Optimizing anti-bullying programs on inclusive learning atmosphere in integrated islamic elementary school

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A B S T R A C T

This study aims to examine the implementation of the anti-bullying program at Integrated Islamic Elementary School of At-Taqwa Surabaya in creating an inclusive learning atmosphere. Through a systematic approach such as daily pledges, early-year assessments, house systems, and integration of religious values in learning, this school has been able to establish a positive culture and strengthen relationships between students. Mandatory extracurricular programs and active parental involvement through parenting and the E-Bukpeng application further strengthen bullying prevention efforts. Handling of bullying cases is carried out in stages with a restorative approach, supported by sharing sessions and home visits for students' emotional recovery. The results of the study show that the combination of preventive, collaborative, and supportive strategies is effective in building a safe, inclusive school environment and supporting the development of students' character holistically.

INTRODUCTION

Inclusive education aims to create a safe, supportive, and non-discriminatory learning atmosphere for students and those with special needs to learn and develop equitably (Saenen et al., 2024) In this context, schools are expected not only to provide physical and academic access, but also to ensure emotional and social acceptance among all school members. One of the primary barriers to establishing an inclusive climate is bullying, which can diminish students' sense of safety, self-esteem, and active participation in the learning process (Joseph & Kuperminc, 2020). According to data from Indonesia's Ministry of Education and Culture in 2022, approximately 25% of students were bullied at school who need intensive preventive measures. Therefore, bullying prevention is an important component of effective inclusive education policies.

Inclusive schools should implement strong and collaborative social protection systems to both prevent and address bullying. However, the reality in many Indonesian schools, including Integrated Islamic Elementary School of At-Taqwa Surabaya, shows that they still face challenges in establishing a fully safe inclusive learning environment. Bullying behaviors such as verbal,

physical, and social are still found, even to students with special needs. Moreover, existing anti-bullying programs tend to be reactive and are not fully integrated with local values, spiritual beliefs, or comprehensive school participation. As a result, prevention efforts remain suboptimal and their impact on school culture limited. Putra and Arifin (2021) argue that the success of anti-bullying programs in Islamic schools depends heavily on the active involvement of all school stakeholders and the integration of Islamic character values in every aspect of the learning process (Alwi et al., 2023).

Previous studies, such as the verbal bullying cases at Al-Huda Islamic Elementary School on Bawean Island, show that such incidents are complex and influenced by various factors. Despite existing rules and moral instruction, weak supervision enables verbal bullying in the form of harsh jokes or belittling comments to occur unnoticed, and such behaviour is frequently normalized by peers and educators (Putri et al., 2025) .International research emphasizes the importance of systemic and contextual approaches to anti-bullying program effectiveness through comprehensive implementation of Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) to reduce bullying in school environments (Wigelsworth et al., 2022). SEL-based interventions positively affect empathy development, emotional regulation, and the creation of safer and more inclusive school climates. Moreover, studies show that teachers' perceptions of school atmosphere significantly influence their responses to bullying incidents, which in turn affects intervention effectiveness (Lubis & Dafit, 2024). However, such research remains limited in the context of integrated Islamic primary schools in Indonesia, especially those involving Islamic values in anti-bullying strategies. While local studies have highlighted the importance of fostering inclusive school cultures to support Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), they have yet to explicitly link anti-bullying programs to Islamic educational approaches (Febriyanti & Giantara, 2025).

Field observations and interviews at Integrated Islamic Elementary School of At-Taqwa indicate the school's strong commitment to create a safe and harmonious environment, evident through various innovative anti-bullying initiatives. These include a Daily Pledge recited every morning as a moral commitment, early-year assessments to map social dynamics, and House System to foster inter-grade solidarity. These efforts are integrated with Islamic values in the learning process to reinforce empathy and social harmony. family-based strategies such as Parenting sessions and the use of E-Bukpeng (electronic communication books) support behavioural monitoring at school and home. The Poin Pulsa system (points-based reward and sanction program) further reinforces behavioural accountability.

