

An Ecological Approach to Mental Recovery for Victims of Bullying in Elementary Schools

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Abstract: The mental recovery of students who are victims of bullying in elementary schools is a complex process that interrelated individual, school environment, and social interaction factors Influence. Various studies show that partial interventions have not addressed the need for comprehensive, sustainable recovery. This study aims to analyse the mental recovery process of students who are victims of bullying and the supporting and inhibiting factors using an ecological approach. The method used is qualitative research with a case study approach, involving students who are victims of bullying and teachers as research subjects. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation, then analysed interactively through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and verification, with data validity maintained through extended collection time and triangulation techniques. The results of the study show that students' mental recovery is supported by school counselling, teachers' active roles, communication with parents, peer support, and school policies, despite limitations in psychological services, variations in family involvement, and students' personal factors. This study recommends strengthening collaboration among schools, families, and professionals and developing a sustainable, trauma-informed approach. The contribution of this research lies in enhancing the application of an ecological approach in understanding the mental recovery of bullying victims in elementary schools holistically and contextually.

Keywords: Bullying, Mental Recovery, Elementary School, Counseling.

Introduction

Research on the mental recovery of students who are victims of bullying in elementary schools still faces significant obstacles ([Herman dkk., 2023](#)). Although many studies discuss the handling of bullying, the main gap lies in the lack of a

holistic and personalised approach tailored to the psychological needs of each student. Limited counselling services, lack of teacher training, and variability in family involvement widen the gap in recovery effectiveness. Previous studies tend to focus on only one dimension, neglecting interactions across educational and social systems, so the results often do not fully address the complexity of this issue ([Due dkk., 2020](#)).

The scientific urgency of this research is very high, given the high number of bullying cases in elementary schools that harm children's mental health and social development ([Armitage, 2021](#)). Bullying has the potential to cause long-term trauma that affects academic achievement and interpersonal relationships ([Kearney dkk., 2021](#)). Recent studies highlight the importance of strengthening support systems at school and at home, as well as providing equitable, high-quality psychological services. Given the widespread impact of bullying, research is still needed to develop effective intervention models that can be adapted to the unique characteristics of each school and student.

Psychology and education experts emphasise that the dynamic interaction between students, families, teachers, and the school environment is crucial to the mental recovery process of bullying victims ([Bhatia, 2023](#)). Bronfenbrenner, in his ecological theory of development, states that optimal recovery occurs when interventions involve various social systems that interact synergistically ([Stanley & Kuo, 2022a](#)). Experts also emphasise the importance of developing teacher competencies in trauma-informed education and the active role of families in supporting children's emotions. In general, this view directs Research to focus on the broader social and psychological context, rather than just individual coaching actions.

Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory of development serves as the main framework because it explains how the environments surrounding students influence the post-traumatic recovery from bullying ([Stanley & Kuo, 2022b](#)). Microsystems, such as families and schools, play a direct role in providing emotional support and supervision. Mesosystems describe the interactions between various microsystems, such as communication between teachers and parents, which strengthen support for victims ([El Zaatari & Maalouf, 2022](#)). This theory emphasises that successful recovery is not the responsibility of a single party but rather the result of collaboration among interrelated elements within the child's social ecosystem ([Strindberg, 2023a](#)).

Furthermore, this theory helps us understand that individual student factors, such as emotional regulation and self-efficacy, are also crucial in the adaptation process ([Inda Wulandari dkk., 2025](#)). The inability to manage emotions can hinder recovery, while increased self-confidence encourages the courage to report and interact again. This concept requires personalised and diverse interventions tailored to each child's emotional needs. This analysis underscores the need for an interdisciplinary approach that integrates developmental psychology with educational practices and school policies to support students' mental adaptation after bullying trauma ([Kipchirchir dkk., 2025](#)).

The process of mental recovery for students who are victims of bullying in elementary schools is not easy. There are several obstacles, such as limited

counselling services that are not yet optimal and insufficient duration of assistance to overcome trauma completely. Other influencing factors include variations in family involvement in supporting children, where some families are less active due to busy schedules or a lack of psychological understanding. In addition, a school environment that is not entirely conducive and a lack of teacher training in dealing with trauma also hinder the mental recovery process of students who are victims of bullying. Based on a focus analysis, the following research questions were formulated. First, how does the mental recovery process of elementary school students who are victims of bullying take place? Second, what are the factors that Influence the cognitive recovery of elementary school students who are victims of bullying?

