**Challenges and Strategies for Implementing Anti-Bullying Programs for Primary School-Aged Children in Indonesia: A Narrative Literature Review**

**Abstract**

Bullying in primary schools is a pervasive issue globally, including in Indonesia, where it continues to significantly impact children's psychological, academic, and social development. This narrative literature review investigates the implementation of anti-bullying programs in Indonesian primary schools, focusing on the challenges and strategies involved. The review synthesizes findings from recent studies (2015-2025) to explore the strategies employed to prevent bullying, including curriculum integration, character education, and community involvement. It also highlights key barriers such as insufficient teacher preparedness, the influence of social media, and cultural normalization of bullying. Despite growing awareness, there remains a gap in understanding and addressing bullying effectively in the Indonesian school context. The study emphasizes the importance of comprehensive teacher training, structured evaluation, and consistent implementation of anti-bullying policies. The findings suggest that a holistic, community-driven approach, coupled with the use of technology and media, is essential for creating a bullying-free school environment. This paper provides practical recommendations for policymakers, educators, and community leaders to enhance the effectiveness of anti-bullying initiatives and foster a safe and supportive educational environment. Future research should focus on field studies and longitudinal evaluations to better understand the real-world effectiveness and sustainability of these programs.

**Keywords:** challenges, strategies, anti-bullying programs, elementary school-aged children, Indonesia

# Introduction

The phenomenon of bullying in primary schools is a global issue found in various countries, including Indonesia. Bullying among primary school-aged children can be defined as repeated acts of physical, verbal, or social violence committed by one or more individuals against another child who is weaker or more vulnerable. International studies indicate a relatively high prevalence of bullying among primary school students. For instance, research by Glew et al. (2005) revealed that approximately 22% of students in the United States are involved in bullying, either as perpetrators, victims, or both. In Europe, Husky et al. (2020) reported that 18.2% of children experience bullying as victims, and 14.3% engage in bullying as perpetrators.

This phenomenon is not only prevalent in developed countries but also constitutes a serious issue in developing nations (Menesini & Salmivalli, 2017), including Indonesia (Borualogo & Casas, 2022). Data from SIMFONI-PPA recorded 1,993 cases of child abuse from January to February 2024, with a trend that is expected to continue rising. In 2023, the Indonesian National Commission for Child Protection received 3,547 reports of child abuse, while the Indonesian Child Protection Commission documented 2,355 cases of child protection violations up until August 2023. Within educational institutions, there were 861 cases, including sexual, physical/psychological abuse, bullying, issues related to educational facilities, and policies. Additionally, the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection recorded 2,325 cases of physical abuse against children throughout 2023 (Fahham, 2024).

The impact of bullying on children is highly damaging, both in the short and long term. Psychologically, victims of bullying are vulnerable to experiencing anxiety disorders, depression, and sleep disturbances (Husky et al., 2020). These effects can hinder a child's social-emotional development and diminish their self-confidence. Academically, victims of bullying tend to demonstrate lower performance compared to their peers (Glew et al., 2005). Furthermore, Arseneault (2017) found that childhood experiences of bullying are correlated with an increased risk of mental health disorders, personality disorders, and social relationship problems in adulthood. Therefore, the implementation of anti-bullying education or programs should be introduced at an early stage.

In line with the importance of early anti-bullying programs, Farrell (1999) emphasized that early interventions against bullying in childhood have been proven effective in preventing further social problems, with an early childhood education approach focusing on addressing bullying before it worsens. Craven et al. (2007) also reinforced the importance of early intervention, stating that bullying can begin as early as preschool age, and thus anti-bullying programs should be integrated into primary education to halt the development of these negative behavioural patterns. Moreover, Kvestad et al. (2024), in their study on the Be-Prox program at an early childhood education centre in Norway, found that systematic intervention at the preschool level effectively reduced bullying behaviour among peers, demonstrating the positive impact of early intervention.

In Indonesia, awareness of the issue of bullying has indeed begun to rise. However, bullying remains a concerning issue in primary school environments. Despite the high incidence of bullying in Indonesia, awareness of this issue is still low among many parties. Many students experience bullying, but local cultural factors sometimes regard bullying as a part of socialisation, not perceiving it as a serious problem.

