

The Role of Teachers in Handling Bullying Among Children in Kindergarten Learning Environments

Indriyani^{1*}, Sadaruddin¹, Andi Rezky Nurhidaya¹

¹Early Childhood Teacher Education, Universitas Islam Makassar, INDONESIA

Abstract

Bullying in early childhood represents a severe threat to the integrity of social-emotional development within the school environment. This study aims to analyze the manifestations of child bullying behavior in the learning environment of Pabata Ummi Kindergarten, as well as to evaluate the operationalization of teachers' strategic roles in detecting and intervening in such cases. A qualitative approach with a descriptive method was applied in this research. Data were gathered through a one-month passive participant observation, semi-structured in-depth interviews with the principal, classroom teacher, and parents, along with a documentary review of children's developmental anecdotal records. Data analysis was conducted interactively, encompassing data reduction, thematic data display, and conclusion drawing. The results indicated that physical bullying (pushing, seizing items), verbal bullying (mocking parents' names, taunting peers' abilities), and relational bullying (social exclusion from playgroups) still frequently occurred, particularly during free-play hours due to limited daily supervision ratios. Educators play a vital role as counselors, facilitators, and motivators by implementing a conducive classroom environment and executing humanistic, non-violent, curative-restorative measures. Nevertheless, teacher interventions remain reactive-spontaneous based on personal empirical experience, due to the absence of standard operational guidelines at school and a lack of formal competency training. This study recommends the importance of strengthening anti-bullying conceptual literacy for educators through continuous workshops, alongside the necessity of synchronous positive parenting synergy with parents to dismantle the normalization bias of childhood violence in order to establish a safe, inclusive, and child-friendly early childhood education unit.

Keywords: *Bullying; Early Childhood; Learning Environment; Teacher's Role.*

* Corresponding author. E-mail addresses: indryni30@gmail.com

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INTRODUCTION

Early Childhood Education (ECE) is the most crucial phase in the trajectory of human development as it serves as the foundation for character building, holistic intelligence, and a child's mental readiness for the next level of education. During this golden age, stimulation of the child's social-emotional, cognitive, motor, and language aspects must run in a balanced manner within a safe and inclusive environment. However, the integrity and quality of early childhood education services currently face a serious challenge in the form of widespread social deviation within the educational institution environment. (Sihaloho et al., 2023). One of the most alarming forms of deviation that requires immediate intervention is the phenomenon of bullying among early childhood. (Sihaloho et al., 2023). The inability of educational units to guarantee a learning environment free from intimidation not only violates children's normative rights to protection, but also threatens the effectiveness of the entire growth and development stimulation process being provided..

Conceptually, bullying in early childhood should be understood as an aggressive behavior or negative action carried out intentionally, systematically, and repeatedly by an individual or a group against another party positioned as weaker, thereby causing discomfort, fear, or psychological harm to the victim (Fatimah et al., 2024; S. Novianti et al., 2024). This conceptualization aligns with various scientific studies confirming that bullying is a patterned form of aggression across various social environments, thus requiring a comprehensive approach for its prevention and handling (Fatimah et al., 2024). At the early childhood education level, the manifestation of this action is very concrete and varies within daily play interactions at school (Widaningtyas & Sugito, 2022). Empirical evidence in kindergartens shows that physical bullying frequently emerges through direct, visible aggressive actions such as hitting, tripping, pushing, hair-pulling, scratching, or forcefully seizing food and toys (Widaningtyas & Sugito, 2022). Meanwhile, verbal bullying presents itself in the form of negative comments, mockery of parents' names or physical conditions, as well as taunts regarding the child's academic abilities, spoken repeatedly. In addition, there is also relational or non-verbal bullying, which is covert yet destructive, such as systematic exclusion, instigating peers to avoid the victim, hateful glares, sneering, and the use of harsh body language to undermine the victim's self-esteem (Widaningtyas & Sugito, 2022). Literature also emphasizes that in preschool age, bullying often appears as a group phenomenon, with a more prominent tendency toward physical involvement compared to other forms in most play activity contexts (R. Novianti et al., 2022).