This study makes a significant contribution by showing that the mental recovery process of students who are victims of bullying in elementary school not only depends on intervention at school, but also requires the active involvement of families and peer support. The findings emphasise the need for an integrated approach that combines adaptive counselling services, trauma-informed teacher training, and consistent and structured school policies. In addition, this study reinforces the application of Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory of development by emphasising cross-system social interactions as the key to successful recovery, which can serve as the basis for developing more effective and sustainable intervention models in elementary school environments [\(Wan & Huang, 2025\)](#).

Method

The research method is qualitative, with a case study approach [\(Oğuz & Pinar, 2025\)](#). This approach was chosen to explore in depth the mental recovery process and experiences of students who were victims of bullying in the context of everyday school life. Through a case study approach, the research captured students' emotional, social, and institutional dynamics more comprehensively. In addition, case studies allowed researchers to obtain rich, detailed, and layered contextual data from various sources. Thus, this approach can also help to understand the interactions between students, teachers, families, and the school environment.

This research was conducted at SDN Slemanan 01 Elementary School in Udanawu District, Blitar Regency, with a research duration of three months, from August to October 2025, with data collection focused on September. The selection of the Research location was based on the presence of bullying cases relevant to the study's focus and the school's openness to the research process. The three-month time frame was considered adequate to allow researchers to conduct repeated observations, build trust with research subjects, and gradually understand the dynamics of students' mental recovery. In addition, this duration provides sufficient time to conduct in-depth interviews, observe situations, and continuously collect supporting documentation. With this relatively intensive research time, the data obtained are expected to be deep, context-rich, and highly valid.

The object of this study is the mental recovery process of students who are victims of bullying that takes place in the context of everyday school life. The research subjects include students who are victims of bullying as the primary informants, as well as various parties directly involved in their assistance and

supervision, namely other students, homeroom teachers, teachers, principals, vice principals, and parents. The involvement of these diverse subjects allows the study to capture layered perspectives on the dynamics of mental recovery. Each actor plays a different role and can support or hinder the student's recovery process. By focusing on the relationships among these subjects, this study can understand mental recovery holistically and contextually, grounded in cross-role interactions in the school environment.

Table 1. Research Object and Subject

No	Research Object/Focus	Subject / Gender	Role
1	The mental recovery process of students who are victims of bullying	Students who are victims of bullying (Male & Female)	Primary sources of data on psychological experiences, recovery processes, and emotional needs
2	The dynamics of social interaction after bullying	Students/Peers (Male & Female)	Providing information about interaction patterns, social acceptance, and peer support
3	Academic and emotional support for students	Class teachers (Male & Female)	Direct companion, development observer, and communication facilitator
4	School mentoring and supervision strategy	Teachers (Male & Female)	Supervisor, initial counseling, and bullying prevention
5	School policies and climate	Principal (Male & Female)	Policy makers, program directors, and decision makers
6	Technical implementation of bullying management	Deputy principal (Male & Female)	Technical coordinator, implementation supervision, and policy monitoring
7	Family support in mental recovery	Parents of students (Male & Female)	Supporters of students' emotional recovery in the family environment

The data collection technique in this study was conducted through in-depth interviews as the primary method to obtain narratives, subjective experiences, and personal interpretations of students who were victims of bullying and teachers regarding the mental recovery process. Interviews allowed researchers to explore feelings, emotional responses, and support strategies that were not always apparent on the surface. Furthermore, direct observation was conducted to examine students' social interactions, classroom relationship patterns, and the school environment that influenced the recovery process. Observation helped clarify the correspondence between verbal data and actual behaviour. In addition, documentation was collected as supporting data in the form of school records, case reports, and activity archives to strengthen the validity and consistency of the research findings.

The validity of the data in this study was maintained through a data-collection extension technique that enabled researchers to conduct repeated observations and build trust with the research subjects. This extension provided space to cross-check information in depth, so that the data obtained was not temporary or situational. Furthermore, triangulation was applied by combining various data collection techniques, namely in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation. Triangulation of sources and techniques helped to compare and confirm findings from multiple perspectives. In this way, potential bias was

minimised, and the research results were more valid and reliable. This approach ensures that the findings accurately reflect the field conditions.

