

## Breaking the Cycle of Bullying: The Role of Islamic Education in Fostering Empathy and Tolerance

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### ABSTRACT

This study explored the integration of Islamic teachings into bullying prevention strategies in MI schools in Kota Langsa. Through case studies and data collection, the research identified bullying as a prevalent issue influenced by social and environmental factors. The study examined the role of Islamic values in addressing bullying. By integrating these values into the school curriculum, teacher training, and classroom management, a supportive and inclusive school environment was fostered. Findings revealed that students' understanding of Islamic principles contributed to a reduction in bullying incidents and the creation of positive peer relationships. The study concluded that a comprehensive Islamic-informed educational approach, emphasizing empathy and tolerance, is effective in mitigating bullying behaviors, improving school culture, and supporting students' moral and social development.

**Keywords:** Bullying, Islamic Education, Empathy, Tolerance, Prevention

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Bullying persists as a widespread problem in educational settings globally, causing significant harm to victims, perpetrators, and the overall school climate. Victims often experience emotional distress, including anxiety, depression, and social isolation, hindering their academic performance and long-term well-being. Perpetrators may develop aggressive tendencies and a lack of empathy, negatively impacting their future relationships and social integration. The broader school environment also suffers, as bullying erodes trust and creates a climate of fear and tension, undermining learning and disrupting the safe environment essential for students to thrive. Addressing bullying, therefore, necessitates comprehensive strategies that focus not only on preventing incidents but also on fostering a culture of respect, empathy, and inclusion throughout the school community.

Bullying creates a devastating cycle of negativity that impacts a student's entire well-being. Victims often experience feelings of inferiority, depression, and anxiety,

which, as observed by the three homeroom teachers, lead to truancy (firmansyah moch. fahmi, 2023; Saefulloh, 2020). This avoidance of school further exacerbates their situation, hindering their ability to learn and develop, as the constant stress of bullying makes it difficult for students to concentrate, leaving them feeling fearful and pressured (Khairunnisa, Suyanti, & Yunita, 2023). This inevitably leads to a decline in academic performance, as they struggle to follow lessons and complete assignments (Fatkhianti, 2023). The long-term consequences are significant, with bullying leaving lasting scars on students' mental and emotional health, a concern shared by all three homeroom teachers.

While previous research has explored various strategies to address bullying, there is a limited understanding of the role of religious education, particularly Islamic education, in fostering empathy and tolerance. Islam unequivocally condemns bullying. Core Islamic values such as courtesy, justice, and brotherhood, which form the ethical bedrock of Muslim society, are violated by acts of intimidation and aggression (Parjiman, Sutarman, Muhammad Ragil Kurniawan, Sutrisno, & Kun Hidayat, 2023). The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) exemplified compassion and mercy, teaching Muslims to respect and treat everyone fairly. Bullying, with its inherent intent to harm or dominate, directly contradicts these Islamic principles of social harmony and integrity (Fitriya, 2013). The Quran and Hadith, the fundamental sources of Islamic guidance, offer numerous examples condemning violence and cruelty while advocating for peace, compassion, and empathy (Irmayanti, 2023). For instance, the Quran states, *“And tell My servants to say that which is best. Indeed, Satan induces [dissension] among them. Indeed, Satan is ever, to mankind, a clear enemy”* (Quran 17:53) (Aji, 2020). This verse underscores the importance of kind speech and avoiding hurtful language. Furthermore, the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said, *“A Muslim is the one from whose tongue and hands other Muslims are safe”* (Aji, 2020). This hadith emphasizes the necessity of actions that do not harm others, physically or verbally, a principle fundamentally opposed to bullying. Islam promotes a community where mutual respect and cooperation are paramount to collective well-being (Natalie, Agrin, Diah, Putra, & ..., 2023). Social harmony and peace are considered essential for a flourishing Muslim society, that disrupts this balance, such as bullying, is condemned and must be actively addressed (Fatkhianti, 2023). Islamic teachings not only encourage abstaining from intimidation and oppression but also call for intervention and support for those affected by bullying. This includes providing comfort and assistance to victims, educating bullies about the harm they inflict, and facilitating reconciliation and justice (Hatta, 2018). By promoting these actions, Islam seeks to cultivate a just and compassionate society where everyone thrives without fear of intimidation.

