



## The Decline of Elementary School Students' Attitudinal Values

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### ABSTRAK

Fenomena kemerosotan sikap siswa sekolah dasar di era modern menjadi perhatian penting, terutama dalam konteks pendidikan karakter. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis fenomena kemerosotan nilai sikap siswa sekolah dasar dan mengidentifikasi faktor-faktor yang berkontribusi terhadap kemerosotan nilai sikap siswa di salah satu sekolah dasar. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif studi kasus, dengan subjek penelitian terdiri dari guru kelas V dan siswa yang mengalami kemerosotan sikap. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi dan wawancara terstruktur, kemudian dianalisis menggunakan metode analisis siklus interaktif. Adapun instrumen yang digunakan adalah lembar observasi dan wawancara. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa beberapa siswa mengalami kemerosotan sikap yang ditandai dengan perilaku tidak jujur, ketidakdisiplinan, dan bullying, baik fisik maupun verbal. Sehingga dapat disimpulkan bahwa, peran sekolah dan orang tua sangat krusial dalam mengatasi masalah kemerosotan sikap siswa. Sekolah harus mengintegrasikan pendidikan karakter dalam kurikulum dan menerapkan program Social-Emotional Learning untuk membantu siswa mengelola emosi dan membangun empati. Temuan penelitian ini menekankan bahwa peran sekolah tidak hanya sebatas pendidikan akademik, tetapi juga pendidikan karakter yang perlu diterapkan melalui kurikulum yang menekankan nilai-nilai moral dan pembelajaran sosial-emosional.

### ABSTRACT

The deterioration of primary school students' attitudes in the modern era is a significant concern, especially in the context of character education. This study aims to analyze the phenomenon of the decline in the value of attitude of elementary school students and identify the factors that contribute to the decrease in the value of attitude of students in one elementary school. This research used a qualitative case study approach, with the research subjects consisting of a grade V teacher and students who experienced an attitudinal slump. Data were collected through observation and structured interviews and then analyzed using the interactive cycle analysis method. The instruments used were observation and interview sheets. The results showed that some students experienced attitudinal deterioration marked by dishonest behavior, indiscipline, and physical and verbal bullying. It can be concluded that the role of schools and parents is crucial in overcoming the problem of students' attitudinal deterioration. Schools should integrate character education into the curriculum and implement Social-Emotional Learning programs to help students manage emotions and build empathy. The findings of this study emphasize that the role of schools is not only limited to academic education but also character education, which needs to be implemented through a curriculum that emphasizes moral values and social-emotional learning.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Attitudinal deterioration is a serious challenge facing society in today's modern era. The phenomenon of attitudinal decline indicates a decline or unfavorable change in moral standards in society. In general, attitudinal decline covers many aspects of life, including social values, individual ethics, and one's collective attitude (Aji, 2022; Revalina et al., 2023). This phenomenon indicates a paradigm shift in values in society that can affect individual behavior and social dynamics as a whole. Attitudinal deterioration can be understood as the result of a shift in social values. Rapidly, cultural changes and social dynamics are causing moral norms that were once firmly established to become blurred (Hairiyah et al., 2022; Muslim &

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Ranam, 2020; Saifuddin & Hanik, 2020). Traditions that have been upheld can be forgotten, and individuals may feel freer in adapting behavior that was previously considered taboo behavior. If this phenomenon is not addressed, it could trigger a troubling moral shift that will erode the character of Indonesian society. Therefore, education also contributes to this phenomenon. If moral and ethical values are not strongly instilled in education, the younger generation may lose their grip on distinguishing between right and wrong.

It is very important to pay attention to the problem of deteriorating attitudes of students in elementary schools. The influence of family, peers, media, and environment can cause this phenomenon (C. et al., 2021; Purwasih, 2023; Waty et al., 2022). One of the main components is the lack of educational understanding of moral and ethical principles. Students are often exposed to negative behavior from those around them, such as deviant behavior or violence, which can lead to moral degradation. According to Thomas Lickona, degradation is the deterioration of values in society that can cause the beginning of destruction for a nation. Education in today's dynamic and technologically advanced era includes not only imparting knowledge but also building character and moral principles for the next generation (Lickona, 2013; Zai et al., 2023). To deal with the complex challenges faced by modern society, the cultivation of character education is becoming increasingly important. Providing character education is not only about providing academic education, but it is also about forming a strong character in everyone. Character education involves the formation of ethical values such as a sense of empathy, responsibility, honesty, and cooperation. To ensure that values are understood and reflected in daily life, active participation, and hands-on experience are also required (Hidayah et al., 2023; Waty et al., 2022).

