

Internalization Strategy of Religiosity Values as an Effort to Prevent Bullying at Darul Qur'an Islamic Boarding School Surakarta

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DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.23917/iseedu.v9i2.14631>

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Received: 11-09-2025

Accepted: 30-10-2025

Published: 09-11-2025



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Abstract: This study aims to analyze the strategy of internalizing religiosity values as an effort to prevent bullying in the Darul Qur'an Islamic Boarding School in Surakarta. Bullying, which often appears in verbal and relational forms, is a problem that affects the mental health and social development of students. This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study design to explore an understanding of how religious values are applied in daily life in pesantren and how it contributes to preventing bullying behavior. Data collection was carried out through in-depth interviews with students and pesantren managers as well as the study of documents related to pesantren policies and religious activities. The results of the study show that routine religious activities, such as congregational prayers, dhikr, and learning the Qur'an, play an important role in shaping the character of students who prioritize positive moral and social values. However, although religiosity has a big role in preventing bullying, there are still challenges related to differences in perceptions among students about bullying behavior. In conclusion, the consistent and deep internalization of religiosity values can create a safer and more harmonious environment in Islamic boarding schools, while reducing the risk of bullying.

Keywords: Internalization Of The Values Of Religiosity, Bullying, Pesantren, Prevention, Character Of Students.

Introduction

Bullying is still a serious problem that often arises in various educational contexts, including in the pesantren environment. The practice of bullying does not always appear in the form of visible physical violence, but is also often present in a more subtle way through ridicule, verbal intimidation, labeling, and social marginalization. These disguised forms have the potential to escape supervision, but still cause a meaningful psychological impact on the victim, especially on the development of emotions, social relationships, sense of security, and self-esteem of students. Empirical findings show that bullying in pesantren is not a sporadic phenomenon; A study reported that around 50.2% of students had experienced bullying with the dominance of verbal bullying (Rizki et al., 2023). More broadly, the global meta-analysis also indicates that approximately 25% of adolescents experience bullying in the school environment, with the proportion of adolescents who are perpetrators and victims as well as perpetrators of around 16% each (Man et al., 2022). The data confirms that bullying is a social-psychological problem that needs to be handled systematically, including in religious-based educational institutions.

On the other hand, Islamic boarding schools have a strategic position as an educational institution that not only transmits religious knowledge, but also shapes the character and values of students through worship routines, strengthening manners, habituating discipline, and communal life. In this framework, religiosity values should be a moral and social foundation that is able to suppress aggressive behavior and encourage empathy, respect, and concern among students. However, the facts on the ground show that the integration of religious activities alone does not automatically eliminate bullying (Emilda, 2022; Finiswati & Matuilessy, 2018). Studies have shown that bullying behavior can still occur even in environments that emphasize moral formation, so a more targeted and preventive approach is needed. In line with that, research on religiosity and *cyberbullying* in madrasah adolescents found a strong negative correlation between religiosity and the tendency to do *cyberbullying* ($r = -0.714$, $p < 0.05$), but at the same time shows that various forms of bullying can still arise despite the inherent framework of religiosity (Khoir & Kurniawati, 2024). This condition suggests that what determines the effectiveness of prevention is not just the existence of religious activities, but how these religious values are internalized into beliefs, attitudes, and daily social behaviors.

The Darul Qur'an Islamic Boarding School Surakarta is an educational institution that focuses on the tahfidz Al-Qur'an program and the development of student morals based on the teachings of Ahlussunnah wal-Jama'ah. In addition to tahfidz, this pesantren also organizes formal education and personality development to form students who are not only spiritually and intellectually strong, but also adaptive to the challenges of modern life. This commitment places Darul Qur'an Surakarta as a relevant context to examine how value education strategies run in the daily life of Islamic boarding schools, especially related to the prevention of bullying behavior in the student community.

Based on initial observations, there is information about several incidents that are perceived as acts of bullying in the Darul Qur'an Islamic Boarding School in Surakarta. However, an interesting indication arises when some of these incidents are not always uniformly understood by students: some interpret it as "joking", "seniority tradition", or "ordinary in association", while others perceive it as a painful and degrading experience. This difference in perception shows that there is an important space to examine the process of internalizing religious values in forming moral standards, behavioral limitations, and the empathetic sensitivity of students in interpreting certain actions as natural or as bullying. In other words, the key question is not only "whether there are religious activities", but "how religious values are shaped into self-control and social norms that prevent bullying".

