

REPOSITIONING ISLAMIC PARENTING FOR STUDENTS' MORAL CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT IN THE DIGITAL ERA

Siti Hayati Lubis, Ahmad Ridwan, Rizki Akmalia

Universitas Alwashliyah Medan

Jl. Sisingamangaraja Km. 5,5 Harjosari I, Kota Medan, Sumatera Utara

Email: sitilubis03@gutu.sma.belajar.id, iwanmth@gmail.com, rizki.akmalia@gmail.com

Abstract: This study aims to examine the repositioning of Islamic parenting in shaping students' moral character in the digital era. A qualitative approach was employed using in-depth interviews with parents as the primary data source. The data were analyzed thematically through data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings indicate that Islamic parenting remains the primary foundation for moral character development through parental role modeling, religious habituation, effective communication, and the reinforcement of honesty, politeness, and responsibility. In the digital era, parents function not only as educators but also as digital mentors by regulating children's screen time, supervising online content, and encouraging the use of educational media. Although digital technology offers significant educational benefits, challenges such as exposure to inappropriate content, reduced social interaction, and excessive gadget use require continuous parental supervision and guidance. The study concludes that the repositioning of Islamic parenting requires strong collaboration between families and schools to integrate Islamic values, character education, and digital literacy, thereby fostering students with strong moral character who are capable of using digital technology responsibly.

Keywords: Islamic Parenting, Moral Character, Digital Era

Abstrak: Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis reposisi parenting Islami dalam pembentukan akhlak siswa di era digital. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan teknik wawancara mendalam terhadap orang tua siswa sebagai sumber data utama. Data dianalisis secara tematik melalui proses reduksi, penyajian, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa parenting Islami tetap menjadi fondasi utama pembentukan akhlak melalui keteladanan, pembiasaan ibadah, komunikasi yang efektif, serta penguatan nilai kejujuran, sopan santun, dan tanggung jawab. Di era digital, orang tua tidak hanya berperan sebagai pendidik, tetapi juga sebagai pembimbing dalam penggunaan teknologi melalui pembatasan waktu penggunaan gawai, pengawasan konten digital, dan pemanfaatan media edukatif. Meskipun teknologi memberikan manfaat bagi proses belajar, tantangan berupa paparan konten negatif, berkurangnya interaksi sosial, dan ketergantungan terhadap gawai memerlukan pengawasan yang berkelanjutan. Penelitian ini menegaskan bahwa reposisi parenting Islami menuntut sinergi antara keluarga dan sekolah dalam mengintegrasikan nilai-nilai Islam, pendidikan karakter, dan literasi digital sehingga terbentuk siswa yang berakhlak mulia serta mampu memanfaatkan teknologi secara bertanggung jawab.

Kata Kunci: Parenting Islami; Akhlak Siswa; Era Digital

INTRODUCTION

The rapid expansion of digital technology has transformed the social and educational environment in which children grow and develop. Internet access, social media, digital applications, online games, and smart devices have become increasingly integrated into children's everyday lives, including their learning, communication, entertainment, and social interaction. Digital technology offers substantial educational opportunities by expanding children's access to information, learning resources, and interactive educational media. However, the same digital environment may expose children to content and behavioral patterns that are inconsistent with moral and religious values. Without adequate guidance, children's intensive engagement with digital media may influence their habits, self-control, patterns of interaction, and moral development. This situation makes the development of children's character not only an educational responsibility but also a family and social concern that requires continuous parental involvement.

The importance of parental involvement becomes particularly evident during elementary school years, when children are actively developing moral awareness, behavioral habits, and patterns of self-regulation. Character formation does not occur exclusively within the school environment but develops through interactions among family, school, peers, community, and the broader social environment. Bronfenbrenner's ecological perspective emphasizes that children's

development is shaped by interconnected environmental systems rather than by a single educational institution. From this perspective, the increasing presence of digital media introduces another influential environment into children's everyday lives, requiring families and schools to reconsider how educational and moral guidance is provided. Consequently, character education in the digital era cannot be separated from the quality of relationships and educational practices established between children, parents, teachers, peers, and their surrounding environments (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

Within Islamic education, the family occupies a fundamental position in the formation of children's faith, morality, and personality. Islamic education is not limited to the transmission of knowledge but is directed toward the formation of an integrated human being whose intellectual development is accompanied by moral and spiritual formation (Al-Attas, 1980). The educational process therefore requires the internalization of Islamic values into everyday behavior. Al-Attas (1993) further emphasizes that education should be oriented toward the cultivation of proper recognition and ethical conduct, thereby placing moral formation at the center of the educational process. In this context, parenting should be understood as a form of continuous *tarbiyah* in which parents assume responsibility for nurturing children's religious consciousness, moral behavior, discipline, and responsibility.

Islamic parenting consequently extends beyond physical care and

behavioral control. It encompasses exemplary conduct, habituation, affection, communication, moral instruction, and consistent guidance. The Islamic tradition places considerable emphasis on the cultivation of virtues through repeated practice and moral habituation. Al-Ghazali (2002), for example, emphasizes the importance of habituating individuals to virtuous conduct so that good character becomes embedded in their disposition and everyday behavior. Similarly, Halstead (2007) identifies Islamic moral education as a distinctive framework grounded in values such as justice, responsibility, honesty, compassion, respect, and self-discipline. These principles provide a conceptual foundation for understanding parenting as an educational process aimed at developing children's moral dispositions rather than merely controlling their behavior.

