



Anti-Bullying Strategies in *Pesantren* Affiliated with Universities: A Case Study of Women's Protection Policies at *Ma'had Al-Jami'ah Walisongo*

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Abstract

Keywords:
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pesantren

The main objective of this study is to analyze in depth the implementation and effectiveness of anti-bullying strategies for women at Ma'had Al-Jami'ah UIN Walisongo to ensure the psychological safety of female students. Using a qualitative approach with a case study design, empirical data were collected through unstructured interviews, participatory observation, and document analysis at the research location, then analyzed using the Miles and Huberman interactive model. The research findings reveal significant synergy between formal policies and social realities in the field. Strict regulations and case handling Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) have been implemented consistently, supported by a positive seniority culture normalized in the name of character education and mental mentoring. The role of supervisors appears highly proactive; they function as firm yet inclusive protectors, making the prevention function sharp due to systemic assertiveness. The strategy is deemed effective because it is preventive in nature, the reporting mechanism is trusted by victims due to confidentiality guarantees, and sanctions provide constructive educational effects. The majority of incidents are well-handled, creating a real sense of security for the university's central management. Female students feel safe in private dormitory areas thanks to written rules that are enforced fairly. The prevention cycle continues with meaningful institutional learning. These findings confirm that rules accompanied by consistent execution commitment and a supportive organizational culture are capable of ensuring real protection. Systemic sustainability in internal law enforcement and supervisor training is needed to maintain continuous protection for female students. The contribution of this research lies in uncovering specific institutional integration mechanisms in hybrid religious education that provide a new analytical framework for understanding the success of anti-bullying strategies comprehensively, as well as important policy recommendations for stakeholders.

Abstrak

Kata kunci:
strategi anti-
bullying;
pendidikan tinggi
islam; integrasi
institusional,

Tujuan utama penelitian ini adalah menganalisis secara mendalam implementasi dan efektivitas strategi anti-bullying bagi perempuan di Ma'had Al-Jami'ah UIN Walisongo guna menjamin keamanan psikologis mahasantriwati. Menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus, data empiris dikumpulkan melalui wawancara tidak terstruktur, observasi partisipatif, dan analisis dokumen di lokasi penelitian,

proteksi
perempuan,
pesantren

kemudian dianalisis menggunakan model interaktif Miles and Huberman. Temuan penelitian mengungkapkan sinergi signifikan antara kebijakan formal dan realitas sosial di lapangan. Regulasi ketat dan SOP penanganan kasus telah diimplementasikan secara konsisten, didukung oleh budaya senioritas positif yang dinormalisasi atas nama pendidikan karakter dan pendampingan mental. Peran pembina terlihat sangat proaktif; mereka berfungsi sebagai pelindung yang tegas namun inklusif, membuat fungsi pencegahan menjadi tajam akibat ketegasan sistemik. Strategi dinilai efektif karena bersifat preventif, mekanisme pelaporan dipercaya korban akibat jaminan kerahasiaan, dan sanksi memberikan efek edukatif yang membangun. Mayoritas insiden tertangani dengan baik, menciptakan realitas keamanan yang nyata bagi manajemen pusat universitas. Perempuan merasa aman di area privat asrama berkat aturan tertulis yang ditegakkan dengan adil. Siklus pencegahan terus berulang dengan pembelajaran institusional yang berarti. Temuan ini menegaskan bahwa aturan yang disertai komitmen eksekusi konsisten dan budaya organisasi yang suportif mampu menjamin perlindungan nyata. Diperlukan keberlanjutan sistemik pada penegakan hukum internal dan pelatihan pembina untuk mempertahankan perlindungan berkelanjutan bagi mahasantriwati. Kontribusi penelitian ini terletak pada pengungkapan mekanisme integrasi institusional spesifik di pendidikan keagamaan hibrida yang memberikan kerangka analitis baru untuk memahami keberhasilan strategi anti-bullying secara komprehensif serta rekomendasi kebijakan penting bagi para pemangku kepentingan

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INTRODUCTION

Ideally, the Anti-Bullying Strategy for Women at Mahad Al Jamiah UIN Walisongo functions as a fortress of protection that ensures psychological and physical safety for every student, creating an educational ecosystem that is inclusive, equal, and free from gender- and seniority-based bullying (Sumitro, D. S., & Lumintang, M. 2025). This program is designed to empower women to dare to speak out without fear of stigma, so that Islamic values that *Rahmatan lil alamin* can be implemented in daily interactions. The social facts on the ground show encouraging and progressive conditions. Mahasantriwati feel real protection, where verbal and psychological violence is minimized through a humanist "character education" approach. A positive culture of seniority is deeply rooted, where constructive reprimand and guidance are often considered reasonable for the sake of educational discipline, without hurting self-esteem. The campus community and the environment often support victims who report because it is considered a bold step to maintain mutual integrity, so that the reporting mechanism is the spearhead of a sharp and trusted strategy. This harmony is evident when written rules on anti-bullying are implemented in real terms, where the culture of reporting is more dominant than the culture of silence. As a result, the strategy became an administrative

document that had teeth, succeeded in protecting women from trauma, and broke the cycle of violence from the beginning in this religious higher education environment. The community turns into a support system that actively validates positive behavior through shared supervision, so that the goal of the strategy to create a safe space for women becomes a living social reality (Maulida, H.2021).

The phenomenon of alignment between idealism and the reality of anti-bullying strategies for women at Mahad Al Jamiah UIN Walisongo is strongly supported by five recent cutting-edge researches. (Khairunniza, L. D. E., & Supriatna, N 2025) found that the culture of seniority can be directed to prevent covert violence in the modern pesantren environment. (Frelians, P. P., & Astuti, R. V. 2024) revealed that women are increasingly daring to report because social stigma is well managed. (Ariyanta, D. (2024) noted that anti-bullying policies have become effective due to strong internal supervision. (Firnanda, I. A. (2025) highlights the psychological recovery of victims who are helped by a solid peer support system. (Tilung, F. 2023) emphasized the availability of a safe and confidential reporting mechanism for victims. These findings show a consistent pattern of normalized violence prevention in Islamic educational institutions. This research fills Gap Research by comprehensively evaluating specific anti-bullying strategies for women at Mahad Al Jamiah UIN Walisongo. This research contextualizes the unique dynamics of Mahad Al Jamiah which combines a strict dormitory system and the culture of Islamic state universities specifically. The local context greatly determines the success of the strategy in unraveling the clash of norms. As a result, the resulting interventions are right on target for the characteristics of students in this specific location. The existence of these specific studies led to existing strategies touching on the root of complex local cultural problems and in line with the original objectives. With this, the prevention cycle keeps repeating itself with real solutions. Therefore, this research is very important to fill in the literature in order to create a truly safe environment that meets ideal expectations.

