

DEVELOPMENT OF PRINCIPAL STRATEGY MODEL IN MITIGATING STUDENT VIOLENCE IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the efforts of the school principal in mitigating student violence at public elementary school 204 Sompe, Sabangparu District, Wajo Regency, through educational and da'wah-based approaches. It aims to describe the strategies employed by the principal to reduce physical, psychological, and verbal violence in the school, as well as the supporting factors and challenges faced in these efforts. The research was conducted using a descriptive, non-statistical analysis with an inductive approach. Data were collected and analyzed through deductive and inductive methods. Key findings highlight the principal's comprehensive approach, which includes problem identification, policy formulation, partnership building, goal-setting, implementation, and evaluation. Supporting factors include the school's location in a region known for its Islamic culture, extracurricular activities, and manageable student numbers. Challenges include resistance from students, particularly those with limited religious exposure at home, and the influence of technology on student behavior. This study contributes to understanding how educational and da'wah approaches can mitigate student violence in schools, providing insights for further research and improvements in educational practices.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Education is a fundamental human need, essential for sustaining life and making it meaningful and valuable. Education also represents a series of processes through which individuals can develop their potential, cultivate positive behaviors, and adapt to societal norms in the community (Ahmadi, 2019). From a teaching perspective, education involves both students and teachers. Students engage in learning activities, while teachers serve as guides and facilitators throughout the learning process. This dynamic necessitates effective managerial leadership to achieve educational goals (Sutrisno, 2017).

A leader is someone who can influence others or groups to work together towards achieving predefined objectives. Leadership, therefore, is a process of influencing others to put collective effort into attaining goals (Rivai, 2015). In the educational context, the principal, or head of a school, is the leader. The term "principal" etymologically refers to a teacher who leads a school. In this regard, the principal is a functional teacher tasked with managing an institution where teaching and learning take place—essentially, the place where teachers provide instruction, and students absorb knowledge (Wahyudi, 2018).

In modern education, school leadership is crucial to achieving educational objectives. The school principal, as the managerial leader within an educational institution, has a broader responsibility than merely being a teacher. The principal must guide and influence the school's environment, encompassing not only academic development but also fostering spiritual, emotional, intellectual, physical, and financial growth (Nugroho, 2019). The principal plays a vital role in shaping the school's environment to ensure a thriving educational atmosphere.

A principal's primary role is to organize the school environment, control group activities, and act as the spokesperson for the institution. To effectively empower the surrounding community, the principal must take on a multifaceted role, including that of a catalyst, solution-giver, process-helper, and resource-linker. As a catalyst, the principal inspires others about the need for change. As a solution-giver, the principal emphasizes the end goal of any change initiative. As a process-helper, the principal helps ensure the smooth progress of these changes and resolves conflicts between stakeholders. Lastly, as a resource-linker, the principal connects people to necessary resources (Khalid, 2020).

School principals must uphold equality, avoid discrimination, and foster a sense of unity among the teaching staff, students, and other school members. Positive feedback and suggestions from the principal can help boost morale and teamwork among all parties involved in the educational process (Rashid, 2017). As a motivator and catalyst, the principal's role is to keep the spirit of learning alive within the school environment. Every individual, whether personally or as part of a group, needs their needs to be met, including recognition through promotions, benefits, or opportunities for further education (Simamora, 2016).

The principal is the key figure in school management. They are tasked with ensuring a positive school climate, motivating teachers to enhance their competencies, fostering good working relationships among staff, and promoting student success. This leadership role carries significant weight as it directly influences the school's success in meeting its educational goals (Rizki, 2017). Furthermore, principals must leverage their managerial skills to empower teachers and staff to achieve the school's vision and mission.

As educational leaders, school principals hold a key position in shaping school culture and quality. Their competence directly impacts the achievement of educational goals (Haryanto, 2020). A principal's leadership competence includes personal competence, managerial competence, entrepreneurial competence, supervisory competence, and social competence, as outlined in the National Education Ministry's Regulation No. 13/2007 on School Head Standards (Ministry of National Education, 2007).

The 21st century, marked by rapid technological advancements, has placed demands on principals to adapt their competencies to remain competitive in the modern world (Sari, 2021). The challenges facing school leaders today are immense, making it essential to examine school principals' competencies in the 21st century more deeply (Yusuf & Sari, 2019).

2. METHOD

This study adopts a descriptive/non-statistical research design. Descriptive research is defined as a study that aims to reveal problems and situations as they exist without attempting to manipulate them (Sukardi, 2013). It focuses on exploring, describing, and systematically analyzing phenomena based on data obtained in the field, with the aim to explain and predict the occurrence of such phenomena. The researcher endeavors to document, analyze, and interpret the existing conditions, gathering information on variables relevant to the study.

