The Role of Teachers in Creating a Child-Friendly School at TK Negeri Pembina Gianyar Bali

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Abstract

Keywords: Children-Friendly Schools; role of teachers; safe learning environment;

Early childhood education is the first formal education that young children attend. Children’s joyful experiences at this educational stage become crucial because they lay the foundation for a love of learning, a love of education, and lifelong learning. In 2015, the Indonesian Government initiated the program of “Sekolah Ramah Anak” (Children-Friendly School) to serve the right of children to gain knowledge at schools. Teachers possess important roles in Children Friendly Schools. The purpose of this study is to investigate the role of teachers in a Children-Friendly School, TK Negeri Pembina Gianyar - Bali. This research applies the qualitative-descriptive method. The research method used is qualitative, the purpose of this study uses qualitative research so that researchers can describe a that occurs as the role of teachers in child-friendly schools. The sample in this study was 11 teachers with a minimum teaching experience of 5 years. Data collection techniques in this study used interviews. Data analysis in this study was carried out through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, then conclusions (Miles and Huberman). The result explains that the teachers in TK Negeri Pembina Gianyar - Bali have various roles, such as facilitators, mentors, and motivators. They involve children, school staff, parents, and the community to establish a children-friendly environment.

Abstrak

Kata Kunci: Sekolah Ramah Anak; peran guru; lingkungan belajar yang aman;

untuk mengetahui peran guru di Sekolah Ramah Anak TK Negeri Pembina Gianyar - Bali. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah kualitatif, tujuan penelitian ini menggunakan penelitian kualitatif agar peneliti dapat mendeskripsikan suatu hal yang terjadi seperti peran guru di sekolah ramah anak. Sampel dalam penelitian ini adalah 11 orang guru dengan pengalaman mengajar minimal 5 tahun. Teknik pengumpulan data pada penelitian ini menggunakan wawancara. Analisis data dalam penelitian ini dilakukan melalui tahapan reduksi data, penyajian data, kemudian penarikan kesimpulan (Miles dan Huberman).

Hasil penelitian menjelaskan bahwa guru di TK Negeri Pembina Gianyar - Bali mempunyai peran yang beragam, seperti fasilitator, mentor, dan motivator. Mereka melibatkan anak, staf sekolah, orang tua, dan masyarakat untuk menciptakan lingkungan ramah anak.

1. Introduction

Children aged 0 - 6 are naturally active learners. They move about and explore the world around them with high curiosity. According to Dr. Maria Montessori, children at this stage are at their Absorbent Mind period, where they easily pick up new information including imitating behaviors and languages. They are also in their sensitive periods, where they learn best by using all their senses to manipulate objects. As parents and educators, we need to understand and address their needs, then provide a safe nurturing environment for them.

These days, there are more parents who have a good understanding about the importance of early childhood education. The issue then is that not all parents are fortunate enough to choose the best preschool for their children because of certain factors, such as budget, the school location, and the availability of good quality preschools.

Based on the research done by Wulandari and Hafifah (2023), the data on Sistem Informasi Online Perlindungan Perempuan dan Anak (Simfoni PPA) (Online Information System for the Protection of Women and Children) shows that in 2019 there is a high number of cases of violence to children, which happened to 12.285 children. This number rose in 2020 to 12.425 children, and experienced a significant increase by 2022 with 15.972 children as victims (Silaban, 2023). The cited research by Putri (2008) found that there are two types of violence to children done by educators with an excuse to discipline the children or giving consequences that will educate children. The consequences are done by physical punishment, such as pinching, twisting their ears, asking them to do push-ups, asking them to run around the school field, throwing a stationery at them, asking children...
to stand under the sun at the school field, being slapped or hit, and being kicked. There are also verbal punishments, such as mocking and threatening. All these inappropriate actions gave significant impact to children both physically and psychologically. They give negative experiences both to the victims and to other children who witnessed the actions. Being at school and learning will not be a fun experience any longer for those children.

To uphold the right of children in getting good quality education in a safe environment, UNICEF released a manual of Child Friendly Schools in 2009. “Education is not a privilege that society grants to children; it is a duty that society fulfills towards all children.” (UNICEF 2009). The emphasis of education is on children’s participation in the process of learning both indoors and outdoors. Children should be active participants during the process of learning, where they are welcome to express their thoughts and ideas and the presence of the educators is to facilitate and guide the learning process. The learning should be interactive, where children are given the opportunities to explore, observe, and be involved in discussions. Furthermore, the involvement of children, teachers, parents and community are crucial in establishing Child Friendly Schools.

