

Comparison of Verbal and Physical Bullying Incidence among Elementary Students in Jayapura

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Abstrack

Bullying has increasingly affected elementary school students, with prevalence estimated at 25%. However, there is a lack of definitive data comparing bullying incidents between public and private elementary schools. This study aimed to compare the incidence of verbal and physical bullying among students at two elementary schools in Jayapura. A cross-sectional design was used, conducted in July 2024. The study involved a total population of 987 students, with a purposive sample of 102 students each from Inpres II Waena State Elementary School (public) and Muhammadiyah Elementary School (private). Data were collected via questionnaires and analyzed using Stata 14, applying bivariate analyses with chi-square tests. Findings revealed that verbal bullying was more prevalent at Inpres II Waena State Elementary School (66.7%) compared to Muhammadiyah Elementary School. Key factors associated with bullying included gender, age at first experience of bullying, and the availability of complaint channels. Verbal bullying often manifests as teasing or jokes, which are normalized due to the absence of firm sanctions for perpetrators. These results highlight the need for stronger school policies and structured reporting systems to address verbal bullying in both public and private school settings.

Keywords: incidence of bullying, students, elementary school, counseling

Abstrak

Bullying semakin mempengaruhi siswa sekolah dasar, dengan prevalensi diperkirakan mencapai 25%. Namun, kurangnya data pasti yang membandingkan insiden bullying antara sekolah dasar negeri dan swasta. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk membandingkan kejadian perundungan verbal dan fisik di kalangan siswa di dua sekolah dasar di Jayapura. Desain penampang digunakan, dilakukan pada Juli 2024. Penelitian ini melibatkan total populasi 987 siswa, dengan sampel purposive masing-masing 102 siswa dari Sekolah Dasar Negeri Inpres II Waena (umum) dan Sekolah Dasar Muhammadiyah (swasta). Data dikumpulkan melalui kuesioner dan dianalisis menggunakan STATA 14, menerapkan analisis bivariat melalui uji chi-square. Temuan mengungkapkan bahwa perundungan verbal lebih marak di Inpres II Waena State Elementary School (66,7%) dibandingkan dengan Sekolah Dasar Muhammadiyah. Faktor-faktor kunci yang terkait dengan bullying termasuk jenis kelamin, usia pada pengalaman pertama bullying, dan ketersediaan saluran pengaduan. Bullying verbal sering bermanifestasi sebagai ejekan atau lelucon, yang dinormalisasi karena tidak adanya sanksi tegas bagi pelaku. Hasil ini menyoroti perlunya kebijakan sekolah yang lebih kuat dan sistem pelaporan terstruktur untuk mengatasi bullying verbal di lingkungan sekolah negeri dan swasta.

Kata kunci: kejadian bullying, siswa, sekolah dasar, konseling

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INTRODUCTION

Bullying is increasingly recognized as a critical global issue that threatens the emotional, social, and academic development of children. It is often categorized as a form of hidden or covert violence, with long-lasting consequences for its victims (Ali et al., 2022). While bullying may occur in various contexts, it is particularly prevalent in educational settings, especially among children and adolescents who are still developing cognitive maturity and moral reasoning (Susilowati et al., 2022). According to global reports, approximately 49.8% of children aged 9 to 12 have experienced some form of bullying at school, making the educational environment a primary site for such incidents (Patchin & Hinduja, 2020). In Indonesia, school-based bullying remains a widespread concern. The Federation of Indonesian Teachers' Unions (FSGI) reported that, as of 2023, around 25% of bullying victims were students enrolled in primary or junior high schools. While national data suggests a decline in bullying from 53.24% in 2021 (Statista, 2021), the current figures remain relatively high. A report by the Ministry of Education also noted that bullying is more prevalent in schools than at home (Direktorat SMP, 2022). Despite the scope of the problem, many cases of bullying in Indonesia go unreported, especially among younger children who are either afraid of retaliation or reluctant to share their experiences with teachers or parents (Borualogo et al., 2020).

