



Eradicating Bullying, Creating a Safe and Comfortable Learning Environment through Child-Friendly Schools

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Abstract:

This research explores the optimal application of the Child-Friendly School (SRA)-based approach across various cultural contexts to eliminate bullying and create a safe, comfortable learning environment. The study was conducted at Aisyiyah Bustanul Athfal Jatinom Kindergarten in Blitar Regency, using a qualitative approach with a case study design. Data collection involved desk reviews, participatory observation, in-depth interviews with teachers, students, and parents, as well as focus group discussions (FGD). The data was analyzed through reduction, presentation, verification, content analysis, and interpretation. The findings reveal that the success of the SRA program hinges on three key factors: a well-structured program, such as class agreements and sessions focused on positive values; a supportive school environment, complete with counseling facilities and anti-bullying media; and active parental involvement in monitoring and reinforcing children's values. This research suggests that implementing SRA not only helps reduce bullying incidents but also fosters an inclusive school culture and supports the development of positive student character. The study recommends extending the research to diverse regions and cultural settings to ensure the program's sustainability and to provide a foundation for more adaptive and inclusive education policies.

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INTRODUCTION

Bullying in schools remains a pervasive issue despite the prevailing view that schools should be safe and supportive environments for learning and development (Arif et al., 2024; Fauzan & Sulaeman, 2024). Although educational theories stress the importance of a conducive school environment for character formation and academic success (Halat et al., 2023; Nardi et al., 2022), bullying continues to occur in various forms, including verbal, physical, and cyberbullying. This inconsistency between theoretical expectations and real-world occurrences highlights the need for an in-depth exploration of the factors that contribute to bullying in schools. The phenomenon of bullying can be influenced by various external factors, including environmental supervision, school culture, and the involvement of all relevant parties in addressing these incidents (Nugroho et al., 2021; Siddique et al., 2023). Therefore, understanding how a school's environment and culture contribute to bullying is vital in crafting effective strategies to mitigate this issue. In this context, the Child-Friendly School (SRA) approach emerges as a promising method for creating safer and more inclusive educational spaces.

Bullying in schools is often examined from multiple perspectives, ranging from psychological and sociological theories to organizational and educational models in the academic discourse. Numerous studies have pointed out the direct link between bullying and a lack of community-based interventions, as well as the absence of a child-friendly school culture (Admiraal et al., 2021; El-Sabagh, 2021; Fauzan & Sulaeman, 2024). Furthermore, research on educational environments emphasizes the importance of creating spaces that promote positive relationships and inclusivity, highlighting how conducive environments contribute to student success and well-being (Lu et al., 2021; Springstein & English, 2024). Many various intervention strategies to reduce bullying, including those that focus on involving teachers, students, and parents in creating an inclusive culture (Damayanti et al., 2023; Gaffney et al., 2021). However, studies show that despite these initiatives, bullying continues to be prevalent due to insufficient implementation of effective and sustainable strategies, as well as a lack of community involvement in the solution process.

The persistence of bullying in schools is not merely an educational issue but a social one, deeply rooted in the broader cultural and community context. In many educational settings, bullying reflects power dynamics, peer relationships, and social hierarchies that are often reinforced by inadequate supervision or reactive approaches (Achmadin et al., 2024; Alwi et al., 2023; Hastasari et al., 2022). The occurrence of bullying in schools is often linked to the lack of a strong community bond and the failure to foster meaningful partnerships between teachers, parents, and students. Moreover, bullying is a reflection of societal norms, where certain behaviors are tolerated or even normalized, which further perpetuates these harmful actions within school environments (Ataman et al., 2024; Nugroho et al., 2021; Saharani & Diana, 2024). The absence of a comprehensive approach, which includes psychological support, a positive school culture, and active parental involvement, often exacerbates the problem. Social factors such as peer influence, family background, and socio-economic status can also play a significant role in shaping students' behavior and experiences. Hence, it is crucial to understand these social dynamics to effectively tackle bullying and create an environment where students feel safe, valued, and supported.