In Indonesia, Children Friendly School (Sekolah Ramah Anak) was first launched in 2015 by Kementerian Pemberdayaan Perempuan dan Perlindungan Anak (the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection) based on the following concerns: (1). Many schools are still using a teacher-centered approach, where children are passive learners, (2). High case of bullying, (3). High case of violence to children, such as physical, psychological, and sexual abuse, as well as neglect, (4). Negative forms of punishment, such as pinching, yelling, and twisting the children’s ears, (5). Many cases of food poisoning, and (6). Inappropriate school buildings. (Panduan Sekolah Ramah Anak 2015).

Based on the updated guidelines published in 2020, The basic principle of Sekolah Ramah Anak is that schools are able to fulfill children's rights and offer them extra protection, which includes a complaint procedure for resolving issues within the educational unit. SRA must be able to ensure that educational units are able to develop children's interests, talents, and abilities, as well as prepare children to be responsible for life that is tolerant, respectful, and work together to progress with a spirit of peace. There are four concepts of SRA, namely: (1). Changing the paradigm from teacher to mentor, parents, and friends of children. 2. Adults provide role models in everyday life. 3. Ensure adults at school are fully involved in protecting children. 4. Ensure parents and children are actively involved, fulfilling the six components of the SRA. (p.11)

The six components are (1). The policies, (2). educators and educational staff who have been trained on children’s rights and SRA, (3). child-friendly learning process, (4). child-friendly facilities and infrastructure, (5). children’s participation in program planning and as peer educators, (6). the participation of parents, community organizations, business owners, stakeholders, and the alumni.
In his paper, Chasani (2022) mentioned eight concepts of teachers:

a. The most crucial quality a teacher needs to possess is affection, similar to what parents adore for their kids.

b. A teacher should not seek compensation for the laborious work he puts into teaching knowledge because it is a religious duty for every knowledgeable person.

c. In addition to being an honest and upstanding instructor, a good teacher should also serve as a counselor and teacher director for their students.

d. Teachers should use a gentle, understanding approach when conducting lessons; they shouldn't use violence, insults, or other offensive language.

e. A teacher needs to be understanding and open to appreciating the knowledge of others.

f. A good teacher must be able to notice the different potential of his students and be able to address each potential.

g. A good teacher according to Al-Ghazali is the one who understands the different talents and characters possessed by his students.

h. A good teacher is a teacher who adheres to the principles he proclaims and tries to make them happen.

Based on the SRA guidelines, to be eligible to become teachers in an SRA, the candidates must attend training on Konvensi Hak Anak/Convention on Children's Rights (KHA) and on Sekolah Ramah Anak/Children Friendly School (SRA). Learning and teaching process strive to be fun so that children feel comfortable, and the disciplinary process is carried out without humiliation and non-violence. To achieve this, educational institutions need to be creative and innovative. The teachers are not present to teach new concepts to children with textbooks and rote of memorization. Their roles are to become facilitators, mentors, and motivators. As facilitators, teachers need to provide services that help students comprehend the concepts with ease. In order to facilitate a seamless learning process, teachers have an obligation to provide services, infrastructure, and learning resources to their students. To ensure that the implementation of teaching and learning interactions proceeds smoothly and enjoyable, they always play an active role in providing facilities for the process of learning activities, creating goals, interpreting learning activities, and teachers must carry out evaluations and assessments. (Sanjaya, 2008).

Literally, a mentor means someone who provides support, advice, and guidance. As mentors, teachers act to support the students through the learning process, and help students navigate their own learning. To do so, teachers can provide open-ended questions, engage their children in continuous feedback loops, and use scaffolding concepts of instruction (Mashburn et al., 2008; Pianta et al., 2008). Teachers must be able to carry out effective planning and use knowledge while involving students in order to guide them in accordance with learning objectives.

