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ANTI-BULLYING AMBASSADOR PROGRAM FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN PALEMBANG TO REALIZE 'ASTA CITA OF THE PRABOWO GIBRAN ADMINISTRATION'

PROGRAMA DE EMBAIXADORES ANTI-BULLYING PARA ESTUDANTES DO ENSINO MÉDIO EM PALEMBANG PARA REALIZAR A "ASTA CITA DA ADMINISTRAÇÃO DE PRABOWO GIBRAN"

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Abstract
Children's rights are threatened by school bullying, which also affects their mental health and academic success. Existing laws have not been so effective about protecting children from bullying. This is a study of the legal protection of children from the bullying of the "Anti-Bullying Ambassador Selection" program in the City of Palembang using both normative and empirical approaches. The first approach is normative analysis, which reviews the Indonesian legal framework, particularly in Law No. 35 of 2014, on Child Protection. It also examines Permendikbud No. 82 of 2015, which mandate schools to prevent violence and ensure safe learning environments. This empirical study has a survey sample of 385 students from 19 participating program schools. High awareness of bullying is already seen (99.5%), yet a prevalence of verbal (91.4%) and social bullying (53.2%). Students report significant psychological effects but also testify strong trust on peer-led interventions, with 91.7% willing to rely on ambassadors. Additionally, economic-wise, the program could contribute positively to the country. Findings confirm that peer-based initiatives complement existing regulations, institutionalize participation, and align with the Asta Cita vision for a safe and inclusive educational environment.

Resumo
Os direitos das crianças estão ameaçados pelo bullying escolar, que também afeta sua saúde mental e sucesso acadêmico. As leis existentes não têm sido tão eficazes na proteção das crianças contra o bullying. Este é um estudo sobre a proteção legal das crianças contra o bullying do programa "Seleção de Embaixadores Anti-Bullying" na cidade de Palembang, utilizando abordagens normativas e empíricas. A primeira abordagem é a análise normativa, que analisa o quadro jurídico indonésio, particularmente a Lei n.º 35 de 2014, sobre a Proteção da Criança. Também examina o Permendikbud n.º 82 de 2015, que obriga as escolas a prevenir a violência e a garantir ambientes de aprendizagem seguros. Este estudo empírico tem uma amostra de 385 alunos de 19 escolas participantes no programa. Já se observa uma alta conscientização sobre o bullying (99,5%), mas ainda há prevalência de bullying verbal (91,4%) e social (53,2%). Os alunos relatam efeitos psicológicos significativos, mas também demonstram forte confiança nas intervenções lideradas por colegas, com 91,7% dispostos a confiar nos embaixadores. Além disso, do ponto de vista econômico, o programa poderia contribuir positivamente para o país. As conclusões confirmam que as iniciativas baseadas em colegas complementam os regulamentos existentes, institucionalizam a participação e se

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alinham com a visão da Asta Cita para um ambiente educacional seguro e inclusivo.

Palavras-chave: *Proteção à Criança. Bullying. Embaixador Anti-Bullying. Lei da Educação. Asta Cita.*

1 INTRODUCTION

Bullying behavior in school environments remains one of the most serious situations in the world today, including Indonesia, because of its harmful impact on students' mental health, academic achievement, and ultimately their overall well-being. The Law on Child Protection (No: Law No. 35/2014), which amended Law No. 23/2002, and specifically the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture No. 82 of 2015, which highlight a zero-tolerance approach towards bullying, constitute legal protection for children in Indonesia. In this context, the "Anti-Bullying Ambassador Selection" program held in 2025 in Palembang City by STIHPADA is an innovative way to engage students in efforts to prevent bullying by involving 19 schools including SMAN 3 PLG, SMAN 4 PLG, SMAN 6 PLG, SMAN 8 PLG, SMAN 9 PLG, SMAN 12 PLG, SMAN 13 PLG, SMAN 14 PLG, SMAN 15 PLG, SMAN 18 PLG, SMAN 19 PLG, SMAN 20 PLG, SMAN 21 PLG, SMAN 22 PLG, Sriwijaya State Sports School Palembang, SMKN 1 PLG, SMAN 1 BANYUASIN, SMA Methodist 1 PLG, and SMA Islam Terpadu Raudhatul Ulum Sakatiga. The purpose of this research is to analyze child legal protection through a normative approach according to the applicable regulations and an empirical approach using survey data, whose gender proportions, awareness of bullying, types of bullying, psychological effects, reporting mechanisms, supports for anti-bully programs, and perceptions about the effectiveness of the existing policy are all covered by the survey, as well as discussing its economic implication. This research aims to discover how the program can be integrated into national legal frameworks and the best practices internationally towards developing a safe yet sustainable educational environment with the backdrop of Asta Cita, which upholds local wisdom values in education. Thus, this research is not limited to the Palembang relevance but also serves as an example to other areas within Indonesia, as shown by a wealth of literature such as systematic study on

nursing interventions (Yosep et al., 2022) and bibliometric analysis of global trends (Ishak et al., 2023).

