

## THE ROLE OF HOMEROOM TEACHERS IN OVERCOMING BULLYING BEHAVIOR AMONG FOURTH GRADE STUDENTS AT MIN 26 ACEH UTARA

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### Abstract

*This study aims to determine the role of homeroom teachers in overcoming bullying behavior among fourth-grade students at MIN 26 Aceh Utara. This research used a qualitative approach with a descriptive method. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation. The participants consisted of homeroom teachers, the school principal, and fourth-grade students. The results showed that homeroom teachers played an important role in overcoming bullying behavior through giving advice, supervision, character building, and personal approaches to students. The strategies applied included rotating students' seating positions every week, providing special guidance for students involved in bullying, and instilling values of empathy and mutual respect through daily habituation activities at school. The forms of bullying found in this study included verbal bullying such as mocking parents' names, physical appearance, and giving inappropriate nicknames, as well as physical bullying such as pushing, stepping on friends' feet, and hitting during playtime. The challenges faced by teachers included repeated bullying behavior, students' lack of awareness regarding the negative impacts of bullying, and limited teacher supervision during break times and outside learning hours. This study shows that cooperation between teachers, parents, and the school is very important in preventing and overcoming bullying behavior in schools.*

**Keywords:** *Homeroom Teacher; Bullying, Teacher's Role; Character Education, Islamic Elementary School*

### 1. Introduction

In the context of modern elementary education, bullying has become one of the most serious social and psychological problems that requires proper attention from all parties involved in the educational environment. Bullying is defined as aggressive behavior carried out repeatedly by an individual or group toward someone who is considered weaker or unable to defend themselves, with the intention of causing fear, suffering, or physical and psychological harm (Olweus, 1993). According to a report published by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), Indonesia ranks fifth among countries with the highest level of bullying cases, reaching 41.1% out of 78 countries surveyed in the international study (OECD, 2019). These data indicate that bullying is not only an isolated incident among students, but has become a serious educational problem that requires continuous prevention and structured intervention from schools, teachers, parents, and the wider community.

Bullying does not only occur in the form of physical violence, but also includes verbal bullying such as insulting, mocking, and giving humiliating nicknames to other students. In addition, bullying can also appear in social forms, such as excluding friends from peer groups

and creating unhealthy social relationships among students. Zhao et al. (2023) explained that students who become victims of bullying have a higher risk of experiencing depression, sleep disorders, and symptoms of psychological stress compared to students who are not involved in bullying. Bullying can also have negative effects on students' psychological conditions, such as fear, low self-confidence, discomfort in the school environment, and decreased motivation to learn.

At the elementary education level, especially in Islamic elementary schools (*madrasah ibtidaiyah*), bullying becomes a more complex issue because it is closely related to the process of character building and the development of Islamic values among students. As Islamic educational institutions, *madrasahs* are expected to become places that teach positive values such as compassion (*rahmah*), mutual respect (*ihtiram*), and helping each other (*ta'awun*), as reflected in the Qur'an and the teachings of Prophet Muhammad SAW. However, in practice, bullying behavior is still found among students in the *madrasah* environment, including at MIN 26 Aceh Utara. This condition shows that there is still a gap between the moral values taught in school and students' daily behavior in social interactions.

Homeroom teachers have an important role because they interact directly with students in daily classroom activities, allowing them to better understand students' social and emotional conditions. According to Mulyasa (2013), homeroom teachers are responsible for creating a safe, comfortable, and conducive learning environment that supports students' development in cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects. In dealing with bullying, homeroom teachers have a strategic role in identifying bullying behavior early, providing preventive actions, and handling bullying cases through educational and guidance-based approaches.

This study aims to gain a deeper understanding of how homeroom teachers carry out their roles in creating a learning environment that is free from bullying and supports the development of Islamic character among students at MIN 26 Aceh Utara. This research is important because it provides information about the role, strategies, and challenges faced by homeroom teachers in handling bullying behavior and creating a safe, comfortable, and positive learning environment for students.

## **2. Research Method**

This study used a qualitative approach with a descriptive research design. A qualitative approach was chosen because this study aims to gain a deeper understanding of the role of homeroom teachers in overcoming bullying behavior among fourth grade students at MIN 26 Aceh Utara. Through this approach, the researcher was able to obtain information directly based on the real conditions found in the school environment.

The research was conducted at MIN 26 Aceh Utara with a focus on bullying behavior among fourth grade students and the role of homeroom teachers in handling such behavior. The research location was chosen because verbal and physical bullying were still found in students' daily interactions, so efforts from homeroom teachers were needed to provide guidance and handle bullying cases at school.

