

Assistance for Santri-Friendly Islamic Boarding School (Bullying and Sexual Violence Free) at Al-Amin Islamic Boarding School Mojokerto

Muhamad Farid Ilhamuddin¹, Ahmad Abdullah Zawawi^{2*}, Lutfi Saksono³, Ainur Rifqi²

¹ Universitas Negeri Surabaya, Indonesia (muhammadilhamuddin@unesa.ac.id)

^{2*} Universitas Negeri Surabaya, Indonesia (ahmadzawawi@unesa.ac.id)

³ Universitas Negeri Surabaya, Indonesia (lutfisaksono@unesa.ac.id)

⁴ Universitas Negeri Surabaya, Indonesia (ainurrifqi@unesa.ac.id)



ABSTRACT

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The rise of bullying and violence in Islamic boarding schools, especially in the Mojokerto area, highlights the urgent need for more effective prevention efforts. Although several Islamic boarding schools have implemented character education and internal policies, concrete measures to protect students remain limited. This issue became the background for the development of the Student-Friendly Islamic Boarding School Mentoring Program at Al-Amin Islamic Boarding School, Mojokerto. The program was implemented through three main stages: preparation, implementation, and evaluation. Data were collected using a mixed-method approach, including participatory observation, structured interviews, documentation, and questionnaires. The activities focused on preventing bullying and sexual violence, promoting a student-friendly boarding school environment, and strengthening the capacity of administrators, caregivers, and teachers. The mentoring program successfully developed a socio-cultural model that promotes a safe and supportive boarding school environment through education, peer support, workshops, and the strengthening of internal institutional systems. Evaluation results indicated an improvement in participants' knowledge across all aspects, from a moderate level in the pre-test to a very good level in the post-test, with average scores ranging from 4.4 to 4.5. Overall, the program proved effective in increasing participants' understanding and awareness of sexual violence, bullying, and the concept of a student-friendly Islamic boarding school. Beyond its educational outcomes, this initiative also generated a positive social impact by fostering a culture of care, protection, and mutual respect within the boarding school community. Although several challenges were encountered during implementation, the strong enthusiasm of participants and the support of caregivers created significant opportunities for further development. This program therefore has the potential to be replicated in other Islamic boarding schools as a sustainable model of community-based prevention.

INTRODUCTION

Islamic boarding schools are known as one of the oldest educational institutions in Indonesia. As traditional, non-formal educational institutions, Islamic boarding school place greater emphasis on the study of Islamic knowledge and its application in daily life (Komariyah, 2018). In addition to deepening Islamic theory, Islamic boarding school also serve as a place for character and moral development through habituation activities or best practices (Anjana et al., 2022). This shows that Islamic boarding school are not merely institutions that provide theory, but also practice for moral formation.

The role of Islamic boarding school in shaping morals and ethics is crucial, especially for the younger generation. If morals and ethics among the youth decline, crime rates will rise. Criminal cases such as bullying, promiscuity, sexual violence, and drug abuse have the potential to increase (Hudi et al., 2024). The number of crimes committed by the younger generation increased by 10% in 2022, reaching 37,297 cases out of a total of 372,965 criminal cases in Indonesia (Hadini et al., 2025). Meanwhile, in the first semester of 2025 alone, more than 250 cases were recorded, mostly involving teenagers. These cases included brawls, alcohol consumption, and misuse of social media (Yogi, 2025). These data indicate a decline in moral values among the younger generation, reinforcing the urgent need for character-building institutions such as Islamic boarding school.

Educational institutions like Islamic boarding school are therefore required to provide safe environments, especially amid the rising number of crimes within Islamic boarding school settings. Data from the Indonesian Education Monitoring Network (JPPI) shows that 114 cases of violence occurred in Islamic boarding school in 2024. Of these, 86 cases took place within dormitories or Islamic boarding school compounds (JPPI, 2025). Among all types of violence, sexual violence and bullying were the most dominant. As many as 42% (241 cases) were sexual violence, while 31% (178 cases) were bullying (Jannah, 2024). The high incidence of violence in Islamic boarding school demonstrates that Islamic educational institutions still require evaluation, particularly in regions that have yet to implement preventive measures or proper handling of violence cases.

