International Conferences On Early Childhood Education Proceedings
E-ISSN (Online Media):3032-7288

Parents' Perspectives On The Use Of Verbal Abuse In Disciplining Children Aged 5-6 Years

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ABSTRAK:

From an early age, it is important for parents to teach their children a disciplined lifestyle. In their role as the closest figures to the child, parents bear the responsibility of shaping discipline. Self-discipline is regarded as a valued asset for a child's development, as it can have positive effects throughout their adulthood. The practice of discipline can mold a child's personality to be more organized and strengthen their ability to regulate themselves. The implementation of discipline is often associated with punishment, which can lead to child abuse. Speaking of child abuse, one of the forms that is often overlooked and considered normal is verbal abuse. This study aims to describe parents' perspectives on the use of verbal abuse in disciplining children aged 5-6 years. The type of research used is descriptive qualitative. The method used is a case study. The research location was at Cendekia Pasir Putih Kindergarten Depok, West Java. The research was conducted in May 2023. Data collection using interviews and documentation. Interviews were conducted in depth with six parents. The results showed that parents' understanding of non-violent discipline is still low. Parents tend to believe that discipline and stern reprimands are acceptable without considering the long-term impact on the child's development. The implementation of discipline sometimes still involves using harsh words toward the child

Article History
Received : January, 12, 2025
Accepted : January, 30, 2025
Published Online : June, 30, 2025

Keywords: parents' perspectives, verbal abuse; discipline; child protection

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1. Introduction

Establishing a disciplined mindset during early childhood serves as a child's groundwork for the future (Ayub, 2022). Discipline involves adhering to rules and regulations (Ramadhanti et al., 2023). It is considered a crucial factor for children's success in overcoming challenges and difficulties (Lestari, 2023). The cultivation of self-discipline can contribute to the development of positive behavior in children (Sabartiningsih & Muzakki, 2018). Through discipline, children learn valuable lessons and become individuals with effective self-regulation (Aprilia & Wardhani, 2023). Discipline plays a role in molding children into organized individuals with self-control (Fono et al., 2019). As children grasp the concept of discipline, they naturally adopt disciplined behavior voluntarily (Prima & Lestari, 2018). Additionally, instilling disciplinary behavior from an early age aids children in adapting to their environment in harmony with societal norms and culture, fostering an understanding of right and wrong (Saputri & Widyasari, 2022).

As the closest individuals to the child, parents play a crucial role in developing the child's ability to embrace discipline (Trianasari & Sunaryo, 2022). Unfortunately, there is a tendency for parents to harbor misconceptions about discipline, viewing punishment as a normal aspect of the disciplinary process, which can lead to instances of child abuse (Sulvinajayanti et al., 2021). Discipline is often associated with punishment that may lead to acts of violence against children (Muarifah et al., 2020). Discipline, employed by parents to correct inappropriate behaviors in children, often involves punitive measures or stern actions (Lansford, 2019). Parents and caregivers utilize various forms of discipline, encompassing both aggressive and non-aggressive methods, including physical and psychological aggression (Beatriz & Salhi, 2019; Ward et al., 2022).

Basically, every child has the right to be protected from all forms of violence to ensure optimal development (Risma et al., 2019). The Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified through Presidential Decree No. 36 of 1990, declares that every child has absolute rights that must be fulfilled, including the right to protection from all forms oh discrimination, exploitation, violence, persecution, and neglect (KEPPRES, 1990). The Child Protection Law No. 35

states that child protection encompasses all activities to ensure and safeguard children and their rights, allowing them to live, grow, develop, and participate optimally in accordance with human dignity, while receiving protection from violence and discrimination.

