



Collaborative Guidance and Counseling and Bullying Prevention in Southeast Asian Schools: The Mediating Role of Social Support Systems

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Abstract

Bullying in schools is a serious issue that disrupts students' social, emotional, and academic development. However, empirical evidence on how collaborative guidance and counseling, supported by social support systems, contribute to bullying prevention across cultural contexts remains limited. This study examines the mediating role of social support systems in the relationship between collaborative guidance and counseling and bullying prevention. Using a quantitative survey design, data were collected from 612 high school students aged 14–17 across three Southeast Asian countries: Indonesia (214), Malaysia (198), and Thailand (200). Data were gathered through a validated structured questionnaire and analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) and multi-group analysis, with bootstrapping applied to test direct and indirect effects. The findings indicate that collaborative guidance and counseling have a positive and significant effect on bullying prevention. They also significantly enhance social support systems, which in turn positively influence bullying prevention. Bootstrapping results confirm that social support systems partially mediate this relationship. Furthermore, multi-group analysis reveals no significant differences across the three countries, suggesting the model's stability in diverse cultural contexts. These results underscore the importance of integrating collaborative guidance and counseling with strong social support systems to strengthen school counseling practices and inform effective anti-bullying policies in multicultural educational settings.

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INTRODUCTION

Bullying in schools remains a serious challenge for adolescents around the world, especially in Asia, where the prevalence rate is high. Several cross-national studies provide empirical evidence that bullying is a common experience among children in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Vietnam. In their research, Borualogo and Casas (2023) found that verbal bullying, such as name-calling, is the most commonly reported form of violence. The study also revealed that about 7.5% to 12.5% of children experienced repeated bullying at least twice, while another 6.4% to 22.9% reported more intense frequency in a month. These findings confirm that bullying is a widespread and persistent phenomenon in Asian communities.

The impact of bullying is profound and multidimensional, affecting students' psychological well-being and academic achievement. Syahrudin et al. (2025) explained that being a victim of bullying can significantly reduce students' academic achievement, along with increasing stress levels. Students who experience this stress often struggle to concentrate, lose motivation, and experience decision-making disorders, which ultimately worsen their academic performance. In addition, bullying triggers anxiety, fear, and even high school absenteeism rates. This is in line with a report by Hysing et al. (2021) stating that peer violence has long-term negative consequences, including mental health problems, sleep problems, and the emergence of aggressive and mischievous behavior. These facts show that bullying is not only a short-term disorder but a serious risk to adolescent development.

Conceptually, Olweus (2011) defines bullying as repetitive aggressive behavior that involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim, in which the victim is in a difficult position to defend himself. This definition provides a basic framework for understanding bullying across cultural settings and emphasizes the importance of systematic prevention efforts in educational institutions.

Overcoming bullying requires comprehensive interventions, especially through the optimization of school counseling services. Counselors play an important role in

identifying, preventing, and addressing such behaviors. Nurmaya and Wasliman (2025) highlight that peer counseling programs can be an effective strategy because they empower students and create a supportive school climate. Their research shows that well-organized peer counseling, from planning to supervision, can strengthen students' role as active agents in promoting positive social interactions.

In addition, school counselors play a strategic role in managing bullying cases and fostering a safe learning environment. Putri et al. (2025) explain that counselors function as facilitators, educators, mediators, and advocates for students. Through collaboration with teachers and parents, interventions such as Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) and Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) are effective in reducing aggressive behaviors and supporting the psychological recovery of victims. These findings underscore the importance of collaborative counseling as a key component in bullying prevention.

This research is based on three complementary theoretical perspectives. First, Olweus's (2011) bullying prevention framework emphasizes the need for comprehensive school-level interventions. Second, Cohen and Wills' (1985) buffer effect theory explains that social support serves as a buffer, reducing the negative psychological impact of stressful experiences such as bullying. Third, the collaborative counseling framework of Gysbers and Henderson (2012) highlights the importance of coordination between various parties in providing counseling services. Conceptually, these three theories are interconnected, with collaborative counseling serving as an intervention mechanism, social support acting as a protective factor, mediation, and bullying prevention as desired outcomes.

Although studies on bullying in Asia are constantly evolving, existing research still focuses primarily on prevalence rates and direct impacts. Little attention has been paid to the deeper mechanisms by which interventions affect prevention outcomes. In particular, the mediated role of social support systems in the relationship between collaborative counseling and bullying prevention has not been explored. In addition, empirical studies comparing these relationships across Southeast Asian countries

are limited, hindering the development of culturally responsive intervention models.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze the role of social support systems in mediating the relationship between collaborative counseling and bullying prevention among students in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand. Using a cross-national approach, this research is expected to contribute to the development of culturally adaptive evidence-based counseling strategies for educational contexts in Southeast Asia.

