

Legal Protection for Student Victims of Bullying at SMPN 2 Ngawi

Fakhrina Wardina Athiroh¹

Law Science, Faculty of Law and Politic Science, Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta
c100220164@student.ums.ac.id

Marisa Kurnianingsih, S.H., M.H., M.Kn²

Law Science, Faculty of Law and Politic Science, Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta
mk122@ums.ac.id

Abstract

This study aims to determine the implementation of legal protection for students who are victims of bullying in SMPN 2 Ngawi and to identify the inhibiting factors in providing such protection. The research method used is a juridical-empirical approach with primary data collection through semi-structured interviews with the Principal, Guidance and Counseling Teachers (BK), homeroom teachers, and students, while secondary data includes an analysis of various laws and regulations related to child protection and human rights. The results of the study indicate that the implementation of legal protection in SMPN 2 Ngawi is carried out through preventive channels such as socialization of rules of conduct, the formation of an Anti-Bullying Task Force, and strengthening religious character, as well as repressive channels through objective investigations, restorative mediation, and assertive counseling for victims which are substantially in line with Law No. 35 of 2014. However, the effectiveness of this protection still faces obstacles in the form of normalization of bullying actions. *bullying* which is considered a joke, the victim's reluctance to report due to intimidation, and differences in perception between the school and the student's parents

Keywords: *Legal Protection, Students, Victims, Bullying.*

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a country based on law as stated in Article 1 paragraph (3) of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia. As a country based on law, all aspects of social, national and state life must be based on law, including guaranteeing the protection of human rights and creating justice and order in society. In addition, the laws that are implemented and enforced must reflect the will of the people. Laws are not made to guarantee the interests of a few people in power, but rather to guarantee the interests of all citizens. (1)

Criminal law is a branch of the legal system that functions to regulate acts prohibited by law and provide sanctions for violators, in order to protect the public interest and maintain social order. (2) The aim of criminal law itself is to maintain public order in relative (preventing crime) and absolute (retaliation for perpetrators) efforts.

One of the subjects considered vulnerable to becoming victims in criminal law is children. Children are individuals who are not yet adults and are still in the growth and development stage,

so they are in a vulnerable position to various forms of violence and rights violations. This is not excessive because children are not yet adults and therefore cannot properly distinguish the intentions and goals of someone treating them. Therefore, children need the presence of the state and family to provide legal protection guarantees because psychologically they still need guidance because children are easily influenced by their surroundings and the majority of perpetrators are people closest to them. Besides the state, the family also has a very important role in shaping the mentality and determining the future of children. (3)

One form of protection for children in Indonesia has been regulated in Law Number 35 of 2014 concerning Child Protection as an amendment to Law Number 23 of 2002. This law emphasizes that every child has the right to receive protection from physical and psychological violence and other forms of mistreatment, including those that occur in educational environments. (4)

Violence against children that often occurs in school environments is bullying or harassment. Bullying comes from the word bully, which refers to a person who intimidates or harms weaker individuals. According to the National Commission for Child Protection, bullying refers to physical and psychological abuse, or physical and psychological violence, that is carried out periodically against victims and may be based on religion, race, gender, sexuality, or personal characteristics. (5)

Bullying is prevalent in school environments, particularly in junior high schools. This behavior mostly occurs among students aged 12 to 16 years. Bullying among adolescents is caused by several factors, both internal and external. External factors are caused by adolescents' lack of empathy with their peers, as they perceive bullying as a fun activity to tease others. External factors, on the other hand, are caused by a lack of attention and communication between parents and children, and can also be caused by television shows that are inappropriate for adolescents.

The psychological impact of bullying can disrupt children's school activities and ultimately affect their academic performance. Many cases go unreported to the authorities because the victim's family or position is weakened, preventing them from filing complaints. Bullying among children continues to increase from year to year. Such incidents require special attention to ensure protection so that children feel safe and their rights are guaranteed.(6)

Based on statistical data on violence against children (bullying) The Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (PPPA) from 2019 to 2023, that in 2019 there were 11,057 victims of bullying, 11,278 victims in 2020, 14,517 victims in 2021, 16,106 victims in 2022, and in 2023 there were 15,120 victims of bullying. This shows that in 2023, bullying cases may be more concentrated in certain groups (for example among junior high school students), so that the proportion of the victim population is higher. (7)

