



# The Role of Social Organization in Building Society's Empathy

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**Abstract.** Violence and social issues that occur in Indonesia are the impact of a lack of empathy culture in society. This is shown from the increasing conditions of humanitarian issues in LBH APIK's record regarding cases of Gender-Based Violence. Empathetic failure leads to ruining social life because genuine empathy is the axle of social life. Natural disasters that follow one another, safety of school buildings and application of social restrictions during pandemic in Indonesia cause the characteristics of society's individualism. It is responsibility of all citizens to help each other and to work together to meet the issue, especially Indonesia is known for gotong royong value. The high empathy of citizens can foster social actions in society. Building society's empathy can be done either by pursuing social programs that exist in social organizations. With the existence of social organizations can attract society to become involved and participate in social affairs so that empathy is imprinted in themselves and improve society life in a positive direction.

**Keywords:** Citizenship Education · Empathy · Social Organization

## 1 Introduction

The increasing cases of gender-based violence from year to year, event of natural disaster that follow each other, emergency of school building, complexity of pandemic problem and large-scale social restriction that give rise to the nature of individualism in human are social problem that must find right solution. In this position of worry, human beings need to work hand in hand, embrace not beat, provide help and support, share and work together in order to get through social problems that occur with the nuances of familiarity and kinship. It is very important to build empathy in community. Empathy can improve social relationship, because the higher of empathy in human, more them behave prosocially in their daily life. Based on general purpose review of citizenship education to form smart and good citizen, it means that intelligent in question is not only about being intelligent in terms of knowledge, more than that citizen, especially learners as next generation of nation have emotional, social, spiritual and moral intelligence. Empathy which is root of morality is an important character to build and develop in every citizen in a sustainable manner. Thus, the role of social organization with their human social program is a true manifestation of how citizen have empathy by involving themselves in caring, both for others and surrounding environment.

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## 2 Theoretical Review

### 2.1 Empathy

The ability to empathize is an important part of social and emotional development, which influences the behavior of individual towards others and the quality of social relationship. Astin [1] explains term empathy comes from Greek empathy, which implies an active appreciation of the feelings of others. Titchener [2] who is an expert in psychology, in 1909, first used term empathy as an English translation of German word *einfuhlung*, which etymologically comes from Greek word *empathia* meaning to enter feelings of others or to feel one's desires or anguish. Rogers [3] defines empathy as ability of a person to understand others in a way that seems to enter into another person so that they can feel and experience the feelings and experiences of other person without having to lose their own identity. Batson [4] argues empathy will encourage individuals to help, understand others need us so that there is a sense of happiness if they are able to help. Mehrabian & Epstein [5] further asserts that empathy is part of one's sense of belonging that affects emotions.

Goleman [6] explains characteristics of people with high empathy ability, namely:

1. Participate in feeling, you can feel emotions and interpret the feelings of others.
2. Have self-awareness, more you understand emotions in yourself, more intelligent you are in reading other people's feeling.
3. Be sensitive to sign language.
4. Play a role, because real behavior is born of empathy.
5. Control emotions, not get carried away with conflict that are being experienced by others.

According to Hoffman [7], there are several factors that influence individual in receiving and giving empathy, namely:

1. Socialization, by doing game, children will experience a number of emotions that help children to think more, pay attention, and be more open to needs of others so as to increase child's ability to empathize.
2. Mood and feeling, a person who is in a good feeling will also be better at getting along with others and better at accepting other people's situation.
3. The process of learning and identification, child learns to justify response of a special circumstance, in accordance with rules of his parent and other ruler.
4. Situation or place, a person can empathize differently in different situation and place.
5. Communication and language, very influential in expressing and receiving empathy.
6. Parenting, an empathetic environment from family will greatly help development of child's empathy.

Empathy is a civic attitude that needs to be built sustainably and consistently, especially for students given that wave of globalization brings rapid social change in society that erodes the values of mutual aid into individualistic. Therefore, Scott & Graham (2015) emphasizes that it is very important to instill empathy and community involvement in learners from an early age.

