

REPRESENTATION OF BULLYING IN THE FILM "I WANT TO KNOW YOUR PARENTS" (SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS OF ROLAND BARTHES)

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Abstrak

Kenakalan remaja akhir-akhir ini menjadi sorotan masyarakat, salah satu kenakalan remaja yang paling hangat dibicarakan di media sosial adalah *bullying*. Tindakan *bullying* menjadi salah satu potret kenakalan remaja yang menjadi perhatian di berbagai negara, khususnya Korea Selatan. "I Want to Know Your Parents" adalah film yang membahas intimidasi di sekolah. Studi ini berfokus pada analisis intimidasi pada anak di bawah umur yang digambarkan dalam film tersebut. Penelitian ini didasarkan pada paradigma konstruktivisme dan menggunakan pendekatan penelitian deskriptif kualitatif. Peneliti menggunakan teori semiotika Roland Barthes yang terdiri dari tiga makna analisis yaitu makna denotasi, konotasi, dan mitos dengan unit analisis berupa beberapa adegan dalam film. Berdasarkan hasil analisis, penulis mengidentifikasi enam kategori bullying yang berbeda dalam film yaitu bullying fisik, bullying verbal, bullying nonverbal, bullying relasional, cyberbullying, dan pelecehan seksual. Mitos dikategorikan ke dalam bullying dan perilaku agresif, bullying dan self-esteem, bully-victim dalam bullying, bullying dan status. Anak-anak yang menjadi korban memiliki kemungkinan lebih tinggi untuk mengembangkan masalah klinis, termasuk kecemasan, depresi, rasa tidak aman, harga diri rendah, kesepian, isolasi, dan gejala somatik. Film ini menggambarkan bagaimana intimidasi dapat menyebabkan siklus balas dendam, karena korban yang dianiaya dapat menahan kemarahan mereka dan akhirnya melampiaskannya pada orang lain yang mereka anggap lebih lemah.

Kata Kunci: Bullying, Representasi, Roland Barthes, Semiotika.

Abstract

Bullying has emerged as a highly debated aspect of juvenile delinquency on social media, especially in South Korea. The act of bullying is a particularly concerning manifestation of juvenile delinquency. "I Want to Know Your Parents" is a film that addresses bullying in schools. The study focused on analyzing the bullying among minors depicted in the film. This study is based on a constructivist paradigm and employs a qualitative descriptive research approach. The researcher uses Roland Barthes' semiotic theory derived from three analytical meanings, namely the meaning of denotation, connotation, and myth by using analytical units in the form of several scenes within the film "I Want to Know Your Parents". The analysis identified six distinct categories of bullying in the film: physical bullying, verbal bullying, nonverbal bullying, relational bullying, cyberbullying, and sexual harassment. Victimized children have a higher probability of developing clinical problems, including anxiety, depression, insecurity, low self-esteem, loneliness, isolation, and somatic symptoms. Myths are categorized into bullying and aggressive behavior, bullying and self-esteem, bully-victim in bullying, bullying and status. The film depicts how bullying can lead to a cycle of revenge, as victims who are mistreated may hold onto their anger and eventually take it out on others they perceive as weaker.

Keywords: Bullying, Representation, Roland Barthes, Semiotics

1. INTRODUCTION

Juvenile delinquency has recently garnered significant attention in society. Bullying has emerged as a highly debated aspect of juvenile delinquency on social media, especially in South Korea. The act of bullying is a particularly concerning manifestation of juvenile delinquency. This concern is warranted due to the substantial increase in recorded cases from 2013 to 2019 (Nami, 2022).

A survey by the Ministry of Education of South Korea revealed that 41.7% of students experienced verbal violence, 14.5% were victims of bullying by other students, 12.4% experienced physical violence, and 9.8% were victims of cyberbullying. Another survey conducted by the Korean Institute of Criminology and Justice (KICJ) showed that 58.6% of students had experienced violence at school. This included 33% who experienced mild physical violence not requiring medical attention, 18.1% who experienced moderate physical violence requiring medical attention, 6.5% who faced serious physical violence requiring hospitalization, and 1% resulting in death. Additionally, 56.1% of victims felt intense anxiety, 11% refused to go to school, 3.2% needed the help of professional psychiatrists, 0.5% attempted suicide, and 0.6% committed suicide (Seo, 2022).

In 2020, South Korea's Ministry of Education stated that 1 in 3 victims reported being bullied under the guise of "just joking". Other popular reasons included 'no special reason' or 'because the victim's behavior and face are strange' (Jayanti, 2023).

Lee Myung Bak, the president of South Korea, has stated that bullying in schools become a significant social issue. The South Korean government has announced several new rules aimed at preventing the increasing prevalence of bullying cases in schools (Hasibuan, 2023).