2 METHOD

This study combines two methodologies: the normative and the empirical for a full analysis of child legal protection under the 'Anti-Bullying Ambassador Selection' program in Palembang City High Schools. This normative approach involves reviewing relevant laws and regulations, including Law No. 35 of 2014 on Child Protection and Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture No. 82 of 2015, and policies at the local level on preventing bullying in schools. The aim of this legal analysis is to map out the obligations school must comply with in creating safe environments and reporting mechanisms that fall under the national standards. The empirical approach is through data collection and analysis of a survey involving 385 students from among the 19 schools which are associated with participation in the anti-bullying ambassador selection activity for 2025. The survey included demographic questions as well as inclusion of other categories such as awareness of bullying, type of bullying experienced or witnessed, psychological impacts, knowledge about reporting, support for anti-bullying programs, and perception of how effective policies are. Data were gathered through questionnaires distributed online and offline, with the results visualized in the form of pie charts showing the percentage of respondents for each category. The data analysis technique used a quantitative descriptive approach to identify patterns and trends. Data validity was strengthened by comparing the survey results with related literature, such as a scoping review of nursing interventions to reduce bullying incidents (Yosep et al., 2022). However, this excludes the geographic domain wherein such findings are applicable: Palembang is a small area; therefore, there could be some restrictions against generalization to other contexts, but this is a fairly reasonable and relevant start for comparative studies in the future. This period covers the July-September 2025 period during which data collection is carried out, with analysis completed by September 2025, meanwhile, this research is timed in accordance with the annual anti-bully activities. This method optimizes field studies being undertaken on healthy educational environments

(Gómez-Galán et al., 2021) so that the results of this research will be credible for use as evidence-based policies.

3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The discussion in this study integrates empirical findings from the survey with a normative legal framework, including the discussion of economic implications, to evaluate the effectiveness of the "Anti-Bullying Ambassador Selection" program in legal protection of children in high schools in Palembang City.

For the normative aspect, this is an analysis that delves into Indonesian legal frameworks and policies for child protection in schools. The crux of the matter is how the Asta Cita doctrine, expressing the government's ideals of national development, is a legal and philosophical basis for securing safe and protective school environments. The analysis touches upon bills, ministerial regulations, and legal considerations concerning schools preventing and responding to bullying. The aim is to declare the legal obligatory measures for school-related interventions such as the anti-bullying ambassador program as state obligations for protecting children's rights.

The Indonesian legal system offers a strong, if at many times disjointed, global protection for children. Child Protection law (Law No. 35 of 2014) is a crucial legal instrument that mandates the states, government, and people to protect children against coercion, exploitation, and abuse. The State has, therefore, recognized bullying in particular as violence that should be prevented and addressed according to the law. Further, the Ministry of Education and Culture Regulation (Permendikbud) No. 82 of 2015 provides more concrete grounds for schools to implement anti-violence policies, including anti-bullying. This regulation mandates schools to carry out violence management teams and establish a safe school environment. That said, the legal frame gives a clear command to educational institutions to stay active in damage prevention towards its learners.

A more detailed legal consideration shows that the responsibility of child protection duties goes beyond just prevention and punishment. The Indonesian legal framework seems to operate on a principle of parens patriae, in which the state is obliged to act as a guardian for those who cannot protect themselves, the latter especially means

children (Starky, 2025). Within that perspective, schools manifestly become an extension of the state executive, having an obligation under the law to provide and maintain a safe environment for the optimal development of the child. The provision, then, of a comprehensive anti-bullying policy must include a proactive approach as well as a reactive approach. That way, this anti-bullying ambassador program could be construed as leading to the fulfillment of the parens patriae obligation, a proactive measure enabling, through risk mitigation identification, the preventing of further escalation. This would proceed not only from the Child Protection Act, as earlier mentioned, but also from Article 28B Paragraph (2) of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, which speaks of the right of every child to survive, to grow, and develop, as well as to be protected from violence and discrimination.

