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THE ROLE OF NORMS IN CREATING A SAFE AND INCLUSIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

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Abstract

This research discusses the role of norms in creating a safe and inclusive learning environment. A safe and inclusive learning environment is essential to support an effective educational process, where all students feel accepted, valued and protected from all forms of violence and discrimination. Using qualitative research methods, this research collected data through observing relevant literature. The results of this research show that rules in the learning environment are very important to create safe and inclusive schools. Three main norms-social norms, academic norms, and collective behavioral norms were identified based on a qualitative approach with a literature review. Each of these elements has an impact on student interaction, encouragement to learn, and the formation of a positive school culture. This research concludes that clear norms and consistency in application can help create a learning environment that supports diversity, increases student participation, and reduces school dropout rates. Therefore, it is important for schools to develop and implement norms that support the creation of a safe and inclusive learning environment. It is hoped that this research can provide insight for educators, policy makers and researchers in an effort to create a better educational environment.

Keywords : Norms, Learning, Safe, Inclusive

Introduction

A safe and inclusive learning environment is essential to achieving educational goals. In education, a safe environment means that students feel protected from violence, discrimination, and other harassment. In addition, an inclusive learning environment means that all students receive equal opportunities regardless of their background, gender, or their abilities. The norms that apply in the school environment are an important component in building this environment. Norms are rules or standards held by a particular group or society that regulate the behavior and interactions of its members. In the context of education, norms can be divided into several types, including social norms, academic norms, and collective behavioral norms. Each of these norms has a significant role and impact on the social dynamics in the classroom and the overall learning experience of students. As explained by Hidayah (2020), these norms help shape expectations for student behavior and contribute to the formation of a positive school culture. In recent years, research has focused on the importance of implementing standards to create a safe and inclusive learning environment. According to research conducted by Nugroho (2019), high academic norms can encourage students to try harder to learn, while positive social norms can reduce aggressive behavior and increase healthy interactions among students. On the other hand, the absence of clear or negative norms can lead to increased bullying behavior and create an unsafe environment for students. School policies are an important part of creating a safe and inclusive learning environment. Students can feel safer and more protected if there are clear policies about violating social norms and harassment. According to Sudarsono (2018), policies that are implemented consistently and transparently provide students with clear guidance about what is expected of them and the consequences of inappropriate actions. The curriculum should also include norms. A comprehensive

character education program can help students understand and apply principles such as cooperation, tolerance, and empathy in everyday life. Hidayah (2020) said that teaching good social norms in the classroom can influence student behavior and create a more harmonious learning environment. This study investigates the role of standards in creating safe and inclusive learning environments in schools in Indonesia. The study aims to identify and analyze how social, academic, and collective behavioral norms can contribute to the formation of supportive learning environments. By gaining a better understanding of the role of these norms, it is hoped that suggestions can be found for creating better education policies and implementing practices that support the formation of supportive learning environments.

Research Methodology

This study explores the role of norms in creating a safe and inclusive learning environment. This study collected data through a review of relevant literature and used qualitative research methods, because it allows researchers to understand the phenomenon holistically and understand its meaning from various perspectives. Creswell (2014) stated that a qualitative approach has the ability to explore a person's personal experiences as well as social interactions that occur in an educational environment.

Result & Discussion

The results of this study indicate that rules in the learning environment are essential to making schools safe and inclusive. Three main norms—social norms, academic norms, and collective behavioral norms were identified based on a qualitative approach with a literature review. Each of these elements impacts student interactions, motivation to learn, and the formation of a positive school culture.

1. Social Norms and Student Interactions

    Social norms are unwritten rules that govern how students behave with others, such as peers, educators, and school staff. This study shows that social norms centered on the principles of mutual respect and empathy serve as the basis for creating a positive social environment. Hidayah's study (2020) found that schools that implement strong social norms, such as group activities that encourage cooperation, have lower rates of aggressive behavior. This is due to the fact that students are increasingly aware of the importance of respecting differences and avoiding disruptive behavior. For example, schools that incorporate character development programs, which teach students to empathize and understand others' perspectives, can result in better interactions. Putri's (2021) study found that students felt safer to actively participate in class discussions and other learning activities when they were in an environment that supported positive social norms. Students were more likely to be more open to sharing their ideas and opinions when they felt valued, which impacted the quality of learning.

2. Academic Norms and Learning Motivation

    Academic standards set the academic expectations and standards that students expect. In this study, it was found that rigorous academic standards can increase students' desire to learn. According to Nugroho (2019), schools that set high expectations for student academic achievement and provide sufficient support tend to encourage students to achieve their academic goals. Students feel encouraged to participate in academic activities and feel more confident while in class. On the other hand, very important academic standards include fair and open assessments. According to Sari (2022), students who receive clear and constructive teacher feedback have a greater desire to improve their academic performance. This shows that academic standards not only show success but also help students become more involved in learning.