Bullying is part of activities against Human Rights law. This is based on Article 1 number 6 of Law Number 39 of 1999 concerning Human Rights with the following description, "Human Rights Violators are any actions or behavior of a person or group of people including state officials, whether intentional or unintentional or negligence, limiting, and/or revoking the human rights of a person or group of people guaranteed by law, and not receiving, or it is feared that they will not receive a fair and correct legal resolution, based on the applicable legal mechanisms." (8) Indonesia has legal protection for victims of bullying, which prohibits violence against children and provides criminal sanctions for perpetrators (9). It is expected that the regulation on the prohibition of bullying can prevent such acts, provide a sense of justice for victims, and create a safe and comfortable learning environment. (10)

The aim of this study is to determine the implementation of legal protection for students who are victims of bullying in the SMPN 2 Ngawi environment and to identify inhibiting factors in providing this legal protection. (11)

METHOD/IDEA

This study uses a juridical-empirical approach to obtain comprehensive and relevant data on the issue of child bullying. The juridical approach is used to examine various applicable laws and regulations as a normative basis, while the empirical approach focuses on observing how these laws function and are implemented in the social reality of society. The legal analysis in this study is based on the principle of *lex specialis derogat legi generali*, whereby the author specifically examines regulations concerning bullying as an instrument of legal protection for children. (12) The research location was strategically determined at SMPN 2 Ngawi in order to obtain direct information regarding the effectiveness of legal protection in the junior high school education environment.

The data in this study comes from primary and secondary data collected systematically. Primary data were obtained through semi-structured interviews with guidance and counseling

teachers (BK), homeroom teachers, and students at SMPN 2 Ngawi to explore the perspectives of individuals directly involved (13). Meanwhile, secondary data sources include primary legal materials such as the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, Law No. 39 of 1999 concerning Human Rights, Law No. 35 of 2014 concerning Child Protection (particularly Article 76C and Article 80), and Law No. 11 of 2008 concerning Electronic Information and Transactions (ITE) to examine aspects of cyberbullying. In addition, secondary legal materials, including books, scientific journals, and previous research, are used to support and strengthen the analysis of primary legal materials. (9)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Legal Protection for Student Victims *Bullying* at SMPN 2 Ngawi

The implementation of legal protection for students at SMP Negeri 2 Ngawi substantially aligns with the theoretical framework proposed by Philipus M. Hadjon, who divides protection instruments into preventive and repressive dimensions. The implementation of preventive and repressive measures can be seen as follows:

Table 1. Legal Basis for Protection

Dimensions of Protection	Legal basis	Forms of Efforts at SMPN 2 Ngawi
Preventive	Article 54 of Law No. 35 of 2014, educational institutions are obliged to protect children from violence.	Socialization of rules and regulations to students and parents, as well as bullying prevention materials during MPLS.
	Article 76C of Law No. 35 of 2014, prohibits allowing violence against children.	Formation of an Anti-Bullying Task Force involving collaboration between teachers and students.
	Article 1 number 6 of Law No. 39 of 1999, protection of human rights.	Strengthening religious values (Surat Al-Hujarat: 11) and the creation of a "Class Agreement" as a social contract.
Repressive	Law No. 11 of 2008 (ITE), the basis for reviewing aspects of cyberbullying.	Objective investigation through evidence (CCTV, electronic messages) and witness summons.
	Article 80 of Law No. 35 of 2014, provides for criminal/legal sanctions for perpetrators of child abuse.	Imposing administrative sanctions and recording in the Attitude Record Book as a deterrent effect (<i>shock therapy</i>).

	Article 13 of Law No. 35 of 2014, children have the right to receive protection from mistreatment.	Assertive counseling for victims by BK teachers and restorative mediation involving parents.
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1. Preventive Legal Protection

Preventive legal protection at SMPN 2 Ngawi is implemented through a series of strategic policy and educational instruments designed to prevent violations of students' rights from an early stage. As a fundamental step, the school has developed regulatory instruments in the form of SOPs for handling cases and officially verified rules of conduct. These regulations not only serve as internal guidelines for educators but have also been transparently disseminated to parents to build understanding regarding the boundaries of permissible behavior within the school environment. The existence of these written and verified regulations embodies the theory of preventive protection, which prioritizes clarity of norms in an effort to minimize the potential for disputes. (15)

In addition to strengthening regulations, on-the-ground oversight is being strengthened through the formation of an Anti-Bullying Task Force. As explained by Public Relations Officer Rara Rahmat Dwi Purwani, this task force is unique in that it involves collaboration between teachers and students to monitor potential bullying more responsively. Involving students in task forces aims to shorten the information gap, considering that many acts of bullying often escape adult supervision but are seen among peers. This mechanism creates an early warning system that allows schools to intervene before minor conflicts escalate into more serious acts of violence. (16)

Ongoing education and outreach are key pillars in establishing a common understanding among all school members regarding the nature of bullying. Mr. Hary Supritono emphasized that the main challenge in the field is the tendency of students to perceive bullying merely as a joke rather than as an act of violence. (17) Therefore, the school intensively communicates with parents of students to unite their vision in protecting children. This socialization aims to ensure that there are no longer double standards in understanding violence, so that an environment is created that has collective sensitivity to the psychological and physical safety of students.