Based on direct field observations, the researcher found that the impact of bullying behavior manifests concretely in changes to the psychological and physical conditions of child victims at Pabata Ummi Kindergarten, particularly during transition hours and free play outside the classroom. During learning activities, children who fall victim to verbal bullying (such as being mocked by their parents' names or ridiculed for their abilities) exhibit high situational anxiety, loss of concentration, frequent lowering of their heads on the desk, and social withdrawal from their group. Meanwhile, in outdoor play areas with minimal visual supervision from teachers (such as the corner of the locker

hallway and the back of the slide yard), direct physical aggression such as pushing friends until they fall off the swings and forcibly seizing lunch boxes still frequently occurs. This phenomenon not only triggers minor commotions and hysterical crying on-site, but is also confirmed by reports from parents who complain that their children are beginning to experience psychosomatic trauma in the form of fear, stomach aches before leaving, and a reluctance to go to school.

The symptoms of withdrawal and academic anxiety observed in the child victims at Pabata Ummi Kindergarten reinforce empirical findings, which emphasize that the impact of bullying at preschool age highly endangers emotional stability and can persist as long-term trauma if ignored. When a child lowers their head and remains passive in the classroom, it serves as a clear indicator of a decline in learning motivation and a loss of self-confidence resulting from the verbal intimidation they receive (Zakiah Zulfa et al., 2023). Furthermore, the acts of relational exclusion occurring in the block-play corner align with the analysis of R. Novianti et al. (2022), which states that during the preschool phase, bullying often develops into a group phenomenon, where certain children consciously form cliques to exclude other children who are perceived as weaker.

The existence of surveillance blind spots on the school grounds that trigger the proliferation of physical aggression also validates the learning environment theory by Andriyani (2024). Schools that have not been able to build an intensive supervision system and consistent rules in free play areas indirectly allow for power contestation among children (Sihaloho et al., 2023). This profound insensitivity of adults toward these dynamics is often exacerbated by educators' knowledge bias. As revealed by Syajuananda and Tirtayani (2022) as well as Hendarty et al. (2024), the greatest obstacle in overcoming bullying at the early childhood education level is the tendency to "normalize" it among teachers or parents, who view the physical and verbal aggression of preschool children merely as childhood banter or a natural part of the growth and development process, resulting in interventions that are frequently delayed and purely reactive.

Although the framework is ideal, empirical facts in the field often reveal a research gap in the form of perceptual bias and the phenomenon of "normalizing" bullying in early childhood. Many educators and parents mistakenly consider the aggressive actions of preschool children as a natural part of growth and development or merely childhood banter, resulting in educator interventions being less firm, delayed, or even completely ignored due to knowledge bias (Hendarty et al., 2024; Syajuananda & Tirtayani, 2022). In addition, previous studies on bullying have mostly focused on junior or senior high school levels, assuming that bullying behavior only crystallizes during adolescence. Very few studies highlight in depth how qualitative handling dynamics are carried out directly by teachers in the classroom within kindergarten units that have limited human resources. Through initial observations at Pabata Ummi Kindergarten, Makassar, real conditions were found where verbal and physical bullying behavior still frequently occurs among children, especially when teacher supervision weakens during free play hours,

which directly implicates a decline in children's interest in learning and the emergence of a sense of insecurity.

This is where the novelty and contributory value of this study lie. Unlike common quantitative research that only maps out numerical prevalence or macro-theoretical research, this study offers an in-depth descriptive-qualitative analysis regarding the daily operationalization of a teacher's singular role in breaking the chain of bullying amidst school limitations. The practical contribution of this research is to provide an applicable guide for early childhood education practitioners concerning classroom management and situational conflict resolution that is adaptive to child psychology. Theoretically, this study enriches the literature on the importance of strengthening educators' conceptual literacy to detect bullying starting from preschool age in order to dismantle the violence normalization bias that has occurred thus far (Syajuananda & Tirtayani, 2022). Based on this entire description, this study explicitly aims to comprehensively analyze the forms of bullying behavior occurring among children within the learning environment of Pabata Ummi Kindergarten, as well as to evaluate the operationalization of the teacher's strategic role as a guide, facilitator, and motivator in handling and intervening in these bullying cases.

