Improvement of Conflict Resolution Among Elementary School Students

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ABSTRACT

Resolving conflict underpins teachers’ efforts to improve students’ skills in handling personal challenges. It is known that conflicts often stem from social interactions between students in the school environment, highlighting the need for various strategies to address these issues effectively. Based on this, this research aims to analyze an event in more depth, including individual and procedural data, using existing information. This research applies a qualitative research design, namely a case study. The subjects involved are students of the target school. The researcher acts as the main instrument in this qualitative research. The data collection methods used include observation, interviews, and literature observation. The technique used to analyze the data is qualitative-descriptive analysis. The study results are student control and discipline, principals, and instructors participate in resolving and managing conflicts in the education system. Conflict arises when a group of people deviates from their overwhelming desire for control, prestige, or power. When helping students resolve conflicts effectively and non-violently, the educational environment is advised to provide them with conflict resolution skills. These skills can be acquired through various extracurricular activities and other subjects. This study has implications in providing a more comprehensive insight into conflict among elementary school students. It can assist teachers in designing more effective strategies to improve school conflict resolution.

1. INTRODUCTION

Education is the process by which student behavior is changed through the facilitation of teaching and learning. The existence of a successful education program gives individuals the potential to develop
Problem-solving learning is the most complex form of learning. Because of the frequent challenges in students' daily experiences, problem-solving skills should ideally be taught at the elementary school level. The ultimate goal of instilling these skills is for students to apply the concepts they acquire daily. However, the practical implementation often fails to achieve these aspirations. Robert M. Gagne (Sagala, 2009; Saptadi et al., 2024). Conflict resolution underpins teachers' efforts to improve students' skills in handling personal challenges. Based on observations made in the field, conflicts often stem from social interactions between students in the school environment, highlighting the need for various strategies to address this issue effectively. This is because differences in views or misinterpretations between individuals are inherent in human social dynamics. Nonetheless, societies use various methods to address these conflicts, some of which encourage collaboration and understanding, while others may jeopardize social bonds. (Mafthuh, 2008; Sofia, 2021). The Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI) documented 53 cases of violence in schools and 168 incidents of online bullying in 2021. It shows a higher prevalence of online harassment compared to bullying cases in schools. However, recent data from the Indonesian Child Protection Commission in 2022 shows a spike in the incidence of violence in schools. In 2022, the Indonesian Child Protection Commission recorded 226 cases of physical and emotional bullying in schools, as well as 18 cases of cyberbullying. Given this situation, educators and researchers must remain vigilant in identifying any incidents in the school environment. Although violence against students is not a new phenomenon, schools should be more cautious and take proactive measures to monitor students and prevent bullying on campus (Fatimah et al., 2014).

Student conflicts can stem from various causes, including offensive humor, use of derogatory pseudonyms, verbal abuse, bullying, physical aggression, and defense of peers. Schools are important in setting the right framework and offering optimal guidance to manage such situations effectively. Mishandling conflicts have the potential to adversely impact students' mental and physical health, resulting in trauma, physical injuries such as bruising or swelling, and symptoms such as recurring headaches and abdominal pain (Constantin et al., 2023; Sumendap & Tumuju, 2023). Conflict is a type of communication between people. It should be noted that sarcasm, rivalry, and other factors can sometimes catalyze conflicts within certain groups. A dynamic feature of human existence is conflict. Humans are social creatures; therefore, social relationships are inevitable. From these intensive encounters, different people may have different views. Disputes can inevitably occur when people interact with each other. Conflict can also occur among students, which has a dangerous impact on the surrounding environment and other individuals, especially considering that adolescence is a phase where individuals experience conditions that are not yet mature or stable and are still in the process of self-discovery. The incident was caused by students' interest in unproductive activities such as brawls. Moreover, students who cannot resolve their inner conflicts may fall into social deviance, such as using illegal drugs (Nadya dkk., 2020 Arfini, 2020). Conflict is inevitable as it is an integral part of existence and cannot be avoided. However, conflict is described as a social process in which two or more individuals or groups work together to achieve the goal of one party, eradicating or paralyzing the other party. Relationships between two or more parties with different goals or interests can also be considered conflict. Three aspects can be used to categorize the origin of conflict: communication, structure, and personal characteristics, or human factors with constructive and dysfunctional influences (Ghofir, 2020; Sukatin et al., 2022).

