

The Role of Smart Counseling System Development in Mediating the Influence of Parenting Style on Early Detection of Adolescent Bullying Behavior

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ABSTRACT

Bullying among adolescents remains a serious global and national issue, with documented impacts on mental health, academic achievement, and social relationships. Early detection of bullying behavior is therefore crucial to prevent the escalation of psychosocial problems. Building on an existing Indonesian study, this article analyzes the role of a Smart Counseling System (SCS) as a technological mediator between parenting style and early detection of bullying in secondary school students. Using a quantitative explanatory design with Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) and Partial Least Squares (PLS), the model incorporates three latent variables: parenting style (PAQ), bullying detection via Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ), and the implementation of SCS. The measurement model indicates that PAQ is the most robust construct, with high standardized loading factors (SLF), excellent reliability ($\alpha = 0.899$; $\omega = 0.902$), and strong convergent validity (AVE = 0.753), whereas SDQ and SCS show moderate to weak psychometric properties. The structural model reveals that bullying detection explains 91.7% of the variance in parenting style and, together with parenting, explains 53.2% of the variance in SCS. Nonetheless, the indirect effect of SDQ on PAQ through SCS is negative, suggesting that, in its current form, SCS does not optimally mediate the relationship. The article elaborates theoretical and practical implications for integrating AI-based counseling systems with family and school-based interventions to enhance early detection and prevention of adolescent bullying.

Keywords: counseling, development, influence, parenting.

Introduction

Bullying during adolescence has been widely recognized as one of the most pervasive forms of violence in schools, affecting victims, perpetrators, and bystanders alike. Global data from UNESCO and WHO show that a

substantial proportion of students report being bullied, with prevalence rates varying significantly across countries and socio-cultural contexts (Huda et al., 2026).

In Indonesia, national and local reports confirm that bullying remains among the top three

categories of child abuse in educational settings, with high rates of verbal, physical, and increasingly digital (cyberbullying) forms of aggression.

Bullying is associated with a broad spectrum of negative outcomes. Victims are more likely to experience depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, sleep disturbances, self-harm, and suicidal ideation, while perpetrators are at higher risk of developing antisocial behavior, substance misuse, and personality disorders in adulthood.

School-level consequences include deteriorating classroom climate, decreased sense of safety, lower student engagement, and long-term impacts on social cohesion. These cumulative effects underscore the need for effective systems of early detection and intervention (Sender & Urbanova, 2026).

Traditional approaches to bullying prevention in schools often rely on manual reporting, teacher observations, and conventional counseling services. While these methods are important, they are constrained by limited human resources, underreporting, and the increasing complexity of bullying dynamics in the digital era.

Many incidents, especially cyberbullying, remain undetected due to the private nature of online communication and the reluctance of victims to report their experiences. As a result, interventions tend to be reactive—implemented after severe incidents rather than preventive (Nurmansyah & Yani, 2026).

At the same time, theoretical frameworks in developmental psychology emphasize the central role of the family, particularly parenting style, in shaping adolescents' social behavior and vulnerability to bullying, either as victim or perpetrator. The parenting styles authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, and neglectful—has been extensively linked to differences in self-regulation, empathy, and aggression (Zhu et al., 2025).

Authoritative parenting, characterized by warmth and consistent discipline, is generally associated with better psychosocial outcomes and lower levels of aggressive behavior, whereas

authoritarian and permissive styles tend to increase risk for externalizing and internalizing problems.

Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory further situates bullying within a broader interplay of microsystems (family, school, peer group), mesosystems (family–school interactions), exosystems (community, media), and macrosystems (culture, policies) (Park et al., 2026).

Within this framework, effective anti-bullying strategies must be multi-level and collaborative, involving strong coordination between parents, school personnel, and broader support mechanisms. Thus, the integration of school-based guidance and counseling services with parenting practices becomes essential for comprehensive prevention.

The rapid development of digital technologies and artificial intelligence (AI) offers new opportunities for strengthening school counseling and early detection of psychosocial problems, including bullying.