Theoretically, bullying can be divided into two dominant forms: physical and verbal. Physical bullying includes actions such as hitting, kicking, or pushing and tends to produce immediate physical harm. Verbal bullying, on the other hand, includes name-calling, mockery, or exclusion, and often results in long-term psychological effects. Both types can lead to severe emotional distress, social withdrawal, poor academic performance, absenteeism, and even school dropout (Menesini & Salmivalli, 2020). Studies have also found that bullying is associated with poor school climate and culture, where hostile environments and a lack of adult involvement perpetuate the problem (Damayanti et al., 2024). Girls, in particular, are more likely to suffer mental health consequences from bullying than boys (Källmén & Hallgren, 2021).

Although several international studies have examined differences in bullying prevalence between public and private schools, findings vary by context. For instance, research in the United Arab Emirates found that physical bullying was more common in private schools (24%) than in public schools (18%), with the difference approaching statistical significance (Al-Ketbi et al., 2024). Similarly, a study in São Paulo, Brazil, revealed that private schools reported higher levels of aggression than public schools (Silva et al., 2024). These studies suggest that institutional differences in school governance, discipline enforcement, and social norms may shape the frequency and nature of bullying.

In contrast, research focusing on similar comparisons in Indonesia, particularly in Eastern Indonesia, is scarce. Papua, as one of the country's easternmost and most geographically isolated regions, has received limited scholarly attention to school-based bullying. Nonetheless, several cases reported in the region highlight the seriousness of the problem. In Timika, for example, a student was physically assaulted by six classmates and required hospital treatment due to bruises on multiple body parts (Fajar, 2025). In Manokwari, signs of physical violence among elementary school students were also documented, with verbal bullying being frequent and socially tolerated (Elyas, 2022). Elyas further noted that bullying in Papua is often driven by complex social, economic, and cultural factors, making it difficult to address through one-size-fits-all interventions.



In Jayapura City, Papua's provincial capital, bullying remains a critical issue in both public and private schools. Preliminary data from two schools, Negeri Inpres II Waena (public) and Muhammadiyah Elementary School Abepura (private), indicate that approximately 15% of students in public schools and 13% in private schools reported experiencing bullying in the past 30 days. Verbal intimidation and peer exclusion were the most frequently reported forms. These findings raise important questions about whether the type of school is associated with the prevalence and nature of bullying in this under-researched region. Despite the growing national and international literature on school bullying, no empirical study has yet focused on comparing bullying between public and private elementary schools in Papua or Eastern Indonesia. Most available studies have centered on urban areas in Java and Sumatra, overlooking the unique socio-cultural contexts of more remote provinces. Therefore, this study seeks to fill that gap by providing context-specific data on the prevalence and types of bullying in primary schools in Jayapura City. The objective of this study is to compare the incidence of Verbal and Physical Bullying among Elementary Students in Jayapura. By doing so, the study aims to offer a deeper understanding of how school type, local context, and social dynamics shape the experience of bullying in primary education settings.

METHOD

The present study employed a cross-sectional research design. It was conducted over the course of one month, specifically in May 2024, at two primary schools: Inpres Perumnas II Waena State Elementary School and Muhammadiyah Elementary School Abepura. May was strategically selected for data collection as it coincides with the active academic term, ensuring optimal student attendance. Moreover, this period precedes final examinations, thereby minimizing potential academic disruptions and allowing respondents to participate without added academic stress. This timing was intended to enhance participants' reliability and attentiveness during data collection.

The study population consisted of 486 students enrolled at Inpres II Waena State Elementary School and Muhammadiyah Elementary School Abepura. From this population, a sample of 204 students was selected purposively, comprising 102 students from grades V and VI at each school. The inclusion criteria required participants to be in grades V or VI, have experienced bullying, and demonstrate the willingness and capacity to engage responsibly in the research process. A purposive sampling technique was adopted to recruit respondents with direct experience of bullying, which could not be efficiently identified through random sampling. This approach enabled the researchers to collect data that were both relevant and information-rich, aligning with the study's specific objectives.

