Strengthening the Self-Confidence of Bullying Victims through Islamic Counseling Based on Psychological and Spiritual Values

Meiviana Nurul Khadijah Maulana[1*], Elis Rosmawati[2], Fatya Fatihatul Mumtaziah[3], Ike Aprilia Muslim[4], Dadan Suherdiana[5], Dewi Sa'diah[6]

[1,2,3,4,5,6] Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Gunung Djati, Bandung, Indonesia

ABSTRACT

This research was motivated by bullying cases that diminished students' self-confidence at the Al-Madani Islamic Boarding School. This study aims to describe the forms and impacts of bullying, the stages of Islamic counseling, and the changes in students' self-confidence after receiving interventions based on psychological and spiritual values. A qualitative case study design was employed through interviews, observations, and documentation. The findings show that verbal and social bullying lead to decreased motivation, heightened anxiety, and weakened spiritual self-esteem. The implementation of Islamic counseling through empathetic relationship building, problem exploration, self-reflection, and spiritual strengthening led to positive changes in students' self-confidence and sense of self-meaning. This study concludes that holistic Islamic counseling can bring positive changes in reconstructing the self-confidence of bullying victims. The contribution of this research lies in offering a contextual Islamic counseling model suited to the Islamic boarding school environment.

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini dilatarbelakangi oleh kasus bullying atau perundungan yang menurunkan self-confidence santri di Pesantren Al-Madani. Penelitian ini bertujuan mendeskripsikan bentuk dan dampak bullying, tahapan konseling Islami, serta perubahan self-confidence santri setelah memperoleh intervensi berbasis nilai psikologis dan spiritual. Metode yang digunakan adalah kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus melalui wawancara, observasi, dan dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa bullying verbal dan sosial berdampak pada penurunan motivasi, kecemasan, dan melemahnya harga diri spiritual santri. Pelaksanaan konseling Islami melalui tahapan hubungan empatik, eksplorasi masalah, muhasabah, dan penguatan spiritual mampu memberikan perubahan positif terhadap kepercayaan diri dan pemaknaan diri santri. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa konseling Islami holistik mampu memberikan perubahan positif dalam rekonstruksi self-confidence korban bullying. Kontribusi penelitian ini terletak pada model konseling Islami yang kontekstual untuk lingkungan pesantren

1. INTRODUCTION

In the bullying case at Al-Madani Islamic Boarding School, several students reported experiencing a decline in self-confidence as a result of being victims of bullying. The bullying that occurred did not always take the form of physical violence but more frequently manifested as verbal mockery and social exclusion, which made the students feel worthless. The victims became withdrawn, reluctant to interact with their peers, and showed excessive fear when asked to speak in public. They also began to disengage from boarding school activities, lost their enthusiasm for learning, and exhibited signs of decreased spiritual motivation. According to Lerner and Steinberg (2004), bullying is a form of aggression involving physical, psychological, or verbal violence, as well as intimidation that
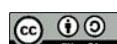
creates fear and distress in the victim. In line with this, Hulaibi and Umam (2025) define bullying as repeated aggressive behavior intended to harm others through verbal, physical, social, or digital actions.

Bullying experienced by students has a significant impact on their psychological development, such as feelings of inferiority, fear, and loss of self-confidence, which hinder their ability to adapt and develop their potential. The counselees showed symptoms of mild stress, including frequent crying, loss of appetite, and sleep difficulties. Spiritually, students who experienced bullying felt alienated from the religious environment of the pesantren and lost motivation to participate in congregational worship (Prayogi et al., 2025). Bullying victims were also continuously compared to peers who were perceived as more academically capable.

Self-confidence refers to an individual's belief in their abilities, self-worth, and capacity to face various life situations and challenges (Pahlevi et al., 2025). This concept reflects the extent to which a person believes they are capable of thinking, making decisions, acting effectively, and taking responsibility for their choices. Self-confidence is closely related to self-efficacy (the belief in one's ability to complete tasks) and self-esteem (the evaluation of self-worth). Individuals with strong self-confidence are generally able to express opinions assertively, are willing to try new things, can manage failure adaptively, and are not easily influenced by negative judgments from their environment (Pahlevi & Oktavia, 2024). Self-confidence plays an essential role in academic, social, and emotional development, including enhancing learning motivation, healthy decision-making, and the ability to interact positively with others (Moin et al., 2025). Therefore, the development of self-confidence is often a primary focus in guidance and counseling services, character education, and psychological interventions that strengthen personal potential.