Bullying can be significantly reduced through community-based interventions, suggesting that a collective effort involving various stakeholders is essential (Gaffney et al., 2021; Hjetland et al., 2021; Tkáčová et al., 2021). Other studies, such as those by Shablysty et al. (2021), emphasize the importance of student participation in creating child-friendly school environments. These studies argue that when students are actively involved in the process, they are more likely to contribute to a positive school culture and the prevention of bullying. Additionally, research by Gaffney et al. (2021) demonstrates the role of school counselors in reinforcing positive behaviors and maintaining a safe school climate. Despite these findings, there is limited research on integrating these elements systematically within specific cultural contexts, which is crucial for ensuring the sustainability and effectiveness of bullying prevention programs.

While existing research provides valuable insights into bullying prevention, there are notable gaps that need to be addressed. Much of the literature focuses on generalized, one-size-fits-all approaches to bullying prevention, often neglecting the importance of local cultural contexts. Furthermore, while community-based interventions have been proposed as practical strategies, there is insufficient research on how these approaches can be integrated into existing school systems in a culturally

adaptive manner. Most studies also fall short in examining the direct involvement of all stakeholders—students, parents, teachers, and community members—in the process of bullying prevention. This research presents a novel approach by focusing on the integration of the Child-Friendly School model with participatory strategies tailored to local cultural needs.

The main objective of this research is to explore how a Child-Friendly School-based approach can be implemented optimally in various cultural contexts to eliminate bullying and create a safe, comfortable learning environment. The study seeks to investigate how local culture and community involvement can enhance the effectiveness of bullying prevention programs. It also aims to examine the roles of different stakeholders—such as teachers, students, parents, and school counselors—in promoting a child-friendly school culture. Through this exploration, the research aims to provide actionable recommendations for schools and policymakers to foster more inclusive, responsive, and sustainable educational environments that are free from bullying.

This research is original in its approach to bullying prevention, combining the principles of the Child-Friendly School model with participatory strategies that engage all stakeholders in addressing bullying cases. Unlike previous studies, which often focus on either the structural or community aspects of bullying prevention, this study integrates both dimensions into a single framework, emphasizing the importance of local cultural contexts. The research argument is that bullying can be most effectively prevented through a collaborative approach that involves students, parents, teachers, and the broader community, with a focus on local needs and cultural sensitivity. This combination of theory and practice provides a strong foundation for future research and policy development in the field of bullying prevention.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses a qualitative design with a case study approach to understand the implementation of the Child-Friendly School (SRA) program at Aisyyah Bustanul Athfal Jatinom Kindergarten, Blitar Regency. This approach was chosen because it can explore the phenomenon comprehensively through the real experiences of the participants, especially in the context of eliminating bullying and creating a safe and comfortable learning environment (Alam, 2021). In addition, a qualitative approach allows exploration of the values, strategies, and challenges schools face in implementing SRA programs.

The research location was chosen at Aisyyah Bustanul Athfal Jatinom Kindergarten because this school is one of the early childhood education institutions that has implemented child-friendly principles in a structured manner. This location was also chosen because of the diversity of its students' social and cultural backgrounds, thus providing an opportunity to understand the implementation of the SRA program in varied contexts. Blitar Regency is also known as an area with strong educational initiatives, so the research results are hoped to be a model for other schools in similar areas.

Sources of information in this research include informants such as teachers and parents, school principals, and support staff, as well as supporting documents such as school policies, activity reports, and relevant online news. Data was collected through several techniques, namely desk review of related documents, participatory observation to understand the dynamics of SRA implementation, in-depth interviews using interview guides with teachers, parents, and students, and focus group discussions (FGD) with the

SRA implementation team at the school. The data obtained is analyzed through several stages: data reduction to filter important information, presenting the data in the form of narratives or tables, and verifying the data to conclude (Leko et al., 2021). The analytical methods used are interactive Miles and Huberman for documents, discourse analysis for interviews, and interpretation to understand the meaning behind the findings, resulting in a deep understanding of the effectiveness of SRA in eliminating bullying in this school.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Child Friendly School Program

The first finding of this study revolves around the successful implementation of the Child-Friendly School (SRA) program at Aisiyah Bustanul Athfal Jatnom Kindergarten. The school has actively applied the principles of a child-friendly environment, as evidenced by the display of class agreements and anti-bullying posters throughout the school. The school also conducts training sessions on anti-violence and sets up a complaint mechanism to address bullying incidents effectively. These actions reflect a conscious effort to create a safe and nurturing environment where children's rights are respected, and their welfare is prioritized. The implementation of these measures contributes to reducing bullying and ensuring that children feel secure in their learning space.