Based on the Global Status Report on Preventing Violence Against Children indicates that half of the global child population undergoes various forms of harm, including physical violence, sexual abuse, psychological violence, injuries, disabilities, and even fatalities (WHO, 2020). Notably, the highest incidence of verbal violence, accounting for 65%, was reported in the Asia-Pacific region (UNICEF, 2014). There were 768 cases of emotional violence against children in Indonesia between January and June 2020 (The Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection, 2020). A survey, focusing on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on Indonesian children in 900 households across various regions, found that 33.8% of children experienced verbal violence (World Vision Indonesia, 2021). According to data, 62% or approximately 39 million children in Indonesia encountered verbal violence from their parents during the pandemic (Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia, 2021). Incidents of psychological violence, including threats and intimidation, against children are increased significantly from 32 cases in 2019 to 119 cases in 2020 (National Commission for Child Protection, 2020). There were a total of 303 reported cases of child victims of physical and psychological violence (Pusdatin KPAI, 2023). The Online Information System for the Protection of Women and Children in the Map of Violence Cases Distribution states that three provinces with the highest cases of violence against children and women are: 1) Riau Islands with a total of 1565 cases, with the highest cases in the city of Pekanbaru at 129 cases, 2) West Java with a total of 1250 cases, and the highest cases in the city of Depok at 259 cases, and 3) DKI Jakarta with a total of 1230 cases (Simfoni-PPA, 2023).

Speaking of child maltreatment or abuse, one form of child abuse frequently overlooked by parents or caregivers is psychological aggression or verbal abuse, sometimes justified under the guise of disciplinary measures. Numerous parents still are unaware that verbal abuse can have more profound effects than physical abuse (Bunga et al., 2022). Psychological disciplinary measures like shouting and using derogatory language have garnered attention due to their detrimental impact on young children (Cuartas, 2021). Verbal abuse, a form of domestic violence often underestimated due to its lack of direct physical repercussions, significantly affects the mental health of children (Fairuzza et al., 2023). Verbal abuse is considered a highly damaging form of violence because it has the potential to cause damage to the development of a child's brain. Its impact is negative on the mental, physical, social, and cognitive abilities of the child (Dye, 2020). Verbal abuse also can result in enduring psychological trauma for children (Sagita et al., 2021). Children who experience verbal abuse from their parents exhibit higher levels of physical aggression, antisocial behavior, and interpersonal difficulties compared to those who do not undergo such mistreatment (Loh et al., 2011). The enduring consequences of brain development have been unveiled in cases of emotional abuse within verbally aggressive parenting patterns (Polcari et al., 2014). The impact of childhood abuse on brain function was examined, and the outcomes indicated that the abuse had repercussions on the control system and was associated with more pronounced developmental declines (Kim- Spoon et al., 2021). Despite the potential negative consequences for children, parents continue to adhere to the belief that employing verbal aggression is an acceptable approach in child- rearing (Bunga et al., 2022).

Parents commonly resort to psychological aggression or verbal abuse, such as making threats, yelling, and scolding, as a means of disciplining their children when they lose emotional control (Rerkswattavorn & Chanprasertpinyo, 2019). Parents frequently resort to speaking in a harsh manner to their children as an emotional reaction when the children fail to meet the behavior standards set by their parents (Nurmalina, 2020). Verbal mistreatment is defined as the use of language or speech with the purpose of causing distress to an individual, which may be perceived as belittling, offensive, threatening, or disrespectful (Howells-Johnson, 2000). There are nine behaviors classified as verbal abuse that parents or caregivers often unintentionally engage in. These are included: a) demeaning and humiliating, b) dismissal, c) blaming, d) exaggerating mistakes, e) making threats, f) condemnation, g) insults, h) unwarranted comparisons, and i) expressing negative expectations (Lilly et al., 2011). Parents commonly employ forms of psychological aggression such as "shouting, yelling, or screaming at children" and using derogatory terms like "stupid, idiot, or lazy" (Dede Yildirim & Roopnarine, 2019; Mackowicz, 2013).

Based on the explanation above, this study aims to discuss the parent's own perspective as follows 1) discussing the parents' perspective on the use of verbal abuse in disciplining children, 2) the forms of parenting approaches in disciplining children..

2. Methodology

This type of research uses descriptive qualitative. The method used is a case study. The type of case study is a single case study in which in this study researchers can describe in detail obtaining a complex and comprehensive picture of the portrait of the real situation, as well as analyzing the sentences obtained from informants. The case study obtained information about the use of verbal abuse in disciplining children aged 5-6 years. Therefore, this research will discuss parents' perspectives on the use of verbal abuse in disciplining children aged 5-6 years. The location of this research is in Cendekia Pasir Putih Kindergarten, Depok. Implementation of research in May 2023. Data collection was obtained through semi-structured interviews and documentation in the form of recordings and photos. The research instrument used was the researcher by holding on to the interview guidelines.

