

Teacher's Influence on Bullying Prevention in RA Al-Muslimun: Practices and Outcomes in Bandung's Early Childhood Education

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Received: 09-06-2025

Revised: 20-07-2025

Accepted: 29-07-2025

Published: 30-07-2025

Abstract: This study examines the role of teachers in preventing bullying at RA Al-Muslimun, Bandung, focusing on strategies, challenges, and supporting factors in early childhood education. Bullying, often addressed seriously in higher educational levels, is still perceived as normal behavior in kindergartens. Using a qualitative approach, data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation involving the principal and four teachers. Findings reveal that teachers act as role models, teaching good morals daily through structured activities such as moral recitations, storytelling, and songs highlighting exemplary behaviors. The forms of bullying identified include physical (hitting, kicking) and verbal (insults, ridicule). Challenges include inconsistent parenting styles, environmental influences, peer interactions, and the impact of social media. Supporting factors involve teacher competence, principal support, and collaborative teamwork among educators. The study concludes that effective bullying prevention in early childhood requires strong cooperation between teachers, parents, and schools, coupled with ongoing teacher training to enhance awareness and intervention skills.

Keywords: Bullying, Teacher's Role, Early Childhood, Moral Education

Abstrak: Penelitian ini mengkaji peran guru dalam mencegah bullying di RA Al-Muslimun Bandung, dengan fokus pada strategi, tantangan, dan faktor pendukung dalam pendidikan anak usia dini. Bullying yang sering ditangani serius di jenjang pendidikan lebih tinggi masih dianggap hal wajar di tingkat RA. Dengan pendekatan kualitatif, data diperoleh melalui observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi melibatkan kepala sekolah dan empat guru. Hasil menunjukkan bahwa guru berperan sebagai teladan, mengajarkan akhlak mulia setiap hari melalui kegiatan terstruktur seperti pembacaan *mafhudzat*, bercerita, dan menyanyi yang menonjolkan perilaku teladan. Bentuk bullying yang ditemukan meliputi fisik (*memukul, menendang*) dan verbal (*menghina, mengejek*). Tantangan meliputi pola asuh yang tidak selaras, pengaruh lingkungan, interaksi teman sebaya, dan dampak media sosial. Faktor pendukung mencakup kompetensi guru, dukungan kepala sekolah, serta kerja sama antarpendidik. Penelitian menyimpulkan bahwa pencegahan bullying yang efektif pada anak usia dini memerlukan kolaborasi erat antara guru, orang tua, dan sekolah, disertai pelatihan berkelanjutan untuk meningkatkan kesadaran dan keterampilan intervensi guru.

Kata Kunci: Bullying, Peran Guru, Anak Usia Dini, Pendidikan Moral

Introduction

Teachers play multifaceted roles in education, extending beyond mere lecturing to include motivating, facilitating, and nurturing students' development (Krishnaveni, 2016; Nurzannah, 2022). They are crucial in advancing education and shaping students' self-esteem (Krishnaveni, 2016). The traditional teaching model is shifting towards a more active, participatory approach that encourages two-way knowledge transfer between teachers and students (Vighnarajah et al., 2008).

This shift aligns with constructivist learning theory, emphasizing the teacher's role in fostering active student engagement (Vighnarajah et al., 2008). In the Indian context, teaching is viewed as a complex social practice influenced by cultural, historical, and socio-economic factors (Rani & Neetu, 2024). The authors suggest reshaping education policies to improve professional training and develop industry-academia partnerships (Rani & Neetu, 2024). Overall, these papers highlight the evolving nature of teaching and the critical role teachers play in students' holistic development and learning experiences.

Early childhood education teachers play a crucial role in children's educational and social development, serving as role models and examples for students (Phajane, 2014; Krivokapic, 2018). Their responsibilities include providing children with essential skills and knowledge, shaping social character through play-based activities, and integrating social studies concepts (Rachmah et al., 2020). Teachers act as educators, guides, and models, influencing students' personality development and social identity formation (Ginting & Eza, 2024; Krivokapic, 2018). Effective teachers align their speech with actions, display appropriate appearance and manners, and foster positive learning environments (Ginting & Eza, 2024). However, challenges exist, such as teachers treating all children's characteristics equally and lacking specialized early childhood education knowledge (Ginting & Eza, 2024). The teacher's personality, skills, and competencies significantly impact the quality of the teaching process and students' engagement with the subject matter (Krivokapic, 2018).

Bullying in Indonesian schools is a significant issue, with increasing incidents reported annually (Fathra Annis Nauli et al., 2019). It occurs across all educational levels, from elementary to high school (Melawati, 2024). Factors contributing to bullying include individual, family, peer, and school-related aspects (Rachmawati, 2024). The impact on victims can be severe, with hurt feelings being the most common consequence (Fathra Annis Nauli et al., 2019). While legal frameworks like the Child Protection Act and Ministry of Education regulations exist to address bullying, implementation remains challenging (Saraswati & Hadiyono, 2020). Effective prevention strategies involve a holistic approach, combining legal norms with behavioral change interventions targeting students, teachers, and community members (Saraswati & Hadiyono, 2020). Collaborative-based interventions and school-wide anti-bullying policies have shown promise in addressing this issue (Melawati, 2024; Fathra Annis Nauli et al., 2019). The rise of technology has also led to cyberbullying, necessitating comprehensive approaches that consider both traditional and online forms of bullying (Rachmawati, 2024)..