This study utilizes a pedagogical, psychological, theological normative, and juridical approach. The pedagogical approach is used to examine the learning efforts at public elementary school 204 Sompe. The psychological approach focuses on understanding the school principal's efforts to address violence against students. The theological normative approach aims to find justifications for religious teachings related to the issue, offering insights from Islamic teachings as outlined in the Qur'an and Hadith. Finally, the juridical approach is employed to investigate the principal's actions in line with relevant laws and regulations governing education and child protection (Arikunto, 2013; Mulyasa, 2011).

The study population consists of all students, teachers, the vice principal, curriculum vice principal, educational staff, and public relations at public elementary school. A purposive sampling technique is applied to select participants who are directly involved in the principal's efforts to combat violence in the school. Data collection methods include observation, unstructured interviews, and documentation. Observations are made by the researcher while engaging in the activities at the school, interviews are conducted with key figures to gather detailed information, and documents such as school records and regulations are reviewed to support the findings. Data analysis is performed using descriptive, inductive, and comparative methods to interpret the collected data effectively (Sugiyono, 2017).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Results

a. Forms of Violence and Contributing Factors at public elementary school 204 Sompe, Sabbangparu Subdistrict, Wajo Regency

The study conducted on the behavior of violence at public elementary school 204 Sompe, Sabbangparu District, Wajo Regency, identified various forms of violence: physical, psychological, and verbal. Data obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation were analyzed to examine the school's efforts in addressing these issues.

1) Physical Violence

Physical violence was infrequent but occurred. One incident in 2022 involved a student named Mufidah, who was injured and required intensive hospital care. Other physical violence incidents included a student being punched by a peer outside school and another being shoved, resulting in facial injuries.

2) Psychological Violence

Psychological violence, mostly in the form of bullying, was common. Students often reported being verbally taunted and mocked, leading to feelings of fear and anxiety. Teachers sometimes contributed unintentionally by making threatening gestures or comments.

3) Verbal Violence

Verbal violence was the most widespread form of aggression, involving insults and name-calling. Teachers addressed this by reprimanding students, documenting incidents, and promoting conflict resolution. The social and family backgrounds of students played a role in the prevalence of verbal bullying.

4) Causes of Violence

Several factors contributed to the violence at the school:

- a) Biological: Emotional triggers like frustration or anger fueled violent behavior.
- b) Psychological: Accumulated frustration and unmet needs led to aggression.
- c) Social-Cultural: The influence of the social environment and exposure to media violence affected behavior.

- d) External Pressures: Personal, family, and societal pressures contributed to violent behavior.

The study highlights the importance of raising awareness, enforcing stronger disciplinary policies, and providing better teacher training to prevent violence in schools.

b. Efforts of the Principal in Mitigating Violent Behavior at public elementary school 204 Sompe, Sabbangparu District, Wajo Regency

The principal of public elementary school 204 Sompe, Sabbangparu District, Wajo Regency, mitigates violent behavior at the school through educational and da'wah approaches. These efforts include a comprehensive strategy to prevent violence, involving the identification and assessment of the problem, policy-making, forming partnerships, setting measurable goals, implementing plans, and evaluating outcomes.

Firstly, the principal personally identifies each incident of violent behavior, including reports of violence related to the school. These incidents are identified based on facts and eyewitness accounts, without involving teachers or other parties. This approach ensures that the identification remains impartial and free from external interests, particularly regarding the individuals involved in the violent behavior.

Secondly, the principal formulates policies as a preventive measure against violent behavior. For example, in the case of violence against Mufidah, the principal implemented two major policies: creating a mediation team between the victim's and perpetrator's families and temporarily suspending the teacher involved. In the case of verbal violence, the principal emphasized the importance of teachers providing good examples and immediately reprimanding students who engage in verbal aggression. If a student continues to display verbal violence, the teacher is encouraged to impose corrective measures, such as asking the student to say "Istighfar" (seek forgiveness).

Thirdly, regarding the implementation phase, the specific details of the plan are discussed further in the thesis. For evaluation, the principal aims to address areas where the established policies have not been fully effective in mitigating violent behavior.

1) Educational Approach

The principal's policy for mitigating violent behavior is a mandatory task for a leader. It is the principal's responsibility to create policies that prevent frequent occurrences of violent behavior. The established policies serve as indicators of the effectiveness of the violence prevention efforts.