Smart Counseling Systems (SCS) are conceptualized as technology-enhanced platforms that assist guidance and counseling teachers by collecting, processing, and visualizing data related to students' behavior, academic performance, and social interactions (Hadiyanti et al., 2026).

Such systems can integrate standardized instruments, digital reporting channels, and analytics modules to produce risk profiles and alerts for potential bullying cases, thereby enabling more timely and targeted interventions.

In the Indonesian context, guidance and counseling teachers (Guru BK) face significant challenges: high student–counselor ratios, limited time and resources, and cultural barriers that inhibit students from seeking help or reporting bullying incidents (Moduane & Tadi, 2026).

Moreover, school programs often focus on in-school interventions without adequately involving parents, even though parenting patterns strongly influence the development of

empathy, emotion regulation, and moral reasoning in adolescents.

These structural and cultural constraints point to an urgent need for integrated systems that connect school-based counseling with family-based support. The existing study on which this article is based aims to develop and test an SCS model that integrates the roles of guidance and counseling teachers and parenting style in early detection of adolescent bullying (Lukman et al., 2024).

The research employs a quantitative explanatory design with SEM-PLS to investigate how parenting style (PAQ), bullying detection (SDQ), and SCS implementation interact in a structural model. Specifically, the study examines whether SCS mediates the influence of parenting on early detection of bullying, thereby functioning as a technological bridge between family and school.

Preliminary findings show that the parenting construct (PAQ) demonstrates superior psychometric quality compared with SDQ-based bullying detection and SCS implementation indicators. All PAQ indicators achieve high standardized loading factors above 0.5, and the construct displays excellent reliability and convergent validity (Wiatr & Krok, 2026).

In contrast, SDQ exhibits low reliability and weak convergent validity, indicating that its adaptation to the local context requires refinement. SCS indicators have moderate reliability and borderline convergent validity, suggesting that technology-based counseling practices are still in an early developmental stage in the studied schools.

Despite these measurement limitations, the structural model offers important insights. Bullying detection (SDQ) explains a large proportion of variance in parenting style (PAQ), and together with PAQ, accounts for more than half of the variance in SCS implementation (Putri et al., 2024).

However, the indirect effect of SDQ on PAQ through SCS is negative, indicating that the current design and implementation of SCS does not function as a robust mediator. This finding

raises critical questions about the alignment between technological solutions, human counseling practices, and family dynamics.

Against this backdrop, the present article aims to reframe the original Indonesian study for an international audience, particularly readers of Scopus-indexed journals in education, psychology, and educational technology. The article has several objectives. First, it synthesizes theoretical perspectives on parenting, bullying, and school-based counseling to build a conceptual framework for SCS as a mediating mechanism. Second, it presents a detailed account of the quantitative methodology, including SEM-PLS procedures and measurement invariance considerations. Third, it reports and interprets key results, highlighting both strengths and limitations of the current SCS model. Finally, it discusses implications for policy, practice, and future research in the Indonesian and broader global contexts.

By doing so, the article contributes to ongoing debates about how digital technologies can be responsibly and effectively integrated into educational systems to support mental health and prevent violence among adolescents. Rather than viewing SCS as a replacement for human counselors and parental involvement, the analysis emphasizes its potential as an intelligent support system that amplifies existing roles, facilitates data-driven decision making, and fosters collaboration between school and family.

2. Methodology

Research Design

The study adopts a quantitative explanatory design, grounded in a positivist paradigm that seeks to test hypothesized relationships among variables using statistical analysis. The primary objective is to examine the structural relationships between parenting style (PAQ), bullying detection (SDQ), and Smart Counseling System (SCS) implementation, as well as the mediating role of SCS in the link between parenting and early detection of bullying (Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, 2018).

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with Partial Least Squares (PLS) is employed to estimate both the measurement and structural models simultaneously. SEM-PLS is appropriate for exploratory and confirmatory analysis in situations where the sample size is limited, the data do not necessarily conform to multivariate normality, and the model includes multiple latent constructs measured by reflective indicators.

