

## Promoting Anti-Bullying Behavior in Elementary Schools Through Storybooks Based on Living Values Education

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### ABSTRACT

Bullying among elementary school students remains a significant issue that hampers social and emotional development. This study investigates the effectiveness of a picture storybook titled “Masalah Rambut”, developed based on the Living Values Education (LVE) approach, in promoting anti-bullying behavior and enhancing civic competence among young learners. A quasi-experimental design with a non-equivalent control group was employed. Participants were 68 third-grade students from SDN Ciremai Giri, Cirebon, divided equally into experimental and control groups. The experimental group received learning using the storybook and role-play activities, while the control group followed conventional instruction. Data were collected through pre-tests and post-tests on civic knowledge, civic skills, and civic disposition. Statistical analysis included paired t-tests and Cohen’s d to assess effectiveness. The experimental group showed significant improvements in civic competence, with p-values < 0.001 across all dimensions. Effect size analysis indicated very large impacts: civic knowledge (d = 1.91), civic skills (d = 2.08), and civic disposition (d = 2.26). These gains outperformed those of the control group. Findings suggest that integrating LVE-based storybooks with interactive methods like role-play is highly effective in instilling empathy, tolerance, and responsibility. The emotional engagement offered by narratives and experiential learning fosters deeper internalization of anti-bullying values. Storybooks rooted in LVE present a promising pedagogical tool for character and citizenship education at the elementary level. Further research is needed to examine long-term impacts and broader applicability.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of bullying that occurs at the elementary school level is a serious problem that has a broad impact on children's social and emotional development. Primary school children are often involved in acts of bullying, both as perpetrators and as victims. This can have a negative impact on the victim, physically, emotionally, and psychologically. Actions such as taunting, ostracizing, and violence can have a negative impact on children's mental and emotional development. (Chaidar & Latifah, 2024) (Yektiningsih et al., 2025). This is reinforced by data collected by the Ministry of Women and Child Protection in 2025, showing that victims of bullying show significant differences between genders and age groups. Based on the data collected, victims are dominated by women as much as 81.3%, while men only reach 18.7%, children as much as 61.4% while children vulnerable 6 and 12 years as much as 20.4%. This phenomenon often occurs in the school environment, where children can be victims of bullying, either verbally, physically, or socially.

Bullying behavior can be caused by a variety of factors, including environment, family and school. An environment that is permissive of violence or a lack of social supervision can make a person feel that bullying is normal. (Andriyani et al., 2024). Family factors, such as harsh parenting, lack of parental attention, or domestic violence, can shape children into bullying perpetrators. (Ariani & Asih, 2022). In addition, a school environment that lacks the importance of character education, minimal teacher supervision, and a school culture that does not support empathy and tolerance can exacerbate this behavior. (Syarida, 2024).

Victims of bullying who experience physical or verbal violence can feel afraid, threatened, experience decreased self-esteem, experience depression, limit social interactions, and increase the risk of suicide as a result of this treatment. (Fajar Al Arif Fitriana & Fauzi, 2023; Maghfiroh & Sugito, 2021; Ningsih, 2024). The impact felt by the abuser includes an increased sense of power, being arrogant, getting angry easily, becoming increasingly arrogant, and always wanting to win alone. (Junindra et al., 2022). Victims of bullying that occur will have an impact on students' learning concentration and motivation to learn, because victims feel threatened, are afraid to go to school and become passive and lack concentration in participating in the teaching and learning process. (Junindra et al., 2022; Maemunah & Sakban, 2023; Maghfiroh & Sugito, 2021).

Constructivist theory also plays an important role in the character education process, where students construct knowledge and values through direct experience, reflection and interaction with the social environment. By using engaging learning environments, such as picture storybooks and e-books, students can learn moral values in a contextual and participatory manner, thus strengthening their understanding of the importance of good character in preventing bullying.

One effective way to prevent bullying is by implementing a living values education approach, which focuses on developing positive behaviors and values such as empathy, respect, and responsibility in the daily lives of students. Humans are *homo educandum*, meaning that humans have the ability to be educated through the concept of living values education. (Patimah & Herlambang, 2021).

