

The Need of Anti-Bullying Program in Indonesia: Defining Bullying Behaviour and Issues in Early Childhood Education

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Abstract

Bullying may occur during childhood or at an early age in Indonesia. Unfortunately, bullying cases get less attention because they are considered natural behaviours and not many teachers consider bullying as a serious problem. Early childhood teachers sometimes neglect bullying for various reasons. Therefore, there exists the need for the development of anti-bullying programs in early childhood schools. Definition of bullying behaviour may refer to bullying in different criteria or terms, such as aggressive behaviour, bullying behaviour, as well as a grey zone. Observation results show that verbal aggressive behaviour is more common to appear in early childhood level. The interview results show that both principals stated there is no manuscript of anti-bullying policies in their particular schools. Training and program development are expected to be available not only in the form of lectures or questions and answers, but also in practical training, and with the implementation of bullying policies. Additionally, these policies need to be accessible once they are developed.

Keywords: Indonesia, aggressive behaviour, bullying, early childhood.

1. Introduction and Background

One of the educational challenges that can never stop managing the problem is the practice of bullying or violence in school. Schools which should provide children with a sense of security and comfort for learning and helping to build positive personal characters have turned out to be a location for the production of violent practices or widely referred to as bullying. Wiyani (2012) reported that bullying has been observed to exist in the field of education.

Figure 1 shows that according to KPAI (Indonesian Child Protection Commission), public complaints about bullying cases from 2011-2016 were 1,106 in total (KPAI, 2016). KPAI also noted that there were 161 reports as shown in figure 2 regarding student violence in 2018 and 77 of them were bullying case (Wibowo, 2019). Although by comparing the bullying

cases from 2016 to 2018 the number of cases were decreasing, KPAI stated that in a period of 9 years, from 2011 to 2019, there were 37,381 complaints of violence against children. For bullying both in education and social media, the figure reached 2,473 reports and the trend continues to increase (KPAI, 2020).

Bullying may occur during childhood or at an early age. According to Wiyani (2012) bullying on children most often occurs in schools. She also explained that at the age of 5-6 years, bullying cases get less attention because it is considered natural and not many teachers consider bullying as a serious problem. Early childhood teachers sometimes neglect bullying for various reasons. They claim that kids are too innocent and too pure to bully and are considered reluctant to take action that can injure or damage other kids. Teachers do not know that it is due to loss of oversight or even that adults do not see the source

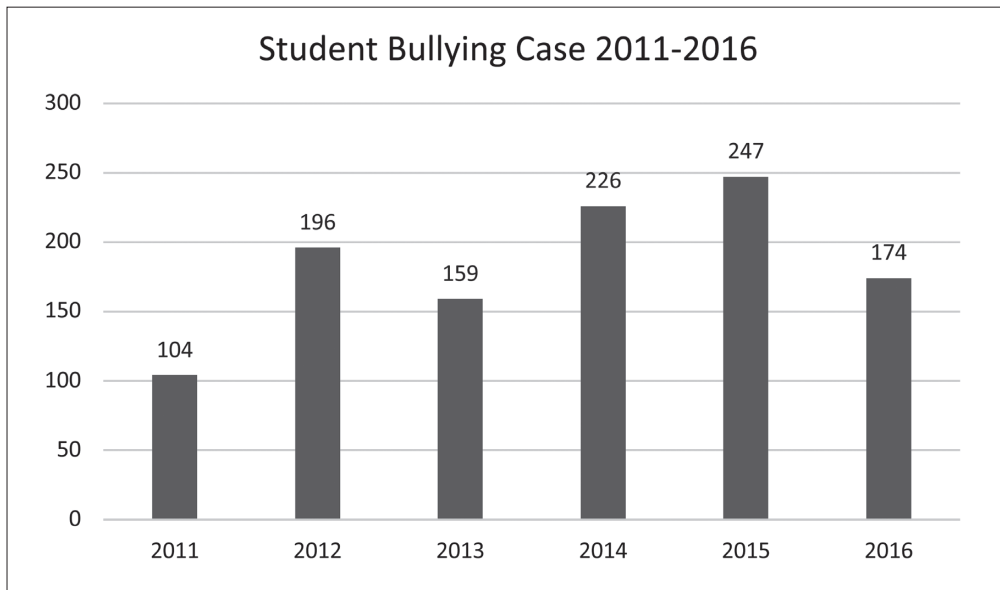


Figure 1. Student Bullying Case.
Source: Made by author according to data from KPAI (2016)