This study aims to bridge this gap by investigating how Islamic teachings is applied to create a more inclusive and supportive learning environment for MI students in Kota Langsa. Drawing upon the principles of compassion, justice, and respect for diversity embedded within Islam, this research will explore practical strategies and interventions that is implemented in MI classrooms. By examining the unique socio-cultural context of Kota Langsa, the study seeks to identify specific challenges faced by MI students and propose tailored solutions grounded in Islamic values. Ultimately, this investigation aims to contribute to the development of an educational framework that fosters a sense of belonging, promotes academic success, and nurtures the holistic development of all students, regardless of their background or abilities. To investigate into the specific context and experiences of MI schools in Kota Langsa, this research employs a case study approach. This methodology allows for an in-depth exploration of how Islamic teachings are being implemented to foster inclusivity within these schools. By focusing on a select number of MI schools in Kota Langsa, the research closely examines the unique challenges and opportunities they face in creating supportive learning environments. Through observations, interviews with teachers and students, and analysis of school policies and practices, this case study approach will provide rich, contextualized insights into the practical application of Islamic principles in promoting inclusivity.

This study explored a novel approach to bullying prevention in Kota Langsa's MI schools by integrating Islamic principles into educational practices. It drew upon the Quran's teachings on compassion, respect, and justice, and the Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) emphasis on kindness and empathy to foster an inclusive and safe learning environment. This framework examined through its application in curriculum development, teacher training, and school policies, with the aim of creating a holistic model that nurtures students' spiritual, moral, and social well-being while addressing the problem of bullying; Two potential research questions arising from these frameworks are:

1. How Islamic pedagogical approaches centered on empathy and tolerance be effectively integrated into the curriculum and teaching practices of MI schools in Kota Langsa to mitigate bullying behaviors?
2. What is the impact of an Islamic-informed educational approach emphasizing empathy and tolerance on students' attitudes, behaviors, and social interactions related to bullying within MI schools in Kota Langsa?

The first question addressed the specific pedagogical techniques derived from Islamic principles and their application in the classroom. In addition, the second research question projected the measurable effects of this approach on student behavior and social dynamics.

## 2. METHODS

### 2.1. Research Design

The study employed a case study approach was employed. This involved selecting several MI schools within the city as case study sites. Data collection involved semi-structured interviews with school administrators, teachers, students, and parents, as well as classroom observations and document analysis (Ahmad et al., 2019; Wilson, Onwuegbuzie, & Manning, 2016). The collected data was analyzed using thematic analysis to identify key themes and patterns related to bullying prevention, Islamic education, and the school culture. By examining multiple cases, this research aimed to enhance the generalizability of the findings and provide a more nuanced understanding of the factors influencing bullying and its prevention within MI schools in Kota Langsa.

Data sources for this qualitative research were primarily primary data, obtained directly from relevant stakeholders. In-depth interviews were conducted with school principals, homeroom teachers, guidance counselors, parents, and students involved in bullying incidents (Ahmad et al., 2019; Wilson et al., 2016). This case study approach allowed for an intimate exploration of the dynamics of bullying, perceptions, and experiences of all parties involved. Additionally, secondary data, such as attendance records and Islamic guidance profiles, was used to complement the analysis and provide broader context. By combining primary and secondary data, the research achieved a comprehensive understanding of bullying from multiple perspectives.

### 2.2. Participants and Research Location

This research involved a diverse group of participants from three MI schools in Kota Langsa: MIN 1 Kota Langsa, MIN 2 Kota Langsa, and MI Terpadu Kota Langsa. A total of 42 individuals were involved, including 12 students who had experienced or were currently experiencing bullying, 12 students who had engaged in bullying others, and 12 students who had witnessed bullying incidents. Additionally, the research included 3 school principals, 6 homeroom teachers, 3 guidance counselors, 3 school staff members, and parents of both victims and perpetrators. This diverse participant pool provided valuable insights from various perspectives, including those of the directly affected students, school personnel, and parents.