The presence of class agreements, bullying posters, and a clear reporting system indicates the school's commitment to child-friendly principles based on the observations conducted. The school environment is designed to foster respect, mutual understanding, and accountability among students, with a focus on reducing bullying through education and awareness. Teachers and staff actively engage with the children, guiding them to follow the rules of the school, and encouraging the students to speak out about any bullying they may witness or experience. This proactive approach has created a school culture in which children are more aware of their rights and responsibilities in preventing violence.



Figure 1. Class Agreement Poster

The implementation of a child-friendly school program is integral to the school's efforts to combat bullying. The findings suggest that visible reminders such as posters (see Figure 1), along with the structured training of educators and the establishment of complaint mechanisms, are essential in creating an environment that is conducive to

learning and free of violence. These efforts not only help reduce bullying but also contribute to the formation of a school culture in which students feel safe and supported. The research supports the notion that a well-rounded child-friendly approach can foster an atmosphere of mutual respect and safety.

The successful application of a Child-Friendly School program involves not only physical measures such as posters and reporting systems but also a consistent effort from the entire school community, including teachers, students, and parents. The presence of these key elements ensures a positive school environment where bullying is actively discouraged. Therefore, the implementation of this program can be generalized as a highly effective strategy for reducing bullying in educational settings.

Supportive School Environment

The importance of a supportive school environment in the success of the Child-Friendly School program. The study reveals that the active participation of teachers, students, and parents plays a crucial role in creating an environment that is conducive to learning and free of fear. Data collected from interviews with teachers and parents further supports this conclusion, indicating that collaboration and mutual support are fundamental to ensuring that the school environment remains safe and supportive for all students.

Through the analysis of interview findings, it became clear that the school's commitment to maintaining a supportive environment directly contributed to a reduction in bullying cases. Both teachers and parents expressed that their active participation in school activities, such as monitoring students during playtime and being involved in class discussions, has created a sense of shared responsibility. This collaborative approach has resulted in an atmosphere where bullying is less likely to occur, as students feel protected by a strong network of support. Teachers reported feeling more confident in addressing any concerns, knowing that parents were also actively involved in the process.

The presence of a supportive school environment was vital in creating a safe space for students. Teachers, parents, and students all played active roles in ensuring that the school culture was one of mutual respect, where students were free to express themselves without fear of bullying or intimidation. This support system was not limited to academic achievement but extended to emotional well-being, ensuring that students felt safe both physically and emotionally. The involvement of all parties in maintaining a positive school culture contributed significantly to the reduction of bullying.



Figure 2. Teacher Accompanies Children While Playing

School environment that actively supports student well-being and involves all stakeholders in the process is key to reducing bullying. Teachers and parents who collaborate effectively in monitoring students' activities create a sense of community and responsibility (see Figure 2). This, in turn, promotes a safe learning environment where students are less likely to engage in or experience bullying. The findings suggest that continued collaboration between teachers and parents is necessary to sustain a positive and supportive school environment.

The fact that a supportive school environment, in which all stakeholders—teachers, students, and parents—play an active role, is crucial for reducing bullying. This model of collaboration creates an atmosphere where students feel safe, respected, and valued, which is essential for preventing bullying. It is clear that the success of the Child-Friendly School program hinges on the active and ongoing participation of the entire school community.

Parental Participation

The importance of parental involvement in the success of the Child-Friendly School program. The study found that parental support was a critical factor in the success of the school's bullying prevention efforts. The synergy between the school and parents was established through regular communication and active participation in school activities, which helped to strengthen the implementation of the program and create an environment that was truly child-friendly.

The involvement of parents played a significant role in supporting the school's anti-bullying initiatives. The formation of class associations provided a platform for parents to engage with teachers, share concerns, and contribute to the overall school culture. This collaboration allowed for a more holistic approach to addressing bullying, as parents were able to reinforce the values taught at school within the home environment. Parents' understanding of the school's policies and their willingness to work alongside teachers contributed to the effectiveness of the program.

