as relevant to the issues they face at school. Bronfenbrenner's (2021) environmental support theory reinforces that the involvement of all school elements in socialization can create a conducive environment that supports the program's objectives.

2. Registration and Nomination of Candidates

In the registration stage, it was found that student participation was highly influenced by their awareness of bullying issues. Students who registered as Harmonious Ambassadors generally had a high level of concern for their peers' welfare. However, facilitators reported a limitation in the number of students registering, partly due to doubts about their ability to carry out these duties. This

indicates the need for strategies that encourage more active participation, particularly through teacher or peer recommendations for students who exhibit qualities of a change agent.

3. Initial Selection and Criteria Assessment

The initial selection stage plays a crucial role in assessing the mental readiness and motivation of prospective Harmonious Ambassadors. Based on FGD findings with facilitators, interview and group discussion methods helped identify students with high empathy and good communication skills. This is supported by findings from Alzayani (2021), who emphasized the importance of selecting participants who demonstrate both emotional intelligence and the ability to effectively communicate in preventive roles. Some students demonstrated enthusiasm, while others felt less confident in facing substantial responsibilities. Through rigorous initial selection, the program successfully filtered candidates genuinely prepared to play an active role in ensuring school safety

4. Training and Orientation

The results from the training stage show a positive impact in enhancing intervention skills and mental readiness among prospective Harmonious Ambassadors. Facilitators reported that the training covered communication techniques and direct approaches in bullying situations, which greatly helped candidates understand the complexity of bullying in the school environment. Previous study supports this approach, stating that simulation-based training effectively strengthens social skills and a sense of responsibility in students. Although the training was considered effective, some agents suggested additional sessions specifically to address complex cases, indicating the need for more in-depth training for prospective Harmonious Ambassadors (Espelage, 2023; Ríos, 2023).

5. Final Selection and Inauguration

The final selection and inauguration stage provided official recognition to selected Harmonious Ambassadors, boosting their motivation to carry out their duties. This inauguration event fostered a sense of responsibility among students while motivating them to serve as role models in bullying prevention. According to facilitators, this recognition is essential for building trust in the Harmonious Ambassadors, as public acknowledgment strengthens their position as agents of change in the eyes of their peers. Bandura's (2023) social reinforcement theory suggests that recognition and appreciation can strengthen positive behavior in social settings, as seen in the enthusiasm of the selected students. The organizational structure of the selected Harmonious Ambassadors at SMA Negeri 19 Medan is presented in Figure 1.

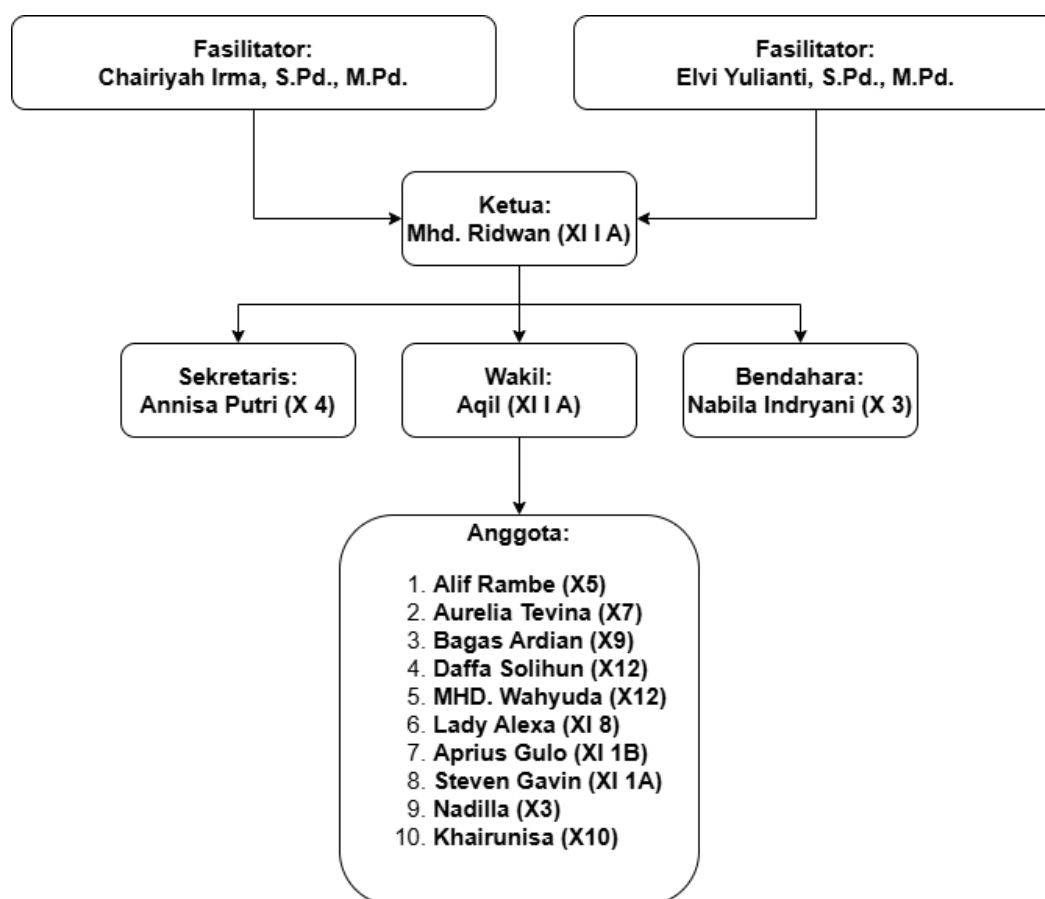


Figure 1. Structure of the Harmonious Ambassador (Researcher, 2024)

6. Support and Monitoring

The support and monitoring stage is considered crucial for the sustainability of the Harmonious Ambassadors' effectiveness. Facilitators reported that anti-bullying agents who received continuous support from counselors and teachers felt more prepared and confident in performing their duties. This monitoring ensures that the agents can learn from each field experience and enhance their intervention skills. Discussion results indicate that most students involved in this mentoring perceived a positive impact on their understanding of bullying and acquired better capabilities to handle situations professionally. Regular evaluations and guidance are key factors supporting the sustainability of the Harmonious Ambassadors' role in maintaining a safe and bullying-free school environment.

4.2. Effectiveness of the "Harmonious Ambassador" Campaign in Reducing Bullying

Bullying in school environments is an urgent issue that requires special attention, given its significant impact on student welfare and the learning climate. Bullying actions not only cause psychological and emotional harm to the victims but also create an unsafe and stressful school environment. Bullying is a form of repeated aggression, characterized by an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim, which can lead to long-term effects such as trauma, decreased academic performance, and mental health issues like depression and anxiety (Söderberg & Björkqvist, 2020; Volk et al., 2014).

The phenomenon of bullying is concerning due to its varied forms, ranging from physical to verbal, social, and cyberbullying (Bork-Hüffer et al., 2020; Kintonova et al., 2021). Bullying cases often occur unseen by school authorities, and victims are generally reluctant to report due to fear of retaliation from perpetrators or a lack of support from school institutions. This aligns with findings by Branch (2021), which state that bullying victims often feel unsafe to report because they doubt the

effectiveness of available reporting mechanisms. At SMA Negeri 19 Medan, this phenomenon is also frequent, with students opting to remain silent rather than report, fearing the situation may worsen (Shelley et al., 2021). It is added that fear and a lack of trust in school protection are major factors why bullying cases often remain undisclosed and improperly managed. This condition underscores the need for more systematic and structured interventions in school environments to prevent and effectively address bullying (Noboru et al., 2021; Park, 2023; Tay, 2024).

The "Harmonious Ambassador" campaign is a strategic initiative aimed at reducing and preventing bullying actions in school environments by involving students as agents of change. In this campaign, a number of students are selected and trained to become "Harmonious Ambassadors," who are responsible for promoting an anti-bullying culture, creating a more inclusive environment, and helping to prevent both physical and verbal violence among peers.

The program focuses on empowering students to take an active role in creating a more harmonious atmosphere at school. Ambassadors are trained to recognize signs of bullying, provide support to victims, and act as mediators who can connect bullied students with more authoritative figures, such as teachers or counselors (Longobardi, 2022; Portelada, 2024; Sağın, 2022).

