

## Strengthening Social Care Character in Preventing Bullying Behavior in Elementary School Through the Role of Peers

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### ABSTRACT

This research was conducted considering the tendency of bullying behavior which has now become a phenomenon that often occurs, especially in the world of education. One way that can be done to prevent it is through the application of social caring characters with support from peers because students spend more time with their friends. This study aims to describe the process of implementing social care characters through the role of peers in preventing bullying behavior in schools. The method used is qualitative descriptive with a case study approach. The informants in this study were class teachers and learners. Data collection techniques through interviews, observation, and documentation studies. The data analysis technique used is the Miles and Huberman model which includes data reduction, data presentation, and conclusions. The results of the study concluded that the application of social care characters through support from peers can prevent bullying behavior in students.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Character education is an important part of the National Education system. Education must be able to form individuals who are educated and have character. One of the efforts that can be done is through strengthening character education. Character is formed through the learning process in several places, such as at home, school, and the surrounding environment. Parties who play an important role in shaping a person's character include family, teachers, and peers. "Good character as a life by performing good actions with respect to oneself and others." [1].

Character education is an important aspect that supports children's development that must be done from an early age, namely since childhood. At an early age, children enter the golden age where there begins to be a formation of character in individual children. Children are expected to grow into independent and self-trusting individuals. Character education can be done in families, schools, and neighborhoods.

Character education is one of the important things in the world of education, because character education can determine whether a person can be responsible for what he does or not. The application of character education in basic education must get a larger portion than education that teaches knowledge. Character is an aspect that determines a person's success. A person's good academic ability will not mean anything if it is not balanced with good character. Character education will encourage a child to grow with confidence. Children are expected to develop and explore their abilities and skills without neglecting positive values and kindness.

One of the character values that must be instilled is the value of social care because students are social creatures who cannot live without the help of other humans. Social education is an attitude and action that always wants to help others in need. [2]. The cultivation of social care character is an important key in shaping the personality of students, because concern for things around them is currently considered to be declining. Many negative behaviors arise due to a decreased sense of social care in students.

Man as a social creature cannot live without the help of other human beings. Social care is a form of attitude and action that reflects concern for others or communities that need each other. This social concern is also related to the values of other human lives, such as honesty, compassion, humility, friendliness, kindness, and so on. In the world of education, the cultivation of social care character is one of the 18 character education regulated by the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia. Instilling the character of social care is an important key in shaping the personality of students, because concern for things is currently considered to be declining. Many negative behaviors arise due to a decreased sense of social care in students.

Bullying behavior is one example of negative behavior that often occurs, especially in the school environment. Bullying is an act of repeated intimidation by a stronger party against another person or group of people who are weaker, done deliberately and aimed at hurting the victim physically or emotionally. [3]. Bullying can happen anywhere, anytime, and is done by anyone during human interaction. Types of bullying that are often carried out include, namely physical bullying, verbal bullying, mental bullying.

The impact of bullying behavior greatly affects children's lives fundamentally. Social support from people around is indispensable. Social support can come from family, friends, or the surrounding environment. Social support is defined as a person's perception of potential support received from the environment, referring to the pleasure felt as appreciation of caring and providing assistance in the context of close relationships. [4].

Students spend more time with their friends while at school. Peers become important people in the socialization of learners because their interactions create more relationships than relationships with family members. [5]. Learners who are victims of bullying are very important to get support from their peers. Students who get support from their peers will feel more valuable so that their confidence will grow. Therefore, it is important for students to get social support, especially from peers so that they can live life confidently and avoid bullying behavior.

Initial observations carried out by researchers in one of the elementary schools in Binangun District, Cilacap Regency show that the school has tried to provide awareness to students about morals in order to become good individuals, character, and noble morals by implementing social care character education. Researchers also conducted interviews with classroom teachers and found a tendency of bullying behavior in students both in low and high grades. The types of bullying behavior tendencies that become like physical bullying are pushing, pinching and verbal bullying such as body shaming, taunting, dirty words, and cheering. The purpose of this study is to examine in depth the character of social care through the role of peers and its relationship with prevention of bullying behavior.

## 2. RESEARCH METHODS

The research method used by researchers is qualitative research. Qualitative research is research to understand what phenomena are experienced by research subjects holistically by using descriptions in the form of words and language in certain natural contexts and by utilizing various methods nature. [6].

The type of approach used in this study is a descriptive approach. The descriptive research approach is research conducted to determine the value of independent variables, either one variable or more (independent) without making comparisons or connecting with other variables. [7].