Above all, in view of its legal character, the work of this student-led program can be theorized based on deliberative democracy, which involves affected bodies in decisions. Thus, by appointing students as anti-bullying ambassadors, schools not only satisfy the requirement of their duty but also empower students to engage in processes of governance that form the core of democratic education (Celdran-Navarro et al, 2023). This has resonance with Article 31 of the 1945 Constitution, which asserts the right of education and the duty of the state for providing and managing a national education system. Here, the state's duty would entail creating an educational environment in which students can be heard and their views respected regarding safety matters that concern them. The ambassador program, therefore, is not only a social program; from a legal and constitutional view, it is one necessary for executing the principles of child participation and protection, as stated in the national and international laws.

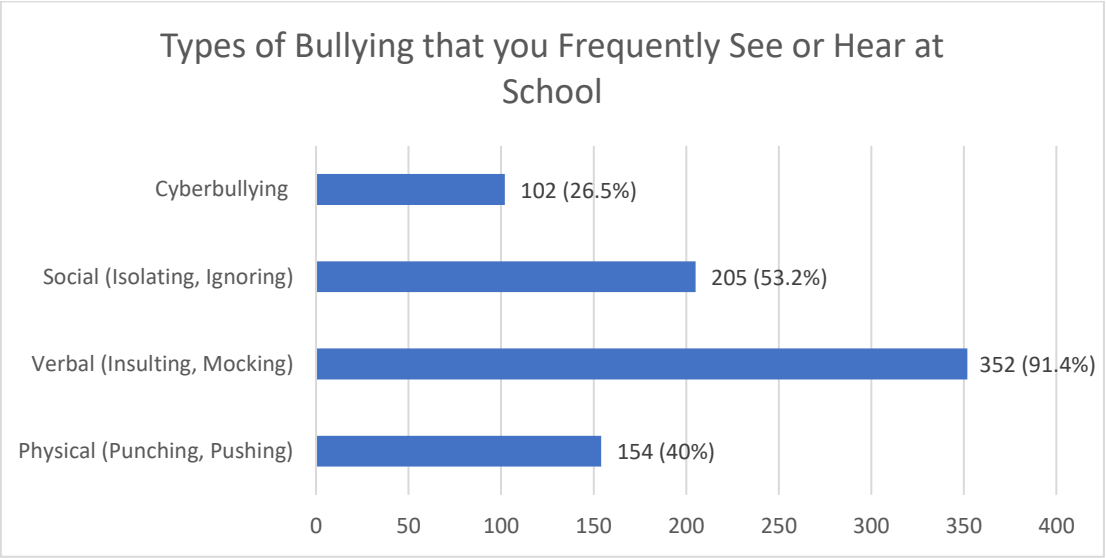
However, a critical aspect of this legal protection is its positioning within the Asta Cita framework, a national strategic vision that underlines the promotion of human dignity, social justice, and national unity. In this light, the protection of children is not a mere legal requirement but a moral and political imperative for the long-term growth of the nation. The Asta Cita vision of education is focused not only on an environment created for academic learning but also on making that environment for emotional and physical well-being. The launch of the student-led anti-bullying ambassador program supports this vision by enabling children to participate actively in their own protection. Thus, this shifts the paradigm from one solely centered on punitive measures toward more

preventive, educational approaches, in congruence with restorative justice and community empowerment as outlined in the Asta Cita doctrine (Jaskulska et al, 2022). In this sense, the program is an innovative way of helping fulfill the state's obligations under the Child Protection Act by engaging the community, in this case, the student community, to stand for children's rights. Yet, this acknowledgment is thickened by the other international conventions ratified by Indonesia whereby children shall, according to the CRC, express their views freely in all matters affecting them, views that should be given due weight. An anti-bullying ambassador program provides a formal channel to allow students to work out this right to a safer school environment.

Concerning empirical data, the demographics of the respondents show that 62.9% of respondents were females and 37.1% were males, with class distributions of 47.3% for Grade X, 27.8% for Grade XI, and 24.9% for Grade XII. This distribution seemed quite balanced in letting the researchers picture bullying experiences across school levels, with relatively younger Grade X members being more vulnerable perhaps due to their ongoing adaptation phase in high school. A high awareness rate of 99.5% for the respondents in the matter of bullying shows that past educational campaigns had borne fruit, but the 0.5% that had no understanding bring to light a need for a more inclusive approach especially for students from varying backgrounds (Ishak et al., 2023). The commonly experienced forms of bullying were stated to be verbal (91.4%) and social (53.2%), followed by physical (40%) and cyber (26.5%) as could be seen on the following figure.

