

The Role of Madrasah Heads as Educators in Bullying Prevention in the School Environment

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Abstract

Bullying is one of the problems that is still often found in the educational environment and has the potential to interfere with the psychological, social, and academic development of students. Bullying prevention efforts require not only a repressive approach through rules and sanctions, but also a preventive approach oriented to character building. This study aims to analyze the role of madrasah heads as educators in preventing bullying behavior at MIS Darul Huda Bandar Lampung. The research uses a qualitative approach with a case study type. The research informants consisted of 6 people consisting of 1 madrasah head, 3 teachers, and 2 students who were selected purposively. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, non-participatory observations, and documentation, then analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawn. The validity of the data is carried out through triangulation of sources and techniques. The results of the study show that madrasah heads play an active role as educators through four forms of coaching, namely mental, moral, physical, and artistic coaching. Mental coaching is carried out through persuasive approaches, motivation, and religious activities to foster empathy and self-control in students. Moral development is carried out through example, cult, recitation, and habituation of moral values. Physical coaching is realized through regular exercise, discipline, and hygiene activities that encourage cooperation and sportsmanship. Meanwhile, artistic coaching is carried out through marawis, calligraphy, and educational tourism activities that strengthen positive social interaction. The findings of the study show that the multidimensional coaching approach carried out by madrasah heads is able to create a safer, harmonious, and conducive school culture so as to contribute to preventing the emergence of bullying behavior in the madrasah environment.

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INTRODUCTION

Bullying is still one of the most complex issues in the world of education because it not only impacts victims psychologically, but also affects the learning climate, social relationships, and overall quality of education. This phenomenon can appear in various forms, such as physical violence, verbal ridicule, psychological intimidation, social exclusion, to technology-based bullying (cyberbullying). National data shows that cases of violence and bullying in education units are still relatively high. Based on the results of the Learning Environment Survey of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, there are still students who claim to have experienced bullying in the school

environment. The findings show that schools are not yet fully a safe space for student development. This condition is a serious challenge because the existence of bullying is contrary to the purpose of education which places schools as an environment that supports the growth and development of character, academic potential, and psychological well-being of students (Putri et al., 2023; Setiawan & Wahyuni, 2024).

Academically, various studies show that bullying has a negative correlation with learning achievement, academic motivation, and student involvement in school activities. Victims of bullying tend to experience anxiety, fear, low self-esteem, difficulty interacting socially, and even show symptoms of depression in the long term

(Zhao et al., 2024). At the primary education level, the impact becomes more serious because the child's age phase is an important period in the formation of self-identity, character, and social abilities. If bullying behavior is not prevented early, then students have the potential to internalize aggressive behavior as something normal. Therefore, bullying prevention cannot only be done through an approach to taking action against perpetrators, but must be directed at preventive efforts that are able to build a positive school culture and are oriented towards character building.

In the context of Islamic education, the existence of bullying is a paradox that needs special attention. Madrasah is basically built on the values of morality, *ukhuwah*, tolerance, and respect for fellow humans. However, various studies show that bullying behavior is still found in Islamic-based educational institutions, both in the form of ridicule, negative labeling, and social exclusion of peers (Annisa et al., 2022). This reality shows that the internalization of religious values is not always directly proportional to the formation of positive social behavior. In other words, the existence of a religious curriculum alone is not enough to prevent bullying if it is not accompanied by systematic and sustainable character development. Therefore, an educational leadership strategy is needed that is able to translate Islamic values into the daily life practices of students.

Bullying prevention efforts have a strong normative foundation in the national education system. Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System emphasizes that education not only aims to develop the intellectual aspects of students, but also to form character, noble morals, and responsible personalities (Habe & Ahiruddin, 2017). The mandate shows that schools and madrasahs have a responsibility to create a safe, inclusive, and free learning environment from all forms of violence. In this perspective, bullying prevention is not just an additional program, but an integral part of the character education process. The success of educational institutions in preventing bullying can be an important indicator of the success of forming a healthy and humanist school culture.

