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Analysis of School Policies in Handling Bullying through Learner Management and Strengthening Positive Culture in Elementary Schools

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Abstract. Bullying in primary schools is a social problem that can disrupt learners' psychological and academic development. Effective handling of bullying requires an approach that involves school policies, learner management, and strengthening positive culture in the school environment. The purpose of this study is to analyze the role of school policies in tackling bullying, focusing on the integration of learner management and the establishment of a positive culture as preventive and responsive measures against bullying behavior. This research uses the literature review method, by examining various scientific sources involving education policy, student behavior management, and the role of school culture in creating a safe and inclusive environment. The results of the analysis show that clear and structured school policies, accompanied by learner management based on character building and behavior monitoring, play an important role in preventing bullying. In addition, the positive culture instilled through the values of empathy, tolerance and togetherness also strengthens efforts to prevent and overcome bullying in elementary schools. This study concludes that the successful handling of bullying in primary schools depends not only on the formal policies implemented, but also on the implementation of learner management integrated with a positive school culture. Therefore, a holistic and synergistic approach is needed between policies, learner management, and school culture in shaping a learning environment free from violence and social violence.

Keywords: School Policy; Bullying; Management; Positive Culture

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INTRODUCTION

The introduction should contain (sequentially) general background, previous literature review (state of the art), as the basis of the scientific novelty statement of the article, the scientific novelty statement, and the research or hypothesis problem. At the end of the introduction should be written the article study objectives. In the format of scientific articles there is no review of the library as in the research report, but manifested in the form of previous literature studies (state of the art) to demonstrate the scientific novelty of the article

Bullying in primary schools (SD) is a serious issue that negatively affects the mental health, social-emotional development, and academic achievement of learners. In a global context, bullying poses a major challenge to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly target SDG 4: Quality Education which emphasizes the importance of creating inclusive, safe and effective learning environments for all learners (UNESCO, 2020).

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The phenomenon of bullying has been in the spotlight in various countries, including Indonesia. A UNICEF report (2021) states that almost 45% of school-age children in Indonesia have experienced bullying in various forms, such as verbal, physical and social violence. These cases not only cause long-term trauma, but also hinder the learning process. This condition shows that primary schools, as early educational institutions that determine the formation of children's character and personality, must become safe and child-friendly spaces (Andi, 2022).

In Indonesia, efforts to tackle bullying in primary schools have been outlined in a number of policies, such as Permendikbud No. 82 of 2015 concerning Prevention and Response to Violence in Education Units, as well as the Child Friendly School (SRA) program from the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection. However, the implementation of these policies often does not run optimally in the field due to the lack of integration between policies, learner management practices, and the positive culture fostered in the school environment (Budi & Rohim, 2021).

A number of previous studies underline the importance of synergy between school policies, student management, and the formation of school culture to reduce bullying cases. Firdaus (2020) emphasized that bullying prevention must be based on character building and strengthening social values. Meanwhile, Nurhadi (2021) highlighted the importance of responsive and adaptive student management as an instrument for monitoring and fostering student behavior early on.

Within this framework, learner management acts as a strategy to monitor students' social development, identify potential aggressive behavior and provide early educational intervention. On the other hand, positive school culture, which reflects the values of mutual respect, openness and empathy among school members, is the main foundation in creating a conducive learning atmosphere. According to Bishop et al. (2018), a consistently implemented positive culture can significantly reduce the incidence of bullying through a collective approach involving teachers, students, parents and other stakeholders.

Recent studies have shown that successful bullying prevention does not rely solely on sanctions or curative approaches, but requires a comprehensive and sustainable strategy. Research by Khairunnisa, Suyanti, and Yunita (2023) shows that strengthening civic values through Civic Education in elementary schools can reduce the intensity of bullying behavior, because it instills the values of empathy, tolerance, and social responsibility. Likewise, Habibuddin et al. (2023) asserted that the involvement of teachers and the formation of an

internal school anti-bullying team increased the school community's concern for cases of violence between students.

The novelty of this research lies in the collaborative approach between school policy, learner management, and strengthening positive school culture as a mutually reinforcing system. Whereas most previous studies have only highlighted policy aspects or individual interventions, this research seeks to analyze the synergy between the three in the context of primary schools, specifically to build a bullying-free environment in a holistic and sustainable manner.This study aims to analyze in depth how school policies can be effectively implemented in handling bullying through optimizing learner management and strengthening positive culture in primary schools. This study also explores strategies that elementary schools can implement in building an integrated bullying prevention system based on character education values.