One area highlighted due to sexual violence in Islamic boarding school is Mojokerto. According to the Head of Public Relations of the East Java Regional Police, the number of victims of sexual violence committed by a Islamic boarding school caretaker in Mojokerto increased by four, with one victim reportedly only 14 years old. Such acts of violence inevitably cause severe psychological trauma for the victims (Hasana, 2021). Mojokerto itself ranks as the second-highest area for child abuse cases in East Java. Since the onset of the pandemic, such cases have continued to rise (Aprilia, 2021). This situation has led some parties to begin taking preventive measures, especially in Islamic boarding school environments.

Several Islamic boarding schools have taken steps to address the issue, one of which is character-building through education. Approximately 60% of the lessons in Islamic boarding school emphasize *aqidah* (Islamic creed) and history, aimed at instilling noble character (*akhlakul karimah*) in students (Gumilang & Nurcholis, 2018). Internal policies have also been implemented as mechanisms to ensure protection focusing on the rights and safety of students (Raudhah R.A. et al., 2025). In Mojokerto, child sexual violence prevention and response efforts have only been carried out by the local Social Affairs Office for Women's and Children's Empowerment (P3A), through awareness programs, the implementation of the Community-Based Integrated Child Protection Program (PATBM), and the establishment of children's forums (Janiarti & Purba, 2023). However, no specific measures have yet been taken to address violence within Islamic boarding school.

Based on these conditions, the researchers carried out a community engagement program focused on establishing a "Santri-Friendly Islamic boarding school" at Pondok Pesantren Al-Amin, Mojokerto, East Java, Indonesia. This initiative was implemented as a form of collaborative community service between the university, Islamic boarding school administrators, and the student community to create a safe and comfortable environment free from bullying and sexual violence. Through mentoring activities, awareness campaigns, and capacity building for both mentors and students, the program seeks to foster an Islamic boarding school culture that is friendly, inclusive, and protective of students' rights, so that Islamic boarding schools may function not only as centers of religious learning but also as socially responsive spaces that support positive character development and emotional safety for all students.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT METHOD

The methodology of this community service program is designed to systematically address the issues of bullying and sexual violence at Islamic Boarding School Al-Amin Mojokerto. The approach was structured to ensure clarity, transparency, and replicability in similar contexts. The methods consist of five main components:

1. Target Community and Participants

The target community of this program was the students (*santri*), caretakers, teachers (*ustaz/ustazah*), and administrators of Islamic boarding school Al-Amin Mojokerto. The Islamic boarding school accommodates adolescents aged 12–18 years, many of whom come from rural and lower-middle-class backgrounds. These participants were chosen because of their vulnerability to bullying and sexual violence, as well as their central role in shaping and maintaining a safe Islamic boarding school environment. Caretakers and teachers were included to strengthen their capacity as role models and protectors, while students were engaged as the primary beneficiaries.

2. Program Design and Implementation Procedures

The program was designed in three stages: preparation, implementation, and evaluation. Preparation involved identifying the core issues of bullying and sexual violence through initial assessments and coordination with Islamic boarding school stakeholders. This step resulted in the development of a tailored mentoring module. Implementation began with awareness-raising sessions for students, caretakers, and administrators. This was followed by workshops and training to strengthen teachers' and administrators' capacity in guiding students. Continuous peer support activities were conducted to reduce bullying and sexual violence through mutual support mechanisms. The final stage of implementation included roleplay and simulations on prevention and handling of violence, enabling participants to practice real-life scenarios beyond theoretical knowledge. Evaluation focused on monitoring participation, conducting pre-test and post-test assessments, and reflecting with Islamic boarding school stakeholders to ensure program sustainability.

