

## **TRANSFORMATION OF JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS' MUTUAL COOPERATION BEHAVIOR IN THE MIDST OF SOCIAL CHANGES IN MODERN SOCIETY**

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### **Abstract**

This study examines changes in the behavior of mutual cooperation of junior high school students in the context of modern society characterized by the intensification of the use of digital media and shifts in social interaction patterns. The purpose of the study is to identify the form of change in mutual cooperation behavior, the factors that affect it, and its implications on the quality of adolescent social relations. The research uses a qualitative approach with in-depth interview techniques and observation of students as the main informants, as well as educators as key informants. Data analysis was carried out thematically to capture the dynamics of social meaning that developed in the school environment. The results of the study show that there is a transformation of mutual cooperation behavior from a direct pattern of collective participation to a more individualistic and digital-based form of social engagement. Students tend to build relationships through social media, which on the one hand expands the network of friends, but on the other hand reduces the intensity of face-to-face togetherness and weakens the practice of spontaneous mutual cooperation in the school environment. The findings also show a decrease in social sensitivity and empathy in collective activities, as the orientation to virtual interactions increases. In addition, this change is influenced by the factors of gadget usage habits, peer communication patterns, and the lack of social space that encourages direct cooperation. Sociologically, this condition reflects the process of social modernization that shifts the value of togetherness towards a more pragmatic and instrumental orientation of relationships. This study emphasizes the importance of the role of the educational and family environment in revitalizing the value of mutual cooperation through strengthening collaborative activities and habituating offline social interactions. These findings are expected to serve as a basis for consideration for educators and policymakers in designing social education strategies that are adaptive to the challenges of modern society.

**Keywords:** *mutual cooperation, junior high school students, social interaction, modern society, behavior change.*

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## INTRODUCTION

Gotong royong is a fundamental social value in Indonesian culture that serves as the glue of social relations and the foundation of collective solidarity of the community. These values not only represent practical cooperation, but also reflect a moral orientation about togetherness, empathy, and social responsibility. From the perspective of the sociology of education, mutual cooperation is understood as a form of social capital that supports community cohesion and forms the social character of individuals from an early age (Nasution, 2021). Therefore, internalizing the value of mutual cooperation in students is an important part of the process of forming an adaptive and collective-oriented social personality.

However, the dynamics of modern society show a significant shift in the practice of the value of togetherness. Modernization, characterized by the rationalization of life, the penetration of digital technology, and lifestyle changes, has encouraged the emergence of an increasingly individualistic pattern of social relations, especially among adolescents (Sari, 2023). These changes not only shift the way individuals interact, but also affect the orientation of social values, including weakened participation in collective activities such as mutual cooperation. The Rahmawati study (2024) emphasizes that the current young generation tends to build social relations based on practical interests and virtual communication, so that the intensity of face-to-face togetherness has decreased.

In the context of education, junior high school (SMP) students are in a crucial phase of social development, where the values of togetherness should be strengthened through direct social experience. However, reality shows that the intensive use of gadgets and social media has changed the pattern of student interaction, from communal relationships to more personal and fragmented relationships (Hidayat & Kurniawan, 2022). This condition has an impact on decreasing social sensitivity, reduced empathy, and weakening student involvement in joint activities in the school and community environment (Putri & Suryadi, 2023).

On the other hand, the social space that should be a vehicle for the habituation of mutual cooperation both in the family and school has often not been systematically optimized. The modern family environment that tends to be busy and an educational orientation that emphasizes academic achievement more than the formation of social character also accelerate the shift in the value of togetherness. As a result, students are increasingly accustomed to completing tasks individually because they are considered more efficient, a trend that reflects the strengthening of the culture of individualism in the daily life practices of adolescents (Nasrullah, 2022).

