

Class Teacher Strategies In Handling Cases Of Bullying Against Minority Religious Students In Grade II Of SDN 3 Gondang

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Abstract

This study aims to describe the strategies used by classroom teachers in addressing bullying cases against religious minority students in Grade II of SDN 3 Gondang during the 2025/2026 academic year. The study was motivated by the existence of bullying behavior related to religious differences, which may affect students' comfort, self-confidence, and social interactions within the school environment. Therefore, classroom teachers play an important role in creating a safe, comfortable, and inclusive learning atmosphere that respects diversity. This research employed a qualitative approach with a case study design. The research participants consisted of the Grade II classroom teacher and students involved in bullying cases. Data were collected through observations, interviews, and documentation. The data were analyzed through data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Data validity was ensured through source triangulation and technique triangulation. The findings showed that the classroom teacher implemented several strategies to address bullying cases involving religious minority students. These strategies included providing understanding about tolerance and respect for differences, conducting personal approaches to both perpetrators and victims of bullying, offering guidance and assistance to students who experienced bullying, monitoring student interactions, and collaborating with parents. In addition, the teacher integrated the values of tolerance into learning activities and daily classroom practices. These strategies helped reduce bullying behavior and improve social acceptance of religious minority students, thereby creating a more inclusive and harmonious learning environment.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Schools are social systems comprised of various components, such as teachers, students, curriculum, and the environment, that interact to achieve educational goals. In this context, schools serve not only as places for learning but also as spaces for social interaction, fostering various dynamics among students, including the potential for bullying (Nikmah, 2025). As formal educational institutions, schools organize learning processes in a planned and systematic manner to develop students' potential. However, in practice, educational institutions also face various social problems, one of which is cases of bullying that can occur between students, including those from different backgrounds, such as religious differences (Asniyati, 2021).

Amirah et al. (2025) stated that schools play a crucial role not only in the transfer of knowledge but also in the development of students' character and tolerance. Therefore, schools must be able to create a safe, comfortable, and inclusive environment for all students regardless

of differences, including students from minority religions. Education is truly a process of guiding all the natural strengths within children so that they, as human beings and members of society, can achieve the highest level of safety and happiness. As explained by Mulyasa (2021), education is humanistic and emphasizes character formation or morals, in addition to intellectual development. This is crucial for students to develop an attitude of tolerance, mutual respect, and the ability to interact positively with their surroundings (Fitriani et al., 2023).

However, bullying cases against children remain a serious problem in education at the local, provincial, and national levels. At the local level in North Lombok Regency, police reports from the Women and Children Protection Unit (PPA) of the North Lombok Police in 2025 indicated that bullying cases were resolved through a restorative justice approach. At the provincial level, the Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Agency (DP3A) of West Nusa Tenggara Province recorded an increase in cases of violence against children, reaching 633 cases in 2024. Meanwhile, at the national level, the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI) stated that approximately 67% of cases of violence in education occurred at the elementary school level. This confirms that elementary school-aged children are a highly vulnerable group to becoming victims of bullying.

This bullying phenomenon was also identified at SDN 3 Gondang, particularly among students from minority religious backgrounds (Christians) in second grade. The bullying experienced included teasing, exclusion from class, and unpleasant treatment from peers. This situation reflects a lack of understanding and tolerance within the school environment towards religious differences (Anggraini, 2023; Pitaloka et al., 2021). A school environment that should be safe and inclusive has instead become a place that can threaten students' psychological and social development (Fajriyanti, 2022). Therefore, the active role of classroom teachers is crucial in implementing appropriate preventive and curative strategies to create a conducive learning environment (Muslimah et al., 2021; Ningrum et al., 2024).