Writers and scriptwriters have also highlighted bullying cases. As a result, bullying cases in South Korea have gained attention from the global community for their representation of severe teenage bullying (Jayanti, 2023). In an interview on MBC Radio's "News High Kick," Choi Woosong mentioned that bullying shown in films and dramas doesn't compare to the harsh reality of real-life bullying. One distressing incident of bullying occurred in 2020 at a dormitory in Cheonghak-dong, where a group of girls inserted a foreign object into the victim's body and forced her to drink urine. In another incident in North Gyeonggi in January 2022, a 13-year-old boy sexually assaulted a 9-year-old girl on her way home from school. Commissioner Choi emphasized that all the perpetrators were teenagers under the age of 14. He also highlighted the complexity of

punishing delinquent teenagers, as it cannot be handled in the same way as adults (Hasibuan, 2023).

"I Want to Know Your Parents" is a film that addresses bullying in schools. The film features well-known Korean actors such as Son Kyunggu, Chun Woohee, Moon Sori, and Oh Dalsoo. Director Kim Jihoon presented the bullying scenes dramatically and intriguingly. The story revolves around Kim Geonwoo, who attempts suicide due to prolonged bullying. Geonwoo left a suicide note naming the bullies: Do Yoonjae, Park Kyubeom, Jeong Ideun, and Kang Hangyeol. The school's principal, the bullies' parents and grandparents, held a closed-door meeting to discuss how to address the bullying.

This research refers to several previous communication studies. First, a study conducted by Afkarina and Aminuddin revealed that bullying is depicted by signs that include acts of violence such as slapping, grabbing, damaging the victim's body parts, threatening, degrading, and harassing the victim in bullying cases. A semiotic analysis using Roland Barthes' opinion model and employing a qualitative method was conducted (Afkarina, F. I. A., & Aminuddin, A., 2023).

Second, the study conducted by Atus Lailiyah rigorously analyzed the bullying scenes in the film "Better Days" using Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis. The unequivocal results identified five distinct categories of bullying portrayed in the film: physical violence, verbal bullying, gesture bullying, cyberbullying, and exclusivity bullying. The film unapologetically sheds light on the prevalence of bullying in schools, aiming to forcefully raise awareness and prevent bullying (Lailiyah, 2022).

Third, the research conducted by Arum aimed to examine the issue of lookism in everyday life and how societal beauty standards can lead to harmful effects. The findings demonstrate how the drama "Gangnam Beauty" depicts lookism in daily life and the pressure on individuals based on their appearance. The message of the drama is a person's appearance can significantly impact their life and often overlooked due to societal beauty standards (Arum, 2022).

This research is part of a longitudinal study aiming to address gaps in previous research by examining the connection between parenting behavior, cultural values, and the occurrence of bullying in South Korea. There have been limited studies exploring the correlation between cultural values, parental involvement in bullying, and the dimensions of parenting. According to Nesdale and Naito (2005), there is a higher likelihood of bullying in collectivistic cultures and a greater tendency to support victims in some individualistic cultures. Hussein (2009) has suggested that individuals in collectivistic

cultures may be more prone to bullying, possibly due to authoritarian upbringing, which is prevalent in this culture and strongly associated with involvement in bullying.

In this study, the researcher will analyze the film "I Want to Know Your Parents" to explore the meanings of the signs in the film. The denotative, connotative, and myth meanings contained in the film will be examined, with a focus on how bullying is represented. The purpose of this study is to analyze the film to uncover the underlying meaning behind the bullying scenes presented in the film.

2. METHOD

This study is based on a constructivist paradigm and employs a qualitative descriptive research approach. The constructivist paradigm suggests that social reality varies based on social experiences, is specific, and depends on the individual perceiving it. Constructivism is evident in how humans, as creators of social reality, interpret and give meaning to their behavior (Aldiansyah, 2016). According to Ramdhan (2021), qualitative descriptive research aims to describe natural and man-made phenomena, focusing on their characteristics, quality, and relationships. According to Patton, constructivist researchers study the diverse realities constructed by individuals and the implications of those constructions for their lives with others. In constructivists, each individual has a unique experience. Thus, research with such a strategy suggests that every way an individual takes to view the world is valid, and there needs to be a sense of respect for this view (Patton, 2002). The researcher uses a constructivist paradigm for which this paradigm uses various types of construction and combines them in a consensus. This process involves two aspects: hermeunetic and dialectic. Hermeunetics is the activity of associating texts, writings, or images. Meanwhile, dialectics is the use of dialogue as an approach so that the subject being researched can examine his thoughts and compare them with the researcher's way of thinking.

Non-probability sampling does not offer an equal chance for each element or member of the population to be chosen as a sample (Sugiyono, 2014). The non-probability sampling method used in this study is purposive sampling, which selects samples based on specific scenes related to bullying.

Data analysis techniques include two components, data analysis and data interpretation (Kriyantono, 2014). The data collection technique relevant to this study is observation. The researcher conducted direct observations through the film followed by a documentation stage where data was collected from scenes obtained from the film. The visual scenes and script of the film were the unit of analysis. Additionally, a literature

study was conducted as a secondary data source, involving material from written sources like books, articles, and journals.

