



## Analysis of Factors Contributing to the Lack of Social Care Attitudes Among Children Aged 5-6 Years at Tiberias Kindergarten, Tuak Daun Merah (TDM), Kupang City

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### ABSTRAK

This study focuses on identifying the reasons behind the lack of social awareness among children aged 5 to 6 years at Tiberias Kindergarten in Tuak Daun Merah, Kupang City. A descriptive qualitative method was applied, involving semi-structured interviews with five parents and two teachers who were purposively selected and recruited through referrals. The data were analyzed using the interactive model proposed by Miles and Huberman, along with source triangulation. The findings show that low social awareness is influenced by children's internal characteristics (such as stubbornness and emotional reactivity), family influences (including authoritarian parenting styles and physical punishment), and social environmental factors (such as aggressive interactions with peers). Although the school environment provides some positive effects, it has not yet been fully effective, highlighting the need for collaboration among all stakeholders.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Education is a structured process designed to enhance an individual's knowledge, skills, and character in a comprehensive manner. In this context, early childhood education (ECE) plays a crucial role as a foundation for nurturing children's personality and social abilities. As the future of the nation, children need high-quality educational experiences that go beyond intellectual growth to include moral development and character building, including a sense of social responsibility.

This aligns with the provisions of Law Number 20 of 2003 on the National Education System, which states that the goal of national education is to develop students' potential to become individuals of good character, competence, and responsibility. One important value that needs to be instilled from an early age is social awareness, which relates to individuals' mindset and behavior in intentionally and responsibly caring for and helping others, the environment, and their communities (Perlina & Nurhafizah, 2020; Nursalim et al., 2020).

At a broader level, Indonesian society is known for having relatively strong social awareness. This is evident in Indonesia's ranking in the World Giving Index, where the country has consistently been identified as the most generous nation in the world (Charities Aid Foundation, 2020), and is supported by findings from the Social Piety Index, which indicate a high level of communal awareness centered on mutual assistance (Ministry of Religious Affairs, 2022). Communal cooperation practices that emerge during times of crisis serve as tangible evidence of strong social unity in society. However, this reality is not fully reflected among today's younger generation, particularly young children, who show declining social awareness due to various influences, including excessive gadget use, a shift toward individualism, and reduced face-to-face social interaction (Octaviani et al., 2022).

Several previous studies have examined methods to foster and enhance social awareness through various strategies, such as student group activities, religious initiatives, and culturally relevant education. Research by Achban et al. (2023) showed that participation in student associations (HMPS) can increase social awareness among university students through community service initiatives. Iflahathul Chasanah (2024) found that the "Ramadhan Berbagi" initiative effectively cultivated socially aware traits in children by involving them in sharing activities. In addition, Gusti et al. (2024) highlighted those educational experiences based on Balinese folklore can serve as an effective tool for teaching empathy and social awareness to elementary school students. Nevertheless, most of these studies have focused on improvement strategies rather than examining the underlying reasons for low social awareness, especially in early childhood.

Limited social awareness among young children has also been observed at Tiberias Kindergarten in Kupang City. Observations revealed a lack of adequate empathy in children's interactions. Children often failed to respond to peers in distress, did not help friends who fell, refused to share toys or learning materials, and showed little motivation to collaborate. In some cases, certain children lacked learning tools such as colored pencils simply because their peers were unwilling to share. These concerns were reinforced through discussions

with teachers, who indicated that children's social awareness remains underdeveloped and has not yet reached its full potential.

Theoretically, children's social development is strongly influenced by how they interact with their environment, particularly through support from adults who guide and enhance their learning. The concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) emphasizes that children do not reach their full potential solely through their own abilities; rather, they develop through assistance from more experienced individuals, such as parents and teachers (Astari et al., 2020). In this context, teaching values such as empathy, kindness, and teamwork does not occur by chance but through intentional and consistent social learning approaches.

