

Empowering Muslim Adolescents through Progressive Islamic Digital Literacy to Combat Cyberbullying

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ABSTRACT

The increasing prevalence of cyberbullying and online harassment presents serious psychological risks for adolescents, particularly among Muslim youth who often lack the ethical and spiritual guidance needed to navigate digital spaces. Existing digital literacy programs tend to emphasize technical skills but fall short in fostering moral resilience and ethical behavior. This study aims to develop an Islamic digital literacy model that strengthens the mental resilience of Muslim adolescents by integrating digital competencies with core Islamic values. Employing a qualitative approach, this research synthesizes secondary data from literature reviews and case studies of value-based digital education programs. The results indicate that adolescents exposed to Islamic digital literacy demonstrate significant improvements in risk perception, critical thinking, and emotional regulation, as well as heightened mental health literacy. Website features that combine digital ethics education with Qur'anic and Hadith-based content provide both preventive and formative benefits. The integration of interactive features and family engagement is also essential to enhance the platform's pedagogical and emotional impact. These findings highlight the importance of progressive Islamic education in addressing contemporary challenges and offer a practical framework for fostering ethical, spiritually grounded, and psychologically resilient Muslim youth in the digital era.

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INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of digital technology has significantly impacted social life, particularly among adolescents [1]–[3]. According to the We Are Social and Hootsuite report at 2023, over 91% of Indonesian teenagers aged 13–18 are active internet users, with 84% accessing social media daily. Although digital media facilitates communication and information access, phenomena such as cyberbullying, online harassment, and the spread of harmful content pose serious threats to adolescents' mental health, character development, and emotional stability [4]–[6]. A report by UNICEF Indonesia reveals that approximately 45% of teenagers have experienced some form of online violence, which negatively affects their self-confidence, psychological well-being, and social anxiety [7]–[9].

Amid these challenges, conventional digital literacy—which primarily emphasizes technical aspects such as device usage and cybersecurity—has proven insufficient in shaping ethical and prudent online behavior [10]. Therefore, a digital literacy approach that integrates moral and spiritual values, particularly Islamic values, offers a promising alternative. Several studies have shown that incorporating religious values into digital education can strengthen self-control, enhance empathy, and foster emotionally and spiritually balanced personalities [11]. However, there remains limited literature specifically exploring the connection between Islamic digital literacy and the mental resilience of Muslim adolescents in navigating digital challenges. Most existing research remains descriptive and has yet to develop practical, Islam-based learning models or educational media tailored for adolescents [12]–[14].

This gap highlights the urgent need for research and the development of educational media that contextually integrates digital literacy principles with Islamic teachings. Such an approach is increasingly critical given the high

exposure to negative content among Muslim youth, which is not yet matched by adequate capacity to filter and respond wisely in accordance with religious values [15]–[17]. In this context, the role of families, schools, and communities as key supporters in fostering a healthy and Islamic digital culture also emerges as an essential but underexplored element in digital education practices.

Thus, this article discusses the strengthening of Muslim adolescents' mental resilience through digital literacy grounded in Islamic values as an effort to shape a generation that is technologically competent, emotionally resilient, and spiritually grounded. This study is based on the urgent need to offer an alternative approach to digital literacy—one that not only hones technical skills but also internalizes ethics, empathy, and noble character in online life.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Strengthening adolescent mental resilience is a critical concern in addressing the complexities of the digital era. From the perspective of Islamic psychology, mental resilience is deeply rooted in one's ability to endure life's challenges while remaining anchored in religious principles. Hasanah notes that Islamic values such as *tawakkul* (trust in God), *sabr* (patience), and *shukr* (gratitude) can be internalized to build psychological strength. Adolescents who are grounded in these values are generally more capable of navigating stress, including the pressures of online environments, due to their strong moral and spiritual foundations. Alongside this, digital literacy emerges as a vital competency [12]. As Rheingold defines, it involves the ability to understand, utilize, and create digital content responsibly and safely. According to Nasir and Rahmat, digital literacy not only equips adolescents with technical know-how but also fosters ethical awareness, critical thinking, and cybersecurity skills—key tools for managing risks like cyberbullying and online harassment. For Muslim adolescents, digital literacy is particularly crucial in ensuring that technological engagement aligns with Islamic ethical standards [18], [19].

