



Analysis of TikTok social media's impact on bullying behavior among students of SDN 13 Pekanbaru

Tenesya Dara Saski¹, Muhamad Nukman²

^{1,2}Universitas Islam Riau, Kota Pekanbaru, Indonesia

tenesyadarasaski@student.uir.ac.id¹, nukman.m16@edu.uir.ac.id²

ABSTRACT

The emergence of digital technology, especially social media, has changed many aspects of human life, including education. Elementary school students widely use social media and have been significantly influenced by it. This study aims to identify and analyze the relationship between bullying behavior and social media use among elementary school children, with a focus on students' self-confidence. This study used a descriptive quantitative research method. The study was conducted at SD Negeri 13 Pekanbaru, with the research subjects comprising high-level students in grades IV, V, and VI. The data collection techniques include population and sample determination, development of research instruments (questionnaires), distribution of questionnaires to the research sample, data collection, and data analysis. The findings of the study indicate that the influence of social media on bullying behavior can lower the self-esteem of students who experience bullying, as well as hinder the growth of social skills and all aspects of students' personal lives, including low self-esteem, stress and anxiety, depression, social isolation, difficulty focusing, and poor academic performance.

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ABSTRAK

Kemunculan teknologi digital, terutama media sosial telah mengubah banyak aspek kehidupan manusia, termasuk pendidikan. Media sosial telah banyak digunakan oleh murid sekolah dasar dan memberikan pengaruh cukup besar dalam karakter murid. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi dan menganalisis hubungan antara perilaku bullying dan penggunaan media sosial di kalangan anak SD yang berfokus pada nilai kepercayaan diri murid. Dalam penelitian ini digunakan metode penelitian kuantitatif deskriptif. Pelaksanaan penelitian ini berlangsung di SD Negeri 13 Pekanbaru dengan subjek penelitian terdiri dari murid tingkat tinggi yaitu kelas IV, V, dan VI. Teknik pengumpulan data adalah penentuan populasi dan sampel, pengembangan instrumen penelitian berupa kuesioner, pendistribusian kuesioner kepada sampel penelitian, pengumpulan data, dan analisis data. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pengaruh media sosial terhadap perilaku bullying dapat menurunkan harga diri murid yang mengalami bullying, serta menghambat pertumbuhan keterampilan sosial dan semua aspek kehidupan pribadi murid, termasuk harga diri yang rendah, stres dan kecemasan, depresi, isolasi sosial, kesulitan fokus, dan kinerja akademik yang buruk.

Kata Kunci: guru sekolah dasar; media sosial; perilaku perundungan

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INTRODUCTION

The emergence of digital technology, especially social media, has changed many aspects of human life, including education (Syaro & Dewi, 2022). Elementary school students widely use social media and have been significantly influenced by it. Social media has emerged as a learning tool and a platform for student expression in education (Sivakumar et al., 2023). TikTok, a social media platform known for its light and engaging content, has gained immense popularity and is often used by students (Manurung et al., 2025; Ramdani et al., 2025). TikTok has both positive and negative effects. One of the positive effects of TikTok is that it can help students explore learning content and improve their communication skills, creativity, and confidence. In addition, learning with TikTok media attracts students' interest. However, the negative effects of using TikTok include unfiltered content, which often leads students to view content containing offensive, obscene, or vulgar material (Apriliyani, 2025).

In addition, the temptation to go viral and receive lots of likes and comments on TikTok can lead to unhealthy social competition and cause students to create poor-quality content. Some students even treat their friends based on viral content. This shows that using TikTok can affect students' interactions, character development, and their sources of entertainment. Excessive use of TikTok can have a negative impact if used carelessly. One phenomenon caused by excessive use of TikTok is the prevalence of bullying among children. Bullying can take the form of verbal or physical abuse, but it can also take the form of derogatory comments on social media or about content shared by classmates (Ismatulloh et al., 2025). Several students at SD Negeri 13 Pekanbaru were seen to have been influenced after uploading TikTok videos and imitating the harsh words from the live broadcast of the match they watched. Students often discuss bullying videos that go viral on TikTok and become the subject of ridicule in class.