The subjects of this study consisted of the fourth grade homeroom teacher as the main informant, the school principal as a supporting informant, and several fourth grade students who were involved in bullying interactions, either as victims, perpetrators, or witnesses. The informants were selected using purposive sampling because they were considered to have knowledge and understanding related to the problems studied in this research.

Data collection techniques in this study included observation, interviews, and documentation. Observation was conducted to directly observe the school environment, students' interactions, and the forms of bullying behavior that occurred both inside and outside the classroom. Interviews were conducted with the homeroom teacher, the school principal, and students to obtain information about the forms of bullying, the handling process, the strategies used by teachers, and the challenges faced in overcoming bullying behavior. Documentation was used to support the research data, including photographs of activities, school records, and other documents related to the study.

The main instrument in this study was the researcher, supported by observation guidelines, interview guidelines, and documentation. The interview guidelines were used to make the data collection process more focused and in accordance with the research objectives.

The data analysis technique in this study used the Miles and Huberman model, which consists of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction was carried out by selecting and focusing on data related to the research topic. Furthermore, the data were presented in descriptive narrative form to make them easier to understand, and conclusions were drawn based on the findings obtained from the field research.

To ensure the validity of the data, the researcher applied source triangulation and technique triangulation. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing interview data obtained from the homeroom teacher, the school principal, and students. Meanwhile, technique triangulation was carried out by comparing the results of observations, interviews, and documentation so that the data obtained were more valid and trustworthy.

### **3. Results and Discussion**

#### **The Role of Homeroom Teachers in Overcoming Bullying Behavior**

Based on the results of the research conducted at MIN 26 Aceh Utara, homeroom teachers have an important role in overcoming bullying behavior among fourth grade students. Teachers are not only responsible for delivering learning materials, but also act as mentors, supervisors, and character builders for students at school. In practice, homeroom teachers strive to create a safe and comfortable learning environment so that students can study without fear or pressure from their peers. The interview results showed that homeroom teachers provided advice and guidance to students involved in bullying behavior. Teachers also tried to build close relationships with students so that they would feel comfortable sharing problems experienced at school. In addition, teachers taught students the importance of respecting others, appreciating friends, and maintaining good relationships in daily life at the madrasah environment. Homeroom teachers also supervised students' interactions during the learning process and while students were in the school environment. This supervision was carried out to reduce bullying behavior among students. Teachers paid attention to students who often mocked, disturbed, or hurt their classmates through words or actions.

The results of this study are in line with the opinion of Mulyasa, who states that homeroom teachers have the responsibility to create a safe, comfortable, and conducive learning environment for students. This study shows that homeroom teachers not only act as educators, but also play a role as social mentors in helping students overcome bullying behavior at school.

#### **Steps Taken by Homeroom Teachers in Handling Bullying**

Based on the research findings, homeroom teachers carried out several steps in handling bullying behavior among fourth grade students at MIN 26 Aceh Utara. The first step taken by teachers when bullying occurred was calling the students involved to provide advice and direct warnings. Teachers tried to solve the problem in a good manner so that students could realize the mistakes they had made. In addition to giving advice, teachers also approached bullying victims so that students felt cared for and supported by the teachers. In several cases, teachers brought together the perpetrators and victims to resolve conflicts and prevent ongoing disputes in the classroom environment. If bullying behavior continued to occur, homeroom teachers worked together with students' parents to provide guidance and supervision. Parents were invited to the school to discuss the students' behavior and find solutions together so that the bullying behavior would not happen again. In addition, if the problem could not be resolved by the homeroom teacher, the case would be referred to the vice principal of student affairs and the school principal for further handling. The research findings also showed that the school had

special rules related to bullying behavior. Students who violated these rules were given guidance and sanctions in accordance with school regulations. These actions were taken to help students develop responsibility for their behavior and understand the negative impact of bullying on others.

The findings of this study are in line with the opinion of Novan Ardy Wiyani, who states that bullying prevention and handling should be carried out through guidance, supervision, and cooperation between schools and parents so that bullying behavior can be prevented continuously.