This case reveals a research gap that this study seeks to address. Prior domestic studies on teacher strategies for handling student bullying, such as Muslimah et al. (2021) and Ningrum et al. (2024), examine bullying-handling strategies in a general sense, without specifically distinguishing bullying that targets students based on religious minority status. Meanwhile, studies that do focus on religious tolerance among elementary school children, such as Pitaloka et al. (2021) and Mahmudah et al. (2023), concentrate primarily on the instillation of tolerance values as a preventive measure, rather than on how teachers respond once bullying against a religious-minority student has already occurred. Susanti and Rachmawati (2025), whose work most closely relates to the present focus, examine institutional and policy-level responses to religious-minority bullying rather than the situated, day-to-day strategies enacted by an individual classroom teacher. This study is positioned to fill that gap by providing an in-depth, single-case account of how one classroom teacher combines preventive, repressive, and curative strategies specifically in response to religious-based bullying, within the under-researched context of a rural elementary school in North Lombok Regency.

Based on these problems, this study aims to describe in depth the strategies used by classroom teachers in addressing bullying cases against minority religious students in grade II of SDN 3 Gondang in the 2025/2026 academic year, as well as identifying the obstacles faced by teachers in the handling process. The results of this study are expected to provide theoretical and practical contributions to the development of educational science, particularly regarding inclusive classroom management and the resolution of ethnicity-based conflicts in elementary schools.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study research type. The qualitative approach was chosen because this research aims to understand social phenomena in depth by emphasizing the meaning, process, and experiences of the research subjects through descriptive data in the form of words (Pratama et al., 2022; Ramadhanti et al., 2022). The case study design was used to focus the investigation on one specific event or phenomenon, namely the handling of

a bullying case against religious minority students in grade II of SDN 3 Gondang, North Lombok Regency (Lubis et al., 2025).

The research was conducted at SDN 3 Gondang, located in Karang Bedil Hamlet, Gondang Village, Gangga District, North Lombok Regency, West Nusa Tenggara. The data sources in this study are divided into primary data and secondary data. Primary data were obtained directly from informants actively involved in the phenomenon being studied, consisting of a Grade II Teacher (Mrs. Henny Farida, S.Pd.), a religious minority student (Zeni Marsa Karel tung), and the principal (Mr. Pajri, S.Pd.). Informants were selected using a purposive sampling technique, based on their direct involvement in and knowledge of the bullying case under study, rather than being drawn randomly from the wider school population. Mrs. Henny Farida was selected as the key informant because, as the homeroom teacher of Grade II, she is the party directly responsible for designing and implementing classroom-level strategies to address the bullying and therefore possesses first-hand knowledge of the rationale, process, and outcomes of each strategy. Zeni Marsa Karel tung was selected as the sole student informant because he is the only religious-minority student in Grade II who had directly experienced the bullying behavior under investigation, making him the most information-rich source for understanding the victim's perspective and lived experience; no other student in the class met this specific criterion. Mr. Pajri, the school principal, was included to provide the institutional and managerial perspective on how classroom-level strategies align with school-wide policy, and to corroborate the teacher's and student's accounts from a supervisory vantage point. Secondary data were obtained from school documents such as regulations, school programs related to character building, class posters, and relevant academic literature (Astuti et al., 2024).

The data collection techniques used included observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation (Lestari et al., 2023). Observations were conducted by observing interactions between students and teacher actions in classroom management. In-depth interviews were conducted to explore teacher strategies, perspectives, and constraints, as well as student experiences. Documentation was used to strengthen the observation and interview data. The primary instrument in this study was the researcher herself, supported by observation and interview guidelines (Kurniawan et al., 2021).

Data analysis used the interactive model from Miles and Huberman, which consists of three main stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing/verification (Prasetyo et al., 2023; Fauziah et al., 2022). The collected data were selected, summarized, presented in narrative text, and then their meaning was concluded. To ensure the validity of the data, researchers used source triangulation techniques (comparing teacher, student, and principal data), time triangulation, and member checking (confirming interview transcripts with informants) (Rahimah et al., 2023).

3. RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Research Results

Based on observations, interviews, and documentation, SDN 3 Gondang has a strong commitment to creating a safe educational environment, in line with the school's vision of 'Civilized, Knowledgeable, Achieving, and Cultured'. However, in practice in Grade II, behaviors that lead to bullying are still found in the form of verbal teasing and exclusion of students from minority religions (Zeni Marsa Karel tung). In response, the grade II teacher has implemented a series of specific strategies.

