

The Dynamics of Parental Supervision of Children's Gadget Use from an Islamic Education Perspective

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ABSTRACT

The development of digital technology has increased the use of gadgets by children, which on the one hand provides benefits as a learning tool, but on the other hand has the potential to cause negative impacts if not accompanied by adequate supervision. This study aims to analyze the dynamics of parental supervision of children's gadget use from the perspective of Islamic education in Taccimpo Village. This study used a qualitative descriptive research type. Data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation with 19 informants consisting of parents, children, and religious or community leaders. Data analysis was carried out through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The results show that gadget use by children in Taccimpo Village is quite high and is mostly used for entertainment activities such as watching videos and playing games. Forms of parental supervision are carried out through limiting gadget use time, accompanying children when using gadgets, regulating the type of content accessed, and providing advice based on religious values. The dynamics of supervision are influenced by several factors, including the level of parental digital literacy, work activities, and the child's social environment. From an Islamic educational perspective, monitoring device use is part of parents' responsibility to guide their children in using technology wisely and adhering to moral and spiritual values. This research emphasizes the importance of strengthening parental digital literacy integrated with Islamic educational values to create a balanced parenting pattern between technology use and character development in children.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The rapid evolution of the global digital landscape has fundamentally reconfigured contemporary human existence, shifting societal paradigms, domestic interaction models, and early childhood pedagogical frameworks (Alhassan & Adam, 2021). Digital artifacts, predominantly smartphones and tablets, have permeated diverse demographic strata, becoming ubiquitous fixtures in the daily lives of young children

(Chaibal & Chaiyakul, 2022). This technological proliferation offers profound advantages by expanding horizons for immediate information retrieval (Sari, 2024b), optimizing interpersonal communication channels (Agustina, 2023), and democratizing access to broad, interactive learning repositories (Bintang et al., 2024). Conversely, this ubiquitous connectivity imposes unprecedented challenges upon parents, who must navigate complex regulatory landscapes to monitor their children's digital engagement, ensuring that screen-time exposure remains developmentally constructive and does not undermine cognitive or physical well-being (Evitarini et al., 2025).

Empirical evidence highlights a continuous, exponential increase in internet dependency within developing socio-economic contexts, most notably in Indonesia. According to recent macro-demographic data published by the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII), the aggregate number of internet users across the archipelago is projected to escalate to approximately 229 million individuals, constituting 80.66% of the national population (Fakhri et al., 2024; Rajagukguk et al., 2024). This milestone represents a critical 1.16% expansion from the 79.50% penetration rate recorded in 2024 (APJII, 2025). Such pervasive statistics underscore that internet connectivity is no longer a peripheral utility but an embedded structural component of modern Indonesian society, reshaping cultural and domestic dynamics.

Crucially, children and adolescents emerge as the primary consumers driving this digital surge, displaying high rates of technological immersion. The APJII survey indicates a stratified but uniformly high internet penetration rate across youth educational cohorts, showing that 73.62% of elementary school students, 81.26% of junior high school students, and 89.22% of senior high school students are actively connected online (Djuuna et al., 2026). These metrics demonstrate that a vast majority of the youth demographic maintains uninterrupted network access, primarily through personal smartphones. Consequently, digital media has transcended recreational usage to become an inseparable environment shaping youth socialization and identity in the modern era (Tsaliki, 2022).

This intense exposure creates a complex behavioral dichotomy for developing minds. On one hand, controlled device usage serves as a catalyst for advancing digital literacy, fostering spatial-cognitive development, linguistic acquisition, and creative expression (Mauluddia & Yulindrasari, 2024). On the other hand, unmitigated and excessive screen time triggers severe psychological and physiological consequences, including severe digital addiction (Fahrizal et al., 2024), compromised attention spans during formal learning activities (Febriani et al., 2025), and a notable decline in the quality of face-to-face social interactions (Sari, 2024a). These divergent outcomes indicate that unguided digital consumption presents risks to academic progress, mental health stability, and foundational socio-behavioral development.

To mitigate these risks, parental intervention is essential as a regulatory and protective mechanism (Banić & Orehovački, 2024; Sharma & Lee, 2024). Within contemporary media studies, the theoretical framework of "parental mediation" is widely utilized to evaluate how guardians manage their children's digital media consumption. This framework conceptualizes parenting as an active process of

managing, guiding, and participating in children's digital activities using strategies such as content monitoring, restrictive time boundaries, and active digital co-use (Rudnova et al., 2023). Through these deliberate strategies, parents aim to build a protective barrier against online risks while supporting healthy media consumption.