There are several types of conflict. First, a conflict that advances team goals and increases output is called functional conflict. Functional consequences can arise from conflict if, firstly, it makes internal unhappiness secretly visible and allows the company to take appropriate steps to resolve it; Secondly, the potential for new standards to emerge and improvements to current standards; Thirdly, it can measure the existing organizational power structure, fourthly it reinforces group traits to give it a distinct identity, fifthly
it identifies components that were previously wrong, and sixthly, it is a decisive approach to combat stagnation. Second, dysfunctional conflict is defined as conflict that undermines employee productivity. Dysfunctional conflict is defined as conflict that undermines employee productivity. Conflict impedes departmental operations when it first causes the emergence of shaky perceptions that impede communication. Second, it leads the organization into disintegration. Third, it reduces the cooperation of individual and organizational subsystems. Fourth, it reduces members’ awareness of organizational goals (Muslim, 2020; Ubaidi et al., 2024).

Education is a powerful tool for transforming civilizations previously torn apart by conflict. It does this by influencing tendencies towards violence and aggression into more cooperative and friendly attitudes that manifest in the actions of both people and communities. This can be seen when some students enter the classroom having previously obtained social and emotional intelligence certification from their families while others do not. In classrooms and schools, interpersonal disputes may arise due to a lack of emotional regulation and social skills (Demirci & Arslan, 2020; H. Masduki Duryat, 2021). Several techniques that have proved popular in the social sciences have changed how conflict is approached. Neoclassical or behaviorist approaches contribute to conflict management and have replaced classical or conventional methods that view conflict as an undesirable state that must be resolved. Contemporary and interactive conflict resolution approaches provide current insights and recognize that disputes serve a useful purpose and are an inherent and unavoidable aspect of life (Ay et al., 2019; Sawir, 2020). Many people think that conflict is a problem. Quite the contrary, it provides opportunities for people in problem-solving and social and personal growth. Therefore, the main problem is that attempts to resolve disputes in a way that negatively affects communication or ignores them will worsen communication. Conflicts between people’s wants, desires, and wills are another cause of conflict. Different personal perceptions can lead to disagreements, or people may have the same views. Conflicts may arise due to different perspectives and worldviews (H. Masduki Duryat, 2021; Tuhuteru, 2022).

Several other studies reveal that students at the elementary school level do not have good or constructive conflict-resolution skills, and educators and peers can facilitate their conflict-resolution skills (Sa’odah et al., 2021). Another study revealed that conflicts that occur in schools are caused by conflicts between parents and teachers regarding student problems at school. Besides that, the strategies that can be done are avoidance, compromise, and deliberation to resolve conflicts properly (Yuliana, 2022). Further research states that, in social relationships, conflict is unavoidable. However, for conflict to be beneficial, it must be handled constructively. Interventions that prevent or escalate conflict are part of conflict management (Asil et al., 2023). The research has yet to focus on increasing conflict at the elementary school level.

The conflict resolution that has occurred so far has proven to be ineffective. This is because conflict resolution has historically been done using a similar strategy, i.e., conflicts are resolved peacefully and end with lifting sanctions. It indicates conflict but can also indicate that it will resurface the next day. Since conflict is a fundamental aspect of human nature and is essential for the moral and emotional growth of everyone involved, it is impossible to avoid conflict in educational institutions. Therefore, this study aims to analyze an event more deeply, including individual and procedural data, using existing information. Therefore, this research can provide a more comprehensive insight into conflict among elementary school students and can assist teachers in designing more effective strategies to improve conflict resolution in schools.