1. Class Teacher Strategies in Addressing Bullying Cases

Strategy One: Creating an Inclusive Classroom Environment. Teachers strive to create a classroom free from discrimination. This is evident in the display of posters with the themes 'Stop Bullying' and 'Tolerance' throughout the school and classroom. Ms. Henny Farida stated: 'I always treat all students fairly regardless of their religion. I also display posters about tolerance and mutual respect in the classroom so that students always remember the importance of living in harmony.' Mr. Pajri, the Principal, echoed this

sentiment, stating that the provision of visual media is highly recommended to accustom students to respecting differences.

Second Strategy: Providing Tolerance Education. Tolerance education is carried out continuously, not limited to Civics or Religion subjects, but is embedded in every activity (Pitaloka et al., 2021). Teachers remind students that despite their different beliefs, they are one family in the classroom. Teachers also provide direct role models. "Teachers must be role models first. If teachers demonstrate respect for all students without discrimination, then students will learn to do the same," said Mrs. Henny.

Strategy Three: Dealing with Bullying Cases Directly. If verbal bullying (teasing) occurs, teachers don't delay handling it. They immediately call the perpetrator to give him an educational reprimand and explain the psychological impact of the teasing on his classmates. Zeni, the victim, confirmed this: "Usually, the teacher immediately tells them not to bully me again." This swift action minimizes conflict escalation.

Fourth Strategy: Conduct Regular Supervision. Teachers increase their observations during breaks or group activities, which are likely to lead to social exclusion. Teachers monitor peer interactions to detect potential bullying before it escalates (Noboru et al., 2021).

Strategy Five: Providing Support to Victims. Students who are victims of bullying often experience decreased self-confidence (Sari et al., 2021). Therefore, teachers employ a confidential, emotional approach. "I talk to students privately, listen to their stories, provide encouragement, and reassure them that they are not alone," said Mrs. Henny. This support has been shown to help victims feel like they have a haven.

2. Obstacles Faced by Class Teachers

In practice, implementing this strategy faces two major obstacles. First, the difficulty of instantly instilling the value of tolerance. Because students are still aged 7-8 (early concrete operational phase), most are still egocentric and consider taunts related to ethnicity, religion, race, and intergroup relations (SARA) as mere jokes. "Some students understand, but others still consider teasing their friends as just a joke. That's why I have to keep reminding them," explained Mrs. Henny.

Second, the difficulty in identifying cases due to a lack of disclosure from victims (a culture of silence). Students from minority religions often choose to remain silent due to fear of retaliation or embarrassment. Zeni revealed, "Sometimes I retaliate, but my mother says let God take the revenge, so sometimes I keep quiet, and sometimes I tell the teacher." This phenomenon causes teachers to only become aware of bullying when the victim shows drastic behavioral changes, such as withdrawing from social interactions.

B. Discussion

The results of this study confirm the theory that teachers' strategies for managing classroom conflict must encompass preventive, repressive, and curative measures (Muslimah et al., 2021; Ningrum et al., 2023). This multi-layered approach is consistent with international evidence on anti-bullying intervention, most notably Ttofi and Farrington's (2011) meta-analysis of school-based anti-bullying programs, which found that interventions combining preventive elements (such as classroom rules and whole-school policy) with direct disciplinary and victim-support methods produced significantly greater reductions in bullying than single-component programs alone. Creating an inclusive environment and displaying educational tools such as posters are excellent preventive strategies. This is supported by the findings of Susanti & Rachmawati (2025), who highlighted the importance of institutional and visual responses in reducing discrimination against students from religious minorities. This finding also resonates with UNESCO's (2019) global status report on school violence and bullying, which identifies fostering an explicitly inclusive school climate, one that visibly signals respect for diversity, as one of the most consistently effective whole-school prevention strategies across national contexts, including in relation to bullying based on religious and ethnic identity.

The teacher's role modeling aligns with Lickona's character education approach, cited by various experts, which argues that elementary school-aged children learn more through observational learning than through verbal instruction. Pitaloka, Dimyati, and Purwanta (2021) specifically emphasize that role modeling and fostering a school culture that values diversity are key to instilling tolerance. When Mrs. Henny acts fairly, this indirectly builds a social construct in students' minds that religious differences are not grounds for social segregation.

