

## **Multicultural Islamic Education Model as a Preventive Strategy in Mitigating Bullying Behavior in Schools**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The phenomenon of bullying in schools highlights the need for a new, more holistic and contextual approach. This study aims to develop and test the effectiveness of a multicultural Islamic education model as a preventive strategy for mitigating bullying behavior in schools. Using a mixed-method approach with a sequential explanatory strategy, quantitative data were obtained through questionnaires administered to 120 students, 30 Islamic education teachers, and 20 educational staff, while qualitative data were collected through interviews, observations, and documentation studies. The results of the study reveal a strong negative correlation ( $r = -0.612$ ) between understanding multicultural Islamic values and the frequency of bullying. The values of ukhuwah, tasamuh, adl, and social empathy are integrated into learning, non-academic activities, and counseling.*

**Keywords:** Bullying behavior, inclusive character, multicultural Islamic education, preventive strategies, social empathy

## INTRODUCTION

Violence in educational settings is becoming increasingly prevalent, causing deep concern among educators and parents alike. After all, students are supposed to receive an education and develop themselves in a safe and supportive environment. The school environment should be a conducive space for the development of strong character, not a place where frightening acts of bullying thrive (Khasanah et al., 2025). Bullying is a form of violence intentionally and repeatedly committed by one or a group of individuals against another person (Bucur, 2022). This behavior often stems from the perpetrator's hidden feelings of hatred or dislike, which are then expressed through oppression, pressure, or harassment, causing the victim to feel afraid, stressed, and hurt. Bullies often carry out their actions openly and even admit to their actions without feeling guilty (Sood et al., 2020).

Bullying is often associated with extortion, exclusion, and intimidation (Shablysty et al., 2021). In general, bullying is deviant behavior that is carried out deliberately and repeatedly with the aim of harming others through the systematic abuse of power. These actions can take the form of physical violence, such as kicking or biting; verbal violence, such as spreading rumors, or digital media, known as cyberbullying. All forms of bullying, whether physical or verbal, have negative effects on victims, both physically and psychologically (Armitage, 2021). According to Darmayanti, bullying is negative behavior carried out continuously with the aim of causing discomfort or harming individuals who are unable to defend themselves (Darmayanti et al., 2019).

Bullying is a form of deviant behavior deliberately carried out by individuals who have more power over individuals who are considered weaker. According to Coloroso, this behavior is intimidating and carried out repeatedly with the aim of hurting the victim, both physically and emotionally (Coloroso, 2017). This behavior is not accidental but is carried out with the intention of causing suffering. P.R. Astuti added that bullying is a form of continuous aggression, in which there is a power imbalance between the perpetrator and the victim (P.R. Astuti, 2008). This imbalance puts the victims in a position where they are unable to fight back against their abusers. The primary goal of bullying is to create pressure and pain for the victim (Kurniawan et al., 2022). This can manifest in physical, verbal, or psychological forms. The repetitive pattern of this

behavior indicates the misuse of power dynamics. Bullying is not merely a common form of conflict but also a systematic and destructive form of violence.

Bullying can have serious effects on the physical condition of victims (Esquivel et al., 2023). One of these effects is a decline in physical health due to constant psychological pressure. This stress triggers chronic stress, which can weaken the immune system and lead to various physical complaints, such as headaches, digestive issues, heart problems, and weight loss. Additionally, victims often experience sleep disturbances. Anxiety and fear resulting from bullying can make it difficult for victims to sleep soundly, cause them to wake up frequently at night, or experience nightmares (Siddique et al., 2023). If this sleep disturbance persists, it can disrupt physical and mental balance, impair concentration, reduce productivity, and worsen overall psychological well-being (Gaffney et al., 2021).

Bullying has a serious effect on the psychological well-being of victims (Bermejo et al., 2022). Constant pressure, intimidation, and negative treatment can cause various mental health disorders. First, the psychological well-being of victims tends to decline, characterized by reduced happiness, low self-esteem, and increased feelings of loneliness (Risya et al., 2024). Second, victims often experience anxiety and depression as a result of prolonged psychological pressure (Annisa et al., 2021). Third, in some cases, victims also exhibit symptoms of eating disorders such as anorexia, bulimia, or other forms of eating disorders (Setiani et al., 2024). Additionally, bullying negatively affects victims' self-confidence, making them feel unworthy and doubt their own value (Albakoor et al., 2020; Lawrence et al., 2024). Furthermore, in more severe cases, victims are at risk of developing self-harm tendencies, including the use of addictive substances such as alcohol and drugs as a form of escape (Dorol--Beauroy-Eustache & Mishara, 2021).