In realizing a bullying-free educational environment, madrasah heads have a strategic position as educational leaders. So far, the role of the head of the madrasah is often understood through managerial, administrative, and academic supervision functions. In fact, one of the roles that

is no less important is as an educator. As an educator, the head of the madrasah is responsible for guiding, fostering, setting an example, and directing all school residents in building a positive educational culture (Mulyasa, 2018). In contrast to the managerial function which focuses on the management of systems and resources, the educator function emphasizes more on the process of forming students' character, values, and behaviors through example and continuous coaching. In the context of bullying prevention, educational approaches are particularly relevant because the root of bullying problems is often related to low empathy, weak self-control, and lack of moral awareness of students.

The urgency of the role of madrasah heads as educators is increasingly seen when bullying is understood as a problem of school culture, not just individual behavior. Approaches that rely only on rules and sanctions are often reactive and do not touch the root of the problem. On the other hand, the educational approach allows for value transformation through the moral, mental, social, and emotional development of students. Madrasah heads as educators can direct teachers to be role models, develop character development programs, and create a learning environment that respects diversity and encourages empathy between students (Dirsa et al., 2022). Thus, the role of educators has a stronger preventive function than the administrative approach alone because it is oriented towards the formation of awareness and behavior change in a sustainable manner.

Various previous studies have discussed bullying prevention efforts in the school environment. Kholidi and Muliawan (2024) highlight the role of school principal management in handling bullying cases through school policies and supervision. Other research emphasizes the importance of strengthening character education, anti-bullying programs, and humanistic-religious approaches in reducing bullying behavior (Aswat et al., 2022; Suratno et al., 2022). However, most of the research still focuses on aspects of policy, school management, or intervention of students as objects of coaching. Studies on how madrasah heads carry out the function of educators directly in building an anti-bullying culture are still relatively limited. As a result, the understanding of the educational role of madrasah heads in bullying prevention has not been comprehensively described.

In addition, there are limitations to previous research that is generally conducted at the secondary school level or reviewing educational

institutions in general. Studies that specifically examine the role of madrasah heads as educators at the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah level are still rare. In fact, basic education is a very decisive phase in the formation of students' character. At this age, children are more likely to receive value habituation, role models, and behavior coaching than at higher levels of education. Therefore, research is needed that is able to explain how madrasah heads implement the function of educators through moral, mental, physical, and artistic coaching as a preventive strategy against bullying behavior. This gap is the main research gap in this study.

This research differs from previous research because it not only examines bullying policies or strategies, but specifically analyzes the role of madrasah heads as educators in building an integrated character development system. The focus of the research is directed at four dimensions of coaching, namely moral, mental, physical, and artistic coaching as proposed by Mulyasa (2018). These four dimensions are seen as important instruments in shaping empathy, discipline, social responsibility, and the ability to respect others which are the main foundation for bullying prevention. Thus, this study offers a more comprehensive perspective on bullying prevention through an educational leadership approach in the madrasah environment.

Based on this description, this study aims to analyze the role of madrasah heads as educators in preventing bullying behavior in the MIS Darul Huda Bandar Lampung environment. This research is important to make a theoretical contribution to the development of Islamic education leadership studies, especially regarding the function of educators of madrasah heads, as well as to make practical contributions to educational institutions in designing bullying prevention strategies based on holistic and sustainable character development.

METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive research type of case study. The qualitative approach was chosen because it allows researchers to understand in depth the phenomenon of the role of madrasah heads as educators in complex natural and social contexts, with researchers as the main instrument of research (Wijaya et al., 2018). The case study design was used because the research focused on one specific case, namely the implementation of the role of madrasah heads in preventing bullying

behavior at MIS Darul Huda Bandar Lampung. The research was carried out during February-March 2026 which included the stages of preparation, data collection, analysis, and verification of findings. The research informants consisted of 6 people consisting of 1 madrasah head, 3 teachers, and 2 students who were selected using purposive sampling techniques based on their direct involvement, experience, and understanding of character development and bullying prevention programs in madrasahs. The object of the research is focused on the implementation of the function of the educator of the head of the madrasah through moral, mental, physical, and artistic coaching as a preventive strategy against bullying behavior.