Previous studies have demonstrated the continuing relevance of Islamic parenting in children's moral development. Amalia et al. (2022) explain that Islamic parenting is closely connected to the Islamic understanding of children as a trust and responsibility that must be nurtured through appropriate educational practices. More recent research has examined parenting as an effort to prepare children to become individuals with positive character and quality based on Islamic teachings and prophetic guidance (Almustofa: Journal of Islamic Studies and Research, 2025). Nopiana Sari Z et al. (2025) likewise discuss Islamic parenting as a model of education that integrates Islamic principles into parenting practices. These studies

demonstrate that Islamic parenting possesses a strong normative foundation for character formation. Nevertheless, the rapid transformation of children's social environment through digital technology requires these principles to be examined in relation to new forms of parental responsibility.

The digital environment has consequently generated the need for a broader understanding of parental mediation. Digital parenting involves parents' efforts to regulate, supervise, accompany, and guide children's engagement with digital technology. Livingstone and Helsper (2008) demonstrate that parental mediation plays an important role in shaping children's Internet experiences, indicating that parents can influence how children encounter and respond to digital content. However, digital parenting within an Islamic educational framework cannot be reduced to technological restrictions or monitoring of screen time. It also requires parents to provide children with moral and religious criteria for evaluating digital content and behavior. Thus, digital parenting and Islamic parenting should be viewed as complementary rather than separate approaches: digital parenting addresses children's interaction with technology, while Islamic parenting provides the ethical and spiritual orientation that guides how technology should be used.

This integration becomes increasingly important because parenting styles influence children's behavioral

development and capacity to respond to their social environment. Baumrind's (1991) work demonstrates the importance of parenting patterns in children's competence and behavioral development. Within the context of character education, Berkowitz and Bier (2007) similarly emphasize that effective character formation requires consistent educational environments and practices rather than isolated moral instruction. When these perspectives are connected with Islamic educational principles, parental supervision should therefore be accompanied by communication, habituation, role modeling, and the development of children's internal moral awareness. The objective is not simply to prevent children from accessing inappropriate digital content but to develop their ability to regulate themselves and make morally responsible choices when interacting with the digital environment.

Recent scholarship has begun to examine the relationship between Islamic parenting and the digital era. Masrizal (2025) highlights the importance of parenting practices in cultivating Islamic morals among children while minimizing the negative influence of digital development. The study points to the importance of parental guidance and the consistent cultivation of Islamic values in children's daily lives. Meanwhile, Arifurrohmah et al. (2025), through a bibliometric analysis of parenting trends in the digital era from an Islamic perspective, demonstrate the growing scholarly interest in the intersection between parenting, digital transformation, and Islamic values.

However, the emerging nature of this field also indicates that the integration of Islamic parenting and digital parenting remains an area requiring deeper empirical investigation, particularly concerning how these approaches operate in actual educational settings.

The problem becomes particularly significant at the elementary school level because children are simultaneously exposed to educational influences from home and school and to increasingly autonomous digital environments. Preliminary observations and information obtained from teachers at SDN 104213 Deli Tua indicate that several students have demonstrated declining discipline, limited self-control, and tendencies to imitate inappropriate behaviors encountered through digital media. These conditions indicate that children's moral development is influenced not only by the formal educational process at school but also by experiences occurring outside the classroom. At the same time, some parents still face difficulties in providing consistent guidance and supervision of children's digital activities. This situation creates a potential discontinuity between moral education provided at school and the educational practices implemented within the family.

From an ecological perspective, such discontinuity is important because children's character development depends on the interaction among multiple environments. Family and school should therefore not operate as independent institutions in responding to the challenges

created by digital technology. Instead, both environments need to establish complementary educational practices, particularly in relation to discipline, responsibility, self-control, religious habituation, and ethical digital behavior. Islamic parenting provides the family with a normative and spiritual foundation, while schools provide structured educational reinforcement. The integration of these two environments can potentially strengthen children's capacity to internalize Islamic values and apply them when interacting with digital media.

Despite the growing literature on Islamic parenting, several research gaps remain. First, existing studies have largely discussed Islamic parenting from normative, conceptual, or general character-education perspectives, while empirical investigations focusing specifically on elementary school children's moral character in digitally mediated environments remain limited (Amalia et al., 2022; Nopiana Sari Z et al., 2025). Second, although digital parenting has received increasing scholarly attention, the integration of digital parental mediation with Islamic moral education has not yet been sufficiently explored. Third, previous discussions have tended to emphasize parental practices without adequately examining the interaction between family-based Islamic parenting and school-based character education. Fourth, there remains a need to understand how Islamic values such as responsibility, honesty, discipline, self-control, and moral awareness are translated into concrete parenting practices

for managing children's digital behavior. These gaps indicate the need for empirical research that examines Islamic parenting not merely as a normative concept but as an adaptive educational practice in response to digital transformation.

