

Conflict Management Approaches For Addressing Student Misconduct: A Case Study At MTS Satu Atap Datok Sulaiman Palopo

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Abstract

Student misconduct remains a significant challenge in educational institutions because it may trigger interpersonal conflicts, disrupt the learning process, and create an uncondusive school environment. This study aims to identify the forms of student misconduct that trigger conflicts, analyze the implementation of conflict management approaches, and examine the supporting and inhibiting factors affecting their implementation at MTs Satu Atap Datok Sulaiman Palopo. A qualitative approach with a case study design was employed. Data were collected through interviews, observations, and documentation involving the principal, vice principal for student affairs, teachers, and students. Data were analyzed using the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña. The findings reveal that the dominant forms of student misconduct include truancy, smoking, bullying, and fighting, with verbal bullying identified as the primary trigger of conflict. Conflict management is implemented through preventive, conflict resolution, and restorative approaches supported by collaboration among school stakeholders, continuous communication, and regular evaluation. However, limited parental involvement, peer influence, and students' behavioral characteristics remain major challenges. The study concludes that integrating these three approaches contributes to reducing student misconduct, resolving conflicts constructively, and fostering a safer, more disciplined, and conducive learning environment.

Keywords: Conflict Management, Student Misconduct, Islamic School, Preventive Approach, Conflict Resolution Approach, Restorative Approach.

INTRODUCTION

Educational institutions play a strategic role in developing students' intellectual abilities,

2014

IJETER, Volume 04 Issue 02, 2026



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moral values, social competence, and character. Besides functioning as centers for academic learning, schools are expected to create a safe, orderly, and supportive environment that enables students to achieve optimal personal development. However, educational institutions continue to face various behavioral challenges among adolescents, particularly student misconduct, which has become an increasingly complex issue affecting school discipline, learning effectiveness, and interpersonal relationships among members of the school community (Suncaka, 2023).

Student misconduct encompasses various behaviors that violate school regulations, social norms, and moral values, including truancy, smoking, bullying, fighting, and other forms of disciplinary violations. These behaviors not only interfere with the teaching and learning process but also frequently trigger conflicts among students, teachers, and even parents. If such conflicts are not managed appropriately, they may negatively affect students' psychological well-being, reduce academic achievement, and weaken the overall quality of the educational environment (Mahesha et al., 2024). Therefore, educational institutions are required to implement effective conflict management strategies that emphasize prevention, problem solving, and character development rather than relying solely on punitive measures (Shofirah et al., 2023).

Recent studies have shown that conflict management has become one of the essential components of educational leadership. Effective conflict management enables school leaders and teachers to identify the causes of conflict, facilitate constructive communication, and create collaborative solutions that strengthen positive relationships within the school community (Mufidah, 2025). Moreover, restorative approaches have recently received considerable attention because they prioritize dialogue, accountability, empathy, and relationship restoration instead of punishment alone (Zohriah et al., 2023). Such approaches are considered more effective in fostering students' social responsibility while simultaneously reducing repeated misconduct.

Several previous studies have examined conflict management in educational settings. Most of these studies focused on organizational conflict, leadership strategies, bullying prevention, or student discipline in general (Rizqi, 2024). Although these studies provide valuable insights into conflict management practices, empirical evidence concerning the integration of preventive, conflict resolution, and restorative approaches in addressing student misconduct within Islamic junior secondary schools remains limited. Consequently, further investigation is necessary to understand how these approaches are implemented comprehensively in managing student misconduct within the context of Islamic education.





Although previous studies have contributed significantly to the understanding of conflict management in educational settings, several limitations remain (Samsilayurni et al., 2026). Most recent studies have focused on organizational conflict management, school leadership, bullying prevention, or restorative justice as separate topics. Only a limited number of studies have comprehensively examined how preventive, conflict resolution, and restorative approaches are integrated to address various forms of student misconduct within Islamic junior secondary schools. Furthermore, previous studies generally discuss conflict management from a theoretical perspective or focus on a single type of student misconduct, such as bullying or school violence, without examining the overall conflict management process implemented by school stakeholders (Gregory et al., 2024). Consequently, empirical evidence regarding the practical integration of these approaches in Islamic educational institutions remains relatively limited. Recent systematic reviews also recommend further empirical studies that explore restorative practices in different educational and cultural contexts because their implementation varies according to institutional characteristics and local educational culture.

