

HOW DO MUSLIM COMMUNITIES CREATE PEACE IN SCHOOLS? URBAN SCHOOL CLIMATE (USC) MODEL AS A PREVENTION OF BULLYING

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the behavioral dynamics and social interactions of Muslim school communities by situating them within the ethical framework of the Qur'an and the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad. Although numerous studies have highlighted the importance of school climate and social relations in shaping educational outcomes, limited attention has been given to how Islamic values concretely inform these processes within Muslim educational contexts. To address this gap, a qualitative case study approach was employed, focusing on patterns of behavior and interaction in Muslim school communities. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and document analysis, and subsequently analyzed using a thematic analysis approach. The findings reveal that the Qur'an and Hadith serve not only as spiritual references but also as practical guidelines for cultivating a safe and supportive learning environment, strengthening teacher-student and peer relationships, and reinforcing the influence of family in students' character formation. These interactions collectively foster a school climate characterized by harmony, inclusivity, and mutual respect. By linking Islamic normative principles with contemporary educational practices, this study underscores the role of religion as a transformative resource in promoting holistic education. The results offer valuable insights for educators, policymakers, and researchers seeking to improve the quality of Islamic education while contributing to broader discussions on values-based education in global contexts.

Keywords: Bullying, Peace, School Climate, Muslim Community, Urban School Climate (USC)

INTRODUCTION

Urban School Climate (USC) refers to the pattern of interaction and behavior among urban school residents that shapes the atmosphere of the school environment. Conceptually, school climate is defined as the attributes that characterize a school, creating an atmosphere that distinguishes one school from another (Syahril & Hadiyanto, 2018; Varela et al., 2021). Schools play a vital role in shaping students' character, social interactions, and academic success. A safe and inclusive school environment is essential in fostering students' psychological well-being and ensuring effective learning. However, bullying remains a significant challenge in many educational institutions, negatively impacting students' sense of security, self-confidence, and overall school climate (Suharti et al., 2023). Addressing this issue requires a structured and value-based approach to promoting peace and positive interactions among school members (Cuellar et al., 2021; Bradshaw et al., 2021).

Muslim communities, guided by the Qur'an and the teachings of Prophet Muhammad (Sunnah), emphasize values such as kindness, respect, and social harmony. These principles influence their approach to fostering peace within schools, encouraging cooperation, empathy, and mutual support among students, teachers, and families. By implementing these values, Muslim communities contribute to shaping a school climate that prioritizes safety, inclusivity, and conflict resolution. One framework that helps understand and enhance school peace-building efforts is the Urban School Climate (USC) Model. School climate refers to the set of

attributes that define the school environment, shaping interactions, behaviors, and the overall learning atmosphere (Syahril & Hadiyanto, 2018). The USC Model emphasizes the significance of positive interaction patterns, school policies, and structural support in creating a safe and supportive educational environment (Tubbs & Garner, 2008; Fauziah et al., 2023). A well-established school climate not only promotes students' emotional well-being but also serves as a preventive measure against bullying (Cui & To, 2021; Rutherford et al., 2023).

Previous studies (Back et al., 2016; Blitz et al., 2020; Berkowitz et al., 2021) emphasize the crucial role of school climate in creating a safe learning environment where students feel protected and valued. Additionally, school climate has been closely linked to students' academic performance and overall school satisfaction (Huang et al., 2020; Erdem & Kaya, 2023). The perceptions of school members, teachers, students, and administrators, play a key role in shaping the school's social environment and fostering positive interaction patterns (Ryberg et al., 2020; Suherman et al., 2025).

This study aims to analyze how Muslim communities foster peace in schools through the guidance of the Qur'an and Sunnah. It aims to explore behavioral patterns, social interactions, and the role of religious values in shaping a safe and inclusive school climate. Furthermore, this study examines the integration of the Urban School Climate (USC) Model as a strategy for preventing bullying. It also seeks to highlight the contributions of teacher support, social relationships, and family influence in maintaining school harmony. Ultimately, this research offers valuable insights into the development of religious and community-based approaches for fostering a positive educational environment. This study employs a qualitative case study approach to investigate how Muslim communities foster a peaceful school environment through the guidance of the Qur'an and Sunnah. With the increasing cases of bullying and violence in educational institutions, there is an urgent need to establish effective strategies for building a peaceful school environment. This study aims to explore how Muslim communities create peace in schools through their behavioral patterns and social interactions, aligning them with the teachings of the Qur'an and Sunnah.