Technically at the classroom level, educators play a vanguard role in building a positive culture. Guidance and Counseling teachers regularly visit grades 7, 8, and 9 to instill the values of empathy and tolerance in fellow students. This effort is fully supported by the homeroom

teachers, one of whom is Mrs. Kartika Itsnayatul Abdiyah, who actively equips students with self-protection skills and encourages the courage to report any suspicious behavior. This mentoring pattern ensures that students are not merely passive subjects of the law, but also empowered agents in maintaining a safe space within their smallest circles. (18)

The bullying prevention strategy at SMPN 2 Ngawi is implemented through a massive and scheduled internalization of values in classrooms. Guidance and counseling teachers play a central role by conducting outreach through regular outreach in grades 7, 8, and 9. The material presented not only focuses on identifying types of violations but also delves into psychological aspects, particularly the destructive impacts of bullying on students' future. This approach aims to break down individualistic barriers and build a culture of empathy and tolerance, enabling students to develop emotional intelligence and respect one another as equal legal subjects. (14)

These preventive measures have even begun early through the School Environment Introduction Period (MPLS). For new students, this phase is crucial for instilling a "behavioral compass" so they understand ethical boundaries and school norms from the first day they set foot in the educational institution. By providing early education on bullying prevention during the MPLS, schools are indirectly establishing a social contract with new students. The goal is to create an academic environment free from a culture of seniority and intimidation, where every new individual feels accepted and protected by the institution.

Realizing that character education cannot stand alone in the school environment, Mrs. Rara Rahmat Dwi Purwani as Public Relations emphasized the importance of information synergy through cross-platform education. Education about the dangers of bullying is now being expanded through the school's official social media and regular meetings with parents. (20) This strategic step was taken to ensure there is a harmony of understanding between the school and parents at home. By involving parents as educational partners, the school strives to create holistic legal protection, so that the child protection values taught in the classroom are not interrupted when students return to their family environment.

SMPN 2 Ngawi adopts a holistic approach by integrating spiritual values into the curriculum for character building. This strategy is based on universal religious values, one of which refers to the moral message in Surah Al-Hujurat verse 11 which explicitly prohibits oppressive behavior, insults, and acts of belittling each other. By using theological values as a moral compass, the school strives to touch the intrinsic side of students so that they have an inner

awareness that bullying is not merely a violation of school rules, but a form of injustice that is contrary to the principles of humanity and spirituality. (30)

In addition to the macro approach at the school level, preventive legal protection is also manifested through more micro and participatory instruments in the classroom. Ms. Umi Aslikatin, as the homeroom teacher for Class 9A, implemented an innovation in the form of creating a "Class Agreement" which was collaboratively drafted with the students. This agreement functions as a social contract that sets firm and specific ethical boundaries regarding what is and is not allowed in interactions between students. Through this mechanism, rules are no longer seen as an imposition from school authorities, but rather a shared responsibility born from a collective awareness to maintain a safe learning space. (31)

If a violation of this agreement occurs, the school does not immediately prioritize punitive punishment, but rather uses restitution. This approach is designed to encourage perpetrators to understand the consequences of their actions and find independent solutions to repair the losses or injuries experienced by the victim. Therefore, the case management at SMPN 2 Ngawi aims not only to impose formal discipline but also to provide in-depth character education, so that students learn to be morally responsible for the social harmony within their community.

SMPN 2 Ngawi's concrete steps to strengthen its student protection efforts are demonstrated through the establishment of a participatory internal oversight structure. The institution has established an Anti-Bullying Task Force, which serves as the vanguard in detecting potential conflicts. Uniquely, this Task Force not only involves educators but also empowers students as key elements. By positioning students as the "eyes and ears" of the organization, the school is able to penetrate communication barriers often closed to adults. This peer involvement enables early detection of potential bullying, allowing it to be addressed more organically and responsively before it escalates into a broader crisis.