By focusing on the strategy of internalizing religious values, this research is expected to make a scientific contribution to the mechanism of bullying prevention in pesantren through the formation of attitudes and behaviors. This research is also expected to be able to explain how the teachings of compassion, respect for human dignity, prohibition of hurting others, and social ethics in Islam are translated into the practice of nurturing, coaching, and culture of the student community. At a practical level, the results of the research are expected to be the basis for recommendations for strengthening character education, guidance and counseling services, as well as more preventive and restorative governance of student life by making the internalization of religious values the main strategy in preventing bullying.

Methodology

This research method uses a qualitative approach with a case study design at the Darul Qur'an Islamic Boarding School in Surakarta. Data collection was carried out through semi-structured in-depth interviews and document studies. Interviews were conducted with pesantren managers to explore their understanding of the forms of bullying that occurred, the way the incident was interpreted by pesantren residents, and the strategy of internalizing religious values carried out as an effort to prevent bullying so far. The managers of the pesantren involved are those who have direct responsibility for the management and supervision of religious activities and education in the pesantren, including the nurturing of moral and religious values to the students. The selection of participants was carried out with the aim of obtaining diverse perspectives on the forms of bullying that occurred in Islamic boarding schools, the way in which these incidents were interpreted by Islamic boarding school residents, and the strategy of internalizing religious values carried out as an effort to prevent bullying.

The documents review is carried out by examining relevant internal documents, such as student discipline, moral development guidelines, religious activity modules, and discipline rules, to understand how pesantren policies formulate bullying prevention and how religious values are integrated into daily education and parenting routines. The qualitative approach was chosen because it allows researchers to gain a deep understanding of the experiences, perceptions, and social dynamics behind the bullying phenomenon, including how religious values are formed, transmitted, and internalized in relationships between students. Qualitative research focuses on the process of participants' interpretation of their experiences in a specific social context, making it relevant to examine complex and contextual phenomena such as bullying in Islamic boarding schools (Ishtiaq, 2019). Interview and document data were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify patterns, themes, and strategies mechanisms for internalizing values that emerged from informant narratives and institutional rules (Dejonckheere & Vaughn, 2019).

Results and Discussion

The results of research found in the field show that bullying at the Darul Qur'an Islamic Boarding School in Surakarta occurs in verbal and relational forms, which are often unrealized as an act of bullying by students. One of the main patterns found was the vagueness of students' perceptions of their behavior, where ridicule or whispers between friends were considered jokes, even though they could hurt the feelings of others. In addition, the tendency of female students to be easily offended causes a remark to become serious and considered verbal bullying. In some cases, students feel intimidated by their peers, even though there is no obvious physical action. Other cases suggest that deeper psychological problems, such as trauma from home, play a role in exacerbating this situation. One of the students, for example, felt closer to the figure of a father who was not present in his life, which affected his feelings at the boarding school and led to a feeling of isolation.

In the next findings, the Darul Qur'an Islamic Boarding School has carried out several strategies to internalize religious values at the Darul Qur'an Islamic Boarding School Surakarta. Among these strategies that have been developed in worship habits, moral development, and social supervision of students by pesantren managers. Religious activities carried out every day, such as congregational prayers, tahajud, dhikr, joint prayer, and religious lessons, play an important role in shaping the character of students who prioritize moral, moral, and social solidarity values. An

example of this activity is the routine reading of hisib as a form of business for the Darul Qur'an Islamic boarding school Surakarta in protection from physical and supernatural dangers such as magic and tyranny, help with inner peace and distress, spiritual strengthening and monotheism for its students. Student discipline through religious activities is very important for Islamic boarding schools to improve worship discipline and teach morals that are the foundation of the lives of their students.

