

## Strengthening Self-Confidence and Islamic Morals in Preventing Bullying in Orphanage Children

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### ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the effectiveness of an intervention designed to strengthen self-confidence and internalize Islamic moral values in preventing bullying among children living in an orphanage. The research employed a quantitative approach using a pre-experimental one-group pretest–posttest design. The pre-test was completed by 34 participants, while the post-test was completed by 19 participants. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and an independent sample t-test at a 5% significance level. The findings indicate an increase in the mean scores from the pre-test ( $m = 97.50$ ;  $sd = 3.94$ ) to the post-test ( $m = 99.21$ ;  $sd = 2.51$ ). However, this difference did not reach statistical significance ( $t = -1.93$ ;  $p = 0.059$ ). The effect size value (Cohen's  $d = 0.52$ ) indicates a moderate effect. These findings suggest that the intervention provided practical contributions in strengthening participants' understanding and attitudes toward bullying prevention, although the room for improvement was limited due to the high initial scores (ceiling effect). A community-based intervention that integrates psychological empowerment and religious values may function as an effort to reinforce and stabilize character development within non-formal educational settings. Further research is recommended to employ a more robust experimental design to obtain more comprehensive results.

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## INTRODUCTION

Bullying is one of the social problems consistently found across various educational contexts, both formal and non-formal (Andriyani, Idrus, and Suhaeb 2024). According to Olweus, bullying is characterized by aggressive behavior that occurs repeatedly and involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. These characteristics indicate that bullying is not merely an ordinary conflict, but rather a form of social domination that can have serious implications for children's psychological development (Olweus 2013).

The impact of bullying is not only emotional but also influences the development of self-concept and self-confidence in children. From the perspective of self-efficacy theory proposed by Bandura an individual's belief in their ability to handle particular situations plays a crucial role in determining behavioral responses (Bandura 1997). Children with high levels of self-efficacy tend to be more capable of resisting social pressure, reporting harmful actions, and responding assertively to unpleasant treatment. Therefore, strengthening self-confidence becomes a strategic component in bullying prevention) (Ramadhani and Ulfia 2022).

In addition to psychological factors, the social environment also plays an important role in shaping children's behavior. Bronfenbrenner, through the ecological systems theory, explains that individual development is influenced by interactions between the individual and their surrounding environmental systems, including family, educational institutions, and social communities (Bronfenbrenner 1979). In the context of children living in orphanages, the community environment significantly influences the development of their social behavior and moral values (Agustia and Lubis 2024)

From the perspective of Islamic Religious Education, Islamic moral values such as empathy, patience, responsibility, and mutual respect serve as the moral foundation for building healthy social relationships (Rochmat, Maulaya, and Avilya 2022). The internalization of these values can function as a preventive mechanism against aggressive behaviors, including bullying (Agisyaputri, Nadhirah, and Saripah 2023). However, most previous studies have predominantly focused on psychological approaches or formal school-based interventions, and limited research has integrated the strengthening of self-efficacy with the internalization of Islamic moral values in non-formal educational contexts such as orphanages (Afroo, Nurjanah, and Yudita 2025).

This gap serves as the basis for the present study. The integration of self-confidence enhancement and Islamic moral internalization within community-based interventions has not been widely examined empirically, particularly among children living in orphanages. Therefore, this study formulates the following research question: how do self-confidence strengthening and Islamic moral values influence children's understanding and attitudes toward bullying prevention in the orphanage context?

The proposed hypothesis is that strengthening self-confidence and internalizing Islamic moral values through community-based interventions can improve children's understanding and attitudes in preventing bullying behavior. This study aims to empirically examine the effectiveness of the intervention and provide theoretical contributions to the development of bullying prevention models that integrate psychological approaches and religious values in non-formal educational settings.

## METHOD

This study employed a quantitative approach with a pre-experimental design using the one-group pretest–posttest model. This design was used to examine changes in participants' understanding and attitudes before and after the educational intervention, which focused on strengthening self-confidence and internalizing Islamic moral values in the context of bullying prevention.

### Research Subjects

The subjects of this study were children from orphanages in Bukateja Village, Purbalingga Regency, with activities conducted in Selabaya Village, Kalimantan District. The pre-test was attended by 34 participants; however, only 19 participants completed the entire evaluation process during the post-test. The reduction in the number of respondents in the post-test was due to fluctuations in attendance and technical constraints during data collection.

### Research Instruments

The instrument used was a closed-ended questionnaire in the form of multiple-choice questions designed to measure four main aspects:

- Understanding of the definition and forms of bullying
- Understanding of the impacts of bullying
- Self-confidence and positive affirmation
- Attitudes based on Islamic moral values in dealing with bullying

The instrument was developed based on theoretical studies of bullying, self-efficacy, and Islamic character education. Content validity was assessed through expert judgment by two lecturers specializing in Islamic education and educational psychology. Reliability testing was conducted to measure the internal consistency of the instrument, and the results indicated adequate internal consistency, making the instrument suitable for use in this study.

### Research Procedure

The study was conducted in three main stages:

- Administration of the pre-test to measure participants' initial conditions of understanding and attitudes.
- Implementation of the educational intervention, which included interactive lectures, positive affirmation practices, and discussions on Islamic moral values in bullying prevention.
- Administration of the post-test to measure changes after the intervention.

### Data Analysis Techniques

Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics to obtain mean and standard deviation values for the pre-test and post-test. To examine differences in scores before and after the intervention, an independent sample t-test (Welch's t-test) was applied. The independent test was used because pre-test and post-test responses could not be paired at the individual level due to the absence of consistent

respondent identification codes across both measurements. Consequently, the data were treated as two independent samples. In addition, the effect size (Cohen's *d*) was calculated to determine the practical strength of the intervention effect. All analyses were conducted at a 5% significance level ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data analysis was conducted using descriptive statistics and an independent sample t-test to examine the differences in scores before and after the educational intervention. The pre-test was completed by 34 participants, while the post-test was completed by 19 participants. The analysis was carried out at a 5% significance level ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ).