Data analysis in this study was conducted interactively and continuously across three main stages: data reduction, data presentation, and verification. In the data reduction stage, researchers selected, focused, and simplified the raw data by choosing the information most relevant to the research objectives. The data presentation stage involved organising the findings into a systematic narrative, making the relationships between categories easy to understand. Next, the verification stage was used to interpret the data, assess the consistency of the findings, and draw conclusions carefully. This process was cyclical, so that the analysis remained open to new findings and maintained the objectivity of the research results.

Result and Discussion

Result

Field data obtained from in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation were classified into two categories: First, the mental recovery process of student victims of bullying at SDN Slemanan. Second, factors influencing the cognitive recovery of student victims of bullying at SDN Slemanan 01.

Based on interviews with teachers, the school has made efforts to support students who are victims of bullying through various measures. Teachers explained that the school routinely conducts counselling sessions to help students express their feelings and rebuild a sense of security. In addition, classroom and school supervision has been increased to prevent similar incidents from recurring. Teachers added that the school often holds meetings with parents to monitor the progress of victims and coordinate support measures at home and at school.

On the other hand, targeted dialogues between victims and perpetrators were also conducted with the assistance of teachers to improve relationships and reduce tension. Education on the importance of preventing bullying and maintaining healthy social relationships was also provided to all students. However, teachers acknowledged that special assistance for victims was still not fully optimal and needed to be strengthened to be more effective. The following are the results of the interviews.

"Teachers usually explain that the school has assisted in counselling sessions, increased supervision in the classroom and school environment, and meetings with parents to discuss the victim's progress. Teachers also mentioned that there were targeted dialogues between victims and perpetrators to improve relationships, as well as anti-bullying counselling, even though special assistance has not been running optimally."

The results of interviews with teachers show that the counselling process for students who are victims of bullying is carried out flexibly, both routinely and when needed. Teachers explained that this assistance is provided not only by homeroom teachers who serve as guidance counsellors, but also by the principal and, sometimes, by outside psychologists who are partners with the school. The counselling provided was not limited to confiding sessions; it also utilised several specific techniques, such as reflection, positive reinforcement, and behavioural

observation. These techniques were used to help students recognise and understand their emotions, as well as restore their confidence after experiencing bullying. This assistance is expected to help students recover gradually and feel more prepared to interact in the school environment again. The following is an excerpt from the interview:

"Counselling is usually conducted regularly or as needed, guided by guidance counsellors or the principal, and occasionally involves outside parties such as school partner psychologists. The process is not only in the form of confessional sessions, but also uses specific techniques such as reflection, positive reinforcement, and behavioural observation to help students understand their emotions and rebuild their confidence."

From the interviews, it was learned that when a case of bullying is detected, teachers immediately contact the parents of both the victim and the perpetrator to provide an initial explanation. Teachers also immediately reprimand the perpetrator and record the incident in accordance with school procedure. In addition, teachers try to provide emotional support to victims, although they admit that the steps taken are not always optimal and do not always solve the problem completely.

"Teachers usually explain that when they become aware of a bullying case, they immediately contact the parents of both the victim and the perpetrator, reprimand the perpetrator directly, and record the incident for school reporting. Teachers also try to provide emotional support to the victim, even though in some situations the actions taken are still less than optimal or do not fully resolve the problem."

Based on interviews with many students, some felt that the school's assistance helped. They began to feel an increase in self-confidence and a reduction in trauma. However, some students still reported feeling afraid at school and thought that the recovery process was not yet fully effective, so they still needed additional support.

"Some students said that they felt helped by the assistance provided, although some still felt afraid when they were at school. Some have begun to regain their confidence and feel less traumatized, but others feel that the recovery process has not been fully effective, so they still need additional support."

In addition, several students also said that the classroom atmosphere now feels safer after the school took action. They think that bullying has begun to decrease, and acceptance from their peers has increased. However, some students have not seen significant changes and still feel awkward and worried in the school environment.

