



APPROACH HIFZ AL-'IRDH AND PUBLIC POLICY IN HANDLING BULLYING IN SCHOOLS

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Abstract:

This article discusses bullying in school as a serious problem that negatively impacts students' mental and social well-being. One relevant perspective in dealing with bullying is the hifz al-'irdh approach, one of the main objectives of maqashid sharia that focuses on protecting the honor and dignity of individuals and offers a way to overcome bullying by instilling moral and ethical values among students. On the other hand, public policy provides the regulatory framework needed to prevent and deal with bullying systematically. This article uses a qualitative approach with policy and normative-theological analysis with hifz al-'irdh and public policy as theories to be integrated into bullying in schools. The results of this study discuss the synergy between the hifz al-'irdh approach and public policy in dealing with bullying in schools which highlights the importance of the involvement of all parties, including teachers, parents, and the community in efforts to prevent bullying as a form of effective cooperation instilling supportive moral values. This integrated approach aims to establish a supportive, respectful school environment that not only curbs bullying but also fosters students' overall character growth and well-being.

Keywords: *Hifz al-'Irdh; Public Policy; Bullying; Education*

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INTRODUCTION

Bullying is a complex problem that has garnered serious attention in various educational institutions. It is a global phenomenon that significantly affects each student's psychological and academic development. Bullying not only negatively impacts victims but also creates an unsafe environment for the entire school community (Karisma et al., 2024). The normalization of certain forms of bullying can lead victims to experience trauma, mental disorders, and academic decline.

Cases of bullying occur at all educational levels. According to data from the Indonesian Teachers' Federation (FSGI) gathered from Republika, there were 16 bullying incidents recorded in schools from January to August 2023. These incidents included 25% in primary and junior high schools, 18.75% in senior high schools and vocational schools, and 6.25% in Islamic junior high schools and Islamic boarding

schools. Research shows that an average of 35% of students aged 12-18 are directly involved in bullying, while 15% are involved in cyberbullying (Selian & Restya, 2024). In response to these cases, a comprehensive and sustainable approach is needed to provide a strong moral foundation to address this issue.

In Islamic thought, *maqashid sharia* includes *al-dharuriyat al-khamsah* (the five essential protections), which some scholars propose expanding to include protection of dignity (*hifz al-'irdh*) (Hakim & Maswanto, n.d.) in addition to protection of religion (*hifz al-din*), protection of life (*hifz al-nafs*), protection of intellect (*hifz al-'aql*), protection of lineage (*hifz al-nasl*), and protection of wealth (*hifz al-mal*) (Syarifah Reny Anggraini et al., 2024). Among these, *hifz al-'irdh* is directly relevant to bullying, as it stresses the importance of protecting individual dignity and honor.

On the other perspective, public policy plays a crucial role in creating regulations and guidelines to prevent bullying. Public policies may include anti-bullying regulations, educational programs, and training for teachers and school staff. Public policies related to these regulations are implemented by the government and educational institutions so that they can be integrated as a whole to create a safe and supportive environment for every student, and to ensure the protection of their dignity and honor (Viona Erlanda & Anggraeny Puspaningtyas, 2023).

Integrating the *hifz al-'irdh* approach with public policy creates synergy in overcoming bullying in schools. The *hifz al-'irdh* approach not only emphasizes moral and ethical values but also guides the community in collectively addressing this issue. On the other perspective, public policy provides a formal framework that helps in implementing programs that support the achievement of these goals in every educational institution.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research utilizes two primary theories as the basis for addressing bullying, the *hifz al-'irdh* concept within *maqashid sharia* and public policy theory. *Hifz al-'irdh* is an approach emphasizing the protection of individual dignity and positive character development in social contexts (Hamdi & Musthofa, n.d.). On the other perspective, public policy theory provides a legal and regulatory framework for addressing bullying in school. By integrating *hifz al-'irdh* with public policy, schools can create a safer and more supportive environment for students (Widyaningtyas & Rochman Hadi Mustofa, 2023). These theories complement each other, allowing schools to not only handle bullying cases but also prevent them

through character education and societal values.