To ensure the validity of the data, the researcher used triangulation, a technique that involves comparing and cross-referencing different sources of data. The study employed theoretical triangulation, which is based on the idea that using one or more theories can help verify certain facts (Moleong, 2007). Specifically, the study utilized Roland Barthes' semiotic theory to examine the denotative, connotative, and mythical meanings within the text, audio, and visuals of the film "I Want to Know Your Parents". The study focused on analyzing the bullying among minors depicted in the film.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Results

"I Want to Know Your Parents" is a South Korean film directed by Kim Jihoon. The film was released on April 27, 2022.



Picture 1 Film poster “I Want to Know Your Parents”

The film depicted bullying among minors, focusing on an 8th-grade student named Kim Geonwoo at Haneum International Junior High School. A parents' meeting is convened to address the bullying issue. Parents with high social status are involved in seeking the truth behind the case. Intense debates and various assumptions greatly influence the investigation process.

The principal in the film is portrayed as being more concerned about the school's reputation than the well-being of the students. Parents of the bullies are depicted as contributing to a society that tolerates bullying, even going as far as manipulating evidence to protect their children. The temporary homeroom teacher, Song Jeonguk, is the only one in the school shown to care for the bullied students, although she faces pressure from the school principal.

The film "I Want to Know Your Parents" is unique among Korean films and dramas due to its focus on the issue of bullying. The film explores how the action-reaction between children and parents to the bullying case, highlighting the influence of parents on the behavior of bullies. In this film, bullying potentially acted as a survival function: a *buffer to a life of rejection*: a social-behavioral mechanism that protected him socially and emotionally from the negative impacts of being excluded and isolated (Green et al., 2023). The film depicts how bullying can lead to a cycle of revenge, as victims who are mistreated may hold onto their anger and eventually take it out on others they perceive as weaker.

The representation of bullying in a previous study conducted by Iken, the drama "Shadow Beauty" represented the phenomenon of bullying in the school which is carried out verbally, physically, and psychologically. The drama includes verbal bullying using hurtful words such as "ogre," "unlucky," "jokers," "crazy," "ugly," "dirty thieves," "garbage," and making defamatory statements. Physical bullying is shown through scenes of pinching, pulling, pushing, kicking, stomping, slapping, and stealing the victim's belongings. Additionally, psychological bullying is depicted by making the victim feel humiliated, afraid, sad, degraded, upset, anxious, worried, stressed, and depressed. The study also explores different meanings, including denotation and connotation, as well as implied meanings such as power, beauty, jealousy, friendship, and manipulation (Iken, 2022).

After analyzing the film "I Want to Know Your Parents", the researcher discovered visual elements that depict the reality of bullying in the film:

Table 2 Analysis of Denotations, Connotations, Myth

Scene	Cuts	Denotation	Connotation	Myth
1	00:01:23 - 00:01:27	DIALOGUE Father's senior : "Don't talk to him. He is a garbage seller." FASHION Formal attire. GESTURE Cynical glances, haughty expressions, and arrogant body language.	Power relation affect violence at work.	Self-esteem, bullying & status
2	00:09:23 - 00:09:35	DIALOGUE Yoonjae's Father : "Excuse me, I don't think you aware because you're only a temporary teacher. My son donated 30,000 won to Unicef every month because he felt sorry for the dark boy." GESTURE	Intimidation is exerted by pe- ople who hold a higher posi- tions.	Bullying & status.

		Yoonjae's father sat with his hands and feet wide open, his chin raised.		
3	00:10:49 - 00:10:53	DIALOGUE Yoonjae : “Hey, take some pictures.” INTONATION Bossy tones. GESTURE Laid on his side while supporting his head.	The perpetrator believed he had power and the right to control the vic-tim.	Bullying & status.
4	00:26:55 - 00:27:26	DIALOGUE Ideun : “Piss, jerk! Did that bastard just dodge? Are you? I asked if you were dodging!” Yoonjae : “Hey Hangeol! Make sure you get everything!” GESTURE Hangeol's father and Yoonjae's father watched the video sent on their son's group chat. Geonwoo didn't wear any clothes and covered his genitals. Ideun threw a tambourine and hit Geonwoo's hips, stomach, and genitals. Yoonjae laughs and asks Hangeol to record. Kyubeom approaches and pours a drink on Geonwoo's head.	The bullying perpetrator is aggressive toward the vic-tim.	Aggressive behavior.
5	00:34:02 - 00:34:41	DIALOGUE Yoonjae's Father : “Oh my gosh, little punk bottom. My eyes will fall out from having to look at you. Geonwoo, take a breath. If you die, my son will be finished. Let's live quietly as if you were dead.” GESTURE Yoonjae's father looks sarcastically and slaps Geonwoo.	The failure of the bullies' parents to set a good example.	Aggressive behavior
6	00:38:14 - 00:39:32	GESTURE Geonwoo crawled using his underwear, his neck was tied using a leash then pulled by Kyubeom. Kyubeom, Yoonjae, Ideun laughed at Geonwoo. Kyubeom throws Geonwoo with kimbab. They ordered Geonwoo to eat the scattered kimbab. Kyubeom pulled the leash tightly when Geonwoo was about to eat. Ideun slapped Geonwoo's body. Yoonjae pulls Geonwoo's hair. Kyubeom kicked Geonwoo in the head. DIALOGUE Kyubeom : “Eat it! Keep on eating!” Ideun : “He eats it like a dog!” Kyubeom : “Why did she come so early? Why? Die!”	Bullying makes the victim helpless and powerless.	Aggressive behavior
7	00:39:55 - 00:40:31	DIALOGUE Yoonjae : “Geonwoo's father bit the dust after he fell from a construction site. Your father looks very lonely. You're a good kid Geonwoo. Time to do your	Bullying perpetrators have low empathy & temperamental charac-	Aggressive behavior