## 2.2 Social Organization

According to Dirdjosisworo [8] a social organization is a place of group association that is clearly arranged between administrators and their tasks related to efforts to achieve a certain goal. Furthermore, Reksohadiprodjo & Handoko (2001) expressed various attribute that exist in the organization, namely as follows:

1. An organization is a social institution consisting of a group of people with predetermined interaction pattern.
2. The existence of an organization to achieve a certain goal.
3. The organization is consciously coordinated as well as structured.
4. An organization is a social instrument that has identifiable boundaries and its existence has a permanent relative basis.

Esman and Uphoff [9] stated several benefits of having an organization, namely as follows:

1. Help provide accurate and representative information about need, priority, capability of community, feedback on thoughts and government service.
2. Provide the capability of adjusting development program to various physical and social environment.
3. Improve program capability with the ability to develop group communication.
4. Improving program efficiency through mutual aid.
5. Local knowledge gained from collective experience can be useful for development efficiency and success.
6. Organizational involvement can be beneficial and maintain facility and service.
7. Increase community participation and cooperation in implementation of program to provide social, technological and economic change.

## 2.3 Citizenship Education

Cogan [10] describes citizenship education as an educational contribution in development of characteristic of citizen. Cogan divides citizenship education into two things, namely civic education and citizenship education. Winarno concludes [10] that:

Civic education is education for formation of citizen character which is carried out through schools (civic education in a narrow sense), while citizenship education is an education for formation of citizen character that can be done by various pathways and institution such as families, schools, communities, media and so on (citizenship education in a broad sense).

Arif [11] explained that "citizenship education is an educational process in order to prepare young citizen for their right, roles and responsibility as citizen". Furthermore, Winataputra & Budimansyah [12] explains that:

Philosophically, socio-political and psychopedagogical civic have a sacred mission (mission sacre) in shaping character and civilization of a dignified nation in terms of educating nation's life and making humans democratic and responsible citizen.

Hurri & Munajat [13] also asserts that citizenship education is "the spearhead for the formation of the younger generation as good citizen". Citizenship education is a knowledge system that has:

1. Ontology of civic behavior and civic culture, it is multidimensional (philosophical, curricular, scientific, and sociocultural).
2. Epistemology research, development and diffusion, in form of scientific study and development of curricular program, behavior and socio-cultural context of citizen, academic, curricular and social communication with application of result of scientific study, curricular and instructional development in the praxis of democratic education for citizen in school and in society.
3. Axiology provides the development of a body of knowledge from the knowledge system and the field of civic, underlies and provides the development and implementation of democratic education in schools and outside school, frames and provides the development of corridor for the process of democratization socio-culturally in society [14].

### **3 Methodology of Research**

This research methodologically uses a literature review by examining various writing related to empathy, social organization and citizenship education obtained both from books, national and international journals, and law and regulation with an inductive analysis model.

## **4 Results and Discussion**

### **4.1 Empathy Shapes Prosocial Behavior**

Selviana [15] in her research on empathy reveals that there is a relationship between empathy and moral behavior. Adolescents who have empathy tend to show kindness, both in the form of prosocial behavior and in form of behavior that adapts to surrounding condition. The human being who has empathy in him is a human being with behaviors that lead to prosocial. As Umayah et al. [16] state that there is a positive influence between empathy and prosocial behavior. This means that humans with high emotional empathy have a high level of prosocial behavior. Zuchdi [17] in his writing on empathy and social skills explains that empathy is a key quality in improving social relationship, in addition to selflessness and love. One of social skills that must be developed in any humane environment of life is empathy. Although human beings have communication skill but lack empathy, their presence will be less beneficial to society, and can even endanger social life.

Based on some of the studies above, it can be concluded that empathy is closely related to shaping prosocial behavior in human. Empathy has even become one of important social skill for every human being to have in achieving good and positive social relationship. The importance of empathy has been emphasized by Goleman [7] that 80% of factors that determine life success are emotional intelligence, one of which is the ability to empathize. This is in line with Mayer's opinion that one aspect of emotional intelligence is empathy. Furthermore, Hoffman [7] mentions that empathy is the root of morality. In addition to acting as individual beings, humans are also social beings who always have relationship with other human. The creation of good relationship in

society is greatly influenced by sense of empathy possessed by the community because in essence empathy improves existing social relation. As Covey [2] reveals that empathy is lubricating oil of wheels of social life. When human beings share, love, work together and give, that's where empathy works. On the other hand, when empathy is not there, familiarity will also disappear and relationships will be damaged. Violence, harassment, discrimination and selfishness become commonplace when empathy is lost.

