

Factors Affecting Student Discipline: A Case Study in Junior High Schools, Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

This study analyzes student discipline at SMP Buana Waru, focusing on influencing factors and development strategies. The research sample consists of scout members from the elite troop (*dewan galang*), who are considered to have a strategic role in fostering a culture of discipline among students. A qualitative research approach was employed, utilizing in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and document analysis. The findings reveal that internal factors, such as individual motivation and awareness, and external factors, including support from Scouters, peers, and the school environment, significantly contribute to students' discipline levels. Furthermore, the study identifies development strategies involving a collaborative approach between students, teachers, and parents and reinforcing disciplinary values through extracurricular activities like scouting. The implications of this research provide practical guidance for schools to enhance a culture of discipline through a holistic, character-building-oriented approach.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Discipline is crucial in shaping students' character (Lewis, 2001; Ritonga & Anisa, 2023; Welsh, 2024), particularly during the junior high school years, when foundational habits are formed (Damariswara et al., 2021). It extends beyond adherence to school regulations, serving as a cornerstone for both academic and non-academic development (Robinson, 2008; Serenko & Bontis, 2013; Lazzarini & Pérez-Foguet, 2018). By fostering discipline, students are better equipped to cultivate self-regulation and responsibility, essential for long-term success. Recognizing its significance, schools strategically embed disciplinary values within the broader framework of character education.

SMP Buana Waru, as a junior high school educational institution, encounters significant challenges in maintaining and enhancing student discipline. One of the strategies employed to address this issue is extracurricular scouting activities, which serve as an effective medium for character development. These activities are deemed appropriate for fostering discipline as they integrate practical skill-building with the cultivation of strong moral values and a sense of responsibility. Moreover, scouting emphasizes teamwork and leadership, providing students with experiential learning opportunities that reinforce discipline in real-world contexts. Within this framework, the flagship squad, or galang council, plays a pivotal role in modeling exemplary behavior and guiding their peers. Their presence is instrumental in creating a culture of discipline.

Student discipline is shaped by internal and external factors (Iluz & Rich, 2009; Way, 2011; Shirokova et al., 2016), each of which significantly determines behavioral outcomes. Internal factors include individual awareness, personal motivation, and the student's commitment to comply with established rules and guidelines (Hina et al., 2019; Liu et al., 2020; Gamage et al., 2021). These intrinsic elements foster student self-regulation and accountability, which form the basis of disciplined behavior. On the other hand, external factors include the influence of teachers, parents, peers, and the broader school environment, which shape student attitudes and actions (Beets et al., 2008; Coertjens et al., 2010; Rahmania, 2024). Teachers and parents serve as role models (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2002; Lunenberg et al., 2007; McDavid et al., 2012; Bahiyah & Juhji, 2023), while peers and the school environment provide support and challenges that influence discipline (Barth et al., 2004; Osher et al., 2010; Mitchell et al., 2013). Recognizing the interplay between these factors is critical to developing strategies that effectively improve discipline. Schools can implement a comprehensive and sustainable approach to improving student discipline and character development by addressing internal and external dimensions.

The study results are expected to be a reference for schools, especially in developing character-building programs through an extracurricular-based approach. Extracurricular scout activities significantly increase student discipline through direct learning and strengthening moral values (Sudiami et al., 2019; Subaidi et al., 2023; Sari & Salma, 2024). Another study found that student discipline tends to be higher in groups that receive behavioral reinforcement through rewards and consistent rules (Sprick, 2013; Emmer & Gerwels; Bear et al., 2022). The results of this study provide a theoretical basis for research at SMP Buana Waru, especially in analyzing the factors that influence student discipline. The combination of social discipline, social learning, motivation, and behaviorism theories provides a solid framework for understanding the dynamics of student discipline and designing strategies for its development.

This study aims to identify factors that influence student discipline at SMP Buana Waru and to develop development strategies that can be practically applied in the school environment. By taking samples from members of the flagship scout troop (*Dewan Galang*), this study attempts to provide a comprehensive empirical picture of student discipline patterns while proposing relevant interventions.