Furthermore, this research introduces the Urban School Climate (USC) Model as an innovative approach to preventing bullying and fostering a safe and harmonious school atmosphere. By integrating religious values with structured school climate models, this study seeks to provide practical insights into creating an inclusive and secure learning environment for all students. The novelty of this study lies in its first Integration of Islamic Teachings into the School Climate Model. This study uniquely integrates the principles of the Qur'an and Sunnah into the Urban School Climate (USC) Model, demonstrating how Islamic values contribute to a peaceful and inclusive school environment, thereby preventing bullying. Second, this study adopts a holistic approach to School Climate in a Muslim Community, unlike previous studies that have focused solely on school policies or teacher interventions. It examines multiple interrelated factors: a safe environment, teacher support, individual relationships, and family influence, all within the context of a Muslim community. Third, Empirical Validation of the USC Model in Bullying Prevention. This study provides empirical evidence that the USC Model, when implemented in a Muslim school community, contributes significantly to fostering respect, tolerance, and social harmony, offering a new framework for addressing bullying in educational settings.

METHOD

Research Design

This research employs a qualitative approach, utilizing a case study method (Bennett, 2004; Heale & Twycross, 2018; Milner et al., 2019). Qualitative research, employing the case study method, was conducted to explore in-depth the interaction patterns and create a safe

school environment for students. Then, you can formulate an Urban School Climate (USC) model based on these interaction patterns (McMillan & Hellsten, 2010; Gunadi & Irman, 2021). This research begins with (1) identification of the problem and (2) formulation of the research problem, which has been prepared as the background for this research and which contains elements of research urgency. Then, conduct the research by preparing research instruments (3), collecting data (4), and analyzing the data (5), culminating in the conclusion (6).

Participants

Table 1 explains that this research involved 45 teachers with permanent teacher status (PT) in 17 elementary schools in Bogor, Indonesia. These teachers were recruited based on their extensive teaching experience of more than five years in elementary schools, ensuring their ability to comprehensively understand how teachers perceive USC, including the atmosphere, a safe and comfortable environment, and school policies. Recruitment of teachers who will share their valuable insights is carried out using purposive sampling techniques. Teachers' perceptions were collected through direct interviews using open-ended questions, ensuring an impartial and transparent approach that allowed participants to express their views openly. An overview of participant profiles is provided.

Table 1. Profile of Participants

	Frequency	%
Gender		
Male	18	40.0
Female	27	60.0
Age		
41-60 years	10	22.2
31-40 years	10	22.2
20-30 years	25	55.6
Educational Level		
S1	45	100
S2	0	0
S3	0	0

The first stage in this research was sending a questionnaire to PT via Google Forms. In the second stage, to deepen and confirm the answers in Google Forms, the research conducted direct in-depth interviews with 20 participants out of 45 respondents and in-depth interviews with 17 out of 17 school principals. The criteria for selecting teachers and principals are those who provide the most detailed answers and are in line with the research objectives.

Data collection

Data collection was carried out in two stages: 1) data collection through surveys about interaction patterns and safe school environments for students through open interviews using Google Forms, and 2) in-depth interviews with school principals and teachers directly to find out what the principals' and teachers' experiences were, and how teachers prevent bullying at school. Data was collected from October to November 2023 and involved all the participants mentioned.

Instrument

The research instrument used was an interview guide. The instrument is an open-ended question via Google Forms, consisting of four questions. The following are examples of interview questions:

- (1) What is your view of a safe environment at school?

- (2) What is teacher support like in realizing peace in schools?
- (3) What individual social relationships indicate a safe school?
- (4) What is the family atmosphere like at school?

Data Analysis

Qualitative data analysis was conducted using the Miles and Huberman model (Braun & Clarke, 2012), specifically involving data collection, data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusions. Data analysis was also assisted with NVIVO version 12 software (Woods et al., 2016).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Figure 1 illustrates that Thematic analysis reveals the USC Model as a school climate characterized by the interaction patterns and behaviors of urban school residents, which shape the school environment's atmosphere. The USC Model has four dimensions, 1) safe environment, 2) teacher support, 3) relationships between individuals, and 4) family atmosphere.