However, there is no comprehensive research has yet examined how such strategies contribute to develop an inclusive Islamic learning atmosphere. To solve this research gap is vital for developing a contextual, participatory, and religiously grounded anti-bullying model for Islamic schools. This study seeks to fill that gap by proposing a model for optimizing anti-bullying programs rooted in Islamic values and tailored to the local culture of Integrated Islamic Elementary School. The innovation in this study integrates bullying prevention strategies, Islamic character education, and inclusive approaches into a single, adaptive, and systematic framework. This model not only prevents bullying but also supports the psychosocial recovery of victims, enhances parental involvement, and fosters a learning environment that is inclusive and harmonious.

Therefore, this research offers a practical Islamic values-based model and contributes to the enrichment of inclusive education literature in Indonesia.

METHOD

This study used descriptive qualitative with a case study design to explore the implementation of the anti-bullying program at Integrated Islamic Elementary School of At-Taqwa Surabaya. The study began by identifying the research site and selecting key informants such as headmasters, counselors, classroom teachers, students, and parents based on their active participation in school programs and regular communication via the E-Bukpeng platform. Parents were included to provide insights into the family's role in bullying prevention.

Data were collected using interviews, observations, and document checklists (Hirose & Creswell, 2023). To ensure accuracy, the researchers used the same interview questions for all participants, recorded observations carefully, cross-checked information from different sources, and confirmed the interview results with participants.

Credibility was ensured through methodological and source triangulation to confirmreliable and consistent findings. This approach followed triangulation guidelines by Faridah et al. (2023), emphasizing cross--checking data collection that is crucial in school-based, context-specific bullying prevention efforts (Pearce et al., 2024). This study was conducted through the following stages:

Table 1. Research Procedure Stages

Stage	Activity	Duration
1. Site and Informant Identification	Determine SDIT At-Taqwa and select key informants (counselors, headmaster, parents, etc.)	3 months
2. Instrument Preparation	Develop semi-structured interview guides, observation forms, and document checklists	1 month
3. Data Collection	Conduct in-depth interviews, observe anti-bullying activities, and analyze school documents	3 months
4. Data Analysis	Perform data reduction → data presentation → draw inductive conclusions	3 months
5. Data Validation	Apply methodological and source triangulation to enhance data credibility	2 months

RESULTS

1. Implementation of Anti-Bullying Prevention Programs to Optimize an Inclusive Learning Atmosphere

Integrated Islamic Elementary School of At-Taqwa Surabaya implements a proactive and systematic approach to prevent bullying in school environment. Based on interviews conducted by the researchers, it was found that the school runs three main programs: the Daily Pledge, early-year Assessments, and the House System. These play important role in fostering a positive and inclusive learning atmosphere.

The Daily Pledge program at Integrated Islamic Elementary School of At-Taqwa has been implemented since 2021 to create positive, bully-free learning atmosphere. This activity takes place every morning before lessons begin. During the session, all students recite the pledge together, which includes the line: *"I am a friend, I have no enemy."* The pledge aims to instill values of friendship and nonviolence from an early age while fostering students' moral awareness in social interactions. The principal of SDIT At-Taqwa stated:

"...For our anti-bullying prevention program, we have three initiatives: the daily pledge, assessments, and the house system. Students usually participate in activities not by class but based on the house system. Grades 1 through 6 are grouped together according to the color of their shirts." (P.PR.F1.10-07-2024).

These programs are also documented formally by Integrated Islamic Primary School (SDIT) At-Taqwa Surabaya Anti-Bullying Program (2024–2025).

