

## Strategy Of Akidah Akhlak Teachers In Addressing Bullying Behavior At K.H Abdul Satar Saleh Bangko Islamic Boarding School

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### ABSTRACT

*This study investigates bullying behavior at K.H. Abdul Satar Saleh Bangko Islamic Boarding School, focusing on the role of Akidah Akhlak teachers. Participants include Akidah Akhlak teachers and students. Using a qualitative case study approach, data were collected through observations, in-depth interviews with teachers and students, and document analysis. The data analysis technique involves transcription of interview recordings, data reduction and coding, as well as interpretation and conclusion drawing. The findings indicate that verbal bullying, including body shaming, inappropriate name-calling, and social exclusion, is the most prevalent form. Akidah Akhlak teachers address this issue through three key strategies: (1) Personalized approaches to identify root causes, (2) Education on akhlakul karimah (noble character) and the negative impacts of bullying, and (3) Habitual reinforcement through religious programs (prayer, Quranic recitation, and memorization). These strategies prove effective in reducing bullying incidents and increasing students' awareness. This study underscores the importance of active teacher involvement and the integration of religious values in addressing social issues within Islamic boarding schools. Regular religious practices and the emphasis on akhlakul karimah cultivate moral awareness and help mitigate negative behaviors. Future research is recommended to examine the long-term effectiveness of these strategies and incorporate perspectives from various stakeholders.*

### INTRODUCTION

Education is a process that aims to shape human beings to be better, by fulfilling physical and spiritual needs. Islamic-based education aims to develop spiritual and intellectual knowledge (Kartina et al., 2024). Rapid developments, especially in technology and information, bring cultural changes that can have positive or negative impacts (Silitonga, 2023). These changes give rise to various complex social problems, which demand the optimal role of education in preparing quality and characterful human resources. Individual character is influenced by the social environment and educational institutions, including Islamic boarding schools.

Islamic boarding schools, as traditional Islamic educational institutions, have a significant role in shaping the character and morality of students. In addition to teaching religious knowledge, Islamic boarding schools are also expected to be a safe and conducive environment for the social and emotional development of students. However, the results of the study show that the dynamics of interactions between students in an intensive dormitory environment are inseparable from the

potential for negative behavior, one of which is bullying (Nugroho et al., 2020). The phenomenon of bullying in educational environments, including Islamic boarding schools, is a worrying issue because of its detrimental impact on the physical and psychological well-being of victims (Madsen et al., 2024). This aggressive and repetitive behavior can be in the form of verbal, physical, relational, or cyber actions, all of which have the potential to cause trauma, anxiety, depression, and decreased academic achievement in victims (Muauwanah et al., 2024).

Bullying can occur in various forms, such as teasing, calling inappropriate names, ostracizing, and carrying out physical oppression (Emilda, 2022). The impact is very detrimental to the victim, both in the short and long term, including mental health disorders and social functioning. Data from WHO and KPAI show that bullying is a serious problem in Indonesia, and many cases go unreported (Muid et al., 2024). Bullying behavior in educational environments continues to be a global concern, given its damaging impact on the psychological and social well-being of students (Astivationita, 2024). Various studies have been conducted to understand the root of the problem and develop effective intervention strategies to address this phenomenon at various levels of education, including in boarding educational institutions such as Islamic boarding schools.

Previous research has shown that a multidimensional approach tends to be more effective in dealing with bullying. Strategies that focus on changing the overall school climate, involving the entire educational community (teachers, students, staff, and parents), show more significant results in reducing bullying incidents (Selvianda et al., 2024). Comprehensive anti-bullying programs often include raising awareness, developing clear school policies, training for staff, interventions with perpetrators and victims, and psychosocial support for the parties involved (Bahiroh, 2024). Therefore, educational institutions, including Islamic boarding schools, need to create a safe and fear-free environment for students. Teachers have an important role in preventing and dealing with bullying, especially Akidah Akhlak teachers who are closely related to Islamic-based education.