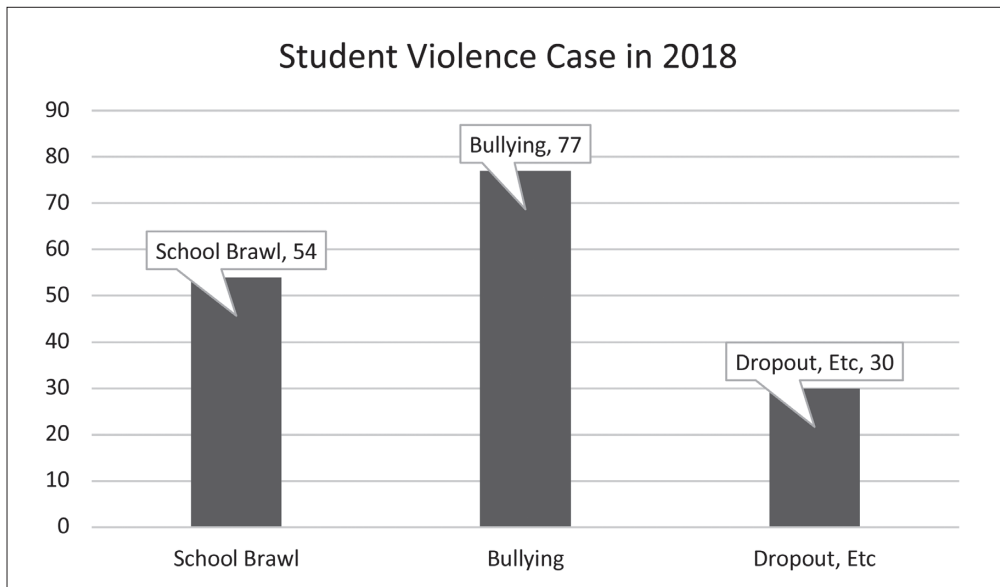


Figure 2. Student Violence Case in 2018.
Source: Made by author according to report data of KPAI (Wibowo, 2019)

of bullying itself. Another cause is the inability of teachers to realize that *pre-bullying* actions could turn into bullying behaviour (Ahmed & Braithwaite, 2006).

2. Purpose of Study

The main purpose of this study is to find the need of anti-bullying program in early childhood school and availability to access anti-bullying policy in Indonesia. The anti-bullying program is expected to help educators to identify bullying, learn what should be done to prevent bullying, create programs that will

improve coping skills for children, and develop action plans for intervention (Nansel et al., 2001). To assist the main purpose of the study, two sub purposes are prepared, one of them is to analyze theoretical discussion about the definition of "bullying" and define it at early childhood level concerning to their development stage and social skill. In fact, as described in this study further below, it also includes clarifying relationship among "bullying" and "aggressive behaviour", in order to detect and locate appropriately all the possible bullying behaviour from classroom activities at early childhood level. These theoretical

and practical analysis were conducted to find bullying situation in order to get a rationale reason why anti-bullying program in early childhood schools is needed.

3. Methodology

In order to get a clear image of bullying in early childhood level, the definition, cause and effect of the behaviour against children is need to be distinguished. Theoretical analysis was done to find if there was a different point of view to addressed bullying behaviour that may happen. Also, non-participant observation was conducted to find the form of bullying in the school. To find the information of availability of anti-bullying policy or program in school, interview was conducted to school principals. Furthermore, creating program must refer to the policies and regulations set by Indonesian government.