Harmonious Ambassador is an independent program developed and implemented by SMA Negeri 19 Medan to replace the Roots program, a previous anti-bullying initiative implemented by the government in pilot schools, including SMA Negeri 19 Medan. The replacement was made because the Roots program was discontinued by the government, prompting the school to introduce a new program that is more sustainable and tailored to the students' needs. Harmonious Ambassadors are designed to involve students as agents of change in bullying prevention efforts, focusing on creating a harmonious and inclusive school environment (Lekhal, 2024). The program is expected to continue the objectives of Roots with a more structured and sustainable approach, allowing the management and prevention of bullying in schools to continue effectively. Below are some results from interviews conducted by researchers with representatives of anti-bullying agents and facilitators; based on these interviews the researchers obtained the following data:

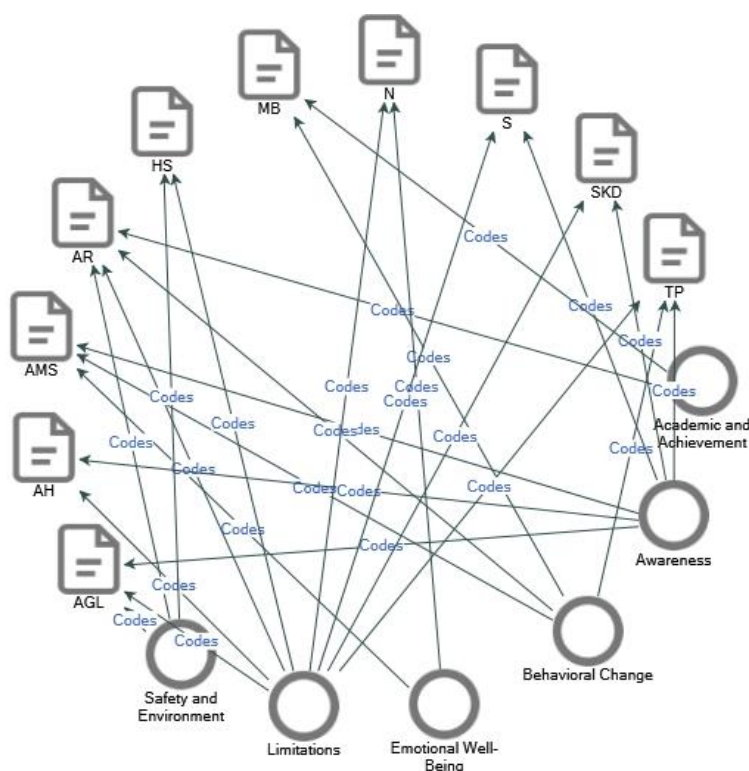


Figure 2. Interview Maps with Facilitators (Nvivo 15, 2024)

The network map displayed details the interactions and correlations among interviews with agents, facilitators, and various thematic codes that emerged from discussions about the "Harmonious Ambassador" campaign. Each node or circle in the map represents a specific theme identified in the data analysis, including "Safety and Environment," "Limitations," "Emotional Well-being," "Behavioral Change," "Awareness," and "Academic Achievement and Performance." The connectivity illustrated in the map shows how frequently these themes were discussed by certain respondents, providing insights into the level of influence or engagement each facilitator has on specific topics.

The interconnection among themes highlights how discussions about raising awareness often lead to conversations about the limitations faced in implementing practices. For example, a line connecting the "Awareness" and "Limitations" themes might indicate that discussions about increasing awareness are often closely tied to acknowledging the existence of resource limitations or adequate training for facilitators and students.

From this map, researchers can deeply analyze how information flows and how these discussions are interconnected to form a comprehensive understanding of the campaign's effectiveness. This mapping allows for the identification of major motifs emerging from the interviews and how these motifs are interconnected. This provides crucial insights into areas that require further attention in the anti-bullying initiative.

The map also plays an important role in identifying areas where further intervention or development is needed, such as through additional facilitator training or better resource allocation. The connectivity between "Safety and Environment" and "Behavioral Change" indicates that actions taken to create a safe and supportive environment directly influence the behavioral changes of students in the context of bullying (Gizzarelli et al., 2023).

In this context, the map serves not only as a visualization tool but also as a diagnostic tool that aids in strategic decision-making. Analysis from this map can be used to formulate more effective policies and practices in anti-bullying education approaches, ensuring that efforts lead to meaningful and sustainable changes in the school environment.

Overall, this analysis reinforces the importance of using visual data in evaluating social intervention programs, particularly in unveiling the complex dynamics present in the implementation of anti-bullying campaigns in educational settings. The network map not only presents information explicitly but also facilitates a deeper understanding of interactions and influences that may not be immediately apparent through conventional analysis methods (Murillo-Moraño, 2025).

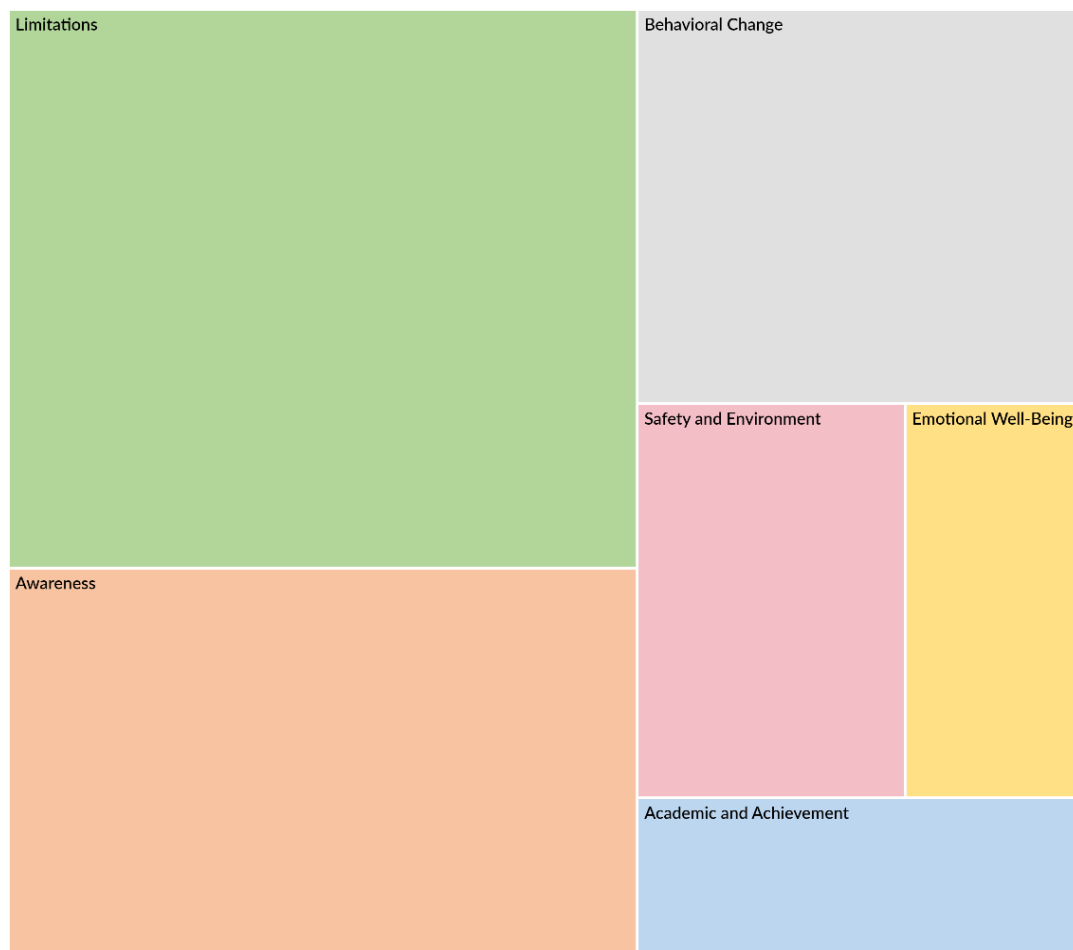


Figure 3. Interview Hierarchy Analysis (Nvivo 15, 2024)

The hierarchical analysis visible in this chart illustrates the relative distribution of key themes related to the effectiveness of the "Harmonious Ambassador" campaign in reducing bullying at SMKN 19 Medan. This chart offers a visualization that aids in understanding how these themes are interrelated and which are considered more dominant or require further attention in program implementation.

