BUILDING STUDENTS' MORAL RESILIENCE THROUGH ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (PAI) AS A PREVENTIVE EFFORT AGAINST ONLINE GAMBLING IN MADRASAH

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Abstract

The advancement of digital technology has increased teenagers' access to information and entertainment but also poses serious challenges to morality, such as the rise of online gambling among adolescents. This study analyzes the role of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) in developing students' moral resilience to prevent online gambling behavior and examines preventive strategies implemented in madrasah. This qualitative research employed a case study at MTsN 1 Aceh Selatan, collecting data through in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and document analysis. Data were thematically analyzed using source and method triangulation to enhance validity. The findings reveal that PAI teachers actively integrate Islamic values, Quranic and Hadith principles, and current issues into the learning process. Furthermore, the madrasah applies collaborative policies such as parental involvement, supervision of gadget usage, and character development through religious activities. The integration of religious values in PAI learning and collaborative madrasah policies is proven effective in building students' moral resilience and preventing involvement in online gambling. These findings contribute to the development of religious-based character education models relevant in the digital era and may serve as a practical reference for other schools in developing strategies to prevent online gambling among teenagers.

Keywords: *Islamic Religious Education, Moral Resilience, Online Gambling, Madrasah, Prevention.*

A. Introduction

The development of digital technology nowadays brings many conveniences to daily life, including in the field of education. However, these conveniences also open new opportunities for the emergence of social problems previously unforeseen. One of the most concerning phenomena is the rampant practice of online gambling among adolescents, including in religious-based schools such as madrasah.

Online gambling is a form of betting conducted over the internet, where players place bets using money or valuables in the hope of instant profit

(Kurniawan et al., 2022). This activity is high-risk not only because it is prohibited by national law, but also firmly forbidden in Islam, as stated in the Quran (QS. Al-Māidah [5]: 90–91), which prohibits intoxicants, gambling *(maisir)*, idols, and divining arrows as acts of abomination and Satan's handiwork. Moreover, online gambling disrupts social order, family harmony, and has negative impacts on teenagers' mental health, morals, and academic achievement (Hakim et al., 2024).

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) is expected to be the main bulwark against these moral challenges. PAI does not merely teach religious cognitive aspects but also aims to shape students' character, instilling noble morals, encouraging avoidance of disgraceful acts, and developing discernment between right and wrong in daily life (Nuryadin et al., 2015). Within the madrasah context, PAI teachers play a strategic role as agents of change, providing spiritual and moral understanding to students through both classroom learning and religious activities. Therefore, the effectiveness of PAI in character formation is essential in preventing students' involvement in online gambling.

This study was conducted at MTsN 1 Aceh Selatan, a madrasah located in a region implementing Islamic law. Preliminary observations indicated that some students had begun to recognize and show interest in online gambling, although it occurred outside of school hours. This phenomenon serves as a crucial warning for the madrasah and parents to take more concrete and systematic preventive steps. Simple prohibition is inadequate; instead, coordinated strategies involving collaboration among the madrasah, teachers, parents, and the wider community are necessary.

Several previous studies have explored online gambling from various perspectives. Azman (2024) examined online gambling from a mass communication standpoint, focusing on how media reporting can influence adolescents' perceptions and behaviors related to online gambling (Azman, 2024). Ardhan, Adepio, Kennardy, Febriyandi, and Seipul (2023), as well as Bakhtiar and Adilah (2024), focused more on the legal and social impacts of online gambling on young generations (Ardhan et al., 2023; Bakhtiar & Adilah, 2024). While Sipayung and Handoyo (2024) analyzed promotional strategies and the spread of online gambling advertisements in digital media (Sipayung & Handoyo, 2024). Nevertheless, there remains a significant gap in exploring the role of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) as an educational intervention integrated with institutional policies within madrasahs to proactively prevent online gambling behavior among students. This study addresses this gap by investigating how the combined efforts of PAI pedagogical methods, active

collaboration between teachers and parents, and madrasah-level preventive policies can enhance students' moral resilience in the digital age. By providing empirical insights from MTsN 1 Aceh Selatan, the research contributes to advancing character education models rooted in Islamic values, offering both theoretical enrichment and practical guidance for Islamic educational institutions facing similar challenges.

B.   Research Methods

This study employed a qualitative approach with a case study design focusing on MTsN 1 Aceh Selatan. This approach was chosen to provide an in-depth understanding of complex social phenomena, particularly regarding the role of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) in developing students' moral resilience against online gambling (Satori & Komariah, 2017; Somantri, 2005) .