Complementing this human structure, the school also optimizes supervision in the spatial dimension, especially in areas categorized as high risk. Recognizing that bullying often exploits gaps in time and space with minimal supervision, the school has increased the intensity of patrols at critical points during break times. This step was taken to ensure that student interactions remain within ethical corridors, even when they are outside the formal classroom. Strengthening the physical presence of teachers in these "blind spot" areas is a manifestation of institutional

vigilance to ensure that no space in the school becomes a lawless zone for perpetrators of violence. (16)

Through the synergy of an inclusive task force structure and systematic area surveillance, SMPN 2 Ngawi strives to build a comprehensive security ecosystem. This approach represents a transition from traditional surveillance to a more proactive, community-based approach. Thus, the legal protection provided is no longer merely reactive, waiting for victims to fall, but rather an early detection system capable of precisely mitigating risks to maintain the physical and psychological integrity of all students.

SMPN 2 Ngawi carries out strategic collaboration with various stakeholders outside the school environment to strengthen the student protection system. According to the Principal, Mr. Hary Supritono, the school regularly invites expert speakers and competent specialists to provide education on the legal and psychological aspects of bullying to teachers and students. The involvement of these experts aims to ensure that the school community has a comprehensive understanding of the boundaries of behavior prohibited by law and the sociological impacts arising from such actions. (32)

In addition to engaging individual experts, the school also established formal partnerships with relevant government agencies, particularly the Department of Women's Empowerment, Child Protection, and Family Planning (DP3AKB). This collaboration is realized through a technical briefing program for students on prevention and self-protection procedures. Through this collaboration, students are provided with an understanding of children's rights as stipulated in national regulations, enabling them to identify and avoid potentially unlawful actions, both as perpetrators and victims.

This cross-agency partnership demonstrates that the legal protection system at SMPN 2 Ngawi has been integrated with regional child protection policies. By partnering with the DP3AKB (Child Protection Agency), the school has access to operational standards that comply with Indonesian legal provisions. This ensures that bullying prevention efforts in schools are well-founded and align with the mandate of the Child Protection Law to ensure the physical and mental safety of all students while in the educational environment.(33)

Preventive efforts at SMPN 2 Ngawi include standardizing students' understanding of their rights with their parents. The school regularly holds communication forums to align perceptions on the legal definition of bullying, preventing disparities in standards in character

education. This is done so that parents have the same benchmarks as the school in identifying actions that violate norms. This alignment is a strategic step to ensure that student supervision is based on consistent values, preventing the permissibility of deviant behavior at home that could impact interactions at school.

Operationally, homeroom teachers carry out supervisory functions by monitoring student behavior, involving the active role of parents. Educators, including Mr. Ardhani Samti (7G) and Mrs. Kartika Itsnayatul Abdiyah (8G), conduct routine coordination to periodically verify the psychological condition and changes in students' attitudes. This early detection procedure is designed to identify symptoms of bullying victims that are often not visible in the school area but are observed at home. Through accurate data exchange between teachers and families, schools can intervene more quickly to provide protection in accordance with established standard operating procedures. (34)

This combination of shared perception and integrated monitoring creates a holistic child protection system. This collaboration ensures that the responsibility for legal protection for students is not limited by institutional boundaries, but rather a shared commitment between schools and parents. This integrated oversight optimizes the effectiveness of enforcing school discipline, supported by information transparency and active family participation in ensuring every student's right to grow up in an environment free from violence.

To complement the positive legal aspects, the school also integrates a theological approach by strengthening religious values as a bulwark of students' character. This approach is a concrete implementation of the values contained in Surah Al-Hujurat, verse 11, which expressly prohibits behavior that belittles or ridicules others. By building an inner awareness that oppressive actions are both moral and legal violations, the school strives to foster intrinsic compliance. This synergy between formal regulations and moral education is expected to create comprehensive and sustainable preventive protection for all students at SMPN 2 Ngawi.

2. Repressive Legal Protection

Repressive legal protection at SMPN 2 Ngawi focuses on efforts to restore students' violated rights and uphold justice through legitimate and measurable resolution mechanisms. In a legal context, this repressive protection functions as an instrument to restore social balance in the school environment that has been disturbed by bullying. The implementation of this protection begins with the provision of a safe and confidential complaint mechanism for students.