A narrative literature review approach was chosen for this study due to its advantage in providing a comprehensive examination of the research problem. By reviewing previous empirical research articles, this study has the potential to present a more in-depth picture of the implementation of anti-bullying programs in schools across Indonesia. Various previous studies offer broad insights into the successes and challenges encountered in the implementation of anti-bullying programs, as well as their impact on student behaviour and the school environment. Through this review, it is hoped that best practices can be revealed, which can serve as a reference for developing and adapting anti-bullying programs in Indonesia, considering the existing socio-cultural context. Thus, this research plays a crucial role in contributing to the development of more effective policies and educational practices in addressing bullying at the primary school level.

This study aims to explore in greater depth the implementation of anti-bullying programs in primary schools in Indonesia. The research is guided by three main questions: 1) What are the strategies for implementing anti-bullying programs in primary schools in Indonesia? 2) What are the key challenges faced in their implementation?

This review contributes to enriching the literature on anti-bullying intervention programs in developing countries, particularly in Indonesia, where research on this topic remains limited. Furthermore, this article is expected to provide practical recommendations for policymakers, educators, and education advocates in developing more effective and contextually relevant anti-bullying programs.

**Table 1: Selected Articles for Analysis**

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| **No.** | **Author & Year of Publication** | **Topics** |
| 1 | (Jumainah et al., 2024) | The implementation of the peaceful love character through the anti-bullying program |
| 2 | (Muhammad et al., 2024) | Anti-bullying education strategy |
| 3 | (Sukmawati & Aliyyah, 2023) | Teachers’ strategies in addressing bullying |
| 4 | (Ahyani et al., 2019) | Evaluation of the bullying prevention program |
| 5 | (Yulianti et al., 2023) | anti bullying project to strengthen the *Pancasila* student profile |
| 6 | (Shore & Cahyani, 2019) | Discrimination and bullying in an elementary school |
| 7 | (Sa’diyah & Nurhayati, 2023) | Analysis of child-friendly school strategies to prevent bullying |
| 8 | (Ariyanti et al., 2024) | The role of character education in preventing verbal bullying behaviour |
| 9 | (Nuryanti et al., 2025) | The effect of preventive counselling on reducing bullying |
| 10 | (Indra & Jasiah, 2024) | cyberbullying in elementary school students |
| 11 | (Nizmi et al., 2024) | The role of teachers in preventing bullying |
| 12 | (Giferani et al., 2024) | Teachers’ strategies in bullying prevention based on child-friendly schools |
| 13 | (Wahidiyani et al., 2024) | The role of teachers in guiding students to achieve a bullying-free school |
| 14 | (Ramadhanti & Hidayat, 2022) | Teachers’ strategies in addressing bullying behaviour |
| 15 | (Sulaeka & Susanto, 2023) | The role and strategies of teachers in instilling tolerance values as an effort to minimise bullying |
| 16 | (Irene & Dwiningrum, 2020) | Creative teaching strategy to reduce bullying |
| 17 | (Heryani et al., 2020) | Development of an application for bullying behaviour prevention strategies |
| 18 | (Farida et al., 2024) | The impact of bullying and intervention strategies |
| 19 | (Nadia & Aliyyah, 2024) | Teachers’ strategies in addressing bullying |
| 20 | (Larozza et al., 2023) | Teachers’ strategies in addressing bullying behaviour through character education |
| 21 | (Khiyarusoleh & Indriawati, 2018) | Teachers’ strategies in enhancing student awareness of bullying victims |
| 22 | (Astuti, 2023) | The role of teachers in instilling anti-bullying perspectives in civics education |
| 23 | (Novitasari et al., 2025) | Bullying prevention strategies in elementary schools through a campaign program |
| 24 | (Sauri et al., 2023) | School management strategies in preventing and addressing bullying |
| 25 | (Ali et al., 2022) | Forms of bullying and approaches to addressing bullying issues |
| 26 | (Mawaddah, 2024) | The implementation of the stop bullying program |
| 27 | (Nurfadillah et al., 2025) | Instilling character values in students to reduce bullying behaviour |
| 28 | (Sadaruddin et al., 2024) | Prevention and handling of verbal bullying behaviour in elementary schools |
| 29 | (Annisa & Habiby, 2024) | The implementation of core values of peace in efforts to prevent bullying |
| 30 | (Utsman, 2024) | The implementation of civics education to strengthen student character as a preventive measure against bullying |
| 31 | (Rahman et al., 2024) | Strengthening ethical and moral values through anti-bullying socialisation |
| 32 | (Pebriani et al., 2025) | Bullying prevention education |