### 2.3. The Instruments

The study employed participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. During the data collection process, the researcher uses instruments

such as observation, interviews, and documentation. Direct observation was conducted to systematically gather data on student behavior, classroom dynamics, and teacher responses to bullying (Weyant, 2022). Observations were documented using written notes and mobile phone recordings. This method provided firsthand insights into the context and dynamics of bullying within the schools. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with a diverse group of participants, including school principals, teachers, parents, and students. The interviews aimed to gain in-depth perspectives on bullying experiences, perceptions, and school practices. Interviews were conducted in person and lasted approximately 20-30 minutes. Documentary analysis was employed to supplement the primary data. Relevant documents, such as student attendance reports and teacher notes, were examined to provide additional context and information related to bullying incidents. This method allowed for a broader understanding of the school's policies and procedures regarding bullying prevention.

#### **2.4. The Procedure of Data Analysis**

Data analysis was conducted iteratively throughout the research, utilizing the analytical framework proposed by Miles and Huberman (Ahmad et al., 2019; Dixon-Woods, Agarwal, Jones, Young, & Sutton, 2005). The process comprised three key stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction involved systematically organizing and summarizing the collected data, identifying salient themes and patterns. This process ensured that only relevant information was retained for subsequent analysis. The reduced data was organized into a clear and accessible format, such as tables or narratives. This facilitated the identification of meaningful patterns and relationships within the data. Conclusions were drawn by interpreting the displayed data and connecting them to the research objectives. The process aimed to uncover novel findings and deepen understanding of the research subject.

#### **2.5. Ethical Consideration**

This research prioritized the ethical conduct of the study, with a particular focus on protecting the well-being of the participating students. To minimize potential harm or discomfort, research activities were carefully designed to avoid causing distress. Student participation was voluntary, with the right to withdraw at any time without negative consequences. Informed consent was obtained from parents or guardians before their children's involvement. This ensured that they fully understood the research objectives, procedures, and potential risks. Data confidentiality was strictly maintained to protect the privacy of participants.

Student identities and personal information were protected using codes and pseudonyms, and research data was stored securely in accordance with ethical standards. The protection of participants from harm was a paramount concern. Mechanisms were implemented to address any potential negative impacts on students. Regular monitoring and evaluation ensured that ethical principles were adhered to throughout the research process. The impact of the research on students and the school environment was carefully assessed to ensure no significant negative effects occurred. Collaboration with the school was essential for ethical conduct. Open communication and adherence to school policies were maintained throughout the research process. By addressing these ethical considerations, this research contributed to the community while safeguarding the well-being of the participant

The case study approach is ideal for this research as it allows deep exploration of bullying prevention and Islamic education within MI schools in Kota Langsa. Using interviews and observations, the research uncovers how cultural, social, and religious factors influence bullying. This method's flexibility allows for addressing new questions that arise, ultimately providing a strong understanding of the complexities involved and informing the development of effective interventions tailored to this unique context.

### **3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

These findings encompass various forms of bullying that occur within the madrasah environment, the factors influencing such behavior, as well as the Islamic approaches implemented by teachers and the school to address and prevent bullying. The researcher also outlines the important role of character education in Islam as a long-term solution to create a safe and harmonious learning environment in the madrasah

#### **3.1. Empathy and tolerance-focused Islamic pedagogy should be integrated into MI school curricula in Kota Langsa to reduce bullying**

Bullying, a pervasive issue in educational environments worldwide, casts a long shadow on the well-being and academic success of students. In Kota Langsa's Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) schools, where Islamic values are central to the educational philosophy, an opportunity exists to leverage these values to cultivate a culture of empathy and tolerance, thereby effectively mitigating bullying behaviors. This essay argues that integrating an empathy and tolerance-focused Islamic pedagogy into MI school curricula is crucial for fostering a harmonious

learning environment and promoting positive social interactions among students. Bullying in MI Kota Langsa is a complex issue influenced by a confluence of factors, including the school environment and social dynamics among students. Observations revealed that both the physical and social conditions within the schools contribute to the prevalence of bullying. Inadequate supervision in specific areas, such as isolated spaces, provides opportunities for bullying behaviors. Additionally, the presence of exclusive social groups creates a climate of isolation and vulnerability for certain students, making them more susceptible to victimization.