Low self-esteem is among the psychological effects often experienced by victims of bullying. Bullying can damage an individual's view of themselves, making them feel worthless, unappreciated, or incapable (Pascual-Sanchez et al., 2021). These effects can cause various long-term psychological problems, including the following: a) Victims often become targets of demeaning and humiliating remarks, which ultimately lower their self-confidence and make them feel insignificant (Sood et al., 2020); b) bullying also often drives victims to withdraw from social environments, leading to feelings of isolation or neglect by their peers (L. Li et al., 2022); c) victims often become trapped in excessive self-comparison with others, making them feel inadequate or insufficient (Tobing & Lestari, 2021); d) fear and a lack of self-confidence also become long-term effects of traumatic bullying experiences (Jelita et al., 2021; Moh Anang Zulqurnain & Mohammad Thoha, 2022); and e) the emotional impact can be profound, creating emotional wounds such as shame, guilt, and helplessness (X. Li et al., 2020).

Research data reveal that 84% of children aged 12–17 in Indonesia are victims of bullying. This percentage reflects the high level of violence among

adolescents and places Indonesia as one of the countries with the highest incidence of bullying in Asia (Noboru et al., 2021). This situation shows that bullying has become a serious problem that cannot be ignored. Therefore, a comprehensive response from various stakeholders is urgently needed. The government, schools, families, and communities must collaborate to address this issue. Identifying trigger factors, implementing preventive measures, and providing support to victims must be carried out in a structured manner. A collaborative approach is key to creating a safe and healthy environment for children (Febriana, 2017).

On the basis of data from the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI), 37,381 cases of bullying were recorded over a nine-year period from 2011 to 2019. These cases were reported both in the educational sphere and through social media (Annisa et al., 2021). This fact underscores that bullying is a very serious issue that requires greater attention from all segments of society in Indonesia. The high number of reports indicates a deep concern about the prevalence of bullying among children and adolescents (Garandeau et al., 2022). Therefore, it is crucial for relevant authorities and the broader community to take immediate, concrete steps to address and prevent this phenomenon.

The number of bullying cases in schools is increasing and has become a very concerning issue. In East Java Province, Surabaya city is the area with the greatest number of cases, reaching 59.8% (Annisa et al., 2021). This fact indicates that the issue of bullying is not only a concern at the national level but has also become a serious problem at the local level with a high level of urgency (Bokhove et al., 2022). The surge in cases in Surabaya underscores the need for greater attention to the educational environment in the region. Therefore, swift and appropriate measures are needed to address this issue. Prevention efforts, including raising awareness about the harmful effects of bullying and implementing anti-bullying programs within school environments, are crucial (Fauzan & Sulaeman, 2024).

This statement shows that bullying cannot be justified in any form and that children have the right to protection in accordance with the provisions of Law No. 35 of 2014 on child protection. Article 54 explains that every child in a school environment must be protected from all forms of violence, whether committed by teachers, educational staff, or peers (Bambang Wiyono et al., 2020). This provision clarifies that the responsibility to protect children lies not only with the government but also with educational institutions and society in general. Therefore, the implementation of this law is crucial for ensuring the fulfillment of children's rights and creating a safe and conducive school environment for their growth and development (Silva et al., 2023).

Islamic religious education is considered to play an important role as an agent of peace or a problem solver by teaching noble moral values, and knowledge and providing direction for human life (Alturki et al., 2020). One of the core aspects of religious education is to cultivate and strengthen students' faith by

imparting knowledge, deepening spiritual values, and applying them in daily life (Azhari, 2022). On the other hand, many also note that Islamic religious education has not yet succeeded in educating students in efforts to develop the ethics and morality of the nation. This is because the current process of developing awareness of religious education values focuses only on cognitive aspects and ignores psychomotor and affective aspects. This results in a gap in knowledge and experience among individual students. Understanding religious values and how to apply that understanding is crucial because knowledge is useless if not applied (Muhaimin, 2015).

Although religious education has become an integral part of the curriculum at all levels of education in Indonesia, it has not been able to fully guarantee harmony and peace among religious adherents. The continued prevalence of conflicts rooted in religion, ethnicity, race, and intergroup tensions indicates that religious education in schools has not functioned optimally as a tool for social reconciliation (Jensen, 2025). One of the causes is the exclusive approach to religious education, which emphasizes the singular truth of a particular belief system without fostering dialog or cross-religious understanding. This narrow and dogmatic approach reinforces social barriers and fosters intolerance among students (Khoja-Moolji, 2018). In this context, religion is no longer understood as a source of universal values that uphold peace and humanity but rather as a narrow identity that is easily exploited to divide people (Ali Maksum, 2021).

