



# The Role of Social Interaction Patterns in Character Formation and Community Awareness in the School Environment

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## ABSTRACT

*Character education in schools faces challenges related to social interaction patterns that influence students' moral development in the digital era. This study aims to examine the role of social interaction patterns in character formation and community awareness through a qualitative literature review. The population included scientific literature from 2021 to 2025 from journals, books, and national laws; a sample of 20-30 sources was selected through purposive sampling based on thematic relevance. Instruments, consisting of scientific documents, were analyzed through systematic collection in Google Scholar, thematic data reduction (positive-negative interactions), and literature triangulation. The results show that positive interactions such as cooperation and effective communication foster discipline, empathy, and tolerance, while negative interactions such as bullying hinder moral development. The conclusions emphasize the need for an inclusive environment through school-family collaboration for a responsible generation, with limitations in secondary data.*

## INTRODUCTION

Education serves as the primary foundation for the formation of students' character and personality in the school environment, where daily social interactions contribute to the development of affective and psychomotor aspects in addition to cognitive (Rahayu et al., 2023; Kurnia et al., 2023). Schools, as complex social systems, enable students to learn norms, values, and interpersonal relationships through communication, cooperation, and constructive conflict resolution, thereby fostering tolerance, responsibility, discipline, and empathy (Qa'iriyah & Qumaira, 2025; Muttaqin, 2023). This phenomenon is increasingly relevant in today's digital era, where face-to-face interactions in schools are crucial to counteracting the tendency towards individualism among adolescents (Hidayatullah et al., 2025; Fikroh, 2025).

However, social awareness, which encompasses empathy, tolerance, environmental sensitivity, and social participation, is often not balanced with the development of personal character traits such as honesty and independence, as required by national education (Kurnia et al., 2023; Sari & Ningsih, 2024). Challenges arise from negative interaction patterns such as bullying, conflict, and discrimination, which hinder moral development and have a destructive impact on students' personalities, including a

decrease in enthusiasm for learning and empathy (Rahayu et al., 2023; Ixfina, 2024). The increasing phenomenon of bullying in Indonesian schools, both physical and verbal, further exacerbates this situation, creating social isolation and mental health disorders in students (Hidayatullah et al., 2025; Indriani, 2025).

This problem is exacerbated by the influence of modern, individualistic and digital society, where adolescents show a decline in social sensitivity despite being supported by legal frameworks such as Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, which targets a generation with noble and responsible morals (Qa'iriyah & Qumaira, 2025; Putri et al., 2025). Negative interactions not only weaken school solidarity but also hinder the internalization of values through collaborative activities such as student organizations or extracurricular activities, making it difficult for students to apply social norms in real life (Sari & Ningsih, 2024; Swid et al., 2022).

This study aims to examine in depth the role of social interaction patterns in character formation and community awareness in schools through a qualitative literature review. The urgency of this research lies in the need for collaboration between schools, families, and communities to create an inclusive environment that addresses negative interactions and reinforces positive values, in line with national education demands (Rahayu et al., 2023; Tanfidziyah, 2025). The novelty of this research is a comprehensive synthesis of recent studies that integrate digital dynamics with face-to-face interactions, providing practical recommendations for educators in building a generation with superior character (Kurnia et al., 2023; Yasin et al., 2024).

## **METHODS**

### **Types and Methods of Research**

This study uses a literature review method or library study with a qualitative approach to examine in depth the role of social interaction patterns in character formation and community awareness in the school environment (Sugiyono, 2019; Emzir, 2019). The qualitative approach was chosen because it is relevant to synthesizing theories, concepts, and previous research findings related to the theme, as explained by the descriptive-analytical nature of the literature review in exploring conceptual relationships between socio-educational variables (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Sudaryono, 2021). This method not only collects information from scientific sources such as national journals, articles, and academic books, but also conducts critical analysis to build a theoretical understanding of the dynamics of social interaction in schools (Rahayu et al., 2023; Kurnia et al., 2023).