Data collection was conducted using a structured questionnaire, adapted from two established instruments: the 2021 National Survey on Peer-to-Peer Harassment and Response (SNPHR) and UNICEF's Bullying in Indonesia survey. To ensure the instrument's validity and reliability, it underwent expert validation and a pilot test with 30 students with demographic characteristics similar to those of the study sample. Construct validity was supported by item-total correlation scores exceeding 0.30, while reliability testing using Cronbach's alpha yielded a coefficient of 0.81, indicating strong internal consistency and suitability for measuring bullying experiences in the elementary school context.

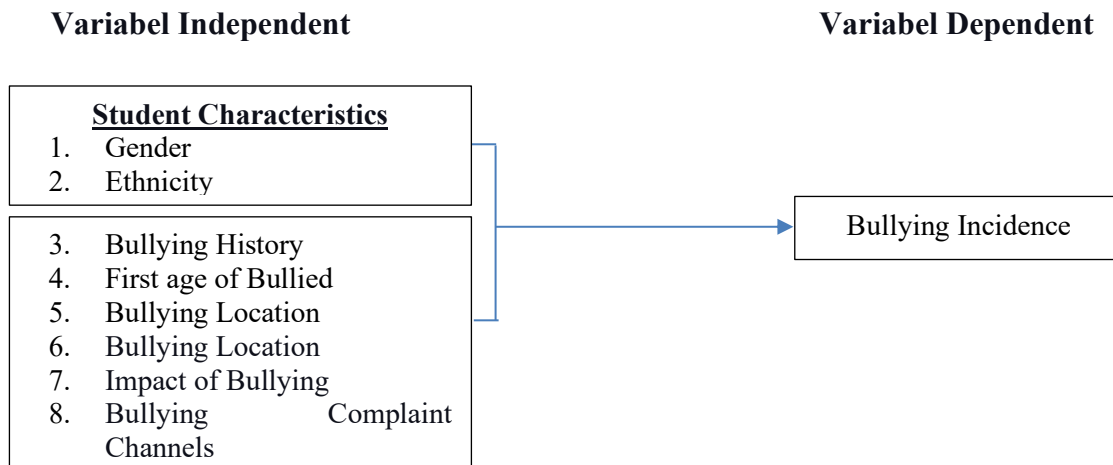
The study examined one dependent variable bullying incidence, categorized into two types: (0) verbal bullying and (1) physical bullying. Independent variables included



student demographic characteristics (gender and ethnicity), bullying history, age at first victimization, location of the bullying incident, identity of the perpetrator, perceived impact of the bullying, and the availability or use of complaint mechanisms. The conceptual relationship among these variables is illustrated in Diagram 1.

Diagram 1.

The relationship between Dependent and Independent Variables



Data collection was conducted via the administration of structured questionnaires, distributed directly to selected participants in their classrooms prior to the lunch break. This timing ensured minimal disruption to the academic schedule and improved the quality of responses. Once collected, responses were entered into a raw data template and then cleaned to ensure accuracy and consistency. The cleaned dataset was then analyzed using univariate and bivariate statistical methods, with the Chi-Square test employed to examine associations between variables. All statistical analyses were performed using STATA version 14. Ethical approval for the study was granted by the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Public Health, Cenderawasih University, under reference number 067/KEPK-FKMUC/2024.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

As illustrated in Figure 1, verbal bullying emerged as the most prevalent form of victimization among students in both schools. At Inpres Perumnas II Waena State Elementary School, 66.7% of respondents reported experiencing verbal bullying, compared to 63.7% at Muhammadiyah Elementary School Abepura. Furthermore, approximately 54.9% of students at Inpres Perumnas II Waena State Elementary School reported being verbally teased or mocked by their peers. In contrast, this figure was lower 35.3% among students at Muhammadiyah Elementary School.