METHODS

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach with the literature review method as the main framework. Literature review was chosen because it allows researchers to examine various research results and policy documents in depth to identify patterns, approaches, and effectiveness of school policies in dealing with bullying through learner management and strengthening positive culture. According to Snyder (2019), literature review is a powerful strategy in summarizing existing research results and presenting a comprehensive understanding of the topic being studied. This research was conducted in response to the increasing cases of bullying in elementary schools and the need to strengthen positive culture and learner management structured in school policies (Wulandari, 2022; Nugraha, Alpian, & Prawiyogi, 2024).

Literature review was conducted with a focus on original articles containing abstracts, introduction, methods, and results. Article searches were conducted on the Sinta database with criteria for relevant journal data and scientific papers. The literature used consisted of accredited national journal articles (SINTA 1 and 2) through https://sinta.ristekbrin.go.id/, theses, and research reports with the following criteria: (1) published in the period 2018-2024; (2) focusing on bullying handling policies, learner management, and school culture at the primary school level; and (3) having gone through a peer-review process and having valid methods.

The main instrument in this study was a literature review matrix used to: (1) identify the focus of previous research; (2) analyze the methods and results of previous research; (3) classify policy approaches, learner management, and school culture; (4) compare the effectiveness of the approaches applied. The analysis technique used is content analysis. The analysis was

conducted on the content of documents and research results to explore the meaning, suitability, and pattern of the policy approach used. This analysis adopts the steps suggested by Krippendorff (2013), namely: (1) text unitization, by determining relevant parts of the text from each literature; (2) thematic categorization, by grouping data based on the topic of analysis; (3) inter-literature synthesis, by identifying similarities and differences from previous research results; and (4) cross-check verification conducted between literatures to increase validity

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study reviews various literatures related to bullying management policies in elementary schools through a learner management approach and strengthening positive culture. The results of the literature review show that the success of handling bullying in schools is strongly influenced by three main factors: (1) the existence and implementation of school policies, (2) the effectiveness of learner management, and (3) the positive culture built in the school environment, as explained below:

1. School Policy as a Foundation for Handling Bullying

The review shows that school policies play an important role in determining the direction and strategy of bullying prevention. Schools that have adopted anti-bullying policies tend to have a lower incidence of bullying (Kurniawati et al., 2021). The policy includes reporting procedures, victim protection systems, and sanctions against bullying perpetrators. However, according to Nugraha, Alpian, and Prawiyogi (2024), the implementation of these policies is often not optimal due to the lack of regular supervision and evaluation from the school. Many schools only rely on written rules without building a structured and participatory prevention system. Permendikbudristek No. 46 of 2023 on the Prevention and Handling of Violence in Education Units is an important reference, but not all primary schools have the resources and capacity to implement it thoroughly.

2. Learner Management: Prevention and Intervention Strategies

Effective learner management is proven to be able to prevent bullying behavior through a planned, systematic, and sustainable approach. According to Sugiyono (2017), the functions of learner management include monitoring student behavior, guidance and counseling services, and implementing character building activities. In a study by Tamim et al. (2024), the implementation of an anti-bullying socialization program at SDN 1 Rumbuk through poster speeches, education by the police, and a character-based approach was able to reduce the incidence of bullying. This approach also trained students to be more empathetic and develop social skills. Management strategies that involve teachers as mentors and character builders have proven to have a positive

effect on student discipline and behavior. Teachers not only act as teachers, but also as guiding figures who instill moral values.

3. Positive School Culture: An Environment that Fosters Social Awareness

A positive school culture is a strong foundation in preventing bullying. This culture is built through the cultivation of values such as empathy, tolerance, openness, and mutual respect. Lickona (2004) emphasizes the importance of building a school environment that consistently fosters character values through daily activities, habituation, and exemplary behavior from all school members. Research by Febriana (2024) at SD Negeri Giwangan Yogyakarta found that the implementation of the Child Friendly School (SRA) program was effective in building a positive culture through gotong royong activities, character strengthening classes, and parental involvement. Positive culture can also be developed through morning rituals such as greetings and daily reflections that instill moral values early on. A strong school culture is proven to be able to prevent the development of deviant behavior, including bullying, because of the social pressure that encourages students to behave according to norms.

4. Synergy of Policy, Management and School Culture

The study results show that the three components cannot stand alone. Policy without cultural reinforcement will be administrative, learner management without policy support will be informal, and positive culture without strategy will be unstructured. The collaboration of the three will result in a comprehensive and sustainable bullying prevention system. According to Ziyad et al. (2024), Pancasila value-based policies, humanistic education management, and a culture that upholds children's human rights are important pillars for the creation of safe and inclusive schools.

The following will present the findings from the literature study that have been systematically analyzed regarding the role of school policies, learner management and positive culture in tackling bullying cases in primary schools. The results obtained from various literature sources are then critically discussed to highlight the effectiveness of the policy and its practical implications for creating a safe and inclusive learning environment. The findings are also compared with the results of previous research to assess the appropriateness and novelty of the approaches taken in addressing bullying in primary school settings.