The teacher's direct action against the perpetrator of verbal bullying is a form of educational repression strategy. Hidayat et al. (2023) stated that even the slightest omission from the teacher will be interpreted by the perpetrator as legitimizing or approving the bullying. By intervening immediately, the second-grade teacher at SDN 3 Gondang broke the chain of aggression. This aligns with research by Wahyuni et al. (2022), which demonstrated that persuasive reprimands are more effective than physical punishment.

Furthermore, the support provided to Zeni (the victim) was a form of curative intervention focused on her resilience. Bullying victims are vulnerable to psychological trauma that hinders academic achievement (Fajriyanti, 2022). With emotional validation and personal support, the victim regained a sense of authority and security in the classroom.

Regarding obstacles, these findings are highly relevant to the studies of Mahmudah et al. (2023) and Nurfaniza et al. (2024). Early childhood children's understanding of the concepts of religion and ethnicity (SARA) is still limited. For them, differences are perceived as strange and are often reflected in ridicule due to a lack of diversity literacy within the family environment. Therefore, the biggest challenge for teachers is bridging this gap in understanding. Furthermore, the phenomenon of victim silence proves that school regulations alone are not enough; it requires building chemistry and trust between educators and students (Ramadhanti et al., 2022; Raihan et al., 2026).

These obstacles also mirror patterns documented in the international bullying literature. Modecki et al.'s (2014) meta-analysis across multiple national contexts similarly found that bullying rooted in out-group identity markers, such as religion or ethnicity, is frequently minimized by both perpetrators and bystanders as harmless joking during middle childhood, a developmental pattern consistent with the "just teasing" framing observed among students at SDN 3 Gondang. Likewise, Moore et al.'s (2017) systematic review on the consequences of bullying victimization emphasizes that underreporting by victims, driven by fear of retaliation, shame, or a perceived lack of adult responsiveness, is a near-universal barrier to early intervention across the studies reviewed, reinforcing that the culture of silence identified in this study is not unique to the Indonesian context but reflects a broader, cross-cultural challenge in addressing bullying against minority-identity students.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis of research results and discussion, it can be concluded that the strategies of class II teachers at SDN 3 Gondang in addressing bullying cases against minority religious students have been implemented systematically through preventive, repressive, and curative actions. These strategies include: (1) Creating an inclusive classroom environment without discrimination supported by poster media; (2) Providing education and role models of tolerance on an ongoing basis; (3) Handling bullying cases directly through an educational approach to the perpetrators; (4) Conducting intensive supervision of peer interactions; and (5) Providing emotional support to victims of bullying.

In practice, teachers face psychological and social challenges, such as the difficulty of changing students' perceptions of racial, ethnic, and intergroup bullying as mere jokes, and the lack of openness from victims due to fear or embarrassment. Therefore, stronger synergy is needed between schools, classroom teachers, and parents (the education tricerter) to cultivate multicultural values and tolerance from the family environment to the school.

These findings carry several practical implications. For classroom teachers, this study suggests that combining visible preventive measures (such as inclusive classroom displays) with swift, direct intervention upon incidents and confidential emotional support for victims offers a replicable, low-cost strategy package that does not require specialized counseling training to implement. For schools, the findings imply a need to move beyond relying on individual teachers' initiative by formally incorporating religious-tolerance education and anti-bullying response protocols into whole-school policy and character-education programs, so that effective practices are not dependent on any one teacher's personal commitment. For parents, particularly those of religious-minority students, the culture of silence identified here suggests a need for schools to proactively open communication channels, such as regular parent-teacher check-ins, so that families feel safe reporting incidents rather than relying on children to disclose them unprompted. For future research, given that this study is limited to a single classroom and a single case, larger-scale studies involving multiple schools and a more diverse range of religious-minority experiences are recommended to examine the transferability of these findings; longitudinal designs would further help determine whether the reported reduction in bullying behavior is sustained over time, and mixed-methods studies incorporating quantitative measures of school climate or peer-acceptance could complement the in-depth qualitative insight offered here with generalizable outcome data.

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