At the top of the chart, the "Limitations" theme occupies a larger space, indicating that this is a major issue encountered in the campaign. These limitations may include a lack of resources, inadequate training, or insufficient institutional support, all of which can hinder the long-term effectiveness of the campaign. Focusing on this theme underscores the importance of addressing these barriers to enhance campaign outcomes.

The "Awareness" theme, also dominating the lower part of the chart, indicates a strong focus on efforts to raise awareness about bullying among students and staff. This heightened awareness is seen as a crucial first step in behavior change and in creating a safer, more inclusive school environment. Increased awareness is expected to encourage more students and teachers to actively participate in reporting and addressing bullying incidents.

Conversely, the themes "Behavioral Change" and "Safety and Environment" depict two interconnected crucial aspects of the campaign. Behavioral changes through effective education and intervention can facilitate the creation of a safer school environment (Fandrem, 2024). This reflects a more holistic approach to addressing bullying, not only stopping incidents but also transforming social norms and behaviors within the school community.

"Emotional Well-being" and "Academic Achievement and Performance" represent the long-term impacts of the campaign on individuals and students' academic success. Good emotional well-being is crucial for learning and personal growth in students and directly correlates with academic achievement. An effective campaign should support both aspects by providing support to students affected by bullying and creating a conducive learning environment.

The hierarchy of themes in this chart indicates the priorities and relationships among issues faced in the "Harmonious Ambassador" campaign. This analysis helps identify critical areas requiring strategic intervention and offers insights into how various aspects of the campaign interrelate and contribute to the overarching goal of alleviating bullying at SMKN 19 Medan. It also underscores the need for a comprehensive approach that addresses various aspects of bullying to achieve sustainable results.

There are differing views related to the effectiveness of the Harmonious Ambassador campaign in reducing bullying. Anti-bullying agents feel that this campaign has increased student engagement in addressing bullying. Students have become more active and aware of the importance of preventing bullying actions at school, whereas facilitator teachers feel that the campaign has not been optimally effective due to various challenges, including a lack of ongoing monitoring and evaluation; this can be crucial for any education (Ritonga et al., 2024).

The implementation of the Harmonious Ambassador program at SMA Negeri 19 Medan should have a positive impact on the school environment in reducing bullying incidents. Based on interviews and FGDs conducted by researchers with anti-bullying agents and facilitators, the following data was obtained:

"The biggest change I've seen is the increased openness in communication among students about bullying. Previously, students were hesitant to report, but now they feel more comfortable reporting cases. Solidarity among students has also increased, creating a more inclusive and friendly school atmosphere." (Anti-bullying agent)

"In my view, the 'Harmonious Ambassador' campaign has not run optimally effective. Although student awareness has increased, there are still many challenges that need to be overcome, such as a lack of continuous evaluation and monitoring. Some elements in this program still need to be enhanced to have a more significant impact in the future." (Facilitator of anti-bullying agents).

Based on interviews and FGDs conducted with anti-bullying agents and facilitators, there are differing views on the changes occurring in the environment of SMA Negeri 19 Medan following the implementation of the Harmonious Ambassador campaign. The interviewed anti-bullying agents noted changes post-implementation, while facilitators believe the program has not been optimally effective, citing a need for ongoing training and monitoring to address bullying issues effectively.

The statement made by facilitators regarding the suboptimal campaign from the Harmonious Ambassadors is acknowledged by anti-bullying agents, where in interviews and FGDs conducted by researchers with anti-bullying agents, it was stated that:

"Some students come seeking help, but there are still those who are afraid to report for fear of retaliation. I listen to them and provide emotional support. I also accompany them when they report cases to teachers or counselors to make them feel safer and supported." (Anti-bullying agent).

Based on interview and FGD data related to bullying cases at SMA Negeri 19 Medan during the implementation of the Roots program between 2021-2023, the following data is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Bullying Cases (Source: Researcher)

Years	Program Roots		
	Physical Bullying	Verbal Bullying	Social Bullying
2021	15	20	10
2022	16	22	11
2023	18	25	15

Source: Researcher (2024)

Based on the data in Table 1, it is evident that bullying incidents at SMA Negeri 19 Medan increased between 2021 and 2023 during the implementation of the Roots Program. In 2021, there were 15 cases of physical bullying, 20 cases of verbal bullying, and 10 cases of social bullying. These numbers increased in 2022, with 16 cases of physical bullying, 22 cases of verbal bullying, and 11 cases of social bullying. In 2023, there was a significant increase, with 18 cases of physical bullying, 25 cases of verbal bullying, and 15 cases of social bullying. The rise in these cases indicates that the Roots Program has not been fully successful in reducing bullying incidents, especially in terms of verbal bullying which saw the most significant increase. This data underscores the need for a more effective approach to reducing bullying rates at the school, making the introduction of the "Harmonious Ambassador" campaign program a refreshing new initiative to replace the Roots program.

4.3. Implications of the "Harmonious Ambassador" Program on Student Well-being at School

The implementation of the "Harmonious Ambassador" program at SMA Negeri 19 Medan has shown various positive implications for student well-being, including emotional, social, and academic aspects. Based on interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGD) conducted with anti-bullying agents and facilitators, there are several significant impacts from this program that align with theories related to social support and student well-being (Wahidah et al., 2024). From the findings obtained, several implications as mentioned by the agents and facilitators are as follows:

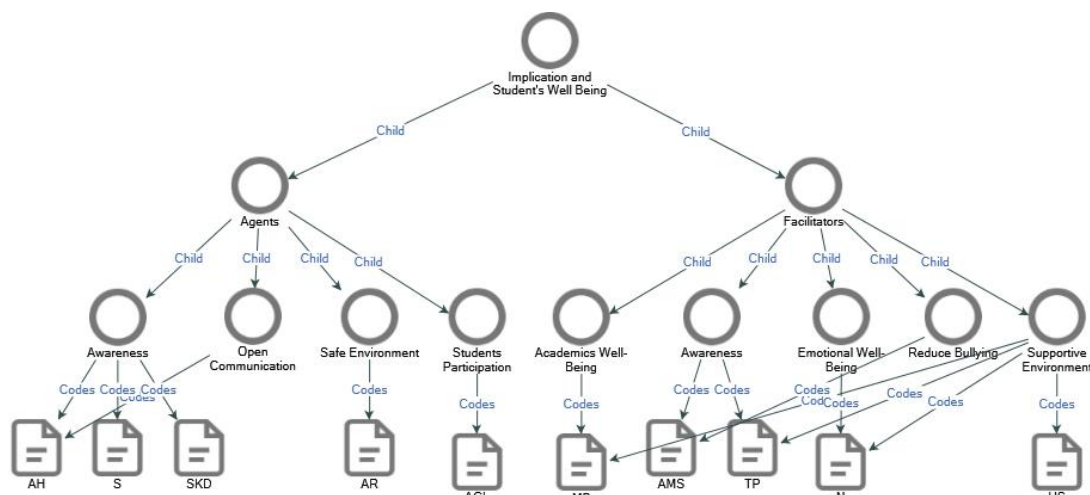


Figure 4. Map of the Implications of the "Harmonious Ambassador" Program in Bullying Mitigation (Nvivo 15, 2024)

The Focus Group Discussion (FGD) map displayed dissects the dynamics between two key groups in the implementation of the "Harmonious Ambassador" campaign at a school: agents and facilitators. It shows how both interact with various themes related to bullying and student welfare,

and outlines the methods of data collection and analysis used to evaluate the program's effectiveness.

In this context, agents are individuals who interact directly with students, playing a crucial role in educating and encouraging their active participation in the campaign. They are involved in spreading awareness and ensuring that communication about bullying issues occurs openly and effectively. Codes associated with agents in themes such as Awareness and Open Communication indicate the types of activities carried out to achieve these goals, as well as the feedback received from students regarding the effectiveness of these interactions.

Furthermore, themes like Safe Environment and Student Participation are also linked to agents and provide insights into efforts made to make the school a safer place. Codes under these themes may include details about security initiatives introduced or new policies implemented, as well as the level of student activity in these processes.

On the other hand, facilitators are tasked with ensuring that the program runs according to plan and evaluating its overall effectiveness. They oversee the program's implementation and provide logistical and moral support to agents. Themes such as Emotional Well-being and Reducing Bullying connected with facilitators highlight the approaches taken to help students cope with the psychological impacts of bullying. Codes within these themes may document specific interventions designed to support affected students, along with evaluations from facilitators on how effective these interventions have been (Borowiec, 2022).

