



The Effectiveness of using Symbolic Modeling Technique through Empathy Training to overcome Bullying Behavior of Students in Raudhatul Athfal

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to reduce bullying behavior in early childhood through empathy training-based interventions using symbolic modeling techniques. The subject of the study is a 5-year-old boy with the initials RA from RA Al-Muslim Kota Baubau. The method used is an experiment with a single-subject design (Single Subject Research, SSR) and an A-B-A design. Data was collected through observation using a behavior monitoring instrument that recorded the frequency of RA's bullying behavior during the intervention. Visual analysis was conducted to compare the observation results in three conditions: Baseline A1 (before the intervention), Baseline B (during the intervention), and Baseline A2 (after the intervention). The results showed a significant decrease in bullying frequency from a very high category in Baseline A1 (average 14.6) to medium in Baseline B (average 6.2), and low in Baseline A2 (average 2.2). The intervention used short animated films teaching empathy, proving to be effective. Schools can integrate empathy training programs as a preventive and rehabilitative effort against bullying.

KATA KUNCI

Teknik Pemodelan Simbolik;
Pelatihan Empati;
Perilaku Penindasan;
Siswa TK

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan mengurangi perilaku bullying pada anak usia dini melalui intervensi berbasis latihan empati dengan teknik modeling simbolik. Subjek penelitian adalah anak laki-laki berusia 5 tahun berinisial RA dari RA Al-Muslim Kota Baubau. Metode yang digunakan adalah eksperimen dengan desain subyek tunggal (Single Subject Research, SSR) dan desain A-B-A. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi dengan instrumen monitor perilaku yang mencatat frekuensi bullying RA selama intervensi. Analisis visual dilakukan untuk membandingkan hasil observasi dalam tiga kondisi: Baseline A1 (sebelum intervensi), Baseline B (selama intervensi), dan Baseline A2 (setelah intervensi). Hasil menunjukkan penurunan signifikan dalam frekuensi bullying dari kategori sangat tinggi pada Baseline A1 (rata-rata 14,6) menjadi sedang pada Baseline B (rata-rata 6,2), dan rendah pada Baseline A2 (rata-rata 2,2). Intervensi menggunakan film animasi pendek yang mengajarkan empati terbukti efektif. Sekolah dapat mengintegrasikan program latihan empati sebagai upaya preventif dan rehabilitatif terhadap bullying.

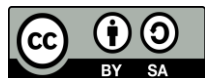
1. INTRODUCTION

Bullying is a prevalent issue in educational institutions, ranging from kindergarten to college. As the first formal educational setting for children, kindergarten should provide a safe and nurturing environment for both physical and psychological development (Abusafieh, 2022). A school environment free from bullying fosters an atmosphere conducive to children's learning and social growth. Research highlights the harmful effects of bullying on students, including psychological, academic, and social consequences (Garg & Chaudhary, 2024; Hulkin et al.,

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2024). Bullying significantly influences the social environment of school-aged children, affecting their psychosocial well-being, academic performance, and online interactions (Wijayanti et al., 2024). Children who feel safe and accepted in their environment are typically more focused and motivated in their learning activities, laying a positive foundation for future academic and social development.

Bullying in kindergarten is an increasing concern, manifesting in various forms, such as verbal and physical bullying (Purnama, Herman, & Saodi, 2018). While often associated with adolescence, bullying in kindergarten is becoming more common and has a significant impact on children's early development (Li, 2023). This trend suggests changes in social and environmental dynamics, necessitating a deeper understanding for prevention and intervention. The social interactions of young children, as they learn to navigate their relationships, may contribute to the rise in bullying cases in kindergarten (Pahlevi et al., 2021). Children might exhibit aggressive or dominant behavior as they explore their roles within the group, which can evolve into bullying. Most researchers agree that bullying involves three key elements: power imbalance, intent to harm, and repeated negative actions (Chang, 2021; Stives, May, & Bethel, 2022; Dutta et al., 2021).

Two types of bullying are particularly common in kindergartens: verbal and physical (Kayıran, 2023; Saragih, Ndonga, & Saragi, 2022). Verbal bullying includes name-calling, mocking, teasing, and scolding, while physical bullying involves hitting, kicking, and pinching. Additionally, social bullying is observed in kindergartens, where children may be isolated, cry due to being laughed at, or become distressed out of fear. These behaviors occur frequently, making bullying a widespread issue in preschool environments, ranging from mild verbal taunts to physical aggression (Syajuananda & Tirtayani, 2022).

Bullying is a significant issue in Indonesian education. According to the Program for International Students Assessment (OECD, 2017), Indonesia ranks fifth among OECD members, with 22.7% of students experiencing bullying. The country also ranks fifth among 78 nations, with 41.1% of students reporting being bullied—well above the global average. In addition to being bullied, 22% of Indonesian students reported being insulted and having their belongings stolen, 18% were physically pushed, 15% were intimidated, 19% were ostracized, 14% were threatened, and 20% had rumors spread about them (Ramadhanti & Hidayat, 2022).

RA Al-Muslim, an early childhood education institution in Waborobo Village, Baubau City, has also experienced bullying issues. An initial survey revealed that one five-year-old male student exhibited bullying behavior, identified during observations in November 2023. This student frequently used harsh language, took other students' belongings, hit, pulled, and acted aggressively when his desires were unmet. When the victim cried and reported the behavior to the teacher, the student would mock rather than apologize. Teachers corroborated this, noting complaints from parents about the student's aggressive behavior, which led some parents to intervene directly and discourage their children from befriending him. This situation has negatively impacted other students and the school. The school has faced decreased trust from parents and the surrounding community, while victims of bullying have become less motivated to attend school, disrupting the learning environment. The bullying student has also faced social isolation, often seen playing and studying alone as other students avoid him.