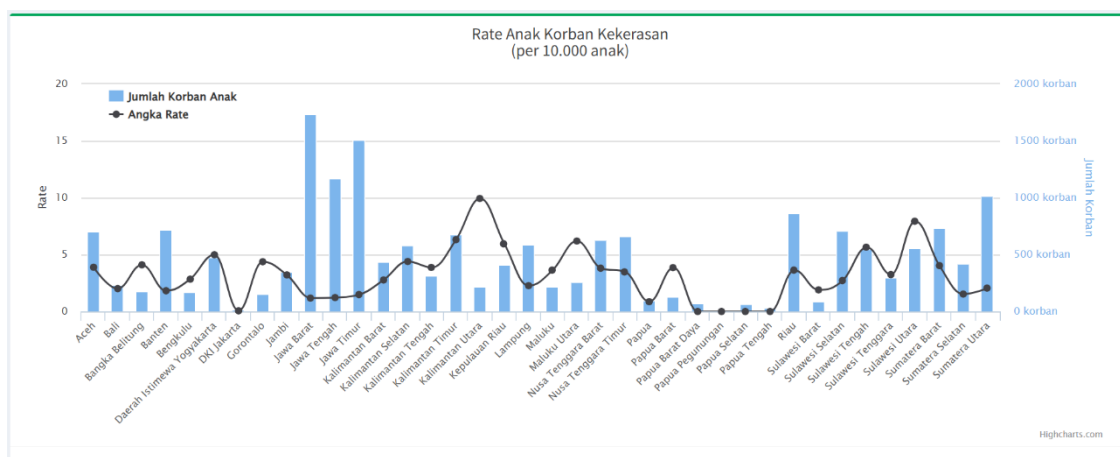
This research employs a qualitative approach with policy and normative-theological analysis to understand how the *hifz al-'irdh* approach and public policy can be integrated into handling bullying in schools. This approach allows the researcher to explore perspectives from various stakeholders, including students, teachers, parents, and policymakers. Data collection methods include article and document analysis, character education programs, bullying case reports, and references from scholarly books and articles to examine the alignment between existing policies and practices.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Bullying is an aggressive behavior that is intentional, repetitive, and involves a power imbalance between the perpetrator and the victim. In the school context, bullying can manifest physically, verbally, socially, and cyber, stemming from factors like emotional instability, a desire to dominate, and other social factors (Widyaningtyas & Rochman Hadi Mustofa, 2023). This phenomenon has significant implications for students' psychological, academic, and personal dignity and identity, making its handling crucial.

Data from the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (Kemen PPPA) indicates that the rate of violence against children, which also includes bullying, remains high in various provinces in Indonesia, with Central Java, East Java, and North Sumatra among the provinces with a significant number of victims.