Bullying prevention through character education is very important in forming a generation that empathizes, respects differences, and has a positive attitude from an early age. In this case, strengthening values such as honesty, respect, responsibility, and caring must be instilled from an early age, both at home and at school. Bullying prevention through character education is very important in forming a generation that empathizes, respects differences, and has a positive attitude from an early age. In this case, strengthening values such as honesty, respect, responsibility, and caring must be instilled from an early age, both at home and at school. (Arofah & Selirowangi, 2024).

The Children's Storybook Development Agency, established by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology (Kemendikbud Ristek), is responsible for creating and providing quality storybooks that are educational, creative, and in accordance with the cultural values and character of the Indonesian nation. The agency focuses on developing content that supports the literacy of Indonesian children that is educational, creative, and in accordance with the cultural values and

character of the nation. As part of this effort, the Language Development and Development Agency (BPPB) launched a children's storybook translation page that contains various short story titles to support Indonesian children's literacy. This page provides easy access for parents, teachers, and children to enjoy quality stories that have been translated into various languages, including local languages.

One example of the application of Living Values Education in storybooks is a book entitled "*Masalah Rambut*" published by the Center for Language and Literature Development in 2021. This storybook is part of the children's storybook translation program which aims to enrich the literacy of Indonesian children by providing interesting and educational reading. Children's storybooks are not only entertaining, but also convey many developing values.

Picture storybooks have the advantage of attracting students' interest and making it easier to understand character values, due to the combination of interesting text and illustrations. Digital picture storybooks are an effective medium for instilling moral values and increasing reading interest in children aged 7-9 years, because they are able to convey messages in an interesting and easy to understand manner. (Pratiwi & Candrasari, 2022). With a picture storybook-based approach, students can more easily discuss and understand the moral messages contained in the story. (Yugakisha et al., 2023).

Living Values Education is a learning community based on living values and places the search for meaning and purpose at the heart of education. Living Values Education is a structured effort to revive universal values of goodness, aimed at reflecting on oneself, others and the world as well as the interconnectedness of these values to understand the impact of every action on oneself, others and society, with a focus on 12 core values. (Hayati, 2023; Hikmah et al., 2022). According to Dianne Tillman, there are twelve universal values in life: education, namely peace, respect, love, tolerance, honesty, responsibility, cooperation, happiness, freedom, unity, simplicity, and humility. (Apriani et al., 2021; Hidayana & Apriani, 2023; Ilmiah & Sience, 2020; Qadafi, 2020).

Implementing Living Values Education in the context of anti-bullying through storybook media can be done in the form of character development reconstruction, anti-bullying initiatives, and building communication and cooperation with parents. With a holistic approach, the implementation of Living Values Education units is one of the effective solutions to overcome the problem of bullying in schools. (Annisa & Habiby, 2024; Astuti et al., 2024; Lusiana & Siful Arifin, 2022; Rahnang et al., 2022).

The results of the eight studies show that current anti-bullying interventions have several shortcomings, including one-sided and unappealing methods for children, which do not touch on children's emotional aspects and moral values. These interventions tend to emphasize cognitive aspects only, without touching the affective and psychomotor domains of children. (Abdillah, 2023; Ainulhaq et al., 2024; Christiani et al., 2024; Irma et al., 2025; Mahdavikia et al., 2025; Maisaroh, 2023).

This shortcoming can be addressed through character-based approaches such as living values education and the use of storybooks as contextual and entertaining educational tools. LVE emphasizes the development of life values such as love, tolerance, responsibility and empathy, which are important foundations for building anti-bullying character. Meanwhile, storybooks and fairy tales can be effective tools for communicating values through narratives about children's lives, accompanied by visualizations and activities such as coloring or discussions.

The use of value-based storybooks has been shown to increase students' understanding of right and wrong behavior, increase empathy, and develop good social skills. In addition, students are actively involved in the learning process, internalize moral ideas more easily, and are able to reflect positively on their social experiences. Thus, the integration of LVE and storybooks is not only a learning tool, but also an effective and holistic intervention strategy for bullying prevention in primary schools.