Various factors contribute to bullying, including internal factors related to the individual, such as underdeveloped empathy. Empathy, the ability to understand and respond to others' feelings, is crucial for moral development. Goleman (Anggraini et al., 2021) emphasizes that empathy guides individuals in considering the moral impact of their actions. Developing empathy in children is essential for fostering moral, ethical, and socially responsible behavior (Anggraini et al., 2021). Kohlberg (Petrovich, 1982) highlights empathy as a key element in moral development, noting that individuals with advanced moral reasoning tend to have higher empathy and are less likely to engage in bullying. Similarly, Eisenberg and Miller (Tartila & Aulia, 2021) stress the importance of empathy in motivating prosocial behavior. Children with high empathy are more inclined to act positively, avoiding negative behaviors like bullying. Fikrie (Arofa et al., 2018) warns of the dangers of bullying for school-age children, emphasizing empathy as a potential solution. Nurfazrina et al. (2020) suggest that early childhood empathy skills should include caring, tolerance, and understanding, in line with their developmental stage.

At RA Al-Muslim, the bullying student shows little empathy, neither remorseful after harming peers nor concerned when a classmate is in distress. Unlike other children who immediately offer comfort, this student remains indifferent and fails to show tolerance toward others. The teacher finds this lack of empathy and the student's bullying behavior concerning. Developing empathy requires the involvement of various parties, with the supervising teacher playing a critical role in understanding and addressing each child's behavior to prevent and resolve school issues. Napitupulu (2019) describes guidance and counseling as services aimed at helping students overcome problems and develop their potential across personal, social, academic, and career domains. This program also aims to prevent issues early in a child's development. Beyond fostering potential, counseling prepares chil-

dren's mental and social development, enabling them to adapt to higher levels of education. Addressing bullying through guidance and counseling can be achieved using modeling techniques. Purba et al. (2023) identify modeling as a counseling technique where individuals learn and apply new behaviors by observing others (models). This technique involves not just imitation but cognitive and creative processes. Symbolic modeling, a proven technique in guidance and counseling, has been effective in various contexts, including career planning (Karamoy et al., 2024), enhancing altruism (Dewi et al., 2023), improving practical skills in counseling (Sudibyoy et al., 2021), fostering empathy (Nopianti & Hafina, 2018), and improving counseling services in inclusive schools (Liddarsyah & Van Helen, 2021).

For young children, modeling techniques are effective in teaching new behaviors, as these behaviors can be directly observed. Symbolic modeling, using media like animated videos or short films, is particularly engaging for children and helps maintain their interest. Empathy training combined with symbolic modeling is considered effective in reducing bullying at RA Al-Muslim. Through this training, students learn to understand and respond to others' feelings, with symbolic modeling providing clear examples of empathetic behavior for students to emulate.

Bandura's theory (Indrawati et al., 2016) supports modeling as an effective learning method through observation, with proper stimulation aiding child development. Originating from Albert Bandura's 1950s theory, modeling includes real, movie, or imaginary characters and is divided into live models, symbolic models, and multiple models. The modeling process involves attention, retention, reproduction, and motivation/reinforcement stages (Purba et al., 2023). The teacher first captures students' attention with clear instructions, models the behavior, and then supports students as they imitate the behavior, ultimately reinforcing the positive behavior through motivation.

Research supports the effectiveness of symbolic modeling in developing empathy and reducing bullying. Hutasuhut & Yaswinda (2020) found that the movie "Nussa and Rara" positively impacted early childhood empathy through simple, engaging storytelling, making moral lessons more accessible to children. Guidance and counseling services can use symbolic modeling with animated films to teach empathy, with these films providing relatable examples of positive behaviors like helping, respecting, and speaking politely. Research has demonstrated that such films can instill values like honesty and kindness, serving as real-life examples for children (Sari & Ulpah, 2023). In the context of bullying, empathy training through symbolic modeling is expected to reduce harmful behaviors, creating a more conducive learning environment at RA Al-Muslim. Previous studies by Fatimatuzzahro & Suseno (2017) and Hutasuhut & Yaswinda (2020) demonstrate the effectiveness of empathy training and symbolic modeling in reducing bullying behavior in children. These findings suggest that instilling empathy through symbolic modeling with animated videos or short films can effectively address bullying in kindergarten settings.

Given the bullying issues at RA Al-Muslim and their impact, intervention is deemed necessary. Recognizing the importance of empathy in preventing bullying, this research aims to evaluate "The Effectiveness of Symbolic Modeling Techniques Based on Empathy Training in Overcoming Bullying Behavior at RA Al-Muslim Baubau City." This study is intended to provide a viable approach to addressing bullying in kindergartens, ultimately fostering children with strong moral character, ethics, and civility.

2. METODE

2.1 Research Design

This study used a quantitative approach with the Single Subject Research (SSR) method. SSR aims to document changes in subject behavior individually or N-of-1 (Groot et al., 2017), with a focus on modifying bullying behavior through guidance and counseling interventions. The design used is A-B-A, where the baseline condition (A1) measures bullying behavior before intervention, the intervention condition (B) measures during intervention, and the second baseline (A2) after intervention (Yuwono, 2015). The intervention applied is in the form of increasing the ability to empathize through symbolic modeling techniques using animated videos / short films

2.2 Location and Year of Research.

This study was conducted at RA Al-Muslim Baubau City for two months from February to March 2024, with measurements taken at each period before, during, and after the intervention

2.3 Research Subject

This SSR study involved one subject enrolled as a learner at RA Al-Muslim, Baubau City, who exhibited bullying behavior tendencies. The subject studied was a boy with the initials RA, aged 5 years.

2.4 Data Collection

Data were collected using observation guidelines and documentation study methods. The tools and materials used included stationery, observation sheets, laptops/projectors, loudspeakers, and animated video media/short films.

2.4 Data Analysis

Data analysis technique is an activity of examining and analyzing the research instruments used (Utomo et al., 2024). The analysis used is a visual analysis technique that involves analysis within conditions and between conditions. Analysis within conditions includes condition length, estimated directional tendency, stability tendency, data trace, and stability level. While the analysis between conditions includes the number of variables, change in trend, change in stability, change in level, and percentage of overlap.

2.4 Research Procedures

Research procedures include observation, intervention implementation, data preparation, data analysis, and report preparation.