Data collection was carried out through in-depth interviews, non-participatory observations, and documentation. The interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner with a grid that included the planning of the bullying prevention program, the form of coaching carried out by the head of the madrasah, the involvement of teachers, student responses to the coaching program, and the obstacles faced in its implementation. Observations are focused on teacher-student interaction, the implementation of religious activities, student discipline, sports activities, art activities, and forms of social behavior that have the potential to lead to bullying. Documentation is carried out through the collection of madrasah profiles, school rules, character development programs, and other supporting documents (Ardiansyah et al., 2023). Data analysis uses the Miles and Huberman model which includes data reduction, data presentation, as well as conclusion drawing and verification (Qomaruddin & Sa'diyah, 2024; Waruwu, 2024). The validity of the data is maintained through source triangulation and triangulation techniques by comparing the results of interviews, observations, and documentation from various informants so that the data obtained is more valid, objective, and reliable (Alfansyur & Mariyani, 2020).

DISCUSSION

Bullying behavior is one of the educational problems that is not only related to aggressive actions between students, but also reflects the quality of the school climate, the effectiveness of character education, and the success of educational leadership in building a positive school culture. Various studies show that bullying does not appear suddenly, but is influenced by

individual, social, school culture, and interaction factors that develop in the educational environment (Zhao et al., 2024). At the elementary school and madrasah ibtidaiyah levels, bullying behavior often appears in the form of verbal ridicule, negative nicknames, social exclusion, and psychological bullying which is often considered part of children's play. In fact, if this behavior is left unchecked, the impact can interfere with the social-emotional development of students and affect their academic achievement. The findings of the research at MIS Darul Huda Bandar Lampung show that bullying prevention efforts are carried out through a preventive approach centered on the role of madrasah heads as educators. This finding is interesting because it shows that bullying prevention is not only carried out through rules and sanctions, but through a process of character development that is integrated into madrasah life.

The findings of the study show that the head of the madrasah does not place himself solely as a manager of an educational institution, but as an educator figure who seeks to form a safe, harmonious, and supportive learning environment for the development of students' character. This role is in line with the view of Mulyasa (2018) who places the principal as an educator who is responsible for fostering all school residents through an educational approach oriented to personality development. However, the results of this study expand the concept by showing that the function of educators not only plays a role in improving the quality of learning, but also becomes a strategic instrument in preventing bullying. In other words, the success of madrasah heads as educators can be measured through their ability to build a school culture that respects differences, develops empathy, and minimizes aggressive behavior between students.

Theoretically, these findings strengthen the argument that bullying is a school culture problem that requires comprehensive intervention. A punishment-only approach is often able to stop the behavior in the short term, but it does not always change the mindset and character of the student. Therefore, coaching strategies that are carried out in a sustainable manner through mental, moral, physical, and artistic coaching become more relevant because they touch the root of the problem behind the emergence of bullying behavior. The results of this study also support the findings of Aswat et al. (2022) who stated that strengthening character education has a significant contribution to reducing bullying behavior in the

elementary school environment. Thus, the role of the educator of the head of the madrasah can be understood as an effort to build a character-based prevention system that is more sustainable than a repressive approach.

Mental Coaching as the Foundation for Bullying Prevention

The results of the study show that mental coaching is one of the main strategies used by madrasah heads in preventing bullying behavior. This coaching is realized through providing motivation, persuasive approaches, religious activities, the formation of empathy, and strengthening students' self-control. Conceptually, this finding is in line with the view of Mulyasa (2018) who emphasizes the importance of mental coaching in shaping students' dispositions and personalities. However, the results of this study show that the function of mental coaching is not only related to character formation in general, but also has a direct impact on the prevention of bullying behavior.

The persuasive approach applied by teachers and madrasah heads shows an orientation to solving problems in an educational manner. When students show symptoms of aggressive behavior or experience social problems, the teacher does not immediately give punishment, but takes a personal approach to understand the root of the problem. This strategy shows that madrasahs view bullying as a symptom that needs to be understood as a cause, not just a behavior that must be punished. This approach has relevance to the research of Suratno et al. (2022) which found that humanistic-religious approaches are able to increase empathy and reduce the tendency to aggressive behavior in students.

