

## ADOLESCENT CYBER-RESILIENCE IN THE DIGITAL AGE FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF ISLAMIC PSYCHOLOGY

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### Abstract

The psychological development of adolescents has become increasingly complex in the cyber era due to pervasive internet use. Adolescents are particularly vulnerable to psychological challenges such as problematic internet use, emotional dysregulation, and ethical self-management difficulties. Previous studies indicate that self-control and self-regulation are crucial psychological capacities that protect adolescents from cyber-related risks. However, there remains a lack of theoretical explanation within Islamic psychology regarding how religious values function as internal regulatory mechanisms. This study examines adolescents' psychological challenges in the cyber era and conceptualizes *taqwā* (piety) as a core mechanism for strengthening self-control and self-regulation from

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an Islamic psychological perspective. Using a qualitative literature review approach, this study synthesizes findings from psychological research, Islamic scholarship, and relevant religious texts. The analysis suggests that adolescents' psychological vulnerabilities in the cyber environment are closely linked to weaknesses in self-control and self-regulation, while *taqwā* functions as an internalized mechanism integrating faith, knowledge, and practice. The findings also underscore the complementary role of parents as external support agents in nurturing *taqwā* and guiding adolescents' engagement with the cyber world.

**Keywords:** Religious approach; adolescent psychology; cyber world; self-control, self-regulation.

### **Khulasah**

Perkembangan psikologi remaja di era digital kini semakin kompleks akibat limpahan penggunaan internet yang meluas. Fenomena ini mendedahkan golongan berkenaan kepada pelbagai cabaran psikologi termasuklah isu penggunaan internet bermasalah, ketidakstabilan emosi, dan kepincangan pengurusan sendiri beretika. Walaupun kajian terdahulu membuktikan bahawa keupayaan psikologi seperti kawalan dan aturan sendiri berkesan melindungi remaja daripada risiko siber, penjelasan teoretikal dari sudut psikologi Islam mengenai fungsi nilai agama sebagai mekanisme aturan dalaman masih terhad. Justeru, kajian ini bertujuan untuk meneliti cabaran psikologi remaja dalam landskap siber serta mengkonseptualisasikan konsep takwa sebagai mekanisme teras dalam memperkukuh kawalan dan aturan sendiri menurut perspektif psikologi Islam. Kajian kualitatif ini menggunakan reka bentuk tinjauan literatur untuk mensintesis dapatan penyelidikan psikologi terkini, karya ilmiah Islam, serta teks wahyu yang berkaitan. Hasil analisis menunjukkan bahawa krisis psikologi remaja dalam persekitaran siber berakar umbi daripada kelemahan sistem kawalan dan aturan sendiri. Sebaliknya, takwa berfungsi sebagai

mekanisme dalaman holistik yang mengintegrasikan aspek iman, ilmu, dan amal. Selain itu, dapatan kajian turut menegaskan kepentingan peranan ibu bapa sebagai ejen sokongan luaran yang kritikal bagi memupuk takwa sekali gus membimbing interaksi siber remaja secara berhemah.

**Kata Kunci:** Pendekatan agama; psikologi remaja; dunia siber; kawalan sendiri; aturan sendiri.

## Introduction

Sophisticated digital technologies have enabled a borderless flow of information and communication, which has become one of the defining features of globalization. Individuals now require only an internet-connected device to access diverse information and connect virtually with the world. These technological shifts have transformed lifestyle patterns across all segments of society, with adolescents being among the most affected. This phenomenon affects adolescents more intensely, as they tend to be more technologically adept than older generations. Today's adolescents face the cyber world, which is interconnected without borders or limits.<sup>1</sup> Concerns regarding adolescents' engagement with digital technology were documented<sup>2</sup> even before the widespread use of personal smart devices, with early studies consistently linking shared internet access environments to truancy,<sup>3</sup> exposure to inappropriate

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<sup>1</sup> Sham, F. M. Abdullah, M. H. & Ismail, A., "Generation Z and the Level of Islamic Akhlaq Practices," *Journal of College of Sharia and Islam Studies* 37(2) (2020), 183-196.

