



BULLYING AMONG STUDENTS IN ISLAMIC BOARDING SCHOOLS: TYPES, RISK FACTORS, AND PREVENTION STRATEGIES

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ABSTRACT

Bullying does not only occur in public schools, but is also commonly found in Islamic boarding schools. Several studies indicate that 61–73% of students experience various forms of bullying, such as violence, extortion, intimidation, and theft. This study investigates the forms, risk factors, and prevention strategies of bullying in Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) in Depok, West Java, Indonesia. A descriptive cross-sectional design was applied involving 51 santri aged 8–15 years from elementary to high school levels, selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected using a 30-item questionnaire documenting bullying experiences, with validity established through theory-based content development and face validity, covering verbal, physical, and sexual bullying perpetrated by peers, teachers, and parents. Descriptive statistics, Chi-square, and Mann–Whitney U tests were employed for analysis. Verbal bullying emerged as the most prevalent form, followed by physical and sexual bullying. Peers were reported more frequently as perpetrators than teachers or parents. A significant association was found between gender and specific types of bullying ($p < 0.05$). Younger students were significantly more exposed to verbal bullying ($p < 0.05$). The majority of victims were in early to middle adolescence, a developmental stage marked by heightened susceptibility to peer influence. Bullying remains a critical issue in pesantren settings, involving various perpetrators. Effective prevention should address age and gender differences and the distinctive social context of boarding schools. Enhancing awareness, supervision, and institutional policies is crucial to ensure a safe and supportive learning environment.

Keywords: adolescents; bullying; islamic boarding school; prevention strategy

How to Cite (in APA Style)

Hartini, R. S., Aryani, Y., & Desdiani, D. (2026). Bullying among Students in Islamic Boarding Schools: Types, Risk Factors, and Prevention Strategies. *Indonesian Journal of Global Health Research*, 8(2), 925–934. <https://doi.org/10.37287/ijghr.v8i2.1244>.

INTRODUCTION

Pesantren, or Islamic boarding schools, are educational institutions grounded in Islamic teachings and dedicated to advancing Islamic da'wah within local communities and regions. Historically, during the pre-colonial period, Islamic scholars founded these boarding schools in Indonesia, making them among the earliest educational institutions to emerge and develop in response to the sociocultural challenges of that era, with a central emphasis on Islamic education. However, as residential educational settings, pesantren have unfortunately also been sites where numerous cases of bullying have been reported within their communities (Arif et al., 2024).

Bullying refers to a form of aggressive behavior perpetrated repeatedly by an individual or group to dominate or oppress a weaker person or group, with the intent to inflict physical or psychological harm (Waliyanti et al., 2018). A study conducted by the International Center for Research on Women involving adolescents aged 12–17 years reported that Indonesia has the highest rate of bullying among five Asian countries, with a prevalence of 84% (Plan International & International Center for Research on Women, 2015). Data from the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (Komisi Perlindungan Anak Indonesia or KPAI) indicated that reported bullying cases increased by 21% in 2018, with 34.7% occurring in senior high schools and 17.3% in junior high schools (Widiastuti, 2025). A study conducted in Yogyakarta among junior and senior high school students identified various forms of bullying, including physical bullying (e.g., hitting, kicking, pulling ears),

verbal bullying (e.g., teasing, name-calling), relational bullying (e.g., social isolation, intimidation), and cyberbullying (e.g., posting negative comments on social media, uploading photos or stories without consent) (Waliyanti et al., 2018).

Based on data collected by the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI) and the Federation of Indonesian Teachers' Unions (FSGI), it was recorded that in 2022, there were 226 registered cases of bullying. The most common type of bullying experienced by victims was physical bullying (55.5%), followed by verbal bullying (29.3%) and psychological bullying (15.2%). In terms of educational levels, elementary school students were the most frequent victims of bullying (26%), followed by junior high school students (25%) and senior high school students (18.75%). Bullying remains a serious threat to children in both formal and non-formal educational institutions (Abdurrohim et al., 2024).