Mirra [18] in *Educating for Empathy* argues that development of citizen empathy depends on personal action, professional and citizen. Hylton in her journal on citizen literacy and social empathy [19] suggests that in order to engage in community, Americans are informed about issues in their community and empathize with those challenged by unfair social structure. Furthermore, Hylton explained that to increase citizen involvement, citizen literacy and social empathy are needed. The involvement of citizen in actual society requires interest, attention as well as a sustainable will, including a willingness to fight together, to engage in problems to do what is best for society. For example, by volunteering or participating in fundraising activity that can increase awareness of social issues. In terms of lessons, empathetic behavior of learner allows learner to gain more about global issue, engage in the perspective of others, encourage them to think about their personal behavior, and how they can apply knowledge in their lives [20].

In an effort to live well in society, behaviors will be created that are referred to as moral behavior. The success of social life requires rules as well as moral value, otherwise a good social life will be difficult to achieve. Every individual has an interest and of course others also have an interest. The indisputable problem between one's own desires and well-being of others will always exist, therefore there is a need for control in taking a stand. Human can learn in controlling his desires by realizing and understanding desires of others. In this case, presence of empathy in human being is indispensable, given that empathy is the ability to understand condition and feeling of others. As Zuchdi [17] explains that empathy is a complete and deep understanding of others, both intellectually and emotionally.

## 4.2 Contribution of Social Organization

Based on research conducted by Hanifah and Unayah [21] regarding contribution of social organization, it was found that services provided by social organization can meet basic need of service recipient. This basic need includes food, clothing, education, and health. For more details, as follows:

1. For underprivileged family, service is provided through family empowerment program in the form of saving and loan that can help their family's economic growth.
2. For the displaced elderly, service is provided through orphanage with the help of food and spiritual mental guidance. In addition, discipline is instilled, getting up early regularly, being given time to play and watch TV, providing nutritious food, and treatment service to hospital.
3. For abandoned children, service is provided in form of spiritual mental guidance and education as a form of developing potential of children.

Gunawan & Muhtar in their book entitled *Kontribusi Organisasi Sosial dalam Pembangunan Kesejahteraan Sosial* in 2010 stated that the contribution of social organization is in form of donation and support from social organization in dealing with various social welfare problem. The assistance can be in the form of support in form of thought, ability, energy, expertise, material, and others. Gunawan & Muhtar continued that in realizing development activity is duty and responsibility of government with society. The government plays a role in facilitating, while society need its participation. This implies the success of social program is largely determined by involvement of citizen/involvement of society itself. In line with the result of Hanifah & Unayah's research above, Gunawan & Muhtar emphasized that contribution of social organization can be seen from the forms of society participation in social services to meet the basic needs of every citizen, such as social rehabilitation, social security, social empowerment, and social protection. The purpose of the existence of a social organization is to provide service to society.

No human being can carry on their life without help of other human beings. In this life, human beings are interdependent and need each other. As Bertrand [22] states that in order to survive, human beings must organize themselves, which means learning to perform joint actions with other human beings. Therefore, relationship needs to be maintained and maintained properly. The presence of social organizations in society can build society's empathy in form of participation and self-involvement in social program of social organization.