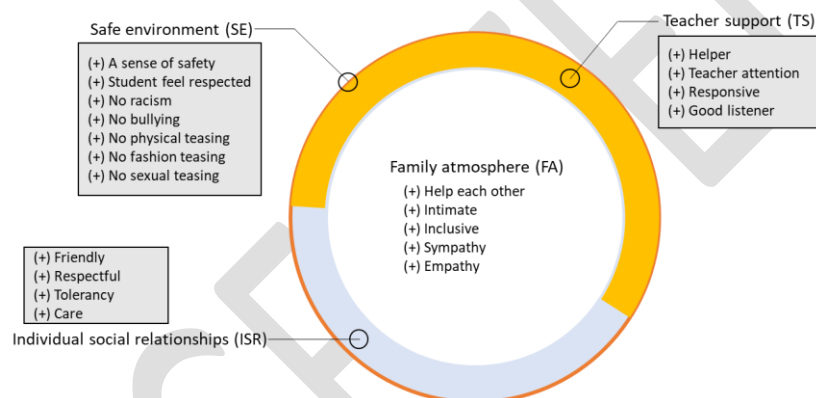


Figure 1. Urban School Climate (USC) Model

Safe environment in USC

A safe environment in the USC dimension is described as an environment that can provide a sense of security for students, where they feel respected, and there is no racism, bullying, physical, verbal, or sexual harassment. The research results show that the school environment is quite safe, because teasing and racism sometimes occur among students. However, the majority of students feel safe at school, meaning that the teasing and racism that occurs is not severe. Apart from that, students feel appreciated while they are in the school environment, and the school pays attention to student complaints and reports (Xiao et al., 2023).

Three things are of particular concern as signs of a safe school environment, racism, sartorial ridicule, and sexual innuendo. The research results indicate that students sometimes experience these three issues; therefore, schools need to be aware of such cases that occur on campus. Racism and ridicule are often used in communication language. Therefore, improving the safe environment at USC can be done by improving the language of communication between students and teachers.

The findings of this study indicate that a safe school environment in the Urban School Climate (USC) dimension is characterized by students feeling safe and respected, with few incidents of racism, bullying, and teasing related to physical appearance, clothing, or sexual comments. However, occasional teasing and racism still occur among students, although the majority do not consider them to be serious problems. Additionally, students feel valued within

the school environment, and the school administration is responsive to student complaints and reports. Three main aspects were identified as indicators of a safe school environment: racism, teasing related to clothing, and sexual innuendo. The results of the study indicate that students occasionally experience these issues, highlighting the need for schools to address these cases. Racism and teasing are often embedded in everyday communication. Therefore, improving a safe environment in the USC model can be achieved by improving communication patterns between students and teachers (Bradshaw et al., 2021; Aştor & Benbenishty, 2019). There are also vertical aspects that must be considered to ensure a safer school environment, preventing racism, bullying, and other forms of violence. These include open spaces and student activity centers. Both need to be safe areas, places that guarantee the safety of all students (Aminpour, 2023).

Teacher support in USC

Teacher support is characterized by the teacher's attentive behaviour, providing help and responding to every student's complaint, and being a good listener. Teacher support at school is good. Teachers provide students with assistance and attention. Then, teachers respond quickly and effectively when students report adverse incidents at school. Teachers also always give students an understanding of the importance of respecting each other, so that it is not justified to intimidate each other. All teacher support is effectively provided by the teacher while at school, so that students feel supported and receive attention from the teacher (Ferguson & Johnson, 2010; Moore et al., 2018).

Apart from that, a form of teacher support is being a good listener. Teachers listen to students' complaints and concerns so that they feel safe and comfortable at school. Every student feels protected from various threats that might occur. Therefore, teacher support can be described as attentive teacher behavior that provides help and responds to every student complaint.

The teacher's role in preventing bullying includes building good communication with students, serving as a role model, providing direct supervision, guidance, and counselling, and addressing bullying as early as possible. Farrington & Ttofi (2009) stated that the role of teachers in preventing bullying is planning policies to overcome bullying, identifying the root of the problem, giving sanctions, forming study groups, appeals to students, counselling guidance services, giving rewards, the "*Say Stop School Bullying*" program, supervision, and efforts to create child-friendly schools. Good communication with students (Adiyono et al., 2022) suggests that teachers play a crucial role in guiding, advising, and providing direction, as well as developing students, thereby facilitating effective communication. Teachers can convey important advice about the prohibitions and negative impacts of bullying. Then, as educators, teachers serve as role models for the students they educate; therefore, role models are important for teachers, especially in this case, to prevent acts of violence or bullying (Yoon et al., 2014; Noboru et al., 2021; Liang et al., 2022). The following finding is that direct supervision of teachers plays an important role. Several studies have revealed that a lack of teacher supervision is one of the factors causing bullying (Misfala et al., 2023; Rambe et al., 2024).