Self-confidence is an attitude grounded in belief in one's abilities and potential, enabling individuals to act freely in accordance with their desires, take responsibility for their actions, and maintain low levels of anxiety. Hady (2024) explains that self-confidence is a person's belief in their strengths, which allows them to feel capable of achieving various life goals. Safitri and Prabawa (2024) emphasize that self-confidence is a crucial aspect of personality development that plays a significant role in successful social and academic adaptation, as individuals with strong self-confidence tend to cope with social pressure in a calm, positive manner.

This study is based on the need for cultural competence in mental health services. As Rassool (2015) emphasized in his research on cultural competence in counseling Muslim clients, therapeutic effectiveness largely depends on the counselor's ability to understand the client's worldview rooted in Islamic values. Rassool asserts that for Muslims, psychological well-being cannot be separated from spiritual well-being; therefore, counseling approaches that ignore the religious dimension often fail to build trust (rapport) and are less effective in addressing the core issues faced by clients (Rassool, 2015).

In the Islamic context, self-confidence is not merely a matter of personal ability. However, it is also closely related to spiritual values such as 'izzah an-nafs (self-dignity grounded in faith) and tawakkul (trust in Allah SWT). When these spiritual values weaken, individuals become more vulnerable and lose inner balance when facing social challenges such as bullying (Suyatno et al., 2024). Therefore, rebuilding self-confidence among students who are victims of bullying requires not only psychological approaches but also spiritual approaches that instill awareness of their value in the sight of Allah SWT.

Islamic counseling is an approach aimed at helping individuals explore and develop their potential through a deep understanding of Islamic teachings, with an emphasis on forming noble character and enhancing interpersonal skills to achieve well-being for oneself, society, the environment, and one's relationship with God (Pohan et al., 2024). Islamic counseling involves providing advice, direction, and guidance to individuals in need, grounded in Islamic teachings (Ikhlas et al., 2024).

The main problem addressed in this study is the low level of self-confidence among adolescents who are victims of bullying, accompanied by negative psychological impacts such as anxiety, fear, and feelings of worthlessness. If left unaddressed, this condition can hinder self-actualization and disrupt individuals' ability to establish healthy social interactions (Hadijah et al., 2023). The sharp increase in bullying cases (Pusiknas, 2025) necessitates special interventions that address not only cognitive-behavioral aspects but also spiritual strengthening. Islamic counseling, grounded in spiritual values such as tawakkul, ikhtiar, and sabr, integrated with psychological principles, is effective in healing trauma, enhancing self-worth, and rebuilding victims' self-confidence by fostering the values of ukhuwah and compassion (Mardhatillah & Darimis, 2025). This approach is necessary because conventional counseling often places insufficient emphasis on spiritual and religious aspects, which are crucial for achieving inner peace (sakinah) and fostering a positive self-concept as a noble creation of Allah.

Several studies indicate that Islamic counseling plays a significant role in addressing bullying because it not only provides guidance and advice but also fosters self-awareness that individuals are Muslims who will be accountable for their actions before God (Putra et al., 2023). Essentially, Islamic counseling aims to bring students and individuals closer to God, enabling them to experience inner peace and to clarify their thoughts, thereby understanding their true nature as humane beings (Jannah et al., 2025). From an Islamic counseling perspective, self-confidence is understood not merely as personal ability but as a reflection of spiritual values (Sutopo et al., 2022). In general, the goal of Islamic counseling is to help clients understand their position and gain the courage to make decisions that are considered good, right, and beneficial for them both in this world and the hereafter (Fikri, 2025). Additionally, Islamic counseling helps clients protect themselves from problems and, if problems have already occurred, assists them in overcoming these difficulties by developing their potential so they do not become a source of problems for others (Daulay, 2018).