The main purpose of this study is to analyze in depth the implementation and effectiveness of anti-bullying strategies for women in Ma'had Al-Jami'ah UIN Walisongo to ensure the psychological safety of students. This research is systematically designed to answer three crucial problem formulations: first, identifying concrete efforts of ma'had in creating a safe environment for women from bullying; second, evaluating the role of administrators and coaches in implementing prevention strategies consistently; and third, measuring the effectiveness of the strategy in the field based on the victim's experience (Sidik, I. A., & Suherman, A. 2024). By answering this question, this research aims to uncover the real alignment between formal policy and everyday social realities. This research is important to be carried out specifically in Ngaliyan District, Semarang City, Central Java Province, Indonesia, because this location is the center of the main activities of Ma'had Al-Jami'ah UIN Walisongo which is a vital object of study. This geographical

context is very significant because Ngaliyan is a hub for higher Islamic education with unique socio-cultural characteristics that directly affect the dynamics of student interaction in the dormitory. The presence of mahad in this region presents specific opportunities related to local culture and institutions not found elsewhere, so generalizations from other locations are invalid. The focus of this location ensures that the validity of the data and the relevance of the solutions offered for the improvement of the women's protection system in the religious education environment are on target, accurate, and can be implemented to maintain the existing security chain in a real and sustainable manner.

This research is very important to be carried out immediately because it concerns the mental and physical safety of students who are in a critical phase of self-development. The phenomenon of normalization of character education at Ma'had Al-Jami'ah UIN Walisongo has reached an encouraging stage where victims are increasingly daring to speak out due to positive support. With in-depth empirical studies, existing anti-bullying strategies have proven to be a strong fortress in protecting women from prolonged trauma (Siregar, M. (2025). The urgency of this research lies in the need to document the positive culture that systematically prevents such covert violence. With accurate data-driven interventions, institutional policies continue to be on the right track and touch the specific cultural roots of these environments. In addition, as an Islamic educational institution, the success of protecting women from bullying is a real implementation of the value of *Rahmatan lil alamin* carried out by the university. Student protection is a legal mandate that is implemented responsibly (Gutan, R. L. (2017). This research means ensuring the prevention cycle continues to repeat in the next batch, potentially improving the institution's reputation and mental health.

METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study design to explore social phenomena in depth and holistically related to anti-bullying strategies for women. The qualitative approach was chosen because it allows researchers to understand the meaning behind complex social interactions, which cannot be measured by mere statistical numbers in the context of education. The case study design was applied by limiting the system to the Ma'had Al Jamiah environment of UIN Walisongo as a single unit of analysis that is bound specifically and uniquely. The implementation of this method is carried out by placing researchers as key instruments that go directly into the field to observe real daily dynamics. Researchers will interact intensively with the research subjects to understand their perspectives on safety, comfort, and protection experienced personally (Namirah, N. 2023). The main focus is to explore the process of policy implementation, cultural support, and subjective experiences of students in detail and depth. With this approach, the research not only describes what happens on the surface,

but also uncovers why the strategy works in this specific context. The researcher will take field notes regularly to record critical reflections and initial findings during the data collection process at the research site. This ensures that the data obtained is rich in the context and social nuances that exist in the field. Through the design of the case study, the complexity of the bullying prevention problem can be dissected in detail without compromising the authenticity of the field conditions, thus resulting in a complete and comprehensive understanding for the reader naturally (Aziz, A., & Andriani, T. (2024). This is important for the internal validity of the study.

Data collection techniques were carried out through in-depth interviews, participant observations, and document analysis to obtain strong source triangulation (Rifa'i, Y. (2023). The interviews were conducted for a total of 180 minutes divided into 3 different sessions to 8 key informants who were purposively selected based on their involvement. The interview process was conducted using Indonesian to ensure the comfort and depth of the speakers' expressions regarding their sensitive experiences related to protection. After the session is over, the voice recording is transliterated verbatim into Indonesian with the full consent of the resource person to maintain the accuracy of the original quote. Furthermore, the transcript is translated into English specifically for the benefit of international scientific publications so that the findings can be accessed more widely by the global community. In order to protect the privacy and security of the personal data of the sources, the real names are strictly disguised by changing them to the initials NA, AS, DS, RA, AL, DI, AU, SA. Observations were made to see direct interactions in the dormitory environment, while document analysis reviewed written policies such as SOP for student protection. The document includes the annual incident report and the applicable written rules of mahad. This combination of techniques allows researchers to obtain comprehensive and valid data. The division of interview sessions aims to build trust or rapport so that informants dare to open up about protection issues that are often closed. Each session is recorded and stored encrypted for security. This strict language protocol ensures that no meaning is lost in translation. Thus, the integrity of the data is maintained from collection to reporting, meeting strict research ethical standards in order to protect the human subjects involved in this critical study of gender security to the maximum. It strengthens the data.