3.1. Theoretical Analysis of the Definition of “Bullying”

Theoretical analysis was used to investigate the problem’s decision and peculiarities of the problem which may impact the future results. In this study, various different point of views how to address bullying behaviours in kindergarten or early childhood level was collected. Furthermore, it was compared, analyzed, and redefined based on previous legitimate researches adjusting to the early childhood

characteristics.

3.2. Observation

Non participant observation was done in 2 kindergartens in Bandung, Indonesia. Observation was conducted in 2 times per week for each school. with expectation to find the form of bullying that may occur in early childhood level. Regardless any students’ intentions of the behaviour and motivation, behaviour was observed in the format as table 1 below:

After collecting the data, behaviour explanation were categorized into two categorizations of aggressive behaviour which are verbal and non-verbal. To find the repetition of the behaviour, each type of the same behaviour in one category were accumulated per school. Afterward, all the accumulated behaviour were added into one each categorization to find the common behaviour that occurred during the observations.

3.3. Interview

Semi structured interview was conducted to principals in 2 schools. In this study, the interview did not address the teachers’ perception concerning bullying behaviour, it was more focused to find the availability of anti-bullying policy or program that officially listed in the school. The questions of the interview are showed as table 2 below.

Table 1. Example observation format

Class:		Date:		
Time	Name of Pupil	Behaviour Explanation	Target of pupil	Notes (place, situation, etc)
Example				
10.10am	Agung	Pulling Khrisna’s Hair	Khrisna	Break time - classroom
	Peter	Laughing at Khrisna	Khrisna	
	Ram	Defended Khrisna who was being teased	Agung	
11.00am	Vladmir	Reporting Agung and Peter behaviour to teacher	Agung Peter	During class

Table 2. Interview questions

1. Does your school have bullying or anti-bullying regulations?
2. Should the district have training for its anti-bullying program and policy implementation?
3. Where are the copies of the district's anti-bullying policies located?
4. What strategies are used to implement your anti-bullying policies to the district or school?
5. What are the challenges you found in executing the policy?

After conducting the interview, the results were then noted and coded. Coding as described by Saldana (2009) is intended as a way of obtaining words or phrases that determine the existence of prominent facts, capturing the essence of facts, or marking attributes that appear strongly from a number of words or visual data.

4. Analysis Discussion

4.1. Definition of Bullying

In fact, aggressive behaviour and bullying behaviour are different forms of action, even though they are sometimes considered the same. Aggressive behaviour are behaviours that display hostility (Brosbe, 2011). Aggressive behaviour are intended to harm or do damage, but bullying behaviour have two critical components that need to be concerned which are power imbalance between perpetrators and victims, and repetition of the action (Ostrov et al., 2019).

Concerning early childhood's development stage, around this age they show aggressive behaviour tendencies such as emotional outburst and endangering others or damaging toys and objects due to the frustration. Frustration is a reaction to situation that prevent children from achieving goals that important to their self-esteem, and it has strong connection with aggression (Delfos, 2003). If children learn that behaving aggressive when feel frustration is considered acceptable or tolerated, the behavior is strengthened and may be repeated later grows into bullying behaviour (Smith et al., 2005).

As stated by Ostrov (2019), bullying is aggressive behaviour with conditions. The definition of bullying behaviour may apply to bullying in different criteria or terms. Bullying expert researcher Olweus defined bullying often requires malice on the part of the aggressor and malice is a part of violence (Farrington, 1993; Olweus, 1993; Rigby, 2002; Smith & Sharp, 1994). In Japan, they are used *Ijime* as a term to define bullying behaviour. Noteworthy is not just the action taken but the impact of the action on the victim, for example, a student pushes his friend's shoulder roughly. If those who are encouraged feel intimidated, also if these actions are carried out repeatedly, means

that bullying behaviour has occurred (Taki, 2001).

According to the results of the survey, Japanese researchers often say "*Ijime* can happen at any time, in any school and among any children." It tells us that *Ijime* is regarded not by the exceptional children with dysfunctional backgrounds as unique behaviours, but by ordinary children as the one. We can assume that children with different individual backgrounds such as child neglect, dysfunctional family, aggressive climate, and so on, have a few cases completed. Instead, in Japan, there are several other cases that cannot be clarified by these causes (Morita, 2001).

