

## A Comprehensive Analysis of School-Based Support for Children with ADHD and Oppositional Defiant Disorder: Insights from Parental Perceptions

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**ABSTRACT:** Children with behavioral disorders, such as ADHD and oppositional defiant disorder, face significant academic and social challenges in primary schools. This study examines parents' perceptions of educational support for these children, highlighting the adequacy of existing programs and the challenges faced in accessing essential services. Using a qualitative case study approach, in-depth interviews were conducted with parents, teachers, and students in Jakarta. The findings reveal that while some schools attempt to provide support, gaps remain in specialized interventions, teacher training, and communication between parents and educational institutions. Parents reported difficulties in obtaining necessary resources and felt inadequately included in decision-making processes regarding their children's education. Teachers also struggled due to limited institutional guidance on managing behavioral disorders. The study underscores the importance of tailored interventions, improved teacher training, and enhanced parental involvement in educational policymaking. The findings contribute to the broader discourse on inclusive education and emphasize the necessity for structured, evidence-based strategies to support children with behavioral disorders. Policymakers and educators must work collaboratively to implement policies that enhance accessibility and inclusivity in primary education. Future research should assess the long-term impact of intervention programs and explore ways to strengthen the partnership between schools and families.

**Keywords:** Behavioral Disorders; Inclusive Education; Parental Perceptions; Teacher Training; ADHD Support.



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## INTRODUCTION

The inclusion of children with behavioral disorders in mainstream education is a fundamental aspect of inclusive education policies worldwide. Behavioral disorders, such as Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD), significantly impact children's academic performance and social interactions in school settings (Bierman et al., 2013;

Zendarski et al., 2018). These children often struggle with attention, impulse control, and emotional regulation, making it difficult for them to adapt to structured educational environments (Singh et al., 2022). Schools play a critical role in providing structured interventions that foster both academic success and social development (Claussen et al., 2018; Miller et al., 2024; Paseka & Schwab, 2019). However, the effectiveness of these interventions is contingent upon well-trained educators, institutional policies, and the active involvement of parents (Liber et al., 2013; McIntyre et al., 2023).

In recent years, research has increasingly emphasized the need for comprehensive support systems in schools to accommodate children with behavioral disorders (Paseka & Schwab, 2019; Rivard et al., 2021). While various intervention models exist, including Positive Behavior Support (PBS) and Prevent-Teach-Reinforce (PTR) strategies, the success of these interventions largely depends on teacher training, school policies, and parental collaboration (Estes et al., 2019; Latzer et al., 2021). Despite these frameworks, many schools still struggle to effectively integrate children with behavioral disorders into their academic and social environments due to inadequate resources and limited teacher preparation (Kaur et al., 2024; Kopańska et al., 2022; Singh et al., 2022). This has resulted in significant disparities in educational outcomes, with children with behavioral disorders often experiencing lower academic achievement and higher rates of social exclusion (Catroppa et al., 2023; Ormel & VonKorff, 2024).

One of the primary challenges faced by children with behavioral disorders in educational settings is the lack of individualized support tailored to their specific needs (McIntyre et al., 2023; Zendarski et al., 2018). Teachers often report feeling ill-equipped to manage disruptive behaviors and to implement specialized teaching methods that could enhance these children's learning experiences (Bierman et al., 2013). Furthermore, inconsistent disciplinary measures in schools may exacerbate behavioral issues rather than provide constructive behavioral management (Liber et al., 2013). Schools frequently lack the infrastructure and training necessary to accommodate these children, leaving parents to seek alternative interventions independently (Singh et al., 2022; Rivard et al., 2021).

Parental involvement has been identified as a crucial factor in supporting children with behavioral disorders in school settings (McIntyre et al., 2023; Liber et al., 2013). Studies suggest that when parents actively participate in their child's education, they contribute to improved academic and social outcomes (Zendarski et al., 2018; Latzer et al., 2021). However, many parents of children with behavioral disorders face barriers in engaging with schools, including lack of communication with teachers, limited school support systems, and inadequate resources to address their child's unique needs (Estes et al., 2019; Paseka & Schwab, 2019). As a result, parents often feel marginalized and struggle to advocate for their children within the education system (McIntyre et al., 2023).