### **4.3 The Role of Social Organization in Building Society's Empathy**

Empathy is an important civic attitude to continue to be built and improved in social life. The failure to empathize causes a breakdown of social relationships that can result in occurrence of social problems, a consequence that arises when people are not able to empathize so that it is easy to hurt and even eliminate lives of others due to loss of ability to understand feelings and conditions of others. Moreover, Indonesia is an area prone to disaster, this can be seen from the report of recorded that total natural disaster that occurred in Indonesia throughout 2021 reached 1,891 events. Where this natural disaster caused 6,049,649 people to suffer and evacuate, 12,892 injured, 511 people died, and 70 people were missing [23]. It is responsibility of every citizen to help each other and work together to deal with natural disasters that occur, especially since Indonesia is known for value of Gotong Royong. High empathy from citizen can encourage social action in society. As Wibowo [24] argues that the higher empathy that humans have, the higher prosocial behavior, and vice versa, the lower empathy in human, the lower prosocial behavior. Not only is it prone to disaster, Indonesia is also experiencing an emergency in school building. Data from Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan shows that in the 2019/2020 school year, more than 70% of classrooms at each level of education have been damaged, be it lightly, moderately or severely damaged. Even at elementary and junior high school education level, classrooms in a damaged condition reached a percentage above 80% [25]. Of course, the government has sought the construction of school with adequate facility, but this is not enough if it only relies on effort of government. Therefore, public awareness is needed to participate in realizing equitable school construction throughout Indonesia. As Rukmana [26] revealed that one of components that need to be included in development activities is society participation.

The existence of social organization as a means of society participation can facilitate and facilitate purpose of educational development from government, especially in terms of assistance for school infrastructure for convenience of learning for students. Another problem that is no less complicated is of Covid-19 Pandemic presence which gave rise to nature of human individualism due to limited movement so that daily needs could no longer be met. In such alarming circumstances, it should be that as fellow human beings who have needs, human beings need to provide each other with help and support, share and cooperate with each other in face of existing problems with an atmosphere of familiarity and kinship.

Pradnyana & Lestari's research in 2016 showed results including:

1. Empathy has a role to play in prosocial behavior because empathy can improve helpful behavior.
2. High empathy in the human being can improve his prosocial behavior in society.

In line with this, Goleman [6] explains that one of characteristic of empathy is to play a role / get involved, because real behavior is born of empathy. Helpful behavior is a form that a person has empathy in him. As Batson [4] states that empathy will encourage individuals to help others. In addition, people who have high empathy are very attached to behavior of sharing, giving and working together [2, 6]. Empathy can be built one of them through social organization. A study of the role of social organization in building empathy can be seen from several aspects as follows:

1. There are two reasons underlying formation of social organization, namely (1) humans are social beings, which means that human in this life cannot be separated from interaction with others. So organizing becomes important for human for sake of association and in fulfillment of needs of life. In context of this common life, there are those that bind the behavior of society, such as the values of Gotong Royong and Tolong Menolong; and (2) human beings are religious beings, where in principle every religion in the world always teaches to do good and help each other. In context of living together, this value has fostered society empathy to be able to feel problem of life and needs faced by others [27].
2. Hanifah and Unayah [21] revealed that social organization is an aspect of behavior pattern and social relation in social life. That is, social organization become places of community participation in development of social welfare.
3. Esman and Uphoff [9] explained that the existence of social organization can increase society participation and cooperation through social programs to provide social, technological and economic change.

In an effort to deal with social problems, this responsibility is not only in the hands of the government, but also responsibility of society. In Undang-Undang RI Number 11 of 2009 about Kesejahteraan Sosial article 38 paragraph (1) states that masyarakat mempunyai kesempatan seluas-luasnya untuk berperan dalam penyelenggaraan kesejahteraan sosial. This means that government expects public to participate in implementation of social welfare, especially in dealing with emerging social problem. Community involvement in social organization is a tangible manifestation of empathy that has been imprinted in oneself. Through its humane social program, communities help each other, sharing, giving, and work together in a structured group called a social organization. Citizen

involvement is a form of civic education in society. As Karliani [28] stated that Indonesian citizenship can be built through civic engagement, one of which is transformed through civic education.

## 5 Conclusions

The role of social organization in building community empathy is a very important role in answering today's social problem. The tragedy of the disaster that followed each other, emergency of school building and emergence of the nature of individualism in society are serious social problem and need to find solution. In this regard, empathy of society is indispensable in dealing with such humanitarian issues. Therefore, the presence of social organization can build society empathy by helping each other, sharing, giving, and cooperating in carrying out humanitarian social program carried out by social organization.

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