Data were collected through primary and secondary data. Primary data was obtained directly through interviews with six parents. The selection of respondents was carried out by purposive sampling, researchers considered the willingness of Cendekia Pasir Putih Kindergarten and the parents to collaborate during the implementation of this research. Furthermore, secondary data are journal articles and reviews.

Data validity underwent testing through triangulation, employing methods such as check, check-recheck, and cross-check. The analytical approach utilized was an interactive model encompassing several steps: data collection, data condensation, data presentation, and data verification/depiction. The research stages are succinctly outlined as follows:

Table 1 Interview guideline table

No	Aspect	Sub-aspect
1.	Perspective on the use of verbal abuse in disciplining children	How do parents feel when dealing with a difficult to manage child? What kind of offensive words are often spoken when parents cannot control their emotions upon seeing the undisciplined child? Besides using offensive language, have parents ever raised their voice? What about the parents engaging in other forms of aggression, apart from verbal aggression?
2.	Forms of parenting approaches	What challenges do parents face in disciplining the children? How do parents discipline their children every day? How is the parents' understanding of applying discipline to children positively?

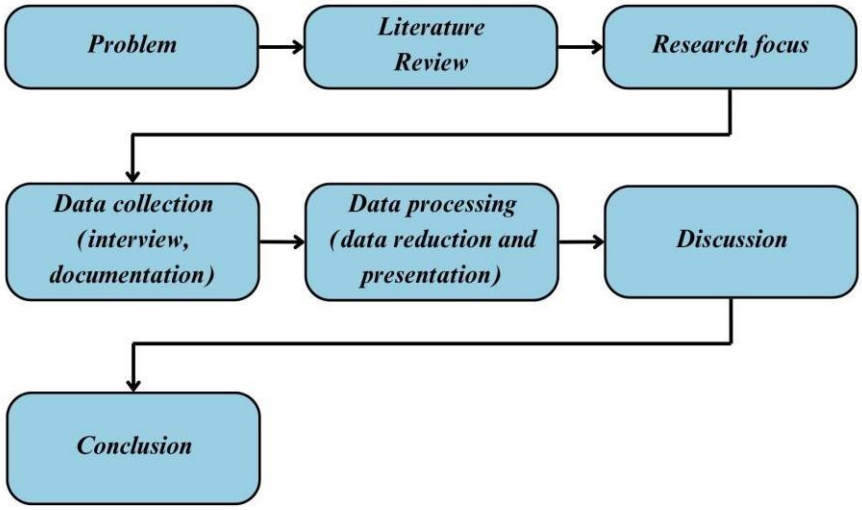


Figure 1: Research Stages

3. Result And Discussion

During this phase, the research questions will be addressed. Subsequently, we will delve into the findings obtained throughout the data collection process. The insights gathered for this study were derived from six parents at Cendekia Pasir Putih Kindergarten in Depok, West Java. The aspects to be presented encompass perspective on the use of verbal abuse in disciplining children and the forms of parenting approaches. Firstly, the interview results with six parents reveal that each parent acknowledges facing the challenge of dealing with a difficult-to- discipline child. When asked about their children's undisciplined behavior, four parents noted experiencing frequent irritation and being overwhelmed, while the other two expressed feelings of anger and exhaustion. It is undeniable that addressing a difficult-to-manage child presents a significant challenge for parents. This is not an easy task as it undoubtedly drains energy, consumes time, and mind. The tendency of children to exhibit challenging and undisciplined behavior also affects how parents control their emotions. When asked about the use of offensive words frequently uttered by parents when dealing with a difficult-to-manage child, two out of the six parents mentioned that the offensive phrases they used were "you're so disrespectful" or "you're really annoying". Although the other four parents stated that they never used offensive language towards their children, all six parents admitted to raising their voices when speaking to their children when the latter refused to follow the rules set by the parents. The next question is about the tendency of parents to resort to other forms of aggression when unable to control their emotions in dealing with a difficult-to-manage child. Four out of six parents admitted that they have engaged in physical aggression towards their children, such as pinching their hands, thighs, or legs, and hitting them either with their hands or a small broomstick, although this tendency is infrequent. However, a common issue encountered is when parents or caregivers who should be nurturing children with love end up engaging in violent actions (Khotimah & Sugito, 2022).