		duty as a son. You have to die too.” Ideun : “Want us to help you?” INTONATION Mocking and condescending tone. GESTURE Yoonjae points the knife at Geonwoo's neck and hands. Kyubeom smothered Geonwoo's mouth. Hangeol recorded the incident.	ter.	
8	01:11:58 - 01:12:10	DIALOGUE Ideun's Father : “Miss Song is a temporary teacher. She may not have a strong sense of responsibility when it comes to children. How could they make someone like her a home-room teacher?”	Bullying perpetrators have higher power.	Bullying & status.
9	01:15:42 - 01:15:55	GESTURE Yoonjae beats Hangeol in the face. Kyubeom and Ideun trampled Hangeol's body.	Bullies has aggressive behavior.	Aggressive behavior
10	01:15:58 - 01:16:57	GESTURE Kyubeom, Ideun, and Yoonjae drown Hangeol's head. Yoonjae recorded the incident using a drone. INTONATION Angry and intimidating tone. DIALOGUE Kyubeom : “Do you think we are a joke? Jerk!” Ideun : “Tell me the truth!” Kyubeom : “You're a jerk! He tried to survive.” Ideun : “You talked about us to the teacher!” Hangeol : “It's not me! Geonwoo went to Ms. Song and talked about you guys.” Yoonjae : “You want to die? Do you want to live? Want to swap places?”	Bullying becomes a cycle.	Aggressive behavior
11	01:17:11 - 01:17:20	GESTURE Hangeol hits Geonwoo with a block. Geonwoo drowned. Yoonjae, Ideun, Kyubeom clapped and laughed. DIALOGUE Yoonjae : “Let's help Hangeol. Good shot.”	The victim became an active perpetrator of bullying as a form of release.	Bullying-victim, aggressive behavior,
12	01:17:23 - 01:17:32	GESTURE Hangeol is beating and kicking Geonwoo's body. Yun Jae, Kyubeom, Ideun watched as bystanders and smiled happily	The victim became an active bully.	Bullying-victim, aggressive behavior.
13	01:24:03 - 01:24:32	GESTURE Yoonjae, Ideun, and Kyubeom gave false statements and scapegoated Hangeol. DIALOGUE Ideun : “Hangeol has no friends and he's very weird.” Kyubeom : “Geonwoo fainted on the pool floor. We tried to call an ambulance but Hangeol refused to let us go.”	Personal defamation is carried out by people who have higher power.	Bullying & status.

		<p>Hangyeol : “That's not true!”</p> <p>Yoonjae : “I performed CPR on Geonwoo. My father taught me before. Geonwoo, who is on the verge of death, comes back to life.”</p> <p>Hangyeol : “You made me do it. You are the one who oppressed him! You were the one who killed him!”</p>		
14	01:43:16 - 01:44:36	<p>DIALOGUE</p> <p>Hangyeol : “You're crazy, why are you doing this? Why did you kill yourself? Can't you take that much? Are you a coward?”</p> <p>Geonwoo : “You bigger coward!”</p> <p>Hangyeol : “It's all your fault. That's because you complained to the homeroom teacher. It's all your fault!”</p> <p>Geonwoo : “You're worse than them.”</p> <p>Hangyeol : “Just die! That's it! Die!”</p> <p>GESTURE</p> <p>Hangyeol pushed, grabbed Geonwoo's collar, and beat him.</p>	Victims of bullying feel helpless and often want to end their lives.	Bullying-victim, aggressive behavior, self-esteem,
15	01:44:46 - 01:46:32	<p>GESTURE</p> <p>Hangyeol's father cried while watching a video of Hangyeol strangling Geonwoo on the drone. Hangyeol's father walks to the lake and throws away the drone.</p>	Parents are willing to do eve-rything even if their child makes mistakes.	Bullying-victim, aggressive behavior

3.1.1 Bullying and Aggressive Behavior

Bullying and aggressive behavior are evident in scenes 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, and 15. In scenes 4, 6, 7, and 9, Yoonjae, Kyubeom, and Ideun exhibit aggressive behavior toward victims. The bullies dehumanize Geonwoo, leading him to see himself as no longer human. Their aggressive nature is demonstrated through physical attacks, such as throwing a tambourine, hitting, stomping, and pointing a knife at Geonwoo. According to Arimbi (2018), bullying perpetrators exhibit the following characteristics: behaving aggressively and authoritarian, easily provoked and unable to control emotions, having low empathy for the victim, feeling superior, considering themselves better than the victim, susceptible to environmental pressures and the influence of others, not having an adequate understanding of the importance of tolerance and respect in diversity.

