



Analysis of Parenting Activities to Prevent Toxic Parenting in Early Childhood



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Abstrak

Penelitian ini dilatarbelakangi oleh masih ditemukannya pola pengasuhan yang kurang tepat yang dapat berdampak negatif terhadap perkembangan sosial emosional anak. Perilaku toxic parenting, seperti kontrol yang berlebihan, kekerasan verbal, pengabaian emosional, serta kurangnya kasih sayang dapat menyebabkan anak menunjukkan perilaku agresif, kesulitan mengendalikan emosi, rendahnya rasa percaya diri dan hambatan dalam berinteraksi sosial. Oleh karena itu, kegiatan parenting dinilai sebagai cara yang strategis untuk meningkatkan pemahaman orang tua tentang pola asuh yang positif. Dimana tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk menganalisis pelaksanaan kegiatan mencegah Toxic Parenting pada anak usia dini di salah satu Taman Kanak Kanak di Kabupaten Bekasi. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian yang menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus. Dengan subjek penelitian yaitu yang terdiri dari satu kepala sekolah, dua guru dan satu orang tua yang terlibat dalam kegiatan parenting. Teknik pengumpulan data yang dilakukan dalam penelitian ini adalah observasi, wawancara semi terstruktur, dan dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kegiatan parenting dilaksanakan melalui seminar parenting yang dilaksanakan tiap tahun dan sharing sessions yang melibatkan orang tua, guru dan pihak sekolah. Seminar parenting bertema “Emosi Anak Cerminan Emosi Orang Tua” bertujuan meningkatkan pemahaman orang tua mengenai pola asuh positif, pengelolaan emosi, dan pentingnya kolaborasi antara sekolah dan orang tua. Kegiatan parenting terbukti mengembangkan kesadaran orang tua terhadap pola asuh yang sehat, memperkuat komunikasi anatar guru dengan keluarga di rumah, serta mencegah praktik toxic parenting. Dengan demikian, kegiatan parenting dapat menjadi cara yang cukup efektif dalam mendukung perkembangan optimal anak usia dini.

Abstract

This research is motivated by the discovery of inappropriate parenting patterns that can negatively impact children's social-emotional development. Toxic parenting behaviors, such as excessive control, verbal violence, emotional neglect, and lack of affection can cause children to show aggressive behavior, difficulty controlling emotions, low confidence and obstacles in social interaction. Therefore, parenting activities are considered as a strategic way to increase

	parents' understanding of positive parenting. Where the purpose of this study is to analyze the implementation of activities to prevent Toxic Parenting in early childhood in one of the Kindergartens in Bekasi Regency. This research is a research that uses a qualitative approach with a case study design. The research subjects consist of one principal, two teachers and one parent involved in parenting activities. The data collection techniques carried out in this study are observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. The results of the study show that parenting activities are carried out through parenting seminars that are held every year and sharing sessions involving parents, teachers and schools. The parenting seminar themed "Children's Emotions Reflect Parents' Emotions" aims to increase parents' understanding of positive parenting, emotional management, and the importance of collaboration between schools and parents. Parenting activities are proven to develop parents' awareness of healthy parenting, strengthen communication between teachers and families at home, and prevent toxic parenting practices. Thus, parenting activities can be quite effective in supporting the optimal development of early childhood
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INTRODUCTION

Early Childhood is an individual who is in the age range of 0-6 years and is experiencing a period of very rapid growth and development. This period is often referred to as the *golden age* because it is an important period in the formation of cognitive, linguistic, social-emotional, moral, religious, physical, motor, and artistic aspects. During this period, children are very easy to receive various stimuli from the environment that are given will greatly affect the development of children in the next stage.

The family is the first and main environment for children to gain learning experience. Parents have an important role in providing parenting, guidance, protection, and education that supports optimal child development. According to Bronfenbrenner's theory of ecology, a child's development is influenced by the immediate environment that interacts directly with the child, one of which is the family. Therefore, the parenting style applied by parents is an important factor in shaping the character, behavior, and social-emotional development of children (Hamdani, 2013).

However, in the field, there are still many improper parenting methods. Data from the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI) shows that there are still cases of

violence against children that occur in Indonesia (Hidayah, 2024). Both in the form of physical violence, verbal violence, and psychological impacts. One of the things that can cause violence against children is the way parents take care of children that are not good. Parents often do bad things such as scolding their children too harshly, comparing their children to others, ignoring their children's feelings, and putting pressure that is not in accordance with the child's age and development.

The parenting pattern that is detrimental to the child's development is known as *toxic parenting*. *Toxic parenting* is a way for parents to educate their children that has a negative impact on children's mental health, feelings, and social interactions. *Toxic Parenting* can manifest itself through abusive speech, controlling the child too harshly, ignoring the child's feelings, not giving respect to the child, thus giving punishment that does not help the child learn. If done continuously, this behavior can make children feel less confident, have difficulty controlling their feelings, become aggressive, anxious, and even interfere with their relationships with others.

Some studies show that the way parents give *toxic parenting* behavior can affect children's development in the long run. Children who grow up in bad households often experience mental disorders, difficulty interacting with controlling their feelings. This condition is important because social and emotional development is one of the main aspects that must be developed when children are in early age.