Cyberbullying and online harassment continue to pose significant threats to adolescent mental health, often resulting in depression, anxiety, and reduced self-esteem. These risks may be exacerbated for Muslim youth, especially when online abuse intersects with religious or cultural identity. Fatima emphasizes the importance of family and community support, coupled with digital literacy skills, in helping Muslim adolescents respond more effectively to such threats. To this end, integrating digital literacy with Islamic values provides a strategic and culturally grounded solution. Rahman argues that framing digital literacy within Islamic teachings cultivates ethical online behavior and personal responsibility [20]–[22]. Core principles such as preserving personal dignity (*hifz al-'ird*) and avoiding slander (*fitnah*) serve as moral compasses in digital interactions. A holistic approach that combines spiritual development, digital competence, and social support, as suggested by Yusuf et al., proves especially effective in building adolescent resilience. Religious practices—such as reading the Qur'an, engaging with hadith, and participating in faith-based communities—not only foster inner peace but also promote ethical conduct online. Education and family play a pivotal role in this process. Arifin found that families instilling Islamic values in everyday life model appropriate digital behavior, while schools can reinforce this by integrating digital literacy and religious instruction into their curricula. Together, these spheres of influence form a comprehensive framework for nurturing resilient, ethically grounded Muslim adolescents in the digital age [23].

METHODOLOGY

This study draws upon data obtained from two primary sources. The first includes secondary literature such as peer-reviewed journal articles, academic books, institutional reports, and official publications that address key themes related to digital literacy, Islamic values, and the psychological impact of cyberbullying on adolescents. The second source comprises relevant case studies of Islamic-based digital literacy programs implemented in various Muslim

communities. These case studies provide practical insights into how religious values can be integrated into digital education initiatives aimed at strengthening adolescent mental resilience. The data were analyzed using a qualitative approach through three main steps: theme identification, comparison, and interpretation. Initially, information was categorized into thematic areas concerning digital literacy, Islamic values, and mental health. This was followed by a comparative analysis of conventional and faith-integrated digital literacy approaches. Lastly, interpretive analysis was conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of such integrative strategies in mitigating the effects of cyberbullying.

To ensure the validity and credibility of the findings, only academically credible sources were utilized, and efforts were made to maintain alignment between theoretical frameworks and empirical evidence. However, this study is limited by its reliance on a literature-based review and does not incorporate field research. Consequently, the results remain conceptual and are intended to serve as a foundation for further empirical inquiry. Future studies should include direct observation and data collection in real-world settings to validate and expand upon the conclusions presented here.