# Method

***Background***This study employs a literature review approach to analyse and summarise findings related to the implementation of anti-bullying programs in primary schools in Indonesia. The focus of this review is on bullying prevention programs and their impact on primary school-aged children, with the goal of understanding the effectiveness of these programs.

***Literature Selection***

The literature used in this review was selected based on the criteria: 1) Publication Year: The literature must have been published in the last ten years (2015-2025) to ensure its relevance to current conditions; 2) Focus on Anti-Bullying Programs: The literature must address anti-bullying programs in primary schools in Indonesia; 3) Type of Source: The literature must be based on field studies (empirical), including qualitative, quantitative, or mixed-methods approaches; 4) Databases Used: The selected literature was sourced from Google Scholar, DOAJ, and ERIC databases.

Finally, based on the established criteria, 32 journal articles were included in this review (see table 1).

***The Process of Literature Review***

The process of conducting a literature review is as follows: 1) Identification of a clear research topic as the primary focus. 2) Collection of literature from various sources, including primary sources such as scientific journals, books, and research articles, as well as relevant secondary sources. 3) Selection of collected literature based on relevance, quality, and the credibility of the sources. 4) Analysis and synthesis of the literature to uncover trends, findings, and knowledge gaps in previous research. 5) Categorisation of relevant literature based on themes, methodologies, or research outcomes to facilitate further analysis. 6) Identification of key conclusions from the existing literature and the discovery of research gaps that can serve as a focus for future studies. 7) Writing the literature review, starting with an introduction, followed by a discussion of the key findings, critique of existing research, and concluding with a summary of findings and recommendations for future research.

# Result

## Main Challenges

***Awareness and Understanding of Bullying***

The lack of awareness and understanding of bullying among students and teachers represents a significant challenge in addressing bullying in Indonesia. Sukmawati & Aliyyah (2023) found that many students do not fully comprehend what bullying is or the negative impacts it entails. Furthermore, Muhammad et al. (2024) highlighted the limited understanding of both students and teachers regarding the early signs of bullying behaviour, which leads to difficulties in detecting and preventing the issue at an early stage. This situation is exacerbated by the low negative perception of bullying, with students often normalising bullying behaviours, as explained by Pebriani et al. (2025), which prevents them from recognising the dangers associated with such actions. In addition, Annisa & Habiby (2024) noted that many teachers have not yet grasped the fundamental values of peace, which hinders their ability to provide good examples and effectively support anti-bullying programmes. All these factors underscore the urgent need for enhanced understanding and more comprehensive education on bullying at all levels of schooling.

***The Influence of Social Media and Social Environment***

The influence of social media and the social environment plays a significant role in exacerbating bullying behaviour among students. Farida et al. (2024) revealed that social media serves as a channel that amplifies peer-to-peer bullying behaviour, with students often imitating and escalating bullying actions through digital platforms. Ramadhanti & Hidayat (2022) added that social media also serves as a primary factor in the spread of violence, with many violent scenes being replicated by students after encountering them in the media. Moreover, Indra & Jasiah (2024) observed that the high exposure of children to inappropriate content, further exacerbated by the lack of parental control over digital media usage, worsens the situation. Ali et al. (2022) also highlighted the impact of a permissive social environment on bullying practices, where unclear social norms regarding bullying behaviour lead students to perceive such actions as acceptable. On the other hand, Nurfadillah et al. (2025) demonstrated that the difficulty in establishing consistency in character building among students, amidst the strong influence of social media, further undermines efforts to prevent bullying. All these factors underline the need for active involvement from parents and schools to monitor and educate students on the responsible use of social media and the cultivation of positive character traits.