The participants in this study were purposively selected based on their strategic roles in the management and implementation of character education at MTsN 1 Aceh Selatan. This sampling technique aligns with the purposive sampling method as described by Miles and Huberman (2013), which involves selecting informants who are most relevant and knowledgeable about the phenomenon under study (Miles et al., 2013). The study involved six key informants: the Madrasah Principal, the Vice Principal for Curriculum, and four PAI teachers specializing in Fiqh, Quran-Hadith, Akidah-Akhlak, and Islamic Cultural History (SKI). According to Guest, Bunce, and Johnson (2006), a sample size of six is adequate to achieve data saturation in qualitative research, ensuring sufficient depth and breadth of information for analysis (Guest et al., 2006).

Data collection was conducted in three stages. First, participatory observation was carried out within the madrasah environment to gain contextual insights into teaching practices and student behavior, following the guidelines of Satori and Komariah (2017) on qualitative observation techniques (Satori & Komariah, 2017). Second, in-depth interviews were performed with the selected informants using semi-structured interview guides, a method recommended by Creswell (2014) for obtaining rich, detailed data in qualitative research (Creswell, 2014). These interviews were conducted between April 7 and April 12, 2025. Third, document analysis was conducted on relevant institutional documents, including syllabi, lesson plans (RPP), madrasah policies, and teaching materials, to complement and triangulate the primary data, as suggested by Bowen (2009) in qualitative research methodology (Bowen, 2009).

The data analysis technique followed the stages outlined by Miles and Huberman, namely data reduction, data display, and thematic interpretation and conclusion (Miles et al., 2013). All collected data were coded and grouped according to the main themes that emerged, such as PAI teaching strategies, preventive madrasah policies, and collaboration patterns with parents.

To ensure validity and credibility, this study applied source and method triangulation, as well as member checking, confirming interview results and preliminary findings with the informants. This approach ensured more accurate data interpretation.

With this approach, the study not only reveals general patterns but also highlights best practices by PAI teachers and the madrasah in countering the negative influence of online gambling among students.

C. Results and Discussion
1. Results

This section elaborates on the findings of the study focused on two key aspects: the role of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) in fostering students' moral resilience, and the strategies implemented by MTsN 1 Aceh Selatan to prevent online gambling. The first theme discusses how PAI teachers integrate Islamic values and moral teachings into the learning process to build students' character and resistance to negative influences. The second theme highlights the collaborative preventive measures and institutional policies adopted by the madrasah in addressing the issue of online gambling among students.

The Role of PAI in Building Students' Moral Resilience

PAI teachers at MTsN 1 Aceh Selatan consistently integrate Islamic values and moral teachings into every learning process. This is evident in material selection, teaching approaches, and character development efforts through religious extracurricular activities.

To foster students' moral resilience against the negative influence of online gambling, PAI teachers strive to integrate Islamic values into all aspects of instruction, connecting lesson content to students' daily realities. The Fiqh teacher (NU, April 2025) stated:

> "We always emphasize to students the dangers and prohibition of gambling in Islam. In every discussion, we also encourage students to analyze real-life cases that are currently trending, so they understand the context and are not easily influenced."

This statement shows that PAI learning in the madrasah is not only theoretical but also encourages students to be critical and contextual in addressing current issues affecting their lives.

Researcher observations also indicate that PAI teachers do not rely solely on lectures but also promote active discussions, case studies, and reflection on Islamic values relevant to students' everyday experiences. Topics on the prohibition of online gambling are frequently included in class discussions and assignments (Observation, 2025).

A proactive attitude in integrating religious texts is also evident in Quran-Hadith lessons. The Quran-Hadith teacher (AS, April 2025) explained:

> "I often recite and explain Quranic verses and hadiths directly related to the prohibition of gambling, so that students understand that such behavior is not only prohibited by the state but also by religion."

In addition to emphasizing religious texts and moral values, PAI teachers also focus on cultivating responsible behavior in the digital realm. Meanwhile, the Akidah-Akhlak teacher (YU, April 2025) emphasized:

> "I always remind students to use technology as needed and not for negative purposes such as online gambling."

This is important for enabling students to filter the information and entertainment they access, while also developing responsible technology use habits.

Contextual learning approaches are also applied in Islamic Cultural History (SKI) lessons. The SKI teacher (SU, April 2025) links historical Islamic stories to current social phenomena, aiming for students to learn from past experiences and apply them in modern life, thereby avoiding behaviors contrary to Islamic values, including gambling:

> "In SKI, I always connect historical values to the dangers of gambling and using technology according to Islamic ethics."

Such contextualization enables students to comprehend that gambling is a *jahiliyah* (ignorant) practice with detrimental effects on individuals, families, and the wider community, reinforcing the importance of Islamic ethical guidelines in contemporary life.

Document analysis of syllabi, lesson plans, and teaching materials confirms these contextual adjustments, highlighting prohibitions of immoral behavior and promotion of noble character in technology use (Documentation, 2025).

These findings demonstrate how PAI contributes significantly to building students' moral resilience, fulfilling one of the main objectives of this study.