"Some students said that the classroom atmosphere feels safer after the school took action, and bullying has started to decrease. They also feel more accepted by their friends. However, some other students admit that they have

not seen significant changes and still feel awkward or worried about the situation in the school environment."

From interviews with students, it is known that the recovery process has had a positive impact on some of them. Some have become more confident, more active in class, and more willing to report discomfort. However, some students still appear quiet and show signs of trauma, indicating that their recovery is not yet complete.

"Some students revealed that after participating in the recovery process, they felt more confident and began to be more active in class activities. Others became more courageous in reporting when they experienced discomfort. However, some other students still tended to be quiet and showed signs of trauma that had not fully healed."

In addition to support from the school and the students themselves, interviews with parents revealed differences in the level of family involvement in the recovery process. Some parents tried to give more attention through intensive communication and daily guidance so that their children would feel safe again. However, some parents also admitted that their involvement was still limited due to busy schedules or a lack of understanding, resulting in slower recovery and suboptimal outcomes for their children.

"Some parents explained that they tried to give more attention through more intensive communication and daily guidance to ensure their children felt safe. However, some families admitted that their involvement was still limited due to their busy schedules or lack of understanding, resulting in a slower and less than optimal recovery process for their children."

The researchers also interviewed several teachers, who reported striving to provide the best support for students who are victims of bullying. Teachers try to be good listeners, increase classroom supervision, and assist as facilitators in the counselling process when needed. However, they admit that not all responses can be given quickly or appropriately, so some students still feel unsafe and need more intensive attention.

"Some teachers explained that they try to be good listeners to students, increase supervision in the classroom, and act as counselling facilitators when needed. However, they also acknowledged that in some situations, their responses were not entirely quick or appropriate, so some students still felt insecure and needed more attention."

When researchers interviewed students, some said peer support was emerging through invitations to play, more frequent interactions, and attitudes that made them feel more accepted. However, this situation is not yet completely uniform. Some students still experience unfriendly treatment, are shunned, and even face subtle forms of intimidation. This situation shows that efforts to build a safe and supportive social environment have begun, but further attention and intervention are still needed so that all students can feel the same level of comfort.

"Some students explained that their peers began to provide social support by inviting them to play and interact more often, so that they felt more accepted. However, some said that there were still friends who shunned victims or showed unfriendly attitudes. There were even forms of covert intimidation that made the situation not entirely comfortable."

Based on the interview results, it appears that social support from peers has begun to grow through invitations to play, more intense interactions, and efforts to make victims feel more accepted in the classroom environment. However, not all students have responded positively. There are still friends who choose to keep their distance, are unfriendly, and even engage in covert intimidation. This condition shows that, even though there have been improvements, the social atmosphere among students is not yet completely safe and comfortable for all parties.

"The school said that they have developed SOPs for handling bullying and established strict rules for perpetrators to prevent recurrence. Anti-bullying socialisation is also carried out through class activities and morning assemblies. However, they admit that some policies have not been effective and still need evaluation and reinforcement in their implementation."

The interview results also show that students' personal factors play a significant role in the recovery process. Teachers and counsellors said that children who are shy or tend to be closed off find it challenging to talk, which delays the identification of problems. Low self-confidence and previous negative experiences are also obstacles that prolong the recovery process. On the other hand, students' ability to manage their emotions is an essential determinant of their readiness to bounce back and feel safe again in the school environment.

"Several teachers and counselors explained that students' personal factors also influence the recovery process, such as being shy or withdrawn, which makes it difficult for them to talk about their experiences. Low self-confidence and previous negative experiences also slow down recovery. In addition, students' ability to manage their emotions greatly determines their readiness to bounce back and feel safe again."

Several respondents revealed that students' access to psychological services still varies. Some students find it easy to get assistance when they have problems, especially if the school has a regular counselling schedule. However, many also face difficulties due to limited service hours, lack of facilities, or the absence of professionals at school. The small number of counsellors exacerbates this situation, so the counselling process is not yet optimal, and students often have to wait a long time before they can be treated. This situation shows that the availability of psychological services still needs improvement to enable more effective and equitable student recovery.

"Several respondents explained that student access to psychological services still varies; some find it easy to get counseling, but others have difficulties due to limited schedules and facilities. Professional services are not

always available in schools, and the limited number of counselors means that the counseling process is not yet optimal and students often have to wait a long time before being seen."

