



The Effectiveness of Using Molly Polly Learning Media on Students' Understanding of Bullying at a Public Islamic Junior High School in Madiun

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Abstract

Bullying is a serious problem in school environments that can hinder students' psychological, social, and academic development, while limited understanding of its forms and impacts often causes bullying behavior to be perceived as normal. One learning medium that can be used to address this issue is Molly Polly, an educational board game adapted from Monopoly and designed to promote cooperation and critical thinking. This study aims to examine the effectiveness of Molly Polly learning media in improving students' understanding of bullying at a public Islamic junior high school in Madiun. The study employed an experimental method using a pre-test-post-test control group design involving two eighth-grade classes with relatively equivalent academic characteristics, selected from the same population, with a total sample of 62 students. Data were collected using a validated 20-item multiple-choice test. The results showed a significant difference between the experimental and control groups, with mean post-test scores of 86.13 and 76.77, respectively. The Mann-Whitney U test indicated a significance value of 0.002 (< 0.05). These findings demonstrate that Molly Polly learning media is effective in enhancing students' understanding of bullying and can serve as an alternative interactive learning medium for bullying prevention in schools.

INTRODUCTION

Education is essentially a human endeavor to humanize individuals, namely to cultivate learners who are able to uphold and respect humanitarian values in their personal and social lives (Sarkawi, 2020). In practice, education is implemented through schools

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as formal institutions aimed at developing students' knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, and character (Mariani et al., 2024). In the Indonesian context, the government has actively promoted the 12-Year Compulsory Education Program as an effort to produce a generation that is not only academically educated but also possesses strong moral character and quality (Iis Margiyanti & Siti Tiara Maulia, 2023).

Nevertheless, the educational process in schools is inseparable from various developmental problems experienced by students, one of which is bullying behavior (Nurlia & Partini, 2020). From the perspective of Islamic guidance and counseling, bullying constitutes a serious issue that is directly related to the core functions of guidance and counseling services, particularly in assisting students to understand and practice social behaviors aligned with Islamic values, such as mutual respect, empathy, and avoidance of unjust actions toward others. Therefore, bullying should be positioned as one of the primary concerns of guidance and counseling services in Islamic Junior High Schools (Madrasah Tsanawiyah/MTs).

According to the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (2020), bullying is a form of physical and psychological violence carried out over a long period of time by an individual or group against someone who is unable to fight back. (Arliman S, 2018) According to Rigby (2009), bullying is a desire to hurt others, manifested in direct actions by a person or group of people who are stronger and irresponsible (Nur et al., 2022). Usually this behavior is repeated with the aim of making the target of bullying suffer. According to Olweus (2005), bullying is defined as negative behavior that causes someone to feel uncomfortable or hurt, and usually occurs repeatedly (Sofyan, 2019). Meanwhile, according to Sujiwa (2011), bullying is a situation where physical or mental abuse of power and authority is carried out by an individual or group, and in this situation, the victim is unable to defend or protect themselves (Agisyaputri et al., 2023).

At the Islamic Junior High Schools, students are in the early stage of adolescence, which is characterized by emotional and social instability. During this phase, bullying behavior frequently occurs, largely due to students' limited understanding of the concept of bullying, its various forms, and its negative impacts, both on victims, perpetrators, and the school environment (Dian Anggraini Supa'at Putri, 2024). Behaviors that are initially perceived as jokes or trivial acts often develop into repeated bullying if they are not addressed appropriately through systematic guidance and counseling services.

Data from the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI) indicate that between 2011 and 2023, there were 3,800 reported cases of bullying in educational settings, with the number continuing to increase annually (KPAI, 2025). This condition highlights that bullying remains a persistent issue that has not been optimally addressed. The government has emphasized the importance of protecting students through the Child Protection Law, which mandates that every educational institution provide protection against physical and psychological violence (UUD, 2025; (Yusuf, 2025). However, in practice, the implementation of bullying prevention efforts in schools particularly through guidance and counseling services still faces various challenges.

One of the major challenges in school guidance and counseling services is the

limited availability of effective and engaging learning media to enhance students' understanding of bullying. Previous studies indicate that bullying prevention efforts are commonly conducted through lectures, counseling sessions, or conventional media, which tend to be less interactive and insufficient in fostering deep understanding among students. Moreover, many existing media have not been specifically developed within the framework of Islamic guidance and counseling or tailored to the developmental characteristics of students in Islamic Junior High Schools (Sjögren et al., 2025).

Based on these conditions, innovation in learning media for Islamic guidance and counseling services is urgently needed to improve students' understanding of bullying in an active, enjoyable, and meaningful manner. One such medium is Molly Polly, a board game-based learning medium adapted from the Monopoly game and modified to align with guidance and counseling objectives. This medium is designed to encourage interpersonal interaction, behavioral repetition, and conceptual understanding of bullying among students (Galaresa, 2022; Rizki Nur Aisah et al., 2024).

