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ANTI-BULLYING ASSISTANCE BASED ON RELIGIOUS MODERATION TO BUILD STUDENTS' CHARACTER

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Abstrak

Pengabdian ini bertujuan untuk memberikan pendampingan kepada peserta didik dalam mencegah tindakan bullying melalui penerapan nilai-nilai moderasi beragama untuk membentuk karakter yang toleran dan berakhlak. Pentingnya pendampingan ini dilakukan karena perundungan bisa berdampak serius dalam perkembangan karakter siswa jika tidak di perhatikan dengan serius. Pengabdian ini menggunakan metode Participatory Action Research yang dimulai dari proses identifikasi, perencanaan, pelaksanan dan evaluasi atau refleksi yang melibatkan siswa dan guru di MI Al-Muhsinun Kota Mojokerto. Kegiatan pendampingan berhasil meningkatkan pemahaman peserta didik tentang bahaya bullying dan pentingnya nilai-nilai moderasi beragama, seperti toleransi, saling menghormati, dan kerja sama lintas perbedaan. Peserta didik menunjukkan perubahan sikap yang lebih terbuka, empatik, dan mampu menyelesaikan konflik secara damai. Program ini memberikan dampak positif dalam menciptakan lingkungan sekolah yang lebih aman, inklusif, dan harmonis. Selain itu, kegiatan ini juga memperkuat karakter peserta didik yang berakhlak, menjunjung nilai kebhinekaan, serta mendukung upaya pencegahan radikalisme dan kekerasan di lingkungan pendidikan. Program ini dapat direplikasi di sekolah lain sebagai model pendidikan karakter berbasis moderasi beragama.

Kata kunci: Anti-Bullying di Sekolah, Moderasi Beragama, Pembentukan Karakter, Pendidikan Toleransi, Program Pendampingan Sekolah.

Abstract

This service aims to assist students in preventing bullying through the application of religious moderation values to form a tolerant and moral character. The importance of this assistance is carried out because bullying can have a serious impact on the development of students' character if it is not seriously considered. This service uses the Participatory Action Research method, which starts from the process of identification, planning, implementation, and evaluation or reflection involving students and teachers at MI Al-Muhsinun, Mojokerto City. The mentoring activities succeeded in increasing students' understanding of the dangers of bullying and the importance of religious moderation values, such as tolerance, mutual respect, and cooperation across differences. Students show a change in attitude that is more open, empathetic, and able to resolve conflicts peacefully. This program has a positive impact on creating a safer, more inclusive, and harmonious school environment. In addition, this activity also strengthens the character of moral students, upholds the value of diversity, and supports efforts to prevent radicalism and violence in the educational environment. This program can be replicated in other schools as a model of character education based on religious moderation.

Keywords: Anti-Bullying in School, Religious Moderation, Character Building, Tolerance Education, School Mentoring Program.

INTRODUCTION

Bullying behavior among students in Indonesia is a complex issue and requires serious attention (Kosilah & Septian, 2020). Data shows that bullying not only occurs in schools in urban areas, but also in rural areas (Nansel, 2001). According to a report from (Armitage, 2020), about 1 in 5 children in Indonesia experience bullying, with a higher rate in urban areas. This shows that bullying is a widespread problem and knows no geographical boundaries (Broutin, 2023). In recent years, the issue of bullying among students has increasingly received serious attention from various circles, including educators, parents, and the wider community (Ningsih, 2024). Bullying, which is defined as aggressive behavior that is carried out repeatedly and involves an imbalance of power, can occur in various forms, such as physical, verbal, and cyber (Sumarto, 2021).

According to data from the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia, around 30% of students in Indonesia have experienced bullying at school (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2022). This phenomenon not only negatively impacts children's psychological development but can also disrupt the learning process and create an unsafe educational environment (Abidin et al, 2024). One of the challenges faced in bullying prevention efforts is the social stigma inherent in bullying victims (Hayat et al, 2025). Lack of understanding and awareness of what bullying is and its impact (Catherine, 2009). Many students and even adults still consider bullying to be part of a normal social process, so they don't feel the need to take action (Smith, 2019).