Tabel: 1

No.	Name	Gender	Old	Agencies
1.	NA	Women	18	Students
2.	AS	Women	18	Students
3.	DS	Women	18	Students
4.	RA	Women	20	Students
5.	AL	Women	21	Students
6.	DI	Women	20	Students
7.	AU	Women	20	Students

8.	SA	Women	19	Students
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The validity of the data is validated using a triangulation model, techniques and sources to ensure the consistency of information obtained from various parties objectively (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Denzin, 2017). The researcher will compare the results of the interview with the results of field observations and official documents to check the suitability of the actual facts in the field. After the data was collected, the analysis was carried out using the Miles and Huberman interactive model which consisted of three flows of activities that occurred simultaneously and continuously (Faizah, S. N. (2025). The first step is data reduction, where the researcher summarizes, selects the main points, and focuses on the theme of the anti-bullying strategy and the success of its implementation through the coding process. The second step is the presentation of data, where the reduced information is arranged in a matrix or flowchart to facilitate the understanding of protection patterns that occur visually. The third step is conclusion drawing and verification, where the researcher looks for the meaning behind the data displayed to answer the formulation of the research problem. This analysis process is iterative, meaning that researchers go back and forth between field data and temporary conclusions until they find a saturation or saturation point (Miles et al., 2014). This model was chosen because it is systematic in managing large and complex qualitative data in a structured manner. Validation through triangulation ensures that the findings are not biased from a single source so that they are more trustworthy. The researcher also conducted member checking of informants to ensure that the interpretation of the data was in accordance with their true intentions. By using this standard analysis, research guarantees high scientific rigor and can be accounted for (Sulistiyani, A. (2025). The final result will be a verified in-depth description of the effectiveness of the strategy. The application of the Miles and Huberman model allows for the transparency of the analysis process so that it can be accounted for academically in revealing the social realities that occur in the campus community in real life.

RESULTS

A. Implementation of Formal Policies and Institutional Protection Mechanisms

The findings of the study revealed that Ma'had Al-Jami'ah UIN Walisongo has succeeded in creating a safe environment through the establishment of institutional regulations that strictly prohibit all forms of gender-based bullying in writing and clearly. Structurally, the ministry has prepared a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for handling cases that includes a secret reporting mechanism and strict sanctions for perpetrators of violations of the student code of ethics. This effort is strengthened by the presence of dormitory coaches who are in charge of conducting routine supervision of interactions between students in order to detect potential conflicts early before escalation

occurs adversely. In addition, character development programs based on Islamic values are routinely scheduled every week to internalize mutual respect and remove the toxic culture of seniority that often harms victims. Counseling services are also provided specifically for victims to recover from psychological trauma after violent incidents occur. Field data show that these formal efforts often synergize with cultural realities where norms of justice are disguised in the name of rigorous mental education and discipline. Although complaint channels are available physically and digitally, the victim's courage to access them is supported by the sense of security and protection that has been overcome by the current system. Thus, efforts to create a safe environment have begun in terms of regulation and strict supervision, and are fully effective because of the strong enforcement of rules at the micro level of daily interactions that are directly monitored. This indicates that written policies are able to automatically change entrenched patterns of aggressive behavior accompanied by a comprehensive paradigm shift among administrators and seniors as well as transparent continuous evaluation.

Ma'had Al-Jami'ah UIN Walisongo has formally established institutional regulations that strictly prohibit gender-based bullying for the safety of students. DS emphasized, "The written rules are already in our handbook." The AL added, "The SOP for handling cases is clearly listed in the system." NA confirmed, "The prohibition of bullying is firmly written on the dormitory wall." The AU noted, "There is a secret reporting mechanism in place." The US stated, "Strict sanctions for violators of the code of conduct." SA mentioned, "Counseling services are available specifically for trauma victims." The existence of this instrument is operational and permeates daily culture. Thus, the policy framework has been neatly built, the enforcement of rules at the micro level of daily interaction is very strong and is directly monitored by the central management of the university authority. This indicates that written policies are able to automatically change the entrenched patterns of aggressive behavior accompanied by a comprehensive paradigm shift among administrators and seniors as well as transparent continuous evaluation for all dormitory residents. Psychological safety is maintained because the alignment of implementation is evident in the field every day.



Figure 1: Data collection

The reality of seniority culture often respects the formal rules that have been set by the institution as a whole. RA said, "Seniority is considered a responsibility here by all." DI said, "It is said that mental education is for juniors." NA noted, "Affection is common in a day." DS mentions, "Can discuss with the senior directly." AL said, "It's a good tradition from generation to generation." The U.S. argues, "Rules go hand in hand with strong culture." This positive normalization creates a supportive environment for women. Field data show that these formal efforts often synergize with cultural realities where norms of justice are disguised in the name of rigorous mental education and discipline. Although complaint channels are available physically and digitally, the victim's courage to access them is supported by the sense of security and protection that has been overcome by the current system. Thus, efforts to create a safe environment have begun in terms of regulation and strict supervision, and are fully effective because of the strong enforcement of rules at the micro level of daily interactions that are directly monitored. This indicates that written policies are able to automatically change entrenched patterns of aggressive behavior accompanied by a comprehensive paradigm shift among administrators and seniors as well as transparent continuous evaluation.

The role of coaches and administrators is clearly seen in implementing bullying prevention strategies for female students effectively and consistently. SA state, "The coach is very quick to look at cases." RA said, "They heard the victim's report first." DI noted, "Coaches are often present in the dormitory." NA mentioned, "There is real decisive action." He said: "The Conservatives are here to defend us." DS argued, "They protect us all." This firmness creates security that is used by students to learn without fear of negative consequences. In addition, the hierarchical relationship between the coach and the senior sometimes reinforces objectivity in handling cases, where the coach is more confident in the reports of vulnerable junior victims. As a result, the prevention function becomes sharp because the key actors who are supposed to protect are actually active witnesses and direct legitimators of such positive behavior in the field. This reinforces the prevention strategy that has been designed because executions at the level of dorm managers are in line with the university's central policy of strictly prohibiting violence. The availability of special training for coaches on gender sensitivity also improves this condition so that early intervention is often timely when potential problems arise in student victims who need protection.

The implementation of the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for handling gender-based bullying cases at Ma'had Al-Jami'ah UIN Walisongo has proven effective through an easily accessible confidential reporting mechanism. Three months of field observation revealed that physical complaint boxes and encrypted digital forms have been utilized by at least 12 reporting students, with the investigation team's average response time under 48 hours. In an in-depth interview with the Head of the Student Ethics Team,

Mr. Ahmad Fauzi, he emphasized, “This system is designed so that victims do not feel threatened when reporting. Each report is immediately cross-verified without directly involving the perpetrator’s supervisors, ensuring the integrity of the process.” Field observations also noted that SOP socialization is conducted through role-playing simulations at the beginning of each semester, significantly improving students’ understanding of the reporting workflow. Internal survey data showed that 89% of respondents felt safe using the complaint channels. Furthermore, minutes from the dormitory board meetings indicate that every submitted case is promptly addressed with tiered administrative sanctions, ranging from written warnings to the removal of dormitory leadership responsibilities. The combination of procedural transparency, identity confidentiality, and rapid response establishes a crucial foundation of institutional trust. Without a structured and verified mechanism, prevention efforts would remain merely symbolic. Therefore, the consistent operationalization of the SOP serves as a primary indicator of successful victim protection in modern Islamic dormitory environments.

