

## **Implementation of Sustainable Islamic Education in Strengthening Santri Character and Preventing Bullying at the Alhusna Bukit Rajawali Islamic Boarding School**

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### **Abstract**

This study is motivated by the increasing prevalence of bullying in Islamic educational institutions, including pesantren, which can hinder character development and affect students' emotional well-being. Sustainable Islamic education is considered a strategic approach to strengthening students' character through the integration of spiritual, moral, social, cognitive-reflective, and environmental values. This research aims to examine the implementation of sustainable Islamic education and its role in preventing bullying at Pondok Pesantren Alhusna Bukit Rajawali. A descriptive qualitative approach with a single-case study design was employed to obtain a holistic understanding of educational dynamics and student interactions. Data were collected through observations, in-depth interviews, and document analysis, and were analyzed using Miles and Huberman's model, which includes data reduction, data display, and verification. The findings indicate that the integration of the five dimensions of sustainable Islamic education creates a comprehensive character-building ecosystem. Religious routines, educator role modeling, social activities, value-based reflection, and environmental management significantly enhance empathy, discipline, self-control, and students' sense of responsibility. These values collectively contribute to reducing bullying behavior. In conclusion, sustainable Islamic education serves as an effective framework for holistic character formation and for fostering a safe, violence-free pesantren environment. These findings may serve as a model for character education development in other Islamic educational institutions.

**Keywords:** sustainable Islamic education, pesantren, character formation, bullying prevention, student development

### **Introduction**

Islamic education has a very important role in forming the personality, morals, and character of students comprehensively (Mulyadi., 2024) . The goal of Islamic education does not only stop at mastering religious knowledge, but also on the process of instilling ethical, spiritual, and social values based on the teachings of al-karimah morals (Ekasari, N., Alya, R., & Sari, 2025) . The Prophet Muhammad emphasized that he was sent to perfect human morals, as stated in the hadith "Innama bu'itstu liuttammima makarimal akhlaq." This statement shows that the essence of Islamic education lies in the formation of noble morals and character, not solely on intellectual achievement (Rahmatullah, 2018) .

In the development of modern education, the concept of sustainable Islamic education has emerged, namely an educational approach oriented towards the integration and continuity of spiritual, moral, social, and environmental values in everyday life (Rianto, MI, Cahnia, D., Baiti, N., & Satra, 2023) . This concept is derived from the principle of *khalifah fil ardh*, which places humans as guardians of the earth and responsible for maintaining a balanced relationship with Allah, fellow humans, and the surrounding environment (Rohana, 2025) . This sustainable educational approach not only emphasizes the habituation of worship, but also character development that reflects social responsibility and environmental concern (Nugroho, 2023) .

However, various Islamic educational institutions, including Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*), still face serious challenges in the form of increasing cases of bullying. Forms of bullying that arise, such as physical violence, verbal violence, and social exclusion, have been shown to hinder the emotional, spiritual, and character development of students (Alavi, N., Roberts, N., Sutton, C., & Saeid, 2021) . Research by Bsoul et al. (2022) shows that Islamic values-based learning can strengthen moral awareness and reduce aggressive behavior (Bsoul, M., Obeidat, A., & Ta'amneh, 2022) . Research by Damayanti & Ismail (2024) also confirms that compassion-based Islamic education is effective in reducing bullying behavior in Islamic educational institutions (Damayanti, A., & Ismail, 2024) . In addition, Rahman & Yusuf's (2022) study found that the integration of religious values in learning contributed to increasing empathy and social relationships among students (Rahman, F., & Yusuf, 2022) .

Although several studies have examined Islamic-based character education, most of these studies focus on the implementation of religious values in the context of public schools or *madrasas* (Baharun, H., & Mahmudah, 2023) . Research on the development of sustainable Islamic education systematically integrated into Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*), particularly regarding bullying prevention efforts, remains very limited (Abdurrohim, 2024) . This gap indicates the need for deeper exploration into how Islamic boarding schools can sustainably internalize Islamic values to build the character of their students while preventing bullying (Albar, 2024) .

