



The Role of Teacher and Parent Collaboration in Overcoming Bullying in the Kindergarten Environment

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Abstract: This study aims to analyze the role of teacher-parent collaboration in overcoming bullying in kindergarten settings. The research was conducted at RA Shazia Palembang using a qualitative descriptive approach. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation involving the principal, teachers, and parents. The results showed that bullying in early childhood education still occurs in verbal, physical, and social forms, such as mocking, pushing, taking toys, and excluding peers from play groups. Teachers play an important role in handling bullying through character education, emotional approaches, supervision, and communication with parents. Meanwhile, parents contribute through positive parenting, emotional support, and active communication with the school. The study also found that effective collaboration between teachers and parents can create a safer and more supportive learning environment for children. However, several obstacles were identified, including differences in parenting styles, limited parental time, and a lack of understanding about bullying in early childhood. This research highlights the importance of strengthening school-family partnerships to prevent bullying and support children's social-emotional development from an early age.

Keywords: Bullying, Early Childhood Education, Teacher and Parent Collaboration, Kindergarten Character Education

Abstrak: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis peran kolaborasi antara guru dan orang tua dalam mengatasi perundungan di lingkungan taman kanak-kanak. Penelitian dilakukan di RA Shazia Palembang dengan menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi yang melibatkan kepala sekolah, guru, dan orang tua. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa perundungan dalam pendidikan anak usia dini masih terjadi dalam bentuk verbal, fisik, dan sosial, seperti mengejek, mendorong, mengambil mainan, dan mengecualikan teman sebaya dari kelompok bermain. Guru berperan penting dalam penanganan perundungan melalui pendidikan karakter, pendekatan emosional, pengawasan, dan komunikasi dengan orang tua. Sementara itu, orang tua berkontribusi melalui pengasuhan positif, dukungan emosional, dan komunikasi aktif dengan sekolah. Studi ini juga menemukan bahwa kolaborasi yang efektif antara guru dan orang tua dapat menciptakan lingkungan belajar yang lebih aman dan lebih mendukung bagi anak-anak. Namun, beberapa kendala diidentifikasi, antara lain perbedaan gaya pengasuhan, keterbatasan waktu orang tua, dan kurangnya pemahaman tentang bullying pada anak usia dini. Penelitian ini menyoroti pentingnya memperkuat kemitraan sekolah-keluarga untuk mencegah perundungan dan mendukung perkembangan sosial-emosional anak-anak sejak usia dini.

Kata kunci: Bullying, Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini, Kolaborasi Guru dan Orang Tua, Pendidikan Karakter Taman Kanak-kanak

INTRODUCTION

Bullying in early childhood is one of the social problems that is receiving increasing attention in the world of education, especially at the kindergarten (TK) level. So far, behaviors such as mocking friends, ostracizing, snatching toys, and light physical actions are often considered a normal part of the child's play. In fact, if the behavior occurs repeatedly and causes emotional distress to other children, then the action has led to bullying. Early childhood itself is an important phase in the formation of a child's character, emotional development, and social abilities. Therefore, a safe and supportive school environment is a basic need so that children can grow up with confidence and good empathy for others.

The phenomenon of bullying in kindergarten environments actually often goes unnoticed because children are considered not to understand the concept of social violence in its entirety. However, it is precisely at this stage that the pattern of social interaction begins to form and become a long-term habit. When aggressive behavior is not addressed early, children may carry the pattern into the next level of education. (Hyun et al., 2020). This situation becomes even more complex when teachers and parents have different understandings of bullying behavior in early childhood. Some parents consider the act of mockery to be "normal", while teachers see the psychological impact it has on the victim's child. This disparity in perception is what makes the handling of bullying often suboptimal. (Dwianti & Arikunto, 2007).

