

## **SCHOOL HEAD MANAGEMENT IN REALIZING CHILD-FRIENDLY EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION INSTITUTION**

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### **Abstract**

The rise of cases of violence and bullying against children in educational institutions has become a phenomenon that attracts a lot of public attention. This is because the impact of the case harms many parties, this is also what attracts the attention of educational institution managers to create child-friendly schools. The purpose of this study is to examine and analyze the management of school principals in realizing child-friendly early childhood education institutions. This research was conducted in PAUD Wadas Kelir Purwokerto. This type of research is a field research using a qualitative descriptive approach. Data collection is done by observation, interviews, and documentation. Data analysis is done by collecting data, reducing data, verifying data and drawing conclusions. The results of this study show that managerial efforts made by school principals in order to realize child-friendly early childhood education institutions are carried out by managing six things, namely educator management, classroom management, learning management, learning environment management, child rights management, and parent involvement management.

**Keywords:** Management, Principal, Early Childhood Education Institutions, Child Friendly.

### **Introduction**

Since the beginning of 2023 until August, the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI) revealed that there were 2,355 cases of child protection violations in the education sector. The forms of violence varied, including 87 cases of bullying, 27 cases of children being victims of educational facility deprivation, 24 cases of children being victims of education policies, 236 cases of children being victims of physical and/or psychological violence, 487 cases of children being victims of sexual violence, and many other unreported cases to the KPAI (Soci, 2023). This issue has gained public attention regarding the implementation of the education system in Indonesia. The high number of violence cases against children within educational environments raises questions about the implementation of the education system itself.

The cases of violence against students have significant impacts on both the institutions and the victims. One of the losses suffered by the institutions is the tarnishing of their reputation, which affects public trust in the educational institution. For the student victims, it disrupts various aspects

of their development, including psychological disturbances, mental pressure, fear, discomfort, and trauma. These impacts on students ultimately affect their learning process and educational activities (Christiana 2019; Muis, Syafiq, and Savira 2008; Hadi et al. 2022). This issue requires special attention from educational institution administrators to address and prevent further cases of violence. There are various ways in which educational institutions can minimize violence within the educational environment, such as creating a safe, comfortable, and conducive learning environment, instilling positive character values in children, promoting tolerance and togetherness, strengthening the sense of brotherhood, and more (Ramadhanti and Hidayat, 2022; Sriyanti, Asbari, and Praptoyo, 2023).

Considering the phenomenon of violence in educational institutions, one of the policies and efforts implemented by the government is the establishment of child-friendly school programs. Child-friendly schools aim to create a safe, clean, healthy, caring, and environmentally conscious condition that guarantees children's rights and protection from violence, discrimination, and other forms of mistreatment during their time in educational institutions. Child-friendly schools also support children's participation, especially in planning, policies, learning, and supervision. Child-friendly schools do not involve building new schools but rather adapting existing schools to make them comfortable for children and ensure that they fulfill children's rights and protect them, as schools serve as a second home for children after their own homes (Anak, 2015).

The main principle of child-friendly schools includes non-discrimination, the best interests of the child, survival, development, respect for children's views, and good management. The components of child-friendly schools include commitment in the form of written policies on child-friendly schools, child-friendly teaching and learning processes, trained educators and education personnel on children's rights, child-friendly facilities and infrastructure, child participation, parental involvement, involvement of community institutions, businesses, other stakeholders, and alumni (Anak, 2015). Thus, child-friendly schools can be an alternative for the entire school community. According to the components of child-friendly schools, the responsibility for child-friendly schools lies with all education stakeholders, including students, teachers, parents, the community, and alumni.

Child-friendly schools are important to be implemented in order to address violence within schools. Previous research on child-friendly schools includes a study conducted by Alisa Alfina and Rosyida Nurul Anwar on the management of inclusive early childhood education child-friendly

schools, which found that management involved regulating teachers (brainware), curriculum development (software), and facilities and infrastructure (hardware) (Alfina and Anwar, 2020). Another study by Nurul Izzah, Yanti Setianti, and Olga Tiara titled "The Role of School Principal Leadership in Creating Child-Friendly Schools in Inclusive Schools" revealed that the school principal plays a crucial role in making decisions to improve the school's quality. The success of a school can be seen through the attitude and decisions of the school principal, including in educating teachers and designing systems and learning models that create child-friendly schools (Izza, Setianti, and Tiara, 2023).

