Strategies to Overcome Bullying from the Perspective of Educational Philosophy

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Abstract

With thousands of child bullying cases reported annually, Indonesia's education system currently faces a significant challenge related to bullying among children. The purpose of this study is to analyze the role of educational philosophy in preventing bullying in schools by fostering students' character and morality. To develop students' morality and ethics, the philosophy of education contributes to the cultivation of positive character traits. This study employs Aristotle's virtue ethics theory to emphasize the importance of fairness, empathy, courage, and self-control in curbing bullying behavior. By integrating humanistic and ethical values into education, students are expected to develop virtuous traits, enhance social awareness, and take responsibility for their choices. This research adopts a qualitative approach by conducting a literature review to gather data from relevant journal articles and books. The findings indicate that character education based on the philosophy of education can effectively reduce and prevent bullying in schools. It also contributes to creating a safer and more secure learning environment for all students.
Keywords: Bullying, Philosophy, Education

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia's education system is experiencing a bullying emergency. This was conveyed by the Commissioner of the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI), Aries Adi Leksono (Databoks.katadata.co.id, 2023). In line with the statement of the National Commission on Child Protection (KOMNAS PA) that there were 16,720 cases of bullying found in students (Kompas.com). Bullying is an aggressive action that occurs continuously where there is an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim (Olweus, 1994 in Fu, X., et.all, 2024). Bullying has even become a social phenomenon where bullying events almost occur among school children (Safaat, R. A. (2023). The Federation of Indonesian Teachers' Unions (FSGI) released the number of bullying cases in Indonesia recorded 30 cases throughout 2023 and increased from the previous year of 9 cases. The most cases of bullying occurred in junior high school students as much as 50%. The remaining 30% occurred at the elementary level, 10% occurred at the high school level and 10% occurred at the vocational level. Some of the bullying cases that occurred included the persecution of elementary school students at one of the elementary schools in Sukabumi Regency and high school students in Wakatobi, Southeast Sulawesi. Both victims died as a result of mistreatment by their peers (Kompas.id, 2023). As many as 80% of bullying cases in 2023 occurred in schools under the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology (Kemendikbudristek), and 20% in schools under the Ministry of Religious Affairs (Databoks.katadata.co.id, 2023)

It is as if bullying has become an integral part of the lives of teenagers in the modern era. Bullying can be verbal, physical, social, and emotional (Safaat, R. A., 2023). There are many reasons why people who bully do what they do. Most of the bullying that occurs in children in secondary schools occurs because they imitate bad behaviour that they watch on social media or other content on electronic devices and television (Gustiawan J, 2021). In contrast, bullying at the secondary school level is caused by the desire to dominate and be popular among peers

(Safaat, R. A., 2023) Schools are one of the educational institutions responsible for building and fostering children's character. Research shows that the implementation of character education can prevent bullying in the form of habituation and cultivation of moral values integrated in the process of teaching and learning activities. It is time for schools to become a place to reduce or overcome the bullying's problem from an educational perspective. A good school climate is associated with lower levels of bullying of learners (Fu, X. et al., 2024).

This research will discuss about strategies to overcome bullying in the perspective of the philosophy of education. Philosophy of Education is a philosophy that examines the problems of education and how students will be brought to an educational goal. So that the strong philosophical foundation can help solve this problems in the world of education. In the perspective of the philosophy of education, bullying can be prevented by approaching human values, ethics, and higher educational goals. Philosophy of education plays a role in building a moral and ethical foundation for students, creating an environment conducive to character development and respectful understanding between individuals. The importance of ethics and morals in preventing bullying lies in instilling the characters of empathy, care and responsibility towards others. So that the school function is not only a place to transfer knowledge but also to transfer good character and morals (Devi Ayu Lestari, Wanda Kholisah, & M. Rifqi Januar Supriyanto, 2024)

RESEARCH METHODS

This research is qualitative research that is a library study (library research) using journal articles and books which is related to the subject. The data collection technique of this research is to collect data from both journals and books. This research data analysis uses content analysis.

RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
The Role of Philosophy of Education

Philosophy is a discipline that comprehensively, rationally, and profoundly examines human-related subjects, aiming to uncover the fundamental essence of the objects under study (Hanurawan, 2012). Philosophy is a noble and supreme discipline, indispensable for every thoughtful individual, as it addresses beneficial matters and explores ways to avoid harmful ones (Daniel, R. F., 2024). Philosophy encompasses three principal areas of inquiry: the relationship between humans and God, the relationship between humans and nature, and the relationship between humans and other humans, whether individually or collectively. It is a critical field of study for humanity, as philosophical thinking enables individuals to adopt a holistic perspective, thereby assisting in solving life's complex problems. Educational philosophy is a branch of philosophy that focuses on education as its primary subject of inquiry. It delves deeply into all aspects related to the human effort in conducting the educational process and achieving the goals of education as envisioned (Hikmawan, 2017). Education is a process aimed at changing the behavior of learners. Meanwhile, personality or character is related to how they behave. The primary benefit of education is the development of a dignified and moral national character. Education must contribute to enhancing and shaping a nation's moral and dignified character. This will undoubtedly have a significant impact on the advancement of our country (Aryana, I. M. P., 2021 in Yuliyanti, S., & Juliangkary, E., 2023). Educational philosophy serves as a foundation of values underpinning approaches in education (Ainia, 2020). Ethics, as an integral component, helps establish goals and principles aimed at shaping students' morality and character throughout the learning process. In educational philosophy, ethics is closely tied to self-awareness and personal development. Students are

encouraged to reflect on their life goals, the values they uphold, and how their actions affect others and the broader world (Faiz, 2018).

Ethics and Morality in Education

Ethics originates from the Greek word "Ethos," which is commonly associated with the Latin term "Mos" and its plural "Mores," both of which refer to habits or ways of life that involve performing good deeds (morality) and avoiding harmful actions. Although the meanings of morality and ethics are similar, there is a distinction between the two in daily activities: morality refers to the evaluation of actions performed, while ethics is the study of the system of prevailing values (Devi et al., 2024). Ethics and morality differ in everyday activities, although their meanings are almost the same. Ethics examines the system of values in place, while morality assesses the actions that are carried out (Ersilia M & Christina S, 2017). Morality refers to various aspects of the individual socialization process; without it, humans cannot undergo the socialization process. Morality consists of absolute values in societal life. A person's moral judgment can be measured by their own cultural standards. Morality concerns how individuals interact with others and can also be defined as the attitudes, behaviors, actions, and deeds of an individual attempting to act in accordance with their experiences, interpretations, conscience, advice, and other factors. One of the fundamental traits taught during education is morality. Therefore, it can be concluded that ethics and morality are two interconnected concepts in education. In education, ethics focuses on the behavior expected from educators, educational staff, and students within a particular profession or group. Educational philosophy aims to create a learning environment that is positive, respectful, and upholds human values. Morality refers to the habits, values, and norms of society that are considered good and right. In education, morality is related to building the character of students, helping them become kind-hearted, responsible, and caring toward others (Devi et al., 2024).

Aristotle's Virtue Ethics

According to Aristotle, virtue is a condition that allows individuals to live optimally and achieve true happiness, or eudaimonia (Daniel, 2024). Eudaimonia is attained when individuals practice virtue and exhibit good behavior. Aristotle identifies virtue as a set of dispositions, including wisdom, courage, generosity, and justice, all of which guide individuals on the path to eudaimonia (Sidiq & Wisnu, 2024). According to Aristotle's virtue ethics, the following elements are associated with virtue: First, the virtue of justice enables us to treat others well, while the virtue of empathy is the behavior that allows us to understand the needs and emotions of others. Second, the virtue of courage, as described by Aristotle, is the ability to balance fear and bravery when facing difficult situations. This ability enables an individual to act for justice without excessive fear. Certainly, courage is necessary to report bullying behaviors or defend victims**.** Third, self-control is a virtue that enables an individual to avoid instinctive actions, such as hurting or harming others. In the context of bullying, this attitude helps control aggressive impulses that could cause harm to others. Fourth, Aristotle states that virtue is an inherent quality, but it must be cultivated through habituation, both in the family and at school. In schools, the development of positive character is achieved through continuous education and repeated practices. The goodness practiced repeatedly becomes a habit (Sachs, 2002).