Table 1. Integrated Islamic Elementary School of At-Taqwa School Program

No	Program	Objective	Description	Implementation Time	Person in Charge
1	Observation of New Students	Assess academic and emotional readiness Identify learning styles and special needs Understand student characteristics and potential	1. Interviews with parents, questionnaires, and previous records 2. Observe student interaction in small group activities 3. Observe student behavior in simulated environments such as classrooms or playgrounds	January - May	Guidance Counselor
2	Interview with New Student Guardians	Understand student background Identify parent needs and expectations Build rapport and communication	1. Ask questions in an empathetic and respectful manner while actively listening and noting important points 2. Conduct follow-up by compiling a report covering key information and recommendations for further action	January - May	Headmaster
3	Creation of Anti-Bullying Posters and Standing Banners	Build a positive school culture Raise awareness of the Anti-Bullying Movement Reduce bullying	1. Design and create content with strong messages about preventing bullying and supporting victims 2. Place posters and	July (Theme: Ourselves)	Ust. Mukhlis

No	Program	Objective	Description	Implementation Time	Person in Charge
		incidents Encourage participation	banners in strategic and frequently accessed areas such as school entrances, halls, classrooms, and canteens		
4	Observation of Student Character (Choleric, Sanguine, Melancholic, Phlegmatic)	Support social and emotional development Understand personality and learning preferences	1. Collect data using personality assessments, classroom observations, and anecdotal records to gather information on student character	July (Theme: Ourselves)	Homeroom Teachers

The school conducts Eary year assessments using non-cognitive diagnostic tools designed to understand students' social dynamics, including identifying close friendships. This allows potential conflicts to be identified and addressed early, creating a safer and more comfortable social setting. The school's guidance counselor added:

"Students from Grades 1 to 6 are grouped into houses, each with a specific color. This program fosters solidarity across grade levels and encourages positive interaction. During events like At-Taqwa Sports Day, students compete in their house teams, strengthening inter-grade relationships." (GC.GBK.F1.12-07-2024)

The House System is a cross-grading strategy, grouping students from Grades 1 through 6 into teams identified by colour. This system facilitates collaboration in various activities and fosters emotional bonds among students. An internal survey indicated that approximately 85% of students felt more comfortable and motivated to interact with peers from other grades after joining the House System, showing its effectiveness in building solidarity and reducing bullying. The vice principal for student affairs stated:

"...Every day, students recite the pledge, such as 'I am a friend, I have no enemy,' after the morning prayer and before entering class. This is designed to instill values of friendship and help prevent conflict from the start of the school day." (VP.WKSS.F1.10-07-2024)

Evidence of program implementation was also gathered through field observations. Researchers noted a spirit of cooperation among students during the midday Dhuhr prayer. Before prayer, students helped one another prepare the space, demonstrating social responsibility and care. This implementation has been shown in school documentation showing a culture of mutual respect and communal support.

Figure 2. Outing Classroom Hours Activities

Field observations showed that the school's value-based programming was effective, as evidenced by students' cooperative behavior during Dhuhr prayer. The activity served not only a religious function but also as a learning platform for values like responsibility, teamwork, and social concern. Visual documentation reinforced the conclusion that students were beginning to internalize these values, contributing to a school culture that discourages bullying.

Students' sense of comfort and belonging was also evident in enjoyable extracurricular activities, such as the End-of-Theme Celebration, which was creatively and collaboratively organized. The school's official YouTube channel documented this event, showing students actively engaged and excited throughout the learning experience.

Figure 3. At-Taqwa End of Theme Celebration

In conclusion, the programs implemented at Integrated Islamic Elementary School of At-Taqwa not only reflect the school's commitment to bullying prevention but also highlight a successful integration of religious values with a human-centered educational approach. This approach has proven effective in creating a safe, inclusive learning atmosphere that supports students' emotional and social development.

2. Implementation of Anti-Bullying Campaigns and Socialization Programs

Integrated Islamic Elementary School of At-Taqwa Surabaya is committed to fostering a safe, bully-free educational environment by implementing a range of collaborative strategies involving the entire school ecosystem including teachers, students, and parents. These strategies go beyond prevention, incorporating both promotive and curative approaches within an integrated framework.