Based on these conditions, this study aims to examine in depth the implementation of sustainable Islamic education in the process of strengthening character and preventing bullying at the Alhusna Bukit Rajawali Islamic Boarding School (Raihani., 2012) . This study also examines the role of spiritual, moral, social, cognitive-reflective dimensions, as well as the Islamic boarding school environment as the basis for forming a holistic character education ecosystem (Syafe'i, 2017) .

**The hypothesis of this research is:**

"The implementation of integrated sustainable Islamic education through spiritual, moral, social, cognitive-reflective, and environmental dimensions is expected to have a positive effect on strengthening the character of students and contribute significantly to reducing bullying behavior at the Alhusna Bukit Rajawali Islamic Boarding School."

## **Methods**

### **Research Design**

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach with a single case study model focusing on the Alhusna Bukit Rajawali Islamic Boarding School. The qualitative approach was chosen because it can provide an in-depth picture of the process, meaning, and dynamics

of implementing sustainable Islamic education in the daily lives of students. Through this approach, researchers can understand the phenomenon holistically based on the direct experiences of the participants. The use of a single case study design allows researchers to explore the phenomenon in detail within the natural context of the Islamic boarding school as a unique educational system. Thus, this study not only describes how sustainable Islamic education is implemented, but also how these values are internalized and influence the character formation of students within the Islamic boarding school environment.

### **Interview**

In this interview, the researcher found data from 407 individuals, consisting of students at various levels of education, from elementary school to university, as well as ustadz, ustadzah, and pesantren caretakers. This diverse participant composition provides a comprehensive picture of the social, spiritual, and educational dynamics taking place at the Alhusna Bukit Rajawali Islamic Boarding School. The involvement of students from various levels allows researchers to capture the variety of experiences and levels of internalization of values in each phase of development. Meanwhile, the contributions of ustadz, ustadzah, and pesantren caretakers provide a broader perspective on the policies, educational practices, and character development patterns applied. The diversity of interviews enriches the research data and increases the validity of the findings because it reflects the factual conditions of pesantren life as a whole.

### **Research Procedures**

This research procedure was carried out through three main interrelated stages. The first stage is the preparation stage, which includes initial observations of the Islamic boarding school environment, processing research permits, and mapping problems related to the implementation of sustainable Islamic education and the issue of bullying. The second stage is the data collection stage, which is carried out through direct observation of the daily activities of students, in-depth interviews with various parties such as students, ustadz, ustadzah, and boarding school caretakers, and document analysis in the form of rules of procedure, guidance notes, and archives of Islamic boarding school activities. The final stage is the data analysis stage using the Miles and Huberman model, which includes the processes of data reduction, data presentation, as well as drawing conclusions and verification. These three stages are carried out systematically to ensure that the data obtained is valid, rich, and able to provide a comprehensive picture of the phenomenon being studied.

### **Data Collection Techniques**

The data collection techniques in this study were conducted through three main, complementary methods. First, observation, which was used to directly observe the behavior of students during worship activities, social interactions, and daily habits within the Islamic boarding school environment. This observation provides an empirical picture of how the values of sustainable Islamic education are internalized in the students' routine activities. Second, in-depth interviews with ustadz (teacher), ustadzah (female teacher), and students to explore their experiences, perceptions, and understanding regarding character development and the phenomenon of bullying in Islamic boarding schools. Through these interviews, researchers obtained more personal and reflective information regarding the dynamics of education in

Islamic boarding schools. Third, documentation, which involved collecting various archives and documents such as Islamic boarding school regulations, activity schedules, and coaching notes related to the educational process and discipline enforcement. These three techniques were used in an integrated manner to strengthen the validity of the data and produce a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under study.

### **Data analysis**

Data analysis in this study was conducted continuously using the Miles and Huberman model, which consists of three main stages. The first stage is data reduction, which is the process of selecting, grouping, and focusing data relevant to the research objectives so that the information obtained is more focused and meaningful. The second stage is data presentation, where the reduced data is then organized in narrative form, tables, or matrices to make it easier for researchers to understand the patterns, relationships, and important findings that emerge. The final stage is drawing conclusions and verification, which is carried out through a process of data triangulation to ensure the validity, consistency, and credibility of the research findings. These three stages occur simultaneously and complement each other, resulting in a comprehensive and in-depth analysis of the implementation of sustainable Islamic education and its impact on character formation and bullying prevention in Islamic boarding schools.