RESULTS

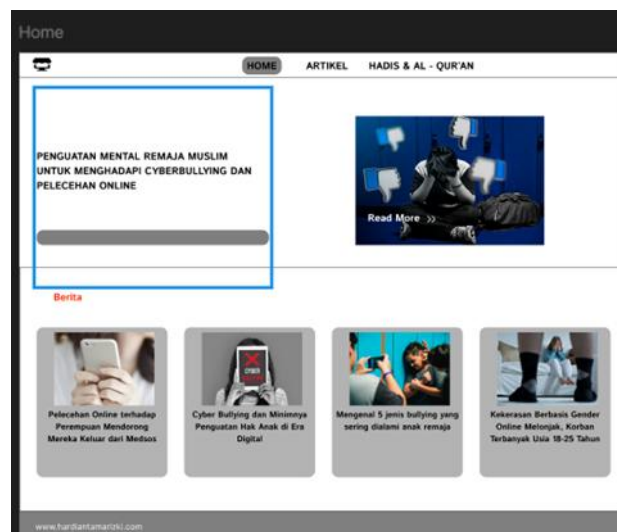


Figure 1. Homepage of the website

This menu serves as the homepage of the website and features various news articles. It is the first page users encounter when accessing the site, displaying relevant and up-to-date information or headlines. The homepage functions not merely as a navigational entry point, but also as a dynamic information hub that contributes directly to enhancing adolescents' digital literacy and mental resilience. By curating up-to-date and credible news articles related to digital ethics, cyberbullying awareness, and Islamic perspectives on technology use, the homepage encourages adolescents to critically engage with content. This fosters their ability to discern reliable information, a core component of digital literacy. Furthermore, exposure to content that addresses real-life challenges—such as online harassment—paired with Islamic ethical responses, can normalize constructive coping mechanisms, thus promoting psychological preparedness and emotional resilience. In this way, the homepage acts as both an informational and formative space, guiding adolescents toward becoming more informed, reflective, and mentally strong digital citizens.



Figure 2. The Articles Menu

This menu includes articles that discuss the characteristics of cyberbullying and online harassment, as well as strategies for addressing such issues. Its primary objective is to provide information and education on social issues in the digital sphere. The “Articles” menu serves as an educational repository that directly supports the development of adolescents’ digital literacy by providing structured, informative content on the nature, patterns, and consequences of cyberbullying and online harassment. Through these articles, adolescents are introduced to both theoretical and practical frameworks that enhance their understanding of digital risks, critical information evaluation, and responsible online behavior—key competencies in digital literacy. Moreover, the menu includes actionable strategies for dealing with digital aggression, thereby equipping adolescents with coping tools grounded in both psychological and Islamic ethical perspectives. By normalizing proactive responses and emphasizing the importance of empathy, patience (sabr), and self-restraint (iffah) in online interactions, the menu indirectly fosters mental resilience. This cognitive and emotional preparation enables adolescents to manage stress, respond constructively to online provocation, and maintain psychological stability in the digital environment.

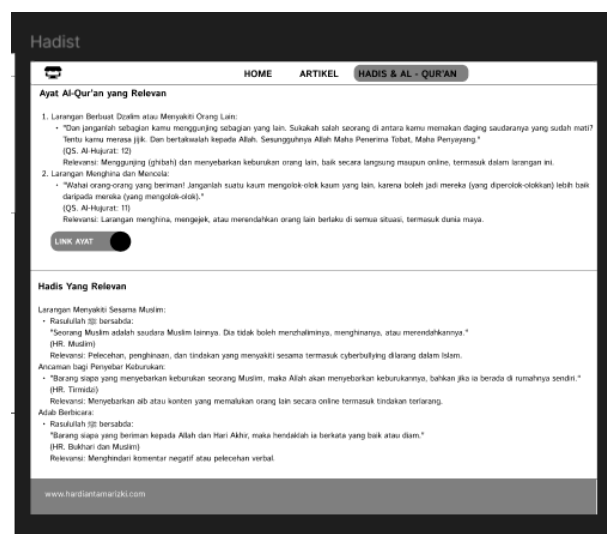


Figure 3. Hadis & Al – Qur'an Menu

This menu is designed to support users' religious learning. It contains content featuring selected verses from the Qur'an and relevant hadiths. As a feature, this menu functions as a reliable source of Islamic knowledge, enabling users to deepen their understanding of Islamic teachings. By integrating religious elements, this feature offers added value for users seeking to learn or explore religious references online. The "Hadith & Qur'an" menu serves a dual function that significantly contributes to both digital literacy and mental resilience among Muslim adolescents. First, by presenting curated religious texts relevant to digital ethics, emotional regulation, and interpersonal conduct, this feature grounds users in spiritual principles that can guide their online behavior. This supports the moral dimension of digital literacy, ensuring that technological proficiency is accompanied by value-based decision-making in digital spaces. Second, exposure to verses and hadiths emphasizing virtues such as patience (*sabr*), trust in divine justice (*tawakkul*), and the prohibition of slander (*ghibah*, *fitnah*), provides a psychological buffer against the emotional harm caused by cyberbullying and online harassment. By reinforcing a sense of purpose, identity, and moral clarity, this feature helps adolescents to contextualize negative digital experiences within a broader spiritual framework, thereby enhancing their emotional stability and resilience. The menu thus functions as a tool for value-oriented digital navigation and as a source of internal strength in the face of online adversity.