Psychologically, mental coaching contributes to the development of students' emotional intelligence. The ability to recognize one's emotions, understand the feelings of others, and control behavior are important factors in preventing bullying. Students who have high empathy tend to be better able to understand the negative impact of their behavior on others, making them less likely to commit bullying. In this context, religious activities such as joint prayer and cults not only function as spiritual activities, but also become a medium for internalizing the values of empathy, compassion, and respect for others.

However, the effectiveness of mental coaching at MIS Darul Huda Bandar Lampung is inseparable from various limitations. One of the important findings of this study is the lack of

formal guidance and counseling services. This condition causes the coaching process to depend more on the sensitivity of teachers and homeroom teachers in detecting student problems. From the perspective of education management, this condition can be challenging because the effectiveness of mental coaching is greatly influenced by the individual capacity of teachers. If there is a change of educators or a decrease in teacher commitment, the quality of coaching has the potential to decrease. Therefore, a more structured system is needed so that mental coaching does not only depend on a personal approach, but becomes part of an ongoing institutional program.

Moral Building and Strengthening of Anti-Bullying Culture

The findings of the study show that moral development is carried out through daily cults, recitations, joint prayers, teacher examples, flag ceremonies, and other religious activities. This strategy shows that bullying prevention is carried out through the internalization of moral values that take place continuously. The results of this study are in line with Annisa et al. (2022) who stated that education has an important role in building students' awareness of the negative impact of bullying.

Further analysis shows that the effectiveness of moral coaching does not only lie in the delivery of advice, but in a consistent habituation process. From the perspective of character education, moral behavior is not formed only through a cognitive understanding of good and bad, but rather through repeated social experience. Therefore, the example of teachers is an important factor in the success of moral development. When teachers show an attitude of respect, respect, and treat students fairly, students

acquire behavioral models that can be replicated in everyday life.

The results of this study also show that moral coaching functions as a prevention mechanism against the emergence of stereotypes, discrimination, and social exclusion which are often the initial forms of bullying. Through religious activities and social habits, students are taught that every individual has dignity that must be respected. These findings reinforce the results of research by Aswat et al. (2022) who showed that value-based character education can reduce the tendency to aggressive behavior in elementary school students.

However, this study found that moral coaching still faces challenges in the form of differences in students' family backgrounds and social environment. Not all values taught in school receive the same reinforcement in the home environment. As a result, there is a possibility of a discrepancy between the values taught by the madrasah and the social experience of students outside the school. This condition shows that the effectiveness of moral coaching requires synergy between madrasas, families, and society so that the values instilled can be internalized optimally.

Physical Coaching as a Media for Developing Positive Interactions

Physical coaching at MIS Darul Huda Bandar Lampung is realized through routine exercise, PJOK activities, daily pickets, clean Fridays, and discipline habituation. Based on the results of the research, these activities not only aim to improve students' physical health, but also build cooperation, sportsmanship, and social responsibility. These findings suggest that physical coaching has an important social function in bullying prevention.

Table 1. Physical Coaching Strategy at MIS Darul Huda Bandar Lampung

Strategy	Indicator	Impact on Bullying	Constraints
Exercise routine and PJOK	Teamwork, sportsmanship	Reduce negative energy and increase empathy	Limited facilities
Daily pickets and Clean Friday	Discipline, hygiene	Building collective responsibility	-
Appearance check	Uniform neatness	Boosts self-confidence	-

(Source: Research Data, 2026)

Theoretically, sports activities are able to create a healthy space for social interaction. In group games, students learn to work together, respect rules, accept defeat, and control emotions.

This ability is a very important social competence in preventing bullying behavior. The results of this study reinforce the view that exercise is not only a physical activity, but also an effective means of

character education.

However, the effectiveness of physical training is still influenced by the limitations of sports facilities. These findings show that the success of the program is not solely determined by the availability of facilities, but also by the creativity of madrasah heads and teachers in utilizing the available resources. However, in the long term, improving facilities is still needed so that physical coaching can run more optimally and reach all students equally.