Character education is very important because of its role as a moral foundation that will guide individual behavior in various life contexts. Character education can shape people who are sensitive to society, able to work together, and have integrity in various life situations. Good character not only benefits individuals personally but also makes a positive contribution to society. The cultivation of character education is a long-term effort to build a generation that has moral awareness and can bring positive changes in society (Aopmonaim et al., 2023; Zai et al., 2023). By making character building a top priority, we are not only producing personally successful individuals but also establishing a stable foundation for achieving social progress and shared prosperity. Therefore, character education is not the sole responsibility of schools.

Similar research has also been done before, such as Library research conducted by Hairiyah on the decline of educational attitudes in the era of modernization and globalization which shows that the most important role in dealing with the decline of educational attitudes is the role of family and society. The absence of role models from the family and society will create various problems, such as the occurrence of free sex, drug abuse, addiction to online games, and pornography that will damage children's mentality. In addition, Saifuddin and Hanik revealed that online learning during a pandemic can be one of the triggering factors for attitudinal deterioration in students, this is because learning that is usually done face-to-face to transfer knowledge and manners directly becomes online learning from home which makes teachers unable to carry out their educational duties directly, therefore the development of student character is getting better or decreasing depending on parental education at home. Having good character and morals is a major capital that must be instilled and developed early in students to be ready to face the rapid development of humans, therefore the phenomenon of degradation cannot be underestimated, Revalina reviewed Civic Education as character education found a decline in attitudes in junior high school students in Jambi in the application of Pancasila values, while the forms of attitudinal decline found were a decrease in religious values, a decrease in human values, and a decrease in the value of unity. The decline in attitudes experienced by students resulted in students not showing the relationship between humans and God, not showing democratic character, and not showing a value of justice for all parties (Hairiyah et al., 2022; Revalina et al., 2023; Saifuddin & Hanik, 2020).

There have been several studies on the decline of attitudes before, but the rampant research used Library Research and was carried out at the Senior High School and Junior High School levels. This research will examine the factors causing the decline in student attitudes since elementary school using a qualitative approach. Based on the results of pre-research that researchers conducted through interviews with teachers in one of the elementary schools in the Sumenep district obtained the results that there was a deterioration in the value of attitudes in students, the teacher revealed that the deterioration that occurred in the form of dishonest behavior, indiscipline, and even verbal bullying behavior in grade V students. The behavior carried out by students can be considered a phenomenon of deterioration in the value of attitude because this school has a community environment with strong religious norms and the location of the school is not far from the boarding school in Sumenep. Referring to the results of Ibrahim's research which revealed that victims of bullying have higher than average levels of depression and anxiety and low levels of self-confidence (Casika et al., 2023; Hairiyah et al., 2022; Ibrahim et al., 2024; Revalina et al., 2023;

Saifuddin & Hanik, 2020). Therefore, it is important to conduct this research to find out the factors that contribute to the deterioration of attitude values in elementary school students. This research is expected to serve as an empirical foundation for developing solutions to address bullying, especially at the elementary school level. This study aims to analyze the deterioration of students' attitudinal values and identify factors that contribute to the deterioration of attitudinal values in primary school students in one of the primary schools in Sumenep district.

## 2. METHODS

This research uses a qualitative case study approach. The qualitative approach was chosen because the object to be studied was the deterioration of student attitudes. This is also to understand the phenomena that occur in depth. The qualitative method is a method based on the philosophy of postpositivism used to research natural object conditions or develop as they are. Qualitative approaches focus more on context and meaning than numbers and statistics. This research was conducted in one of the elementary schools in Sumenep district. In this study, there were four research subjects, consisting of fifth-grade teachers and students who experienced attitude deterioration. The data collection methods used were observation and structured interviews conducted directly in one of the primary schools in Sumenep District, Madura, while the instruments used in this study are interview and observation sheets. The data obtained were analyzed using an interactive cycle with data collection stages, condensation stages, data presentation, and data verification/conclusion drawing to make it easier for readers to understand the information presented. Researchers use data validity techniques in the form of source triangulation and technique triangulation techniques (Miles et al., 2014; Moleong, 2019; Sugiyono, 2019). Source triangulation is done to increase data validity by comparing and verifying information obtained from different sources. In this study, source triangulation was carried out to compare and verify information from V-grade teachers and students. The Interactive Cycle is presented in Figure 1, the Source Triangular is presented in Figure 2, and the Technique Triangular is presented in Figure 3.