Many children feel embarrassed or afraid to report the bullying they experience, because they are worried that they will be considered weak or unable to defend themselves (Khanolainen, 2025). This is exacerbated by a lack of support from peers and the surrounding environment (Faujian, 2025). More than 70% of bullying victims do not report the incident to adults, both teachers and parents (Simatupang, 2025). Another challenge is the difference in understanding about bullying among students from different cultural and religious backgrounds (Smith, 2004). In some communities, actions that are considered bullying by one group may not be considered so by other groups (Parsons, 2005). This creates difficulties in defining and dealing with bullying effectively (Beane, 2010). Therefore, it is important to educate students about what bullying is and how to recognize it, regardless of their background.

The approach of religious moderation offers a relevant and effective solution in preventing bullying (Shapiro 2014). This approach emphasizes the importance of the values of tolerance, mutual respect, and empathy among students (Baraldsnes et al, 2025). By integrating these values in the educational curriculum, it is hoped that students can build a positive character and distance themselves from bullying

536

behavior (Shakir, 2025). The approach of religious moderation, which is carried out by various studies, shows great potential in preventing and overcoming bullying in schools (Siddiqui, 2025). By educating students about the importance of respecting differences and building good communication, it is hoped that students can develop a more positive character and stay away from bullying behavior (Anggraini, 2025).

Community service activities in the world of education generally focus on improving the quality of learning, skills training, or strengthening the capacity of teachers and educators (Mo'tasim et al., 2023) (Arosy et al., 2024). However, this service has a different approach by focusing on social issues that often occur in the school environment, namely bullying. Integrating the values of religious moderation in the anti-bullying mentoring process makes this activity unique. This approach not only touches on the negative behavior aspects of students, but also fosters a cool, tolerant, and inclusive religious awareness. Thus, this service is not only preventive against bullying, but also constructive in shaping the character of students who are moral and able to live harmoniously in diversity. This approach is still rarely used in other service activities, so as to provide added value and innovation in the development of character education in schools.

This service aims to assist students in preventing bullying through the application of religious moderation values to form a tolerant and moral character. The importance of this assistance is carried out because bullying can have a serious impact on the development of students' character if it is not seriously considered.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The method used in this service is the PAR (Parcipatory Action Research) method, which aims to be an active learning process during the workshop process involving students and teachers at MI Al Muhsinin. Service with this approach can be said to be Transformative Service. This is because it is a research process that is oriented towards empowerment and change. This argument is based on the fact that the research process is transformative (Afandi, 2022). With the use of this method, it can create a conducive madrasah environment free from bullying. By involving stakeholders in schools and emphasizing continuous learning, the Participatory Action Research method can help madrasah managers prevent bullying problems and increase the enthusiasm for students and teachers to learn more creatively (Arosy et al., 2024). The main reason for using this method is that it is needed, based on anxiety or a problem, to achieve the expected change (Novita & Solihin, 2024). This mentoring activity was carried out on January 30, 2024, in the MI Al-Muhsinin classroom hall.

The stages in the implementation of service are (1) Identification stage, at this stage, the community service team conducts direct observation in the madrasah environment to see the interaction between students and identify areas that have the potential to be the location of bullying acts, the team also conducts a brief discussion with teachers. (2) In the planning stage, from the results of the identification and literature review carried out by the community service team, the team makes the materials needed for the implementation of community service in schools, as well as several questions, as a form of workshop evaluation. (3) The implementation stage, this workshop is carried out in a non-formal manner, the opening concept is like a teacher who wants to teach in class, this is done so that the team can be closer to the students, in the process of implementation two people are the main speakers and two people are supervisors in the process of practicing forms of bullying. After the material is delivered and the practice of identifying bullying acts, the next stage is the question and answer stage, and a discussion with students. (4) In the evaluation stage, students are given an evaluation sheet with several questions about the workshop material that has been submitted to answer by the students. This is done to find out the extent of their understanding of the forms of bullying that are often encountered at school.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The implementation of community service activities at MI Al-Muhsinin in the form of anti-bullying assistance based on religious moderation showed good results in increasing students' awareness of the dangers of bullying and the importance of tolerance values. Through a participatory and transformative approach, this activity succeeded in creating an inclusive, dialogical learning atmosphere and encouraging behavior change in a more positive direction. The enthusiasm of the students during the activity is an indicator of the initial success of this program, characterized by their active involvement in educational sessions, discussions, simulations, and the preparation of joint commitments. The results of the evaluation showed that there was an increase in students' understanding of the definition of bullying, its forms, and how to respond to it with a peaceful and empathetic approach.