Madrasah Strategies for Preventing Online Gambling

Efforts to prevent online gambling at MTsN 1 Aceh Selatan are not limited to classroom activities but are also supported by collaborative preventive madrasah policies. Participatory observation shows that religious activities such as the recitation of student pledges and regular religious lectures are held, instilling anti-gambling values in students (Observation, 2025).

The madrasah places great emphasis on collaborative efforts with parents as a fundamental strategy to supervise and guide students in preventing online gambling behavior. This partnership ensures a holistic approach to student supervision, extending beyond the school environment. The Principal (YB, April 2025) emphasized:

> "The madrasah always works with parents to supervise students, provide information about the dangers of online gambling, and respond directly to any violations."

This collaborative framework facilitates timely communication and shared responsibility between the madrasah and families, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of supervision both within the madrasah and at home.
Supporting this, the Vice Principal for Curriculum (JA, April 2025) stated:

> "We always explain to students that online gambling is the act of Satan and a *jahiliyah* culture. We also maintain intensive communication with parents and supervise gadget use both at the madrasah and at home."

Such ongoing communication and supervision underscore the madrasah's comprehensive approach to fostering awareness and preventing engagement in online gambling.

Practical preventive measures implemented include daily student pledges, regular socialization about the dangers of online gambling during religious activities, and periodic inspections of student gadgets. When violations are detected, the Guidance and Counseling (BK) teacher employs a persuasive counseling approach aimed at behavior correction.

Moreover, the madrasah encourages continuous collaboration among teachers to innovate teaching methods and develop technology-based instructional materials as part of the preventive strategy. Annual program

documentation confirms that socialization on online gambling dangers, gadget supervision, and digital education are routine agendas within the madrasah's preventive framework (Documentation, 2025).

Thus, these field findings show that the internalization of religious values in PAI lessons and collaborative madrasah strategies are highly effective in building students' moral resilience and preventing online gambling at MTsN 1 Aceh Selatan.

2. Discussion

The findings of this study confirm that Islamic Religious Education (PAI) at MTsN 1 Aceh Selatan functions not merely as a means of knowledge transfer, but as an effective instrument for developing students' moral filters and character resilience against the negative influences of online gambling. The integration of religious values into both instruction and madrasah policy forms a self-defense system for students, where the internalization process is strengthened through contextual and participatory learning models. This is consistent with the character education theory of Ki Hajar Dewantara, which emphasizes that education ideally shapes students' character and habits, not just their knowledge (Taneko, 1984).

Madrasah policies that stress collaboration with parents and gadget supervision are a best practice in the digital era. Nuryadin et al. (2015) also assert that effective PAI must involve multiple parties, not only teachers and students, but also parents and the community (Nuryadin et al., 2015). Findings at MTsN 1 Aceh Selatan indicate that persuasive and preventive approaches are much more effective than punitive measures. Teachers and the madrasah do not merely prohibit but provide space for dialogue and character strengthening through reflection, discussion, and reinforcement of relevant religious principles.

The integration of religious values and contextual learning practices also supports Bandura's social learning theory, where positive behavior formation occurs through habituation, modeling, and reinforcement from the school and family environment. PAI teachers actively engage in discussions on the dangers of online gambling, analyze real cases, and guide students in understanding the moral and legal consequences of such behaviors.

This research aligns with the findings of Azman (2024) and Bakhtiar & Adilah (2024), which highlight the crucial role of educational institutions in developing collective awareness about the dangers of online gambling through religion-based education that adapts to contemporary issues (Azman, 2024;

Bakhtiar & Adilah, 2024). However, this study offers novelty by proposing a model of integrated PAI learning based on actual issues (online gambling), collaborative madrasah–parent policies, and the use of digital instructional media tailored to the needs of teenagers in the digital era. The comprehensive and collaborative approach proposed here has not been widely addressed in previous studies, which tend to focus on legal or social aspects.

In summary, the synergy between PAI pedagogical approaches, madrasah policies, and parental involvement forms the cornerstone of efforts to prevent deviant behavior, particularly online gambling, among adolescents. The integrative model developed in this study may serve as a valuable reference for other madrasahs facing similar challenges in fostering moral resilience among youth in the digital era.

D. Conclusion

Based on the findings and discussion, it can be concluded that Islamic Religious Education (PAI) plays a strategic role in shaping students' character and moral resilience against online gambling at MTsN 1 Aceh Selatan. PAI teachers consistently integrate Islamic values, Quranic and Hadith principles, and moral messages in each lesson through contextual lesson plans, persuasive approaches, and educational use of technology.

Furthermore, the madrasah plays a vital role through collaborative preventive policies: working with parents, reciting daily pledges, holding regular religious activities, and supervising gadget use. The synergy between religious pedagogical approaches and madrasah management creates a responsive and adaptive educational ecosystem for moral challenges in the digital era.

This study offers a new contribution in the form of an integrated PAI and madrasah policy model based on collaboration, which may serve as a reference for other madrasahs in preventing deviant adolescent behaviors, particularly online gambling.

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