The theme Environmental Support also associated with facilitators, captures aspects of the program aimed at creating a supportive environment in the school, which may include activities designed to enhance solidarity and empathy among students. Codes under this theme reflect the outcomes of these activities and how they contribute to the overall improvement of student welfare.



Figure 5. Word Cloud of the Implications of the "Harmonious Ambassador" Program (Nvivo 15, 2024)

The word cloud presented by the author illustrates various key terms that emerged from the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) about the "Harmonious Ambassador" program in efforts to mitigate bullying. These terms reveal diverse perspectives from participants involved, including students, facilitators, and agents. Each word in the cloud reveals important aspects of the program's impact and reception and highlights key elements contributing to its success or areas that still require improvement.

The prominent words "students," "agents," and "facilitators" in this cloud affirm that the program involves collaboration among various stakeholders within the school environment. "Students" reflect

the main focus of this initiative, while "agents" and "facilitators" represent those who support and implement the program, indicating their crucial role in a multi-actor approach to bullying mitigation.

The simultaneous presence of the words "bullying" and "harmonious" highlights the primary goals of the program, which are to reduce bullying behaviors and create a more harmonious and supportive environment. The presence of words like "reducing," "awareness," and "support" further underline the efforts directed not only at reducing bullying incidents but also at enhancing awareness and support for the victims.

The words "encourages," "active," and "participation" depict the program's efforts to motivate students to be more active in school activities that promote inclusivity and prevent bullying. This also reflects efforts to develop leadership skills among students and strengthen their roles as anti-bullying ambassadors, who not only assist their peers but also enhance their own resilience against bullying.

Additionally, the presence of "courageous" and "reporting" indicates the importance of equipping students with the courage and tools needed to report bullying incidents. This highlights the significance of transparency and open communication within the school environment as an effective step in identifying and addressing bullying issues early.

The presence of words such as "change" and "escalates" could indicate dynamics in the acceleration or change of attitudes resulting from the program's implementation. This could be a sign that the program is producing positive changes, yet the word "escalates" might also indicate challenges or escalation in specific issues that still need to be addressed.

Overall, this word cloud analysis provides valuable insights into the focus, reception, and outcomes of the "Harmonious Ambassador" program, highlighting key successes and areas that need attention for further program development. This analysis reinforces the importance of a comprehensive and participative approach in tackling bullying in school environments.

The program has provided a greater sense of security for students at the school. Students who are victims of bullying feel more protected and supported due to the presence of anti-bullying agents they can rely on. One agent reported that

"This program has made students more comfortable due to the presence of a clear support system, allowing them to report bullying incidents without fear of retaliation from the perpetrators" (Anti-bullying agent).

This aligns with Olweus's theory, emphasizing the critical need for a safe school environment and robust social support to deter bullying; however, the program must further strengthen its support for victims, as some students remain hesitant to report incidents involving close friends. This issue was highlighted in focus group discussions with Anti-bullying Agents (Ali, 2025; Aslan, 2025; Firdaus, 2025).

In terms of social engagement, the "Harmonious Ambassador" program has encouraged more positive interactions among students. Many students have begun to participate in social activities, and relationships between students have improved. Anti-bullying agents report that

"this program has made students who are victims feel not alone, as they have peers who support them in dealing with bullying" (Anti-bullying agent).

This aligns with Bronfenbrenner's theory (1979), which posits that support from the social environment aids in more holistic individual development. However, some student groups are still less engaged in social activities, indicating limitations in the program's effectiveness in reaching all students.

Another significant impact is on students' academic achievements. With reduced bullying cases, the school environment becomes more conducive, allowing students to focus more on academics.

"Facilitators noted that students are able to concentrate better in their studies due to a more peaceful and harmonious classroom atmosphere" (Facilitator).

This corresponds with findings by (2016), which state that bullying can disrupt focus and student performance, and a safe environment is crucial for supporting academic achievement. However, some students still struggle with focus due to unresolved trauma from bullying, emphasizing the need for additional support for emotionally affected students.

From a character development perspective, students involved as anti-bullying agents develop a sense of leadership and responsibility. Agents report that their role in maintaining safety and harmony at school boosts their confidence and responsibility. According to Creswell (2022), involvement in positive social activities, such as being change agents, can help students develop leadership skills. Yet, some agents feel that the responsibilities are heavy and sometimes burdensome, indicating the need for more support from the school, including counseling or guidance from teachers.

Overall, the "Harmonious Ambassador" program contributes positively to creating a safer school environment and supporting student well-being at SMA Negeri 19 Medan. However, to ensure the sustainability of this program and to effectively reach all students, continuous evaluation and monitoring are needed, along with stronger support from school authorities. This will help the program achieve greater effectiveness and provide a more equitable impact on all students.

4.4. Challenges and Opportunities in Enhancing the Effectiveness of Anti-Bullying Campaigns in Schools

School-based anti-bullying programs, such as the Harmonious Ambassador program, face various challenges that need to be addressed to achieve greater effectiveness. Based on interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGD) with anti-bullying agents and facilitators, there are clear obstacles in implementing this program, as well as opportunities that can be leveraged to enhance its impact. From the FGD results, agents and facilitators have identified several opportunities that could be capitalized on, as detailed below:

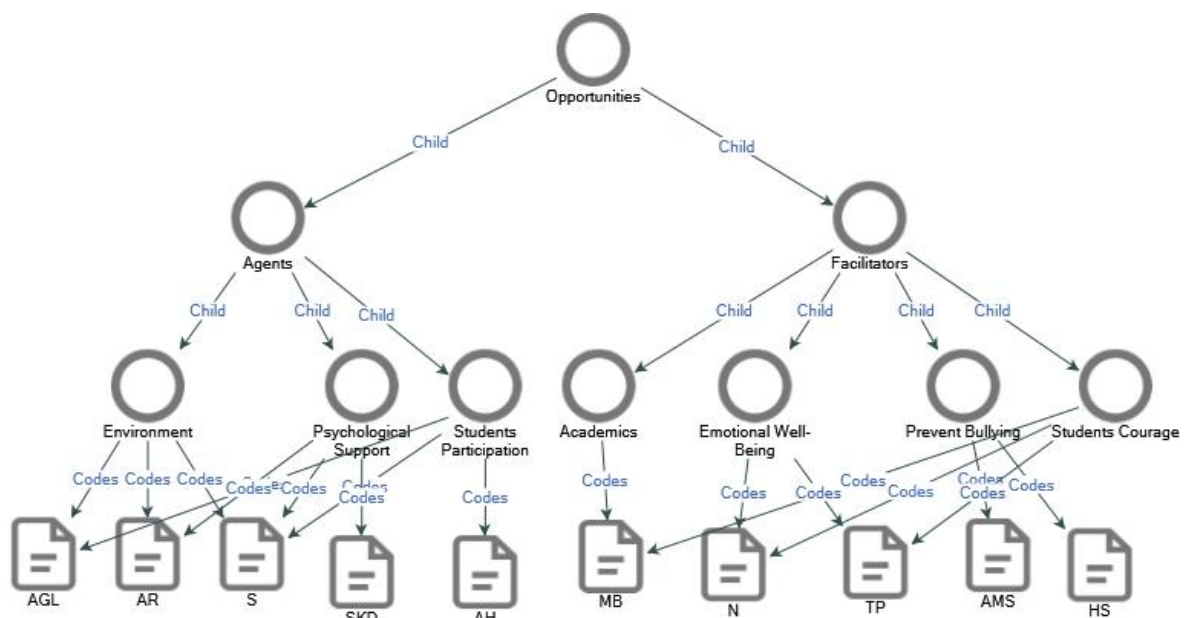


Figure 6. Opportunity Map of the "Harmonious Ambassador" Program in Bullying Mitigation (Nvivo 15, 2024)

The Focus Group Discussion (FGD) map displayed outlines the opportunities identified in the "Harmonious Ambassador" program for bullying mitigation at SMKN 19 Medan. The structure of this map illustrates how two key groups, agents and facilitators, interact with various program-related themes and how these themes shape opportunities for development and improvement.

On the left side, agents, who are the implementers in the field, are connected with themes such as "Environment," "Psychological Support," and "Student Participation." The "Environment" theme depicts agents' efforts to ensure the school environment is safe and conducive for all students. Codes associated with this theme include data on physical changes or policies implemented to support a safer environment.