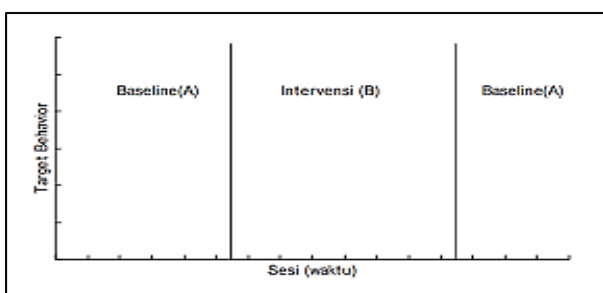


Figure 1. Measurement Design Model (Yuwono, 2015)

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Results

3.1 Overview of the Initial Condition of RA Bullying Behavior

The initial description of bullying behavior was obtained through observations in the Baseline A1 condition, which showed the state of RA's bullying behavior before the intervention. This observation was carried out on March 18-27, 2024 with an interval of one day between sessions. During this period, observations were conducted in five sessions, namely on Monday March 18, Wednesday March 20, Friday March 22, Monday March 25, and Wednesday March 27. Each observation session was conducted on a scheduled basis in the RA Al-Muslim classroom from 08:00 to 10:00. The bullying behavior observed included three main indicators, namely saying harsh words (indicator 1), hitting (indicator 2), and grabbing other people's objects (indicator 3).

Table 1. Recap of Baseline A1 Observation Results of RA Bullying Behavior

Sesison	Frekuensi indikator			Score
	Saying harsh words	Hitting	Taking/grabbing	
1	7	4	3	14
2	6	6	3	15
3	5	4	5	14
4	7	4	4	15
5	6	5	4	15

From the table above, it shows that in sessions 1 to 5, the indicator of saying harsh words has a higher frequency with a range of 5-7. Then followed by the hitting indicator which is in the range of 4-6 and the grabbing/taking indicator has a slightly lower frequency, namely in the range of 3-5. Furthermore, in general, RA's bullying behavior from the total frequency of the three indicators in each session is in the value range of 14-15. To

find out the description of RA's bullying behavior in this condition, the observation results were analyzed in 2 forms of analysis, namely Baseline A1 condition analysis and Baseline A1 Indicator Analysis.

3.1.1 Baseline A1 Condition Analysis

This analysis was carried out on the results of observations of bullying behavior in general whose data were obtained from the total frequency value of the three indicators. From table 1, the total value of behavior is made into the following graph:

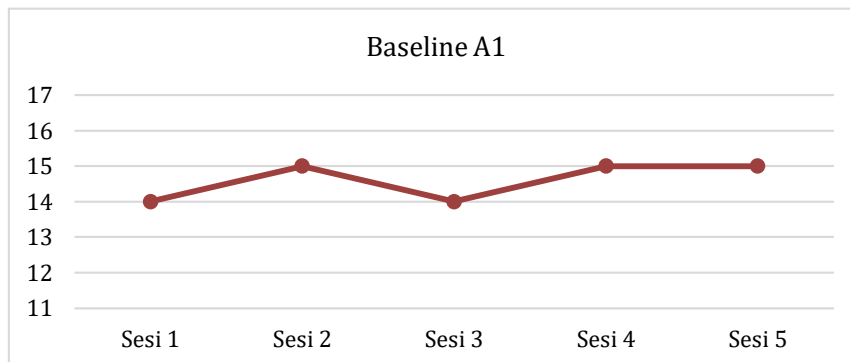


Figure 2. Baseline A1 Graph of RA's Bullying Behavior

Based on the results of this condition, the analysis can be described through two main components: condition length and estimated directional tendency. The condition length of this Baseline can be seen through the graph in Figure 1, which shows that the length of the Baseline condition is five sessions. This number indicates the number of observation sessions conducted, where RA's bullying behavior with a score range of 14-15 was obtained from five observation sessions conducted for two full hours at each session.

Estimation of the trend in the direction of development of RA's bullying behavior can be seen by using the middle split technique on the graph. This technique is done by dividing the data in the baseline phase into two parts, then the right and left parts are each divided again into two parts. Next, a line parallel to the abscissa is drawn to connect the meeting point between the graph line and the right and left hemisphere lines. The application of this middle split technique helps in understanding the direction of development of bullying behavior during the observation period.

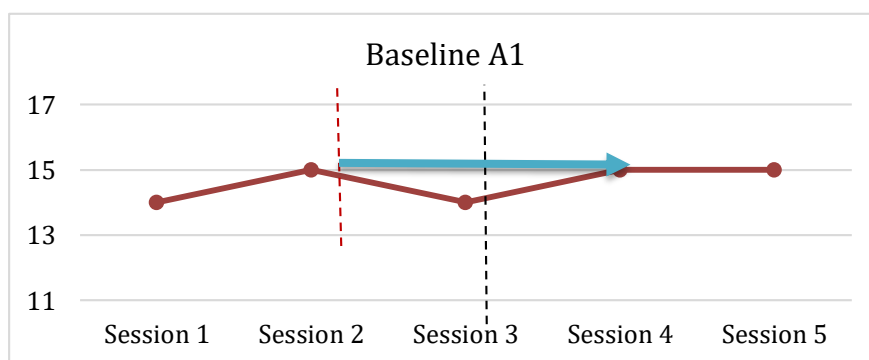


Figure 3. Baseline A1 Directional Trend Estimation Chart

The blue arrow represents the estimated trend in the direction of development of RA's bullying behavior at this Baseline. From the graph above, the resulting direction is a horizontal line. This shows that RA's bullying behavior at Baseline A1 tends to be the same or equal in each session which can be symbolized by an equal sign (=). To determine the tendency of stability of RA's bullying behavior in baseline A1 conditions, 15% stability criteria were used. A stability percentage of 85%-100% is said to be stable, whereas if the data score gets stability below that, it is said to be unstable or variable. (Sunanto, 2005).