This study addresses these gaps by examining the repositioning of Islamic parenting as an adaptive strategy for shaping students' moral character in the digital era. The term "repositioning" is important because the study does not seek to replace the fundamental principles of Islamic parenting but to examine how those principles can be actualized within a substantially transformed social and technological environment. Islamic parenting is therefore conceptualized through several interconnected dimensions, including parental role modeling, religious habituation, communication, supervision of digital activities, moral guidance, and the development of children's self-control. These dimensions are examined in relation to the role of schools in reinforcing values that are cultivated within the family.

The empirical setting of SDN 104213 Deli Tua provides an important context for examining this issue because the school represents an environment in which formal character education intersects with children's family experiences and digital lives. Rather than treating digital technology solely as a threat, this study positions technology as a social environment that requires appropriate educational mediation. The central concern is consequently how parents and schools

can transform digital challenges into opportunities for strengthening children's moral awareness, responsibility, discipline, and ability to make appropriate choices. Such an approach is consistent with the broader objectives of Islamic education, which seek not only to transmit religious knowledge but also to cultivate ethical dispositions and responsible conduct (Al-Attas, 1980; Halstead, 2007).

Accordingly, the study entitled "Repositioning Islamic Parenting in Shaping Students' Moral Character in the Digital Era: An Empirical Study at SDN 104213 Deli Tua" seeks to examine how Islamic parenting practices are implemented in the context of children's increasingly digital lives, how parents and schools contribute to the formation of students' moral character, and how Islamic values are integrated into parental guidance of children's digital activities. The study is expected to contribute theoretically by strengthening the conceptual connection between Islamic parenting, digital parenting, and character education, and empirically by providing evidence concerning the implementation of these principles in an elementary school context. Practically, the findings may assist parents and schools in developing collaborative educational strategies that combine digital supervision with religious habituation, exemplary conduct, communication, and moral guidance. Ultimately, the study seeks to reaffirm the family's role as a primary environment for children's moral formation while demonstrating the importance of school-family collaboration in preparing children

to engage with digital technology in ways that are responsible, self-regulated, and consistent with Islamic values.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach using a field research design to obtain an in-depth understanding of the implementation of Islamic parenting in the digital era and its contribution to the moral development of elementary school students. A qualitative approach was selected because the study sought to explore social and educational phenomena holistically by examining participants' experiences, perceptions, and interpretations within their natural settings. Rather than measuring causal relationships quantitatively, this approach emphasizes understanding the processes through which Islamic parenting is practiced and how these practices influence students' moral character in the context of increasing digital technology exposure. Creswell (2013) argues that qualitative research is particularly appropriate for investigating complex educational phenomena where contextual understanding and process-oriented inquiry are required.

The research was conducted at SDN 104213 Deli Tua, Deli Serdang Regency, North Sumatra, Indonesia. The selection of this site was based on several considerations. First, the school represents a public elementary school with students originating from diverse socio-economic family backgrounds. Second, most students have been exposed

to digital devices and internet-based technologies from an early age, making the school an appropriate context for examining the interaction between family upbringing and digital influences. Third, the school actively implements character education and Islamic Religious Education programs that emphasize students' moral development. Finally, the close interaction between the school and parents provides an appropriate setting for investigating the synergy between family and school in strengthening students' moral values in the digital era.

Research participants were selected using purposive sampling to ensure that the collected data were information-rich and directly relevant to the research objectives. According to Patton (2002), purposive sampling enables qualitative researchers to obtain comprehensive insights from participants who possess substantial knowledge and experience regarding the phenomenon under investigation. The participants included parents of students at SDN 104213 Deli Tua as the primary informants, students as the subjects of moral development, Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers, classroom teachers, and the school principal as supporting informants who provided institutional perspectives on character education and parental involvement.

Data were collected through three complementary techniques: semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and document analysis. Semi-structured interviews were

conducted to explore parents' experiences, perceptions, and practices of Islamic parenting, as well as teachers' perspectives regarding students' moral behavior and the influence of digital technology. This interview format provided sufficient flexibility to probe emerging issues while maintaining consistency across participants (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Observations were carried out to examine students' daily behaviors, teacher-student interactions, religious practices, and the manifestation of moral values within the school environment. Observation also enabled the researcher to obtain contextual evidence that might not emerge through interviews alone (Creswell, 2013). Documentary evidence, including the school's profile, vision and mission statements, character education programs, school regulations, and records of religious activities, was analyzed to complement and corroborate the interview and observational data through source triangulation.

The collected data were analyzed using the interactive model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), consisting of three interrelated stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. Data reduction involved selecting, organizing, coding, and simplifying the raw information obtained during fieldwork. Subsequently, the organized data were displayed in the form of descriptive narratives and thematic matrices to facilitate interpretation and comparison

across participants. Finally, conclusions were continuously developed and verified throughout the research process to ensure that the emerging findings accurately represented the empirical evidence. This iterative analytical process allowed patterns, themes, and relationships concerning the repositioning of Islamic parenting in the digital era to emerge systematically.