This study offers a distinct contribution by examining conflict management through three interconnected approaches preventive, conflict resolution, and restorative in handling various forms of student misconduct within an Islamic educational institution. Unlike previous studies that emphasize punishment or restorative practices alone, this research analyzes the entire conflict management process, beginning with preventive efforts, continuing through conflict resolution, and concluding with relationship restoration after conflicts occur. In addition, this study identifies both supporting and inhibiting factors affecting the implementation of conflict management, thereby providing a more comprehensive understanding of conflict management practices in Islamic schools. The findings are expected to enrich educational management literature while offering practical recommendations for school leaders in developing more effective strategies for handling student misconduct. Recent evidence also indicates that restorative practices improve school climate, strengthen students' sense of safety, and reduce bullying when implemented as part of a comprehensive conflict management system rather than as isolated interventions.

MTs Satu Atap Datok Sulaiman Palopo was selected as the research site because the madrasah has encountered various forms of student misconduct, including truancy, smoking, bullying, and fighting, which potentially trigger conflicts among students and affect the learning environment. At the same time, the madrasah has developed conflict management practices involving the principal, vice principal for student affairs, homeroom teachers, counseling teachers, subject teachers, students, and parents through preventive activities, mediation,





counseling, and restorative efforts. These characteristics make the madrasah an appropriate setting for examining how conflict management is implemented in practice within the context of Islamic education and for identifying factors that support and hinder its effectiveness.

Based on the above considerations, this study aims to: (1) identify the forms of student misconduct that trigger conflicts at MTs Satu Atap Datok Sulaiman Palopo; (2) analyze the implementation of preventive, conflict resolution, and restorative approaches in handling student misconduct; and (3) examine the supporting and inhibiting factors influencing the implementation of conflict management. Through these objectives, the study is expected to provide both theoretical and practical contributions to the development of conflict management strategies capable of fostering a safer, more disciplined, and more conducive educational environment.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach using a case study design to obtain an in-depth understanding of conflict management in handling student misconduct at MTs Satu Atap Datok Sulaiman Palopo. A qualitative case study was considered appropriate because it allows researchers to explore social phenomena comprehensively within their natural setting while emphasizing participants' experiences and interactions (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

The research was conducted at MTs Satu Atap Datok Sulaiman Palopo. Participants were selected using purposive sampling based on their direct involvement in conflict management practices. The informants consisted of the principal, vice principal for student affairs, homeroom teachers, counseling teacher, subject teachers, and students who had experienced or been involved in disciplinary cases.

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, non-participant observations, and documentation. Interviews were conducted to explore participants' experiences regarding student misconduct, conflict management practices, and factors influencing their implementation. Observations were carried out to examine interactions among school members, disciplinary practices, and conflict resolution processes in the school environment. Documentation, including school regulations, disciplinary records, counseling reports, and meeting minutes, was analyzed to strengthen and verify the findings obtained from interviews and observations (Sugiyono, 2019).

Data were analyzed using the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, which comprises data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing or verification. These stages were conducted continuously throughout the research process to identify patterns, categories,





and relationships among the collected data (Miles et al., 2019). The credibility of the findings was ensured through source triangulation, technique triangulation, prolonged engagement, and member checking to enhance the trustworthiness and consistency of the research findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Forms of Student Misconduct Triggering Conflict

The findings indicate that student misconduct at MTs Satu Atap Datok Sulaiman Palopo comprises several forms of disciplinary violations, namely truancy, smoking, bullying, and fighting. Among these behaviors, verbal bullying emerged as the most dominant factor triggering interpersonal conflicts among students. These forms of misconduct were identified through interviews, observations, and documentation, which consistently showed that behavioral violations not only disrupted classroom discipline but also affected students' social relationships and the overall learning environment.