In scene 5, Yoonjae's father slaps Geonwoo. In scene 15, Hangyeol's father discarded evidence that Hangyeol was a murderer. Yoonjae's father and Hangyeol's father failed to model good character, behavior, and personality to

their children. Aggressive parents do not fulfill the role of being good parents to children. According to Anggraeni & Rahmi (2022), the determining factor that can prevent and overcome bullying cases is the role of parents. The role of parents is significant in fostering good character, behavior, and personality (Rigby, 1994).

In scenes 10, 11, 12, and 14, Hangyeol becomes an active bully as a form of release from bullying. Kuppersmidt and Patterson stated that children rejected by peers may turn aggressive (Siregar, 2016). Additionally, Fonzi and Olweus pointed out that the characteristics of bullies usually include being aggressive, having a positive concept of violence, being impulsive, and having difficulty in empathizing (Sullivan, 2000).

3.1.2 Bullying and Self-esteem

The issue of bullying and its impact on self-esteem is depicted in scenes 1 and 14. In scene 1, The senior of Hangyeol's father attempts to undermine Hangyeol's father's self-esteem by subjecting him to personal defamation. In scene 14, Geonwoo experiences feelings of helplessness and expresses a desire to end his life. Victims of bullying often experience feelings of weakness, helplessness, and perpetual threat (Djuwita, 2005). Bullying behavior has a detrimental impact on students' psychology, with the primary concern being the erosion of students' self-esteem. When self-esteem diminishes, students may develop feelings of worthlessness, significantly declining their psychological well-being. Ahmed and Braithwaite (2006) discovered that bullying behavior leads to depression, anxiety, fear, loneliness, poor academic performance, emotional disorders, and eventually, low self-esteem, triggering suicidal ideation in children (Wahyuni, 2014).

3.1.3 Bully-victim in Bullying

Bully-victim is depicted in scenes 11, 12, 14, and 15. In scene 11, Hangyeol is offered the chance to switch places with Geonwoo in order to release from bullying. In scene 12, Hangyeol becomes an active bully. The film illustrates the concept that bullying can become a continuous cycle, where victims may turn into bullies. Andreou state that bully-victims are individuals who engage in aggressive behavior while also victim to such behavior (Moutappa et al., 2004). Bullying, in Hangyeol's case, potentially acted as a survival function: a *buffer to a life of rejection*: a social-behavioral mechanism that protected him socially

and emotionally from the negative impacts of being excluded and isolated (Green et al., 2023). Victims of bullying may become aggressive towards their peers (Stein et al., 2006). Dr. Alice Miller, in her book "For Your Own Good," points out the idea that every perpetrator was once a victim (Coloroso, 2006). According to Azzahra, A., & Haq, A. L. A. (2019), those who bully others often rely on their friends' support and bystanders' silent approval. This perspective suggests that bullying can persist if those around the perpetrator react negatively, such as protecting the victim, which may inadvertently perpetuate the cycle of violence (Coloroso, 2006).

In scene 14, Hangyeol blamed Geonwoo for reporting bullying to the teacher. According to Craig (Haynie et al., 2001), bullying victims show a higher level of verbal and physical aggressiveness compared to other children. Additionally, Schwartz (Moutappa, 2004) explained that bully-victims are characterized by reactivity, poor emotional regulation, academic difficulties, rejection from peers, and learning difficulties. Priyatna (2010) stated that one-third of bullies are known to have been victims of bullying and it seems difficult for them to control their emotions. Those who are both bullies and victims are at the highest risk for developing psychological problems and experiencing poor social adjustment (Connors-Burrow et al., 2009; O'Brennan, Bradshaw, & Sawyer, 2009). Research has shown that students who initiate bullying are more likely to develop criminal behavior compared to other young adults (Aluede et al., 2008; Garrett, 2003; Olweus, 1993; Sourander et al., 2006).

3.1.4 Bullying and Status

Bullying and status are depicted in scenes 1, 2, 3, 8, 13. In scene 1, power relations significantly influence violence in the environment. Hangyeol's father experienced workplace bullying in the form of verbal attacks and exclusion from his work environment (Einarsen et al., 1994; Leymann, 1996; Zapf et al., 1996). The indicators are in the form of actions such as damaging, threatening, extorting, pressuring, or defaming the victim (Einarsen et al., 1994).

In scenes 2 and 8, Yoonjae's father and Ideun's father speak in a demeaning, discrediting, and intimidating manner toward the homeroom teacher. In scene 3, the bully feels that he has power over the victim. Yoonjae tends to command Hangyeol to do unexpected tasks. The characteristic of bullying perpetrators is that they tend to feel that they have power or control

over their victims and use their power to degrade the victims (Olweus, 1993). Bullies have the ability to oppress and deceive others so that they can get what they want, as their character is built based on power (Sharp & Smith, 2019; Akerman et al., 2018).

