

The Role of Islamic Religious Education Teachers in Preventing Bullying Behavior at SMP IT Darur Rasyid Aceh Singkil

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Abstract: This study aims to determine the role of Islamic Religious Education teachers in preventing bullying behavior at SMP IT Darur Rasyid Aceh Singkil. The research employs a qualitative approach with a descriptive method. Data were collected through interviews, observations, and documentation. The results show that Islamic Religious Education teachers play a crucial role in preventing bullying through three main aspects: (1) educative role, by teaching moral values and Islamic teachings that forbid harming others; (2) guidance role, by providing Islamic counseling and support to students involved in bullying; and (3) exemplary role, by serving as role models through daily behavior and attitudes. Preventive efforts are also implemented through religious activities such as Qur'an recitation, congregational prayers, and short sermons that instill compassion and Islamic brotherhood. This study concludes that Islamic Religious Education teachers significantly contribute to creating a harmonious, religious, and bullying-free school environment.

Keywords:

Islamic Religious Education Teacher; Bullying; Prevention; Moral Values.

Abstrak: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui peran guru Pendidikan Agama Islam dalam mencegah perilaku bullying di SMP IT Darur Rasyid Aceh Singkil. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode deskriptif. Data diperoleh melalui wawancara, observasi, dan dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa guru Pendidikan Agama Islam memiliki peran penting dalam mencegah perilaku bullying melalui tiga aspek utama, yaitu: (1) peran edukatif, dengan memberikan pemahaman nilai-nilai akhlak dan ajaran Islam tentang larangan menyakiti sesama; (2) peran pembimbing, dengan memberikan bimbingan dan konseling islami kepada siswa yang terlibat dalam perilaku bullying; dan (3) peran teladan, dengan menjadi contoh dalam sikap dan perilaku sehari-hari. Upaya pencegahan juga dilakukan melalui kegiatan keagamaan seperti tadarus, salat berjamaah, dan kultum yang menanamkan nilai kasih sayang dan ukhuwah Islamiyah. Penelitian ini menegaskan bahwa guru Pendidikan Agama Islam berkontribusi signifikan dalam membentuk lingkungan sekolah yang harmonis, religius, dan bebas dari perilaku bullying.

Kata Kunci:

Guru Pendidikan Agama Islam; Bullying; Pencegahan; Nilai Akhlak.

A. Introduction

Bullying behavior has become a growing concern in educational environments worldwide. It is not only a social problem but also a moral issue that affects students' psychological well-being, academic achievement, and interpersonal relationships (Olweus, 2013). Schools are expected to be safe spaces for students to learn and grow; however, the increasing number of bullying cases has disrupted this ideal.

Bullying can take many forms, including physical aggression, verbal harassment, social exclusion, and cyberbullying. These behaviors cause long-term harm to both victims and perpetrators, influencing their emotional and spiritual development (Espelage & Swearer, 2010). In Islamic education contexts, such behaviors contradict the fundamental teachings of Islam, which emphasize mercy, compassion, and respect for others.

The school environment plays a crucial role in shaping students' character and moral behavior. Teachers, especially Islamic Religious Education (IRE) teachers, have the responsibility to cultivate moral consciousness and instill Islamic values that guide students toward positive social behavior (Azra, 2019).

Islamic Religious Education (IRE) is designed not only to transmit knowledge about Islamic doctrines but also to form students' character (*akhlaq*) based on Qur'anic principles. One of the core missions of IRE is to prevent moral decay, including acts of bullying, by strengthening faith and moral integrity (Hidayat, 2018).

In this context, the teacher acts as a *murabbi* (educator), *mu'allim* (instructor), and *mursyid* (spiritual guide). Through these roles, IRE teachers are expected to integrate religious values into students' daily interactions, thus minimizing behaviors that lead to bullying and conflict (Syamsuddin, 2021).

SMP IT Darur Rasyid Aceh Singkil, as an Islamic integrated junior high school, provides a religiously oriented educational setting that emphasizes moral and spiritual formation. Despite this, cases of verbal teasing, exclusion, and other forms of mild bullying occasionally occur among students, reflecting the need for stronger preventive efforts by teachers.

