

***Implementasi Teori Caring Jean Watson dalam Program
Anti-Bullying untuk Perkembangan Psikososial Anak
di SD Tamalanrea Makassar***

**Implementation of Jean Watson's Caring Theory in an Anti-Bullying
Program for School Children's Psychosocial Development**

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Abstract

Bullying in elementary schools is a serious issue that negatively affects children's psychosocial development, highlighting the need for holistic and sustainable prevention approaches. This community service activity aimed to examine the implementation of Jean Watson's Caring Theory on the psychosocial development of school-aged children through an anti-bullying program at SD Negeri Tamalanrea, Makassar City, involving 50 students with active participation and teachers as supporting partners. The program employed an educational and participatory approach conducted through stages of problem identification, delivery of caring-based anti-bullying education, mentoring in the application of caring behaviors in the school environment, and program evaluation. Educational activities were delivered through interactive lectures, group discussions, educational games, and simple simulations tailored to the characteristics of school-aged children. The results showed improved students' understanding of bullying, enhanced empathy and mutual respect, and better social interactions among students. The implementation of Jean Watson's Caring Theory contributed positively to creating a safe, supportive, and inclusive school environment and to optimizing the psychosocial development of school-aged children.

Keywords: bullying, jean watson's caring theory, psychosocial development

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Abstrak

Bullying di sekolah dasar merupakan permasalahan serius yang berdampak negatif terhadap perkembangan psikososial anak, sehingga diperlukan pendekatan pencegahan yang holistik dan berkelanjutan. Kegiatan pengabdian kepada masyarakat ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji implementasi Teori Caring Jean Watson terhadap perkembangan psikososial anak usia sekolah dalam program anti-bullying di SD Negeri Tamalanrea, Kota Makassar, dengan melibatkan 50 siswa yang berpartisipasi aktif serta guru sebagai mitra pendukung. Metode pelaksanaan menggunakan pendekatan edukatif dan partisipatif yang dilaksanakan melalui tahapan identifikasi masalah, pemberian edukasi anti-bullying berbasis nilai caring, pendampingan penerapan perilaku caring di lingkungan sekolah, serta evaluasi kegiatan. Edukasi disampaikan melalui ceramah interaktif, diskusi, permainan edukatif, dan simulasi sederhana yang disesuaikan dengan karakteristik anak usia sekolah. Hasil kegiatan menunjukkan peningkatan pemahaman siswa mengenai bullying, berkembangnya sikap empati dan saling menghargai, serta perbaikan interaksi sosial antar siswa. Implementasi Teori Caring Jean Watson berkontribusi positif dalam menciptakan lingkungan sekolah yang aman, nyaman, dan inklusif serta mendukung perkembangan psikososial anak usia sekolah secara optimal.

Kata Kunci: *bullying, perkembangan psikososial, teori caring jean watson*

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Highlight:

- Increased students' understanding of bullying and its negative impacts.
- Development of empathy and mutual respect among students through caring-based activities.
- Improvement of social interaction among students, contributing to a safer and more supportive school environment.

INTRODUCTION

Bullying in elementary school environments remains a significant issue that receives serious attention in the fields of education and child psychology due to its considerable impact on children's developmental processes (Arif et al., 2024). Bullying behavior, whether in physical, verbal, or social forms, has been proven to negatively influence students' psychological and social conditions. Andini et al. (2025) reported that elementary school students who experience bullying tend to suffer from anxiety, emotional distress, a decreased sense of safety in the learning environment, and difficulties in establishing social relationships. These conditions may eventually affect students' learning motivation and academic achievement.

Furthermore, Oktarina et al. (2023) reported that 21,241 children were recorded as victims of bullying, with approximately 25% of them being elementary school students. This condition is closely associated with an increased risk of mental health problems, including anxiety, depression, and social isolation. Hardiana and Pritasari (2025) also emphasized that bullying among school-aged children contributes to low self-

confidence, reduced learning concentration, and obstacles in social development within the school environment. These impacts are not only temporary but may also continue into later stages of development if early intervention is not implemented (Ghofur *et al.*, 2022).

