



The Role of Educators in the Prevention of Bullying Behavior in Early Childhood in Early Childhood

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ABSTRACT

The problem of bullying behavior does not only occur in the community environment but also in the educational environment at the elementary, middle, and upper levels. However, unfortunately, at the early childhood education level (PAUD), it is sometimes not paid attention. In fact, the early childhood education environment can also have the potential for bullying behavior. Seeing this, the researcher conducted a study to see the role of educators in preventing bullying behavior in early childhood in early childhood in early childhood education. Using qualitative literature research, this study investigated the role of early childhood educators in preventing bullying behavior in early childhood from 2020 to 2025. The results of the study show that the role of educators in schools is not only as an educational organization but educators also play the role of supervisors, directors, trainers, assessors, motivators, mediators, evaluators. In addition, educators need to be adaptive to the changing times because educators are also responsible for helping children in difficult situations with their learning achievement during various issues that arise in school.

Keywords: *The role of educators, bullying, Early Childhood, Braun & Clarke thematic*

INTRODUCTION

Bullying behavior is a problem related to children's psychosocial behaviors such as insulting or degrading others that are repeated (Maysarah & Bengkel, 2023). This bullying behavior occurs not only among adolescents but also among children, especially in the environment where they live, the play environment and even in the learning environment, such as school. The results of the 2024 SIMFONI PPA survey reported that as many as 1,165 cases of child violence with a total of 871 violence were carried out in school environments in West Java and Central Java (Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection, 2024).

This school environment does not only occur at the secondary education level but also in basic education there is bullying behavior. The Federation of Indonesian Teachers' Unions (FSGI) reported in Kompas.com that 36% of bullying cases occurred at the junior high school level, 28% at the high school level, and 33% occurred at the elementary level (Mashabi, 2024).

Looking at the statement above, bullying behavior occurs in elementary, junior high, and high school, but PAUD is sometimes less noticed. In fact, the early childhood education environment can also have the potential for bullying behavior. This is as described by Maghfiroh & Sugito (2021) that when children are 5-7 years old, bullying behavior begins to occur because they are in the process of adjusting to the environment and developing developmental aspects. Social development is one of the developments that are developed to them, such as interacting and playing with peers and their environment. However, in the process, sometimes children without a basis become victims and even perpetrators of bullying behavior. One of them is when children interact with their peers and children unconsciously make fun of them, mock their friends, yell or others. Not only bullying behavior in verbal form, they have also unconsciously also committed bullying in physical form when playing, such as pinching, hitting body parts, throwing things, clawing and others (Arumsari et al., 2018; Iraklis, 2020; Maghfiroh & Sugito, 2022; Rahayu et al., 2020). In line with Saracho (2017) Behavior that is included in Bullying in the PAUD environment when children are excluded from their group, called by names when children without fathers, or mothers, are hit with something, or stabbed with pencils.

If the repetition of bullying behavior is carried out with a long period of intensity, it can have an impact on children in the future because bullying behavior is a negative behavior that has a negative impact on children's growth and development (Ey & Campbell, 2022; Wahyuningsih et al., 2023). In line with Christiana (2023) and Maliki et al. (2009), bullying behavior is a behavior that results in the victim experiencing psychological disorders and mental distress caused by aggressive attitudes that attack the victim periodically for a long time. Victims of bullying behavior will usually feel afraid, anxious, threatened, and helpless so that conditions like this can reduce children's confidence in themselves, or the surrounding environment. Meanwhile, a bully may have an impact such as not having empathy, being selfish, and being shunned by friends (Maghfiroh & Sugito, 2022; Ramadhanti & Hidayat, 2022; Sumarni et al., 2024).

According to Saracho (2017), bullying behavior obtained by children can cause physical problems, such as bruises, cuts, or others. Not only physically, but also victims can experience psychological problems, such as headaches, dizziness, vomiting, problems with food attraction, insomnia, severe depression,

nightmares, avoiding school, low self-esteem, and thoughts that can be self-destructive. Even though children are basically entitled to a sense of security, comfort, calm, and happiness. In Article 54 Paragraph 1 of Law Number 35 of 2014 concerning child protection, it is stated that it is very important that at school age it is protected from sexual, physical, psychological, or other crimes committed by children, teachers, employees, or other people.