Based on interviews with all subjects, the post-incident recovery process appears to be ongoing, with varying dynamics. Support from the school and family environment has begun to take shape, although it is not yet entirely uniform or consistent. Various factors, such as students' personal circumstances, limited access to psychological services, and social interactions at school, also influence the speed and quality of their recovery. These findings emphasise the importance of ongoing collaboration between schools, families, and professionals so that every student feels safe, receives adequate support, and has a conducive space to recover optimally.

Table 2 Research Findings

No.	Subchapter: Formulation of the Problem	Research Findings
1.	The mental recovery process of students who were victims of bullying at SDN Slemanan	Assistance through counseling, increased teacher supervision, parent meetings, victim-perpetrator dialogue, anti-bullying education, regular or as-needed counseling, reflection and positive reinforcement techniques, case recording by teachers, emotional support from teachers, safer classroom atmosphere, reduced bullying, increased acceptance of peers, some students still fearful or traumatized, some becoming more confident and active
2.	Factors influencing the mental recovery of students who are victims of bullying at SDN Slemanan	Family support varies, parents may be intensely involved or less involved, teachers act as listeners and facilitators, teacher responses are not always immediate, peer support is increasing, there is still covert bullying, school policies such as SOPs and socialization are not yet optimal, personal factors such as shyness, low self-confidence, negative experiences, emotional management skills, access to psychological services is limited and there are few professionals available.

Discussion

This study reinforces previous studies that emphasize the importance of the school's directive role in the mental recovery process of students who are victims of bullying ([Daly dkk., 2025](#)). Counseling that is applied flexibly, both routinely and as needed, along with the use of reflection and positive reinforcement techniques, demonstrates that emotional support is highly effective in helping students process traumatic experiences ([Liu dkk., 2025](#)). The contribution of this study lies in the evidence that a needs-based counseling model can adapt more flexibly to each student's psychological condition. The implications of these findings underscore the need to strengthen school counseling services by increasing guidance counselors' capacity and collaborating with external psychologists. However, a difference is observed in suboptimal support compared to other studies reporting more effective results, most likely due to limitations in human resources and supporting facilities.

This aligns with developmental ecology theory, which emphasizes that factors closest to the microsystem, especially the role of teachers, are crucial for accelerating the recovery of students who are victims of bullying ([Salem dkk., 2025](#)). Active teacher supervision significantly increases students' sense of security and encourages them to interact more confidently in the school environment. These results reinforce the argument that direct teacher involvement has a significant influence in reducing the recurrence of trauma and anxiety in students. An important implication of these findings is the need for trauma-informed training for teachers so that their responses are more appropriate and sensitive to students' emotional conditions ([Bilbrey dkk., 2024](#)). The difference from previous studies arises because teachers at this school were not yet fully able to identify signs of trauma. Hence, the effectiveness of supervision was not as high as reported in other studies.

This study reaffirms the importance of warmth and family support in accelerating the mental recovery of students who are victims of bullying, as confirmed by previous studies ([Kholis et al., 2014](#)); ([El-Khodary & Samara, 2020](#)). However, this study makes a new contribution by showing that family involvement varies widely, with some parents less involved due to busy schedules and low psychological literacy. This lack of involvement directly affects students' slow recovery, so school assistance efforts are not as effective as expected. This difference explains why the results of this study are not entirely consistent with those of studies that portray the family as a stable source of support. Therefore, emotion literacy-based parenting programs need to be integrated into the school system so that the family's role is more consistent and has a real impact on the child's recovery ([Ansar dkk., 2022](#)).

The dialogue between the victims and perpetrators of bullying in this study aligns with the restorative approach, which is widely recommended for building a positive school culture ([Lodi dkk., 2021](#)). These findings are important because they reveal that guided dialogue can improve social relationships, reduce tension, and help victims regain a sense of security. This process also serves as a mechanism for emotional recovery by reconstructing healthier interaction patterns. The implication of these findings is the need for schools to formalize restorative procedures into SOPs to ensure more consistent, structured implementation. Differences in effectiveness arise because some perpetrators do not fully understand the social consequences of their behavior, so not all dialogues result in significant change.