That shows how social media encourages students to communicate in aggressive, insensitive ways. The types of bullying that occur at SDN 13 Pekanbaru include mocking peers in TikTok video comments, sharing videos with offensive content, and ostracizing students who are not trendy. In one example, a student was labeled "alay" by his friends because his video was considered unfunny. This is reflected in classroom jokes, which caused the child to withdraw and hesitate to interact with others. Therefore, it is important to understand how social media affects children's behavioral development. Unfortunately, there is currently no research examining in detail how the social behavior of elementary school students is actually influenced by this rapidly growing, viral TikTok content.

Previous studies have shown that excessive use of social media can reinforce hostile communication styles that lead to cyberbullying (Manurung et al., 2025; Oktari et al., 2025). Specifically, there have been few studies examining the relationship between TikTok use and the prevalence of bullying in the surrounding environment. This study aims to examine how bullying behavior among upper-grade students at SDN 13 Pekanbaru is influenced by social media use, particularly TikTok. The results of this study are expected to serve as a guide for parents and educators in directing children's positive and healthy use of social media. In elementary schools, this study is expected to serve as a basis for developing digital literacy initiatives and bullying prevention plans. This study is expected to provide valuable insights into the impact of social media use on bullying among elementary school students. It can serve as a reference for developing bullying prevention strategies in schools.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Social Media

Social media is a form of innovation in communication technology that relies on the internet as its primary means. The development of the internet since the 1970s has laid the foundation for the emergence of

various forms of social media. In 1978, the first form of social media, the Bulletin Board System (BBS), was introduced, allowing users to share announcements and exchange information over the network. BBS is considered the pioneer of the first virtual community formation in digital history. Then, in 1979, the emergence of the UserNet became the initial gateway for people to communicate online through articles, newsletters, and discussion forums. In 1995, as the World Wide Web was becoming widely used, people were encouraged to create personal website pages to represent their identity in cyberspace.

Social media is a means of conveying messages that refer to the form of interaction between individuals and their surroundings. Thus, social media can be seen as a means of communication that individuals use to establish relationships and interact with others. Social media is a form of digital content that contains information and is created by individuals through internet-based publishing technology, which is easily accessible and used to support communication, build influence, and establish relationships with fellow users or the general public. Based on the above description, it can be concluded that social media is a communication tool that allows individuals to interact and build social relationships. Social media is an activity of interaction between individuals and their environment.

Over time, the function of social media has evolved into a strategic tool in the business world, used to promote products, strengthen branding, and build closer relationships with consumers. Therefore, social media plays two key roles: as a means of communication and as a marketing tool. The use of social media has a significant impact on the behavior of elementary school students, both positive and negative, as evidenced by several observed phenomena (Sya'ro & Dewi, 2022). Students tend to imitate the language and behavior of the content they consume, and uncontrolled use of the TikTok application can lead to bullying in the classroom. Students' use of social media needs to be limited to help them become smart users. Supervision and guidance from adults, especially parents, are essential so that social media is not misused and can become an effective learning medium. If parents ignore their children's social media use, social media is more likely to influence children's behavior and character negatively.

TikTok

TikTok is a short-video app loved by people of all ages and backgrounds. Through this app, users can explore various video content, create creative visual works, and interact directly with other users through the available live broadcast features. TikTok's primary goal is to provide its users with engaging, enjoyable entertainment. The app also provides a variety of unique visual effects that are easy to use, allowing users to generate engaging short videos that can be shared with friends or other audiences (Anggraini et al., 2024). TikTok is a digital platform that gives users access to a variety of short videos with diverse expressions from creators. Not only that, but users can also recreate or modify videos that have been created by other users, including adding trending popular music.

Currently, many businesses use TikTok to introduce and market their products to a broader audience (Hasiholan et al., 2020). Based on the description above, TikTok is a short-video app that is very popular among people from various walks of life. The app allows its users to explore, create, and share content creatively. Through its live broadcast features and attractive visual effects, TikTok serves as a platform for entertainment and self-expression. In addition to watching and recreating videos from other users, users can also add up-to-date music to their creations. Not only that, but TikTok is also used by businesses as an effective promotional tool, making it an innovative communication and marketing medium.