The use of game-based media such as Molly Polly is considered relevant in Islamic guidance and counseling services because it creates a positive and engaging learning atmosphere, increases student participation, and fosters empathy, social awareness, and the internalization of Islamic values in social interactions (Junalia, 2022; Makkatenni et al., 2023). Through gameplay experiences, students are expected not only to cognitively understand the concept of bullying but also to reflect on and apply appropriate social behaviors in their daily lives.

Therefore, this study aims to examine the effectiveness of the Molly Polly learning media in improving students' understanding of bullying within the context of Islamic guidance and counseling services at Islamic Junior High Schools, as well as to identify students' responses to the use of this media. The findings of this study are expected to provide theoretical contributions to the development of learning media studies in Islamic guidance and counseling and practical contributions by offering an innovative and applicable alternative medium for guidance and counseling services in preventing bullying in Islamic Junior High Schools.

METHOD

This study employed a quantitative approach with an experimental design, as the data obtained were numerical and analyzed using statistical techniques to test the research hypotheses (Karimudin, 2019). The use of an experimental design was intended to examine the effectiveness of the Molly Polly learning media in improving students' understanding of bullying.

The research adopted an experimental research method, which is defined as a method used to investigate the effect of a treatment on a dependent variable under controlled conditions (Sugiyono, 2013). In this study, the treatment was the use of the Molly Polly learning media, while the dependent variable was students' understanding of bullying.

The research design applied was a True Experimental Design, specifically the Pre-Test–Post-Test Control Group Design. This design involved two groups: an experimental group and a control group. Both groups were administered a pre-test to measure students’ initial understanding of bullying prior to the treatment. Subsequently, the experimental group received instruction using the Molly Polly learning media, while the control group received conventional learning. After the treatment phase, a post-test was administered to both groups to examine differences in students’ understanding following the different instructional approaches (Sugiyono, 2013).

The participants of this study were eighth-grade students at State Islamic Junior High School 4 Madiun. A random sampling technique was employed to select participants from the population. The selected students were then randomly assigned to two groups: the experimental group and the control group. This random assignment ensured that each participant had an equal opportunity to be included in either group and helped minimize potential bias.

Tabel 1. Research Design

Class	Pre-Test	Treatment	Post-Test
Experimental	O ₁	X	O ₂
Control	O ₁	-	O ₂

The variables in this study consisted of:

Independent variable (X): the Molly Polly learning media.

Dependent variable (Y): students’ understanding of bullying.

Data analysis was conducted in a systematic and sequential manner. First, descriptive statistical analysis was performed to describe the pre-test and post-test results of both groups. Second, assumption tests were carried out, including tests of normality and homogeneity, to ensure that the data met the requirements for inferential analysis. Third, inferential statistical analysis was conducted to determine whether there were significant differences in students’ understanding of bullying between the experimental and control groups after the treatment. The results of the data analysis were used to draw conclusions regarding the effectiveness of the Molly Polly learning media in improving students’ understanding of bullying.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The discussion of the research findings is based on the analysis of pre-test and post-test data, which aimed to examine differences in students’ understanding of bullying between the experimental group and the control group, as well as to evaluate the effectiveness of the Molly Polly learning media. The analysis was conducted in a sequential manner to ensure the equivalence of students’ initial abilities and to assess the impact of the treatment provided.

Based on the results of the Mann–Whitney U test at the pre-test stage, the Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) value was 0.741, which is greater than the significance level of 0.05. This finding indicates that there was no statistically significant difference in students’

understanding of bullying between the experimental group and the control group prior to the treatment. These results suggest that the initial levels of students' understanding in both groups were relatively equivalent. Such equivalence is a crucial prerequisite in experimental research, as it ensures that any differences observed at later stages can be attributed to the treatment rather than to pre-existing differences among participants.

Tabel 2. Hypothesis Testing in Pre-Test

Test Statistics^a	
	Pre-Test Score
Mann-Whitney U	457.500
Wilcoxon W	953.500
Z	-.330
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.741
a. Grouping Variable: KELAS	

Tabel 3. Hypothesis Testing in Post-Test

Test Statistics^a	
	Post-Test Score
Mann-Whitney U	262.000
Wilcoxon W	758.000
Z	-3.149
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.002
a. Grouping Variable: KELAS	

Following the implementation of the treatment, the results of the Mann–Whitney U test at the post-test stage revealed an Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) value of 0.002, which is lower than the significance level of 0.05. This result demonstrates a statistically significant difference in students' understanding of bullying between the experimental group and the control group. Accordingly, it can be concluded that the use of the Molly Polly learning media had a significant effect on improving students' understanding of bullying.

Based on the results of the research that has been conducted, it was found that the average post-test score of the control class using Molly Polly learning media was 76.77. Meanwhile, the average post-test score of the experimental class using conventional learning methods was 86.13. These results indicate that there was a significant increase in learning outcomes in the class that used Molly Polly learning media. Thus, it can be said that the use of Molly Polly learning media has an effect on improving students' understanding of bullying.

