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Implementation of Child Protection Law in Elementary Madrasahs: A Qualitative Study of Readiness and Achievements

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Implementation of Child Protection Law in Elementary Madrasahs: A Qualitative Study of Readiness and Achievements

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ABSTRACT

Law Number 35 of 2014 concerning Child Welfare (KUA) mandates that all educational institutions, including madrasahs, implement child protection laws. However, the implementation of this law remains a challenge for many madrasahs, including Madrasah Negeri 2 Karawang. This study aims to describe the readiness of Madrasah Negeri 2 Karawang in implementing child protection laws and its achievements in protecting the children under its supervision. This research employs a descriptive qualitative approach, with data collected through in-depth interviews with the principal, teachers, and administrative staff, as well as observations of madrasah activities. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis. The results show that Madrasah Negeri 2 Karawang has taken several steps to enhance its readiness in implementing child protection laws; however, there are still several obstacles that need to be addressed. Its achievements in protecting children are also still limited, particularly in terms of protection from physical and psychological violence. The implementation of child protection laws still requires further improvement and greater attention from both the madrasah and the government. Training and capacity building for teachers and madrasah staff are also needed to improve their readiness and ability to implement child protection laws. Therefore, this study is expected to contribute to improving the quality of education and child protection in madrasahs, and to serve as a reference for the government, madrasahs, and the community in strengthening the implementation of child protection laws.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Child protection is one of the essential aspects of developing high-quality and equitable human resources. Children, as the next generation of the nation, possess fundamental rights that must be protected and fulfilled, as mandated by Law Number 35 of 2014 concerning Child Protection. This law emphasizes that every child has the right to

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protection from violence, neglect, discrimination, and other forms of mistreatment. Such protection is the responsibility of all parties, including educational institutions, particularly madrasahs as religious-based educational institutions that play a strategic role in shaping children's character and moral values.

Terminologically, according to Hasan Langgulong as cited in [1], an educational institution is a system of regulations that is abstract in nature, a conception consisting of codes, norms, ideologies, and so forth, whether written or unwritten, including material equipment and symbolic organization, as well as groups of individuals intentionally or unintentionally formed to achieve certain goals. The places where these groups implement such regulations include mosques, schools, kuttab, and others. Meanwhile, Mukhlison Effendi, as cited in [2], explains that formal educational institutions are all forms of education organized in schools or specific places in a regular and systematic manner, having structured levels and conducted within a certain period of time, ranging from kindergarten to higher education, based on officially established regulations.

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In Indonesia, madrasahs are educational institutions that are not only oriented toward academic aspects but also instill religious and moral values in their students. As formal institutions recognized by the government, madrasahs are obligated to implement child protection laws in order to create a safe, comfortable, and violence-free learning environment. However, in reality, the implementation of child protection laws within madrasahs still faces various challenges. Several previous studies indicate that although madrasahs already have policies and guidelines related to child protection, their implementation has not been optimal and still shows shortcomings in terms of readiness and effectiveness.

The state bears responsibility for child protection through the enforcement of the Child Protection Law (Law No. 23/2002 as amended by Law No. 35/2014), which serves as one of the legal foundations underlying the obligation of the state, central government, and regional governments to provide facilities, infrastructure, and implementing institutions for child protection. At the regional level, this responsibility is manifested through the establishment of the Office of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection. Article 22 paragraph (2) of Law No. 35 of 2014 states that —The Government and Regional Governments are obliged to provide maintenance, care, and social rehabilitation for neglected children, both within and outside institutions| [3].

According to [4], the protection of children's rights essentially concerns regulatory arrangements in legislation, policies, efforts, and activities that ensure the realization of children's rights protection. This is primarily based on the consideration that children constitute a vulnerable and dependent group, in addition to the existence of children who experience obstacles in their spiritual, physical, and social growth and development. Furthermore, O'Donnell, as cited in [5], adds that the phrase —child protection| refers to protecting children from exploitation, violence, and other forms of abuse. This demonstrates that the objective of child protection is to respect, uphold, and support every child's right to avoid suffering resulting from harmful circumstances. Other children's rights, such as ensuring that children obtain what they need to live, grow, and develop, are complemented by the right to protection.