The third role is to become motivators. It refers to the ability in guiding children to receive the process of activities, helping children to
become active and excited and growing their interest in the activities so that the purpose of the activities could be achieved optimally (Fen & Poh, 2015; Umasugi, 2020). As motivators, teachers need to boost students' engagement in the teaching and learning process, giving them support to thrive. They also need to have the ability to observe students' engagement and do reflections based on their observation, in order to provide better-quality learning materials. Teachers must encourage active participation of their students and support their learning needs.

Based on this background, a research is done in a kindergarten in Gianyar – Bali to collect data and have further knowledge about the implementation of teacher roles in children-friendly schools.

2. Methods

The research method used is qualitative, the purpose of this study uses qualitative research so that researchers can describe a phenomenon that occurs such as the role of teachers in child-friendly schools. This type of research uses descriptive qualitative research methods, because to explore information that occurs in the field and describe it as it is in accordance with existing facts that can only be described in writing or words without measurement. This research reveals how the role of teachers as facilitators of Child Friendly Schools in one area of Bali is clearly described and detailed practices in the field.

The type of sampling in this study was purposive sampling. Purposive sampling technique is a technique of determining and taking samples determined by researchers with certain considerations (Sugiyono, 2017). The considerations made in this purposive sampling technique can vary and depend on the needs of the research to be carried out. The sample in this study was 11 teachers with a minimum teaching experience of 5 years.

Data collection techniques in this study used interviews. Interviews were conducted with teachers as the main information in this study regarding the role of teachers in implementing child-friendly schools at the TK Negeri Pembina Gianyar - Bali. The instrument in the interview was made based on the indicators of child-friendly schools. The research was conducted in February 2024, through interviews with google form techniques.

Data analysis in this study was carried out through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, then conclusions (Miles and Huberman). This research uses descriptive qualitative analysis, describing narratively the role of teachers in implementing child-friendly schools supported by evidence from interviews.

3. Result and Discussion

Child-friendly schools are essentially educational units that are able to guarantee, fulfill, respect children's rights and protect children from violence, discrimination and other mistreatment and support children's participation, especially in planning, policies, learning and complaint mechanisms (Talu & De Gomes, 2019).
Based on the facts in the field conducted through interviews, the role of teachers in implementing the Child Friendly School policy is as follows:

1) As a role model for children, by supervising to ensure the protection and fulfillment of children's rights, giving full attention to their education and development. The teacher is the central figure in the world of education. His position cannot be replaced and at the same time becomes a role model for students in particular and society in general. As a role model, the teacher cannot avoid the professional ethics attached to him (Chasani, 2022).

2) Teachers also support and implement activities related to child-friendly schools, so as to create a pleasant and comfortable learning atmosphere in accordance with the concept of child-friendly schools. They are responsible for creating a safe and comfortable school environment, facilitating the development of children's creativity, and providing guidance and a sense of security to learners. Protection of schools that have carried out their duties (Isnawati., et al, 2019).

3) Through this concept, teachers play a role in protecting children in the education process and ensuring the fulfillment of their rights by setting relevant indicators. This is in accordance with the 2020 child-friendly school guidelines which state that the Child-Friendly School Policy is a regional and school commitment in realizing CFS. It is demonstrated in the form of declarations, CFS team decisions, local government decisions and other school policies with a child perspective.

The child-friendly school program is a very good program implemented to protect the rights of the nation's children so that they feel treated fairly without discrimination. In addition, with this program, the character of children will be better and fostered as a qualified and trustworthy successor to the nation. If the character has been formed in accordance with the nation's goals, then in the future this country will be better. Therefore, improving the character of the nation's children must receive more attention from the government and the entire community of a country (Amrina, et al., 2022).

The role of teachers in the Child Friendly School curriculum is to increase children's interest, pay attention to individual needs, be responsible for learning according to a safe and comfortable curriculum, provide examples, plan, implement and evaluate children's development, create an inclusive and child-friendly environment. Developing teaching modules that are easy to understand, creating interesting activities, motivating learners to achieve educational goals, providing freedom to choose activities, and realizing educational services for the community.

Child-friendly schools are programs established to protect the rights that children should receive in general. Children's rights include the right to growth and development, the right to have their opinions heard, the right to identity, the right to worship, the right to education, the right to health services, the right to be cared for by their own...
parents, the right to be protected from cruelty in the field of law and the right to special protection (Batusangkar, 2022).