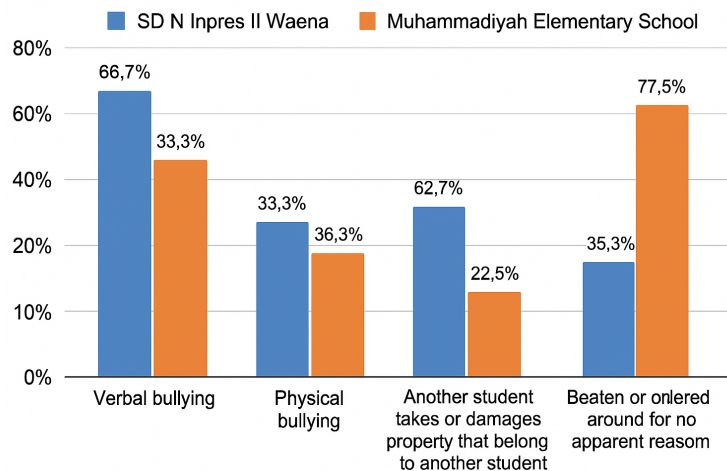
Table 2 highlights additional forms of bullying. At Inpres II Waena Elementary School, 62.7% of respondents stated that their personal belongings had been taken or intentionally damaged by other students. In contrast, only 22.5% of students at Muhammadiyah Elementary School reported similar incidents. Physical aggression was also reported, with 25.5% of respondents at Inpres II Waena Elementary and 35.3% at Muhammadiyah Elementary School indicating they had been physically assaulted or reprimanded without justification. These findings suggest that while verbal bullying is



predominant across both institutions, specific types of bullying vary in frequency and form between public and private school settings. The data underscores the need for context-specific anti-bullying interventions that address both verbal and physical dimensions of peer aggression within primary schools in Jayapura.

Graph 1.

The distribution of bullying events and Bullying Types among Students in Inpres Waena and Muhammadiyah Elementary School



As presented in Table 3, the majority of participants at both Inpres II Waena State Elementary School and Muhammadiyah Elementary School Abepura were female, accounting for 59.8% and 47.1% of respondents, respectively. A higher proportion of students from ethnic minority backgrounds was found at SD Inpres II Waena (51.9%) compared to Muhammadiyah Elementary School (28.2%). The proportion of students who reported experiencing bullying was identical across the two schools, at 27.5%. However, differences emerged regarding the age at which students first became victims. At SD Inpres II Waena, bullying was most commonly first experienced at age 11 (33.3%), whereas at Muhammadiyah Elementary School, it occurred more frequently at age 10 (38.2%).

Classrooms were identified as the primary location for bullying incidents, reported by 40.2% of respondents at SD Inpres II Waena and 33.4% at Muhammadiyah Elementary School. Classmates were cited as the most frequent perpetrators of bullying in both schools, with reported rates of 33.3% and 31.4%, respectively. The consequences of bullying were evident in school attendance. At Inpres II Waena Elementary School, 45.1% of respondents reported missing school due to bullying, while 30.4% of students at Muhammadiyah Elementary School reported similar effects. Notably, a significant proportion of students indicated a lack of awareness of available reporting or complaint mechanisms: 36.3% at Inpres II Waena Elementary School and 30.4% at Muhammadiyah Elementary School reported being unaware of any existing bullying reporting channels or support services.