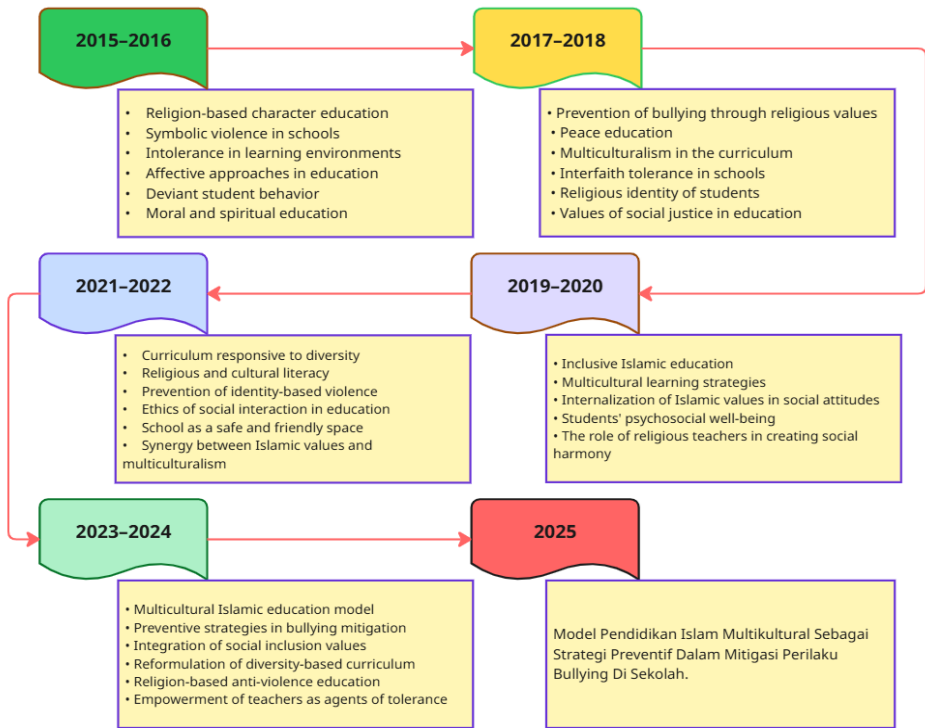
One of the issues that often arises in society is misunderstandings in response to differences, which then trigger prolonged conflict (Diab et al., 2022). It is not uncommon for students to receive religious teachings that are laden with exclusivism, which tends to be close to diversity. In such teachings, there is a tendency to view other religious perspectives as erroneous, even going so far as to label those who differ as infidels or apostates simply because they do not align with their understanding. Furthermore, various sects or groups have emerged that claim to be part of Islam but deviate from the true teachings of Islamic sharia (Dorcheh, 2024). In extreme cases, other religions are even seen as threats that must be eliminated. This mindset unconsciously plants the seeds of intolerance and conflict among students. If not addressed early on, such distorted understandings can develop into acts of violence in the name of religion in the future (Ihsan, 2017).

On the basis of these issues, there is a need to reformulate Islamic Religious Education, which has great potential as one of the solutions to address bullying. This can be achieved through multicultural Islamic education, an improvement over Islamic Religious Education, which has thus far focused solely on cognitive aspects. By integrating multicultural values, this education not only instills religious knowledge but also fosters awareness of the importance of mutual respect, tolerance, and living harmoniously in diversity. Multicultural Islamic education emerges as a solution to the limitations of the old approach by balancing cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects (Najmi et al., 2022). Through this approach, students not only understand religious teachings textually but also internalize them into inclusive, ethical, and harmonious daily behavior within a diverse society (Santika, 2023). Thus, multicultural Islamic education becomes a strategic path for shaping a generation that is faithful, virtuous, and capable of becoming agents of peace in complex social life.

Thus, students are taught to be responsible for their actions and to behave with good morals toward others. In this context, multicultural Islamic education can serve as an effective solution to overcome bullying through a comprehensive and integrated approach. This approach is capable of creating a safe, friendly, and inclusive learning environment for all school members. Multicultural Islamic education holds an important and urgent position in the school environment, as it can shape students who have a deep understanding of life in a diverse society. Therefore, this research was conducted in response to academic concerns regarding the importance of strengthening the values of diversity in the world of education. The school that is the subject of this research has implemented a curriculum based on the spirit of unity and the elimination of barriers of difference, whether in terms of social, cultural, religious, political, or ethnic aspects, which have often been triggers for bullying behavior.