The urgency of this research stems from the growing need for a more preventive, collaborative child protection system in early childhood education. So far, efforts to counter bullying have been more focused on elementary school students and adolescents, while research at the kindergarten level remains relatively limited. (Theodora Dian Widyaningrum, 2017). In fact, early childhood has different emotional characteristics and requires a more persuasive and supportive handling approach. (Revaldi, 2020). In practice, teachers cannot shape children's social behavior alone without parental support at home. And vice versa. Character education in schools will be difficult to develop if the parenting style at home does not align with it. At this point, collaboration between teachers and parents becomes very important and may even be the core of bullying prevention from the beginning. (Iting, 2020).

The problem of bullying in kindergartens is also directly related to the real needs of the community, especially in creating a safe and child-friendly learning environment. Parents basically want a school that not only focuses on academic ability but also supports the child's emotional health. Meanwhile, schools are required to foster a positive culture that supports students' social development. In some cases, children who are victims of bullying experience fear of coming to school, withdrawing from the social environment, and even showing behavioral changes at home. Things like this often appear slowly and

are sometimes not immediately noticed by parents and teachers. Therefore, open communication and consistent cooperation are very real needs in today's early childhood education.

Previous research has generally discussed bullying from the perspective of children's behavior, parenting patterns, or character education strategies separately. Some of the research is also conducted at the elementary and secondary school levels, so the context of early childhood has not been fully explored. (Nurgiyantoro, 2019). In addition, there are still a few studies that specifically examine how concrete collaboration between teachers and parents in dealing with bullying in kindergarten (Nuryati, 2019). Most studies only place parents as additional supporters, not as active partners in the process of preventing and handling bullying. (Dr. Hj. Khadijah & Armanila, S.Pd.I., 2017; Syefriani Darnis, 2018). This is where the gap in this research lies: an effort to view early childhood bullying through a collaborative perspective between school and family as an interconnected unit.

Given these problems, this study aims to analyze the role of teacher-parent collaboration in overcoming bullying in the kindergarten environment. This research also seeks to identify the forms of bullying that occur in early childhood, communication patterns between teachers and parents, and the obstacles encountered in the cooperation process. The research questions in this study include: (1) what forms of bullying occur in the kindergarten environment, (2) what forms of collaboration between teachers and parents in overcoming bullying, (3) what are the obstacles in the collaboration process, and (4) how effective are strategies in creating a safe and comfortable kindergarten environment for children. These questions are compiled to obtain a more comprehensive picture of bullying prevention practices in early childhood education.

The novelty of this research lies in its focus on integrating the roles of teachers and parents simultaneously in the context of bullying in the kindergarten environment. This study does not see bullying solely as an individual behavior of children, but also as a social phenomenon shaped by interactions between the school and family environments. This approach provides a new perspective that addressing bullying in early childhood requires an active, communicative, and sustainable partnership pattern between teachers and parents. It is hoped that this research will serve as an important reference for the development of child-friendly school policies, the strengthening of parenting programs, and the formulation of a more effective model of educational collaboration in the future. Little by little, maybe from a small classroom in kindergarten, the culture of mutual respect and empathy can really begin to be built.

METHODOLOGY

This study uses a qualitative, descriptive research approach. The qualitative approach was chosen because this study focuses on an in-depth understanding of bullying in early childhood, as well as on collaboration between teachers and parents to tackle this behavior in the kindergarten environment. Qualitative research enables researchers to obtain a more complete picture of the experiences, perceptions, and social interactions that occur between the school and the family in the context of bullying.

A descriptive approach is used to describe the actual conditions in the field without manipulating the research object. The researcher seeks to understand communication patterns, forms of cooperation, and the obstacles encountered in efforts to prevent bullying in the school environment. In this study, the data were obtained through observations, interviews, and documentation, which were systematically analyzed to produce conclusions relevant to the research focus.

Interestingly, in the context of early childhood education, qualitative approaches often become more flexible because children's behavior cannot always be measured solely by statistical data. There are nonverbal expressions, emotional dynamics, and even small interactions in the playroom that actually hold important meaning in understanding bullying behavior. Therefore, this study emphasizes depth over quantity.