Bullying that occurs in general school settings is also prevalent in Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) (Ernawati & Unggul, 2019). Previous studies have reported that non-formal educational institutions such as pesantren experience bullying incidents at rates ranging from 61% to 73%, including acts of violence, extortion, intimidation, and theft. Adolescents residing in Islamic boarding schools spend extended periods interacting closely with their peers, which increases the risk of bullying both in dormitories and in school environments (Bondü & Scheithauer, 2014). Bullying in pesantren settings has been shown to have significant psychological and physical consequences for victims. The psychological effects may include anxiety, loneliness, insecurity, and even suicidal thoughts, while physical impacts can manifest as headaches, stomach aches, and sleep disturbances (Wolke & Lereya, 2015). A study conducted in Yogyakarta further revealed that common forms of bullying in these environments include mocking, name-calling, harsh speech, shouting, and blame-shifting by senior students (Waliyanti & Swesty, 2021).

Bullying among school children is regulated under Law Number 35 of 2014 concerning Child Protection. Article 76C of the law prohibits anyone from placing, allowing, committing, ordering, or participating in acts of violence against children, including bullying. Perpetrators of bullying may face criminal sanctions, and if the bullying is carried out through social media, it may fall under the Electronic Information and Transactions (EIT) Law. The Child Protection Law is the primary legal foundation for handling bullying cases. Article 76C explicitly prohibits all forms of violence against children, including bullying. Schools play an important role in preventing and addressing bullying cases. Minister of Education and Culture Regulation (Permendikbud) Number 46 of 2023 outlines the responsibilities of schools in bullying prevention efforts. If someone becomes a victim or witness of bullying, the incident can be reported to the school, child protection agencies, or the police. With clear legal frameworks and robust preventive strategies, schools can more effectively minimize bullying and uphold the rights and well-being of every child (Rudi, 2025).

Despite the existence of clear legal provisions and institutional guidelines intended to prevent and address bullying, cases continue to occur in various educational settings, including Islamic boarding schools (pesantren). Recognizing this persistent issue, this study aims to investigate the factors contributing to bullying in Islamic boarding schools, the characteristics of bullying behavior within these institutions, and the preventive measures that Islamic boarding schools can implement to protect their students from bullying.

METHOD

Study Design and Participants

This study employed a descriptive cross-sectional design to explore students' experiences of bullying in Islamic boarding schools. It aimed to examine the factors contributing to bullying, describe the characteristics of bullying behaviors within these settings, and identify preventive measures that can be implemented to safeguard students. The research was conducted in January

2025 at several Islamic boarding schools in Depok, West Java. A total of 51 santri aged 8 to 15 years were selected through purposive sampling. The inclusion criteria required participants to be enrolled students within the specified age range.

Data Collection

In this survey, students completed a questionnaire consisting of 30 items grouped according to their experiences of being victims of bullying by peers, teachers, or parents, either at school or at home. The items were developed bullying questionnaire and encompassed various forms of bullying, including verbal, physical, and sexual types. For peer perpetrators, the questionnaire included four items on verbal bullying, five on physical bullying, and four on sexual bullying. The same distribution was applied for teacher perpetrators: four items on verbal bullying, five on physical bullying, and four on sexual bullying. For parent perpetrators, the questionnaire contained two verbal and two physical bullying items. The bullying questionnaire was designed to capture students' experiences of bullying rather than to measure a latent psychological construct. Accordingly, the items function as descriptive indicators of exposure and were analyzed at the item level. Validity was established through theory-driven content development and face validity based on established definitions of bullying and prior school-based studies. Internal consistency reliability indices were not applied, as such measures assume reflective and unidimensional constructs, which are not consistent with the purpose of this instrument. Respondents were asked to answer each item with either "Never" or "Ever," with "Ever" indicating that they had experienced the specified form of bullying at least once. This design facilitated the identification of the types and patterns of bullying experienced by students from different perpetrators and the examination of potential risk factors associated with these experiences.