2. METHODS

This research is classified as qualitative research with a case study approach. Case studies use details about an event, such as personal and procedural data, to analyze it comprehensively (Kurniawan & Miftah, 2021; Yuliana, 2022). In a case study, a researcher collaborates with one or more participants to conduct an in-depth analysis of a program, event, procedure, or activity. This type of research is known as qualitative research. Since time and activity are constraints in a case, researchers use various data collection techniques to gather comprehensive information over a long period (Sugiyono, 2014). This research was conducted at SDN 01 Sukaresmi Kec. Rongga, Kab. Bandung Barat, with a focus on elementary school students. The researcher serves as the main tool in qualitative research. This research used observation, interviews, and literature review as data collection methods. Participant observation was conducted by actively observing the processes that lead to conflict resolution. Interviews regarding the research problem were conducted with informants. A literature review and the study of non-literary textual materials related to the subject matter were also conducted. It should be noted that the researcher acts as the main instrument in this qualitative research.
The triangulation technique is used to assess the validity of the data based on the degree of trust criteria so that there are no errors or inaccuracies in the data collected. Qualitative research aims to investigate and understand phenomena, including what happens, why it happens, and how it happens. It is a particular study conducted in a real-life (natural) context. In other words, the cornerstone of qualitative research is "exploring," which includes an in-depth, case-focused analysis of one or more instances (Fadli, 2021).

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

Diverse societal needs, emotional states, and violent tendencies are the leading causes of conflict in educational settings. These elements catalyze individual disputes, which sometimes turn into confrontations between groups. The restoration of peace in schools ultimately depends on the resolution of disputes, both individual and group. Instructors have an important role as an educational institution in mediating differences of opinion because there are still many unmet expectations regarding the role of teachers in education, especially in schools.

In the research conducted at SDN 01 Sukaresmi, Rongga sub-district, West Bandung district, it was seen that students have yet to be able to reach the level at which they should live and mature in society through the learning process in the classroom. They have not been able to help to resolve various disputes that have just arisen. In addition, vertical and horizontal conflicts were identified in the school. Horizontal conflicts include disputes between individual students in the classroom, groups of students within one school, and disputes between students in different schools (interpersonal conflicts). Primary school-age children are often asked to think critically and understand the difference between good and evil, so efforts to restore the nation's cohesion and togetherness must begin at a young age. Without the support of their social environment, parents, schools, and other institutions, children cannot grow on their own.

In addition, it was found that other factors such as individual differences, inability to manage emotions, and lack of communication skills are the main causes of conflict among students. The analysis also showed that conflicts often arise due to differences of opinion, competition, or feelings of unfairness. Research also shows that social and emotional skills training programs can help improve conflict resolution among elementary school students. This program teaches students to identify their emotions better, understand others' perspectives, and use more effective communication strategies to resolve conflicts. As a result, students can better resolve conflicts constructively and build more positive relationships with peers.

They must acquire conflict resolution competencies to help students resolve their conflicts peacefully and without violence. These competencies can be integrated through various activities, both extracurricular and other subjects and pay attention to indicators that are still relatively low in the community and workplace, as well as in the educational environment.

The researcher observed that each student in the school is different in terms of socio-cultural traits, interests, personality, and values. Those with these different attributes have to spend time together in class. Students with these traits generate diverse ideas but can also generate disagreements among them. It causes a lot of time and energy that should be spent on teaching to be wasted on mediating disputes between students. All students in a school have unique personalities, interests, values, and socio-cultural characteristics. In the classroom, students with these various qualities spend time together. While these student characteristics lead to the formation of diverse ideas, they can also lead to conflicts between them. Therefore, a lot of time and energy that should be used in teaching is instead used to resolve student conflicts.

Conflict prevention can be done by encouraging conflict resolution in the community, as conflict is becoming increasingly concerning. Primary school students must receive ongoing instruction in conflict resolution or peace education. Schools need to be places of learning with a supportive environment, as formal educational institutions serve as gathering places for social interaction.