The persistence of bullying cases indicates that efforts to address this problem should not merely focus on punishment or corrective actions. Instead, effective prevention requires an approach that addresses students' emotional aspects and interpersonal relationships (Farizal and Nursanti, 2024). To ensure that nurse–patient interaction is not limited to clinical procedures, a relational and emotional approach is needed so that patients feel valued, heard, and supported holistically. Jean Watson's Caring Theory emphasizes the importance of empathy, compassion, respect for human dignity, and the creation of a safe and supportive environment as the foundation of human interaction (Anti and Amriyah, 2025). These caring values are highly relevant when applied within educational settings because they can strengthen positive relationships among students, teachers, and the school community, while also supporting children's social and emotional development (Syahrudin *et al.*, 2025).

The implementation of Jean Watson's Caring Theory in an anti-bullying program in elementary schools can shape students' behavior by internalizing caring values such as empathy, mutual respect, openness, and positive interpersonal relationships into daily school interactions. Through repeated caring-based interactions among students, teachers, and the broader school community, these values may strengthen prosocial behavior, reduce tolerance toward bullying, and support the formation of a safer and more respectful school culture (Nurfaniza and Margaret, 2024). Therefore, preventive efforts through educational and character-building programs are essential to foster a supportive and caring school environment. By applying the principles of caring as proposed in Watson's theory such as compassion, empathy, respect for human dignity, and the development of trusting relationships, students can be guided to better understand the importance of kindness, cooperation, and respect for differences among their peers (Breitenstein *et al.*, 2025).

Through the integration of caring values into anti-bullying education, students are encouraged to develop positive attitudes and behaviors that support harmonious social interactions within the school setting (Hidayati *et al.*, 2025). Teachers and school staff also play an important role as role models in demonstrating caring behaviors, creating a learning atmosphere that prioritizes emotional safety and psychological comfort for every student. In addition, involving students in discussions, reflections, and interactive activities related to caring values can help strengthen their awareness of the negative impacts of bullying and motivate them to become active agents in preventing such behavior (Wei *et al.*, 2023).

Therefore, this community service activity aims to implement Jean Watson's Caring Theory within an anti-bullying program at SD Negeri Tamalanrea, Makassar, as an effort to enhance the psychosocial development of school-aged children. The program is also expected to strengthen students' emotional intelligence, empathy, and social responsibility while promoting respectful peer relationships (Rahmawati *et al.*, 2024). Ultimately, the implementation of this approach is intended to help create a safe, comfortable, and supportive school environment that promotes optimal child development, encourages positive character formation, and contributes to the establishment of a caring school culture that can sustainably prevent bullying behavior (Gaffney *et al.*, 2021).

METHOD

This study used a descriptive approach with an educational and participatory model focusing on anti-bullying education and the application of caring values based on Jean Watson's Caring Theory. The activity was conducted at SD Negeri Tamalanrea, Makassar City, using a convenience sampling method. The participants consisted of 50 elementary school students who were available and willing to take part in the program, with inclusion criteria including being enrolled as active students at SD Negeri Tamalanrea, being present during the activity, and being able to participate in educational discussions, games, and simulations. Teachers were involved as supporting partners to assist the implementation and observation of students' responses during the program.

The procedure was implemented in three structured phases to ensure that the program was conducted systematically from initial assessment to evaluation. Phase 1 involved a baseline assessment through coordination with the school to identify existing forms of bullying and students' psychosocial conditions. This phase provided an initial understanding of the students' needs and served as the basis for designing the intervention.