Researchers also found that night halaqoh serves as a medium to internalize reflective and relational values. Halaqoh not only instills a religious cognitive aspect, but also builds emotional bonds and a sense of community between students. This makes them feel attached to each other and fosters a sense of mutual love, which erodes negative actions such as bullying. However, the results of this study also found that bullying still occurs in verbal and relational forms. This behavior is often unnoticed as bullying because it is considered a joke or part of the student's social culture.

The results also show that the difference in students' perceptions in interpreting bullying shows that the internalization of religious values has not fully reached the internal stage of moral awareness. Some students are still at the conventional moral stage, where the judgment of right and wrong is strongly influenced by group habits, rather than by personal ethical reflections. In addition, the findings also show that the role of ustazah and guardians in providing reprimands based on religious values reflects internalization strategies through normative and affective approaches. Reprimands attributed to Islamic teachings on maintaining verbal and social manners have proven effective in preventing the escalation of conflict, but have not fully touched the root of covert bullying behavior.

Discussion

The discussion of the results of this study shows that the Darul Qur'an Islamic Boarding School Surakarta has successfully implemented a strategy of internalizing religious values through various well-organized worship activities and social supervision. Worship activities such as congregational prayers, tahajud, dhikr, joint prayer, and religious lessons not only aim to improve the quality of student worship, but also play an important role in shaping students' character that focuses on moral values, discipline, and social solidarity. Through this routine, religious values that prioritize inner peace, self-protection from physical and supernatural dangers, and the strengthening of monotheism, have been successfully internalized deeply in students.

Discipline formed through religious activities also has a very important role. Discipline in worship is very important, not only an obligation but a worship that embodies virtue that must always be maintained *istiqomah* that grows through conscience awareness (Anugrah & Shobahiya, 2024). Islamic boarding schools as Islamic-based educational institutions emphasize the discipline of worship as the basis of students' daily lives. This discipline is not only limited to the obligation of worship, but is broader in teaching morals and moral values that are the foundation for social interaction, both in the pesantren environment and in the community. Through structured worship activities, such as congregational prayers, as well as religious studies, students learn to manage their time and take responsibility for their worship tasks.

These findings are in line with the view in the psychology of religious education that consistently internalized religiosity can function as a *moral self-regulation* that suppresses aggressive and deviant behavior. Religiosity does not work instantly, but through a continuous process of internalizing values to form self-control and social empathy (Kadiyono et al., 2025; Shepperd et al., 2015). Research by Hardy and Carlo shows that the internalization of religious-based moral values is

positively correlated with prosocial behavior and empathy, and is negatively correlated with aggressiveness in adolescents (Hardy et al., 2019). This study confirms that internalized religiosity (intrinsic religiosity) is more effective in directing social behavior than formalistic religiosity (Fariz & Saloom, 2021; Rogobete & Francis, 2021). The next statement is supported by a research entitled "*Bridging the Generation Gap: Managing Conflict between Teachers and Students with the Wisdom of QS. An-Nahl: 125*" that religious values that prioritize compassion, respect, and wisdom in speaking can help manage conflicts between teachers and students (Pakpahan & Shobahiya, 2024).

The night halakoh at the Darul Qur'an Islamic Boarding School in Surakarta serves as an important forum in forming emotional bonds among students, which directly supports the process of internalizing religious values. This activity not only emphasizes the cognitive aspects of religiosity, but also provides space for students to develop positive social skills, such as empathy and solidarity. When students share experiences and discuss in halaqoh, they indirectly learn to better understand the perspectives of others, which can reduce the emotional and social gap between them. The togetherness created in this halaqoh is able to build stronger bonds between students, so that they not only feel connected spiritually, but also socially. This is in line with research that states that community-based religious activities are able to strengthen adolescents' emotional regulation and social sensitivity, which are protective factors against bullying behavior (Song & Kim, 2022). This formation of mutual love is key in overcoming negative behavior problems, such as bullying, because students who care more about the feelings of their peers tend to avoid harmful behavior.