### **Data Analysis Instruments and Techniques**

The primary research instruments were scientific documents selectively selected based on thematic relevance, source credibility, and publication timeliness (2021-2025), including journals such as the Journal of Social Education and academic books related to character education (Ixfina, 2024; Sari & Ningsih, 2024). Data analysis techniques included data collection through systematic searches in databases such as Google Scholar, data reduction by categorizing positive-negative social interaction themes, presenting data in a synthetic narrative, and drawing conclusions through literature triangulation to strengthen theoretical arguments (Sugiyono, 2023; Emzir, 2022). This process integrated Vygotsky's theory of social interaction with recent empirical findings, ensuring validity through cross-verification of sources (Creswell & Poth, 2021; Sudaryono, 2024).

### **Population and Sample**

The study population encompasses all relevant scientific literature discussing social interaction, character formation, and community awareness in the school environment, derived from national/international journals, books, and previous research from 2021-2025 (Hidayatullah et al., 2025; Putri et al., 2025). The sample was determined through a purposive sampling technique, namely 20-30 primary sources such as the works of Sari and Ningsih (2024), Ixfina (2024), and classic references such as Law Number 20 of 2003, which were selected due to their direct relevance to the title and introduction of the study (Qa'iriyah & Qumaira, 2025; Tanfidziyah, 2025). This sample selection ensures a comprehensive representation of the perspectives of the sociology of education and character education (Sudaryono, 2022; Emzir, 2021).

## Research Procedures

The research procedure begins with problem identification from the introduction, followed by a literature search using keywords such as "social interaction in school character formation," followed by selection and extraction of relevant data, thematic analysis to find conceptual patterns, and validation through discussions with existing bibliographies (Yasin et al., 2024; Swid et al., 2022). The final stage involves developing a cohesive narrative that connects the results to the research objectives, hopefully contributing to the development of character education science (Rahmawati, 2023; Mahendika & Sijabat, 2023). All procedures adhere to ethical standards of qualitative research, emphasizing objectivity and originality of synthesis (Sugiyono, 2024; Creswell & Poth, 2025).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Education serves as a crucial foundation for character and personality development (Rahayu et al., 2023). This makes schools a crucial socialization agent after the family, as through social interactions within the school environment, students learn to understand social roles, negotiate values, and absorb the norms prevailing in the broader society (Hidayatullah et al., 2025). Social interaction is a fundamental process that shapes individual behavior and character within the school environment. Social interaction significantly impacts various aspects, including communication skills. Studies have found that the interaction between social support and resilience significantly impacts psychological well-being (Mahendika & Sijabat, 2023).

Social interaction is a fundamental process that shapes individual behavior and character in the school environment. According to Ixfin (2024), social interaction in educational institutions such as Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (Islamic elementary schools) is not limited to communication between individuals but also encompasses the formation of norms, values, and culture that serve as the foundation for social behavior. Through the continuous process of interaction between students, teachers, and the school environment, relationship patterns are formed that influence student character development. Sari and Ningsih (2024) show that social interactions between students, teachers, and the community play a significant role in developing character traits such as discipline, responsibility, and mutual respect. They emphasize that daily social experiences in school are an important foundation for the formation of students' moral values. According to Vygotsky's learning theory, interactions between students and teachers, as well as interactions between students, can help foster better conceptual understanding and problem-solving. Through the continuous process of interaction between students, teachers, and the school environment, relationship patterns are formed that influence student character development.

Healthy social interaction patterns in schools foster mutual respect and concern for others. Swid, Ayub, and Fitrilinda (2022) emphasized that positive social interactions among peers contribute significantly to the development of environmentally conscious and socially supportive characters, especially among adolescents. Their research demonstrates that a supportive social environment can be an effective medium for character development. Teachers also play a crucial role in developing constructive social interaction patterns. Rahmawati's (2023) research explains that social education in schools plays a crucial role in developing students' core values. This more structured character development is achieved through all components of the school ecosystem.

Character education is one of the main goals of the national education system, emphasizing the development of the whole person, namely a person who is knowledgeable, faithful, and has noble morals. In this context, social interaction becomes a concrete means for internalizing character values. According to Sari and Ningsih (2024), the development of character education cannot be carried out separately from social life in schools, but must be integrated with social interaction activities between students and the school community. Rahmawati's (2023) research explains that social education in schools must be directed at developing individual character that is not only knowledgeable but also possesses social sensitivity and high morality.