Overall, TikTok encourages its users to express themselves and grow as content creators in the digital age. There are several benefits to using social media platforms such as TikTok to encourage student creativity and learning. Through this application, students can experiment with concepts, produce learning materials, and feel confident when their videos are liked by others (Erwana et al., 2025). Studies show that TikTok can help students become more creative and professional communicators by allowing them to

create short videos (Manurung et al., 2025). However, when control and consumption are combined, the media completely transforms into a tool for oppression, self-comparison, and the establishment of a new social order among children.

Behaviour

Behavior is a series of human instincts that arise in response to circumstances and manifest in systematically structured actions (Tefa & Mahendra, 2022). Explains that behavior is a person's reaction or response to stimuli or influences received from outside. From the above statements, it can be concluded that behavior is an individual's response to the environment, influenced by instincts and stimuli. Behavior is the result of a stimulus that triggers a reaction or response. Thus, human behavior can be seen as a complex interaction between internal (instinctive) and external (stimulus) factors.

Bullying

The word "bullying" comes from the English term bull, which refers to a bull—an animal known for its temperament and tendency to attack other creatures in its vicinity. The similarities between bullying and bull characters lie in aggressive behavior and endangering the other party. Bullying is a form of action when an individual or group of people uses their influence, power, or authority to hurt, oppress, or harm others. This action can occur in the form of physical violence as well as mental or emotional distress. In Indonesian, the term bullying is often interpreted as "menyakat", which comes from the root word "sakat", which is behavior that reflects an attitude of harassing, mocking, or inhibiting someone in doing something. The person who performs this act is referred to as "pekaka" (Listiani et al., 2024). Bullying is an act of hurting or hurting that is done repeatedly, both physically and mentally.

Many factors can trigger this behavior, such as disharmonious family relationships, exposure to non-educational events, and a less supportive social environment for children's emotional development. In addition, the lack of understanding from educators about how to effectively handle bullying cases in the school environment also worsens the situation that occurs. In addition, bullying can be caused by interactions in the virtual world or cyberbullying through negative comments made secretly and sometimes unconsciously. This can cause emotional distress, low self-esteem, and even social trauma in children. Bullying on social media often manifests itself in real life, such as teasing classmates or ostracizing children who are considered unusual (Oktari et al., 2025).

Verbal bullying at SDN 13 Pekanbaru was observed in the form of insulting comments on classmates' TikTok videos. Students who were deliberately excluded from social circles because they were considered "uncool" were subjected to a form of social exclusion based on digital content. Often, students imitate violent content and practice it in the classroom, causing concern. Students who experience bullying will be reluctant to learn, resulting in poor academic performance (Ismatulloh et al., 2025). Despite its shortcomings, social media is not entirely dangerous if used wisely and appropriately. Social media can be a creative and inventive learning tool, as long as teachers and students make good use of its capabilities. Other interesting teaching methods include moral values campaigns, short videos on the subject, and basic tutorials. Students can learn while having fun with TikTok, a platform that uses short videos, which increases their engagement in educational activities (Manurung et al., 2025).

METHODS

This study uses a descriptive quantitative research method. The research was conducted at SD Negeri 13 Pekanbaru, which is located on Jl. Cempaka No. 01, Karam Island Village, Sukajadi District, Pekanbaru

City, Riau Province. The study's subjects were students in grades IV, V, and VI. This study aims to determine the influence of social media, particularly TikTok, on bullying among elementary school students. This research focuses on the types of bullying, their causes, and their impact on victims. This research stage includes determining the population and sample, developing research instruments (questionnaires), distributing the questionnaires to the research sample, collecting data, analyzing the data using statistical methods, and drawing conclusions based on the analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of the study on students' experiences of bullying, shown in **Figure 1**, indicate that many students face bad behavior from their peers. Therefore, parents and teachers need to provide appropriate guidance to their children. The majority of students admit that their friends often encourage them, so educators need to teach them about attitudes in friendship frequently. Based on interviews with students about their experiences, some students have been spat on, pushed, and teased by their friends.

