

## Teachers' Strategies: Can It Prevent Bullying to Early Childhoods in Preschool Education?

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### ABSTRACT

Bullying is an action of verbal and non-verbal violences done repeatedly by a person to another. This study aims to determine the forms of bullying carried out by early childhood and teachers' strategies applied to overcome bullying behavior in preschool education. The method used in this study is a qualitative under a descriptive approach. The findings of the present study show that bullying carried out by early childhoods is in the forms of aggressive and negative actions such as kicking, pinching, hitting, taunting, and pushing friends. In addition, the strategies used by the teachers to prevent bullying behavior to the early childhood are carried out through several steps: (1) the teachers conducted anti-bullying during the teaching and learning process through storytelling method using hand puppet as media related to bullying material, (2) the teachers invited the early childhoods to sing the song to know anti-bullying, (3) the teachers communicated to the parents about the dangers of bullying, (4) the teachers invited the parents to understand well their early childhood's character, (5) the teachers invited the parents to participate in parenting program, (6) the teachers advised and supervised the early childhoods when they are at school, (7) the teachers provided strict policy against bullying behavior. In conclusion, bullying behavior can be prevented earlier through instilling character education and implement seven strategies such as mentioned above.

**Keywords:** *bullying; early childhoods; preschool education; teachers' strategies*

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## INTRODUCTION

Recently, in social environment early childhoods often face the violence, particularly when they interact each other. The violence experinced by them can be physical or non-physical forms. Physical violence occurs such as hitting, kicking, spitting, and so forth. Meanwhile, non-physical violence occurs such as mocking, threatening, slandering, humiliating others in public area, and so forth. The types of negative behaviors aforementioned are categorized as bullying (Arumsari & Setyawan, 2018; Iraklis, 2020).

However, bullying around the environment of early childhoods education is sometimes ignored. When an early childhood mocks others, slander others, pinch and

even hit others repeatedly, these behaviours are sometimes ignored, even though these behaviours have been already categorized as bullying (Sakti & Widyastuti, 2020; Zhang et al., 2022). Based on the regulation, bullying is actually contradicts to the Act Number 35 of 2014 concerning Children Protection, Article 54, Point 1 which states that early childhood in the educational environment have to obtain protection from physical, psychological, sexual crimes, and other crimes committed by educators, education staff, fellow students, and/or other parties (Fatimah et al., 2024; Zhang et al., 2022).

Furthermore, Mahriza et al., (2021) states that bullying is kind of repeated violent behavior in the form of psychological and physical behaviours, at which the target is usually bullied towards the weak person or early childhood. Then, Sakti & Widyastuti (2020) mentioned that bullying is a behavior that causes the victims obtaining psychological disorders and mental distress caused by aggressive attitudes that attack victims repeatedly in a long period of time. In line with the previous statements, Pratiwi & Sugito (2022) argues that bullying is the series of action done to someone with the aim of disturbing, hurting or attacking. Thus, efforts to prevent bullying behaviours are very important for teacher to minimize and prevent bullying behaviours since the early age.

However, the facts showed in the research site, the teacher's strategy to prevent bullying behaviours have not been able to be applied optimally. Based on the preliminary study conducted by the researchers on Bahrul Ihsan Kindergarten, the data showed that there were several teacher's problems in preventing bullying behaviours. One of these problems is the lack of teacher's understanding towards bullying behaviours in early childhood education. It can be seen that there are still lot of physical and psychological violences experienced by early childhoods in the educational environment, both carried out by teacher, education staff, and fellow friends. In addition, bullying behaviours in early childhood, such as mocking, threatening, slandering, humiliating others in public area are not realized by the teacher as kinds of bullying behaviours. Besides, those behaviours cause early childhoods feeling uncomfortable when they are at school. This phenomenon is in line with the research conducted by Dey Putri *et al.*, (2020) cited in Mahriza et al., (2021, p. 893) which is supported by the research undertaken by Arumsari & Setyawan (2018, p. 39); Sakti & Widyastuti (2020, p. 105); Ambarini et al., (2018, p. 74) at which the role of teacher is very urgent in preventing bullying behaviours occurred at school through providing various fun learning methods that contain bullying prevention messages.