Previous studies have emphasized mainly the general objectives of Islamic counseling and have not specifically examined how Islamic counseling that integrates psychological and spiritual values can be used as a strategy to strengthen the self-confidence of bullying victims. Therefore, there remains a need for more in-depth investigation into how Islamic counseling based on psychological and spiritual values can comprehensively help bullying victims rebuild their self-confidence, both mentally and spiritually.

This study has distinctive value in integrating psychosocial approaches with Islamic spiritual values, thereby not only emphasizing psychological self-confidence but also strengthening students' faith and spiritual motivation. The novelty of this research lies in the application of holistic Islamic counseling, designed explicitly for the pesantren environment, distinguishing it from previous studies that primarily focused on public schools. This study is important because it offers an alternative intervention strategy that can strengthen the self-confidence of students who are victims of bullying while simultaneously instilling values of monotheism (tauhid) and noble character.

The purpose of this study is to describe Islamic counseling in strengthening the self-confidence of students who are victims of bullying in pesantren. The research focuses on: (1) the forms and impacts of bullying on students' self-confidence; (2) the stages and dynamics of implementing Islamic counseling; and (3) the evaluation of changes in students' self-confidence after receiving Islamic counseling services that integrate psychological and spiritual approaches.

This study is expected to contribute both theoretically and practically to the field of Islamic guidance and counseling. Theoretically, it enhances understanding of Islamic counseling strategies that can be used to strengthen the self-confidence of bullying victims by integrating psychological approaches with spiritual values. The findings also enrich the literature on counseling practices in pesantren environments, which remain underexplored. Practically, this study can serve as a guide for guidance and counseling teachers, musyrif, and pesantren caregivers in designing and implementing holistic counseling interventions that help students strengthen their self-confidence and improve their psychological and spiritual well-being within the pesantren environment. Thus, this study is expected to serve as a reference for the development of relevant and contextually appropriate Islamic counseling programs.

2. METHOD

2.1 Research Design

This study employed a qualitative case study design. The case study was selected because the research focuses on developing a comprehensive understanding of strengthening the self-confidence of bullying victims through Islamic counseling based on psychological and spiritual values. This approach allows the researcher to explore experiences, processes, and counseling dynamics in context, as well as to examine changes in students' self-confidence holistically.

2.2 Location and Year of Research.

The study was conducted at Al-Madani Islamic Boarding School in Majalengka in 2025. This location was selected because there were identified cases of bullying that affected students' self-confidence, and the pesantren environment provides Islamic counseling services that can be observed and analyzed. The research subjects were students who had experienced bullying and had received Islamic counseling services at the pesantren. The subjects were selected using purposive sampling, namely, individuals with direct experience of the pheno-menon under investigation.

2.3 Data Collection

Data were collected using several instruments: (1) semi-structured interviews with students who were victims of bullying to explore their experiences and the Islamic counseling process they underwent; (2) participatory observation during counseling sessions and pesantren activities to examine interactions, responses, and the dynamics of students' self-confidence; and (3) documentation, including counseling notes, pesantren activity reports, and Islamic counseling materials used as references. The data collection process was conducted in stages, beginning with subject identification, followed by initial observation, in-depth interviews, and data triangulation using documentation and relevant informants.

2.4 Data Analysis

Data analysis in this study was conducted using a descriptive qualitative approach. After completing all interviews and observation processes, the researcher transcribed the recorded data verbatim to preserve the integrity of the meaning and context of statements made by students and counselors. The data were then analyzed by identifying and categorizing major themes related to Islamic counseling strategies, implementation stages, techniques used, and students' responses to the self-confidence strengthening process.

In addition, observational data were analyzed using prepared observation guidelines, focusing on nonverbal behavior, counselor–student interactions, applied spiritual practices, and group dynamics during counseling sessions. Documentation such as counseling notes, pesantren activity reports, and counseling materials was also used to complement and strengthen the analysis.

The analysis was conducted systematically and reflectively, following thematic analysis procedures (Braun & Clarke, 2006), enabling the identification of consistent patterns, themes, and meanings. The findings were then interpreted within the context of the pesantren environment and Islamic counseling principles to ensure theoretical and contextual relevance.