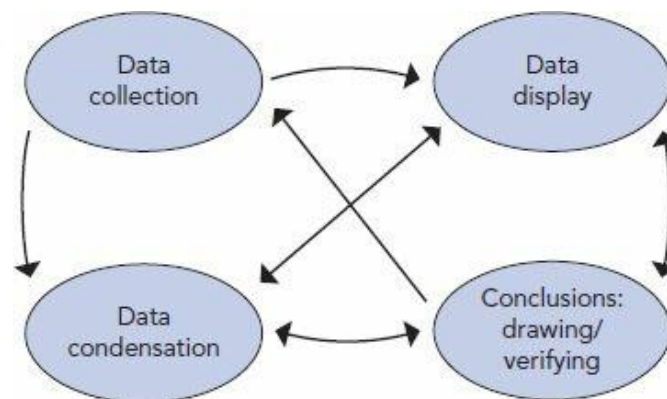


Figure 1. Interactive Cycle

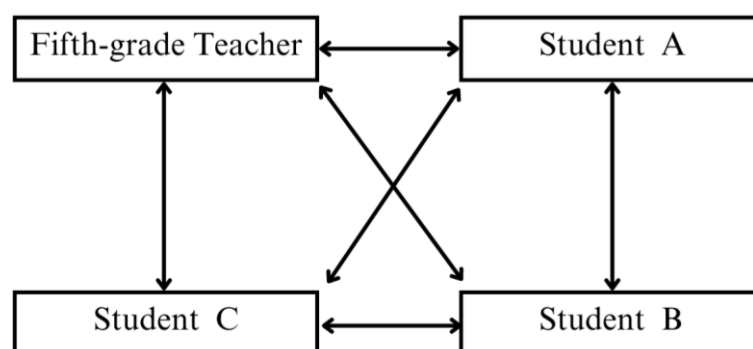
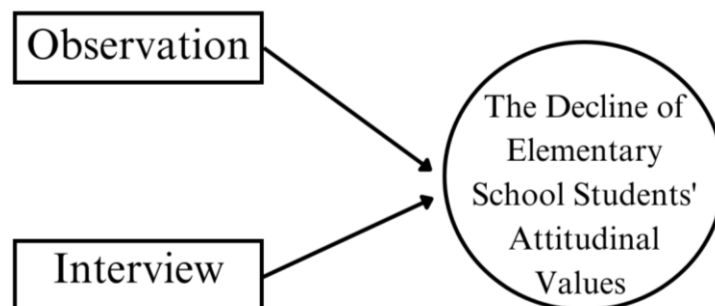


Figure 2. Source Triangular



**Figure 3.** Technique Triangular

In addition, to increase the validity of the data, triangulation techniques are also carried out by using various data collection techniques with the same research topic so that researchers obtain richer and more comprehensive data (Moleong, 2019; Sugiyono, 2019). In this study, the triangulation technique used is to observe the decline in student attitudes, including student attitudes towards teachers and student interactions inside and outside the classroom (break time). Meanwhile, interviews were conducted to understand and explore in-depth information about student attitudes decline.

### 3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

#### Results

This section presents the main findings of the phenomenon of attitudinal deterioration among primary school students and the factors that contributed to the deterioration of students' attitudinal scores. The results showed that the attitudes of grade V students were quite good, but three students experienced a decline in attitude. These students have the initials AFR, TM, and AK. It is known that the three students are members of one group and are always together. The three of them were identified as often joking when praying, cheating, disturbing other students during the learning process, playing outside the classroom when the break bell ended, and carrying out physical bullying and verbal bullying such as mocking students by calling their parents' names and the shortcomings of their friends. The results of observations of class V students are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Table of Observation Results on Class V Students

Observed Aspects	Description of Observation Results
Student Interaction in the Classroom	Students are calm and listen when the teacher explains. Three students disturb their friends during the learning process. The three students stopped bothering their friends if scolded by the teacher, but a few moments later, it happened again. There is mocking behavior between students by calling parents' names and playing around when praying before starting learning.
Student Interaction Outside the Classroom (Break Time)	There was one student who was seen hitting his friend during recess. Students tend to play with certain groups. Some students are alone and do not play outside the classroom, and there are still students who play outside the classroom when the break bell has ended.
Students' Attitude Towards Teachers	On average, students are obedient and obedient to all teachers. However, some students often disturb their friends even though they have been advised by the teacher.