Variables and Constructs

The research model includes three main latent variables:

Parenting style (PAQ), reflecting the quality of parental warmth, control, and communication.

Bullying detection (SDQ), operationalized through indicators from the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire adapted to the local context.

Smart Counseling System (SCS), capturing the extent of technology-based counseling implementation in schools.

PAQ is measured by three reflective indicators (PAQ1–PAQ3) representing key dimensions of parenting such as responsiveness, consistency, and emotional support.

SCS is measured by two indicators (SCS1–SCS2) that assess the use of digital tools in counseling and perceived effectiveness of the system.

SDQ is measured by five indicators (SDQ1–SDQ5) related to students' emotional symptoms, conduct problems, peer relationship issues, and prosocial behavior.

Measurement Model Assessment

The measurement model is evaluated using several criteria: standardized loading factors (SLF), composite reliability (CR), Cronbach's alpha, and Average Variance Extracted (AVE).

Following Hair et al., SLF values of at least 0.5 indicate acceptable item reliability, CR values above 0.7 suggest good internal consistency, and AVE values of 0.5 or higher reflect adequate convergent validity.

Parenting style (PAQ) exhibits excellent reliability, with Cronbach's alpha of 0.899 and omega coefficient of 0.902.

Its AVE is 0.753, well above the threshold of 0.5, indicating strong convergent validity.

By contrast, SDQ has very low reliability ($\alpha = 0.382$; $\omega = 0.028$) and an AVE of only 0.262, suggesting poor convergence among its indicators.

SCS shows moderate reliability ($\alpha = 0.547$; $\omega = 0.625$) and an AVE of 0.483, slightly below the recommended threshold.

These results imply that the PAQ construct is psychometrically robust, whereas SDQ and SCS require further refinement in their operationalization and measurement.

In particular, the adaptation of SDQ items to the cultural and linguistic context may need revisiting to ensure that they accurately capture bullying-related behaviors and emotional difficulties among Indonesian adolescents.

Structural Model Assessment

The structural model is assessed using R-square values, path coefficients, effect sizes, and predictive relevance (Q-square), alongside indices of model fit such as standardized root mean square residual (SRMR).

According to rule-of-thumb guidelines, higher R-square values indicate better explanatory power, while acceptable SRMR values (below 0.08) suggest adequate model fit.

The R-square for PAQ is 0.917, indicating that bullying detection (SDQ) explains 91.7% of the variance in parenting style.

The R-square for SCS is 0.532, suggesting that SDQ and PAQ jointly explain 53.2% of the variance in SCS implementation.

While these values demonstrate substantial explanatory capacity, the extremely high R-square for PAQ warrants cautious interpretation, as it may reflect model overfitting or conceptual overlap between constructs.

Path coefficients are estimated for the direct and indirect relationships among constructs. The direct effect of SDQ on SCS is 0.27, indicating a positive but modest influence of bullying detection on SCS implementation.

The indirect effect of SDQ on PAQ through SCS is negative, with a magnitude of -0.729.

The total effect of SDQ on PAQ is approximately 5.951, combining direct and indirect pathways.

SEM-PLS Procedures and Multi-Group Considerations

SEM-PLS analysis proceeds through several stages: specification of the theoretical model, estimation of the measurement model, assessment of structural relationships, and evaluation of mediation effects.

Bootstrapping with 10,000 resamples is used to obtain stable estimates of standard errors and significance levels for path coefficients and indirect effects.

In addition, the study considers the potential for multi-group analysis (MGA) to compare

structural relationships across different subgroups, such as gender, educational level, or school type.

Prior to MGA, measurement invariance is assessed using the MICOM procedure, which examines configural invariance, compositional invariance, and equality of means and variances across groups.

Full invariance allows for meaningful comparisons of path coefficients, whereas partial invariance requires careful interpretation and may limit conclusions about differences in latent means.