To support systematic thinking and conceptual analysis, researchers will utilize mind maps as a tool to organize and map the connections between previous studies relevant to the theme of Multicultural Islamic Education Models as a Preventive Strategy in Mitigating Bullying Behavior in Schools. This mind map focuses on the connections between the concepts of internalizing multicultural values in Islamic education, a holistic approach to character development among students, curriculum integration that emphasizes tolerance and inclusivity, and their ability to create a safe school environment free from discriminatory behavior or violence. These conceptual relationships are visually represented in the mind map, which is part of the research analysis strategy:

**Figure 1:** *Mind map of the development of the concept of multicultural Islamic education*



The chart above shows that since 2015, the focus of Islamic education in the social context at schools has shifted from moral and character education to concrete efforts to address conflict and violence in the classroom. During the 2015–2016 period, research still focused on the formation of religious character as a foundation. However, over time, there has been a growing awareness of the need for a more open approach that addresses the social realities of students, particularly regarding intolerance and symbolic violence.

From 2017 to 2024, attention to multicultural values, inclusivity, and religious moderation as preventive measures against bullying behavior significantly increased. Research conducted between 2021 and 2024 more explicitly emphasizes the need to integrate inclusive Islamic values into the curriculum and educational practices, with a focus on creating a safe, friendly, and violence-free school environment. Therefore, the current multicultural Islamic education model is considered a comprehensive strategic approach to fostering tolerance awareness, reducing discrimination, and promoting social cohesion amid the diversity of the school community.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a mixed-method approach with a sequential explanatory strategy. This strategy begins with the collection and analysis of quantitative data to identify general trends in the population, which are then reinforced and deepened through qualitative data to understand the context, meaning, and social dynamics that cannot be explained by numbers alone. This approach was chosen to obtain comprehensive results, as studies on the implementation of Islamic multicultural values in bullying mitigation require both the measurement and the exploration of values, practices, and interactions in the field.

The study was conducted in several high schools located in multicultural environments that actively implement Islamic Religious Education (PAI) programs. Schools were selected using purposive sampling, taking into account the diversity of student backgrounds (religion, ethnicity, socioeconomic status), the school's openness to inclusive approaches, and the presence of past cases or tendencies toward bullying. The study respondents consisted of: 120 students who were vulnerable to becoming perpetrators or victims of bullying. Thirty PAI teachers were the primary implementers of multicultural Islamic education. Twenty educational staff members, such as class advisors and counseling staff, participated. School principals, as policy makers and vision leaders in education. Parents of students, to examine support and resistance toward the multicultural approach. The operationalization of the variables (quantitative) is as follows:

**Table 1:** *Operationalization of Variables (Quantitative)*

| Variable                                      | Indicator                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Instrument                              | Scale                  |
|-----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Understanding multicultural Islamic education | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge of the values of tolerance, human brotherhood, justice, and social empathy</li> <li>• Perceptions of diversity</li> <li>• Attitudes toward differences</li> </ul> | Closed-ended questionnaire (Likert 1–5) | Ordinal                |
| Frequency of bullying in schools              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verbal, physical, and social bullying</li> <li>• Frequency and location of incidents</li> <li>• Perpetrators and victims</li> </ul>                                         | Kuesioner dan daftar periksa insiden    | Ordinal/Categorical    |
| Correlation between two variables             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comparison of comprehension scores and bullying levels</li> </ul>                                                                                                           | Pearson Correlation Test (r)            | Inferential statistics |