Next, the following aspect concerns forms of parenting approaches. Interview questions focus on the challenges faced when disciplining children. The challenging behaviors commonly encountered by parents involve children being stubborn and resistant to advice. Children tend to grumble and argue with their parents when asked to perform tasks such as waking up, bathing, untidy eating, a child who does not neatly arrange their personal belongings such as shoes, school bags or tidying up their toys. One out of the six parents stated that their child often whines because they want to be bought toys and insists on having their requests always granted. Then, when asked about how parents discipline their children on a daily basis, the three parents mentioned that they often provide advice to their children. They tried to inform and explain to the child about their wrong behavior, although they acknowledged that this was not easy and required continuous effort. A parental approach involving guidance, education, and protection with full love and care is needed for a child to grow and develop an understanding of oneself (Vega et al., 2019). Meanwhile, the other two parents stated that they tend to enforce rules at home and impose consequences when their children violate those rules. Additionally, one remaining parent answered that she often disciplined her children by scolding and shouting at them to get them to comply. In essence, parents acknowledge that engaging in verbal aggression can harm their children; however, they continue to do so as they perceive their children as mischievous, hard to comprehend, and challenging to guide, prompting the need for discipline.

Lastly, statements related to parents' understanding of implementing discipline on children in a positive manner. All six parents responded that they haven't fully grasped how to apply discipline to children effectively and positively. Parents are aware that their knowledge of proper disciplinary methods for children is still lacking. This limited understanding leads parents to unintentionally act aggressively when disciplining their children. Parents tend to unconsciously use offensive language or even resort to physical abuse when dealing with a child who acts beyond the rules. Parents don't even understand the consequences of the violence they commit. They consider it to be a reasonable action to discipline the child. Parents believe that punishment, whether verbal or physical, is deemed effective in changing a child's behavior to become more disciplined. Parents are also not yet aware that the abuse, especially verbal abuse imposed on their children, has long-term negative impacts.

Based on the qualitative descriptive above, the findings reveal that dealing with a difficult-to- discipline child poses a significant challenge for parents. The emotional toll is evident, as parents frequently experience irritation, feelings of being overwhelmed, anger, and exhaustion. Offensive language and raised voices are common responses when children defy established rules, with some parents resorting to physical aggression on occasion. The challenges in disciplining children include stubbornness, resistance to advice, grumbling, arguing, and whining for material desires. Parental approaches vary, with some opting for guidance, education, and protection with love, while others enforce rules or resort to scolding and shouting. Despite the challenges, the study underscores a crucial gap in parents' understanding of effective and positive disciplinary methods. Parents acknowledge their limited knowledge and unintentionally resort

to aggression, believing it to be an effective means of instilling discipline. Importantly, parents are not fully aware of the long-term negative impacts, especially in the case of verbal abuse. In summary, the study sheds light on the complex dynamics of disciplining children, emphasizing the need for improved parental education and support in adopting positive disciplinary strategies

4. Conclusion

The results indicate that, fundamentally, parents want their children to be more disciplined in carrying out their activities and to be able to discern between right and wrong. However, parents do not yet understand the proper implementation of discipline. Most parents express feelings of frustration, anger, fatigue, and overwhelm when dealing with a difficult-to-control child, leading to frequent use of harsh and high-pitched language towards the child. Improper discipline implementation can lead to child abuse, especially verbal abuse, against the child, often unnoticed and considered normal by parents, without understanding the potential long- term consequences. However, parents also need to start understanding the importance of implementing discipline correctly, as it is necessary to protect the child from violence.

5. Acknowledgements

Firstly, gratitude is expressed to the Almighty God for His mercy and blessings. Secondly, immense appreciation is extended to supportive parents. Thirdly, the researcher acknowledges and appreciates the guidance of Dr. Nurbiana Dhieni, M.Psi and Prof. Dr. Elindra Yetti, M.Pd, who consistently offer valuable feedback for the improvement of the manuscript. The completion of this scholarly article is made possible with the support of the Postgraduate Program in Early Childhood Education at the State University of Jakarta. text.

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