Gultom, as cited in [6], explains that there are direct and indirect methods of child protection. Children who are the target of protection efforts can be directly reached through activities such as preventing hunger, focusing on children's health, and providing conditions for self-development. These efforts also include educating, guiding, assisting, and safeguarding children from various external dangers.

The purpose of child protection is to ensure the fulfillment of children's rights so that they can live, grow, develop, and participate optimally in accordance with human dignity. It also aims to protect them from violence and discrimination so that they can grow into good, noble, and prosperous individuals [7].

Empirical data show that in Indonesia, cases of violence against children within educational settings remain relatively high. According to data from the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI), in 2022 more than 1,200 cases of violence against children were recorded in various educational institutions, including madrasahs. These cases include physical violence, psychological violence, and neglect. At the local level, Karawang Regency is not exempt from this challenge. Based on reports from the Karawang Regency Office of Education and Culture, several cases related to inappropriate treatment of students have been reported in a number of madrasahs.

In addition, a survey conducted by the Child Protection Agency (LPA) of Karawang Regency in 2021 revealed that the level of understanding among teachers and madrasah staff regarding child protection laws remains relatively low. Approximately 65% of respondents admitted that they did not fully understand the provisions of child protection law and how to implement them in daily activities within the madrasah. This indicates the need to enhance the capacity and knowledge of educators and madrasah administrators to effectively implement child protection policies.

Furthermore, preliminary observations indicate that although madrasahs have written policies regarding child protection, their implementation in practice has not fully met expectations. Several obstacles identified include the lack of specialized training on child protection, insufficient socialization to students and parents, and the absence of a structured and transparent reporting and incident-handling system.

This condition is concerning because madrasahs play a vital role in shaping children's character and providing comprehensive protection. If the implementation of child protection laws is not optimal, the potential for violence and violations of children's rights will increase, which would harm children's future and undermine the vision of educational institutions as safe, comfortable, and dignified environments.

Based on a review of literature and previous studies on the implementation of child protection laws in educational settings, several aspects require specific examination within the context of madrasahs. Previous studies have generally focused on the national level or major urban areas such as Jakarta, Surabaya, and Bandung. For example, research by [8] indicates that although the policy has been implemented properly, obstacles remain in terms of human resources and funding. Limitations in staffing and budget pose challenges in achieving optimal child protection. Nevertheless, community participation through the Integrated Community-Based Child Protection Program (PATBM) and collaboration with various stakeholders have increased public awareness of child violence issues. The study

emphasizes the importance of continuous socialization and resource enhancement for the future success of child protection policies.

Similarly, research by [9] shows that policy implementation has been supported by inter-agency collaboration and parental participation. However, challenges persist, such as limited facilities and infrastructure, unequal distribution of educator training, and the absence of case-handling teams in some schools. Coordination among agencies and proactive implementers serve as supporting factors, but communication between schools and parents still needs to be strengthened. In this regard, policy effectiveness can be enhanced through capacity building, equitable distribution of facilities, establishment of special teams in each school, strengthening child-friendly school programs, and consistent monitoring and evaluation.

From these studies, it is evident that limited attention has been given specifically to public madrasahs in certain regions such as Karawang Regency. Research on the implementation of child protection laws in public madrasahs located in suburban or rural areas remains minimal. In fact, the characteristics of madrasahs in these areas tend to differ from those in major cities in terms of culture, resources, and the understanding of child protection laws among communities and educators.

Therefore, this study is expected to fill this gap by providing a comprehensive and in-depth empirical description of the implementation of child protection laws at Madrasah Negeri 2 Karawang, as well as the factors influencing its success at the local and contextual levels.

Based on the above background, an in-depth study on the implementation of child protection law is necessary. This research aims to examine the extent of the madrasah's readiness in implementing child protection law, the supporting and inhibiting factors, and the measures undertaken to achieve optimal protection for students. The findings of this study are expected to serve as a reference for policy development, capacity building of educators, and the empowerment of all madrasah stakeholders in creating a safe learning environment that comprehensively protects children's rights.

