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Internalizing Islamic Educational Values through Parental Mediation: Digital Parenting Practices among Muslim Families in Mataram

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ABSTRACT
This study aimed to analyze how Muslim parents mediate digital technology use among young children and how Islamic educational values are internalized through these digital parenting practices in Mataram City. This descriptive qualitative study involved six parents of children aged 3–7 in Mataram who actively mediated their children's digital device use. Data were collected through interviews, non-participant observation, and documentation, and analyzed using Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña's procedures of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. The findings showed that parental mediation was implemented through restriction, active mediation, and co-use. Through these practices, the internalization of Islamic values occurred through four interrelated processes: value introduction through content curation and rules, meaning-making through dialogue and guidance, value habituation through parental role modelling and relational reinforcement, and value reaffirmation through correction, protection, and reflection. This study contributes to parental mediation theory by extending it from media-use regulation to Islamic value mediation and supports value-based digital parenting guidance in early childhood education.

Keywords: *digital parenting*, *internalization of Islamic Educational values*, *parental mediation*, *young children*

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1. INTRODUCTION

Young children are now growing up in increasingly digitalized social environments. From the earliest stages of life, they become familiar with various digital devices and platforms, including television, smartphones, tablets, video applications, digital games, and social media used by family members around them. YouTube use among young children, for example, has become a cross-national phenomenon, indicating that exposure to digital media is no longer incidental but has become part of children's everyday lives (Neumann & Herodotou, 2020; Zhao et al., 2022). Consequently, children's learning and caregiving experiences no longer occur solely through direct interactions at home, in early childhood education settings, and in play environments, but increasingly involve experiences mediated by screens, algorithms, and families' content choices.

Digital technology presents both opportunities and risks for children's development, depending on the quality of the content, the context in which it is used, and the involvement of adults (Swider-Cios et al., 2023). Educational content appropriate to children's age and developmental stage can support vocabulary acquisition, story comprehension, and emergent literacy through the integration of narratives, images, sounds, and interactive features aligned with learning objectives (Booton et al., 2023; Egert et al., 2022). In Muslim families, digital media can also be used to introduce daily prayers, stories of the prophets, Qur'anic recitation, adab (Islamic manners and conduct) , religious practices, and virtuous behaviour (Astuti et al., 2022; Dasopang et al., 2022; Tahir et al., 2019). However, these benefits are highly dependent on content quality, the context of use, and adult involvement. Excessive, fast-paced, unguided, or unsupervised exposure may disrupt children's cognitive and socio-emotional development, whereas co-use with parents can help children understand media content in ways appropriate to their developmental capacities (Swider-Cios et al., 2023). Furthermore, uncontrolled digital media use may also expose children to content that is inappropriate for their developmental stage, including verbal and physical violence, sexual content, consumerist lifestyles, offensive language, misinformation, and violations of children's privacy. Moreover, excessive screen use may lead to dependence, reduce children's engagement in physical activity, diminish social interaction, and weaken emotional closeness between children and their parents (Caldeiro-Pedreira et al., 2022; Gkolemi et al., 2022; Pangastuti, 2018; Zhao et al., 2022). These risks warrant particular attention in early childhood, when children's digital experiences and emerging habits are still strongly shaped by adult guidance, supervision, consistent family routines, and parental modelling (Pyne et al., 2025; Swider-Cios et al., 2023).

Based on preliminary observations and interviews conducted with Muslim families in Mataram City, young children used digital devices to watch entertainment programmes, access learning materials, and engage with religious content. In certain situations, parents also gave their children digital devices to calm them, redirect their attention, or allow mothers time to complete domestic tasks. Nevertheless, parents recognised the need for restrictions, supervision, and guidance to prevent children from accessing content that was inconsistent with their developmental stage, family values, and Islamic teachings (preliminary observations and interviews with the families of AN, ML, FR, and YN). These preliminary findings indicate that digital technology use in Muslim families is driven not only by educational needs but also by the practical demands of everyday parenting. This situation reflects a process of parenting adaptation as parents seek to balance the use of digital media with their responsibility to protect young children and instil Islamic educational values in them.

Therefore, parental involvement is an important factor in guiding children's interactions with digital media. In the digital parenting literature, this role is referred to as digital parenting. Digital parenting refers to parent–child interactions through which parents establish boundaries, provide guidance and supervision, and protect children's safety when using digital media (Ulfah et al., 2021). In a broader sense, digital parenting also encompasses parental communication and support, the negotiation of boundaries between parents and children, and the utilization of positive opportunities afforded by digital technologies (Modecki et al., 2022). Within the parental mediation framework, parental practices were initially classified into restrictive mediation through rules and limitations, active mediation through dialogue or explanation, and media co-use with children (Valkenburg et al., 1999). These three forms remain relevant to young children's use of mobile media, although the increasingly personal and portable nature of such devices requires mediation practices to be adapted to families' parenting contexts (Nathanson, 2018).

In the context of internet use, parental mediation has expanded to include active co-use, the application of rules to online interactions, and technical restrictions through filters and monitoring software (Livingstone & Helsper, 2008). Thus, parental mediation functions not only as a protective measure but also as an educational practice that helps children understand and make sense of their digital experiences. These forms of mediation are not necessarily applied as fixed or mutually exclusive strategies. Parents may combine restrictions, explanations, and co-use according to the child's age, the type of digital activity, and the perceived risks or educational value of the content (Livingstone & Helsper, 2008; Modecki et al., 2022; Nikken & Jansz, 2014). This situational character is particularly relevant in early childhood because parental decisions about digital media are closely intertwined with

everyday routines, immediate caregiving needs, and the educational meanings attached to children's media experiences.

Previous studies have provided an important foundation for understanding parents' protective and regulatory roles in children's digital media use. Digital parenting encompasses communication, monitoring, rule-setting, support for technology use, and the implementation of technical strategies (Modecki et al., 2022). In the context of early childhood education in Indonesia, parents regulate the duration of device use, accompany their children, use child-friendly applications, monitor browsing activities, restrict access to digital games, and manage screen time to prevent device addiction (Sisbintari & Setiawati, 2021). In addition, the development of digital parenting textbooks has been directed towards improving parents' knowledge and skills in protecting children from online risks (Ulfah et al., 2021). These studies underscore the importance of regulation, guidance, monitoring, and protection in digital parenting practices for young children.

