



**Principal Leadership Strategies In Controlling Bullying Cases Through A Positive School Culture
(A Qualitative Descriptive Study at Ciroyom 098 Elementary School, Bandung City)**

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ABSTRACT

Bullying is a common problem in schools and can negatively impact students' social, emotional, and academic development. Therefore, an effective principal leadership strategy is needed to control bullying cases through the implementation of a positive school culture. This study aims to determine the principal's leadership strategy in controlling bullying cases through a positive school culture at SDN 098 Ciroyom. This study uses a qualitative approach with descriptive methods. Data collection techniques were carried out through observation, interviews, and documentation. The research subjects included the principal, teachers, and students. Data analysis was carried out through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The results of the study indicate that the principal's leadership strategy in controlling bullying cases is carried out through the instillation of positive character values, enforcement of school rules, role models from the principal and teachers, and collaboration with parents and the school community. The implementation of a positive school culture such as mutual respect, discipline, and social awareness has been proven to be able to minimize the occurrence of bullying cases in schools. The conclusion of this study is that the visionary and consistent leadership of the principal in building a positive school culture has an important role in creating a safe and conducive school environment and in controlling bullying behavior at SDN 098 Ciroyom.

Keywords: principal leadership, bullying, positive school culture

INTRODUCTION

Schools are educational environments that play a crucial role in shaping the character, attitudes, and personalities of students. In addition to being a place for the transfer of knowledge, schools also serve as social spaces for students to learn to interact, collaborate, and cultivate moral and ethical values. However, in practice, various social problems persist in schools, one of which is bullying.

Bullying is an aggressive act carried out intentionally and repeatedly by an individual or group against a weaker party, whether physical, verbal, or psychological. Bullying can have negative impacts on victims, such as reduced self-confidence, emotional disturbance, learning difficulties, and even long-term trauma. Therefore, bullying is a serious problem that requires the attention of the entire school community.

Efforts to prevent and control bullying cannot be carried out in isolation but require the involvement of all school components. The principal, as the educational leader, plays a strategic role in determining the direction of school policy and culture. Effective principal leadership can create a safe, comfortable, and conducive school climate through the implementation of a positive school culture based on the values of character, discipline, and mutual respect.

A positive school culture is a set of values, norms, habits, and traditions that develop and are consistently implemented within the school environment. This culture can be a preventative measure against bullying if implemented comprehensively and sustainably. The exemplary behavior of school leaders, fair enforcement of rules, fostering empathy, and collaboration between the school and parents are all part of a positive school culture that plays a crucial role in shaping student behavior.

SDN 098 Ciroyom, as an elementary educational institution, has a significant responsibility to create a safe and child-friendly learning environment. To control bullying, a principal leadership strategy is needed that integrates positive school culture values into all school activities. Therefore, this study is crucial to identify and describe the principal's leadership strategy in controlling bullying through a positive school culture at SDN 098 Ciroyom.

METHODOLOGY

This study used a qualitative approach because the focus of the research is to describe and understand the phenomena occurring in depth. A qualitative approach was chosen because the problems studied relate to human behavior, interaction patterns, and leadership strategies in the school context, which require a holistic understanding, not just numerical data.

According to Moleong (2014), qualitative research emphasizes understanding social phenomena from the perspective of the actors, using descriptive data. Data is collected through observation, interviews, and documentation, allowing

researchers to capture the social reality in its entirety. In the context of this study, a qualitative approach allows researchers to:

1. Understand how the principal formulates and implements strategies to control bullying.
2. Describe the implementation of a positive school culture in daily life at school.
3. Identify supporting and inhibiting factors in the implementation of these strategies.

With a qualitative approach, the research results will be in the form of descriptive data that provides a clear picture of the principal's role, teacher-student interactions, and the implementation of a positive school culture at SDN 098 Ciroyom.

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach. This approach was chosen because the focus of the research was to understand and describe social phenomena in depth, specifically the principal's leadership strategies in controlling bullying cases through a positive school culture at SDN 098 Ciroyom. A qualitative approach allows researchers to obtain a comprehensive picture of social interactions, policies, and school culture practices as they apply in everyday life.