METHOD

The study used a quantitative cross-sectional survey design to examine the relationship between collaborative guidance and counseling, social support systems, and bullying prevention in schools, with social support systems as mediating variables (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

The analysis was performed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with WarpPLS software, which is suitable for analyzing complex models involving mediating relationships.

The study participants consisted of 612 high school students from three Southeast Asian countries, namely Indonesia ($n = 214$), Malaysia ($n = 198$), and Thailand ($n = 200$), aged 14-17 years (52% female, 48% male). The participants were selected using the intended sampling technique, with inclusion criteria including active enrollment in high school and willingness to participate in the study.

Collaborative guidance and counseling refers to the extent of collaboration among school stakeholders, social support systems refer to perceived emotional, informative, and instrumental support, and bullying prevention refers to efforts to reduce bullying behaviors in schools.

Data were collected using a structured five-point Likert scale questionnaire developed to assess three latent constructs: collaborative guidance and counseling, social support systems, and bullying prevention. The construction of collaborative counseling and counseling was measured using 5 items adapted from previous studies on school counseling collaboration (Ramdani et al., 2020; Gysbers & Henderson, 2012). Social support systems were measured using 4 items

that reflected emotional, informational, and instrumental support based on the framework of Cohen and Wills (1985). Bullying prevention was measured using 4 items adapted from previous research on school-based bullying interventions (Espelage & Swearer, 2011; Thofi & Farrington, 2011). All items are rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Examples of items include: "School counselors collaborate with teachers and parents to address student issues" (collaborative guidance and counseling), "I feel supported by my peers and teachers when facing difficulties" (social support system), and "My school is actively implementing programs to prevent bullying behavior" (bullying prevention).

This research adheres to ethical research standards. Participants were informed of the objectives of the study, and their participation was voluntary. Informed consent is obtained prior to data collection, and the confidentiality and anonymity of responses are ensured.

The analysis was carried out in two stages. First, the measurement model was evaluated to ensure the validity and reliability of the construct using the outside loading, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), Fornell-Larcker criteria, Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio (HTMT), Composite Reliability, and Cronbach's Alpha. Second, the structural model was evaluated through the analysis of the path coefficient, R^2 , Q^2 values, and effect size (f^2) at a significance level of 5%.

To test the significance of the relationship between variables, this study used a bootstrapping procedure with 3,000 resamples. This procedure was carried out by randomly resampling with resampling from the original data totaling 612 respondents. Thus, bootstrapping does not increase the number of samples, but generates an empirical distribution of parameter estimation to calculate standard error values, t-values, and p-values.

Mediation analysis and multi-group analysis (MGA) were conducted to examine the mediating role of social support systems and to compare structural relationships across Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand. Prior to MGA, measurement invariance was assessed to ensure the comparability of the constructs between groups.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Evaluation of Measurement Models/ External Models