Recent studies highlight the persistent issue of bullying in Indonesian schools, particularly among children aged 3-12 years (Borualogo & Gumilang, 2019; Hasanah et al., 2023). Data from various regions show fluctuating but concerning trends in bullying cases. In West Java, a survey of over 22,000 children revealed high rates of physical and verbal bullying by siblings and peers (Borualogo & Gumilang, 2019). At a public school in Mereng, 58.8% of students reported high incidences of bullying, predominantly physical (Hasanah et al., 2023). The Indonesian Child Protection Commission reported 25 bullying cases from January to April 2019, accounting for 67% of all reported cases in primary education (Hasanah et al., 2023). Despite existing regulations like Law No. 35 of 2014 and Permendikbudristek No. 46 of 2023, implementation remains ineffective (Setiawan & Saputra, 2024). Recent efforts focus on enhancing the role of guidance counselors, implementing anti-bullying curricula, and leveraging technology for prevention

(Lestari et al., 2024).

Early childhood education teachers play a crucial role in children's educational and social development, serving as role models and providing essential skills and knowledge (Phajane, 2014). Their responsibilities have evolved to include fostering creative and critical thinking, supporting self-directed learning, and implementing child-centered curricula (Chae, 2024). Teachers are expected to balance nurturing and instructional roles while maintaining close interactions with children (Chae, 2024; Basri, 2021). The optimization of teachers' roles requires synergy between educators, students, and parents, emphasizing proportionality and openness in expectations versus reality (Basri, 2021). Teacher education is vital for maintaining quality in early childhood education, promoting continuous learning and skill development (Anees, 2024). Creating a joyful, play-based, and developmentally appropriate learning environment is essential for early childhood education, though teachers face challenges in this field (Anees, 2024). Overall, early childhood teachers are fundamental in shaping children's future learning experiences and development.

Method

This research method is qualitative, which is a type of research that emphasises the process and meaning that are not tested or measured as accurately as possible with descriptive data (Arikunto, 2013). This study describes the role of teachers at RA Al-Muslimun in preventing bullying. This qualitative research aims to provide an overview of the role of teachers at RA Al-Muslimun in preventing bullying. The sources for this research are the school principal and four teachers. The data collection techniques used are observation, interviews, and documentation.

Results and Discussion

Bullying, according to the National Commission for Child Protection, is long-term physical and psychological violence committed by an individual or group against someone who is unable to defend themselves (Chakrawati, 2015). Bullying is aggressive behaviour aimed at hurting, disturbing, and endangering the physical and mental well-being of children.

There are several types of bullying, according to Ainun & Alpiyah (2024), including: a) Physical Bullying; Physical acts include hitting, choking, shoving, punching, kicking, biting, and scratching, causing pain, injury, and damage; b) Verbal Bullying; Verbal bullying includes the use of hurtful or humiliating words towards the victim, including name-calling, insults, slander, harsh criticism, and statements containing sexual innuendo; c) Relational Bullying; Relational bullying is an act in which the victim's self-esteem is destroyed through acts of neglect, exclusion, or avoidance. Even if the victim does not hear the gossip directly, the impact is still felt. Relational bullying is often used to separate or exclude someone from a social circle or even deliberately damage friendships; d) Cyberbullying; This is a modern form of bullying resulting from technological advancements, where perpetrators continuously use harsh and oppressive words on social media.

From the results of interviews conducted by researchers with the principal and teachers at RA Al-Muslimun, the forms of bullying committed by students included physical bullying and verbal bullying. Physical bullying took the form of hitting and kicking, while verbal bullying took the form of insults, ridicule, and inappropriate words.

A teacher has a duty to guide and assist students with the aim of developing their physical and spiritual aspects. Students are expected to become individuals who can fulfil their obligations as servants of Allah SWT who live in harmony with others, so that they can become leaders on earth and independent individuals (Hamalik, 2013).

The role of RA Al-Muslimun teachers in preventing bullying is that teachers act as educators

who set examples, motivate, and advise students to respect and honour one another (Bete & Arifin 2023). Teachers also teach good morals to students by teaching mahfudhat morals every day before lessons begin.

In carrying out their roles, teachers also face various obstacles in addressing bullying. According to Anggraini, Sadtyadi & Widodo (2024), the factors that hinder teachers in addressing bullying are: a) parental factors, which include the family in educating children. It is hoped that parents or families create a friendly atmosphere and give more attention to children; b) environmental factors, namely the school environment and community or peer interactions; c) peer factors, which are the attitudes and habits of peers that lead to negative things and will have a bad impact on student behaviour; d) social media factors, in the form of print and electronic media.

In addition to inhibiting factors, there are also supporting factors for RA Al-Muslimun teachers in preventing bullying, namely internal support, such as teacher competence, principal support, and cooperation among teachers, which are important elements in preventing bullying (Widyarta, 2024).

Conclusion

The Role of Teachers in Preventing Bullying at RA Al-Muslimun by teaching morality to children by instilling good values every day at the beginning of their learning process. Teachers then become role models and examples for their students. The role of teachers at RA Al-Muslimun in preventing bullying involves several methods, such as introducing the concept of bullying through singing and storytelling about the exemplary behaviour of the prophets. Through this method, it is hoped that children will better understand the dangers of bullying. However, in carrying out their role to prevent bullying, teachers face obstacles such as parenting styles that are not in line with those of the school. Additionally, challenges faced by teachers in preventing bullying, such as a lack of understanding about bullying, must be addressed through training. Good cooperation between the school, teachers, and parents is crucial in efforts to prevent bullying.

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