To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, this study adopted the criteria proposed by Lincoln and Guba (1985), including credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility was established through source and methodological triangulation, prolonged engagement in the research setting, and member checking with selected participants. Transferability was strengthened by providing rich descriptions of the research context and participants. Dependability was ensured by maintaining a comprehensive audit trail documenting all stages of the research process, while confirmability was achieved by systematically linking interpretations to empirical evidence and minimizing researcher bias through continuous reflection and documentation. These procedures enhanced the rigor, reliability, and validity of the qualitative findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Implementation of Islamic Parenting in Shaping Students' Moral Character in the Digital Era

The findings of this study indicate that Islamic parenting remains a primary foundation for shaping students' moral character despite the increasingly complex challenges posed by the digital era. Interviews with parents revealed a shared understanding that Islamic parenting is a continuous educational process grounded in Islamic teachings, emphasizing affection, exemplary conduct, habituation, and consistent supervision. Rather than perceiving parenting as merely fulfilling children's physical and educational needs, parents regarded it as a comprehensive responsibility to cultivate moral integrity, religious commitment, and social responsibility. This understanding is consistent with the Islamic educational perspective that education should develop individuals holistically through the integration of intellectual, spiritual, and moral dimensions (Al-Attas, 1980; Ramayulis, 2012). In this context, the family functions as an important educational environment in which parents assume responsibility for introducing and cultivating Islamic values in children's everyday lives (Amalia et al., 2022; Nopiana Sari Z et al., 2025).

One of the most prominent findings concerns parents' strong commitment to instilling moral values from an early age. Nearly all participants emphasized that honesty, politeness, respect for others, and responsibility constitute fundamental values consistently introduced in everyday family life. These values were not transmitted solely through verbal instruction but primarily through direct

parental example. Parents explained that they consciously demonstrated courteous language, respectful interactions, and disciplined behavior in the presence of their children, believing that children learn more effectively through observation than through advice alone. Daily practices such as greeting family members politely, asking permission before leaving home, expressing gratitude, and respecting older people were repeatedly mentioned as practical forms of moral habituation. This finding demonstrates that Islamic parenting places considerable emphasis on the transformation of moral knowledge into lived behavior. Such an approach corresponds with the Islamic conception of moral education, in which good character is cultivated through continuous practice, habituation, and exemplary conduct (Al-Ghazali, 2002; Sanuhung et al., 2021). It is also consistent with the broader principle that character education requires sustained practice within children's everyday environments rather than isolated moral instruction (Zubaedi, 2012; Shifana et al., 2025).

The interviews further revealed that religious habituation represents another essential component of Islamic parenting. Parents consistently introduced obligatory prayers, Qur'anic recitation, and daily supplications as integral parts of their children's routines. Most participants required their children to perform the five daily prayers on time, attend afternoon Qur'anic learning sessions, and recite prayers before engaging in daily activities. These practices were perceived not merely

as religious obligations but also as strategies for nurturing discipline, self-control, gratitude, and spiritual awareness. Parents believed that regular worship strengthens children's relationship with Allah while simultaneously encouraging positive interpersonal behavior. Consequently, moral education and religious education were viewed as inseparable dimensions of Islamic parenting, each reinforcing the other in developing balanced personal character. This finding is consistent with Islamic educational thought, which positions religious education as a process of developing faith, moral disposition, and responsible conduct simultaneously (Al-Attas, 1980; Ramayulis, 2012). The cultivation of religious habits also corresponds with the Islamic understanding of character formation in which repeated virtuous practices contribute to the development of stable moral dispositions (Al-Ghazali, 2002; Sanuhung et al., 2021).

Another significant finding relates to disciplinary practices within the family. Rather than relying on harsh punishment, participants consistently preferred educational approaches characterized by gentle advice, dialogue, and emotional guidance. Parents explained that children were corrected calmly whenever inappropriate behavior occurred, with explanations emphasizing the moral consequences of their actions from an Islamic perspective. Several participants stated that anger and physical punishment were avoided because they could

undermine children's emotional security and weaken parent-child relationships. Instead, parents sought to create an atmosphere of openness in which children felt comfortable discussing their experiences and mistakes. Daily family communication, particularly during dinner or before bedtime, served as an important opportunity for parents to monitor children's emotional well-being while reinforcing Islamic values through informal conversation. These findings demonstrate that effective Islamic parenting integrates affection with discipline, thereby fostering moral awareness rather than obedience based solely on fear. The importance of parenting practices, communication, and the quality of parent-child relationships is also recognized in broader parenting literature (Baumrind, 1991; Steinberg, 2001). Within an Islamic framework, however, such communication is further oriented toward the formation of *akhlak*, responsibility, and moral consciousness (Basori et al., 2025; Halstead, 2007).