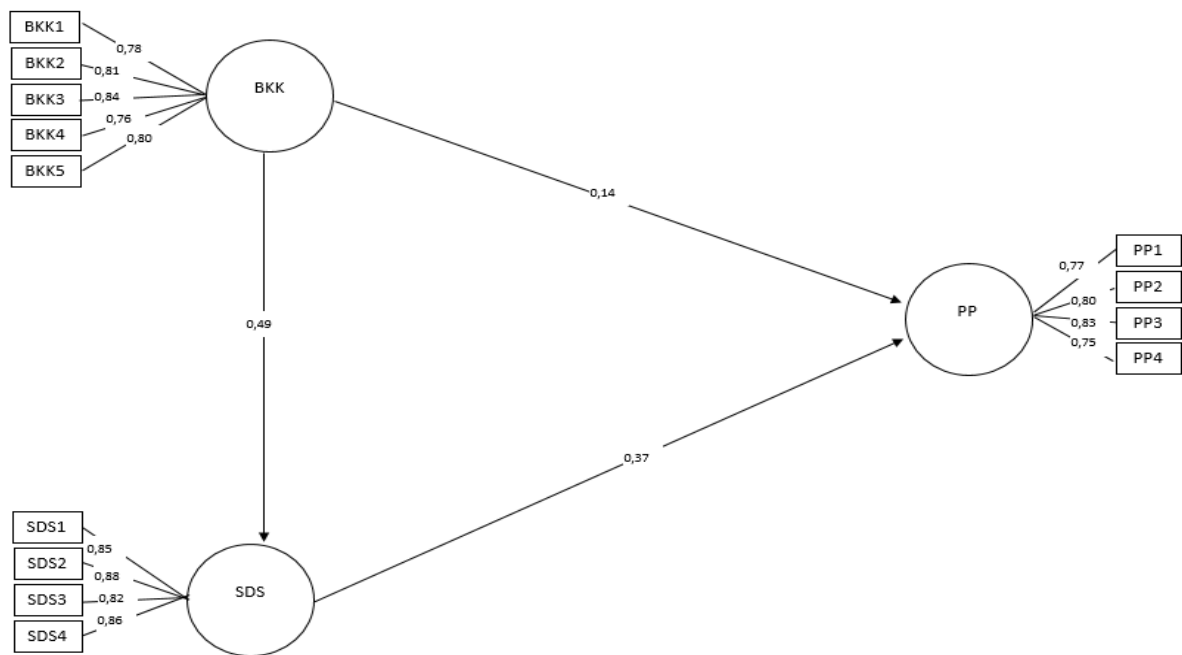


Figure 1. WarpPLS Processing Measurement Model

Evaluation of the measurement model is carried out to ensure that the indicators used are able to represent the latent construct validly and reliably. The measurement model testing in this study includes convergent validity, construct reliability, and discriminant validity. The results of data processing using WarpPLS are shown in Figure 1, which illustrates the relationship between latent constructs and their reflective indicators.

In this study, there are three main constructs analyzed, namely Collaborative Guidance and Counseling (BKK), Social Support System (SDS), and Bullying Prevention (PB). Collaborative Guidance and Counseling (BKK) is defined as a form of guidance and counseling services that involve active collaboration between various school stakeholders, such as counselors, teachers, parents, and peers, with an emphasis on coordination, communication, and integration of roles in dealing with student problems comprehensively. Social Support System (SDS) refers to students' perceptions of the availability of emotional, informational, and instrumental support from their social environment, including peers, teachers, and family, which serves as a

protective factor in strengthening psychological resilience as well as reducing the risk of involvement in bullying behavior. Meanwhile, Bullying Prevention (PB) reflects the systematic efforts made by schools to reduce and prevent bullying behavior, which includes school policies, intervention programs, and the establishment of a safe, inclusive, and supportive social climate. The measurement model in Figure 1 shows that each latent construct is represented by reflective indicators designed to capture the main dimensions of each variable. Furthermore, the convergent validity is evaluated through the factor loading values of each indicator, which shows the extent to which the indicator is able to represent the latent construct being measured. In addition, the validity of the convergence is also strengthened through the value of the Extracted Mean Variance (AVE), which shows the ability of the construct to explain the variance of the indicator.

Validitas Convergence

The results of the convergent validity test are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Convergent Validity Test Results

Variabel	Indicator	Loading Factor	Status
Collaborative Guidance and Counseling	CGC1	0,78	Applicable
	CGC2	0,81	Applicable
	CGC3	0,84	Applicable
	CGC4	0,76	Applicable
	CGC5	0,80	Applicable
Social Support System	SSS1	0,85	Applicable
	SSS2	0,88	Applicable
	SSS3	0,82	Applicable
	SSS4	0,86	Applicable
Bullying Prevention	BP1	0,77	Applicable
	BP2	0,80	Applicable
	BP3	0,83	Applicable
	BP4	0,75	Applicable

Based on the results in Table 1, all indicators used in this study show good ability in representing the measured constructs. Each item in the Collaborative Guidance and Counseling variable is able to describe collaborative practices involving various parties in the school environment, such as teachers, counselors, and parents, so that this construct can be understood as a complete representation of the collaborative approach in counseling services.

In the Social Support System variable, all indicators reflect a strong perception of support from the student's social environment. This shows that aspects of emotional support, information, and real help from teachers, peers, and family have been well represented in the instruments used.

Meanwhile, the indicators on the Bullying Prevention variable are also able to describe the school's efforts in creating a safe and supportive environment. The items used reflect positive policies, programs, and social interactions that contribute to reducing bullying behavior in schools.

Overall, these findings show that all indicators have been appropriate in describing the constructs studied, so that they can be used to continue the analysis at the next stage.

The next convergent validity test was also carried out by looking at the Average Extracted Variance/AVE value displayed in Table 2.

Table 2. Extracted Mean Variance (*AVE*) Value

Variabel	AVE	Criteria	Status
Collaborative Guidance and Counseling	0,64	$\geq 0,50$	Applicable
Social Support System	0,68	$\geq 0,50$	Applicable
Bullying Prevention	0,61	$\geq 0,50$	Applicable

Based on the results in Table 2, all constructs in this study show a good ability to represent the indicators. This means that each variable researched, both Collaborative Guidance and Counseling, Social Support System, and Bullying Prevention, has been composed of items that truly reflect the concept to be measured.