This research was conducted at RA Shazia Palembang, located in Sukarami District, Palembang City, South Sumatra. The selection of the research location was based on the consideration that the school has an early childhood education environment that actively promotes character learning and maintains intensive communication with students' parents. In addition, based on initial observations, it was found that there are dynamics of children's social interactions that are relevant to the research focus on bullying at an early age.

The research was conducted over five days, namely, February 20-24, 2025. During this time period, the researcher conducted direct observations of children's learning activities and interactions at school, interviews with teachers and parents, and collected supporting documentation for the research.

The subjects in this study consisted of school principals, class teachers, and parents of students at RA Shazia Palembang. The selection of subjects was carried out using purposive sampling, which involves selecting informants based on specific criteria to understand the research problem in depth. This technique was chosen to ensure the data obtained are more relevant and in accordance with the research objectives.

The principal was chosen because he has a role in the formulation of school policies related to character education and handling of children's social behavior. Classroom teachers are chosen because they are directly involved in children's learning activities and daily interactions at school. Meanwhile, parents

were selected to obtain information about parenting patterns, communication with schools, and their involvement in bullying prevention.

In this study, children were not included as subjects in direct interviews due to their young age. However, children's behavior and interaction are still observed through observation activities during the learning process.

Table 1. Research Subject

| No | Research Subject | Total | Role in Research |
|----|---------------------|-------|--|
| 1 | Principal | 1 | Provide school policy information |
| 2 | Classroom Teacher | 3 | Provide information related to children's behavior and handling bullying |
| 3 | Parents of Students | 6 | Provide information on parenting patterns and communication with schools |

Data collection in this study was conducted through observation, interviews, and documentation. The three techniques were used to obtain comprehensive, in-depth data on bullying and on forms of collaboration between teachers and parents.

Observations

Observation is carried out directly in the school environment during learning activities. The researcher observed children's social interactions, the forms of bullying behavior that emerged, and how teachers handled conflicts and aggressive behaviors among children. Observations were also conducted to examine communication patterns between teachers and parents in the school environment.

Sometimes the situation in the kindergarten class feels very spontaneous. Children can laugh together for a few minutes, then suddenly, a fight over toys breaks out, triggering crying. Small things like this are actually an important part of research observation.

Interview

Interviews were conducted semi-structuredly with principals, teachers, and parents of students. The semi-structured interview technique was chosen to keep the researcher within the guidelines while still allowing the informant to explain their experiences more broadly.

The focus of the interview includes:

- The form of bullying that has occurred,
- How to Deal With Bullying,
- Forms of communication between teachers and parents,
- Obstacles to cooperation,
- Bullying prevention strategies.

Documentation

Documentation is used as research supporting data. The documents collected include:

- photos of school activities,
- record of student behavior,
- school discipline,
- program parenting,
- School and Parent Communication Documentation.

The data analysis technique in this study uses the Miles and Huberman model, which consists of three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. At the data reduction stage, the researcher selects and simplifies data relevant to the research's focus. The data from observations, interviews, and documentation were selected based on themes related to bullying and collaboration between teachers and parents.

The next stage is presenting the data. The reduced data is then compiled into narrative descriptions, tables, and thematic descriptions to make it easier to understand. The data presentation aimed to examine the patterns of relationships among bullying form, handling strategies, and the involvement of parents and teachers in the prevention process.

The last stage is concluding. At this stage, the researcher interprets all the analyzed data to conclude the role of teacher-parent collaboration in overcoming bullying in the kindergarten environment. To maintain data validity, this study uses triangulation techniques. Triangulation is carried out by comparing observation, interview, and documentation data so that the data obtained has a better level of confidence.

In addition, the researcher also used source triangulation by comparing information from school principals, teachers, and parents. This step is taken so that the data obtained does not only come from one point of view. The researcher then conducts a member check by showing the provisional research results to several informants to ensure that the data obtained is consistent with the conditions that actually occur in the field.