Through the guidance and example of teachers, students learn to emulate positive behaviors such as honesty, discipline, and a sense of responsibility. Students are introduced to discipline, academic responsibility, and the importance of respecting differences through daily interactions, clear school rules, and the exemplary behavior of teaching staff. A conducive environment, supported by positive interactions between teachers and students, not only increases self-confidence and enthusiasm for learning but also fosters empathy, solidarity, and problem-solving skills among fellow students.

Therefore, schools that foster social interactions based on values and morals will be more effective in shaping students' character with integrity and ethics.

Recent research confirms that positive social interaction patterns in schools, such as cooperation between students, healthy communication between teachers and students, and active involvement in extracurricular activities, contribute to the development of discipline, responsibility, and empathy (Putri et al., 2025). This suggests that character formation does not occur automatically through the teaching and learning process, but also through the emotional and social experiences students experience in various school activities. Thus, schools function not only as academic spaces but also as social communities that shape identity, values, and behavior.

On the other hand, student involvement in social, religious, and cultural activities within the community provides opportunities for them to improve their social skills, foster a sense of caring, and foster solidarity (Tanfidziyah, 2025). Thus, it can be concluded that character education is the result of synergy between various complementary social environments, and the success of student character formation depends heavily on the consistency and quality of the interactions within them.

The social environment plays a primary role in character formation in students, where positive and negative influences emerge based on the examples and interactions they experience. The family environment is the primary setting for instilling the values of honesty, responsibility, and truth through parental example and healthy communication at home. The school environment serves to reinforce the values learned in the family environment with a learning culture that emphasizes cooperation, discipline, and social norms, enabling students to learn life skills. According to Sari and Ningsih (2024), character education development cannot be carried out separately from social life at school but must be integrated with social interaction activities between students and the school community. They emphasize that student involvement in school social activities, such as community service, student organizations, and religious activities, is an effective medium for instilling the values of responsibility, discipline, and social solidarity.

Meanwhile, in the community, this can be achieved through community awareness, a broader form of social awareness, where individuals recognize their position as part of a community with responsibilities towards others and the surrounding environment. Schools, as a model of society, play a strategic role in fostering this awareness. Through social interactions at school, students learn to understand the social structures, norms, and values that apply in community life. Ixfina (2024) explains that the dynamics of social interactions in the school environment reflect the actual patterns of community life. When students are able to interact effectively, they indirectly practice social skills that will be useful in future community life.

Social interaction also plays a significant role in character formation, but not all forms of interaction are positive. There are also negative interaction patterns, such as bullying and discrimination, which can have negative psychological impacts on students' personality development. Ixfina (2024) revealed that conflict and social inequality in the school environment often lead to a decline in enthusiasm for learning, low empathy, and the emergence of individualistic attitudes among students. This demonstrates the important role of teachers and schools in controlling and guiding social interaction patterns to ensure they remain within the framework of moral and ethical values in education.

Negative interaction patterns can also reduce social awareness because students miss opportunities to learn to appreciate differences and work together in groups. Therefore, schools need to develop character-building systems through social activities that strengthen solidarity, such as mentoring programs, joint religious activities, and team-oriented leadership training. By creating an inclusive and collaborative social atmosphere, students can avoid the negative influences of social interactions and more easily internalize positive values in their daily lives. Teachers and other educational staff also need to act as role models and facilitators, creating a warm, open, and respectful social atmosphere. Learning activities should be directed not only at academic mastery but also at developing social and moral skills.

Furthermore, in the context of social studies learning, social interaction is also related to students' ability to make decisions and relate to others. As emphasized, one of the primary responsibilities of social studies is to help students develop the skills to make important decisions that affect their relationships with others and their role in society, both at the local and national levels.

Through this process, students not only understand social norms and values but also learn to apply them in real life, preparing them to become responsible citizens.