In Indonesia, according to (KBBI, n.d.) bullying is translated as *rundung* or *perundungan* in Indonesian, which means "disturbing; constantly annoying; troublesome". This *perundungan* terms are not commonly used as a definition for bullying behaviour in Indonesia. However, is it still used by some researchers and educators. Additionally, other researcher associate *perundungan* to mean violence and harassment (Efianingrum, 2009; Cakrawati, 2015). This means that there exists a variety of interpretation of the term *perundungan* in the Indonesian context. This variation is a possible reason why some bullying behaviour can be undetected in early childhood. One notable difference between *ijime* and *perundungan* is that *perundungan* is aggressive behaviour, but *ijime* is bullying behaviour, which means it has the following components: power imbalance, repetition¹, and intention to harm. This seems to suggest that *ijime* is intentional while *perundungan* can be intentional or unintentional aggressive behaviour.

Looking at the figure 3 below, we can assume that bullying behaviour is part of aggressive behaviour, yet not all aggressive behaviour can be assumed as bullying behaviour. Also, in several countries, the terms of bullying itself varies. In Indonesia, due to the limited description of *perundungan* by legitimate source, the term itself cannot be fully represented as bullying behaviour to cover all of its aspects. Rather, it is partially overlapped between bullying and aggressive behaviour. Most of researchers use directly the English term "*bullying*" as a term to describe the bullying behaviour in their research to avoid misconception (Arumsari, 2017; Hidayati, 2012; Sejiwa, 2008; Wiyani, 2012). On the other hand, *ijime* term for

¹ In *perundungan* "constantly" may mean "repetition," but there is no meaning of imbalance nor intention to harm.

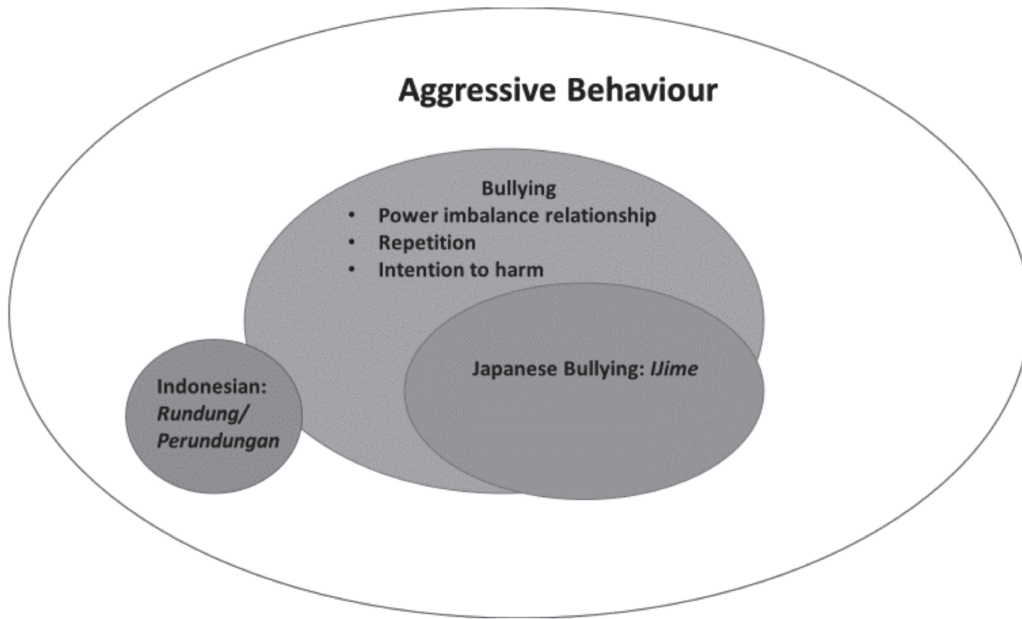


Figure 3. Relationship among concepts of bullying behaviours, Ijime, and Perundungan, based on orthodox theoretical discussion. Source: Made by author according to stated researchers (Farrington, 1993; Olweus, 1993; Rigby, 2002; Smith & Sharp, 1994; Taki, 2001; Morita, 2001)

Japanese bullying has closer meaning to the original definition from Olweus (1993), aside they put more concern on the victims' perception factor.