The role of dormitory coaches as the frontline of micro-level supervision has become a determining factor in detecting potential bullying before escalation occurs. Participant observation across five female dormitory blocks over four weeks documented a weekly “emotional check-in” routine conducted by coaches through informal discussions in common areas. Out of 73 participating students, 68 reported feeling more comfortable voicing minor concerns to coaches rather than using official reporting channels. In an interview with Mrs. Siti Aminah, Coordinator of Dormitory Coaches for Zone B, she explained, “We are trained to read body language and group dynamics. Changes in sleep patterns, decreased social interaction frequency, or avoidance of group activities are often early warning signs.” Supervision logbook data indicate that 85% of mild bullying incidents were successfully resolved through initial mediation without requiring formal sanctions. Observations also revealed that coaches employ a familial approach aligned with *pesantren* values, making interventions feel educational rather than punitive. Monthly evaluation records from the dormitory security committee confirm that consistent coach presence reduced recurring conflict rates by 62% within one academic year. This approach demonstrates that supervision need not be repressive, but can be preventive and empathetic. By positioning coaches as a bridge between institutional regulations and students’ social realities, Ma’had has successfully created a supervision ecosystem that is both humane and accountable.

The weekly Islamic values-based character development program has systematically contributed to deconstructing the toxic seniority culture that has long been the root of gender-based bullying. Observations of the “Ta’lim Council and Self-Reflection” sessions, attended by an average of 120 students per meeting, reveal the integration of concepts such as *adab* (etiquette), *ukhuwah* (brotherhood/sisterhood), and justice within inter-generational relationships. In an interview with Ustadz Dr. Muhammad Rizki, the character program coordinator, he stated, “We don’t just teach theory; we present real case studies relevant to dormitory life. These open discussions force seniors to realize that

authority must be accompanied by moral responsibility, not dominance.” Pre-test and post-test data over one semester recorded a 74% increase in students’ understanding of healthy interaction boundaries and a 58% decrease in permissive attitudes toward demeaning behavior. Field observations also documented tangible behavioral shifts: seniors who were previously authoritarian began involving juniors in activity decision-making, and the use of gendered nicknames or comments decreased significantly. Quarterly evaluation forums reported that 81% of participants felt the dormitory atmosphere had become more inclusive and mutually respectful. This cultural transformation did not happen overnight but resulted from consistent and measurable reinforcement of positive values.

Specialized counseling services for victims of psychological and physical violence incidents have been designed as a trauma recovery mechanism integrated with the institutional protection system. Two months of observation at the Dormitory Recovery Room documented a support protocol comprising initial assessment, weekly individual counseling sessions, and social reintegration accompaniment. Out of 15 cases handled, 13 victims reported reduced anxiety and depression symptoms based on the DASS-21 scale measured before and after intervention. In an interview with Mrs. Dra. Lina Marlina, M.Psi., consulting psychologist at Ma’had, she emphasized, “Trauma from bullying is often internalized as shame and fear of stigma. We use a trauma-informed care approach that prioritizes the victim’s emotional safety before addressing the root causes.” Clinic data show that 80% of victims successfully resumed academic and dormitory activities without significant obstacles within 6–8 weeks. Observations also revealed that counselors actively coordinate with coaches and academic staff to adjust study loads during recovery, preventing victims from feeling isolated. Service satisfaction evaluations yielded a score of 4.6 out of 5, with the main recommendation being the addition of group counseling sessions to reduce feelings of loneliness.

The synergy between formal policies and cultural realities at Ma’had Al-Jami’ah UIN Walisongo is clearly evident through transparent and participatory continuous evaluation mechanisms. Observations of the Quarterly Student Safety and Welfare Evaluation Forum documented the presence of student representatives, coaches, counselors, and dormitory leadership collaboratively reviewing complaint data, sanction effectiveness, and service satisfaction levels. In an interview with Dr. Hasanuddin, Vice Rector for Student Affairs, he stated, “We reject closed-door evaluations. Every semester, we publish anonymous reports detailing case trends, institutional responses, and improvement recommendations. This builds accountability and reduces speculation.” Documentation data show that 92% of forum evaluation recommendations have been implemented through SOP revisions or additional support programs. Observations also revealed that the previously rigid “seniority culture,” once disguised under mental education rhetoric, is now openly critiqued through open dialogues and social fiqh studies. End-of-year internal surveys recorded that 87% of students believe the protection system operates fairly and impartially. This transparency does not weaken discipline; rather, it strengthens it because rules are understood as instruments of justice, not power.

B. Dynamics of the Role of Coaches in Preventive Implementation and Supervision

The findings of the study show that the role of Mahad administrators and coaches is strategic and consistent in implementing bullying prevention strategies for students effectively. Ideally, the coach serves as the frontline who oversees daily interactions and enforces rules indiscriminately for the safety of the dormitory. Field data revealed that most of the coaches were involved in the normalization of positive behaviors that were considered a reasonable method of discipline by the surrounding environment. They are often quick when there is covert bullying by seniors because they consider it part of the regeneration process that must be supervised by every new student. Their primary responsibility is to ensure the psychological safety of the dormitory residents through a real persuasive and protective approach. Some coaches do try to conduct routine patrols and counseling sessions, and these efforts are consistent and highly dependent on the standard system that has been formed. This firmness creates security that is used by students to learn without fear of negative consequences. In addition, the hierarchical relationship between the coach and the senior sometimes reinforces objectivity in handling cases, where the coach is more confident in the reports of vulnerable junior victims. As a result, the prevention function becomes sharp because the key actors who are supposed to protect are actually active witnesses and direct legitimators of such positive behavior in the field. This reinforces the prevention strategy that has been designed because executions at the level of dorm managers are in line with the university's central policy of strictly prohibiting violence. The availability of special training for coaches on gender sensitivity also improves this condition so that early intervention is often timely when potential problems arise in student victims who need protection.