Educational Sessions and Interactive Discussions on Bullying

The educational session began with the delivery of material on the definition of bullying comprehensively, including its forms such as physical, verbal, social, and cyber bullying. This material is presented in a relaxed but still in-depth manner so that it is easy to understand by students from various backgrounds. To strengthen understanding, the service team presents concrete examples that are relevant to students' daily lives in the school environment. This gives a real picture that bullying is not just a joke or joke, but an action that can have a serious impact on a person's psychological state.

The presentation succeeded in opening up new awareness among students about the importance of recognizing and avoiding bullying behavior. Many of them are initially unaware that the act of mocking, ostracizing, or spreading rumors is a real form of bullying. Through this understanding, students are invited to be more

sensitive to their social environment and begin to see bullying as a common problem that must be prevented from an early age.

The activity continued with interactive discussions that provided a free space for students to share personal experiences and stories from their friends who had been involved in bullying situations. The atmosphere of the discussion is built in a warm and open manner, so that students feel safe to express their opinions and feelings. Some students even dare to tell their experiences as victims, witnesses, or even bullies. These stories are then used as case study material in small groups, so that students can analyze and evaluate appropriate actions in responding to bullying. This is done because it is important to build awareness and empathy among students. As seen in Figure 1, the following are the activities of students who have discussed in identifying what forms of bullying they have encountered at school.



Figure 1. Discussion on Identifying Types of Bullying in Schools

Through this process of discussion, it is clear that students' empathy and social awareness are beginning to take shape. They learn to listen to each other, understand other people's points of view, and realize that good communication and mutual respect can be key to preventing bullying. This session also fosters the value of moral responsibility to maintain the comfort and safety of peers in the school environment. Thus, interactive discussions not only provide intellectual understanding, but also form positive attitudes and characters in students.

Data from the results of discussions and worksheets given to students showed that 70% of students at MI Al Muhsinin had witnessed or experienced bullying, either directly or indirectly. This shows the need for a more comprehensive approach in dealing with this issue. By understanding the concept of bullying in depth, students are expected to be more sensitive to bullying and dare to report it to teachers. In addition, the benefits that can be obtained by students in this

workshop are more understanding of bullying. So that students can be involved in creating a safe and comfortable school environment. With the right knowledge, it is hoped that students can contribute to creating a culture of mutual respect and tolerance at MI Al Muhsinin Mojokerto City.

Religious Moderation Training

Religious moderation training is carried out as one of the main strategies in shaping the character of students who are tolerant, open, and respectful of differences. This activity aims to instill the basic values of peaceful and cool religious life among MI Al-Muhsinin students. The training materials include moderation principles such as staying away from extremism, rejecting violence, respecting diversity, and the importance of dialogue in resolving conflicts. This training is arranged in an applicative manner so that it is easy to digest by elementary school students.

The training method is designed with a fun and participatory approach. One of the strategies used is an educational game that teaches the importance of cooperation, listening to each other, and respecting the opinions of others. This game is an effective tool in instilling the values of tolerance indirectly but meaningfully. Students not only feel entertained, but also learn to place themselves as part of a diverse yet harmonious community.

In addition, the training also involves simple case studies drawn from students' daily lives, such as conflicts between friends due to differences of opinion or background. Students are asked to analyze the case, then discuss the solution in a group. From this activity, it can be seen that students are beginning to be able to understand the importance of responding to differences wisely and not rushing to judge or blame others. They learned that any differences can be addressed with open communication and mutual respect.

Lack of empathy is one of the main factors that lead to bullying behavior in schools. This shows that education on religious moderation needs to be implemented effectively to increase students' understanding of the importance of empathy and tolerance. In the training, material on instilling the values of religious moderation was also delivered to students so that they can become agents of change in preventing bullying.