<sup>2</sup> Herman, I. & Yahya, S., "Lepak di Kafe Siber" (paper, Seminar Antarabangsa Nilai dalam Komuniti Pasca Modenisme (SIVIC 2004), Hotel City Bayview, Langkawi, 4-6 September 2004).

<sup>3</sup> Nor, N. M., Hamzah, A. & Junus, N. F., "Faktor-Faktor yang Mempengaruhi Gejala Ponteng di Kalangan Pelajar Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Taman Selesa Jaya 2, Skudai," *Journal of Educational Psychology & Counseling* 5 (2012): 12-29.

content,<sup>4</sup> and behavioral problems.<sup>5</sup> However, this borderless digital environment increasingly exposes adolescents to psychological demands that exceed their developmental capacity for self-regulation.

The rapid expansion of digital technology and social media in developing countries, including Malaysia, has outpaced adolescents' psychological and spiritual preparedness to navigate a borderless online environment. A growing body of research indicates that adolescents' extensive engagement with the cyber world is associated with a range of psychological challenges. These include exposure to cyberbullying<sup>6</sup>, problematic internet use, emotional dysregulation<sup>7</sup>, and difficulties in distinguishing between beneficial and harmful online content. The shift towards online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic further intensified adolescents' reliance on digital devices, increasing the amount of time spent online and deepening their immersion in cyberspace. In highly connected digital environments, adolescents may experience a sense of freedom from social constraints, which can normalize unethical behavior and heighten vulnerability to psychological distress. Such conditions place considerable strain on adolescents' emotional, cognitive, and moral development during a critical developmental stage.

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<sup>4</sup> Aziz, N. A. A., "Internet, Laman Web Pornografi dan Kaedah Psikospiritual Islam dalam Menangani Keruntuhan Akhlak Remaja Pelayar Laman Web Pornografi," *Jurnal Usuluddin* 29 (2009), 147-169.

<sup>5</sup> Abdullah, A., "Tema dan Isu Penyelidikan Mengenai Gejala Sosial pada Dekad Pertama Abad 21 di Malaysia," *Akademika: Journal of Southeast Asia Social Sciences & Humanities* 78( 1)(2010), 3-14.

<sup>6</sup> Che Noh, C. H., Ibrahim, M. Y., & Yussoff, F., *Meneroka Ciri dan Faktor Buli Siber Kalangan Remaja di Malaysia* (Terengganu: Penerbit UMT, 2018), xiii.

<sup>7</sup> Shaari & Kamaluddin, "Buli: Ketidaksantunan Bahasa dan Etika Media Sosial dalam Kalangan Remaja Malaysia," *e-Bangi: Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities* 16(6) (2019), 1-16.

Past studies indicate that self-control and self-regulation are key factors influencing adolescents' vulnerability to problematic internet use.<sup>8</sup> Adolescents with strong self-control and self-regulation are less likely to develop internet addiction.<sup>9</sup> Conversely, excessive or addictive use of the internet increases adolescents' likelihood of engaging in cyber-related misconduct, including various forms of cybercrime. Studies of juvenile offenders have found that low self-control contributed to offenses of illegal downloading and computer hacking.<sup>10</sup> Self-control and self-regulation also reduce adolescents' susceptibility to cyberbullying, online deception and scams.<sup>11</sup> Therefore, strengthening adolescents' capacity for self-control and self-regulation is essential to help them navigate the challenges of the digital environment.

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<sup>8</sup> Atashafrouz, A., "Study of the Relationship Model of Family Function and Problematic Internet with the Mediating of Self-Control and Emotional Intelligence," *Biannual Journal of Applied Counselling* 7(1) (2017), 65-80.

<sup>9</sup> Akin, A. et al., "Self-Control Management and Internet Addiction," *International Online Journal of Educational Sciences* 7(3) (2015), 95-100; Mahapatra, S., "Smartphone Addiction and Associated Consequences: Role of Loneliness and Self-Regulation," *Behaviour & Information Technology* 38 (2019), 833-844; Mascia, M. L., Agus, M. & Penna, M. P., "Emotional Intelligence, Self-Regulation, Smartphone Addiction: Which Relationship with Student Well-Being and Quality of Life?" *Frontiers in Psychology* 11(2020), 375.