Chart 1. Rate of child victims of violence

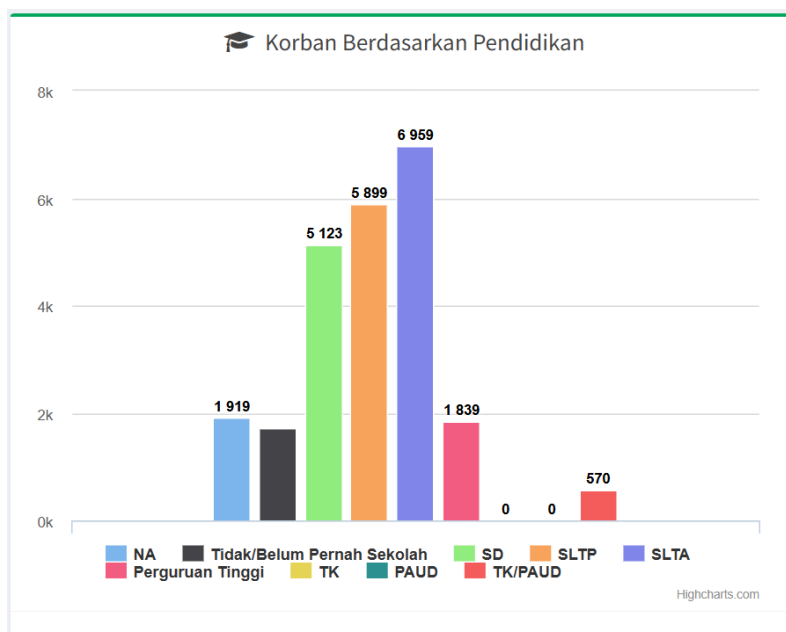


The variation in violence rates per 10,000 children across provinces shows that although the number of victims is high in some areas, the incidence rate may

differ due to factors such as child population. This reveals that violence against children, including bullying, is a serious issue that requires greater attention in efforts to protect children in various regions. This data underscores the urgency of addressing bullying as part of a comprehensive approach to prevent violence against children in Indonesia.

Specifically, violence and bullying can be observed across various educational levels. The data can be seen in the following graph.

Chart 2. Victims of violence based on education



The highest number of victims comes from the high school level (SLTA) with 6,959 individuals, followed by those with elementary school education (SD) with 5,899 victims, and early childhood education (PAUD) with 5,123 victims. The group with no or limited schooling records 1,919 victims, while those with higher education account for 1,839 victims. The junior high school level (SLTP) has the fewest victims, totaling 570 individuals. No victims are recorded in the kindergarten (TK) and combined kindergarten or early childhood education (TK/PAUD) groups. This data shows that the majority of victims come from high school and elementary school groups, which highlights the need for attention to protection and education at these educational levels.

In Islam, maintaining one's honor and dignity is a moral value that is needed in the social structure of society. Known as *hifz al-'irdh* which focuses on protecting individual dignity and developing positive character (Hamdi & Musthofa, n.d.). The *hifz al-'irdh* approach can be applied in various aspects of school life, including prevention and handling of bullying. One of the main focuses of this approach is

character education, where the values of the *hifz al-'irdh* can be integrated into character education programs that emphasize empathy, tolerance, and mutual respect among fellow human beings.

Specifically, *hifz al-'irdh* highlights the importance of preserving and protecting an individual's dignity and reputation from being tarnished by degrading actions or words. In a social context, maintaining one's honor includes protection from slander, harassment, and actions that can damage one's self-esteem. Meanwhile, bullying often involves insults and harassment which fails to create a culture of mutual respect and protection among students in educational institutions (Karisma et al., 2024).

From a public policy perspective, effective policies are essential in providing legal and regulatory framework for addressing bullying in educational institutions. Critical aspects of this policy include anti-bullying regulations that ensure bullying actions are identified and addressed. Government and educational authorities need to establish rules that include penalties for perpetrators and procedures for handling cases. These policies should be widely disseminated to all stakeholders in the school environment.

The government's policy in dealing with bullying is clearly explained in Article 54 of Law Number 23 of 2002 concerning: "Children in and around schools must be protected from acts of violence committed by teachers, school administrators or their friends in the school concerned, or other educational institutions". The policy in this article has also been attempted to be implemented in every educational institution, but its handling and prevention are still not optimal in being implemented.

The main step needed in dealing with this case is an anti-bullying awareness program that refers to laws and regulations especially governing bullying, where the regulations include the application of sanction for perpetrators and procedures for handling bullying cases effectively with the development of intervention programs that target prevention and handling. Programs that can also be carried out are counseling services for victims and perpetrators, as well as training for educators to detect and handle bullying situations that occur in schools (Viona Erlanda & Anggraeny Puspaningtyas, 2023). Therefore, public policies must be equipped with an evaluation mechanism that aims to monitor the implementation and effectiveness of programs that have been implemented.