In Muslim families, the regulatory and protective functions of parenting are inseparable from parents' responsibility to introduce, explain, and habituate Islamic values in their children. Digital devices can be used to instil values related to *aqidah* (Islamic faith), *ibadah* (worship), and *akhlak* (moral character), although their use is also associated with variations in parenting practices and a range of risks for young children (Astuti et al., 2022). The internalization of Islamic values in children is also facilitated through the Magrib Mengaji programme, the use of YouTube Kids, the reading of Islamic storybooks, the singing of Islamic songs, and the use of animated videos to learn how to perform prayer (Dasopang et al., 2022). Conceptually, Islamic education within the family in the digital era requires an understanding of child development, knowledge of Islamic teachings, the regulation of digital platforms, the selection of appropriate applications, and parental guidance (Aziz, 2024).

Other studies have emphasised the protective function of digital parenting in Muslim families. The prevention of exposure to pornography has been pursued through the strengthening of the *nafs*, the practice of religious rituals, parental role modelling, control, and the development of parent–child attachment (Soraya, 2022). In families of Islamic scholars, parents guided their children's social media use through parental role modelling, motivation, time restrictions, the 1+1 model, and supportive supervision that maintained openness in parent–child relationships (Bin-Tahir et al., 2019). Overall, these studies have made important contributions by identifying the media, religious programmes, parenting practices, and parental protective functions involved in children's digital experiences. However, explanations of the processes connecting parental mediation practices with the internalization of Islamic educational values in young children's digital experiences remain limited.

An important empirical gap lies between the normative expectation that digital media should support Islamic value education and the everyday reality that families also use devices for entertainment, emotional regulation, and practical caregiving needs. Previous studies have identified religious content, device-use rules, and protective strategies, but have not adequately explained how parental mediation becomes a process through which Islamic educational values are introduced, interpreted, habituated, and reaffirmed in parent–child interaction. The novelty of this study lies in its empirical explanation of four interrelated process domains: value introduction through content curation and rules grounded in Islamic educational values; meaning-making through dialogue and guidance; value habituation through parental role modelling and relational reinforcement; and correction, protection, and reflection in response to inappropriate digital media use. These domains are treated as recurring and mutually reinforcing processes rather than linear stages. Such a process-oriented perspective is important because similar parental actions may carry different educational functions depending on how and why they are used. A restriction, for example, may simply limit access, but when accompanied by explanation, modelling, and consistent family practice, it may also become part of the process through which children are introduced to, make sense of, and become accustomed to particular values. This perspective allows the study to examine digital parenting not only as the regulation of children's media use but also as a family-based educational process through which Islamic educational values are continuously mediated in everyday interaction.

To explain these processes, this article integrates two complementary theoretical perspectives: parental mediation theory and Muhaimin's theory of value internalization. The internalization of values occurs through value transformation, value transaction, and value transinternalization (Muhaimin et al., 2012). Parental mediation theory is used to identify the forms of parental action involved in

regulating, guiding, monitoring, and directing children's digital media use. Meanwhile, value internalization theory is used to analyse how values are introduced, communicated, interpreted, modelled, and habituated within parent–child relationships. Bringing these two perspectives together enables the analysis to trace the connections among the media and mediation practices employed by parents, the educational meanings they attach to children's digital experiences, and the processes of value formation that occur in family life.

The Islamic educational values examined in this study are organized into three main categories: aqidah (faith), ibadah (worship), and akhlak (moral character). This categorization is supported by previous studies that identify aqidah, ibadah, and akhlak as core domains of Islamic educational values in different educational and social contexts (Irfan & Setiady, 2023; Nisa' & Amirudin, 2023; Rukmana et al., 2024). I**n** the present study, values such as adab, discipline, and responsibility are treated as practical expressions within these broader domains according to the empirical contexts in which they emerged, rather than as separate primary categories. The analytical focus is the process through which parents mediate these values within parent–child interactions involving children aged 3–7 years; the study does not directly measure whether children have developed stable or enduring internalized values. In this article, digital parenting practices refer to parental mediation of children's use of digital technology in general, including video platforms, digital games, educational and religious applications, and social media content accessible to children. Social media is included only when it forms part of children's digital exposure and is not analysed as a separate domain.

Accordingly, this study aims to analyse how Muslim parents mediate digital technology use among young children in Mataram City and how Islamic educational values are internalized through these digital parenting practices. It addresses two questions: (1) How do Muslim parents mediate digital technology use among young children in Mataram City? and (2) How are Islamic educational values internalized through these practices? By answering these questions, the study contributes to early childhood education research by showing that parents serve both as mediators of media use and as mediators of values, while digital media function as supporting resources rather than substitutes for parenting.

2. METHODS

This research was designed as a descriptive qualitative study. This approach was selected because the initial analysis was intended to remain close to parents' experiential accounts, organize the information into categories and themes, and avoid imposing theory as a set of predetermined categories from the outset (Bingham, 2023; Hall & Liebenberg, 2024). These characteristics are consistent with descriptive qualitative methodology, which emphasizes the researcher's close engagement with the data and the organization of information into themes. The study did not seek to test relationships between variables but to understand parents' experiences, considerations, strategies, and dynamics as they curated content and established rules grounded in Islamic educational values; engaged in dialogue with and guided their children; provided parental role modelling and relational reinforcement; and undertook correction, protection, and reflection when their children's digital media use was considered inappropriate.

The study was conducted in Mataram City and involved six participants. To protect their confidentiality, the participants were identified using pseudonymous initials: AN, ML, FR, WT, HS, and YN. Participants were recruited through criterion-based purposive sampling based on the following inclusion criteria: having a child aged 3–7 years; residing in Mataram City; being directly involved in the child's daily care; having experience regulating or guiding the child's use of digital devices; and being willing to describe digital parenting practices in the family setting. This sampling strategy was used to select participants whose caregiving roles and experience in regulating or guiding young children's digital media use matched the inclusion criteria and were directly relevant to answering the research questions(Campbell et al., 2020).

In this qualitative study, the researcher served as the primary instrument in the collection and interpretation of data. Data were collected through semi-structured in-depth interviews, non-participant observations, and documentation, which provided complementary sources of evidence. The interviews were conducted using a guide covering key topics, including parents' experiences of changes in parenting in the digital era; children's forms of digital media use; perceived opportunities

and risks; content selection; the implementation of rules and restrictions; parental guidance during media use; the monitoring of children's digital activities; and the ways parents introduced and explained Islamic values through digital experiences. Questions were posed flexibly and developed through follow-up questions to explore parents' reasons, considerations, concrete experiences, changes in parenting practices, and the connections between digital media use and value habituation in family life.

Non-participant observations were conducted to examine the context of family parenting and children's digital media practices to the extent that these could be observed during the research process. In these observations, the researcher did not participate in or intervene in family activities but recorded naturally occurring interactions relevant to the research focus. The observations focused on situations involving digital device use, forms of parental involvement, the implementation of value-based rules, parent–child dialogue, parental role modelling in technology use, children's responses to restrictions or corrective actions, and the connections between digital activities, religious routines, and everyday family life. Documentation was used to complement the interview and observational data, particularly information concerning the digital content and applications used by the children.