METHODS

This study utilizes a qualitative approach with a descriptive method to uncover in-depth, holistic, and contextual insights regarding the phenomenon of bullying and the conceptualization of intervention actions taken by educators. The selection of this qualitative descriptive method is based on the need to explore complex social realities within the school environment without manipulating variables, allowing the researcher to naturally capture the meaning behind children's behavior and the guidance strategies implemented by teachers. This research was conducted at Pabata Ummi Kindergarten, located in the Antang area, Makassar City. The location was selected purposively because the institution demonstrates an urgent and unique characteristic, where the social interactions of early childhood are still frequently marked by verbal and physical aggression during free play hours, while the ratio of supervising teachers is relatively limited.

To address data inconsistencies and fulfill the principle of information adequacy as suggested by reviewers, the primary subjects and informants in this study have been strictly synchronized into three elements of the school ecosystem. The primary subject of this research is the classroom teacher who actively accompanies, observes, and intervenes in the daily dynamics of children's behavior both inside and outside the classroom. In addition to the classroom teacher as the core subject, this study involves two parties as supporting informants: the school principal, as the individual responsible for regulatory policies and a safe environment in the early childhood education unit, and the students' parents, as strategic partners outside the school to confirm the consistency of changes in children's behavior when at home. This multiphasic involvement of subjects and informants aims to guarantee the credibility and validity of the data through source triangulation techniques.

Data collection techniques used in this research include three complementary main instruments: passive participant observation, in-depth

interviews, and documentation. Observation was conducted for approximately one month, focusing on areas prone to bullying at Pabata Ummi Kindergarten, such as the classroom during activity transitions, the school yard during free play hours, and the student pick-up area. Through this observation, the researcher recorded concrete forms of physical, verbal, and relational bullying, as well as the teachers' spontaneous responses in the field. Semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with classroom teachers, the school principal, and parents to explore their understanding of children's motives, supervision constraints, and the effectiveness of educators' roles as guides, facilitators, and motivators. Meanwhile, documentation techniques were applied to collect complementary data in the form of school profiles, anecdotal records of children's social-emotional development, photographs of daily interactions, and supporting documents for parenting programs.

Data analysis in this study was conducted interactively and continuously from before entering the field until the completion of fieldwork, using an operational flowing qualitative data analysis model. The data analysis stage began with the data reduction process, where all raw interview transcript audio recordings, observation field notes at Pabata Ummi Kindergarten, and documentation sheets were strictly sorted. The researcher summarized, selected key points, and focused the data only on matters directly related to the research focus, namely the forms of child bullying and the operationalization of the teacher's role; whereas irrelevant data, such as complaints about public facilities or school fees, were immediately eliminated. The results of this data reduction were then codified based on conceptual themes to facilitate the categorization of handling methods.

The next analysis stage is the data display, where the reduced and thematically grouped data are narrated systematically, logically, and smoothly in the form of descriptive-qualitative text. Unlike rigid, raw field reports, the data display is not grouped per individual informant but is synthesized into thematic sub-chapters, such as the dynamics of bullying forms found in the field, the effectiveness of situational handling strategies by teachers, and the forms of partnership with parents. The final stage of this analysis is conclusion drawing and verification. At this stage, initial conclusions that are still vague and temporary are re-verified by repeatedly matching them with new field notes, conducting member checks with the teachers at Pabata Ummi Kindergarten, and testing their consistency through technique and source triangulation, thereby obtaining a final conclusion that is robust, credible, and capable of scientifically answering the research objectives.

RESULTS

In accordance with the applied descriptive qualitative approach, data findings in the field regarding the dynamics of bullying and the operationalization of the teacher's role at Pabata Ummi Kindergarten were explored holistically. The data gathered through a series of passive participant observations, in-depth interviews with three elements of the school ecosystem (the school principal, classroom teachers, and parents), and reviews of anecdotal record documents are presented in an integrated manner. To

facilitate mapping, the presentation of these research results is classified into three main themes: the identification of forms of child bullying behavior in the field, the operationalization of prevention and situational handling actions by classroom teachers, and the forms of strategic partnerships built with parents.