3. Collective Behavioral Norms and School Culture

    The standards of behavior set by the school community indicate the attitudes and actions expected of everyone in the school. This study found that an inclusive and supportive school culture can be built by consistently implementing positive standards. Agustina (2021) said that creating a good school culture can be achieved by implementing standards that encourage togetherness, cooperation, and respect for each other. Schools that implement programs that involve all students, such as cultural festivals or social activities, show good results in increasing a sense of belonging and involvement. According to Ramadhan (2020), these activities not only make students more familiar, but also give them the opportunity to learn to appreciate differences. Students feel safer to speak up and participate in school activities when their environment supports collective behavioral norms.

4. The Influence of School Policy on the Implementation of Norms.

The study also found that school policies are critical to ensuring that positive standards are implemented. Schools with clear policies addressing bullying and other antisocial behavior tend to be safer. According to Sudarsono (2018), good policies provide clear guidelines for teachers and students about expectations and desired behaviors. The study found that supportive policies such as counseling and teacher training can help create a more inclusive environment. For example, schools that have fair and open discipline policies give students a sense of security that their actions will be treated fairly. As a result, students are more confident and more engaged in class. A study conducted by Hidayah (2020) found that students who felt that their school policies helped them were more likely to participate in social and academic activities.

5. The Influence of Social Norms on the Learning Environment

Social norms are essential to creating a safe and inclusive learning environment. Research shows that good social norms, such as respect, openness, and empathy, are very helpful in reducing harassing behavior and making students interact better with each other. Hidayah (2020) stated that implementing good social standards in schools can help reduce conflict, increase a sense of togetherness, and support the formation of good relationships between students. In this study, several schools that implemented character programs and group activities such as group discussions and project collaboration showed a significant decrease in incidents of aggressive behavior. Students gained a better understanding of the importance of respecting differences and working together through these programs. They also gained the social skills needed to interact well in a diverse environment. For example, students in one school in Jakarta participated in a peer mentoring program. This program teaches students to respect and support each other. This increases students' sense of security and their confidence to participate in class (Putri, 2021).

6. Academic Norms and Achievement Improvement

Students who have high academic standards are also greatly influenced by their desire to learn and their achievements. Students tend to be motivated to achieve academic goals when schools set high goals. Nugroho (2019) explains that clear expectations and adequate support from teachers can increase students' efforts in learning. In this study, students who lived in an environment with positive academic standards showed increased class participation and academic achievement. Sari (2022) also said that fair and open assessment is very important to create a supportive learning environment. Formative assessment, where students are given constructive feedback periodically, allows students to understand their strengths and weaknesses and improve their academic performance. Students who feel objectively assessed are more motivated to take risks in learning.

7. School Policy and Norm Implementation

School policies serve as a basis for implementing good standards. In this study, it was proven that clear and consistent policies to deal with negative behaviors such as bullying are essential to creating a safe environment. Fair policies create a sense of safety and trust between students and teachers, according to Sudarsono (2018). Schools that implement transparent and supportive discipline policies and provide access to counseling services can create a more inclusive and supportive environment. For example, a consistent policy for dealing with bullying in one school in Bandung helps students report negative behavior without fear of consequences. This program not only makes students feel safe, but also encourages them to make the school environment better. With supportive policies, students feel more involved and take responsibility for their choices.

8. Normative Integration in the Curriculum

One of the main focuses of this study is the integration of positive standards into the curriculum. Schools that successfully create safe and inclusive learning environments typically incorporate social skills and character education into their curriculum. A study conducted by Hidayah (2020) showed that schools that incorporate character education into daily subjects show good results for student behavior. Character education programs that teach tolerance, respect, and cooperation, for example, can help students understand the importance of these principles in everyday life. Schools can also prepare students to become better people and contribute positively to society by focusing their curriculum on character building and social skills.

Conclusion

The journal "The Role of Norms in Creating a Safe and Inclusive Learning Environment" discusses the role of behavior and social norms in creating a learning environment that supports everyone, regardless of their background. Norms that apply in the educational environment, both formal (e.g., school rules) and informal (e.g., student habits), have a significant effect on students' sense of safety and engagement. Positive norms encourage students to be more respectful, open, and empathetic towards each other. Ultimately, this will result in an environment where everyone feels accepted and valued. Exclusive or discriminatory norms can lead to injustice and marginalization of certain groups, especially minority groups. Therefore, it is important for teachers and educational institutions to be proactive in promoting inclusive standards. They can do this through direct actions such as anti-bullying programs, sensitivity training, and engaging students in open discussions about diversity. This study concludes that clear and consistently implemented norms can help create a learning environment that supports diversity, increases student participation, and reduces dropout rates. Thus, it is important for schools to develop and implement norms that support the creation of a safe and inclusive learning environment. This study is expected to provide insights for educators, policy makers, and researchers in an effort to create a better educational environment.

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