

Islamic Values-Based Psychoeducation for Bullying Prevention: Strengthening Students' Mental Health and Moral Character at Pusat Asasi Darul Ulum (PADU), Kedah, Malaysia

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Abstract. Bullying among students is a persistent concern that can adversely affect adolescents' mental health, social relationships, and academic development, including in Islamic educational settings. In Malaysia, bullying among secondary school students takes various forms, including verbal, physical, psychological, and cyberbullying, with potential consequences such as anxiety, depression, and declining academic performance. As an Islamic pre-university institution, Pusat Asasi Darul Ulum (PADU) Kedah requires preventive approaches that address bullying while simultaneously strengthening students' moral character and psychological resilience. This community engagement program aimed to implement Islamic values-based psychoeducation to enhance students' understanding of bullying, develop practical prevention skills, and strengthen psychologically and spiritually grounded resilience. The program involved approximately 60 PADU students and employed an interactive approach combining peer education, Islamic values integration, theoretical sessions, group discussions, case-based activities, and interactive games. The results indicated that participants developed a broader understanding of bullying, including its verbal, physical, psychological, and cyber forms, and demonstrated greater awareness of its potential impact on mental health and strategies for prevention and reporting. Interactive discussions also provided a supportive space for participants to express their perspectives and experiences and fostered a collective commitment to preventing bullying. Overall, the program contributed to strengthening students' awareness, empathy, moral responsibility, and commitment to creating a respectful and psychologically safer learning environment. The program may be sustained through integration into character education, teacher training, and institutional anti-bullying initiatives.

Keywords: bullying prevention; Islamic values; psychoeducation; mental health; psychological resilience.

1. Introduction

Bullying among adolescents has become a persistent global concern because of its potential consequences for mental health, social development, and educational well-being. The problem is particularly relevant in school and pre-university settings, where

adolescents are navigating critical stages of identity formation and interpersonal development. In Malaysia, bullying has been documented in various forms, including verbal, physical, psychological, social, and cyberbullying, with evidence linking bullying victimization to adverse psychological outcomes such as depression, anxiety, and stress (Lee & Cornell, 2010; Ang et al., 2021). These concerns are also relevant to Islamic educational institutions, where the development of students is expected to encompass not only academic achievement but also psychological well-being, social responsibility, and moral character. As an Islamic pre-university institution, Pusat Asasi Darul Uloom (PADU) Kedah therefore has an important role in creating a learning environment that protects students from bullying while promoting respectful and ethical interpersonal relationships.

Bullying should not be understood solely as an act of physical aggression. It may also take the form of repeated verbal humiliation, social exclusion, psychological intimidation, or harmful interactions through digital media. Research on Malaysian adolescents has highlighted the relationship between traditional and cyberbullying victimization and psychological distress, including depression, anxiety, and stress (Ang et al., 2021). Such findings suggest that effective bullying prevention requires students to possess sufficient psychological literacy to recognize behaviors that may otherwise be normalized as jokes, teasing, or ordinary peer interactions. In this regard, early identification and prevention are particularly important during adolescence, a developmental period characterized by significant changes in identity, social relationships, and moral orientation (Erikson, 1968).

The consequences of bullying extend beyond individual incidents and may affect victims, perpetrators, bystanders, and the broader school climate. Victims may experience psychological distress, reduced academic engagement, and other adverse outcomes, while involvement in bullying has also been associated with problematic behavioral trajectories among perpetrators (Farrington & Ttofi, 2011; Kowalski et al., 2014; Olweus, 2013). From an Islamic educational perspective, bullying is also inconsistent with the ethical principles underlying *akhlaq al-karimah* (noble character). Qur'anic guidance in Surah Al-Hujurat (49:11-12), for example, emphasizes the prohibition of ridicule, insults, negative labeling, suspicion, and other forms of interpersonal harm. Thus, preventing bullying in an Islamic educational environment is not merely a matter of maintaining institutional discipline; it is also part of cultivating moral responsibility, mutual respect, empathy, and socially responsible behavior.