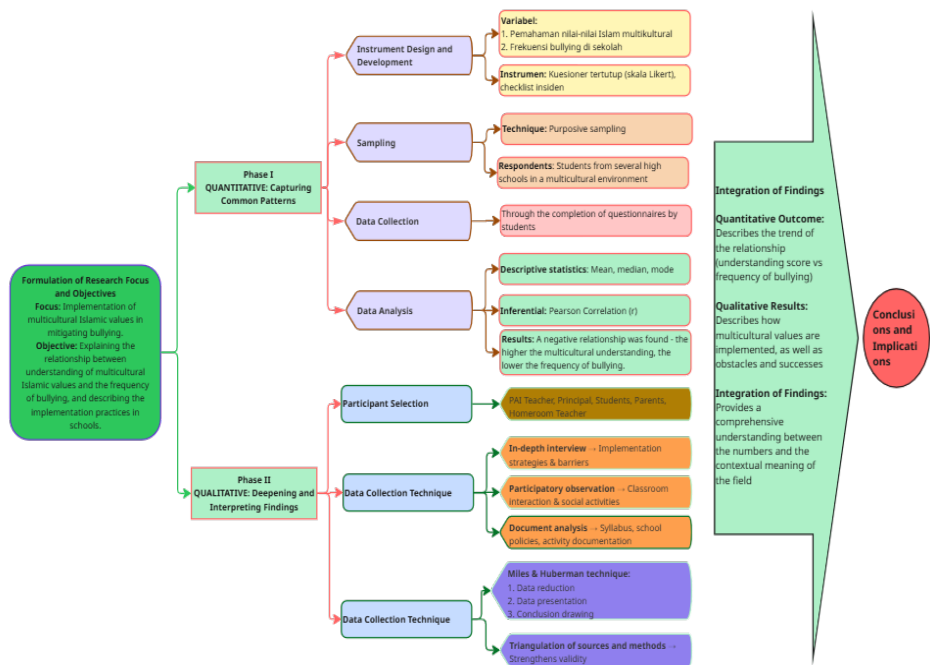


The data collection techniques (qualitative) used in this study included in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and document analysis. Interviews were conducted with PAI teachers, school principals, students, and parents to explore strategies for implementing multicultural Islamic values and the obstacles encountered. Observations were conducted to directly observe student interactions, classroom learning, and non-academic activities such as community service, mentoring, and daily routines that reflect inclusive attitudes. Document analysis included syllabi, lesson plans, school policies, counseling outcomes, and documentation of multicultural activities to strengthen field data and understand the extent to which multicultural Islamic values are integrated into school life.

In this study, data analysis was conducted comprehensively. Quantitative descriptive analysis (mean, median, and mode) was used to determine the distribution of understanding of multicultural Islamic education, and Pearson's correlation test was used to measure the relationship between this understanding and the frequency of bullying. The correlation results revealed that the greater the degree of multicultural understanding was, the lower the tendency to bully. Moreover, qualitative analysis employed the Miles & Huberman technique through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Data validity was strengthened through the triangulation of sources and methods, ensuring that the research findings are not only statistically accurate but also contextually profound.

The process began with a quantitative stage to measure students' understanding of multicultural Islamic values and the frequency of bullying in schools through questionnaires and incident checklists, followed by a Pearson correlation test to determine the relationship between the two. After the general pattern is statistically identified, the research continues to the qualitative stage to deepen the understanding of the quantitative results through in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and document analysis, involving various educational actors such as Islamic education teachers, school principals, students, parents, and school staff. This process is designed to provide a comprehensive overview of how multicultural values are implemented in educational practices and their role in reducing the intensity of bullying behavior in multicultural school environments. The methodological structure of this study is illustrated in the following diagram:

**Figure 2:** *Research flow chart*



## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, the main findings of the study, which aimed to examine the use of the multicultural Islamic education model as a preventive strategy for mitigating bullying behavior in schools, are presented. The results obtained through this mixed-method approach include quantitative data illustrating the level of understanding among students, teachers, and educational staff regarding multicultural and inclusive concepts, as well as their relationships with the frequency of bullying in the school environment. This is complemented by qualitative data providing an in-depth description of the implementation of multicultural Islamic values and the strengthening of inclusive character in the daily context of the school. This analysis was conducted to systematically address the research questions while providing interpretations of the dynamics observed in the field, both statistically and narratively, to offer a comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of the multicultural Islamic education approach in creating a safe, tolerant, and bullying-free school environment.

**Understanding multicultural and inclusive Islamic education and its connection to bullying in schools**

On the basis of the results of the quantitative data processing, an overview of the level of understanding of the concept of multicultural and inclusive Islamic education among students, teachers, and educational staff was obtained. These data were obtained through the distribution of questionnaires to all the respondents, which included assessments of their understanding of the values of diversity, tolerance, inclusiveness, and their application in daily life in the school environment. These findings serve as a starting point for assessing the extent of knowledge and awareness among education stakeholders in understanding the importance of diversity as the foundation for creating a harmonious environment free from bullying behavior. The results obtained will further serve as the basis for analysis to determine how much this understanding influences the frequency of bullying incidents in schools.

The results revealed that the respondents' level of understanding of the concept of multicultural and inclusive Islamic education varied, with teachers having the greatest understanding, followed by education personnel and students. These data provide an initial picture of the extent to which the values of diversity and inclusiveness have been understood by schools as a basis for bullying prevention efforts in the table below:

**Table 2:** *Respondents' Level of Understanding of the Concept of Multicultural and Inclusive Islamic Education*

| Respondent Category      | Number of Respondents | High (%)      | Medium (%)    | Low (%)       |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Students                 | 120                   | 42 (35%)      | 60 (50%)      | 18 (15%)      |
| Teachers                 | 30                    | 21 (70%)      | 8 (26.7%)     | 1 (3.3%)      |
| Education Personnel      | 20                    | 10 (50%)      | 7 (35%)       | 3 (15%)       |
| <b>Total/Average (%)</b> | <b>170</b>            | <b>42.94%</b> | <b>44.12%</b> | <b>12.94%</b> |

The table above presents data on the level of understanding of three groups of respondents: students, teachers and education personnel. This finding highlights the concept of multicultural and inclusive Islamic education. Overall, out of a total of 170 respondents, the majority showed a level of understanding that was in the medium category (44.12%), followed by the high category (42.94%), and only a small proportion were in the low category (12.94%). A more detailed look at the group of 120 students reveals that 50% are in the moderate category, 35% are in the high category, and 15% are in the low category. This finding shows that half of the students do not have an optimal understanding of multicultural and inclusive values in Islamic education.