In the Collaborative Guidance and Counseling construct, the indicators used are able to describe collaborative practices

consistently, thus providing confidence that this variable is not only technically measurable, but also conceptually relevant in the context of counseling services in schools. Similarly, in the construction of the Social Support System, the indicators used have been quite representative in capturing students' experiences related to support from their social environment, both from teachers, peers, and family.

Meanwhile, the Bullying Prevention construct also shows that the items used are able to reflect the school's real efforts in creating a safe and free environment from bullying behavior. This indicates that the instrument used not only measures perception, but also describes the real conditions that students feel.

Overall, these findings show that each construct has been built with the right and mutually supportive indicators, so that it is able to provide a complete and reliable picture

of the phenomenon being studied. Thus, the constructs in this study are suitable for use in follow-up analysis.

Composite Reliability

The reliability of the construct was then tested using *composite reliability* which aimed to measure the internal consistency of the indicator in representing latent construction. The results of the *composite reliability test* are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Composite Reliability Results

Variabel	Composite Reliability	Criteria	Status
Collaborative Guidance and Counseling	0,92	$\geq 0,70$	Reliabel
Social Support System	0,93	$\geq 0,70$	Reliabel
Bullying Prevention	0,90	$\geq 0,70$	Reliabel

Based on the results in Table 3, all variables in this study showed a very good level of consistency in measuring the constructs studied. This means that each indicator used in each variable is able to work in harmony in describing the same concept.

In the variable of Collaborative Guidance and Counseling, the alignment between the indicators shows that collaborative practices involving various parties in the school can be consistently represented in the instruments. Similarly, in the Social Support System variable, the indicators used were able to stably reflect the experience of support felt by students from their social environment.

Meanwhile, in the Bullying Prevention variable, all items used also showed uniformity in describing the school's efforts in creating a safe and free environment from bullying behavior. This shows that students' responses to each statement tend to be consistent and not contradictory.

Overall, these findings provide confidence that the instruments used in this study have a high level of reliability. Thus, the data obtained can be considered stable and trustworthy for use in further analysis.

A summary of the results of the convergent validity and construction reliability test is presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Convergent Validity and Construction Reliability Test Results

Construction			AVE	Composite Reliability	Alfa Cronbach	Remarks	
Collaborative	Guidance	and	0,64	0,92	0,89	Valid	&
Counseling						Reliabel	
Social Support System			0,68	0,93	0,91	Valid	&
						Reliabel	
Bullying Prevention			0,61	0,90	0,87	Valid	&
						Reliabel	

Based on the results in Table 4, all constructs in this study show good measurement quality. Each variable, namely Collaborative Guidance and Counseling, Social Support System, and Bullying Prevention, is built by indicators that are able to represent the measured concepts appropriately and consistently.

These findings show that the instruments used are not only able to describe each construct clearly, but also provide stable and reliable results. Thus, the measurement model in this study can be declared feasible to be used at the next stage of analysis, namely the evaluation of the structural model.

Overall, these results provide a solid basis that the relationships between variables in the study can be further analyzed without any doubt about the quality of the measuring instruments used.

Discriminatory Validity

Table 5. Discriminatory Validity Test (*Fornell-Larcker Criteria*)

Construction	Collaborative BK	Social Support	Bullying Prevention
Collaborative BK	0,80	0,70	0,60
Social Support	0,70	0,82	0,74
Bullying Prevention	0,60	0,74	0,78

Based on the results of the analysis in Table 5, the square root value of AVE in each construction is higher than the correlation between other constructions. This shows that each construct has a good degree of discrimination and is able to differentiate itself from other constructions in the research model. Thus, all constructions are declared to meet the criteria of discriminant validity.

Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT)

Tabel 6. Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT)

Construct	Collaborative BK	Social Support	Bullying Prevention
Collaborative BK	—	0,82	0,76
Social Support	0,82	—	0,85
Bullying Prevention	0,76	0,85	—

Based on the results in Table 6, it can be seen that the relationships between constructs are within acceptable limits, thus showing that each variable has different characteristics from each other. This indicates that collaborative guidance and counseling, social support systems, and bullying prevention are stand-alone constructs and do not overlap in explaining the phenomenon being studied.

Overall, these results reinforce previous findings that the measurement model in this study has met the criteria for discriminant validity, so it can be used for further analysis at a later stage.

