

Seniority and Bullying Behavior in the Elderly in Nursing Homes

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Abstract. Bullying and seniority are phenomena that can be found across various social groups and age ranges. These behaviors occur not only among children or adolescents but also in daily interactions, including among the elderly. In nursing homes, for example, bullying persists despite the physical limitations that aging brings. This study aims to explore the impact and the underlying factors that contribute to seniority and bullying behaviors among older people. A qualitative approach was used, employing the photo-elicitation technique, with two participants who met the selection criteria. The results of the study indicate that seniority and bullying behaviors among older people are influenced by early character development, particularly by authoritarian parenting styles, as well as the social conditions that create bullying victims. The consequences of these behaviors include social sanctions, such as being ostracized from interaction with other residents.

Keywords: Seniority, Bullying, Elderly, Nursing Home

Abstrak. Bullying dan senioritas adalah fenomena yang dapat ditemukan dalam berbagai kelompok sosial dan rentang usia. Perilaku ini tidak hanya terjadi di kalangan anak-anak atau remaja, tetapi juga dalam interaksi sehari-hari, termasuk di lingkungan lansia. Di Panti Jompo, misalnya, fenomena bullying tetap berlangsung meskipun pelaku memiliki keterbatasan fisik terkait usia. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menggali dampak dan faktor penyebab perilaku senioritas dan bullying pada lansia. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan teknik elicitation foto, melibatkan dua partisipan yang memenuhi kriteria. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa perilaku senioritas dan bullying pada lansia dipengaruhi oleh pembentukan karakter sejak dini, yang terkait dengan pola asuh otoriter, serta kondisi sosial yang membentuk korban bullying. Dampak dari perilaku ini adalah sanksi sosial, berupa pengucilan dari interaksi sosial dengan penghuni lainnya.

Kata kunci: Senioritas, Bullying, Lansia, Panti Jompo

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Introduction

Bullying is an absorption of a foreign word (in English) which, if translated, becomes *perundungan*, but the word *perundungan* is not popular among the public. Only a few people know the meaning of the word *rundung*. Bullying is a type of aggressive behavior that occurs continuously and is shown to individuals who have been targeted or victimized (Papalia, Olds, and Feldman in Irmayanti, 2016). "Bullying is a negative behavior that repeatedly harms or injures the victim verbally, physically, or emotionally" (Syafira et. al., 2024).

Cases of violence, especially in the field of education, have become an epidemic everywhere, as reported by the official KPAI website within a period of 9 years, from 2011 to 2019. There were 37,381 complaints of violence against children. For bullying both in education and social media, the number reached 2,473 reports, and the trend continues to increase, which is currently being experienced. Freud believed that current character and actions are influenced by childhood memories and affect humans up to the last stage of development, namely old age. Becoming elderly is not something that humans can avoid. It is something that humans will inevitably experience when the time comes. This is a regular occurrence in humans, accompanied by psychological and physical changes (Ranti, 2021).

Psychological and physical changes will occur significantly over time, and during the process of change, Erikson is very aware that adjustments, both physical and social, must be made by the elderly (Crain, 2007). During the intended adjustment period, seniority and bullying behaviors occur. This behavior usually occurs in perpetrators and victims who often meet with older people who experience this adjustment period together in a shelter.

Based on a preliminary study conducted by researchers at a pesantren in Jombang, several students who were interviewed stated that they had been targets of bullying. In the dormitory, there are still many bullying behaviors from their seniors, such as being told to take the food queue, being told to buy snacks, and being forced to give money. Sometimes, the perpetrator forcibly takes the victim's belongings, and

if the victim refuses, the perpetrator will use physical violence by kicking, hitting, and threatening the victim. These make the victim feel scared, traumatized, uncomfortable, and intimidated, which has an impact on mental health.

This writing aims to describe the factors that cause bullying in the Al-Risalah dormitory. It uses a qualitative writing method with a phenomenological approach. The data selection method uses observation and interviews. The results explain that the causes of bullying in the Al-Risalah dormitory are family factors, peers, schools, environments, media, empathy, high aggression, a history of bullying victims, venting personal problems, and the effects of boredom.

The writing by the author Helena Lohy titled "Seniority Violence in the Educational Environment" with the aim of this writing to see what factors underlie violent behavior in seniority in the educational environment. The writing method used is a descriptive qualitative approach. Meanwhile, data is collected through literature studies from various journals, books, and websites that follow the topic discussed. The results of the writing indicate that the factors that cause violent behavior in seniority still exist, such as the lack of social control from three educational environments, namely family, school, and society (Helena Lohy & Pribadi, 2021). The differences between the previous writing and this one are the research design, participants, and research location. This writing will be done using photo elicitation. The photo elicitation method will provide photos that are useful for stimulating participants' memories and helping them answer questions during the interview process.

Method

This study employs a qualitative approach and photo-elicitation method, as it facilitates the expression of participants' feelings and experiences. It also aims to stimulate participants' memories to recall events with a correlation (Shaw, 2013). The data collection location for participants takes place at the Budi Agung Social Nursing Home in NTT.