Data were analysed iteratively through data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification, following the qualitative data analysis framework proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña. This iterative framework continues to be applied in contemporary educational research to guide coding, data organization, comparison, and the development and verification of themes (Brosseuk & Downes, 2026). During data condensation, interview transcripts, observational notes, and documentation were read repeatedly to select data units relevant to the focus of the article. Meaning units were assigned initial codes relating to forms of parental mediation, the Islamic values introduced, the ways in which values were interpreted and habituated, and parents' corrective and protective practices. Codes were compared within and across informants and were then progressively grouped into categories and four themes: (1) value introduction through content curation and rules grounded in Islamic educational values; (2) meaning-making through dialogue and guidance; (3) value habituation through parental role modelling and relational reinforcement; and (4) correction, protection, and reflection in response to children's inappropriate digital media use. Value internalization theory and parental mediation theory were applied during the interpretive stage to explain the empirical patterns rather than to replace or impose categories on the data.

During data display, the coding results were organized into matrices comprising themes, informants, quotations, categories, and interpretations. These displays were used to identify recurring patterns, variations across informants, and cases demonstrating differences in digital parenting practices among families. Conclusions were subsequently developed iteratively by comparing data across informants and verifying the alignment of the themes with the quotations and the contexts of the original data. The analysis was directed towards answering the two research questions, namely how Muslim parents mediated digital technology use among young children and how Islamic values were internalized through these practices.

Trustworthiness was supported through data and methodological triangulation throughout the analysis. Data triangulation was conducted by systematically comparing similarities, differences, and variations across the six participants' accounts, particularly in relation to parental mediation practices, the values emphasized within families, and the ways parents responded to children's digital experiences. Rather than treating differences among participants as inconsistencies to be eliminated, these variations were examined in relation to the specific family contexts in which they occurred and were used to refine the developing categories. Methodological triangulation involved examining the convergence and divergence among interview data, non-participant observation notes, and documentary data (Morgan, 2024). Interview accounts were therefore considered alongside observable parenting situations and relevant documentation to determine whether particular interpretations were supported, qualified, or contextualized by evidence from different forms of data. When the data did not fully converge, the differences were retained and reconsidered in relation to their original contexts rather than being forced into a single interpretation. The emerging categories and themes were subsequently checked against the original interview transcripts, observation notes, and documentary materials to ensure that the analysis remained grounded in the participants'

accounts and the contexts in which the data were generated. This iterative comparison also helped reduce the risk of developing themes from isolated statements and strengthened the coherence between the empirical data, the analytical categories, and the final thematic interpretation.

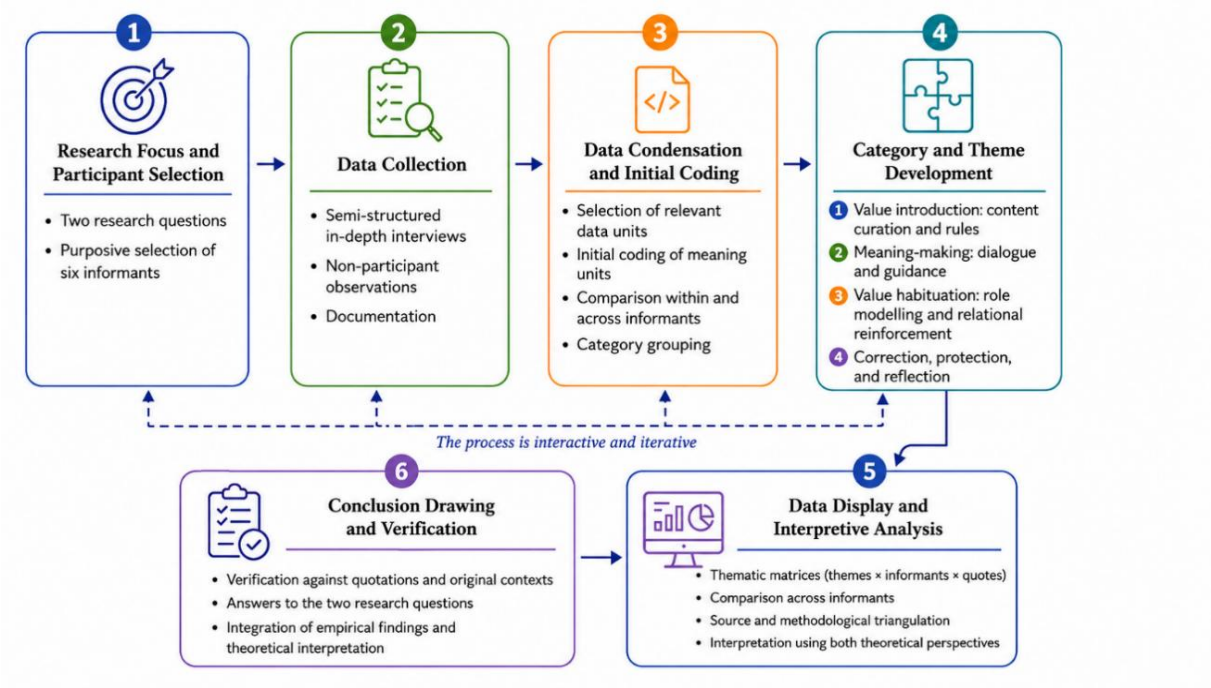

Figure 1. Research and Data Analysis Process

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This section addresses two research questions: how Muslim parents mediate digital technology use among young children in Mataram City and how Islamic educational values are internalized through these practices. The findings are organized into four themes: (1) value introduction through content curation and rules grounded in Islamic educational values; (2) meaning-making through dialogue and guidance; (3) value habituation through parental role modelling and relational reinforcement; and (4) correction, protection, and reflection in response to inappropriate digital media use. These themes are not treated as stages that invariably unfold in a linear sequence, but as processes that may recur, overlap, and change according to parenting situations. Each theme is presented by first describing the empirical evidence, followed by interpretation and dialogue with value internalization theory and parental mediation theory.

Value Introduction through Content Curation and Rules Grounded in Islamic Educational Values

The findings showed that the internalization of Islamic educational values in Muslim families' digital parenting practices began with parents' efforts to regulate their children's digital media experiences. Within this theme, parents acted as gatekeepers of digital experiences by selecting content they considered appropriate, restricting access to unsuitable content, and introducing device-use rules linked to Islamic faith, worship, moral character, and adab (Islamic manners and conduct), as well as considerations of safety, age appropriateness, and children's developmental needs. Content curation therefore served as an initial entry point for value introduction. Children were introduced to the understanding that not all digital content should be accessed, not all behaviour portrayed in media should be imitated, and device use should comply with family rules grounded in Islamic educational values.

