



## PERSPECTIVES ON ISLAMIC EDUCATION TEACHERS' STRATEGIES FOR GUIDING STUDENTS' DIGITAL BEHAVIOR: INSIGHTS FROM INDONESIA AND THE PHILIPPINES

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### ABSTRACT

The increasing use of the internet among adolescents in Southeast Asia brings both opportunities and risks, particularly in shaping behavior and values. In Indonesia and the Philippines, where Muslim youth are actively engaged in digital environments, Islamic education teachers play a crucial role in guiding students toward responsible digital practices rooted in Islamic principles. This study aims to explore their strategies in fostering ethical digital behavior. Using a qualitative research design, data were collected through semi-structured interviews with two informants: a Pendidikan Agama Islam (PAI) teacher from Indonesia and an Arabic Language and Islamic Values Education (ALIVE) teacher from the Philippines. The data were analyzed thematically following Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña's model. Three main themes emerged: teachers' perspectives on internet use, approaches to guiding digital behavior, and supervision of internet misuse. Findings show that while both teachers view the internet as a valuable educational tool, the Indonesian teacher emphasizes faith and piety as the foundation for online engagement, whereas the Filipino teacher integrates digital literacy and critical thinking into instruction. In addressing misuse, Indonesian teachers involve parental collaboration, while Filipino teachers apply stricter monitoring and disciplinary measures. The study concludes that effective digital guidance requires a holistic approach that unites Islamic values, interactive pedagogy, and critical awareness to cultivate digitally literate and morally grounded Muslim youth.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of technology has profoundly transformed human life, particularly in education and communication. Among these developments, the internet has become an integral part of daily activities, offering both opportunities and challenges for adolescents. It enables easy access to information, creativity, and social interaction, yet also poses risks when misused. Digital technology now shapes adolescents' learning and social behaviour, influencing their moral and emotional development.

In Indonesia, internet penetration reached 80.66 percent in 2025, showing that most of the population, including junior high students, actively engage in digital environments. Generation Z and Generation Alpha represent the largest user segments, with penetration rates of 87.80 and 79.73 percent respectively (ANTARA, 2025). Indonesia added 17 million new users between January 2024 and January 2025, a growth rate of 8.7 percent (Kemp, 2025). Meanwhile, the Philippines recorded a slightly higher penetration rate of 83.8 percent, though with slower growth of only 0.8 percent in the same period (Kemp, 2025). This parallel rise in digital exposure underscores the urgency to understand how adolescents, especially Muslim youth, navigate the online world amid growing moral and social challenges.

Excessive internet use among adolescents has been associated with problematic behaviours such as addiction and social withdrawal. Rakhmawati et al. (2021) revealed that adolescents spend more than eight hours online daily, mostly for entertainment and social media, with limited academic focus. Karacic and Oreskovic (2017) also found that males aged 15 to 16 are particularly vulnerable to internet addiction, indicating the need for age-specific approaches. Among Muslim youth, this behaviour disrupts religious learning. Rizki, Kurniawan, and Mubinah (2024) observed that parental concern rises as adolescents prioritize non-educational digital content over Qur'anic and moral studies, weakening their internalization of Islamic values. Beyond religious impact, uncontrolled internet use correlates with depression, impulsivity, aggression, and social anxiety (Haddad et al., 2021). Cyberbullying, experienced by 42.8 percent of Southeast Asian adolescents (Gohal et al., 2023), further intensifies these issues, contributing to anxiety, withdrawal, and even suicidal ideation (Mahzunah et al., 2024).

Within this context, Islamic education plays a vital role in directing students toward responsible digital behaviour. Teachers of Islamic Religious Education are expected not only to transmit religious knowledge but also to guide ethical conduct in the online sphere. At SMP PGRI 2 Tenjo, Bogor, Indonesia, religious instruction is reinforced through daily Qur'an recitation and weekly assemblies to strengthen students' moral resilience in facing digital temptations. Similar challenges appear in the Philippines, where Islamic education is delivered through the ALIVE (Arabic Language and Islamic Values Education) program under the Department of Education. ALIVE teachers serve as moral and cultural anchors for Muslim students in a secular, pluralistic society, particularly in regions such as Mindanao where internet access continues to expand.

However, despite the increasing digital engagement of Muslim adolescents, research examining how Islamic education teachers, especially those in the ALIVE program, guide

students' online behaviour remains limited. Existing studies in both Indonesia and the Philippines focus largely on general digital literacy or moral education, leaving a gap in understanding how teachers integrate religious values with digital ethics in classroom practice. Furthermore, comparative studies addressing the similarities and differences in these efforts across the two countries are still scarce.

Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by exploring the strategies used by Islamic education teachers in Indonesia and the Philippines to guide students' digital behaviour, as well as identifying factors that support or hinder these efforts. The study's findings are expected to contribute to the development of Islamic education that is responsive to the challenges of the digital era, one that integrates moral values with technological awareness and strengthens students' capacity for responsible digital engagement.