3. Tools, Materials, and Instruments

Several tools and materials were employed to support the implementation of the program. A set of mentoring modules was specifically designed and adapted to the social and cultural context of the Islamic boarding school, serving as the main reference for delivering the activities. To measure changes in knowledge and understanding, pre-test and post-test questionnaires consisting of 20 items were administered, covering topics such as sexual violence, bullying, the concept of a *Santri-Friendly* Islamic Boarding School, and preventive strategies. In addition, observation guides were used to record behavioral changes and the dynamics of interaction among students during the program. Structured interview guides were also prepared to gather systematic information from caretakers, administrators, teachers, and selected student representatives. To ensure accountability and provide supporting evidence, documentation was carried out through photos, audio recordings, and written reports that captured the entire process of program implementation.

4. Data Collection and Analysis

Data were collected using a mixed-methods approach that combined qualitative and quantitative techniques. Qualitative data were gathered through participatory observation, structured interviews, and documentation. These methods provided insights into communication patterns, behavioral changes, and the cultural environment of the Islamic boarding school (Pratiwi et al., 2024; Waruwu, 2023). Quantitative data were collected using pre-test and post-test questionnaires to measure participants' knowledge and understanding.

Analysis was conducted using descriptive qualitative interpretation for observational and interview data, and comparative analysis for test scores before and after the intervention. This combination allowed for measuring both knowledge improvement and behavioral impact. Reliability was ensured by aligning instruments with validated methods from previous studies (Rahmawati et al., 2024).

5. Expected Outcomes and Justification

The expected outcomes of the program included an increase in awareness and understanding of bullying and sexual violence prevention among students, caretakers, and teachers. In addition, the program aimed to strengthen the capacity of Islamic boarding school administrators and teachers in creating a *Santri-Friendly* Islamic boarding school environment. Another anticipated result was the development of peer support mechanisms to reduce the risks of bullying and sexual violence within the community. Finally, the program sought to establish an internal reporting and mentoring system to ensure sustainability and long-term effectiveness.

These outcomes directly address the initial problem identification of rising violence in Islamic boarding school, particularly in Mojokerto. By comparing conditions before and after implementation, the program aims to demonstrate improvements in knowledge, safer daily practices, and the creation of an inclusive environment that protects students' rights and well-being.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The "*Santri-Friendly* Islamic boarding school Mentoring" program produced a socio-cultural engineering model in the form of a *Santri-Friendly* Islamic boarding school, which focuses on creating a religious education environment free from bullying and sexual violence. This model is not a tangible product, but rather a service and a set of new skills in the form of mentoring, training, and internal systems within the Islamic boarding school aimed at driving behavioral and cultural change. The outcomes of this program include:

1. A bullying prevention system through education and the establishment of peer support groups.
2. A sexual violence prevention mechanism consisting of regulations, safe reporting channels, and internal counseling.
3. Capacity building for administrators and teachers through interactive workshops and case-handling simulations.

4. The integration of a “*Santri-Friendly*” culture into daily life through approaches grounded in positive communication and empathy.

Table 1. Average Pre-test and Post-test Scores of Participants in the Santri-Friendly Islamic boarding school Mentoring Program

Assessed Aspect	Average Score	
	Pre-test	Post-test
Knowledge of Sexual Violence	3.2 (Moderate)	4.4 (Very Good)
Knowledge of Bullying	3.2 (Moderate)	4.4 (Very Good)
Knowledge of <i>Santri-Friendly</i> Islamic boarding school	3.1 (Moderate)	4.4 (Very Good)
Knowledge of Sexual Violence and Bullying Prevention	3.7 (Good)	4.5 (Very Good)

Note: Interval scale = 0.8. The assessment categories are as follows: Very Good: 4.2 – 5.0; Good: 3.2 – 4.0; Moderate: 2.2 – 3.0; Poor: 1.2 – 2.0; Very Poor: 0.0 – 1.2.