<sup>10</sup> Udris, R., "Cyber Deviance Among Adolescents and the Role of Family, School, and Neighbourhood: A Cross-National Study," *International Journal of Cyber Criminology* 10(2) (2016), 127-146; Back, S., Soor, S. & LaPrade, J., "Juvenile Hackers: An Empirical Test of Self-Control Theory and Social Bonding Theory," *International Journal of Cybersecurity Intelligence and Cybercrime* 1(1) (2018), 40-55.

<sup>11</sup> Peter, A., "An Examination of the Relationship Between Self-Control and Cyber Victimization in Adolescents," *Eurasian Journal of Educational Research* 67 (2017), 1-15; Hamzah, I. S., "Keselamatan Peribadi di Facebook: Ancaman dan Penyelesaian," *Malaysian Journal of Communication* 37(1) (2021), 379-395.

Given the critical role of self-control and self-regulation in mitigating problematic internet use, it is essential to identify the underlying influences that shape these capacities, among which religion has consistently been highlighted as a significant factor. Previous studies indicate that religion is strongly associated with key aspects of adolescent development, particularly self-control and self-regulation.<sup>12</sup> Religious commitment has been shown to strengthen self-control<sup>13</sup> and facilitate more effective self-regulation.<sup>14</sup> According to Hodge et al., religion and spirituality may shape self-regulation through explicit processes or through more implicit, unconscious mechanisms.<sup>15</sup> Pargament's theory explains that individuals with strong religious commitment demonstrate greater self-control, particularly in managing stress.<sup>16</sup>

Self-control and self-regulation are central components of religious teachings, including Islam, where behavioral regulation is grounded in transcendent accountability and moral self-monitoring. Religious principles encourage individuals to regulate their behavior, pursue virtuous actions and avoid harmful conduct.<sup>17</sup> These teachings aim to promote holistic well-

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<sup>12</sup> Hamzah, I. S., "Keselamatan Pribadi di Facebook," 379-395.

<sup>13</sup> Rounding, K. et al., "Religion Replenishes Self-Control," *Psychological Science* 23(6) (2012), 635-642.

<sup>14</sup> Hodge, A. S. et al., "Religion and Spirituality, Free Will, and Effective Self-Regulation," in *The Science of Religion, Spirituality, and Existentialism*, ed. K. E. Vail III & C. Routledge (San Diego: Elsevier Science Publishing Co. Inc., 2020), 103-118.

<sup>15</sup> Hodge, A. S. et al., "Religion and Spirituality," 103-118.

<sup>16</sup> Pargament, K. I. & Raiya, H. A., "A Decade of Research on the Psychology of Religion and Coping: Things We Assumed and Lessons We Learned," *Psyche and Logos* 28(2) (2007), 742-766.

<sup>17</sup> Mat Jusoh, M. S., & Mohd Sharif, M. F., "Spiritual Development in the Implementation of Tarbiah Programme Among Boarding Students at Selected National Religious Secondary Schools (SMKA)

being and security for individuals in both this life and the hereafter.<sup>18</sup> From the Islamic perspective, security and well-being are attained through a balanced implementation of the principles of *'aqīdah*, *sharī'ah*, and *akhlāq*, all of which are anchored in *taqwā*.<sup>19</sup> Commonly defined as an awareness of God's presence and ultimate accountability, *taqwā* serves as the bedrock for righteous and ethical living.<sup>20</sup>

Although previous studies have established a correlation between religiosity and self-regulatory outcomes, a theoretical lacuna persists particularly within Islamic psychology regarding how religious values actively fortify adolescents' self-control and self-regulation within the digital landscape. Existing models fail to adequately articulate the role of *taqwā* as an internal regulatory construct that seamlessly integrates the cognitive, emotional, motivational, and behavioral dimensions of psychological resilience required in the cyber world. Addressing this gap, the present study examines adolescents' psychological challenges in the cyber era and conceptualizes *taqwā* as a core mechanism of self-control and self-regulation within Islamic psychology, proposing a conceptual framework that positions *taqwā* as a functional psychological resource supporting adolescents' well-being and ethical

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in Penang," *Afkar: Jurnal Akidah & Pemikiran Islam* 20(2) (2018), 127–158.

<sup>18</sup> Sulong, J. & Ismail, F. H., "Kesejahteraan Sejagat: Analisis dari Perspektif Maqasid al-Syariah," *Jurnal Usuluddin* 31 (2010): 79-96.