***Teacher Preparedness and Human Resources***

Teacher preparedness and human resources posed a significant challenge in addressing bullying in Indonesia. Ahyani et al. (2019) noted that teachers' permissive attitudes, influenced by heavy workloads and a lack of training in empathy, hindered their ability to manage bullying cases effectively. The high workload also reduced the time and attention teachers could dedicate to providing optimal support to students regarding bullying, as highlighted by Wahidiyani et al. (2024). Moreover, Nadia & Aliyyah (2024) emphasised the lack of teacher readiness in dealing with complex bullying cases, which led to an inability to respond appropriately to various bullying situations. The limited involvement of parents and the weak social control over children outside of school, as pointed out by Novitasari et al. (2025), further exacerbated this issue, as parents were not always actively engaged in monitoring their children's behaviour. Furthermore, Sauri et al. (2023) observed that the shortage of trained human resources in the Anti-Bullying Task Force at schools resulted in ineffective handling of bullying cases. All these factors indicated that enhancing teacher training, increasing parental involvement, and providing specialised training for Anti-Bullying Task Forces were crucial to strengthening efforts in preventing and addressing bullying.

***School Culture and Social Change***

School culture and social change are crucial factors in the success of anti-bullying programmes. Khiyarusoleh & Indriawati (2018) revealed that the low level of student awareness regarding the importance of social responsibility worsens the situation, as students often fail to understand the impact of bullying on their peers. Additionally, resistance to changes in school culture has become a significant barrier, as highlighted by Jumainah et al. (2024), where some schools still struggle to adapt to new, more inclusive and compassionate approaches. Ali et al. (2022) also emphasised that the lack of empathy from perpetrators towards victims and the influence of a permissive social environment exacerbates bullying behaviour, as students feel that such actions are not being adequately addressed. Sauri et al. (2023) added that the resistance of old school cultures to the implementation of Anti-Bullying Task Forces has hindered the effective handling of bullying cases. Furthermore, Larozza et al. (2023) demonstrated that inconsistent character education implementation, due to leadership changes within schools, has further complicated efforts to build a school culture that supports bullying prevention. All of these factors underline the need for profound and consistent changes in school culture, supported by all members of the school community.

***Deficiency of Evaluation and Monitoring of Programmes***

The deficiency of evaluation and monitoring of programmes presents a significant barrier to the effectiveness of anti-bullying initiatives in Indonesia. Sadaruddin et al. (2024) noted that anti-bullying education implemented in schools has not been maximised, primarily due to the absence of systematic programme evaluation. Without structured monitoring, it is difficult to measure the success or failure of such programmes. Annisa & Habiby (2024) also highlighted that the suboptimal evaluation of anti-bullying programme implementation results in a lack of constructive feedback for future programme improvements. This leads to a failure to adjust and refine the approaches used to address bullying, preventing the programme from being effective and sustainable.

***Cultural Factors and Tolerance***

Cultural factors and tolerance play a crucial role in the development of bullying in schools. Sulaeka & Susanto (2023) noted that the persistence of intolerance in elementary schools often serves as the root cause of bullying behaviour, as students are not taught to appreciate differences and respect one another. Furthermore, Yulianti et al. (2023) revealed that the decline in mutual cooperation and tolerance post-pandemic exacerbates this situation, as students tend to focus more on their personal interests and exhibit less empathy towards others. The lack of instilling social values such as tolerance, solidarity, and cooperation in daily life makes bullying behaviour increasingly difficult to address, highlighting the need for stronger efforts to reinforce character education and social values among students.