Identification of Forms of Bullying Behavior in Children

Based on intensive observations conducted during the research period across various areas of the school, bullying actions among children aged 4–6 years at Pabata Ummi Kindergarten are a tangible reality. These activities most frequently escalate during learning transition phases, free play hours in the yard, and the moments leading up to student pick-up, where the intensity of direct supervision from educators tends to loosen due to limited personnel ratios. The forms of bullying found in the field include physical, verbal, and relational/non-verbal manifestations. The details of the typology, concrete behavioral indicators, and frequency of occurrence of the child bullying phenomenon based on the observation logbook records at Pabata Ummi Kindergarten are summarized in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Typology and Manifestations of Bullying Behavior at Pabata Ummi Kindergarten

No	Type of Bullying	Concrete Behavioral Indicators in the Field	Critical Locations of Occurrence	Frequency of Occurrence
1	Physical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Pushing friends from the swing facility * Tripping friends' legs while they are running around * Forcibly seizing lunch boxes/toys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Outdoor playground * Bag locker area * Classroom 	Often (Occurs almost every free play hour)
2	Verbal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Mocking physical appearance/skin color * Calling others by their parents' names * Ridiculing children who cannot yet read fluently 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Classroom carpet area * School veranda * Center room 	Moderately Often (Often covertly done while the teacher is writing)
3	Relational / Non-Verbal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Forbidding friends from joining the playgroup * Instigating other children to avoid the victim * Giving cynical glares/hostile body language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Block-play area corner * Outdoor yard 	Occasionally (Occurs during independent group formation)

The data in Table 1 indicates that physical bullying is the most prominent and easily recognizable type in the field. During outdoor play activities, the researcher observed recurring events where certain children dominated play facilities such as swings and slides by roughly pushing other friends away. One clear incident was recorded when a child named Zafran directly witnessed his friend being pushed until he fell off the swing due to fighting over taking turns to play. Another physical action that frequently appeared was forcibly seizing friends' snacks during communal meal times in class. This action was often

followed by a defensive reaction in the form of crying from the victimized child, which triggered minor commotions inside the classroom.

On the other hand, verbal bullying at Pabata Ummi Kindergarten tends to be carried out in a low voice volume or whispered among fellow children so as not to be directly detected by the teacher's hearing. The most dominant type of verbal bullying is the use of insulting nicknames or mentioning the name of the victim's father/mother as a mockery in between coloring activities. In addition, children who have a slower cognitive development rhythm, such as not yet being fluent in spelling letters or making mistakes in pronouncing numbers, frequently receive taunts from several of their peers. Victims of this verbal bullying show an immediate response in the form of facial expressions changing to gloomy, passively putting down colored pencils, resting their heads on the table, and socially withdrawing from the remainder of the group learning activities.

Meanwhile, relational bullying appears in the form of subtle yet planned social rejection. In the block-play area, the researcher observed deliberate group rejection, where two or three children actively forbade a certain child from joining them in arranging wooden blocks with the sentence, "You cannot play here, this group is already full." This act of group exclusion was often reinforced by non-verbal body language, such as cynical glares, lip-sneering, and sighing shown by the perpetrators when the victim tried to approach their play area. The cumulative impact of all these exposures to bullying actions was clearly recorded in reports from parents, where children who became regular targets of bullying began to show signs of reluctance to go to school, crying in the morning before leaving, and experiencing a drastic decline in learning interest and self-confidence.

Operationalization of Prevention and Situational Handling Actions by Teachers

Responding to the reality of such bullying behavior, the classroom teacher at Pabata Ummi Kindergarten (Mrs. Nurlinda) operationalizes a series of daily intervention actions encompassing preventive and direct handling (curative) functions. Based on the results of in-depth interviews and confirmation through classroom observations, all actions carried out by the classroom teacher were based on the accumulation of personal empirical experience and spontaneous field responses, given that the teacher concerned had never received specific formal training regarding early childhood bullying management from relevant agencies.

