

Addressing Internet Addiction Among Adolescents: The Role of Islamic Religious Education in Prevention and Intervention

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Abstrak

Bullying remains a significant challenge in educational institutions, including Islamic boarding schools (pesantren), where intensive social interactions among students may create opportunities for both positive relationships and bullying behavior. This study aims to analyze the forms of bullying, the factors contributing to its occurrence, and the strategies employed to prevent bullying at Al-Falah Pancordao Islamic Boarding School, Central Lombok. This research adopted a qualitative field-study approach. Data were collected through observations, in-depth interviews, and documentation, and were analyzed using the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, which includes data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings reveal that verbal bullying is the most dominant form of bullying, manifested through teasing, mocking, ridiculing peers during classroom presentations, and assigning derogatory nicknames. Physical bullying was also identified, although it was limited to minor physical actions such as pinching and ear-pulling, which were often perceived as jokes among students. The study further indicates that family conditions and peer-group influences are the primary factors contributing to bullying behavior. To address this issue, the boarding school implements various preventive measures, including continuous moral guidance, religious habituation programs, support for victims, counseling and supervision for perpetrators, and the reinforcement of Islamic values through daily educational activities. The study concludes that a religio-cultural approach based on character education and religious practices plays a crucial role in fostering a safe, respectful, and bullying-free educational environment within Islamic boarding schools.

Kata Kunci: *bullying; Islamic boarding school; students; character education; bullying prevention*

1. INTRODUCTION

Bullying remains a serious challenge in educational institutions across the world. This form of aggressive behavior not only affects victims' psychological well-being but also has significant implications for academic achievement, social relationships, mental health, and the overall quality of the learning environment. According to UNESCO (2025), more than 30% of students worldwide have experienced bullying, resulting in adverse consequences for academic performance, physical and mental health, and an increased risk of school dropout. Furthermore, UNESCO estimates that approximately 246 million children and adolescents experience various forms of violence and bullying in educational settings each year.

In the Indonesian context, bullying continues to be a pressing issue that requires serious attention. Various reports indicate that bullying occurs not only in formal schools but also in faith-based educational institutions such as Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*). Previous studies have shown that bullying in *pesantren* may take the form of verbal, physical, and social aggression, largely due to the intensive social interactions that characterize students' daily lives in boarding environments (Harson et al., 2026). These findings suggest that *pesantren*, despite their emphasis on moral and character development, face significant challenges in creating safe and violence-free educational environments.

The issue of bullying in *pesantren* deserves particular attention because of the unique characteristics of boarding-school life. Unlike conventional schools, *pesantren* provide a residential educational environment in which students live together and interact intensively on a daily basis. While such interactions can foster strong social solidarity and a sense of community, they may also create opportunities for group domination, seniority-based practices, and bullying behaviors when effective social control mechanisms are lacking. Previous research has identified social environmental factors, seniority culture, peer influence, and inadequate supervision as major contributors to bullying within Islamic boarding schools (Emilda, 2022).

A growing body of literature has examined bullying from various perspectives. Most studies have focused on identifying different forms of bullying, investigating its psychological consequences, and exploring the factors that contribute to its occurrence. Research has consistently demonstrated that bullying has detrimental effects on students' psychological well-being and is influenced by family conditions, peer relationships, social environments, and broader societal factors (Zhao et al., 2023). Other studies have found that victims of bullying frequently experience anxiety, decreased learning motivation, prolonged psychological trauma, and, in some cases, a desire to leave the boarding school environment altogether (Thornberg, 2019).

Despite the increasing scholarly attention given to bullying, most existing studies continue to focus primarily on identifying its forms and consequences. Relatively little attention has been devoted to examining bullying prevention strategies that are rooted in the cultural and religious context of Islamic boarding schools. This gap is significant because *pesantren* possess distinctive educational characteristics, including the internalization of religious values, the exemplary role of religious teachers (*ustadz*), collective religious practices, and structured character-building programs, all of which have the potential to serve as effective mechanisms for preventing bullying behavior. Studies on anti-bullying educational innovations in Islamic boarding schools suggest that approaches grounded in religious values and local cultural contexts tend to be more effective than those relying solely on punishment and formal disciplinary measures.