Complementing this framework, the discourse on "digital parenting" has emerged as a distinct pedagogical approach designed to guide children toward wise and ethical technological consumption (Liu et al., 2024). This paradigm focuses on establishing clear boundaries for device usage, monitoring digital footprints, and educating youth on digital ethics, privacy, and cybersecurity risks. When structured with consistent supervision and supportive guidance, digital parenting enables children to maximize the educational benefits of technology while preserving emotional stability and balanced social development (Siron & Sadiyah, 2025).

From an Islamic educational perspective, this domestic responsibility aligns with the foundational concept of the family as the *madrasah ula* (the primary school). The domestic sphere serves as the initial ontological environment where parents bear the primary responsibility for embedding theological values, moral integrity (*akhlak*), and character development through modeling, habitual practice, and vigilant oversight (Yohana et al., 2025). This position establishes parents as the primary educators responsible for forming a child's ethical and behavioral foundation before they enter formal schooling (Bain et al., 2024). This responsibility is rooted in Quranic imperatives, specifically in QS. At-Tahrim [66]: 6, which commands believers to protect themselves and their families from metaphysical and moral ruin—a principle that underpins Islamic education's focus on holistic intellectual, moral, and spiritual development (Siregar, 2026).

While existing literature thoroughly explores the socio-psychological dimensions of youth screen time, it often focuses on urban centers, creating a geographical and conceptual gap regarding rural communities undergoing rapid digital transitions. Taccimpo Village represents a rural environment experiencing a sharp increase in youth device usage due to expanding internet infrastructure and affordable technology, which introduces distinct challenges for working parents who may have limited digital literacy. The novelty of this study lies in addressing this gap by evaluating the dynamics of parental supervision through an Islamic educational lens within a rural setting. Consequently, this study aims to analyze the dynamics of parental supervision of children's gadget use from an Islamic education perspective in Taccimpo Village, contributing to the literature on Islamic family pedagogy in the digital era.

2. METHOD

This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach to comprehensively examine the intricate dynamics of parental supervision regarding children's device utilization through an Islamic educational lens in Taccimpo Village, Dua Pitue District, Sidrap Regency. A qualitative design was deemed most appropriate as it facilitates an in-depth, nuanced exploration of the lived experiences, subjective perspectives, and daily regulatory practices enacted by parents within their domestic environments (Creswell,

2014). To capture these localized socio-religious phenomena accurately, field research was systematically conducted over a two-month period from February to March 2026.

Aligned with established qualitative research paradigms, the researcher served as the primary instrument, engaging directly in the field to facilitate authentic data collection and contextual analysis. The study involved a carefully selected cohort of 19 informants, categorized to ensure data triangulation: 8 parents served as primary informants, 8 children functioned as supporting informants, and 3 local religious or community leaders provided critical contextual insights. These participants were recruited using a purposive sampling technique, which restricted selection to individuals who possessed substantial experience, direct involvement, and relevant insight into the domestic and cultural dynamics of digital media regulation within the village.

Empirical data were gathered through a triangulation of qualitative techniques, comprising systematic observation, in-depth semi-structured interviews, and meticulous documentation. Field observations focused on identifying behavioral patterns of device usage among children and the overt regulatory strategies employed by parents in daily life. Complementing this, in-depth interviews were conducted to unpack the informants' underlying motivations, values, and parental reflections concerning technology through the framework of Islamic pedagogical principles. Relevant administrative, cultural, or photographic documentation was also integrated to supplement and contextualize the primary narrative accounts.

Data analysis was executed via an interactive model consisting of three concurrent flows of activity: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification, as formulated by Miles et al. (2014). During data reduction, raw field notes and interview transcripts were systematically coded, focused, and organized around core thematic concepts. These refined data were subsequently compiled into structured data displays to identify recurring relational patterns, ultimately allowing the researcher to draw robust, verified conclusions that accurately reflect the realities of the rural community under investigation.