Addressing bullying behaviours in early childhood education appears to be difficult because of the linguistic and cognitive deficiencies of preschoolers. That inflicts a kind of conditions/limitations for researchers, so that their interpretation and comprehension of the concept of bullying/bullying behaviours are based on; observation and teacher evaluations (Andreou & Bonoti, 2010; Repo & Sajaniemi, 2015; Vlachou et al., 2016). Hidayati (2012) states that many of teachers did not have proper instructions or instruction on positive aspects in the sense of bullying behaviour. Teaching that is too permissive, too challenging, or inconsistent with discipline often affects the growth of a child who appears to bully other children. If we as adults do not regularly have consequences if children neglect or violate the laws, then we implicitly increase the risk of bullying the children in the future; such teaching gives incentives for detrimental behaviour and teaches children implicitly to deviant behaviour.

In spite of the fact that the concept of bullying still become a debate, there is general agreement regarding the conditions that have been considered. Those agreements include actions that inflict physical and or psychological pain intentionally and repeatedly;

the fact that the behavior is repeated over time; and the social, psychological or physical nature of aggressiveness and power imbalance that causes victims powerless to protect themselves (Monks & Smith, 2006; Olweus, 1994; Farrington, 1993; Vlachou et al., 2011).

Although these are somehow authentic definitions of the bullying behaviours, other researchers such as Guerin & Hennessy (2002), argue that not every condition should be observable in the bullying behaviours. While an action may not be intentional, it just may have inflicted negative impacts to the victim, it also can be interpreted still as deliberate. In addition, Monk & Smith (2006) argued that the condition of repetition is not necessary because the perpetrator, who may be dominated by the fear of committing the same action in the future, also the victim may be negatively affected by a single event which the perpetrator provokes.

As summarized in figure 4 bellow, orthodox of "bullying behaviour" was define by Olweus (1993) as actions that can inflict physical and psychological effects on persons intentionally and repeatedly. However, other researchers have examined and found that these intentional physical and psychological are often unidentified in the early childhood level, and these creates a grey zone. The grey zone represents all the intentional undetected physical and