Sociologically, this phenomenon shows a transformation of mutual cooperation behavior from traditional collective patterns to a more pragmatic and instrumental form of social relations. This shift cannot be understood solely as a result of technological developments, but also as part of a broader process of social change, in which communal values confront the logic of modernity that emphasizes individual independence (Sari, 2023). If not responded to reflectively through a contextual educational approach, this condition has the potential to weaken the foundations of social solidarity of the younger generation.

Based on this background, this study aims to analyze the dynamics of changes in the behavior of mutual cooperation of junior high school students in the context of modern society, identify the social factors that affect it, and formulate relevant educational implications to re-strengthen the value of togetherness among adolescents. This study is expected to make an empirical and conceptual contribution to the development of social education that is more responsive to the challenges of contemporary societal change.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with an ethnomethodological perspective to deeply understand the dynamics of changes in the behavior of mutual cooperation of junior high school students in the context of modern society. The qualitative approach was chosen because it allows researchers to explore subjective meanings, social experiences, and interaction patterns that students build in their daily lives, especially related to togetherness practices and collective work (Creswell & Poth, 2021). Meanwhile, ethnomethodology is used to examine how students actively construct, interpret, and reproduce the social reality of mutual cooperation through their routine actions in the school environment (Garfinkel, 1967; contemporary reinterpretation by Rawls, 2020).

This approach positions mutual cooperation behavior not just as a normative attitude, but as a social practice that is continuously negotiated in daily interactions. Thus, this study seeks to capture the social processes behind changes in student behavior, including how the influence of digital technology, peer relations, and school culture shapes their individual and collective orientation (Hidayat & Kurniawan, 2022). The main informants in this study are junior high school students who are directly involved in school social activities, while the key informants consist of educators who understand the social dynamics of students.

Data collection was carried out through in-depth interviews, participatory observations, and documentation, in order to obtain a complete picture of the practice of mutual cooperation in a real context. Data analysis was carried out thematically through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawn, with emphasis on patterns of meaning that emerged from the social experiences of informants (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2020). The validity of the data is maintained through triangulation of sources and techniques, so that the research findings represent the empirical conditions credibly.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### *a. Transformation of the Form of Mutual Cooperation in Social Relations of Junior High School Students*

The results of the study show that the behavior of mutual cooperation of junior high school students has undergone a significant transformation in line with changes in the social structure of modern society. The practice of togetherness that was previously realized through direct collective activities, such as community service and school social activities, now tends to shift towards a form of collaboration mediated by digital technology. Students build more cooperation through online platforms, such as sharing lesson information, completing group assignments virtually, and providing academic assistance through social media. These findings indicate that the value of solidarity is not completely lost, but has adapted in a new digital social space (Nasrullah, 2022).

This phenomenon is in line with the view of Sari (2023) who states that social modernization encourages the reconstruction of the value of togetherness, from communal interaction patterns to more flexible and technology-based relationships. In this context, mutual cooperation is no longer always present in physical form, but is manifested in virtual collaborative practices that adapt to the lifestyle of the digital generation. However, this form of online mutual cooperation tends to be instrumental and limited to academic interests, so it is not fully able to replace the traditional social function of mutual cooperation which is full of emotional bonds and social empathy (Putri & Suryadi, 2023).

### *b. The Dominance of Individualistic Patterns and the Weakening of Face-to-Face Togetherness Practices*

On the other hand, the results of the study also show that the negative impact of mutual cooperation behavior change is more dominant than the positive impact. The intensity of

student involvement in direct collective activities has decreased quite noticeably. Gotong Royong activities in schools tend to be formal and incidental, no longer a social habit that grows from mutual awareness. Most students participate in these activities because of institutional demands, not because of an internal drive to participate.

This condition is influenced by the increasing use of gadgets and social media in students' daily lives. Reliance on digital devices encourages students to spend more time in virtual spaces than building real social relationships. Hidayat and Kurniawan (2022) emphasized that the high intensity of online interaction contributes to a decrease in social sensitivity, empathy, and the ability to work together directly. The study's findings reinforce the argument, where students tend to choose to complete tasks individually because they are perceived as more efficient, an indication of a strengthening of individualistic orientation among adolescents.