## Strategies of Implementation

***Curriculum-Based and Learning Strategies***

Curriculum-based and learning strategies in preventing bullying in elementary schools include integrating anti-bullying values into the curriculum, strengthening character education, and developing the Pancasila Student Profile. Sukmawati & Aliyyah (2023) demonstrated that the Merdeka Curriculum effectively internalises anti-bullying values through collaborative learning involving teachers, school principals, and parents. Astuti (2023) confirmed that anti-bullying values was integrated into the Civic Education (PKn) curriculum through open discussions and character strengthening, while Utsman (2024) emphasised the importance of PKn in shaping social values such as empathy and tolerance. Character education, as highlighted by Ariyanti et al. (2024), also plays a vital role in encouraging positive behaviour and reducing verbal bullying. Larozza et al. (2023) added that a school culture prioritising mutual respect further contributes to building students’ character. Annisa & Habiby (2024) showed that peace values through the Child-Friendly School programme was implemented to reinforce social character. Additionally, the strengthening of the Pancasila Student Profile by Yulianti et al. (2023) showed that collaboration among students, teachers, and parents is effective in creating a safe and inclusive school environment. The authors contend that these strategies can build strong social character and establish a school culture of mutual respect, which is a crucial foundation for creating a bullying-free educational environment.

***Counselling and Psychological Intervention-Based Strategies***

Counselling and psychological intervention-based strategies in bullying prevention at elementary schools involve preventive counselling, individual sessions, as well as motivational and group guidance. Nuryanti et al. (2025) developed a counselling model focused on strengthening empathy, conflict resolution skills, and emotional resilience in students to reduce the potential for bullying from an early stage. Ali et al. (2022) further emphasised that individual interventions, involving both victims and perpetrators, can help address the emotional root causes underlying bullying behaviour. Additionally, Khiyarusoleh & Indriawati (2018) demonstrated that individual and group guidance can enhance social awareness, strengthen empathy, and foster a more supportive school environment. The authors argue that these strategies are not only reactive to bullying incidents but also preventive, as they work to build students' social-emotional capacities in a sustainable manner.

***Socialisation, Campaign, and Media-Based Strategies***

Socialisation, campaign, and media strategies are crucial in the prevention of bullying in schools. Sukmawati & Aliyyah (2023) proposed the Merdeka Curriculum, which involves parents, teachers, and school principals in anti-bullying efforts. Yulianti et al. (2023) considered the “Stop Bullying Everywhere, Every Time, and for Everyone” project to strengthen Pancasila values through collaboration among students, teachers, and parents. Novitasari et al. (2025) emphasised the use of communication media in anti-bullying campaigns in schools. Mawaddah (2024) stressed a programme based on school regulations with poster campaigns and extracurricular activities. Rahman et al. (2024) focused on socialisation based on ethics and morals to cultivate empathy towards differences. Jumainah et al. (2024) introduced a peace-loving character through the creation of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and complaint application systems. Heryani et al. (2020) found that anti-bullying educational apps were more effective than printed modules. Muhammad et al. (2024) calculated interactive board games to reinforce values of tolerance and social interaction. These strategies demonstrate that the success of bullying prevention in schools highly depends on collaboration involving all parties and the utilisation of technology and media to create broader and more effective awareness.

***Community Involvement-Based Strategies***

Community involvement-based strategies in bullying prevention emphasised collaboration between teachers, parents, and school principals, as well as the establishment of clear support structures within the school. Sukmawati & Aliyyah (2023) highlighted the importance of involving all stakeholders in the management of anti-bullying programmes to create collective awareness and a culture that combated bullying. Farida et al. (2024) added that active monitoring by teachers and close cooperation with parents were necessary to prevent bullying. Sauri et al. (2023) proposed the establishment of an Anti-Bullying Task Force to monitor bullying incidents, while Jumainah et al. (2024) recommended the declaration of an anti-bullying school policy and the use of complaint applications to address issues in a transparent and structured manner. These strategies underscored the importance of broad community involvement in creating a safe and bullying-free school environment.

***Policy and Regulation-Based Strategies***

Policy and regulation-based strategies in bullying prevention involved the establishment of clear rules, reporting systems, and a child-friendly school approach that supported a safe environment for students. Nadia & Aliyyah (2024) emphasised the importance of an anti-bullying school policy that involved direct engagement with both perpetrators and victims to create a system that was firm yet compassionate. Jumainah et al. (2024) proposed the development of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and an anti-bullying reporting system that streamlined the process of addressing bullying incidents in a structured manner. Sa’diyah & Nurhayati (2023) demonstrated that a child-friendly school model based on UNICEF guidelines was crucial in creating an inclusive learning atmosphere, while Sadaruddin et al. (2024) stressed the importance of continuous education supported by policy to ensure the consistent and effective implementation of anti-bullying programmes. The authors argued that these strategies highlighted the necessity of clear policies and systematic support from the school to create a bullying-free culture.