Graph 2.
 Comparison of the Prevalence of Bullying in Two Elementary Schools

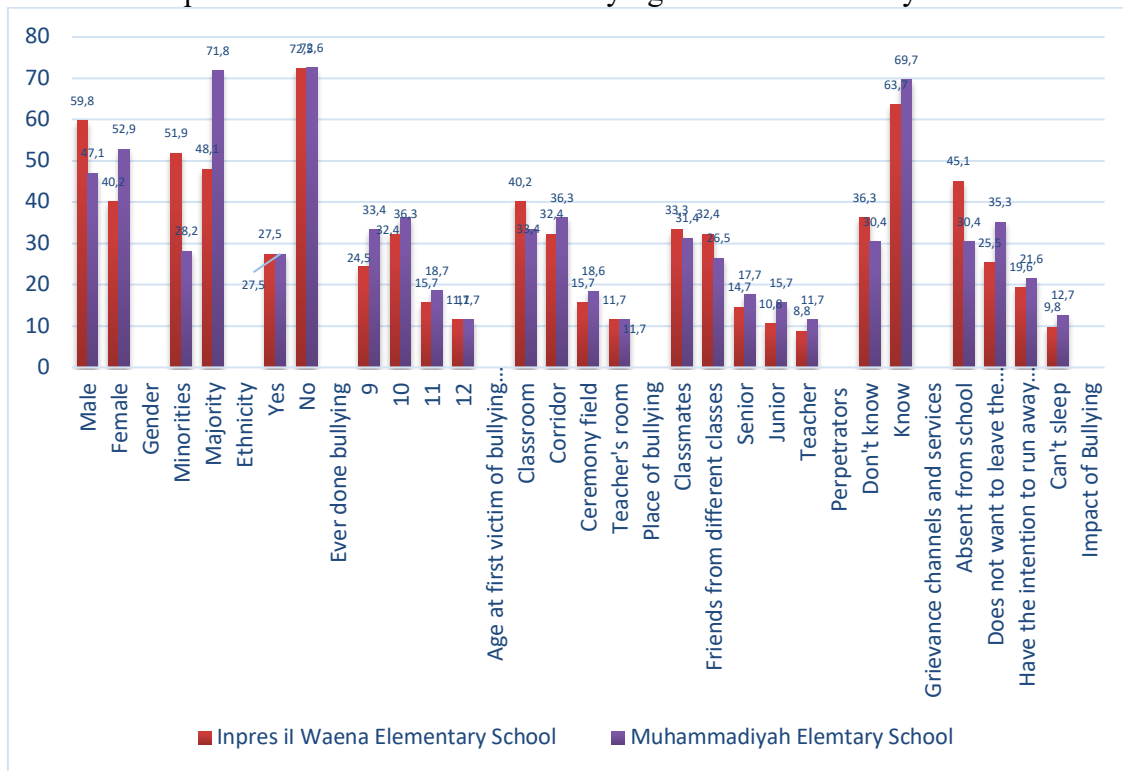


Table 4 presents the bivariate analysis examining various factors associated with bullying incidence at Inpres II Waena State Elementary School and Muhammadiyah Elementary School, Abepura. Gender was found to be significantly associated with bullying at both schools. At SD Inpres II Waena, male students were 1.81 times more likely to experience bullying than female students (OR = 1.81; 95% CI: 0.78–4.15), and this relationship was statistically significant ($p = 0.016$). Similarly, gender was also associated with bullying incidence at Muhammadiyah Elementary School ($p = 0.002$); however, in this setting, being female appeared to serve as a protective factor, with an odds ratio of 0.26 (95% CI: 0.11–0.62), suggesting that female students were significantly less likely to be bullied. In contrast, ethnicity did not show a statistically significant association with bullying at either school. At SD Inpres II Waena, the odds ratio was 0.94 (95% CI: 0.41–2.15; $p = 0.889$), while at Muhammadiyah Elementary School, the association approached significance (OR = 3.13; 95% CI: 0.94–10.4; $p = 0.063$), indicating a potential trend but insufficient evidence for a definitive link.