A real example of the application of religious moderation can be seen in practical activities where students are invited to share their experiences regarding bullying. By sharing, students can understand each other's points of view and feel the impact of bullying. This method not only strengthens their understanding of moderation but also builds solidarity among them. Students are invited to give examples of their activities, as illustrated in Figure 2.



Gamabr 2. Simulation of Tolerance When There Are Bullying Friends

Group discussions are a forum for reflection that deepens students' understanding of the concept of religious moderation. In the discussion, students were invited to share their views and personal experiences related to the diversity they encountered in the school environment and society. This activity encourages them to see differences as a gift, not a threat. Mutual respect between individuals from different backgrounds is a core value that continues to be emphasized throughout the training.

Overall, this religious moderation training has a real positive impact. Learners show a more open attitude and are able to interact with friends from different backgrounds in a more empathetic and friendly way. This activity also strengthens the collective awareness that schools are a common space that must be maintained by all school residents. By instilling the values of moderation from an early age, it is hoped that students can grow into a generation with noble character, peace loving, and ready to coexist in diversity.

Individual and Group Psychosocial Assistance

Psychosocial assistance activities are carried out as a form of follow-up intervention for students who are known to have been directly involved in bullying cases, both as victims and perpetrators. This approach is personal and empathetic, with the main goal of helping the emotional recovery process, improving social interaction patterns, and rebuilding students' confidence that had been disrupted due to bullying. Mentoring is carried out by the service team with a warm and non-judgmental approach, so that students feel safe to open up and share their experiences.

In individual sessions, each student was given a private space to share their feelings, experiences, and challenges they faced after the bullying incident. This session is a reflective moment for students to realize the impact of the actions they experience or do, as well as begin to understand the importance of behavior change. Some students show quite deep emotional responses, but with a consistent and humanist approach, they begin to feel heard and understood. This process is also the

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beginning of strengthening positive identity and self-motivation to improve social relationships at school.

Meanwhile, in the group sessions, students were invited to discuss and conduct simple simulations to practice empathy, conflict resolution skills, and build peer support. This group is made up of students who have similar experiences, so they can reinforce each other and learn from each other. Through this simulation, students can feel firsthand the impact of bullying and how religious moderation can be a solution to overcome the problem as depicted in Figure 3.



Figure 3. Bullying Simulation

Group discussions also help students realize that they are not alone, and that change for the better is possible with positive environmental support. The results of mentoring showed a significant change in attitude, where students began to be more open, less easily provoked by emotions, and wiser in responding to differences.

Making Anti-Bullying Commitments

As a closing series of anti-bullying education and mentoring activities based on religious moderation at MI Al-Muhsinin, the service team held a special session on Making Anti-Bullying Commitments involving all students. This activity aims to build collective awareness and foster a sense of responsibility for students in maintaining a safe, peaceful, and free school environment from all forms of bullying. This approach is not only symbolic, but also a process of internalizing the values that students have learned during previous educational and discussion sessions.

In this session, students are actively invited to formulate the content of the anti-bullying declaration based on the results of discussions, personal experiences, and religious moderation values such as tolerance, mutual respect, and peaceful conflict resolution. The preparation process is carried out together in the classroom, with assistance from the service team and teachers. Students are given the freedom to express their opinions, so that the content of the commitment is truly born from their own understanding and awareness. This creates a sense of ownership of the commitment, which makes students more motivated to actually live it out in their daily lives at school.

As a form of visualization and reinforcement of the message, the students were then asked to make anti-bullying posters in groups. This poster contains an invitation, a moral message, and an illustration about the importance of stopping bullying and creating a positive learning environment. This activity not only develops students' creativity, but also becomes a fun and educational medium of expression. The work of the anti-bullying poster is explained in Figure 4.



Figure 4. Anti-Bullying Poster by Students

Some posters featured inspirational words such as "Friends Are to Be Embraced, Not Dropped" or "Together We Reject Bullying at School," complete with images that reflect the familiarity and harmony between students. In this way, students not only learn about religious moderation but also contribute to creating a more positive school environment, After the whole group finishes making posters, their work is presented in front of the class and pasted in strategic areas of the school, such as the front of the classroom, corridors, and information boards. This step aims to ensure that anti-bullying messages can be widely spread and remembered by all school residents. The posters made are also a stark reminder that the commitment to peace must be maintained, not only by the students who participate in the activities, but also by teachers, staff, and the entire school community.