The description of RA's bullying behavior graph to see the percentage of stability tendency is described in the following graph:

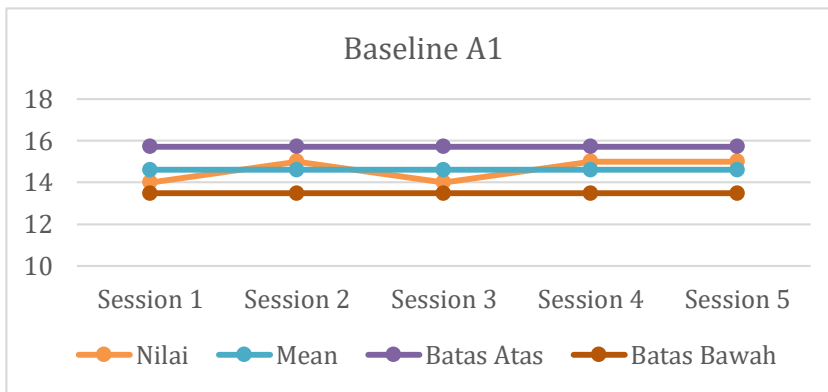


Figure 4. Baseline A1 Stability Trend Chart

The graph above shows that all RA bullying behavior values do not cross the upper and lower boundary lines. The percentage of stability tendency of RA's bullying behavior is obtained by dividing the number of sessions that have values outside the upper and lower limit ranges by the entire number of sessions and multiplied by 100%. So that the tendency of stability of RA's bullying behavior = $5:5 \times 100\% = 100\%$. The result of the calculation of the tendency of stability of RA's bullying behavior at Baseline A1 is 100%, which means that the development of RA's bullying behavior at this baseline tends to be stable with a percentage of 100%.

The trend of the data trace displayed on the direction trend estimation graph shows a horizontal direction, which means that the value of RA's bullying behavior remains the same or equal in each observation session, described by a horizontal line and symbolized by an equal sign (=). The stability level of RA's bullying behavior is at a stable level, as described in the stability tendency points. This stability is indicated by behavioral values that do not come out of the range of upper and lower limit values, which are between 15.725 and 13.475. Changes in level at this baseline can be seen from the difference between the data in the initial session (session 1) and the data in the final session of the baseline (session 5). From Table 2, the data in session 1 shows a value of 14 and the data in session 5 shows a value of 15, so it can be concluded that the change in the level of RA's bullying behavior in this condition is 1 level.

3.1.2 Analysis of Baseline A1 Indicators

This analysis was carried out with the aim of knowing the description of each indicator that formed RA's bullying behavior separately and comparing the results of the analysis between indicators. Based on the Baseline A1 Indicator Value Recap data, it can be seen that the average value of each indicator during the Baseline A1 condition. Indicator 1 has the highest average value of 6.2. Indicator 2 with an average value of 4.6 and indicator 3 with an average value of 3.8. A comparison of the average value of each indicator shows that RA's bullying behavior that occurs most often is saying harsh words, followed by hitting and grabbing behavior. To see the description of the frequency of RA bullying behavior from each indicator, it can be described through the following diagram:

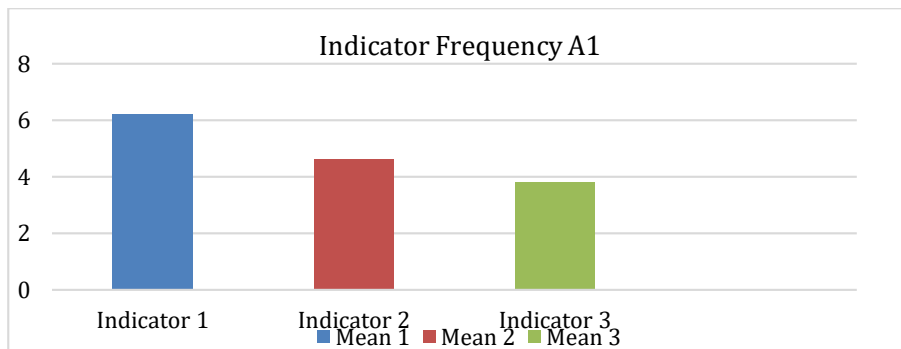


Figure 5: Frequency Diagram of Indicator A1

Based on the analysis of Baseline A1 conditions and analysis of indicators, it can be described that RA's bullying behavior seen from session 1 to session 5 is stable with a flat or the same direction of change in each session. The

highest score from this baseline becomes the benchmark for the percentage of RA's bullying behavior. In this condition, the average score is at 14.6 so that it can be determined that when RA's bullying behavior score is 14.6, the percentage of RA's bullying behavior is 100%. To facilitate the determination of the category of high and low bullying behavior in the next baseline, it can be determined by dividing the average value of each baseline by 14.6 and multiplying by 100% and the category can be determined as follows:

Table 5. Percentage Category of RA Bullying Behavior

Percentage score	Category
75%-100%	VeryHigh
50%-74,99%	High
25%-49,99%	Medium
0%-24,99%	Low

Furthermore, the determination of the percentage of change by indicator was carried out with the same method and the same category, using the mean of each indicator. The percentage change for each indicator is calculated by the formula: Mean Baseline Indicator (x) divided by Mean Baseline Indicator A1, multiplied by 100%. Thus, the percentage change in the value of indicator 1 at this baseline is 14.6 divided by 14.6 multiplied by 100%, which is 100%. For indicator 2, the percentage is 4.8 divided by 4.8 multiplied by 100%, which is 100%. As for indicator 3, the percentage is 3.8 divided by 3.8 multiplied by 100%, which is 100%. Based on the category and percentage of the baseline average score and its indicators, it can be concluded that the condition of RA's bullying behavior is very high with a percentage of 100%.

3.2. Overview of the Implementation of the Symbolic Modeling Technique Based on Empathy Training

To address student bullying behavior at RA Al-Muslim, the intervention involved collaboration with classroom teachers to establish a supportive classroom environment. This intervention was conducted from April 1, 2024, to April 10, 2024, across five sessions with a day off between each to prevent monotony from the animated films shown. The approach included screening short animated films that demonstrated empathy and appropriate expressions of it. Following each screening, a reflection session was held to discuss the lessons learned from the film and how they could be applied in real-life scenarios.