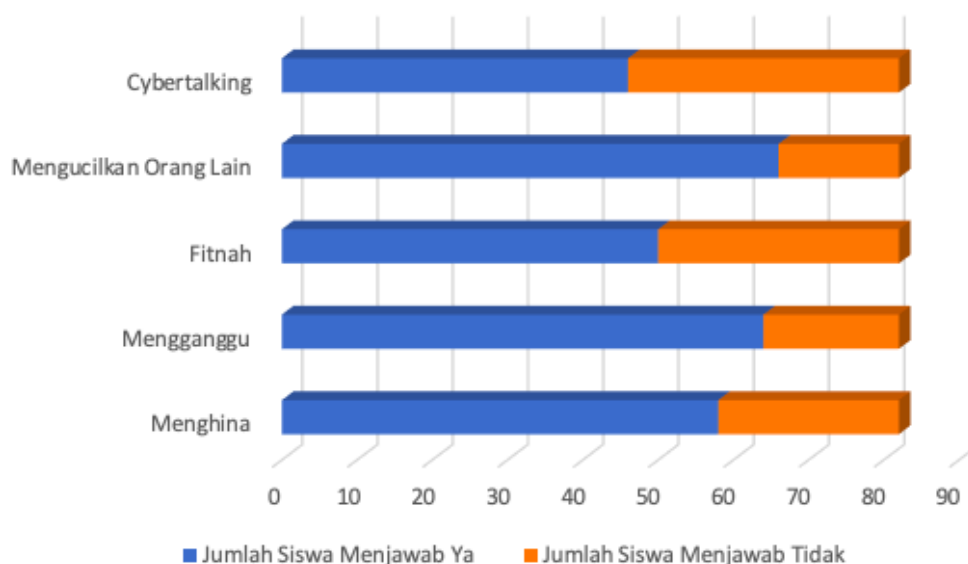


Figure 1. Bullying behavior that occurs in the respondent's environment
Source: Research Data, 2025

Furthermore, **Figure 1** shows that 45% of students have teased their peers, so teachers need to be more vigilant about this behavior and immediately correct students if they report it. In fact, the majority of students have experienced incidents where they were approached by other students asking for money. In this case, students must be more courageous and fight back by informing teachers. In addition, 20% of respondents said that their classmates had bullied them, and 8% of students admitted to threatening other students. Therefore, students like this need supervision and guidance from their parents and teachers. Furthermore, most students admitted to having been in embarrassing situations with other students, such as being called offensive names. Therefore, other students must have the courage to inform teachers about children involved in such behavior so that appropriate action can be taken.

Meanwhile, the research findings also revealed several online media platforms that students often access and use. This kind of social network is too open and risky for children, as they meet strangers without really understanding their personalities. Web video is another type of media that students often access. The majority of viewers are children who often imitate what they see. Therefore, videos with offensive content have a negative impact (Adnan & Istiqomah, 2022; Alqahtani et al., 2023). Not only do online videos often contain offensive language, but viewers of those videos also often use abusive language in

their comments. If children are exposed to abusive language frequently, bullying can occur online.

Players who use foul language and threaten other players in online games with communication buttons also create the possibility of online bullying. In addition, online gaming is a community or group, which makes prejudice a real possibility (Cary & Chasteen, 2022). Young people often leak personal information, including names, addresses, ages, and other details, when playing online games. FreeFire, Mobile Legend, and PlayerUnknown's Battlegrounds are some of the online games that often experience cyberbullying, according to student interviews. The game belongs to the friendship genre, which binds participants from all over the world. Therefore, children must be taught how to play safe and appropriate online games to protect them from cyberbullying. The findings of this study suggest that bullying among elementary school students can be influenced by the use of social media. In this era, social media users are not only adults. Children are also using platforms like TikTok, which features video content. The use of TikTok for children, especially elementary school students, can have both positive and negative impacts (Maulidiniyah & Ain, 2024).

People can interact and communicate online. However, the anonymity and independence of social media platforms like TikTok can also lead to the spread of offensive, harassing, or intimidating content. Sometimes TikTok can replace in-person social engagement. Children in primary school may not develop their social skills and confidence if they are not allowed to engage directly with their peers. Self-esteem values may be important in this regard. Students with good self-esteem are better able to handle social pressures, recognize their own values, and develop effective social skills (Tazkia & Darmiyanti, 2024). This can support them in dealing with and overcoming bullying incidents that may occur on social media platforms like TikTok. Although children's self-esteem is also affected by bullying, the impact discussed is the impact of bullying in general.