The application of photo elicitation techniques requires stages in writing, such as, among others:

a. Photo Appearance Stage

This initial stage follows the selection and recruitment of participants. They will be asked to read and sign the informed consent form. At this stage, the author will build rapport with the participants and display the previously prepared photos.

b. Interview

The interview is a data collection technique that involves asking predetermined questions related to writing to a predetermined group of participants. At this stage, after the photo appears, participants will be interviewed using the interview guidelines that have been prepared.

The data analysis used is a technique from Braun and Clarke (2006), namely thematic analysis (Kiling et al., 2022). This technique is very effective in describing things in detail and explaining the process. For a Thematic analysis, the author needs to take the time to get to know the data they have obtained better before carrying out the following stages for more details on how to technically analyze data using the thematic analysis method.

Result

This writing aims to explain the causes of seniority and bullying behavior in the elderly at the Budi Agung nursing home. It employs a descriptive, qualitative method with a photo-elicitation technique, which utilizes photos to help participants explain the meaning of the photos from their own perspectives. From the interviews, two major themes, Early Character Formation and Social Sanctions, and three sub-themes, Authoritarian parenting, Seniority Victims, and Bullying, have been identified.

Authoritarian parenting is one of several parenting patterns in which parents consistently apply a relatively strict attitude to their children. Parenting plays a

crucial role in shaping a person's character throughout their lifetime. The authoritarian parenting pattern appears rigid in managing children, creating a sense of "fear" to obey all parental orders. This can result in a sense of rebellion when a child has more opportunities and power; both participants also felt this way. This was proven in the previous writing by Irawati (2020). This supports a positive relationship between authoritarian parenting and bullying behavior.

One of the participants, FM, revealed that all decisions from FM were made by parents, causing FM to obey all their parents' decisions. This indirectly made FM unable to express feelings and opinions and unable to make decisions on their own, causing FM to harbor all negative feelings themselves so that they form a negative character. It is supported by Relegia et al. (2023), stating that authoritarian parenting on the tendency of bullying behavior has a value of 0.00 or $p < 0.05$, meaning that there is a significant change in bullying behavior with a change in authoritarian parenting. Also, with every increase in one unit of a person's authoritarian parenting score, the bullying behavior will be higher. When there is an increase in authoritarian parenting, seniority and bullying behavior are higher.

Being a victim of seniority and bullying, experiencing intimidation and forms of aggression in late adolescence to early adulthood, is associated with a marked increase in the likelihood of daydreaming or fantasizing about hurting people. This topic was also discussed in the journal *The Effects of Bullying*, as obtained through the experiences. Vanderbilt & Augustyn (2010) state that "bullying victims may be trapped in a disturbing cycle in which they respond aggressively to bullying which then, in turn, triggers more abuse." It also aligns with Bandura's social learning theory, famous for its modelling method. Indirect modelling of a person's life is essentially learning; the learning process experienced by participants from adolescence to entering late adulthood has an unexpected modelling figure. The family around them applies verbal bullying behavior to participants; Bandura's social learning theory (Ansani & H. Muhammad Samsir, 2022) states that modelling is also oriented towards one of the formations of a person's personality; this develops

through the observation process, where people learn through observation. Participants learn through the process of observing people who are considered to have more value than them. This is based on the participants' experience; there is someone who becomes a role model to be imitated, and the observation process and the results of the observations align with the personality currently emerging at the nursing home.

Character formation is closely related to Bandura's social learning theory because the process of observation and imitation experienced by participants throughout their lives involves attention to details of behavior and how models interact with others. In their reactions to various situations, participants unconsciously perceive the models they observe so that they copy their behavior to be imitated. This is based on the answers from participants who admitted to experiencing events such as being victims of undemocratic parenting. This forms and strengthens their character as the observed and imitated model do.

Perpetrators of seniority and bullying behavior are sanctioned for violating social norms and rules that apply in nursing homes. These sanctions are in the form of social sanctions that aim to deter the perpetrators so that they do not repeat and prevent things from happening again. They are closely related to Solomon Asch's Conformity Theory (Lestari, 2023), "a key concept in understanding how social rules and pressures influence human behavior." Indirectly, caregivers have used conformity theory as an important tool in regulating individual behavior.

Limiting behavior that is not under applicable norms and providing guidance on acceptable behavior. What was expressed is in accordance with what was stated by Coloroso in (Hayati & Yusri, 2023), who stated that bullies will be trapped in the role of bullies, unable to develop healthy relationships, less able to see from other perspectives, lack empathy, and consider themselves strong and liked so that they can influence their social relationship patterns in the future.

The application of enforced social sanctions is supported by a review of the sociology of law on the application of social sanctions (Hannan & Syarif, 2023). They state that social sanctions are a fundamental theme that needs to be raised and introduced to the public domain formally and seriously. Apart from being able to function as an additional law, social sanctions can also be used as an indicator of "The strength of community understanding and support." The application of social sanctions must be an indicator to become an alternative punishment for perpetrators, such as those carried out by participants.