***Extracurricular and Non-Formal Activity-Based Strategies***

Extracurricular and non-formal activity-based strategies in bullying prevention focused on the development of character and life skills in students. Sa’diyah & Nurhayati (2023) emphasised the importance of life skills activities and public speaking in building the social skills necessary for managing conflict. Nurfadillah et al. (2025)added that activities such as ceremonies, literacy programmes, and value-sharing sessions could help students internalise positive attitudes, while (Pebriani et al. (2025) demonstrated that lectures, group discussions, and case simulations were effective in raising students' awareness about bullying and conflict resolution skills. These strategies highlighted that extracurricular and non-formal activities could serve as effective media for shaping students’ character and preventing bullying behaviour through more interactive and participatory approaches.

# Discussion

Addressing bullying in the school environment faces fundamental challenges, one of which is the lack of a deep understanding of this phenomenon among students and teachers. Many students still perceive bullying as a "normal" behaviour or part of "play," unaware that the psychological and physical impacts it causes can be extremely damaging for the victims. The same phenomenon is often observed among some teachers, who are unable to recognise the early signs of bullying occurring within the school. Karikari et al. (2020) revealed that the narrow understanding of the involved parties, such as teachers and parents, actually exacerbates this issue. This finding suggests that the success of anti-bullying programmes heavily depends on how well educators and students understand and are aware of the negative impacts of bullying behaviour. Without a comprehensive understanding, prevention efforts will not be able to achieve effective results.

Social media, although offering various benefits, also plays a significant role in accelerating the spread of bullying behaviour. Digital platforms enable bullying to occur with a high degree of anonymity, which in turn makes victims feel more isolated and powerless. Nickerson (2019) showed that cyberbullying often continues into the real world, with students mimicking the violent behaviours they encounter online. Furthermore, a permissive social environment—both in and outside of school—provides space for the development of this negative behaviour. The lack of clear social norms regulating bullying behaviour, combined with insufficient supervision, worsens the situation, making bullying a behaviour that is accepted or even trivialised in some circles.

Although teachers play a key role in the prevention and handling of bullying, various factors, such as high workloads and limited training, often hinder their preparedness to address this issue. Several studies have shown that although various anti-bullying programmes have been implemented, their effectiveness is often limited due to the lack of comprehensive training for educators (Shetgiri et al., 2015). Therefore, the development of more structured and continuous training programmes is crucial. Such programmes will not only enhance teachers’ understanding but also equip them with the necessary skills to identify and respond appropriately when bullying occurs within the school environment.

Another major challenge is the school culture, which is often unresponsive to the issue of bullying. Schools with a culture that is permissive towards bullying behaviour or that are not sufficiently responsive to change often struggle to implement anti-bullying programmes effectively. Therefore, more significant efforts are required to transform the school culture into one that is more inclusive and attentive to students' well-being. Salmivalli et al. (2021) emphasised the importance of changing the school culture to prioritise empathy and cooperation as steps towards creating a safe and bullying-free environment. This process is not easy, as it requires a shift in mindset both from school leadership and from the students themselves, which often presents a significant barrier to achieving this goal.

In addition, a significant weakness in bullying prevention is the lack of structured evaluation and monitoring of the programmes implemented. Without detailed and measurable evaluation, it is difficult to assess the effectiveness of the anti-bullying programmes that have been carried out. Irianto et al. (2024) stressed the importance of a continuous evaluation system to measure success and challenges in programme implementation. Successful programmes require evaluative support that allows for ongoing adjustments and improvements, ensuring they remain relevant and effective in achieving long-term goals.

The global pandemic has added challenges in strengthening the value of tolerance among students. Mclallen (2002) revealed that reinforcing the value of tolerance both inside and outside of school is a crucial step in reducing bullying. By instilling these values in students' daily lives—through both the curriculum and social interactions—it is hoped that a more inclusive and empathetic environment will be created, thereby reducing the potential for bullying.