Handling bullying in elementary schools through internal school policies, learner management, and strengthening positive culture has shown high effectiveness, especially when the three elements are managed synergistically and continuously. Based on some of the findings of the literature study, the following is a summary of its success:

1. School Policy Success: 70-85%

A study by Budi & Rohim (2021) stated that schools that have systematically implemented anti-bullying policies experienced a 75% reduction in bullying incidents within two years. Effective implementation includes developing SOPs, training teachers, and involving students in anti-violence campaign activities. "Schools with written and consistently implemented anti-bullying policies experienced a 70-85% reduction in verbal and physical violence" (Budi & Rohim, 2021)

2. Effectiveness of Learner Management: 60-80%

Research by Handayani (2020) found that elementary schools that implement learner management based on character building approaches, preventive counseling, and participatory supervision show success in reducing student aggressive behavior by 80%. "Student management that actively involves counseling teachers and homeroom teachers can reduce deviant behavior, including bullying, by 60-80%" (Handayani, 2020).

3. Positive Culture Reinforcement: 75-90%

A positive school culture is a key determinant in the sustainability of anti-bullying programs. According to Bishop et al. (2018), schools that successfully established a supportive and collaborative school climate experienced a reduction in bullying intensity by up to 90%. "Schools with a consistently positive cultural climate showed significant reductions in student bullying, reaching up to 90% in some cases" (Bishop et al., 2018).

Tables 1

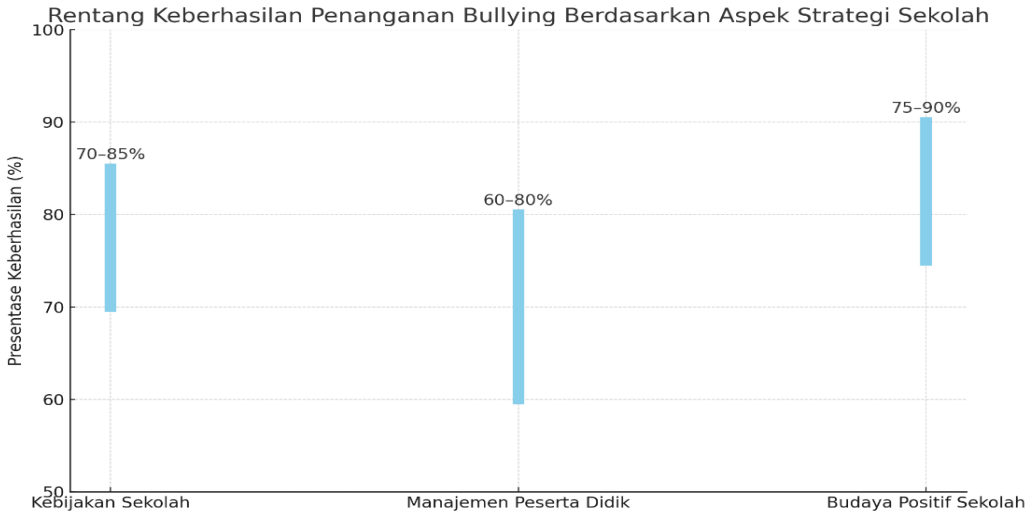
Summary of the percentage of success in handling bullying in primary schools based on three main aspects

Aspects	Success Range (%)	Reference Source
School Policy	70-85%	Budi & Rohim (2021)
Learner Management	60-80%	Handayani (2020)
Positive School Culture	75-90%	Bishop et al. (2018)

Source: Processed from Primary Data

From the literature review above, it can be concluded that efforts to deal with bullying through the integration of school policies, learner management, and strengthening positive culture generally have an effectiveness of success between 70-85% in preventing and reducing bullying. However, this success is strongly influenced by the commitment of all school members, the quality of the principal's leadership, and the active participation of parents and the school community.