Somad (2021) states that early childhood marks a critical stage for developing social behavior, as children begin to observe, imitate, and absorb values from their surroundings. This process of imitation makes the environment a key factor influencing how children engage socially, highlighting the importance of quality adult role models in guiding this aspect of development. Furthermore, early childhood education is essential not only for cognitive growth but also for shaping children's overall moral and emotional development (Rizqiyani & Asmodilasti, 2020; Munisa, 2023). Teaching social awareness from an early age lays an important foundation for children's future ability to build meaningful social relationships. This aligns with the perspectives of Nainggolan & Lubis (2023) and Mardhiyah & Hidayana (2023), who emphasize that empathy and consideration are crucial for nurturing individuals who can adapt and engage positively in society.

Children's socio-emotional skill development is influenced by various factors, including genetics, family background, and the school and community environment (Julia, 2019). However, each region has unique characteristics, making more detailed research necessary to understand the key elements that cause low social awareness among early childhood populations in specific areas. In this regard, conducting research on children aged 5–6 years at Tiberias Kindergarten is important, as it provides empirical evidence reflecting the local context of Kupang City, which has been relatively underexplored in previous studies.

This study contributes to knowledge by focusing on identifying the reasons behind low social awareness in early childhood, rather than merely examining ways to improve it. Furthermore, the research provides valuable empirical insights through distinct and context-specific sampling, laying the groundwork for designing more effective character education strategies aligned with local conditions. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to identify and evaluate the factors contributing to low social awareness among children aged 5–6 years at Tiberias Kindergarten in Kupang City, in order to provide relevant recommendations for advancing character education in early childhood.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### *Social-Emotional Development Theory*

Social-emotional development theory explains that children's ability to engage, empathize, and understand others' emotions emerges from a combination of internal and external influences. During the early years (from birth to around six years old), children experience a critical phase in which their character is shaped, demonstrating social awareness through actions such as helping, sharing, and showing empathy. As noted by Tiel (2019), this development is influenced by three key elements: innate traits (temperament), family dynamics (parenting practices), and external environments (community and educational settings). The home environment serves as the central component of socialization, while schools and communities expand children's social interactions. Disruptions in any of these elements may hinder the development of social awareness.

H1: Children's temperament contributes to low social awareness among children aged 5–6 years.

### *Social Learning Theory*

Social learning theory states that children's behavior is shaped through observation, imitation, and reinforcement from their surrounding environment. Children often imitate behaviors they observe from caregivers, peers, and other social contexts. In relation to social awareness, children tend to develop empathy and prosocial behavior when they frequently observe and participate in positive interactions. Conversely, environments characterized by aggression, strict parenting patterns, and ineffective communication may lead to harmful social behaviors. Therefore, families, communities, and educational institutions play a crucial role in modeling positive behavior for children.

H2: Family and community contexts strongly influence low social awareness among children aged 5–6 years.

### *Conceptual Framework (Qualitative Approach)*

This study adopts a qualitative methodology, prioritizing a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon rather than hypothesis testing. The conceptual framework illustrates that low social awareness among children aged 5–6 years results from the interaction of three main factors: (1) innate qualities, such as temperament; (2) family influences, including parenting styles and parent–child interactions; and (3) external factors, such as community and school environments. These three components interact with one another, shaping how children demonstrate social behavior in their daily lives.

Within this model, family influence is considered the most significant because it provides the foundation on which children's values and behaviors are developed. The community can strengthen or weaken family influence through broader social interactions, while the school functions as a supportive environment that offers positive reinforcement through character education. Therefore, low social awareness does not stem from a single factor but from the complex interaction of various internal and external influences.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This study employed a qualitative descriptive method to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the factors causing limited social awareness among children aged 5–6 years. This approach was chosen because it focuses on the meaning and natural occurrence of social phenomena, positioning the researcher as the primary instrument, following the recommendations of Sugiyono (2018).

The research was conducted at Tiberias Kindergarten located in Tuak Daun Merah Village, Oebobo District, Kupang City, based on preliminary findings indicating that social awareness among children in class B2 remained inadequate.