While some studies have explored interventions designed to support children with behavioral disorders, fewer have examined the direct perceptions of parents regarding the effectiveness of educational support systems (Rivard et al., 2021; Singh et al., 2022). Understanding parental perspectives is critical in identifying gaps in current educational policies and designing more

effective interventions that align with the needs of children with behavioral disorders (Liber et al., 2013). A key aspect of successful intervention programs is the integration of parental insights into policy development, allowing for a more holistic approach to supporting these children (Bierman et al., 2013; McIntyre et al., 2023).

Although government policies in many countries mandate inclusive education for children with special needs, the actual implementation varies significantly between institutions (Zendarski et al., 2018; Singh et al., 2022). Countries with well-established inclusive education frameworks, such as Finland and Australia, have demonstrated that providing teacher training, individualized learning plans, and collaborative partnerships with parents can significantly improve educational outcomes for children with behavioral disorders (Bierman et al., 2013; Ormel & VonKorff, 2024). However, in many other contexts, inclusive education remains underdeveloped due to systemic barriers such as lack of funding, inadequate teacher training, and resistance to policy changes (Singh et al., 2022; Rivard et al., 2021).

The present study aims to investigate parents' perceptions of the educational support available for children with behavioral disorders in primary schools. By focusing on parental experiences, this study seeks to highlight the challenges faced in accessing appropriate support and to identify areas for policy improvement. Furthermore, this study contributes to the literature by emphasizing the role of parental collaboration in enhancing educational interventions for children with behavioral disorders (Hobson et al., 2022; Maddox et al., 2020; Mahmudiono et al., 2018; Raspa et al., 2017). The findings of this research are expected to inform educators, policymakers, and stakeholders about the existing gaps in inclusive education and the steps necessary to foster a more supportive learning environment for children with behavioral disorders (Doroudchi et al., 2023; Jones et al., 2019; Mercier et al., 2022).

## **METHOD**

This study employed a qualitative research approach using a case study methodology to explore parents' perceptions of educational support for children with behavioral disorders in primary schools. A qualitative approach was chosen due to its ability to provide in-depth insights into the lived experiences of parents, children, and educators, allowing for a nuanced understanding of the challenges and opportunities within inclusive education (Scibelli et al., 2021).

The study was conducted in Jakarta, Indonesia, involving ten parents of children diagnosed with behavioral disorders, five primary school teachers, and five children enrolled in special educational support programs. Participants were selected through purposive sampling, ensuring that they met the criteria of having children diagnosed with behavioral disorders and being actively engaged in their children's education. This method ensured the inclusion of diverse perspectives and experiences related to educational support and challenges (Dever et al., 2016).

Data collection was carried out through in-depth, semi-structured interviews, allowing for flexibility in responses while ensuring that all key themes were explored (Cook et al., 2021). The interview guide was developed based on a thorough literature review and preliminary observations,

covering aspects such as parental perceptions of educational support, accessibility challenges, and parental involvement in school-based interventions. The semi-structured nature of the interviews enabled the researchers to probe deeper into specific issues while maintaining consistency across participant responses (McIntyre et al., 2023).

Additionally, focus group discussions (FGDs) were conducted with teachers and parents to facilitate interactive discussions, uncovering shared challenges and potential strategies for improving educational support for children with behavioral disorders (Dever et al., 2016). FGDs allowed participants to reflect on their experiences collectively, leading to the emergence of new insights that might not have surfaced in individual interviews. This approach has been widely recommended in educational research for its ability to capture group dynamics and consensus on critical issues (Latzer et al., 2021).

Observational data were also collected in classroom settings to assess the interactions between children with behavioral disorders, their peers, and teachers. The researchers recorded behaviors, instructional strategies, and teacher responses to student behaviors, which provided an additional layer of data triangulation (Xie et al., 2023). Observations were conducted over a three-month period, ensuring that findings were not limited to single-instance events but reflected recurring patterns within the educational environment.

Data analysis was conducted using Thematic Analysis, as proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006), allowing for the identification of key patterns and themes across interviews, FGDs, and observational data. The analysis followed a six-step approach: familiarization with data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the final report. Each transcript was carefully coded to identify emerging patterns related to parental perceptions, school policies, and behavioral management strategies (Scibelli et al., 2021).