Effective Strategies for overcoming Bullying in Schools

Steps to overcome and reduce bullying in schools, according to educational philosophy, can include understanding ethics, character development, and creating a safe and supportive learning environment. Below are some strategies that can be implemented:

1. Understanding Ethics and Morality. Teachers in schools should not only transfer knowledge but also teach moral and ethical values. Ethical and moral education is essential for human life to ensure that individuals act responsibly and morally. Moral strength is crucial in managing emotions (Nurfitriyanti et al., 2024). In social ethics, empathy plays an important role. The ability to feel and understand the feelings, views, or experiences of others allows individuals to be more considerate and understand the needs, emotions, and perspectives of their peers. This is a key component of social ethics. Behaving well toward others, showing concern, and providing support when needed are characteristics of empathetic students. Since empathetic individuals are more likely to consider the emotional impact of their actions, empathy also helps prevent behaviors that might hurt or harm others (Kamaruddin et al., 2023).

2. Character Development. Good character can be instilled in students through habituation. Character development, through the cultivation of religious values, can reduce bullying behaviors, as evidenced by research conducted by Larozza et al. (2023) at SDN 182/I Hutan Lindung. Character education teaches students social skills to interact with their peers, develops empathy, and fosters respect for the existence of others. It helps students nurture concern, moral values, and respect for others (Maryani et al., 2024). This aligns with the research by Stipek, D., & Hoffman, L. (2019) in Kamaruddin et al. (2023), The Impact of Character Education on Student Behavior, which states that well-implemented character education can prevent negative behaviors in students and promote positive behavior.

3. Creating a Safe and Comfortable Learning Environment. A supportive school atmosphere and climate can be one of the key factors in preventing bullying. Teachers can establish positive relationships with their students, making them feel comfortable enough to report bullying incidents (Basit, A., & Azis, F., 2024). Teachers serve as agents of change in the development of students' morals and character. A safe and supportive school environment can effectively prevent bullying within the school (Andryawan et al., 2023). Schools that respect diversity, implement anti-bullying policies, and promote an inclusive culture will create a safe and welcoming space for students to grow and thrive. In such an environment, students will feel accepted and will not fear becoming victims of bullying (Rahmawati et al., 2024).

Discussion

Educational philosophy plays a critical role in addressing the widespread issue of bullying in schools. One strategy to combat bullying is by strengthening the development of character and morality in students. Character is defined as a collection of principles that form the system underlying thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors, and is understood to be synonymous with personality (Kristian, 2021). Essentially, character education helps individuals become moral beings who can experience freedom and responsibility in their relationships with others, the world, and themselves within the educational community. Character education assists individuals in becoming morally upright, capable of making sound decisions, and actively participating in building communal life (Maharani & Kristian, 2021). Morality is not only reflected in habitual behavior but also in the thoughts and convictions regarding what is good and bad, what is proper and improper for humans to do. It serves as a measure for determining right or wrong behavior, judged from the perspective of humanity rather than specific roles individuals may perform. In Aristotle's theory of virtue, several aspects of behavior are outlined that can serve as controls to prevent bullying. Among these are how fairness and empathy can encourage individuals to better understand the perspectives of others, thus preventing behaviors that could harm others. Furthermore, courage is described as the attitude that enables individuals to stand up for truth, speak out against injustice, or report bullying

behaviors. Finally, self-control is one of the key character traits that involves controlling emotions or negative feelings toward others, helping individuals avoid desires to harm or dominate others. Aristotle portrays a moral person as one who possesses qualities such as courage, simplicity, freedom, greatness, magnificence, high-mindedness, gentleness, honesty, intelligence, and justice (Poespoprodjo, 1999 in Kristian, 2021). By students' understanding of ethics, morality, and the application of virtue theory, individuals can develop good character and moral values aligned with societal norms. This understanding enables students to make wiser decisions regarding their actions and the potential consequences of those actions, helping prevent and even eliminate bullying behaviors

CONCLUSION

Educational philosophy plays a crucial role in addressing bullying among adolescents by instilling character and morality. Character education aims to shape moral individuals who make wise decisions and actively participate in social interactions within the community. By understanding moral values and ethics, as well as applying Aristotle's virtue theory—such as fairness, empathy, courage, and self-control—students can develop good character. This helps them better understand the perspectives of others, have the courage to challenge injustice, and manage negative emotions that may trigger harmful behaviors. Thus, the instillation of moral values and virtues in students can prevent and eliminate bullying behaviors within the school environment.

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