Another study conducted by Binti Muakhirin on the management of child-friendly schools in achieving educational service quality showed that the management of child-friendly schools at SD Negeri Gentan Seyegan was well-implemented. The supporting factors in implementing child-friendly school management at SD Negeri Gentan Seyegan included cooperation and involvement between the school and relevant stakeholders, as well as the role of parents and teachers in educating students (Muakhirin, 2022). Ahmad Nashiruddin and Ari Yuliana conducted research on the implementation of child-friendly schools in promoting character values in early childhood education at RA Hidayah Tayu, Pati Regency. The results of their study showed that the concept of child-friendly schools was implemented through preparation, planning, implementation, and outcomes (character development of students). The implementation of child-friendly schools involved four components: protection, care, education, and health (Nashiruddin and Yuliana, 2022). Based on previous research and literature reviews, the researcher aims to further examine the role of school principals in creating child-friendly early childhood education institutions.

## **Method**

This research is a field study where the data is obtained directly from the field. The approach used in this research is qualitative descriptive, where the results of this research will be in the form of narrative or descriptive (Matthew B. Miles, A. Michael Huberman, 2014). The research was conducted at PAUD Rumah Wadas Kelir, with the sources of information being the school principal, teachers, and students of PAUD Rumah Kreatif Wadas Kelir. The object of this research is the school principal's management in realizing a child-friendly early childhood education institution. Data collection is done through observation, with the observation focused on managerial activities for the realization of a child-friendly school. Interviews are conducted to gather

information related to school management in creating a child-friendly school. The last method is documentation, which involves documents from previous research and literature related to child-friendly schools. Data analysis techniques are carried out through data reduction, data analysis, verification, and drawing conclusions (Moleong, 2017).

## **Results And Discussion**

Schools, as the second environment for children after home, should be a safe and comfortable place for them. Schools, as a learning environment for children, have a significant impact on all aspects of their development. However, lately, we easily come across news about cases that harm students while they are at school. This serves as a note for education practitioners on how to create a safe and non-violent educational institution for children. As a form of realization in creating a comfortable, conducive, and non-discriminatory school for children, there are several things done by the principal of PAUD Rumah Kreatif Wadas Kelir.

### **1. Management of teachers and education personnel**

Teachers and education personnel play a crucial role in the functioning of an educational institution. The learning process and all activities carried out by children are designed, implemented, and evaluated by teachers and education personnel. The success of an institution is also determined by its teachers and education personnel. The school principal's management in creating a child-friendly school through teacher management is carried out through several stages: a) teacher recruitment management, b) management of task distribution and functions, c) time and performance management.

#### **a. Teacher recruitment management**

The school principal recruits competent teachers who are suitable for their respective fields. Additionally, some teachers recruited are local residents who have experience and familiarity with the surrounding conditions, making them both informants and guardians for the institution. Currently, PAUD Wadas Kelir has eight teachers, three of whom have bachelor's degrees, three are pursuing their first degree, and two are high school graduates. The majority of the teachers are local residents. In relation to creating a child-friendly school, teacher recruitment is one of the main aspects because teachers will directly interact with the children. Furthermore, the reason why the school principal chooses to recruit female teachers over male teachers is due to several reasons. Female teachers are considered

more meticulous, patient, and have a closer bond with children, making it more conducive to creating a child-friendly atmosphere.

b. Task distribution and function management

Task distribution and function management is the arrangement carried out by the school principal to regulate all the tasks and functions of the teachers in various aspects. The goal is to ensure that teachers understand what needs to be done and take responsibility for their tasks, thus avoiding cases of shifting responsibilities or neglected tasks. Another goal of this management is to prevent teachers from engaging in activities they should not be involved in. In creating a comfortable and safe school, teachers need to understand their tasks, including facilitating learning activities with children, addressing child-related issues, and communicating with parents. The distribution of tasks and functions for teachers also includes specifying what should and should not be done by teachers, thereby minimizing deviations.

c. Time management

Time management and performance management involve the regulation of time and performance that teachers should adhere to. Time management determines the arrival of teachers, where there are designated teachers who arrive before the children to ensure their safety upon arrival at school. These designated teachers also have the responsibility of organizing the children's play area. Additionally, time management sets the schedule for teacher arrival and departure. Teachers leave after ensuring that all children have been safely picked up by their parents or accompanied by teachers. The purpose of time management is to ensure that previously planned activities are carried out as scheduled. In relation to child safety, time management ensures the presence of teachers when children arrive at school and ensures that children go home safely with their parents.