**TABLE 1.** Descriptive Statistics of Pre-test and Post-test Scores

Groups	N	Mean	SD
Pre-test	34	97,50	3,94
Post-test	19	99,21	2,51

Based on Table 1, there is an observable increase in the mean scores from the pre-test ( $M = 97.50$ ;  $SD = 3.94$ ) to the post-test ( $M = 99.21$ ;  $SD = 2.51$ ). In addition, the lower standard deviation in the post-test compared to the pre-test indicates that participants' score variation became more homogeneous following the intervention.

The results of the independent sample t-test show that the difference in mean scores between the pre-test and post-test did not reach statistical significance at the 5% significance level ( $t = -1.93$ ;  $p = 0.059$ ). Nevertheless, the effect size calculated using Cohen's *d* demonstrates a moderate effect ( $d = 0.52$ ). These findings indicate a tendency toward practically meaningful improvement, although not statistically significant.

The results further reveal an increase in the average scores after the intervention, despite the improvement not achieving statistical significance at the 5% level. Substantively, these findings suggest that the intervention involving self-confidence strengthening and the internalization of Islamic moral values contributed to reinforcing participants' understanding and attitudes toward bullying prevention.

The lack of statistical significance may be attributed to several methodological factors. First, participants' initial scores were already within a very high range ( $M = 97.50$ ), indicating a potential ceiling effect, where respondents' initial scores are close to the maximum, thereby limiting the room for improvement. In this context, the intervention functioned more as reinforcement and value stabilization rather than producing a substantial increase in foundational knowledge. Similar patterns have been noted in character education interventions, where quantitative increases are often limited when respondents' initial levels of understanding are already high (Gaffney, Farrington, and Ttofi 2019).

Second, the smaller post-test sample size compared to the pre-test sample size may have affected the statistical power. Smaller sample sizes reduce the likelihood of detecting statistically significant differences, even when practically meaningful changes are present. Hence, the *p*-value approaching the threshold of significance ( $p = 0.059$ ) still reflects a noteworthy trend that warrants substantive consideration.

In relation to Olweus' theory of bullying, the high initial scores suggest that participants already possessed a foundational understanding of bullying characteristics, including power imbalance and its psychological impact on victims (Olweus 2013). This indicates that the participants were cognitively

aware of the importance of bullying prevention before the intervention. The intervention, therefore, was aimed not only at increasing knowledge but also at strengthening attitudes and moral commitment in navigating social interactions.

From the perspective of self-efficacy theory, Bandura emphasizes that behavioral change often begins with strengthening individuals' belief in their ability to handle particular situations (Bandura 1997). Interventions emphasizing positive affirmations and self-confidence reinforcement have the potential to increase participants' confidence in responding assertively to social pressure. The moderate effect size ( $d = 0.52$ ) suggests that the intervention had a meaningful practical impact on strengthening participants' psychological aspects, despite not yielding statistically significant results.

These findings are consistent with Zych's research, which states that bullying prevention programs do not always produce substantial score increases in the short term; rather, they function as protective mechanisms that reinforce social norms and prosocial attitudes (Zych, Farrington, and Ttofi 2019). Character education programs tend to show more visible impacts on attitude consistency and value reinforcement than on drastic cognitive improvement.

Within the framework of ecological systems theory, Bronfenbrenner explains that a child's development is influenced by interactions between the individual and their social environment (Bronfenbrenner 1979). Interventions implemented within the orphanage community context are relevant as they target the microsystem where children interact directly. Strengthening Islamic moral values within the community environment can shape collective norms that support respectful behavior and prevent bullying.

Overall, the findings of this study indicate that character and morality-based interventions do not always produce statistically significant score improvements, especially when participants' initial conditions are already strong. Nevertheless, the observed increase in mean scores and the moderate effect size suggest that the intervention had practical contributions in strengthening participants' attitudes and confidence in preventing bullying.

This study has several limitations. First, the pre-experimental design without a control group restricts the ability to isolate the intervention's influence comprehensively. Second, the absence of respondent identification matching between the pre-test and post-test prevented the use of a paired t-test, thus requiring the data to be treated as two independent samples. Third, the smaller post-test sample size may have affected the statistical power. These limitations underscore the need for future research to employ stronger experimental designs, respondent identification systems that allow paired analyses, and more stable sample sizes.

## CONCLUSION

This study aims to examine the effectiveness of an intervention designed to strengthen self-confidence and internalize Islamic moral values in preventing bullying among children living in an orphanage. The analysis revealed an increase in the average scores after the intervention, although the improvement did not reach statistical significance at the 5% level. Nevertheless, the effect size, which falls within the moderate category, indicates that the intervention provided practical contributions in enhancing participants' understanding and attitudes toward bullying prevention.

These findings suggest that character-building and morality-based interventions function more as reinforcement and value stabilization rather than as mechanisms for producing substantial increases in foundational knowledge, especially when participants' initial levels of understanding are already high. Thus, community-based approaches that integrate psychological empowerment and religious values

remain relevant in efforts to prevent bullying.

Practically, programs focused on strengthening self-confidence and Islamic moral character can serve as preventive intervention models in non-formal educational settings, particularly those aimed at children's character development. However, future research is recommended to employ an experimental design with a control group, a more stable sample size, and an identification system that allows for paired analyses to produce more comprehensive findings.

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