<sup>19</sup> Din, H., *Manusia dan Islam* (Kuala Lumpur: PTS Publishing House Sdn. Bhd., 2015), 21; Aziz, A. R. A. et al., "Konsep dan Perspektif Tauhidik dalam Meningkatkan Kebahagiaan Kendiri," *International Journal of Humanities Technology and Civilization* 10(1) (2021), 64-79.

<sup>20</sup> Hidayat, A., Fikri, Krisma, N. "The Concept of Muslim's Taqwa and Islamic Psychology Measurement," *Psikoislemedia Jurnal Psikologi* 9(2) (2024), 228 – 242.

engagement in the digital environment. In doing so, this study contributes to the growing body of Islamic psychology by offering a theoretically grounded framework for understanding adolescent cyber-resilience.

### **The Challenges of Adolescent Psychology in the Cyber-era**

Development of adolescent psychology naturally requires direct interpersonal interaction, as humans are inherently social beings. However, this development process has shifted in the cyber era. Adolescents engage in face-to-face interaction to communicate, as virtual platforms now fulfill many of these functions. This shift has contributed to a decline in physical social activities, including recreation and in-person interaction. Adolescents now spend more time engaging in online activities, a trend that intensified during the COVID-19 pandemic, which also required the expansion of online learning. Consequently, adolescents face a developmental context that diverges from traditional patterns of psychological maturation. Adolescents now navigate two overlapping developmental environments, physical space and cyberspace. Cyberspace functions as an expansive environment offering limitless opportunities and stimuli. It provides adolescents with unrestricted access to information and social interaction with individuals from diverse backgrounds. Such exposure can exceed their cognitive and emotional capacity to process and regulate experiences effectively.

In the past, parents could easily monitor their adolescents' activities by observing their whereabouts, peer groups, reading materials, and social interactions. However, this level of supervision has become increasingly difficult in the cyber-era. Even when adolescents remain at home, their online interactions, information-seeking behaviors, and cyberspace activities often occur beyond parental visibility. Parents

increasingly struggle to monitor what their adolescents are doing online, the content they access, the individuals they interact with, and the sources of information that capture their attention.<sup>21</sup> This challenge is even greater for working parents, who have limited time to monitor their adolescents' online behavior. Due to work demands, many parents are compelled to rely on their adolescents to manage themselves independently.

Uncontrolled gadget use has been associated with diminished social interaction skills among adolescents.<sup>22</sup> Excessive engagement with online content reduces opportunities for face-to-face socialization, which can hinder adolescents' interpersonal development. Excessive internet use also reduces adolescents' direct personal interactions with family members.<sup>23</sup> As a result, many adolescents become more comfortable communicating online, sometimes even with individuals they do not personally know.<sup>24</sup> Uncontrolled use of cyber-era technology also negatively affects adolescents' academic motivation.<sup>25</sup> Excessive internet use often leads to lack of

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<sup>21</sup> Kwan, H. C. & Leung, M.T., "The Structural Model in Parenting Style, Attachment Style, Self-Regulation and Self-Esteem for Smartphone Addiction," *IAFOR Journal of Psychology & the Behavioral Sciences* 3(1) (2017), 85–103.

<sup>22</sup> Cerniglia, L. et al., "Internet Addiction in Adolescence: Neurobiological, Psychosocial and Clinical Issues," *Neuroscience & Biobehavioral Reviews* 76 (2017), 174-184.

<sup>23</sup> Tenzin, K. et al., "Internet Addiction Among Secondary School Adolescents: A Mixed Methods Study," *Journal of Nepal Medical Association* 57(219) (2019) 344-351.

<sup>24</sup> Wartberg, L., Kriston, L. & Thomasius, R., "Internet Gaming Disorder and Problematic Social Media Use in a Representative Sample of German Adolescents: Prevalence Estimates, Comorbid Depressive Symptoms and Related Psychosocial Aspects," *Computers in Human Behavior* 103 (2020), 31–36.