The history of having previously bullied others also did not show a meaningful association with being a victim of bullying at SD Inpres II Waena (OR = 1.03; 95% CI: 0.41–2.55; $p = 0.942$). When exploring the age at which bullying was first experienced, contrasting patterns emerged. At SD Inpres II Waena, the variable showed no significant relationship with bullying incidence (OR = 1.03; 95% CI: 0.41–2.55; $p = 0.942$). Conversely, at Muhammadiyah Elementary School, the age of first victimization was significantly associated with reduced risk of being bullied (OR = 0.29; 95% CI: 0.12–0.71; $p = 0.007$), suggesting that students who experienced bullying at an earlier age were less likely to report ongoing incidents. The location of bullying was significantly associated



with bullying experiences at both schools. At Inpres II Waena Elementary School, bullying was 1.4 times more likely to occur in the classroom than in other areas such as corridors (OR = 1.4; 95% CI: 0.53–3.65; $p = 0.049$). A stronger association was observed at Muhammadiyah Elementary School, where students were 5.49 times more likely to report classroom bullying than corridor incidents (OR = 5.49; 95% CI: 1.84–16.4; $p = 0.002$). Regarding the identity of bullying perpetrators (e.g., classmates, siblings, or teachers), no significant associations were found in either school, indicating that perpetrator type did not substantially influence bullying prevalence.

However, the impact of bullying, particularly in terms of the desire to run away from home, was associated with bullying at Inpres II Waena Elementary School (OR = 0.18; 95% CI: 0.04–0.92; $p = 0.040$), suggesting that students who reported this emotional response were more likely to be bullying victims. This relationship was not observed at Muhammadiyah Elementary School. Finally, the availability of complaint channels and services was significantly linked to bullying occurrence. At SD Inpres II Waena, schools lacking formal complaint mechanisms were 1.2 times more likely to report bullying (OR = 1.2; 95% CI: 0.54–3.08), though the result was not statistically significant. In contrast, at Muhammadiyah Elementary School, the presence of complaint services was a significant protective factor ($p = 0.023$), with schools without such services showing a 3.22 times higher risk of bullying incidents (OR = 3.22; 95% CI: 1.17–8.83).



Tabel 4
 Result of Chi Square

Variables	Inpres II Waena State Elementary School								Elementary School							
	Bullying				P value	Odds Ratio	95% CI		Bullying				p value	Odds Ratio	95% CI	
	Verbal		Physical				Lw	Up	Verbal		Physical				Lw	Up
	n	%	n	%					n	%	n	%				
Gender																
Male	40	72,7	15	27,3	0,016	1,81	0,78	4,15	23	47,9	25	52,1	reff	0,26	0,11	0,62
Female	28	59,6	19	40,4					42	77,8	12	22,2				
Race																
Minorities	35	66,1	18	33,9	0,889	0,94	0,41	2,15	18	81,8	4	18,2	0,063	3,13	0,94	10,4
Majority	33	67,4	16	32,7					33	58,9	23	41,1				
Ever done bullying																
Yes	18	64,3	10	35,7	0,754	0,864	0,34	2,15	18	64,3	10	35,7	0,942	1,03	0,41	2,55
No	50	67,6	24	32,4					47	63,5	27	36,5				
Age at first victim of bullying in (years)																
9 - 10	36	65,5	19	34,5	0,045	0,88	0,38	2,03	29	51,3	27	48,2	0,007	0,29	0,12	0,71
11 -12	32	68,1	15	31,2					36	78,3	10	21,7				



Variables	Inpres II Waena State Elementary School								Elementary School							
	Bullying				P value	Odds Ratio	95% CI		Bullying				p value	Odds Ratio	95% CI	
	Verbal		Physical				Lw	Up	Verbal		Physical				Lw	Up
	n	%	n	%					n	%	n	%				
Place of bullying																
Classroom	28	68,3	13	31,7	reff	reff			28	82,4	6	17,6	reff	reff		
Corridor	20	60,6	13	39,4	0,049	1,4	0,53	3,65	17	45,9	20	54,1	0,002	5,49	1,84	16,4
Ceremony field	12	75,0	4	25,0	0,620	0,71	0,19	2,65	12	63,2	7	36,8	0,126	2,72	0,75	9,82
Teacher's room	8	66,7	4	33,3	0,915	1,07	0,27	4,23	8	66,7	4	33,3	0,265	2,33	0,52	10,3
Bullying perpetrators																
Classmates	24	70,6	10	29,4	reff	reff			20	62,5	12	37,5	reff	reff		
Friends from different classes	22	66,7	11	33,3	0,730	1,2	0,42	3,37	19	70,4	8	29,6	0,525	0,70	0,23	2,01
Seniors	9	60,0	6	40,0	0,468	1,60	0,44	5,69	9	60,0	6	40,0	0,869	1,11	0,31	3,90
Class sister	4	36,4	7	63,6	0,051	4,20	1,00	17,6	11	68,7	5	31,3	0,670	0,75	0,21	2,71
Teacher	9	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	50,0	6	50,0	0,455	1,66	0,43	6,35
Impact of Bullying																