The intervention process consisted of the following stages: (a) **Attention Stage**: For the first 20 minutes of each session, the individual was introduced to a character from the film to capture their interest and stimulate curiosity about the story; (b) **Retention Stage**: After engaging with the story, the teacher demonstrated how to respond to the character's actions and connected these responses to real-life situations, helping the individual understand applicable steps; (c) **Reproduction Stage**: Post-viewing, the individual was asked to recount the character's behavior and compare it to their own past responses, with the teacher highlighting key aspects of the character's behavior to model; (d) **Motivational and Reinforcement Stage**: The individual was encouraged to replicate the observed behavior, given the similarities between the film scenarios and real-life situations, and received praise and examples from the teacher to reinforce positive behavior.

These stages were implemented in each session with different stories or films. The intervention was conducted by both the researcher and the teacher to maintain a conducive classroom environment and ensure optimal execution. The overall intervention process included several stages: engaging attention, observing responses, encouraging imitation, and reinforcing behavior, all aimed at addressing and reducing bullying behavior through empathy-based symbolic modeling.

3.3. Effectiveness of Symbolic Modeling Technique based on Empathy Training to Overcme Bullying Behavior

To assess the effectiveness of intervention through symbolic modeling techniques based on empathy training in overcoming bullying behavior at RA Al-Muslim, the data analyzed included the results of observations at Baseline B and Baseline A2, as well as a comparison of both against Baseline A1. Intervention (Baseline B) was carried out from April 1 to 10, 2024 in five sessions with a one-day break between sessions to avoid saturation. Observation after intervention (Baseline A2) took place from April 15 to 19, 2024, the same as observation at Baseline A1, conducted from 08.00-10.00 in the RA Al-Muslim classroom. Data analysis includes analysis of Baseline conditions and analysis of Baseline indicators.

3.3.1. Baseline B and A2 Observation Results

The results of observation data on both conditions (Recap of Baseline B and A2 Indicator Values and Frequencies) are summarized in the following graph:

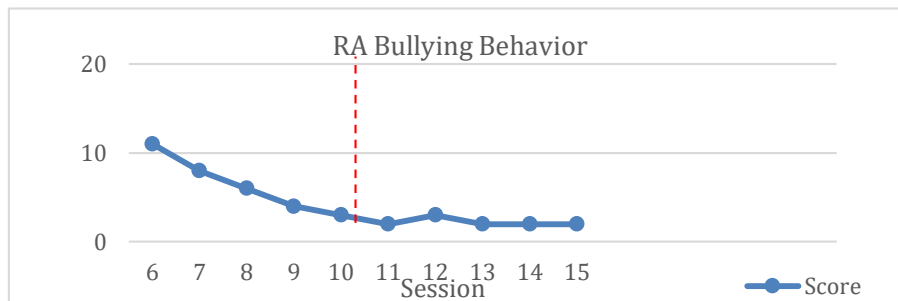


Figure 6. Graph of Baseline B and A2 RA Bullying Behavior Score

3.3.2. Analysis in Baseline B and A2 Conditions

Figure 5 shows that the condition length of baseline B is 5, where in this condition 5 meeting sessions have been conducted. The graph also shows that the length of the condition at Baseline A2 is 5. This means that all values obtained at baseline B and A2 are obtained from 5 measurement observation sessions in each condition. The directional trend in these two conditions is also determined by the same technique as the Baseline A1 condition. So it can be seen in the following graph:

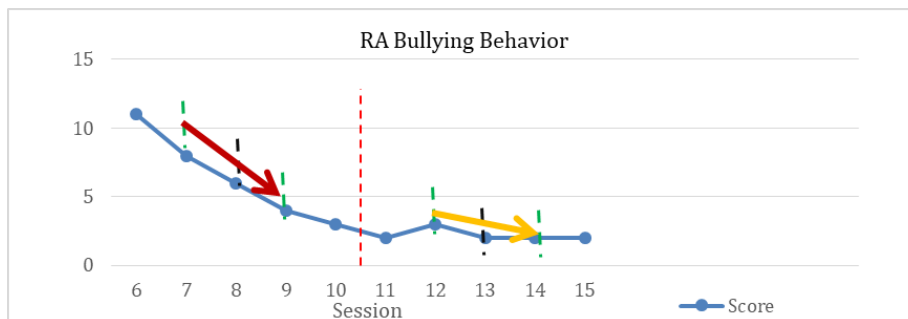


Figure 7. Baseline B and A2 Directional Trend Graphs

The direction of the red arrow shows the estimated directional trend at Baseline B, meaning that the condition of RA's bullying behavior decreased (-) during the intervention provided. While at Baseline A2 the estimated directional trend also decreased (-), meaning that RA's bullying behavior at this baseline continued to decrease as in Baseline B. For the tendency of stability of RA's bullying behavior in baseline B and A2 conditions, it is determined by the same criteria as Baseline A1, namely the 15% stability criterion is used.

To see whether the data tends to be stable or unstable in each baseline, the data above can be seen in the following graph:

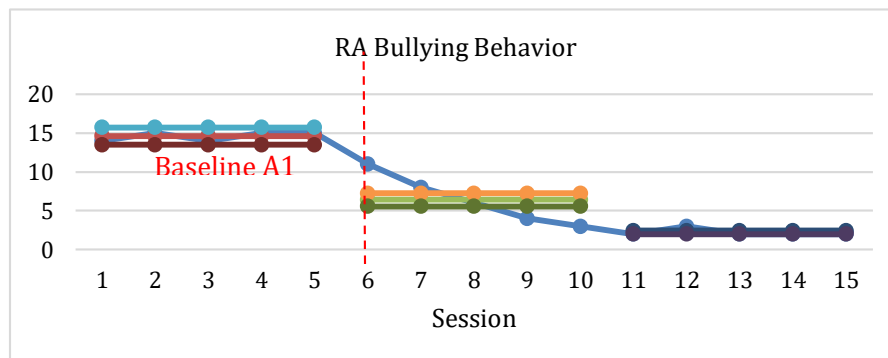


Figure 8. Baseline B-A2 Stability Trend Chart

The results of the calculation of the tendency of stability of RA's bullying behavior at Baseline B are 20% and Baseline A2 80%. This means that the tendency of stability of RA's bullying behavior at Baseline B is variable with a percentage of stability of 20% and the tendency of stability of RA's bullying behavior after intervention is still in the variable category with a percentage of stability of 80%.