The data source for this study was primary data collected from seven informants: five parents as the main informants and two teachers as supporting informants. Informants were selected using purposive and snowball sampling techniques to ensure the relevance of the data to the research objectives. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, allowing the researcher flexibility to explore information regarding hereditary influences, family relationships, community environment, and educational environment (Sugiyono, 2018).

To ensure data credibility, source triangulation was applied by comparing information from parents and teachers, referring to the concept proposed by William Wiersma (in Sugiyono, 2018). Data analysis followed the interactive model described by Matthew B. Miles and A. Michael Huberman (in Sugiyono, 2018), which includes the steps of data collection, data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing.

Through this approach, the study aims to provide a systematic and detailed description of the factors contributing to low social awareness in early childhood.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The findings of this study were collected through in-depth interviews with seven participants: five parents who served as the main sources of information and two teachers who acted as supporting informants from Tiberias Kindergarten in Tuak Daun Merah Village, Kupang City. The participants were purposively selected because all of them were directly related to the issue under investigation, namely the lack of social awareness among children aged 5–6 years.

The collected data were analyzed using the interactive analysis approach formulated by Miles and Huberman, which involves the processes of data reduction, data display, and repeated conclusion drawing until reliable results are obtained (Sugiyono, 2018).

To enhance clarity, the research findings are organized into four main categories that describe the factors contributing to low social awareness among children, as presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Categories of Factors Causing Low Social Awareness in Children

No	Factor	Main Findings
1	Innate Factors	Children tend to be stubborn, easily angered, and resistant to guidance
2	Family Factors	Parenting styles tend to be harsh (physical punishment), with less supportive communication
3	Community Environment Factors	Aggressive play environment and imitation of peers' behavior
4	School Environment Factors	A conducive environment with teachers acting as motivators, but the impact is not yet optimal

Source: Processed research data based on interviews with informants (2026)

Based on the details outlined in Table 1, the factors contributing to the lack of social awareness among children aged 5–6 years at Tiberias Kindergarten in Tuak Daun Merah, Kupang City were examined. Data were collected through semi-structured discussions with five parents as the main sources and two teachers who provided additional insights. The findings indicate that low social awareness in children is not an isolated issue but the result of a complex interaction between internal traits (innate) and external influences (family, community, and educational environments). These four elements exert different impacts while working together to shape children's daily social interactions.

Initial observations revealed that most children in this study displayed prominent temperamental traits from an early age. Both parents and teachers consistently reported that these children were easily frustrated, stubborn, difficult to manage, and strongly inclined to pursue their own desires. These behaviors were not merely situational reactions but appeared to be consistent behavioral patterns observed across various contexts. For example, one informant noted that their child frequently threw tantrums when their needs were not met, a behavior that had been present since around the age of three. Teachers confirmed that the same child refused to share toys and hesitated to help peers who had fallen.

From an analytical perspective, this challenging temperament represents a significant predisposing factor. Children with such temperaments tend to have low frustration tolerance and difficulty controlling impulses. Consequently, when faced with social situations that require empathy or selflessness, they tend to prioritize their own needs. This aligns with social-emotional development theory, which states that early temperament serves as a biological foundation influencing how environmental factors shape children's prosocial behavior (Julia, 2019). However, these insights also indicate that temperament is not a fixed trait; it actively interacts with parenting styles and surrounding environments. The second and most significant factor identified in this study is family dynamics. All parent informants acknowledged that they still applied relatively harsh disciplinary practices, including yelling, pinching, slapping, or other forms of physical punishment when children misbehaved. Interestingly, parents stated that these actions were intended to educate and prevent inappropriate behavior.

However, detailed interviews revealed that such harsh parenting approaches were actually ineffective. Children who frequently experienced physical discipline often imitated aggressive behavior in their interactions with peers. One teacher reported a child hitting a friend after a toy was taken and, when asked about the behavior, the child replied, "My mother hits me when I am naughty."