According to the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture Regulation No. 82 of 2015 on the Prevention and Handling of Violence in Educational Institutions, the duties of educational units in preventing violence include:

a) Creating a Violence-Free Educational Environment

The principal of public elementary school 204 Sompe engages both students and parents through simple informal events that also serve as campaigns to raise awareness about the importance of a violence-free environment.

b) Building a Safe, Comfortable, and Enjoyable School Environment

The principal organizes informal activities aimed at fostering unity and camaraderie among students and educational staff, such as group games to build closeness.

c) Ensuring Safety and Comfort in School Activities

The school has established procedures, including having security guards on site and maintaining communication with local residents to ensure school safety.

d) Reporting to Parents/Guardians and Seeking Information on Potential Violence

The principal conducts early identification, as discussed earlier, by mediating between the victim and perpetrator and communicating with their families.

e) Developing and Implementing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)

The principal has developed SOPs in line with Ministry guidelines and has socialized these procedures to students, educators, staff, parents, the school committee, and the community.

Based on interviews and observations, the principal's efforts in mitigating violence at public elementary school 204 Sompe using an educational approach are formal. Some plans have been successfully implemented, while others have led to new policies that were not initially included in the SOP.

2) Da'wah Approach

Previously, the researcher outlined that from a religious standpoint, public elementary school 204 Sompe, Kecamatan Sabbangparu, Kabupaten Wajo, has a relatively strong religious environment. This is supported by the positive behavior of the teachers, who are good role models both towards each other and the students. Teachers often greet each other and maintain harmonious relationships both inside and outside the classroom, which helps to create a supportive atmosphere for the students. According to Andi Lili, one of the teachers, the religious environment at the school is conducive to fostering good relationships between teachers and students.

Regarding the application of da'wah (Islamic preaching) to address violence at public elementary school 204 Sompe, the principal has implemented several strategies, both as a leader and as an educator.

a) Tadarrus (Quran Recitation)

As part of the school's literacy activities, tadarrus al-Quran is also a concrete action taken by the principal. According to Hj. Rusniati, S.Pd, the school principal, Quran recitation is considered a must for students, as it helps them both academically and in their Islamic studies. Reciting the Quran can calm the heart, reduce emotions, and indirectly help mitigate violent behavior. The principal believes that teachers should instill strong religious values in students, guiding them to live according to Islamic teachings. The daily practice of reading the Quran builds good character, ethics, and moral integrity. Tadarrus typically lasts for 10-15 minutes before lessons begin, focusing on short Surahs such as An-Nas, which can also help students improve their Quranic reading skills.

b) Providing Guidance and Advice

Before teaching any material, the principal encourages all teachers to guide students in a way that helps them develop good character and avoid behaviors that can damage their morals, such as violence. Teachers are also advised to pay particular attention to students known to be disruptive. Guidance should be given in a conversational manner during free periods or breaks, using simple and everyday language to make it more relatable to the students. Occasionally, providing light-hearted moments can help prevent boredom. Additionally, the principal personally gives informal advice and guidance, focusing especially on issues related to violence in the school.

c) Habituation

According to Mustika, S.Pd, several habits are emphasized to mitigate violence at public elementary school 204 Sompe. One of these is the practice of shaking hands before entering the classroom and when leaving at the end of the school day. Although this is a simple gesture, it helps to foster psychological closeness among students, which can indirectly prevent violent behavior. Positive habits lead to good outcomes, and students will learn to set a good example for others.

c. Supporting and Hindering Factors in Mitigating Violence at public elementary school 204 Sompe

Several factors both support and hinder the efforts to mitigate violence at public elementary school 204 Sompe:

a) Supporting Factors

The school's location within the religiously rich area of Wajo, known as a "city of santri," is a supportive factor. Religious efforts are well accepted by both teachers and students.

Moreover, the school conducts regular extracurricular activities, such as Quran reading lessons on Fridays, which contribute to the students' moral development.

Another supportive factor is the relatively small number of students, making it easier to build and maintain good habits among students.

b) Hindering Factors

Despite the efforts, there are several obstacles in addressing violence:

First, students often try to avoid participating in activities like tadarrus by coming up with excuses.

Second, some students, especially those who lack religious guidance at home, struggle to understand the importance of the learning process and are reluctant to engage in it.

Third, the influence of technology, particularly violent content in short video apps, has encouraged some students to mimic violent behavior, contributing to violence in the school.

3.2. Discussion

The study on violent behavior at public elementary school 204 Sompe, Sabbangparu District, Wajo Regency, reveals important insights into the forms of violence prevalent in the school environment and the efforts taken by the principal to mitigate these behaviors. The forms of violence observed include physical, psychological, and verbal aggression, all of which significantly impact the emotional and social development of students. The study also underscores the importance of the principal's leadership in addressing these issues, with a focus on both educational and da'wah approaches.

a. Forms of Violence and Contributing Factors

The study identifies various types of violent behavior in the school setting, including physical, psychological, and verbal violence. Physical violence, although less frequent, can have severe consequences, as seen in the case of Mufidah, who required medical attention. Psychological violence, primarily in the form of bullying, and verbal violence, including name-calling and insults, were found to be more widespread. This type of aggression is often exacerbated by the social and family environments of the students.