Structural Model Evaluation (Inner Model)

Structural model evaluation was carried out to assess the model's ability to explain the

Discriminatory validity testing is carried out using the Fornell-Larcker criteria, which aim to ensure that a construct has a clear distinction from other constructs in the research model. The results of the discriminant validity test are shown in Table 5.

To strengthen the discriminant validity test, the analysis was not only performed using the Fornell-Larcker criteria, but also complemented by the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) approach. This approach is used to ensure that each construct in the model actually has clear differences and does not overlap with each other. The results of the calculation of HTMT values between constructs are presented in Table 6.

relationship between latent variables. This analysis includes the coefficient of determination, predictive relevance, and the contribution of each relationship in the model. To test the significance of the relationship between variables, a bootstrapping procedure with 3,000 samples was used, so that the resulting estimate was more stable and reliable.

Coefficient of Determination (R^2) and Predictive Relevance (Q^2)

The results of the determination coefficient test and predictive relevance are shown in Table 7.

Table 7. Coefficient of Determination (R^2) and *Predictive Relevance* (Q^2)

Variable endogenous	R^2	Category R^2	Question 2	Category Q^2
Social Support System	0,49	Medium	0,38	Large
Bullying Prevention	0,63	Strong	0,45	Large

The results in Table 7 show that the model has a fairly good ability to explain the relationships between variables. The social support system can be adequately explained by collaborative guidance and counseling, while bullying prevention can be explained more powerfully through a combination of collaborative guidance and counseling and social support systems.

In addition, the model's ability to predict the relationship between variables is also relatively good. This shows that the developed

model is not only able to explain the phenomenon being studied, but also has accuracy in estimating the relationships between variables in the context of cross-border research.

Effect Size (f^2)

Effect measures are used to assess the magnitude of each pathway's contribution in the structural model. The results of the effect size analysis are shown in Table 8.

Table 8. Effect Size (f^2)

Pathway	f^2	Categories Effects
Collaborative Guidance and Counseling → Social Support System	0,49	Large
Collaborative Guidance and Counseling → Bullying Prevention	0,14	Small–Medium
Social Support System → Bullying Prevention	0,37	Large

The results of the analysis show that each relationship in the model has a different level of contribution. The influence of collaborative guidance and counseling on the social support system shows a very strong role, which indicates that collaborative practices in schools are a major factor in building social support for students.

Meanwhile, the direct influence of collaborative guidance and counseling on bullying prevention appears to be more limited. This shows that although a collaborative approach still plays a role, its impact becomes more optimal when supported by the existence of a social support system.

On the other hand, the social support system shows a very important role in bullying prevention. These findings confirm

that a supportive social environment is a key factor in creating safe school conditions that are free from bullying behavior.

Model Eligibility (Model Fit)

The feasibility of the model in this analysis was evaluated using several model suitability indices, namely Average Path Coefficient (APC), Average R-squared (ARS), and Average Variance Inflation Factor (AVIF) (Kock, 2020). These three indices are used to assess the extent to which the constructed model is able to adequately represent the relationships between variables and ensure that there are no problems of excessive relationships between constructs. The results of the model feasibility test are shown in Table 9.

Table 9. Model Feasibility Index

Table of Contents	Value	Criteria	Remarks
APC	0.51 (p. <0.001)	page <0.05	Suitable
ARS	0.56 (p. <0.001)	page <0.05	Suitable
AVIF	2,14	<5	No multicollinearity

Based on the results of the analysis, the entire index shows that the model has a good level of conformity. The APC and ARS values indicate that the relationship in the model is significant, while the AVIF values indicate that there is no problem of multicollinearity between variables. Thus, the developed model can be declared feasible for use in further analysis.

Hypothesis Testing

The hypothesis test in this study aims to understand the direction and strength of the relationship between variables in the developed structural model. This analysis is not only used to see if the relationship is significant, but also to explain the role of each construct in shaping the dynamics of bullying prevention in the school environment.

In this study, testing was carried out by analyzing the direct relationship between

variables and indirect relationships through mediation variables. The assessment of the relationship is based on the coefficient of the path that indicates the direction of influence, as well as the level of significance that reflects the reliability of the relationship formed. To ensure more accurate and stable results, parameter estimation was carried out using a bootstrapping procedure with 3,000 resampling.

The results of the path analysis provided an overview of how collaborative guidance and counseling, social support systems, and bullying prevention interact with each other within one integrated model framework. The visualization of the relationship between these variables is presented in Figure 2, which shows the pattern of interdependence and the strength of influence between constructs in this study.