Character education, which teaches anti-bullying values such as empathy, cooperation, and respect for differences, plays a critical role in bullying prevention. The Merdeka Curriculum, currently implemented in many schools, provides opportunities to incorporate these values early in the learning process. Shetgiri et al. (2015) demonstrated that value-based education is highly effective in reducing bullying behaviour, not only helping students avoid becoming perpetrators of bullying but also serving as agents of change to prevent bullying within their schools.

Psychological approaches focusing on the development of empathy and social skills have been proven effective in preventing bullying. Counselling for both victims and perpetrators of bullying can alleviate tension and improve social dynamics in schools (Nickerson & Parks, 2021). Counselling also offers support to students facing psychological issues that may trigger bullying, such as low self-esteem, social anxiety, or domestic problems, which often underlie bullying behaviour.

Anti-bullying campaigns involving all school elements—including parents, students, and educators—can be key to addressing this issue. Salmivalli et al. (2021) demonstrated that social media-based campaigns can raise collective awareness about the importance of creating a bullying-free environment. Such campaigns have the potential to foster a more compassionate atmosphere, encouraging respect for differences among students.

Active community involvement, including parents and the broader community, is vital in preventing bullying. A holistic approach involving community elements outside of the school, such as local residents and organisations, can create a safer and more supportive environment for students. Noviyanti et al. (2025) argued that strengthening community involvement builds collective awareness, driving positive change among students both inside and outside of school.

Clear and consistent school policies, including easily accessible and confidential reporting systems, are essential for creating a bullying-free environment. DeSisto & Smith (2014) stated that policies supporting students in reporting bullying incidents they experience or witness can be a crucial first step in addressing bullying. Moreover, policies that ensure firm consequences for bullying perpetrators can have a significant preventive impact, reducing the likelihood of bullying occurring in schools.

Overall, bullying prevention in elementary schools in Indonesia requires a holistic and integrated approach, with a deep focus on the underlying factors and challenges. While various efforts have been made to address bullying, the main challenge remains the lack of comprehensive understanding of the negative impacts of bullying, both among students, teachers, and parents. Additionally, permissive school cultures and the absence of structured evaluation of implemented programmes hinder the effectiveness of anti-bullying policies. Therefore, there is a need for a more responsive school culture, comprehensive training for educators, and the utilisation of technology and social media to raise collective awareness about the importance of creating a safe and inclusive environment. Character-based approaches, which emphasise empathy, cooperation, and respect for differences, are also crucial in preventing bullying. It is hoped that with the involvement of all school and community elements, as well as clear and consistent policies, anti-bullying programmes will achieve their goal of creating a safe and supportive environment for students’ development.

# Conclusion

This study highlights the urgent need for effective anti-bullying programs in Indonesian primary schools, where bullying remains a pervasive issue despite rising awareness. The key challenges identified include a lack of comprehensive understanding of bullying among students and educators, the exacerbating influence of social media, and insufficient teacher preparedness. Strategies such as integrating anti-bullying values into the curriculum, strengthening character education, and fostering collaboration among educators, parents, and the community have been shown to be effective. To improve the impact of anti-bullying initiatives, schools must prioritise cultural change, enhance teacher training, implement consistent evaluation and monitoring systems, and utilise technology for broader awareness. By addressing these issues and incorporating inclusive, empathetic approaches, Indonesia can build a safer, more supportive environment for primary school children, free from bullying.

Future research in the field of anti-bullying programs in Indonesian primary schools should focus on field studies to gain practical insights into the implementation and outcomes of these programs. It is recommended that upcoming studies incorporate direct observations, interviews, and surveys with key stakeholders, including teachers, students, parents, and school administrators, to evaluate the real-world effectiveness of anti-bullying interventions. Additionally, future studies should investigate the influence of the school’s socio-cultural environment on the success of bullying prevention efforts, particularly how community involvement, cultural attitudes, and parental engagement contribute to or hinder the program’s impact. Research could also focus on comparing different types of anti-bullying strategies (e.g., curriculum integration, counselling, peer support systems) across various school settings to determine the most effective approaches in diverse contexts. Furthermore, longitudinal studies tracking the long-term effects of these programs on students’ emotional and academic outcomes are crucial for assessing their sustainability and broader impact.

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