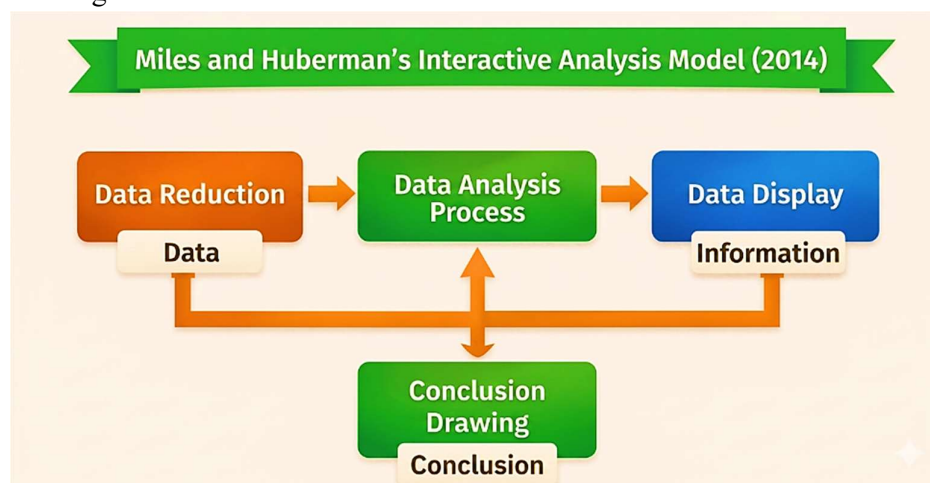


Figure 1. Interactive Data Analysis

Data validity is maintained through source triangulation and technical triangulation, namely by comparing information obtained from various informants as well as from the results of observations, interviews and documentation

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Children's Gadget Usage Patterns

Observations show that most children in Taccimpo Village use devices almost daily. Device use is generally for entertainment activities such as watching videos, playing games, and accessing social media. Meanwhile, device use for learning activities such as searching for information or doing schoolwork remains relatively limited.

The duration of device use varies, but most children use their devices for more than an hour each day, especially after school or in the evening. Observations also show that some children still use their devices during study time or around prayer times.

One parent stated:

"My child usually uses his phone after school, sometimes until the evening if I don't remind him. Usually to watch videos or play games." (Parent Informant 3)

A similar sentiment was echoed by another informant's child:

"I often use my phone to watch YouTube or play games. Sometimes I also look for schoolwork." (Child Informant 2)

These findings indicate that children's device use tends to be more for entertainment than educational activities. Children's digital device use is still largely dominated by entertainment activities such as watching videos and playing games. This situation demonstrates the importance of parents' role in guiding and directing technology use so that it can be utilized more positively for children's development.

Forms of Parental Supervision of Device Use

Interviews indicate that parents in Taccimpo Village implement various forms of supervision over their children's device use. One of the most common forms of supervision is limiting device usage time. Some parents set specific rules regarding device use time, such as only allowing devices to be used after completing schoolwork or not allowing them to use devices for too long.

One parent informant stated:

"We usually limit the amount of time they use their phones. If it's been too long, I tell them to stop so they don't become too addicted." (Parent Informant 5)

In addition to time limits, some parents also supervise their children when they use their devices. This supervision is provided to ensure that the content accessed by their children is age-appropriate. Observations also indicate that some parents monitor the content their children watch and provide rules regarding the types of content they can and cannot access. However, not all parents consistently supervise their children.

One parent explained:

"Sometimes I don't have time to supervise them because I have to work, so my children sometimes use their phones by themselves." (Parent Informant 2)

These findings indicate that parental supervision of device use is carried out through various strategies such as time limits, mentoring, and content management. This aligns with the concept of parental mediation, which explains that parents play a crucial role in controlling and guiding children's digital activities through various strategies such as supervision, communication, and establishing rules regarding digital media use. Through these mediation practices, parents can guide children's digital behavior and prevent risky or excessive internet use. Furthermore, digital parenting also emphasizes the importance of setting boundaries, monitoring online activities, and open communication between parents and children regarding technology use.

Dynamics and Challenges of Parental Supervision

Parental supervision of children's device use in Taccimpo Village demonstrates dynamics influenced by various factors. One major factor is parents' busy work schedules, which prevent them from always providing intensive supervision. Several parents acknowledged that when they are busy working, their children tend to use their devices without direct supervision.

One informant stated:

"When I'm working outside the home, my children usually spend more time on their phones because there's no one to supervise them." (Parent Informant 6)

Furthermore, the social environment also influences children's device usage habits. Children often imitate the habits of their peers, who also use their devices for extended periods of time.

A community leader interviewed stated:

"Nowadays, almost all children have phones, so if their friends are playing on their phones, other children will follow suit." (Community Leader Informant 1)

These findings indicate that supervision of device use is influenced not only by family factors but also by the social environment in which children grow up. Furthermore, the rapid development of digital technology also presents challenges for parents in controlling the content their children access. Children's digital media use behavior is influenced not only by family factors but also by social environmental factors that interact with individual characteristics and parenting patterns. Furthermore, the rapid development of digital technology makes it increasingly easy for children to access various content on the internet. This situation presents a challenge for parents in monitoring their children's digital activities, as high digital device usage has the potential to increase the risk of exposure to negative content, cyberbullying, and technology addiction.

