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ORIGINAL ARTICLE

## Parenting style and bullying behavior in adolescents<sup>☆</sup>



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### KEYWORDS

Bullying behavior;  
Parenting style;  
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### Abstract

**Objective:** The study aims to investigate the correlation between parenting style and bullying behavior in adolescents at schools.

**Method:** The research design was quantitative with a cross-sectional approach with a sample of 261 students selected with stratified random sampling and systematic random sampling. Data were collected using questionnaires Parenting Style and Dimensions Questionnaire (PSDQ) and Adolescents Peer Relations Instrument (APRI). The data were analyzed using the Chi-Square difference test technique.

**Results:** 261 adolescents were analyzed and reported as bully and victim (53.3%). The results of the study indicated a significant statistically correlation between parenting style and bullying behavior in adolescents at school ( $p = 0.0001$ ).

**Conclusions:** Authoritarian parenting is related to bullying behavior as bullies, and permissive parenting is related to bullying behavior as a victim. This result focused on parents and teachers to aware of the school bullying behavior.

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### Introduction

Adolescence is a transition period into adulthood and processes physical, psychological, and mental development. It is a crucial period that needed attention from parents and other people.<sup>1</sup> Bullying is recognized as a major concern in an adolescent at school, and the incidence increases significantly.<sup>2</sup> United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), 2018, reported that approximately 150 million students worldwide experienced bullying at school.<sup>3</sup> Being bullied

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has been found to have a significant effect on adolescents' physical and mental health, psychosocial well-being, and educational performance.<sup>4</sup> One study showed that in the middle of adolescence, it is crucial after puberty is the peak for teenagers to bullying behaviour.<sup>5</sup>

Many studies reported related bullying among adolescents at school. One study reported more than 90% of students showed bullying behaviors at school including verbal, psychosocial, and cyberbullying.<sup>6</sup> Another research by Shaheen et al. (2017) revealed that physical bullying was the most bullying by adolescents at school.<sup>7</sup> Bullying behavior has been given a negative impact on the bully and the victims' physical and psychological. Bullying among adolescents could decrease school attendance and academic achievement.<sup>8,9</sup>

Numerous studies have revealed the critical role of the parenting style for bullying among adolescents. One study showed that bullies often describe their family as authoritarian and less organized, whereas victims instead view their family as highly permissive.<sup>10</sup> Authoritarian parenting style characterized by excessive control, abusive parental practices such as using physical punishment as a form of discipline, lack of affection and poor communication and humor in adolescents increases the risk of involvement in bullying behavior and adolescent's inability to socialize with the environment so that it becomes a victim of bullying.<sup>11–13</sup> Parenting style during early adolescence was critical and could influence adolescent attitudes and behavior towards their involvement in bullying or cyberbullying behaviour.<sup>14</sup> Several studies, measuring the correlation between parenting style and bullying behavior in western.<sup>4,14–17</sup> However, a limited study in Indonesian students.<sup>5</sup> Therefore, this study tests for the correlation between parenting style and bullying behavior in Indonesian adolescents at school.

## Method

This was a quantitative study using a cross-sectional approach was conducted from 1<sup>st</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2019 in 261 students at junior high school in Makassar, South Sulawesi, Indonesia, who recruited by using the stratified random sampling techniques. Makassar is the capital city of South Sulawesi and the biggest city in eastern Indonesia. Parenting style was measured by Parenting Style and Dimensions Questionnaire (PSDQ)<sup>18</sup> and using in the Indonesian version with validity ( $r=0.567-0.866$ ) and reliability (*Cronbach's Alpha* 0.757).<sup>19</sup> This questionnaire divided parenting style into three styles, namely authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive.

Bullying behavior was measured by the Adolescent Peer Relations Instrument (APRI). This study was used in the Indonesian version with validity ( $r$  0.475–0.851) and reliability (*Cronbach's Alpha* 0.749). This tool was divided bullying behavior into four categories, including the bully, the victim, both (bullies and victims), and not bullies victims.<sup>20</sup>

Data were analyzed using SPSS version 22.0. Frequency distributions and descriptive statistics were conducted to reported participant characteristics, while chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) was conducted to report the correlation between variables. Ethical approval was obtained from the Faculty of Medicine, Universitas Hasanuddin review boards. The study

**Table 1** The description of the characteristic of the respondent, parenting style and bullying behavior in adolescent.

Variables	<i>n</i>	%
<b>Age</b>		
12 years old	53	20.3
13 years old	145	55.6
14 years old	63	24.1
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	96	36.8
Female	165	63.2
<b>Parenting style</b>		
Authoritative	140	53.6
Authoritarian	74	28.4
Permissive	47	18
<b>Bullying behavior</b>		
The bully	45	17.2
The victim	46	17.6
Both (bully and victim)	139	53.3
Not bully and victim	31	11.9

was performed in accordance with the Helsinki Declaration. The respondent was given an explanation related to the study, and written informed consent was obtained.

## Results

A total of 261 students was included in the analysis. Table 1 summarizes the description of parenting style by adolescent parents and bullying behavior. Most respondents reported that their parenting style had authoritative (53.6%). Bullying behavior had shown most of the bully and the victim (53.3%).