Variables	Inpres II Waena State Elementary School								Elementary School							
	Bullying				P value	Odds Ratio	95% CI		Bullying				p value	Odds Ratio	95% CI	
	Verbal		Physical				Lw	Up	Verbal		Physical				Lw	Up
	n	%	n	%					n	%	n	%				
Absent from school	29	63,1	17	36,9	reff	reff			23	74,2	8	25,8	reff	reff		
Does not want to leave the house	14	54,8	12	46,2	0,446	1,46	0,55	3,88	21	58,3	15	41,7	0,176	2,05	0,72	5,82
Have the intention to run away from home	18	90,0	2	10,0	0,039	0,18	0,04	0,92	14	63,6	8	36,4	0,411	1,64	0,50	5,36
Can't sleep	7	70,0	3	30,0	0,678	0,73	0,16	3,21	7	53,8	6	46,2	0,192	2,46	0,63	9,55
Grievance channels and services																
Don't know	26	70,3	11	29,7	0,027	1,2	0,54	3,08	25	80,7	6	19,3	0,023	3,22	1,17	8,83
Know	42	64,6	23	35,4					40	56,3	31	43,7				



Discussion

Class size and supervision levels often differ between public and private schools, with public schools typically accommodating larger student populations per classroom. This can limit teachers' ability to monitor student interactions effectively, particularly verbal forms of bullying, which are more difficult to observe and prevent (Al-Ketbi et al., 2024). Verbal bullying is often subtle, does not involve physical contact, and tends to occur in semi-supervised areas such as hallways and playgrounds (Ghardallou et al., 2024). In the present study, this pattern was supported by the data, with nearly two-thirds of respondents at Inpres Waena Elementary School (66.7%) and one-third at Muhammadiyah Elementary School (33.3%) reporting experiences of verbal bullying. Brief interviews conducted during the research also revealed that many of these incidents involved sexist remarks. International findings are consistent with these trends. For instance, research conducted in Qatar and the United Arab Emirates reported a verbal bullying prevalence of approximately 8.7% (Al-Darmaki et al., 2022; Kamal et al., 2023). A study using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) found that verbal bullying was more prevalent than physical bullying among students (Johansson & Englund, 2020). Likewise, research in India indicated a higher overall prevalence of bullying in private schools (33%) compared to public schools (19.2%) (Rana et al., 2020). This could reflect stricter discipline enforcement in private institutions or cultural norms in public schools, where teasing and verbal insults may be socially tolerated as everyday banter.

Moreover, students in private schools may be more inclined to report bullying due to stronger school policies and support systems (Azeredo et al., 2025). In the present study, male students at Inpres II Waena Elementary School had 1.88 times higher odds of being bullied compared to their female counterparts. At Muhammadiyah Elementary School, although gender was also significantly associated with bullying, it served as a protective factor. These findings align with a study from Peru, which found that both verbal and physical bullying were more frequent in public schools, with male students more commonly involved as both victims and perpetrators (Man et al., 2022). A similar pattern was observed in Egypt, where cultural norms and minimal sanctions for male aggression were linked to higher bullying rates among boys in public schools (Galal et al., 2020). The socio-cultural context may also explain the heightened vulnerability of male students in public schools, where aggressive behaviors such as name-calling and physical dominance are often socially reinforced. Limited resources and larger class sizes in public schools further exacerbate supervision challenges, allowing such behaviors to persist undetected.