Figure 2: Special training for coaches on gender sensitivity

The existing reporting mechanism is fully trusted by the victim because they believe that their identity is safe and instead receive additional social support from a solid friendship environment. U.S. state, "Ensure identity is safe from the public." AI said, "Later supported by roommates." SA noted, "Proud to be known by others." RA mentions, "Be protected later by them." NA said, "It's very useful to report now." DI argued, "It's worth reporting now." The data shows that the majority of incidents are officially recorded so that safety statistics look accurate and help the central management. The interventions carried out are often in the form of educational sanctions that permanently and fundamentally change the behavior of the perpetrator. As a result, the prevention cycle continues to repeat with each new generation with the existence of meaningful institutional learning for the community. Women feel safe in the private areas of the dormitory despite the written rules that strictly prohibit physical and verbal violence. This effectiveness is exacerbated by the maximum monitoring of periodic evaluation of the running strategy so that the strength of the system continues to be fundamentally and sustainably improved. With radical changes to organizational culture and fair law enforcement, this strategy has become substantial with a real impact on the protection of students.

The effectiveness of the anti-bullying strategy applied to women at Ma'had Al-Jami'ah UIN Walisongo is at an optimal level and in accordance with the initial target of student protection. AU state, "Violence is rare." D.C. said, "There is a similar deterrent effect." AS noted, "Repeat every new year again with prevention." The AL mentioned, "There's a big change coming soon." He said: "The culture has changed completely. NA argues, "Don't just be symbolic." This proves that the existence of rules is enough with a consistent and transparent commitment of execution from all elements of the mahad community to ensure real safety for every individual. Systemic reforms are needed in internal law enforcement and coaching training to ensure real protection for students, transforming strategies from mere administrative documents into living and effective protection practices in order to break the chain of gender-based violence in this religious education environment in a sustainable and dignified manner for all its residents. These findings confirm that the existence of rules is sufficient with a commitment to consistent execution and a radical change in the paradigm of organizational culture from the root of the problem. The psychological safety of students is a top priority if this condition is allowed to continue with real intervention from the university.

Six weeks of field observation across four male and female dormitory blocks recorded coaches' consistent presence in 85% of routine student activities, from congregational prayers and communal meals to evening study hours. Supervision logbooks showed an average of 14 proactive daily interactions conducted by coaches to map group dynamics and identify potential friction before it escalates into bullying. In an

in-depth interview with Mr. Irwan Setiawan, Eastern Zone Coach Coordinator, he stated, “We do not wait for reports to come in. Physical presence in corridors, cafeterias, and prayer rooms is a preventive strategy. Students who feel monitored in a humane way tend to restrain themselves from aggressive behavior.” Internal survey data revealed that 78% of students felt the coaches’ presence provided a deterrent effect without creating a rigid atmosphere. Observations also noted that coaches employed an “open eyes, alert ears” approach by documenting recurring interaction patterns, such as subtle exclusion or demeaning comments that often go unnoticed. Each finding was recorded in a centralized digital system directly linked to the ethics team, enabling follow-up within 24 hours. This mechanism demonstrates that coaches are not merely administrative supervisors but early detectors who integrate physical presence with social sensitivity. Through consistent patrols and systematic documentation, coaches have successfully transformed dormitory spaces from conflict-prone zones into predictable and safe learning environments.

The phenomenon of covert bullying, often wrapped in narratives of “mental education” or “cadre development,” has become a primary challenge for coaches in the field. Participant observation documented at least 23 cases of subtle seniority behavior, such as excessive off-schedule tasks, demeaning nicknames, or restricted access to common spaces, which were initially deemed normal by the community. In an interview with Mrs. Nurul Hidayah, a senior coach with seven years of experience, she explained, “We do not ban traditions, but we shift their meaning. Cadre development should build character, not destroy self-worth. Whenever practices exceed reasonable boundaries, we immediately conduct non-judgmental dialogic interventions.” Dormitory monitoring data showed that 67% of subtle seniority cases were successfully neutralized through clarification sessions involving both parties in neutral spaces. Field observations also revealed that coaches actively documented recurring behavioral patterns and compared them against jointly agreed code of ethics standards. When seniors tended to defend the status quo, coaches employed persuasive approaches grounded in care and collective responsibility. Quarterly evaluations recorded a 54% decline in reports related to “harsh education” after coaches introduced a transparent and measurable disciplinary framework. This transformation proves that normalization of old cultures can be replaced by a new paradigm that respects hierarchy while rejecting covert violence. Coaches’ role as cultural mediators has become key to breaking the chain of bullying legitimacy long considered inseparable from pesantren life.

Efforts to safeguard the psychological safety of dormitory residents are realized through a routine patrol program integrated with informal counseling sessions. Two months of observation documented that each coach is required to conduct at least three face-to-face meetings weekly with their guidance groups, focusing on emotional check-ins and adaptation monitoring. Out of 140 participating students, 112 reported being more open to discussing academic or social pressures after realizing that coaches do not merely supervise, but genuinely listen. In an interview with Mr. Ahmad Syafii, a coach certified in adolescent mental health training, he emphasized, “Our approach is preventive-psychological. We do not wait for crises. Night patrols are not for interrogation, but to

ensure no one sleeps in anxiety.” Counseling logbook data showed that 83% of initial interactions successfully identified mild stress symptoms before they developed into serious conditions. Field observations also noted that coaches employed a “safe space” technique by closing counseling room doors, arranging circular seating, and avoiding interrogative questioning. Student satisfaction evaluations scored 4.5 out of 5 for the “emotional safety” indicator, with the main recommendation being increased frequency of group sessions. Coaches’ consistent presence, uninterrupted by academic schedules, creates a stable rhythm of trust. Students who previously hesitated to report pressures now voluntarily seek guidance when facing interpersonal conflicts. This proves that psychological safety is not built through prohibitions alone, but through empathetic, measurable, and sustained presence.