1.1 Literature Review

Educational Code of Ethics

The educational code of ethics serves as a moral and professional framework that governs the behavior of educators and students within the educational environment. Central to this code are principles such as fairness, responsibility, and respect for individual rights, which collectively foster a positive and inclusive learning atmosphere. According to Suparlan (2009), the effective implementation of a code of ethics in schools supports the learning process and contributes to shaping students' character, including their sense of discipline. As the frontline educational figures, teachers are responsible for instilling these values by modeling ethical behavior and employing appropriate pedagogical approaches. Educators can consistently adhere to the code of ethics to create a culture of respect and accountability within the school community. This ethical foundation not only enhances the quality of education but also prepares students to become responsible and principled members of society.

The Role of Teachers in Improving Discipline

Teachers play a dual role as academic educators and facilitators of character formation in students (Subroto, 2016). Research by Lickona highlights that student discipline improves when teachers provide positive reinforcement, maintain consistency in enforcing rules, and

offer emotional support (Damariswara et al., 2021). These actions create a structured environment where students feel motivated to adopt disciplined behaviors. Moreover, teachers are role models, with their disciplined conduct directly influencing students' behavior. It aligns with the principle of learning by observation, as outlined in social learning theory, where students learn by imitating the actions of those they admire (Lesilolo, 2019). By embodying the values of discipline and responsibility, teachers help shape students' attitudes and actions inside and outside the classroom.

Theories that Support Student Discipline

Social Discipline Theory emphasizes the role of school social norms and rules in shaping student behavior. According to Parsons (1951), schools are social institutions that instill discipline values by establishing rules and enforcing sanctions. When these norms are applied consistently, students will likely internalize discipline as part of their behavior. In this context, discipline becomes a learned value that influences students' actions in and out of school. Social Learning Theory, proposed by Albert Bandura, asserts that individuals acquire behaviors through observation and interaction with their social environment. In schools, students learn discipline from their teachers, peers, and other authority figures. Respected role models, such as teachers or scout leaders, profoundly reinforce disciplined behavior. According to Maslow's Motivation Theory (1943), basic needs like security and recognition must be fulfilled before individuals reach their full potential, including developing discipline. When students feel safe and valued in the school environment, their motivation to behave in discipline increases. Additionally, Behaviorism Theory (B.F. Skinner) highlights the importance of reinforcement in shaping behavior. In the school setting, rewards like praise or recognition for disciplined behavior can strengthen students' adherence to rules, while sanctions for indiscipline serve as a deterrent.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach to gain an in-depth understanding of student discipline at SMP Buana Waru, especially among members of the flagship scout troop (Dewan Galang). This approach was chosen because it can explore experiences, perceptions, and social interactions that contribute to the formation of student discipline behavior. The subjects of the study included teachers, students, and parents. The teachers interviewed included scout leaders, subject teachers, and homeroom teachers who interact directly with students. The students who were the focus of the study were members of the flagship scout troop, while other students were used as supporting data. Parents of students were also involved to understand the family's perspective on the formation of student discipline. Data were collected through in-depth interviews and direct observations. Interviews were structured and semi-structured to explore participants' experiences and perceptions of student discipline. Teachers were interviewed regarding their roles in instilling discipline values, teaching methods, and challenges faced. Student interviews focused on their experiences with school rules, motivation to be disciplined, and the influence of scouting activities. Interviews with parents were conducted to investigate the role of family support in shaping student discipline at home and in school. Observations were conducted to observe the interactions between teachers and students in the classroom, including the implementation of disciplinary rules and how students obey the rules in scouting activities, such as punctuality, compliance with uniforms, and behavior during activities.

The collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis techniques, including data reduction, categorization, and interpretation. Relevant data were grouped based on themes, such as internal and external factors of discipline and their development strategies. Furthermore, the data were interpreted and linked to relevant theories, such as Maslow's motivation theory, Bandura's social learning theory, and Skinner's behaviorism theory. Data

validity was maintained through triangulation of sources, methods, and theories by comparing the results of interviews and observations to ensure consistency of information.