Data Analysis

Data analysis in this study was performed in two main stages. First, descriptive statistical analysis was used to present the distribution of santri responses to the 30 questionnaire items addressing experiences of bullying by peers, teachers, or parents within the pesantren environment. These items covered various forms of bullying, including physical, verbal, social, and sexual types. Second, inferential analysis was conducted using the Chi-square test to examine the association between gender and bullying experiences as reflected in each item. Due to the limited sample size, inferential analysis was restricted to items that met the minimum expected cell count assumption (> 5) required for the Chi-square test to be valid (Field, 2017). Based on this criterion, only 10 of the 30 items were eligible for inferential testing.

In addition, the Mann–Whitney U test was employed to assess the relationship between santri age and bullying experiences. This test was appropriate because age was a non-normally distributed numerical variable, while bullying experience was dichotomous (Ever/Never). Each item was analyzed separately to determine whether significant differences existed in age distribution between those who had experienced bullying and those who had not. This approach provided further insight into age-related vulnerability to bullying among santri.

RESULT

This study aims to examine the bullying experiences of students attending Islamic boarding schools in Depok, West Java, Indonesia. Fifty-one students participated in the survey, representing three educational levels: elementary, junior high, and senior high school. The majority of respondents were male (68.6%) and aged between 8 and 15 years, with a mean age of 12.55 years. Most participants were in grade 9 or equivalent to the third year of junior high school (25.5%). This demographic distribution indicates that most respondents were in early to middle adolescence, a developmental stage that is particularly susceptible to social pressure and complex peer dynamics, which can heighten the risk of bullying within boarding school settings.

Table 1.
Demographic Characteristics of Respondents (N = 51)

Variables	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Man	35	68.6%
	Woman	16	31.4%
Class	2	1	2.0%
	3	3	5.9%
	4	5	9.8%
	5	6	11.8%
	6	9	17.6%
	7	8	15.7%
	8	4	7.8%
	9	13	25.5%
	10	2	3.9%
	Age (years)	Mean ± SD: 12.55 ± 1.93	

Distribution of Respondents' Answers

Based on the distribution of responses presented in Table 2, students reported experiencing various forms of bullying, including verbal, physical, and sexual, perpetrated by peers, teachers, and parents. Incidents of bullying by peers were consistently higher than those by teachers or parents across nearly all categories, both in frequency and percentage. Students reported experiencing various forms of mistreatment from their peers. The most common forms of bullying were being shouted at and insulted, each reported by 41 students (80.4%). Additionally, 38 students (74.5%) reported being cursed at, while 33 students (64.7%) indicated they had experienced physical beatings. Social forms of bullying, such as being ostracized or excluded, were also reported at a relatively high rate, with 28 students (54.9%) admitting to such experiences.

Other forms of bullying, though less frequent, remain significant. These include receiving threats (27 students, 52.9%), being slandered or publicly humiliated (23 students each, 45.1%), having personal belongings taken without permission (21 students, 41.2%), being prohibited from participating in certain activities (15 students, 29.4%), and experiencing extortion or coercion for money or goods (14 students, 27.5%). Overall, these findings indicate that the most prevalent types of bullying perpetrated by peers are verbal and social. Meanwhile, the frequency of bullying incidents by teachers was relatively lower. The most frequently reported behavior was being shouted at by teachers, experienced by 29 students (56.9%). Being insulted by teachers was reported by 18 students (35.3%), and being compared to other students was experienced by 17 students (33.3%).

Other forms of negative treatment from teachers reported at lower frequencies included being yelled at (15 students, 29.4%), not being assessed objectively (13 students, 25.5%), and being threatened, slandered, or humiliated in front of peers, each reported by fewer than 10 students (under 20%). This pattern suggests that teacher bullying tends to be verbal, with little involvement in explicit or physical discrimination. The total frequency of peer bullying was 357 incidents, with an average percentage of 53.8% per question. In contrast, the total frequency of negotiations by teachers and parents was 126 incidents, with an average percentage of 14.5%. This difference indicates that interactions between students are the primary source of various forms of bullying experienced, especially in verbal and social forms. Although the frequency is lower, unpleasant treatment from teachers still needs to be considered because it concerns the position of authority and its potential impact on students' psychological health.