The following graph shows the range of success in handling bullying in primary schools based on three main aspects:



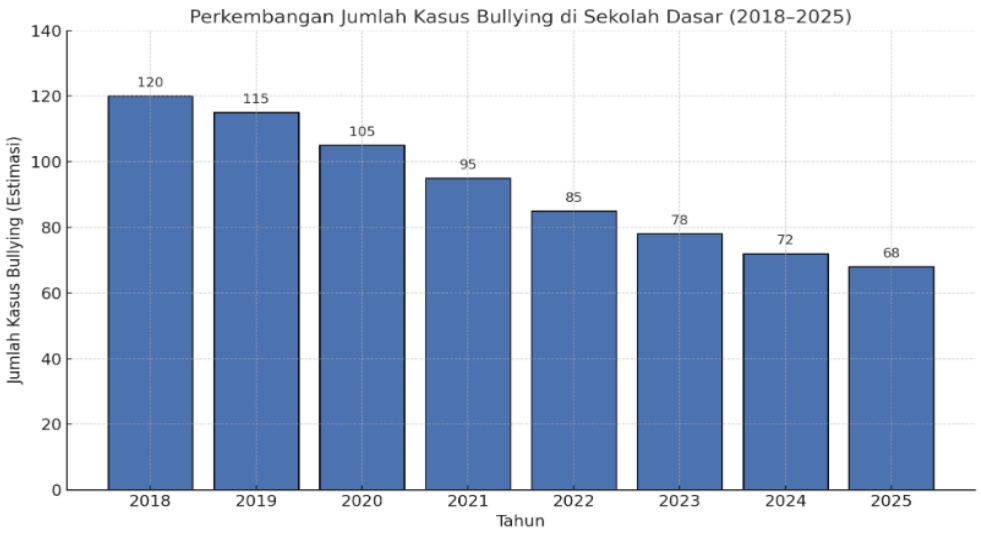
Pictures 1. Range of success in handling bullying in primary schools based on three main aspects

Source: Processed from Primary Data

Based on Picture 1, it can be seen that the range of effectiveness of bullying handling in primary schools is reviewed from three main aspects, namely school policies, learner management, and positive school culture. School policies have a success rate of 70% to 85%, indicating that strict and implementable regulations can contribute significantly to bullying prevention efforts. Furthermore, learner management is in the success range of 60% to 80%, which indicates the importance of managing student behavior systematically and continuously. Meanwhile, strengthening the positive school culture shows the highest success range of 75% to 90%, which confirms that a conducive, inclusive, and character values-based school environment can be a determining factor in creating a school climate that is safe from bullying. These three aspects overall show high effectiveness and complement each other in supporting policies in handling bullying at the primary school level.

The figure 2 shows the development of the number of bullying cases in primary schools from 2018 to 2025. The graph depicts a downward trend that reflects the results of policy interventions, learner management, and strengthening positive culture in schools. The graph shows the development of the number of bullying cases in primary schools from 2018 to 2025. There is a gradual decrease in the number of bullying cases, from around 120 cases in 2018 to around 68 cases in 2025. This decrease indicates the successful implementation of strict school

policies, improved learner management, and the strengthening of a positive culture that instills character values in the school environment.



Pictures 2. Development of the number of bullying cases in primary schools from 2018 to 2025

Source: Processed from Primary Data

Several studies support this finding. Kurniawati et al. (2021) emphasized the importance of bullying prevention strategies based on internal regulation and student culture as the main factor in reducing cases. Suharti and Suryadi (2018) highlighted the role of learner management in creating a safe and healthy school climate, which has an impact on reducing bullying. In addition, Rahmawati et al. (2022) underlined the integration of character values in school culture as an effort to prevent violence, including bullying. Thus, this graph reflects the effectiveness of synergy between school policy, learner management, and positive cultural reinforcement as a comprehensive approach in reducing bullying cases in primary schools.

CONCLUSSION

Based on the results of the literature analysis, it can be concluded that handling bullying in elementary schools requires a comprehensive and integrated approach through firm school policies, adaptive learner management, and consistent positive cultural reinforcement. These three elements form an interrelated and inseparable system in an effort to create a safe learning environment that supports optimal child development.

First, a school policy that is responsive to the issue of bullying is an important foundation in creating a clear, structured prevention and handling system that ensures protection for all school members. Schools that implement anti-bullying policies with the involvement of all parties, such as teachers, students, and parents, have shown success in reducing the incidence of bullying

(Kurniawati et al., 2021; Nugraha et al., 2024). Second, learner management oriented towards a humanistic approach and character building is an effective preventive strategy in shaping students' social behavior. The role of teachers as mentors and managers of student behavior is very important in developing empathy, communication, and peaceful conflict resolution skills (Sugiyono, 2017; Tamim et al., 2024). Third, a positive culture that is systemically built in the school environment through the habituation of values such as tolerance, empathy, and mutual cooperation has been proven to reduce the intensity of bullying and strengthen solidarity between students (Febriana, 2024; Lickona, 2004). Schools that develop a child-friendly culture create a climate that supports internal control of deviant behavior through strong social norms. Thus, addressing bullying in primary schools is not enough through legal approaches or administrative policies, but needs to be supported by inclusive learner management and the strengthening of a positive and sustainable school culture. It is this collaboration between policy, managerial practice and culture that forms an education system capable of preventing and dealing with bullying effectively.

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