The teacher group showed the highest level of understanding. Among the 30 teachers, 70% have a high level of understanding, 26.7% are in the medium category, and only 3.3% are in the low category. These findings indicate that teachers generally have a good understanding of the concept of Islamic education, which encourages diversity and tolerance. Education personnel fall between the previous two groups, with 50% having a high understanding, 35% having a medium understanding and 15% having a low understanding. While this is good, it shows that there is still room for improvement, particularly in providing thorough training to non-teaching staff. From the total average, it can be concluded that although most respondents understand the concept of multicultural Islamic Education quite well, there is still a proportion that needs reinforcement of their understanding. This uneven understanding can affect the effectiveness of the implementation of bullying prevention strategies in the school environment. Thus, structured and sustainable interventions are needed to improve multicultural literacy for all school components.

**Table 3:** *Frequency of occurrence of bullying behavior according to respondents' perceptions*

| Type of Bullying                | Often (%)  | Sometimes (%) | Never (%)  |
|---------------------------------|------------|---------------|------------|
| Verbal (teasing, insults)       | 28 (16.5%) | 85 (50%)      | 57 (33.5%) |
| Physical (hitting, pushing)     | 12 (7%)    | 46 (27%)      | 112 (66%)  |
| Social (ostracizing, excluding) | 22 (13%)   | 72 (42.4%)    | 76 (44.6%) |

Table 3 presents data on respondents' perceptions of the frequency of three types of bullying behavior in the school environment, namely, verbal bullying, physical bullying, and social bullying. These data provide an overview of how often these types of bullying are experienced or witnessed by the school community. According to the respondents, verbal bullying (mockery, insults) is the most common form of bullying. A total of 16.5% reported that verbal bullying behavior occurred frequently, and 50% reported that it occurred sometimes. A total of 33.5% reported that they had never witnessed or experienced this type of bullying. These findings indicate that verbal bullying is still the most dominant form of violence in the school environment because it is often considered mild or normal by some people, even though it can have serious psychological effects.

Physical bullying (hitting, pushing, direct harm), is the least common form of violence the basis of respondents' perceptions. Only 7% claimed to see or experience it often, and 27% said it occurred sometimes. The vast majority, 66%, reported that they had never seen or experienced physical bullying. This figure shows that physical violence tends to be easier to recognize and take action against, so its frequency is relatively low compared with that of other forms. Social bullying (ostracizing, refusing to socialize, and forming exclusive groups), falls between verbal and physical in terms of frequency. Approximately 13% of the

respondents stated that social bullying occurred often, 42.4% said sometimes, and 44.6% said never. Although not as prevalent as verbal bullying is, social bullying remains a concern because it is covert and often difficult to detect directly; however, it can have serious social and emotional effects on victims.

Thus, it can be concluded that verbal and social bullying are still the main challenges in the school environment, while physical bullying has begun to be controlled. These results confirm the importance of implementing a multicultural Islamic education model as a strategy that emphasizes strengthening the values of empathy, tolerance, and mutual respect to prevent bullying behavior in the form of bullying.

**Table 4:** *Correlations between Multicultural Understanding and Bullying Frequency*

| Variable                                | Correlation Value (r) | Interpretation              |
|-----------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| Multicultural Understanding of Bullying | -0.612                | Strong negative correlation |

Table 4 shows the results of the correlation analysis between the variable understanding of multicultural Islamic education and the frequency of bullying behavior at school. The correlation value (r) obtained is -0.612, which indicates a strong negative relationship between the two variables. The interpretation of this correlation value is that the higher the understanding of the concept of multiculturalism in Islamic education among students, teachers, and education personnel is, the lower the frequency of bullying that occurs in the school environment. Conversely, a low understanding of multicultural values tends to be directly proportional to the increase in intolerant, discriminatory, and bullying behavior, whether verbal, physical, or social. This strong negative correlation provides important evidence that multicultural understanding plays a significant preventive role in creating a safe, harmonious and inclusive school climate. These results support the urgency of implementing a multicultural Islamic education model as an integral part of bullying prevention strategies, with an approach that is not only cognitive but also affects the affective and social aspects of students.