Meanwhile, Figure 1 presents the distribution of the ratio of bullying incidents per 100 respondents based on the type of bullying (verbal, physical, and sexual), perpetrators (peers, teachers, parents), and gender. With this approach, the visualization considers the difference in the number of male (*n*

= 35) and female (n = 16) respondents, thus allowing a more proportional comparison of the intensity of bullying exposure between groups.

In general, male students showed higher levels of exposure across all categories of perpetrators and types of bullying. For example, in peer bullying, male students recorded a ratio of 317 verbal incidents, 337 physical incidents, and 151 sexual incidents per 100 respondents; while female students recorded 225, 181, and 63 incidents in the same categories. Similar patterns were also seen in bullying by teachers and parents, although with lower intensity overall. The ratio of sexual bullying by teachers, for example, was recorded at 17 per 100 male respondents, and only 6 per 100 female respondents.

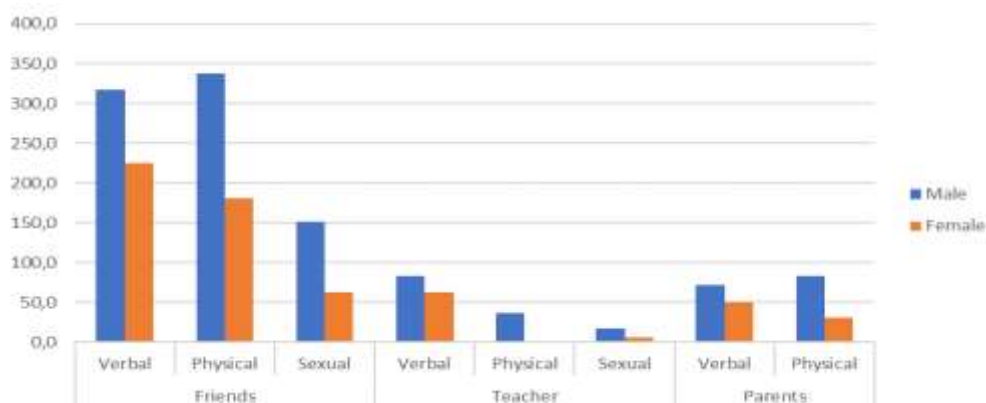


Figure 1. The ratio of bullying incidents per 100 respondents was based on type of bullying, perpetrator, and gender.

Table 2. Distribution of Respondents' Answers

No	Question	Total		Man		Woman		χ^2	U
		f	%	f	%	f	%		
1	Have you ever been threatened by a friend while at school? (verbal)	27	52.9	27	77.1	0	0.0	26.229***	118.5***
2	Have you ever been yelled at by a friend at school? (verbal)	41	80.4	26	74.3	15	41.7		182.0
3	Have you ever been cursed at by friends at school? (verbal)	38	74.5	28	80.0	10	27.8		188.5
4	Have you ever been insulted by friends at school? (verbal)	41	80.4	30	85.7	11	30.6		160.5
5	Have you ever been hit by a friend at school? (physical)	33	64.7	29	82.9	4	11.1	16.095***	143.0**
6	Have you ever been pushed by a friend during school? (physical)	38	74.5	28	80.0	10	27.8		234.0
7	Have you ever been kicked by a friend during school? (physical)	30	58.8	24	68.6	6	16.7	4.377	228.0
8	Have you ever been slapped by a friend at school? (physical)	19	37.3	16	45.7	3	8.3	3.415	215.5
9	Have you ever been hurt with an object by a friend at school? (physical)	27	52.9	21	60.0	6	16.7	2.231	285.0
10	Have you ever been hit on by a friend during school? (sexual)	25	49.0	17	48.6	8	22.2	0.009	285.0
11	Have you ever been kissed forcibly by a friend at school? (sexual)	4	7.8	4	11.4	0	0.0	NA	21.0**
12	Have you ever been shown pornographic videos at school? (sexual)	3	5.9	3	8.6	0	0.0	NA	47.0
13	Have you ever had your genitals touched by a friend at school? (sexual)	31	60.8	29	82.9%	2	5.6	22.803***	201.0*
14	Have you ever been threatened by a teacher while at school? (verbal)	4	7.8	4	11.4	0	0.0	NA	84.0
15	Have you ever been yelled at by a teacher at school? (verbal)	29	56.9	19	54.3	10	27.8	0.30	212.5*
16	Have you ever been cursed at by a teacher at school? (verbal)	2	3.9	2	5.7	0	0.0	NA	25.5
17	Have you ever been insulted by a teacher while at school? (verbal)	4	7.8	4	11.4	0	0.0	NA	93.5
18	Have you ever been hit by a teacher at school? (physical)	1	2.0	1	2.9	0	0.0	NA	13.5
19	Have you ever been pushed by a teacher while at school? (physical)	2	3.9	2	5.7	0	0.0	NA	43.5