Researchers observed fifth-grade students from 3 aspects, student interactions in the classroom, student interactions outside the classroom, and student attitudes toward teachers. The results of the observations showed that there were student behaviors that showed a decline in attitudes in class V

students. This is indicated by the existence of bullying behavior towards other students, disobedience to rules, and disobedience to teachers. The results of interviews with fifth-grade teachers also stated that the behavior of the three students often disturbed their friends during learning. The class teacher also took action by calling the three students to be advised and discussing with their parents, but the following week the students again disturbed their classmates by physically mocking their classmates, and not listening to the teacher when explaining. According to the fifth-grade teacher, some teachers also gave reports about the three students in other subjects.

Based on the results of analyzing interview data with the class teacher and the three students concerned, three factors cause students to experience a decline in attitude scores; First, there is a less harmonious relationship between parents and students in communication which affects children's education while at home. This is reinforced by the statement of the fifth-grade teacher who stated that he had summoned the guardians of students with problems. This student guardian summoning aims to coordinate between teachers and parents and inform the child's behavior while at school. However, related to the problems of students with the initials AFR, TM, and AK, summoning parents does not change student behavior, according to the fifth-grade teacher this is because the parents of AFR and AK are busy working. Second, a poor friendship environment. In interviews conducted with students, TM stated that he occasionally joined his two friends to disturb other students. This is reinforced by the fifth-grade teacher's statement who revealed that TM, AFR, and AK are always together while at school. Third, following trends on social media. This is reinforced by a statement from the three students that all three are intense in using social media outside of school hours. The social media that are often used by the three students are WhatsApp, TikTok, Facebook, and Instagram, where in these social media there is a variety of information, both positive and negative information. However, students do not have enough ability to sort and select good and bad information. So that students easily imitate trends on social media, without seeing the negative side of the trend.

## Discussion

The younger generation is a generation that is very important to be considered and nurtured from an early age. This is because the younger generation is the next generation of the nation that will determine the fate of a country, the better the quality of the younger generation, the brighter the future of a country. Especially in an age where technology and information are developing rapidly, the younger generation must have smart thinking and strong character to face the challenges of the times. Thomas Lickona revealed that related to the existence of moral degradation behavior that is allowed to be a sign of the destruction of a nation, according to Lickona there are ten signs of moral degradation, including 1) violence in adolescents increases, 2) the use of harsh and inappropriate words, 3) the influence of strong peer group violence, 4) increased consumption of alcohol, drugs, and free sex, 5) blurred moral boundaries between good and bad, 6) low respect for teachers and parents, 7) low work ethic, 8) low sense of responsibility, 9) cultivating dishonest attitudes, 10) the existence of suspicion and hatred for each other (Lickona, 2013; Revalina et al., 2023). Although the decline in attitudes that occurred in fifth-grade students was not fatal as described by Lickona, students already reflected signs of a decline in attitudes that if not immediately given a handler, it is likely that students will grow up with a bad attitude. For some people, the behavior of these students may be understandable and justified as delinquency at school age, even some teachers consider behavior such as bullying as child delinquency in general so that it does not need special handling and is ignored. However, if such behavior continues to be tolerated and ignored, it will have a worse impact on the victims of bullying. Bullying behavior carried out by the three students to their friends both physically and verbally can hurt the mental health and academic achievement of the victims of bullying (Abdelaziz & Abu-Snieneh, 2022; Darimis et al., 2022; Ghofur et al., 2022; Nur et al., 2023). In line with this, victims of bullying were revealed to experience depression, have poor academic performance, fear of socializing, and fear of reporting for fear of being ostracized (Ghofur et al., 2022; Hidayati et al., 2021). Bullying occurs due to disharmonious families that make parents monitor children's behavior and lack of attention and communication from parents to children, mass media has an impact on the occurrence of bullying in students by seeing and imitating the spectacles presented by mass media. In addition, the lack of empathy of students is also the cause of students bullying their friends (Nugrahani, 2020; Rahayu & Permana, 2019; Suhendar, 2020).