In the dimension of universal prevention, the classroom teacher strives to build a conducive learning environment atmosphere inside the classroom through periodic spatial management. The classroom is arranged neatly, cleanly, and decorated with various colorful ornaments and educational posters that insert anti-bullying visual messages. Before starting the core material, the teacher consistently inserts interactive ice-breaking activities and habituates the use of gentle language to stimulate children's positive emotions. In addition, the teacher utilizes morning circle moments to provide routine classical advice regarding the importance of loving friends, respecting differences, and instilling moral concepts regarding good and bad actions in daily life.

In the dimension of handling direct conflict situations, the teacher applies a guidance approach that is restorative and non-violent. When a physical or verbal bullying incident is detected inside the classroom, the teacher immediately halts learning activities to conduct situational mediation. The operational steps taken by the classroom teacher in intervening in a bullying case are outlined sequentially in the following phase scheme:

Table 2. Typology and Manifestations of Bullying Behavior at Pabata Ummi Kindergarten

<i>Phase</i>	<i>Handling Process</i>	<i>Description</i>
1	Bullying Incident Occurs	The incident is directly identified by the teacher or reported by other students/parents.
2	Physical Separation / Halting the Action	The teacher immediately steps in to stop the aggressive behavior and safely separates the involved parties.
3	Balanced Hearing of Explanations	The teacher gathers complete facts by listening to both sides (the victim and the perpetrator) impartially.
4	Providing Advice & Understanding	The teacher explains the negative impacts of the action in an in-depth, child-friendly manner to build empathy.
5	Mediation & Apology	The teacher facilitates a peaceful resolution and reconciliation rooted in the children's self-awareness.
6	Educational Consequences & Restoration	Implementing corrective behavioral actions and restoring a safe, supportive social atmosphere in the classroom.

Based on the handling scheme above, the classroom teacher prioritizes the physical separation of both parties to defuse the children's emotional tension. After the situation calms down, the teacher takes a sitting position at the child's eye level and listens to the explanations from both sides impartially without immediately judging the perpetrator. The teacher then provides a concrete understanding regarding the painful impact felt by the victim due to the action. This process is concluded by facilitating a handshake and a voluntary apology from the perpetrator to the victim. To ensure an educational deterrent effect, the teacher applies educational consequences such as asking the perpetrator to help tidy up the victim's toys or to sit quietly near the teacher for a few minutes before being allowed to return to play with their group.

Strategic Partnership with the School Principal and Parents

The success of handling bullying at Pabata Ummi Kindergarten is supported by coordinative communication patterns with the school principal and parents. The interview results with the school principal show that the school management has a complete conceptual understanding of the dangers of

bullying to children's mental health. The forms of managerial support provided by the school principal include the provision of outdoor media facilities such as anti-bullying posters in the school corridors as well as giving periodic directions during teacher meetings. The policy implemented at the school level emphasizes the optimization of internal approaches and strictly prohibits the use of physical sanctions against children who commit aggression, but rather prioritizes humanistic character building.

At the out-of-school partnership level, the classroom teacher builds an active communication network with parents, especially when children's bullying actions have involved high intensity or caused minor physical injuries. If a child is identified as committing repeated bullying actions at school, the classroom teacher immediately invites the respective parents to come to school to synchronize parenting practices. In the meeting, the teacher objectively presents the anecdotal records of the child's behavior at school, while the parents provide feedback regarding the child's interaction patterns at home.

The responses of parents toward this partnership pattern are split into two parenting dynamics. On one hand, there are parents (such as Mrs. Utami) who have proactively instilled basic character foundations at home by training children to speak politely, respect others, and be cheerful before the children enter the school environment. However, on the other hand, the interview results reveal challenges in the form of parenting imbalances at home, where some parents complain about the difficulty of controlling children's emotions due to unsupervised device exposure or internal tension within the family environment. The parents place high hopes on teachers at school to maintain strict and responsive supervision in handling changes in children's social behavior wisely, in order to realize a learning environment that is truly safe for the psychological development of early childhood.