One of the programs is Regular Parenting Program, a series of scheduled education and socialization sessions designed for parents. This program aims to raise parental awareness of bullying behaviour and strengthen their role in supporting children at home. The headmaster emphasized:
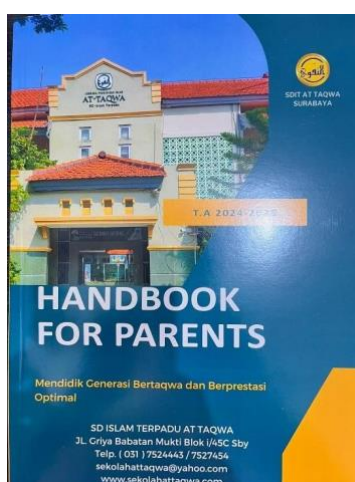

Figure 3. Handbook For Parents

"...we always invite parents at the beginning of each academic year, encouraging them to consistently 'fill their child's love tank' at home. This way, children won't seek negative attention at school or act disruptively." *(P.PR.F2.20-08-2024)*

This shows that the headmaster shows his commitment on anti-bullying program to establish affective parenting, referring to the concept of "filling the love tank." This metaphor highlights the belief that when a child's emotional needs are built at home, they are less likely to seek attention through negative behaviour, including bullying. This aligns with Maslow's hierarchy of needs, particularly the need for love and belonging, which—when unmet—can manifest in behavioral issues. The school's use of a Parent Handbook reinforces this ecosystem-based preventive approach, positioning parents as key stakeholders in psychosocial resilience-building.

This emphasis is further reinforced by documented parent orientation activities, which aim to align school and family perspectives. These events carry themes such as *"Synergizing Together to Strengthen a Pious and Virtuous Generation,"* and include parenting sessions that educate families about their crucial role in bullying prevention and holistic child development.

To support these goals, the school has developed an effective communication system known as E-Bukpeng (Electronic Communication Book). This collaborative tool allows both teachers and parents to monitor student behaviour continuously.


Figure 4. Orientation of School Program

"...we use an e-bookpeng system, a communication bridge between teachers and parents, enabling us to routinely monitor student behavior. With clear indicators, students are assessed by both school and home, allowing early detection of negative behaviors." *(GC.GBK.F2.20-08-2024)*

E-Bukpeng consists of two core components: first, Collaborative Monitoring: Parents fill out behavior indicators for at-home conduct, while teachers record observations from the classroom. Secondly, Indicator-Based Evaluation: Behavioral aspects such as discipline, manners, and early signs of deviant behavior (including bullying) are tracked. This data is compiled regularly and forms the basis for targeted interventions.

The school also implements a points-based reward and punishment system known as *"Poin Pulsa."* This system offers both positive reward and corrective sanctions, depending on students' daily behavior. According to the vice principal for student affairs:

"...we have a points-based reward and punishment system. Students receive reward points for good behavior and negative points for misconduct. This helps motivate students to behave positively, including refraining from bullying." (VP.WKSS.F2.20-08-2024)

This statement is further supported by the school's official counseling service policy, documented in the Communication Book.
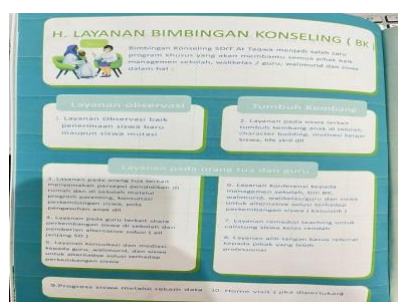
Figure 6. The Communication Book includes policies for counseling services.

The Communication Book, which outlines the policies for the school's counseling services, is a formal communication tool between school and parents that plays a vital role in the primary

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education setting by integrating behavioral guidance, developmental monitoring, and parental involvement in the educational process. The program is founded on the principle that bullying prevention cannot be confined to the school environment alone, but must actively involve the family. Therefore, Integrated Islamic Elementary School of At-Taqwa involve parents not as external observers, but as strategic partners in nurturing positive character and behavior in students.

Moreover, the existence of written policies on counseling services strengthens the school's preventive approach in solving the behavioural issues. These policies are included in official documents and embedded in the Communication Book as part of a comprehensive monitoring system.