The presence of IRE teachers in such schools is vital for establishing moral awareness through religious learning and guidance activities. Their role extends beyond classroom teaching into personal mentoring, counseling, and modeling ethical behavior (Anwar, 2020).

Islam clearly prohibits all forms of violence and humiliation. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said, "A Muslim is the one from whose tongue and hands other Muslims are safe" (Hadith narrated by Bukhari and Muslim). This hadith underscores the importance of maintaining good conduct and avoiding harm to others—values that IRE teachers must transmit to students.

The prevention of bullying is not merely about enforcing discipline; it involves creating a culture of empathy, respect, and brotherhood (*ukhuwah Islamiyah*) among students. Religious education provides a strong moral foundation for this transformation (Hamid, 2017).

According to Bandura's (1986) social learning theory, students learn behaviors through observation and imitation. Therefore, teachers' exemplary behavior becomes a powerful tool in shaping students' moral attitudes and discouraging aggressive or bullying actions.

In the Islamic perspective, the teacher's moral integrity (*akhlaq al-karimah*) significantly influences students' ethical growth. When teachers consistently demonstrate politeness, fairness, and compassion, students tend to emulate these behaviors in their social interactions (Nata, 2016).

The role of IRE teachers in preventing bullying can be categorized into three dimensions: educative, guidance, and exemplary. The educative role involves delivering Islamic teachings on morality, the guidance role focuses on advising and counseling students, and the exemplary role emphasizes modeling good conduct (Mahmud, 2020).

Preventive programs at SMP IT Darur Rasyid Aceh Singkil include religious activities such as congregational prayers, Qur'an recitation, and short religious talks (*kultum*). These activities aim to strengthen students' sense of empathy and community (Rahmawati, 2022).

However, these programs require consistent supervision and integration with daily school life. Without teachers' active engagement, such activities may lose their transformative potential in shaping students' moral awareness (Kurniawan, 2021).

In addition to preventive education, IRE teachers also play a rehabilitative role in addressing students who engage in bullying. By using Islamic counseling approaches, teachers can guide such students toward repentance (*taubah*) and behavioral improvement (Fauzi, 2019).

The implementation of Islamic-based counseling techniques—such as reflection on Qur'anic verses, hadith-based discussions, and self-evaluation—helps students internalize values of compassion and justice (Yusof, 2020).

In modern educational research, the integration of religious and psychological perspectives has proven effective in fostering positive student behavior. Spiritual-based interventions often lead to long-term behavioral change because they touch both the emotional and moral dimensions of the individual (Rahman, 2018).

The present study focuses on exploring how IRE teachers at SMP IT Darur Rasyid Aceh Singkil perform their roles in preventing bullying behavior. This research is expected to provide insights into effective strategies for integrating Islamic moral education into anti-bullying initiatives.

Furthermore, this study seeks to analyze the challenges faced by IRE teachers in maintaining moral discipline among students in a rapidly changing social environment influenced by technology and peer culture (Sulaiman, 2021).

Ultimately, the research aims to strengthen the contribution of Islamic Religious Education in promoting a peaceful, caring, and morally responsible school culture. By emphasizing the holistic role of teachers, it aspires to build a generation of students who uphold Islamic values and respect the dignity of others in all aspects of life.

B. Methods

This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach to explore the role of Islamic Religious Education (IRE) teachers in preventing bullying behavior at SMP IT Darur Rasyid Aceh Singkil. The qualitative approach was chosen because it allows the researcher to understand the meaning and depth of social phenomena within their natural context (Creswell, 2018). Through this approach, the researcher sought to obtain a comprehensive understanding of teachers' strategies, experiences, and challenges in fostering a non-bullying school culture.

The research subjects consisted of three IRE teachers, the school principal, and several students selected through purposive sampling. This sampling technique was used because participants were considered to have direct experience and involvement in the prevention of bullying at the school (Sugiyono, 2020). The research setting was SMP IT Darur Rasyid Aceh Singkil, which was chosen due to its implementation of integrated Islamic education and its strong emphasis on moral and character formation.