Four students from various classes were interviewed to gain insights into the motivations of bullies, the experiences of victims, group dynamics, and the role of peers in bullying. Each interview lasted approximately 45 minutes. A student identified as a bully at MIN 1 Kota Langsa stated,

*"He's slow, so it's fun teasing him. He mocked me first, so I retaliated. Older kids do it too, so I joined in."*

This statement reflects a lack of empathy, a desire for revenge, and the influence of peer pressure as contributing factors to bullying behavior. A victim expressed,

*"I feel scared, alone, and have low self-esteem. The unfair treatment is upsetting."*

This highlights the significant emotional and psychological impact of bullying on victims. A student involved in bullying said,

*"I was joking like everyone else. I didn't think it was a big deal. I didn't want to be different."*

This indicates that peer pressure and a lack of understanding drive bullying behavior. A student who intervened stated,

*"Stop it, that's not funny. He didn't deserve this. I'll report it to the teacher."*

This reflects empathy, courage, and a sense of responsibility in addressing bullying.

A parent of a bully expressed shock and disappointment, stating,

*"I was shocked and disappointed to hear about my child's behavior. I never thought they could do something like this. I sincerely apologize for my child's actions. I will have a serious talk with them. I'll do everything I make sure this never happens again"*

This demonstrates a responsible and proactive response from a parent committed to preventing future bullying incidents. These negative social interactions among students are another key factor contributing to bullying. Verbal bullying, physical bullying, and social bullying all have detrimental effects on victims (Irmayanti, 2023; Ningtyas & Jadmiko, 2021). Verbal bullying, such as harassment and threats, create a psychologically harmful environment (Khairinnisa & Christiana Elisabeth, 2020; Muin, Rosmalah, & Kiki, 2022). Social bullying, such as spreading rumors,

exclusion, or damaging someone's reputation, damage relationships and self-esteem.

Bullying has far-reaching consequences for both victims and perpetrators. Victims of bullying often experience psychological trauma, academic difficulties, and mental health issues. Bullies developed behavioral problems in the future. Moreover, bullying created a negative learning environment, reducing students' overall academic performance and well-being. The interview result projected the detrimental impact of bullying on students' learning processes and academic achievement. The Interviews with homeroom teachers, counseling teachers, and students revealed a consistent narrative of diminished academic performance and psychological well-being among bullied students. The homeroom teacher from MIN 1 stated:

*“Students who are victims of bullying tend to participate less in class activities. They may feel embarrassed or afraid of becoming the center of attention, especially if the bully is also in the classroom. As a result, they rarely ask questions or engage in group discussions, which limits the development of their communication skills and courage”*

The statement by the homeroom teacher highlights the concerning reality that students who experience bullying tend to participate less in class activities. Furthermore, the teacher continued:

*“The lack of interaction with peers can hinder the development of communication skills, cooperation, and the ability to work in groups. Inactivity in class can negatively impact understanding of the lesson material. Additionally, the pressure from bullying can also disrupt students' concentration and learning ability”*

The homeroom teacher's statement emphasizes several serious impacts resulting from a lack of social interaction and involvement in the classroom, particularly in students who experience bullying. Three key points can be discussed from this statement: (1) the impact on social skills development, (2) the impact on lesson comprehension, and (3) disruption in concentration and learning ability due to bullying pressure. Another participant, the homeroom teacher from MIN 2, stated:

*“The impact on students who are victims of bullying often includes difficulties concentrating during lessons. They appear anxious and frequently daydream, which indicates emotional disturbance due to bullying. This condition hinders their ability to follow the lesson and negatively affects their academic comprehension”*