To systematically illustrate the implementation flow of the school's anti-bullying programs, the following diagram (Figure 7) and matrix (Table 1) outline the program components and the specific objectives of each strategy.
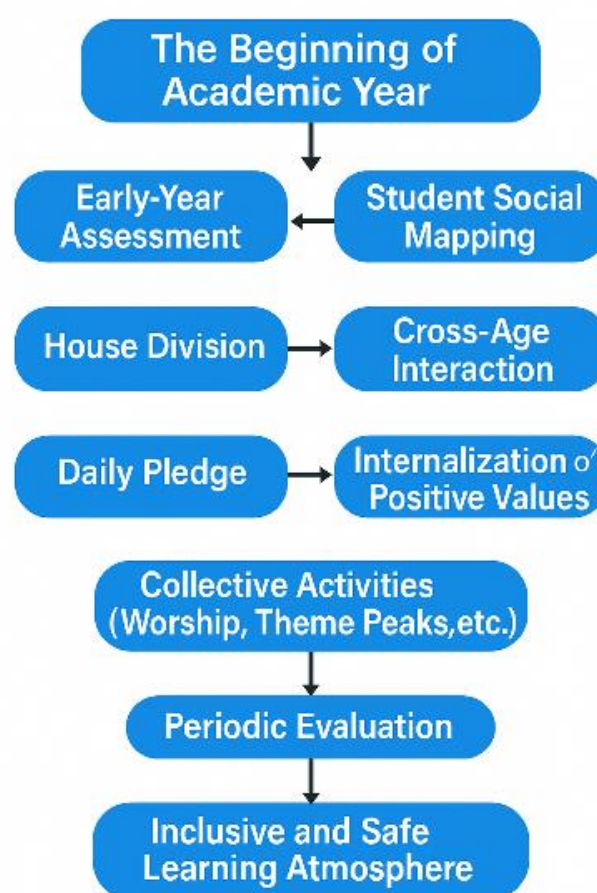
Figure 7. Activity Matrix

In conclusion, Integrated Islamic Primary School of At-Taqwa Surabaya implemented anti-bullying program that has been designed holistically, integrating preventive, promotive, and curative approaches into a unified and harmonious system. By emphasizing strong collaboration between school and home, and embedding religious and moral values into its educational framework, the school has successfully cultivated a culture that supports students' social-emotional development in a positive and sustainable manner.

Table 1. Anti-Bullying Program Components and Their Specific Objectives

Component	Specific Objective	Form of Implementation
Beginning-of-Year Assessment	To understand students' social networks	Non-cognitive social diagnostic assessment
House System	To strengthen cross-grade solidarity	Grouping students by color across different grade levels
Daily Pledge	To instill values of friendship and non-conflict	Reciting a pledge before starting lessons
Collective Activities	To foster togetherness and social belonging	Communal work, theme-based events, and religious activities
Program Evaluation	To assess effectiveness and gather feedback	Interviews, observations, and reflective teacher discussions

3. Implementation of Bullying Case Resolution to Support an Inclusive Learning Atmosphere

Integrated Islamic Elementary School of At-Taqwa Surabaya has made a gradual, structured, and systemic approach to resolving bullying cases to create inclusive and harmonious learning atmosphere. This multi-level strategy begins with the classroom teacher as the first responder. If the issue persists, it is escalated to the school's guidance counsellor and if necessary, reported to headmaster for more intensive intervention.

One of the school's key preventive innovations is Sharing Time program called "Curhat Time" that is a designated period where students can privately express their feelings and concerns to a teacher without pressure. This initiative offers a safe emotional space for students who may be hesitant to report bullying openly. A student who participated in "Curhat Time" shared that the experience made them feel heard and emotionally supported, which helped them recover from bullying and regain the confidence to interact with peers.