The research was conducted at SDN 098 Ciroyom, an elementary school chosen as the study location due to its experience in handling bullying cases and implementing a positive school culture. The study was conducted over several months to allow researchers to conduct direct observations, in-depth interviews, and collect adequate documentation data.

The research subjects consisted of the principal, teachers, and students. The principal was chosen as the primary informant because of his strategic role in determining policies and implementing strategies for controlling bullying. Teachers were chosen because they act as implementers and supervisors of student behavior, while students were chosen as those directly experiencing social interactions at school.

Research data was collected through three main techniques. First, observation was used to observe school activities, student interactions, and the implementation of a positive school culture. Second, interviews were conducted to obtain in-depth information from the principal, teachers, and students regarding bullying control strategies. Third, documentation was conducted by collecting official school documents, such as school regulations, anti-bullying programs, disciplinary records, and reports on school cultural activities.

After data collection, analysis was conducted using the Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña model, which involves three stages. First, data reduction, which simplifies and focuses the data to ensure its relevance to the research problem. Second, data presentation, in the form of descriptive narratives, tables, or diagrams, makes the data easier to understand. Third, conclusions were drawn, which summarizes the research results based on the data analysis.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Student Questionnaire Completion

This study aimed to determine students' understanding, experiences, and attitudes toward the phenomenon of bullying at Ciroyom 098 Public Elementary School. Based on the processing of questionnaire data from 15 respondents, several important findings were obtained, which are presented as follows:

1. Student Understanding of Bullying

Based on the questionnaire results, the majority of respondents knew what bullying was. Of the 15 respondents, 9 (60%) stated that they clearly understood the concept of bullying, indicating that most participants had a good understanding of the phenomenon. However, 4 (27%) only had a vague understanding, meaning they did not fully understand or were still confused about the definition and forms of bullying. Furthermore, 2 (13%) admitted to having no idea what bullying was at all, indicating that a small proportion of respondents had never received information about it.

2. Knowledge of Types of Bullying

The questionnaire results showed that verbal bullying (bad-mouthing, name-calling) was most familiar to students (10 students), followed by social bullying (ostracizing, spreading lies, 3 students) and physical bullying (hitting, shoving, hair pulling, 2 students). No respondents were familiar with online bullying (cyberbullying). This finding indicates that students' understanding of bullying types is still limited to face-to-face and verbal interactions, while modern forms of bullying through digital media are less familiar.

3. Experience of Witnessing or Experiencing Bullying

Based on the questionnaire results regarding observations of bullying incidents at school, only 2 respondents stated that they had witnessed bullying incidents. This indicates that a small number of respondents have direct experience witnessing bullying behavior at school. Meanwhile, 13 respondents stated that they had never witnessed bullying incidents, indicating that the majority of respondents feel their school environment is relatively safe from bullying, or they may not be aware of bullying incidents occurring around them. Overall, these results indicate that the incidence of bullying in schools is relatively low. However, it is important for schools to continue implementing prevention and education efforts so that all students understand bullying and can report or prevent it if it occurs.

4. Time and Place of Bullying Incidents

Based on the questionnaire results regarding the location of bullying in schools, the most frequently reported location was the schoolyard, with 7 respondents stating they had witnessed or experienced bullying there. Furthermore, 5 respondents mentioned bullying occurring in the classroom, indicating that classrooms can also

be a place where conflict or bullying behavior occurs. Meanwhile, 3 respondents reported bullying incidents occurring on the way home from school, indicating that bullying occurs not only within the school environment but also on students' way home.

Reporting Bullying Incidents

Based on the questionnaire results, all 15 respondents who experienced or witnessed bullying chose to report the incident to a teacher or parent. This indicates that the majority of respondents felt more comfortable or confident reporting bullying to an adult authority figure than to peers.

The choice to report to peers or not report due to fear of being rejected by respondents indicates that no one relied on peers as a reporting medium, and no one was afraid to report.

Overall, these results demonstrate the respondents' awareness and courage to report bullying to the appropriate parties, which is a positive factor in efforts to prevent and address bullying in schools.