This research was conducted in one of the public elementary schools in Binangun District, Cilacap Regency. This study was conducted in March 2023. Research subjects are informants who provide information and data needed by researchers when research is carried out in the field. The subjects of the study are a representative part of the population and use certain techniques. [8]. The informants in this study were class teachers and learners.

The data collection techniques used are interviews, observations, and documentation studies. Primary data are obtained by in-depth interview techniques, while other data such as observation and documentation are only used as supporting data. Cloud is a data collection technique to obtain information extracted from a data source directly through conversation or answer. [9]. The interviews used in this study were in-depth interviews in the form of semi-structured interviews.

The data analysis techniques in this study were Miles and Huberman. Activities in data analysis must be carried out interactively and continuously until the data obtained is saturated. [10]. Activities in data analysis include data reduction, data display, and conclusion/verification.

## 3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### 3.1 Results

Researchers conducted interviews with key informants, namely class teachers and participants in SD Negeri WidarapayungWetan 02 to obtain in-depth information about strengthening social care characters in preventing bullying through the role of peers:

1. The role of teachers in providing strengthening of social care character to prevent bullying behavior.

Teacher as an educator has the main task of educating, teaching, guiding, directing, training and assessing and evaluating students in achieving the goals of character education. As an educator, the teacher is also a benchmark or model for students. An interview conducted with a class teacher at SD Negeri Widarapayung Wetan 02 in March 2023 said that the role of teachers is very necessary so that students can have good character. The teacher is tasked with directing students in a better direction so that the character of students is formed in accordance with the teacher's guidance. One of the character education reinforcements that has been applied to students is social care. The strategy carried out by teachers to provide social care character for students is to become a role model or example for students. Teachers treat all students equally regardless of differences so that it is expected that students will learn to follow the example given by the teacher. The teacher also guides students to establish good relationships with teachers and friends, care towards others, help each other, and love each other.

2. The role of Peers in providing reinforcement of social care character to prevent bullying behavior.

The role of the teacher is not only to provide learning materials, but also to shape the character of children at school. Teachers are asked to be sensitive to the conditions of the class being taught, so that teaching and learning activities (KBM) run safely and smoothly. A teacher must pay attention to the students and the situation in the classroom, whether it is conducive enough for learning or not. Teachers should also know if there is violence or bullying in the classroom, so as to provide the best solution. Friendship with peers can play an important role as a child's moral support. Peers become important people in a child's friendship because their interactions make the child understand social relationships more than family members. The opinions or ideas of peers are usually highly heeded and heard. Peer parents can be a good place to complain for children. Peers tend to understand problems better, because they are always together at school. The similarity of feelings can also affect closeness with peers. Through peers, children can learn to adapt themselves to their social demands.

The results of an interview with SZ as a grade 4 teacher at SDN Widarapayung Wetan 02 said, "Social support from other friends can encourage to always behave positively, prevent bullying behavior towards other friends, besides that support from friends is also an encouragement, especially for victims of bullying. They feel cared for, loved, not ignored so they are motivated to get up." The results of the researchers' observations on students of SD Negeri Widarapayung Wetan 02 also showed the same thing. "The approach from other friends is an encouragement for students who are often bullied, when in class who were quiet, aloof, became more cheerful, willing to hang out, play together and feel more confident. Classes become warmer, there is no mocking behavior and also students are excluded".

### 3.2 Discussion

Bullying is a major problem faced by children today. Bullying is a form of child abuse committed by peers to someone (child) who is 'lower' or weaker to get certain benefits or satisfaction. Bullying is often repetitive, unwanted, and deliberate aggressive behavior that occurs in the context of a perceived power imbalance relationship. [11].

Bullying is an act that harms both the victim and the perpetrator. The impact of physical and psychological bullying on students can linger for a long period of time. Bullying behavior has certain peculiarities or indicators. Educators must understand the indicators of bullying behavior so that bullying behavior can be prevented.

The characteristics of the bully can be seen from the way the perpetrator hurts the victim, making the victim feel depressed. This behavior is carried out continuously against the same victim regardless of the fate of the victim. Indicators of bullying behavior include a form of aggressive behavior that pleases the perpetrator to hurt the victim. Bullying behavior is carried out continuously and repeatedly. Another indicator is that bullying involves unequal power and power, leaving the victim unable to defend themselves effectively.