These findings are in line with those of international research: a meta-analysis revealed that the implementation of multicultural education significantly reduces bullying and victimization in schools, making it an effective pedagogical tool (López Gómez et al., 2025). Research from the Unesa Conference emphasized that multicultural counseling helps eliminate racial bullying and increase tolerance among students (Widya, 2024). Moreover, a national study from Putra highlighted the effectiveness of multicultural Islamic education as a solution to reduce cyberbullying among adolescents, revealing the relevance of inclusive values in a digital context (Putra, 2025). In line with the research results, inclusive Islamic education that prioritizes empathy, compassion, and justice has succeeded in reducing the intensity of bullying behavior (Ningsih, 2023). Thus, these findings

provide a strong empirical basis to support the multicultural Islamic education model as an integral component of the anti-bullying strategic framework.

**The application of multicultural Islamic values and inclusive character strengthening in schools prevent and reduce bullying behavior**

On the basis of the results of the qualitative data collection and analysis, an in-depth description of how the application of multicultural Islamic values and inclusive character strengthening is carried out in the school environment in an effort to prevent and reduce bullying behavior is obtained. Data were obtained through in-depth interviews with teachers, students, and education personnel; observation of learning activities; and document review related to the school curriculum and programs. The findings show that values such as tolerance, justice and respect for differences have begun to be internalized in various educational practices through learning approaches, social interactions and school culture, which are consciously developed. These results provide a basis for evaluating the extent to which the application of multicultural Islamic values can shape the character of inclusive learners and contribute to creating a safe, harmonious and bullying-free school environment.

**Table 5:** *Integration of Multicultural Islamic Values in Learning Activities*

| Aspects of Learning                                    | Implementation Description                                                                    |
|--------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Reinforcement of Islamic Religious Education Materials | Materials are infused with the concepts of tolerance, justice, and mutual respect.            |
| Teacher Approach                                       | Avoiding doctrinal methods, emphasizing contextual and reflective approaches.                 |
| Key Values Emphasized                                  | Ukhuwah insaniyah, tasamuh (tolerance), adl (justice), and social empathy.                    |
| Methods Used                                           | Class discussions, diversity case studies, collaborative projects across student backgrounds. |
| Learner Response                                       | Students are more open to differences and active in multicultural value-based activities.     |

Table 5 illustrates the implementation of multicultural Islamic values in learning activities at school, especially in Islamic Religious Education subjects. In terms of strengthening the material, teachers actively insert values such as tolerance, justice, and mutual respect in the delivery of teaching materials. This aims to make students' understanding of Islamic teachings not only normative but also contextual and relevant to plural social life. In terms of learning approaches, teachers no longer use dogmatic or one-way methods but rather prioritize reflective and contextual approaches that allow students to think critically about social reality.

The main values emphasized, such as *ukhuwah insaniyah*, *tasamuh* (tolerance), *adl* (justice), and social empathy, become the foundation in building students' inclusive character. To achieve this goal, participatory learning methods such as class discussions, case studies on diversity, and collaborative projects between students with different backgrounds are used. As a result, the learners responded positively; they became more open to differences and showed active involvement in various activities that foster multicultural values in the school environment. The findings indicate that the Islam-based multicultural approach has a real impact on shaping tolerant characteristics and preventing bullying behavior.

**Table 6:** *Inclusive Character Strengthening Strategies through Non-Academic Activities*

| Types of Non-Academic Activities | Activity Objectives                                            | Main Activity Forms                                  | Impact on Student Character                       |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| Cross-Class Social Service       | Fostering empathy and social awareness                         | Donations, visits to orphanages, community service   | Increases caring and solidarity                   |
| Religious Mentoring              | Spiritual development and strengthening the value of tolerance | Group studies, discussions across religious themes   | Fosters mutual respect                            |
| Student Peace Ambassador         | Creating agents of peace in the school environment             | Conflict resolution training, anti-bullying campaign | Improves mediation and communication skills       |
| Daily Habituation Program        | Training positive and tolerant attitudes in everyday life      | Smile greetings, prayers, cross-group pickets        | Forms inclusive and cooperative habits            |
| Student Consultative Forum       | Encouraging active participation and joint problem solving     | Class meetings, discussions between students         | Improves social and democratic skills             |
| Teacher & Counselor Assistance   | Providing psychosocial protection and support                  | Individual/group counseling, persuasive approaches   | Reduces the potential for violence and alienation |

The results show that the school not only relies on academic approaches but also actively develops inclusive character strengthening strategies through non-academic activities. Activities such as cross-class social services, religious mentoring, and student peace ambassador programs are designed to increase the empathy, solidarity, and social skills of learners. Through interactions between students from different backgrounds in these activities, the values of tolerance, social care, and a sense of community are successfully instilled in a contextual and fun way. The program also shows that a collaborative and participatory approach is effective in promoting students' understanding of the importance of living peacefully in the midst of diversity.