The "Psychological Support" theme highlights the importance of emotional and psychological support provided to students, especially those who have experienced or witnessed bullying. Codes under this theme may include activities such as counseling, workshops, and other supportive sessions initiated by agents to help students cope with the psychological impacts of bullying.

"Student Participation" refers to the active involvement of students in various aspects of the program, including prevention and response to bullying. Codes in this area capture initiatives where students are encouraged to be part of the solution, possibly through roles as peer supporters or through participation in awareness campaigns.

On the right side, facilitators, who act as overseers and evaluators of the program, are linked with themes such as "Academics," "Emotional Well-Being," "Prevent Bullying," and "Student Courage." The "Academics" theme describes the relationship between academic welfare and a bullying-free environment. Codes under this theme record the program's influence on students' academic achievements, noting how emotional security affects learning capabilities.

"Emotional Well-Being" focuses on the overall emotional health of students, reflecting facilitators' evaluations of how the program has succeeded in enhancing students' emotional stability. Meanwhile, "Prevent Bullying" indicates the strategies implemented to reduce bullying incidents, with codes covering specific prevention activities and evaluations of their effectiveness.

The "Student Courage" theme emphasizes empowering students to stand against bullying, both as victims and as witnesses. This reflects program initiatives to strengthen students, giving them the courage and tools to report and confront bullying.

Cumulatively, this map highlights how the "Harmonious Ambassador" program has created various opportunities to strengthen responses to bullying and enhance student welfare. Each theme and associated code forms a broader picture of how the program is applied in the field and its resultant effects, providing valuable insights for adjusting strategies and approaches in the future to reduce bullying in schools.

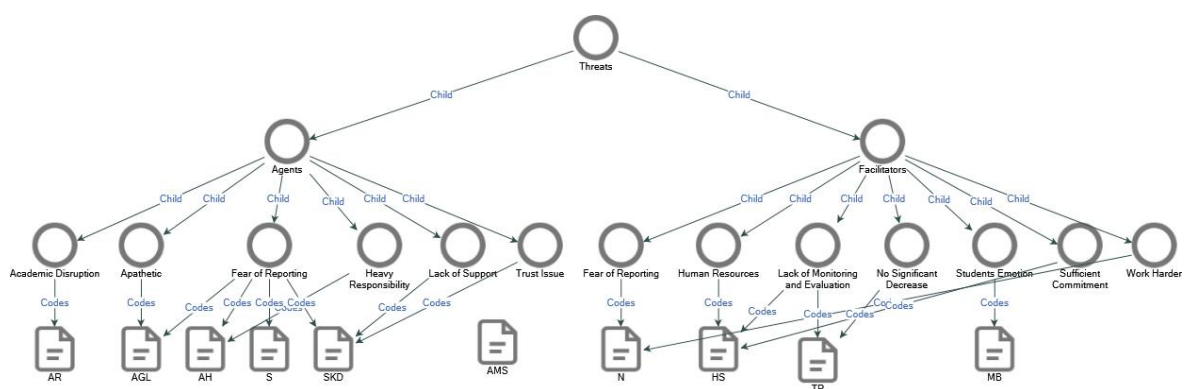


Figure 7. Challenge Map of the "Harmonious Ambassador" Program in Bullying Mitigation (Nvivo 15, 2024)

The Focus Group Discussion (FGD) map explores the challenges faced by the "Harmonious Ambassador" program in bullying mitigation efforts at SMKN 19 Medan. The map specifically identifies and categorizes various obstacles encountered by both agents and facilitators, and maps how these challenges affect the overall success of the anti-bullying initiative.

On the left side of the map, agents, who are the primary actors in direct program implementation, face several critical issues. "Academic Disruption" indicates that the program may disrupt regular academic activities, creating tension between educational needs and program activities. Codes under this theme capture data related to the impact of interventions on students' schedules and academic focus.

"Anapethic" describes some students' apathetic attitudes toward the anti-bullying initiative, highlighting challenges in changing student attitudes or behaviors towards bullying. This reflects the need for more engaging and relevant strategies to enhance student involvement. "Fear of Reporting" on the other hand highlights students' fears of reporting bullying cases, which may be caused by fear of retaliation or stigma.

Challenges like "Heavy Responsibility" and "Lack of Support" felt by agents indicate a heavy workload and a lack of adequate support from other staff or school management, making them feel isolated in their efforts.

On the right side, challenges faced by facilitators focus on strategic and operational issues. "Human Resources" and "Lack of Monitoring and Evaluation" suggest a shortage of personnel and failures in conducting effective evaluations of the program, which are crucial for understanding the effectiveness and impact of actions taken. "No Significant Decrease" in bullying indicates that despite efforts made, the reduction in bullying incidents has not reached a significant level, signaling the need for stronger or different approaches.

Meanwhile, "Students Emotional Decrease" notes a decline in student emotional well-being, possibly as a result of stress associated with the intervention or the dynamics of bullying itself. This underlines the importance of psychological support components in the program. On the other hand, "Sufficient Work Commitment" describes issues where students or staff may not be fully committed to the program's goals, indicating potential shortcomings in motivation or awareness of the importance of this initiative.

This aligns with Vidourek's theory (2016), which indicates that students often fear reporting bullying due to concerns about negative social consequences. Additionally, a lack of support from the school also poses challenges. Agents report that they often work without adequate guidance or full support from teachers and school staff, which can hinder the effectiveness of the campaign.

On the other hand, facilitators also face constraints in the form of limited resources and training.

"According to them, the lack of additional training for teachers and students limits the impact of this program, as teachers and agents are not fully prepared to handle complex bullying cases" (Facilitator).

Darling & Cook (2018) emphasize the importance of support from all elements within the school environment to create significant change, yet the lack of monitoring and evaluation by the school makes the program less effective in the long term. These factors suggest that internal constraints, such as students' fear, and external constraints, such as limited school support, need to be addressed for the anti-bullying campaign to run more optimally.

Despite many challenges, there are several opportunities that can be leveraged to enhance the program's effectiveness. One opportunity is to increase training for anti-bullying agents and facilitators. Facilitators assess that

"agent participation in this campaign greatly assists in monitoring bullying situations at school, and their role in mediating cases also enhances the overall impact of this program" (Facilitator).

Parent participation is also an opportunity that can be leveraged to support the anti-bullying campaign. Involving parents in this program can expand the campaign's reach, considering family support can strengthen efforts to prevent bullying in the school environment. Facilitators emphasize that parental involvement and support from external organizations, such as training from bullying experts, can provide new insights and enhance the effectiveness of the program. This is in line with Heyder's (2020), research, stating that cross-group support, including families, is crucial for creating a safe and bullying-free school environment.

The response of students and teachers to this campaign is largely positive, yet the program's impact is not uniformly felt throughout the school. Although anti-bullying agents feel motivated by peer support, some students are still uncomfortable engaging in the campaign due to fear or lack of trust in the system. Facilitators also note that while some teachers support the campaign, others are less committed, so the program's effectiveness is not experienced by all students. Johander (2021) emphasizes the importance of joint commitment in anti-bullying efforts at school, as consistent support from all parties is key to reducing bullying incidents.



Figure 8. Hierarchical Coding Analysis of the “Harmonious Ambassador” Program in Bullying Mitigation (Nvivo 15, 2024)

The hierarchical map above indicates a broad range of opportunities and challenges associated with efforts to mitigate bullying in schools. Through systematic categorization, each color block represents critical aspects faced by the program, aiding in identifying areas that require special attention and potential that could be further developed.

Themes related to "Student Participation" and "Student Courage" demonstrate a strong push to enhance student involvement in anti-bullying activities. This indicates that the program is encouraging students to not only be passive witnesses but also active participants in creating a safe environment. Students' courage to speak out and act against bullying is key to the long-term effectiveness of the program, highlighting the importance of continuous education and training in fostering anti-bullying advocacy among students.

On the other hand, themes like "Fear of Reporting" and "Psychological Support" indicate difficulties in creating a supportive environment where students feel safe to report bullying incidents. Fear of stigma or retaliation poses significant barriers, necessitating deeper strategies to address trust issues and emotional support. The program needs to provide ample resources to support students' emotional well-being, ensuring they feel fully supported by the school.

Challenges such as "Lack of Monitoring and Evaluation" and "Human Resources" describe operational and resource issues that can hinder the effective implementation of the program. A shortage in monitoring and evaluation indicates that there may be a deficiency in the feedback loop necessary for continuous program improvement. Meanwhile, a lack of human resources highlights the need for better allocation and possibly enhanced training for involved staff (Carless, 2019).