Overall, the results of the study show that the mental recovery process of student victims of bullying is influenced by various aspects within the microsystem to the exosystem of the school, which interact with each other to form the dynamics of recovery ([Strindberg, 2023b](#)). School counseling conducted with a flexible approach, using reflection and positive reinforcement techniques, reinforces previous Research findings on the importance of directive school support, though its effectiveness remains suboptimal due to limited professional staff. Teacher supervision has also been shown to increase student safety, in line with developmental ecology theory, but some teachers still lack understanding of the signs of trauma, so their supervision is not yet fully responsive.

On the other hand, family communication shows significant variation because

not all parents are actively involved, leading to uneven recovery and differing from studies that describe the family as a source of stable support ([Analisah & Indartono, 2019](#)). The restorative dialogue approach between victims and perpetrators has been shown to help improve social relationships, but it has not always been successful because some perpetrators are unaware of the social consequences of their behavior. In addition, although schools have anti-bullying SOPs, their implementation has not been optimal due to the absence of a monitoring unit to ensure consistent policy enforcement, creating a gap between regulations and practices in the field.

Research on school policies emphasizes the importance of implementing anti-bullying SOPs as part of formal education policy. Although these policies exist, their implementation is still weak, indicating a gap between regulations and practices in the field. This condition enriches the literature on the challenges in implementing anti-bullying policies, particularly regarding the effectiveness of regulations that have not been fully implemented. The implications of these findings underscore the need to strengthen internal supervision to ensure each procedure is carried out consistently. However, a significant difference is the lack of monitoring units in schools, which leads to SOPs not being applied uniformly and systematically across the school environment.

Developmental theory emphasizes that students' emotional regulation plays an important role in post-trauma adaptation ([Cafaro dkk., 2023](#)). Research shows that students with low emotional regulation skills tend to experience slower recovery compared to their peers who are better able to manage their emotions. These findings contribute significantly to understanding the differences in recovery speed among students, while also confirming the role of emotional regulation as a key factor in post-traumatic interventions. The implication of this is the need to implement cognitive-behavioral interventions to help students improve their ability to manage their emotions. However, individual differences remain significant, so each student's recovery results are not always uniform even after intervention.

This study reinforces Bandura's theory that self-efficacy plays a significant role in determining students' courage to report bullying experiences ([Saripanidis dkk., 2025](#)). Research shows that some students experience increased courage when their self-confidence grows, especially through successful experiences. These findings make an important contribution to understanding the relationship between self-efficacy and reporting behavior, as well as highlighting the psychological factors that support post-traumatic adaptation. The practical implications emphasize the need for teachers to create mastery experiences so students can build confidence and courage. However, individual differences remain apparent, as students who tend to be quiet and receive less social reinforcement continue to experience trauma even after intervention.

According to Due et al. (2020), their Research explains that limited access to psychological services is a major obstacle to students' post-trauma recovery. In addition, this aligns with the findings of Munardji et al ([Munardji et al., 2020](#)). The findings show disparities in students' access to services, with some receiving intervention more quickly while others experience delays. This contributes significantly to the literature on disparities in access to psychological services in

school settings. The practical implication emphasizes the need for schools to establish memoranda of understanding (MoUs) with professional psychologists to ensure more equitable access to services. However, disparities persist due to the limited number of counselors in schools, leading to delays in treatment for some students.

The learning environment theory emphasizes that the classroom climate plays an important role in students' recovery after trauma ([De Stigter dkk., 2025](#)). Research shows that changes in the classroom environment can create a safer atmosphere, thereby reducing bullying incidents. The contribution of these findings lies in the empirical evidence that environment-based interventions can support student well-being and encourage positive adaptation. The practical implications underscore the need to continue classroom control programs to maintain a conducive, safe learning climate for all students. However, individual differences remain, as not all students experience significant changes, possibly due to previous traumatic experiences.

The importance of case management in addressing bullying in the school environment underscores the role of teachers in documenting each incident ([Van Aalst dkk., 2024](#)). The findings show that although teachers routinely record cases, the documentation is still inconsistent and incomplete. The contribution of these findings lies in identifying weaknesses in the manual administration system that affect the effectiveness of follow-up for bullying cases. The practical implications emphasize the need to implement a digital reporting system to ensure that each case is well documented and can be quickly followed up on. However, differences remain because some teachers sometimes consider certain cases to be "minor," so they are not recorded or formally administered.