The trend of RA's bullying behavior data trace at Baseline B is decreasing, meaning that there is a change in data in this condition, which is decreasing which can be seen from the 6th session to the 10th session. Meanwhile, the trend of RA's bullying behavior data traces at Baseline A2 also decreased. In other words, there is a change in data in this condition, namely decreasing which can be seen from the 11th session to the 15th session. In determining the level of stability and range, it is necessary to do so by entering each condition of the upper limit and lower limit numbers.

The data obtained regarding the level of change in data levels in each condition by looking at the difference between the last data and the first data in each condition. From the data in 4.5, it can be obtained that the level change at Baseline B is $3 - 11 = (-8)$. This means that there is a change of 8 levels with a downward direction of change because the level value obtained is negative. In other words, it can be concluded that the provision of intervention has an effect in reducing RA's bullying behavior by 8 levels. Furthermore, level changes did not occur at Baseline A2 because the initial and final data were the same, namely $2 - 2 = 0 (=)$.

3.3.3. Analysis of Indicators in Baseline B and A2 Conditions

This analysis is carried out on indicator frequency data at baseline B and A2 described in the following graph:

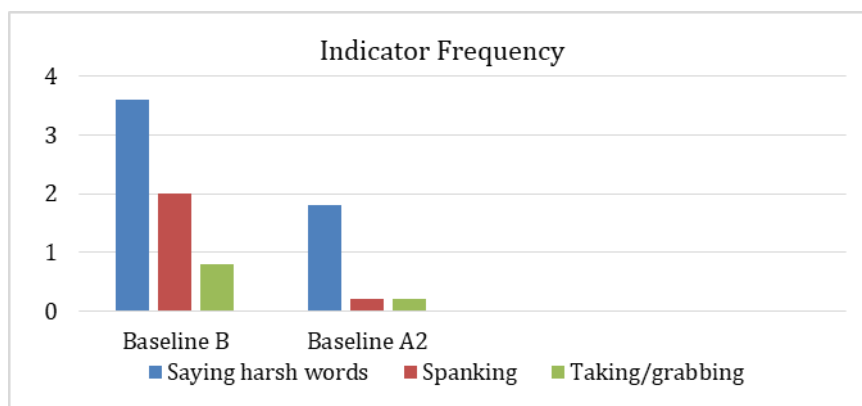


Figure 9: Frequency Diagram of Baseline B and A2 Indicators

From the diagram above, it can be seen that at Baseline B and A2, the average frequency of indicator 1 is the indicator with the highest level compared to other indicators. However, when compared to the average at Baseline A2, the average value is reduced or decreased. In indicator 2 in Baseline A2, it also decreased compared to the condition at Baseline B. Furthermore, in indicator 3, the value became 0 at Baseline A2. This means that after the intervention is given a change in direction and the average value of the frequency indicator decreases. This shows a positive change in RA's bullying behavior, namely Reduced Frequency or intensity.

3.3.4. Analysis of Comparison Between Baseline A1-B-A2 Conditions

In this analysis, RA's bullying behavior is examined through several key components. First, the study focuses on a single variable: RA's bullying behavior. Second, changes in behavioral trends and effects are evaluated by reviewing the directional trends in the condition analysis. The trend from Baseline A1 to Baseline B revealed a decrease in RA's bullying behavior following the intervention. This downward trend continued from Baseline B to Baseline A2, suggesting that the reduction in bullying behavior persisted even after the intervention was halted.

The comparison of Baseline A1, Baseline B, and Baseline A2 demonstrated a shift from a stable to a variable trend, reflecting variations in RA's bullying behavior during the intervention. The instability observed at Baseline B was due to fluctuations in RA's bullying behavior scores during the intervention phase. To assess the level changes between conditions for each baseline, the final value of Baseline A1 was compared with the initial value of Baseline B, and the final value of Baseline B was compared with the initial value of Baseline A2. The level difference between Baseline B and Baseline A1 was -4, indicating a reduction from 15 to 11 due to the empathy training intervention with symbolic modeling techniques using short animated films. The level change between Baseline A2 and Baseline

B was 0, showing that RA's bullying behavior remained consistent after the intervention, compared to the end of Baseline B.

Analysis of the percentage of overlap between Baseline B and Baseline A1 indicates that there were no data points from Baseline B within the range of Baseline A1. With a 0% overlap, it suggests that the intervention was highly effective in altering the targeted behavior. This finding highlights the intervention's success in reducing RA's bullying behavior. The overlap data from Baseline A1 to Baseline B is illustrated in the following graph:

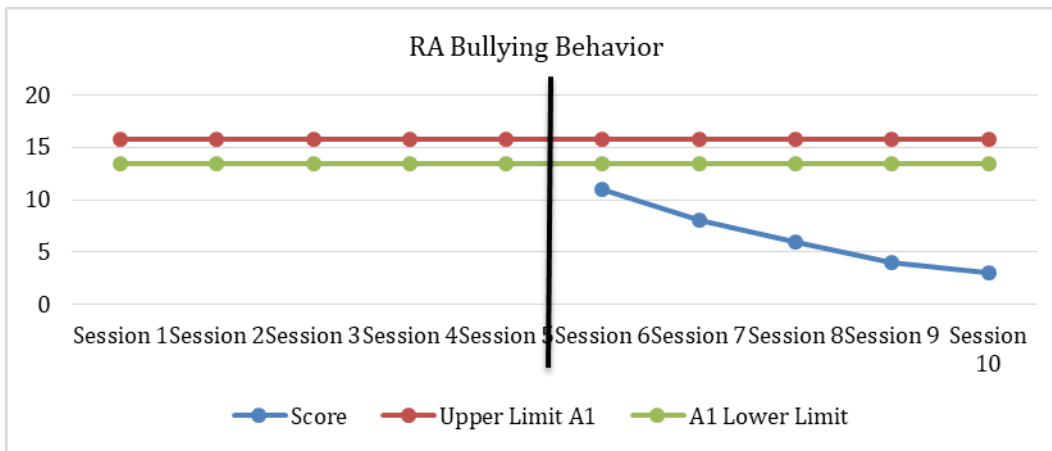


Figure 10. Baseline B/A1 Overlap Chart

The graph above shows that the overlap data is 0%, meaning that there is no overlap between the data in Baseline A1 and Baseline B data. Thus it is known that the provision of intervention has an effect on the target behavior (RA Bullying Behavior) because the smaller the percentage of overlap, the greater the effect of the intervention obtained.