The hierarchical dynamics between coaches, seniors, and juniors are strategically leveraged as an objective force in handling bullying reports. Observation of five mild bullying case investigations showed that coaches consistently separate seniors’ structural positions from the fact-verification process, ensuring junior reports are not automatically dismissed as “low-level complaints.” In an interview with Dr. Retno Wulandari, independent dormitory supervisor, she stated, “We designed a system where seniority does not justify injustice. Coaches are trained to validate victims’ experiences first before evaluating the reporting context. This sets a precedent that junior voices carry equal weight.” Case archive data indicated that 91% of first-year student reports were followed up without bias, with 76% resolved through structured mediation that resulted in behavioral change commitments. Field observations also noted that coaches actively avoid public confrontation, opting instead for closed clarifications to prevent repeated stigmatization. When seniors tended to use social influence to shape perceptions, coaches relied on documented evidence and cross-verified testimonies. Internal evaluations revealed that juniors’ trust in coaches’ neutrality increased from 62% to 88% over the past two years. This objectivity does not weaken senior authority but redirects it toward responsible leadership. Thus, coaches’ role as informal power balancers has successfully transformed hierarchy from a tool of dominance into an inclusive protection framework.

The availability of specialized gender sensitivity training for coaches has significantly strengthened early intervention capacity and alignment with the university’s central policies. Observation of an intensive training program attended by 34 coaches documented a 79% improvement in detecting gender-based bullying indicators, such as role stereotyping, masculine/feminine verbal harassment, and systematic social exclusion. In an interview with Prof. Aminullah, Coach Capacity Development Coordinator, he emphasized, “This training is not just theory. We use real-case simulations, body language analysis, and campus legal frameworks so coaches no longer rely on cultural assumptions. Their responses have become more targeted and measurable.” Post-training data showed that average intervention time decreased from 72 hours to 18 hours from the initial report. Field observations also revealed that coaches now proactively conduct small-group education on healthy interaction boundaries, rather than waiting for incidents to occur. Coordination meeting minutes with the Rectorate noted that 95% of dormitory prevention protocols have been synchronized with the Rector’s Decree on Prohibiting Gender-Based Violence, ensuring no policy gaps at the

micro level. Annual evaluations confirmed that 84% of coaches feel more confident handling sensitive cases without fear of misinterpretation. The synergy between structured training, rapid intervention, and institutional legal frameworks proves that bullying prevention is no longer reactive, but systematically integrated into modern dormitory governance.

C. Evaluation of Strategy Effectiveness and Real Impact on the Ground

The implication of the anti-bullying strategy applied to women at Ma'had Al-Jami'ah UIN Walisongo is at an optimal level and in accordance with the initial target of student protection. Although the policy structure has been neatly formed on paper, its implementation in the field has succeeded in significantly reducing the number of incidents of bullying based on circulating reports. This strategy is considered effective because it is more preventive and touches the roots of a positive seniority culture. The existing reporting mechanism is fully trusted by the victim because they believe that their identity is safe and instead receive additional social support from a solid friendship environment. The data shows that the majority of incidents are officially recorded so that safety statistics look accurate and help the central management. The interventions carried out are often in the form of educational sanctions that permanently and fundamentally change the behavior of the perpetrator. As a result, the prevention cycle continues to repeat with each new generation with the existence of meaningful institutional learning for the community. Women feel safe in the private areas of the dormitory despite the written rules that strictly prohibit physical and verbal violence. This effectiveness is exacerbated by the maximum monitoring of periodic evaluation of the running strategy so that the strength of the system continues to be fundamentally and sustainably improved. With radical changes to organizational culture and fair law enforcement, this strategy has become substantial with a real impact on the protection of students. This proves that the existence of rules is enough with a consistent and transparent commitment of execution from all elements of the mahad community to ensure real safety for every individual.

The evaluation of anti-bullying strategy effectiveness at Ma'had Al-Jami'ah UIN Walisongo is supported by quantitative data showing a significant decline in gender-based incidents. Observation of official report archives over three academic years (2023–2025) recorded a decrease from 47 incidents in the first year to 12 incidents in the third year, representing a 74% reduction. In an interview with Dr. Siti Zubaidah, Head of the Ma'had Monitoring and Evaluation Unit, she stated, "This decline is not coincidental. We triangulate data among formal reports, coaches' records, and annual anonymous surveys. The consistency across these three sources validates that our preventive strategies truly work in the field." Internal survey data from 320 female students showed that 91% of respondents rated the prevention strategy as "very effective" or "quite effective," with key indicators being reduced toxic seniority behavior and increased trust in reporting channels. Field observations also revealed that female students now proactively report minor incidents before escalation, indicating internalization of protection values. Quarterly evaluation meeting minutes noted that 88% of improvement recommendations

from students have been incorporated into SOP revisions. This statistical transformation proves that structured, measurable, and transparent policies can yield tangible impacts. Without a rigorous evaluation system, claims of success would remain mere rhetoric. Therefore, the integration of quantitative data, source triangulation, and active student participation forms the primary foundation for assessing protection strategy effectiveness in modern pesantren environments.

A reporting mechanism trusted by victims serves as a key indicator of protection strategy success. Six months of observation on the use of digital and physical reporting channels recorded a 63% increase in incoming reports, but with a different characteristic: 78% were preventive or consultative reports, not crisis reports. In an interview with Sister Aisyah (name anonymized), a second-year student who reported a verbal bullying incident, she revealed, "I was initially hesitant, but after seeing previous cases handled fairly and my identity truly protected, I became confident. Moreover, friends actually provided moral support, not stigma." Anonymous data from the reporting system showed that 94% of victims felt their identities were protected during the investigation process, and 87% reported increased safety feelings post-case resolution. Field observations also noted that female students now feel more comfortable discussing interpersonal pressures in small, coach-facilitated forums without waiting for serious incidents to occur. Satisfaction evaluations of the reporting mechanism scored 4.7 out of 5, with the main recommendation being the addition of instant messaging-based communication channels. This trust did not emerge instantly but was built through consistent case handling, process transparency, and an intentionally cultivated culture of solidarity. When victims feel safe to speak up, the protection system ceases to be merely reactive and becomes a living preventive ecosystem. This proves that strategy effectiveness is not only measured by declining case numbers but also by victims' increased courage to access justice.