2. METHOD

According to Rahardjo, as cited in [10], a research method is a way of obtaining and seeking truth that is tentative in nature, not absolute truth. The result is scientific truth. Scientific truth is open to continuous testing, criticism, and even revision. Therefore, there is no single best method for seeking truth; rather, there is an appropriate method for specific objectives in accordance with the existing phenomena. Budiharto, as cited in [11], states that the selection of a research method must be adjusted to the research being conducted in order to achieve optimal results.

The type of research used in this study is a descriptive method. According to [12], descriptive qualitative research is an intensive examination focused on a particular object, studying it as a specific problem. In this study, it is used to explore in depth the analysis of the Implementation of Child Protection Law in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah.

2 The approach used in this research is a qualitative approach. Bogdan and Taylor, as
2 cited in [13], state that a qualitative approach is a research procedure that produces
3 descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from people and observable
3 behavior. According to [14], the process involves transcribing data, coding field notes, and
3 interpreting the data to obtain conclusions.

This research employs qualitative research with a field research method. According
to [15], this approach is aligned with the main objective of the study, namely to describe
and analyze the Implementation of Child Protection Law in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah. Thus,
this method is able to explain the research problems effectively [16].

1 Bungin, as cited in [17], explains that descriptive qualitative research aims to
1 describe social situations, conditions, or phenomena existing in society, which are then
1 used as research objects, and attempts to bring reality to the surface as a model or depiction
1 of a particular condition or situation. This study aims to provide a description of the
1 Implementation of Child Protection Law in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah.

3 Determining appropriate data collection techniques greatly influences the scientific
3 validity of a study. The data collection techniques used in this research are observation,
3 interviews, and documentation.

Technique can be viewed as a means of carrying out technical work carefully using
reason to achieve objectives. Although research is essentially an effort within the scope of
science, it is conducted to systematically collect realistic data in order to establish truth.
Research methodology is a means of finding solutions to any problem. In this case, the
author collected information regarding the analysis of the Implementation of Child
Protection Law in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah from articles, journals, undergraduate theses,
graduate theses, e-books, and other sources [18].

13 Because it requires materials from libraries as data sources, this study also utilizes
13 library research. The researcher requires books, scientific articles, and other literature
13 related to the topic and issues being explored, both in print and online [19].

1 Seeking information from data sources requires the use of data collection
1 techniques. Amir Hamzah, as cited in [20], argues that data collection is an effort to gather
1 information related to the subject being studied. The author uses the library research
1 method to collect data. Specifically, the author begins with library research to gather
1 information from books, dictionaries, journals, encyclopedias, papers, periodicals, and
1 other sources that provide perspectives on the Implementation of Child Protection Law in
1 Madrasah Ibtidaiyah.

Furthermore, Amir Hamzah states that data collection refers to various efforts to
gather facts related to the topic or discussion being explored [21]. Such details can be
found in scientific literature, research reports, scholarly writings, dissertations, theses, and
other written sources. According to [22], data collection can be carried out under various
conditions, using different sources and techniques.

Observation is part of the research process conducted directly on the phenomena
being studied [23]. Through this method, researchers can directly see and experience the
atmosphere and conditions of the research subjects [24]. The aspects observed in this study

13 concern the analysis of the Implementation of Child Protection Law in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah.

2 The interview technique used in this research is structured interviews, namely interviews conducted using standardized guidelines that have been predetermined. The questions are arranged according to the required information, and each question is designed to reveal empirical data [25].

2 Documentation is one of the data collection techniques through existing documents or written records [26]. Documentation derives from the word —document meaning written materials. In applying the documentation method, researchers examine written objects such as books, magazines, meeting minutes, and daily notes. According to Moleong, as cited in [27], the documentation method is a way of collecting information or data through examining archives and documents. Furthermore, according to [28], the documentation strategy is also a data collection technique directed at research subjects. The use of the documentation method in this study aims to obtain data about the condition of the institution (the research object), namely the analysis of the Implementation of Child Protection Law in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah.

1 Moleong, as cited in [29], explains that the collected data are analyzed using an interactive analysis model consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Syarifah et al., as cited in [30], explain that data reduction is carried out by filtering relevant information, data presentation is conducted in a systematic narrative form, and conclusions are drawn based on the research findings. To ensure data validity, this study uses source triangulation, namely comparing information from different informants. According to Moleong, as cited in [31], source triangulation helps enhance the validity of research results by comparing various perspectives on the studied phenomenon.