The observational and interview data showed that parents generally used content as an entry point for value introduction by selecting and directing their children towards digital materials containing Islamic educational values. Such content included the cartoons Nusa Rara and Omar Hana, stories of the prophets, Upin-Ipin, and Mini Muslim. This finding is consistent with studies of Muslim families emphasizing that parents need to actively monitor, guide, and curate materials so that

children can access content aligned with Islamic educational values while being protected from harmful content (Rahman, 2025; Sutrisno et al., 2024).

In the families of FR and AN, digital media were also used to support children's school learning. FR regularly played MP3 recordings of Qur'anic recitation on a smartphone to reinforce her child's memorization of the Qur'an. She also played animated videos with Qur'anic recitation in the background to support the child's memorization. Meanwhile, AN used a Qur'an memorization application that integrated a verse-completion game and a feature for correcting the child's Qur'anic recitation. These practices are consistent with previous research showing that digital applications used in Qur'an memorization among preschool children can help them remember verses more easily, learn more flexibly, and improve their motivation and memorization outcomes (Ismail et al., 2023). Content curation was also evident in HS's strict restrictions on access to TikTok and short-form videos. This practice was motivated by her awareness of the potential adverse effects of short-form content on children's attention (Chiossi et al., 2023).

In another family, content curation did not necessarily involve selecting content explicitly labelled as Islamic. ML, for example, assessed general content based on the language used by creators and the behaviour that her child might imitate. She prohibited her child from watching game-review creators who used offensive language and restricted games depicting violence.

> *"My child likes watching game reviews, but I don't allow my child to watch creators who use foul language. My friend's child keeps saying 'anjir, anjir'; the child picked that up from YouTube. Just recently, my child downloaded a game. When I saw the game being played, it was about how to hurt someone until the person died—stabbing and cutting them. At first, I thought it looked interesting, but when I paid closer attention, the person had to be bombed, cut up, turned to dust, and burned. I thought it looked really frightening, so I deleted the game."* (Interview with ML)

This account illustrates how Islamic educational values were translated into practical criteria, including linguistic politeness, communicative adab, and the avoidance of violent behaviour. Thus, value orientation did not depend on whether content carried an explicitly religious label, but on the messages and behavioural models conveyed through that content. Consistent with previous research, game-related content watched by children on YouTube has been associated with language politeness among children aged 5–6 years (Suroyya et al., 2022). Restrictions on violent games are also relevant to experimental findings indicating that exposure to violent video games can increase aggressive cognition and aggressive behaviour among children (Zhang et al., 2021). Thus, efforts to internalize Islamic educational values through digital parenting involved not only selecting religious content but also evaluating the language, communicative conduct, behaviour, and violent elements contained in digital media more generally.

YN's practices illustrate another dimension of content curation, namely close supervision of the content and applications accessed by her child. This practice was prompted by an experience in which the child accessed an animated game containing pornographic material. The finding indicates that content unsuitable for children may be disguised as children's entertainment and that labels such as animation, cartoons, or children's content do not necessarily guarantee alignment with family values or children's developmental needs (Gkolemi et al., 2022; Tahir et al., 2019; Yousaf & Nawaz, 2022). Parents therefore need to examine the substance, context, and potential messages conveyed by digital media, particularly because young children have not yet developed a mature capacity to distinguish among entertainment, fantasy, risk, and moral values(Banić & Orehovački, 2024).

The level of parental guidance in WT's family differed from that observed among the other informants. Her child memorized several daily prayers, including prayers before eating and sleeping, through YouTube. However, the child selected the videos independently. As WT explained:

> "When watching, my child chooses what to watch and only stops when they get bored."

This finding suggests that exposure to religious content can occur spontaneously through digital media. However, without a clear parental role in content selection, time-related rules, and guidance, the process of value introduction may be less directed and receive less reinforcement

through parent–child interaction (Muthohar et al., 2026; Pamuji et al., 2024; Ramona & Cholimah, 2025). In other words, the presence of Islamic content in digital spaces does not automatically lead to value internalization. Parental involvement helps determine whether such content functions as part of a value-education process or remains incidental exposure.

In addition to content selection and restriction, value introduction was evident in the establishment of device-use rules linked to Islamic faith, worship, moral character, and adab, as well as considerations of safety, age appropriateness, and children's developmental needs. The families of FR and HS prohibited device use during the period between the Maghrib and Isha prayers. During this period, the children were directed towards Qur'an study and schoolwork. In ML's family, device use was not permitted during family quality time. Meanwhile, AN did not allow her child to take a device when playing outside with friends so that the child would remain under parental supervision. Through these practices, device-use rules introduced children to the principle that screen-based activities should not displace worship, religious routines, family togetherness, or social interaction (Gupta et al., 2022).

Rules governing device use were also related to screen-time restrictions. In ML's family, the child's device use was limited to 30 minutes per day and two hours on holidays. This pattern shows that the parent attempted to regulate the intensity of device use through clearly defined time limits. However, the data also showed that screen-time restrictions were not always imposed through fixed numerical limits. In other families, device access was linked to whether children had fulfilled responsibilities such as Qur'an study, learning activities, and going to bed on time. This pattern indicates that restrictions on device use were defined not only by duration but also by their relationship to children's responsibilities and routines. The findings further indicate that screen-time rules among the participating Muslim families in Mataram City were flexible and context-dependent, shaped by family activity patterns, the level of parental involvement, and the practical circumstances of everyday parenting.

The digital parenting practices identified in this theme demonstrate that parents employed restrictive mediation by limiting duration, rejecting particular applications, selecting safer devices or materials, and monitoring children's access. These restrictions acquired Islamic educational meaning when the reasons underlying the rules were linked to worship, adab, responsibility, and balanced engagement in daily activities. Within the value internalization framework, this theme is most closely associated with value introduction or value transformation, whereby parents communicated initial boundaries concerning what was good or bad, permissible or impermissible, and beneficial or risky. These findings support the view that digital parenting encompasses rule-setting, monitoring, communication, and support. However, this study further shows that such rules also function as a means of conveying Islamic educational values (Astuti et al., 2022; Aziz, 2024; Dasopang et al., 2022)

Value Meaning-Making through Dialogue and Guidance

If content curation and device-use rules served as the initial gateway to value introduction, dialogue and parental guidance provided the space in which children made sense of those values. The findings indicate that selecting Islamic content and restricting digital access alone did not fully explain how children came to understand the values conveyed through digital media. Meaning-making emerged when parents discussed media content with their children, responded to their questions, explained the messages presented, and connected digital experiences with situations in everyday life. Parents also provided moral and religious reasons why particular content or behaviours should or should not be followed. These practices reflect active forms of joint media engagement, in which parent–child communication and parental scaffolding support children's engagement with media content (Luo et al., 2025). Within this process, digital media therefore served as a stimulus for conversation, while parents acted as interpreters who made its moral and religious meanings more explicit.