The homeroom teacher from MIN 2 observed several emotional and academic effects experienced by students who are victims of bullying. Specifically, the statement covers three main points: difficulty concentrating during lessons, signs of emotional disturbance, and negative impacts on academic understanding. Furthermore, the homeroom teacher from MIN 2 shared:



*"I once encountered a very intelligent student, but they always remained silent in class because they were afraid of being mocked by their classmates"*

This statement illustrated the negative impact of bullying or social intimidation on students' academic potential and behavior in the classroom. Several important points were discussed from this statement, including the effects of bullying on self-expression, social fear and isolation, and the loss of opportunities for academic and social growth. Additionally, the homeroom teacher from MIN 2 revealed:

*"Students lose interest and concentration in learning, which can lead to skipping school or pretending to be sick to avoid bullying, resulting in lower grades, difficulty concentrating, or a loss of interest in lessons, damaging their self-esteem and making them feel unworthy of success."*

This statement underscored the serious impact of bullying on students, affecting not only their academic performance but also their mental health and self-esteem. Several important points were discussed from this statement, including the loss of interest in learning, physical and emotional impacts, a decline in academic performance, and damage to self-esteem. The homeroom teacher from MIN Terpadu directly addressed the decline in students' academic abilities, leading to a negative cycle, stating:

*"Bullying creates a negative cycle that is difficult to break. The more often a student becomes a victim of bullying, the lower their motivation to learn. Conversely, the lower their motivation to learn, the more vulnerable they become to bullying"*

This statement revealed how bullying forms a damaging cycle that is difficult to overcome. This cycle has lasting negative effects on students' emotional and academic well-being. Several important points can be discussed from this statement, including the recurring effects of bullying, the decline in learning motivation, and the increased vulnerability to bullying. Furthermore, the homeroom teacher also stated:

*"Students who are victims of bullying often feel isolated and lack support from their peers. When compounded by a lack of closeness with parents and family, students can experience psychological impacts and pressure that lower their motivation to learn"*

This statement reveals the dual impact that can occur on victims of bullying at school. It includes two main factors: the lack of social support from peers and family, and the psychological impact leading to a decrease in learning motivation. Another participant, the homeroom teacher from MIN 1, shared several examples of students' experiences with bullying and how it affected their motivation to learn:

*"(1). Student A, after experiencing bullying, became very quiet and did not want to participate in class activities. They always seemed gloomy and unmotivated. Their academic performance also dropped drastically. (2). Student B, frequently complained*

*of headaches and stomachaches, although there was no significant physical problem. It turned out to be a way to avoid bullying at school. (3). Student C, became very aggressive and started bullying other classmates. It seemed like they wanted to take out the pain and frustration they experienced. (4). Student D, lost interest in learning and often skipped school. They felt there was no point in learning if they were constantly being bullied"*

This statement describes various responses and impacts experienced by students who are victims or affected by bullying at school. There are four examples of students with different reactions to bullying: Student A, B, C, and D. Each student exhibits a different way of responding to bullying, which can have a significant impact on their emotional, physical, and academic well-being. Students' responses to bullying vary widely depending on their personality, the level of support they receive, and their personal experiences. Another participant, the homeroom teacher from MIN 2, shared examples of students' experiences with bullying:

*"Persistent feelings of fear and anxiety haunt students and have eroded their motivation to learn. They struggle to focus and absorb lesson material because their minds are filled with worries. As a result, their confidence decreases, and they are reluctant to interact with their classmates. To avoid painful situations, many students choose to avoid school"*

This statement reveals the significant emotional impact of bullying on students and how it affects their motivation to learn, mental well-being, and engagement in school activities. Another participant, the homeroom teacher from MIN Terpadu Kota Langsa, shared:

*"Students who are victims of bullying often feel unmotivated to learn because they feel scared or anxious. They often feel that their efforts at school won't be appreciated or could even be an additional reason to be mocked. This results in a decline in their interest in following lessons and actively participating in class"*

Several important points were discussed from this statement: the ongoing fear and anxiety, the decline in learning motivation, disruption of focus and learning, decreased confidence, and avoidance of school. Furthermore, as the Counseling Teacher in the Madrasah, they often meet with students who experience bullying and have witnessed firsthand how these experiences affect their motivation to learn. Here is an excerpt from the interview with the researcher:

*"Often, students who are bullied feel tired or unmotivated to go to school. The fear and anxiety make them feel more exhausted, both physically and emotionally. They may lack the confidence to ask questions or seek help when they don't understand something. They may also be reluctant to do homework if they don't have a supportive learning environment. They often feel hesitant to come to school for fear of encountering the bully or experiencing unpleasant events."*

This statement highlights the deep psychological impact of bullying on students' motivation and enthusiasm for learning. The fatigue and lack of enthusiasm for going to school in bullied students are clear signs that bullying has significantly affected them.

Islamic teachings are replete with exhortations toward compassion, respect, and mutual understanding. The Quran and the exemplary life of the Prophet Muhammad consistently advocate for kindness, forgiveness, and peaceful resolution of conflict (Firmansyah, 2023; Hatta, 2018). By harnessing these foundational principles, MI schools can cultivate a learning environment where empathy and tolerance are not merely abstract concepts but are actively embodied and practiced.

- **Curriculum Design:** The curriculum should be intentionally designed to incorporate narratives and teachings from Islamic history and tradition that exemplify empathy and tolerance. Stories of the Prophet's interactions with diverse communities, his emphasis on forgiveness, and his unwavering commitment to justice and compassion can serve as powerful exemplars for students (Fauziah & Mulkiyah, 2023; Parjiman et al., 2023). Furthermore, incorporating contemporary examples of individuals who embody these values can demonstrate their relevance in today's world.
- **Pedagogical Approaches:** Interactive and engaging pedagogical approaches should be employed to foster critical thinking, perspective-taking, and conflict resolution skills (Benaziria, 2018; Ramadhanti, 2020). Structured classroom discussions, role-playing exercises, and collaborative learning activities can facilitate understanding of diverse perspectives, promote appreciation for individual differences, and equip students with the skills necessary to navigate interpersonal challenges constructively.
- **Teacher Training and Development:** Educators play a pivotal role in cultivating an anti-bullying ethos. Professional development programs should be implemented to equip teachers with the knowledge and skills to effectively integrate empathy and tolerance-focused pedagogy into their teaching practices (Benaziria, 2018; Ismail, 2019). This includes training on culturally responsive teaching, conflict resolution strategies, and trauma-informed practices.
- **School-wide Culture:** Creating a school-wide culture that values empathy, respect, and inclusivity is essential. This can be achieved through the

implementation of clear anti-bullying policies, consistent enforcement of behavioral expectations, and the promotion of positive school-wide initiatives that celebrate diversity and foster a sense of belonging for all students (Dalimunthe, 2015; Pencegahan Bullying, Muhamad Hanafi Zulfani, & Indarsjah Tirtawidjaja, 2014).

- **Parental and Community Engagement:** Effective bullying prevention requires collaboration between schools, parents, and the wider community. Workshops and educational programs were offered to parents to raise awareness about bullying and provide them with strategies to support their children (Andryawan, Laurencia, & Putri, 2023; Nadiyah & Vinayastri, 2022). Community partnerships can also be established to provide additional resources and support services to students and families.

By implementing this comprehensive approach, MI schools in Kota Langsa create a learning environment where empathy and tolerance are not merely taught but are deeply ingrained in the school culture. This will not only mitigate bullying behaviors but also foster the development of well-rounded individuals equipped with the social-emotional skills and ethical values necessary to thrive in an increasingly interconnected and diverse world.

### **3.2. Islamic education emphasizing empathy and tolerance impact student bullying behaviors in Kota Langsa's MI schools**

Islamic teachings are replete with exhortations towards compassion, respect, and mutual understanding. The Quran and the exemplary life of the Prophet Muhammad consistently advocate for kindness, forgiveness, and peaceful conflict resolution. By strategically integrating these values into the educational framework, MI schools cultivate a learning environment where empathy and tolerance are not merely theoretical concepts but are actively embodied and practiced.