This issue is particularly important in the context of PADU Kedah. Preliminary observations conducted in the institution indicated that some students primarily associated bullying with physical violence and had limited understanding of verbal, psychological, social, and cyber forms of bullying. The initial observations also suggested that students were not yet fully familiar with systematic strategies for preventing or reporting bullying incidents. This situation indicates a gap between the existence of bullying-related risks and students' capacity to identify, respond to, and prevent such behaviors. Consequently, an intervention is needed that does not merely

provide information about bullying but also equips students with practical prevention skills and encourages them to become active participants in creating a safe and respectful learning environment.

Psychoeducation offers a promising preventive approach because it combines the dissemination of psychological knowledge with the development of practical skills, awareness, and adaptive attitudes. In the context of bullying prevention, psychoeducation can help students recognize different forms of bullying, understand their psychological and social consequences, identify appropriate responses, and seek assistance when necessary. Evidence from school-based prevention initiatives has demonstrated the value of interactive and whole-school approaches. For example, the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program emphasizes coordinated involvement among students, teachers, and parents, while the KiVa program incorporates peer-oriented strategies and interactive activities to address bullying and victimization (Olweus & Limber, 2010; Salmivalli et al., 2011). These approaches demonstrate that bullying prevention is more effective when students are not treated merely as recipients of information but as active participants in shaping peer norms and school culture.

Several anti-bullying initiatives have also emerged in Southeast Asian educational contexts. In Singapore, character education and social-emotional learning have been incorporated into efforts to address student behavior and peer relationships. In Indonesia, the Child-Friendly School (*Sekolah Ramah Anak*) initiative emphasizes the development of protective and supportive educational environments, while Malaysia has implemented anti-bullying initiatives that recognize the role of teachers and schools in prevention and response. These initiatives provide important foundations for bullying prevention; however, their approaches may not fully address the specific needs of Islamic pre-university education, particularly the integration of religious values into psychological education and character development.

The distinctive contribution of the present program lies in its attempt to integrate psychological literacy concerning bullying with Islamic moral values, peer education, and psychological resilience. Rather than treating religious values as an additional component of the intervention, the program positions Islamic teachings concerning respect, dignity, empathy, self-control, and responsibility toward others as a normative foundation for bullying prevention. This orientation is relevant because religious and spiritual resources may contribute to coping, meaning-making, and psychological adjustment, particularly among populations for whom religious commitment forms an important part of everyday life (Abu-Raiya & Pargament, 2015; Koenig, 2012). Integrating these values into psychoeducation may therefore help bridge psychological knowledge and students' moral and spiritual frameworks.

The program also adopts a peer education perspective. Adolescents' attitudes and behaviors are strongly influenced by peer relationships and group norms; therefore, effective bullying prevention requires attention not only to the victim and perpetrator but also to bystanders and the wider peer environment. Peer-oriented approaches can encourage students to reflect on their own roles in either reinforcing or challenging

harmful social norms (Parkin & McKeganey, 2000). Within an Islamic educational context, this approach can be connected with the development of *akhlaq al-karimah*, mutual care, empathy, and collective responsibility for maintaining a safe learning environment.

Against this background, the community engagement program at PADU Kedah was designed to address the identified gap through an interactive Islamic values-based bullying psychoeducation program. The intervention combined theoretical learning, group discussion, case-based activities, interactive games, peer interaction, and reflection on Islamic moral values. The program was intended not only to improve students' understanding of bullying but also to strengthen their awareness of its impact on mental health, develop practical prevention and reporting skills, and encourage psychologically and spiritually grounded resilience.

Accordingly, this community engagement program aimed to implement Islamic values-based psychoeducation for bullying prevention among students at PADU Kedah, Malaysia. More specifically, the program sought to (1) strengthen students' understanding of the forms and consequences of bullying, (2) develop students' awareness and practical skills for preventing and reporting bullying, and (3) foster moral responsibility, empathy, and psychological resilience through the integration of Islamic values into bullying prevention education. In the longer term, the program is expected to contribute to the development of a safer, more respectful, and more supportive learning environment within Islamic pre-university education.

2. Methodology

2.1. Setting and Target Participants

This community engagement program was conducted at Pusat Asasi Darul Ulum (PADU), Kedah, Malaysia, an Islamic pre-university educational institution that places emphasis on students' academic development, moral character, and Islamic values. PADU was selected as the setting for the program because of its relevance to the developmental needs of adolescents and its openness to educational initiatives aimed at strengthening students' character and psychosocial well-being.