Artistic Coaching and Social Sensitivity Development

The findings of the study show that artistic development is carried out through marawis activities, calligraphy, and educational tourism activities. This strategy is interesting because it shows that art can function as an instrument of character education as well as a medium for bullying prevention. Through art activities, students learn to express themselves positively, appreciate the work of others, and work together in groups.

Table 2. Artistic Development Strategy at MIS Darul Huda Bandar Lampung

Activities	Purpose	Contribution to Bullying Prevention
São Paulo	Creativity and appreciation	Group collaboration and appreciation for the work of friends
Calligraphy	Creativity and self-expression	Increase confidence and respect differences
Educational Work Tours	Artistic and social experiences	Positive interaction across classes and strengthening social relationships

(Source: Research Data, 2026)

The analysis of the results of the study shows that artistic coaching has a unique contribution compared to other forms of coaching. If mental and moral coaching focuses on the internal aspects of the individual, then artistic coaching plays a role in building social relationships through collaborative experiences. Art activities create a more egalitarian interaction space so that students can get to know each other and appreciate differences in abilities. Thus, the potential for ridicule and ostracization can be minimized.

However, artistic coaching still faces obstacles in the form of limited costs, time, and supporting facilities. In addition, the effectiveness of an art program also depends on student interest and participation. Therefore, program innovations are needed that are able to accommodate the diversity of student talents so that the benefits of artistic coaching can be felt more widely.

Theoretically, this research contributes to the development of the concept of madrasah heads as educators by showing that the educational function has a strategic role in preventing bullying. So far, the study of educational leadership has highlighted more managerial and administrative aspects. This study shows that the function of educators has a direct impact on the formation of a safe and bullying-free school culture.

Practically, this study shows that bullying prevention can be done through a holistic

approach that integrates mental, moral, physical, and artistic coaching. These four aspects complement each other and form a sustainable character development system. This model can be a reference for madrasahs and other schools that face similar problems.

Overall, the results of the study show that the role of madrasah heads as educators has a significant contribution in preventing bullying behavior through multidimensional coaching that is oriented towards developing students' character. Although there are still various limitations, such as the lack of formal counseling services, limited facilities, and differences in student backgrounds, the approach applied has proven to be able to build a safer, harmonious, and conducive learning environment. These findings confirm that bullying prevention will be more effective if it is done through the formation of a positive school culture rather than simply relying on repressive and sanctioning approaches.

CONCLUSION

The results of the study show that the role of the head of the madrasah as an educator has a strategic contribution to the prevention of bullying behavior at MIS Darul Huda Bandar Lampung through a holistic coaching approach, including mental, moral, physical, and artistic coaching. These four forms of coaching not only function to shape the character of students, but also create a madrasah culture that supports the growth of

empathy, mutual respect, cooperation, discipline, and self-control as the main factors in bullying prevention. These findings show that bullying prevention efforts are more effective when carried out through strengthening school culture and character education in an ongoing manner rather than relying solely on repressive approaches or sanctions. The novelty of this research lies in the disclosure of the role of the head of the madrasah as an educator in integrating mental, moral, physical, and artistic coaching as a model for bullying prevention in the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah environment, which has been relatively rarely studied compared to the managerial and administrative aspects of leadership.

However, this research has limitations because it was only conducted in one madrasah with a limited number of informants so that the results of the study could not be generalized to all madrasah contexts. In addition, this research focuses more on the perspective of madrasah heads, teachers, and students without involving parents more deeply as an important part of shaping students' characters. Therefore, further research is recommended to involve more research sites, more diverse informants, and longitudinally examine the effectiveness of bullying prevention programs. Practically, madrasahs need to strengthen the bullying prevention system through the development of guidance and counseling services, increased collaboration with parents, and the development of anti-bullying policies that are integrated with character education programs. Thus, bullying prevention efforts can take place in a more systematic, sustainable manner, and have a wider impact on the creation of a safe, inclusive, and characterful educational environment.

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