Figure 1

Types of Bullying Frequently Encountered at School



The psychological effects of bullying are significant; 69.9% consider themselves to be victims and only 30.1% do not feel bullied. This high percentage of self-reported victimization concurs with several studies that link bullying with reduced academic achievement and health-related quality of life, where cognitive-motivational factors such as self-esteem have emerged as mediators (Samara et al., 2021). Support for the anti-bullying program was enthusiastic, with 54% of the respondents helped the victims, 37.4% reported the case to the teachers, 8.3% did nothing, and only 0.3% followed suit, which is a promising student acceptance that could be harnessed to promote other student-led initiatives (Dubey et al., 2022). Among respondents, 71.4% believed the program would be significantly effective, while 26.2% felt that the effect would be not substantial, and merely 2.4% thought that it would not be impactful; improvement efforts should be continuously supported by assessment and appropriate nursing interventions on which interventions have been proven (Celdrán-Navarro et al., 2023).

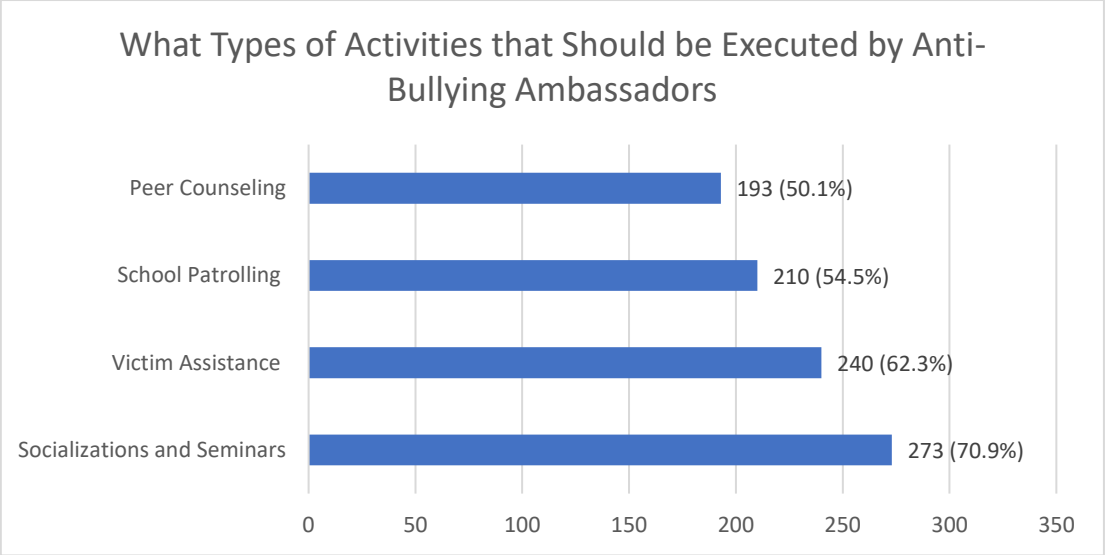
The belief that bullying is a serious problem was held by 75.1% of respondents, with 21.3% considering that the issue is mild, and the rest thinking it is not a pressing trouble, highlighting the need for urgency in such legal and social intervention implementation. Acceptance to join the program reached 56.9%, while 43.1% expressed refusal, showing both a great potential and a challenge for motivation of the minority group (Feijóo & Rodríguez-Fernández, 2021). Support for the implementation of policies

with a stricter purview was expressed by 94.3% of respondents; these views are demonstrative of the need for stronger law enforcement, and this could be supported by ambassador advocacy (Martínez-Martínez et al., 2021).

Proposed methods of prevention consist of socializations and seminars (70.9%), victim assistance (62.3%), school patrolling (54.5%), and peer counseling (50.1%), indicating a holistic strategy that would fit into ambassador programs (Jaskulska et al., 2022). The figure below depicts the aforementioned elaboration.

Figure 2

Types of Activities that Should be Executed by Anti-Bullying Ambassadors



Cyberbullying (26.5%) also necessitates training on digital literacy, as supported by recent evidence concerning online victimization prevention (Rusillo-Magdaleno et al., 2024). Output may support emotional intelligence training, which is related to victimization, and the ambassadors could highly benefit from it according to meta-analysis (Zhang & Chen, 2023). The scoping review asserts ambassadors may employ multi-stakeholder collaboration-including parents and counselors on this situation, especially since 75.1% consider bullying a serious problem (Yosep et al., 2022).