The primary target group consisted of approximately 60 PADU students. Students were the main participants because they are directly involved in peer interactions in the educational environment and therefore play an important role in recognizing, preventing, and responding to bullying. Teachers also participated as facilitators and supporting actors during the program, particularly in encouraging students' engagement and supporting the sustainability of bullying-prevention efforts within the institution.

2.2. Program Duration and Design

The program was implemented as a one-day, interactive psychoeducational intervention lasting approximately 3–4 hours. The program was designed to strengthen

students' psychological literacy concerning bullying while integrating Islamic moral values as a foundation for prevention and positive peer relationships.

The intervention combined several complementary learning activities, including theoretical presentation, small-group discussion, case-based learning, interactive games, social simulations, Islamic values reflection, and collective evaluation. Rather than relying exclusively on one-way information delivery, the program encouraged participants to actively identify bullying situations, discuss possible responses, consider the perspectives of victims and bystanders, and reflect on the relevance of *akhlaq al-karimah* (noble character) to everyday peer interactions.

The psychoeducational content covered the concept and characteristics of bullying, different forms of bullying, its potential psychological and social consequences, and strategies for prevention and reporting. Developmental perspectives relevant to adolescence were also introduced to help participants understand the importance of identity formation, peer relationships, emotional development, and psychological well-being during this stage of life.

2.3. Program Implementation Stages

The program was implemented through three main stages: preparation, implementation, and evaluation.

2.3.1. Preparation Stage

The preparation stage began with an initial assessment of the educational context through preliminary observation and informal assessment activities. These activities were conducted to identify students' existing understanding of bullying, the forms of bullying that were most relevant to their context, and the areas in which additional psychoeducational support was needed.

The preliminary assessment indicated that some students primarily associated bullying with physical aggression and had limited awareness of other forms of bullying, including verbal, psychological, social, and cyberbullying. The assessment also indicated a need to strengthen students' understanding of appropriate prevention and reporting strategies. These findings informed the selection and organization of the psychoeducational materials.

2.3.2. Implementation Stage

The implementation stage consisted of an interactive psychoeducation session addressing four major components.

First, participants were introduced to the concept and forms of bullying, including verbal, physical, psychological, social, and cyberbullying. The discussion emphasized the distinction between harmful bullying behavior and ordinary peer interaction or joking.

Second, the facilitators discussed the psychological and social consequences of bullying, particularly its potential effects on victims, perpetrators, bystanders, and the broader learning environment. Participants were encouraged to consider bullying not

merely as an individual behavioral problem but also as a social phenomenon influenced by peer relationships and group norms.

Third, participants explored bullying prevention and reporting strategies. Through group discussion and case-based activities, students were invited to identify appropriate responses to bullying situations, consider when and how to seek assistance, and discuss the role of peers in preventing the normalization of harmful behavior.

Fourth, the program incorporated Islamic moral values and character reflection. Principles related to respect, dignity, empathy, self-control, mutual care, and responsibility toward others were connected to the prevention of bullying. Relevant Islamic teachings, particularly those concerning the prohibition of ridicule, insults, and harmful interpersonal behavior, were used as a basis for reflection on *akhlaq al-karimah*.

To reinforce these concepts, the program employed interactive games and simple social simulations. These activities were designed to encourage participants to recognize bullying situations from different perspectives, particularly those of victims, perpetrators, and bystanders, while developing empathy and constructive responses.

2.3.3. Evaluation Stage

The final stage involved collective reflection and open discussion. Participants were invited to reflect on what they had learned, identify forms of bullying that they had previously overlooked, and discuss appropriate strategies for prevention and reporting.

Evaluation was conducted using a descriptive-qualitative approach. The facilitators observed participants' engagement, responses, participation in discussions, and interaction patterns throughout the program. In addition, a simple reflection sheet was used to explore participants' understanding of bullying and their perceptions of appropriate prevention strategies.

Because the program was conducted as a one-day community engagement intervention and did not employ standardized pre-test and post-test instruments, the evaluation was intended primarily to document participants' responses, learning experiences, and emerging awareness rather than to statistically measure intervention effectiveness.