In scene 13, the parents and bullies conduct personal defamation to frame Hangyeol as the sole suspect. The parents of the bullies utilize their power to bribe the witness to provide false testimony in support of their children's claims. According to Harold D. Lasswell (1952), power is a relationship in which an individual or group can influence the actions of others. The most widely recognized definition is that power is the ability of an actor to exert influence over others.

3.2 Discussion

The representation of physical bullying in this film is throwing tambourine and food, hitting, pouring drinks on the head, slapping, tying and pulling the neck with a leash, grabbing hair, kicking the head, pointing a knife, smothering the mouth, holding hands and feet tightly, beating the face, stomping, sinking the head, pushing, and strangling. Verbal representations of bullying are name-calling (e.g. garbage-sellers, small punks), belittling, cursing, abusive remarks (e.g. cowards, dogs, bastards, and jerks), threatening, intimidating, taunting, sarcasm, and cruel criticism. Nonverbal bullying is represented by stares (e.g. cynical, condescending, mocking, or intimidating), arrogant facial expressions, smiling or laughing mockingly, intonation (e.g. bossy, intimidating, condescending, mocking), and raising the chin. Relational bullying is represented by rumors that Hangyeol's father is a garbage-seller lawyer. Yoonjae, Kyubeom, Ideun made false accusations against Hangyeol so that Hangyeol would be the only perpetrator in the bullying case. Ideun's father made accusations that the homeroom teacher did not have a strong sense of responsibility towards her students. Cyberbullying is represented by a scene of Hangyeol recording and uploading the bullying videos to the group chat. Sexual harassment is represented when Yoonjae forces Geonwoo to urinate and not wear clothes. Geon Woo was forced to crawl in his underwear and was treated like a dog.

The film aims to raise awareness about anti-bullying by highlighting how society judges people based on strength, wealth, and power. These differences result in a social hierarchy, which is also evident in the education system (Maliki, 2022). The film also depicts how the parents of bullies, police, and society support those with

power. The parents of the bully engage in unlawful actions to protect their child, including hacking Geonwoo's cell phone, destroying evidence (e.g. Geonwoo's suicide note and cellphone), and bribing witnesses to provide false testimony. Additionally, the film delves into the idea that bystanders who do nothing to stop bullying are, in a way, contributing to the behavior. In the film, Nam Jiho is convinced to provide false testimony that unfairly incriminates Hangyeol. Bullying leads to both direct and indirect contributions to the victim's suffering. This bullying incident is categorized as a criminal act due to the resulting casualties. Geonwoo's death remains unresolved and the bullies escape accountability.

Bullying is influenced by both internal and external factors. Internal factors contributing to bullying include self-concept, values, personality, perception, self-control, self-esteem, emotional intelligence, and sociocognitive skills. According to Olweus (1996), children with an active temperament who often use impulsive approaches to solve problems are more likely to become aggressive. The bullies in the film display aggressiveness by attempting to control their victims through physical strength and a lack of emotional intelligence (Magfirah, 2009). The bullies' low emotional intelligence is manifested by their difficulty in managing their emotions due to their limited sociocognitive skills. Vlachou et al. (2014) define sociocognitive skills as the ability of individuals to recognize others may have differing opinions, perspectives, and feelings. In addition, a relationship between rejection and aggression was found (Leary et al., 2006). The need to feel accepted by peers is recognized as a 'fundamental innate motivator' which is Hangyeol's strong drive to bully Geonwoo (Baumeister & Leary, 1995).

Bullying behavior have a significant impact on students' psychological condition, such as causing a loss of self-esteem. Geonwoo and Hangyeol as victimized children have a higher probability of developing clinical problems, such as depression, feelings of insecurity, low self-esteem, loneliness, isolation, and somatic symptoms. Geonwoo and Hangyeol feel that they deserve such treatment, leading them to remain silent about their suffering (Magfirah, 2009). When self-esteem is diminished, victims may feel worthless, leading to a weakened psychological state (Ima & Ajeng, 2020).

External factors are influences from outside the individual, such as family dynamics, socioeconomic status, and the presence of discriminatory school environments. The complexities of family issues, like the absence of fathers, lack of

communication between parents and children, and parental divorce, can contribute to significant acts of aggression. A dysfunctional social environment within the family can lead adolescents to engage in various deviant behaviors (Rochaniningsih, 2004). Parenting failures may also be associated with low emotional regulation skills, lack of prosocial behavior, empathy, and problem-solving abilities for the bullies (DeVooght et al., 2015). Negative friendships and environments can correlate with bullying behavior (Espelage et al., 2000). Parents must show affection and try to facilitate their children's friendship in accordance with applicable norms (Ipak Rima Tuah Niate, et al., 2017). Communication is one of the aspects that affect bullying because when the family uses a covert and indirect communication pattern, it results in the child's personality becoming closed, experiencing doubts about conveying messages, difficulty listening to others, difficulty expressing personal desires or opinions clearly, and difficulty communicating anger well so that it is often expressed inappropriately (Epstein et al., 1983). The results of the research by Connolly and O'Moore (2003) show that effective and positive communication with adolescents in the family is important in the functioning of a family because it forms the social and personal skills of adolescents.