However, the results of this study also found that bullying still occurs in verbal and relational forms, and is often unrealized as bullying because it is considered a joke or part of the student's social culture. This phenomenon is consistent with findings that show that the normalization of bullying in peer groups is often influenced by social norms and moral ambiguity, so that the perpetrator is not always aware of the psychological impact of his actions (Faith et al., 2017). This is in line with the perception that the culture of pesantren that tends to have clan nuances and is supported by hierarchy shapes the way students assess social behavior. The nuances of clan (kinship) can make ridicule or harsh words considered "normal" or "jokes," so bullying risks normalization. Therefore, strengthening the hierarchical aspect in the form of rules and regulations is needed to clarify the boundaries of behavior so that students' sense of security is maintained (Mardalis et al., 2021).

Although Islamic boarding schools have implemented various activities to form the character of students based on religious values. The Darul Qur'an Islamic Boarding School still has challenges in internalizing the results of the study showing that bullying still occurs in verbal and relational forms. One of the main reasons why this act of bullying is not always recognized as bullying is because it is often considered a joke or part of the prevailing social culture among students. This phenomenon is closely related to the normalization of negative behavior that occurs in peer groups, where social norms and moral ambiguity often make the perpetrator unaware of the psychological impact of his actions. From the perspective of moral development theory, this condition illustrates that some students are still at the conventional moral stage, where the judgment of right and wrong is strongly influenced by group habits, rather than by personal ethical reflections (Snarey, 1986). Therefore, it can be concluded that moral education requires a process of reflection, value dialogue, and emotional assistance so that religious values are truly deeply internalized. So it is necessary to pay further attention to how the internalization of religious values can be fully applied and can provide the same understanding of the definition of how bullying actually is and what are the indicators that

lead to bullying things. This is done so that the students have their own indicators about bullying or just a joke.

The role of ustazah and guardians in providing reprimands based on religious values reflects the internalization strategy through normative and affective approaches. Reprimands attributed to Islamic teachings on maintaining oral and social manners have proven effective in preventing the escalation of conflicts, but have not fully touched the root of the covert bullying behavior. This is in line with findings that moral value-based bullying interventions are more effective when combined with strengthening empathy and social-emotional skills (Espelage et al., 2015). Strengthening empathy can be done with the collaboration carried out by the Darul Qur'an Islamic boarding school Surakarta with outside parties. This has been carried out with psychologists who work together in dealing with the behavior of their students who need further handling (Faizal & Shobahiya, 2024).

Overall, this discussion emphasized that the strategy of internalizing religious values at the Darul Qur'an Islamic Boarding School in Surakarta has contributed to creating a relatively conducive environment. The internalization of religious values in the Darul Qur'an Islamic Boarding School in Surakarta plays an important role in preventing bullying. Through instilling the values of mutual respect, empathy, and honesty, pesantren succeed in creating a positive and safe social environment. This strategy not only supports academic achievement, but also shapes the character of students, prevents them from bullying behavior, and strengthens relationships between peers that are full of mutual respect (Apriliano & Shobahiya, 2024). Thus, internalizing the value of religiosity is the key to creating a healthy social climate in Islamic boarding schools.

Differences in students' perceptions in interpreting bullying From the perspective of moral development theory, this condition illustrates that some students are still at the conventional moral stage, where the judgment of right and wrong is strongly influenced by group habits, rather than by personal ethical reflections (Snarey, 1986). Therefore, it can be concluded that moral education requires a process of reflection, value dialogue, and emotional assistance so that religious values are truly deeply internalized. Therefore, it is necessary to pay further attention to how the internalization of religious values can be fully applied and can provide the same understanding of the definition of how bullying actually is and what are the indicators that lead to bullying things. This is done so that students have their own indicators about bullying or just a joke.

Conclusion

The conclusion of this study shows that the strategy of internalizing religious values in the Darul Qur'an Islamic Boarding School in Surakarta plays an important role in bullying prevention. Through routine religious activities, such as congregational prayers, dhikr, and learning the Qur'an, this pesantren has succeeded in instilling moral values that shape the character of students, increase empathy, and reduce aggressive behavior. However, some forms of bullying, especially those that are verbal and relational, still occur due to differences in perceptions among students. Therefore, there is a need for further strengthening in the application of religious values as moral control and the development of social-emotional skills of students to overcome bullying behavior as a whole. This shows that the internalization of religious values must be carried out consistently and deeply in order to create a safer and more harmonious environment in Islamic boarding schools.

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