Through the medium of a picture storybook titled "*Masalah Rambut*", it can incorporate educational values in life, which can be an intervention tool to reduce bullying in elementary schools. By instilling values such as compassion, tolerance and peace through picture storybooks, it is hoped that students can better understand the importance of good character in their social interactions. It is

hoped that teaching through this medium will create a more harmonious atmosphere in schools, and foster a generation that is more caring and empathetic towards others. Thus, the storybook "Masalah Rambut" not only serves as a medium for teaching literacy, but also as a means of building positive character in students.

## 2. METHODS

This research uses a quantitative approach based on the philosophy of positivism, which aims to test hypotheses through statistical data analysis. The research design used is a Quasi-Experimental Design Non-Equivalent Control Group as described by (Fihani neti, 2021; Gunawan, 2020; Marzuki, 2023; Sugiyono, 2020). In this design, the experimental group and control group are not randomly selected, but pretest, treatment and post-test are carried out on both to compare the results to test the cause-and-effect relationship, where there are independent variables that affect the dependent variable, and the magnitude of the effect can be measured statistically.

**Table 1.** Research Design

Group	N	Pretest	Treatment	Posttest
Experimental	34	O1	X1 (Learning using the storybook "Masalah Rambut")	O2
Control	34	O3	X2 (Conventional learning without the storybook)	O4

Information:

- **X1:** Treatment for the experimental group consisting of learning using the storybook "Masalah Rambut" based on the Living Values Education approach.
- **X2:** Treatment for the control group consisting of conventional learning (without the storybook).
- **O1 & O3:** Pretests to measure initial abilities in civic knowledge, civic skills, and civic disposition.
- **O2 & O4:** Posttests to measure learning outcomes after treatment in each group.
- **n:** Number of students in each group (Experimental = 34, Control = 34).

The population of this study comprised all third-grade students at SDN Ciremai Giri, Cirebon. The third-grade cohort was divided into two learning groups (rombel): Class 3A, designated as the experimental group, and Class 3B, serving as the control group. Each class consisted of 34 students. The experimental group received a specific instructional intervention, whereas the control group followed the standard curriculum without additional treatment.

Prior to the intervention, both groups were administered a pretest to assess their initial understanding of anti-bullying values within the context of Civic Education. This pretest served to ensure the equivalence of the two groups at baseline, minimizing potential confounding variables and allowing for a more accurate assessment of the intervention's impact. Following the pretest, the experimental group participated in a learning session utilizing the storybook *Masalah Rambut*, integrated with a role-play method. In contrast, the control group continued with conventional instruction, without the incorporation of supplementary media or pedagogical strategies.

**Table 2.** Description of hair problem storybook characters

Character Name	Character Description	Contained Living Values Education
Manasa	The main character, a girl with curly hair. Learn to accept herself and look confident.	Self-esteem, tolerance, honesty.
Mrs. Manasa	A loving and supportive mother figure. Instilling gratitude and self-love.	Compassion, understanding, empathy.
Titus	A good and supportive friend. Encouraging Manasa to be confident and not feel inferior.	Friendship, care, respect.
Ravi	Manasa's classmates who often mocked Manasa's curly hair as "jangri hair".	The antithesis of the values of empathy and respect.
Shwetha	Manasa's classmates who also mocked Manasa's hair.	The antithesis of the values of tolerance and empathy.
Shireen	Manasa's classmate brought jangri lunch, which became a source of ridicule for Manasa.	Neutral - triggers reflection on feelings.

**Table 3.** Research Hypothesis

H <sub>0</sub> (Null Hypothesis)	H <sub>1</sub> (Alternative Hypothesis)
The use of the storybook "Masalah Rambut" has no effect on the improvement of students' civic knowledge, civic skills, and civic disposition.	The use of the storybook "Masalah Rambut" has a significant effect on the improvement of students' civic knowledge, civic skills, and civic disposition.

Data analysis was carried out in two stages, namely :

1. Descriptive Analysis

At this stage, the data is presented in the form of descriptive statistics which include the minimum value, maximum value, average value (mean), and standard deviation.

2. Inferential Analysis

To test the hypothesis and find out whether there is a significant difference between the pretest and posttest results in each group (experimental and control), the Paired Samples t-test was used. This test is used because it compares two measurements (pretest and posttest) in the same group. The test was conducted using SPSS software version 26, with a significance level ( $\alpha$ ) of 0.05. The test results will show whether the difference in pretest and posttest scores in each group is statistically significant or not.