The correlation between parenting style and bullying behavior in adolescence at school is presented in Table 2.

## Discussion

This study aimed to analyze the correlation between parenting style and bullying behavior in adolescents at Indonesian schools. The result showed that the majority of the respondent was 13 years old, and most of the study participants were female. General trends suggest that bullying is most common in the earlier part of adolescence (10–15 years), with transitions from primary to secondary school being a key factor.<sup>4</sup>

Based on gender, verbal bullying is more common among female students as both the bullies and victims than male students. In line with other studies revealed that the majority of verbal bullying happens among female students.<sup>21</sup> Female students do more verbal bullying by making jokes about a student. Sejiwa (2008) said that many of the teens who have sensitive and sensitive feelings are unable to accept jokes from their peers.<sup>22</sup> In contrast with this study, another study in southern-Brazilian samples showed that males were more than twice as likely to be aggressors.<sup>23</sup>

The result reported that the majority sample was likely to be the bullies and the victims. One study showed that

**Table 2** The correlation between parenting style and bullying behavior in adolescents.

Parenting style	Bullying behavior								Total		p-value
	The bully		The victim		Both (bully and victim)		Not bully and victim		n	%	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%			
Authoritative	2	1.4	10	7.1	97	69.3	31	22.1	140	100	0.0001*
Authoritarian	43	58.1	3	4.1	28	37.8	0	0	74	100	
Permissive	1	2.1	32	68.1	14	29.8	0	0	47	100	

\*Significant  $\alpha < 0.05$ .

the most common bullying among adolescents engages in bullying as bullies and victims. Bullying is defined as the systematic abuse of power involving the repeated infliction of negative behaviors impacting harm or discomfort.<sup>4</sup> A bully is a person who has a desire and is actively involved in bullying behavior. A bully usually has more power or power to oppress victims, have less empathy, and consider aggressive action as their way of socializing with their peers. Perpetrators or bullies are lack attention and empathy for others, tend to regulate and control the environment, and less able to control emotions.<sup>5,24</sup>

The result showed that there was a significant, statistically correlation between parenting style and bullying behavior. Parenting will form the attitudes and personality of adolescents as to influence adolescent behavior in socializing with the environment and peers. This study supported other research that parenting style is significantly related to teenage behavior and involvement in bullying.<sup>25,26</sup>

The study reported that students who are involved in bullying behavior as more as a bully get authoritarian parenting. This study supported other studies that authoritarian parenting is more common in bullying perpetrators.<sup>27</sup> Authoritarian parenting is a parenting pattern that is characterized by the use of physical punishment in enforcing discipline, exposure to violence from parents, verbal hostility, will form aggressive adolescent behavior towards peers. Authoritarian parenting, according to Baumrind (2013), has high control but does not respond to the needs of children in enforcing discipline by using punishment and coercion, limiting children's freedom and expecting children to obey their rules and commands without negotiating and asking questions.<sup>28</sup> Martínez et al. (2019) revealed that children to be exposed to violence and believe that violence is a good choice for interacting with others.<sup>15</sup>

The study also found that adolescents who were victims of bullying raised from a parent with permissive style generally. It is in line with other research that explained that victims of bullying are usually more related to parental permissiveness.<sup>26</sup> Permissive parents do not allow their children to socialize with other people (overprotection) so that children are more dependent on parents, and they cannot defend themselves if they become victims of bullying.<sup>14,29</sup> Furthermore, the individual characteristic was caused to be victims. The victims feel weak, feel that the bullying behavior they receive is indeed acceptable, feel ugly, stupid, or not popular.<sup>22</sup>

This research also found that research participants who were both the bullies and victims got authoritarian

parenting. The parenting style happens with participants who choose to be bystanders. Parents who implement authoritative parenting to children used a rational and democratic approach where parents provide warmth and affection, respect opinions, personal uniqueness of children, and children's decisions. The results of the analysis found that authoritative parenting can encourage adolescent socialization more positively, have high self-esteem, be able to develop their potential so they can socialize with their peers, and do not engage in bullying behavior.<sup>30</sup>

As the present study had a cross-sectional design, it may serve as one of limitations. Data collected using questionnaires and did not explore from the parent's perspective may not be adequate to explore parenting style. Thus, further research suggested conducting a mixed-method design using quantitative and qualitative methods to enhance the data. Furthermore, the present study was limited to one school, and this restricts the generalization to the other private or government school. Further research could compare between private or government schools in term the bullying behavior related to parenting style.

## Conclusion

This study found that there was a significant statistically correlation between bullying behavior and parenting style among adolescents. The participants showed bullying behavior as much as a bully gets authoritarian parenting, and permissive parenting is related to bullying behavior as a victim. It emphasizes the need for comprehensive school-based nursing intervention involving school management, teachers, mental health professionals, and parents is integrated into creating awareness about bullying behavior. The parents need to identify the potential bullying behavior among their children and implement the right parenting style that might prevent bullying behavior at school.

## Conflict of interest

The authors declare they have no competing interests in this study.

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