From a theoretical perspective, bullying behavior can be explained through Social Learning Theory developed by Albert Bandura. This theory posits that

individuals acquire behaviors through processes of observation, imitation, and reinforcement within their social environments. In the context of Islamic boarding schools, behaviors such as teasing, mocking, or humiliating peers may become normalized when they are socially accepted and reinforced by peer groups (Bussey, 2023). Conversely, educational environments that promote respect, empathy, and social responsibility can function as protective factors that discourage bullying behavior.

Based on the foregoing discussion, this study aims to analyze the forms of bullying occurring at Al-Falah Pancordao Islamic Boarding School in Central Lombok, identify the factors contributing to its occurrence, and examine the strategies employed by the institution to prevent bullying. The novelty of this study lies in its analysis of how religious habituation programs, character education, and the exemplary conduct of *ustadz* function as preventive mechanisms against bullying within the pesantren environment. Consequently, this study is expected to contribute to the theoretical development of bullying research within Islamic education while also providing practical recommendations for boarding-school administrators in creating safe, inclusive, and student-friendly educational environments.

2. METHODS

This study employed a qualitative literature review approach to examine the causes, consequences, and preventive role of Islamic Religious Education in addressing internet addiction among adolescents. A literature review was considered appropriate because it enables researchers to synthesize, analyze, and critically evaluate existing scholarly evidence related to internet addiction and religious-based interventions in the digital era (Snyder, 2019).

The study relied on secondary data obtained from peer-reviewed journal articles, academic books, conference proceedings, and institutional reports published between 2020 and 2025. Relevant literature was identified through several academic databases, including Google Scholar, Scopus, Web of Science, Crossref, and ERIC. The literature search employed a combination of keywords such as *internet addiction*, *problematic internet use*, *adolescents*, *digital behavior*, *Islamic Religious Education*, *religiosity*, *Islamic parenting*, *character education*, and *digital ethics*.

To ensure the relevance and quality of the reviewed literature, a set of inclusion and exclusion criteria was established. The inclusion criteria consisted of: (1) publications written in English or Indonesian; (2) studies focusing on internet addiction among adolescents and young adults; (3) research discussing psychological, social, educational, or religious dimensions of internet addiction; and (4) peer-reviewed journal articles, scholarly books, or reputable institutional reports. Publications that were not directly related to internet addiction, duplicate records, opinion pieces without scholarly evidence, and sources lacking relevance to the research objectives were excluded from the review.

The literature selection process involved several stages. First, potentially relevant publications were identified through database searches. Second, titles and abstracts were screened to determine their relevance to the research objectives. Third, full texts of selected publications were reviewed in depth to assess their eligibility and contribution to the study. Finally, the selected sources were categorized according to major themes, including psychological determinants of internet addiction, social and environmental factors, educational and health consequences, Islamic Religious Education, Islamic parenting, and intervention strategies.

Data were analyzed using thematic content analysis, which allows researchers to identify recurring patterns, concepts, and relationships across multiple studies (Braun & Clarke, 2022). The analysis involved four stages: familiarization with the literature, coding and classification of findings, identification of themes and sub-themes, and synthesis of results in relation to the research objectives and theoretical framework. Through this process, the study generated a comprehensive understanding of the multidimensional nature of internet addiction and the potential role of Islamic Religious Education in preventing and addressing problematic internet use among adolescents.