To ensure the credibility and reliability of the findings, multiple validation techniques were employed. Triangulation was conducted by cross-referencing data from interviews, FGDs, and classroom observations, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the research questions (Dever et al., 2016). Member checking was also used, where participants were invited to review and validate the transcriptions and interpretations of their interviews, reducing potential biases in data interpretation (Powell & Parish, 2016). Additionally, peer debriefing was carried out among the research team to discuss emerging themes and verify consistency in data interpretation (McIntyre et al., 2023).

Ethical considerations were strictly adhered to, ensuring the protection of participants' rights and well-being throughout the study. Informed consent was obtained from all participants before data collection, with clear explanations of the study's purpose, procedures, and potential risks (Alias et al., 2020). Parents provided consent for their children's participation, and confidentiality measures were implemented to protect participant identities. Pseudonyms were used in transcriptions and reports to maintain anonymity (Scibelli et al., 2021). The study also received approval from the relevant institutional ethics review board, ensuring compliance with ethical standards for research involving human participants (Zendarski et al., 2018).

Overall, the methodological framework employed in this study ensured a robust and ethical approach to exploring parental perceptions of educational support for children with behavioral disorders. The combination of interviews, FGDs, and classroom observations provided a holistic view of the challenges and opportunities in inclusive education. The use of Thematic Analysis facilitated a systematic and transparent approach to data interpretation, contributing to the reliability and validity of the findings (Latzner et al., 2021). Future research may build upon this methodology by incorporating longitudinal studies to track changes in parental perceptions and educational support over time, further enriching the understanding of inclusive education for children with behavioral disorders.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

This section presents the key findings regarding parental perceptions of educational support for children with behavioral disorders in primary school. The results are organized according to the main themes identified through thematic analysis, including parental perspectives on educational support, challenges in accessing educational services, parental involvement in their child's education, teachers' perspectives on teaching children with behavioral disorders, and the experiences of children with behavioral disorders in school. The findings are supported by verbatim interview quotes from parents, teachers, and children, providing deeper insights into their experiences and perspectives.

### **3.1 Parental Perceptions of Educational Support**

Parents of children with behavioral disorders expressed diverse views on the effectiveness of educational support programs provided by schools. While some parents appreciated the support their children received, others highlighted significant gaps in the system. Parents noted that many teachers lacked an adequate understanding of behavioral disorders, which affected how their children were treated in school. One parent described their experience:

"The school tries to help, but the teachers seem unsure of how to handle my child. Sometimes, they reprimand him harshly, which only makes things worse." (N.)

This concern aligns with previous research indicating that schools often struggle to implement effective interventions for children with behavioral disorders (Thompson et al., 2022). Many parents believed that additional training for teachers would improve the support provided to their children. Furthermore, some parents reported that while their child's school had support programs, these were not sufficiently individualized to address their child's specific needs.

### **3.2 Challenges in Accessing Educational Services**

Parents also faced numerous barriers when attempting to access educational support services for their children. These challenges included limited availability of specialized services, financial constraints, and a lack of clear communication from schools. One parent expressed frustration about the difficulty in securing appropriate educational accommodations:

"There is no dedicated support teacher, which is a major issue. I had to hire a therapist outside of school, which is costly and inconvenient." (F.)

Research by Rivard et al. (2021) supports this finding, indicating that while some schools provide behavioral interventions, the availability and accessibility of such services remain inconsistent. Additionally, parents highlighted bureaucratic hurdles when trying to obtain assistance. Another parent stated:

"I have had to explain my child's condition repeatedly to different school officials, yet nothing changes. It feels like my concerns are not taken seriously." (L.)

These challenges emphasize the need for systemic changes to ensure that all children with behavioral disorders receive equitable access to educational support.

### **3.3 Parental Involvement in Education**

Parental involvement emerged as a crucial factor in supporting children with behavioral disorders. Many parents actively engaged with teachers and adapted home learning environments to accommodate their child's needs. One parent shared their approach:

"I created a special learning schedule for my child, allowing frequent breaks and using visual learning methods to keep him engaged." (M.)

Despite their efforts, parents often felt excluded from critical decision-making processes in schools. A parent described their frustration:

"I communicate with my child's teacher once a month, but I wish there were more frequent updates. I often feel left out of important decisions." (S.)