The digital environment has significantly influenced parental strategies in shaping children's character. Almost every participating family reported that their children owned personal digital devices primarily to support school activities. Nevertheless, parents recognized that unrestricted access to digital media could expose children to inappropriate content capable of influencing their attitudes and behavior. Consequently, parents implemented various supervisory measures, including

limiting screen time to approximately one or two hours per day, monitoring browsing histories, selecting educational applications, and establishing clear household rules regarding technology use. Educational platforms such as YouTube learning channels and WhatsApp for school communication were generally considered acceptable, whereas entertainment content lacking educational value was carefully restricted. These practices illustrate that Islamic parenting in the digital era has evolved beyond traditional moral instruction by incorporating digital supervision as an essential educational responsibility. The findings are consistent with research emphasizing the importance of parental mediation in children's Internet use, particularly through supervision, restriction, and guidance (Livingstone & Helsper, 2008). They also reinforce recent discussions concerning the need to adapt Islamic parenting to the realities of children's digital lives (Masrizal, 2025; Sitorus et al., 2025; Umi Zulfa, 2025).

Despite acknowledging the educational benefits of digital technology, parents also expressed concern regarding its potential negative consequences. Many participants observed that prolonged gadget use tended to reduce children's physical activity, limit direct social interaction, and occasionally increase emotional withdrawal. Several parents explained that children became quieter, less communicative, or reluctant to participate in family activities after spending excessive time with digital

devices. These observations encouraged parents to maintain balance between technology use and face-to-face interaction by involving children in household responsibilities, outdoor activities, and religious programs within the community. The findings indicate that parents do not reject technological advancement but instead seek to integrate digital literacy with Islamic moral values through continuous supervision and balanced educational practices. This adaptive orientation corresponds with emerging conceptual discussions of Islamic parenting in the digital era, which emphasize the importance of balancing technological engagement with religious, moral, and social development (Arifurrohman et al., 2025; Umi Zulfa, 2025). From the perspective of Islamic education, technological engagement should remain subject to ethical considerations so that educational progress does not become detached from moral responsibility (Sahin, 2018; Yuliana et al., 2024).

The interviews also highlighted the importance of collaboration between families and schools in strengthening children's moral development. Parents generally expressed appreciation for schools that introduced digital ethics, responsible social media use, and character education while maintaining regular communication with families. Such collaboration enabled parents to reinforce at home the moral values introduced within the school environment, thereby creating consistency between formal and

informal educational settings. Participants believed that successful Islamic parenting in the digital era cannot rely solely on family efforts but requires active cooperation among parents, teachers, and educational institutions in responding to the rapidly changing digital landscape. This finding supports the ecological understanding of child development, in which children's development is influenced by interconnected environments rather than by a single institution (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). It also reinforces the argument that character formation requires consistent educational environments and cooperation among the various actors involved in children's development (Berkowitz & Bier, 2007; Zubaedi, 2012).

These findings support the view that Islamic parenting is a dynamic educational model capable of adapting to technological and social transformation without abandoning its fundamental principles. Consistent with Islamic educational theory, the formation of moral character is achieved through exemplary conduct, habituation, continuous guidance, and affectionate communication rather than authoritarian control (Al-Ghazali, 2002; Halstead, 2007; Sanuhung et al., 2021). The findings also reinforce the argument that digital technology should be understood not merely as a source of moral challenges but as an educational resource requiring responsible guidance. Therefore, the repositioning of Islamic parenting in the digital era involves strengthening parents' roles not only as moral educators

and religious role models but also as digital mentors who equip children with ethical awareness, critical thinking, and self-control. This integrated approach enables Islamic parenting to remain relevant in cultivating students who are morally grounded, technologically literate, and firmly committed to Islamic values amid the rapid transformation of contemporary society (Arifurrohman et al., 2025; Sitorus et al., 2025; Masrizal, 2025).

Repositioning Islamic Parenting Strategies in Responding to the Challenges of the Digital Era

The findings of this study indicate that the rapid development of digital technology has encouraged parents to reposition Islamic parenting practices in order to remain relevant to the changing social environment experienced by their children. Although the fundamental principles of Islamic parenting continue to be derived from Islamic teachings, parents no longer perceive moral education as being limited to conventional family interactions. Instead, they recognize that the digital environment has become an inseparable part of children's daily lives, requiring parenting practices that integrate religious guidance with digital literacy and responsible technology use. Interviews with parents revealed that the repositioning of Islamic parenting does not involve changing Islamic values but rather adapting educational strategies so that these values remain applicable within contemporary digital contexts. This finding corresponds with recent scholarship that

identifies the digital era as a context requiring the adaptation of Islamic parenting without abandoning its normative foundations (Arifurrohman et al., 2025; Sitorus et al., 2025; Umi Zulfa, 2025).

One of the most significant forms of this repositioning is the transformation of parental roles from traditional supervisors into digital mentors. Parents acknowledged that digital devices are indispensable for supporting children's academic activities and access to educational resources. Consequently, prohibiting technology altogether was considered unrealistic and potentially counterproductive. Instead, participants emphasized the importance of accompanying children during their interaction with digital media by providing explanations about ethical online behavior, encouraging critical evaluation of information, and reminding children to prioritize religious responsibilities over entertainment. This approach reflects a shift from restrictive parenting toward educative supervision, where technology is viewed as a medium requiring guidance rather than an object that must simply be prohibited. The finding is consistent with the concept of parental mediation, which emphasizes the role of parents in guiding children's experiences with digital media through active mediation and supervision (Livingstone & Helsper, 2008). In the context of Islamic parenting, such mediation is strengthened by the incorporation of religious and moral

criteria into children's digital experiences (Masrizal, 2025; Sitorus et al., 2025).