<sup>25</sup> Demir, Y. & Kutlu, M., "The Relationship Among Internet Addiction, Academic Motivation, Academic Procrastination and School Attachment in Adolescents," *International Online Journal of Educational Sciences* 10(5) (2018), 315-332.

sleep and irregular waking patterns, which in turn adversely impact academic performance.<sup>26</sup> A study by Yusuf et al. found that most adolescents spend between 7 and 21 hours on the internet, particularly on weekends.<sup>27</sup> The extended hours spent online indicate how deeply the cyber world shapes their daily lives.

Past studies have shown that psychological challenges in the cyber era are increasingly associated with various emotional and mental health difficulties among adolescents.<sup>28</sup> One of the most common issues is gadget or internet addiction, which is closely associated with excessive technology use.<sup>29</sup> Gadget addiction affects adolescents' psychological functioning and may lead to anxiety, depression, narcissistic traits, low self-confidence, trauma<sup>30</sup> and in severe cases, suicidal tendencies.

Excessive internet use may affect adolescents' moral behavior<sup>31</sup> and increase their vulnerability to

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<sup>26</sup> Cheng, C. & Li, A. Y. L., "Internet Addiction Prevalence and Quality of (Real) Life: A Meta-Analysis of 31 Nations Across Seven World Regions," *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking* 17(12) (2014), 755-760.

<sup>27</sup> Yusuf, S. et al., "Cyber Aggression-Victimization among Malaysian Youth," *Asian Journal of University Education* 17(1) (2021), 240-260.

<sup>28</sup> Shaw, M. & Hitam, D. W., "Internet Addiction: Definition, Assessment, Epidemiology and Clinical Management," *CNS Drugs* 22(5) (2008), 353-365.

<sup>29</sup> Choi, M., Park, S. & Cha, S., "Relationships of Mental Health and Internet Use in Korean Adolescents," *Archives of Psychiatric Nursing* 31(6) (2017), 566-571.

<sup>30</sup> Li, L. et al., "Childhood Trauma and Suicidal Ideation among Chinese University Students: The Mediating Effect of Internet Addiction and School Bullying Victimization," *Epidemiology and Psychiatry Sciences* 29 (2020), 15.

<sup>31</sup> Ardi, Z., Viola, K. & Sukmawati, I., "An Analysis of Internet Abuses Impact on Children's Moral Development," *Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan Indonesia* 4(1) (2018), 44-50.

deviant or criminal activities.<sup>32</sup> Adolescents may view internet use as a way to relieve boredom, whereas parents often perceive it as time spent on unproductive activities. Exposure to violent video games has also been linked to increased aggressive behavior among adolescents. Repeated exposure reinforces and activates aggression-related self-schemas, lowers pro-social behavior, and diminishes empathy.<sup>33</sup> Exposure to social media has also been associated with heightened aggression, particularly when adolescents consume content that provokes anger, jealousy, or retaliatory behavior.<sup>34</sup> Shaari and Kamaluddin found that almost all of the 120 adolescents interviewed admitted to using the internet as a platform to express their emotions and experience a sense of freedom without concern for restrictions or negative judgment from others.<sup>35</sup> This indicates that many adolescents struggle to distinguish between beneficial and harmful online content.

Cyberbullying represents a major challenge faced by adolescents in the cyber era. Empirical studies report that a substantial proportion of adolescents are involved in cyberbullying, either as victims or perpetrators.<sup>36</sup> With

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<sup>32</sup> Nikolovska, M., "The Internet as a Creator of a Criminal Mind and Child Vulnerabilities in the Cyber Grooming of Children"(PhD Dissertation, University of Jyväskylä, 2020), JYU Dissertations, 164.

<sup>33</sup> DeWall C. N. & Anderson, C. A., "The General Aggression Model," in *Human Aggression and Violence: Causes, Manifestations, and Consequences*, ed. P. R. Shaver & M. Mikulincer (Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2011), 15–33.

<sup>34</sup> I. Sarbeni, "Brutal Effects of Online Game in Animator Perspective," in *Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research 519, Proceedings of the 3rd International Conference on Arts and Design Education (ICADE 2020)* (Paris: Atlantis Press, 2021), 61–65.

<sup>35</sup> Shaari & Kamaluddin, "Buli: Ketidaksantunan Bahasa," 1–16.