2.5 Research Procedures

The research procedures were carried out systematically to obtain comprehensive data on strengthening the self-confidence of students who were victims of bullying through Islamic counseling based on psychological and spiritual values. The initial stage involved preparation, including coordination with pesantren authorities to obtain permission for observations and interviews, as well as the development of research instruments such as semi-structured interview guidelines, observation sheets, and documentation formats appropriate to the pesantren context.

Subsequently, the researcher identified research subjects through purposive sampling, selecting students who had experienced bullying and had participated in Islamic counseling services to ensure data relevance to the research focus. Data collection was conducted through in-depth interviews to understand bullying experiences and counseling processes, participatory observation during counseling sessions and pesantren activities to record interactions, nonverbal behavior, and spiritual practices, and documentation in the form of counseling notes, activity reports, and Islamic counseling materials to support the data.

Data validity was ensured through source and technique triangulation, as well as confirmation with counselors and students to ensure that interpretations accurately reflected their experiences. The research findings were presented descriptively, emphasizing Islamic counseling strategies, the implementation stages, the techniques used, and students' responses to the self-confidence-strengthening process.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Results

a) Forms and Impacts of Bullying on Students' Self-Confidence

Based on the interview findings, bullying in the pesantren environment appeared in various forms, not only verbal and social bullying but also group exclusion, social isolation, and repeated negative labeling. Students who became victims of bullying were often used as objects of ridicule, received demeaning comments, and were excluded from group activities.

The impact of bullying was clearly reflected in a decline in students' self-confidence. Several students began to internalize the negative labels directed at them, doubted their own abilities, and experienced decreased motivation to learn. There was even a tendency among some students to deliberately lower their academic performance to

avoid becoming targets of mockery and peer jealousy. This condition led to a decline in academic achievement, for example, from previously consistently attaining first rank to second rank. In addition, students exhibited psychological symptoms such as social anxiety, feelings of insecurity, withdrawal from their social environment, and loss of self-confidence in both academic and social contexts.

Thus, when students begin to doubt their dignity and potential as a result of bullying through negative labeling, exclusion, or dehumanizing treatment, the harm extends beyond psychological injury to a spiritual identity crisis. This condition diminishes self-confidence not only in academic or social aspects but also in students' understanding of themselves as dignified human beings before Allah.

b) Stages and Dynamics of the Implementation of Islamic Counseling

The research findings indicate that Islamic counseling was implemented at Al-Madani Islamic Boarding School in several stages. The initial stage focused on establishing a safe, empathetic, and trusting counseling relationship. Counselors emphasized the principle of *mau'izhah hasanah* (kind and wise advice) and maintained confidentiality (*sirriyyah*), enabling students to feel comfortable expressing their problems.

The next stage involved problem exploration, during which counselors examined students' experiences related to the bullying they had endured, including emotional impacts such as sadness, psychological pressure, and the emergence of negative self-perceptions. Counselors employed techniques such as active listening, probing, and emotional reflection.

During the intervention stage, counselors guided students to engage in *muhasabah* (self-reflection), helped them realize that achievement is a trust (*amanah*) from Allah SWT, and encouraged them to replace negative thoughts with positive affirmations grounded in the values of sincerity (*ikhlas*), acceptance (*ridha*), and trust in Allah (*tawakkul*). Counselors also instilled the concept of *izzah*, emphasizing that personal dignity is not determined by human judgment but by obedience to Allah.

Spiritual reinforcement was provided through guidance on worship practices such as *dhikr*, supplication (*du'a*), and *the tadabbur* of Qur'anic verses. In addition, counselors coordinated with pesantren authorities to create a supportive environment for restoring students' self-confidence through *halaqah* activities, religious studies, and group discussions.

The final stage of counseling included evaluation and termination, involving assessment of changes in students' self-confidence, learning motivation, and social interactions, and was concluded with supplication and spiritual reinforcement.

c) Changes in Students' Self-Confidence After Receiving Islamic Counseling Services

The research results demonstrate positive changes in students' psychological, social, and spiritual development after participating in a series of Islamic counseling services. From a psychological perspective, students showed increased self-confidence, as reflected in their daily behavior following counseling. Students who had previously been reluctant to eat and socially withdrawn began to reestablish routines such as eating regularly, getting sufficient rest, and participating more enthusiastically in daily pesantren activities.