### **Results**

The research results show that sustainable Islamic education at the Alhusna Bukit Rajawali Islamic Boarding School is implemented through five main, complementary dimensions. First, the spiritual dimension is realized through the habit of congregational prayer, Quran recitation, regular religious studies, and various other worship activities that foster discipline, spiritual awareness, and religious responsibility in students. Second, the moral dimension is developed through the exemplary behavior of the ustadz and ustadzah, the implementation of Islamic boarding school regulations, and a moral development program that instills the values of honesty, politeness, and discipline in daily behavior. Third, the social dimension is strengthened through mutual cooperation activities, social service, leadership training, and community service that contribute to the formation of empathy, solidarity, and the ability to work together. Fourth, the cognitive-reflective dimension is developed through the study of moral books, religious discussions, and value reflection activities that encourage students to think critically and understand Islamic teachings more deeply. Fifth, the environmental dimension is seen from the Islamic boarding school culture which is clean, orderly, and upholds ethics, so that Islamic values can be consistently internalized in various aspects of the students' lives.

The integration of these five dimensions creates a comprehensive and effective character education ecosystem. This sustainable Islamic education model has been proven effective in reducing bullying behavior, as students accustomed to interacting in a religiously-based environment demonstrate increased empathy, self-control, and a tendency to avoid aggressive behavior.

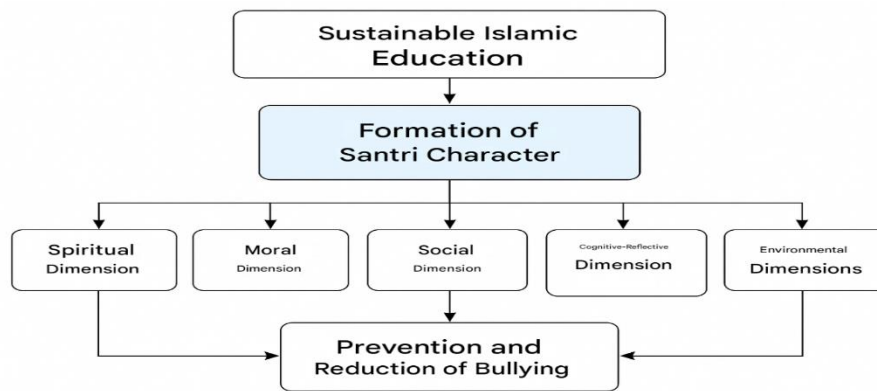


Figure 1. Conceptual Model of Continuing Islamic Education for Bullying Prevention

## Discussion

The results of this study indicate that the main hypothesis that sustainable Islamic education contributes to the character formation of Islamic boarding school students and plays a role in suppressing bullying behavior is supported by field findings. The integration of the five dimensions of sustainable Islamic education (spiritual, moral, social, cognitive-reflective, and environmental) has been shown to create a harmonious, consistent, and conducive educational ecosystem for the internalization of positive values (Al-Huda, AAF, & Anwar, 2025). This finding is consistent with Islamic educational theory that emphasizes the role of good morals as the core of character formation and is in line with previous research showing that religious values have a significant influence on empathy and prosocial behavior in adolescents (Rahman, F., & Yusuf, 2022).

In the spiritual and moral dimension, this study supports the findings of Damayanti and Ismail (2024) who stated that the habit of worship and teacher role models are important factors in reducing aggressive behavior among students (Damayanti, A., & Ismail, 2024). The exemplary behavior of *ustadz* and *ustadzah* at the Alhusna Islamic Boarding School also plays a major role in strengthening moral values, and this has been identified as one of the most effective mechanisms for internalizing morals in Islamic education (Bsoul, M., Obeidat, A., & Ta'amneh, 2022). Thus, the results of this study strengthen the existing literature that the spiritual and moral dimensions are not merely rituals, but form a sustainable character habitus (Darmawan, 2020).