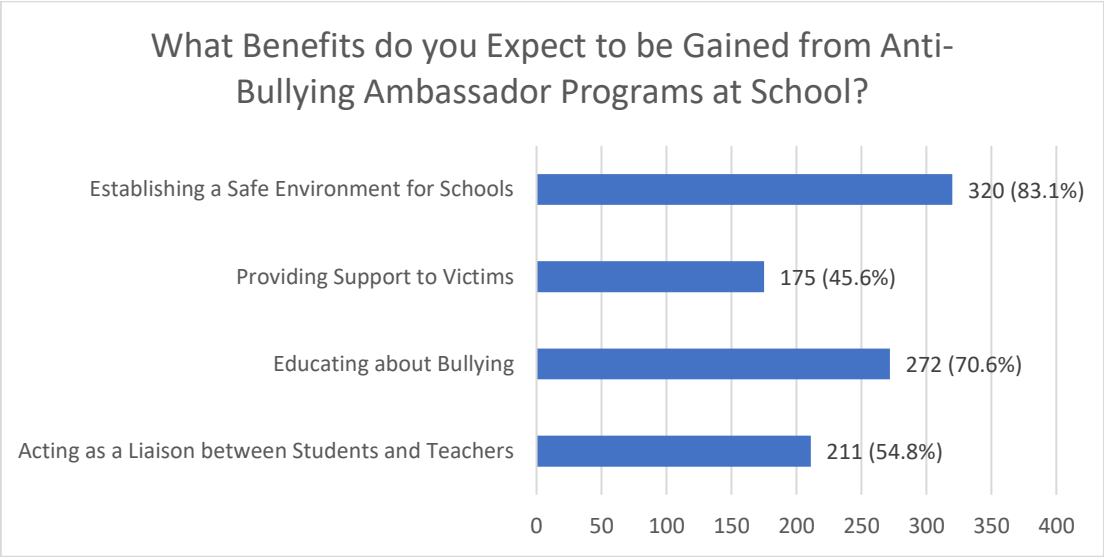
Furthermore, the surveyed students had strong opinions on the need for a peer-administered anti-bullying program, and a whopping 74.3% of them had knowledge about the concept of the program. The perceived need for an anti-bullying program was also

found to be outstandingly high among students, as 73.2% indicated it was "very necessary".

The students expressed a well-developed understanding of the objectives of the program. The most commonly anticipated benefit was the establishment of a safe environment for schools, mentioned by an astonishing 83.1% of respondents. This was followed by educating about bullying (70.6%), acting as a liaison between students and teachers (54.8%), and providing support to victims (45.5%). The pictorial representation of the explanation above could be found below.

Figure 3

Benefits Expected from Anti Bullying Ambassador Program at School



This shows that students see the program not only as something reactionary but one that is able to integrate and improve the climate of their schools.

A key finding in this study is that students show a high level of trust in peers to undertake the ambassador assignment. A total of 91.7% of the respondents expressed either "very high trust" (36.6%) or "enough trust" (55.1%) in their peers. Such trust between peers is an essential ingredient for the success of any intervention designed to be facilitated by peers since it indicates that students would feel comfortable approaching and discussing matters with an ambassador. The willingness to report to the ambassador is especially striking, with 88.6% of students indicating willingness to report any incidents to them.

From the economic point of view, this panacea to prevent bullying manifestations could reduce the dropout rates that would limit the number of adults that could grow the economy of the nation. The reason is the students that experience bullying might think that they would be better at home rather than studying, which causes their education to come to a halt, depriving them of the golden opportunity to thrive as an individual that could contribute positively to the country. If this were pervasive, the impact would be detrimental to Indonesia because there would be less productive and educated young generations to participate in the economy.

At the same time, the healthcare costs to treat the students that experience bullying could immensely rise. With Indonesia's economic condition that is in deficit, it could prevent the country to allocate the fund for some more constructive posts. As a result, this anti bullying ambassador program's impact would be twofold: maintain the number of productive young individuals that could contribute to the economy and minimize the healthcare costs to treat mentally ill students due to bullying.