### 3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The illustrated storybook "Masalah Rambut" features moral messages integrated within the narrative. The illustrated storybook "Masalah Rambut" features moral messages integrated within the narrative. These values can be identified through the characters and the development of the storyline, as presented in Table 4. Picture 1 explains the title of the book.

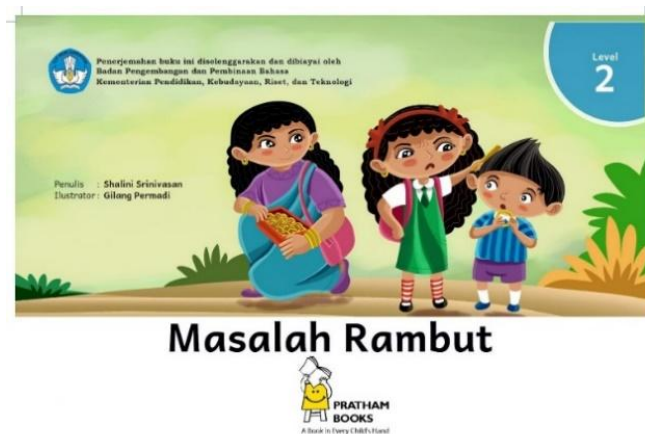


Figure 1. Book title “Masalah Rambut”

Table 4. Summary of The Story and Moral Messages Contained

Page	Story Summary	An Emergent Figure	A Moral Message
1-2	Manasa didn't like her curly hair and wished she had straight hair like her friend.	Manasa, Titus.	Self-acceptance, self-confidence.
3-4	Manasa asked her mother about the origin of her curly hair.	Manasa, Mother.	Knowledge of genetic inheritance, communication, family.
5-6	Her mother explained that everyone inherits traits from their parents, including hair.	Manasa, Mother.	Respect differences, understand diversity.
7-8	His mother showed him a picture of Manasa's father with straight hair and explained that Manasa had inherited his father's smile.	Manasa, Mother.	Appreciate the uniqueness of self and family relationships.
9-10	Manasa began to understand that her curly hair was a part of her and began to accept it.	Manasa, Mother.	Self-acceptance, Gratitude.
11-12	Manasa felt proud of her hair and smile, realizing that it made her unique.	Manasa.	Self-confidence, pride in oneself.

In the early stages of analyzing research instruments, validity and reliability tests were carried out to ensure that the measuring instruments used were really able to measure the variables under study precisely and consistently. The validity test aims to assess the extent to which each item can reflect the competency indicators being measured, so that the data obtained is valid and reliable. Meanwhile, the reliability test is used to test the consistency of the instrument in producing stable and reliable data in various measurement conditions.

In this study, the validity test was carried out on each aspect of civic competence, namely Civic Knowledge, Civic Skill, and Civic Disposition. Each item was tested using the item-total correlation value and compared with the critical value in the r table to determine its validity. Furthermore, the reliability test is calculated using Cronbach's Alpha to determine the level of internal consistency of the instrument as a whole.

The results of these validity and reliability tests are an important basis in ensuring that the instruments used can provide an accurate and reliable picture of students' citizenship competence. Thus, further analysis can be carried out on the basis of valid and reliable data.

**Table 5.** Indicators of Civic Knowledge Validity Test Results

No.	Indicator	r <sub>count</sub>	r <sub>table</sub>	Description
1	Identifying the meaning of tolerance in social life.	0.566		Valid
2	Determine attitudes that reflect living in harmony and peace at school.	0.446		Valid
3	Identify examples of bullying behavior.	0.343		Valid
4	Explain the reasons for not mocking friends with different backgrounds.	0.626		Valid
5	Explain the meaning of compassion in interactions at school.	0.386		Valid
6	Determine actions when seeing friends being bullied.	0.343		Valid
7	Identify behaviors that reflect peace in the classroom.	0.343		Valid
8	Determine attitudes towards friends with different skin colors.	0.380	>0.339	Valid
9	Explaining the importance of respecting friends with different habits.	0.747		Valid
10	Determine attitudes that help prevent bullying at school.	0.506		Valid

Based on the validity test results in table 5, the validity test results obtained a value of > 0.339. It can be concluded that the data obtained is able to assess the extent to which the items are able to measure civic knowledge appropriately. Furthermore, Table 6 presents the validity indicators for the Civic Skill aspect, namely, citizenship skills translated into real action.