## 2. RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a qualitative approach to deeply explore the strategies used by Islamic education teachers in guiding students' digital behavior. According to Creswell and Creswell (2023), qualitative research aims to understand the meanings of human experiences in natural settings through a complex and interactive research process. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with two informants: one Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teacher from Indonesia and one ALIVE (Arabic Language and Islamic Values Education) teacher from the Philippines. The participants were selected using purposive sampling, a technique involving intentional selection based on specific criteria relevant to the research objectives (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2022). The teachers selected as participants in this study were chosen because both are Islamic Education teachers who are concerned about the influence of digitalization on students' behavior and often provide guidance to students on the wise and responsible use of the internet. Interviews were conducted online and recorded with the informants' consent for further analysis. Data analysis followed the interactive model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), consisting of three main stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. This approach enables the researcher to systematically organize and interpret the data to identify patterns, themes, and deeper meanings related to teachers' strategies in fostering students' digital behavior across the two country contexts digital behavior in both Indonesia and the Philippines. To maintain the trustworthiness of this study's findings, triangulation was also carried out. The type of triangulation used was investigator triangulation, in which the data analysis process, particularly the interpretation of interview results, was conducted not only by one researcher but also by several other researchers independently before discussing and consolidating the findings further.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the findings derived from in-depth interviews with two Islamic education teachers: one *Pendidikan Agama Islam (PAI)* teacher from a junior high school in Tenjo, Indonesia, and one *Arabic Language and Islamic Values Education (ALIVE)* teacher from the Philippines. The purpose of the interviews was to explore their perspectives,

experiences, and strategies in guiding students' digital behavior within the context of Islamic values.

The responses were analysed thematically to identify recurring patterns and insights across both contexts. Despite the different national and educational settings, several common themes emerged, reflecting both shared concerns and culturally specific approaches to digital guidance in Islamic education. The table below summarizes the key themes identified from the interview data;

**Table 1.** Themes and Key Insights from Islamic Education Teachers in Indonesia and the Philippines

Theme	Indonesia	The Philippines
Teachers' Perspectives on Internet Use	The internet is taught to be used for seeking positive information and assisting in completing assignments for various subjects	more interactively in using internet for Academic lesson
Islamic Teachers' Approach to Guiding Students' Digital Behavior.	I teach students by explaining the purpose of using the internet and the benefits they should gain from it. Accessing the internet must be based on faith and piety because Allah is All-Seeing.  Absolutely, because Islamic Religious Education is a guideline from Allah. Therefore, it is very clear that the internet should be used for positive purposes to avoid negative ones	one thing is by integrating lessons on digital literacy. And the responsible internet use into my teaching. So, because I used to integrate....  in my teaching Arabic language and Islamic values before, so I can guide students to.....  apply critical thinking skills when engaging with online content...
Supervision and Handling Approach to Internet Misuse	When I observe students misusing the internet, I consistently issue a warning and provide constructive guidance  I always impose sanctions on students who misuse the internet. The first step is to give them a warning, then inform their parents that their child has accessed pornographic websites, so that the parents become aware of their child's behavior in misusing the internet	,limiting the student's internet access during the class, so implementing strict monitoring measures.  or referring... repeated cases to the discipline office.

This section presents the findings from interviews with two Islamic education teachers: one *Pendidikan Agama Islam* (PAI) teacher from a junior high school in Tenjo, Indonesia, and one *Arabic Language and Islamic Values Education* (ALIVE) teacher from the Philippines. The analysis identifies three main themes that reflect their strategies in guiding

students' digital behaviour, along with contextual similarities and differences between the two countries.

### 3.1 Teachers' Perspectives on Internet Use

Both Indonesian and Filipino teachers perceive the internet as a valuable educational tool that enhances students' learning processes. The Indonesian teacher stated, "I teach my students that the internet should help them find positive information and complete assignments." Similarly, the Filipino teacher noted, "I integrate lessons on responsible internet use into my teaching so that students can think critically about what they see online."

This shared understanding highlights the positive orientation of Islamic educators toward technology. Their views are in line with Baskoro (2024), who found that Indonesian teachers acknowledge technology's role in improving instructional effectiveness and engagement. Likewise, Ikhlas et al. (2021) revealed that ALIVE teachers in the Philippines consider internet-based tools essential for interactive and meaningful learning. These parallel findings indicate a regional trend in Southeast Asia where Islamic education increasingly embraces digital integration to enhance both academic and moral outcomes.

The main distinction lies in the mode of engagement. Indonesian teachers tend to use the internet as a structured and supportive medium for academic tasks, while Filipino teachers employ it as a dynamic and interactive component of classroom learning. This difference reflects the broader educational environment. Indonesia's formal religious schooling emphasizes discipline and memorization, whereas the Philippines' ALIVE program encourages adaptability within a pluralistic setting. The variation suggests that pedagogical context influences how teachers implement digital learning within Islamic frameworks.