While previous studies (Selvianda et al., 2024; Bahiroh, 2024) have demonstrated the effectiveness of multidimensional and comprehensive approaches in addressing bullying—particularly those involving the entire educational community—this research explicitly examines how the integration of Islamic values and the pivotal role of Akidah Akhlak teachers can serve as key components in effective anti-bullying strategies. Accordingly, this study aims to fill that gap by conducting an in-depth investigation into the strategies implemented by Akidah Akhlak teachers at K.H. Abdul Satar Saleh Bangko Islamic Boarding School in managing bullying behavior. Through an analysis of existing practices, this research seeks to identify effective approaches grounded in prior studies while ensuring alignment with the Islamic values upheld in the pesantren. The findings of this study are expected to provide both theoretical and practical contributions to the development of more comprehensive and value-based anti-bullying strategies within Islamic boarding schools and other educational institutions rooted in Islamic teachings.

## METHODS

This study employs a qualitative approach with a case study design. The qualitative approach was chosen to gain an in-depth and comprehensive understanding of the strategies implemented by Akidah Akhlak teachers in addressing bullying behavior at K.H. Abdul Satar Saleh Bangko Islamic Boarding School, as well as to explore the perspectives and experiences of teachers and students regarding this issue (Cresswell, 2007). The case study design allows researchers to investigate bullying phenomena within their natural context, specifically within the boarding school environment (Caldas, 2003). The participants in this study consist of two Akidah Akhlak teachers and two students. The teachers were selected based on the criteria of having experience teaching Akidah Akhlak at the boarding school and actively engaging in bullying prevention and intervention efforts. Data collection was conducted through in-depth interviews, observations, and document analysis over a period of

four months. The collected data were then analyzed using techniques such as transcription of interview recordings, data reduction and coding, as well as interpretation and conclusion drawing.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Strategies of Akidah Akhlak Teachers in Overcoming Bullying Behavior**

Based on the analysis of data obtained through in-depth interviews with teachers and observations in the KHASS Bangko Islamic Boarding School environment, three main strategies were identified that were implemented by teachers in overcoming bullying behavior among students. These strategies are: (1) Approach and identification of factors causing bullying, (2) education about good morals and the dangers of bullying, and (3) implementation of habits through religious programs in the formation of good morals

#### **Approach and Identification of Factors Causing Bullying**

Research observations indicate that bullying incidents at KHASS Bangko Islamic Boarding School fall into the low-intensity category, with verbal bullying being the most dominant form. Unlike physical bullying, the identified cases primarily involve harmful speech and non-physical actions. Specifically, body shaming emerges as the most prevalent type of bullying. Students frequently mock their peers based on physical characteristics, such as weight ("fat" or "thin"), skin color ("dark"), or other perceived differences. Additionally, the use of inappropriate nicknames for disliked peers is commonly observed. Another significant aspect of bullying identified is social exclusion, where students tend to isolate peers they perceive as "not aligned" or different from their group.

The following section presents findings from interviews conducted with Akidah Akhlak teachers.

"Bullying incidents frequently occur in this boarding school, primarily in verbal forms, where students mock their peers based on physical attributes. For instance, student A is ridiculed for having a large body, being compared to an elephant, or for having limited memorization skills and struggling with lessons. Although these actions do not involve physical aggression, as a teacher, I am concerned that they might escalate into conflicts among students in the future".

Although the intensity was not high and did not involve physical violence, these incidents of verbal and social bullying remain a concern. In responding to these findings, the Akidah Akhlak teacher proactively sought out the factors causing the bullying. This approach involved direct dialogue with the perpetrators and victims. The results of the observation showed that the personal approach taken by the Akidah Akhlak teacher, especially through direct communication, proved effective. The students responded positively to this approach, felt closer to the ustaz/ustazah, and the messages conveyed were well received. The effectiveness of this approach underscores the importance of the teacher's role as a communication facilitator and moral guide in overcoming bullying behavior in the Islamic boarding school environment.

#### **Education about Akhlaqul Karimah and the Dangers of Bullying**

An important strategy found to be implemented by Akidah Akhlak teachers is comprehensive education about the importance of akhlaqul karimah (noble morals) and the negative impacts of bullying. This education is rooted in the principle that education aims to enlighten life and form people who are faithful and have noble character (National Education System Law, No. 20 of 2003).

In the context of preventing and minimizing bullying, this education is focused on equipping students with essential knowledge and skills. The goal is to develop individuals who have good physical and spiritual health, mature and independent personalities, and a high sense of responsibility towards themselves and others. Through a deep understanding of moral and ethical values in Islam, students are expected to be able to identify and avoid detrimental bullying behavior. This education not only highlights the prohibition of bullying from a religious perspective, but also explains clearly how bullying can damage social relationships and individual well-being, both for victims and perpetrators. Thus, this education becomes an important foundation in building collective awareness and creating a harmonious Islamic boarding school environment free from bullying.