An Islamic education that emphasizes empathy cultivates a cognitive shift in students, enabling them to understand the perspectives and emotions of others. This enhanced perspective-taking ability reduces the likelihood of engaging in bullying behavior, as students develop a heightened awareness of the potential harm inflicted on their peers. Teachers at the Langsa madrasahs have implemented comprehensive anti-bullying programs that integrate Islamic values. These programs incorporate lectures on Islamic ethics, storytelling of historical figures who exemplified positive virtues, and discussions on applying these values in daily school life (Benaziria, 2018; Parwanto & Kalsum Hasibuan, 2023; Ramadhanti, 2020;

Wahyuningsih, 2023). The goal is to cultivate empathy, cooperation, and mutual respect among students, thereby reducing their propensity for bullying behavior. Each madrasah principal has implemented unique approaches within their respective institutions to prevent and mitigate bullying.

The school principals developed anti-bullying programs in their respective schools, which remain coordinated with relevant agencies and receive support from academics at IAIN Langsa and Samudra University in Kota Langsa. The principal of MIN 1 exemplified this by saying:

*“This program involves the entire school community, including teachers, students, staff, and parents, in creating a safe and inclusive environment. The program is running well, and we have seen an increase in students’ awareness of the importance of respecting one another and avoiding bullying behavior”*

The above statement highlighted the importance of involving the entire school community in efforts to prevent bullying. By involving teachers, students, staff, and parents, the school has created a strong synergy in building a safe and inclusive environment. The results of the interview with the principal of MIN 2 also depicted a similar sentiment, where he mentioned:

*“These Islamic values are the foundation for students and for all of us Muslims to avoid bullying others. Islamic values are the foundation of good morals and faith, providing a basis, both mentally and spiritually, for us, especially the students in Madrasah, so that with the morals they possess, they can eliminate the desire to harm others or engage in bullying. Simple habitual practices that have been implemented by classroom teachers and subject teachers include the habit of giving and returning greetings, speaking with kind and polite words, apologizing when making mistakes, and fostering honest behavior while seeking forgiveness after wrongdoing. I also always advise and remind students that a good student is one who can make others feel happy.”*

The statement above highlighted the central role of Islamic values in shaping students' character and preventing bullying behavior. Islamic values such as compassion, tolerance, justice, and honesty serve as strong foundations for preventing bullying. This approach, which focuses on strengthening Islamic values, is a highly effective step in preventing bullying (Irmayanti, 2023; Muin et al., 2022). By instilling good behavior from an early age, students will grow into individuals with noble character, capable of creating a harmonious environment. The support from the principal of MIN Terpadu Kota Langsa emphasized:

*“We teach positive values from exemplary stories of the Prophet and his companions. In every lesson, we always emphasize the importance of empathy, tolerance, and*

*respect as part of faith and good deeds. For instance, we use stories of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), who showed compassion and kindness to everyone, even to those who treated him poorly. We also teach the importance of respecting differences, whether in religion, culture, or viewpoints, as part of Allah SWT's will, who created humans in diversity."*

The above statement highlighted a highly effective approach in preventing bullying, namely by using exemplary stories from the Prophet (PBUH) and his companions. These stories serve as real-life examples of how a Muslim should behave in daily life. Using exemplary stories from the Prophet (PBUH) and his companions is a highly effective approach in preventing bullying and shaping students' character. By continuing to develop this program, schools create a generation with noble character who contributes positively to society (Irmayanti, 2023). The principal of MIN 1 Langsa has a specific approach to preventing bullying in class, discussion groups, cooperative games, or social activities, where he stated:

*"Yes, we use several specific approaches to prevent bullying in the classroom. We often hold discussion groups where students can talk about their experiences and discuss solutions to the problems they face. We also organize cooperative games and social activities designed to build cooperation and strengthen bonds between students. These activities help students get to know each other better and understand the importance of supporting and working together"*

This approach is highly effective in preventing bullying. By actively involving students in discussion groups, cooperative games, and social activities, the school has successfully created a positive and inclusive learning environment. By providing space for students to share experiences and ideas, the school empowers students to be part of the solution. Cooperative games and social activities help students build positive relationships with their peers. Additionally, the principal of MIN 2 stated:

*"We hold regular discussion groups in every class where students can talk about their experiences and learn from each other. We also use cooperative games that require good teamwork and communication to strengthen bonds between students. Furthermore, we often hold social activities such as competitions and bonding events aimed at fostering a sense of brotherhood among students. We believe that by encouraging positive interactions, we can minimize the chances of bullying"*

The approach implemented by the school is comprehensive and demonstrates a deep understanding of the root causes of bullying. By creating an environment conducive to open communication, cooperation, and empathy, the school has taken excellent steps in preventing bullying. Furthermore, the principal of MIN Terpadu Kota Langsa added:

*“We use an approach focused on Islamic togetherness and solidarity. We hold discussion groups in the form of halaqah, where students can discuss their experiences and learn from one another in a supportive and Islamic atmosphere. We also organize cooperative games designed to develop teamwork skills and strengthen the bonds of brotherhood among students. In addition, we have social activities such as the ‘Friday Charity’ program and visits to orphanages, aimed at fostering empathy and a sense of caring for others. All these activities are designed to strengthen the social bonds between students and create a safe and harmonious environment.”*

The approach implemented by the school is highly interesting as it combines Islamic values with proven practices in preventing bullying. By focusing on togetherness, solidarity, and empathy, the school has created a learning environment conducive to students' social and emotional growth. The halaqah and social activities create a safe and comfortable atmosphere for students to share experiences and feelings. This approach, which focuses on Islamic values and social activities, is highly effective in preventing bullying. They learn to communicate effectively, manage anger, and resolve disagreements without resorting to aggression. This results in a decrease in bullying incidents and an increase in prosocial behaviors.

Fostering a culture of empathy and tolerance within MI schools promotes a more inclusive and harmonious social environment. Students are more likely to develop positive relationships with their peers, transcending social divisions and fostering a sense of belonging. This reduces social isolation, a key risk factor for both bullying perpetration and victimization. Integrating Islamic teachings on empathy and tolerance into the curriculum facilitates moral development in students. They internalize these values, recognizing the inherent dignity of each individual and the importance of treating others with kindness and respect. This internalization serves as a powerful deterrent against bullying behavior. An Islamic educational approach that champions empathy and tolerance empowers bystanders to actively intervene when they witness bullying. Students are encouraged to speak out against injustice, support victims, and contribute to a culture of respect and accountability. The study supported the efficacy of empathy-focused interventions in reducing bullying behaviors. Studies have demonstrated that programs that cultivate empathy and perspective-taking skills lead to significant decreases in aggression and increases in prosocial behaviors among students. The study projected Islamic-informed educational approach that prioritizes empathy and tolerance holds immense potential for mitigating bullying behaviors within MI schools in Kota Langsa. By systematically integrating these

values into the curriculum, pedagogical practices, and school culture, MI schools creates a learning environment where every student feels safe, respected, and valued. This not only reduces bullying but also nurtures compassionate individuals who contribute to a more just and harmonious society.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

The conclusion of this research highlights the effectiveness of integrating Islamic values in addressing bullying behaviors within Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) schools in Kota Langsa. By embedding core Islamic principles—such as empathy, tolerance, and respect—into the educational framework, the study demonstrated how these values fostered a more inclusive and supportive learning environment. The Islamic approach to education, which emphasizes compassion and social responsibility, significantly contributed to reducing bullying incidents and improving interpersonal relationships among students. The study revealed that Islamic teachings, when systematically integrated into the curriculum, teacher training, and school policies, not only addressed the immediate issue of bullying but also nurtured students' moral and social development. By adopting strategies rooted in Islamic ethics, schools were able to create a culture where students felt valued, respected, and empowered to intervene in cases of bullying. This approach positively impacted the students' emotional well-being and academic engagement. Ultimately, the research concluded that the incorporation of Islamic values into school culture offers a promising solution to bullying, creating a harmonious environment that promotes both academic success and personal growth. The findings support the need for broader implementation of religious values in educational systems to address social challenges, fostering a more compassionate and cohesive school community.

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