The present study suggests that adolescents from low socioeconomic status families are at a high risk of being involved in bullying, particularly as victims (Seo et al., 2017). This is depicted in the film as well, where the extreme differences in economic class between Geonwoo and the bullies contribute to the bullying case. Being a low-income scholarship student, Geonwoo is an easy target for bullying due to the inequality in socioeconomic status.

Furthermore, the school environment in the film is portrayed as disharmonious and discriminatory. The lack of supervision and ethical guidance from teachers allows bullying cases to go undetected, and conflicts are not properly addressed, leading to a normalization of bullying behavior (Siregar, 2016). Additionally, reporting bullying to teachers did not stop the bullying and led to further torture of Geonwoo. In this film, the school internally handled the bullying case, leading to injustices that harm Geonwoo (Magfirah, 2009). Alongside their teaching obligations, teachers also have a crucial responsibility to guide, direct, and evaluate students in terms of their behavior. (Fikriyah et al., 2022; Musawamah, 2021). Therefore, teachers play a crucial role in guiding students, which can help strengthen victims' resilience against bullying behavior. By closely monitoring students, teachers can help minimize bullying

incidents. This supervision should be carried out in stages to ensure effective monitoring and to help students avoid becoming perpetrators or victims of bullying. (Salsa & Nanik, 2022). There needs to be synergy between stakeholders such as the government, the private sector, educational institutions, and the community to break the chain of bullying and avoid the things behind the occurrence of bullying in schools. (Mishna et al., 2006).

3.2.1 The Relevance of Bullying to Parenting Style and Culture in South Korea

In different cultures, bullying varies, and there are significant differences between Western and Eastern countries. This is often categorized as collectivistic or individualistic. For example, South Korea follows a collectivistic culture where people depend on their group members, prioritizing harmony between them (Hofstede, 2005). Bullying in early childhood in South Korea has been studied minimally, with only a few investigations into its prevalence. Research indicates that parents with individualistic cultural values focus on developing their child's "sense of self" to take control of their lives. In contrast, in collectivistic cultures, there's an emphasis on obedience, reliability, appropriate behavior, and social obligations of children, promoting interdependence between parents and children. (Wang & Leichtman, 2000).

Several other studies contradict these findings which claim that bullying is more prevalent among collectivistic cultures, rather than individualistic-oriented cultures. Nesdale and Naito (2005) compared a group of students from Japan (a typical collectivistic country) and a group from Australia who were individualistic, and found that the tendency to bullying was higher among collectivists than individualists. On the same line, Hussein (2009) reported that students from Egypt and Saudi Arabia showed higher rates of bullying behavior than American students. These findings are explained through a stronger collectivist need to be part of and accepted by the inner group. Therefore, members of the inner group behave in a way that fosters conformity with group norms, and biases that favor the inner group versus the outside group. In other words, the collectivist fear of being excluded from the inner group makes them conform to the rules of the inner group even if these rules are socially unacceptable and promotes antisocial behavior towards the outside group (Triandis, 2001).

Through the processes of social learning, cultural values are thought to be culturally transmitted to children inter-generationally (e.g. Prioste et al. 2015; March 2015). The parental attitudes seem to influence the development of children's values and attitudes, even when not controlling for the influences of family status, or other socio-demographical characteristics (Hitlin and Piliavin 2004). Based on the cultural values that are dominant in a community, the perceptions of parenting interactions may change (e.g. Cukur et al. 2004). For example, Kim (2005) reported that adolescents in collectivistic cultures perceived parental control as positive and as associated with parental acceptance and warmth. On the other hand, adolescents in individualistic cultures perceived parental control as negative. Other reports also support that collectivistic societies promote authoritarian parenting styles and individuals coming from such cultures favor authoritarian parenting, as they perceive it to be related to positive developmental outcomes in adolescence (e.g., Grusec et al. 1997; Keshavarz and Baharudin 2012).

Similarly, authoritative parenting is more idealized in individualistic societies, as in these cultures authoritarian parenting is perceived as an indication of dictatorial and controlling practices (Chao 2001; Keshavarz and Baharudin 2012). However, authoritarian parenting style is theoretically more strongly related to vertical values rather than to collectivism in general, as vertical values, similarly to authoritarian practices, emphasize obedience to authority figures, power imbalance, and/or the need to acquire control and authority status (Bond and Smith 1996; Triandis and Gelfand 1998). One should note the cultural differences in the perceptions regarding the motives of authoritarian parenting, as even in collectivistic cultures, authoritarian parenting may promote increased obedience to rules and power imbalance, but may be conceptualized as promoting equality and respect for others (Georgiou et al. 2013).

Based on the conceptualization of Triandis (2001), family integrity and functioning are inherently related to the emergence of individualistic and collectivistic values in children, as child-rearing practices also emphasize different parts depending on parental cultural values and other culture-specific characteristics. Therefore, a bidirectional relationship exists between the cultural values and parenting practices, as cultures impact on the parenting practices,

which subsequently impact on the cultural values developed by children (Bornstein and Cheah 2006).