The issue of "Academic Disruption" also raises concerns, indicating that the program must be more smoothly integrated into the academic routine without disrupting the learning process. This suggests the importance of finding a balance between educational interventions and students' academic needs, ensuring that anti-bullying efforts do not divert attention from primary educational goals.

This analysis reveals the complexity of addressing bullying in school environments, where each theme emerging from the FGD provides valuable insights into the dynamics involved. A comprehensive and responsive approach to feedback is crucial for enhancing the effectiveness of the "Harmonious Ambassador" program in creating a safer and more inclusive learning environment at SMKN 19 Medan.

Anti-bullying campaigns in schools, such as the "Harmonious Ambassador" program, have the potential to create a safe environment and support student welfare. However, the success of these programs is still hindered by various factors, including students' fear, lack of training, and uneven support from schools. To overcome these obstacles, additional training for agents and facilitators, as well as increased participation from parents and external organizations, is greatly needed. More intensive evaluation and monitoring by the school are also necessary to achieve greater effectiveness and create lasting impacts.

5. Discussion

Bullying in schools is a pervasive challenge that impacts students globally, necessitating thoughtful and effective interventions (Zheng, 2025). The "Harmonious Ambassador" program at SMA Negeri 19 Medan exemplifies an innovative approach to this issue by empowering students to actively participate in bullying prevention. This initiative draws upon Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, which posits that an individual's development is influenced by their various environmental systems. By involving students as agents of change within their own educational ecosystem, the program leverages peer influence to foster a supportive and inclusive school environment, potentially transforming school culture towards greater respect and empathy.

The success of such interventions depends heavily on their implementation and the active engagement of all stakeholders involved. In Medan, the "Harmonious Ambassador" program strategically trains students to recognize and effectively respond to bullying incidents, fostering a sense of responsibility and agency. This hands-on approach not only mitigates bullying but also

enhances overall student engagement and morale by promoting an atmosphere of mutual respect and support.

Research underscores the profound impact bullying can have on victims, including psychological trauma and academic decline (Choi, 2022; Strohmeier, 2024). Addressing these challenges, the program at SMA Negeri 19 Medan constructs a supportive network encompassing students, teachers, and parents. This comprehensive approach aligns with the ecological theory by embedding anti-bullying efforts within the broader educational framework, thereby reinforcing the school's commitment to creating a safe and nurturing learning environment.

Key to the program's success is its focus on continuous training and the establishment of feedback mechanisms. These components ensure that student ambassadors are equipped to manage their responsibilities and adapt to evolving challenges. Such training sessions are vital, offering students the chance to develop crucial interpersonal and leadership skills that benefit their personal growth and future endeavors.

However, the effectiveness of the "Harmonious Ambassador" program can be constrained by challenges such as resource limitations, variable student participation, and the stigma associated with discussing bullying. These issues necessitate ongoing support and resources to maintain the program's vitality and expand its impact. Enhancing student engagement and reducing stigma is critical, as these factors directly influence the program's success by affecting how likely students are to participate and report bullying incidents.

The "Harmonious Ambassador" program at SMA Negeri 19 Medan resonates with findings from previous studies such as those by Xin (2021) and Frois (2021), which emphasize the importance of educational interventions in addressing bullying behaviors that target less powerful individuals. Similar to these studies, our program focuses on altering the school's social environment to mitigate bullying rather than merely punishing the perpetrators. However, while Xin and Frois highlight the recurring nature of aggressive behaviors in schools, the "Harmonious Ambassador" program extends these insights by empowering students to lead the change, thus fostering a proactive rather than reactive school culture. This approach aligns with Smith (2016), who notes that student-led initiatives can effectively shift social norms and promote a non-tolerant attitude towards bullying among peers.

Furthermore, our findings complement the work of Alzayani (2021), who underscores the significant impact proactive student involvement has on transforming school dynamics and reducing bullying. The "Harmonious Ambassador" program encapsulates this strategy by training students to act as agents of change, which has not only raised awareness but also actively engaged the student body in preventive actions. This active engagement is a critical factor in the program's success, as it builds on the concept that informed and empowered students are more likely to intervene and support their peers, thereby enhancing the overall school climate. This is a step forward from previous studies, which have often focused on adult-led interventions, underscoring the unique contribution of our research in demonstrating the effectiveness of peer-led approaches.

Lastly, the comprehensive approach adopted by the "Harmonious Ambassador" program reflects the principles advocated by Kenny, McCoy, and O'Higgins Norman (2023) in their "Whole Education Approach." By integrating various elements of the school environment—from teachers to administrative policies—the program ensures a holistic strategy that aligns with the ecological systems theory. This integration not only addresses bullying from multiple angles but also creates a more inclusive and respectful school environment, similar to what is observed in diverse school settings, as discussed by Sansait, Aguilin-Saldaña, and Retiracion (2023). By comparing the effectiveness of interventions across different educational settings, our study adds depth to the discussion on the adaptability and scalability of anti-bullying programs, highlighting how context-specific strategies are essential for their success.

The theoretical underpinning of the program, based on ecological systems theory, suggests that changes in student behavior and attitudes towards bullying can be most effectively achieved by influencing all levels of their environment—from the immediate, interpersonal interactions to broader institutional policies. This theory advocates for an integrated approach to prevention, where educational strategies are complemented by community involvement and policy support to create enduring change (Bronfenbrenner, 2021; Ritonga et al., 2024).

Novel aspects of the "Harmonious Ambassador" program lie in its methodical integration of ecological systems theory with practical, peer-led intervention strategies that go beyond traditional anti-bullying efforts. Unlike conventional approaches that often rely on punitive measures or passive educational campaigns, this program actively engages the student body in shaping their social environment. By training students not just as participants but as leaders in bullying prevention, it cultivates a culture of empowerment and accountability. This innovative model fosters resilience, empathy, and active citizenship among students, preparing them to tackle not only bullying but also other social challenges they may encounter. The scalability and adaptability of this framework suggest its potential application in diverse educational settings globally, offering a blueprint for transforming student dynamics and promoting a safer, more inclusive educational landscape.

6. Conclusion

The "Harmonious Ambassador" campaign at SMA Negeri 19 Medan plays a crucial role in creating a safer and more harmonious environment for students by actively involving them as agents of change in addressing bullying. The program successfully raises student awareness about bullying and encourages their active participation in reporting or supporting peers who are victims. However, the implementation of this campaign still faces challenges, particularly related to students' fear of reporting, limited support and training from the school, and the need for ongoing monitoring and evaluation to enhance program effectiveness.

Opportunities to improve this campaign include enhancing training for anti-bullying agents and facilitators, as well as engaging the participation of parents and external communities. Cross-group participation, in line with expert theories, can strengthen the impact of the campaign in creating a safe school and supporting student welfare (Results & Discussion). The long-term success of the "Harmonious Ambassador" requires full commitment from all school stakeholders, including teachers and staff, to support students in dealing with bullying. Through continued support, adequate training, and regular evaluations, this campaign is expected to have a more significant impact in reducing bullying incidents and enhancing student welfare.

7. Suggestions

In light of the findings from this study on the "Harmonious Ambassador" program, it is recommended that schools enhance the efficacy of anti-bullying initiatives by incorporating comprehensive and continuous training sessions for all stakeholders involved. These training sessions should focus not only on recognizing and responding to bullying incidents but also on fostering a supportive environment that encourages open communication and active participation from students, teachers, and parents. Moreover, implementing regular and systematic monitoring and evaluation processes is crucial to identify the strengths and areas for improvement of the program, ensuring that the interventions remain relevant and effective over time. Additionally, schools should consider integrating these anti-bullying programs into the broader educational curriculum to reinforce the importance of a safe and inclusive school environment, thereby supporting holistic student development and well-being.

Declarations

Author Contributions. The conceptual framework and research design were formulated by Humaizi and Sofiari. The methodology and literature review were collaboratively developed by Sofiari Ananda and Endah Rundika Pratiwi. The collection of policy documents and relevant research literature was undertaken by Sofiari Ananda. The synthesis of research findings and their theoretical analysis were carried out by Humaizi. All authors have reviewed, contributed to, and approved the final version of the manuscript for publication

Conflicts of Interest. The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Funding. This study was supported by Universitas Sumatera Utara (USU) through the Research Grant Program. The authors extend their sincere appreciation to Universitas Sumatera Utara for the financial assistance that made this research possible.