The interviews further demonstrated that parents have adopted preventive strategies to minimize the negative influence of digital media while maximizing its educational benefits. Most families established clear household regulations concerning screen time, limiting gadget use to approximately one or two hours each day except when additional time was required for school assignments. Parents also selected educational applications that supported children's learning while avoiding content considered inconsistent with Islamic moral values. Platforms such as educational YouTube channels and WhatsApp were generally accepted because they facilitated learning and communication between teachers and students. At the same time, parents routinely monitored browsing histories, online interactions, and digital activities to ensure that children remained protected from inappropriate content. These findings suggest that Islamic parenting in the digital era increasingly emphasizes preventive education through continuous supervision rather than reactive intervention after problems have occurred. Such practices correspond with the broader concept of digital parenting, which emphasizes parental regulation, mediation, and accompaniment of children's technology use (Livingstone & Helsper, 2008; Umi Zulfa, 2025). The Islamic dimension of this approach lies in determining not only whether technology is used but also whether its use contributes

to beneficial, responsible, and morally appropriate activities.

Another important finding concerns the continued centrality of exemplary behavior despite technological transformation. Participants consistently stated that no form of digital supervision could replace the influence of parental example in shaping children's character. Parents recognized that children frequently imitate adult behavior both offline and online. Consequently, they consciously attempted to demonstrate responsible technology use by limiting unnecessary smartphone use during family interactions, avoiding inappropriate online behavior, and prioritizing direct communication within the household. Several participants explained that children become more receptive to parental advice regarding digital ethics when parents themselves consistently practice the values they seek to instill. This finding reinforces the Islamic educational principle of *uswah hasanah*, which emphasizes that effective moral education begins with personal example before verbal instruction. The centrality of exemplary conduct is consistent with Islamic moral education, which regards the development of *akhlak* as inseparable from the practical embodiment of moral values (Al-Ghazali, 2002; Halstead, 2007; Sanuhung et al., 2021). It also supports the broader understanding that character formation is strengthened when children encounter consistent moral models in their immediate environments (Berkowitz & Bier, 2007).

The study also revealed that parents increasingly rely on open communication as a strategy for responding to digital challenges. Rather than adopting authoritarian approaches, participants preferred regular conversations in which children were encouraged to express their experiences, discuss online activities, and seek parental guidance whenever they encountered unfamiliar information. Family discussions commonly occurred during dinner, after evening prayers, or before bedtime, providing opportunities for parents to evaluate children's daily experiences while reinforcing Islamic values. Parents believed that maintaining close emotional relationships reduces children's tendency to conceal online activities and increases their willingness to seek advice when facing digital risks. Consequently, communication functions not only as a mechanism of supervision but also as an educational process that strengthens mutual trust and moral awareness. This finding is compatible with parenting perspectives that emphasize the significance of parent-child relationships in children's social and behavioral development (Baumrind, 1991; Steinberg, 2001). Within Islamic parenting, open communication further provides a medium for transmitting ethical values and developing children's moral awareness through affectionate guidance (Amalia et al., 2022; Nopiana Sari Z et al., 2025).

Despite these adaptive strategies, parents acknowledged that the digital era presents increasingly complex challenges

beyond their complete control. The unrestricted availability of information, rapid technological innovation, and the growing influence of social media expose children to values that may conflict with Islamic teachings. Participants expressed particular concern regarding inappropriate entertainment content, declining face-to-face interaction, excessive dependence on digital devices, and the emergence of individualistic behavior among children. Several parents reported that prolonged gadget use occasionally reduced children's willingness to participate in family conversations, religious activities, and outdoor play. These concerns demonstrate that technological advancement creates new educational demands requiring parents to balance children's digital engagement with opportunities for direct socialization and religious practice. Recent studies on Islamic parenting similarly identify the digital era as a context that presents both opportunities and risks for children's moral development, thereby requiring active parental intervention and value-based guidance (Masrizal, 2025; Sitorus et al., 2025). The challenge is therefore not to reject technology but to ensure that technological engagement remains compatible with the moral objectives of Islamic education (Sahin, 2018; Yuliana et al., 2024).

The findings further highlight that successful repositioning of Islamic parenting depends upon effective collaboration between families and schools. Parents consistently appreciated

schools that incorporated character education, digital ethics, and responsible social media practices into the learning process while maintaining regular communication with families. Such cooperation enabled consistent reinforcement of Islamic values across home and school environments, thereby reducing contradictions between formal education and family upbringing. Parents emphasized that schools should not merely teach technological competence but also cultivate ethical awareness and digital responsibility grounded in Islamic principles. This collaborative approach reflects a shared educational responsibility in addressing the moral implications of technological change. From an ecological perspective, cooperation between family and school is essential because children's development emerges through interactions among interconnected social environments (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The importance of integrated character education is also supported by scholarship emphasizing that moral development requires consistency and continuity across educational contexts (Berkowitz & Bier, 2007; Shifana et al., 2025).