Furthermore, daily parent-child interactions often lacked educational and supportive elements. Parents rarely explained why certain behaviors were inappropriate or discussed others' emotions with their children. Instead, rules and boundaries were often imposed without explanations that young children could understand. As a result, children failed to adopt positive behaviors such as sharing, helping others, and showing compassion; instead, they learned that physical dominance was a way to resolve conflict. These observations reinforce the idea that the family serves as the primary socialization agent shaping children's moral development. Although strict and punitive parenting may appear effective in the short term, it actually hinders the development of social awareness over time (Nainggolan & Lubis, 2023).

The third element is the local community, particularly children's interactions during playtime outside school. Sources indicated that playground environments near children's homes often displayed aggressive interactions among children. Many engaged in rough play, physical aggression, and the use of inappropriate language, while friendliness was rarely observed. Parents often heard shouting or crying from these groups but considered it normal childhood play. In such contexts, preschool children in the observational learning phase easily imitate aggressive actions. One educator described a previously calm child who began mocking classmates after joining neighborhood playgroups.

This unsupportive community background reinforced negative behaviors already shaped by innate traits and family dynamics. Children not only learned to view violence as normal but also lacked exposure to positive behavioral role models. Unlike Indonesia's broader cultural reputation for strong social unity, this sense of communal cooperation was not fully reflected in the early childhood play environments observed in the study.

In contrast to the three previous factors, the school environment provided a positive and supportive setting. Interviews with teachers revealed that Tiberias Kindergarten integrates character education into daily practice. Teachers used various techniques such as verbal encouragement, encouraging snack sharing, singing songs about kindness, and showing short films with moral lessons. Teachers also modeled caring behavior by helping children who fell and expressing gratitude when children helped others. They consistently reminded students not to tease classmates and to assist those in need.

However, the findings indicate that these initiatives have not yet resulted in significant behavioral change. Children still frequently displayed selfishness, reluctance to share, and limited empathy in the classroom. This suggests that the positive influence of school is not strong enough to counterbalance the stronger negative influences from family and community environments. Children appear to navigate two contrasting environments: a school setting that promotes

kindness and a home and community environment that models conflicting behaviors.

Overall, the findings show that low social awareness among children aged 5–6 years at Tiberias Kindergarten stems from a complex network of interrelated causes. Natural temperament lays the foundation, harsh and unsupportive parenting reinforces it, and an aggressive community environment provides further modeling and reinforcement. Meanwhile, the supportive school environment has not yet effectively counteracted these influences. As a result, efforts focused solely on schools without involving families and communities are unlikely to succeed. A holistic approach involving parents, educators, and community leaders is needed to build a consistent environment that fosters social awareness in early childhood.

This section examines and interprets the research findings regarding the factors contributing to reduced social awareness among children aged 5–6 years at Tiberias Kindergarten in Tuak Daun Merah Village, Kupang City. The analysis connects real-world findings with theoretical concepts and previous studies to provide a comprehensive understanding of both internal and external influences.

First, intrinsic factors indicate that children's temperament plays a crucial role in developing social awareness. Interviews revealed that many children exhibited stubbornness, irritability, resistance to authority, and a strong tendency to assert their own desires. These traits affected their ability to meet social expectations such as helping peers or sharing. These findings align with Tiel (2019), who argued that children with extreme temperaments may face challenges in social development. Research by Oktaviana et al. (2021) also supports the importance of intrinsic factors, particularly when not addressed through appropriate interventions. Nabila et al. (2024) further noted that inherited traits significantly influence children's behavioral development.

Second, family-related factors emerged as the primary influence on children's social awareness. The study revealed that some parents applied strict parenting styles, including verbal reprimands and physical discipline. Such practices can negatively affect emotional development and reduce empathy and social awareness. This aligns with Tiel (2019), who highlighted that violent or emotionally distant parenting can hinder social development. Desri et al. (2025) emphasized the family as a fundamental environment shaping children's behavior, while Nabila et al. (2024) highlighted the role of economic status, family cohesion, and parent-child interactions. Aquilah et al. (2026) further noted that family interactions help children learn emotional recognition, behavior regulation, and empathy.