Ethical Approval. I affirm that I have secured all necessary consents as required by applicable laws for the publication of any personal details or images of research subjects or other individuals. I also agree to provide the EDUPIJ with copies of the consent or evidence of such consent upon request.

Data Availability Statement. The data supporting the findings of this study are openly available at the Open Journal System of EDUPIJ and can be accessed via the following DOI/link

Acknowledgments. The researchers would like to thank the Research Institute of the Universitas Sumatera Utara for providing grants according to research contract Number: 2431/UN5.1.R/SK/PPM/2024, August 01, 2024 that allowed this study to be conducted successfully.

References

- Ali, N. Al. (2025). Examining the Impact of a School-Based Bullying Education Program on Students' Knowledge of Bullying, Bullying Behavior, and Self-Esteem. *International Journal of Adolescence and Youth*, 30(1). <https://doi.org/10.1080/02673843.2025.2454997>
- Alzayani, N. (2021). Resolving bullying in terms of workload management in the public education sector after COVID-19 remote working experience. In *2021 Sustainable Leadership and Academic Excellence International Conference, SLAE 2021* (Vol. 2021). <https://doi.org/10.1109/SLAE54202.2021.9788078>
- Aslan, H. (2025). Bullying Among Special Education Students. *Psychological Reports*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00332941251314705>
- Bandura, A. (2023). Social Modeling and Psychological Processes of Observational Learning. In *Social Cognitive Theory*. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781394259069.ch2>
- Beitz, J. M. (2022). Psychometric Development of an Instrument Measuring Academic Social Bullying in Nursing Higher Education: Continuing Content and Construct Validation. *Journal of Nursing Measurement*, 30(2), 186–209. <https://doi.org/10.1891/JNM-D-D21-00026>
- Berchiatti, M. (2022). Bullying in Students with Special Education Needs and Learning Difficulties: The Role of the Student–Teacher Relationship Quality and Students' Social Status in the Peer Group. *Child and Youth Care Forum*, 51(3), 515–537. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10566-021-09640-2>
- Bork-Hüffer, T., Mahlknecht, B., & Kaufmann, K. (2020). (Cyber)Bullying in schools—when bullying stretches across cON/FFlating spaces. *Children's Geographies*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14733285.2020.1784850>
- Borowiec, J. (2022). Victims and Perpetrators of Bullying in Physical Education Lessons: The Role of Peer Support, Weight Status, Gender, and Age in Polish Adolescents. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 37(17). <https://doi.org/10.1177/08862605211017257>
- Borualogo, I. S., & Casas, F. (2021). Subjective Well-Being of Bullied Children in Indonesia. *Applied Research in Quality of Life*, 16(2). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11482-019-09778-1>

- Branch, S., Ramsay, S., Shallcross, L., Hedges, A., & Barker, M. (2021). *Exploring Upwards Bullying to Learn More About Workplace Bullying*. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-13-0935-9_11
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2022). Thematic Analysis: A Practical Guide. *QMIP Bulletin*, 1(33). <https://doi.org/10.53841/bpsqmip.2022.1.33.46>
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (2021). The Macrosystem and Human Development. In *The Ecology of Human Development*. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv26071r6.15>
- Bronfenbrenner. (1979). The Ecology of Human Development: Experiments by Nature and Design. Cambridge. *Encyclopedia of Quality of Life and Well-Being Research*.
- Carless, D. (2019). Feedback loops and the longer-term: towards feedback spirals. *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education*, 44(5). <https://doi.org/10.1080/02602938.2018.1531108>
- Choi, J. (2022). Bullying Victimization, Social Withdrawal, and Problematic Internet Use: A Moderated Mediation Model of Parental Involvement in Education among Korean Adolescents. *Child Indicators Research*, 15(5), 1889–1903. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12187-022-09934-4>
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2022). Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches 6th edition - John W. Creswell, J. David Creswell - SAGE. In *SAGE Publications, Inc.*
- Dardiri, A., Hanum, F., & Raharja, S. (2020). The bullying behavior in vocational schools and its correlation with school stakeholders. *International Journal of Instruction*, 13(2). <https://doi.org/10.29333/iji.2020.13247a>
- Darling-Hammond, L., & Cook-Harvey, C. (2018). Educating the whole child: Improving school climate to support student success. *Learning Policy Institute*., September.
- Espelage, D. L. (2023). Pilot Evaluation of Disability Anti-Bullying (DIAL) Training for Elementary Special and General Education Teachers: Impact on Teacher Self-Efficacy Attitudes Toward Bullying and Student Outcomes. *International Journal of Bullying Prevention*, 6. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s42380-023-00168-8>
- Fandrem, H. (2024). What is a safe and good learning environment in a diverse classroom? Bias-based bullying and religious education in Norwegian schools. In *Handbook of School Violence, Bullying and Safety* (pp. 390–402). Edward Elgar Publishing Ltd. <https://doi.org/10.4337/9781035301362.00041>
- Firdaus, E. (2025). Investigating factors influencing bullying behavior reduction and gender differences in higher education: A structural equation modeling approach. *Acta Psychologica*, 253. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.actpsy.2025.104747>
- Frois, T. (2021). Students of physical education from concepted public universities partially know the bullying concept. In *Journal of Physical Education (Maringa)* (Vol. 32, Issue 1). <https://doi.org/10.4025/jphyseduc.v32i1.3246>
- Gizzarelli, E., Burns, S., & Francis, J. (2023). Exploring Primary School Staff Responses to Student Reports of Bullying in Australia: A Qualitative Study. *International Journal of Bullying Prevention*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s42380-023-00190-w>
- Gusfre, K. S., Støen, J., & Fandrem, H. (2023). Bullying by Teachers Towards Students—a Scoping Review. *International Journal of Bullying Prevention*, 5(4). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s42380-022-00131-z>

- Heyder, A., Südkamp, A., & Steinmayr, R. (2020). How are teachers' attitudes toward inclusion related to the social-emotional school experiences of students with and without special educational needs? *Learning and Individual Differences*, 77. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lindif.2019.101776>
- Hollis, L. P. (2022). Universal Declaration of Human Rights: An argument for higher education to prohibit workplace bullying. *Policy Futures in Education*, 20(2), 234–239. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14782103211032093>
- Jeffrey, J., & Stuart, J. (2020). Do Research Definitions of Bullying Capture the Experiences and Understandings of Young People? A Qualitative Investigation into the Characteristics of Bullying Behaviour. *International Journal of Bullying Prevention*, 2(3). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s42380-019-00026-6>
- Johander, E., Turunen, T., Garandeau, C. F., & Salmivalli, C. (2021). Different Approaches to Address Bullying in KiVa Schools: Adherence to Guidelines, Strategies Implemented, and Outcomes Obtained. *Prevention Science*, 22(3). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11121-020-01178-4>
- Kenny, N., McCoy, S., & O'Higgins Norman, J. (2023). A Whole Education Approach to Inclusive Education: An Integrated Model to Guide Planning, Policy, and Provision. *Education Sciences*, 13(9). <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci13090959>
- Khan, N. A., & Abedin, S. (2022). Focus Group Discussion. In *Principles of Social Research Methodology*. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-5441-2_26
- Kintonova, A., Vasyaev, A., & Shestak, V. (2021). Cyberbullying and cyber-mobbing in developing countries. *Information and Computer Security*, 29(3). <https://doi.org/10.1108/ICS-02-2020-0031>
- Lekhal, R. (2024). Bullying of students who receive special education services for learning and behaviour difficulties in Norway. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 28(8), 1372–1389. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2021.1991487>
- Longobardi, C. (2022). Correction to: The links between students' relationships with teachers, likeability among peers, and bullying victimization: the intervening role of teacher responsiveness (European Journal of Psychology of Education, (2022), 37, 2, (489-506), 10.1007/s10. In *European Journal of Psychology of Education* (Vol. 37, Issue 2, pp. 507–508). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10212-021-00555-z>
- Murillo-Moraño, J. (2025). Influence of School Bullying on Motivation in Physical Education Classes. *Journal of School Violence*, 24(1), 64–80. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15388220.2024.2393144>
- Noboru, T., Amalia, E., Hernandez, P. M. R., Nurbaiti, L., Affarah, W. S., Nonaka, D., Takeuchi, R., Kadriyan, H., & Kobayashi, J. (2021). School-based education to prevent bullying in high schools in Indonesia. *Pediatrics International*, 63(4). <https://doi.org/10.1111/ped.14475>
- Park, M. (2023). Development and Evaluation of a Workplace Bullying Cognitive Rehearsal-Based Nursing Simulation Education Program: A Mixed-Methods Study. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 20(6). <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph20064974>
- Portelada, A. (2024). Teacher Well-Being Under Threat: The Consequences of Workplace Bullying from Preschool to Higher Education. *Education Sciences*, 14(11). <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci14111175>
- Ríos, X. (2023). “We’ve Never Studied Bullying at University:” Bullying-Related Beliefs, Training, and Strategies Among Physical Education Preservice Teachers. *Journal of Teaching in Physical Education*, 42(3), 556–562. <https://doi.org/10.1123/jtpe.2022-0124>