The significant difference observed in the post-test results indicates that the improvement in students' understanding did not occur by chance, but rather as a result of a learning process that emphasized active participation, social interaction, and contextual learning experiences. The Molly Polly learning media enables students not only to receive information passively, but also to engage actively in thinking, discussing, and reflecting

on situations related to bullying behavior. As a result, the knowledge acquired becomes more meaningful and deeply internalized.

These results are in line with Piaget's constructivist learning theory (1920), which states that the learning process will be more meaningful if students are actively involved in constructing their knowledge through direct experience (Azizah Siti Lathifah et al., 2024). In the context of this study, Molly Polly learning media provides an active and interactive learning experience through fun games. Students do not just passively receive information, but also actively understand the concept of bullying through card games and group discussions (Nasution et al., 2023). In addition, the results of this study are also in line with Bryant's opinion, which states that board game-based games such as Monopoly can increase student engagement, foster critical thinking skills, and help students understand the concepts taught more deeply (Rizki Nur Aisah et al., 2024). Through Molly Polly learning media, students are trained to recognize forms of bullying, analyze its causes, and understand its effects.

From a theoretical perspective, these findings are consistent with constructivist learning theory, which emphasizes that learning is more effective when students actively construct their own knowledge through direct experience (Harahap et al., 2025). In addition, the social interactions that occur during the game support the learning process as described in social learning theory, where understanding is developed through observation, interaction, and shared experiences. In this regard, the Molly Polly learning media functions not only as a learning aid but also as a form of social simulation that helps students comprehend the dynamics of bullying behavior more concretely (Rajab, n.d.).

Another factor that supports the effectiveness of Molly Polly learning media is the element of collaboration and competition in the game, which motivates students to participate actively (Abbas Zakaria et al., 2025). This is in line with Bandura's social learning theory, which emphasizes that learning occurs through social interaction, observation, and imitation (Pramudiantoro et al., 2025). In game activities, students learn from their peers' experiences and build a shared understanding of what constitutes bullying behavior and how to prevent it (Almasi et al., 2025; Yose putri et al., 2024).

The findings of this study are also consistent with previous research indicating that game-based learning media, particularly educational board games, can enhance student engagement, conceptual understanding, and critical thinking skills. Compared to conventional instruction, this approach is considered more effective in delivering socially contextualized and sensitive topics, such as bullying (Cahyaningtias & Ridwan, 2021). Within the context of Islamic junior high schools (Madrasah Tsanawiyah), the Molly Polly's learning media offers a distinctive advantage as it can be integrated with Islamic guidance and counseling values that emphasize moral character, empathy, and social responsibility.

In terms of implications, the findings of this study contribute theoretically to the development of Islamic guidance and counseling by highlighting the potential of innovative learning media as preventive counseling tools. Practically, these results

provide valuable insights for guidance and counseling teachers and educators in Madrasah Tsanawiyah in selecting effective media to enhance students' understanding of bullying and to prevent the occurrence of bullying behavior in school settings (Priantini et al., 2025).

Despite these significant findings, several limitations of the study should be acknowledged. This research was conducted in only one Islamic junior high schools, which limits the generalizability of the findings. In addition, the duration of the implementation of the Molly Polly learning media was relatively short, and the study primarily focused on the cognitive aspect of students' understanding of bullying. Consequently, the long-term effects on students' attitudes and behaviors could not be comprehensively examined. Based on these limitations, future research is recommended to involve larger and more diverse samples, extend the duration of the intervention, and examine the effects of the Molly Polly learning media on affective and behavioral aspects related to bullying. Further studies may also explore the systematic integration of this media into Islamic guidance and counseling programs to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of its long-term effectiveness.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study entitled "The Effectiveness of Using Molly Polly Learning Media on Students' Understanding of Bullying at a Public Islamic Junior High School in Madiun", it can be concluded that Molly Polly learning media is effective in improving students' understanding of bullying. Before the treatment was given, the initial abilities of the control class and the experimental class were shown by a Mann Whitney U test significance value of 0.741 (> 0.05). Then, after the treatment was given, there was a significant difference between the control class and the experimental class. The average post-test score for the control class was 76.77, while the average score for the experimental class was 86.13, with a Mann Whitney U test significance value of 0.002 (< 0.05). This shows that the use of Molly Polly learning media has a positive effect on improving students' understanding. In addition, the effectiveness of using Molly Polly learning media was evident from the active involvement of students in learning activities through interactive activities and direct experiences, which made understanding more meaningful and was able to foster normal awareness and social empathy towards bullying.

This study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings. First, the sample size was relatively limited and involved only one educational institution; therefore, the generalization of the results to other school contexts should be made with caution. Second, this study focused solely on measuring students' cognitive understanding of bullying and did not comprehensively examine changes in students' attitudes and behaviors toward bullying over a longer period of time. Based on these limitations, future research is recommended to involve a larger sample size and include diverse educational settings to enhance the generalizability of the findings. In addition, further studies may develop instruments that assess not only cognitive aspects but also students' attitudes and behaviors related to bullying. Future research may also examine

the long-term effectiveness of the Molly Polly learning media in fostering sustainable understanding and preventive behavior toward bullying.

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