Discussion

As a social structure, schools need to be locations where learning can take place. Conversely, hostility and violence in the school environment can adversely affect the learning process. Learning will go more smoothly if the atmosphere is physically and mentally supportive. If we observe the atmosphere, we will see that the school is only sometimes safe and calm. This is due to the frequent occurrence of minor and major disputes in the school. A child's environment can influence their attitude because children often observe and imitate the behavior they see around them. Therefore, parents must provide examples of good and bad attitudes and behaviors so their children can develop and grow fully in both personal and community contexts. Students should be taught conflict resolution in an integrated manner that includes
attitudes and psychomotor skills, which they should develop through education. Many experts describe various approaches to dispute resolution (Dewi et al., 2022; Manesis et al., 2019).

Conflict is a social process when two or more individuals (or a group) try to eliminate another party by destroying or rendering them powerless. A relationship between two or more parties (individuals or groups) with different goals or interests can also be considered a conflict. The school must build and maintain a peaceful and enjoyable learning environment free from conflict and have strong dispute-resolution capabilities (Yildiz, 2023; Akbar, 2020).

This research has several advantages. Firstly, it provides a deeper understanding of the factors influencing conflict among elementary school students. Thus, the results of this research can be used as a basis for developing more effective intervention programs to improve conflict resolution in schools. Second, with a case study approach, it allows researchers to explore cause-and-effect relationships in the context of conflict. It provides a deeper understanding of how conflict arises, develops, and can be resolved among elementary school students. Third, the focus of this research is elementary school students. It is the right step because elementary school students are at the age of significant development of social and emotional skills. Therefore, teachers can take appropriate action by analyzing the factors that cause conflict. Educators also need to understand the social structure and cultural norms of the society in which they work. In this way, they should be role models for others. Teaching students how to behave, manage a class, present information, and communicate engagingly is important (Sekerci & Yilmaz, 2021; Uslu & Genç, 2021). This study provides a strong empirical foundation for developing school conflict resolution programs. By understanding the factors that influence conflict, schools can design programs that suit the needs of students, thereby increasing their effectiveness in addressing conflict. The programs designed can also help reduce the overall level of conflict and violence in the school environment.

This research is relevant to previous research, which states that teachers facilitate conflict resolution in elementary school students. In addition, there are patterns of student conflict resolution, namely, appeasement, taking responsibility, choosing solutions, and resolving. Furthermore, other researchers revealed that, in resolving student discipline conflicts, teachers need good strategies when teaching in class and outside the classroom. In addition, teachers must also actively participate in the implementation of discipline. It should be noted that school teachers act as motivators, mentors, and facilitators (Hidayah et al., 2019; Rahma Putri Anabilla et al., 2024). This study has positive implications in providing a more comprehensive insight into conflict among elementary school students. It can assist teachers in designing more effective strategies to improve school conflict resolution. It impacts a more harmonious school environment and can be the basis for curriculum development or training for teachers and educators in managing conflict in schools, thus improving the quality of education at the primary level.

However, this research has several areas for improvement. Firstly, it tends to be descriptive and does not delve deeper into the more complex or unpredictable factors contributing to conflict among elementary school students. Second, this research was only conducted in one school. Therefore, steps can be taken to overcome this deficiency. First, researchers can further deepen the analysis of factors that may be unexpected but significantly impact conflict among elementary school students, such as the influence of the family environment or social media. Thus, this research can contribute more to improving conflict resolution in elementary schools. Second, further research could involve a larger and more representative sample from various schools.

4. CONCLUSION

According to the research, conflict arises when a group of people deviates from their great desire to gain control, prestige, or power. When society faces conflict, interactions within oneself or with other people, it can be concluded that conflict is a condition of dissonance caused by inconsistencies or differences the individual feels, giving rise to unsatisfactory sensory gaps. In addition, peer aggression is increasingly occurring in conflicts and has the potential to encourage children to commit crimes. The fighting begins when the person becomes increasingly irritated or angry with himself because his friends make fun of him and insult him and because their disputes trigger tension. It is important because although conflict cannot completely disappear, its development can be slowed. Conflict resolution techniques can also be taught outside the official education system.

5. REFERENCES


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