6. Knowledge of Bullying Prevention Programs or Rules

Based on the questionnaire results, the majority of respondents stated that their school has rules or programs for bullying prevention. Thirteen respondents stated that they were clearly aware of these rules or programs, indicating that the majority of students have a good understanding of the school's efforts to prevent bullying. Meanwhile, two respondents acknowledged the existence of rules or programs but were unaware of the details, indicating that information regarding school policies has not been fully communicated to all students. No respondents stated they were completely unaware of bullying prevention rules or programs, indicating that all students were at least somewhat aware of the school's efforts to prevent bullying.

Overall, these results indicate that the school has a bullying prevention policy or program in place, and the majority of students are aware of its existence. Although further outreach is needed to ensure that all students fully understand the applicable rules and procedures.

7. Student Attitudes When Witnessing a Peer Being Bullied

Based on the questionnaire results, the majority of respondents demonstrated a proactive attitude toward bullying victims. Eleven respondents stated that they would help the victim and report the incident to a teacher, demonstrating a high level of awareness of the importance of taking swift action and involving authorities to stop bullying.

Meanwhile, one respondent chose to help by directly intervening in the bullying, demonstrating courage to act, even without involving teachers or parents. Three respondents chose to support the victim but not report it, demonstrating concern for the victim but a lack of active involvement in the school. The option of taking no

action was chosen by any respondent, indicating that no one felt completely passive when witnessing bullying. Overall, these results indicate that the majority of students have the awareness and courage to take action if they see a friend being bullied, either by helping or reporting it to the school, although a small number simply provide moral support.

8. Perception of Responsibility for Bullying Prevention

Based on the questionnaire results, the majority of respondents stated that all parties work together as the most responsible for preventing bullying at school, with 14 respondents choosing this answer. This indicates that students recognize the importance of collaboration between teachers, school staff, parents, and students themselves in creating a safe and bullying-free school environment.

Only one respondent chose that students themselves are responsible, indicating that a small percentage of students believe individual actions are sufficient to prevent bullying. Other options, such as teachers and school staff or parents, were not chosen as primary responses, although their roles remain important.

Overall, these results confirm that, according to students, bullying prevention is not solely the responsibility of one party, but requires the collaboration of all relevant parties for prevention efforts to be more effective.

Interview with the Principal

Preventing bullying in the school environment requires a comprehensive and sustainable strategy. At SD Negeri 098 Ciroyom, this effort is realized through a series of daily activities that positively impact the development of students' character and social attitudes. These programs include:

1. Love for the Homeland Program

This program aims to instill a sense of nationalism, social responsibility, and concern for others. By fostering love for the homeland, students are expected to develop empathy and mutual respect, which are the foundation for preventing bullying behavior. The activity is carried out in the form of a Flag Ceremony every Monday.

2. National Defense Program

The National Defense Program emphasizes discipline, responsibility, and cooperation. Discipline and adherence to rules help students understand the limits of behavior that can harm others, thereby minimizing bullying behavior. The activity is carried out in the form of a Scouting Extracurricular Activity every Tuesday.

3. Healthy Soul Program

This activity focuses on developing students' physical and mental health. With good emotional health, students tend to be better able to manage conflict and reduce aggressive behavior towards peers. Activities are carried out in the form of Healthy

Gymnastics every Wednesday.

4. Love Culture Program

Through this activity, students learn to appreciate cultural differences and traditions, which can increase tolerance and reduce exclusive attitudes that often trigger social bullying. Activities are carried out in the form of Love Culture every Thursday.

5. Spiritual Shower Program

Religious activities help shape students' moral character, ethics, and empathy. With a strong moral foundation, students are more likely to care for friends who are victims of bullying. Activities are carried out in the form of Jumroh (Muslim gathering) every Friday.

6. Talent and Interest Development

This extracurricular activity encourages students to channel their energy and creativity in positive ways. Active involvement in group activities also strengthens healthy social relationships and reduces the likelihood of bullying. Some extracurricular activities at SDN 098 Ciroyom, Bandung City, include Scouts, Angklung, Footsal, Taekwondo, and Dance.

