

*Links between Prosocial Value and Bystanders' Helping Behavior in Bullying
Situation: The Mediating Role of Collective Efficacy and
Psychological Well-Being as Moderator*

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Abstract

Collective efficacy was examined as a mediator of relations between prosocial values and bystander's helping behavior, where psychological well-being functions as a moderator between prosocial values and bystander's helping behavior: whether they are willing to help a bullying victim, or on the contrary, support the bully. To answer this question, a study was conducted involving 2.725 participants consisted of 1.657 students and 1.068 adults (school personnel and parents as participants). Through vignettes, participants were given the role as bystanders in a bullying situation and asked whether they are willing to help the victim or on the contrary will support the perpetrator. Collective efficacy partially mediated between prosocial values and bystander's willingness to defend a victim or supporting the perpetrator. Psychological well-being did not mediate when data from students were evaluated. Psychological well-being did mediate the relations between adult's prosocial values and their helping behavior, whereas the relationship in helping the victim is stronger, when the psychological well-being is better. The findings provide evidence for the central role of prosocial values and the role of collective efficacy and psychological well-being in predicting bystanders willingness to help in bullying situation. The implication of this study suggests that it is needed different approaches for students compared with adults, considering increasing helping behavior in bullying situation in school.

Keywords: Bullying, Bystanders' Helping Behavior, Collective Efficacy, Psychological Well-being, Value

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Introduction

Bullying is widely regarded as a serious problem in schools in many countries (Craig et al., 2009; Smith, Monks, & Coyne, 2011), with no exception in Indonesia. Bullying in Indonesian schools have been noticed since 2004, after some students were seriously injured and even beaten to death by their seniors. This kind of violence is a relatively a recent known problem in Indonesian schools and it is still debatable whether bullying was an issue before or it is a new phenomenon in Indonesian schools. But regardless of the debate when bullying began appearing in Indonesian schools, studies show that the highest level of bullying is observed in high school compared to other school level (Djuwita & Royanto, 2008; Riauskina, Djuwita, & Soesetio, 2005).

Decreasing and preventing bullying in schools are urgent goals for schools, because the negative impacts are severe. When bullying happens in a school, students who are victims often have academic, personal and social difficulties (Hernández & Seem, 2004; Juvonen, Yueyan, & Espinoza, 2010) and these negative impacts of bullying often last into adulthood (Adams & Lawrence, 2011; Ttofi, Farrington, & Lösel, 2012). The negative impact of bullying will also have its impact on other students who are not actively involved in bullying. They may be afraid to go to school because they are afraid to be a next victim (Gini, Albiero, Benelli, & Altoe, 2008) and feeling of fear and intimidation can affect their capacity to learn academically and socially. The negative impact will also affect the family and the school reputation could be tarnished (Sullivan, 2011).

Considering the negative impacts of bullying, it is indisputably important to find ways to prevent or at least decrease bullying. Being a bully and a victim is related with their personality which has been long developed, therefore long term interventions are needed to change the behavior of the perpetrator and the victims (Sherer & Nickerson, 2010). Consequently, the most potential party to be empowered to stop bullying are the bystanders (Ahmed, 2008; Pöyhönen, Juvonen, & Salmivalli, 2012). In school bullying context, bystanders are usually defined as students who are witnessing a bullying incident but are not actively involved in the bullying act, neither as a perpetrator nor a victim (Cowie, 2014). However, some scholars argue that the definition of bystander should not be limited to students, but should also involve adults - like parents, teachers, guidance counselors, school psychologists, bus drivers, librarians, school administration staff, cafeteria workers, and security officers - who are part of the school community (Stueve et al., 2006). For this reason, in this research, we take students and adults (teachers, school administrators and also parents) as participants. As participants, they will be given a vignette where they see themselves having the role of a bystander.

From the explanation above, it is important to discover factors that influence bystanders' helping behavior in bullying situation, because these factors are the key to decrease and prevent bullying. However, for bullying in Indonesian high schools, it may require a somewhat different approach; given the different cultural backgrounds as collective society, Indonesian bystanders could respond differently in helping behavior than participants from Western countries because they have a different value priorities.

Like other behavior, helping behavior is caused by several internal and external factors. Helping behavior as one form of prosocial behavior, implies that the actions taken are beneficial to others and as having positive social consequences (DeLamater & Myers, 2007). Helping behavior which is usually defined as "*an action that has the consequence of providing some benefit to or improving the well-being of another person*" (Piliavin, 2009, p. 210). Helping in bullying can be done by defending the victim, but not helping by being inaction or responding with the "code of silence" if asked about a bullying incidence (Syvertsen, Flanagan, & Stout, 2009) can be considered supporting the bully perpetrator (Coloroso, 2005). Because there is always the choice to do good for the well-being of others or not, prosocial and helping behavior are always related to internal factors, what we call as values (De Dreu & Nauta, 2009).

Values are "trans-situational" and they will serve as "guiding principles in the life of a person or other social entity" (Schwartz, 1994). This means that value will determine behavior independent of the situations. Schwartz developed a comprehensive theory of basic values, which has already been tested in several cultures (Vecchione, Casconi, & Barbaranelli, 2009). He categorizes five values as social focused values (Security, Conformity, Tradition, Benevolence, Universalism) and the other five values as more personal focused (Self-Direction, Stimulation, Hedonism, Achievement and Power). In this article, we refer the values which are social focused as prosocial values.