Table 1 presents a comprehensive comparison between participants’ average pre-test and post-test scores in the *Santri-Friendly* Islamic Boarding School Mentoring Program. Overall, the data demonstrate a substantial and consistent improvement across all assessed aspects, indicating that the program had a positive impact on participants’ knowledge, awareness, and attitudes toward violence prevention and the creation of a supportive boarding school environment.

Before the implementation of the program, students’ understanding of key issues related to sexual violence and bullying was still at a moderate level, with average scores of 3.2 for both aspects. This suggests that although participants had some basic awareness of these problems, their understanding tended to be superficial and largely conceptual. Many students were still unsure about how to identify different forms of sexual violence and bullying, particularly in distinguishing harmful behavior from what is often perceived as harmless jokes or disciplinary practices within the Islamic boarding school context. Similarly, their knowledge of the *Santri-Friendly* Islamic boarding school concept was also categorized as moderate (3.1), indicating that the idea of creating a safe, inclusive, and protective learning environment had not yet been fully internalized.

In contrast, participants’ knowledge regarding the prevention of sexual violence and bullying showed a slightly better condition at the pre-test stage, reaching the good category with an average score of 3.7. This implies that some students were already aware of the importance of prevention efforts; however, their understanding of concrete procedures, such as reporting mechanisms, institutional roles, and available support systems, remained limited. These initial findings underline the necessity of a structured mentoring program that not only delivers information but also builds practical awareness and behavioral readiness among students.

After the mentoring activities were carried out, a significant improvement was observed in all indicators. The average post-test scores for knowledge of sexual violence, bullying,

and the *Santri-Friendly* Islamic boarding school concept each increased to 4.4, placing them in the very good category. This change reflects a meaningful shift in students' comprehension, from merely recognizing the existence of these issues to developing a clearer understanding of their impacts, risks, and preventive strategies. Participants became more aware that sexual violence and bullying are not only personal problems but also institutional concerns that require collective responsibility and clear regulatory frameworks within the Islamic boarding school environment.

Moreover, the most notable improvement appeared in the aspect of knowledge related to the prevention and handling of sexual violence and bullying, where the average score rose to 4.5 in the post-test. This indicates that students gained stronger confidence and readiness to take part in prevention efforts, including knowing whom to approach for help, how to report incidents safely, and how to support peers who may become victims. Such improvement suggests that the program was successful not only in increasing cognitive understanding but also in fostering a sense of responsibility and empowerment among participants.

From a broader perspective, these results demonstrate that the mentoring program functioned effectively as a community-based educational intervention. By integrating awareness sessions, discussions, and practical guidance, the program helped bridge the gap between knowledge and action. The consistent shift from moderate and good levels in the pre-test to very good levels in the post-test across all aspects shows that participants did not merely receive information but also internalized the values of safety, empathy, and mutual respect that underpin the concept of a *Santri-Friendly* Islamic Boarding School.

Furthermore, the findings highlight the importance of sustained community engagement in addressing sensitive issues such as bullying and sexual violence within Islamic boarding schools. The improvement in students' knowledge and attitudes indicates that when educational institutions collaborate with facilitators and mentors in a supportive learning environment, meaningful social change can occur. In this sense, the program contributes not only to individual capacity building but also to the gradual transformation of institutional culture toward one that prioritizes protection, inclusivity, and students' well-being.

In conclusion, the evaluation results confirm that the *Santri-Friendly* Islamic Boarding School Mentoring Program was effective in enhancing students' understanding of sexual violence, bullying, preventive measures, and the broader concept of a safe and supportive boarding school environment. The substantial increase in post-test scores across all assessed aspects provides strong evidence that this program can serve as a model of community-engaged intervention for other Islamic boarding schools seeking to strengthen their preventive frameworks and promote a culture of safety and respect among students.