7. Smile, Greet, and Greet Activity

The Smile, Greet, and Greet activity is a school-based habit-building program aimed at instilling the values of politeness, friendliness, and respect for others. Every student and teacher is trained to smile, greet, and say hello when they meet, whether at the school gate, in the hallway, or in class. This activity is practiced daily, fostering positive habits that can enhance social interaction, foster caring and discipline, and create a friendly and enjoyable school atmosphere.

In addition to these daily programs, collaboration with the school committee and parents is a key component in bullying prevention. This collaboration ensures cross-stakeholder mentoring and supervision, ensuring optimal implementation of school programs and broad impact on student character development.

Overall, the integration of daily character-building activities, moral education, and collaboration with the school and families creates a safe, conducive, and bullying-free school environment, while equipping students with the social skills and empathy necessary for everyday life.

Interviews with Teachers

Before the implementation of a structured bullying prevention program, Ciroyom 098 Public Elementary School experienced high rates of bullying, both physical and verbal, among students. This was partly due to the lack of focus on character development in the program, resulting in frequent occurrences of negative

behavior.

Currently, through systematic school programs, significant changes in student behavior are visible. Students are more focused on participating in school activities, actively participating in extracurricular activities that support the development of talents and interests, and demonstrating increased discipline and empathy. As a result, the level of bullying at the school has decreased dramatically and has become virtually non-existent.

Teachers and school staff play a crucial role in this regard, as these programs can raise awareness of potential bullying incidents. Furthermore, the Violence Prevention and Response Team (TPPK) serves as the frontline in addressing emerging issues, providing guidance, and ensuring that each incident is handled appropriately.

Overall, the combination of character development programs, teacher supervision, and the active role of the TPPK team has created a safer, more conducive school environment that supports students' social-emotional growth, while significantly reducing bullying behavior at SD Negeri 098 Ciroyom.

Discussion

Based on the results of a questionnaire conducted at Ciroyom 098 Public Elementary School, several important findings related to students' understanding, experiences, and attitudes toward bullying can be analyzed as follows:

1. Understanding of Bullying

The majority of students (60%) had a clear understanding of bullying, while others were vague or had no knowledge at all. This indicates that despite educational efforts about bullying, some students still require further explanation regarding the definition, forms, and impacts of bullying. A good understanding is important so that students can recognize bullying behavior and know how to respond to it.

2. Knowledge of Types of Bullying

The results showed that verbal bullying was most familiar to students, followed by social and physical bullying. No respondents were familiar with online bullying (cyberbullying), indicating a gap in understanding regarding modern bullying through digital media. This is a significant concern, given that the increasing use of technology among students can become a medium for online bullying.

3. Experience of Witnessing or Experiencing Bullying

Only a small percentage of students reported having witnessed bullying, while the majority had not experienced it. This could indicate two possibilities: the school environment is relatively safe or students are not yet fully aware of the bullying behavior that occurs. Although the frequency of observations is low, education and supervision are still needed to prevent bullying cases from occurring early.

4. Time and Place of Bullying

The majority of reported bullying incidents occurred in the schoolyard and classrooms, and some on the way home from school. There were no reports of frequent incidents, indicating that bullying is not routine. However, the reported locations indicate that public areas of the school, such as the yard, classrooms, and the way home, still require more intensive supervision to prevent bullying incidents.

5. Reporting of Bullying Incidents

All students who witnessed or experienced bullying reported it to a teacher or parent. This demonstrates students' high awareness and courage to involve authorities in addressing bullying. None reported only to peers or were afraid to report, a positive indicator that the school's reporting system is effective.

6. School Bullying Prevention Programs and Rules

The majority of students (13 out of 15) were clearly aware of the school's bullying prevention programs and rules, while a small number were aware of the programs but did not know the details. No students were completely unaware of the program. This finding indicates that the school already has a well-socialized bullying prevention policy and program, but more in-depth socialization is still needed to ensure all students fully understand the rules.

7. Student Attitudes When Seeing a Peer Become a Victim of Bullying

Most students demonstrated a proactive attitude, helping the victim and reporting it to a teacher. A small number simply provided moral support or helped by intervening to stop the perpetrator. None were completely passive. This indicates that students possess a high level of empathy and awareness of social responsibility, although there is still room for more consistent action involving authorities.