**Table 6.** Indicators of Civic Skill Validity Test Results

No.	Indicator	r <sub>count</sub>	r <sub>table</sub>	Description
1	Determining the right action when friends have difficulties.	0.580		Valid
2	Determining how to help a new friend with language difficulties.	0.631		Valid
3	Determining the attitude in helping friends who fight.	0.460		Valid
4	Determining the action of sharing with friends in need.	0.580		Valid
5	Showing empathy towards friends who are discriminated against.	0.648		Valid
6	Demonstrates emotional control during minor conflicts.	0.460		Valid
7	Determines actions to encourage friends who are sad.	0.366	>0.339	Valid
8	Determines an inclusive attitude in group work.	0.601		Valid
9	Determines how to reconcile those who are about to fight.	0.452		Valid
10	Specifies helping a friend who is less skilled in a task.	0.408		Valid

Based on the validity test results in Table 6, the validity test results obtained a value of > 0.339. It can be concluded that the data obtained is able to assess the extent to which the items are able to measure civic skills into real action. Furthermore, Table 7 presents the indicators of the validity test results on the Civic Disposition aspect, which measures civic character and attitudes such as tolerance and social responsibility.

**Table 7. Indicators of Civic Disposition Validity Test Results**

No.	Indicator	r <sub>count</sub>	r <sub>table</sub>	Description
1	Showing an inclusive attitude towards friends who are laughed at.	0.345		Valid
2	Determining empathetic actions to friends who feel sad.	0.644		Valid
3	Determining attitudes to help defuse minor conflicts between friends.	0.494		Valid
4	Showing patience and support to friends who learn slowly.	0.577		Valid
5	Determining actions to help friends who have fallen.	0.718		Valid
6	Determining attitudes in dealing with differences of opinion.	0.487		Valid
7	Determining an inclusive attitude towards friends of different religions.	0.383	>0.339	Valid
8	Demonstrates an attitude of sharing with a hungry friend.	0.345		Valid
9	Demonstrates actions to defuse physical conflict during play.	0.383		Valid
10	Determines a positive attitude towards new friends from abroad.	0.577		Valid

Based on the validity test results in table 7, the validity test results obtained a value of > 0.339. It can be concluded that the data obtained is able to assess the extent to which the items are able to measure civic character and attitudes such as tolerance and social responsibility. Furthermore, Table 8 presents the results of the reliability test. The following table shows the results of the reliability test.

**Table 8. Reliability Test Results**

Civic Competence	Cronbach's Alpha	Description
Civic Knowledge	0.626	Reable
Civic Skill	0.692	Reable
Civic Disposition	0.655	Reable

The reliability analysis of the civic competency instrument yielded Cronbach's Alpha values of 0.626 for Civic Knowledge, 0.692 for Civic Skills, and 0.655 for Civic Disposition. These results suggest that all three components of the instrument demonstrate acceptable internal consistency, as values exceeding 0.6 are generally considered reliable according to several sources in the literature. Although the reliability coefficient for Civic Knowledge is slightly below the commonly cited threshold of 0.7, a value of 0.626 is still deemed adequate for research in the social and educational sciences. Therefore, the instrument can be regarded as sufficiently reliable for consistently measuring civic competence across these three dimensions.

To assess the impact of storybooks on bullying prevention among elementary school students, a pre-test was conducted, beginning with a normality test using the Shapiro-Wilk method. This test was selected due to the sample size being fewer than 50 respondents, as the Shapiro-Wilk test is recommended for samples under 100 (Jonathan & Effendi, 2020; Permana & Ikasari, 2023). Normality testing is a prerequisite for applying parametric statistical methods; if the data are found to be non-normally distributed, non-parametric tests are advised. The data are considered normally distributed if the significance value of the Shapiro-Wilk test exceeds 0.05.