In the overlap percentage for Baseline A2/B conditions, the lower limit of Baseline B is 5.575 and the upper limit is 7.225. Data points (2, 3, 2, 2, 2) in the Baseline A2 condition that are in the Baseline B range are 0. By dividing the number of data points in the Baseline B range by the total data points in the Baseline A2 condition, then multiplying by 100, the result is $0 / 5 \times 100 = 0\%$. This means that the intervention provided has an influence on RA's bullying behavior in the Baseline A2 condition, indicating that the intervention is successful in influencing behavior change. To see the overlap data in the Baseline B to Baseline A2 conditions, it can be described in the following graph:

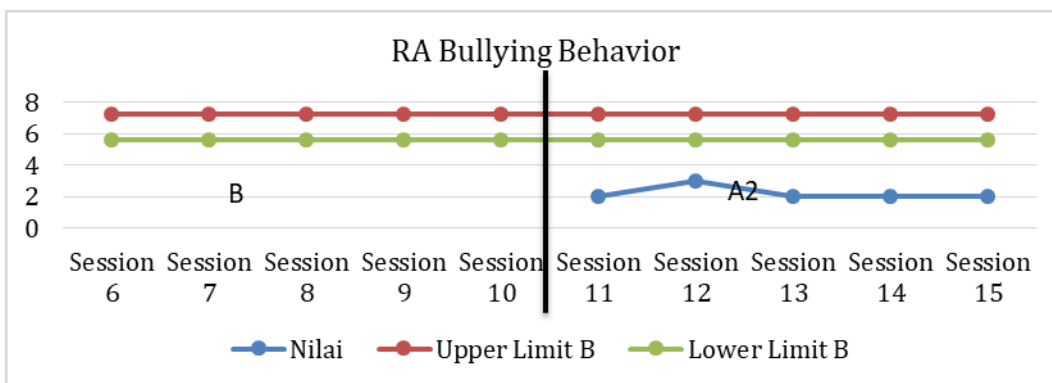


Figure 11. Baseline A2/B Overlap Chart

The graph above illustrates a 0% overlap between the data from Baseline B and Baseline A2, indicating that there is no overlap between these conditions. This demonstrates that the intervention had a significant impact on the target behavior (RA's bullying behavior). The analysis reveals notable changes between the initial condition, the intervention phase, and the post-intervention period. Specifically, RA's bullying behavior decreased significantly from the start of the intervention until its conclusion. Prior to the intervention, RA's bullying behavior

scores were stable, but during the intervention, the stability became variable or unstable, suggesting that the intervention had a substantial effect on RA's behavior stability.

The analysis also shows a significant difference in the level of behavior change between pre-intervention and intervention conditions. However, once the intervention ended, RA's bullying behavior scores remained consistent. The 0% overlap percentage indicates that the intervention was highly effective.

To determine the percentage change in behavior, the average scores from each condition were analyzed. Before the intervention, Baseline A1 had an average score of 14.6, representing 100% in the very high category. During the intervention (Baseline B), the average score decreased to 6.2, or 42.5% of the initial score, which falls into the moderate category. After the intervention ended (Baseline A2), the average score further dropped to 2.2, or 15% of the initial score, placing it in the low category. Additionally, a behavioral indicator analysis was performed to assess changes in indicator values influenced by the intervention, as depicted in the following graph.

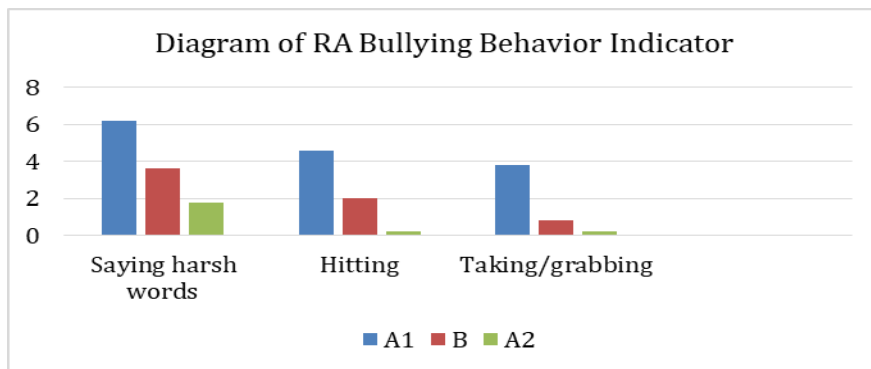


Figure 12: Indicator Comparison Diagram

The diagram presented shows that each indicator has decreased in value with a uniform direction of change, namely decreasing or decreasing. This indicates that the intervention provided has a positive impact on reducing RA's bullying behavior. The percentage change in indicators is calculated using the same method as in the Baseline A1 analysis, as follows: The percentage of indicator 1 (saying harsh words) at Baseline A1 is 100%, calculated from $6.2 / 6.2 \times 100\%$. At Baseline B, indicator 1 showed a percentage of 58%, calculated from $3.6 / 6.2 \times 100\%$, and at Baseline A2 the percentage was 29%, calculated from $1.8 / 6.2 \times 100\%$. A significant decrease was seen from Baseline A1 (100%) to Baseline B (58%), and further to Baseline A2 (29%), with the categories sequentially from Very High, High, to Moderate.