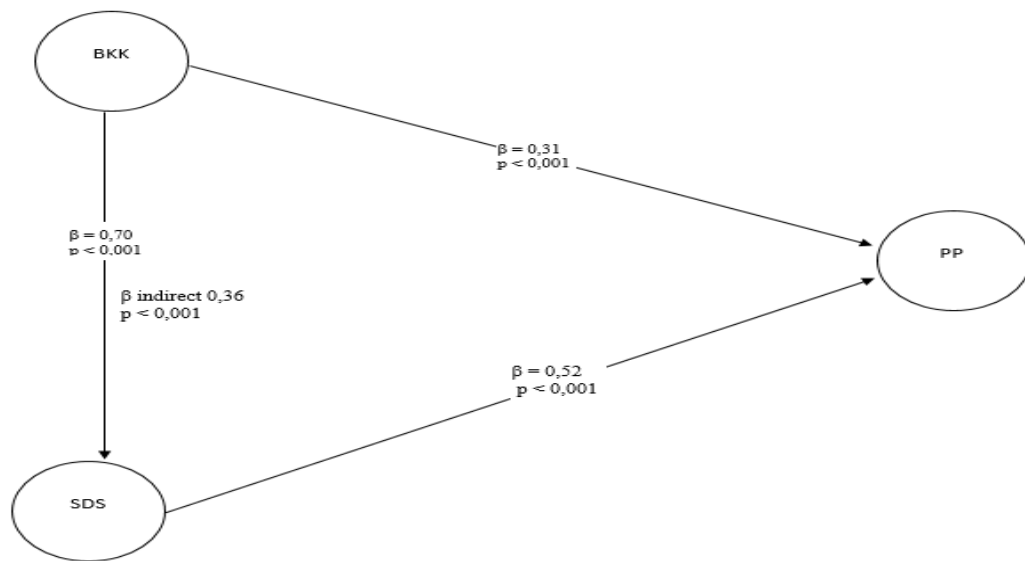


Figure 2. Path Coefficient Value and P-Value

Direct Influence

The results of the analysis show that all relationships between variables in the model have a positive and meaningful direction. This shows that each of the constructs studied contributes to each other in explaining bullying prevention efforts in the school environment.

Collaborative guidance and counseling have been proven to play a role in increasing the effectiveness of bullying prevention. These findings show that the involvement of various parties such as counselors, teachers, parents,

and peers in the counseling service process is able to create a more comprehensive approach in dealing with student problems. This integrated approach allows for more responsive handling and more systematic prevention of bullying behavior.

In addition, collaborative guidance and counseling also show a very strong role in shaping students' social support systems. This indicates that collaborative practices not only focus on problem solving, but also contribute to building a supportive social environment. The interaction established through collaboration between the school and the

environment around students is able to strengthen the sense of connectedness and support felt by students in their daily lives.

On the other hand, the social support system has proven to have an important role in bullying prevention. An environment that provides emotional, social, and practical support is able to create safer conditions for students, while reducing the potential for aggressive behavior. This suggests that bullying prevention does not only depend on formal interventions, but is also strongly influenced by the quality of social relationships that students have.

Overall, these findings confirm that the relationships between variables in this study are mutually reinforcing. Collaborative guidance and counseling serve as a

foundation in building a social support system, which ultimately contributes to improving the effectiveness of bullying prevention in schools. Thus, all hypotheses proposed in this study are acceptable.

Mediation Tests

Mediation testing was conducted to understand the role of social support systems in bridging the relationship between collaborative guidance and counseling and bullying prevention. This analysis aims to see whether the influence exerted by the collaborative approach occurs not only directly, but also through the social mechanisms that are formed in the student environment. The results of the mediation test are shown in Table 10.

Table 10. Mediation Test Results (*Indirect Effects*)

Mediation Pathway	β indirect	p- value	Types of Mediation
Collaborative BK → social support → bullying prevention	0,36	<0.001	Partial Mediation

The results of the analysis in Table 10 show that the social support system plays a role as a link in these relationships. This indicates that collaborative guidance and counseling practices are able to strengthen the social support felt by students, which ultimately contributes to improving the effectiveness of bullying prevention in schools.

The role of mediation was found to be partial, meaning that the influence of collaborative guidance and counseling on bullying prevention occurred through two pathways. First, through the direct influence that comes from the counseling intervention itself. Second, through indirect channels, namely by strengthening the social support system which then has an impact on decreasing bullying behavior.

These findings suggest that the success of bullying prevention depends not only on formal interventions carried out by counsellors, but also on the extent to which they are able to build a supportive social environment. Thus, the social support system becomes an important mechanism that

strengthens the effectiveness of collaborative guidance and counseling services in the school context.