This study is supported by three previous studies. The first previous study was conducted by Swit (2018) entitled "Early Childhood Educators' and Parents' Perceptions of Bullying in Preschool". Then, the second previous study was carried out by Rahayu et al., (2020) entitled "The Role of Teachers and Parents in Preventing Bullying in Early Childhood Education". Finally, the last previous study was done by Hartati et al., (2020) entitled "Bullying Behavior in Early Childhood: Study at Early Childhood Education Institution in East Jakarta in Indonesia".

Referring to the three previous studies aforementioned, the studies conducted by Swit (2018) and Rahayu et al., (2020) has similarity to the present study related to teacher strategy in preventing bullying early education. Then, the previous study conducted by Hartati et al., (2020) has disimilarity to the present study because this study is related to how to implement bullying in pre-school. However, these three previous studies are used by the researchers as the comparison studies and references towards the present study.

In harmony with the background of the problem explained aforementioned, the researchers set forth two research questions. Those two research questions are as follow: (1) What is the form of bullying occurs to early childhoods in Bahrul Ihsan Preschool education located in Kawasen, Ciamis regency? (2) What strategies are used by the teachers to prevent bullying to early childhoods in Bahrul Ihsan Preschool education located in Kawasen, Ciamis regency? From those two research questions, the objectives of this study are formulated as follow: (1) to find out the form of bullying occurs to early childhoods in Bahrul Ihsan Preschool education located in Kawasen, Ciamis regency, (2) to know the strategies used by the teachers to prevent bullying to early childhoods in Bahrul Ihsan Preschool education located in Kawasen, Ciamis regency.

In line with the explanation aforementioned, the researchers try to investigate the strategies used by the teachers to prevent bullying to early childhoods in Preschool education. Then, this study entitled, **“Teachers’ Strategies: Can It Prevent Bullying to Early Childhoods in Preschool Education?”**.

## **METHOD**

This study employed kualitatif method under descriptive approach (Hidayat, Kurnia, et al., 2023). Descriptive research is an approach in qualitative method that direct researchers to conduct a series of research activities by observing the teaching and learning process activities carried out by teacher and students taken place in the classroom (Hidayat, Nurhayati, et al., 2023; Hidayat & Nurlatifah, 2023).

This study was conducted for a week, from November 6<sup>th</sup> -12<sup>th</sup> 2023. Furthermore, this study was carried out in Preschool Bahrul Ihsan located in Kawasen Village, Banjarsari Subdistrict, Ciamis Regency, West Java Province. For the population of the study, the researchers selected 3 teachers and 14 early childhoods aged 5-6 years consisting of 7 male students and 7 female. In this study, the researchers act as observers who observed the teachers’ activities in teaching and learning process related to bullying behavior prevention strategies and observed the early chidlhoods’ behaviors. Furthermore, the whole observational activities are written in a field note as the document to know the teachers’ strategies in preventing bullying occured in early childhoods aged 5-6 years.

After the data written in a field note, then those are analyzed qualitatively under the following stages: (1) data collection, during this stage there was a process of collecting data through writing in a field note, (2) data reduction, during this stage the data were selected and summarized which are focused on important themes, and

removed parts of the data that are not needed, (3) display data, during this stage there was the data were presented systematically, and (4) drawing conclusion, during this stage the researchers concluded the data that has been written in the previous stage (Hidayat, Susanti, et al., 2023; Iraklis, 2020; Mulyono et al., 2023).

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This study was conducted in Preschool Bahrul Ihsan located in Kawasen Village, Banjarsari Subdistrict, Ciamis Regency, West Java Province. During a week, the reseachers observed the whole teaching and learning process that involved 3 teachers and 14 early childhoods aged 5-6 years consisting of 7 male students and 7 female. Based on the overall teaching and learning process related to teachers' strategies to prevent bullying to early childhoods, the reseachers documented the observational results in a field note. The aforementioned field note is presented in the following table.