The percentage of indicator 2 (hitting) at Baseline A1 was 100%, calculated from $4.6 / 4.6 \times 100\%$. At Baseline B, indicator 2 showed a percentage of 43.5%, calculated from $2 / 4.6 \times 100\%$, and at Baseline A2 the percentage was 4.3%, calculated from $0.2 / 4.6 \times 100\%$. A significant decrease was seen from Baseline A1 (100%) to Baseline B (43.5%), and further to Baseline A2 (4.3%), with the categories ranking from Very High, Medium, to Low. The percentage of indicator 3 (grabbing objects) at Baseline A1 was 100%, calculated from $3.8 / 3.8 \times 100\%$. At Baseline B, indicator 3 showed a percentage of 21%, calculated from $0.8 / 3.8 \times 100\%$, and at Baseline A2 the percentage was 5.2%, calculated from $0.2 / 3.8 \times 100\%$. A significant decrease was seen from Baseline A1 (100%) to Baseline B (21%), and further to Baseline A2 (5.2%), with the categories being sequential from Very High, Medium, to Low.

3.2. Discussion

Field research uncovered that a 5-year-old boy, identified as RA, demonstrated bullying tendencies including using abusive language, hitting, and grabbing objects. RA was a student at RA Al-Muslim in Baubau City. Initial interviews with the teacher indicated that RA's behavior negatively impacted his peers, himself, and the school environment, leading to diminished trust from both parents and the community. The victims of RA's bullying lost motivation to attend school, resulting in an unfavorable classroom atmosphere due to their feelings of unsafety (Yulianti et al., 2024). Additionally, RA faced social isolation as his peers avoided him, leading to him spending much time alone during play and study. Kurniawan & Pranowo (2018) noted that bullying can disrupt the learning environment, leading to absenteeism and poorer academic performance.

Lusiana & Arifin (2022) observed that bullying affects not only the victims but also the perpetrators, who often display low empathy and hyperactive behavior. Perpetrators may experience more significant mental health issues

compared to victims. Goleman (Angraini et al., 2021) highlighted the crucial role of empathy in evaluating one's actions and their consequences, while Mulyawati et al. (2022) emphasized that reduced empathy can lead to undesirable behaviors such as bullying. Empathy involves understanding others' feelings and conditions, which should be reflected in speech, attitudes, and actions.

This study aimed to assess the impact of empathy training on reducing RA's bullying behavior. Conducted over two months using a single-subject research (SSR) method with an A-B-A design, the study focused on modifying RA's bullying through guidance and counseling using symbolic modeling techniques with short animated films. Observations were made over 15 sessions, divided into three phases: Baseline A1 (pre-intervention), Baseline B (during intervention), and Baseline A2 (post-intervention). Results indicated a significant reduction in bullying behavior, from 14-15 instances in Baseline A1 to 2-3 instances in Baseline A2.

During Baseline B, RA was exposed to short animated films teaching empathy, such as "Tolerance and Mutual Respect" and "Sorry." Observations showed a drop in RA's bullying behavior frequency from a score of 8 in the initial session to 3 in the final session of the intervention. After the intervention, during Baseline A2, the frequency remained stable at 2-3. The percentage of behavior change demonstrated a significant decrease from 100% in Baseline A1 to 15% in Baseline A2. Abusive behaviors, hitting, and grabbing also saw substantial reductions. This study confirms that guidance and counseling with symbolic modeling techniques are effective in mitigating bullying behavior. Successful intervention also relies on collaboration with teachers and a supportive school environment. Careful selection of intervention media is crucial to prevent potential media addiction among children. This research indicates that with proper support and positive role models, bullying behavior can be significantly reduced or eliminated.

At an early age, children like RA often judge actions based on immediate consequences. Interventions emphasizing empathy can help children understand the emotional impact of their behavior, thereby advancing their moral development. Kohlberg's theory of moral development outlines how moral reasoning evolves through a hierarchical structure of three levels and six stages (Yilmaz, Bahçekapili, & Sevi, 2021). RA was given the chance to grasp and internalize empathy values demonstrated in the films and apply them to daily interactions. The symbolic modeling technique aligns with Kohlberg's theory, particularly at the pre-conventional and conventional levels, fostering a transition from immediate consequences to a more sophisticated understanding of social norms. The technique shows promise in reducing bullying and promoting advanced moral development in children. Studies by Alwi, Iqbal, & Manas (2023), Melati, Sobari, & Septian (2023), and Arista, Nurhasanah, & Bustamam (2020) support the effectiveness of this approach in reducing bullying behavior in school settings.

4. RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS

The results of this study have important implications in the development of intervention programs to reduce bullying behavior in schools. The empathy training-based intervention was shown to be effective in reducing the level of bullying, as indicated by a significant decrease in the frequency of bullying behavior during and after the intervention. This suggests that empathy training can be an effective approach to change negative behaviors into more positive and stable ones. The application of the symbolic modeling technique based on empathy training not only helps students to understand the impact of their behavior on others, but also develops their ability to empathize and interact positively. Therefore, schools can consider integrating empathy training programs in their curriculum as a preventive and rehabilitative effort against bullying behavior.

5. CONCLUSIONS

This study concluded that an empathy training-based intervention through symbolic modeling technique was effective in reducing bullying behavior at RA Al-Muslim school. During the intervention period, there was a significant decrease in the frequency of bullying behavior, indicating that the intervention had a positive impact. The data showed that bullying behavior decreased from a very high category before the intervention to a medium category during the intervention and finally to a low category after the intervention was stopped. These results suggest that empathy training can be an effective tool in changing students' negative behaviors and promoting a more positive and safe school environment. Thus, this empathy-based intervention program can be widely adopted in other schools as an approach to address the problem of bullying.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

The first author, Yunita Mardianti Ahyia, was responsible for the formulation of the research concept, methodological design, and data analysis. The second author, Abdullah Pandang, played a role in drafting the initial manuscript and checking the research methodology design. The third author, Abdul Saman, contributed in checking the results of data processing and revising our manuscript ready for inclusion in scientific journals.

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