- Ritonga, A. R., Veronica, A., Ginting, L. D. C. U., Dalimunthe, M. A., & Nasution, L. H. (2024). Library promotion in the development of the Universitas Sumatera Utara towards a world-class university. *Journal of Infrastructure, Policy and Development*, 8(6), 1–19. <https://doi.org/10.24294/jipd.v8i6.4149>
- Ritonga, A., Thamrin, M., Siahaan, H., Dalimunthe, M., & Nur'aini, N. (2024). Promotion of ecotourism and communication policy in increasing tourists in Indonesia. *Journal of Infrastructure, Policy and Development*, 8(8), 4764. <https://doi.org/10.24294/jipd.v8i8.4764>
- Sağın, A. E. (2022). Bullying in Physical Education: Awareness of Physical Education Teachers. *Physical Culture and Sport, Studies and Research*, 95(1), 40–53. <https://doi.org/10.2478/pcssr-2022-0010>
- Sansait, J. R. M., Aguilin-Saldaña, G. F., & Retiracion, P. M. A. (2023). Does the type of school matter in preventing bullying? Knowledge, experience, and readiness to face bullying by students enrolled in public and private schools in the Philippines. *Social Sciences and Humanities Open*, 8(1). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssaho.2023.100530>
- Shelley, W. W., Pickett, J. T., Mancini, C., McDougale, R. D., Rissler, G., & Cleary, H. (2021). Race, Bullying, and Public Perceptions of School and University Safety. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 36(1–2). <https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260517736272>
- Smith, P. K. (2016). Bullying: Definition, Types, Causes, Consequences and Intervention. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 10(9). <https://doi.org/10.1111/spc3.12266>
- Söderberg, P., & Björkqvist, K. (2020). Victimization from Peer Aggression and/or Bullying: Prevalence, Overlap, and Psychosocial Characteristics. *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment and Trauma*, 29(2). <https://doi.org/10.1080/10926771.2019.1570410>
- Strohmeier, D. (2024). Correction to: Students as victims of bullying by teachers: Longitudinal antecedents and consequences (*Social Psychology of Education*, (2024), 27, 6, (2967–2990), 10.1007/s11218-024-09931-1). In *Social Psychology of Education* (Vol. 27, Issue 6, pp. 2991–2992). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11218-024-09946-8>
- Sullivan, T. N., Washington-Nortey, P. M., Sutherland, K. S., Hitti, S. A., & Farrell, A. D. (2021). Supports and Barriers for the Implementation of the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program in Urban Middle Schools in Low-Income Areas. *School Mental Health*, 13(2). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12310-021-09420-2>
- Tay, E. M. K. (2024). Exploring the relationship between the learning environment and bullying: PLS-SEM evidence from Norwegian higher education. *Learning Environments Research*, 27(3), 691–725. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10984-024-09497-x>
- Vidourek, R. A., King, K. A., & Merianos, A. L. (2016). School bullying and student trauma: Fear and avoidance associated with victimization. *Journal of Prevention and Intervention in the Community*, 44(2). <https://doi.org/10.1080/10852352.2016.1132869>
- Volk, A. A., Dane, A. V., & Marini, Z. A. (2014). What is bullying? A theoretical redefinition. In *Developmental Review* (Vol. 34, Issue 4). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dr.2014.09.001>
- Wahidah, A., ZM, H., Syafruddin, Ilyas, M., Malik, I., & Amalia, S. M. (2024). Penerapan Nilai-Nilai Multikultural Guna Mencegah Praktek Bullying Pada Siswa di SMA Mataram. *Jurnal Abdi Insani*, 11(1). <https://doi.org/10.29303/abdiinsani.v11i1.1367>
- Wallace, W. C. (2024). Student on student bullying in higher education: case studies from Trinidad and Tobago. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 37(7), 2129–2143. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09518398.2023.2264245>

- Weinreich, L., Haberstroh, S., Schulte-Körne, G., & Moll, K. (2023). The relationship between bullying, learning disorders and psychiatric comorbidity. *BMC Psychiatry*, 23(1). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12888-023-04603-4>
- Weyant, E. (2022). Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches, 5th Edition. *Journal of Electronic Resources in Medical Libraries*, 19(1–2). <https://doi.org/10.1080/15424065.2022.2046231>
- Xin, C. (2021). The intervention of bullying in middle schools under the concept of “moral and Psychological Education.” In *ACM International Conference Proceeding Series* (pp. 188–192). <https://doi.org/10.1145/3456887.3456929>
- Yin, R. K. (2018). *Case Study Research and Applications Design and Methods (6th ed.)*. Thousand Oaks, CA Sage. Scientific Research Publishing.
- Zheng, J. (2025). A qualitative study on the experiences and coping strategies of nursing interns facing bullying in nursing education. *Nurse Education Today*, 146. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nedt.2024.106538>

About the Contributor(s)

Humaizi is a distinguished professor in the Doctoral Program of Communication Science at the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Universitas Sumatera Utara (USU). With a strong academic background in communication and social sciences, he has made significant contributions to the fields of media literacy, public policy, digital literacy, governance, and social development. His research explores diverse topics, including poverty reduction, e-government, religious moderation, disaster management, and the role of media in society. As an accomplished scholar, Prof. Humaizi has published extensively in reputable international and national journals, as well as monographs and reference books. His work has been instrumental in shaping discussions on public administration, policy implementation, and community empowerment. In addition to his research, he actively engages in academic mentoring, knowledge dissemination, and community service initiatives, particularly in fostering media literacy and countering misinformation.

Email: humaizi@usu.ac.id

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8520-9724>

Bahtiar Mohamad Associate Professor of Corporate Communication and Strategy at the Othman Yeop Abdullah Graduate School of Business (OYAGSB), Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM), Kuala Lumpur. Additionally, he holds the titles of Chartered Manager (CMgr) and Fellow of the Chartered Management Institute (FCMI). Currently, he serves as a Senior Research Fellow at the Institute of Sustainable Growth and Urban Development (ISGUD), UUM Kuala Lumpur. Dr. Bahtiar's research interests encompass corporate communication, corporate identity, corporate image, crisis communication, and corporate branding. He has contributed to numerous collaborative research projects funded by various entities, including ERASMUS on Sustainability Development Goals (SDGs), the Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia (RAGS, FRGS, TRGS), Universitas Sebelas Maret, and Telkom University, Indonesia.

ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0828-3194>

Sofiari Ananda is a committed lecturer in the communication Science at Universitas Sumatera Utara, where she plays an active role in teaching, research, and knowledge dissemination. With a strong foundation in social sciences, Journalism, Sociology, and Gender.

ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7906-0078>

Endah Rundika Pratiwi is a dedicated lecturer in Communication Science at Universitas Sumatera Utara (USU) with a deep passion for social studies, communication, culture, and advertising. Her academic interests revolve around exploring the dynamics of media, cultural narratives, and the evolving landscape of communication in contemporary society. With a strong commitment to academic development and knowledge dissemination, Endah actively contributes to the advancement of communication science through teaching, research, and scholarly engagement. She is particularly invested in enhancing communication studies, fostering critical thinking, and encouraging innovative approaches in media and advertising research.

ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0006-1824-673X>

Publisher's Note: *The opinions, statements, and data presented in all publications are solely those of the individual author(s) and contributors and do not reflect the views of Universitepark, EDUPIJ, and/or the editor(s). Universitepark, the Journal, and/or the editor(s) accept no responsibility for any harm or damage to persons or property arising from the use of ideas, methods, instructions, or products mentioned in the content.*