Age also plays a crucial role in bullying dynamics. Literature suggests that early exposure to bullying, particularly between ages 6 and 9, may increase the risk of children becoming perpetrators or victims in later years (Jansen et al., 2022; Zhou & Wang, 2021). The present study corroborates these findings, showing a statistically significant association between younger age of first victimization and increased likelihood of bullying in both public ($p=0.045$) and private schools ($p=0.007$). This echoes results from the Netherlands, where students in public schools reported higher levels of physical (16%) and verbal (22%) bullying than their private-school peers (Jansen et al., 2022). Likewise, a cross-cultural study found that younger children were more susceptible to physical bullying across both school types (López-Castro et al., 2023). While a study in Turkey showed that 9-year-olds were particularly vulnerable to verbal bullying (Dawes et al., 2023). Verbal bullying, in particular, tends to go unnoticed by teachers and leaves



no visible injuries, making it difficult to monitor and address effectively—especially in resource-constrained public school settings.

The consequences of bullying among students are far-reaching. This study found that the desire to run away from home as a result of bullying was more common among public school students (90.0%) than among private school students (63.6%). In contrast, absenteeism due to verbal bullying was most frequently reported in private schools (74.2%). These trends mirror findings from a study in Pakistan, where 54% of public school students experienced bullying, compared to 46% in private schools, and school absenteeism was the most common consequence (56.3%) (Salman et al., 2021). However, a study in India found an inverse pattern: private school students were more likely to report a desire to run away from home (33%), whereas public school students most commonly reported absenteeism (19.2%) (Rana et al., 2020). Students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds who are more likely to attend public schools—are at increased risk of being bullied. A lack of social support and a weak sense of belonging further intensify this vulnerability. In contrast, schools with a supportive climate and strong community integration tend to exhibit lower levels of bullying (Johansson et al., 2022; Tambing et al., 2024).

The availability and effectiveness of bullying complaint mechanisms can significantly influence the prevalence and impact of bullying. In this study, complaint channels were shown to reduce the risk of bullying by 1.2 times in public schools and by 3.22 times in private schools. This finding aligns with other international research indicating that private schools, due to their more flexible organizational structures and greater resource allocation, are better equipped to implement a responsive and effective anti-bullying system (Zhao et al., 2023). In contrast, public schools may struggle with bureaucratic complexity, budgetary constraints, and unfavorable student-teacher ratios, which hinder their ability to address bullying effectively.

Several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the study focused on students in grades five and six, which limits the generalizability of the findings to all elementary school populations. Moreover, due to the young age of the participants, recall bias may have influenced responses, particularly regarding the age of the first bullying experience. To minimize this bias, the study utilized standardized instruments adapted from the 2021 SNPHR Questionnaire and the UNICEF Bullying Survey for Indonesia, which had been previously validated for use in similar contexts..

CONCLUSION

This study shows that verbal bullying, including acts such as mocking, threatening, or damaging personal belongings, is the most dominant form of victimization experienced by elementary school students at Inpres II Waena State Elementary School and Muhammadiyah Elementary School. The dominance of verbal bullying indicates that this behavior is often normalized and less visible, particularly in school environments with limited supervision, weak rule enforcement, and overcrowded classrooms, making it harder for teachers to detect and intervene early. The findings also highlight that gender, age at first bullying exposure, and the availability of complaint mechanisms significantly influence bullying incidence, with male students being more vulnerable due to socially reinforced norms of dominance and aggression. Differences between public and private schools suggest that early exposure to bullying increases the risk of bullying in public schools. In contrast, in private schools, it may act as a protective factor, likely reflecting stronger social support systems and intervention practices. From a policy standpoint,



these results underscore the urgent need for comprehensive, school-based anti-bullying frameworks, particularly those that strengthen classroom supervision, establish trusted reporting channels, and integrate culturally responsive interventions to create safer, more inclusive learning environments.

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