Multi-Group Analysis (Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand)

Multi-group analysis was conducted to find out whether there were differences in the relationship between variables in the three countries where the study was located, namely Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand. Before conducting this analysis, measurement invariance testing was first carried out using the Measurement Invariance of Composite Models (MICOM) approach to ensure that the measured construct has an equivalent meaning in each group.

The test results show that the model has met the measurement invariance criteria, so that comparisons between groups can be valid. Thus, multi-group analysis can be used to identify differences in structural relationships between countries.

The results of the comparison of the route coefficient between countries are shown in Table 11.

Table 11. Comparison of Path Coefficients Between Countries

Pathway	Indonesia (β)	Malaysia (β)	Thailand (β)	P MGA	Remarks
BK → Social Support	0,72	0,68	0,64	0,21	There is no significant difference
Social Prevention → Support	0,55	0,49	0,50	0,34	There is no significant difference
BK → Prevention	0,33	0,29	0,30	0,27	There is no significant difference

Based on the results in Table 11, the relationships between variables show a relatively consistent pattern in all three countries. This indicates that the role of collaborative guidance and counseling in building social support systems and their impact on bullying prevention has a similar tendency in various contexts.

The absence of meaningful differences between groups shows that the developed model has cross-cultural stability. This means that the mechanisms of the relationship between collaborative guidance and counseling, social support systems, and bullying prevention can be understood in a relatively similar way in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand.

These findings indicate that collaborative approaches in counselling services, supported by a strong social support system, have broad relevance and are not limited to one specific country context. Thus, this research model has the potential to be applied more widely in educational environments that have similar social characteristics.

Discussion

1. The Effect of Collaborative Guidance and Counseling on Bullying Prevention

The findings of this study show that collaborative guidance and counseling have a positive and significant effect on bullying prevention in schools. These results confirm previous research that emphasized the effectiveness of collaborative approaches in addressing student behavior problems (Espelage & Swearer, 2011; Thofi & Farrington, 2011). However, the study expands on previous findings by showing that collaborative counseling not only directly affects bullying prevention but also operates within a broader system involving multiple

stakeholders, making interventions more comprehensive and sustainable.

The effectiveness of collaborative guidance and counseling stems from its ability to integrate the roles of teachers, counselors, parents, and peers to create a coordinated prevention strategy. Unlike individual approaches, collaborative interventions allow for early identification of bullying behaviors and facilitate a more responsive and structured handling system (Thornberg, 2015). In addition, counseling interventions involving multiple sources of social support have been shown to result in greater behavioral changes than individual approaches (Hong & Espelage, 2012).

These findings also reinforce the argument that collaborative counseling helps to form a supportive school climate that prevents aggressive behavior. A positive school climate has consistently been identified as a key factor in reducing bullying in the educational environment (Wang & Degol, 2016). Thus, this study provides empirical evidence that collaborative tutoring and counseling practices function not only as intervention strategies but also as systemic approaches to building safe school environments.

2. The Role of Social Support Systems in Bullying Prevention

The results also revealed that social support systems have a significant positive effect on bullying prevention. These findings confirm the central assumption of social support theory, which posits that supportive social relationships function as protective factors against stress and maladaptive behavior (Cohen & Wills, 1985). Students who feel strong emotional, informational, and instrumental support are less likely to engage in bullying behavior or be affected by it.

These findings are consistent with research showing that a supportive school climate reduces bullying by fostering collective responsibility among students (Salmivalli, 2010). Similarly, students who receive strong support from peers and teachers are less likely to engage in bullying behaviors (Wang et al., 2009).

In addition, social support also plays an important role in reducing the psychological impact of bullying. Victims who receive peer support are better able to cope with stress and emotional distress (Holt & Espelage, 2007). This shows that the social support system not only serves as a prevention mechanism but also as a protective factor that increases students' resilience in the face of social challenges.

3. The Mediation Role of the Social Support System

The study further showed that social support systems partially mediate the relationship between collaborative guidance and counseling and bullying prevention. These findings provide empirical evidence that the influence of collaborative counseling operates both directly and indirectly by strengthening social relationships within the school environment.

These results are in line with the perspective of social ecology, which emphasizes that individual behavior is shaped by interactions in various social systems (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). In this study, collaborative counseling represents systemic interventions, while social support systems serve as relational mechanisms by which behavioral changes occur.

In addition, effective bullying prevention requires a multi-layered approach that addresses the complexities of social interactions in schools (Swearer & Hymel, 2015). Thus, this study expands on previous frameworks by validating social support systems as a key mediation mechanism that increases the effectiveness of collaborative counseling interventions.