**Table 9. Civic Knowledge Normality Test Results**

Class	Sig.	Description
Experiment	0.73	Normal
Control	0.71	Normal

Based on the normality test results in Table 9, the results of the civic knowledge normality test for the experimental class and control class obtained a value of  $>0.50$ . It can be concluded that the data obtained is normally distributed. To further see the results for the civic skill normality test, which is in Table 10. The following are the results of the civic skill normality test.

**Table 10.** Civic Skill Normality Test Results

Class	Sig.	Description
Experiment	0.81	Normal
Control	0.61	Normal

Based on the normality test results in Table 10, the results of the civic skill normality test for the experimental class and control class obtained a value of  $>0.50$ . It can be concluded that the data obtained is normally distributed. To further see the results for the civic disposition normality test, which is in Table 11. The following are the results of the civic skill normality test.

**Table 11.** Civic Disposition Normality Test Results

Class	Sig.	Description
Experiment	0.67	Normal
Control	0.53	Normal

Based on the normality test results in table 11, the results of the civic knowledge normality test for the experimental and control classes obtained a value of  $>0.50$ . It can be concluded that the data obtained is normally distributed.

The overall results of this normality test indicate that the pretest data from the three aspects of civic competence (knowledge, skills, and attitudes) in both research groups meet the normality requirements, so they can proceed with parametric tests for hypothesis testing. The next step is the non-parametric paired sample test. The following are the results of the paired sample t-test.

**Table 12.** Paired T-test Results

Class	Civic Competence	Sig. (2-tailed)	Description
Experiment	Civic Knowledge	<0.001	There is a significant difference between before and after treatment.
	Civic Skill	<0.001	There is a significant difference between before and after treatment.
	Civic Disposition	<0.001	There is a significant difference between before and after treatment.
Control	Civic Knowledge	<0.001	There is a significant difference between before and after treatment.
	Civic Skill	<0.001	There is a significant difference between before and after treatment.
	Civic Disposition	<0.001	There is a significant difference between before and after treatment.

The results of the Paired T-test analysis are presented in Table 12. show that there are significant differences between the pretest and posttest scores in all aspects of civic competence, both in the experimental class and the control class. All significance values (Sig. 2-tailed) for the indicators of Civic Knowledge, Civic Skill, and Civic Disposition are below 0.001, indicating that the differences are highly statistically significant. In the experimental class, which used storybooks as a learning medium, the significant increase in scores indicates that the use of storybooks effectively contributes to the development of students' civic knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Meanwhile, the control class, which did not use storybooks, also experienced a significant increase, although without the intervention of storybook-based learning, which was likely obtained from conventional learning activities. Thus, it can

be concluded that storybook-based learning has a more positive impact on improving civic competence compared to conventional learning.

These results indicate that the intervention or treatment provided was effective in improving these aspects of citizenship in participants. Thus, it can be concluded that the program or method applied successfully has a significant positive impact on increasing Civic Knowledge, Civic Skill, and Civic Disposition. Based on the results of data analysis, the alternative hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) is accepted. This means that there is a significant difference between the group that received the intervention and the group that did not receive the intervention. In other words, the intervention provided proved effective in influencing the variables under study. Specifically, students who received the "Masalah Rambut" storybook intervention (role play and Living Values Education discussion) had a significantly lower level of bullying behavior compared to students who did not receive the intervention.

The next step was to measure the effect of the hair problem in the short story. To see the standard values for Cohen's Effect Size, refer to Table 13. Cohend's d test was conducted.

**Table 13.** Cohend's Effect Size Value Criteria

Cohend's Effect Size	Criteria
$d \geq 2,1$	Very High
$0,8 \leq d \leq 2,0$	High
$0,5 \leq d \leq 0,79$	Currently
$0,2 \leq d \leq 0,49$	Low
$0,0 \leq d \leq 0,19$	Very Low

Table 13 shows the criteria for Cohen's effect size to determine the magnitude of the effect of intervention in a study, especially one involving two groups. Then, to see the results in Table 14

**Table 14.** Cohend's d Test Results

Class	Civic Competence	Cohend's d Effect Size
Experiment	Civic Knowledge	1.91
	Civic Skill	2.08
	Civic Disposition	2.26
Control	Civic Knowledge	1.36
	Civic Skill	1.66
	Civic Disposition	0.77

Based on Table 14, the Cohen's d values listed in the table show that the experimental class demonstrated a more significant improvement in all three aspects of civic competence compared to the control class. In the experimental class, the Cohen's d values for Civic Knowledge were 1.91, Civic Skill were 2.08, and Civic Disposition were 2.26. These values fall into the category of large effects, indicating that the intervention or treatment provided to the experimental class had a very strong influence on the improvement of students' civic competence.