However, unfortunately, child protection rules in the school environment are often ignored by adults, especially educators and educators because they believe that violence often occurs in preschool children. As researched by De Luca et al. (2019) and Hana Wahyuningsih (2023), some educators consider bullying behavior as normal behavior that can help children develop developmental aspects, especially social, such as when children commit physical violence to their peers such as kicking, hitting, pinching and pushing their friends, educators sometimes ignore it. This is because they do not consider this behavior as bullying behavior. Further research conducted by sustainable Wachs et al (2019). If educators ignore or underestimate bullying behaviors or educators play less important roles in preventing bullying behavior, perpetrators are more likely to engage in bullying behavior until they grow into adolescence, and the victim will experience trauma in a traumatic manner. This is sad because early childhood should not experience bullying behavior but instead they become the perpetrators or victims.

Even though in childhood their attitudes and behaviors can still be controlled, guided so that they can reduce the level of violence that makes early childhood victims or perpetrators. Maghfiroh & Sugito (2021) and Sims-Schouten, (2015). It is also revealed by Dey Putri et al. (2020) that adults around children often ignore the violence they commit. Educators also often ignore this type of bullying behavior because they think that early childhood does not yet have the ability to distinguish between good and bad behavior. In fact, educators have an important role not only as an education provider but also responsible for forming positive social interaction relationships between children and preventing negative social interactions (Smith & Low, 2013). In line with Wahidiyani et al. (2024), the main responsibilities of educators as education professionals are to teach, provide direction, guide, assess, and evaluate children at the early childhood, elementary school, and secondary school levels. In addition, educators also have the responsibility to help children who have problems or difficulties with their learning achievement to various kinds of problems that occur at school, such as bullying behavior.

What's more, educators will also be the first adults to be contacted by children when bullying behavior occurs in the school environment so that the

various reactions shown by educators to children are very diverse, such as intervening in solving the problem, observing the conditions and situations that occur. Even so, it is not uncommon for educators to not want to be involved in these problems, ignoring and even underestimating the bullying behavior that children get (De Luca et al., 2019). In fact, children expect educators to play an active role in intervening when there are indications of bullying behavior in children in the school environment (Rigby, 2014).

The success of the role of educators in intervening can increase children's sense of confidence and security so that bullying behavior can be prevented as early as possible. However, few studies have investigated how teachers play a role in preventing violent behavior in children, especially in early childhood settings. A literature study conducted by Wahidiyani et al. (2024) and Nasution (2024) shows that the prevention of bullying behavior is more carried out in elementary and junior high schools where educators will play the role of directors, mediators, supervisors, directors, and advisors, identifying early signs of bullying behavior. Furthermore, Arumsari & Setyawan (2018) in their literature review explained that educators will provide training to children to be more assertive about their feelings and thoughts. Even so, this role has not been fully carried out in early childhood education because educators have the assumption that behaviors, such as kicking, hitting, pinching, or pushing peers, can help children in their social development (Wahyuningsih et al., 2023). In fact, research by Maghfiroh & Sugito (2022) describes violence against children to include verbal, physical, and psychological abuse. In addition, the 2025 SYMFONI PPA survey shows that 8.6% of children aged 0-5 years are victims of bullying behavior, an increase of 1.6% from the previous year. In addition, Cirebon Regency has 84 cases of violence including bullying of preschoolers (Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection, 2024).

METHOD

Using qualitative literature research, this study investigated the role of early childhood educators in preventing bullying behavior in early childhood from 2020 to 2025. The purpose of this study is to find out how the role of educators in the prevention of bullying behavior in early childhood in the PAUD environment. The data obtained will be collected, examined, and analyzed. The researcher then analyzed articles relevant to the research topic from nationally and internationally recognized journals around the world. When searching the initial database, the author used the terms bullying in early childhood education, and the role of educators. From 2020 to 2025, about 915 articles were published. These seven articles have been collected, examined, and analyzed,

and considered relevant to the issue "What is the role of educators in preventing bullying behavior in early childhood education?". This method of literature study begins by searching for journals that are relevant to a search in the database. The results showed that only 10 relevant articles after reading and analyzing the abstract titles were carefully examined. The results of this study will be used to look at bullying activities and prevention of bullying behavior carried out by educators. Thus, readers, especially educators, will be informed about the role in preventing bullying behavior.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Role of Educators in Schools

Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System states that an educator is an individual who has pedagogical skills who can function as a teacher, lecturer, counselor, learning teacher, widyaiswara, tutor, instructor, facilitator, or other designation in accordance with his specialty and contribute to the provision of education. So that educators have an important role in advancing education, not just teaching learning materials. Rather, educators play the role of mentors, trainers, mediators, and role models for children (Junindra et al., 2022; Karisma et al., 2020). In line with Wahidiyani et al. (2024) that the main responsibilities of educators as education professionals are to teach, direct, guide, provide training, conduct assessments, and evaluate children at the early childhood, elementary level, and secondary levels. Law on Teachers and Lecturers No. 14 of 2005, Educators are people who teach, teach, guide, provide direction, conduct training, conduct assessments, and evaluate children in formal schools, elementary schools, and secondary schools.