<sup>36</sup> Kamaluddin, M.R. *et al.*, *Buli Siber: Suatu Bencana Sosial* (Bangi: UKM Press, 2019), 35–36.

prevalence rates commonly ranging between 30% and 60%, while a majority remain unaware of available support services.<sup>37</sup> More concerning is the tendency among adolescents to normalise such behavior and fail to recognise its seriousness. Che Noh et al., in a study involving 276 Malaysian adolescents, found that 30 percent of respondents had been victims of online bullying.<sup>38</sup> Similarly, Karsodikromo et al. found that 60 percent of school students were involved in cyberbullying cases and various forms of internet harassment.<sup>39</sup>

Environmental factors also contribute to adolescents' psychological challenges, including family environment, school context, access to cybercafé facilities, and exposure to internet game advertisements.<sup>40</sup> The quality of family interaction and communication has been linked to adolescents' vulnerability to cyberbullying.<sup>41</sup> Chung, Lee and Lee found that environmental factors exert a stronger influence on

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<sup>37</sup> "Bernama: Buli Siber Perlu Ditangani Segera," Kementerian Komunikasi dan Digital, 19 November 2019, accessed on 25 July 2021, <https://www.kkmm.gov.my/awam/berita/16089-bernama-19-nov-2019-buli-siber-perlu-ditangani-segera>.

<sup>38</sup> Che Noh, *Meneroka Ciri dan Faktor Buli Siber*, xiii.

<sup>39</sup> Karsodikromo, Y., Husin, M. R., Razali, A. R. & Hamzah, H., "Buli Siber dalam Kalangan Murid Sekolah Menengah di Daerah Samarahan, Sarawak," *Jurnal Pendidikan Bitara UPSI* 13(2) (2020), 38–47.

<sup>40</sup> Chung, S., Lee, J. & Lee, H. K., "Personal Factors, Internet Characteristics, and Environmental Factors Contributing to Adolescent Internet Addiction: A Public Health Perspective," *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 16(23) (2019), 4635; Ortega-Barón, J., Buelga, S. & Cava, M. J., "The Influence of School Climate and Family among Adolescents Victims of Cyberbullying," *Comunicar* 24(46) (2016), 57–65.

<sup>41</sup> Buelga, S., Martinez, B. & Cava, M.J., "Difference in Family Climate and Family Communication among Cyberbullies, Cybervictims, and Cyber Bully-Victims in Adolescents," *Computers in Human Behavior* 76 (2017), 164–173.

adolescent internet addiction compared to social contexts such as family and school.<sup>42</sup> Whereas Fumero et al. reported that personal factors show a stronger association than social factors.<sup>43</sup> These mixed findings suggest that reliance on external conditions alone is insufficient, highlighting the need for stronger internal regulatory mechanisms.

Based on this discussion, the cyber era presents not only technological advancement but also significant risks to adolescents' psychological well-being, particularly within highly connected digital environments. Research indicates that weak self-control and self-regulation increase adolescents' vulnerability to psychological difficulties associated with problematic internet use.<sup>44</sup> Accordingly, this article examines Islamic religious approaches grounded in the Qur'an, Hadith, and classical Islamic scholarship to address the psychological impacts of the cyber world by strengthening adolescents' self-control and self-regulation.

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<sup>42</sup> Chung, S., Lee, J. & Lee, H. K., "Personal Factors, Internet Characteristics, and Environmental Factors Contributing to Adolescent Internet Addiction: A Public Health Perspective," *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 16(23) (2019), 4635.

<sup>43</sup> Fumero, A., Marrero, R. J. Voltes, D. & Peñate, W., "Personal and Social Factors Involved in Internet Addiction Among Adolescents: A Meta-Analysis," *Computer in Human Behavior* 86 (2018), 387-400.

<sup>44</sup> Arrivillaga, C., Rey, L. & Extremera, N., "Adolescents' Problematic Internet and Smartphone Use is Related to Suicide Ideation: Does Emotional Intelligence Make a Difference?" *Computer in Human Behavior* 110 (2020), 106375; L. Wartberg, L. Kriston & R. Thomasius, "Internet Gaming Disorder and Problematic Social Media Use in a Representative Sample of German Adolescents: Prevalence Estimates, Comorbid Depressive Symptoms and Related Psychosocial Aspects," *Computers in Human Behavior* 103 (2020), 31-36.