Public policy-compliant bullying prevention programs can be found in UNICEF's 2020 Fact Sheet on Child Bullying in Indonesia, which outlines several key

initiatives involving educators, students, and the community. Below are some of the main programs:

1. Positive Discipline

This program, conducted in collaboration with the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (KPPPA) and Yayasan Nusantara Sejati, aims to train teachers to discipline students without physical or verbal violence, which is considered to have negative long-term effects. Teachers are taught positive discipline approaches through Teacher Working Groups (KKG) and Subject Teacher Meetings (MGMP).

2. Roots Indonesia Program

This evidence-based intervention model involves students as Change Agents. Selected students are trained to identify and address bullying cases in their schools. They organize activities such as anti-bullying campaigns and school events to raise awareness. The program has shown positive impacts, reducing bullying behavior by up to 30% in some pilot schools.

3. National Kindness Campaign

This campaign promotes kindness values and aims to stop bullying in schools by encouraging cooperation, tolerance, and empathy, which is expected to foster more prosocial student character and create a safe and supportive learning environment.

4. Training and Socialization in Pilot Schools

UNICEF, in partnership with KPPPA, has implemented these programs in several provinces, including Jakarta, West Java, and Yogyakarta. Positive outcomes include a 16% decrease in the use of physical punishment by teachers and a 9% reduction in emotional punishment in pilot schools in West Papua.

In addition to public policies and strategies built to prevent bullying, schools can build a strong support network to create an environment that is responsive to bullying issues. All school communities, from students, and teachers, to parents, will feel responsible for overcoming this negative behavior. Interactive activities that can be done are simulations, role-playing, and group discussions that will be very helpful in implementing and improving students' understanding of the consequences of bullying and the importance of positive behavior. This mechanism ensures that the policies implemented are truly effective and on target.

To create a safer and more supportive school environment, an approach is needed that does not only focus on enforcing rules but also on ethical aspects and

character building. Integration between approaches *hifz al-'irdh* and this public policy can play an important role in handling bullying by creating strong synergy. Approach *hifz al-'irdh* emphasizes ethical aspects and helps direct public policy so that handling bullying is not only limited to providing sanctions but also includes rehabilitation and character education. This shows that handling bullying needs to be oriented towards building moral and positive behavior, not just punishment.

Combining these two approaches creates a more holistic system for handling bullying in schools. Values-based education in policy key, where public policies include aspects of character and values education *hifz al-'irdh* has the potential to increase the effectiveness of bullying prevention. In addition, community participation is also very important, because the approach *hifz al-'irdh* emphasizes the participation of all parties, in line with public policies that encourage the involvement of other communities in bullying prevention efforts. In this way, an integrated program is created that is not only reactive but also proactive in educating students. This program also facilitates discussion forums about bullying which can increase students' awareness and social skills.

Integrating values *hifz al-'irdh* or religion in the education curriculum will equip each student with a better understanding of the importance of mutual respect and empathy for each other. Public policy is also able to support the development of a character-based curriculum, which not only emphasizes academic aspects but also the development of student morals in order to create a moral and useful generation for the future.

CONCLUSION

The *hifz al-'irdh* approach emphasizes protecting individual dignity and fostering moral values like empathy and respect, while public policy provides a structured regulatory framework to prevent bullying. Together, these approaches create a comprehensive system that addresses both the ethical and regulatory aspects of bullying prevention. The synergy between moral education and policy enforcement encourages community involvement, ensuring that anti-bullying efforts are proactive, values-based, and focused on character development rather than punishment alone. This integrated approach aims to establish a supportive, respectful school environment that not only curbs bullying but also fosters students' overall character growth and well-being.

The following research is recommended to conduct quantitative surveys and comparative studies across educational institutions to measure the effectiveness of this approach. A long-term study is also advised to assess the program's impact on

students' mental health and character development. A holistic approach integrating psychology and character education, community participation, and regular evaluations should be implemented to strengthen policy implementation.

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