By guaranteeing the confidentiality of the identities of both victims and witnesses, the school strives to minimize the fear of further intimidation, so that access to justice for victims can be wide open in accordance with the principle of equitable legal protection. (19)

The case handling procedure in the field is carried out systematically through comprehensive investigation stages. Mrs. Rara Rahmat Dwi Purwani as Public Relations explained that the handling process begins with receiving a report followed by direct protective measures for the victim to prevent further trauma. The school then conducts an in-depth investigation by collecting supporting evidence, such as examining CCTV footage, checking electronic messages or social media, and summoning witnesses who witnessed the incident. These steps are crucial to ensure that the decisions taken by the school are based on objective facts and can be legally accounted for. (20)

Homeroom teachers play a vital role as the frontline in responding spontaneously and quickly to bullying incidents. Informants such as Ms. Mega Pramesti and Ms. Dwi Rahmawati, in carrying out their functions, immediately broke up the dispute, confirmed the actions that occurred, and issued a stern warning to the perpetrator at the scene. This swift action by the homeroom teachers constitutes a form of first-level legal intervention aimed at immediately stopping violations of students' rights. This demonstrates that the school's organizational structure has a clear division of responsibilities in carrying out its supervisory and enforcement functions in order to maintain the reputation of the educational institution as a safe space. (21)

In addition to taking action against the perpetrators, psychological rehabilitation for victims is a top priority in this school's legal protection scheme. Guidance and counseling teachers provide individual counseling using assertiveness techniques to train victims to take a stand and rebuild self-confidence that was shattered by bullying. This curative approach is carried out continuously through intensive monitoring to ensure the victims' mental health has fully recovered. These mental health recovery efforts are a concrete manifestation of fulfilling students' rights to well-being and a conducive learning environment, as guaranteed by national child protection standards.

Enforcement of discipline against perpetrators is carried out by giving firm sanctions that are adjusted to the degree of the violation in order to provide a deterrent effect (shock therapy). One of the control instruments used is the Attitude Record Book, where every violation is recorded permanently as part of the student's behavioral evaluation. (22) The application of this

sanction is not merely an act of punishment, but a manifestation of the implementation of Article 80 of Law No. 35 of 2014 which emphasizes that there are legal consequences for every perpetrator of violence against children. By implementing consistent sanctions, schools send a strong message that all forms of bullying are unlawful acts that will not be tolerated. (23)

As a final step in dispute resolution, SMPN 2 Ngawi prioritizes mediation and restitution methods to achieve a fair solution for all parties. Ms. Umi Aslikatin, the 9A class homeroom teacher, explained that this process involves intensive coordination between the principal, the guidance counselor, and the parents of both the victim and the perpetrator. Through this mediation, it is hoped that there will be a restoration of social relations between students and there will be real responsibility from the perpetrator for the losses experienced by the victim. This restorative justice approach is in line with the legal objective of creating order and peace in the school community through deliberation that remains based on the provisions of applicable laws and regulations.

The implementation of legal protection at SMPN 2 Ngawi has attempted to fulfill Satjipto Rahardjo's theory, namely the effort to provide protection for human rights so that these rights can be truly enjoyed by every individual. In the context of schools, this protection is not just a series of rules on paper, but an active action from the institution to ensure that students can carry out their functions as learners without the shadow of intimidation. The use of Law No. 35 of 2014 concerning Amendments to Law No. 23 of 2002 concerning Child Protection as the operational legal basis in schools shows that the state is present through educational institutions to protect children from physical and psychological violence. This is reflected in the school's commitment to adopting national legal norms into school disciplinary instruments to guarantee the personal integrity of each student. (24)

The presence of protective laws is evident in how schools internalize the mandate of Article 54 of the Child Protection Law, which requires educational institutions to provide protection from acts of violence. At SMPN 2 Ngawi, protection of students' human rights is realized through close supervision carried out by the entire school ecosystem, from the principal to the teachers on duty. This effort ensures that every student has a safe space to develop, where the right to feel safe is no longer abstract, but becomes a daily reality felt directly by students in the classroom environment and play areas. Thus, the law truly works as an instrument that

provides concrete protection in accordance with the legal ideals put forward by Satjipto Rahardjo. (25)

From an empirical legal perspective, the synchronization between laws and practices at SMPN 2 Ngawi is evident in the enforcement mechanism for every symptom of bullying. When indications of psychological violence occur in the form of physical teasing or racism, the school immediately responds by referring to applicable legal corridors to prevent escalation of conflict. The firm action taken by the homeroom teacher and guidance counselor in resolving the situation and imposing administrative sanctions is a concrete form of upholding children's rights. This demonstrates that the Child Protection Law has been absorbed into the school's organizational culture, so that every act of violence is no longer viewed as an ordinary internal problem, but rather a violation of the rights of legal subjects that must be immediately remedied.

Fulfillment of human rights in schools also includes protecting children's dignity and preventing them from discriminatory treatment. Through the establishment of an anti-bullying task force and regular outreach, schools strive to break the chain of violence that often hides behind the guise of peer teasing. Satjipto Rahardjo emphasized that the law must provide protection, and in this regard, schools act as protectors by actively educating students so they understand the legal boundaries of their interactions. Instilling this legal awareness is crucial because it serves as the primary foundation for sustainable and independent legal protection among students.