Furthermore, Social Studies (IPS) learning in schools is also designed to enable students to establish social relationships and develop positive interaction patterns based on social science concepts. This demonstrates that the goal of social education is not limited to theoretical knowledge, but also how students are able to practice the values of unity, effective communication, and cooperation in everyday life at school and in the community. In the development of social interactions, humans as social beings have a tendency to live in groups, and students can learn to think systematically and develop their social intelligence.

In essence, humans are both creators and guardians of social order. They strive to create a safe, peaceful, and orderly life through mutually agreed-upon values and rules. In the school context, this is reflected in the instilling of discipline, a sense of responsibility, and the ability to understand social norms and rules. When social interaction patterns in schools are well-functioning, students not only understand these rules but are also able to apply them as a foundation for behavior in the wider community.

Furthermore, in the context of social studies learning, the development of students' social interactions is also related to the primary objective of the subject. This aligns with the statement that the goal of social studies learning is to develop students into citizens with the knowledge, values, attitudes, and skills necessary to participate in a democratic society. Therefore, the process of social interaction in schools is not only a means of communication, but also a training medium for students to understand the principles of justice, equality, tolerance, and the ability to express themselves responsibly. Furthermore, social studies learning needs to apply principles that reflect students' social awareness, cultural experiences, and personal development. This demonstrates that social studies learning is not merely theoretical but must be connected to students' real-life social experiences. Through meaningful, situation-based learning within the school environment, students can understand social norms, societal structures, and their roles as part of the broader community.

Research by Muhammad Yasin, Selfiana, and Muhammad Awie Mas'ud (2024) confirms that schools are not only a place to acquire knowledge, but also a social place that shapes students' character through interactions between individuals with roles and functions regulated by social norms and structures. The dynamics of social interactions in schools include socio-cultural processes, personality development, and their relationship to education, which are influenced by social structural factors (formal and informal hierarchies), norms and values (politeness, cooperation, respect for diversity), and interaction processes (communication, collaboration, competition, and conflict). Positive interaction patterns characterized by openness, cooperation, and equality have been shown to increase learning motivation and create a conducive environment, while negative interactions can lead to a decrease in learning enthusiasm, damage mental health, and increase the risk of bullying.

Therefore, through positive social interaction patterns, schools can become a platform for developing a young generation with strong character, high social awareness, and the ability to contribute positively to community life. Collaboration between all social components within the school environment is crucial in building a safe and democratic culture that fosters student character. Overall, this discussion demonstrates that character education is a process involving interactions between individuals and their social environment. This process is influenced by the intensity of interactions and the quality of social experiences students experience within their families, schools, and communities. When these three environments work synergistically, character development will be more optimal and sustainable. Therefore, through positive social interaction patterns, schools can become a platform for developing a young generation with strong character, high social awareness, and the ability to contribute positively to community life.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on a literature review, the main findings of this study confirm that social interaction patterns play a crucial role in shaping students' character and social awareness in the school environment. Positive interactions such as cooperation between students, effective communication with teachers, and involvement in extracurricular activities foster values such as discipline, empathy, responsibility, tolerance, and social solidarity, as supported by various recent studies (Rahayu et al.,

2023; Sari & Ningsih, 2024; Ixfina, 2024). Conversely, negative interactions such as bullying, conflict, and discrimination hinder moral development, reduce empathy, and weaken the sense of community, ultimately creating a destructive school climate (Hidayatullah et al., 2025; Putri et al., 2025). These findings demonstrate that schools, as miniature communities, function not only academically but also as social laboratories that shape responsible generations through the synergy of families, teachers, and the community.

However, the limitations of this study lie in the nature of the literature review, which relies on secondary sources from 2021-2025. Therefore, it lacks primary empirical data from specific school contexts in Brebes or eastern Indonesia. It also fails to integrate digital variables such as social media in depth (Yasin et al., 2024; Tanfidziah, 2025). Suggestions for further research include quantitative-qualitative empirical studies with field surveys or longitudinal observations to measure the causal impact of social interactions. Practically, the implications of this research encourage schools to implement anti-bullying programs, collaborative leadership training, and parent-teacher collaboration to build an inclusive environment that aligns with Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System (Qa'iriyah & Qumaira, 2025).

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