The headmaster elaborated: "...we have a program called 'Curhat Time.' Every student is given the opportunity to express their feelings or complaints privately to a teacher. This session helps students who might be reluctant to speak up about bullying. They are free to share anything." (P.PR.F3.20-08-2024)

To extend the emotional support, the school counselor also conducts home visits to students who got social challenges such as bullying. This strategy enables a comprehensive understanding of the student's family environment and helps foster meaningful cooperation with parents. The school counselor explained:

"...homeroom teachers also visit the homes of students, especially those dealing with social issues like bullying. The goal is to understand the family situation and provide guidance to parents."

The school's House System, beyond serving as a cross-grade collaboration framework, also acts as a supportive social environment for students recovering from bullying. In one case, a transfer student who had been bullied at a previous school was able to integrate smoothly at school

due to peer support within the house system. This peer and teacher support network played a vital role in the student's emotional healing and social reintegration.

Before involving the parents of the victim or perpetrator, the school conducts an internal review and case data collection to design an evidence-based intervention plan and avoid assigning blame. The outcomes of this internal dialogue then inform collaborative meetings to formulate constructive, solution-focused strategies for conflict resolution.

To reinforce both promotive and recreational aspects, school provides a range of extracurricular programs, including both mandatory weekday activities and optional weekend sessions. These include sports like futsal, archery, and basketball, designed to help students channel their energy productively, build teamwork, and cultivate positive characteristics. The school collaborates with Universitas Negeri Surabaya (UNESA) to provide professional coaches for these programs, to mentor all students.

As the vice headmaster for student affairs explained: "...our school runs both mandatory and additional extracurricular activities. Sports like futsal, archery, and basketball are designed to channel students' energy into productive outlets. We also collaborate with universities like UNESA to provide professional coaches for these activities." (VP.WKKS.F3.20-08-2024)

From a management perspective, the school maintains a solid internal coordination system featuring roles such as the Teacher Captain (TC) and Coordinator Level (CL). The TC oversees the implementation of character and anti-bullying programs at each grade level, while the CL ensures the integration of spiritual and social values within the learning process. This structure maintain goal-oriented execution and consistent evaluation across all levels.

As a school-community synergy, At-Taqwa Sports Day event represents the school's inclusive, anti-bullying values in action. This event involves students, parents, and teachers in collaborative sports competitions and social activities.

The vice principle noted: "...At-Taqwa Sports Day is one of our flagship events, designed to strengthen the relationships among students, parents, and the school. Through sports and joint activities, students not only learn teamwork and sportsmanship but also have the opportunity to build social connections across age groups. The event creates a joyful, informal atmosphere that reduces barriers between school, students, and families." (VP.WKKS.F3.20-08-2024)

Therefore, Integrated Islamic Primary School of At-Taqwa Surabaya prevents bullying cases not only on the formal approach but also the extracellular mechanism. The program emphasizes humanistic, participatory, and values-based approaches, blending curative and promotive strategies to foster a truly inclusive learning environment where every student feels respected, safe, and empowered to grow.

DISCUSSION

Integrated Islamic Primary School of At-Taqwa Surabaya has implemented a systematic, multi-layered strategy to prevent bullying in routine programs such as the daily pledge, early-year assessments, and the House System. These findings shows that this study emphasizes comprehensive, whole-community approaches that actively engage students, teachers, and families (Søndergaard et al., 2023).

The integration of religious values into every subject through a spiritual paradox approach plays a vital role in shaping students' character. For example, in mathematics, the concepts of balance and justice are linked to Qur'anic verses that emphasize the importance of fairness in daily life. In science lessons, natural phenomena such as order and the complexity of Allah's creation are connected to hadiths that encourage reflection on the signs of His greatness. This approach aligns with the concept proposed by (Elyunusi et al., 2022) which states that character education should be internalized throughout the entire learning process to produce individuals with morality and integrity.