The effectiveness of legal protection at SMPN 2 Ngawi depends heavily on the synergy between formal regulations and the preparedness of those implementing it in the field. The use of Law No. 35 of 2014 as the primary basis for resolving bullying cases provides legal certainty for victims that their rights are guaranteed by the state. Despite challenges such as the normalization of bullying by parents, the school's efforts to align perceptions of the law represent a progressive step to ensure that the law is not merely symbolic, but a force that truly protects people. Through this approach, SMPN 2 Ngawi has endeavored to realize a law that humanizes humans, where protection of children is the highest priority in the educational process. (17)

B. Obstacles in Providing Legal Protection to Student Victims *Bullying* at SMPN 2 Ngawi

Research results are explicitly summarized. Interpretation of findings is conducted using logic and existing theories. Findings, whether in the field, sociological, conceptual, or normative,

are integrated with previous research or existing theories. References are essential for this purpose. In developing new theories, existing ones can be confirmed or rejected.

In practice, the provision of legal protection does not always run smoothly. Various obstacles arise from both internal and external factors that hinder the effectiveness of legal protection in accordance with existing legal theory. The most dominant internal factor is the normalization of bullying among students, where many perpetrators consider their aggressive behavior or teasing to be mere jokes between friends. This lack of understanding among students regarding the boundaries between jokes and bullying creates obstacles in the case identification process, so that bullying is often only detected when the psychological impact on the victim is already quite serious.

In addition to perception issues, technical obstacles in the field also hinder the implementation of maximum legal protection. Limited information and a lack of supervision in blind spots during break times often make bullying cases undetected by teachers. Difficulties in gathering strong evidence, such as witnesses being reluctant to report due to fear or a lack of digital footprints, also contribute to the problem of cyberbullying, often hindering schools from taking swift corrective action. This shows that even though school regulations have been established, their effectiveness is highly dependent on a comprehensive monitoring system and the active participation of all school residents. (26)

Externally, significant challenges arise from differences in perception and family background among students. Field data reveals a "double standard" phenomenon, with some parents tending to be permissive toward their children's behavior under the guise of joking, while others are overly sensitive, hindering objective mediation. Parents' lack of understanding of the systemic impact of bullying hinders efforts to synchronize character education at home and at school. These external obstacles often complicate the process of resolving disputes through family channels, which can ultimately hinder the fulfillment of justice for victims in accordance with the spirit of the Child Protection Law. (27)

In the field, the implementation of legal protection at SMP Negeri 2 Ngawi often runs afoul of social normalization. The most fundamental obstacle is the persistent narrative that dismisses bullying, particularly verbal bullying, as mere "jokes" or typical teenage pranks. This permissive culture creates moral ambiguity within the school environment: on the one hand, laws

prohibit violence, but on the other, teasing is tolerated, considered a social norm. This situation often leads to legal protection losing its appeal in the minds of the students themselves.

This misperception poses a significant challenge for school authorities in early identification of potential conflicts. As emphasized by Mr. Hary Supritono, S.Pd., M.Pd., the school principal, there is a significant gap in understanding, with perpetrators often unaware that actions they consider “just for fun” actually cross legal and social boundaries in cases of bullying. (17) This lack of awareness on the part of the perpetrator is a latent obstacle to the effectiveness of preventive legal protection, because a violation is difficult to prevent if the legal subject himself does not feel that he is violating the rights of others.

This issue becomes even more complex when we examine it from the victim's perspective. Ms. Intan Indri Pinasti, the homeroom teacher for class 8I, highlighted how difficult it is for victims to build the courage to take a firm stance against the treatment they receive. When the school environment has legitimized teasing as part of the hangout tradition, victims tend to experience psychological pressure to "accept" the situation so as not to be seen as weak or overly sensitive. The victims' lack of understanding of their human rights makes reporting rare, so that repressive legal protection only becomes effective when the situation has reached a boiling point or resulted in real psychological impacts.(28)

This normalization ultimately creates a "grey zone" that hinders consistent law enforcement. If excessive joking is tolerated, positive legal instruments like the Child Protection Law will appear as mere paper tigers, only used for cases of extreme physical violence. This cultural barrier requires schools to focus not only on enforcing formal rules but also on deconstructing student behavioral standards so that no individual feels safe committing bullying under the guise of jokes or peer humor.