According to Arumsari & Setyawan (2018) today, the ideal educator is an educator who has awareness of the changing times so that they always want to improve themselves from time to time. Because educators also have a responsibility to help children who have problems or difficulties with their learning achievement to various kinds of problems that occur at school (Wahidiyani et al. 2024). Like the motto of Ki Hajar Dewantara as the basis of education, namely Ing Ngarso Tuladha where leaders or educators must be able to provide role models to others. Then Ing Madya Mangun Karsa has the meaning that leaders or educators must be in the midst of their children and continue to encourage enthusiasm and ideas/ideas in work. And Tut Wuri Handayani means that a leader or educator always helps, supports, and points his students to the right path (Junindra et al., 2022).

Thus, it can be concluded that the role of educators in schools is not only as an educational organization but educators also play a role as a supervisor,

director, trainer, assessor, motivator, mediator, evaluator. In addition, educators need to adapt to the changing times as educators are also responsible for helping children in difficult situations with their learning achievements during various issues that arise in school.

Bullying Behavior

Bully is a form of bullying which means that the British are oppressive or bullying. Bullying is a type of violence that can cause physical and psychological harm to a person or a group of people, with the perpetrator "weakening" another person or group of people and using their feelings to torture the victim (Maghfiroh & Sugito, 2022; Wahyuningsih et al., 2023). According to Christiana (2023), violent behavior is defined as long-term violence, including nonverbal and psychological violence, committed by a group or individual against someone who is unable to protect themselves.

Several factors, both internal and external, influence this bullying behavior. Factors from outside the child include the family, school, and community environment. and factors in the child (e.g., traits, personality, and character) influence the child's bullying behavior. Adolescents' psychosocial development will be threatened by bullying that has not been addressed (Maysarah & Bengkel, 2023; Wahyuningsih et al., 2023). Internal and external factors are the causes of bullying in schools. Internal factors, such as a child's moral understanding that has not yet developed, and a child's self-esteem that others want to look up to. Meanwhile, external factors, such as parents' attitudes towards their children, families who pay too much attention to their children, parents who are not strict in educating their children, and television that is not suitable for children. Other factors that contribute to bullying behavior include an unfriendly school environment (Maghfiroh & Sugito, 2022).

Physical, verbal, and psychological violence experienced by children. Bullying in physical form consists of pinching, spanking, pushing, pulling hair, slapping, stepping on feet, and pushing friends. Bullying in the verbal form consists of sticking out the tongue, making fun of it, insulting, alienating other children, and speaking rudely to friends. Then bullying in the form of psychology occurs in children, such as ostracizing them, avoiding public places, and crying because they are laughed at or terrorized by their peers. (Maghfiroh & Sugito, 2022; Mahriza et al., 2021). Violence of any kind can have a negative impact on victims and perpetrators.

Victims usually feel afraid, anxious, threatened, and helpless when they are bullied. This can damage children's confidence in their environment and themselves. Conversely, people who commit abuse can experience effects such

as not experiencing empathy, becoming selfish, and distancing themselves from friends (Maghfiroh & Sugito, 2022; Ramadhanti & Hidayat, 2022; Sumarni et al., 2024). Saracho (2017) violence in children can cause physical problems, such as bruises and cuts, among others. Psychological problems such as migraines, dizziness, vomiting accompanied by nausea, eating disorders, lack of sleep, serious depression, nightmares, avoiding school, low self-esteem, and negative thoughts are some of the problems that victims can experience.

Based on this description, bullying is negative behavior that intentionally and consciously hurts others physically, verbally, or psychologically. The negative impact caused is not only experienced by the victim but also on the perpetrator. Victims and perpetrators will experience problems related to physical, emotional, social, and other problems.

CONCLUSION

Bullying behaviors that often occur in PAUD are verbal, non-verbal, and psychological. Bullying in the form of psychology occurs in children, such as ostracizing them, avoiding public places, and crying because they are laughed at or terrorized by their peers. Bullying in its non-verbal form consists of pinching, spanking, pushing, pulling hair, slapping, stepping on feet, and pushing friends. Then, bullying in the verbal form consists of sticking out the tongue, making fun of it, insulting, alienating other children, and speaking rudely to friends. To prevent bullying behavior, educators play an important role because the role of educators is not only as an educational organization but educators also play the role of supervisors, directors, trainers, assessors, motivators, mediators, evaluators. In addition, educators need to be adaptive to the changing times because educators are also responsible for helping children in difficult situations with their learning achievement during various issues that arise in school.

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