In contrast, in the control class, Cohen's d values for Civic Knowledge were only 1.36, Civic Skill 1.66, and Civic Disposition 0.77. Although some values still fall within the moderate to large effect category, overall they are lower than those in the experimental class. This indicates that the treatment applied in the experimental class is more effective in improving students' civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions than the method used in the control class.

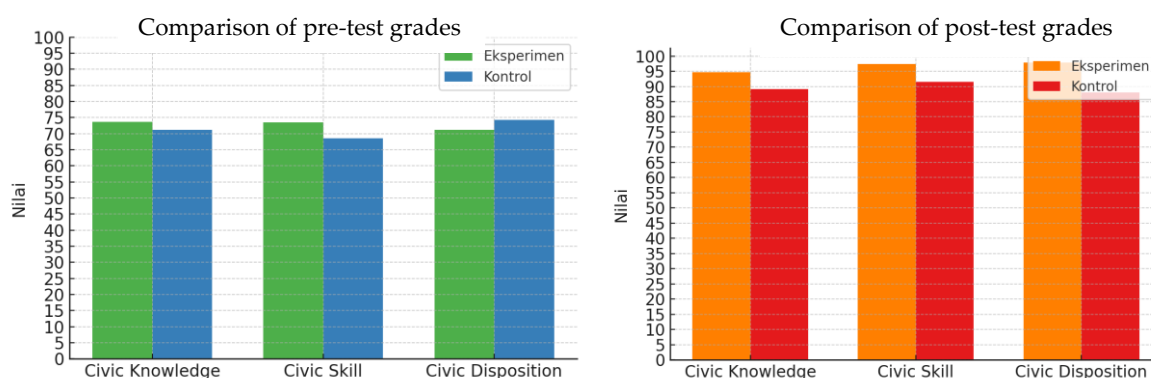


Figure 2. Pre-test and Post-test Scores Diagrams

Based on Figure 2, the pretest and posttest data show that both classes, experimental and control, experienced an increase in scores in the three aspects of civic competence, namely Civic Knowledge, Civic Skill, and Civic Disposition. In the experimental class, the average Civic Knowledge score increased from 73.67 on the pretest to 94.70 on the posttest. A similar increase was observed in Civic Skill, which rose from 73.52 to 97.35, and Civic Disposition, which increased from 71.11 to 97.79. This indicates significant development in all three aspects following the intervention.

Meanwhile, the control class also showed improvement, although with lower scores than the experimental class. Civic Knowledge increased from 71.17 to 89.11, Civic Skill from 68.52 to 91.47, and Civic Disposition from 74.26 to 88.08. This comparison indicates that the methods or interventions applied to the experimental class were more effective in improving students' civic competencies than those applied to the control class. The greater improvement in the experimental class confirms the success of the approach used in comprehensively improving students' civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions.

The findings of this study indicate that the use of the storybook "Masalah Rambut" based on the Living Values Education (LVE) approach has a highly significant effect on enhancing elementary students' civic competence, including Civic Knowledge, Civic Skills, and Civic Disposition. This is reflected in the effectiveness test results, with very high Cohen's *d* values of 1.91, 2.08, and 2.26, respectively. These figures indicate that the value-based intervention provided a strong influence on students' ways of thinking, behaving, and acting as active and principled citizens.

The effectiveness of the LVE approach in this study cannot be separated from the integrated method used, which combined narrative exposure through storybooks with guided discussion and interactive role-play. Core human values were embedded in a storyline that closely aligns with children's everyday experiences. The characters in "Masalah Rambut" reflect common social situations encountered in elementary schools, such as mockery based on differences, interpersonal conflicts, and emotional challenges. By presenting these issues through an engaging and relatable narrative, students were able to understand the experiences of the main character both emotionally and cognitively.