This pattern was particularly evident in FR's family. She prohibited her children from watching frightening content after it had made them fearful. By contrast, she used the story of an orphan in the Omar & Hana series and content depicting the struggles of Muslims in Palestine as material for discussing gratitude, empathy, and concern for others.

> *"My Children once watched frightening videos and became afraid to go to the bathroom. I explained to them that what we watch can affect our thoughts. I told them not to watch frightening things again so that they would not become fearful. I then directed them to watch content about the struggles of Muslims in Palestine. From that, I taught them the importance of being grateful because we live in an independent country, and I encouraged them to study enthusiastically. I could see a difference. After they stopped watching frightening content, they were no longer afraid to go to the bathroom. The content about Palestine also made them more enthusiastic and motivated to learn. I also talked with them about what they watched in Omar & Hana. For example, one of Omar and Hana's friends is an orphan, and from that story we taught them to be grateful that they still have a mother and father. These discussions led to many questions. My child is very talkative and asks many questions—'What is this? What is that?'—there are always many questions." (Interview with FR)*

FR's practice illustrates how digital narratives were transformed into opportunities for moral reasoning rather than being treated as self-explanatory messages. By discussing the story of an orphan and the struggles portrayed in content about Palestine, she directed her children's attention towards gratitude, empathy, concern for others, and responsibility for learning. The significance of this practice lies not in assuming that exposure to such content directly produced these values, but in the parental explanations that connected the narratives with the children's own lives and provided moral reasons for interpreting them. Parent–child conversational scaffolding and caregiver reasoning can support young children in examining characters' actions, motives, responsibilities, and the moral dimensions of the events portrayed (Beck, 2024; Essler & Paulus, 2022). In the present study, parental dialogue therefore functioned as a mediating process through which digital stories became opportunities for children to consider the moral meaning of what they watched.

A similar practice was evident in ML's family. Through YouTube videos, she discussed adjustment to school, the confidence to interact with others, proper conduct while eating, gratitude, and stories of the prophets. The father usually retold the stories of the prophets as bedtime stories, thereby extending the children's digital experiences into family interactions beyond the screen (Scott, 2022). In AN's family, meaning-making involved explaining the distinction between media content and behaviour that children could appropriately imitate, including ways of dressing and excessive dancing. In HS's family, values were interpreted through dialogue and by reinforcing the child's understanding with other learning resources, such as books about responsible device use.

A more corrective form of dialogue was evident in YN's family. When she discovered that her child had accessed an inappropriate game, she did not merely prohibit its use or terminate access. She also explained the values underlying the restriction provided a religious rationale in terms intended to be understandable to the child.

> *"I explained to my child, 'Umi does not like it. Abi does not like it. Allah does not like it either when you watch a game like that. In our religion, a man and a woman should not be alone together in a room, particularly if they are embracing. You must not play that game again, all right?' Once we explain it, the child understands why we do not allow that kind of inappropriate content." (Interview with YN)*

From the perspective of parental mediation, these practices primarily represented active mediation, as parents discussed media content, provided explanations, and guided children's interpretations. In instances where parents also engaged with the media alongside their children, the practices involved co-use or co-viewing. Although co-viewing may involve little discussion, active mediation and scaffolding are more specifically characterised by parental explanations, questions, and conversational support intended to facilitate children's comprehension of media content (Dore & Zimmermann, 2020).

This interpretive role is supported by evidence that children's engagement with screen-based media is shaped not only by the characteristics of the content but also by the social context in which media use occurs, including parental mediation and parent–child co-use (Swider-Cios et al., 2023). Evidence from a systematic review and meta-analysis also indicates a positive, although relatively small, association between adult–child co-use and children's learning from digital media, suggesting

that adult involvement can provide scaffolding that supports children's understanding of media content (Taylor et al., 2024). In the present study, parental explanations, dialogue, and connections between digital content and everyday experiences helped make the moral and religious meanings encountered by children more explicit and accessible.

Within the digital parenting framework, this finding is consistent with the view that parental involvement encompasses not only access restrictions but also communication, support, monitoring, and guidance concerning children's digital activities (Banić & Orehovački, 2024; Modecki et al., 2022). Family mediation of preschool children's digital media practices may also involve broader active strategies, including extending and relating, through which family members connect children's media interests with activities or experiences beyond the media itself (Scott, 2022). The parents therefore acted as value mediators by connecting children's media experiences with everyday moral and religious reasoning.

This process is particularly important for young children because their interpretation of moral and symbolic messages can benefit from developmentally appropriate adult explanation and scaffolding. Without such guidance, appropriate digital content may be experienced primarily as entertainment, while its value-related meanings remain implicit. Previous research indicates that parental mediation and family involvement shape young children's digital practices at home and can support learning across various developmental domains (Soyoof et al., 2024). Accordingly, the educational potential of digital media for young children depends not only on the content provided but also on how parents guide children in interpreting and relating that content to their everyday experiences.

Previous studies have shown that technology can support the introduction of Islamic values related to faith, worship, and moral character in early childhood (Astuti et al., 2022; Dasopang et al., 2022). A related study found that digital narratives became more pedagogically meaningful when parents actively co-read, guided discussions, and selected developmentally appropriate content (Maylani et al., 2026). Although Maylani et al. focused on multimodal literacy rather than Islamic value internalization, their findings similarly demonstrate that the educational potential of digital media is strengthened through parental mediation. The present findings clarify a more specific process: values conveyed through digital media acquired meaning as parents engaged children in dialogue, provided explanation and correction, and connected media experiences with everyday life. In this way, parental dialogue not only supported children's comprehension of digital content but also connected that content with moral and religious meanings, such as gratitude, empathy, appropriate conduct, and awareness of behaviours that should or should not be imitated.

The internalization of Islamic values through digital parenting therefore involved a dialogic process. This theme is closely associated with the concept of value transaction within the value internalization process (Muhaimin et al., 2012), because values were not merely communicated in a one-way direction but were discussed and interpreted through parent–child interactions. Children were not only directed to access or avoid particular content but were also helped to understand the meanings of the values conveyed through it. In the context of Islamic education for young children, this process is closely related to *guided digital mediation*, in which digital media use is accompanied by parental guidance, co-viewing, reflection, and meaning reinforcement so that digital experiences can become interactive and value-oriented learning experiences (Muthohar et al., 2026). Accordingly, dialogue and guidance functioned as the bridge through which mediated digital experiences contributed to the internalization of Islamic values.