In addition, social relationships between students become increasingly superficial because many relationships are built through digital communication without adequate emotional closeness. Rahmawati (2024) refers to this phenomenon as a shift in the quality of social relations, where screen-based interaction replaces the affective experience of togetherness. As a result, the practice of mutual cooperation that requires emotional involvement and physical presence is increasingly losing space in students' social lives.

### *c. The Role of the Social Environment in the Shift in the Value of Mutual Cooperation*

Changes in student mutual cooperation behavior cannot be separated from the influence of the family and school environment. The results of the study show that the lack of exemplary and habituation of the value of togetherness at home and at school has also accelerated the shift. Parents who are preoccupied with work demands and educational institutions that are more oriented towards academic achievement cause the value of mutual cooperation to be less integrated in students' daily practices.

Nasution (2021) emphasized that social capital, including mutual cooperation, can only develop if it is supported by an environment that consistently instills the value of togetherness through real interaction. When such social spaces are narrowed, students miss out on opportunities to learn about cooperation, collective responsibility, and solidarity. This finding is also in line with Sari (2023) who states that modernizing education without strengthening the social dimension has the potential to produce a generation that is academically capable, but weak in social skills.

Sociologically, this condition reflects the process of transformation of social values due to the penetration of digital culture and the logic of modernity that emphasizes individual efficiency. If it is not balanced with an educational strategy that is oriented towards strengthening social character, then mutual cooperation risks being reduced to just a normative concept without real praxis in students' lives.

### *d. Implications of Education on the Revitalization of the Value of Mutual Cooperation*

Based on these findings, this study emphasizes the importance of the role of schools and families in revitalizing the value of mutual cooperation through a contextual educational approach. Strengthening offline collaborative activities, habituating social activities, and integrating the value of togetherness in character education programs is a strategic step to re-grow students' collective awareness. In addition, assistance in the use of digital technology needs to be directed so that it not only functions as a means of communication, but also as a medium for strengthening healthy social relations (Nasrullah, 2022).

Thus, the transformation of mutual cooperation behavior of junior high school students in the context of modern society must be understood as a complex social phenomenon, which demands a systematic and sustainable educational response. This effort is important to ensure

that the young generation is not only adaptive to technological developments, but also maintains a strong foundation of social solidarity as the main capital of community life.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research and discussion that has been described, it can be concluded that the behavior of mutual cooperation of junior high school students in the context of modern society has undergone a fairly fundamental transformation. The practice of togetherness that was previously realized through direct collective activities tends to shift towards a form of collaboration based on digital technology. The value of social solidarity is not completely lost, but it undergoes a change in expression from physical cooperation to virtual interaction that is more instrumental and limited to academic interests.

This study also shows that the negative impact of these changes is more dominant than the positive impact. The intensity of student involvement in mutual cooperation activities directly decreases, accompanied by a weakening of empathy, social sensitivity, and collective participation. Individualistic orientation is getting stronger, influenced by the intensive use of gadgets, peer relations patterns based on digital media, and the lack of habituation of the value of togetherness in the family and school environment. As a result, mutual cooperation tends to be understood as a formal obligation, rather than as a naturally growing social consciousness.

Sociologically, these findings reflect a process of social modernization that shifts the value of collectivity towards a more pragmatic and personal pattern of relationships. In this context, schools and families have a strategic role as the main socialization space to revitalize the value of mutual cooperation through strengthening offline collaborative activities, habituating social activities, and integrating the value of togetherness in character education. In addition, assistance in the use of digital technology needs to be directed so that it not only functions as a means of communication, but also as a medium for strengthening healthy social relationships.

Thus, this study emphasizes that efforts to maintain the sustainability of the value of mutual cooperation among junior high school students require a comprehensive and contextual educational approach. Strengthening social solidarity from adolescence is an important foundation in forming a generation that is not only adaptive to the development of modern society, but also has a strong collective consciousness as the main capital of community life.

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