Helping behavior is not only driven by internal values. Research also shows that the degree of well-being can determine whether individuals are more willing to help or not (Baumeister, Masicampo, & DeWall, 2009). Experimental studies showed that individuals who were unsatisfied - in other words, individuals with low psychological well-being - with their situation will decrease their helping behavior (Dewall, Baumeister, Gailliot, & Maner, 2008). But other studies shows opposite results (Piff, Kraus, Cote, Cheng, & Keltner, 2010): the lower their well-being is, the more they are willing to help others.

Accordingly to Huppert (2009, p.137): "psychological well-being is about lives going well. It is the combination of feeling good and functioning effectively". Ryff (1995) explained, that there are six key dimensions of this synthetic model of well-being: self-acceptance, positive relationships with other people, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life, and personal growth. In short, Ryff (2014, p.11) summarizes that the essence of psychological well-being is knowing about yourself and becoming what you are. Most of the studies investigating psychological-well being, consider psychological well-being as an outcome (Brown & Ryan, 2003) or proving the precision of Ryff's measurement (Abbott, Ploubidis, Huppert, Kuh, & Croudace, 2010). This study consider psychological well-being as a moderator on helping behavior of bullying bystanders.

As part of a collective society, Indonesian people place great value on the group (Matsumoto & Juang, 2012). Based on this cultural tendency, Indonesian bystanders will have a high tendency to be prosocial, to be more concerned in a student is a victim and they will attempt to settle a conflict as soon as possible if it arise in the school community; yet this does not seem to happen in bullying situations. With this in consideration, the authors assumed that Indonesian bystanders will help only if they presume that they are supported by their community, or in other words if the bystanders believe that other community members can and will help, the probability

to help will rise. The belief in the capability or collective power to produce a desired result is called “collective efficacy” (Bandura, 1995, 2006).

Most of the studies done in Western countries, stresses the importance of self-efficacy as a predictor to understand why school bystanders help or not help in a bullying situation (Gini et al., 2008; Pöyhönen et al., 2012; Thornberg, Rosenqvist, & Johansson, 2012). But surprisingly, there are still few studies relating the collective-efficacy and bystanders helping behavior, although Bandura (2000) already emphasized that many problems cannot be solved without the support of the community. In this study, we want to understand the role of collective efficacy because some studies already show that collective efficacy is a stronger predictor of helping behavior than self efficacy (Chen, 2015).

As there are very limited studies focusing on helping behavior in bullying especially in Indonesia, or other collective society, the authors find it important to explore more about Indonesian bystanders' helping behavior, mainly whether prosocial values are mediated by collective efficacy and moderated psychological well-being towards helping the victim or supporting the perpetrator.

Method

Data were collected from 2.725 respondents which consists of students (1.657 participants) and school staffs (1.068) from 3 cities in Indonesia. We used questionnaires with vignettes for gathering quantitative data and focus group discussion as qualitative data to deepen our understanding of the quantitative result. Quantitative data was analyzed using the structural equation model (SEM).

Result

Before running the data with SEM, we checked the bivariate correlation between the exogenous variables: variables that is not caused by another variable in the model, and the endogenous variables: variables that is caused by one or more variables in the model (Kenny, 2011). Our data for students as well as for adults showed that prosocial value are positively correlated with defending the victim and negatively correlated with supporting the perpetrator. The same trend is seen in collective efficacy and psychological well-being variables.

Our analysis showed the structural model was fit for students and adults data (CFI 0.956, TLI 0.951; CFI 0.968, TLI 0.963). The student's SEM model showed that prosocial value was partly mediated by collective efficacy and psychological well-being did not mediate prosocial value, but it negatively predict bystanders response to support the bullying perpetrator. For adults bystander, the model showed collective efficacy fully mediated prosocial values towards helping the victim, but it only partly mediated prosocial values towards supporting the perpetrator. Our analysis showed that psychological well-being does function as a moderator for adults but not for students.

Discussion

To help or not to help a bullying victim and instead supporting a bully perpetrator is a complex phenomenon. Our result showed that prosocial value does positively influence helping behavior in bullying situation, but other factors also has some role. In our study collective efficacy partly mediated prosocial value for students and adults towards helping the victim or supporting the perpetrator. The higher the prosocial value is, Indonesian bystanders will believe more on the capability of others in the school community and they will be more likely to help the victim. On the contrary, the lower their prosocial value are, the less they will believe that others are willing to help and the more they will tend to support the bully. This result gave some new insights that the support of the school community is very important to reduce the bullying level. As Bandura (1995, 2000) always accentuated in his writings that many problems cannot be solved without the support of the community.

Previous studies shows the role of school norm (Dijkstra, Lindenberg, & Veenstra, 2008) and school climate (Boyd & Barwick, 2011), but literature search shows no study has put attention on the psychological effect of the bystanders to help or not in bullying situation. The findings provide evidence for the central role of prosocial values and the role of collective efficacy and psychological well-being in predicting bystanders willingness to help in bullying situation.

In this study, we found that high collective efficacy will have its impact on helping the victim and low collective efficacy will tend to support the bully perpetrator. Psychological well-being also plays a role in determining whether a bystander will help a victim considering his/her prosocial value priority. Interestingly, psychological well-being will interact with prosocial value and determine the helping behavior of adults but not for students. Adults psychological well-being will strengthen the effect for prosocial value. In other words, to help a bullying victim adults behavior will not only depend on their prosocial value but also a good psychological well-being state.

These result will have some implication on developing a prevention and intervention programme. Our results consequence suggests that it is needed different approaches for students compared with adults, considering increasing helping behavior in bullying situation in school.

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