Value Habituation through Parental Role Modelling and Relational Reinforcement

Value habituation constitutes an important process in the internalization of Islamic educational values. Values introduced through content curation and interpreted through dialogue were reinforced through recurring family practices, parental role modelling, consistent rules, and support within caregiving relationships. Digital media supported the introduction and rehearsal of prayers, Qur'anic memorization, stories of the prophets, adab, and religious practices, but these mediated experiences acquired continuity when they were connected with everyday family routines (Afina et al., 2026; Astuti et al., 2022; Aziz, 2024) . Thus, value internalization did not end with what children watched or heard but became embedded in the rhythms and relationships of family life: when children

stop using digital devices, when they engage in Qur'an study, how they observe their parents' device use, how mothers and fathers enforce rules, and how extended family members support or weakened the continuity of those practices.

This pattern was particularly evident in FR's family. Digital media were used to support Qur'anic memorization and murājaʿah—the review of previously memorized passages—through Qur'an applications, offline MP3 recitation recordings, and children's videos incorporating Qur'anic audio. Replay functions enabled the child to listen to the same passages repeatedly, thereby supporting memorization practice (Ismail et al., 2023). In addition, the period between the Maghrib and Isha prayers was kept free from digital entertainment and allocated to Qur'an study or murājaʿah. The child's allotted device-use time was also reduced when the child missed a prayer or violated a family rule. These practices show that digital media were not treated as an unrestricted domain but were regulated in accordance with the family's religious routines and priorities. Value habituation in this family was therefore reinforced through repeated exposure to Qur'anic recitation, structured worship routines, and the alignment of digital access with religious responsibilities (Muthohar et al., 2026).

In ML's family, value habituation was evident in device-free periods during meals, family journeys, and other occasions of family togetherness. The rule requiring mobile phones to be put away applied to both the child and the parents. By complying with the same rule, the parents provided a visible model of the digital conduct expected from the child. This alignment between parental rules and parental conduct positioned digital *adab* as a shared family practice rather than a child-only restriction and illustrated how rule-setting, parental involvement, and behavioural modelling operated together in everyday family life (Hawk et al., 2023; Modecki et al., 2022; Pyne et al., 2025).

Parental role modelling was also strongly evident in HS's family. She recognized that children initially learn from what they observe in their parents. Both parents modelled the use of mobile phones for constructive purposes. They also modelled health-conscious device practices, such as maintaining an appropriate viewing distance and avoiding excessively bright screen settings. Although these practices were not specifically religious, they formed part of the parents' broader effort to model responsible digital conduct. These practices indicate that digital parenting involved parental self-regulation as well as the monitoring of the child. By modifying their own device use, the parents attempted to make their behaviour consistent with the digital conduct expected from the child (Kuru & Eryaman, 2024; Pyne et al., 2025). Parents therefore considered not only what the child watched but also whether their own conduct provided a consistent behavioural model. However, HS's account also showed that the consistency of value habituation depended on coordination across caregiving contexts. Differences between parental and grandparental rules meant that the child encountered different boundaries in different homes. This pattern highlights the relational character of family media mediation, which is shaped by the practices of multiple family members involved in children's everyday media use (Konca, 2022; Sada Garibay & Lapierre, 2025; Scott, 2022).

In YN's family, habituation was supported through written schedules, the division of parenting roles between the mother and father, and technical controls on the duration of internet access. However, she acknowledged that the child imitated the parents' manner of using a device.

> *"When the child sees Umi holding a mobile phone while lying down, the child lies down as well."*
> (Interview with YN)

This statement suggests that digital adab cannot rely on verbal prohibition alone. When parents' own practices differ from the rules they communicate, children may encounter competing behavioural models. Value habituation may therefore be strengthened when verbal rules, parental conduct, and technical controls are mutually consistent (Pyne et al., 2025).

AN's family illustrates that digital media can support certain aspects of habituation, particularly memorization, while prayer, ablution, and moral conduct were reinforced more substantially through non-digital environments such as school and Qur'an study activities. These data reinforce the broader pattern that digital media can function as supporting resources, but value internalization requires lived environments that provide repeated reinforcement. Children may listen to Qur'anic verses through an application, watch Islamic animations, or use memorization applications, but the continuity

of these values still depends on Qur'an study schedules, guidance and correction from teachers, family practices, and everyday social interactions (Dasopang et al., 2022; Winarji et al., 2026).

A contrasting pattern was found in WT's family. She did not implement structured device-use rules and provided limited guidance. When the child was cared for by the grandmother, however, device use was more closely regulated. The grandmother did not allow unrestricted device use and instead directed the child towards physical activities such as play. Inconsistent caregiving practices between parents and other family members may expose children to different messages concerning the boundaries of device use. Consequently, digital rules did not operate as stable family habits but depended on the person caring for the child at a particular time. This condition indicates that value habituation through digital parenting requires alignment among caregivers so that children receive consistent boundaries, guidance, and reinforcement (Sada Garibay & Lapierre, 2025).

Analytically, the findings show that value habituation was supported through the interaction of restrictive mediation, parental role modelling, family routines, and relational reinforcement. Restrictive mediation established boundaries, while parental examples and coordinated caregiving made those boundaries visible in everyday practice. This combination is consistent with digital parenting research that treats rule-setting, monitoring, communication, and parental involvement as complementary rather than isolated practices (Banić & Orehovački, 2024; Modecki et al., 2022).

Parents' role modelling can be interpreted through social cognitive theory, as children learn not only through direct instruction but also by observing behavioural models and the forms of self-regulation demonstrated in everyday life (Adıgüzel et al., 2023). Within Muhaimin's framework, the empirical pattern can be interpreted as value transinternalization because values were reinforced through routines, consistent parental conduct, and family relationships rather than communicated only as verbal information (Muhaimin et al., 2012). This interpretation refers to the observed process of reinforcement; it does not establish that the children had already developed stable or enduring internalized values.

Correction, Protection, and Reflection in Response to Inappropriate Digital Media Use

The findings indicate that the internalization of values did not always occur through a planned or linear sequence, but also developed through parental responses to children's changing digital experiences and emerging risks (Modecki et al., 2022; Scott, 2022). Children may still encounter content, applications, behaviours, or patterns of digital media use that are inappropriate for their age, safety, adab, or family values. In such situations, parents undertook corrective actions by stopping the content, deleting applications, temporarily confiscating devices, restricting access, explaining relevant values, redirecting children towards other activities, and revising family rules. Correction was directed not only at children's behaviour; in several families, it also prompted parents to reassess gaps in their previous supervision and adapt their mediation strategies to newly recognised risks (Banić & Orehovački, 2024; Modecki et al., 2022).