4. Consistency of Cross-Country Models

Another important finding from this study is the consistency of structural models across Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand. The results of the multi-group analysis

showed no significant differences in the relationships between variables, suggesting that the proposed model was stable in different cultural contexts.

This consistency can be explained by the similarity of the education system and the cultural values of collectivism in Southeast Asia, where social relations and community support play a central role in student development. Previous cross-cultural research has also shown that although the prevalence of bullying can vary, the underlying social mechanisms tend to be consistent across countries (Smith, 2016; Craig et al., 2009).

These findings suggest that collaborative mentoring and counseling, supported by a strong social support system, can serve as a broadly applicable strategy for bullying prevention across culturally similar educational settings.

5. Theoretical and Practical Implications

The study advances counseling theory by integrating collaborative guidance and counseling with social support systems into an integrated framework for bullying prevention. Unlike previous studies that examined this construct separately, this study shows how collaborative counseling operates through social support mechanisms to influence behavioral outcomes. Thus, this study validates social support as a mediation mechanism and enriches the existing bullying prevention framework.

From a practical perspective, these findings highlight the importance of implementing collaborative counseling strategies that actively engage teachers, parents, and peers. Strengthening school-based social support systems is equally important to maximize the effectiveness of bullying prevention programs. These findings also provide evidence-based insights for policymakers in designing integrated anti-bullying strategies that combine counseling interventions with systemic support mechanisms.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTION

This research makes an important contribution to the development of guidance and counseling studies by showing that the prevention of bullying in schools is not only influenced by direct interventions, but also by

social mechanisms formed through interactions between individuals in the educational environment. Theoretically, these findings reinforce the perspective that collaborative guidance and counseling is a systemic approach that works through the strengthening of social support systems. Thus, this study not only positions social support as a complementary factor, but as a key mechanism that explains how counseling interventions result in changes in student behavior.

In addition, this study expands the understanding of the application of collaborative counseling models in cross-cultural contexts. The consistency of the findings in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand suggests that the relationship between collaborative guidance and counselling, social support systems, and bullying prevention has broad relevance, particularly in cultural contexts that emphasize the value of togetherness and social connection. This strengthens the position of the model developed as a conceptual framework that can be used in the study of education in the Southeast Asian region.

From a practical point of view, the findings of this study provide clear implications for the development of guidance and counseling policies and practices in schools. Schools need to develop collaborative guidance and counseling programs that actively involve teachers, parents, and peers in the process of handling student problems. In addition, training for teachers and school counselors needs to be directed at strengthening cross-role collaboration skills, so that the interventions carried out are not individual, but integrated in the school system.

Furthermore, schools also need to strengthen student-based social support initiatives, such as peer support programs, mentoring activities, and the development of a school culture that emphasizes empathy, caring, and mutual respect. This effort is important to create a social environment that is not only responsive to problems, but also preventive in reducing the potential for bullying.

For further research, it is recommended that longitudinal studies be conducted to understand the long-term dynamics of the influence of collaborative guidance and

counseling on bullying prevention. In addition, expanding the research context to other countries in the ASEAN region can provide a more comprehensive understanding of the applicability of this model in more diverse cultural contexts. Further research may also integrate technology-based approaches, such as digital counseling or online support platforms, to explore the effectiveness of interventions in an increasingly digitized educational environment.

Overall, the study confirms that collaborative guidance and counseling approaches supported by strong social support systems are not only effective, but also sustainable strategies in creating a safe, inclusive, and supportive school environment for students.

CRedit Authorship Contribution Statement

Ramdani Ramdani contributed to conceptualization, methodology development, and preparation of the original draft. Azahra Hardi Cusinia contributed to data collection and data organization. Raja Zulfikar contributed to data processing and formal analysis. Amirul Fahmie Bin Abdul Razak contributed to the literature review and manuscript refinement. Thammasin Darunkan contributed to critical review, interpretation of the findings, and manuscript editing. All authors are expected to have reviewed and approved the final version of the manuscript and to take responsibility for their respective contributions.

Declaration of Competing Interests

The authors declare that they have no financial or non-financial competing interests relevant to the conduct of this study, the preparation of the manuscript, or its publication. The institutional support received from the Institute for Research and Community Service (LPPM), Universitas Riau Kepulauan, is transparently disclosed in the funding statement.

Declaration of the Use of Artificial Intelligence

Generative artificial intelligence tools were used in a limited capacity during the preparation of this manuscript to assist with language refinement, editorial improvements, and readability. These tools were used to

support the presentation of the text and did not replace the authors' academic responsibility for the validity of the research, the analysis and interpretation of the data, or the conclusions presented. All authors take responsibility for the accuracy, integrity, and final content of the manuscript submitted for publication.

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