These findings align with research by Dever et al. (2016), which highlights the importance of collaboration between schools and parents in improving educational outcomes for children with behavioral disorders. Strengthening parent-teacher partnerships could help bridge gaps in support and communication.

### **3.4 Teachers' Perspectives on Teaching Children with Behavioral Disorders**

Teachers reported facing significant challenges in managing classrooms with children exhibiting behavioral disorders. Many acknowledged that they lacked formal training in handling these students effectively. One teacher expressed their concerns:

"I have been teaching for 15 years, and dealing with children with ADHD and oppositional behavior is incredibly challenging. Maintaining a conducive classroom environment is difficult." (D.)

Teachers also noted that they often relied on personal experience rather than institutional guidance. One teacher explained:

"There is no clear school policy on how to support these children. We try our best, but without proper training, it's tough." (A.)



Previous studies (Zendarski et al., 2018) indicate that without adequate professional development, teachers struggle to implement effective behavioral strategies, leading to inconsistent support for students. Many teachers suggested that schools should provide structured training programs and additional classroom resources to better address these challenges.

### **3.5 Children's Experiences in School**

Children with behavioral disorders shared mixed experiences regarding their school environment. Some felt accepted and supported, while others described feelings of isolation and frustration. One child noted:

"I like school, but when I get scolded all the time, I don't want to be there anymore." (R.)

Another child shared their desire for a more accommodating environment:

"I wish there were more play areas, and that teachers would be more patient with me when I forget to stay still." (K.)

These sentiments align with findings from Bethell et al. (2016), which indicate that children with behavioral disorders often struggle with social integration in school settings. Many children reported experiencing peer exclusion, reinforcing the need for inclusive school policies and social skills training programs.

The findings of this study highlight the need for comprehensive support systems for children with behavioral disorders. Parents, teachers, and students all identified key areas for improvement, including better teacher training, increased parental involvement, and enhanced school policies to foster inclusive learning environments. Addressing these concerns through policy changes and increased support structures will be crucial in improving educational experiences for children with behavioral disorders.

This section discusses the key findings of the study in relation to existing literature and theoretical frameworks. The discussion is organized under thematic subheadings corresponding to the research results, including parental perceptions of educational support, challenges in accessing services, parental involvement in education, and perspectives of teachers and children with behavioral disorders. The study's limitations and implications for future research and policy are also addressed.

### **4.1 Parental Perceptions of Educational Support**

The study reveals that parents have mixed perceptions regarding the effectiveness of educational support for children with behavioral disorders. Some parents acknowledge that schools provide essential support, yet many express dissatisfaction due to a lack of specialized assistance, such as dedicated special education teachers or behavioral therapists. This aligns with Thompson et al. (2022), who found that many parents believe that schools lack an adequate understanding of their children's needs, resulting in inconsistent educational accommodations.

Parents in this study emphasized the necessity for individualized intervention plans that address both academic and social development. However, research by Xie et al. (2023) suggests that while existing support programs provide some benefits, they often fail to address all aspects of

behavioral challenges. This discrepancy may be attributed to insufficient communication between parents and educators, leading to gaps in service provision. One participant highlighted, *"I try to communicate with teachers regularly, but I feel like they don't truly understand my child's condition"* (NR).

#### **4.2 Challenges in Accessing Educational Services**

The study identifies several key barriers that parents face when attempting to access appropriate educational support for their children. These include limited availability of specialized services, lack of financial resources, and social stigma. Research by (Malow et al., 2016) indicates that stigma plays a crucial role in shaping the experiences of families with children who have behavioral disorders, often leading to feelings of isolation and exclusion.

Moreover, parents frequently report difficulties navigating bureaucratic processes to secure educational support, mirroring findings by Rivard et al. (2021), who noted that many schools lack transparent guidelines for parents seeking assistance. One parent in the study expressed frustration: *"The school listens, but nothing changes. I keep pushing for support, but it feels like I'm being ignored"* (FS). Such challenges underscore the need for systemic reforms to enhance accessibility and transparency in special education services.