This pattern was evident in YN's family. Her child's exposure to games and short-form videos containing clothing and behaviour considered inappropriate for the child's age became a turning point in the family's digital parenting practices. The experience prompted the parents to temporarily confiscate the device, enforce a stricter schedule, restrict internet access, and provide more intensive guidance and supervision during digital media use. These restrictions were accompanied by a simple explanation that the behaviour portrayed in the content was inconsistent with the parents' expectations and with the family's religious values. These changes show that the parents did not merely terminate access but also reassessed gaps in their previous supervision and revised their parenting strategies. Such measures are important because even platforms intended for children may contain inappropriate content. Correction should therefore be understood as part of child protection rather than merely as an immediate response to a violation (Gkolemi et al., 2022; Yousaf & Nawaz, 2022). Parental corrective actions, therefore, were not merely emotional reactions but formed part of broader efforts to protect children from inappropriate digital exposure (Gupta et al., 2022; Ulfah et al., 2021).

A similar pattern was found in the families of ML and FR. ML's decision to delete the game reflected her concern that repeated exposure to violent game content could normalise aggressive behaviour or provide behavioural models that the child might imitate, a concern that is consistent

with studies linking some forms of violent digital content with aggressive cognition and behaviour(Soyoof et al., 2024; Zhang et al., 2021). When the child needed a break from the device, the father took the tablet to work, while access to TikTok was not permitted. These actions show that correction involved both removing the source of risk and restricting opportunities to access it again. In FR's family, the parents deleted games that they associated with difficulties in the child's emotional regulation and discontinued frightening content after observing changes in the child's fear responses and behaviour. This response is consistent with research emphasizing that the socioemotional implications of screen media depend on its content, context, and parental mediation (Soyoof et al., 2024; Swider-Cios et al., 2023). Digital media use was subsequently redirected towards physical activities and outdoor experiences. These findings indicate that educational correction extended beyond withdrawing access: parents also considered the child's emotional responses and redirected digital engagement towards activities, outdoor, and relational activities considered more developmentally appropriate (Gupta et al., 2022; Scott, 2022; Swider-Cios et al., 2023).

In AN's family, correction was associated with protecting the child's identity and privacy. The parents deleted the child's YouTube account after discovering that the child had replied to a comment by disclosing personal information. The incident was subsequently used as an opportunity for active mediation, through which the parents introduced the child to digital privacy and explained why personal information should not be disclosed freely in online spacesiences and emerging risks (Gupta et al., 2022; Modecki et al., 2022; Ulfah et al., 2021). Temporary confiscation of the device was also imposed when the child violated family rules. In addition to privacy concerns, the parents explained which forms of clothing, bodily movement, and behaviour portrayed in digital content could or could not appropriately be imitated. These data show that the values mediated through digital parenting concerned not only worship and moral character in a general sense but also proper conduct in dressing, caution when disclosing personal information, and responsibility when interacting in digital spaces (Astuti et al., 2022; Gupta et al., 2022).

WT's case illustrates a more limited form of correction. When she was concerned that the child might encounter age-inappropriate sexual content, she turned off the Wi-Fi connection. However, the child generally continued to watch digital content without parental guidance or structured time limits. This action provided basic protection by terminating access but was not accompanied by value-based explanations, dialogue, or a reorganisation of media-use habits (Banić & Orehovački, 2024; Nikken & Jansz, 2014). This case provides an important contrast because it shows that technical restriction alone offers limited opportunities for children to learn the moral, safety-related, and responsibility-based reasons underlying parental decisions, particularly when it is not accompanied by explanations and consistent rules (Banić & Orehovački, 2024; Scott, 2022).

Protection from unexpectedly appearing content was evident in HS's family. When the child unexpectedly encountered culturally and religiously different content, the parents responded calmly without reprimanding or blaming the child. They provided a simple explanation that religious traditions differ and explained how those traditions differed from Islamic teachings. This response positioned the unexpected exposure as an occasion for value clarification rather than as a basis for blaming or frightening the child. The parents then redirected the child to another channel that they considered safer and more consistent with the family's educational aims. They were also concerned about adult-oriented advertisements, characters' clothing, and games that might contain elements considered inappropriate for children. These practices show that protection involved not only redirecting the child's viewing but also providing a simple explanation that helped the child recognize differences between religious traditions and understand the family's value orientation (Soraya, 2022). Consistent protection became more difficult when caregiving was shared with extended family members because the grandparents did not always apply the same media rules as the parents. This finding illustrates how children's digital mediation may vary across caregivers and become subject to intergenerational differences in media beliefs and practices (Sada Garibay & Lapierre, 2025; Scott, 2022). It also indicates that the continuity of value-based mediation depends partly on whether rules and explanations are reinforced consistently across the caregivers involved in children's everyday digital experiences.

Analytically, this theme primarily demonstrates a combination of restrictive mediation and active mediation. Deleting applications, temporarily confiscating devices, disabling internet connections, and restricting access constituted forms of restrictive mediation. Meanwhile, explaining the reasons underlying prohibitions, redirecting children towards other activities, discussing privacy, explaining differences between religious traditions, and connecting rules with family values constituted forms of active mediation. Across the cases, restrictive actions primarily established or restored boundaries, whereas active mediation added an explanatory dimension by connecting those boundaries with moral, religious, privacy, and safety considerations. In several cases, corrective restrictions were combined with active mediation when parents guided children in understanding media content, explained the moral, religious, and safety-related reasons underlying restrictions, and directed them towards alternative content or activities considered more appropriate conduct (Banić & Orehovački, 2024; Livingstone & Helsper, 2008; Nikken & Jansz, 2014). This combination gave correction an educational function beyond the immediate interruption of access by linking parental responses to the values and expectations being reinforced within the family. Correction did not operate as a final stage that invariably followed habituation. Instead, it could occur at different points in the process and redirect families towards renewed content curation, dialogue, revised restrictions or the formation of new habits (Banić & Orehovački, 2024; Modecki et al., 2022; Scott, 2022).

This synthesis provides an integrated overview of how the principal analytical components identified across the four empirical themes are interconnected within the study findings, including Islamic educational value orientation encompassing Akidah (faith), Ibadah (worship), and Akhlak (moral character), parental mediation practices, the three processes of value internalization, and the cross-cutting role of correction, protection, and reflection, as presented in Figure 2.