In Early Childhood Education, PAUD institutions are not only a place of learning for children, but also a partner for parents in supporting the parenting process (Talango, 2021). The success of children's education is also influenced by the parenting patterns applied at home. Therefore, good cooperation between teachers and parents is needed to create an environment that supports children's growth and development optimally. One form of collaboration that can be done can be done through *parenting activities*.

Parenting activities are programs organized by PAUD institutions to improve parents' knowledge, understanding, and skills in parenting. Through *parenting* activities, parents obtain information about child development, positive parenting, effective communication, and various parenting strategies that suit the needs of early childhood. Parenting activities are also a means of communication between schools and families in solving various problems related to child development.

Several previous studies have shown that *parenting* activities are able to increase parents' understanding of positive parenting and some previous studies have shown that *parenting* activities are able to increase parents' understanding of positive parenting and strengthen family involvement in children's education. However, research that specifically examines the role of *parenting* activities as an effort to prevent toxic *parenting* in early childhood is still limited.

Most studies focus more on the impact of *toxic parenting* or improvements on *parenting* programs in general. Therefore, more in-depth research is needed on how *parenting* activities can play a role in preventing *toxic parenting* in early childhood. Based on this explanation, this study aims to analyze the types of *parenting* activities carried out in PAUD institutions, find out parents' understanding of *toxic parenting*, and identify factors that support and hinder the implementation of *parenting activities*.

The results of this study are expected to be able to contribute to the development of a more effective *parenting* program in supporting the creation of positive parenting and optimal development for early childhood.

METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach method with a case study design. The qualitative approach was chosen because the research aims to deeply understand how parents carry out *parenting* activities in preventing *toxic parenting* in early childhood. The case study design was used to explore the phenomenon that occurred in a certain discussion at an early childhood education institution that was the location of this researcher. The research was carried out in one of the kindergartens in Bekasi Regency. The study subjects consisted of one principal, two teachers, and one money parent actively involved in parenting activities organized by the school.

The data collection technique is carried out by observing, observation is carried out to see firsthand how parenting activities held by schools are running, interviews are conducted semi-structured with school principals, teachers and parents to get information about the types of parenting activities carried out, parents' understanding of toxic parenting, the role of parenting activities in preventing the occurrence of toxic parenting, as well as factors that support and inhibit implementation of activities in preventing these activities. Documentation is carried out as a form of evidence or supporting data in the form of *parenting activities* .

Data analysis uses the Miles and Huberman interactive model which includes four stages, namely data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawn. The validity of the data was carried out through triangulation techniques and source triangulation by comparing the results of observations, interviews, and documentation obtained during the research. Through this process, it is hoped that valid data will be obtained and can comprehensively describe the implementation of *parenting* activities in preventing *toxic parenting* in early childhood.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Forms of Parenting Activities

Based on the results of observations, interviews and documentation, parenting activities at Kindergarten X are held regularly every year as part of a school program that aims to increase parents' insight into parenting. One of the programs that became the focus of the research was a parenting seminar with the theme "Children's Emotions Reflect Parents' Emotions"



Figure 1. Parenting Seminar Poster

The selection of the theme was based on findings in the field that showed that there were still children who showed aggressive behavior, difficulty controlling emotions, and were less able to comply with the rules that apply in the classroom. Activity planning is carried out through coordination between the principal, the foundation, the school committee, and teachers. The preparation stage includes determining the theme, preparing the schedule, forming a committee, technical design of the implementation, and delivering information to parents through school communication media. This seminar presents resource persons who have expertise in the field of education and child development so that the material provided is relevant to the needs of the participants. The findings of this study are in line with Murphy

(2021) who explains that a strong relationship between families and early childhood education institutions can increase their contribution to children's welfare, development, and learning outcomes. The material in the seminar covered various topics about parenting such as a basic understanding of positive parenting that must be given from the womb and the first 1000 days after birth, as well as effective communication and empathy techniques for children, and sharing experiences on how parents educate children without having to use physical or verbal violence. This is in line with Hurlock's theory that good parenting is a parenting style that can stimulate all aspects of development.



Figure 2. Presentation of material by resource persons

In addition to *parenting* seminars, the school also carries out sharing sessions that provide opportunities for parents to discuss various problems faced in childcare. These activities show that *parenting* not only functions as a means of conveying information, but also as a forum for communication and collaboration between schools and families (Hariawan, 2023). The above explanation is the same as the findings of the andragogy concept according to Knowles, namely, the interactive approach is not only theoretically conveying information, but also encouraging the active involvement of parents to better understand and be able to implement the material provided in daily life.



