



Teachers' Strategies to Overcome Bullying Through Character Education in Grade 3 Students at SDN 3 Amadanom: A Qualitative Study

Defrizza Sandy Febriano¹, Candra Utama²

¹State University of Malang

²Department of Elementary School Teacher Education, State University of Malang, Indonesia

*Corresponding author, email: 1defrizza.sandy.2301516@students.um.ac.id,

2candra.utama.pasca@um.ac.id

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Abstract

This study aims to identify bullying that occurs in elementary schools, especially third grade, and analyze the role of teachers in overcoming bullying problems through character education. The data collection technique was carried out through in-depth interviews and documentation, with the research subject being a third-grade teacher at SDN 3 Amadanom. Data analysis was carried out using the Miles and Huberman model which included three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing and verification. The results of the interviews showed that physical, family, social media, and peer factors influenced the type of bullying at SDN 3 Amadanom. Immediate treatment is needed because the high rate of bullying cases negatively impacts students' social, emotional, and academic development. Character education strategies, such as building a positive school environment, teaching social skills, enforcing anti-bullying policies, communicating with students and parents, and detecting and dealing with bullying cases are all strategies in which teachers play an important role. This research confirms that character education is an important role for teachers in combating bullying in elementary schools.

1. Introduction

Bullying is a despicable and deviant behavior that often occurs among students, especially elementary school students. Bullying is an act that aims to hurt the victim either mentally or physically which makes a person have to suffer and accept the consequences of their actions. These actions are also directly carried out by a person or a group of people who have power (Pradana, 2024). This phenomenon has a serious impact on students' learning attitudes. Students who become victims have a bad enthusiasm to pursue knowledge, these students are more silent, do not interact much socially, and interest in learning decreases.

According to Zakiyah, Humaedi, & Santoso, the bully does not have a sense of guilt towards the victim of bullying. Moreover, the perpetrator feels happy and satisfied if he has bullied the victim without any regret (Jumarnis et al., 2023). This suggests that there is a disturbance in the moral values and empathy of the perpetrator, which reduces the level of character education in the school environment. The act of bullying if it continues to be left in the realm of education will certainly make the image of education bad. Thus, the role of teachers and parents is very important to maintain and instill the value of character education in students so that they understand the impact if bullying occurs in elementary schools.

Character education is a process, an effort to communicate and develop character values to students, which allows them to apply these values from God, self, nation, and to the Almighty. Good habits are always attached to character education, just as habits in behaving well are always applied in humans so that a very high example is needed. Character education is closely related to a good and harmonious life and environment. Therefore, with good habits, students can have good quality character education as well.

Character education should be instilled when students are in elementary education. According to (Larozza et al., 2023), if character education is not instilled in students from an early age, they will be able to experience several politeness problems such as poor manners, often speaking dirty, not

caring for others, and the existence of disputes, and even immoral acts can occur. Character education in schools can be applied during learning activities by listing existing character values and character education values can be included in lesson plans, syllabus, and can also be applied to self-development programs such as extracurriculars or through routine activities, examples, spontaneous activities, and conditioning.

The existence of character education in students can humanize human beings according to the inherent identity of each student by adhering to religious teachings, laws and knowledge. In line with research (Illiyah et al., 2023) that Prevention of bullying can occur with this character education, which is an important practice that can help boost morale. This phenomenon is explained by the fact that a child who has strong morals can protect a child who is involved in physical or psychological abuse that can harm others. In the school realm, in the enforcement of character education, there must certainly be a supervisor and director in harmonizing this. Teachers as facilitators are also required to grow students' character through learning activities carried out in the classroom and outside the classroom.

Teachers as educators have an important role in upholding character education. Teachers are required to form and develop good character in each of their students. According to (Alamsyah et al., 2024), teachers hold the key in four main dimensions, including as educators, supervisors, role models, and motivators. This role is very important in instilling disciplinary values that are expected to be implemented in every student. Teachers also have a fairly important role in instilling character education values with various bullying prevention strategies that can be applied in teaching and learning activities and social interactions in schools.