To deepen this understanding, students participated in structured role-play activities that reenacted scenes from the story. Role-play served as a bridge between cognitive understanding and emotional engagement, allowing students to embody the perspectives of both the bullied and the bystanders. This experiential learning encouraged the development of empathy—the ability to understand and share the feelings of others—which is essential for building social responsibility and tolerance. Through role-play, abstract values such as compassion and respect were transformed into concrete, observable behaviors, reinforcing moral reasoning and appropriate social responses in real-life contexts.

Furthermore, the LVE approach aligns well with the principles of constructivist theory. From a constructivist perspective, knowledge and attitudes are not simply transferred from teacher to student, but are actively constructed by the students themselves through experience, reflection, and social

interaction. In this context, the storybook and role-play served as complementary tools that encouraged students to construct their own understanding of values embedded in the story. This construction of meaning occurred through open discussion, personal reflection, and dramatization, which allowed students to interpret and relate the content of the story to their own life experiences.

Thus, the narrative-based approach combined with role-play does not merely convey values passively but invites students to engage critically, reflect on their actions, and internalize moral messages in a meaningful way. Students do not simply receive moral lessons—they process and apply them. This active engagement is reflected in the improvement of students' civic dispositions. Another strength of this integrated approach lies in the power of narrative and performance to build emotional resonance. By dramatizing characters' dilemmas and resolutions, students could place themselves in realistic situations and practice prosocial behaviors.

Moreover, the realistic social context of the story reinforces the effectiveness of the learning experience. The scenarios in "Masalah Rambut" mirror actual peer interactions in school. As a result, the values conveyed are perceived not as abstract ideals but as relevant and applicable to students' daily lives. This contextual relevance accelerates the internalization process and increases the likelihood that these values will influence students' real-world behavior.

In conclusion, the LVE approach presented through a combination of storybook media, role-play, and reflective discussion has great potential in fostering students' civic competence holistically. This multimodal strategy enables students to develop empathy, think reflectively, and build understanding and attitudes of citizenship through an active and meaningful learning process. These findings affirm the importance of using value- and experience-based learning approaches in citizenship education from an early age.

Despite these promising findings, this study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the sample size used is relatively small, so the results may not be widely generalized to a larger population. Second, the geographical coverage of this study is limited to certain areas, so the socio-cultural conditions and learning environments in other regions are not fully represented. Third, there is a potential bias from teachers implementing the learning model, as well as the possibility of a novelty effect—where improvements in students' character values may be influenced by enthusiasm for the new method rather than by the model's long-term effectiveness. Therefore, the findings should be interpreted with caution and serve as a basis for more comprehensive and longitudinal follow-up research.

Nevertheless, the results provide a valuable foundation for advancing the implementation of values-based civic education through story-centered learning in elementary schools. Future studies are encouraged to explore broader samples, diverse school contexts, and long-term effects to further validate the transformative potential of the LVE approach in fostering democratic character and responsible citizenship from an early age.

To strengthen the findings of this study, several follow-up steps are recommended. First, a longitudinal study is needed to examine whether the impact of the LVE approach on students' civic competence can be sustained over time. Second, this approach should be tested in schools with more diverse geographical and socio-cultural contexts to assess its adaptability and effectiveness beyond the current research setting. Third, it is advisable to conduct comparisons with other social-emotional learning (SEL)-based approaches to explore relative advantages, similarities, and potential integration between LVE and other character education models.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the use of the picture storybook "Masalah Rambut" based on the Living Values Education (LVE) approach significantly enhances elementary students' civic competence, particularly in the areas of civic knowledge, social skills, and civic disposition. These improvements are reflected in the very high effectiveness scores observed in the experimental group. The integration of

storytelling, value-based discussions, and role-play activities proved effective in engaging students both emotionally and cognitively, facilitating deeper internalization of core values. These findings carry important implications for curriculum developers, teachers, and policymakers, suggesting the potential of value-based media as a meaningful and contextually relevant tool for strengthening citizenship education and character formation from an early age. Further research is recommended to assess the long-term impact and applicability of this approach across diverse school settings and socio-cultural contexts.

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