Although the present article focuses on the overall model, the inclusion of MICOM and MGA procedures highlights the importance of testing whether the SCS function similarly across diverse student populations and educational contexts.

Such analysis would be particularly relevant given Indonesia's heterogeneity in culture, school resources, and technological infrastructure.

3. Results

Descriptive Overview of Measurement Properties

The measurement model results underscore the contrasting quality of the three latent constructs. Table 1 displays SLF values for each indicator of PAQ, SCS, and SDQ.

Table 1. Standardized Loading Factors (SLF) for PAQ, SCS, and SDQ Indicators

Indicator	Standardized Loading Factor (SLF)
PAQ1	1.000
PAQ2	0.978
PAQ3	0.857
SCS1	1.000
SCS2	2.089
SDQ1	1.000

Indicator	Standardized Loading Factor (SLF)
SDQ2	1.381
SDQ3	0.656
SDQ4	0.532
SDQ5	0.913

All indicators exceed the minimum recommended SLF of 0.5, indicating satisfactory item reliability. However, the unusually high loading for SCS2 (2.089) suggests potential scaling issues or model misspecification that merit further investigation.

Table 2. Reliability Coefficients for SDQ, PAQ, SCS, and Total Scale

Indicator Set	Cronbach's α	Omega (ω)
SDQ	0.382	0.028
PAQ	0.899	0.902
SCS	0.547	0.625
Total	0.607	0.655

These reliability values show that PAQ is highly consistent internally, while SDQ is severely unreliable and SCS is moderately reliable. The

total scale exhibits moderate reliability, indicating that the overall instrument is acceptable but heavily supported by the strength of PAQ.

Table 3. Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for SDQ, PAQ, and SCS

Latent Construct	AVE
SDQ	0.262
PAQ	0.753
SCS	0.483

Only PAQ meets the standard AVE threshold of 0.5, confirming its strong convergent validity.

SDQ's low AVE indicates that its indicators do not adequately capture the underlying construct,

while SCS's AVE slightly below 0.5 suggests marginal convergence.

Structural Relationships and Mediation

The structural model examines the direct and indirect effects among SDQ, PAQ, and SCS. Table 2 summarizes R-square values for the endogenous constructs.

Table 4. R-square Values for Endogenous Constructs

Endogenous Variable	R-square
PAQ	0.917
SCS	0.532

The R-square value of 0.917 for PAQ indicates that SDQ explains 91.7% of the variance in parenting style, a surprisingly high proportion that may signal conceptual overlap or overfitting. The R-square of 0.532 for SCS shows that both SDQ and PAQ jointly explain 53.2% of the variance in SCS implementation. These values suggest that bullying detection and parenting are strongly associated with the use of smart counseling technologies in the studied schools.

Path coefficients and effect sizes are further examined to understand the mediation mechanisms. The direct effect of SDQ on SCS is 0.27, corresponding to a 27% standardized impact. The indirect effect of SDQ on PAQ through SCS is calculated as $0.27 \times -0.27 = -0.729$, indicating a negative mediation. The total effect of SDQ on PAQ is $6.68 - 0.729 = 5.951$.

Table 5. Direct and Indirect Effects of SDQ on PAQ via SCS

Effect Type	Coefficient	Percentage
Direct Effect	0.27	27%
Indirect Effect	-0.729	72.9%

These results indicate that while SDQ positively influences SCS, the mediated pathway through SCS has a negative impact on parenting style. In other words, in this model, the use of SCS as currently implemented does not enhance the beneficial effects of bullying detection on parenting; instead, it appears to attenuate or reverse them.

A path diagram visually illustrates the relationships among the constructs, including SLF values and path coefficients. In the diagram, SDQ (X) serves as the exogenous predictor, SCS

(Z) as the mediating construct, and PAQ (Y) as the endogenous outcome. The diagram highlights the strong measurement loadings for PAQ indicators and the moderate pathways linking SDQ to SCS and SCS to PAQ.