2. Classroom management

Classroom management involves the organization and arrangement of the classroom environment to support the learning process. The goal of classroom management is to create a comfortable and safe learning atmosphere for students. Child-friendly classrooms are designed to create a comfortable, enjoyable, and supportive learning environment that promotes child development. The classroom management practices implemented by the school principal to

support child-friendly classrooms include: a) providing learning resources and materials for children, b) adequate classroom space, c) ensuring safety and cleanliness, d) flexible layout.

a. Availability of learning facilities and infrastructure for children

The availability of learning facilities and infrastructure for children is one of the many needs that must be met. Learning facilities and infrastructure are essential for children's basic learning needs and developmental support. In the context of child-friendly schools, the availability of learning facilities and infrastructure for children is aimed at fulfilling and satisfying their basic learning needs. The learning facilities and infrastructure available at PAUD Wadas Kelir, as a supporting tool for children's learning and play activities, include a variety of indoor and outdoor play equipment, various learning media (both disposable and reusable), spacious play and interaction areas, a wide range of children's books, and an environment that allows children to explore nature.

b. Adequate classroom space

Classrooms, as the primary learning spaces for children, are designed with attractive sizes and layouts. At PAUD Wadas Kelir, the classrooms consist of 1 teacher's office, 3 learning classrooms, 1 library, 1 auditorium, 1 kitchen, 1 health unit, and 1 restroom. The classrooms are designed with a spacious concept, where each room is designed for 15 children, based on a center-based learning approach. In the classrooms, there are not many learning materials available, as the play materials for children are separated in a different space, specifically the auditorium. The child-friendly classrooms at PAUD Wadas Kelir provide ample space for children to move and explore. The classrooms are also designed as open spaces, allowing for good air circulation, ventilation, and lighting, ensuring that children do not feel bored.

c. Safety and cleanliness

Safety and cleanliness are important factors in creating a safe and comfortable learning environment for children. A clean environment makes children feel comfortable in engaging in various activities, and environmental cleanliness can also serve as an indicator of health assurance. On the other hand, safety is a factor that ensures children are protected, so there is no fear or worry when they are at school or during learning and play activities. The implementation of cleanliness and safety measures at PAUD Wadas Kelir, as part of creating a child-friendly school, includes providing school environmental cleaning personnel

and scheduling teachers to maintain children's safety. The cleaning personnel ensure the cleanliness of the learning environment before children arrive at school by organizing and cleaning the school environment. As for safety, teacher schedules are made in a way that teachers arrive early to ensure the safety of children upon arrival and teachers always leave after all students have left. Teachers provide supervision for students during school activities to ensure their safety, and they also teach children about togetherness, tolerance, and loving one another.

d. Flexible layout

Flexible layout refers to the arrangement of the learning environment that can be changed or transformed, as well as learning activities that can take place outside the school premises. The purpose of having a flexible layout is to ensure that children's learning and play activities are not monotonous or boring, so that they always experience a new atmosphere. Learning activities are sometimes conducted in the nearby prayer room (mushola) in front of the PAUD, and in various specific activities, the classroom layout is not like a typical classroom. For example, the classroom can be set up as a cinema, café, or market. In realizing the concept of a child-friendly school, this management approach aims to explore new experiences for children and provide them with new experiences. Additionally, this flexibility also prevents children from easily becoming bored with the school environment.

3. Learning management

Learning management refers to the organization of learning activities and play activities for children while they are at school. The goal of learning management is to create a enjoyable learning environment for children that is appropriate for their developmental stage. The school principal's approach to learning management in order to create a child-friendly school includes implementing student-centered learning, creating enjoyable learning experiences, promoting two-way communication, and fostering active, creative, and innovative learning.

a. Student-centered learning

Student-centered learning is an approach to learning that focuses on the child, where the child takes an active role in the learning process, becoming more independent and responsible. The role of the teacher in the learning process is more of a facilitator and mediator. The teacher acts as a facilitator to meet the child's learning needs and as a

mediator to assist the child when they encounter challenges during the learning process. This type of learning is considered to provide space and freedom for children to express and unleash their creativity, allowing them to learn without feeling constrained. In the context of a child-friendly school, student-centered learning provides flexibility, freedom, and avoids 5 learning does not become a burden for them. This approach emphasizes creating a sense of enjoyment during the learning process, so that children do not get bored. The concept of fun learning is implemented by the school principal through managing the use of media, materials, locations, and teaching techniques. For example, each day, children are given different activities compared to the previous day. Additionally, the school principal also applies the concept of rewards as a form of appreciation for the achievements made by the children on that day.