The empirical evidence from this study thus serves to provide a valuable and potent validation of the normative legal case for a student-led anti-bullying ambassador program. The high levels of bullying reported by students, especially subtle and often unreported verbal bullying (91.4%), thus indicate a serious lack in applying existing legal standards to practical purposes. While laws such as the Child Protection Act (Law No. 35 of 2014) explicitly give a de jure obligation to schools to protect children from violence, the data now indicate that the de facto implementation of such laws through the conventional top-down approaches has not been entirely effective in resolving the envisaged problem in its entirety; hence, these findings call for the consideration of a more workable de facto option within the informal-end peer networks where most bullying takes place. The anti-bullying ambassador program should then be a mechanism addressing altruistically and through their peers the requirement of a de facto preventative capacitance towards imbibing the parens patrie force of the state within the field of an aspiration, the wish of protecting the children in their school life.

Survey results show convincingly that social desirability and sustainability aside, there exists equally compelling legal justification for such an initiative. Students feel empowered in their protection and thereby show a collective willingness to make concrete contributions towards their governance. This is not a reactive stance to a new policy but

an optimistic engagement in an approach to which they are really willing to lend their voices. Furthermore, the strong demand for formal, written policies spelling out the roles of the ambassadors (94.3%) signifies that students consider this program as a legitimate and institutionalized part of the school's legal and administrative framework rather than a temporary social initiative. This creates an unambiguous legal and policy framework for schools that would solidify the program such that it becomes viable and effective.

4 CONCLUSION

The above study has shown that "Anti-Bullying Ambassador Selection" programs put in place in Palembang City do not only serve as symbolic, but it is a major tool to narrow the gap between normative legal protection and empirical realities of bullying in schools. From the normative perspective, these laws prohibit violence against children. There exists, indeed, more or less a relatively strong legal framework for child protection in Indonesia through Law No. 35 of 2014 and Permendikbud No. 82 of 2015. The norm also rules that schools, as much as possible, implement preventive and responsive mechanisms whenever violence occurs against children. Nevertheless, according to the results from this research, there has been increasing evidence from schools about continuing incidents of bullying, which show that legal protection alone cannot be effective without active involvement from the student body itself. The parens patriae principle of the state, along with constitutional recognition about the right of each child to grow and develop free from violence, demands innovations to empower students themselves to act as protectors of their fellow classmates.

This proves even more apparent. High awareness regarding bullying (99.5%) among students shows that educational campaigns came to a head, but a survey of what kinds of bullying show a depth of verbal (91.4%) and social exclusion (53.2%) evidence that bullying remains primordial in peer contexts. Almost 70% of students would consider themselves victims, which shows strong correlation with international studies linking bullying with lowered wellbeing and academic outcomes. Nevertheless, there is a bright side to this dark picture: overwhelming student trust in peer ambassadors (91.7%) and their willingness to report cases to them (88.6%). This proves that the students considered

peer-driven measures to be more approachable and trustworthy from top-down mechanisms.

Economically speaking, the program could generate young individuals that could actively participate in the economy. Furthermore, the government budget could be slashed for healthcare costs that could potentially rise due to bullying cases among students. All in all, through this specific lens, the anti-bullying ambassador program would be effectual in the long term.

The ambassador program therefore serves not only as a legal impetus for the fulfillment of child protection obligations but also as a practical manifestation of deliberative democracy and Asta Cita values in the frame of empowerment of students-as-active-agents rather than passive recipients of policy which consequently makes the environment safe and participative, cooperative, and shares responsibility. Aside from that, the high support level for formalizing this program into school policy (94.3%) shows that students want this institutionalization for continuity and sustainability beyond one-off activities-the necessary step all the same follows restorative justice principles emphasizing prevention, healing, and empowerment along with, but not only, punishment.

Palembang experience, however, holds lessons for other areas in Indonesia. This program includes models designed on how legal protection, when harmonized with community-driven strategies, gives rise to resultant conditions where children's dignity and rights are preserved in education. Internationally, it brings forth the best practices in child participation and protection promoted in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which Indonesia has ratified. The study thus diplomatically ends with the assertion that the Anti-Bullying Ambassador program is a very relevant innovation strengthening further aspects not only of an already existing de jure legal framework but also forces it into student-led, de facto protective practices. Law, policy, and peer empowerment combined raise the bar for the program in resilience against bullying while paving the way for safer, more inclusive, and sustainable schools.

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Authors' Contribution

All authors contributed equally to the development of this article.

Data availability

All datasets relevant to this study's findings are fully available within the article.

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