**Table 1. The observational results on the teachers' strategies to prevent bullying to early childhoods**

No.	Indicator	Observed subject	Appeared behavior		Observation results
			Yes	No	
1	Teachers' strategies to prevent bullying to early childhoods	The teachers provide motivation and assistance to the early childhoods, as well as conduct the assessment.	√		On the first day, the researchers joined and observed the teaching and learning activities in line with the habits in Preschool Bahrul Ihsan. Then, the teachers explained an anti-bullying song before the lesson. Next, the teachers gave an understanding about bullying behavior from the song given. On the first day, there was not bullying behavior found from the early childhoods. However, the teachers kept guiding the early childhoods during the process of learning and playing activities.
		The teachers invite the early childhoods to sit in a circle, then clean up the toys, memorize the lesson, sing the anti-bullying song, and finally pray.	√		On the second day, the researchers observed the teaching and learning activities at which the teachers invited the early childhoods to learn by using telling story method. Through telling story, the teachers used hand puppet as the media while the teachers explained anti-bullying material. On the second day, there was not bullying behavior found in the early childhoods' activities. However,

	<p>The teachers invite the early childhoods to know what they have known and experienced by introducing and strengthening character education related to the dangers of bullying behavior.</p>	√	<p>the teachers still guided the early childhoods during the process of learning and playing activities.</p>
	<p>The teachers carried out the learning process through using various methods, one of them is using telling story method. The telling story method combined with fun hand puppet as the media to tell exemplary story.</p>	√	<p>On the third day, the bullying behaviour began to appear. When the teacher was checking the attendance list, an early childhood aged 5 years old began to mock and laugh his friend's name. Later, the teacher came nearer to and advised him while giving an understanding that the acts were not good and praiseworthy.</p> <p>On the fourth day, when the playing activity began, an early childhood aged 5 years old pinched his friend for several times. Next, one of the teachers advised and invited him to apologize not to repeat this dishonorable action.</p>
	<p>The teachers reflected and evaluated the whole activities (including giving advice about good and bad behaviors).</p>	√	<p>On the fifth day, there was an early childhood aged 5 years old, he was identified as the same child who acted the bullying on the fourth day, he hit a friend because of fighting for a toy. Next, one of the teachers came nearer to, advised, and invited him to the teachers' office to talk heart to heart as two ways communication between the teacher and the student to overcome the bullying behavior.</p>
<p>2 The form of bullying behavior occurred</p>	<p>The early childhood acted assertive action.</p>	√	<p>On the sixth day, the same early childhood kicked his friend. Furthermore, the teacher keep advising and begun to give the punishment through communicating this phenomenon to his parents and invited the parents to understand well the</p>

<p>The early childhood acted aggressive action. ✓</p>	<p>early childhood's character.</p>
<p>The early childhood is able to be patient when he/she was waiting for his/her turn to play and not fight for the toys. ✓</p>	<p>On the last day of the observation, the researchers found some forms of bullying behaviors carried out by the early childhoods. The behavior occurred are in the forms of pushing friends. Then, the teachers provided policy by communicating this phenomenon to the parents and giving the understanding to them related to bullying at school. Besides, the teachers invited the whole parents to participate in parenting activities related to anti-bullying held by the school party.</p>
<p>The early childhood is able to interact with other friends using good language and ethic. ✓</p>	<p>There is an early childhood who is unable to be patient when he was waiting for his turn to play and still fight for the toys.</p> <p>There were 3 early childhoods who still mocked their friend's name.</p>

Source: (Murdiyanto, 2020, pp. 87–88; Wilkinson & Birmingham, 2003, pp. 128–131)