Islamic Education Perspective in Device Monitoring

From an Islamic educational perspective, parental supervision of children's device use is part of their responsibility to educate and guide them. The family is seen as the primary educational institution, playing a crucial role in shaping a child's character and morals. Interviews indicate that some parents in Taccimpo Village associate device use

with religious values in their daily lives. For example, they remind their children to stop using their devices when prayer times arrive.

One parent stated:

"When prayer time arrives, I always remind my children to stop using their phones and pray immediately." (Parent Informant 7)

Furthermore, parents also advise their children to use technology wisely and avoid accessing content that conflicts with religious values.

A religious figure interviewed stated:

"Parents need to teach their children that technology should be used for beneficial purposes and should not violate religious values." (Religious Figure Informant 2)

These findings indicate that Islamic educational values such as responsibility, discipline, and time management are the foundation for monitoring device use. In Islamic education, parents are the primary educators responsible for instilling Islamic values and guiding children in the face of digital technological developments. This aligns with the concept of tarbiyah in Islamic education, which emphasizes the importance of holistic child development, encompassing intellectual, moral, and spiritual development, to develop a balanced personality or insan kamil.

Discussion

Entertainment Dominates Device Usage Patterns

Research findings in Taccimpo Village indicate that children's device use is dominated by entertainment activities such as watching videos, playing games, and social media, while educational use remains very limited. Usage durations exceeding one hour per day, even during school and prayer times, indicate a shift in children's daily activity priorities.

This aligns with the findings of [Merdin and Şahinb \(2023\)](#) and [Febriani et al. \(2025\)](#), which emphasized that digital devices in elementary school children are more often used as entertainment than as learning aids. Psychologically, this tendency can be understood through the appeal of visual and interactive content offered by platforms like YouTube, which is often more cognitively engaging for children than formal academic instruction.

Parental Mediation Strategies and the Challenge of Consistency

Parents in the research location implemented various forms of supervision, ranging from time limits to content guidance. These actions represent a concrete implementation of the concept of parental mediation, where parents act as a filter between children and digital media. This rule-setting strategy is crucial for preventing the risk of technology addiction and exposure to negative content, as explained by [Liu et al. \(2023\)](#) and [Salsabila et al. \(2024\)](#).

However, dynamics in the field indicate significant obstacles, particularly related to parents' busy work schedules, which lead to inconsistent supervision. The phenomenon of "unsupervised use" while parents are working presents a risk gap for children. This challenge is further complicated by the influence of the social environment (peers), which creates conformity pressure for children to continue using devices. This confirms

the theory of [Rahman et al. \(2025\)](#) that children's digital behavior is a result of the interaction between family parenting styles and dynamic social environmental influences.

Integration of Islamic Values: Responsibility and Education

The perspective of Islamic education provides a unique dimension to the supervision pattern in Taccimpo Village. Parents integrate the values of religious discipline with device use, such as the obligation to stop using devices when prayer times arrive. Theoretically, this practice embodies the concept of education, which aims to develop children holistically, intellectually, morally, and spiritually.

In Islam, parents are the primary educators responsible for preserving children's natural instincts amidst the onslaught of digital information. Advice from local religious leaders to use technology for beneficial purposes (*maslahah*) aligns with efforts to shape a perfect human being—a balanced individual capable of utilizing modern advancements without violating religious principles. Therefore, device monitoring in this village is not simply behavioral control, but rather part of character education based on the values of responsibility and time management taught in Islam.

This research makes an important contribution to the literature on Islamic education and digital parenting by revealing how religious values, such as the concepts of *tarbiyah* (education) and moral responsibility, are integrated into device monitoring strategies in rural communities. These findings extend parental mediation theory by demonstrating that religious discipline and guidance from religious leaders can be effective instruments in mitigating the negative impacts of technology, while also providing a practical model for parents in balancing the challenges of a dynamic social environment with the development of children's character towards perfect human beings.

4. CONCLUSION

Children in Taccimpo Village use gadgets has become part of their daily lives, primarily for entertainment purposes such as watching videos and playing games. However, some children also use devices for learning. Parental supervision of gadget use is carried out through various methods, such as limiting usage time, accompanying children while using devices, regulating the type of content that can be accessed, and providing advice. However, the effectiveness of this supervision is influenced by several factors, such as parents' busy schedules, their social environment, and their ability to understand digital technology. From an Islamic educational perspective, monitoring gadget use is not only intended to control children's activities but also part of their responsibility to shape their character and morals. Instilling Islamic values such as discipline, responsibility, and awareness of religious practices is an important foundation for guiding children to use technology wisely.

Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen the role of parents by improving digital literacy and integrating Islamic educational values into childcare, so that the use of digital technology can benefit children's intellectual, social, and spiritual development.

Further research can examine the effectiveness of digital parenting strategies based on Islamic values in improving family digital literacy

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