Analyzing the impact of Self-Management on Psychological Recovery among School Students Who Experienced Bullying

Dita Alinda Restiani*, Rizki Nurfauziah

Universitas Negeri Semarang, Indonesia

*Corresponding Author: ditarestiani128@students.unnes.ac.id

Abstract. Bullying has long-lasting impacts on students' mental health, including anxiety, low self-esteem, and social withdrawal. While prevention efforts are widely studied, recovery strategies for victims remain limited. This literature review examines the role of self-management in supporting the psychological recovery of bullying victims among school students. Using the literature review method, 10 relevant studies published between 2020 and 2025 were analyzed. Findings show that self-management particularly emotional regulation, behavioral control, and self-confidence rebuilding helps students cope with post-bullying trauma and improves their academic and social adjustment. Self-management also mediates the effect of school well-being on bullying behavior, highlighting its dual role in prevention and recovery. These insights suggest that integrating self-management training into school counseling programs can enhance student resilience and support long-term psychological healing.

Key words: Self-management, psychological recovery, bullying.

INTRODUCTION

Bullying remains one of the most persistent and detrimental issues affecting students' psychological well-being in schools worldwide. In Indonesia, the problem has become increasingly alarming, with both traditional and cyberbullying cases rising among adolescents. According to the Komisi Perlindungan Anak Indonesia (KPAI) (2025), there were 1,665 reported cases of violence against children in 2022, including school bullying. These experiences often lead to enduring psychological consequences such as anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, and post-traumatic stress symptoms Nugroho & Azizah (2024). Longitudinal analyses also confirm that early exposure to bullying results in significant and long-term mental health problems Sirait, (2023). This highlights the urgent need to equip students with internal coping mechanisms that support recovery and resilience.

Among these mechanisms, self-management has gained increasing scholarly attention. It involves the ability to regulate one's behavior, manage emotions, and implement self-control strategies. Low self-control has consistently been linked to increased risk of bullying behavior, as students who lack this capacity often respond with aggression and disregard for consequences Noviandari et al., (2022). A cross-sectional study in Lamongan, Indonesia revealed a strong positive correlation between high levels of self-management and effective bullying prevention in junior high school students ($r = 0.716$; $p < 0.001$) Ubudiyah & Susanti, (2025). Similarly, in Bandung, the use of self-control techniques was shown to enhance self-esteem among high school bullying victims ($p < 0.001$) Purnama & Rahmasari, (2022). Despite the emphasis on prevention in school-based programs, recovery efforts for bullying victims often remain underdeveloped. Many students continue to suffer long after the bullying has ended, particularly when they lack internal skills to process and adapt to emotional distress. Therefore, attention must shift not only toward prevention but also toward post-bullying recovery that empowers students with adaptive coping skills.

Previous studies have primarily focused on the role of self-management in preventing bullying, with limited exploration of its function in post-bullying recovery. Addressing this gap, the present study

examines how self-management contributes to psychological recovery in students who have experienced bullying. Specifically, it focuses on dimensions such as emotional regulation, cognitive reframing, and behavioral adjustment, which are essential for rebuilding self-confidence, reducing emotional distress, and restoring social functioning. The findings are expected to inform school-based interventions that incorporate self-management training as a critical element of recovery programs for bullying victims. Nevertheless, little is known about how self-management interacts with factors such as peer support, family involvement, and school climate in shaping recovery outcomes. Integrating these elements into a comprehensive framework may enhance both the effectiveness and sustainability of recovery interventions.