SDN 3 Amadanom is inseparable from the problem of bullying, where these challenges can disturb students physically, mentally, and socially in their lives. Bullying is still a problem that has a very disruptive impact on the academics and psychology of every student. As an opinion (Isnadi et al., 2025) that teachers must be able to recognize the signs of bullying and immediately prevent it, one of which is by instilling character education in each student. Character education can be used as a way to overcome the problem of bullying which is a problem that often occurs in the educational environment. Character education aims to instill empathy, tolerance, respect for others, and can form positive behavior for each student.

Several previous studies support this research. The first previous research was conducted by (Jumarnis et al., 2023) with the title: "Strategies for Cultivating Character Education in Minimizing the Occurrence of Bullying in Elementary School Students: A Literature Study". The second research was conducted by (Ramadhanti & Hidayat, 2022) with the title: "Teachers' Strategies in Overcoming Student Bullying Behavior in Elementary Schools".

Based on the two previous studies, it can be obtained that character education plays a very important role in the prevention and handling of bullying behavior that occurs in the elementary school environment. Research conducted by (Jumarnis et al., 2023) emphasizes the importance of instilling religious values, instilling character education values in education in schools, school culture, and socialization about bullying for character development in each student.

Research conducted by (Ramadhanti & Hidayat, 2022) shows that forms of bullying that often occur in elementary schools are in verbal, physical forms, influenced by the environment, family, social media, and teachers' strategies for handling it as well as counseling services if needed. From these two studies, it can be concluded that with good character education and teacher strategies is indispensable in creating a learning environment that is safe, comfortable, and free from bullying behavior.

Unlike previous research, this study will focus more on how teachers apply character education as one of the strategies to overcome bullying. The main problem in this study is how the teacher's strategy in handling bullying cases through character education at SDN 3 Amadanom, especially in the third grade. This research will examine bullying that occurs in the school environment, especially in the third grade, the role of teachers in handling bullying cases, and strategies used to instill character values in students.

Given the importance of character education in preventing bullying behavior, a deep understanding of teachers' strategies in building students' character through the learning process is needed. This study aims to identify bullying that occurs at SDN 3 Amadanom and analyze the role of teachers in overcoming these problems through character education. In addition, this study also seeks to describe the strategies used by teachers in instilling character values in students to prevent bullying.

Literature Review

Bullying is a type of harassment that often occurs in the school environment. This type of action can be physical, verbal, or psychological, and is usually carried out by individuals or groups who have greater dominance over less dominant individuals. Bullying can have a negative effect on a child's psychological, social, and even academic development. Students who are victims of bullying consistently experience learning difficulties, withdrawing from their social environment, and experiencing emotional stress.

One of the most important strategies for dealing with and preventing bullying is character education. Character education is the process of relearning moral principles such as integrity, discipline, empathy, responsibility, and tolerance that are reflected in students' daily lives. This is essential to form a strong personality so that students can analyze the wrong actions and not participate in the deviant process.

Teachers use a strategic approach when analyzing character traits. As a teacher, mentor, role model, and motivator, a teacher doesn't just impart knowledge; They also build students' self-esteem. Strategies used by teachers to help students understand character can be done through educational activities, routines, examples, and positive environmental observations. If character education is consistently integrated into the learning process, it can become a moral component that helps students succeed in their studies or even become victims.

Several studies have shown a link between character education and bullying prevention measures. To provide a more systematic example, the following table compares the research focus, methodological focus, key findings, and relevance of some of the studies that supported this study:

Table 1. Research Result

No	Research Name	Research Focus	Research Methods	Main Findings	Relevance to this Research
1	(Jumarnis et al., 2023)	Strategies for cultivating character education in minimizing bullying	Literature Study	Emphasizing the importance of religious values, school culture, and socialization	Emphasizing that character education is effective in building students' moral awareness
2	(Ramadhanti & Hidayat, 2022)	Teachers' strategies in overcoming bullying behavior in elementary schools	Qualitative	Identifying forms of bullying, causes, teachers' strategies, and counseling	Providing real examples of teachers' roles in overcoming bullying directly
3	(Illiyah et al., 2023)	Bullying prevention through character education	Qualitative	Character education helps students avoid acts of violence	Demonstrate the power of moral values in reducing deviant behavior
4	(Alamsyah et al., 2024)	The role of teachers in character education	Qualitative	Teachers play the role of educators, guides, role models, and motivators	Strengthen that teachers are the main actors in instilling students' character values

Based on some of these studies, it can be concluded that character education that is consistently instilled by teachers has an important role in preventing bullying in elementary schools. Teachers, as the main actors in the learning process, must be able to implement character education strategies that are relevant and in accordance with the conditions of students at school. The findings from previous research are a strong foundation to continue this study, especially in the context of third grade at SDN 3 Amadanom.