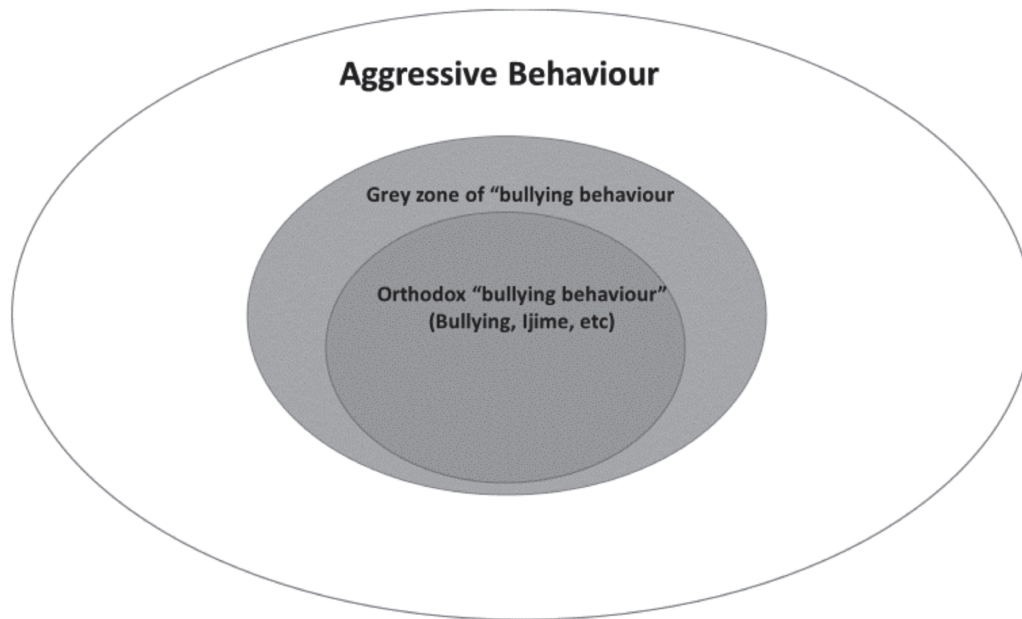


Figure 4. Relationship among concepts of bullying behaviours in early childhood. Source: Made by author according to stated researchers (Farrington, 1993; Olweus, 1993; Rigby, 2002; Smith & Sharp, 1994; Taki, 2001; Morita, 2001)

psychological aggressive behaviour that student at the early childhood level displayed. If this undetected action persists (Grey zone) then these actions may lead to future bullying behaviour. Therefore, this may also mean that the grey zone is a possible extension of the definition of the term “bullying behaviour” especially in early childhood level.

As stated above, the definition and situations of “bullying behaviour” in early childhood may be tricky to address with aggressive behaviour. This is due to the fact many early childhood teachers associate aggressive behaviour as part of child play development so they often make a premature conclusion that aggressive behaviours observed are harmless and not necessarily an evident description of bullying. Therefore, investigating aggressive behaviour in early childhood is important step to defining bullying behaviour. For that reason, intentional and repetitive components had been argued by several researcher, by carefully connecting those key components including; the imbalance of power, to cause harm and victims’ perception are expected to help educators to investigate childrens’ behaviours concerning their development stage.

Additionally, some researchers (Crick et al., 2006; Kochenderfer-Ladd & Wardrop, 2001; Monks, Ruiz, & Val, 2002) are against the idea of the existence of bullying in early childhood development because for

this to exist students would have to develop emotional awareness and criteria of conscious intention. These researchers believe that this condition are not sufficiently develop at the early childhood level. On the contrast, Baird & Moses (2001) disagree with these researches because their finding states that early childhood children do have the ability to perceive motives and understand the intentions of others.

Bullying is also a social process that may include multiple people from different participants (Salmivalli 2010). Salmivalli (2010) indicates that children in bullying cases are not only the perpetrators and victims, but they may take place on other roles. Acquaintances are often present and may play a role by actively supporting the bullying or by being passive. They may, for instance, act as followers who do not start the bullying but follow and facilitate the conduct of bullying, then supporter who do not take an active part or passively act as lookouts. Besides that, they could be defenders who try to stop bullying, possible defender that do not take action but think they ought to help, and also bystander who watch what happens but do not taking any stand.

The 'Bullying Cycle' highlights the various ways children respond or engage in a bullying situation (see figure 5). It describes the attributes of the victim, the bully and the bystander and it demonstrates how we as individuals can intervene and identify when dealing



Figure 5. Bullying Circle. Source: Donohoe & O’Sullivan (2015, p.101)

with a bullying incident. Therefore, by gaining a more comprehensive understanding of how bullying can occur, what the roles are in bullying, how it can be avoided, and how it can be handled, both sufferers and victims can be able to disengage from the bullying cycle. As other children often see reasons to engage in bullying circle, bullying behavior can spread further. In their adolescence and even adulthood, the cycles of bullying and the consequences experienced by bullying victims will carry forward, resulting in a relationship between violent youth and elements of humiliation, which in turn is domestic abuse or lawbreaker acts (Bollmer, Harris, & Milich, 2006). Children who commit bullying will continue to bully as they progress into adulthood, as well as children who become victims will continue to be affected and may have traumatic impact if bullying is underestimated or not stopped at an early age (Adams & Lawrence, 2011; Arumsari, 2017). Since we as an adult cannot always rely on one student to tell us what is happening in bullying situation, by looking at the bullying circle is expected to help educators as well to evaluate the students’ role and the situation itself.