To enhance the credibility of the findings, source triangulation was employed by comparing evidence derived from different academic disciplines, including psychology, education, sociology, public health, and Islamic studies. Priority was given to recent and high-quality publications in order to ensure the reliability, validity, and contemporary relevance of the synthesized findings. By integrating evidence from multiple sources and disciplinary perspectives, this study aims to provide a comprehensive and balanced understanding of internet addiction and its prevention through value-based educational approaches.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Psychological Determinants of Internet Addiction

The reviewed literature indicates that psychological factors constitute one of the most significant determinants of internet addiction among adolescents. Several studies consistently report that individuals experiencing loneliness, anxiety, depression, stress, and low self-esteem are more likely to develop problematic internet use behaviors (Kuss & Lopez-Fernandez, 2016; Zhao et al., 2023). For many adolescents, the internet functions as an alternative environment where they can escape real-life difficulties, seek emotional gratification, and construct desired social identities.

Among the psychological factors identified in previous studies, loneliness appears to be one of the strongest predictors of internet addiction. Adolescents who experience social isolation often use social media platforms, online gaming communities, and virtual communication channels to compensate for deficiencies in face-to-face interactions. While these platforms may temporarily reduce feelings of loneliness, excessive dependence on virtual interactions can further weaken real-world social relationships and increase the risk of addictive behavior.

Depression and anxiety have also been found to be closely associated with excessive internet use. Adolescents experiencing psychological distress frequently turn to digital environments as coping mechanisms. However, instead of resolving emotional problems, excessive internet use often reinforces maladaptive behavioral patterns and contributes to worsening mental health conditions. This finding supports the argument that internet addiction should not merely be understood as a technological problem but also as a psychological phenomenon requiring comprehensive intervention.

From the perspective of Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986), psychological vulnerability interacts with environmental influences to shape individual behavior. Adolescents with low self-regulation may become increasingly dependent on online activities when such behaviors are repeatedly reinforced by immediate gratification and positive emotional experiences. Consequently, psychological resilience and self-control become important protective factors against internet addiction.

3.2. Social and Environmental Factors Influencing Internet Addiction

In addition to psychological determinants, social and environmental factors play a crucial role in the development of internet addiction. The reviewed studies highlight the influence of parenting styles, family relationships, peer pressure, and social environments on adolescents' internet-use behavior (Kircaburun et al., 2022).

Family constitutes the primary socialization agent responsible for shaping children's behavioral patterns. Research suggests that inadequate parental supervision, weak family communication, emotional neglect, and inconsistent parenting practices significantly increase the likelihood of problematic internet use among adolescents. Parents who fail to establish clear boundaries regarding digital media use may unintentionally contribute to excessive internet engagement.

Peer influence also represents an important determinant of internet addiction. Adolescents spend considerable amounts of time interacting with peers and often seek acceptance within social groups. In contemporary digital culture, online gaming, social networking, and content-sharing activities frequently become central aspects of peer interaction. As a result, adolescents may feel pressured to remain constantly connected in order to maintain social status and group belonging.

These findings are consistent with Social Cognitive Theory, which emphasizes the role of observational learning and social reinforcement in shaping behavior. Adolescents often imitate the digital habits of their peers and family members, particularly when such behaviors are perceived as socially rewarding. Therefore, efforts to reduce internet addiction should not focus solely on individual behavior but also address the broader social environment in which digital practices are embedded.

3.3. Educational and Health Consequences of Internet Addiction

The reviewed literature demonstrates that internet addiction produces multidimensional consequences affecting academic performance, psychological well-being, physical health, and social relationships. One of the most frequently reported

outcomes is academic decline. Students who spend excessive amounts of time online often experience difficulties concentrating on academic tasks, completing assignments, and maintaining learning motivation (Odacı & Çelik, 2021).

Several studies have reported a negative correlation between internet addiction and academic achievement. Excessive engagement in online gaming, social media, and entertainment platforms may reduce the amount of time available for studying and limit students' ability to focus on educational activities. Consequently, internet addiction has emerged as an important educational concern that may hinder students' academic success.