### **Strategies of Homeroom Teachers in Overcoming Bullying**

Based on the research findings, homeroom teachers applied several strategies to overcome bullying behavior among fourth grade students. The strategies focused more on character building and preventive approaches so that bullying behavior could be prevented from an early stage. One of the strategies implemented by the teachers was changing students' seating positions every week. This strategy aimed to encourage students to interact with all classmates and not only with certain friendship groups. Through seat rotation, students were expected to build better social relationships and reduce behaviors such as mocking or excluding friends. In addition, teachers also provided special supervision for students who had previously been involved in bullying behavior. These students were asked to sit near the teacher for several days so that their behavior could be monitored directly. Teachers also provided gradual guidance to help students understand the negative effects of bullying behavior on their classmates. In an effort to build students' character, the madrasah carried out religious habituation activities before the learning process began, such as reciting Asmaul Husna, shalawat, and Friday religious lectures (kultum). These activities aimed to instill Islamic values such as mutual respect, helping one another, and respecting fellow students. In addition, the school also collaborated with the Polsek Syamtalira Bayu to provide education about bullying to students. This program was implemented through guidance and counseling activities during flag ceremonies and other school activities. In addition, the school also collaborated with the Polsek Syamtalira Bayu to provide education about bullying to students. This program was carried out through guidance and counseling activities during flag ceremonies and other school activities.

The results of this study indicate that the strategies used by homeroom teachers were not only focused on giving punishment, but also on character building and educational approaches. These findings are in line with the opinion of Thomas Lickona, who states that character education has an important role in shaping positive student behavior in the school environment.

### **Challenges Faced by Homeroom Teachers in Overcoming Bullying**

Based on the research findings, homeroom teachers faced several challenges in overcoming bullying behavior among fourth grade students at MIN 26 Aceh Utara. One of the challenges frequently faced was that bullying behavior often repeated even though students had been given advice and guidance. Some students still considered mocking their friends as a normal joke and did not fully understand the negative impact on bullying victims. This condition caused teachers to continuously provide understanding and repeated guidance to students. In addition, bullying behavior more often occurred during break time or outside teacher supervision. This situation made it difficult for teachers to monitor all students optimally within the school environment. Another challenge was that cooperation with some students' parents had not run optimally. Some parents were unable to attend school meetings because of work responsibilities. In fact, cooperation between teachers and parents is very important in guiding students so that bullying behavior does not happen repeatedly.

However, homeroom teachers continued to provide guidance and supervision to students in order to create a safe and comfortable learning environment for all students.

### **Forms of Bullying Behavior Among Students**

Based on the research findings, the bullying behavior found among fourth grade students at MIN 26 Aceh Utara consisted of verbal bullying and physical bullying. Verbal bullying was the most common form of bullying found in the school environment. The forms of verbal bullying included mocking parents' names, insulting skin color, giving inappropriate nicknames, and using words that could hurt other students' feelings. Some students considered these actions as jokes, but such behavior caused victims to feel embarrassed, lose self-confidence, and withdraw from their social environment.

Besides verbal bullying, physical bullying was also found, such as stepping on friends' feet, pushing, disturbing friends during study or play activities, and hitting while joking with classmates. These behaviors occurred more frequently during break time or outside classroom hours when teacher supervision was limited.

The findings of this study are in line with the opinion of Dan Olweus, who states that bullying can take the form of verbal, physical, or social behavior carried out repeatedly toward individuals who are considered weaker. In this study, verbal bullying was found to be the most dominant form of bullying among fourth grade students.

## **4. Conclusion**

Based on the results of the research conducted at MIN 26 Aceh Utara, it can be concluded that homeroom teachers play an important role in overcoming bullying behavior among fourth-grade students. Teachers not only act as educators, but also serve as mentors, supervisors, and character builders through providing advice, supervision, personal approaches, and instilling values of mutual respect and appreciation among students. In dealing with bullying behavior, homeroom teachers implement various steps and strategies, such as giving warnings, providing guidance, cooperating with parents, rearranging students' seating positions, and giving special supervision to students involved in bullying. Although there are still several challenges, such as students' lack of awareness about the negative impacts of bullying and limited supervision outside the classroom, teachers continue to strive to create a safe, comfortable, and conducive learning environment for all students. The subjects of this research consisted of the fourth-grade homeroom teacher as the main informant, the head of the madrasah as the supporting informant, and several fourth-grade students involved in bullying interactions, either as victims, perpetrators, or witnesses. The informants were selected using purposive sampling based on the consideration that they understood and were directly related to the problems being studied.

The main instrument in this research was the researcher herself, supported by observation guidelines, interview guidelines, and documentation. The interview guidelines were used to ensure that the data collection process remained focused and aligned with the predetermined research objectives. The data analysis technique in this research used the Miles and Huberman model, which consists of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction was carried out by selecting and focusing on data related to the research topic. Furthermore, the data were presented in the form of descriptive narratives to make them easier to understand, and conclusions were drawn based on the findings obtained from the field. To ensure the validity of the data, the researcher applied source triangulation and technique triangulation. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing interview data obtained from the homeroom teacher, the head of the madrasah, and students. Meanwhile, technique triangulation was carried out by comparing the results of observations, interviews, and documentation so that the data obtained were more valid and trustworthy.

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