In addition to engaging in group-based activities, the school also implements simple but consistent daily habituation programs, such as smile-salam-greeting and praying together across groups. This habit is proven to be able to shape inclusive behavior slowly but deeply. No less importantly, the role of teachers and counsellors is the main pillar in providing personal assistance to students who are at risk of becoming perpetrators or victims of bullying. With supportive counseling and a persuasive approach, students are given a safe space to express their problems and are directed toward constructive solutions. Overall, this strategy reinforces that non-academic activities are not just a complement but also an important instrument in creating a school culture that is friendly, fair and free from bullying practices.

**Table 7:** *Supporting and Hindering Factors for Implementation*

| Category   | Factors                                                  | Description                                                                  |
|------------|----------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Supporters | Principal and teacher commitment                         | Strong leadership support in implementing multicultural values               |
|            | Teacher training on tolerance education                  | Improving teachers' capacity in managing diversity                           |
|            | School culture that supports inclusiveness               | School climate that is friendly and open to differences                      |
|            |                                                          |                                                                              |
| Barrier    | Lack of teachers' deep understanding of multiculturalism | Some teachers still understand the concept textually, not yet applicable     |
|            | Parental resistance to inclusive approaches              | Parents' concerns that this approach weakens certain religious identities    |
|            | Limited means of communication across students           | Lack of forums or activities that bring together students across backgrounds |
|            |                                                          |                                                                              |

The results show that the successful implementation of multicultural Islamic education is strongly influenced by internal school factors, especially the strong commitment of the principal and teachers as the main drivers. This commitment is reflected in the initiative to provide training related to tolerance education to teachers and to develop an inclusive school culture. The culture is reflected not only in school policies but also in daily interactions that create a friendly, open and respectful atmosphere among students. However, some obstacles need to be overcome so that the implementation of multicultural Islamic education runs optimally. One of the main obstacles is the lack of in-depth understanding by some teachers of the concept of multiculturalism, which causes the learning approach to not be fully inclusive. On the other hand, resistance from some parents who are worried that an inclusive approach could disrupt their children's religious identity is also a challenge. Coupled with limited facilities or activities that can strengthen cross-student interactions, this condition highlights



the importance of synergy between schools, families and the environment in supporting the success of an equitable and bullying-free education.

On the basis of the findings of this study, it can be concluded that the multicultural Islamic education model is effective at preventing and mitigating bullying behavior in schools through an inclusive, participatory, and contextual learning approach. These findings are in line with the results of Asroruddin & Jumhuri's study, which emphasizes that strengthening Islamic values such as tolerance, justice, and *ukhuwah* in the multicultural education process can shape the character of students who are open and respectful (Asroruddin & Jumhuri, 2024). Nisa and Selvia's research also revealed that a collaborative approach in context-based Islamic Religious Education significantly improved students' inclusive attitudes and social care (Nisa et al., 2025; Selvia et al., 2024). These results were reinforced by those of Khasanah, who reported that a school culture that supports diversity and the active role of teachers in guiding social interactions between students are key factors in creating a safe school environment free from bullying (Khasanah et al., 2025). Moreover, Umar noted that the greatest challenge in implementing Islamic multicultural education lies in teachers' lack of understanding and some parents' resistance to inclusive approaches (Khasanah et al., 2025; Umar, 2024).

## CONCLUSIONS

The combined results of the quantitative and qualitative approaches in this study indicate that the multicultural Islamic education model has strong and relevant effectiveness in preventing and mitigating bullying behavior in schools. On the quantitative side, a correlation value of -0.612 was obtained between the level of understanding of the concept of multicultural Islamic education and the frequency of bullying. This strong negative correlation indicates that the higher the understanding of multicultural values, such as tolerance, justice and inclusiveness, among students, teachers and education personnel is, the lower the incidence of bullying in schools. Conversely, a poor understanding of these concepts tends to correlate with an increase in intolerant actions and discriminatory behavior.

Moreover, the qualitative results reinforce these findings by showing how Islamic values such as *ukhuwah insaniyah*, *tasamuh* (tolerance), *adl* (justice), and social empathy have been actively integrated into the learning process and school life. These values are taught not only cognitively in Islamic Religious Education subjects but also through habituation strategies, non-academic activities, and supportive counseling that is personal and reflective. This implementation is proven to encourage the birth of inclusive, open, and participatory student characters in building a harmonious environment. The success of the program is largely determined by the principal's commitment, teacher competence, a school culture that is open to diversity, and ongoing training. However, challenges still

arise, especially in terms of some teachers' limited understanding and parents' resistance to the inclusive approach. Therefore, the success of this model requires collaborative support among schools, families and communities. With the integration of these two approaches, this research provides a comprehensive picture that multicultural Islamic education is not only a conceptual solution but also strategic and applicable for preventing bullying in schools in a sustainable manner.

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