## **Methodology**

This study uses a qualitative approach to explore the role of religion in addressing adolescents' psychological challenges in the cyber-era. It was conducted using a literature review design, in which data and information are gathered through bibliographic analysis of existing sources such as journals, articles, books and other relevant materials. These sources include past studies, research findings, and scholarly perspectives in the fields of psychology and religion.

Data analysis was conducted using content analysis techniques. Literature sources were reviewed, and key themes related to the influence of religious approaches on adolescent psychology in the cyber era were identified. These themes were then synthesized and analyzed to provide a clearer understanding of how religious approaches can support adolescents in navigating psychological challenges in the digital age.

## **Religious Appreciation as a Protective Factor for Adolescents' Psychological Well-Being in the Cyber Era**

Adolescents' use of cyber-era technology has become a pervasive phenomenon with significant psychological implications. The extent of this impact is concerning, as it may lead to psychological harm without adolescents being fully aware of it. Numerous studies have demonstrated the adverse effects of cyber-era technology on adolescents' physical, psychological, and behavioral well-being. Without effective intervention, these effects are likely to persist and remain a major concern.

The religious approach is proposed to address this problem, as religion provides guidance to achieving well-being in both this world and the hereafter. From an Islamic perspective, values are integrated into an individual's sense of self and identity through religious

appreciation and internalization. Such internalization contributes to spiritual well-being, encompassing mental, emotional, and motivational dimensions.<sup>45</sup> Previous research findings on the relationship between religious appreciation and adolescents' psychological well-being support this assertion.<sup>46</sup> As discussed earlier, a key factor placing adolescents at risk in the cyber world is the lack of self-control and self-regulation.<sup>47</sup> Self-control functions to restrain strong impulses within the individual, while self-regulation reduces the frequency and intensity of impulses through effective stress management.<sup>48</sup>

According to McCullough and Willoughby, self-control and self-regulation are essential for adolescents'

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<sup>45</sup> Abdel-Khalek, A. M. "Religiosity and Well-Being in a Muslim Context," in *Religion and Spirituality Across Cultures*, ed. C. Kim-Prieto, *Cross-Cultural Advancements in Positive Psychology 9* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2014), 71–85.

<sup>46</sup> Osman, A. & Yahya, S. A., "Hubungan antara Penghayatan Agama dengan Kesejahteraan Psikologi dalam Kalangan Pelajar Sekolah Sukan," *Jurnal Maw'izah* 1(1) (2018), 154–165; Abdel-Khalek, A. M., "Subjective Well-Being and Religiosity: A Cross-Sectional Study with Adolescent, Young and Middle-Age Adults," *Mental Health, Religion & Culture* 15(1) (2012), 39–52.

<sup>47</sup> Akin, A. et al., "Self-Control Management and Internet Addiction," *International Online Journal of Educational Sciences* 7(3) (2015), 95–100; Smartphone Addiction and Associated Consequences: Role of Loneliness and Self-Regulation," *Behaviour & Information Technology* 38(8) (2019), 833–844; Mascia, M. L., Agus, M. & Penna, M. P., "Emotional Intelligence, Self-Regulation, Smartphone Addiction: Which Relationship with Student Well-Being and Quality of Life?" *Frontiers in Psychology* 11 (2020), 375.

<sup>48</sup> S. Shanker, "Self-Regulation vs Self-Control: The Reason for the Profound Differences Lies Deep Inside the Brain," *Psychology Today*, 11 July 2016, accessed on 14 July 2021, <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/self-reg/201607/self-regulation-vs-self-control>.

success in life.<sup>49</sup> These capacities contribute to satisfactory outcomes across various domains, including academic performance,<sup>50</sup> positive personality development, reduced engagement in risky behaviors,<sup>51</sup> and the adoption of healthy lifestyle habits.<sup>52</sup> In Muslim societies, religion serves as a powerful source of motivation for self-restraint or self-control. This motivation is grounded in the concept of *taqwā* (piety) towards God. Adolescents with a high level of *taqwā* are therefore better able to control and regulate their behavior.