Schools have a role in educating students at school, so schools also have a contribution in dealing with bullying behavior in students, especially in the school environment. Teachers are figures that students look up to at school, teachers can be a place to provide students with a sense of security for victims to report bullying behavior and teachers can provide handling of bullying cases by taking good action against students who are bullying so that they can provide advice for students who are bullying (Sen & Dogan, 2021). Schools can also strive for a good environment for students so that students feel safe from bullying, such as integrating moral education into the curriculum so that student morals are formed with good



character and give birth to good student attitudes such as how to respect teachers, discipline, and obey religious teachings (Aini et al., 2021; Maisyaroh et al., 2023; Martha et al., 2020; Noboru et al., 2021; Sen & Dogan, 2021; Siddiqui et al., 2023). In addition, schools can implement programs that include Social-Emotional Learning so that students can practice skills to understand themselves and their peers (Araúz-Ledezma et al., 2022; Cooper et al., 2023). The existence of such a program can also help students manage emotions and foster a sense of empathy in students. Social-Emotional Learning can also help students who are victims of bullying to relieve anxiety and stress experienced by students (Li et al., 2023; Silke et al., 2024). Parents have a great influence on the phenomenon of attitudinal deterioration in children, parents are the first source of education for children from childhood, therefore parents have a crucial role in instilling character education in children from an early age so that they have a good attitude towards others. As the first education for children, parents must also have a strategy to educate children at home. Parents can adopt Ki Hadjar Dewantara's educational mottoes, namely *Ing Ngarso Sungtulodo*, *Ing Madyo Mangunkarso*, and *Tut Wuri Handayani*. *Ing Ngarso Sungtulodo* where parents set a good example and become good role models for children, *Ing Madyo Mangunkarso* is the role of parents to accompany and encourage children when studying at home, and *Tut Wuri Handayani* parents encourage children in facing problems in the learning process (Ritonga, 2022; Sujana et al., 2023; Wulandari & Kanta, 2021).

In addition to adopting the motto of Kihadjar Dewantara, parents can also optimize children's character education by habituation, giving advice, providing motivation, and making time for children (Ritonga, 2022). Parents need to know the environment and quality of their children's friendships because the environment and quality of friendships also influence the formation of children's character and attitudes, based on the results of research in Korea stating that individuals who have friends with poor quality are more likely to engage in delinquency in later life, and adolescents who experience bullying, sexual violence, and poor friendship quality are more likely to feel negative emotions later in life (Cho & Galehan, 2020; Ritonga, 2022). Peer influence also has a strong relationship with cyberbullying tendencies. In addition, social relationships including the quality of friendships and the number of friends also play an important role in protecting children from bullying behavior (Irmayanti et al., 2024; Samara et al., 2020). The scope of friendship of elementary school children in the current era is not only playmates in the real world but also friends in cyberspace. The use of social media by students can hurt students. Facts in a study revealed that social media influenced bullying behavior in adolescents by 47.9%. The widespread use of social media has also led to cyberbullying. At the age of elementary school children who do not yet have the skills to be able to sort out good and bad information, students likely imitate the behavior that children watch on social media (Craig et al., 2020; Suhendar, 2020; Sulaeman et al., 2023).

This study has several limitations that need to be considered to optimize the research results. First, although this study has identified factors that influence bullying behavior and moral degradation in students, it has not measured the effectiveness of specific interventions, such as a Social-Emotional Learning program or a school-based character education approach. As such, this study's results are limited in identifying factors and do not demonstrate the effectiveness of the proposed solutions. For this reason, further research is recommended to conduct empirical tests of these interventions to determine their direct impact on student attitude changes. Secondly, this study only involved a few subjects in one school, so further research is recommended to use a more extensive scope of schools. The implications of this study highlight the importance of integrated interventions between schools, parents, and the social environment in shaping the character and behavior of the younger generation. The findings emphasize that the role of schools is not only limited to academic education but also character education, which needs to be implemented through a curriculum that emphasizes moral values and social-emotional learning. Schools can also implement programs that encourage positive behavior and reduce the tendency of bullying through a proactive approach involving teachers as role models and protectors for students.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The deteriorating attitudes of grade V students in one primary school in Sumenep district represent a serious challenge to character education in the modern era. Although the majority of students have good attitudes, some students have experienced attitudinal deterioration, particularly in bullying behavior and disruption to learning. Contributing factors include a lack of harmonization and communication between parents and children, a poor friendship environment, and the negative influence of social media. The role of schools is crucial in addressing this issue through the integration of moral education in the curriculum and Social-Emotional Learning programs. However, the role of parents is also crucial by setting a good example and paying attention to the child's friendship environment. Strict supervision of social media use is also needed. With the synergy between schools, parents, and the social environment, it is expected to create an

educational environment that supports the formation of a strong and positive character for the younger generation.

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