No	Question	Total	Man	Woman	χ^2	U			
20	Have you ever been kicked by a teacher while at school? (physical)	3	5.9	3	8.6	0	0.0	NA	71.0
21	Have you ever been slapped by a teacher while at school? (physical)	2	3.9	2	5.7	0	0.0	NA	45.0
22	Have you ever been hurt with an object by a teacher at school? (physical)	5	9.8	5	14.3	0	0.0	NA	50.5*
23	Have you ever been hit on by a teacher while at school? (sexual)	6	11.8	5	14.3	1	2.8	NA	106.0
24	Have you ever been forcibly kissed by a teacher at school? (sexual)	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	NA	NA
25	Have you ever been shown pornographic videos by teachers at school? (sexual)	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	NA	NA
26	Have you ever had your genitals touched by a teacher at school? (sexual)	1	2.0	1	2.9	0	0.0	NA	23.0
27	Have you ever been hit by your parents while at school? (physical)	21	41.2	19	54.3	2	5.6	7.92**	307.0
28	Have you ever been hurt with an object by your parents while at home? (physical)	13	25.5	10	28.6	3	8.3	NA	215.5
29	Have you ever been threatened by your parents while at home? (verbal)	11	21.6	9	25.7	2	5.6	NA	198.0
30	Have you ever been yelled at by your parents at school? (verbal)	22	43.1	16	45.7	6	16.7	0.30	258.0

Notes: Statistically significant p-value * <0.05 , ** <0.01 , *** <0.001 . NA: Analysis cannot be performed because it does not meet the assumption of expected cell count > 5 in the Chi-Square Test, or one of the two comparison groups has no data at all in the Mann-Whitney Test

Analysis of the Relationship between Gender and Age with Experience of Bullying

The Chi-square test results conducted on 10 questionnaire items revealed that five bullying experience items were statistically significantly associated with gender. These five items were:

1. Have you ever been threatened by a friend while at school?
2. Have you ever been hit by a friend at school?
3. Have you ever been kicked by a friend at school?
4. Have you ever had your genitals touched by a friend at school?
5. Have you ever been hit by your parents at school?

These findings suggest that the experience of bullying is not evenly distributed between boys and girls. In general, boys are more likely to experience various forms of bullying, both physical, such as being hit and kicked, and sexual, and violence from parents. The Mann-Whitney U test was employed to examine the relationship between students' age and their experiences of bullying by peers and teachers within the pesantren environment. The analysis showed that age was significantly associated with six different forms of bullying. Overall, younger students were more likely to be victims of bullying compared to older students. For instance, younger students were more likely to report being threatened by peers ($U = 118.5$; $p < 0.001$) or being hit by peers ($U = 143.0$; $p = 0.002$). They were also more vulnerable to sexual bullying, such as being forcibly kissed ($U = -21.0$; $p = 0.007$) or having their genitals touched ($U = 201.0$; $p = 0.032$). A similar pattern emerged for bullying perpetrated by teachers: students who reported being shouted at by teachers ($Z = -2.060$; $p = 0.039$) or being physically harmed with objects ($Z = -2.078$; $p = 0.038$) were significantly younger than those who did not report such experiences.