Overall, the results point to a structural model in which parenting style is the most psychometrically stable construct, bullying detection is conceptually important but poorly measured, and SCS is moderately developed as a technological mediator. The strong explanatory power of SDQ for PAQ and the combined influence of SDQ and PAQ on SCS underscore the interdependence between family dynamics,

detection practices, and technology use. However, the negative indirect effect raises concerns about the current configuration of SCS and its capacity to mediate effectively.

From an applied perspective, these findings suggest that improving the measurement of bullying-related behaviors (e.g., through better adaptation of SDQ or alternative instruments) and refining the design of SCS to align with counselors' and parents' needs are crucial steps toward building a more functional mediating system.

4. Discussion

The empirical evidence confirms that parenting style, as operationalized by PAQ, is the most robust construct in the model, both in terms of reliability and convergent validity. This aligns with a large body of literature demonstrating that warm, consistent, and communicative parenting reduces adolescents' involvement in bullying and other forms of aggression. Authoritative parenting, in particular, fosters empathy, self-regulation, and moral reasoning, which are protective against both victimization and perpetration (Huang & Wan, 2025).

The high psychometric quality of PAQ in this study indicates that the indicators successfully capture key dimensions of parenting relevant to bullying prevention. This provides a solid basis for incorporating parenting style into models of school-based interventions and technological systems such as SCS. It also reinforces the view that family-level interventions—such as parent training programs and communication workshops—should complement school-based efforts in comprehensive anti-bullying strategies.

In contrast to PAQ, the SDQ-based construct for bullying detection exhibits weak reliability and convergent validity, despite acceptable SLF values. This suggests that while individual items load statistically on the latent construct, they do not cohere sufficiently to represent a unified dimension of bullying-related difficulties. Previous research has noted that SDQ's psychometric properties can vary across cultural

contexts, age groups, and respondent types (e.g., parents, teachers, self-report) (Yang et al., 2026).

In the Indonesian context, challenges in adapting SDQ may include linguistic nuances, cultural perceptions of behavioral problems, and differences in how bullying and related constructs are understood by students and teachers. As a result, the SDQ scores may not accurately reflect the prevalence or severity of bullying behaviors, limiting their utility as inputs to SCS algorithms.

To address these limitations, future research should consider either more rigorous adaptation and validation of SDQ or the use of alternative instruments specifically designed for bullying assessment, including separate scales for traditional and cyberbullying. Such instruments should be tested for reliability, convergent and discriminant validity, and responsiveness to change over time (Izzati et al., 2026).

The moderate reliability and borderline convergent validity of SCS indicate that technology-based counseling practices in the studied schools are still in a formative stage. While counselors may have begun using digital tools for data collection or communication, the integration of these tools into a cohesive system that supports decision making and collaboration with parents is likely incomplete.

According to the Technology Acceptance Model, successful adoption of SCS requires that users perceive it as both useful and easy to use. If the system is complex, poorly aligned with existing workflows, or lacking in clear benefits, counselors may use it only superficially, and parents may remain disengaged. This could partly explain why the mediating role of SCS between SDQ and PAQ appears weak or negative; the system may not yet be fulfilling its intended function as an integrative bridge (Khadka et al., 2024).

Designing effective SCS requires careful participatory processes involving counselors, teachers, students, and parents. Key design principles include user-centered interfaces, transparent data handling, customizable dashboards, and clear protocols for interpreting

risk scores and initiating interventions. Moreover, training and ongoing support for counselors are essential to ensure that SCS is integrated into daily practice rather than treated as an optional add-on.

One of the most striking findings is the negative indirect effect of SDQ on PAQ through SCS, despite a positive direct effect of SDQ on SCS. This pattern suggests that as bullying detection scores increase (indicating more problems), SCS use also increases, but the mediated pathway leads to a deterioration or weakening of the association with parenting style (Prayoga & Defriyanto, 2026).