The health consequences of internet addiction are equally significant. Research indicates that excessive internet use contributes to sleep disturbances, fatigue, headaches, visual impairment, obesity, and reduced physical activity (World Health Organization, 2023). In particular, prolonged screen exposure and sedentary lifestyles associated with internet addiction pose serious risks to adolescent health.

Furthermore, internet addiction may negatively affect interpersonal relationships. Although digital platforms facilitate communication, excessive reliance on online interaction may weaken face-to-face social skills and increase social isolation. Consequently, adolescents may become increasingly disconnected from family members, teachers, and peers in offline environments.

The findings suggest that internet addiction should be viewed as a multidimensional issue with implications extending beyond technology use. Effective prevention strategies therefore require coordinated efforts involving educational institutions, families, healthcare professionals, and policymakers.

3.4. Islamic Religious Education as a Preventive and Intervention Framework

One of the central findings of this review is the significant potential of Islamic Religious Education (IRE) in preventing and addressing internet addiction among adolescents. Unlike conventional intervention approaches that primarily focus on psychological treatment or behavioral modification, Islamic Religious Education emphasizes moral development, spiritual awareness, character formation, and self-regulation.

Islamic educational philosophy views human beings as moral agents responsible for managing their behavior in accordance with ethical and spiritual principles. Concepts such as *muraqabah* (awareness of God's constant supervision), *taqwa* (God-consciousness), and *mujahadah al-nafs* (self-discipline) provide important foundations for developing responsible digital behavior. These values encourage individuals to exercise self-control and critically evaluate their online activities.

Character education also represents a crucial component of Islamic Religious Education. Through the cultivation of honesty, responsibility, discipline, moderation, and respect for others, religious education can strengthen adolescents' capacity to resist excessive internet use. Several studies indicate that students with higher levels of

religiosity tend to demonstrate better self-regulation and lower levels of addictive behavior compared to their less religious peers (Dossi et al., 2022).

Moreover, Islamic Religious Education provides an ethical framework for digital engagement. The principles of accountability, moderation, and social responsibility encourage adolescents to use technology productively rather than compulsively. In this regard, religious education functions not merely as a source of knowledge but as a preventive mechanism that shapes attitudes and behaviors in the digital age.

3.5. Islamic Parenting and Counseling Interventions

The literature further suggests that Islamic parenting practices play an essential role in preventing internet addiction. Islamic parenting emphasizes affection, guidance, supervision, and moral education within the family environment. Parents are encouraged to serve as role models and to establish balanced patterns of technology use for their children.

Effective parental involvement includes monitoring online activities, establishing reasonable screen-time limits, promoting alternative recreational activities, and maintaining open communication regarding digital risks. When combined with religious values, these parenting practices can enhance adolescents' self-regulation and reduce vulnerability to internet addiction.

In addition to family-based interventions, counseling services grounded in Islamic values may provide effective support for adolescents experiencing problematic internet use. Islamic counseling integrates psychological techniques with spiritual guidance, helping individuals develop self-awareness, emotional regulation, and a stronger sense of purpose. Such interventions may complement existing psychological approaches and contribute to more holistic strategies for addressing internet addiction.

Overall, the findings of this review indicate that internet addiction is a multifaceted phenomenon influenced by psychological, social, educational, and spiritual factors. Consequently, prevention and intervention efforts should adopt an integrated approach that combines psychological support, family involvement, educational initiatives, and religious value-based guidance to promote healthy and responsible digital behavior among adolescents.

4. CONCLUSION

This study examined the causes, consequences, and preventive role of Islamic Religious Education in addressing internet addiction among adolescents through a qualitative literature review approach. The findings indicate that internet addiction is a multidimensional phenomenon influenced by a complex interaction of psychological, social, educational, and environmental factors. Psychological determinants such as loneliness, anxiety, depression, stress, and low self-esteem were consistently identified as major contributors to excessive internet use. At the same time, social and environmental influences, including inadequate parental supervision, weak family

communication, peer pressure, and digital culture, further increase adolescents' vulnerability to problematic internet behavior.