Phase 2 consisted of the implementation of caring-based anti-bullying education through interactive learning activities. The intervention was conducted in one session lasting approximately 90 minutes. The content structure consisted of four main components: an interactive lecture introducing the definition, types, and impacts of bullying; a guided discussion to explore students' experiences and perceptions of bullying; educational games designed to strengthen empathy, cooperation, and mutual respect; and simple simulations that allowed students to practice positive responses when witnessing or experiencing bullying. To strengthen the internalization of caring values, students were also guided to apply empathy, positive communication, mutual respect, and concern for others in daily school interactions, with teachers serving as role models.

Phase 3 focused on evaluation using structured instruments, including an observation checklist, question-and-answer sessions, and teacher feedback forms. The observation checklist was used to assess students' participation, understanding of bullying, empathy, social interaction, and application of caring values during the activities. Question-and-answer sessions were conducted to explore students' comprehension after the intervention, while teacher feedback forms were used to obtain supporting information regarding changes in students' social attitudes and interactions. Through these stages, the program was designed not only to increase students' knowledge of bullying but also to encourage the practice of caring behaviors in their interpersonal relationships.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The implementation of anti-bullying education and the application of caring values based on Jean Watson's Caring Theory at SD Negeri Tamalanrea, Makassar City, showed positive outcomes on the psychosocial development of elementary school students. The activity involved 50 students, all of whom actively participated throughout the program. During the sessions, students demonstrated high enthusiasm and engagement in discussions, group activities, and reflective exercises designed according to the characteristics of school-aged children.

Observations during the activities indicated an improvement in students' understanding of bullying, including its forms such as physical, verbal, and social bullying, as well as its impact on emotions and peer relationships. Prior to the implementation of the program, several students were unable to distinguish between joking behavior and bullying and had limited awareness of its psychosocial consequences. After receiving anti-bullying education integrated with caring values, students were able to identify bullying behaviors and showed increased awareness of the importance of respecting and protecting their peers' feelings and dignity in the school environment.

These findings support previous evidence that anti-bullying education is effective in increasing students' knowledge, awareness, and sensitivity toward bullying behaviors. Educational interventions that emphasize empathy, mutual respect, and social responsibility have been shown to improve students' understanding of the negative consequences of bullying while fostering positive peer interactions and a safer school climate (Hidayati *et al.*, 2025). Furthermore, anti-bullying programs that actively involve students through participatory learning activities are more effective in promoting prosocial behavior compared to passive information delivery because they encourage students to internalize caring attitudes and apply them in everyday interactions (Aisyah *et al.*, 2025).

The integration of Jean Watson's Caring Theory also strengthened the psychosocial impact of the program by emphasizing empathy, respect for human dignity, and supportive interpersonal relationships. Through caring-based activities, students were encouraged not only to recognize bullying but also to develop emotional awareness and concern for the well-being of others. This finding is consistent with recent studies showing that empathy-based anti-bullying education contributes to the development of social awareness, moral responsibility, and positive peer relationships among elementary school students (Natania *et al.*, 2026).

Overall, the results suggest that combining anti-bullying education with caring values can serve as an effective strategy to promote psychosocial well-being, strengthen empathy, and cultivate a more inclusive and supportive school environment. Such interventions are particularly important during middle childhood, a developmental stage in which social competence, emotional regulation, and peer acceptance significantly influence children's psychosocial growth and adjustment.

Table 1. Results of student observations

| Assessed Aspect | Activity Form | Findings Before the Activity | Results After the Activity |
|---|------------------------------------|--|--|
| Understanding of bullying | Interactive education | Some students did not understand the types and impacts of bullying | Students were able to identify forms of bullying and explain their impacts |
| Expression of feelings and experiences | Reflection writing on sticky notes | Students tended to be passive and reluctant to express feelings | Students actively expressed feelings, experiences, and expectations |
| Social interaction | Group discussions and teamwork | Interaction was limited and students lacked confidence | Improved communication and group |

| Assessed Aspect | Activity Form | Findings Before the Activity | Results After the Activity |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| Empathy and caring attitude | Implementation of caring values | Empathy was not consistently observed | Students demonstrated respect and support toward peers cooperation were observed |
| Student participation | Overall activities | Participation varied | All 50 students actively participated |

The students’ responses during the reflection activity indicated increased emotional awareness regarding bullying and its impact on peer relationships. Through sticky-note reflections, many students expressed discomfort with behaviors such as mocking, excluding, or hurting others. They also conveyed hopes for a more supportive, friendly, and safe school environment. These responses suggest that the activity helped students recognize bullying not only as inappropriate behavior but also as an action that can negatively affect others’ feelings, dignity, and sense of belonging within the school community.