DISCUSSION

Islamic Digital Literacy and the Strengthening of Adolescent Mental Resilience

The development of the website demonstrates that strengthening adolescent mental resilience through Islamic digital literacy is a strategic approach to addressing psychological challenges in the digital age, such as stress from cyberbullying, social anxiety, and depression [23]–[25]. Adolescents who are trained in Islamic values such as *sabr* (patience), *shukr* (gratitude), and mutual assistance tend to exhibit higher levels of self-awareness and empathy. The integration of these values into digital practices has been shown to enhance emotional regulation and promote healthy social interaction [26]–[28]. In the implementation of an Islamic digital literacy training program involving 112 adolescents in Surabaya, there was a significant improvement in risk perception and critical thinking skills, with a t-test indicating $p < 0.01$. These findings suggest that this approach not only fosters ethical behavior in online spaces but also strengthens cognitive abilities essential for navigating the complexities of the digital information landscape [29].

The Islamic digital literacy approach also directly contributes to the improvement of mental health literacy [30]–[32]. Within the context of value-based training, students who received mental health education grounded in Islamic teachings demonstrated a statistically significant increase in literacy scores, with a p -value < 0.000 . This confirms that religion-based education can be effective in raising awareness of the importance of maintaining psychological well-being [33]–[36]. Additionally, practices such as Islamic spiritual mindfulness have been shown to improve emotional resilience and religiosity—two critical components in fostering psychologically robust adolescents. When religious values are internalized through daily practices such as *dhikr* (remembrance of God) and spiritual reflection, adolescents develop a strong foundation for managing social pressures and inner conflicts. Educational websites that integrate content from the Qur'an and Hadith can serve as effective platforms for instilling Islamic values in digital environments. This approach fosters the principle of *hifz al-'ird* (preservation of personal dignity), which is essential in shaping respectful and responsible behavior on social media. Adolescents accustomed to reflective content based on Islamic teachings are better equipped to regulate their emotions, maintain a positive attitude, and avoid deviant online behaviors. The integration of digital literacy and spirituality encourages the emergence of a generation of Muslim youth who are not only technologically proficient but also spiritually and emotionally resilient in facing the challenges of the modern age [37]–[39]. In addition, the website features several menus that users can access for various functions:

Table 1. Website Menu

No	Menu	Description
1	Home	Initial display and news content
2	Article	Articles on Cyberbullying and Online Harassment
3	Hadis & Al-Qur'an	Religious education

Reflection on Website Functionality and Development

The educational website focusing on Islamic digital literacy presents a solid foundational structure; however, a reflection on its functionality reveals significant potential for further development, particularly in addressing the needs and preferences of adolescent users. The menu divisions—Home, Articles, and Hadith & Qur'an—offer a logical and thematic navigation framework that facilitates user access to categorized information. Nonetheless, in terms of user engagement, interactive elements require greater optimization [40]–[42]. Research in digital pedagogy indicates that adolescents are more responsive to visual, participatory, and immediate content formats. Therefore, integrating media such as short videos, reflective quizzes, Qur'an- and Hadith-based infographics, and light animations could significantly enhance user engagement duration while deepening comprehension of the conveyed messages. According to a 2023 survey by the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII), 79.5% of internet users aged 13–18 prefer interactive audiovisual formats over lengthy text when consuming educational content, underscoring the need to adapt content formats accordingly [43].