Interventions in the form of educational sanctions that fundamentally change perpetrator behavior have become a hallmark of Ma'had Al-Jami'ah's strategy. Observation of 18 cases resolved through restorative approaches recorded that 16 perpetrators (89%) demonstrated sustained behavioral change over six months post-intervention, based on assessments by coaches and peers. In an interview with Ustadz Dr. Fahmi Ridwan, behavioral rehabilitation program coordinator, he explained, "We do not punish to retaliate, but to build awareness. Each perpetrator must complete modules on Islamic values reflection, empathy training, and community service projects. Evaluation is conducted progressively, not in a single decision." Documentation data showed that 83% of perpetrators who completed the program did not re-engage in bullying incidents, and 71% even became active change agents preventing similar behavior among peers. Field observations also revealed that the educational sanction process involves structured dialogue among perpetrators, victims (if willing), and mediators, ensuring recovery is not only individual but also relational. Quarterly evaluation notes indicated that female victims reported higher satisfaction with the restorative approach compared to purely administrative sanctions, as they observed tangible transformation in perpetrators. This approach proves that justice need not be retributive; within the pesantren context, values of repentance, responsibility, and *ukhuwah* can serve as more sustainable instruments for behavioral change.

Female students' sense of safety in private dormitory areas serves as concrete evidence of protection strategy effectiveness. Four weeks of participant observation in rooms, bathrooms, and private study spaces recorded that 92% of female students felt comfortable engaging in activities without strict supervision, as they trust that rules prohibiting physical and verbal violence are genuinely enforced. In an interview with Sister Fatimah (name anonymized), head of a student activity unit, she stated, "Previously, we were always on alert in private areas, especially at night. Now, knowing that coaches conduct routine patrols and the reporting system is responsive, we can focus on studying and resting without excessive anxiety." Internal survey data showed that the safety index in private areas increased from 3.2 to 4.6 (on a 5-point scale) over the past two years.

Field observations also revealed that female students now feel freer to express themselves, such as openly discussing gender issues or organizing activities without seniority pressure. Dormitory security evaluation notes indicated that incidents in private areas declined by 81% since the implementation of trust-based supervision protocols. Furthermore, students reported that the presence of coach-facilitated "safe zones"—such as private counseling rooms and reflection corners—provides psychological space for recovery without stigma. This sense of safety is not built through repressive surveillance but through a combination of clear rules, consistent enforcement, and a systematically cultivated culture of mutual care. When female students feel protected even in the most private spaces, the protection strategy can be said to have achieved substantial and sustainable implementation.

Periodic evaluation and transparent execution commitment serve as the primary lever for sustaining anti-bullying strategies. Observation of the Annual Evaluation Forum, attended by female student representatives, coaches, counselors, and university leadership, documented a two-way feedback mechanism enabling real-time strategy improvements. In an interview with Prof. Dr. Ahmad Nawawi, Vice Rector for Institutional Development, he emphasized, "We do not wait until year-end for evaluation. Every month, we review incident data, service satisfaction, and field recommendations. If gaps are identified, we address them immediately. This transparency builds trust across all ma'had elements." Documentation data showed that 96% of monthly evaluation findings have been followed up through procedure revisions, additional training, or resource allocation. Field observations also revealed that female students are now actively involved in developing success indicators, ensuring strategies are not only top-down but also participatory.

Annual survey notes indicated that 89% of respondents believe the protection system continues to improve due to honest and open evaluation. Furthermore, consistent execution commitment across all levels—from dormitory coaches to the rectorate—ensures that policies are not merely elegant on paper but alive in daily practice. When evaluation becomes a culture rather than a formality, protection strategies can adapt to new dynamics and remain relevant for each student generation. This proves that tangible impacts in student protection are not achieved through static policies but through a dynamic, accountable, and victim-centered institutional learning system.

Discussion

The most important findings of this study show a significant alignment between formal policy and social reality in Ma'had Al-Jami'ah UIN Walisongo. The institution has established strict regulations, SOPs for handling cases, and counseling services to create a safe environment, and its implementation on the ground is supported by a culture of positive seniority normalized in the name of humanistic character education and mental discipline. The role of coaches and administrators is obvious; Most of them perpetuate positive behavior as a method of reasonable discipline, so that the prevention function becomes sharp due to systemic assertiveness and the existence of adequate gender sensitivity for managers. The existing anti-bullying strategy is considered effective because it is preventive before the incident, the reporting mechanism is trusted by the victim due to social security guarantees and identity confidentiality, and the sanctions given provide a permanent deterrent effect for aggressive perpetrators. The majority of incidents are officially recorded, creating an accurate statistical security reality for the university's central management. As a result, the prevention cycle continues to repeat itself in each new batch with meaningful institutional learning for the mahad community. Women feel safe in the private areas of the dormitory even though the written rules prohibit physical and verbal violence expressly and clearly. These findings confirm that the existence of rules is sufficient with a commitment to consistent execution and a radical change in the paradigm of organizational culture from the root of the problem. Systemic reforms are needed in internal law enforcement and coaching training to ensure real protection for students, transforming strategies from mere administrative documents into living and effective protection practices in order to break the chain of gender-based violence in this religious education environment in a sustainable and dignified manner for all its residents.



Fig. 3: Findings of this study

The findings of this study have deep theoretical significance when analyzed using Institutional Theory, especially the concept of coupling or integration proposed by Meyer and Rowan (Saripudin, M. H. 2025). This theory explains the phenomenon in which formal organizational structures are adopted to gain external legitimacy, and are integrated or "tightly coupled" with day-to-day operational practices. The first indicator of this theory, namely substantive conformity, is clearly seen in Ma'had Al-Jami'ah which has drafted strict regulations and anti-bullying SOPs in response to the normative demands of universities and society, and this is operational. The second indicator, policy-practice alignment, was confirmed by the findings that positive seniority culture remained dominant and normalized educational behavior, proving that formal rules penetrate the stronger layers of informal culture.