b. Two-way communication

Two-way communication is a communication technique that involves two or more individuals engaging in a conversation. In the context of learning, two-way communication refers to the communication between teachers and students during the learning process. Two-way communication fosters openness between teachers and students. In practice, two-way communication is achieved by teachers encouraging students to actively participate and express their ideas, thoughts, and feelings. Additionally, teachers actively ask questions to students. Through two-way communication, a bond is formed between teachers and students. This has a positive impact on students' self-confidence and trust in their teachers. In the context of a child-friendly school, two-way communication serves as a means of fostering openness between teachers and students.

c. Active, creative, and innovative learning

Creating active, creative, and innovative learning is a demand for teachers, with the ultimate goal of making learning enjoyable and not boring, so that learning can be memorable and easily understood by children. In PAUD Wadas Kelir, teachers employ various methods to create active, creative, and innovative learning experiences. This includes using different learning media, connecting learning with children's experiences, creating a unique learning environment, linking activities with children's daily lives, and creating a school environment that children enjoy.

#### 4. Learning environment management

Learning environment management involves the arrangement of spatial layout, conditions, and the learning environment for children. The goal of this management is to create a clean, safe, and comfortable environment that supports the learning process. The establishment of a child-friendly school through learning environment management is carried out by the school principal, who provides a clean, safe, comfortable, open, and well-equipped environment. The learning environment at PAUD Wadas Kelir includes gardening areas, a library, and other public facilities. In terms of safety, the learning environment at PAUD Wadas Kelir is strategically located in a village but situated away from the main road, making it safer for children. The learning environment is also supported by various facilities, both electronic and non-electronic.

#### 5. Child rights management

Child rights management refers to the arrangement regarding the fulfillment of children's rights while they are at school. This management aims to ensure that children's rights are fulfilled during their time at school and to protect them from anything that may hinder their development. The rights of children at school include the right to education, the right to justice, the right to safety, the right to protection from violence, the right to access healthcare services, the right to information, the right to be respected, and the right to be loved.

##### a. Right to education

The right to education is an inherent right of every child to receive a proper and quality education. In order to create a child-friendly school environment at PAUD Wadas Kelir, the right to education is fulfilled by providing equal and fair opportunities for all children to learn and express themselves. Teachers do not differentiate in providing facilities and resources.

##### b. Right to receive justice

The right to receive justice means that every child is entitled to equal treatment without discrimination. Justice in this context refers to both treatment and access to facilities. The management of this treatment is carried out by the school principal by ensuring that facilities are not differentiated among children and that activities are equally distributed, thereby preventing jealousy among the children.

c. Right to receive security (protection)

The right to receive security or protection is the right for an individual to feel safe from fear or threats that may harm them. The fulfillment of the child's right to protection at PAUD Wadas Kelir is ensured by the school principal, who ensures that teachers are able to protect children from various dangers that may occur. This is done by assigning class guardians who are responsible for ensuring the safety of the children throughout their time at school, from arrival to departure.

d. Right to receive healthcare services

The right to receive healthcare services is a guarantee for children while they are at school, ensuring their safety and health. The fulfillment of the child's right to healthcare services provided by PAUD Wadas Kelir includes implementing regulations for the meals children bring to school, conducting health checks by measuring weight, head circumference, height, dental check-ups, ear examinations, and providing additional healthy food.

e. Right to be respected

The right to be respected is the right to be valued for who one is, both internally and externally. This respect is given to appreciate the various differences that exist within each individual. The management applied by the school principal of PAUD Wadas Kelir in fulfilling the right to respect children includes respecting the child's creations, desires, abilities, and talents. Additionally, teachers do not compare one child to another.

f. Right to be loved

The right to be loved is the right to receive affection and care from others. The management applied by the school principal to fulfill the child's right to be loved includes serving and educating the child wholeheartedly without favoritism. Additionally, teachers are open to the children, acting as companions to help them solve any difficulties or problems they may encounter.

6. Parental participation management

Parents play a crucial role in the process of educating children, which is why it is important to involve and collaborate with parents in educational institutions (schools). In the process of educating children, parents also have the right to know about their child's development and learning process. On the other hand, in order to optimize a child's

development, schools cannot exclude the role of parents. There are many ways in which parents can participate in the process of educating their children, and this can be achieved through cooperation and task sharing. Teachers are responsible for the child's learning process at school, while parents are responsible for the child's learning activities at home. The management implemented by the school principal of PAUD Wadas Kelir to involve parental participation in creating a child-friendly school includes organizing various activities. These activities include parenting sessions for parents, reporting on the child's growth and development, and involving parents in their child's learning activities through literacy tasks. In literacy tasks, parents are assigned the duty of reading books borrowed by their children from school and reading them aloud at home.

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