In 2003, Baldry found that exposure to parental violence and child abuse strongly predicts bullying behavior. In some Asian countries, parental emphasis on education was also found to be an important influence on bullying (D. Lee & Kim, 2000; Moon, 2002; Naito & Gielen, 2005; Shin, 2000). The researchers identified two possible pathways of influence: (a) the pressure to engage in bullying behavior due to the high importance of academic achievement and (b) parental involvement with school boards.

South Korean society may be very competitive in nature. Korean students are pushed into a competitive environment to succeed, viewing their peers as competitors rather than friends. As a result, the prevalence and correlation of victimization among Korean adolescents may differ from other countries. The study's results also showed that a poor relationship with parents was related to bullying victimization.

Positive and warm parent-child relationships are associated with emotional and behavioral resilience in response to bullying victimization. These findings align with developmental theories suggesting a connection between early parenting experiences and later peer interactions. For instance, attachment theory posits that children internalize important aspects of the parenting relationship, which in turn influences their behavior in later relationships with peers.

Park (1995), Parenting behavior is classified into compassion, acceptance, rejection, sanction, and permissiveness. Loving and receptive parenting behavior refers to the behavior of parents who treat children with respect and positive care and affection. Restrictive parenting behavior focuses on the negative aspects of the child rather than accepting the child as he is.

Mothers generally use positive strategies, teaching their children social and emotional skills to react appropriately. These skills help in resolving peer conflicts positively, maintaining relationships, improving empathy, and communication skills.

The film depicts an absence of mothers' roles in childcare. For example, Yunjae's mother often leaves him abroad, Geonwoo's mother is busy working as the backbone of the family, and Hangyeol's and Kyubeom's mothers have

passed away. This is contrary to the culture in South Korea, where mothers tend to be more involved in the upbringing of their children than fathers (Hong dan Lee 2019).

Research indicates that children who have experienced rejection, insecure attachments to their mothers, overprotective parenting behaviors, negative attitudes, or abandonment of wealth are more likely to experience peer bullying (Finnegan, Hodges & Perry, 1996, 1998; Olweus, 1993; Troy & Sroufe, 1987).

4. CLOSING

Based on the results of the analysis, it can be concluded that the film "I Want to Know Your Parents" depicts bullying among minors in South Korea. The data analysis revealed the type, impact, influencing factors, and underlying meaning behind the bullying scenes in the film. Bullying is influenced by both internal and external factors. Internal factors contributing to bullying include personality, low self-control, low self-esteem, low emotional intelligence, and low sociocognitive skills. The bullies' low emotional intelligence is manifested by their difficulty in managing their emotions due to limited sociocognitive skills. External factors include family dynamics, socioeconomic status, and discriminatory school environments. Parenting failures may also be associated with low emotional regulation skills, lack of prosocial behavior, empathy, and problem-solving abilities for bullies. This is depicted in the film as well, where extreme differences in economic class contribute to the bullying case. Furthermore, the film portrays the school environment as disharmonious and discriminatory. The lack of supervision and ethical guidance from teachers allows bullying cases to go undetected, and conflicts are not properly addressed, leading to a normalization of bullying behavior.

The analysis identified five distinct categories of bullying in the film: physical bullying, verbal bullying, nonverbal bullying, relational bullying, cyberbullying, and sexual harassment. Physical bullying is shown as hitting, wielding a knife, strangling, etc. Verbal bullying is depicted through name-calling, belittling, cursing, etc. Nonverbal bullying is represented by stares, arrogant facial expressions, intonation, etc. Relational bullying is shown through rumors and false accusations. Cyberbullying is represented by recording and uploading bullying videos. Additionally, sexual harassment is depicted when a character forces another not to wear clothes.

Bullying behavior can have a significant impact on students' psychological condition, such as causing a loss of self-esteem. Victimized children have a higher

probability of developing clinical problems, including anxiety, depression, insecurity, low self-esteem, loneliness, isolation, and somatic symptoms.

The study also explores different meanings, including denotation and connotation, as well as myths contained in films. Myths are categorized into bullying and aggressive behavior, bullying and self-esteem, bully-victim in bullying, bullying and status. Bullying, in Hangyeol's case, potentially acted as a survival function: a *buffer to a life of rejection*: a social-behavioral mechanism that protected him socially and emotionally from the negative impacts of being excluded and isolated (Green et al., 2023). The film depicts how bullying can lead to a cycle of revenge, as victims who are mistreated may hold onto their anger and eventually take it out on others they perceive as weaker.

The film unapologetically sheds light on the prevalence of injustice and bullying in schools, aiming to raise awareness and prevent bullying. In addressing bullying, parents, teachers, community, and children need to cooperate.

Based on the conclusion above, the suggestions that can be given by the researcher are as follows: the researcher suggests that the signs interpreted in the film can be a reference in preventing bullying in the school environment. This research can be used as reference material in making similar research and development in the future. The educational institutions need to provide psychoeducation, guidance, counseling, and supervision both to victims of bullying and to bullies. Parents need to be more active in supervising their children's behavior at school.

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