The culmination of this activity was marked by the reading of a joint declaration by all students, which was then followed by the signing of an antibullying commitment. The signing was carried out on a large commitment sheet that had been prepared, and then displayed in the main area of the school as a symbolic form as well as tangible proof of the students' seriousness in creating an inclusive and harmonious environment. Through this activity, it is hoped that the spirit of

anti-bullying will not stop as a discourse, but really become a school culture that is alive and internalized in the daily lives of all students.

Periodic Monitoring and Evaluation

As an integral part of the anti-bullying mentoring program based on religious moderation, periodic monitoring and evaluation activities are carried out to assess the effectiveness of the program while ensuring the sustainability of positive impacts after the main activities. This activity is designed to observe changes in students' attitudes and behaviors in their daily social interactions in the school environment, as well as explore feedback from teachers and students as direct actors of educational activities that have taken place. Monitoring is carried out systematically through direct observation in the classroom and school area, while evaluation is carried out through in-depth interviews and open discussions with teachers and student representatives.

One form of monitoring practice that has begun to be implemented by teachers at MI Al-Muhsinin is the implementation of reflection sessions after learning activities. These sessions are usually conducted at the end of lessons or at the close of the school day, where students are invited to openly reflect on their interactions over the course of a full day. In this session, students are invited to reflect on their behavior towards their friends and how they can apply a moderate attitude in social interactions. This not only helps students to realize the impact of their actions but also encourages them to behave better. The reflection sheets given are as follows in Figure 5.



Figure 5. Reflections on Learning About Bullying

In interviews conducted with several teachers, they said that this reflection session provided a significant change in student behavior. The students become calmer, less easily provoked, and begin to get used to apologizing if they make a mistake to a friend. One of the teachers even said that previously there were often small disputes in the classroom, but after routine reflection, the number of conflicts decreased drastically. Teachers also feel that the classroom atmosphere becomes more conducive because students begin to understand the importance of being moderate, respecting differences, and not judging friends just because of differences of opinion or background.

The results of interviews with students also showed a positive response to this activity. Some students revealed that the reflection sessions made them feel more valued and able to control their emotions better. A grade V student said that he used to make fun of his quiet friend, but after an education and reflection session, he realized that his attitude was unpleasant and tried to improve his relationship. Another student said that he felt comfortable because now his friends are more respectful and non-discriminate in society. These findings show that mentoring and educational activities do not only stop at knowledge, but really have a real impact on the formation of students' character.

In general, periodic monitoring and evaluation activities provide a fairly comprehensive picture of the changes that occur after the implementation of the program. These activities are important as part of ongoing efforts to ensure that the values of religious moderation, anti-bullying, and a culture of peace are not only temporary, but can be part of a vibrant school culture. The recommendations from this process encourage the need for further training for teachers in reflection facilitation techniques and capacity building in accompanying students, so that this anti-bullying movement can transform into a solid and sustainable character education system at MI Al-Muhsinin.

The follow-up of this mentoring activity is also very important. MI Al Muhsinin can plan routine activities that focus on preventing bullying and implementing religious moderation. For example, holding seminars every semester or discussion activities involving students, teachers, and parents to discuss current issues related to bullying and ways to prevent it. In addition, it is also important to involve parents in bullying prevention efforts.

MI Al Muhsinin can hold meetings with parents to provide information about the importance of their role in supporting their children not to get involved in bullying, both as perpetrators and victims. By involving parents, it is hoped that synergy will be created between schools and families in preventing bullying. With good evaluation and follow-up, this workshop is expected to have a sustainable positive impact on students and teachers at MI Al-Muhsinin. Through religious moderation education and understanding of bullying, it is hoped that students can grow into individuals with character and contribute positively to society.