The third indicator, the informal norms that support official rules, is reflected in the clear role of the coach who actually perpetuates protection in the name of "character education", showing how the internal logic of the dormitory strengthens the mandate of institutional protection (Normalia, P. (2016). Finally, the statistical security realities resulting from recorded incidents reflect efforts to maintain legitimacy in the public eye while maintaining internal reality. Thus, this study enriches the literature on Institutional Theory by showing that integration in the context of religious education occurs due to the alignment of traditional values and modernity. These findings confirm that structural change is adequate with organizational cultural transformation that aligns informal norms with formal policies for substantive women's protection (Sidiki, D. A. A. D., & Damayanti, R. (2025).

This research substantively supports and strengthens the findings of five previous cutting-edge studies, while offering significant differentiation in the scientific context. The findings regarding the normalization of positive behavior are in line with (Khairunniza, L. D. E., & Supriatna, N 2025) which highlights the culture of seniority and strong supervision in Islamic boarding schools. The victim's confidence aspect of social support confirmed the outcome (Frelians, P. P., & Astuti, R. V. 2024), while the attention of psychological trauma strengthened the argument (Ariyanta, D. (2024) about the sharp support system. Similarly, the findings on safe reporting mechanisms are in line with (Firnanda, I. A. (2025). However, this study is fundamentally different because it does not only describe the phenomenon of bullying in general, but also reveals specific institutional integration mechanisms in Ma'had Al-Jami'ah UIN Walisongo.

If previous studies tend to separate policy analysis from organizational culture, this study actually shows how the two interact synergistically: formal regulation is adopted for external legitimacy, and informal practices still perpetuate protection in the name of the tradition of regeneration (Tilung, F. 2023). This difference in context is crucial because Ma'had Al-Jami'ah is a unique hybrid between the pesantren system and the state

university, creating a power dynamic not found in previous studies. The novelty of this study's findings lies in the revelation that integration in Islamic religious education is not solely due to bureaucratic efficiency pressures, but rather the result of complex negotiations between traditional values of seniority, religious interpretations of discipline, and the demands of modernity for gender protection. This study also maps for the first time how the clear role of coaches functions as a "strong bridge" that maintains policy-practice alignment, providing a new analytical framework to understand the success of anti-bullying strategies in religious hybrid institutions more comprehensively and in depth.

Based on the novelty of findings regarding the phenomenon of integration and the clear role of coaches as "strong bridges", the urgent strategic step to be taken today is the sustainability of policies that align traditional norms with modern protection standards. From the aspect of the government, especially the Ministry of Religion, it is necessary to prepare national technical guidelines on the prevention of gender-based violence that are contextualized specifically for the Ma'had environment or Islamic boarding schools at State Islamic Religious Universities (PTKIN). This regulation should mandate mandatory gender sensitivity training and non-violent conflict management for all dormitory coaches, as well as establish an independent supervisory unit that has direct access to victims without a seniority hierarchy filter, in order to penetrate a positive culture that perpetuates accountability (Sobarie, 2025) In the context of Islamic Higher Education, institutions must proactively deconstruct the narrative of "discipline" that often legitimizes violence through the reinterpretation of Islamic values that are truly *Rahmatan lil alamin*. Universities need to overhaul the internal evaluation system by adopting indicators based on the psychological impact of victims, rather than just pseudo-administrative compliance, and creating an encrypted reporting mechanism that guarantees the confidentiality of the whistleblower's identity.

In addition, organizational culture transformation must be carried out by involving student elements in safe peer-support supervision, so that the role of coaches can be shifted from authoritarian supervisors to protective mentors. This synergy between the firmness of external regulations and internal cultural reform is crucial to close the decoupling gap, ensuring that anti-bullying strategies are not only ceremonial documents, but also substantive protection practices that are dignified, inclusive, and able to break the chain of structural violence in the religious education environment in a sustainable manner (Noviani, N. R. (2024).

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the Anti-Bullying Strategy for Women at Ma'had Al-Jami'ah UIN Walisongo has experienced a harmonious structural success, where formal protection is actually the foundation for the preservation of a culture of mutual care. The

most encouraging finding that reinforces the general assumption is the fact that the institution that was supposed to be the "moral fortress" and the safest space for students, has consciously transformed into a "second home" whose educational legitimacy protects the psychological well-being of students. Even more proudly, the key actors who are expected to be the main protectors, namely the coaches, turn out to function as a "strong bridge" that actually aligns anti-violence policies with the reality of positive seniority in the field. This dismantles a convenient truth: that written regulation has real power when confronted with the informal norms that are considered noble, creating a statistical security reality that is accurate and the public can trust. This conclusion reinforces our awareness that with a positive deconstruction of a humanist culture of "discipline" and a total reform of the role of supervisors, any attempt at improvement becomes a meaningful administrative ritual. This research emphatically affirms that continuing this condition is not only managerial success, but also an institutional commitment to women's dignity and the values of *Rahmatan lil alamin* that the university promotes, a proud reality that demands immediate action before the next generation of female students become beneficiaries of the integrity of the system that continues to be enforced.

The main limitation of this study lies in the geographical and institutional scope that is limited only to Ma'had Al-Jami'ah UIN Walisongo, so that the findings regarding the integration of policies and culture of positive seniority cannot necessarily be generalized widely to other religious education contexts in Indonesia. The unique characteristics of Ma'had as a hybrid between the *pesantren* system and public universities create specific collaborative dynamics that may differ significantly from purely traditional *pesantren* or public colleges without dormitory. These limitations leave a crucial academic void regarding whether similar phenomena occur at other institutions with different organizational and leadership cultural variations. To overcome these limitations, future research should be designed with a more robust cross-institutional comparative approach, involving several Ma'had in other PTKIN and *salafiyah* Islamic boarding schools to test the consistency of protection patterns and the effectiveness of anti-bullying strategies nationally and involve relevant stakeholders. Furthermore, researchers are also strongly advised to use mixed methods with a larger sample to quantitatively measure the prevalence of success to complement the depth of existing empirical qualitative data. Longitudinal studies are also needed to look at organizational culture changes in the long term after policy interventions are carried out on an ongoing basis. By expanding the scope of the location and variety of methods, the external validity of the research can be drastically improved so that the resulting policy recommendations are more representative and applicable to the national Islamic education system as a whole, not only limited to this specific case in Semarang, but become a universal reference for the protection of women in Indonesia's more diverse and complex religious

education environment for the sake of gender justice.

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