Truancy was commonly committed by students who intentionally left the classroom or failed to attend school without permission. This behavior often resulted in academic problems and increased the likelihood of disciplinary conflicts between students and teachers. Similarly, smoking was identified as another recurring violation despite the school's prohibition. Besides violating school regulations, smoking negatively influenced peers and often encouraged other students to imitate the behavior.

Bullying constituted the most significant source of conflict identified during the research. The majority of bullying incidents involved verbal intimidation, ridicule, mocking, and name-calling, although several cases also developed into physical confrontations. Interviews with teachers revealed that repeated verbal bullying frequently created hostility among students, reduced victims' self-confidence, and occasionally escalated into fights when immediate intervention was not provided. These findings demonstrate that bullying represents not merely an issue of student discipline but also a social conflict requiring comprehensive educational intervention.

These findings support previous studies indicating that bullying, truancy, and other disciplinary violations are among the most common antecedents of conflict within school environments. Student misconduct often develops from individual behavioral problems into interpersonal conflicts that influence classroom interaction, students' emotional well-being, and the overall school climate. Consequently, conflict management should address not only disciplinary enforcement but also relationship building and students' social development.

The findings also align with conflict management theory, which emphasizes that conflict





in educational institutions should not always be perceived negatively. When managed appropriately through preventive intervention, constructive communication, and collaborative problem-solving, conflicts may become opportunities to strengthen students' character, improve interpersonal relationships, and develop conflict resolution skills. Therefore, identifying the forms of misconduct that trigger conflicts constitutes an essential initial stage in designing effective conflict management strategies within Islamic educational institutions.

Implementation of Conflict Management Approaches

The findings demonstrate that conflict management at MTs Satu Atap Datok Sulaiman Palopo is implemented through a systematic process consisting of preventive, conflict resolution, and restorative approaches. Rather than relying solely on disciplinary sanctions, the school emphasizes conflict prevention and constructive problem-solving to maintain a conducive learning environment. This integrated approach enables school stakeholders to minimize the recurrence of student misconduct while promoting students' social responsibility and character development.

Preventive Approach

The preventive approach represents the initial stage of conflict management implemented before disciplinary violations escalate into interpersonal conflicts (Nisa² et al., 2026). The findings indicate that preventive efforts are carried out through the consistent enforcement of school regulations, daily supervision of students, religious habituation programs, character education, and continuous communication between teachers and parents. These activities are intended to strengthen students' self-discipline, increase their awareness of school rules, and reduce opportunities for misconduct.

Daily supervision by teachers during classroom activities, recess, and other school programs enables the early identification of behavioral problems. When teachers observe early signs of misconduct, such as repeated lateness, truancy, or verbal teasing among students, immediate guidance is provided before the situation develops into a larger conflict. In addition, the integration of Islamic values through congregational prayers, Qur'anic recitation, and moral education reinforces students' responsibility, mutual respect, and self-control. Such preventive measures indicate that conflict management is not merely disciplinary in nature but also serves as a character-building process.

These findings support previous studies suggesting that preventive conflict management is more effective than punitive intervention because it addresses potential conflicts before they



escalate into violence or prolonged disputes. Preventive strategies that combine discipline, communication, and social-emotional learning have been shown to strengthen school climate and reduce aggressive behavior among students. Furthermore, recent studies emphasize that schools should regard conflict prevention as a continuous educational process rather than merely a response to disciplinary violations.

Conflict Resolution Approach

When conflicts occur despite preventive efforts, the school implements a conflict resolution approach aimed at resolving disputes through dialogue, mediation, and counseling (Widiasari et al., 2024). The research findings reveal that teachers, homeroom teachers, counseling teachers, and the vice principal for student affairs collaboratively investigate the causes of conflicts before determining appropriate solutions. Students involved in disciplinary cases are first encouraged to explain their perspectives, after which mediation is conducted to facilitate mutual understanding and agreement.