Bullying can occur anywhere when there is social interaction between people regardless of time and place. The environment of bullying is like school, often called school bullying, if work is called workplace bullying, internet or digital technology is called cyberbullying. Technological developments are increasingly influencing the occurrence of bullying behavior. This bullying behavior is generally carried out in cyberspace or often we know as cyber bullying. Bullying usually uses technology such as mobile phones or internet-based social networking sites. Intense monitoring is very necessary in minimizing the occurrence of such behavior.

Types of bullying behavior that are clearly carried out, including: bullying physical, verbal bullying, mental / psychological bullying. Forms of physical bullying include slapping, stepping on feet, grabbing, tackling, punishing by running. Forms of verbal bullying include dubbing, yelling, cursing, insulting,

humiliating in public, accusing, cheering, spreading gossip, slandering. Forms of mental/psychological bullying include: looking cynically, looking threateningly, silent, ostracizing, glaring.

Bullying does not occur suddenly, but because of a factor or cause in carrying out the bullying act. Factors that encourage someone to commit bullying include: family factors, environmental factors, facts or peers, school climate factors and social media factors. These factors unwittingly have a very dominant influence on the emergence of bullying behavior carried out by children. Need good parenting and proper supervision so that children are not wrong in developing.

The parenting style of a family has an important role in shaping children's behavior. Environmental factors themselves are divided into two, namely the school environment and the social environment of friends. Peers can have a negative influence because of the spread of the idea that bullying is not a big problem but a natural thing to do. Social media becomes a part of life that can affect a person's lifestyle. These media can be in the form of print or electronic media.

The culture of bullying is also common among elementary school learners. Bullying behavior occurs repeatedly, some are even done in a planned manner. Bullying that occurs in the school environment can be identified by various criteria, namely (a) physical violence to someone or indirectly such as mocking, spreading rumors about someone; (b) occurs repeatedly over time; (c) disproportionate power between victim and bully.[12]

Bullying usually occurs because of a certain factor or cause in doing so. Factors-factors that cause a person to be able to behave bullying are influenced among others by the way the family educates and how to get along with his friends. Wrong identification and bad friends can make children become depressed so that they take it out on others in the form of bullying behavior. These factors unwittingly have a very dominant influence on the emergence of bullying behavior carried out by children. Good parenting and proper supervision are needed so that children are not wrong in developing.

Observations in the field show that bullying in children starts from mutual ridicule and then causes intimidation by the perpetrator against the victim. The results of an interview with SZ as a grade 4 teacher of SD Negeri Widarapayung Wetan 02: "At first the children just joked as usual, over time they ridiculed each other such as calling each other with unpleasant nicknames, calling parents' names, offending physical appearance, clothing, even lesson grades so that sometimes it triggers violent practices at school". Data from documentation studies also show a tendency of bullying behavior in students at SD Negeri Widarapayung Wetan 02. The documentation that researchers collected was in the form of data on student conditions, school rules and regulations, student delinquency records, school communication books and other supporting data.

Bullying behavior has a huge impact on children's development both psychologically and mentally, short and long term. The impact of bullying behavior is very influential on children's lives. There are short numbers of bullying such as insecurity, fear of going to school, feeling isolated, feelings of low self-esteem, depression and even suffering from stress that can end in suicide. As a long-term impact, victims of bullying can suffer from emotional and behavioral problems.

The handling of bullying behavior that occurs in the school environment is still not optimal. Researchers found various impacts caused by bullying such as anxiety, feeling neglected, feeling inferior, and lazy to school. The same thing was also conveyed by SZ as a grade 4 teacher at SD Negeri Widarapayung Wetan 02: "Bullying behavior in children has an impact on its victims. Children who are bullied sometimes cry, throw tantrums, some become quiet and sometimes even some do not want to go to school for fear of being bullied again by their friends."

Seeing the impact caused, there needs to be efforts to prevent bullying. Research that shows a pattern of handling the impact of bullying as implemented by SMPN 1 Gerung, West Lombok Regency. (Muhammad Mabur Haslan et al., 2021) stated that the activities carried out by SMPN 1 Gerung West Lombok Regency were counseling and Focus Group Discussion (FGD). The counseling was carried out in order to provide information to students of SMP Negeri 21 Gerung related to "Counseling on the Impact of Bullying Behavior for Students and Efforts to Overcome It at SMPN 1 Gerung, West Lombok Regency". Focus Group Discussion (FGD) activities themselves are carried out in order to capture various inputs or views related to efforts taken to prevent the occurrence of bullying behavior among students.