The results of this study on the influence of bullying on student confidence show that bullying can have a negative impact on victims because the perpetrator influences the victim. Victims of bullying experience a decrease in confidence. On the other hand, if the victim of bullying at school receives good support, bullying will have a positive impact on the victim. By accepting oneself and being a good person, the victim's confidence will grow. The statement that oppression cannot be resisted with oppression aligns with Sejiwa's statement in the book *"Bullying: Mengatasi kekerasan di sekolah dan lingkungan sekitar anak"*. If your child hits another child, do not let him retaliate, as this will only lead to conflict later. At least children are taught to avoid violence, so we can encourage them to learn martial arts.

When someone is verbally bullied, they may experience feelings of inferiority, embarrassment, and discomfort at school. The oppression that occurs without words includes fighting, tearing books, kicking, beating, and pulling the hijab. Anxiety at school, physical discomfort, difficulty focusing, and unwillingness to attend are consequences of nonverbal bullying. Relationship suppression is characterized by neglect and exclusion. Being alone, feeling like no one is helping, and not wanting to play with friends are the effects of relational bullying. Bullying affects the victim's confidence by causing them to lose confidence (Merdika et al., 2024). Victims who lack social skills, lack confidence in their talents, and are not involved in the classroom are examples. However, some victims also reported feeling more confident. Being involved in class, confident in their skills, and being friendly with friends are examples. Social circumstances influence self-confidence, but it can also be enhanced by personal internal factors such as friends and teachers at school (Sestiani et al., 2022).

Personal external factors, such as parents teaching their children to be disciplined, cooperative, communicative, respectful of others, trusting, open, caring, and encouraging family, friends, and others, will improve a person's personality and increase their self-esteem (Setiawati & Hidayat, 2020). One of the main elements that can affect how bullying behavior develops in children is family dynamics. One of the factors that also affects the possibility of bullying behavior in students is family. Elements of home background that affect student confidence and bullying behavior in individuals (Al Ali et al., 2025). Parents

often do not know whether their children are being bullied online. As a result, parents need to be able to recognize the warning signs that their child has been a victim of cyberbullying. Family factors include a small family structure, a liberal parenting style with few rules, limited behavioral expectations, and a rigid, inflexible emotional environment without warm affection and shared attention. Show the community families their indifference to community life and their lack of participation in community events; disagreements and disagreements of parents in the family; the use of discipline, in which parents refuse to incentivize and reward violent behavior. Parents who practice authoritarian parenting aim to build families with strict and uniform standards by using control and punishment as a form of harsh discipline (Muspita et al., 2017).

Based on the findings of the investigation into how social media platforms like TikTok affect bullying behavior, it can be said that bullying occurs both physically and verbally. Victims of bullying will lose confidence as a result of bullying behavior, which will also impact all aspects of their social life. Victims of bullying can try to improve their self-esteem by focusing on their social environment, specifically social support. The confidence of bullying victims can be affected by social support. Victims of bullying have more confidence when they have more social support. At the same time, the victim's confidence declines as social support decreases. As a form of repetitive thinking and behavior, bullying has a negative impact, especially on students' self-esteem. Long-term impacts on the emotional and mental health of the victim can occur as a result of this. Some of the psychological impacts that bullying often has on students' self-esteem include low self-esteem, stress and anxiety, depression, social isolation, and poor academic performance and concentration.

As a result of bullying, students may have very low self-esteem, feel worthless, and underestimate their own skills and values. Victims of bullying also often suffer from high levels of stress and anxiety, feeling anxious and anxious about what to think or consider next. People who suffer from depression often experience severe mood swings, sadness, and loss of interest in daily activities. Victims of bullying also often face social isolation; It is challenging to build positive social relationships, which can be detrimental to the development of social skills and confidence in social situations. In addition, the consequences of bullying can interfere with a child's ability to concentrate and focus in class, thereby lowering academic achievement and, in turn, affecting students' confidence and self-perception of their skills.

Complex and beneficial interactions between these psychological effects are possible. The low self-esteem associated with bullying can reduce psychological symptoms, including anxiety and depression. To help victims regain their confidence and improve their psychological health, it is essential to take bullying seriously and offer them emotional support and safety. Teachers and parents can implement strategies to address how social media and technology affect bullying among elementary school students and their confidence and character values. First and foremost, educate and raise awareness among educators, parents, and children about the negative impact of social media platforms such as TikTok and the risks of bullying (Drakatos et al., 2023). Through these instructions, they can better understand the dangers of social media and how it can affect students' self-esteem. Workshops and awareness campaigns can also help them better understand bullying and offer helpful coping mechanisms.