Students also began to view themselves more realistically and no longer based their self-worth on peer evaluations. In the social domain, students demonstrated improved adaptive abilities, as evidenced by more positive interactions with peers and renewed involvement in various group activities following counseling interventions and support programs within the pesantren. Through peer support, students gained safe spaces to learn conflict management, reduce social anxiety, and build trust in daily relationships. This process gradually helped students regulate their emotions in various social situations, enabling them to respond more adaptively and constructively to peer pressure.

From a spiritual perspective, students exhibited a stronger closeness to Allah SWT through improved quality of worship and *dhikr*. Awareness that human dignity originates from Allah, as stated in Qur'an Surah Al-Isra [17]:70, strengthened students' sense of self-worth and spiritual resilience.

وَلَقَدْ كَرَّمْنَا بَنِيْٓ اٰدَمَ وَحَمَلْنٰهُمْ فِى الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ وَرَزَقْنٰهُمْ مِّنَ الطَّيِّبٰتِ وَفَضَّلْنٰهُمْ عَلٰى كَثِيْرٍ مِّمَّنْ خَلَقْنَا تَفْضِيْلًا ۩

Meaning: We also bestow upon them sustenance from the good things, and We have made them superior to many of the creatures We have created with perfect excellence.

This verse serves as the foundation that reinforces students' self-confidence. This spiritual value guides students to understand that they have dignity and potential that others' behavior cannot belittle.

3.2. Discussion

a) Bullying and the Decline of Students' Self-Confidence

The findings of this study are consistent with those of Ismiati et al. (2025), who state that verbal bullying and repeated mockery are the most dominant forms of psychological violence and have a significant impact on the decline of students' self-confidence. Negative labeling and social exclusion experienced by students also support the findings of Marsela and Fitriyeni (2024), which indicate that such treatment leads to feelings of worthlessness, social withdrawal, and weakened self-confidence.

The internalization of stigma experienced by students indicates that bullying affects not only emotional aspects but also self-perception and academic motivation. This is in line with Asa (2023), who reported that bullying victims experience decreased self-efficacy, impaired social relationships, and negative academic self-perceptions as a result of repeated social pressure. Consequently, the academic achievement of bullying victims declined; students who previously consistently ranked first were found to drop to second rank. Similarly, Nugroho and Azizah (2024) found that prolonged bullying produces severe psychological impacts, including social anxiety, loss of a sense of safety, decreased learning motivation, and a tendency to withdraw from the social environment.

From the perspective of Islamic counseling, the weakening of students' self-confidence due to bullying cannot be explained solely from a psychological standpoint. However, it must also be understood through a spiritual lens. Victims of bullying experience a loss of connection with their sense of dignity and personal potential as creations of Allah, a condition that in the Sufi tradition is referred to as *ma'rifat an-nafs* (self-awareness). Studies on Imam Al-Ghazali's thought through the concept of *tazkiyatun nafs* emphasize that the process of spiritual purification and moral development strengthens awareness of spiritual self-worth, an aspect crucial to the formation of healthy self-confidence within an Islamic context (Nurzaman, 2024). Recent literature further confirms that bullying prevention and the strengthening of victims' self-confidence are more effective when integrated with Islamic value education, such as mutual respect, noble character, and reinforced spiritual awareness that every individual possesses equal rights and dignity before Allah (Putra et al., 2023).

b) Stages and Dynamics of the Implementation of Islamic Counseling

The stages of Islamic counseling implemented at Al-Madani Islamic Boarding School began with establishing a safe and empathetic counseling relationship. At this stage, counselors emphasized the principle of *mau'izhah hasanah*, as stated in Qur'an Surah An-Nahl [16]:125, to create a calming and reassuring atmosphere. Counselors also reinforced the principle of confidentiality (*sirriyyah*), ensuring that students felt secure in sharing their problems.