Findings on the social and environmental dimensions indicate that the collective life of Islamic boarding school students, characterized by mutual cooperation, leadership, and strict discipline, can foster a sense of togetherness and reduce the likelihood of bullying (Abdullah, 2018). These findings respond to criticism in previous research that showed high cases of bullying in some Islamic boarding schools due to an uncontrolled culture of seniority (Hidayat, A., & Syamsuddin, 2020). In this context, this study presents a new perspective that Islamic boarding schools can actually become protective environments if Islamic values are implemented consistently and comprehensively (Nilan, P., Demartoto, A., & Wibowo, 2014).

Furthermore, the approach to sustainable Islamic education in this Islamic boarding school aligns with Bronfenbrenner's (2005) bioecological framework, which emphasizes that a child's character is shaped by ongoing interactions between individuals and their microenvironments, such as family and school (Bronfenbrenner, 2005). Alhusna Islamic Boarding School, as an intensive microenvironment, provides a learning space that allows for

the repeated and in-depth internalization of values. This consistent cycle of interactions with religious values makes the Islamic boarding school a learning ecosystem capable of creating positive behavioral change (Alqudsi, Z., Darsinah, D., & Wafroturrahmah, 2023).

This analysis also considers potential bias and threats to data validity (Miles, MB, Huberman, AM, & Saldana, 2014). Because this research used qualitative methods with a single case study, it is possible that some findings cannot be broadly generalized. However, triangulation of methods through observation, interviews, and documentation, as well as the recruitment of participants from various levels of students to Islamic boarding school administrators, increases the credibility of the data. Limitations of the study also include the potential for researcher subjectivity in interpretation, as well as the unique context of Islamic boarding schools that may differ from other institutions (Yin, 2018).

In contrast to previous research, Mustofa (2019) found that a culture of power and seniority often triggers bullying in many Islamic boarding schools. However, this study's findings suggest that this can be minimized through ongoing Islamic values-based educational interventions (Mustofa, 2019). This difference can be explained by differences in leadership structure, the role models of caregivers, and the quality of the character-building programs implemented (Raihani, 2012).

Theoretically, these findings broaden the understanding of how sustainable Islamic education can serve as a strategic framework for bullying prevention (Hashim, 2018). Practically, this study provides evidence that integrating Islamic values into all aspects of Islamic boarding school life can improve students' empathy, discipline, and self-control. This suggests that Islamic boarding schools can serve as strong models for character development if the implementation of these values is structured and consistent (Aisyah, 2019).

This study's limitations include its scope, which only covered one Islamic boarding school, so generalizations of the results should be made with caution. Future research should involve more Islamic boarding schools with diverse characteristics to test the consistency of the sustainable Islamic education model (Zuhdi, 2019). Furthermore, the development of quantitative instruments to more objectively measure the effect of sustainable Islamic education on reducing bullying is needed (Yin, 2018).

Overall, this study provides significant theoretical and practical contributions. The findings confirm that sustainable Islamic education is not merely a normative ideal but can be operationalized as a concrete strategy for building the character of students and creating a safe and bullying-free Islamic boarding school environment (Hashim, 2018).

### **Conclusion**

This study concludes that sustainable Islamic education at the Alhusna Bukit Rajawali Islamic Boarding School is implemented through the integration of five dimensions of Islamic values: spiritual, moral, social, cognitive-reflective, and environmental. The integration of these values forms a comprehensive and sustainable educational system, thus producing students with noble character, discipline, empathy, and concern for others and the environment. The implementation of sustainable Islamic education has also proven effective in suppressing bullying behavior, because students are accustomed to an environment that fosters religiosity, role models, and positive social interactions. These findings indicate that the sustainable Islamic education approach is an appropriate strategy in building students' character in a complete and

holistic manner. With its success, the Alhusna Islamic Boarding School can be used as a model for developing character education and bullying prevention for other Islamic educational institutions that wish to integrate Islamic values consistently and sustainably.

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### Conflict of Interest Statement

The researcher declares that the research and preparation of this article were conducted independently without any conflict of interest. The entire process, from data collection and analysis to conclusion drawing, was conducted based on the principles of objectivity and academic integrity. There was no external influence, whether from institutions, individuals, or other parties, that could have influenced the results or interpretation of this research. Therefore, the researcher guarantees that the findings and content of this article are compiled scientifically, transparently, and free from bias.

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