2.4. Approach

The program employed participatory and educational approaches. The participatory approach was used to position students as active contributors to the learning process rather than passive recipients of information. Students were encouraged to express their views, discuss cases, share perspectives, and reflect on situations related to bullying in their peer environment.

The educational approach focused on strengthening students' psychological literacy regarding bullying and mental health. Information was presented in an accessible manner and reinforced through discussion, case analysis, simulation, and reflection.

The program also incorporated principles of peer education, recognizing the importance of peer relationships in shaping adolescents' attitudes, behaviors, and social norms. Through peer interaction, students were encouraged to understand their potential roles as targets, perpetrators, bystanders, or supportive peers in bullying situations. This approach was intended to foster collective responsibility for creating a safer and more respectful educational environment.

2.5. Evaluation Framework

The evaluation focused on three main dimensions: knowledge and awareness, preventive skills, and social-moral reflection.

First, knowledge and awareness were assessed through participants' responses during discussions and reflections concerning the definition, characteristics, and forms of bullying.

Second, preventive skills were explored through participants' ability to identify appropriate responses to case scenarios and discuss strategies for preventing and reporting bullying.

Third, social-moral reflection was examined through participants' responses to discussions concerning empathy, respect, responsibility, and Islamic moral values in interpersonal relationships.

Data from observations, group discussions, participant responses, and reflection sheets were interpreted descriptively to identify patterns in participants' engagement and emerging understanding. The evaluation therefore served both as a means of assessing the immediate learning process and as a basis for identifying areas requiring further intervention.

2.6. Time and Place of Implementation

The community engagement program was conducted on 9 July 2025 at Pusat Asasi Darul Ulum (PADU), Kedah, Malaysia. The one-day activity was implemented over approximately 3–4 hours and involved students and teachers in a series of psychoeducational, participatory, and reflective activities.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Participants' Understanding of Bullying

The implementation of Islamic values-based bullying psychoeducation at Pusat Asasi Darul Ulum (PADU), Kedah, generated several notable outcomes in terms of students' understanding, awareness, participation, and reflection on bullying prevention. Because the program employed a descriptive-qualitative evaluation rather than standardized pre- and post-intervention measurements, the outcomes reported in this section are based on observations of participant engagement, responses during group discussions, case-based activities, and participants' reflections. Accordingly, the findings are interpreted as indications of emerging learning and awareness rather than as statistically verified changes in psychological or behavioral outcomes.

One of the most apparent outcomes was the broadening of participants' understanding of the concept and forms of bullying. During the initial assessment, some students tended to associate bullying primarily with physical aggression, while less visible forms, such as verbal humiliation, psychological intimidation, social exclusion, and cyberbullying, were not always readily recognized. Through psychoeducational presentations, case discussions, and interactive activities, participants were encouraged to examine bullying from multiple perspectives and to distinguish harmful behavior from ordinary joking or peer interaction.

This finding is consistent with the broader literature emphasizing the importance of students' ability to recognize both direct and indirect forms of bullying. Olweus (2013) and Salmivalli et al. (2011) highlight the importance of school-based educational and interactive approaches in strengthening students' awareness of bullying and the social dynamics surrounding it. Similarly, Kowalski et al. (2014) demonstrate the complexity of bullying in the digital environment, where harmful behavior may extend beyond the physical boundaries of the school. In this context, strengthening students' psychological literacy is an important first step in preventing the normalization of harmful peer behavior.

The discussions also encouraged students to reconsider behaviors that may initially be perceived as harmless jokes. This distinction is particularly important because normalization of teasing, ridicule, or social exclusion may make it difficult for students to recognize when interpersonal behavior has become harmful. Psychoeducation therefore functioned not merely as the delivery of definitions but as a process of critical reflection through which students were encouraged to examine the consequences of their own interactions with peers.

3.2. Islamic Values, Moral Awareness, and Character Formation

A distinctive feature of the program was the integration of Islamic values into bullying prevention education. The intervention framed bullying prevention not only as a psychological and educational issue but also as a matter of moral responsibility. Concepts such as respect for human dignity, empathy, self-control, mutual care, and responsibility toward others were discussed in relation to *akhlaq al-karimah* (noble character).