METHODS

The method used in this research is a literature review. A literature review is a method by conducting a formal review of research articles where researchers think critically, analyze and evaluate information. This study uses a literature review to explore the role of self-management in supporting psychological recovery in students who experience bullying. The study was conducted by searching for relevant scientific articles from various databases such as Google Scholar, Scopus, Sinta, and ScienceDirect. The articles reviewed were selected based on the following criteria: (1) published within the last five years (2020-2025), (2) discussing the topics of self-management, psychological recovery, and bullying in students, (3) being the results of research that has been officially published. From the search results, a number of articles were obtained which were then selected based on the relevance and quality of the content, a total of 10 articles were selected for in-depth analysis. The selected articles were then reviewed using a thematic analysis approach to identify recurring patterns and key themes related to self-management, bullying, and psychological recovery. This process allowed the synthesis of findings from various studies into a coherent understanding while ensuring that only relevant and high-quality evidence informed the discussion.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Bullying in schools is a serious problem that has a widespread impact on students' psychological well-being, causing not only short-term emotional trauma but also potentially disrupting their academic, social, and mental development in the long term. Various studies show that victims of bullying often experience anxiety, depression, social isolation, low self-esteem, and decreased motivation and academic achievement. For example, research by Sari et al., (2024) at MTs Al-Uswah Kuala found that the most common form of bullying was verbal bullying, such as teasing, name-calling, and slander. The impact was very real: students experienced low self-esteem, prolonged anxiety, social isolation, and a decline in motivation to learn. This study emphasizes the importance of counseling services at school, anti-bullying awareness campaigns, harmonious family communication, and a school culture that supports anti-violence. Similar findings were reported by Misykah et al., (2023) who studied 50 elementary school students in North Sumatra. Approximately 35% of students reported having experienced bullying in the past year, with psychological symptoms including anxiety disorders, depression, decreased interest in learning, and psychosomatic disorders such as headaches or stomachaches. These findings underscore the urgency of integrated psychological support, including individual and group counseling, social and emotional skills training, and strengthening a positive school culture.

This phenomenon is not only happening in Indonesia, but is also a global issue. For example, a study conducted by Zhao, N., et al., (2024) in China surveyed more than 95,000 students of various ages and found that 71.6% of students had experienced bullying. Victims have a 3 to 18 times higher risk of developing psychological disorders, including PTSD and sleep disorders. The severity of bullying significantly increases the risk of such disorders. Therefore, they recommend multi-level interventions involving schools, families, and communities. Meanwhile, Zamir & Zia (2024) in Pakistan explored coping mechanisms among students who experienced bullying directly or indirectly. The study revealed that bullying behavior can be malignant (malicious) or non-malignant, but it still has a negative impact.

Therefore, it is important to understand the types and causes of bullying in depth in order to formulate appropriate remedial strategies.

The impact of bullying is also evident in academic aspects, particularly in terms of time management and study effort. Research by Solas-Martínez et al., (2025) shows that victims of bullying, especially girls, experience a decline in learning skills of up to 8.3%, while male and female perpetrators of cyberbullying also show a significant decline in time management and study effort. Cyberbullying has an even greater impact than traditional bullying. This suggests that school interventions need to focus on strengthening self-regulation skills, including time management and study effort. This situation calls for intervention strategies that not only focus on trauma management but also equip students with the skills to independently restore their well-being. One approach deemed effective is the enhancement of self-management skills, enabling students to adaptively regulate their emotions, behavior, and goals.

In line with this urgency, the results of the literature review show that strengthening self-management skills plays an important role, both in helping students recover psychologically after experiencing bullying and in preventing their involvement in the future. Various studies support that self-management has a positive impact on emotional regulation, behavioral adjustment, and the restoration of students' self-confidence. The main findings from various studies support this. For example, a study by Ubudiyah & Susanti (2025) shows a strong relationship between self-management and bullying prevention. In that study, students with high levels of self-management tended to have better prevention skills ($r = 0.716$, $p = 0.000$). Research by Sulaeman et al. (2023) at MAN 1 Yogyakarta shows that self-control influences verbal bullying behavior ($p = 0.031$), while social control does not show a significant influence ($p = 0.472$). This reinforces the idea that strengthening students' internal aspects is more effective than external interventions alone in addressing bullying. Self-management also plays an important role in restoring students' self-confidence and social skills. Wardani & Anjasmoro (2022) found that bullying can lower students' self-confidence, but role-playing-based interventions and teacher support, when combined with self-management training, can help restore that confidence significantly. This confirms that self-management not only serves as a defense mechanism when students become victims, but also enhances their resilience and ability to avoid bullying situations. Self-control, which is part of self-management, has also been shown to significantly influence the impact of verbal bullying, within the framework of self-regulation theory (Zimmerman, 2000), self-control refers to the ability to regulate emotions and immediate behaviors—for example, resisting the impulse to retaliate or react impulsively when bullied—whereas self-management encompasses a broader range of skills. Self-management not only involves self-control, but also goal setting, self-monitoring, self-reinforcement, and self-evaluation. In other words, self-control serves as ensures short-term behavioral stability, while self-management provides students to recover and thrive in the long term after experiencing bullying.