### 3.2 Guiding Students Digital Behaviour Through Islamic Values

Guidance in both contexts is grounded in the integration of faith, ethics, and digital literacy. The Indonesian teacher emphasized that using the internet must be guided by *iman* and *taqwa*, saying, "Accessing the internet must be based on faith, because Allah is All-Seeing." This approach illustrates a values-based strategy that encourages spiritual self-awareness before digital engagement.

In contrast, the Filipino teacher focuses on equipping students with critical thinking skills rooted in Islamic values, explaining that digital literacy is not only about technical competence but also about evaluating online content ethically. This dual focus on *aqidah* and reasoning represents an effort to harmonize moral education with twenty-first-century competencies.

These findings correspond with Adawiyah and Arifin (2025), who discovered that students often understand social media ethics such as *tabayyun* or fact-checking and respectful communication, yet fail to consistently apply them. The gap between knowledge and behaviour shows that moral understanding alone is insufficient without continuous reinforcement. Nasution et al. (2025) further explain that learning strategies combining Islamic moderation with engaging pedagogy deepen moral internalization.

Comparatively, the Indonesian model reinforces obedience through spiritual awareness, while the Filipino model promotes reflective engagement through critical inquiry. This distinction reflects differing emphases. The Indonesian teacher prioritizes vertical accountability to God, while the Filipino teacher emphasizes horizontal responsibility within society. Both aim to produce morally conscious and digitally literate Muslim youth.

### **3.3 Supervision and Handling of Internet Misuse**

Both teachers implement preventive and corrective mechanisms when students misuse digital media. The Indonesian teacher applies a staged disciplinary system and explained, "When I see students misusing the internet, I first warn them, then involve their parents." The Filipino teacher adopts a stricter institutional approach and said, "I limit internet access during class and refer repeated cases to the discipline office."

These responses demonstrate a multi-level supervision framework involving personal, parental, and institutional coordination. This structure aligns with findings by Ma'ruf et al. (2024), who observed that limiting gadget time and conducting regular digital education sessions help students understand the negative effects of overuse. Similarly, Rajai and Husein (2021) found that confiscation and verbal warnings are effective deterrents against inappropriate use during class. Ikhsanudin (2025) also reported that routine gadget checks and moral counselling can prevent misuse and develop awareness of responsible behaviour.

The differences between the two contexts stem from institutional systems and cultural settings. Indonesian schools often emphasize family participation as a form of moral reinforcement, while Filipino schools rely more on formal administrative measures consistent with secular school policies. This indicates that moral guidance in Islamic education is shaped not only by religious principles but also by governance structures and school culture.

### **3.4 Critical Discussion and Practical Implications**

The findings reveal that Islamic education teachers in both Indonesia and the Philippines are evolving from traditional transmitters of knowledge into facilitators of ethical digital citizenship. Their strategies integrate faith-based moral instruction, digital literacy, and behavioural supervision. The differences observed between the two contexts show that cultural, institutional, and curricular factors shape how teachers interpret and implement digital ethics.

From a theoretical perspective, these results affirm the conclusions of Fütterer et al. (2023) and Seufert et al. (2021) that teachers play a central role in developing students' digital ethics through modelling and active mentorship. Islamic education, therefore, must not only impart doctrinal knowledge but also strengthen reflective moral judgment in navigating online spaces.

Practically, the findings suggest several implications. First, teacher training programs should include modules on digital ethics grounded in Islamic values to prepare educators for guiding students in virtual environments. Second, schools should adopt collaborative

monitoring systems that involve teachers, parents, and institutions to ensure consistent reinforcement of ethical digital behaviour. Third, classroom activities can integrate digital case studies that allow students to analyse online dilemmas through Qur'anic and moral reasoning frameworks.

Overall, guiding students' digital behaviour requires a holistic and continuous approach. Islamic education teachers act not only as value instructors but also as spiritual mentors, digital literacy facilitators, and ethical role models. Their collective effort contributes to nurturing a generation of Muslim youth who are spiritually grounded, intellectually critical, and morally responsible in the digital age.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

This study emphasizes the crucial role of Islamic education teachers in guiding students' digital behavior by integrating religious values, innovative teaching strategies, and structured supervision. Both Indonesian and Filipino teachers share the belief that the internet can serve as an educational tool when used responsibly. The Indonesian teacher focuses on moral and spiritual guidance rooted in faith, while the Filipino teacher highlights digital literacy and critical thinking as pathways to applying Islamic values in online contexts. Together, these approaches demonstrate that ethical digital behavior among students can be nurtured through a balance of faith-based discipline and digital competence. Future initiatives should include digital literacy training for teachers so that schools can incorporate digital literacy as part of their curriculum, enabling both teachers and students to use technology more wisely and responsibly. However, this study has certain limitations, as it involved only one school and one teacher from each country, which restricted the diversity of insights obtained. Furthermore, the interviews focused solely on teachers' perspectives, whereas students' viewpoints should also be considered in future research to provide a more comprehensive understanding.

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