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1 According to Muhadjir, as cited in [32], data analysis is the activity of organizing, searching, and systematically arranging field notes obtained through observation and interviews so that researchers can focus on the subject under study. The findings are then prepared for others by editing, classifying, and presenting them. The data validity technique uses triangulation of techniques and sources. Data analysis employs the Miles and Huberman model, as cited in [33], which consists of data collection, data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Findings

11 The findings of this study provide a comprehensive overview of the level of readiness, implementation practices, and obstacles encountered in the implementation of child protection law. Empirical data obtained from in-depth interviews, direct observation, and documentation indicate that although the madrasah demonstrates commitment to implementing child protection, its implementation still faces several significant challenges.

Madrasah Readiness and Policy on Child Protection

31 Based on interviews with the head of the madrasah and teaching staff, it was found that the madrasah has developed written policies related to child protection, which are

outlined in guidebooks and standard operating procedures (SOPs). These policies include regulations concerning protection from physical and psychological violence, incident handling procedures, and reporting mechanisms. In addition, the madrasah has conducted internal socialization sessions for educators and staff regarding the importance of child protection, although their level of understanding of the detailed legal framework varies.

However, direct field observations show that the level of physical readiness and supporting infrastructure remains limited. Counseling rooms and incident reporting systems, for example, are not yet adequate or systematically integrated. Only a few educators fully understand the procedures for reporting and handling cases of violence against students.

Implementation in Practice

In general, the implementation of child protection in this madrasah remains partial and not yet comprehensive. Observation and interview data reveal that most teachers and staff claim to have attempted to implement child protection policies, such as reminding students to maintain proper conduct and following up on reports of physical violence occurring within the madrasah environment.

In practice, however, implementation remains largely reactive rather than proactive. Many teachers acknowledge that they lack sufficient understanding of how to conduct early identification of potential violence or inappropriate behavior. Some students reported being afraid to report incidents of violence due to concerns about sanctions or being perceived as exaggerating.

Furthermore, the current incident reporting system is not fully effective. Reports of violence and inappropriate treatment are still recorded manually and are not centralized, making monitoring and evaluation difficult. According to documented records, in the past six months there were approximately eight cases of physical violence and three cases of discriminatory treatment reported. These reports were responded to promptly and effectively by the madrasah authorities, yet systemic improvements are still required.

Experiences of Teachers and Staff in Child Protection

Interviews with teachers and staff indicate that most of them feel less confident in addressing and handling cases of violence against students. They cited the lack of training and limited understanding of child protection law as major obstacles. One teacher stated, —I know there are child protection regulations, but I do not fully understand how to handle certain cases and what specific steps I should take.¶

They also emphasized the need to enhance capacity in communication and mediation skills in order to provide comprehensive protection without creating fear among students or parents during the handling of child protection cases.

Obstacles and Supporting Factors

Based on the collected data, the main obstacles in implementing child protection at the madrasah include:

1. Lack of continuous training and socialization regarding child protection law.
2. Limited supporting facilities such as counseling rooms and transparent reporting systems.

3. Insufficient supervision and evaluation from the government regarding the enforcement of child protection policies.

Meanwhile, the supporting factors include:

1. A strong commitment from the head of the madrasah to protect children's rights.
2. The existence of written policies and established guidelines.
3. Increasing awareness and support from parents regarding the importance of child protection.
4. Active participation of students in expressing their complaints and experiences.

Based on the empirical data obtained, it can be concluded that the implementation of child protection law in the madrasah is still in its early stage and requires substantial improvement. Although policies and institutional commitment are already in place, practical implementation has not yet been optimal due to various obstacles, including insufficient training and limited facilities. Therefore, sustained efforts from all stakeholders—government, madrasah, parents, and the community—are necessary to strengthen capacity, systems, and a culture of child protection so that children's rights are genuinely safeguarded and the learning environment becomes safe, comfortable, and supportive of optimal development.