In addition, self-management acts as an intermediary factor between school well-being and bullying behavior. Pusvitasari & Zarkasyi (2024) noted that self-management influences bullying tendencies through school well-being by 13.5%. This means that students who have good self-regulation skills tend to create and experience a more positive and safe school environment. Another aspect of psychological recovery is academic self-regulation and time management. Research by Williams, C., Griffin, K et at., (2024) shows that involvement in bullying, either as a perpetrator or victim, has a negative impact on students' time management and learning efforts. These findings emphasize the importance of self-regulation-based interventions as part of a strategy for academic recovery for students after experiencing bullying.

The findings clearly indicate that self-management is a foundational factor in helping students recover psychologically from bullying experiences. This linkage is important because if interventions focus solely on self-control, students may be able to suppress negative reactions in the short term but may not necessarily possess long-term strategies to restore self-esteem, rebuild social relationships, or regain lost learning motivation. Conversely, self-management-based interventions utilize self-control as a foundation and integrate it with other adaptive skills, resulting in a more holistic recovery process. Students who develop strong self-management are better equipped to cope with trauma, re-establish social connections, and re-engage with learning activities. Self-management provides a structure for personal growth, empowering students to set goals, manage emotions, and make constructive decisions even after being subjected to distressing experiences. Importantly, the literature shows that self-management functions not only as a reactive skill to promote recovery but also as a proactive factor in reducing bullying vulnerability. Students with good self-management tend to have higher emotional

intelligence, stronger boundaries, and better interpersonal skills, which can serve as protective factors against being targeted.Despite its importance, self-management does not act alone. Several studies, such as that of Sulaeman et al. (2003), highlight that peer dynamics, family support, and school environment also shape the effectiveness of recovery processes. Recovery outcomes are also influenced by supportive school environments, responsive teachers, access to school counseling, family involvement, and peer support.

However, there remains a research gap in understanding how self-management interacts with these external factors in the context of post-bullying recovery. Most existing studies examine self-management in isolation or focus on its direct influence on recovery outcomes, without exploring how it integrates with school climate, peer relationships, and family dynamics over time. Furthermore, there is limited longitudinal research that tracks the long-term effects of self-management-based interventions, making it unclear whether short-term recovery benefits can be sustained in the long run. Future research should adopt a more integrative approach, combining psychological, social, and environmental variables to capture a holistic picture of students' recovery journeys. Longitudinal and mixed-method studies are particularly needed to evaluate not only the immediate impact of self-management training but also its enduring role in fostering resilience, emotional stability, and academic re-engagement. By addressing this gap, future studies can inform the design of more comprehensive intervention programs that strengthen both individual coping capacities and the supportive ecosystems surrounding students.

CONCLUSION

Building on the findings discussed, this study reaffirms that self-management operates not merely as an ancillary coping mechanism but as a central, multidimensional construct underpinning both the remediation of psychological sequelae and the fortification of resilience among students subjected to bullying. The synthesis of the reviewed literature elucidates that self-management operates not merely as an ancillary coping mechanism but as a central, multidimensional construct underpinning both the remediation of psychological sequelae and the fortification of resilience among students subjected to bullying. Its regulatory functions spanning emotional modulation, behavioral calibration, and goal-oriented self-direction confer dual benefits: attenuating the immediate psychosocial impairments following victimization and diminishing the propensity for recurrent involvement in bullying dynamics. However, the empirical corpus underscores that self-management's efficacy is contingent upon the interplay of contextual moderators, including the ecological affordances of the school climate, the responsiveness of pedagogical agents, the salience of familial scaffolding, and the quality of peer relational networks. Consequently, the integration of structured self-management cultivation within educational counseling frameworks necessitates a systemic orientation one that transcends the individualistic paradigm to encompass multi-tiered interventions engaging institutional policies, curricular design, and community-based synergies. This integrative approach not only positions self-management as a cornerstone of post-bullying psychological rehabilitation but also reframes it as a preventive architecture capable of reshaping school cultures toward inclusivity and psychological safety. Future scholarly inquiry should thus advance beyond cross-sectional correlations to longitudinal and intervention-based methodologies, thereby delineating causal pathways and optimizing the translational applicability of self-management paradigms within diverse educational ecologies. Moreover, future research could develop and validate comprehensive intervention models that integrate self-management training with systemic school-based approaches, including teacher training, peer mentoring, and parental involvement. Mixed-methods studies may offer valuable insights into the lived experiences of students during the recovery process, capturing both quantitative outcomes and qualitative narratives.

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