Teachers also attended training on children's rights as a tangible manifestation of viewing children's rights. The role of teachers and principals is very important in the CFS model so the need for teacher training is a good starting point for making child-friendly schools. Teachers and principals do not only work in these schools; they make the schools child-friendly and maintain the child-friendly nature of the school atmosphere (Fitriani & Qodriah, 2021).

The role of teachers in facilitating child-friendly facilities and infrastructure, especially in the classroom, is to ensure that the room is suitable for children's needs, providing comfort and safety and freedom of movement. Teachers are also responsible for providing teaching aids that match children's interests, providing comfortable tables and chairs, and facilitating the classroom according to children's needs to facilitate learning activities. By making the classroom clean, comfortable and attractive, teachers decorate it with interesting decorations and provide activities that are tailored to children's desires.

In addition, teachers are also responsible for arranging the classroom according to the child, organizing learning activities in accordance with the curriculum and keeping the room clean and organized. This includes providing a comfortable and safe playground and interesting extracurricular activities. Research revealed by Fitriani, 2020, shows that school committees, including teachers, have a significant contribution, especially in helping schools monitor the implementation of child-friendly schools. Teachers have an important role in the classroom because they ensure that everyone respects their own rights and the rights of others to create a positive and conducive school climate and atmosphere, which has a major impact on the development and growth of students.

The teacher's role in involving children as participants in realizing Child Friendly Schools involves children in active learning. One of them invites them to participate in activities such as singing the song “Children's Rights” and yells related to the concept of child-friendly schools. Teachers give freedom to children and ensure their safety in school activities, and teach the importance of non-violence to peers. In addition, teachers give full attention to students' education and development, inviting and motivating them to support the realization of the child-friendly school vision.

Religious values and good manners are also instilled in students. Children are encouraged to keep the school environment clean by doing "gotong-royong" (teamwork) activities every Friday. Through children's participation, they are given the right to express their opinions and have their voices heard, because child-friendly schools are open environments that encourage the growth and welfare of children so that they can develop their potential well. This is evident in research (Nuraeni et al., 2019) that the improvement of early childhood character is significantly influenced by the Child Friendly School program. (Mawaddah & Zaida, 2021) with a good habituation
program, and make the character of students better than before the implementation of child-friendly schools.

Child Friendly Schools (CFS) are democratic environments based on children’s rights, where all students are welcome. The teaching-learning process is organized according to children’s interests and needs. Health, safety and protection measures are in place for children and there is no gender-based discrimination. Preschool education institutions are considered very effective for children's future and society should be child-friendly in this way (Cobanoglu & Sevim, 2019).

The role of teachers in involving parents and even the community as participation in realizing Child Friendly Schools includes various efforts. Teachers invite parents to school meetings and annual activities, and invite them to participate in the arrangement of the school environment, for example by obeying the “no smoking area” rule which is realized through posters. They also invite parents to supervise their children to always apply child-friendly behaviors.

Building harmonious and effective communication relationships with parents is also a focus of teachers, as well as socializing the importance of cooperation and participation in activities such as making school gardens to beautify the school environment. Teachers also invite parents to share about their professions so that children can learn more from the diverse experiences of parents. With the participation of parents and the community, non-violent childcare activities are created, thus encouraging the creation of an ideal Child Friendly School. The community and parents are the spearhead in the implementation of child-friendly schools. Parties who are very close to children's lives should always implement aspects of child-friendly schools in their respective environments (Kristanto. Et al., 2011).

Teachers have the responsibility to communicate regularly with parents/guardians about their children's learning achievements, work with community leaders to find out which children have dropped out and find ways to send them to school; explain the value of Child Friendly Schools to parents and learners, prepare students to interact with the community as part of learning, invite parents/guardians and the community to be involved in the classroom; work with the principal to communicate information about Child Friendly Schools to parents and the community (Cheruto, et al, 2021).

Teachers’ role as facilitators in realizing Child Friendly Schools involves various efforts. They facilitate the children's waiting space at pick-up time by providing playgrounds and play equipment that are safe and appropriate to the students' needs. Teachers also bridge communication between parents, stakeholders and education officers to create a child-friendly school environment. In facilitating activities, teachers provide facilities that facilitate children's learning process and support all activities related to the child-friendly school concept.