4.2. Bullying Form in Early Childhood

As mentioned above, we need to be aware that bullying is not overlooked as simple aggressive behaviour, yet it is an important step, identifying that the aggressive behaviour is must be unwanted or has harmful causes against another children. Observation

has been done by author to find an image what kind of aggressive behaviour that appear in early childhood school. Each behaviour was observed, counted, and categorized into 2, which are verbal behaviour and non-verbal behaviour.

Table 3. Observation non-verbal aggressive behaviour

Behaviour	Amount repetition	Proximity
Nudge	1	Direct
Pull hand hardly	1	Direct
Push body	1	Direct
Befall using body	1	Direct
Punch	2	Direct and Indirect
Disturbing on purpose	4	Direct and Indirect
Snatch or seizing	2	Direct
Total	12	

Table 4. Observation verbal aggressive behaviour

Behaviour	Amount repetition	Proximity
Screaming	4	Direct and Indirect
Ordering	1	Direct
Mocking	3	Direct and Indirect
Degrading name	2	Direct
Accusing	2	Direct
Disturbing on purpose (others)	4	Direct and Indirect
Exclusion (telling not to befriend with someone)	1	Direct
Total	17	

According to the table 3, there are 7 types of behavior that appear and the most was disturbing on purpose which 4 times done by the student that occurred in the school. The same result also showed on the table 4 that common behavior that has been observed was disturbing on purpose. Looking at both tables, it shows that verbal aggressive behaviour is more popular in this study.

Based on the observation, it can be interpreted that aggressive behaviours showed here has indication to be a bullying behaviour. These behaviours observed have repetition aspect and intention to harm other children which are part in the bullying components. Additionally, in this observation, a student deliberately disturbed their friend on purpose while the friend was studying and while the instructor was presenting. This statement is strengthened by Vlachou et al. (2016) which preschooler even in the sight of their teacher, are triggered by spontaneity and impulsive behaviour to do the actions.

In this fact, that teachers are able to observe bullying and aggressive behaviour in early childhood setting, makes for their effective and quick management before these early forms of aggressiveness grow. That being said, in their schools, teachers appear to underestimate the occurrence and intensity of aggression (Wiyani, 2012). They may not react at all or they often react by looking directly to aggressive behaviors, which may increase hostility in children who want to capture the attention of their teacher to them (Rose et al., 2014).

4.3. Availability of Anti-Bullying Policy

Semi-structured interview was conducted with 2 principals in different school to find the availability of bullying policy. The principals were asked the

presence of anti-bullying policy from the Indonesian government, practical training support for teachers, the method to transmit the policy, and the challenges that they may have faced to implementing the policy. Although Interviews were noted, and coded, considering the number of samples is small, in-depth analysis cannot be done in respect to reliability context.

According to the results in table 5, apparently, both principals stated that there is no manuscript of anti-bullying policy. Also practical training support were not conducted in both schools, no more than seminar than been held once in a year. In addition, authority of the to take actions, unrelated intervention from parents, teacher education background that not related to early childhood context, and also their teacher awareness are challenges that the principals found to implement the comprehension in their particular school.

Furthermore, these results may have correlation with the bullying situation that have stated earlier. In Indonesian language there is no bullying terms to describe the “bullying behaviour” that covers all of its components, which may lead to misconceive by educators. In congruence with research by Wiyani (2012) that Indonesian teacher tend to not seeing bullying in early childhood education as a serious problem, may affect these findings. It is feared due to lack of guidelines and control of children’s activities, is one of the reason that makes children engage in bullying and crime (Wong, 2004).

4.4. Indonesian Regulation Concerning Child Protection

The general Indonesian dictionary of children in Indonesia is etymologically classified as humans who are still small or immature (Poerwadarminta, 1976).

Table 5. Interview response

Items	Principal A	Principal B
1. Presence of anti-bullying policy	No written policy about bullying behaviour.	No written policy about bullying behaviour.
2. Practical training support	No practical training supports conducted by government or school.	No practical training supports conducted by government or school.
3. Transmit method, and availability of the copies	Seminar, once a year. For teacher and parents. No copies.	Seminar, one a year. For teacher. No copies.
4. Challenges to implementing policy	Authority of teacher to children unclear. Parent unrelated intervention.	Teacher education background not related. Teacher awareness.