These findings suggest that the repositioning of Islamic parenting in the digital era should be understood as a process of educational adaptation rather than ideological transformation. The essential principles of Islamic education—including faith, moral integrity, discipline, compassion, and responsibility—remain unchanged, while the methods used to transmit these values evolve in response to

contemporary realities. The findings are consistent with the perspective that Islamic education must engage critically with changing social contexts while retaining its fundamental ethical orientation (Al-Attas, 1993; Sahin, 2018). Islamic parenting therefore becomes increasingly holistic by integrating moral education, spiritual development, digital literacy, and critical thinking within a unified educational framework. Such an approach enables parents to prepare children not only to navigate technological advancement competently but also to uphold Islamic ethical principles in increasingly complex digital environments (Arifurrohman et al., 2025; Umi Zulfa, 2025). Accordingly, the repositioning of Islamic parenting represents a strategic effort to ensure that technological progress strengthens rather than diminishes students' moral character, enabling them to become digitally competent individuals who remain firmly committed to Islamic values and responsible citizenship.

Model of Repositioning Islamic Parenting for Students' Moral Character Development in the Digital Era

The findings of this study demonstrate that the repositioning of Islamic parenting in the digital era should not be understood as replacing traditional parenting principles but as strengthening and contextualizing them within the realities of technological advancement. The interviews consistently revealed that parents perceive moral education as a continuous process requiring the

integration of exemplary conduct, religious habituation, digital supervision, and collaborative educational practices. Rather than viewing these elements as separate parenting strategies, participants regarded them as interconnected components that collectively contribute to the development of students' moral character. Consequently, the findings suggest that an effective Islamic parenting model in the digital era is characterized by the harmonious integration of spiritual guidance, moral education, technological literacy, and shared responsibility between families and schools. This integrated understanding is consistent with Islamic parenting scholarship that conceptualizes parenting as a comprehensive educational process involving moral, spiritual, and behavioral development (Amalia et al., 2022; Nopiana Sari Z et al., 2025; Sitorus et al., 2025).

The foundation of this model lies in exemplary parental behavior (*uswah hasanah*), which emerged as the most influential educational strategy throughout the interviews. Parents consistently emphasized that children learn moral values primarily by observing daily parental conduct rather than merely listening to verbal instruction. Respectful communication, honesty, responsibility, discipline, and compassion were repeatedly identified as behaviors intentionally demonstrated within family life. Participants believed that children naturally imitate parental attitudes in both offline and online environments, making parental consistency essential for

successful character formation. This finding reinforces the notion that the effectiveness of Islamic parenting depends not only on the transmission of moral knowledge but also on the credibility of parents as living examples of Islamic values. Accordingly, exemplary conduct functions as the central pillar upon which other parenting strategies are built. The importance of exemplary conduct is strongly rooted in Islamic moral education, particularly in the development of *akhlak* through habituation and the practical embodiment of virtues (Al-Ghazali, 2002; Sanuhung et al., 2021). It is also compatible with character education perspectives emphasizing the importance of consistent moral modeling in children's development (Berkowitz & Bier, 2007; Zubaedi, 2012).

Religious habituation constitutes the second major component of the proposed parenting model. The study found that parents systematically incorporated religious practices into children's daily routines through regular prayer, Qur'anic recitation, supplication, and participation in religious activities. These practices were not perceived merely as ritual obligations but as educational mechanisms for developing self-discipline, emotional regulation, gratitude, and spiritual consciousness. Parents explained that repeated engagement in acts of worship gradually shaped children's moral awareness and encouraged them to internalize Islamic values naturally. This finding indicates that the continuity of religious habituation strengthens children's ability to maintain ethical

behavior even when confronted with complex social and technological influences. Therefore, the cultivation of moral character is viewed as a gradual educational process supported by consistent religious practice. This orientation corresponds with the Islamic conception of education as a process of cultivating integrated human development and moral responsibility (Al-Attas, 1980; Ramayulis, 2012). It is also consistent with Al-Ghazali's emphasis on habituation in the development of virtuous character (Al-Ghazali, 2002) and contemporary discussions of Islamic parenting that emphasize the integration of religious practices into children's everyday lives (Pitri Khayrani, 2025).

Another important element identified in this study is educational supervision of digital technology. The findings reveal that parents no longer perceive digital devices exclusively as threats to children's moral development but rather as educational resources requiring responsible management. Consequently, supervision extends beyond limiting screen time to include guiding children in selecting beneficial content, discussing online experiences, and cultivating critical awareness regarding digital information. Parents recognized that children must eventually develop the capacity to regulate their own digital behavior; therefore, supervision was combined with continuous explanation of Islamic ethical principles related to honesty, respect, modesty, and responsibility in virtual interactions. This

educational approach transforms parental control into a process of character development, enabling children to make morally informed decisions independently while navigating digital environments. The finding corresponds with the concept of parental mediation, which emphasizes that parents can guide children's digital experiences through restriction, monitoring, and active discussion (Livingstone & Helsper, 2008). In the Islamic parenting context, digital supervision is further oriented toward ensuring that children's technology use remains consistent with Islamic moral objectives (Masrizal, 2025; Sitorus et al., 2025; Umi Zulfa, 2025).