In closing, a major challenge for SMP Negeri 2 Ngawi is bridging the gap between rigid legal texts and the fluid cultural realities of students. Changing the perception from "jokes" to "rights violations" is the main key to ensuring that legal protection can operate optimally. Without synchronized understanding between students, educators, and parents regarding clear boundaries, legal protection efforts will always be reactive and lag behind developments in the case. Therefore, transforming the school culture into an empathetic environment must go hand in hand with strengthening regulations to ensure that the rights of every student are fully protected. (17)

In addition to internal factors within the school environment, the effectiveness of legal protection at SMP Negeri 2 Ngawi also often faces a strong external barrier, namely the role and perceptions of parents. One of the most complex obstacles to enforcing the rules is the phenomenon of "double standards" often demonstrated by parents. As highlighted by Mrs. Rara Rahmat Dwi Purwani, Public Relations, there is a tendency for parents to be permissive when their children engage in bullying, claiming it was "just a joke," but then quickly become highly reactive and demand legal justice when their children are the victims. This inconsistent attitude makes it difficult for schools to implement restorative justice, as the objectivity required in mediation is often eroded by parental subjectivity.

This obstacle is further complicated by the excessive defensiveness of some parents towards their children who are perpetrators of bullying. Guidance and counseling teachers have noted a tendency towards overly indulgent parenting, where parents arbitrarily defend their children's misbehavior without considering the psychological impact on the victim. This condition is exacerbated by the lack of integrity of students when confronted; Mrs. Intan Indri, the homeroom teacher for class 8I, confirmed that when summoned to school, the perpetrators often seek justification or make excuses to cover up their mistakes. As a result, parents are trapped in a state of blind trust and deny the fact that their children have committed human rights violations in the school environment. (28)

These external barriers are also rooted in families' ignorance or lack of literacy regarding the systemic impact of bullying. Many families, coming from backgrounds with limited knowledge, fail to understand that actions they consider trivial can have legal implications and damage a child's mental health. The lack of synchronization between legal understanding at school and moral understanding at home makes legal protection for students seem stagnant. Without a shared vision from parents as primary educators at home, legal instruments such as the Child Protection Law will struggle to achieve maximum effectiveness due to resistance from the students' immediate environment.

This mismatch in perception ultimately creates an additional burden for schools in carrying out their repressive and rehabilitative functions. When parents choose to protect their children's egos rather than support rule enforcement, the process of rehabilitating perpetrators is incomplete and recovery for victims is hampered. This challenge demonstrates that legal protection in schools requires the support of a healthy legal culture within the family

environment. Schools' efforts to uphold justice will always face a difficult road as long as parents continue to prioritize family loyalty over the supremacy of norms and ethics prevailing in educational institutions.

A major challenge for SMP Negeri 2 Ngawi is bridging the gap between school policy and the mindset of parents. Comprehensive legal protection can only be achieved if parents are willing to let go of their defensive attitudes and begin to view bullying as a common enemy, not as a problem that can be resolved solely based on who is the perpetrator or victim. Synergy between school authorities and parental awareness is an absolute prerequisite for any legal action taken to truly provide a deterrent effect and provide protection for all students.(25)

The low reporting rate from victims is driven by a combination of psychological pressure and technical constraints. Psychologically, the biggest barrier for victims seeking justice is a deep-seated fear of potential further intimidation. As explained by the Guidance and Counseling (BK) teacher and Grade 9D homeroom teacher, Ms. Susiana Dwi Ningrum, victims often become trapped by threats made by the perpetrators. These threats create a destructive deterrent effect, where victims prefer to remain silent and bear the traumatic burden alone rather than face the risk of escalating violence if they dare to report to the school.

In addition to internal psychological factors, there are technical obstacles in the form of a lack of authentic evidence that can support the victim's report. In the context of law enforcement in schools, objectivity is highly dependent on the availability of physical evidence and consistent witness testimony. However, the reality on the ground shows that many student witnesses are reluctant to provide testimony because they fear becoming the next target of bullying or are bound by false group solidarity. This lack of witness support and physical evidence makes it difficult to follow up on the victim's report procedurally, so that school authorities often find themselves in a dilemma when they want to take firm repressive action. (19)

These obstacles ultimately create gaps in the established legal protection system. When a rights violation goes unreported or fails to be proven, the perpetrator feels impunity, while the victim increasingly loses faith in the effectiveness of the school's legal mechanisms. This situation demonstrates that legal protection requires not only clear procedures but also guarantees of psychological safety for those reporting. Without a safe space that frees victims from fear and a responsive evidence documentation system, students' rights as stipulated in the Child Protection Law will be difficult to fulfill optimally in educational settings.