A safe and comfortable learning environment is tailored to students' needs, and learning activities are organized in a way that is appropriate to students’ development, so that the interaction of the teaching and learning process can run effectively. PAUD teachers understand the importance of implementing classroom management.
but so far there has been no guidance on how to manage an effective classroom and training in its application. The creation of CFC is believed to be able to help teachers suppress the emergence of bullying behavior in early childhood (Wulan & Fridani, 2021).

The role of teachers as mentors is very important in realizing Child Friendly Schools. They guide children according to their interests through interesting activities that make them happy, and provide protection and guidance in every problem that arises. Teachers help students who experience difficulties in various aspects, including learning, personal, and social, by developing students' potential through creative activities. In addition, teachers also invite children to do activities related to the concept of child-friendly schools, and always accompany and motivate students in learning activities in the classroom.

As mentors, teachers try to give their best in realizing child-friendly schools, providing good guidance and direction so that children always behave well. They also teach how to maintain health, personal hygiene and the environment, as well as fostering brotherhood between friends. Thus, the role of teachers as mentors is very important to fulfill the rights and protection of early childhood, as well as for the success of growth, development and welfare of children. The role of the teacher as a mentor is that the teacher is required to be able to carry out good planning, and the application of knowledge by involving students, so as to direct students in accordance with learning objectives (Sari, et al., 2021).

The role of teachers as motivators is very important in realizing Child Friendly Schools. They direct children according to their interests and continue to motivate themselves through self-development and learning communities. Teachers motivate the entire school community to realize the concept of child-friendly schools, create a fun atmosphere and support children in these activities. They accompany learners, provide feedback and continue to motivate children and parents.

Teachers motivate children to always have good attitudes and behaviors by providing examples of creativity. In addition, teachers also encourage children to improve their learning activities and spiritual intelligence, which will be a valuable provision for their future lives. Regarding parenting patterns, the institution provides care that is in accordance with child-friendly schools, namely without violence, discrimination and fulfillment of children's rights. The care provided is not only nurturing, but also educating, guiding and loving.

There are several obstacles faced in realizing a Child Friendly School at TK Negeri Pemgbina Gianyar. One of them is the lack of funds, given its status as a public kindergarten. In addition, they also experience a lack of awareness and support from parents. To overcome this, they put posters in every corner of the school as a reminder for parents to obey the rules. They also experience problems with inadequate supporting facilities. Their hope is to provide more supportive facilities.

The obstacles they face in familiarizing bad ethical values in students' daily lives in the classroom are overcome by often providing
fairy tales or stories that instill good ethics in students. Although they are still learning the concept of child-friendly schools, they also face obstacles with children who tend to like to play and have difficulty concentrating. The solution is to be patient and calm in dealing with these problems, as well as choosing the right teaching materials according to interests and needs.

With these efforts, TK Negeri Pembina Gianyar continues to strive to realize the ideal Child Friendly School. Significant findings show that the school provides maximum facilities such as clean drinking water, school security systems, well-lit classrooms, student attendance lists, referral of children for treatment due to health problems, parent-teacher meetings, etc. (Saleem, et al, 2020).

4. Conclusion

Teachers in Children-Friendly Schools have various roles to ensure all children in their schools receive the right to study and to be in a fun and safe environment. The role of teachers in realizing Child Friendly Schools covers various aspects, starting from the role in implementing policies and curricula, to involvement with children, parents and the community in efforts to create a friendly educational environment for children. Teachers have also attended training on children's rights, as well as identifying obstacles faced in carrying out this role, along with solutions. Teachers in TK Negeri Pembina Gianyar - Bali have put all their efforts in fulfilling the standard that is required to be a Children-Friendly School by becoming facilitators, mentors, and motivators. They have involved their kindergarten children, parents, school staff, and the community to work hand in hand to establish a children-friendly learning environment.

Children Friendly Schools provide a safe learning environment that benefits children, their parents, and the community. Schools that have been inaugurated as Children-Friendly Schools (Sekolah Ramah Anak) need to keep their good-quality to become role models for other schools. The Indonesian Government needs to intensify the outreach to promote the program of Children-Friendly Schools, such as by providing intensive information through social media, providing trainings and support to school and teachers, as well as conducting continuous evaluation. Thus, there are more schools in Indonesia that are qualified to become Children Friendly Schools.

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References

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