DISCUSSION

This study described students' experiences of bullying perpetrated by peers and teachers within the Islamic boarding school (pesantren) environment. The findings demonstrated that peer-perpetrated bullying was reported at a frequency nearly three times higher than teacher-perpetrated bullying, underscoring that peer interactions are particularly prone to verbal and social forms of aggression. Although teacher-perpetrated bullying occurred less frequently, it still warrants serious attention. As authority figures, teachers hold significant influence over students, and any mistreatment, especially if repeated and unreported, can amplify the psychological harm experienced by victims.

These results highlight the need for comprehensive prevention strategies that promote healthy peer relationships and strengthen professional ethics and respectful interactions between educators and students. Our findings are consistent with previous research by Son et al., which found that bullying among adolescents is globally recognized as a significant predictor of adverse health and behavioral outcomes. In a large sample of 9,601 Indonesian students, nearly 20% reported bullying within the previous month. Bullying victimization was significantly associated with loneliness, anxiety, suicidal ideation, smoking, alcohol use, truancy, physical fighting, and sedentary behavior. The associations were slightly stronger among female students for certain outcomes and tended to increase with the frequency of bullying and with age (Putra & Dendup, 2022).

Han's study confirms that bullying is a widespread issue among adolescents globally, underpinned by repetition, power imbalances, and the intent to cause harm. It commonly takes verbal, physical, relational, sexual, and cyber forms, with verbal bullying reported most frequently. Importantly, bullying affects not only victims but also perpetrators and bystanders, resulting in far-reaching mental health consequences such as anxiety, depression, substance abuse, and suicidal behavior (Han et al., 2025).

The current study's finding that male and younger students are more often victims supports this broader evidence and reflects patterns observed in Islamic boarding schools. Nugroho's work further highlights that bullying in pesantren often stems from entrenched seniority systems, where victims can become perpetrators through a cycle of hurt and maladaptive coping. This cycle suggests a critical intervention point: targeted psychological assistance can disrupt the progression from victim to perpetrator if support is provided early and consistently (Nugroho et al., 2021). Moreover, Hafidzi's study shows that gender bias and rigid role expectations within pesantren settings shape how bullying manifests. Traditional gender norms and the segregation of male and female students can reinforce power dynamics and social exclusion, which in turn create environments where verbal intimidation, social ostracism, and physical violence may be normalized (Hafidzi et al., 2024).

In our study, the tendency for boys to experience more frequent and severe forms of bullying may reflect social norms within the pesantren context that tolerate or even normalize aggressive behavior toward male students, as well as potential gender-based differences in reporting. The finding that physical bullying emerged as the most statistically significant form supports the broader pattern that boys are often more exposed to direct violence than girls. This outcome aligns with Saraswati's findings, which revealed that bullying in schools frequently occurs in classrooms, spaces that should ideally be safe learning environments but too often become settings where verbal and social bullying are normalized. Saraswati's study further highlighted that bullying perpetrators can be male or female, acting individually or jointly, although Males still dominated the perpetrators of bullying. This mixed-gender dynamic illustrates how bullying can be embedded in broader peer group interactions rather than confined to isolated incidents (Saraswati & Hadiyono, 2020).

The prevalence of bullying within classrooms underscores the critical role schools play in shaping norms that either enable or deter such behavior. When schools fail to intervene, the classroom climate can reinforce aggressive peer dynamics and normalize harassment. Therefore, schools must actively transform classrooms into safe and respectful spaces by embedding clear anti-bullying policies, cultivating a culture of mutual respect, and providing consistent education on positive social behavior. Establishing specific regulations and creating a structured system for prevention and response are essential to breaking these patterns and ensuring that learning spaces fulfill their intended protective role (Saraswati & Hadiyono, 2020).