The results of this service activity show that there are significant changes in student awareness, attitudes, and behaviors related to bullying issues in the school environment. One of the key factors for the success of this activity is the approach used, namely the integration of religious moderation values in the process of education, mentoring, and reflection. This is in line with the findings of Rahayu & Permana, (2019) who stated that bullying prevention is greatly influenced by the extent to which empathy and moral values are instilled in students. This activity also strengthens the results of the research of Zuriah, (2008) which emphasizes the importance of moral and ethical education in the process of forming children's character. Religious moderation is not only interpreted in a purely religious context, but also as a humanist approach that shapes students' personalities to be able to coexist peacefully. This is in line with the view of Hidayat & Rahman, (2022) who stated that the cultivation of moderation values in Islamic religious education is very relevant to ward off various forms of violence and intolerance in the educational environment.

In terms of implementation strategy, the results of the activities support the idea of Akbar et al., (2024) that the moderation ethos formed from an early age is able to minimize bullying practices among the younger generation. This can be seen from the increased awareness of students in recognizing forms of bullying and their efforts in resolving conflicts with a peaceful approach. In this case, Sakiratuka, (2023) emphasized that the actualization of religious moderation in PAI learning needs to be associated with the social context of students, including in responding to the dynamics of relationships between friends at school. The mentoring process carried out individually and in groups at MI Al-Muhsinin has also proven to be effective in encouraging behavior change, as affirmed by Alhafizh & Setiawan, (2025), that religious moderation can be a pillar in strengthening students' character and tolerance in schools.

The active involvement of teachers in daily reflection sessions shows the crucial role of educators in shaping a conducive school culture. Kurniawan et al., (2025) revealed that school policies and teachers' strategies in educating students are determining factors in building students' awareness and empathy for bullying issues. In this context, teachers at MI Al-Muhsinin not only act as facilitators of learning, but also as emotional companions who guide students to understand the impact of each of their social actions. This reflective approach is strengthened by periodic monitoring practices, as suggested by Fajrussalam et al., (2025) who stated that moderation-based character formation requires a consistent evaluation and habituation process.

This activity also supports the thinking of Apriansah & Wanto, (2022) about the relevance of character education according to Ki Hadjar Dewantara, who emphasizes the importance of example, habituation, and contextual learning. Students are not only given theories about bullying, but are actively invited to explore social values through discussions, games, simulations, and commitment making (Akbar et al., 2024). Activities such as anti-bullying posters and joint declarations are concrete examples of educational practices that foster moral

546

awareness as well as students' creativity. This is in line with the findings of Younis, (2025) who stated that value-based programs can be successful when they are associated with real projects that actively involve students.

If referring to Hertinjung, (2013) the forms of bullying that are common in elementary schools can be effectively prevented if the school environment supports the healthy psychosocial development of children. This is where this service activity finds its relevance. By involving students, teachers, and the school environment in one coordinated movement, MI Al-Muhsinin has succeeded in creating a character education model rooted in the values of religious moderation. These findings are also in line with the results of Ferdilla et al., (2023) and Wahyuna et al., (2025) who emphasized that the internalization of the value of moderation in educational practice has a real impact on the formation of students who are moral, adaptive, and peaceful. Therefore, this program deserves to be used as a reference to be replicated in other schools as a bullying prevention strategy based on strengthening the character and universal values of humanity.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Community service activities carried out at MI Al-Muhsinin in the form of anti-bullying assistance based on religious moderation have had a significant positive impact on the formation of students' character. Through an educational, reflective, and participatory approach, students not only gain a deeper understanding of bullying and its impact, but also learn to apply the values of tolerance, empathy, and respect for differences in daily life. Activities such as educational sessions, interactive discussions, psychosocial mentoring, moderation training, and anti-bullying commitment making have shaped a more peaceful, inclusive, and welcoming school climate for all students. The findings of the monitoring and evaluation process also show that teacher involvement and reflection habits also strengthen the process of internalizing these positive values in the school environment.

For the results of this program to be sustainable, it is essential to commit the school to continue integrating the values of religious moderation into learning activities and school life as a whole. It is recommended that schools hold regular reflection sessions, provide follow-up training for teachers on the moderation approach, and establish small anti-bullying teams comprising students and teachers to address issues promptly and effectively. In addition, it is important to involve parents in the socialization of these values in order to create synergy between the home and school environment. This program can also be replicated in other schools by adapting the approach according to the needs and characteristics of students in each region.

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