Character education is one way or means to improve the morale of students, especially in the elementary school environment. Character education is a system of character values to school residents which includes components of knowledge, awareness or willingness and action to implement these values, both towards God Almighty, oneself, fellow humans, the environment, and nationality so that they become moral people. Character education aims to improve the quality of education implementation and outcomes in schools which leads to the formation of character and noble morals of students in a whole, integrated and balanced manner. The implementation of character education in schools must involve all components (stakeholders). "Complete and comprehensive character education not only shapes young people into smart and good individuals, but also forms good actors for change". [13]

One of the character values embedded in character education is the value of social care because humans as social beings need other people in their lives. "Social care is an attitude and action that always wants to give help to others and communities in need". [14]. Instilling social care character as early as possible in students is very appropriate because elementary school students imitate and implement more of the directions given by educators to them. School is a very important environment in instilling social values of students. These social values will be very useful for students in socializing and interacting with others.

School is not only a place to learn to improve intellectual abilities, but also to develop and expand the social experience of learners. In the school environment students can interact with teachers, education staff and other students. Interacting and getting along with others can be shown in various ways, one of which is by showing an attitude of care for others. Social care in the school environment can be shown by helping each other, greeting each other, and respecting each other.

The results of observations at SDN Widarapayung Wetan 02 show that the school has tried to implement social care character education for students. The purpose of social care character education that is applied is expected that students can care more about the surrounding environment. Muhamad Arif, Jesica Dwi Rahmayanti and Fitri Diah Rahmawati (2021) in the journal "Qalamuna - Journal of Education, Social and Religion | Vol. 13 No. 2 (2021) 289-308 shows research on the importance of cultivating social care characters as carried out by Muhammadiyah 1 Menganti Gresik Elementary School. The purpose of this study is to find out about how the stages of instilling social care character in students at Muhammadiyah 1 Menganti Gresik Elementary School and what are the obstacles faced in instilling social care character in Muhammadiyah 1 Menganti Gresik Elementary School students. Result from this research that in the process of instilling social care characters in students, there are two stages carried out by Muhammadiyah 1 Menganti Gresik Elementary School. First, is the example of teachers. Second, is habituation that must be done continuously.

The environment has a great influence in the formation of individual character. The growth of one's character is strongly supported and driven by environmental factors. The environment can form a routine and habit so that it greatly affects the development of individual character. A person will show his personality based on the relationship of interaction carried out with the state of his environment.

A person's caring character can also be influenced by environmental factors around him. Environmental conditions greatly affect the level of care a person has. The immediate environment is family, friends, and the environment in which a person lived and grew up. One of the social environments that is a place to interact between individuals and others is school. Students spend more time with their friends while at school.

One of the factors causing bullying behavior is the quantity and quality of friendships. Peers have a positive function in communicating in society or social environments. The quality of a good friendship relationship will provide comfort so as to grow one's self-esteem. Self-esteem can grow along with the social support received by the individual. "Social support as an individual's assessment that others love, value, and care about themselves". [15]

Bullying prevention must be integrated with peer involvement. Peers are an important source of emotional support throughout the adolescent transition. [16]. Friendships with peers can play an important role as a child's moral support. Peer friends are often a good place to complain. Peers tend to understand problems better, because they are always together at school. The similarity of feelings can also affect a child's closeness to peers.

Forms of social support from peers include emotional support, appreciation support, instrumental support, and informative support. Emotional support includes expressions of empathy, care and concern for the person concerned. Appreciation support occurs through positive expression or encouragement of individual feelings. Instrumental support includes assistance provided directly. Informative support includes giving advice, hints, suggestions or feedback.

Peer support that is perceived by students can positively influence students to bounce back when they get problems and optimistically face the problems they experience. Peer friendship can be an emotional bond between individuals that is considered to provide motivation in each individual's life. Positive social support from peers can help cope with psychological distress. Students can avoid various problems in under going education and learning at school, help strengthen immunity in the body, and reduce the response to stress.

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

Strengthening the character of social care in preventing bullying behavior through the role of peers in Widarapayung Wetan 02 State Elementary School, Binangun District, Cilacap Regency can prevent the tendency of bullying behavior. Social support from peers is very influential in the prevention of bullying behavior. The support provided to the individual by his or her peers provides comfort physically and psychologically so that the individual feels loved, cared for, and valued as part of a social group. Social support from peers plays an important role because learners spend more time with their friends than with their families.



Students who lack positive support from their peers will tend to cultivate aggressive behavior to gain self-satisfaction. Conversely, students who get positive support from friends around them will feel more valued so that their confidence grows. Confident individuals will be able to control themselves well and stay away from bullying behavior. It is very important for students to get good social support from their peers, so that students can live life confidently so as to avoid bullying behavior.

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