Building on this, our findings indicate that younger students in pesantren settings often occupy a weaker social position, have limited capacity to defend themselves, and are more psychologically

vulnerable to intimidation, physical violence, and even sexual harassment. In other words, the younger the student, the greater their risk of experiencing various forms of bullying. This pattern is consistent with Yuhbaba's study, which found that younger students living in boarding schools for extended periods often experience bullying by seniors or peers, driven by competition, the desire for recognition, or lack of oversight from caregivers. The impacts reported by these students, ranging from physical injuries and fear to feelings of sadness, anxiety, and the wish to leave school, highlight how age-related social vulnerability can intensify the harms of bullying if not adequately addressed through stronger supervision and support systems (Nuris Yuhbaba, 2019).

Our findings further confirm that both gender and age are critical risk factors for bullying in Islamic boarding schools. Therefore, prevention and protection strategies must explicitly consider these two dimensions. Accessible reporting mechanisms for male and younger students, teacher and caregiver training for early detection, and closer monitoring of peer interactions are essential steps. This need aligns with Nurjanah's findings, which highlight that students living apart from parents face unique social challenges that can heighten their vulnerability to both victimization and becoming perpetrators. Nurjanah's study showed that a lack of parental support and experiences of parental rejection were significantly associated with higher bullying behavior. In contrast, maternal support had a protective effect, highlighting the broader role of family dynamics in shaping bullying patterns (Nurjanah et al., 2022).

Moreover, creating a safe and supportive environment inside the pesantren relies heavily on adult guidance and supervision. Mariati's work emphasizes the crucial role of assistant teachers in minimizing bullying through early identification, effective communication, and consistent supervision. By fostering respectful relationships and building awareness about mutual respect, assistant teachers can strengthen a culture that discourages bullying and supports healthy social development (Mariati & Silahuddin, 2024).

Finally, Zulfani's study underlines the role of religiosity as a protective factor. Islamic boarding schools, as faith-based institutions, have an inherent moral foundation that can be harnessed to curb aggressive behaviors. A higher level of religious commitment has been shown to reduce the tendency toward bullying, reinforcing the importance of integrating strong religious and ethical education to shape positive character and prevent deviant behavior among adolescents (Zulfani & Shofwam, 2024). Together, these insights demonstrate that bullying in pesantren settings is not only a matter of peer dynamics but is also profoundly shaped by family relationships, institutional supervision, gender norms, and religious values. Effective prevention must therefore be multi-level, combining structural safeguards, family involvement, adult mentorship, and value-based education to break cycles of victimization and aggression.

CONCLUSION

This study described the experiences of students related to bullying perpetrated by peers and teachers within the pesantren (Islamic boarding school) environment. The findings revealed that bullying by peers occurred with a frequency nearly three times higher than bullying by teachers. Although the incidence of teacher-perpetrated bullying was lower, this still warrants serious concern, as repeated incidents without effective reporting mechanisms can exacerbate psychological harm to students. The results further showed that male students and younger students are more likely to experience various forms of bullying, both by peers and teachers. These findings highlight gender and age as important risk factors for any child protection strategy.

Prevention measures should include accessible and confidential reporting systems, strengthened teacher and caregiver capacity for early detection, stricter supervision of peer interactions, and implementation of comprehensive anti-bullying curricula. Additional measures include consistent

counseling, legal education for students and staff, structured peer support groups, and trained guidance and counseling teachers within every pesantren. Teachers should act not only as educators but also as mentors and protectors. Active collaboration through platforms like the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) can enhance communication between schools and families, ensuring shared responsibility for prevention and response. Psychological assistance programs, both preventive and curative, are also essential to prevent victims from becoming perpetrators and to support trauma recovery.

Despite these contributions, this study has limitations. The relatively small sample size and cross-sectional design may limit the generalizability of the findings to all Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia. Self-reported data may also be affected by underreporting due to stigma or fear of repercussions. Future research should include larger, more diverse samples, adopt longitudinal approaches to examine bullying patterns over time, and incorporate qualitative methods to gain deeper insights into underlying psychosocial factors. Further studies should also evaluate the effectiveness of specific intervention programs tailored to the context of pesantren. A comprehensive, participatory approach involving the entire pesantren community, teachers, parents, and students is crucial to creating a safe, supportive, and protective environment for all students.

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