اُدْعُ اِلٰى سَبِيْلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحِكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجَادِلْهُمْ بِالَّتِيْ هِيَ اَحْسَنُۗ اِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ اَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ ضَلَّ عَنْ سَبِيْلِهٖ وَهُوَ اَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِيْنَ ۝

Meaning: "Call (people) to the path of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction, and debate with them in a better way. Indeed, your Lord is the most knowledgeable about who has strayed from His path, and He is also the most knowledgeable about who has received guidance."

The application of mau'izhah hasanah and the principle of sirriyyah in the early stages plays an important role in building a sense of security and trust among students, which is a key prerequisite for effective counseling, especially for victims of bullying who are vulnerable to stigma and fear of social judgment.

The problem exploration stage reflects the integration of modern counseling techniques and the Islamic spiritual approach. The use of active listening and reflection on feelings helps students recognize the negative emotions they are experiencing, while QS reinforcement reinforces this recognition. Ali Imran [3]:139 serves as a religious coping mechanism that fosters mental resilience. This verse provides a framework of meaning that suffering due to bullying is not a sign of weakness in faith, but rather a test that can strengthen the student's personality.

وَلَا تَهِنُوْا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوْا وَاَنْتُمُ الْاَعْلَوْنَ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُّؤْمِنِيْنَ ۝

Meaning: *"Do not weaken and do not grieve, for you will be superior if you are true believers."*

The phenomenon of high-achieving students becoming targets of bullying indicates the presence of social jealousy dynamics within the pesantren environment. Students' desire to deliberately lower their academic performance can be understood as a form of self-defense mechanism to avoid social pressure. In this context,

Islamic counseling plays a crucial role in helping students resolve internal conflicts between the need for social acceptance and the responsibility to develop their personal potential.

The process of *muhasabah* and the internalization of the values of *ikhlas* (sincerity), *ridha* (acceptance), and *tawakkul* (trust in Allah) function as efforts to reconstruct self-meaning. The concept of *izzah* strengthens the understanding that self-worth is not determined by human judgment but by one's relationship with Allah SWT. This approach fosters a more stable form of self-confidence that is not dependent on social validation. Strengthening worship practices through *dhikr*, supplication (*du'a*), and *the tadabbur* of the Qur'an serves as spiritual therapy, providing inner calm and nurturing optimism. Support from the pesantren environment through religious and social activities demonstrates that the recovery of students' self-confidence depends not only on individual change but also on a supportive and empathetic environment.

Overall, the dynamics of Islamic counseling in this study indicate that an approach integrating psychological, spiritual, and social aspects can serve as an effective recovery process for students who are victims of bullying. Islamic counseling not only helps students overcome the emotional impacts of bullying but also reaffirms their self-identity as dignified human beings before Allah SWT, as emphasized in Qur'an Surah Al-Isra [17]:70.

c) Changes in Students' Self-Confidence After Receiving Islamic Counseling Services

The positive changes experienced by students after participating in Islamic counseling are consistent with the findings of Yohandi et al. (2024), which show that pesantren-based counseling interventions are effective in improving mental health, increasing social engagement, and strengthening students' spiritual motivation. This alignment indicates that counseling approaches integrated with Islamic values make a significant contribution to the psychological recovery of students who are victims of bullying. Students who previously based their self-worth on peer evaluation began to demonstrate a more realistic self-view. This condition is similar to the findings of Madani et al. (2025), who reported that appropriate counseling and support can foster self-love and build healthy social support systems. Consequently, bullying victims can develop more stable self-confidence and self-esteem without relying on negative validation from their social environment.

In the social domain, improvements in students' adaptive abilities were reflected in more positive interactions with peers and renewed participation in various group activities within the pesantren. These findings reinforce those of Muslikah et al. (2025), who emphasized that community-based peer support approaches strengthen social networks and facilitate the restoration of interpersonal relationships among adolescents. Peer support provides a safe space for bullying victims to learn conflict management, reduce social anxiety, and rebuild trust in daily relationships.