Second, for students to fight bullying and develop confidence, they must also have strong emotional and social skills (González-Moreno & Del Mar Molero Jurado, 2025). Social and emotional training programs that support confidence, communication, problem-solving, and emotional control can be implemented in schools. Students will feel more resilient and prepared to deal with bullying situations as a result. Third, parents should monitor their children's internet activities and participate in them (Pons-Salvador et al., 2022). Children can be protected from inappropriate exposure and given guidance on using social media responsibly. Young people's confidence can be maintained by listening to their social media experiences, paying attention to their concerns, and providing them with the proper guidance.

Fourth, schools need to foster a safe, responsive climate in which bullying is not tolerated (Seong, 2024).

There should be an actively implemented and promoted mechanism for reporting and managing bullying incidents. To support and guide students who are bullied, educators and other school personnel need to be trained to recognize warning signs. Student confidence can be strengthened through constructive activities, such as anti-bullying initiatives, incentives for good behavior, and the creation of an inclusive atmosphere. Fifth, the use of social media must be limited (Ademiluyi et al., 2022). Social media use, such as TikTok, can be regulated by parents, who can also monitor the content their children consume. A healthy combination of online and offline activities will support strong character development and confidence.

Finally, it is essential to work with groups and communities in the surrounding environment that care about bullying and student well-being (Fauzan & Sulaeman, 2024). Psychologists, mental health professionals, and others can work with schools to help with bullying prevention initiatives. All stakeholders, including teachers, parents, and students, must be involved in addressing the issue of bullying and the adverse impact of social media and technology on bullying behavior. We can reduce the adverse impact of social media and technology on bullying behavior and help children build confidence and character values by working together and fostering a positive learning environment. Previous research has shown that TikTok social media use can influence the behavior of elementary school-aged children. This study employed data analysis methods with a literature review technique (Sofyan & Kurniawan, 2021).

Thus, these studies can serve as a reference for a more in-depth analysis of the impact of social media use, such as TikTok, on bullying behavior among elementary school students. Other research shows that the impact of social media technology on bullying behavior can reduce the self-confidence of victim students and can hinder the development of social skills and all aspects of students' personal lives (Ananda & Marno, 2023). The existence of social media such as TikTok has both positive and negative effects. Watching short videos can shape students' behavior in bullying their peers. Behavior is defined as a person's reaction or response to external stimuli or influences. Bullying is a serious problem that must be addressed, as it can damage the mental health of victims and destroy their self-confidence. Bullying can take the form of physical violence or mental or emotional pressure (Lusiana & Arifin, 2022).

CONCLUSION

Based on research and analysis of how technology, specifically TikTok, affects bullying behavior through social media, in relation to elementary school students' self-confidence values, the researcher found that social media use negatively impacts these values. There is a correlation between children's exposure to cyberbullying and their decreased self-confidence. TikTok, as a social media platform, can be a place where students are exposed to bullying, enlightenment, and unpleasant comments from peers. Research shows that factors beyond social media use significantly influence students' self-confidence. Examples of elements that may have a greater influence on a student's confidence include social relationships outside of social media, family support, and educational environment. These results suggest that social media can serve as a forum for students to develop and demonstrate their confidence. Positive relationships on social media can help them gain support, recognition, and admiration from peers. Future research may consider several factors to improve the quality and relevance of research on the impact of social media use on bullying among elementary school students. First, research can use more comprehensive methods, such as mixed-methods (quantitative and qualitative), to obtain more accurate and in-depth data. Second, research can consider other factors that can influence bullying behavior, such as the role of parents, teachers, and the school environment. Thus, the research can provide a more complete picture of bullying among elementary school students. Future research may also develop effective prevention and intervention strategies to reduce bullying among elementary school students. Research can work with schools and related institutions to develop programs that can increase students' awareness and skills in using social media positively. In addition, research could develop assessment tools to detect bullying

among elementary school students. Thus, research can make a significant contribution to reducing bullying behavior and improving the quality of life of elementary school students.

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