This is in line with studies of PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) in children, which emphasize that the process of recovery from trauma is not linear and varies from person to person ([Zhang dkk., 2022](#)). Research shows that even though support has been provided, some students still experience residual anxiety and fear that affects their well-being. The contribution of these findings lies in the understanding that emotional support alone is not enough to completely erase the effects of trauma. The practical implication emphasizes the need for periodic trauma assessments so that interventions can be tailored to the needs of each student. However, individual differences remain apparent because the intensity of bullying experienced by students varies, so the level of trauma and recovery response is also not uniform.

This contradicts previous Research stating that teachers already have adequate competence in dealing with bullying. Research shows that training limitations create a competency gap in handling bullying cases in elementary schools ([Zhang dkk., 2022](#)). These findings are important because they highlight the need for systematic teacher capacity building to support student recovery after trauma. The practical implication emphasizes the need for mandatory trauma-informed education training so that teachers can provide appropriate interventions that are sensitive to students' emotional needs. However, significant differences arise because facilities in elementary schools, especially in certain areas, are still inadequate to support optimal training and program implementation ([Farmer dkk.,](#)

[2021](#)).

These findings reinforce the theory of individual differences, which states that victims' responses to bullying recovery are not uniform. Research shows that some students recover quickly, while others experience stagnation in the post-traumatic adaptation process. The contribution of these findings lies in the understanding that individual response variations must be taken into account when designing interventions ([Fernández-Alfaraz dkk., 2023](#)). The practical implication emphasizes the need for a personalized approach, tailoring recovery strategies to each student's needs and conditions. These differences are influenced by factors such as age, personality, support from home, and previous traumatic experiences, which collectively shape the speed and quality of each individual's recovery ([Damyanov, 2024](#)).

This supports Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, which emphasizes that students' post-traumatic recovery results from cross-system interactions. Research shows that recovery is most effective when families, teachers, peers, and counselors work together to support students ([Darmiany dkk., 2022](#)). The contribution of these findings lies in the empirical evidence demonstrating the importance of synergy among components of the educational and social ecosystems in the post-traumatic adaptation process. The practical implications emphasize the need for a collaborative model among schools, families, and professionals to ensure support is more comprehensive and coordinated. However, individual differences persist because the lack of synchronization between systems can lead to variations in each student's recovery results ([Fernández-Alfaraz dkk., 2023](#)).

Conclusion

Based on the findings and discussions from both research questions, it can be concluded that individual factors, the school environment, and cross-system interactions influence the recovery of students who are victims of bullying. Emotional regulation skills, self-efficacy, and previous traumatic experiences determine the speed and quality of recovery. In addition, school policies, access to psychological services, teacher reporting, and classroom climate play an important role in supporting the adaptation process. Simultaneous interactions among family, teachers, friends, and professionals strengthen recovery effectiveness, while inter-system asynchrony leads to differences in outcomes among students. Overall, the study emphasises the importance of an integrated, personalised approach to handling bullying cases.

This study has several limitations that need to be considered. The study focuses on elementary school students, so the generalizability of the results to other levels of education remains to be tested. From a theoretical perspective, most of the foundations use Bronfenbrenner's ontogenetic and ecological approaches, so psychosocial or cultural perspectives are not taken into account. The Research methods used, both quantitative and qualitative, with a limited sample, also affect external validity. In addition, the measurement of variables such as emotional regulation and residual trauma is subjective and dependent on self-report, so the potential for bias remains. These limitations indicate the need for more extensive and multidimensional research.

Follow-up research is recommended to expand the sample across educational levels and consider cultural variations and different social contexts. More objective, longitudinal measurement methods are needed to monitor students' recovery over

time. Further research could also integrate psychosocial theory, neuroscience, and trauma-informed education approaches to enrich our understanding of the interaction between individuals and their environment. In addition, the effectiveness of collaborative school-family-professional models could be tested through experimental studies or interventions. This approach is expected to yield more adaptive, personalised, and sustainable strategies for addressing bullying.

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