This research was conducted at SMP Buana Waru for one month, covering school activities and scouting extracurricular activities to ensure that the data collected reflected the actual situation in the field. With this method, it is hoped that the research will provide an in-depth picture of student discipline, the factors that influence it, and its development strategies in the context of education at SMP Buana Waru.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This study revealed that various interrelated factors, including family environment, peer influence, teacher teaching methods, reward and punishment systems, and student motivation, influence student discipline at SMP Buana Waru. The following is a more in-depth discussion based on the research findings.

The results of interviews with parents indicate that family support plays a crucial role in shaping student discipline. Parents who actively engage in their children's education, such as assisting in organizing study schedules, monitoring school activities, and providing moral encouragement, contribute to developing disciplined behavior. Such parental involvement fosters a structured environment where students feel supported and guided, which is essential for maintaining discipline. In contrast, students from family environments with low parental involvement tend to exhibit behaviors that reflect a lack of discipline, such as frequent tardiness or violations of school rules. This observation aligns with Maslow's Motivation Theory, which asserts that fulfilling basic needs, such as security and emotional support from the family, is essential for fostering positive behavior. When these foundational needs are met, students are more likely to exhibit disciplined behavior and succeed academically and socially. Therefore, the active participation of parents in their children's lives is vital for promoting a culture of discipline and responsibility in the educational setting.

Observations and interviews with students revealed that peers have a significant influence in shaping disciplined behavior. Students who associate with groups of friends who obey the rules tend to follow the same behavioral patterns. Conversely, students who are often involved in groups of less disciplined friends, such as breaking uniform rules or being late to class, tend to exhibit similar behavior. This phenomenon can be explained through Bandura's social learning theory, where students learn through observing and imitating peer behavior (Lesilolo, 2019). In the context of scouts, the mainstay troop members who serve as role models provide positive examples that help internalize the values of discipline in other members.

Teachers play a strategic role in shaping discipline through interesting teaching methods and actively involving students. Based on the results of the interviews, teachers who use interactive learning approaches, such as group discussions or simulations, can maintain students' attention and encourage them to behave more orderly during the learning process (Saputri & Yunita, 2024). Scoutmaster teachers, for example, apply practice-based methods that teach discipline through direct activities, such as camping or team games. These findings suggest that innovative teaching methods increase students' motivation to obey the rules and engage in learning.

Enforcement of disciplinary rules at SMP Buana Waru is carried out through a consistent reward and punishment system. The observations reveal that rewards, such as praise or recognition for high-achieving students, motivate others to adopt similar behaviors. On the other hand, giving strict but educational punishments, such as additional tasks for students who violate, provides a practical deterrent effect. This approach aligns with Skinner's behaviorism theory, where positive and negative reinforcement influences

behavior formation. This system is also applied in scouting activities, where awards such as badges of success become the additional motivation for students to obey the rules.

Students' internal motivation is one of the main inhibiting factors in implementing discipline. The results of teacher interviews showed that students with low motivation are often less enthusiastic about following rules or completing schoolwork. A lack of self-confidence or unclear learning goals often causes this low internal motivation. In scouting activities, student motivation is encouraged through strengthening a sense of togetherness and group responsibility, which helps increase their self-confidence. Based on Maslow's hierarchy of needs, efforts to increase student motivation can begin by meeting their basic needs, such as feeling appreciated and accepted in the school's social environment.

4. CONCLUSION

Student discipline at SMP Buana Waru is influenced by various internal and external factors that support each other. As the basis for forming discipline habits, the family environment plays a vital role, followed by the influence of peers that influence students' behavioral patterns. In addition, teaching methods that actively involve students and a consistent reward-punishment system also support the creation of discipline. Extracurricular scouting activities, especially for members of the flagship squad, also contribute to forming discipline values. Combining these factors creates a holistic and practical environment that supports students' disciplined character formation.

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