From the findings of the study aforementioned, those can be concluded that it is necessary to implement strategies carried out by the teachers to prevent bullying behavior to the early childhoods since as early as possible. The teachers' strategies are generally carried out in the form of advising the early childhoods who carried out aggressive and negative actions such as kicking, pinching, hitting, taunting, and pushing friends. Besides that, the teachers and school party need to collaborate with the parents to work together how to prevent prevent bullying behavior to their early childhoods both at home and at school. In addition, the teachers' strategies to prevent bullying behavior at school were carried out through several steps: (1) the teachers conducted anti-bullying during the teaching and learning process through storytelling method using hand puppet as media related to bullying material, (2) the teachers invited the early childhoods to sing the song to know anti-bullying, (3) the teachers communicated to the parents about the dangers of bullying, (4) the teachers invited the parents to understand well their early childhood's character, (5) the teachers invited

the parents to participate in parenting program, (6) the teachers advised and supervised the early childhoods when they are at school, (7) the teachers provided strict policy against bullying behavior.

After presenting the findings of the study aforementioned, then the researchers need to answer the two research questions set forth in the introduction. The first research question is: "What is the form of bullying occurs to early childhoods in Bahrul Ihsan Preschool education located in Kawasen, Ciamis regency?" Based on the results of the observation written in the field note, the evidences led the reseachers to answer that the bullying behavior done by two early childhoods in Preschool Bahrul Ihsan are in the forms of aggressive and negative actions such as kicking, pinching, hitting, taunting, and pushing friends.

Afterwards, the second research question is: "What strategies are used by the teachers to prevent bullying to early childhoods in Bahrul Ihsan Preschool education located in Kawasen, Ciamis regency?" Based on the results of the observation written in the field note, the evidences led the reseachers to answer that the strategies used by the teachers to prevent bullying behavior to the early childhood are carried out through several steps: (1) the teachers conducted anti-bullying during the teaching and learning process through storytelling method using hand puppet as media related to bullying material, (2) the teachers invited the early childhoods to sing the song to know anti-bullying, (3) the teachers communicated to the parents about the dangers of bullying, (4) the teachers invited the parents to understand well their early childhood's character, (5) the teachers invited the parents to participate in parenting program, (6) the teachers advised and supervised the early childhoods when they are at school, (7) the teachers provided strict policy against bullying behavior.

In harmony with the answers to the two research questions aforementioned, those answers become the findings of the present study. In addition, the findings of the present study are in line with the findings of the previous research conducted by Swit (2018) and Rahayu et al., (2020) which assert that teachers play an important role to educate their students to understand various negative behaviors as the bullying forms which must be avoided both at home and at school. Besides that, teachers also need to collaborate with parents to educate good character to their early childhood to be implemented at home every day. Referring to the difference of the findings of the present study cover: (1) the teachers advise the students of early childhood who act the bullying behavior, (2) the teachers teach the students of early childhood about the song of anti-bullying, (3) the teachers explain the negative effects of bullying behavior, (4) the teachers collaborate with the parents in parenting program to understand how danger bullying carried out by the students of early childhood, and (5) the school party makes the joint commitment with parents to implement strict policy against bullying behavior. These differences of the findings from the present study become the novelty of the study which also in line with the findings of previous research conducted by Iraklis (2020); Swit et al., (2023).

## CONCLUSION

Referring to the findings and discussion of the present study aforementioned, those can be concluded that the bullying behavior done by two early childhoods in Preschool Bahrul Ihsan are in the forms of aggressive and negative actions such as kicking, pinching, hitting, taunting, and pushing friends. Besides that, the strategies used by the teachers to prevent bullying behavior to the early childhood are carried out through several steps: (1) the teachers conducted anti-bullying during the teaching and learning process through storytelling method using hand puppet as media related to bullying material, (2) the teachers invited the early childhoods to sing the song to know anti-bullying, (3) the teachers communicated to the parents about the dangers of bullying, (4) the teachers invited the parents to understand well their early childhood's character, (5) the teachers invited the parents to participate in parenting program, (6) the teachers advised and supervised the early childhoods when they are at school, (7) the teachers provided strict policy against bullying behavior. For further research, the forthcoming researchers are suggested to investigate the other areas of bullying, such as the governmental policy of bullying, the solution of bullying from parenting perspective, and so forth.

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