The second key strategy implemented by Akidah Akhlak teachers is a holistic educational approach, emphasizing the values of akhlaqul karimah (noble morals) and the dangers of bullying from an Islamic perspective. This education is delivered in an integrated manner, both in formal learning activities in class and through informal interactions outside the classroom. The main focus of this education is the internalization of fundamental values in Islam, such as the importance of brotherhood, compassion, mutual respect, and the prohibition of hurting others. Teachers consistently instill an understanding that bullying behavior is contrary to Islamic principles that advocate harmony and care. In addition, teachers explicitly explain the negative impacts of bullying. This explanation includes the physical and psychological consequences that may be experienced by victims, such as trauma, anxiety, and decreased self-confidence. Not only that, the bad consequences for bullies, both from a social, moral, and spiritual perspective, are also emphasized.

### **Implementation of Habits through Religious Programs in the Formation of Noble Morals**

The third strategy found is the implementation of positive behavioral habits through integration in Islamic boarding school religious programs. Activities such as congregational prayer, reading the Qur'an, studying books, and extracurricular religious activities are used as a forum to instill the values of noble morals practically. Teachers provide examples of good behavior, encourage positive interactions between students, and provide reinforcement for commendable behaviors. This habit is expected to form the character of students with noble morals in a sustainable manner and create a conducive social environment to prevent bullying.

The third significant strategy in handling bullying is the implementation of positive behavioral habits integrated with the Islamic boarding school's religious programs. The KHASS Bangko Islamic Boarding School utilizes routine activities such as congregational prayer, reading the Qur'an, and studying the book as fundamental means to instill the values of akhlaqul karimah practically in the daily lives of students. In addition, extracurricular religious activities also act as an effective forum for internalizing these values. In this context, teachers actively act as role models by demonstrating good and commendable behavior. They consistently encourage positive interactions between students, promoting attitudes of mutual assistance and respect. Furthermore, teachers provide reinforcement for commendable behaviors demonstrated by students. This reinforcement can be in the form of praise, appreciation, or other forms of support that encourage the sustainability of positive behavior. Through this habituation approach, the character of students with noble morals can be formed sustainably. By internalizing these values in religious routines and social interactions, the pesantren environment naturally becomes more conducive and harmonious, thus effectively preventing bullying. This strategy shows the pesantren's proactive efforts in building a positive culture from within, using a religious framework as a moral foundation.

## DISCUSSION

Bullying behavior at KHASS Bangko Islamic Boarding School, although predominantly verbal such as body shaming and social exclusion and considered low in intensity, still requires serious attention due to its potential impact on students' psychological well-being. The teacher's proactive approach in identifying the underlying causes of bullying is a crucial step. This aligns with literature that emphasizes the importance of understanding the specific context in which bullying occurs to design appropriate interventions (Madsen et al., 2024). The success of the teacher's personal approach in building close relationships with students, allowing messages to be effectively conveyed, demonstrates that strong interpersonal relationships between educators and students are a vital foundation in addressing sensitive issues such as bullying. This also indicates that in the context of Islamic boarding schools, where teachers serve both as authority figures and spiritual guides, persuasive and empathetic methods are more readily accepted by students.

Educational strategies focused on the values of akhlaqul karimah (noble character) and the dangers of bullying lie at the heart of prevention efforts. This education is not merely cognitive (providing information) but also affective (developing moral awareness and empathy). The integration of Islamic teachings that emphasize brotherhood, compassion, and respect for others becomes a highly relevant and contextual approach. This reinforces the argument that character education based on religious values can serve as an effective moral safeguard against antisocial behaviors like bullying (Nurmalasari et al., 2024). Explaining the consequences of bullying for both victims and perpetrators is also an essential part of this education, in accordance with the educational principle of forming responsible individuals.

