RESEARCH ARTICLE

# PSYCHOLOGICAL AND ETHICAL PERSPECTIVES ON VIOLENCE-BASED DISCIPLINARY ACTION IN SCHOOLS

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## ABSTRACT

_Violence in student discipline remains an ethical and psychological concern in Indonesian schools. Teachers often enforce discipline through physical or verbal punishment, which harms students' emotional well-being and violates professional ethics. This study applied a systematic literature review by analyzing 10 articles published between 2015-2024 from national and international databases. The review identified four key themes: ethical dilemmas in school discipline, psychological impacts of violence on students, teachers' emotional regulation gaps, and the need for empathy-based non-violent discipline. It concludes that violence-based discipline contradicts character education and humanistic values. A paradigm shift toward humanistic discipline through ethical literacy and emotional intelligence training for teachers is urgently needed._

_**Keywords:** educational ethics, school violence, discipline psychology, teachers_

## INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of violent disciplinary actions continues to be a recurring issue in Indonesia. Several cases show that teachers or school principals still use physical violence to enforce student discipline, such as slapping, pulling ears, or giving other physical punishments. Although often intended as a form of guidance, such practices create a serious ethical dilemma because they contradict the fundamental principles of education that uphold humanity, empathy, and respect for students' dignity (Marzuki, 2020). One of the latest examples that has gone viral is the case of a school principal who slapped a student caught smoking on school grounds. Incidents like this raise an ethical dilemma: on the one hand, the action is seen as discipline enforcement; on the other hand, it is a violation of professional educational ethics and psychological principles (Ananda & Gunawan, 2022).

Psychologically, violent behavior by teachers can cause negative impacts on students' emotional development and learning motivation. Research by Setiawan and Ratnasari (2020) shows that violence in educational settings increases anxiety, fear, and decreases students' self-esteem. From an ethical perspective, physical actions toward students violate the principle of non-maleficence (do no harm) and the values of humanity that are fundamental in the teaching profession (Rizal & Suryani, 2021). Teachers are expected to be moral role models and empathetic communicators, not perpetrators of violence who damage students' trust in the educational institution.

These conditions indicate a gap between the ideal of character-based education and the reality of disciplinary practices in schools. The education system often fails to internalize professional ethical values and emotional intelligence among educators (Marzuki, 2020). Therefore, a literature

review is needed to understand how psychological and ethical perspectives can serve as a foundation for designing disciplinary approaches that are both humanistic and effective.

## METHOD

This study uses a systematic literature review method with a descriptive qualitative approach**.** The purpose of this method is to identify, examine, and analyze previous scientific findings related to the relationship between psychology and ethics in violence-based disciplinary practices in schools.

This method was selected because it aligns with the research objective: to construct a comprehensive conceptual understanding based on existing scientific evidence without conducting field data collection (Snyder, 2019). This approach also enables researchers to identify common patterns, knowledge gaps, and theoretical developments related to educational ethics and teacher disciplinary behavior.

Thematic analysis was used to identify main patterns and categories related to:

1. Ethical principles in teacher disciplinary actions.

2. Psychological impacts of violence on students.

3. The role of communication and moral reasoning in discipline practices.

4. Alternative discipline approaches based on empathy and moral reflection.

The analysis followed Braun & Clarke's (2006) steps:

1. Familiarization with data.

2. Initial coding.

3. Searching for themes.

4. Reviewing themes.

5. Developing conceptual narrative.

## RESULT

The review of 10 scientific articles revealed four major themes related to the role of psychology and ethics in violence-based disciplinary practices in schools:

1. *Ethical Dilemmas in School Discipline*
   Many studies highlight that teachers often face a dilemma between enforcing rules and maintaining the moral obligation to protect student dignity. According to Sari & Rahman (2022), violent actions such as slapping, pinching, or humiliating students are still perceived as "normal" in traditional school discipline culture. However, from the perspective of educational ethics, these actions violate the principle of non-maleficence and human dignity (Ananda & Gunawan, 2022). This condition is reinforced by Indonesia's paternalistic and hierarchical school culture, in which teacher authority is often perceived as an "absolute right to educate" (Marzuki, 2020).

2. *Psychological Impacts of Violence on Students*
   Research in educational psychology (Setiawan & Ratnasari, 2020; Ramli et al., 2023) demonstrates that physical or verbal violence by teachers significantly affects students' motivation, confidence, and emotional well-being. Wulandari & Nisa (2021) found that students who frequently receive harsh punishment show increased academic stress and social withdrawal. Moreover, experiences of violence in the learning environment reduce psychological safety and may cause long-term trauma affecting adolescents' self-concept (Erikson, 1968; Lestari & Ramadhan, 2023).

3. *Gaps in Professional Ethics and Teachers' Emotional Competence*

   Several studies show that the root of the problem is not only the lack of understanding of professional ethics but also low emotional regulation among teachers. According to Fitriani & Hidayat (2021), many teachers face high work

pressure, excessive administrative workload, and lack of emotional management training, which triggers impulsive behavior toward students. From a humanistic psychology perspective, teachers should act as facilitators who understand the emotional needs of students, not perpetrators of violence (Han et al., 2021).

4. *Alternative Non-Violent Disciplinary Approaches*
   Violent disciplinary practices should be replaced with restorative and humanistic disciplinary models. Rohmah & Subhan (2022) highlight that restorative discipline based on empathetic communication can reduce conflicts between teachers and students and strengthen students' social responsibility. Similarly, Gregory et al. (2020) confirm that restorative practices decrease rule violations and improve emotional relationships within the learning environment.

## DISCUSSION

Violent disciplinary practices remain a complex phenomenon influenced by culture, professional ethics, and educational psychology. In Indonesia, violence in discipline is often rooted in the outdated paradigm that discipline equals punishment (Marzuki, 2020). However, this perspective contradicts the values of Pancasila-based character education, which emphasizes human dignity and empathy.

From a psychological perspective, teacher violence creates destructive effects on students' motivation and mental health (Setiawan & Ratnasari, 2020). Students begin to view teachers as frightening figures rather than moral guides, hindering meaningful learning processes.

From a professional ethics perspective, violence violates the fundamental moral responsibility of teachers as stated in the Indonesian Teacher Code of Ethics (PGRI, 2017), which requires educators to protect students' dignity and avoid physical or verbal violence. Research (Rohmah & Subhan,

2022; Han et al., 2021) shows that the most relevant solution is a paradigm shift toward restorative discipline—emphasizing moral reflection, empathetic communication, and social responsibility learning.

Thus, this study underscores the necessity of strengthening teacher ethics education and emotional intelligence training through continuing professional development, as well as revising school disciplinary policies toward humane and restorative approaches.

## CONCLUSION

Violence-based disciplinary practices in schools remain a serious ethical and psychological issue within the Indonesian education system. Such practices are rooted in traditional discipline culture that emphasizes authority over humanity. From an educational psychology perspective, physical and verbal violence has negative effects on students' emotional development, learning motivation, and psychological well-being. Violence creates fear, low self-esteem, and social withdrawal.

## RECOMENDATIONS

1. **For Educators** Continuous training is needed on emotional regulation, restorative communication, and professional ethics so that student discipline is carried out humanely and effectively without violence.

2. **For Policymakers** The Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology must strengthen violence prevention policies in schools through national guidelines on restorative discipline and enforce ethical sanctions against perpetrators of violence in education.

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