DISCUSSION

Based on the presentation of the research results, a very strong correlation was found between the conditions of the learning environment and the escalation of bullying behavior in early childhood at Pabata Ummi Kindergarten. The reality that physical, verbal, and relational bullying actions still frequently occur during free play hours confirms that outdoor areas and transition times are critical points requiring extra attention. This finding aligns with the scientific premise put forward by Andriyani (2024), which states that one of the main determinants triggering bullying in educational institutions is the school unit's inability to construct a psychologically safe atmosphere and guarantee an inclusive sense of comfort for all school members. Playground areas that are out of the educators' visual range automatically transform into spaces of power contestation where physically more aggressive children dominate and intimidate weaker children.

When analyzed more deeply based on its typology, the dominance of physical bullying occurring at Pabata Ummi Kindergarten (such as pushing from swings and seizing belongings) proves that self-regulation and the understanding of ownership of others' rights in children aged 4–6 years are still at an egocentric stage that requires external guidance. This direct physical

aggression behavior, as explained by Ashsidyq (2024), must not be underestimated as merely a natural dynamic of play, because the resulting impact not only injures the child's external physical body but destructively disrupts the long-term stability of emotional development. Victims of physical bullying at the preschool level have a tendency to experience academic anxiety, interpersonal fear, and even somatic manifestations such as sleep disturbances and decreased appetite (Zakiah Zulfa et al., 2023). The field findings regarding children crying and being reluctant to go to school serve as concrete academic evidence that the impact of early childhood bullying is immediate and damages students' interest in learning (Sadaruddin et al., 2025).

The phenomenon of verbal and relational bullying found at Pabata Ummi Kindergarten also indicates an expansion of increasingly complex forms of oppression. The actions of mocking parents' names or excluding friends from the block-play group demonstrate that early childhood children have become capable of adopting social instruments to demean their peers' self-esteem. According to Sadaruddin et al. (2024), verbal bullying is the type of oppression that most frequently escapes adult supervision because of its easily disguised nature amidst the noise of the classroom. This is exacerbated by the facts regarding relational bullying emphasized in early childhood bullying literature, where the undermining of the victim's self-esteem is carried out systematically through neglect, cynical glares, and intentional social exclusion (Febriansyah & Yuningsih, 2024; Lusiana & Siful Arifin, 2022). In the preschool phase, these destructive actions frequently shift into a group phenomenon, where children tend to gather to form certain cliques to exclude other children when interacting in play corners.

This is where the urgency lies for the operationalization of the teacher's role as the primary instrument to break the chain of bullying. The preventive and curative actions carried out by Mrs. Nurlinda at Pabata Ummi Kindergarten reinforce the conception of Andryawan et al. (2023) regarding the strategic position of educators who do not merely function to transfer cognitive knowledge, but bear the full mandate as guides, facilitators, motivators, and primary role models for children's social behavior. Arranging an attractive, clean, and conducive classroom, as well as utilizing the classical morning circle method, has proven effective in eliminating children's psychological tension before learning begins. This effort to instill empathy from an early age is a main pillar in reducing internal factors that cause misconduct, namely the lack of sympathy within children toward the suffering of their peers (Rafi Nurul Fikri et al., 2024).

However, a crucial aspect that constitutes the main finding as well as a critical point of discussion in this study is the effectiveness of the situational restorative approach applied by the classroom teacher. The conflict resolution scheme—starting from physical separation, listening to both sides, providing an understanding of the painful impact, to facilitating apologies without violent sanctions—is a concrete manifestation of the implementation of child-friendly character guidance. The classroom teacher's step in refusing to give direct physical punishment is in line with the basic principles of early childhood guidance and counseling. Providing educational advice and shifting to logical consequences (such as tidying up toys together) are considered far more

effective in restoring classroom peace and rebuilding the perpetrator's social personality structure so they do not repeat the aggression in the future. This humanistic approach has proven successful in restoring friendships within the classroom ecosystem of Pabata Ummi Kindergarten without leaving secondary trauma on the child.