Figure 1. The chosen picture from one of the participants

Discussion

The study results indicate that seniority and bullying behavior among the elderly at Budi Agung Nursing Home are influenced by early character formation and the parenting styles they experienced earlier in life. These findings align with Bandura's Social Learning Theory, which states that individuals learn from their environment through observation and imitation (Bandura, 1977) in (Ansani & H. Muhammad Samsir, 2022). In this case, participants who were subjected to authoritarian parenting from childhood tend to internalize the aggressive behaviors they experienced, which are later reproduced in old age. This makes sense because humans naturally learn from past experiences, and if those experiences were dominated by strict control and limitations, individuals are likely to adopt the same patterns in their social interactions.

Consistent with (Relegia et al., 2023), this study confirms that authoritarian parenting has a significant correlation with increased bullying behavior. Participants who grew up in environments with rigid rules and no room for self-expression often struggle with emotional regulation and forming healthy social relationships. This can be explained through psychological mechanisms, where individuals experiencing prolonged emotional suppression without healthy coping outlets tend to express their frustration through aggression toward weaker individuals. Thus, restrictive parenting not only shapes a child's behavior but also perpetuates a cycle of violence that continues into old age.

Furthermore, experiences of being victims of seniority and bullying during late adolescence to early adulthood also contribute to aggressive behavior later in life. (Vanderbilt & Augustyn, 2010) suggest that victims of bullying may become trapped in a cycle of violence, where they respond to past trauma with aggressive behaviors toward others. Psychologically, this can be explained by coping theory, which states that individuals without healthy coping mechanisms tend to adopt behaviors they have experienced as a way to protect themselves or regain control over their situation.

The implementation of social sanctions in nursing homes also plays a crucial role in controlling seniority and bullying behavior. According to Solomon Asch's Conformity Theory, individuals tend to conform to the norms of a social group (Lestari, 2023). In the context of nursing homes, the rules and social norms enforced by caregivers are a guiding factor for elderly behavior. Social sanctions act as a regulatory mechanism to create a safer and more orderly environment. It is rational because when individuals are aware that their actions will result in negative consequences from their surroundings, they are more likely to reconsider their behavior. Therefore, the application of social sanctions in elderly communities serves as a form of punishment and an educational tool to encourage more positive behaviors.

Furthermore, these findings support Coloroso's in (Hayati & Yusri, 2023) perspective that perpetrators of bullying are often trapped in their roles due to a lack of empathy and a limited social perspective. They tend to see themselves as stronger individuals, affecting their future social relationships. This occurs because individuals who are accustomed to dominating social interactions believe that such behavior gives them advantages or a sense of superiority, making them reluctant to change. In the context of elderly individuals in nursing homes, this dynamic is further reinforced by social hierarchies among residents, where dominant individuals tend to hold more power over others.

The implications of this study highlight the need for psychosocial interventions in nursing home environments to prevent seniority and bullying behavior. Educational programs on empathy, social skills, and emotional management for the elderly can be effective strategies for altering long-established behavioral patterns. It is essential because although the elderly have extensive life experiences, behavioral change remains possible with the right interventions. Additionally, community-based approaches emphasizing inclusivity and social support can foster a more harmonious environment within nursing homes.

Conclusion

Seniority and bullying behavior often occur in all age groups, especially in peer groups, such as in nursing homes, schools, offices, or other social groups. The results of the writing that the author has obtained found that the existence of seniority and bullying behavior in the elderly in nursing homes is an incident that often occurs within the scope of the nursing home. This study provides broader insight to readers that seniority and bullying behavior occur not only in children and adolescents but also in the elderly. For it's very concerning, it can be concluded that the pattern of character formation influences this behavior from an early age, which is influenced by Authoritarian Parenting Patterns and Bullying Victims. Both play an important role in forming participants' characters from adolescence to adulthood to produce

such behavior. Seniority and bullying behavior in the elderly in nursing homes also causes impacts on participants where they receive social sanctions such as being isolated or separated from other environments, and the emergence of a sense of distrust for people around the participants. The impact of seniority and bullying behavior carried out by participants affects their social sustainability in nursing homes and society.

Suggestions

Caregivers are advised to learn counselling techniques that will be used in their daily lives with the elderly in nursing homes. This will help caregivers find the root of the problem, especially psychological problems related to the background of the elderly who will come, so that they know the appropriate care and actions to take with certain elderly people. Improving the quality of caregiver care can also be improved by increasing literacy about this care through journals and scientific articles written by previous authors.

The elderly are expected to be more open with people around them or with people who understand better. It can help the elderly overcome anxiety or problems they have experienced previously. They are also expected to be more expressive and foster healthy social relationships with the elderly or the surrounding community. The Nursing Home Administrators are advised to consider cases like this as important and urgent to be addressed by routinely carrying out mental health care programs with more professional people, such as psychologists and psychiatrists, and even taking this expert as a permanent program in the nursing home so that this can be controlled.

This research contributes to expanding future understanding of bullying behavior among the elderly, a group often overlooked in social studies. These findings can serve as a foundation for future research to explore the dynamics of social violence in old age and its implications for their psychosocial well-being.

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