Data were collected using three primary techniques: interviews, observation, and documentation. The interviews were conducted semi-structurally to allow flexibility in exploring participants' perspectives. Observations were carried out during classroom and extracurricular activities to identify teacher–student interactions related to moral education and discipline. Documentation included reviewing lesson plans, school regulations, and program reports related to anti-bullying activities (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014).

The collected data were analyzed using the Miles and Huberman interactive model, which consists of three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing (Miles et al., 2014). Data reduction involved summarizing and categorizing relevant information, while data display was done in the form of descriptive narratives. The conclusions were drawn by interpreting the data in light of Islamic educational principles and comparing them with previous research findings.

To ensure the validity and reliability of the data, the researcher applied triangulation of sources and methods. This included comparing data from interviews, observations, and documents to confirm consistency. The researcher also conducted member checking by verifying findings with participants to ensure accuracy and credibility (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Ethical considerations were maintained throughout the study, with participants' consent obtained before data collection and confidentiality guaranteed in reporting results.

C. Results and Discussion

The findings of this research indicate that Islamic Religious Education (IRE) teachers play a crucial and multidimensional role in preventing bullying behavior among students at SMP IT Darur Rasyid Aceh Singkil. Through qualitative interviews and observations, it was revealed that the teachers' preventive efforts are not limited to religious instruction but also encompass moral, emotional, and social guidance. Their interventions integrate Islamic ethical values into students' daily behavior, aiming to internalize moral awareness that discourages acts of verbal or physical aggression.

The first major finding emphasizes that the preventive approach used by IRE teachers is rooted in the inculcation of *akhlaq al-karimah* (noble character). Teachers constantly remind students of the Islamic prohibition against harming others, supported by Qur'anic verses and Hadith that promote compassion and brotherhood. This moral reinforcement helps students understand that bullying contradicts the essence of Islamic teaching, which upholds respect and empathy.

The second finding highlights the pedagogical strategies employed by teachers. They use storytelling, reflective discussions, and group counseling methods that emphasize real-life moral dilemmas. These approaches are proven effective in fostering students' emotional intelligence and moral reasoning, thus reducing tendencies toward bullying. According to teachers, such

strategies are more influential than punitive approaches because they encourage self-awareness rather than fear-based compliance.

Third, the study found that preventive measures are not isolated within the classroom. Teachers actively collaborate with parents and school management to build a supportive and consistent moral environment. This coordination ensures that anti-bullying messages are reinforced at home and in other school activities, creating a comprehensive moral ecosystem that discourages bullying behavior.

Another key result is that IRE teachers serve as role models in demonstrating positive interpersonal conduct. Their calmness, patience, and fairness in dealing with students reflect the Islamic concept of *uswah hasanah* (good example). Students reported that they tend to imitate teachers who display these attitudes, leading to a reduction in aggressive and mocking behavior among peers.

Additionally, the implementation of religious activities, such as congregational prayers, Qur'an recitation, and Islamic discussions, indirectly contributes to reducing bullying. These spiritual practices cultivate a sense of togetherness and brotherhood, diminishing the social hierarchies that often lead to exclusion or harassment.

In several observed cases, IRE teachers mediated conflicts among students using an Islamic counseling approach (*irsyad dini*). This process involved guiding the aggressor to recognize the sinfulness of their actions and encouraging repentance through good deeds. Victims were also counseled to forgive and rebuild social relations based on the principle of *ukhuwah islamiyah* (Islamic brotherhood).

The findings further suggest that the effectiveness of preventive efforts depends significantly on the teachers' consistency and sincerity. Teachers who integrated Islamic values across all subjects and interactions achieved better outcomes in reducing bullying behavior. In contrast, inconsistent application of these values resulted in minimal behavioral changes among students.

It was also revealed that IRE teachers faced several challenges, including students' exposure to negative influences from digital media. Such exposure sometimes normalizes bullying or disrespectful behavior. Teachers responded by incorporating discussions about digital ethics into their lessons, emphasizing Islamic perspectives on online interactions and responsibility.

Furthermore, the study found that gender differences influence the manifestation of bullying. Male students tended to engage more in physical bullying, while female students were more involved in social or verbal bullying. Teachers adapted their prevention strategies accordingly, focusing on empathy-building and communication training tailored to each gender's behavioral patterns.