In qualitative research, data validity is often a challenge in itself. Therefore, rechecking informants is important to ensure the researcher's interpretation is not too far from the reality they experience daily.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

The results of this research were obtained through observation, interviews, and documentation conducted at RA Shazia Palembang during February 20-24, 2025. The research focuses on the forms of bullying behavior that occur in early childhood and on how teachers and parents collaborate to prevent and address

them. Based on field data, it was found that bullying in the kindergarten environment did occur in a relatively simple form, but still had an emotional impact on children. In addition, the study's results show that communication and cooperation between teachers and parents have a significant influence on the effectiveness of addressing bullying behavior in schools.

Forms of Bullying that Occur in the Kindergarten Environment

Based on the results of observations during learning activities and play time, several forms of bullying were found that often occurred in the school environment. The most dominant form of bullying is verbal bullying, such as mocking friends' names, laughing at friends' abilities, and making calls that other children do not like. In addition, mild physical bullying was also found in the form of pushing, grabbing toys, and hitting spontaneously when there was a conflict while playing together.

In some situations, researchers also found social bullying in the form of excluding friends from the play group. Certain children are not invited to play with the group and are often left out. Although the action seems simple, the teacher said that the behavior can affect children's confidence and make them quieter in class.

The results of interviews with teachers show that most bullying behaviors occur because children are not able to control their emotions and have not understood the concept of empathy well. Classroom teachers said that early childhood tends to imitate the behavior they see in the home environment and digital media. Therefore, aggressive behavior often occurs spontaneously when a child feels angry or seeks attention.

Table 2. Forms of Bullying Found

| No | Forms of Bullying | Description of Findings |
|-----------|--------------------------|---|
| 1 | Verbal Bullying | Mocking a friend's name and calling a specific name |
| 2 | Physical bullying | Pushing, grabbing toys, and light hitting |
| 3 | Social bullying | Not inviting to play and ostracizing friends |
| 4 | Emotional bullying | Making friends cry or being scared to play |

The Role of Teachers in Overcoming Bullying

The study's results show that teachers play a major role in identifying and addressing bullying behavior in the school environment. Teachers at RA Shazia Palembang not only teach but also serve as social mediators for children when conflicts arise during the learning and play processes.

Based on observations, teachers actively provide reprimands and support to children who exhibit aggressive behavior. Teachers also use a persuasive approach by inviting children to talk slowly about the feelings of their friends who have been hurt. This approach is intended to help children understand the

emotional consequences of their actions without feeling overly pressured.

In addition, teachers apply character learning through routine activities such as storytelling, group play, and the habit of apologizing. The activity aims to instill the value of empathy, cooperation, and mutual respect between friends. Teachers also integrate character education into classroom activities so that children can more easily understand good social behavior.

Interestingly, the teacher admitted that the gentle approach was more effective than direct punishment in early childhood. Children find it easier to understand mistakes when they are talked to quietly than when they are scolded in front of their friends.

Table 3. The Role of Teachers in Handling Bullying

| No | Forms of Teacher Roles | Implementation in Schools |
|----|----------------------------|--|
| 1 | Social assistance | Mediating conflicts between students |
| 2 | Pendidikan karakter | Teaching empathy and appreciation |
| 3 | Communication with parents | Conveying the development of children's behavior |
| 4 | Classroom supervision | Control student interaction while playing |

The Role of Parents in Bullying Prevention

Based on interviews with parents of students, most parents realized the importance of their involvement in shaping their children's social behavior. Parents said that communication with children at home is one way to learn about their experiences at school.

Some parents admitted that they routinely ask about their children's after-school activities, including playmates and events that make children feel sad or angry. In addition, parents try to help children understand the importance of sharing, apologizing, and respecting friends.

However, the study also found that not all parents have the same understanding of bullying in early childhood. Some parents still consider mocking or scrambling over toys to be normal child behavior, so it does not require special handling. This difference in perception can sometimes be an obstacle to cooperation with the school.