The findings further demonstrate that effective communication serves as the connecting mechanism linking all dimensions of Islamic parenting. Participants consistently described open and affectionate dialogue as essential for understanding children's emotional conditions, monitoring their digital experiences, and reinforcing Islamic values within everyday family interactions. Conversations during shared meals, after congregational prayers, or before bedtime provided opportunities for parents to discuss academic challenges, online activities, friendships, and religious responsibilities simultaneously. Such communication encouraged mutual trust, reduced children's reluctance to disclose personal experiences, and enabled parents to provide timely moral guidance. The findings therefore suggest that communication functions not merely as

information exchange but as a pedagogical process through which Islamic values are interpreted, negotiated, and internalized within contemporary family life. This finding is compatible with broader parenting perspectives that associate effective parent-child relationships with children's social and behavioral development (Baumrind, 1991; Steinberg, 2001). Within Islamic parenting, communication becomes a medium through which moral values are conveyed through affection, guidance, and mutual trust (Amalia et al., 2022; Nopiana Sari Z et al., 2025).

Equally significant is the collaborative relationship between families and schools. Parents consistently acknowledged that moral education cannot be accomplished solely within the home because children spend substantial portions of their daily lives in educational institutions and increasingly interact with digital communities. Schools were therefore expected to reinforce Islamic values through character education programs, digital ethics instruction, and continuous communication with parents regarding students' behavioral development. Participants appreciated schools that regularly informed parents about children's academic progress, social behavior, and technology use, enabling both educational environments to pursue consistent objectives. This partnership reflects a shared educational responsibility in which parents and teachers complement one another in responding to the moral challenges generated by rapid

technological change. Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological perspective provides a useful theoretical basis for understanding this relationship because children's development is influenced by interactions between interconnected environments. Similarly, character education requires continuity between educational settings to ensure that moral values are reinforced consistently (Berkowitz & Bier, 2007; Shifana et al., 2025).

Despite the strengths of this integrated parenting model, the findings also indicate that its successful implementation requires continuous adaptation to emerging digital realities. Parents acknowledged that technological innovation evolves more rapidly than traditional parenting practices, creating new forms of moral challenges that demand lifelong parental learning. Consequently, Islamic parenting in the digital era should remain flexible while preserving its foundational religious principles. Parents emphasized the importance of continuously improving their own digital literacy, understanding contemporary technological trends, and strengthening their religious knowledge so that they can effectively guide their children within increasingly complex digital environments. This perspective reflects an understanding that parenting is itself a lifelong educational process requiring intellectual, spiritual, and technological development. Recent scholarship on parenting in the digital era similarly emphasizes the need for adaptive approaches that combine Islamic values

with contemporary digital realities (Arifurrohman et al., 2025; Umi Zulfa, 2025). Such adaptation does not require abandoning Islamic principles but rather developing appropriate educational strategies for applying them within changing social conditions (Al-Attas, 1993; Sahin, 2018).

The overall findings of this study suggest that the repositioning of Islamic parenting is best conceptualized as an integrated educational model encompassing four interrelated dimensions: exemplary conduct, religious habituation, educational digital supervision, and collaborative partnerships between families and schools. These dimensions collectively facilitate the formation of students who possess strong Islamic moral character while simultaneously developing the competencies required to engage responsibly with digital technology. The findings are consistent with Islamic educational perspectives emphasizing that character formation is achieved through continuous habituation, guidance, and exemplary practice rather than through isolated instructional activities (Al-Ghazali, 2002; Halstead, 2007; Sanuhung et al., 2021). They also demonstrate that technological advancement does not diminish the relevance of Islamic parenting; instead, it reinforces the necessity of repositioning parents as moral educators, spiritual mentors, and digital facilitators. Accordingly, the study concludes that sustainable moral character development in the digital era depends

upon the ability of Islamic parenting to integrate timeless religious values with adaptive educational strategies capable of preparing students to become ethically responsible, spiritually grounded, and digitally competent members of contemporary society (Sitorus et al., 2025; Masrizal, 2025; Arifurrohman et al., 2025).

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the repositioning of Islamic parenting is essential for strengthening students' moral character amid the challenges of the digital era. The findings demonstrate that Islamic parenting remains fundamentally grounded in the Qur'an and the Sunnah while adapting its educational strategies to contemporary technological developments. Parents play a central role in cultivating moral values through exemplary conduct, religious habituation, effective communication, and consistent supervision of children's digital activities. The study further reveals that the successful formation of students' moral character depends not only on parents' commitment to instilling Islamic values but also on their ability to integrate digital literacy with ethical guidance. Although digital technology offers valuable educational opportunities, it also presents challenges related to inappropriate content, excessive gadget use, and reduced social interaction, requiring continuous parental monitoring and guidance. Moreover, effective collaboration between families and schools emerges as a critical factor in reinforcing consistent moral education across home and educational environments. The proposed model of Islamic parenting integrates four complementary dimensions: exemplary behavior, religious

habituation, educational digital supervision, and family-school partnership. This integrated approach enables students to develop strong moral character, spiritual awareness, and responsible digital behavior. Therefore, Islamic parenting should be continuously strengthened through adaptive educational practices that preserve Islamic values while preparing students to become ethically responsible and digitally competent individuals in contemporary society.

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