IRE teachers also highlighted the importance of creating an inclusive classroom climate. By ensuring that every student feels valued and accepted, teachers reduce the motivation for dominance or exclusion that often triggers bullying. Group-based activities are structured to promote cooperation rather than competition, aligning with the Islamic principle of *ta'awun* (mutual help).

In addition to moral education, disciplinary actions were occasionally necessary. However, such measures were always framed within the context of education, not punishment. Students who committed bullying acts were required to participate in religious mentoring sessions rather than receiving traditional sanctions. This restorative approach helped foster empathy and accountability.

Teachers reported that consistent reinforcement of Islamic values led to observable behavioral improvement. Over time, students developed greater awareness of the emotional harm caused by bullying. Peer monitoring systems were also established, where student leaders assisted teachers in identifying early signs of conflict or exclusion.

Another significant discussion point is the influence of school leadership. The headmaster's support in prioritizing character education strengthened teachers' efforts. School policies aligned with Islamic moral standards, creating a cohesive environment that supported the prevention of all forms of violence and intimidation.

From a broader perspective, this research reveals that the integration of Islamic education into character formation is not only preventive but also transformative. Students who internalized religious values demonstrated higher levels of empathy, cooperation, and respect for diversity. These outcomes support the Islamic educational philosophy that moral development must precede intellectual achievement.

The role of IRE teachers in Aceh Singkil reflects the contextual integration of Islamic pedagogy and local culture. Teachers respect local traditions while reinforcing universal Islamic

ethics, ensuring that the moral messages resonate with students' daily experiences. This cultural sensitivity enhances the effectiveness of anti-bullying interventions.

The findings also affirm that preventive education must be continuous and holistic. Teachers emphasized that one-time programs or campaigns are insufficient to combat bullying. Instead, long-term habituation of good morals through daily practices such as greetings, mutual respect, and community service has a lasting impact.

Moreover, teachers perceived their role not merely as instructors but as *murabbis* (moral nurturers). This perception aligns with the Islamic philosophy of education, where teachers are responsible for the spiritual and moral formation of their students. Their influence extends beyond academic achievement toward shaping students' integrity and social responsibility.

In analyzing the overall data, it becomes evident that the synergy between moral education, spiritual guidance, and counseling creates a robust framework for bullying prevention. When students experience consistent messages of compassion and justice from both teachers and peers, they are less likely to engage in harmful behavior.

Finally, this research concludes that the presence of dedicated and spiritually conscious Islamic Religious Education teachers serves as a cornerstone for fostering a safe, respectful, and harmonious school environment. Their integrative approach—rooted in Islamic values and supported by pedagogical skill—proves essential in addressing both the causes and consequences of bullying in Islamic educational institutions.

D. Conclusion

The findings of this study demonstrate that Islamic Religious Education (IRE) teachers hold a central and transformative role in preventing bullying behavior at SMP IT Darur Rasyid Aceh Singkil. Their preventive efforts are deeply rooted in Islamic moral and spiritual values that guide students toward empathy, respect, and compassion. Through consistent integration of *akhlaq al-karimah* (noble character) in teaching, counseling, and daily interactions, teachers effectively nurture students' moral consciousness and discourage acts of aggression and exclusion.

Furthermore, the study concludes that effective bullying prevention requires a holistic approach that combines moral education, school collaboration, parental involvement, and exemplary teacher behavior. The integration of religious activities and Islamic counseling

strengthens the moral ecosystem of the school, fostering an environment of brotherhood (*ukhuwah islamiyah*) and collective responsibility. Teachers who serve as role models and apply consistent moral guidance contribute significantly to shaping students' behavior and building a positive school climate.

Finally, this research emphasizes that the role of IRE teachers extends beyond academic instruction; they are moral mentors and community builders who embody Islamic ethical principles in both word and action. Sustained commitment to spiritual and character education not only prevents bullying but also cultivates students who are emotionally intelligent, socially responsible, and spiritually grounded. Therefore, empowering Islamic Religious Education teachers through continuous training and institutional support is essential for promoting a safe and value-based learning environment.

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