Unlike punitive approaches that primarily emphasize sanctions, the conflict resolution process at MTs Satu Atap Datok Sulaiman Palopo prioritizes communication and problem-solving. Teachers function as mediators who encourage students to express their opinions respectfully, recognize the consequences of their actions, and identify mutually acceptable solutions. Parents are also involved when conflicts require broader intervention, particularly in repeated cases of bullying, fighting, or serious disciplinary violations. This collaborative process strengthens trust between the school and families while ensuring that conflict resolution addresses both behavioral and social aspects of student misconduct.

The implementation of mediation and dialogue observed in this study is consistent with recent research indicating that constructive conflict resolution contributes to improving interpersonal relationships, strengthening school climate, and reducing recurring conflicts. Schools that promote collaborative communication and mediation are more successful in fostering students' conflict resolution skills than those relying predominantly on punishment.

The findings further indicate that conflict resolution at MTs Satu Atap Datok Sulaiman Palopo is implemented not only to stop conflicts but also to identify their underlying causes and prevent their recurrence. Before determining disciplinary actions, school personnel seek comprehensive information from all parties involved, including students, homeroom teachers, subject teachers, and, when necessary, parents. This process reflects the principle of fairness by ensuring that each student has an opportunity to explain the circumstances surrounding the conflict before decisions are made.



The study also found that communication constitutes the central element of conflict resolution. Teachers encourage students to express their perspectives respectfully, listen to one another, and acknowledge the consequences of their behaviour. Counseling sessions are conducted for students who repeatedly violate school regulations or become involved in interpersonal conflicts. Rather than merely imposing sanctions, teachers attempt to guide students toward understanding the impact of their actions on others and encourage them to develop more responsible behaviour. Consequently, conflict resolution is viewed not merely as a disciplinary mechanism but also as an educational process that promotes emotional maturity, empathy, and problem-solving skills.

These findings are consistent with recent studies emphasizing that effective conflict resolution in schools depends on collaborative communication, mediation, and active participation from all stakeholders. Schools that prioritize dialogue and mutual understanding tend to experience more positive school climates and lower levels of repeated disciplinary problems than schools relying exclusively on punitive sanctions. Moreover, mediation enables students to develop constructive conflict resolution skills that remain beneficial beyond the school context.

Restorative Approach

Another important finding of this study is the implementation of a restorative approach as the final stage of conflict management. After conflicts have been resolved through mediation and counseling, the school encourages students to restore damaged relationships by acknowledging mistakes, apologizing sincerely, and rebuilding mutual trust. This approach reflects the school's commitment to balancing disciplinary enforcement with students' personal and social development. The restorative process is facilitated by teachers through reflective dialogue involving students directly affected by the conflict. Rather than focusing exclusively on punishment, students are encouraged to understand the harm caused by their actions, accept responsibility, and actively participate in repairing interpersonal relationships. Such practices cultivate empathy, accountability, and respect while reducing resentment that may arise from purely punitive disciplinary measures.

The implementation of restorative practices at MTs Satu Atap Datok Sulaiman Palopo is closely aligned with Islamic educational values emphasizing forgiveness, reconciliation, mutual respect, and social responsibility. Consequently, conflict management extends beyond maintaining school discipline to fostering students' moral character and strengthening harmonious relationships within the school community.





This finding supports recent international evidence indicating that restorative practices contribute positively to reducing school violence, improving students' emotional well-being, strengthening school connectedness, and creating a more inclusive learning environment when implemented consistently alongside preventive and conflict resolution strategies. Restorative practices are most effective when integrated into the school's overall culture rather than being applied solely after disciplinary incidents occur.

Overall, the integration of preventive, conflict resolution, and restorative approaches demonstrates that conflict management at MTs Satu Atap Datok Sulaiman Palopo is implemented through a comprehensive educational process. Instead of emphasizing punishment alone, the school seeks to prevent misconduct, resolve conflicts collaboratively, and restore positive relationships among students. This integrated model contributes not only to reducing student misconduct but also to promoting a safer, more supportive, and more conducive educational environment.