8. Perceptions of Responsibility for Bullying Prevention

The majority of students believe that bullying prevention is the responsibility of all parties, including teachers, parents, and students. Only one student felt that students themselves were sufficiently responsible. This finding indicates that students understand the importance of cross-stakeholder collaboration to create a safe and conducive school environment.

At SD Negeri 098 Ciroyom, bullying prevention is implemented through daily programs that build students' character, morals, and social skills, as well as collaboration with parents and the school committee. Daily programs include:

1. Love the Homeland (Monday): fostering empathy and social responsibility.
2. Defending the Nation (Tuesday): teaching discipline and behavioral boundaries.
3. Healthy Soul (Wednesday): maintaining physical and mental health to manage conflict.

4. Love for Culture (Thursday): increasing tolerance for differences.
5. Spiritual Shower (Friday): fostering morals and empathy.
6. Talent and Interest Development (Extracurricular Activities): channeling positive energy and strengthening social relationships.
7. Smile, Greet, and Greeting Activities: instilling values of courtesy, friendliness, and respect for others.

Through this combination of routine activities and cross-stakeholder support, the school creates a safe, conducive, and bullying-free learning environment, while equipping students with empathy, discipline, and social skills.

Before the implementation of a structured bullying prevention program, Ciroyom 098 Public Elementary School faced high levels of bullying, both physical and verbal, because the previous program did not focus on student character development. This resulted in frequent negative behaviors and a less conducive school environment.

Now, through systematic daily programs—including character development, moral education, mental health, cultural tolerance, and talent and interest development—significant changes in student behavior have occurred. Students have become more disciplined, are active in extracurricular activities, and demonstrate empathy and concern for their peers. As a result, bullying incidents have decreased dramatically and have become virtually non-existent.

Teachers and school staff play a crucial role as supervisors and mentors for students, while the Violence Prevention and Response Team (TPPK) serves as the frontline in handling each bullying incident appropriately. The combination of supervision, character development, and TPPK interventions creates a safe, conducive learning environment that supports students' social-emotional growth, while significantly reducing bullying behavior.

CONCLUSION

Research at SDN 098 Ciroyom shows that bullying still occurs in the school environment, taking various forms, including physical, verbal, and social. This bullying has significant negative impacts on victims, such as reduced self-confidence, emotional distress, learning difficulties, and even long-term trauma. This situation emphasizes the need for systematic attention and action from all school members, especially the principal, to create a safe and child-friendly learning environment.

The principal plays a strategic role in controlling bullying through effective leadership. Strategies implemented include planning, implementing, and evaluating school policies and programs related to bullying prevention and management. The principal's firm, consistent, and inspiring leadership can raise awareness among teachers and students about implementing positive values at school. Furthermore, the principal also plays a role in facilitating collaboration

between teachers, parents, and students to create a conducive school culture.

Implementing a positive school culture is a crucial part of the bullying control strategy. This culture includes instilling character values, exemplary behavior by the school community, enforcing rules fairly, and fostering friendly and respectful interactions, for example through "Smile, Greet, and Say Hello." By consistently implementing this culture, students become accustomed to being caring, disciplined, and respectful of others, thereby minimizing the risk of bullying.

Factors supporting the success of this strategy include strong principal leadership, active participation of teachers and parents, and student awareness of the importance of positive behavior. Meanwhile, inhibiting factors that need to be addressed include resistance from some students, limited resources, and the challenge of maintaining consistent implementation of a positive school culture. Therefore, good coordination and regular supervision are key to the program's effectiveness.

Overall, this study confirms that the combination of effective principal leadership and a positive school culture can create a safe, comfortable, and child-friendly learning environment at SDN 098 Ciroyom. This strategy not only prevents bullying but also fosters disciplined, caring, and respectful student character, enabling the school to become a conducive social space for students' academic and moral development. Therefore, the sustainability of a positive school culture and consistent leadership are crucial factors in efforts to improve the quality of education and student well-being.

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