The review also demonstrates that internet addiction has far-reaching consequences extending beyond excessive internet use itself. Its adverse effects are evident in various domains of adolescent life, including declining academic performance, reduced learning motivation, sleep disturbances, physical health problems, emotional instability, and weakened interpersonal relationships. These findings confirm that internet addiction should not be viewed merely as a technological issue but rather as a broader educational, psychological, and social challenge that requires comprehensive intervention strategies.

One of the most significant findings of this study is the potential contribution of Islamic Religious Education as a preventive and intervention framework for internet addiction. The literature suggests that Islamic Religious Education promotes moral development, self-regulation, spiritual awareness, and responsible behavior through the cultivation of values such as *taqwa* (God-consciousness), *muraqabah* (awareness of divine supervision), and *mujahadah al-nafs* (self-discipline). These values strengthen adolescents' capacity to regulate their online behavior and encourage the responsible use of digital technology. Furthermore, character education embedded within Islamic Religious Education contributes to the development of discipline, moderation, responsibility, and ethical decision-making in digital environments.

The findings also highlight the importance of Islamic parenting and counseling interventions in reducing the risk of internet addiction. Effective parental supervision, open communication, moral guidance, and positive role modeling can help adolescents develop healthier digital habits. Likewise, counseling approaches that integrate psychological support with Islamic values may provide a more holistic framework for addressing problematic internet use. Consequently, efforts to prevent internet addiction should not rely solely on technological restrictions or psychological interventions but should incorporate educational, familial, and spiritual dimensions.

Theoretically, this study contributes to the growing body of literature by expanding the discussion of internet addiction beyond psychological and behavioral perspectives and introducing Islamic Religious Education as a value-based preventive framework. Practically, the findings provide useful insights for educators, parents, counselors, and policymakers in designing educational programs and intervention strategies that promote healthy digital behavior among adolescents.

The findings of this study have several important implications for educational practice and policy development. First, educational institutions should integrate digital literacy programs with character education and religious values in order to foster responsible and ethical internet use among students. Such integration may help adolescents develop critical awareness regarding the benefits and risks of digital technology while strengthening their capacity for self-regulation.

Second, families should play a more active role in supervising and guiding adolescents' online activities. Effective parental involvement, including open communication, monitoring of internet use, and the establishment of reasonable digital boundaries, can significantly reduce the likelihood of problematic internet behavior. Islamic parenting practices that emphasize moral guidance, affection, and role modeling may further enhance adolescents' resilience against internet addiction.

Third, counselors and mental health practitioners should consider incorporating religious and spiritual dimensions into intervention programs for adolescents experiencing problematic internet use. Integrating psychological counseling with Islamic values may provide a more comprehensive and culturally relevant approach, particularly in Muslim-majority societies.

Finally, policymakers should develop collaborative strategies involving schools, families, religious institutions, and community organizations to address the growing challenge of internet addiction. Multi-stakeholder cooperation is essential for creating supportive environments that encourage healthy, balanced, and productive digital engagement among adolescents.

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations. As a literature review, the study relies exclusively on secondary data and does not provide direct empirical evidence regarding the effectiveness of Islamic Religious Education interventions. Furthermore, the reviewed literature represents diverse cultural and educational contexts, which may limit the generalizability of the findings.

Future research is therefore recommended to conduct empirical studies examining the effectiveness of Islamic Religious Education programs, Islamic parenting practices, and faith-based counseling interventions in reducing internet addiction among adolescents. Comparative studies across different educational institutions, cultural settings, and religious traditions may also provide a deeper understanding of the relationship between religious values, self-regulation, and digital behavior. Such research would contribute significantly to the development of evidence-based strategies for promoting digital well-being in contemporary society.

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