This integration is particularly relevant within an Islamic educational institution, where moral development forms an important dimension of the educational process. The prohibition of ridicule, insults, negative labeling, and harmful interpersonal behavior articulated in Surah Al-Hujurat (49:11-12) provides an ethical framework through which students can reflect on everyday peer interactions. By connecting these teachings with contemporary psychological concepts of bullying, the program attempted to bridge students' religious understanding with practical knowledge concerning mental health and social behavior.

The discussion of Islamic values also broadened the meaning of bullying prevention. Rather than presenting students merely with rules concerning what they should not do, the program encouraged them to consider the positive character traits required to build respectful relationships. This approach shifts prevention from a purely disciplinary model toward a character-oriented model in which students are encouraged to develop empathy, restraint, compassion, and responsibility toward their peers.

This orientation is compatible with literature suggesting that religious and spiritual resources can contribute to coping, meaning-making, and psychological adjustment, particularly among individuals for whom religious commitment is an important part of their identity and daily life (Abu-Raiya & Pargament, 2015; Koenig, 2012). Nevertheless, the present program should not be interpreted as demonstrating a causal effect of Islamic values on students' psychological outcomes. Rather, the findings suggest that integrating Islamic moral concepts into psychoeducation can provide a culturally and institutionally relevant framework for discussing bullying prevention.

3.3. Creating a Supportive Space for Discussion

Another important observation during the program was the increasing willingness of participants to express their views and discuss bullying-related experiences. The interactive format created a supportive space in which students could respond to questions, discuss cases, and reflect on their perceptions without being restricted to a one-way lecture format.

This dimension is important because bullying is often associated with silence, fear of social consequences, and uncertainty about whether an experience is sufficiently serious to report. A psychologically supportive discussion environment can therefore help students articulate concerns that might otherwise remain unspoken. Within the program, participants were encouraged to consider bullying from the perspectives of victims, perpetrators, and bystanders, thereby expanding the discussion beyond individual blame toward empathy and shared responsibility.

The relevance of this approach is reinforced by evidence that bullying is associated with adverse mental health outcomes among adolescents, including anxiety, depression, and stress (Ang et al., 2021). Preventive activities that provide students with opportunities to discuss these issues may therefore contribute to mental health promotion by increasing awareness and reducing misconceptions surrounding bullying. However, because the present activity did not employ a standardized measure of anxiety or psychological distress, the observed increase in students' willingness to participate should be interpreted as an indicator of engagement and openness rather than as evidence of a measurable reduction in anxiety.

The finding nevertheless highlights an important function of psychoeducation in community engagement settings: it can serve simultaneously as an educational process and as a structured space for dialogue. In this sense, the value of the program lies not

only in what students learned but also in the opportunity to discuss experiences and concerns within a supportive social environment.

3.4. Participatory Learning and Peer Education

The participatory design of the program appeared to support active student engagement. Rather than relying exclusively on theoretical presentations, the facilitators combined explanations with group discussions, case-based learning, interactive games, and simple social simulations. These activities allowed students to apply concepts to situations that could potentially occur in their everyday peer environment.

The use of peer-oriented learning was particularly relevant because adolescents' attitudes and behaviors are influenced substantially by peer relationships and group norms. Through discussion and interaction, students were encouraged to recognize that their responses as peers can either reinforce or challenge bullying behavior. This perspective is consistent with peer education approaches, which emphasize the role of social interaction and peer influence in shaping adolescent attitudes and behaviors (Parkin & McKeganey, 2000).

The activities also helped shift the focus of bullying prevention from a simple victim-perpetrator relationship toward a broader understanding of the social environment. Students were encouraged to consider the role of bystanders, supportive peers, teachers, and the institution in preventing harmful behavior. Such a perspective is important because bullying may be sustained not only by the actions of perpetrators but also by peer norms, passive responses, or institutional practices that inadvertently allow harmful behavior to become normalized.

The participatory approach therefore served two functions. First, it facilitated learning by allowing students to discuss and apply concepts actively. Second, it provided an opportunity to develop a sense of collective responsibility for maintaining respectful peer relationships. The latter is particularly relevant to Islamic character education because *akhlaq al-karimah* is expressed not only through individual self-discipline but also through ethical relationships with others.