From a user experience (UX) perspective, the website's user interface (UI) design must consider the characteristics of devices commonly used by adolescents. Data from the Ministry of Communication and Information (Kominfo) in 2022 indicate that over 85% of Indonesian adolescents access the internet via smartphones, making cross-device responsiveness a crucial design element [44]. In addition, optimizing eye-friendly fonts, comfortable color schemes, intuitive navigation icons, and shallow menu structures is essential to ensure users do not become disoriented or disengaged during exploration. Usability testing with target user groups can serve as an evaluative method to identify potential friction points in navigation and information access.

Enhancing the religious content dimension is also a vital consideration. The Hadith & Qur'an menu should not only feature excerpts from sacred texts but also include concise commentaries (*tafsir*), historical contexts, and connections to contemporary social issues relevant to digital media dynamics. For instance, presenting Hadiths on the importance of guarding one's speech can be contextualized within the issue of hate speech on social media. This enables users to understand that Islamic teachings are not abstract or distant, but highly applicable to modern digital life. The use of storytelling formats or contextual narrative reflections on verses can make the reading experience more personal and meaningful. This content enrichment could draw upon simplified *tafsir* resources suitable for youth, such as *Tafsir Al-Muyassar* or thematic approaches from *Tafsir Maudhu'i*.

The website's social dimension should not be overlooked. Features such as discussion forums or user stories can provide spaces for expression and solidarity, where adolescents can share their experiences in confronting digital challenges such as cyberbullying, social pressure, or identity crises [45]. Through moderated and safe dialogue spaces, the website could function not only as a platform for emotional literacy but also as a support forum rooted in Islamic values. To ensure digital safety, automated moderation systems with keyword filters, as well as community-based human moderators (admins), could be implemented. This also opens opportunities for collaboration with school

counselors, digital da'i (Islamic preachers), or Muslim psychologists, who can contribute content and provide thoughtful responses within these spaces [46].

Nevertheless, the reinforcement of adolescents' digital character cannot be separated from the roles of parents and educators. The lack of digital literacy among adults—especially in the context of parenting and teaching—remains a significant challenge. Technologically unskilled parents and teachers often struggle to provide adequate guidance, leaving adolescents vulnerable to the negative impacts of digital media without proper supervision. Therefore, website development should also include dedicated features for parents and educators, such as Islamic digital parenting guides, webinars, or training modules designed to equip them with the necessary skills and knowledge to support their children. This approach would foster a holistic and sustainable Islamic digital learning ecosystem.

while the website already possesses a robust foundational structure, this reflection on its functionality highlights various technical, visual, and pedagogical aspects that can be further enhanced. Improving interactivity, device adaptability, depth of Islamic content, educational social features, and the involvement of family and schools are critical steps toward creating a digital space that is not only informative but also transformative in shaping the character and mental resilience of Muslim adolescents.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that Islamic digital literacy is a strategic and holistic approach for strengthening the mental resilience of Muslim adolescents in the face of cyberbullying and online harassment. By integrating digital competencies with Islamic values such as *sabr* (patience), *shukr* (gratitude), and *hifz al-'ird* (preservation of dignity), adolescents gain not only the technical ability to navigate the digital world but also the moral foundation to respond ethically to online challenges. Evidence from integrative training programs shows significant improvements in both risk perception and emotional regulation, highlighting the value of spiritually grounded literacy in promoting psychological stability and ethical digital conduct. The website developed in this study provides a practical model for applying this approach by combining informational, educational, and religious content. While its current structure offers a solid foundation, there is considerable potential for enhancement through the addition of interactive media, contextual religious interpretation, social discussion spaces, and parental involvement features. These improvements are critical to forming a supportive and sustainable digital ecosystem. Ultimately, Islamic digital literacy—when embedded within a broader educational and community framework—can foster a generation of Muslim youth who are not only digitally literate but also emotionally resilient and ethically responsible in an increasingly complex online environment.

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Author Contribution

All authors contributed equally to the main contributor to this paper, some are as chairman, member, financier, article translator, and final editor. All authors read and approved the final paper.

Conflicts of Interest

All authors declare no conflict of interest.

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