Table 4. The Role of Parents in Bullying Prevention

| No | Forms of Parental Roles | Activities Carried Out |
|----|------------------------------------|---|
| 1 | Supervision of children's behavior | Monitor your child's interactions at home |
| 2 | Moral education | Teaching manners and empathy |
| 3 | Communication with teachers | Discuss child development |
| 4 | Emotional mentoring | Providing psychological support to children |

Forms of Collaboration between Teachers and Parents

The main results of this study show that teacher-parent collaboration is an important factor in addressing bullying in the kindergarten environment. The forms of collaboration found include regular communication through WhatsApp groups, direct consultations during child pick-up, and parenting activities organized by schools.

Teachers and parents exchange information about children's behavioral development both at school and at home. When aggressive behavior is found in children, teachers immediately contact parents to discuss appropriate handling measures. On the other hand, parents also convey changes in children's behavior at home that are related to the children's social conditions at school.

In parenting activities, schools provide education on positive parenting practices and the importance of fostering emotional communication with children. This program is considered to help improve parents' understanding of bullying and how to handle it in early childhood.

Sometimes, simple communication when picking up a child is the most effective. The teacher can immediately convey the little things that happened in class that day, and then the parents follow up on them at home. Patterns like this seem to be quite helpful in reducing conflicts between children.

Barriers to Bullying Prevention

Although collaboration between teachers and parents has been going quite well, this study identified several obstacles in addressing bullying. The main obstacle is the busyness of parents, so that communication with the school does not always run intensively. Some parents find it difficult to attend parenting activities or school consultations due to limited work time.

In addition, differences in parenting patterns across families affect how parents understand children's behavior. Some parents tend to be defensive when their children are considered to be bullying, so that the handling process becomes more difficult to do together.

Another obstacle found is the influence of digital media on children's behavior. The teacher said that some children imitate aggressive speech or actions from the spectacle they see at home. This shows that addressing bullying in early childhood is not only the school's responsibility but also requires thorough oversight of the family environment.

Discussion

The study's results reveal three main findings regarding bullying prevention in the kindergarten environment. First, bullying in early childhood at RA Shazia Palembang appears in verbal, mild physical, and social forms, such as mocking friends, snatching toys, and excluding children from play groups. Second, teachers play an important role as social mediators, using persuasive

approaches, character education, and supervising children's interactions during the learning process. Third, the success of addressing bullying is greatly influenced by active collaboration between teachers and parents through regular communication, emotional support, and the habituation of positive behavior both at school and at home. These three findings show that bullying in early childhood is not just a simple conflict between children, but part of the process of forming social behaviors that require consistent joint handling.

The results of this study align with several previous studies that emphasize the importance of family and school involvement in shaping children's social behavior. Olweus' research explains that bullying can develop from an early age if it is not handled appropriately through a supportive social environment. (Bonar Siagian & M Bambang Purwanto, 2023). In addition, Albert Bandura's Social Learning theory also supports this study's findings that children tend to imitate the behavior they observe in their surroundings. (Purwanto, Yuliasri, et al., 2025a), both from the family (Nasar et al., 2024), school (Fitria Marisya et al., 2024), and digital media (Purwanto, Yuliana, et al., 2025). Epstein's research on school-family partnerships also strengthens this study's findings, which suggest that effective communication between schools and parents can improve children's social and emotional development. (Purwanto & Umar, 2024; Rosyidin & Purwanto, 2024). However, previous research focused more on bullying at the primary and secondary school levels. In contrast, this study focused specifically on the context of early childhood education, placing teacher-parent collaboration at the center of efforts to address bullying. (Hidayad et al., 2024; M. Bambang Purwanto, 2024).