Ideal legal protection requires schools to not only wait for reports to come in, but also to proactively build an early detection system that is capable of penetrating the wall of silent action (silence culture) among students. Synergy between internal witness protection and strengthening digital evidence or monitoring hidden areas is an absolute prerequisite so that every form of bullying can be processed fairly, transparently, and provide a deterrent effect for the perpetrator.(14)

On the other hand, operational obstacles also arise from the imbalance in the ratio between the number of teaching staff and the total number of students who must be supervised. Limited personnel make supervision in vulnerable areas or "blind spots" of the school less than optimal, especially during crucial hours such as break time. This gap in supervision is often exploited by perpetrators to carry out intimidation away from the supervision of teachers. The physical condition of the large school demands a more integrated supervision system; without this, existing legal protection regulations will only function reactively after the incident has occurred, rather than proactively preventing the emergence of sparks of conflict between students. (29)

In addition to physical supervision issues, case-handling capacity at the teacher level also poses a significant managerial obstacle. Researchers found disparities in sensitivity and technical understanding among teachers regarding how to appropriately handle bullying cases. Not all educators share the same perspective on the urgency of a report, resulting in a frequent accumulation of caseloads that fall solely on the student affairs department or guidance counselors. Effective legal protection, however, requires a collective response from all elements of the school to ensure that any ripples of bullying can be contained from the smallest possible level, within the classroom. (27)

This phenomenon demonstrates that legal protection requires not only strong regulatory texts, but also adequate resource support and technical readiness. The accumulation of cases in one area indicates a suboptimal distribution of responsibility for upholding justice in schools. If understanding of bullying handling procedures is uneven among teaching staff, the effectiveness of the Child Protection Law will be hampered by slow internal bureaucracy and a lack of acuity in early identification of the risk of violence experienced by students.(10)

Digital literacy improvements and conflict management competencies for all teachers are needed to prevent gaps in oversight, both in the classroom and online. By minimizing oversight

gaps and equalizing capacity, schools can ensure that legal protection is not merely a formality, but rather a comprehensive security ecosystem for every student, without exception.

CLOSING

1. Conclusion

The conclusion presents a summary of the results and discussion, referring to the research objectives. Based on these two points, new main ideas are developed that represent the essence of the research findings.

Implementation of legal protection for student victims *bullying* At SMPN 2 Ngawi, preventive and repressive approaches have been implemented, substantially in line with the mandate of Law Number 35 of 2014 concerning Child Protection. Preventively, the school implements strategic policies through the dissemination of rules, the formation of an inclusive Anti-Bullying Task Force, and the internalization of religious values to build student character. Meanwhile, the school has established a structured handling mechanism through Standard Operating Procedure, objective investigation, restorative mediation, to assertive counseling services by Counseling Guidance Teachers to restore the psychological integrity of the victim.

Table 2. Summary of Implementation of Legal Protection at SMPN 2 Ngawi

Protection Line	Implementation at SMPN 2 Ngawi	Main Legal Basis (Law No. 35 of 2014)
Preventive (Prevention)	Socialization of rules and regulations, formation of an inclusive Anti-Bullying Task Force, internalization of religious values, and character education during MPLS.	Article 54: Obligation of educational institutions to protect children from physical, psychological and sexual violence
Repressive (Action)	Objective investigation (CCTV/digital evidence), restorative mediation, assertive counseling for victims, and administrative	Article 80: Provisions on criminal/legal sanctions for anyone who commits cruelty or violence against children.

	sanctions (Attitude Note Book).	
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However, the effectiveness of this legal protection still faces significant structural and cultural barriers, ranging from the normalization of bullying, which students consider mere jokes, to victims' reluctance to report it due to the threat of further intimidation. Furthermore, external factors such as defensiveness and double standards from parents also hinder the synchronization of character education between home and school. As a solution, schools are proactively optimizing prevention efforts through strategic collaboration with external parties such as legal experts and the DP3AKB (Children's Empowerment and Child Protection Agency), as well as strengthening communication channels with parents to align legal perceptions to ensure a safe educational ecosystem for all students.

2. Suggestion

Based on the research findings, it is recommended that SMPN 2 Ngawi improve the effectiveness of supervision in the school's "blind spots" by optimizing routine patrols and adding surveillance technology devices to minimize the room for bullies to maneuver. Furthermore, the school needs to organize periodic legal literacy programs involving parents to align perceptions regarding the systemic impact of bullying, so that there is no longer a normalization of violence under the pretext of jokes both at home and at school. Finally, strengthening the complaint system that guarantees the psychological safety of reporters must be continuously improved to break through the culture of silence among students, as well as ensuring that every report can be followed up objectively and transparently in accordance with the mandate of the Child Protection Law.

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