Discussion

The findings of this community service program demonstrate significant progress in addressing issues of sexual violence, bullying, and the creation of a *Santri-Friendly*

Islamic boarding school environment. Prior to the intervention, students' understanding of these issues was at a "fair" to "good" level, with average scores ranging from 3.1 to 3.7. After the program, however, all assessed aspects increased to the "very good" category, with average scores between 4.4 and 4.5. This shift highlights the effectiveness of the mentoring approach in increasing knowledge, awareness, and attitudes toward violence prevention and the promotion of a safe and inclusive Islamic boarding school environment. These results are consistent with Hernawaty et al., (2016), who found that training programs on sexual education could improve participants' knowledge by up to 23%.

Community engagement and participation were also notable strengths of the program. The active involvement of students, teachers, and Islamic boarding school administrators during workshops, simulations, and peer support activities reflected a strong sense of ownership. Such participatory approaches are vital in ensuring that knowledge transfer does not remain theoretical but becomes embedded in daily practice (Pratiwi et al., 2024). The willingness of students to engage in peer support groups and the recognition of teachers as key agents in cultural change further reinforce the potential for sustainability.

Another important outcome is the adoption of innovative mechanisms, including peer support systems, safe reporting channels, and internal counseling structures. These mechanisms not only address the immediate issues of bullying and sexual violence but also establish preventive and protective frameworks for long-term application. The integration of *Santri-Friendly* principles into Islamic boarding school culture aligns with Law No. 35 of 2014 on Child Protection and Law No. 18 of 2019 on Islamic boarding school, which emphasize the importance of providing safe, healthy, and supportive environments for children. By embedding these mechanisms into the Islamic boarding school's internal structure, the likelihood of sustainability and replication in other institutions is strengthened (Febiantoni et al., 2025; Latifah & Charisna, 2024).

Nevertheless, the program also faced several challenges. The sensitivity of topics such as sexual violence within the Islamic boarding school context required careful and adaptive communication strategies to avoid conflict with prevailing social and cultural norms. This aligns with (Waruwu & Rahayu, 2025), who emphasized that participatory approaches must be culturally adaptive to be effective. While the training successfully improved knowledge and attitudes, its impact on long-term behavioral change remains uncertain. This limitation suggests the need for continuous mentoring, structured counseling, and systematic monitoring to ensure that the knowledge gained translates into sustainable behavioral practices.

In summary, the intervention successfully achieved its objectives by improving participants' understanding and awareness, fostering active community engagement, and establishing innovative preventive mechanisms. Its novelty lies in integrating participatory methods, culturally adapted mentoring modules, and internal reporting systems within the Islamic boarding school context. Moving forward, future community service initiatives should focus on reinforcing behavioral change, institutionalizing training modules into non-formal curricula, and replicating this model in other Islamic boarding school, with adjustments for local cultural contexts. Such efforts would not only

strengthen child protection within Islamic boarding school but also contribute to broader national goals of creating safe educational environments.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this article highlights the key achievements and impact of the *Santri-Friendly Islamic Boarding School Mentoring* program, which successfully empowered the community by addressing the specific needs and challenges related to bullying, sexual violence, and the creation of a safe educational environment. The methods implemented, including mentoring, peer support groups, safe reporting channels, and capacity building, proved highly relevant to the real-life conditions of the target community. The results demonstrate immediate benefits in improving students' knowledge and awareness and also indicate strong potential for long-term positive change by fostering participation, encouraging local innovation, and strengthening social bonds within the Islamic boarding school environment.

While the program achieved significant success, certain limitations remain, particularly regarding the extent to which improved knowledge and attitudes will translate into sustainable behavioral change. These limitations provide valuable insights for refining strategies in the future. Moving forward, expanding the program's reach, institutionalizing the modules into non-formal curricula, and fostering deeper collaboration with stakeholders will be essential to enhance its effectiveness. The lessons learned from this initiative serve as a solid foundation for developing more impactful and sustainable community service programs in the future.

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