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in the Implementation of Conflict Management

The findings demonstrate that the implementation of conflict management at MTs Satu Atap Datok Sulaiman Palopo is influenced by several supporting and inhibiting factors that determine the effectiveness of preventive, conflict resolution, and restorative approaches. Based on interviews, observations, and documentation, the success of conflict management is not solely determined by school policies but also by collaboration among stakeholders, students' personal characteristics, and the surrounding social environment.

One of the primary supporting factors is the strong cooperation among school stakeholders, including the principal, vice principal for student affairs, homeroom teachers, counseling teacher, subject teachers, and parents. This collaboration enables disciplinary problems to be addressed through coordinated communication and shared responsibility rather than relying on a single individual (Fatihaturahmi et al., 2023). Routine coordination meetings and continuous communication facilitate early identification of student behavioral problems, allowing preventive measures to be implemented before conflicts escalate. These findings are consistent with previous studies, which emphasize that leadership commitment, stakeholder participation, and effective communication are key determinants of successful conflict management in educational institutions (Azwardi et al., 2024).

Another important supporting factor is the integration of religious values and character education into students' daily activities. Programs such as congregational prayers, Qur'anic recitation, moral guidance, and regular disciplinary supervision contribute to strengthening





students' self-control and social responsibility. These activities function not only as preventive efforts but also as media for developing mutual respect, empathy, and accountability among students. Consequently, conflict management is implemented as part of character formation rather than merely enforcing school discipline (Rendhika, 2024).

Despite these strengths, several inhibiting factors were identified. The first concerns students' diverse personalities and behavioral characteristics. Some students tend to be less receptive to guidance, demonstrate low self-discipline, or repeatedly violate school regulations despite counseling and disciplinary interventions. The second obstacle relates to limited parental involvement. Several informants explained that inadequate communication between families and the school reduced the effectiveness of follow-up actions because students often received inconsistent guidance at home and at school. Peer influence also emerged as a significant challenge, particularly in cases of truancy, smoking, and bullying, where students were encouraged by their friendship groups to engage in inappropriate behavior.¹

These findings indicate that effective conflict management requires continuous collaboration between schools, families, and the wider community. Similar studies have concluded that the success of conflict management is closely associated with stakeholder commitment, transparent communication, and parental participation, whereas weak coordination, external social influences, and inconsistent supervision frequently become barriers to achieving a conducive school environment.^{5,6} Therefore, strengthening school–parent partnerships and fostering a positive school culture should remain strategic priorities in improving conflict management practices within Islamic educational institutions.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that conflict management plays a significant role in addressing student misconduct at MTs Satu Atap Datok Sulaiman Palopo. The findings reveal that the most common forms of student misconduct include truancy, smoking, bullying, and fighting, with verbal bullying emerging as the primary trigger of interpersonal conflict among students. These behaviors not only violate school regulations but also disrupt classroom learning, weaken peer relationships, and reduce the quality of the school environment. Therefore, student misconduct should be understood not merely as disciplinary violations but also as educational conflicts requiring comprehensive and sustainable management.

The study further reveals that the school implements conflict management through three complementary approaches, namely preventive, conflict resolution, and restorative approaches. Preventive measures are carried out by strengthening school regulations, character



education, religious habituation, supervision, and communication with parents to minimize the emergence of conflicts. When conflicts occur, the school adopts conflict resolution strategies through mediation, counseling, dialogue, and collaborative problem-solving involving teachers, school leaders, students, and parents. Furthermore, restorative practices emphasize accountability, reconciliation, empathy, and the restoration of interpersonal relationships, enabling students to learn from their mistakes while rebuilding positive interactions within the school community. This integrated implementation reflects that conflict management extends beyond disciplinary control and contributes to students' character formation and social development.

The effectiveness of these approaches is supported by cooperation among school stakeholders, consistent communication, and continuous evaluation. Nevertheless, challenges remain, particularly regarding students' behavioral diversity, peer influence, and limited parental involvement. Therefore, strengthening collaboration between schools, families, and communities is essential to ensure the sustainability of conflict management programs. Overall, this study contributes to the development of educational conflict management literature by demonstrating that integrating preventive, conflict resolution, and restorative approaches can foster a safer, more disciplined, and more supportive learning environment in Islamic educational institutions.

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