2. Method

This study uses a qualitative research method with a descriptive approach. The descriptive approach method is used to analyze data by describing or describing the data that has been collected.

By using qualitative research methods with a descriptive approach, it is hoped that it can identify bullying cases that occur, prevention methods and strategies for applying character education values to students to prevent bullying.

This study was conducted in April 2025 at SDN 3 Amadanom, Dampit District, Malang Regency. Data collection was carried out using two main techniques: documentation and in-depth interviews. The interview was conducted in a semi-structured manner using interview guidelines that included all questions that arise regarding the type of bullying that occurred, the teacher's response to the bullying situation, and the character education strategies used. Documents such as school activities, and photos are also needed to support the data.

The subject of this research is a third-grade teacher at SDN 3 Amadanom, who directly guides students and assists in implementing character education in the classroom. Informal research was conducted using purposive sampling techniques, which are based on the assumption that the informant has a deep understanding of the phenomenon being studied.

The collected data were analyzed using the Miles and Huberman models. The analysis is carried out in stages. First, data reduction, namely by selecting and simplifying data that is relevant to the focus of the research. Second, data presentation. To make the data easier to understand, the data is given in the form of tables and narratives. Third, drawing conclusions and verifying formulate findings based on patterns found in the data..

3. Results and Discussion

Results

The following table presents the results of research that summarize the various strategies used by teachers at SDN 3 Amadanom to overcome bullying through character education and how effective these strategies are in creating a positive and safe learning environment for students.

Table 2. Research result

No	Aspects	Description
1	Identify forms of bullying	The form of bullying that occurs is by mocking the name of parents and saying physical deficiencies. Factors that cause bullying behavior lack of affection from parents can make children seek more attention in the wrong way, as well as negative peer influences. The impact that occurs on students who are victims of bullying becomes unenthusiastic in learning and the student's character becomes closed and moody.
2	Strategy	The strategies carried out by teachers and schools are by creating a positive school environment, teaching social skills, detecting and handling bullying cases, enforcing anti-bullying policies, and communicating with students and parents. Meanwhile, the strategy used for students who commit bullying is training through ceremonial activities. Turn habitual behaviors and build empathy through holistic approaches, socialization, and interventions. Focuses on education, the establishment of a positive school culture, a firm anti-bullying policy, as well as support for victims and involving parents.

The results of the study show that character education is a way for teachers to handle bullying in schools. In this effort, teachers play an important role in incorporating moral values such as empathy, tolerance, honesty, and responsibility into their curriculum. These values are taught through teaching methods that encourage student interaction, such as role plays, group discussions, and case studies that emphasize the importance of understanding and appreciating differences. The third grade teacher, Mrs. Tia Wahyu, S.Pd., said "The way I implement learning activities that integrate character values is by doing group work so that students can appreciate their peers, and involve students in learning outside the classroom".

Teachers strive to make the classroom a place where students feel safe, valued, and protected. "My role as an educator/facilitator is by creating a positive school environment, teaching social skills, detecting and dealing with bullying, enforcing anti-bullying policies, and communicating

with students and parents". Said Mrs. Tia. A supportive classroom atmosphere is also considered important to prevent bullying and encourage open discussion about issues facing students.

Collaboration with parents is also part of this strategy. Teachers regularly hold meetings with parents to discuss student development and to share strategies in educating children's character, especially in the context of preventing bullying. Mrs. Tia said, "My form of communication with parents is to overcome bullying by always sharing stories about what students do while at school. Parents and teachers can share information and discuss how to deal with bullying, as well as provide help and support to children who experience bullying." This strategy not only strengthens the relationship between school and family, but also ensures that the character values taught in school are consistent with those taught at home.