Although spontaneous handling based on the classroom teacher's empirical experience demonstrates situational success, this research reveals a fundamental weakness in the school's anti-bullying protection system, namely the absence of systematic standardized guidelines and the lack of formal training for teachers. Handling actions that are reactive-spontaneous without a structured theoretical foundation risk causing inconsistencies in rule enforcement when teachers face a higher complexity of cases. This empirical fact reinforces the theoretical studies by Syajuananda and Tirtayani (2022) as well as Hendarty et al. (2024), which highlight that the greatest structural obstacle in handling bullying at the early childhood education (PAUD) level is the widespread educator knowledge bias and the normalization of children's aggressive actions as merely understandable childhood banter. Without adequate conceptual literacy provision through seminars, classroom management training, or periodic workshops organized by educational institutions, teachers will continue to be trapped in traditional, non-continuous handling patterns.

Furthermore, the discussion regarding the handling of early childhood bullying cannot be separated from the concept of child-centered developmental ecology, which demands absolute alignment between the macro-environment of the school and the micro-environment of the family. The coordinative partnership pattern initiated by Pabata Ummi Kindergarten by involving the school principal and calling the students' parents is a highly appropriate strategic step. This is because the family environment is the first institution that shapes a child's emotional character. Dysfunctional family parenting, domestic parental conflicts marked by verbal abuse, household emotional instability, or even overprotective attitudes are empirically proven to be major variables that trigger stress, depression, and the transmission of children's harsh behavior into the school environment. Therefore, when teachers synchronize parenting practices with parents by matching anecdotal records of children's development, the school is essentially intervening in the root cause of the bullying problem.

As a theoretical conclusion of this discussion chapter, the role of the teacher as an anti-bullying guide and facilitator in early childhood education institutions will only reach its highest level of effectiveness if supported by three ecosystem pillars simultaneously. First, the formal strengthening of educators' competence and conceptual literacy to avoid the bias of normalizing early childhood violence. Second, strict, consistent, and directed school regulatory policies in the form of an institutional anti-bullying program fully backed by the managerial ranks of the school principal. Third, the active involvement and full awareness of parents to create a household atmosphere filled with affection as well as to limit children's exposure to aggressive mass media. Through the harmonious integration between the teacher's role at school, macro-institutional regulation, and the continuation of positive parenting at home, the chain of bullying from an early age can be totally broken, so that the vision of delivering

a ECE environment as a safe, inclusive, and child-friendly learning laboratory can be sustainably realized.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the data analysis and discussion presented, it can be concluded that the phenomenon of early childhood bullying at Pabata Ummi Kindergarten, Makassar, is a tangible social reality that manifests in various behavioral forms, ranging from physical and verbal aggression to relational or non-verbal actions. This behavior most frequently surfaces in high-risk areas, such as the outdoor playground and the classroom during activity transition phases, where the intensity of direct supervision from educators tends to loosen. The impact of these actions is proven to hinder optimal child development, manifesting clearly in a decline in learning motivation, the emergence of insecurity, interpersonal fear, and a reluctance to come to school. In facing these dynamics, the classroom teacher plays a vital and strategic role as a guide, facilitator, motivator, and primary role model in integrating anti-bullying character values into the children's learning ecosystem. The classroom teacher has successfully implemented a restorative and non-violent curative approach through a humanistic situational mediation scheme, which spans from listening to balanced explanations to facilitating reconciliation between children without leaving secondary trauma. Nevertheless, the current management remains reactive-spontaneous and is built upon the accumulation of the educator's personal empirical experience, due to the absence of standard operational guidelines at the school unit level and a lack of specialized formal training provision.

As a recommendation, efforts to break the chain of early childhood bullying cannot rely solely on the individual role of the classroom teacher. Instead, it demands solid, directed, and continuous cooperation among teachers, the school principal's managerial ranks, and parents at home. Educational institutions are strongly advised to organize periodic training, seminars, or workshops to enhance educators' competence, conceptual literacy capacity, and practical skills in classroom management and early detection to dismantle the normalization bias toward early childhood violence. Furthermore, strengthening partnership programs with parents through the synchronization of positive parenting practices at home remains a crucial agenda. This ensures that the values of affection taught at school can be fully internalized within the child's personality, ultimately realizing an early childhood education environment that is genuinely safe, inclusive, and child-friendly.

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