Table 1. The Parental Participation Efforts

Component	Description	Evidence
Parent Communication	Regular updates and meetings between teachers and parents	Class associations and newsletters
Parent Participation	Parents actively involved in school activities	Attendance at school events
Parent Education	Informing parents about bullying prevention strategies	Workshops on child-friendly approaches
Synergy with Teachers	Collaboration between parents and teachers in supporting students	Regular teacher-parent meetings and communication

The Table 1, suggest that parental involvement is crucial for the success of the Child-Friendly School program. Parents who are actively engaged in the school's efforts to prevent bullying create a stronger network of support for students, ensuring that the program is not only effective within the school but also reinforced at home. The partnership between the school and parents enables a more comprehensive approach to bullying prevention, where both parties work together to create a safe and supportive environment for children.

The generalization of these findings highlights that parental involvement is a key factor in the effectiveness of the Child-Friendly School program. By fostering a strong relationship between the school and parents, bullying prevention efforts can be more

impactful and sustainable. Therefore, it is essential to continue strengthening parental participation to ensure that the Child-Friendly School model is successful and that bullying cases continue to decrease.

Discussion

The Child-Friendly School program is most effective when it involves all stakeholders in the process, including teachers, students, and parents (Idris et al., 2023). These findings align with the results of this study, where the implementation of class agreements, bullying posters, and a complaint system was identified as key factors contributing to the program's success. Findings suggest that the inclusion of various stakeholders in bullying prevention activities is crucial for creating a supportive school environment where bullying is less likely to occur.

The importance of communication between parents and schools in enhancing the success of child-friendly programs (Akmaliyah et al., 2021). The synergy between school and home environments contributes significantly to reducing bullying, as both spaces reinforce the values of respect and kindness. This study builds on previous work by emphasizing the unique role of class associations, which foster ongoing dialogue and collaboration between parents and teachers, ultimately creating a more comprehensive and effective approach to bullying prevention.

Supportive school environment plays a crucial role in creating a safe space for students (Diab & Green, 2024; Turner et al., 2022). Teachers' active involvement in monitoring students and the collaboration between parents and teachers is essential in reducing bullying. The results confirm that a supportive school environment, where teachers, students, and parents work together, is a key factor in creating an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect.

Continued teacher training and ongoing parental involvement are vital in sustaining a positive school culture (Ramadhani et al., 2024; Zubaidah et al., 2024). This study echoes their findings, demonstrating that the active participation of teachers and parents in maintaining a supportive environment is essential for reducing bullying. By continuously reinforcing these collaborative efforts, schools can ensure that their anti-bullying initiatives remain effective over time.

Parental involvement is fundamental in creating a holistic approach to bullying prevention (Anggraeni & Hina, 2024; Nwoko et al., 2024). The results of this study show that the synergy between schools and parents is vital for the success of child-friendly programs. Parents who are actively involved in school activities and understand the importance of bullying prevention contribute to a stronger, more supportive school culture. This supports the findings of the study, which emphasizes the need for a partnership between schools and parents in preventing bullying.

The collaboration between teachers and parents is critical in sustaining bullying prevention efforts (Muzakki & Nurdin, 2022; Poudel et al., 2024). This study builds on their work by illustrating the unique role of class associations as a communication space between schools and parents. By fostering this partnership, schools can create a more comprehensive and effective approach to bullying prevention, ensuring that the efforts to create a safe learning environment are reinforced both at school and at home.

The implications of this research suggest that the successful implementation of a Child-Friendly School program requires a collaborative effort from all stakeholders, including teachers, students, and parents. This study contributes to the understanding

that creating a safe and supportive school environment involves not only the physical elements such as posters and reporting systems but also the active participation of the entire school community. Additionally, the findings underscore the importance of cultural sensitivity and the need for ongoing teacher training and parental involvement to ensure the long-term success of bullying prevention programs.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of the Child-Friendly School (SRA) program at Aisyiyah Bustanul Athfal Jatinom Kindergarten has proven to be highly effective in reducing bullying and fostering a safe, supportive learning environment. The school's proactive approach, including the display of class agreements, anti-bullying posters, and the establishment of a clear complaint system, has significantly contributed to the creation of a nurturing space where children's rights are respected. The active involvement of teachers, students, and parents has played a crucial role in reinforcing the program's success. Through continuous communication, mutual support, and collaboration, the school has created a culture of respect and safety. Parental participation, particularly through class associations and regular engagement with teachers, has proven to be a key factor in sustaining the program and ensuring its long-term effectiveness. This study highlights the importance of a holistic approach, where all stakeholders work together to reduce bullying, emphasizing the need for a strong partnership between the school and the home.

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