From a spiritual perspective, improvements in the quality of worship and *dhikr* indicate that Islamic counseling influences not only psychological and social aspects but also students' closeness to Allah SWT. Awareness of human dignity, as described in Qur'an Surah Al-Isra [17]:70, serves as a fundamental foundation for strengthening students' self-confidence. This spiritual value helps students understand that they possess inherent honor and potential that cannot be diminished by others' behavior, leading to a deeper, more sustainable self-confidence.

The findings reveal that Islamic counseling plays an important role in strengthening the self-confidence of students who are victims of bullying. Whereas students previously exhibited low self-confidence and a desire to reduce academic achievement, after counseling, they were able to maintain learning motivation and demonstrate a more stable commitment to academic tasks. This confirms that Islamic counseling approaches that synergize psychological, social, and spiritual dimensions not only restore students' emotional well-being but also strengthen faith and *akhlaqul karimah* as the foundation of students' character development.

The findings of this study reveal a novel contribution to the field of Islamic counseling, specifically in strengthening the self-confidence of bullying victims. This research highlights the integration of psychological and spiritual dimensions within a structured Islamic counseling approach that combines empathetic relationship-building, *muhasabah* (self-reflection), reinforcement of Qur'anic values, and social mentoring. Unlike previous studies that primarily focused on either psychological or spiritual interventions, this study demonstrates the synergistic effect of addressing cognitive, emotional, social, and spiritual aspects simultaneously, providing a comprehensive model for empowering students who experience bullying within pesantren settings.

4. RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS

The findings of this study contribute to the theoretical development of Islamic Guidance and Counseling, particularly in the design of strategies to strengthen the self-confidence of bullying victims in Islamic boarding

school (pesantren) settings. This study enriches Islamic counseling theory by emphasizing a holistic approach that integrates cognitive, emotional, and spiritual dimensions in supporting students.

The results can serve as a reference for designing systematic, contextually appropriate Islamic counseling interventions for pesantren environments. Techniques such as *mau'izhah hasanah*, spiritual reinforcement, and emotional mentoring can be implemented to help students rebuild self-confidence and mitigate the long-term psychological effects of bullying.

This study encourages pesantren institutions to develop anti-bullying programs grounded in Islamic values, strengthen the role of dormitory supervisors, and create supportive environments for students. Additionally, training programs for counselors and *musyrif* can enhance the professionalism and effectiveness of Islamic counseling services.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The findings of this study indicate that bullying among students manifests in multiple forms, including verbal ridicule, negative labeling, social exclusion, and repeated social pressure. These experiences were shown to lower students' self-confidence significantly, undermine their motivation to learn, and negatively affect their emotional well-being. Such patterns of peer victimization highlight the urgent need for interventions that address not only the immediate psychological effects but also the broader social and spiritual dimensions of student development. By recognizing the complex interplay between emotional distress, social isolation, and spiritual disconnection, educators and counselors can design more targeted strategies to help students regain a sense of self-worth and resilience.

The stages of Islamic counseling implemented in this study proved effective in addressing these multidimensional challenges. The counseling process began with establishing empathetic relationships, which helped build trust and a safe space for students to share their experiences. This was followed by problem exploration, muhasabah (self-reflection), reinforcement of Qur'anic values, and social mentoring. Each stage was carefully structured to address psychological, social, and spiritual needs simultaneously, enabling students to process their experiences holistically. The integration of these stages enabled students to develop practical coping skills, strengthen their self-awareness, and cultivate both inner and social resilience.

Evaluation results demonstrated that Islamic counseling produced measurable improvements in multiple domains. Students exhibited increased self-confidence, improved social engagement with peers, more consistent motivation in learning activities, and a more profound sense of spiritual connectedness. These outcomes indicate that combining psychological, social, and spiritual interventions creates a synergistic effect that enhances overall well-being. Consequently, Islamic counseling is affirmed as a highly effective holistic strategy for supporting bullying victims, providing them with the tools to rebuild their confidence, navigate social interactions more positively, and maintain a sense of purpose and inner strength in the face of adversity.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

All authors actively participated in discussing the research findings, preparing the final manuscript, and contributing to every stage of the research process, including data collection, analysis, interpretation, and article writing. All authors have fulfilled their academic responsibilities to the best of their abilities.

DECLARATION OF COMPETING INTEREST

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this study.

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