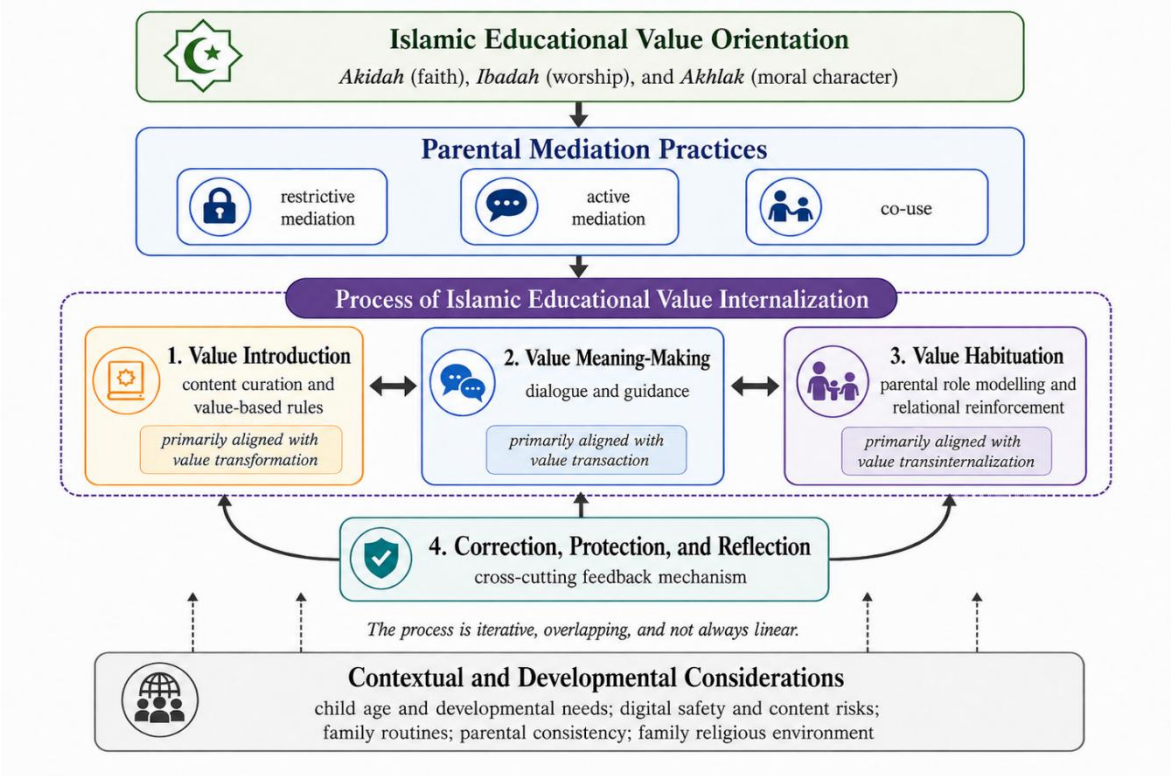

Figure 2. Findings-based analytical synthesis of Islamic educational value internalization in digital parenting practices among Muslim families in Mataram.

Overall, the four empirical themes indicate that the internalization of Islamic educational values through digital parenting among the participating Muslim families occurred through interrelated, overlapping, and not necessarily linear processes. As synthesized in Figure 1, these processes were oriented towards three principal Islamic educational values: Akidah (faith), Ibadah (worship), and Akhlak (moral character). Empirically, these values were reflected in faith-related references and

Islamic identity, worship routines and Qur'anic practices, and forms of moral conduct such as adab, modesty, non-violence, discipline, responsibility, privacy awareness, and responsible digital behaviour. The first three themes were primarily aligned with Muhaimin's processes of value transformation, value transaction, and value transinternalization, respectively (Muhaimin et al., 2012). These alignments represent analytically dominant relationships rather than a rigid sequence.

From the perspective of parental mediation, these processes were enacted through restrictive mediation, active mediation, and co-use (Livingstone & Helsper, 2008; Nikken & Jansz, 2014). Restrictive mediation was reflected in time limits, content and application restrictions, device confiscation, internet disconnection, and revised family rules; active mediation in explanations, value clarification, discussions of privacy and appropriate behaviour, responses to children's questions, and redirection towards more appropriate content or activities; and co-use in shared media engagement that created opportunities for observation, conversation, and guidance. These forms of mediation were combined according to the situations encountered by children and provided the practical means through which Akidah, Ibadah, and Akhlak were introduced, interpreted, habituated, and reaffirmed. Correction, protection, and reflection operated across these processes as a cross-cutting feedback mechanism that could reaffirm value boundaries, generate further dialogue, revise restrictions, and reshape subsequent digital habits.

The synthesis further shows that these processes were shaped by contextual and developmental considerations, including child age and developmental needs, digital safety and content risks, family routines, parental consistency, and the family religious environment. Figure 1 therefore illustrates that Islamic value internalization in digital parenting cannot be reduced to the provision of religious content alone, but emerges through the interaction of parental mediation, dialogue, everyday practice, role modelling, routines, and reflective responses to children's digital experiences. The figure represents a findings-based analytical synthesis derived from the participating families' experiences rather than a universally validated model of digital parenting.

Given the contextual nature of these findings, several limitations should be considered when interpreting them. The study involved six Muslim parents in Mataram City; therefore, the findings are not intended for statistical generalization. In addition, the analysis primarily reflects parents' accounts and observations of family digital practices, while children's perspectives remained limited. Variations in socioeconomic background, parental digital literacy, family structure, and children's developmental characteristics were also not compared in detail. Therefore, future research could involve families from more diverse social and cultural contexts, incorporate children's perspectives through developmentally appropriate methods, and examine how variations in family circumstances and parental digital literacy shape value-based parental mediation. Comparative studies across different Muslim family contexts may further clarify which patterns of Islamic educational value internalization through digital parenting are context-specific and which are more broadly shared.

4. CONCLUSION

This study showed that Muslim parents in Mataram City mediated young children's digital technology use through restrictive mediation, active mediation, and co-use, enacted through content curation, access and time restrictions, dialogue, guidance, role modelling, shared media engagement, and correction of inappropriate use. Through these practices, Islamic educational values—Akidah (faith), Ibadah (worship), and Akhlak (moral character)—were introduced, interpreted, habituated, and reaffirmed within everyday family life. The findings therefore directly address the study objectives by showing both how parents mediated children's digital media use and how value internalization occurred through those mediation practices. Conceptually, the study highlights parental mediation as not only a means of managing digital access and risks but also a mechanism for value education, while practically underscoring the importance of combining restrictions with dialogue, role modelling, and consistent family routines. Future research should examine these processes across more diverse family backgrounds and include children's perspectives to further understand how value-based digital mediation is experienced and negotiated in early childhood.

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