Individual social relationships in USC

Individual social relationships within the school environment are characterized by friendliness, mutual respect, tolerance, and a genuine concern for others. Positive interactions between teachers, students, and peers create a supportive atmosphere that fosters harmony and minimizes conflict. Teachers play a critical role in shaping these relationships by greeting students warmly and demonstrating respectful communication, which in turn encourages students to reciprocate the same behavior. The study also revealed that fights between students

were rare, and students who frequently engaged in conflict were generally viewed negatively by their peers. This reinforces the idea that a strong culture of respect and understanding within the school community contributes to a peaceful and inclusive learning environment. These findings align with the Urban School Climate (USC) Model, which emphasizes the importance of positive interpersonal interactions in promoting school harmony and preventing disruptive behaviors, such as bullying.

The findings of this study align with the insights presented in "Interpersonal Relationships in the School Environment and Children's Early School Adjustment: The Role of Teachers and Peers," which emphasizes the importance of teacher and peer relationships in fostering a favourable school climate. Strong interpersonal relationships contribute to students' social and emotional development, making their transition and adjustment to the school environment smoother. Similarly, in the context of the Urban School Climate (USC) Model, fostering mutual respect, friendliness, and tolerance among teachers, students, and peers is crucial in preventing bullying and creating a harmonious learning environment. When teachers engage with students in a respectful and supportive manner, it reinforces positive behaviour and fosters an inclusive environment where conflicts are minimized. By integrating these principles, schools can enhance their role in ensuring students feel secure, valued, and emotionally supported, ultimately improving their overall school adjustment and academic success (Saputra et al., 2020; Steele et al., 2021).

Family atmosphere at USC

The findings suggest that the school's family atmosphere is well-established, fostering a sense of belonging and emotional security among students. The strong bonds between students and teachers create an environment where students feel comfortable seeking guidance and sharing their experiences. The absence of hierarchical barriers between teachers and students further strengthens this family relationship. Additionally, the proactive role of teachers in recognizing and responding to students' needs, including providing support to quiet or withdrawn students, enhances the overall inclusiveness of the school environment (Budianto, 2023; Sunanah et al., 2025). The teachers' prompt response in handling bullying incidents further strengthens the school's commitment to maintaining a safe and supportive environment. These findings align with the Urban School Climate (USC) model, which emphasizes the importance of interpersonal relationships in fostering a favorable school climate and preventing negative behaviors, such as bullying (Fauziah et al., 2024). There is more to consider when creating a family-like atmosphere in a school environment that is rooted in local culture (Supeni & Harini, 2021; Barliana et al., 2023).

CONCLUSION

Based on the research results, there are four themes: 1) a safe environment for students at school, 2) teacher support as an adult community, 3) individual social relationships, and 4) family atmosphere. Muslim communities live their lives guided by the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad. The pattern of interaction and relations between Muslim communities shows peace and guarantees security for every community.

Furthermore, the Urban School Climate (USC) Model serves as a practical framework in preventing bullying by promoting positive social interactions and reinforcing the role of schools as safe and supportive places for all members. By fostering an environment where students feel respected, supported, and valued, the USC Model helps minimize the incidence of bullying, discrimination, and social exclusion. The results of this study suggest that peaceful social dynamics within Muslim communities, grounded in the teachings of the Qur'an and

Sunnah, contribute to reducing conflict, preventing violence, and cultivating a culture of mutual care and understanding.

In addition, strong teacher support, positive student interactions, and an inclusive family atmosphere in schools create a foundation for emotional and social well-being, which further strengthens the climate of peace. Schools that integrate religious and moral values into their educational framework tend to develop a sense of responsibility and ethical awareness among students, encouraging them to uphold justice and goodness in their daily interactions. Therefore, integrating religious values into school policies, classroom management, and daily interactions can improve school climate management and create a sustainable peace-building model in educational institutions. This approach not only strengthens student-teacher relationships but also contributes to long-term social harmony, ensuring that schools remain safe and welcoming places for all members of the community.

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