Furthermore, based on UUPA number 23 Article 1 paragraph 1 (2014) also stated that children is anyone who is not yet 18 years of age, including children still in the womb.

There are several rules, including the articles in the Criminal Code and the UUPA (Child Protection Law), that can be seen as a legal justification for the value of enforcing an anti-bullying policy or program at school. According to Indonesia Child Protection Law (2014), under articles 76A, 76B, and 76C which are respectively;

- a. Everyone is prohibited from: 1) treating children in a discriminatory manner which causes the child to experience losses, both materially and morally so that it hinders their social function; or 2) treating Children with Disabilities in a discriminatory manner;
- b. Everyone is prohibited from putting, allowing, involving, asking to involve children in situations of abuse and neglect;
- c. Everyone is prohibited from placing, permitting, committing, ordering or participating in violence against children;

Moreover, according to article 54 of Child Protection Law no. 35 of 2014 concerning Child Protection affirms: "Children inside and in the school environment must be protected from acts of violence committed by teachers, school administrators or their friends in the school concerned or other educational institutions". By referring to the laws that have been made, the "bullying behaviour" is implied and can be included in those regulations, and it can be references and one of the reason to start the creation of an anti-bullying program in pre-school level. Moreover, it also can be assumed that everyone as an adult, especially teachers in this case are supposed to protect children in any means.

5. Main Limitation

The findings of the conclusions of interviews and observation in this study, due to the small number of respondents and limited time of the observation, cannot be used as representative status of all schools in Indonesia, but rather as an image of the particular schools obtained to extract the reality.

6. General Conclusion

On the basis of the finding, the definition of bullying and how patterns of the behaviour are expected to be identified by teachers or parents. The possibilities of bullying behaviour that occur among children may have potential to affect children severely. Therefore, early tendencies of bullying behaviour need to be identified and carefully evaluated to prevent bullying behaviour. We can assume that bullying is a prohibited action and is an unkind act in the form of a destructive acts, so bullying behaviour can be penalized in accordance with the applicable provisions.

Bullying behaviour in early childhood may be tricky to address with aggressive behaviour, Though we need to be mindful not to identify all aggressive behaviour as bullying, we also need to be aware of bullying behaviour so they are not overlooked as mere aggressive behaviour. Possible extension of the term bullying behaviour in early childhood level can be detected in the grey zone area. Yet, even if the behaviour that have been observed is not categorized as bullying behaviour, on the basis of cause and effect, it still may not be acceptable if schools have anti-bullying policies or programs that can be used as guidance for educators.

Additionally, through the interview it was revealed that there is no manuscript of anti-bullying policy in Indonesia neither practical training support from the government. Training and program development are expected to be available not only in the form of lectures or questions and answers, but also in the teaching and learning process, and with the implementation of bullying policies so that information can be communicated evenly, and teachers can fully comprehend their roles and duties in school.

In fact, it is important to train and improve anti-bullying learning for early childhood teachers in order to be able to implement learning in child-friendly classrooms, where children feel comfortable and safe at school, as well as on their journey to and from school. In addition, it is also important for educators to always analyze the acts, words, body languages, and facial expressions of children to help assess whether teasing or bullying is taking place (Rios-Ellis, Bellamy, & Shoji, 2000).

The anti-bullying program is expected to help

educators to identify bullying, learn what should be done to prevent bullying, create programs that will improve coping skills for children, and develop action plans for intervention (Nansel et al., 2001). In literature, it is proposed that increasing training and awareness will help educators recognize and appreciate early signs of bullying and learn prevention and intervention strategies (Repo & Sajaniemi, 2015). Furthermore, it should also be of main consideration for preschool teachers to concentrate on the development of social skills and build a positive school environment (Rose et al., 2014; Vlachou et al., 2016).

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