The implementation of positive behavioral habits integrated into religious programs demonstrates a deep understanding of the boarding school ecosystem. Routine activities such as congregational prayer (Muhamad Arif et al, 2024), Qur'an recitation, and classical book study are not only religious rituals but also moments for forming habits and character. Teachers who serve as role models and reinforce commendable behavior strengthen the values of akhlaqul karimah in a practical and sustainable manner. This strategy aligns with social learning theory, which emphasizes the importance of modeling and reinforcement in shaping behavior (Irmayanti et al., 2024). By utilizing existing religious structures, the boarding school creates an environment where anti-bullying values are internalized through lived practice, not just theory. This contributes to building a socially conducive atmosphere and organically prevents bullying within the pesantren community.

Furthermore, the success of this strategy cannot be separated from the collective culture of the boarding school, which emphasizes togetherness, obedience to teachers, and communal living. In this context, teachers hold a strategic position to influence student behavior, not only through instruction but also through daily role-modeling (Ummatus Sakinah, 2022). The teacher's consistency in providing wise corrections, mentoring students with a familial approach, and appreciating behavioral change becomes key in fostering awareness and social responsibility. This shows that managing bullying in Islamic boarding schools does not necessarily require punitive measures but can be addressed through nurturing approaches grounded in values and compassion.

Additionally, the involvement of the broader pesantren community in fostering a culture of noble character also plays a major role (Retnowuni 2022; Nashiruddin, 2019). Supervision is not solely carried out by teachers but also involves dormitory leaders, senior students, and peers who help establish a value-based social control system. This system fosters a sense of ownership and collective responsibility for maintaining a comfortable environment. This proves that the anti-bullying efforts led by Akidah Akhlak teachers do not stand alone but are embedded within a supportive pesantren culture (Dias Tri Arini, et al 2021; Muhamad Arif, 2022;2024). Such a strategy empowers students to become active agents in maintaining a safe and respectful environment.

In other words, the bullying prevention model implemented at KHASS Bangko Islamic Boarding School demonstrates a synergy between personal, educational, and cultural approaches. These three elements form a unified system that mutually reinforces the development of students' moral resilience against negative influences. This strategy not only reduces bullying cases but also strengthens students' character as a whole. Its success can serve as an inspirational example for other Islamic educational institutions in developing an education system that is not only knowledge-based but also centered on forming virtuous and moral personalities (Ahnaf, 2024; Amri, 2019 & Firdaus, 2023).

## **CONCLUSION**

The Liberation Hermeneutics Approach at Lirboyo Islamic Boarding School faces several limitations, especially the strong dominance of the traditional approach based on the Syafi'i School, which causes the understanding of religious texts to tend to be textual and normative. The curriculum that has not fully accommodated this method and the limitations of academic resources and supporting literature are obstacles to the comprehensive application of liberation hermeneutics. In addition, internal resistance to methodological changes slows down the adaptation of this approach. Therefore, further research is needed to dig deeper into the internal dynamics of Islamic boarding schools and external factors that influence the acceptance of liberation hermeneutics, as well as to develop effective strategies for integrating this approach into Islamic boarding school education. As a step forward, it is recommended to conduct comparative research between Lirboyo Islamic Boarding School and other Islamic boarding schools that have different scientific traditions or with Islamic schools in urban areas that are more open to contemporary hermeneutic approaches. This study will provide broader insights into the variations in the application of liberation hermeneutics and the challenges faced in different social and cultural contexts. In addition, policy recommendations include the systematic integration of liberation hermeneutics into the curriculum, increasing academic capacity through training and workshops, developing relevant literature resources, and encouraging constructive dialogue between traditional approaches and liberation hermeneutics. With these steps, it is hoped that religious understanding in Islamic boarding schools can be more critical, contextual, and responsive to the challenges of the times.

Theoretically, this study makes a significant contribution to enriching the body of knowledge in Islamic education, particularly in the context of managing deviant behavior through the Akidah Akhlak (Islamic creed and ethics) educational approach within Islamic boarding schools. The findings reinforce the theory of character formation based on Islamic values and demonstrate the effectiveness of integrating moral education into religious activities as a means of internalizing values. The limitation of this study lies in its scope, which is confined to a single Islamic boarding school using a case study approach, thus limiting the generalizability of the results. Nevertheless, the strength of this research lies in the depth of data obtained through a qualitative approach and its ability to holistically describe the practical management strategies used by Akidah Akhlak teachers in addressing bullying. For future research, it is recommended to conduct comparative studies across various Islamic boarding schools with different characteristics and to develop intervention models based on Akidah Akhlak that can be more broadly applied in the context of Islamic education.

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