Figure 1. Student reflection results

Group discussions and collaborative activities also encouraged more positive social interaction among students. During these sessions, students appeared more confident in expressing their opinions, listening to others, and cooperating in completing group tasks. These interactions reflected improvements in social skills such as communication, respect for differing opinions, and a sense of togetherness. This finding is consistent with the concept of transpersonal relationships in Jean Watson’s Caring Theory, which emphasizes meaningful interpersonal relationships as the foundation for emotional and social growth.

Furthermore, collaborative learning activities provide opportunities for children to practice empathy, mutual support, and constructive communication in a social environment. Through active interaction with peers, students learn to understand different perspectives, regulate their emotional responses, and build positive relationships, all of which contribute to healthier psychosocial development (Anggara and Krisanti, 2025). Previous studies have shown that group-based anti-bullying interventions can strengthen social competence and peer connectedness, thereby

reducing the likelihood of aggressive behavior and increasing prosocial attitudes among school-aged children (Ryzin and Roseth, 2020).

The positive changes observed during the program indicate that integrating anti-bullying education with caring values not only enhances students' cognitive understanding of bullying but also promotes the development of interpersonal skills and emotional sensitivity. In line with Watson's perspective, caring interactions create a supportive environment where children feel valued, respected, and safe to express themselves, ultimately fostering psychosocial well-being and positive peer relationships (Aisyah *et al.*, 2025).



Figure 2. Sharing session

The involvement of teachers as supporting partners also contributed significantly to the success of the program. Teachers were encouraged to act as role models by demonstrating caring behaviors in daily school activities, such as showing empathy, providing supportive responses, and creating a safe and comfortable classroom atmosphere. This role strengthened the sustainability of caring values as part of ongoing bullying prevention efforts, not only during the program but also within everyday teaching practices.



Figure 3. Final documentation

Evaluation conducted through observations, question-and-answer sessions, and teacher feedback indicated positive changes in students' social attitudes, including increased empathy, greater concern for peers, and awareness of avoiding behaviors that could harm others. These findings demonstrate that anti-bullying education combined with caring values not only improves students' knowledge but also encourages the internalization of moral and social values that support children's psychosocial development.

Overall, the results indicate that the implementation of Jean Watson's Caring Theory within the anti-bullying education program at SD Negeri Tamalanrea contributed to improvements in students' understanding of bullying, empathy, and quality of social interaction. A holistic caring approach that emphasizes interpersonal relationships may support the development of a more supportive, inclusive, and caring school environment, which is important for promoting the psychosocial development of elementary school students.

CONCLUSION

The community service activity in the form of anti-bullying education integrated with Jean Watson's Caring Theory at SD Negeri Tamalanrea demonstrated positive contributions to the psychosocial development of elementary school students. The program improved students' understanding of bullying and its impacts while fostering empathy, caring attitudes, and more positive social interactions among peers. The educational and participatory approach encouraged students to express their feelings, respect others, and develop healthier interpersonal relationships within the school environment. The involvement of teachers as role models in demonstrating caring values also played an important role in creating a safe, supportive, and inclusive school climate that supports bullying prevention. It is recommended that future community service programs be implemented in a more structured and sustainable manner by involving all components of the school community, including students, teachers, and parents. Anti-bullying education based on Jean Watson's Caring Theory can be integrated into learning activities and school culture as a long-term strategy for bullying prevention and for promoting students' psychosocial well-being

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