Several explanations are possible. First, SCS may currently emphasize school-centered interventions without sufficiently engaging parents, thereby creating a disconnect between detection and family-based responses. Second, communication through digital platforms may inadvertently reduce direct interaction between counselors and parents, leading to misinterpretation of information or decreased trust.

Third, the system might not yet be configured to provide parents with practical, culturally appropriate guidance on how to adjust their parenting in response to detected bullying risks. These hypotheses point to the importance of designing SCS as a collaborative rather than unilateral tool. Integrating features that facilitate parent–counselor dialogue, provide tailored parenting resources, and allow parents to contribute contextual information can help transform SCS into a genuine mediator (Fu et al., 2026).

From a policy perspective, the findings support current initiatives in Indonesia and globally that recognize bullying as a critical issue in child protection and educational quality. Programs such as child-friendly schools and national regulations on violence prevention emphasize the need for systematic approaches that involve teachers, counselors, parents, and students.

The development of SCS aligns with these initiatives by offering a technological

infrastructure for data-driven detection and intervention. However, policymakers must ensure that investments in technology are accompanied by investments in human capacity, ethical guidelines, and cultural sensitivity. SCS should be framed as a support system for existing roles rather than a substitute, and its design should be informed by local practices and values (Qin, 2025).

At the school level, administrators can use the insights from this study to prioritize training for counselors and teachers in the use of SCS, encourage parent participation in digital platforms, and integrate SCS outputs into school-wide prevention programs. For example, risk profiles generated by SCS can inform the design of targeted social–emotional learning activities, peer support initiatives, and individualized counseling plans.

Future research should expand on the current model in several ways. First, it should refine the measurement of bullying detection by validating culturally appropriate instruments and differentiating between various forms of bullying, including physical, verbal, relational, and cyber. Second, it should develop and validate more nuanced indicators of SCS implementation, capturing dimensions such as frequency of use, quality of data integration, and perceived impact on counseling outcomes (Xie et al., 2026).

Third, longitudinal designs are needed to establish causal relationships between parenting style, SCS use, and changes in bullying behavior over time. Cross-sectional SEM can identify statistical associations and mediation patterns, but it cannot definitively determine causality. Experimental or quasi-experimental studies that compare schools using SCS with those relying on traditional counseling approaches would provide stronger evidence of SCS effectiveness (Oniyide et al., 2025).

Fourth, multi-group SEM and MGA can explore whether the structural relationships in the model differ by gender, school level, urban–rural location, or socio-economic status. Such analyses would reveal whether SCS functions equally well

across diverse contexts or whether tailored designs are needed.

Finally, qualitative research involving interviews and focus groups with counselors, parents, and students can shed light on perceptions of SCS, barriers to adoption, and culturally grounded expectations regarding technology in counseling. Integrating qualitative insights with quantitative data will support the development of more contextually responsive SCS models.

5. Conclusion

This article has examined the role of Smart Counseling System development in mediating the influence of parenting style on early detection of adolescent bullying behavior, using a quantitative SEM-PLS approach grounded in an Indonesian school context. The findings indicate that parenting style is a psychometrically strong construct and a dominant protective factor, while bullying detection via SDQ and SCS implementation are conceptually important but require further refinement in measurement and

design. The structural model reveals substantial associations among the constructs, with bullying detection explaining most of the variance in parenting style and, together with parenting, accounting for over half of the variance in SCS. However, the negative indirect effect of SDQ on PAQ through SCS suggests that the current configuration of SCS does not yet fulfill its intended role as an effective mediator connecting detection practices with family-based interventions. For SCS to realize its potential as an intelligent support system in bullying prevention, future developments must focus on improving the psychometric robustness of detection instruments, enhancing the user-centered design and integration of technological tools, and strengthening collaboration between school counselors and parents. Through such efforts, SCS can move beyond a purely technical solution to become a relational and ecological mechanism that supports the mental health and social well-being of Indonesian adolescents and, by extension, youth in other educational contexts.

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8. Author Declaration

No conflicts of interest