The interpretation of this study shows that bullying in early childhood cannot be understood solely as spontaneous aggressive behavior but rather as a reflection of the child's social learning process. Kindergarten children are at a developmental stage where they are still learning to understand empathy, social rules, and emotional management. (Marsinah et al., 2024; Ridayani & Purwanto, 2024). Therefore, a punitive approach alone is not effective enough to address bullying at an early age. This study shows that persuasive approaches. (Novia et al., 2024), emotional communication (Astirini Swarastuti et al., 2024), and habituation of positive behavior are actually better able to help children understand the impact of their behavior on others (Purwanto & Agustin, 2022; Yuliana et al., 2024). In this context, teachers and parents have an equally important role because children receive behavioral influences from both the school and home environments. (Ilsa Palingga Ninditama et al., 2025; Purwanto, Yuliasri, et al., 2025b). It is actually interesting, because many small conflicts between children are resolved more quickly when parents and teachers respond consistently and do not blame each other.

The implications of this research make an important contribution to the development of early childhood education, especially in fostering a child-

friendly, bullying-free school environment. This research shows that schools need to build a more active communication system with parents through parenting programs, child development consultations, and ongoing student social behavior mentoring. In addition, character education cannot be provided solely through formal learning materials; it must be integrated into children's daily activities at school and at home. Another implication is the importance of improving teachers' competence in understanding early childhood psychology and effective interpersonal communication strategies with students' families. Thus, bullying can be handled preventively, not just reactively when conflicts have occurred (RA Rodia Fitri Indriani et al., 2024; Taufiqi & Purwanto, 2024).

Although this study provides an overview of the importance of collaboration between teachers and parents in tackling bullying, several challenges remain to be considered in future research. One of the main challenges is educational leadership in the PAUD and kindergarten environments. (Ahmad Yani Kosali, Despita, Sinta Bella Agustina, RA Rodia Fitri Indriani, 2026; Purwanto et al., 2024). School principals have a strategic role in building a safe, inclusive school culture and supporting communication between teachers and parents. (Harapan et al., 2024; Purwanto, Firdaus, et al., 2025). However, in practice, not all early childhood education institutions have specific policies for bullying prevention. Future research can develop a study on the transformational leadership model of school principals in building an anti-bullying culture in the PAUD environment. Advanced research can also explore how leadership styles affect the effectiveness of cooperation between teachers, parents, and the school environment in shaping children's social character.

In addition to the leadership aspect, another interesting challenge to develop is the study of language and communication in early childhood interactions. Many forms of verbal bullying arise through the use of colloquial language that is considered joking by children and adults. In fact, the repeated use of certain words can affect children's emotional state and confidence. Future research can examine children's verbal communication patterns in the school environment, as well as the relationship between language use and the development of social aggression. Research on teachers' and parents' communication strategies for fostering positive language in early childhood is also a promising field for further development. Perhaps, from the way children talk daily, we can read how their social and emotional relationship patterns are forming from the beginning.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of research that has been conducted at RA Shazia Palembang, it can be concluded that bullying behavior in early childhood is still found in verbal, mild physical, and social forms. These behaviors include mocking friends, snatching toys, pushing, and excluding children from the play

group. Although they may seem simple, these behaviors affect children's emotional states and social interactions in the school environment. This research shows that bullying at an early age cannot be considered an ordinary delinquency because it can affect the development of children's character and confidence in the future.

The study also shows that teachers play an important role in tackling bullying through persuasive approaches, character education, supervision of children's social interactions, and active communication with parents. On the other hand, parental involvement through positive parenting patterns, emotional mentoring, and regular communication with schools is an important factor in supporting bullying prevention. Good collaboration between teachers and parents has been shown to create a safer, more comfortable, and conducive learning environment for early childhood social development.

In addition, this study found that the main obstacles in handling bullying include parents' busyness, differences in parenting, lack of understanding of early childhood bullying, and the influence of digital media on children's behavior. Therefore, more consistent cooperation between schools and families is needed to build positive behavioral habits from an early age. This research is expected to be a reference for schools, teachers, and parents in developing more effective bullying prevention strategies in the early childhood education environment.

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