3.5. Psychological Resilience and Healthy Coping

The program also introduced the concept of psychological resilience as part of bullying prevention. Resilience refers broadly to the capacity to adapt positively when facing adversity, stress, and challenging experiences (Masten, 2014). In the context of bullying, resilience is relevant not only to students who experience victimization but also to bystanders and peers who may encounter interpersonal conflict or social pressure.

During the activities, participants were encouraged to identify emotions, express feelings appropriately, and consider constructive coping strategies when confronted with difficult social situations. Case discussions and simulations provided opportunities for participants to explore possible responses rather than reacting impulsively or normalizing harmful behavior.

The integration of resilience with Islamic values was intended to provide students with both psychological and spiritual resources for responding to adversity. Religious values can potentially provide meaning, moral orientation, and sources of support when individuals encounter stressful circumstances (Abu-Raiya & Pargament, 2015). In the present program, these values were connected with practical skills such as seeking help, communicating concerns, supporting peers, and avoiding retaliatory behavior.

Nevertheless, the observed activities should be understood as an initial contribution to resilience development rather than evidence that students' resilience had been empirically increased. A one-day intervention cannot establish sustained changes in psychological resilience. Longitudinal assessment using validated resilience measures would be necessary to determine whether the program produces durable changes in this domain.

3.6. From Individual Awareness to Collective Responsibility

An important conceptual outcome of the program was the development of a broader understanding of bullying as a social and institutional issue. Discussions concerning the roles of peers, teachers, and the educational institution encouraged participants to recognize that bullying cannot be addressed solely by focusing on individual victims or perpetrators.

This perspective is consistent with the social-ecological approach to bullying prevention, which emphasizes the interaction between individual characteristics, peer relationships, school environments, and broader social contexts (Swearer & Espelage, 2011). From this perspective, creating a safe learning environment requires coordinated participation from multiple actors.

The program therefore encouraged students to view themselves as potential contributors to prevention. Students can challenge harmful peer norms, support peers who experience bullying, communicate concerns to trusted adults, and avoid behaviors that reinforce humiliation or exclusion. Teachers, meanwhile, can function as important gatekeepers by recognizing early warning signs and ensuring that students have accessible mechanisms for seeking assistance.

This collective orientation is particularly important for Islamic educational institutions. The concept of *akhlaq al-karimah* can provide a shared moral language through which students, teachers, and institutional leaders understand their responsibility to protect dignity and promote respectful relationships. Thus, bullying prevention can become part of a broader effort to strengthen the ethical and psychosocial climate of the educational institution.

3.7. The Distinctive Contribution of the Program

The primary contribution of this community engagement initiative lies in the contextual integration of bullying psychoeducation with Islamic moral values, peer

education, and psychological resilience. Existing school-based anti-bullying programs, including the Olweus and KiVa approaches, have demonstrated the importance of structured prevention, peer involvement, and broader school participation (Olweus & Limber, 2010; Salmivalli et al., 2011). The present program builds upon these general principles while adapting them to the cultural and religious context of an Islamic pre-university institution.

The integration of Islamic values provides an additional interpretive framework for understanding why bullying should be rejected. Students are not only taught that bullying can produce negative psychological consequences; they are also encouraged to understand that ridicule, humiliation, hostility, and harm toward others are inconsistent with the moral principles they are expected to embody. This integration may increase the contextual relevance of psychoeducation for students whose educational environment is explicitly grounded in Islamic values.

The program consequently illustrates the potential of community engagement to connect psychological knowledge with culturally meaningful systems of values. Its contribution should not be framed as establishing a new anti-bullying model superior to existing evidence-based programs. Rather, its value lies in contextual adaptation: translating established principles of bullying prevention into an Islamic educational setting through moral reflection, peer interaction, and participatory learning.

3.8. Program Limitations and Sustainability

Despite the positive observations generated during the activity, several limitations need to be acknowledged. First, the program was conducted as a one-day intervention lasting approximately 3–4 hours. Such a limited duration restricts opportunities for repeated practice, follow-up, and reinforcement of newly acquired knowledge and skills. Second, the evaluation relied on observation, discussion, participant responses, and simple reflection sheets rather than standardized pre- and post-intervention instruments. Consequently, the program cannot provide statistical evidence of changes in knowledge, attitudes, psychological resilience, or mental health.