Figure 3. Implementation of parenting *activities* in Kindergarten X

Parents' Understanding of *Toxic Parenting*

The results of the interviews showed that after participating in *parenting* activities, parents had a better understanding of the concept of *toxic parenting*. Before participating in these activities, before participating in the activity, some parents did not realize that some actions such as comparing children, scolding too harshly, giving pressure and ignoring the child's social-emotional needs were included in the form of *toxic parenting behavior*. Through the material presented in the seminar, parents gain an understanding of the importance of managing emotions in the parenting pattern process

Parents are aware that behavior and emotions are part of the parenting process. Parents realize that the behaviors and emotions shown to children will affect the child's social-emotional development (Chairunnisa, 2021). This understanding makes parents more careful in speaking, giving instructions, and dealing with the way children behave on a daily basis. This refers to research by Paccaud (2021) that parental satisfaction with schools increases when there is open and sustainable collaboration between families and educational institutions.

These findings suggest that parenting can be a good learning tool to improve their understanding of how to parenting positively. A good understanding of parenting is the first step to prevent the emergence of *toxic parenting* behavior in the family. In addition, according to Sanders and Mowraska (2021), it is stated that the higher the parents' knowledge about parenting and child development, the better the parenting style provided, on the other hand, if parental care is low, it will affect the child's development which is less than optimal.

In line with Urie Brofenbrenner's theory which explains that children's development and behavior are influenced by the immediate environment, especially the family which plays the role of the child's first microsystem. The interaction that occurs between parents and children at home will affect the emergence of aggressive behavior in children, so that a warm and supportive family environment can help children's social-emotional development become more stable. According to Suryanto (Chairunnisa, 2021), the dynamics of interaction between children in the family can be the main foundation in the process of children's emotional development, so it is important for parents to monitor their children's behavior to avoid toxic parenting.

For example, when a child makes a mistake, parents do not immediately yell but find out first because the child did it. Managing emotions is a sensible step that parents can take in avoiding *toxic parenting* behavior in the family.



Figure 4. Parental enthusiasm

The Role of *Parenting* Activities in Preventing *Toxic Parenting*

The results of the study show that *parenting* activities have an important role in preventing *toxic parenting* in early childhood. Through *parenting* seminars, parents get information about the negative impact of unhealthy parenting on their children's development. Parents are also given an understanding of more positive parenting strategies such as building good communication, providing emotional support and managing emotions when dealing with children's behavior.

With this increased awareness, parents become more reflective of the parenting patterns applied at home. This is in line with the social learning theory of Albert Bandura which explains that children learn through the process of imitating their parents' behavior through what they see and hear from the surrounding environment, especially parents. Because basically children are very fast individuals in copying all good and bad parental behavior. This is in line with the theme raised in the parenting seminar at Kindergarten X, namely "Children's Emotions Reflect Parents' Emotions".

In addition to increasing parents' knowledge, *parenting* activities also strengthen the relationship between school and family. Communication through *parenting* activities allows teachers and parents to work together in monitoring children's development and finding solutions to various problems that arise. Thus, activities play a role as a preventive strategy in reducing the risk of *toxic parenting* while supporting children's social-emotional development optimally. The same is true of Edvoll (2023) research which shows that there

is a positive relationship between parents' emotional regulation abilities and the development of emotion regulation in early childhood.

The results of this study are in accordance with previous research which shows that *parenting* programs can improve parents' ability to take care of children and help form a better environment for children's growth and development. Therefore, the more parents have an understanding of parenting in the family, the less potential parents have in implementing a poor parenting style.

Supporting Factors and Inhibiting Factors in the Implementation of *Parenting Activities*

The implementation of *parenting activities* in Kindergarten X is supported by several factors. The main supporting factor is the full support of the school, foundation, and other schools. In addition, the selection of themes that suit the needs of parents makes participants more enthusiastic in participating in activities. The presence of competent resource persons is also an important factor in improving the quality of *parenting* activities. In addition, there are several inhibiting factors in the implementation of *parenting* activities.

One of the obstacles that is often found is the limited time that parents have, so that at the time of implementation there are several parents who cannot attend. In addition, differences in the level of understanding and educational background of parents also affect the acceptance of materials provided during the activity. However, in general, *parenting* activities in Kindergarten X can be carried out well and provide positive benefits for parents and schools.

Therefore, *parenting* activities need to continue to be carried out on an ongoing basis as one of the efforts to improve the quality of early childhood care and prevent *toxic parenting practices*.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research, *parenting activities* at Kindergarten X are carried out in a planned manner through *parenting seminars* and sharing sessions that are tailored to the needs in the field. The implementation of *parenting* activities does not only function as a means of conveying information, but also as a forum for interaction and collaboration with schools and teachers, as well as presenting competent

resource persons to provide understanding of childcare. The results of the study show that *parenting activities* have an important role in increasing parents' understanding of positive parenting and understanding the impact of *toxic parenting* on child development.

Through these activities, parents become more aware of the importance of managing emotions in the parenting style given, positive communication, and the application of parenting that is in accordance with the needs of children's development. The impact of this increased understanding can be seen in changes in parenting patterns and the development of children's behavior in the school environment. The implementation of parenting activities is supported by the active involvement of the school and the enthusiasm of most parents.

However, there are still several obstacles, such as the presence of parents who are not fully present and technical factors for the implementation of activities that are not flexible. Thus, *parenting* activities can be one of the effective strategies in preventing *toxic parenting* in early childhood at school, as well as strengthening cooperation between schools and families in stimulating optimal child development.

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