Mandatory extracurricular programs and weekend activities such as futsal, archery, and basketball are designed to channel students' energy into positive pursuits. According to Bandura, as cited in research by Oktaria et al. (2024), engagement in productive activities can reduce tendencies toward aggressive behaviour by providing a healthy outlet for energy expression. Active parental involvement in regular parenting programs, along with the use of the E-Bukpeng application, is an integral part of building collaboration between home and school. This program aims to raise parents' awareness of the importance of supporting their children's character education, in line with Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory as discussed in research by Ady Dharma (2023), which emphasizes the significance of a synergistic relationship between home and school environments in a child's development.

The Poin Pulsa system is implemented as a guidance strategy designed to be relatable and easily understood by students. Through this approach, each positive behaviour earns the student a symbolic "pulse" as a form of reward—something perceived as valuable and enjoyable. Conversely, rule-breaking behaviour results in a deduction of points, allowing students to directly experience the consequences of their actions. This system is effective because it provides clear, measurable, and immediate feedback, helping students connect their actions with tangible outcomes. The approach aligns with Skinner's operant conditioning theory, which emphasizes that behavior can be shaped through reinforcement (rewards) and punishment. Through this system, students not only learn to distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable behaviors, but they are also motivated to actively develop positive attitudes, as they feel involved and appreciated in the process (Arifin & Humaedah, 2022; Long, 2023).

Cross-grade activities especially the House System and Sports Day create an inclusive, peer-supported environment. Programmes that mix ages improve mutual respect and reduce conflict potential (Wigelsworth et al., 2022) Bullying cases follow a tiered response: classroom teacher → guidance counsellor → principal, mirroring conflict-resolution frameworks that stress effective communication and collaborative problem-solving (Gordon, 2010; Zhong et al., 2024)

Individual Curhat Time sessions and home visits provide empathic, trauma-informed care, consistent with Rogers' person-centred counselling principles (Rogers, 1995). Transfer-student testimonies confirm that peer and teacher support within the House System accelerates emotional recovery, supporting evidence that social support buffers the psychological impact of bullying (Mahendika & Sijabat, 2023).

Through cross-level collaborative activities, such as the house system and sports day, the school fosters an environment that promotes the values of inclusivity. According to Wigelsworth

et al., (2022) socialization programs such as the house system and sports day, fostering mutual respect and reducing conflict among students. Interactions across age groups help build empathy, while bullying cases are addressed through a tiered response system from classroom teachers to counselors and the headmaster thorough handling before involving parents. This structured, communicative approach aligns with conflict theory (Gordon, 2010; Zhong et al., 2024) emphasizing the role of effective communication and collaboration in conflict resolution.

Curhat Time sessions and home visits are also conducted to support students' emotional needs. This empathy-based approach, as emphasized by Rogers (2020), is essential in helping students cope with emotional stress and trauma related to bullying experiences. As a result, students who were victims of bullying and later transferred to Integrated Islamic Elementary School of At-Taqwa showed signs of recovery, thanks to peer group support through the house system and various social activities. These findings align with research by (Mahendika & Sijabat, 2023) which states that social support plays a crucial role in mitigating the psychological impacts of bullying, including trauma and decreased self-esteem.

CONCLUSION

This can be concluded that first, the implementation of anti-bullying prevention programs at Integrated Islamic Elementary School of At-Taqwa Surabaya is implemented through a variety of values-based strategies, including the daily pledge, the House System, and extracurricular activities. These initiatives have proven effective in creating a harmonious social environment and reducing the potential for conflict. The program reflects the application of a Whole Education Approach, engaging all components of the school community. Secondly, anti-bullying campaigns and awareness efforts are conducted intensively through regular parenting sessions, the E-Bukpeng application, and a points-based reward and punishment system (Poin Pulsa). This approach has successfully increased both student and parent awareness of the importance of positive behavior, while also strengthening collaboration between home and school in cultivating an inclusive school culture. Thirdly, Integrated Islamic Elementary School of At-Taqwa Surabaya implements a hierarchical intervention system, involving classroom teachers, guidance counselors, and the headmaster before engaging the parents in resolving bullying cases. In addition, emotional support through *Curhat Time* sessions and home visits provides students with a safe space to recover and rebuild social relationships aligning with the headmaster of restorative practices.

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