Discussion

1. Bullying Factors

Bullying is one of the most common types of violence. Bullying has a devastating impact on psychology and can lead to long-term trauma. One of the most common forms of bullying we encounter in our daily lives is in schools and the surrounding environment. This is especially dangerous for victims who cause trauma related to the previously mentioned violence. Currently, 41.1% of Indonesians are considered victims of bullying (Pratama & Ningsih, 2023). Bullying can be described as a way to provide advice or support to people who may be affected by bullying. However, many people are not very good at advising or supporting those who bully, and they may not even do so (Utama, 2022). Because of these factors, ethics is considered prevention and treatment through educational programs, group activities in society, and strong legal ties (Fariz et al., 2023).

Based on some of the studies above, it can be concluded that bullying generally occurs due to physical factors, social media, group dynamics, and environmental or family factors. According to the findings of research conducted by (Ertinawati et al., 2023) bullying can be caused by a variety of factors, including ethnic differences, rejection of several groups of people with different physical conditions, and even a decline in the economic status of the group. This bullying behavior has a negative impact on society, both physically and psychologically.

According to research from (Herawati & Deharnita, 2020) there are several factors that contribute to bullying. These factors include family, which is responsible for a large number of bullying (82.3%), due to the presence of commotion or even problems that arise, which may be slightly less than expected (46.8%), school-related factors, i.e. schools that intervene when there is a problem, and peer factors, which are more than 70% of students who like to tease their peers. Based on some of these factors, teachers' strategies are essential to address these issues, such as using character education to address bullying.

2. Teachers' Strategies in Overcoming Bullying

Character education is one of the teachers' strategies in overcoming bullying that has been proven to be very effective and includes a variety of comprehensive approaches. According to Yatminiwati, strategy is a long-term plan that is implemented through a series of actions, aiming to achieve predetermined goals, based on the results of analysis and observation of the environment (Zuraira, 2024). Meanwhile, the opinion of (Moscato et al., 2023) is that strategies in learning include a planning process that includes the use of diverse methods and resources during the learning process.

Teachers have an important role to play in creating a conducive learning environment, where students feel valued and safe, so that they can learn with confidence. Misconceptions from (Simanungnsong et al., 2023) a teacher is the most effective facilitator in the process of solving problems that arise for students. As teachers become more effective in dealing with these issues, students' trust in teachers grows. The most important aspect of this problem-solving process is the advice.

3. Collaboration with Parents

Efforts to handle bullying in schools cannot run well without support from families. Collaboration with parents is an important element in the strategy to overcome bullying at SDN 3 Amadanom. Teachers actively engage parents in character education and bullying prevention programs, by holding regular meetings to discuss student development and prevention strategies.

Through these meetings, parents can better understand the situation at school and find effective ways to support their children. In addition, this meeting is also a forum for parents to share experiences and ideas in improving bullying prevention strategies. Teachers in schools actively integrate moral values such as honesty, responsibility, empathy, and tolerance into their teaching. With that, the learning environment and the family environment are expected to be more comfortable, positive, and support each other well and comprehensively.

3.1. Conclusion

This study shows that character education is an effective method to overcome bullying in elementary schools, especially in the third grade of SDN 3 Amadanom. Through a fun and interactive learning approach, teachers play an important role in instilling character values such as empathy, tolerance, honesty, and responsibility. To achieve this goal, not only classroom lessons are used, but also look at the problem as a whole through school activities, active collaboration with parents, and anti-bullying policies. The high number of bullying cases that occurred at SDN 3 Amadanom became an urgency in this study which had a negative impact on the social, emotional, and academic development of students. If this bullying is not immediately overcome by teachers enforcing the right character education strategy, bullying or bullying behavior can form a personality to become anti-social and cases of violence are increasing in the educational environment.

An effective prevention strategy relies on early identification of the type of bullying and its causative factors. Teachers can build a more inclusive and child-friendly school culture by creating a safe and positive learning environment. Schools and families work together to implement character education and prevent and deal with bullying in elementary schools. With teachers applying strategies through character education, it is hoped that the bullying behavior can be overcome and students can understand the bad impact that occurs if bullying occurs in the educational environment. Further research is recommended to involve the perspectives of students and parents in order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of bullying and the effectiveness of prevention and handling strategies. This opinion is important to complement the perspective of the teachers who have been studied in this study.

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