Discussion

The implementation of Child Protection Law within educational environments, including madrasahs, is a crucial component in ensuring that children's rights are protected and that a safe, comfortable, and development-supportive learning environment is established. Through theoretical review and previous research, various factors influencing the success or failure of child protection policy implementation, as well as field challenges, can be identified.

Theoretically, child protection refers to the fundamental rights inherent to every child in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and Law Number 35 of 2014 concerning Child Protection. These rights include the right to life, growth and development, protection from violence and abuse, and the right to participation. Implementation in educational settings must ensure the fulfillment of these rights through supportive policies, systems, and institutional culture.

According to theorists such as James and James [34], the success of child protection policy implementation largely depends on institutional commitment, available resources, educators' capacity, and active stakeholder participation. They emphasize that success depends not only on the existence of written policies but also on effective implementation processes and the establishment of a protective culture within the educational environment.

Furthermore, policy implementation theory developed by Pressman and Wildavsky [35] states that policy execution often encounters obstacles related to communication, resource limitations, and cultural resistance. Therefore, successful implementation requires effective communication strategies, continuous training, and the strengthening of a child protection culture embedded across all institutional components.

Research by [8] indicates that although formal child protection policies have been established, a gap often exists between policy and practice. A primary inhibiting factor is the lack of educator training and transparent reporting systems. This finding aligns with the

situation at Madrasah Negeri 2 Karawang, where educators' understanding of child protection policies remains limited and incident reporting systems are not yet optimal.

35 Additionally, research by [36] reveals challenges such as limited teacher training in child protection, insufficient parental participation, and weak reporting systems for violations of children's rights. Although schools may demonstrate strong commitment, further efforts are required to ensure more effective and sustainable protection of children's rights.

Research by [37] highlights the critical role of training and socialization in enhancing teachers' child protection capacity. Without adequate understanding, teachers face difficulties in effectively implementing policies. In the context of Madrasah Negeri 2 Karawang, observations indicate that training activities have not been continuous nor comprehensive in addressing all crucial aspects of child protection.

Moreover, research by [38] explains that effective reporting systems must ensure speed, transparency, and accountability. Although the reporting system at Madrasah Negeri 2 Karawang has functioned relatively well, further innovation and system enhancement are necessary to improve responsiveness to incidents of violence and inappropriate conduct.

11 From the theoretical review and previous studies, it can be concluded that the implementation of child protection in educational environments depends not only on formal policies but also on institutional culture, educator capacity, reporting systems, and stakeholder support. In the context of Madrasah Negeri 2 Karawang, these factors still present tangible challenges requiring strategic solutions.

Overall, theoretical studies and previous research emphasize that the success of implementing child protection law in madrasahs is influenced by both internal and external factors. Internal factors include educators' capacity and understanding, reporting systems, and organizational culture. External factors include community culture, parental and governmental support, and the availability of facilities.

Experiences and findings from previous research suggest that improving the effectiveness of child protection at Madrasah Negeri 2 Karawang requires enhanced capacity through continuous training, strengthened reporting systems, and efforts to build a protective culture involving all layers of the madrasah community and surrounding society. Without integrated and contextual efforts, the implementation of child protection policies will struggle to achieve maximum effectiveness, leaving children's rights vulnerable to violations.

4. CONCLUSION

8 Based on the findings of the study on the implementation of Child Protection Law, it can be concluded that, in general, child protection policies have been recognized and efforts have been made by the madrasah to implement them. However, in the implementation process, several obstacles remain that hinder the optimal protection of children's rights. These obstacles include the limited in-depth understanding of child protection policies among educators, as well as reporting systems that are not yet fully effective and transparent.

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In addition, inadequate supporting facilities and the lack of continuous training for educators are factors affecting the effectiveness of policy implementation. Nevertheless, various efforts have been undertaken by the madrasah and related institutions to increase awareness and knowledge among all members of the madrasah community regarding the importance of protecting children's rights.

The results of this study indicate that the success of implementing child protection policies within the madrasah environment is strongly influenced by both internal and external factors. Therefore, sustained efforts are required from all stakeholders, including the madrasah, government, community, and parents, to strengthen the protection system and build a culture that supports children's rights.

Thus, it is expected that children's rights can be fully protected and that the madrasah learning environment becomes a safe, comfortable, and supportive place for the optimal growth and development of students.

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