Third, community environmental factors also played a major role. Children frequently encountered aggressive play environments characterized by rough play and inappropriate language, which they tended to imitate. This supports Tiel (2019) and Kania & Shifa (2021), who highlighted the influence of the social environment on children's character development. Desri et al. (2025), Nabila et al. (2024), and Arya et al. (2026) also emphasized the role of social experiences and imitation in shaping behavior.

Fourth, the school environment was not identified as a contributing factor to the problem. Teachers actively promoted social awareness through encouragement, sharing activities, and positive role modeling. This aligns with Desri et al. (2025), Diana et al. (2025), Nabila et al. (2024), and Aquilah et al. (2026), who emphasized the importance of schools in children's moral and social development.

In conclusion, limited social awareness among children aged 5–6 years at Tiberias Kindergarten is influenced by a combination of genetic, family, and community factors, with family influence being the most significant. While the school environment has a positive role, it has not yet fully counteracted negative influences from other environments. Therefore, effective collaboration among families, schools, and communities is essential to foster children's social awareness.

From an analytical perspective, the study shows that low social awareness cannot be viewed in isolation but emerges from complex interactions among multiple internal and external influences. Although innate traits play an important role, they are not fixed and can be modified through supportive environments. However, limited corrective influence from family and community environments in this study reinforced negative traits, resulting in less adaptive social behavior.

Family dynamics were identified as the most critical and challenging factor. Authoritarian parenting not only failed to foster empathy but also perpetuated cycles of aggression in children's social interactions. Meanwhile, community environments reinforced social imitation of aggressive behavior, while schools faced limitations due to inconsistent values across environments. Overall, the findings highlight the need for comprehensive and sustained intervention involving families, schools, and communities.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that limited social awareness among children aged 5–6 years at Tiberias Kindergarten results from a combination of internal and external factors. Internal traits such as stubbornness, irritability, and resistance to rules contribute to the lack of empathetic behavior.

Family dynamics emerged as the most significant factor, particularly strict and unsupportive parenting practices, including the use of physical discipline. In addition, an unfavorable community environment characterized by aggressive peer behavior further worsens children's low social awareness. In contrast, the school context does not have a negative impact, as it provides positive influence through teachers who act as motivators and role models.

These findings indicate that families play a crucial role in shaping children's social development. Therefore, it is essential for parents to adopt more supportive, educational, and understanding parenting styles to help children develop empathy, generosity, and concern for others. Parents should also monitor their children's social environments to protect them from harmful peer influences. Furthermore, collaboration between families, educational

institutions, and communities is vital to create an environment that supports children's social growth.

Schools should continue strengthening character-building initiatives, while communities should strive to foster more positive social environments. Through coordinated efforts, initiatives aimed at improving social awareness in early childhood can become more effective and sustainable.

### FURTHER STUDY

The study titled "Analysis of Factors Contributing to the Lack of Social Care Attitudes Among Children Aged 5–6 Years at Tiberias Kindergarten, Tuak Daun Merah (TDM), Kupang City" has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting its findings.

First, the small sample size—consisting of only five parents and two teachers—limits the generalizability of the results to a broader population. Second, the use of a descriptive qualitative approach with semi-structured interviews may introduce bias from both informants and researchers during data interpretation. Third, the study did not examine additional variables that may influence children's social awareness development, such as family socioeconomic status, cultural factors within the community, the frequency of digital media consumption, and deeper family relationship dynamics. Moreover, the research did not include long-term observation to track changes in children's social behavior over time.

Considering these limitations, further research using a mixed-methods approach with a larger and more diverse participant group would be beneficial to produce more representative findings. Future studies should also experimentally evaluate the impact of targeted programs, such as parenting initiatives focused on emotional education, strengthened character education in schools, and community-based interventions. Longitudinal study designs are particularly important to understand how children's social behavior evolves over time. Therefore, future research is expected to provide more comprehensive and practical contributions to fostering sustainable social awareness in early childhood.

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