Psychological theories on aggression, such as the Social Learning Theory proposed by Albert Bandura (1977), suggest that aggression is learned through observation and imitation of others, particularly in environments where violence is normalized. The study indicates that some students, particularly those from challenging family backgrounds or exposed to violent media content, exhibit aggressive behavior that may stem from the modeling of violent actions. Bandura's theory posits that children learn behaviors by observing others, and when they witness violent acts in their surroundings, they are more likely to replicate these actions.

b. Principal's Efforts: Educational and Da'wah Approaches

The principal at public elementary school 204 Sompe has implemented a multifaceted approach to address violent behavior. The educational approach focuses on creating a safe, comfortable, and supportive school environment, where both students and staff are encouraged to participate in activities that promote positive relationships and moral development. According to the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture Regulation No. 82 of 2015, creating a violence-free environment is essential, and the principal's policies align with these guidelines. Through regular extracurricular activities, such as Quran recitation (tadarrus) and moral guidance, the principal fosters an atmosphere that discourages violent behavior.

Incorporating religious teachings into the educational process is an effective strategy for character-building, as highlighted by studies on the impact of religious education on youth behavior. Research by Pargament (1997) on the role of religion in coping with stress suggests that spiritual practices, such as reciting the Quran, can serve as coping mechanisms that reduce aggression and promote emotional regulation. By encouraging students to engage in religious activities, the principal provides students with tools to manage their emotions and behaviors constructively.

The da'wah approach further complements the educational strategies by instilling strong moral values in students. The practice of tadarrus, the regular advice sessions, and the emphasis on good habits, such as greeting others with a handshake, all contribute to the development of positive character traits. These efforts align with the theory of Moral Development by Lawrence Kohlberg (1981), which emphasizes the importance of socialization and moral reasoning in preventing antisocial behavior. By nurturing a moral compass based on Islamic values, the school helps students internalize the behaviors expected of them in society.

c. Supporting and Hindering Factors

The study also highlights several factors that either support or hinder the principal's efforts in mitigating violence at public elementary school 204 Sompe. One of the primary supporting factors is the school's location in Wajo, a region with a strong religious culture, which makes religious-based interventions more acceptable to both students and staff. The school's relatively small student population also facilitates the implementation of personalized guidance and the cultivation of positive habits.

However, several hindering factors complicate the efforts to reduce violence. The reluctance of some students to participate in activities like tadarrus and the influence of technology, particularly violent content on social media, are significant challenges. These barriers reflect broader societal issues related to the role of technology in shaping youth behavior. According to the Uses and Gratifications Theory (Katz et al., 1973), individuals actively choose media content that satisfies their needs, which in this case may involve seeking out violent or provocative content. The exposure to such material may reinforce aggressive behaviors, making it more difficult for school interventions to succeed.

The study at public elementary school 204 Sompe illustrates the complexity of addressing violent behavior in schools, where multiple factors, including social, psychological, and cultural influences, intersect. The principal's efforts to mitigate violence through both educational and da'wah approaches are commendable, as they provide students with both moral guidance and practical tools to handle conflicts. However, the challenges posed by external factors, such as family background and media exposure, indicate that a more comprehensive, community-wide approach is necessary to reduce violence effectively. Integrating religious teachings with modern educational strategies offers a promising path forward, but it must be complemented by addressing the broader societal influences on youth behavior.

4. CONCLUSION

The study found that violent behavior at public elementary school 204 Sompe in Sabbangparu District, Wajo Regency, manifested in physical, psychological, and verbal forms. Among these, verbal violence was the most frequent, including insults, harsh words, mockery, and humiliation. The causes of this violence were multifactorial, involving biological, psychological, socio-cultural, and external pressures. The efforts to address these issues were led by the principal, who applied both educational and da'wah approaches. The educational strategy included creating policies, fostering partnerships, and establishing clear goals and measures, in line with the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture Regulation No. 82 of 2015. Additionally, the da'wah approach focused on activities such as Quran recitation, guidance, and the cultivation of good habits to promote positive behavior among students.

Supporting factors for these efforts included the religiously rich environment of Wajo, the school's regular extracurricular activities, and the manageable number of students, which allowed for the easy cultivation of good habits. However, several challenges hindered progress, including student reluctance to participate in religious activities, a lack of religious guidance at home, and the influence of violent content from technology, especially short video applications. Despite these obstacles, the principal's leadership in implementing both educational and religious approaches offers a promising model for addressing violence in schools.

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