Third, the number of participants is currently reported as approximately 40–60 students, which should ideally be replaced by the exact number of participants in the final manuscript. Fourth, the program did not include longitudinal follow-up, making it impossible to determine whether the observed awareness and commitment were sustained after the intervention.

These limitations do not diminish the practical value of the activity, but they indicate important directions for future program development. Subsequent implementation should incorporate standardized pre- and post-intervention measures of bullying knowledge, attitudes, bystander behavior, psychological resilience, or related outcomes. Follow-up assessments could also be conducted several weeks or months after the intervention to examine whether learning is translated into sustained behavioral and institutional changes.

For sustainability, future programs should extend beyond a single psychoeducational session. Teacher training can be developed to strengthen teachers' capacity as bullying-prevention gatekeepers, while an Islamic values-based psychoeducation module can be developed and standardized for repeated use. The program could also be integrated into character education, student orientation, counseling services, and institutional anti-bullying policies. Such an approach would shift the intervention from a one-time awareness activity toward a more sustainable institutional prevention strategy.

Overall, the experience at PADU Kedah suggests that bullying psychoeducation can provide a meaningful platform for strengthening students' awareness, encouraging constructive peer interaction, and connecting mental health promotion with Islamic character education. Its longer-term contribution, however, will depend on systematic follow-up, institutional support, teacher involvement, and evidence-based evaluation of sustained outcomes.

4. Conclusion

The Islamic values-based bullying psychoeducation program at Pusat Asasi Darul Ulum (PADU), Kedah, provided a meaningful preventive intervention to strengthen students' understanding and awareness of bullying and its potential consequences. The program broadened participants' recognition of bullying beyond physical aggression to include verbal, psychological, social, and cyber forms, while enhancing their awareness of appropriate prevention, response, and reporting strategies. Through interactive discussions, case-based activities, educational games, and reflective learning, participants were encouraged to examine bullying from the perspectives of victims, perpetrators, and bystanders and to recognize their shared responsibility in creating a safe and respectful learning environment.

The integration of Islamic values constituted an important contextual contribution of the program. Principles of *akhlaq al-karimah*, respect for human dignity, empathy, self-control, mutual care, and responsibility toward others provided a culturally and religiously relevant framework for understanding bullying prevention. The participatory and peer-oriented approach also created opportunities for students to express their perspectives and engage in constructive dialogue about peer relationships and psychological well-being. However, the findings should be interpreted cautiously because the program was implemented as a one-day intervention and evaluated through observations, discussions, participant responses, and reflection rather than standardized pre- and post-intervention measures. Thus, the results indicate emerging awareness and learning rather than statistically verified or sustained changes in students' psychological or behavioral outcomes.

Future implementation should strengthen the program through systematic and sustainable follow-up. Standardized pre- and post-intervention instruments are recommended to assess changes in bullying knowledge, attitudes, bystander responses,

and psychological resilience. Periodic refresher sessions and the development of a standardized Islamic values-based bullying psychoeducation module could support continuity and replication. Teacher and staff training should also be incorporated to strengthen their roles as gatekeepers for early identification, prevention, response, and referral, complemented by collaboration with psychologists and counselors when necessary. Overall, the PADU experience demonstrates the potential of integrating bullying psychoeducation, mental health promotion, peer responsibility, and Islamic character education within Islamic pre-university education.

Acknowledgments

The successful implementation of this community engagement program was made possible through the support and contribution of various parties. The authors gratefully acknowledge Kolej Islam Darul Ulum (KIDU) for its trust, support, and provision of adequate facilities for the program. We also express our sincere appreciation to the leadership and entire academic community of Pusat Asasi Darul Ulum (PADU), Kedah, for their warm reception, effective coordination, and support throughout the implementation of the activities. Our gratitude is extended to all PADU students for their enthusiastic and active participation, as well as to the teachers and staff who facilitated the program with dedication. The authors also acknowledge Universitas Islam Negeri Mahmud Yunus Batusangkar for its institutional support in facilitating this program as part of the university's Tri Dharma Perguruan Tinggi. May this collaboration continue to develop and contribute to strengthening the character, well-being, and mental health of young people.

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