#### **4.3 Parental Involvement in Children's Education**

Parental involvement is widely recognized as a critical factor in the educational success of children with behavioral disorders. The findings suggest that while parents are willing to engage with schools, they often feel excluded from key decision-making processes. This finding is consistent with McIntyre et al. (2023), who argue that active parental participation leads to better educational outcomes, yet many schools fail to foster effective partnerships with parents.

Many parents in the study reported a lack of meaningful dialogue with educators, leading to misunderstandings and ineffective interventions. One parent explained, *"I try to support my child at home by using structured learning techniques, but I feel disconnected from what's happening in school"* (NR). This highlights the need for schools to develop structured communication channels and regular parent-teacher meetings to facilitate collaborative educational planning.

#### **4.4 Teachers' Perspectives on Supporting Children with Behavioral Disorders**

The study also explores the perspectives of teachers, revealing that most educators feel underprepared to support children with behavioral disorders effectively. Many teachers acknowledge the need for additional training in behavior management strategies. Zendarski et al. (2018) highlight that teachers who receive professional development in behavioral interventions are more capable of managing classroom disruptions and fostering inclusive environments.

One teacher shared, *"There's no formal training for dealing with children with ADHD or oppositional behaviors. We learn through trial and error"* (DW). This sentiment underscores the necessity for professional development programs focused on inclusive education. Furthermore, research by Singh et al. (2022) emphasizes that providing teachers with specialized training enhances their confidence and effectiveness in handling behavioral challenges.

#### **4.5 Children's Perspectives on Their Educational Experiences**



Children with behavioral disorders frequently face difficulties in social interactions and classroom engagement. Many participants in this study reported feeling isolated or misunderstood by peers and educators. This aligns with findings by (Bethell et al., 2016), which indicate that children with behavioral challenges are more likely to experience social exclusion in educational settings.

One child explained, *"I like school, but sometimes I get in trouble even when I don't mean to"* (MA). This reflects a broader issue of disciplinary practices that fail to consider the unique needs of children with behavioral disorders. Research by Scibelli et al. (2021) suggests that positive reinforcement strategies and peer support programs can significantly enhance the school experience for these children.

This study is subject to several limitations that may influence the generalizability of its findings. First, the research focuses on a specific geographical location, which may limit the applicability of results to broader contexts. Additionally, while the study includes multiple perspectives from parents, teachers, and children, further research incorporating policymakers and school administrators could provide a more comprehensive understanding of systemic challenges.

Another limitation relates to the reliance on self-reported data, which may introduce biases in participant responses. Future studies could incorporate observational methods or longitudinal designs to capture more nuanced insights into the effectiveness of educational support for children with behavioral disorders.

The findings have significant implications for educational policy and practice. Schools should prioritize professional development programs for teachers to equip them with the necessary skills to support children with behavioral disorders effectively. Additionally, policy reforms are needed to ensure the availability of specialized educational resources and behavioral intervention programs.

Furthermore, improving parent-school collaboration should be a key focus, as stronger partnerships can lead to more tailored and effective interventions. Future research should explore the impact of specific intervention programs, such as structured behavioral therapy within schools, to determine their effectiveness in improving both academic and social outcomes for children with behavioral disorders.

In conclusion, addressing the educational needs of children with behavioral disorders requires a multifaceted approach involving schools, families, and policymakers. By implementing evidence-based strategies and fostering inclusive educational environments, stakeholders can better support the academic and social development of these children.

## **CONCLUSION**

This study provides significant insights into parents' perceptions of educational support for children with behavioral disorders in primary schools. The findings indicate that while some parents acknowledge the efforts made by schools, there remains a substantial gap in the provision of specialized interventions. The absence of individualized support, such as shadow teachers and structured intervention programs, significantly hinders the academic and social progress of these

children. Additionally, parents face considerable challenges in accessing educational resources, with bureaucratic obstacles and limited awareness of available support mechanisms being key barriers. Teachers also report difficulties in managing behavioral challenges due to a lack of specialized training and institutional support. The study emphasizes the urgent need for educational policies that promote inclusivity, ensuring systematic collaboration between parents, teachers, and policymakers. By addressing these gaps, schools can foster a more inclusive learning environment that accommodates the unique needs of children with behavioral disorders. Future research should explore longitudinal interventions and evaluate the effectiveness of various educational strategies to further inform best practices in inclusive education.

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