### **Defining Self-Control and Self-Regulation: A Psychological Perspective**

Before examining the role of religion in influencing self-control and self-regulation, it is essential to have a clear understanding of these concepts. In psychology, the terms 'self-control' and 'self-regulation' refer to individuals' ability to regulate behavior and thoughts in response to internal states and external environments. Although these terms are related, they carry distinct meanings. Self-control refers to an individual's ability to manage impulses, emotions, and actions when faced with

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<sup>49</sup> McCullough, M. E. & Willoughby, B. L. B., "Religion, Self-Regulation, and Self-Control: Associations, Explanations, and Implications," *Psychological Bulletin* 135(1) (2009), 69–93.

<sup>50</sup> Lidner, C., Nagy, G. & Retelsdorf, J., "The Need for Self-Control in Achievement Tests: Changes in Students' State Self-Control Capacity and Effort Investment," *Social Psychology of Education* 21(5) (2018), 1113–1131.

<sup>51</sup> Agbaria, Q., Berte, D. Z., & Mahamid, F. A., "Social Support, Self-Control, Religiousness and Engagement in High Risk-Behaviors among Adolescents," *The International Journal of Indian Psychology* 4(4) (2017), 13–33.

<sup>52</sup> Liu, Q. et al., "Mindfulness and Sleep Quality in Adolescents: Analysis of Rumination as a Mediator and Self-Control as a Moderator," *Personality and Individual Differences* 122 (2018), 171-176; Szabo, K. et al., "Adolescents' Attitudes Towards Healthy Eating: The Role of Self-Control, Motives and Self-Risk Perception," *Appetite* 143 (2019), 104416.

temptations or situations that require discipline. It is a fundamental component of emotional and behavioral regulation, often associated with resisting short-term desires in pursuit of long-term goals.

In contrast, self-regulation involves the ability to set goals, monitor progress, regulate emotions, sustain motivation, and maintain focus and attention over time. It extends beyond impulse control to encompass broader processes of self-management across various aspects of life. Core self-regulatory processes include planning, monitoring, evaluating, and adjusting behavior, emotions, and cognitions. Self-control primarily focuses on managing impulses and spontaneous actions, whereas self-regulation is broader and more systematic, involving planning, reflection, and continuous self-adjustment. The following examples can provide a clearer understanding of the functions of self-control and self-regulation.

Self-control can be illustrated by a student who resists immediate temptation, such as declining a leisure activity during examination week to prioritize studying for long-term academic benefits. In contrast, self-regulation involves a more complex and sustained process, as seen in a student who recognizes the negative impact of excessive online gaming and subsequently sets goals, restructures daily routines, monitors behavior, and reflects on outcomes to improve academic performance and social functioning. While self-control focuses on resisting short-term impulses, self-regulation encompasses ongoing planning, monitoring, and adjustment of behavior to achieve broader and enduring goals.

Factors influencing an individual's capacity for self-control and self-regulation may arise from various aspects of life, including biological, psychological, and environmental domains. However, this study focuses specifically on environmental factors related to religious

learning and education, particularly from an Islamic perspective. According to McCullough and Willoughby, many associations between religiosity and health, well-being, and social behavior may be explained by religion's influences on self-control or self-regulation. One of the key functions of religion is to promote self-control and to influence how individuals select, pursue, and organize their goals. In addition, religion facilitates self-monitoring and fosters the development of self-regulatory capacity. Therefore, the influence of religion on health, well-being, and social behavior may, in part, operate through its effects on self-control and self-regulation.<sup>53</sup> Therefore, a clear distinction between self-control and self-regulation is essential before examining how these constructs are reframed within the Islamic psychological framework through the concept of *taqwā*.

### **Self-control through *Taqwā* (Piety)**

From the Islamic perspective, the concepts of self-control and self-regulation are closely related to al-*taqwā* or piety. The term *taqwā* originates from the Arabic root *wiqāyah*, which conveys the meanings of preservation,<sup>54</sup> prevention and protection.<sup>55</sup> Thus, *taqwā* connotes the preservation and prevention of oneself from danger, evil and harm. Islam places strong emphasis on *taqwā*, as it constitutes a key foundation for human safety,<sup>56</sup> well-being,<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> McCullough, M. E., & Willoughby, B. L. B. "Religion, Self-Regulation, and Self-Control: Associations, Explanations, and Implications." *Psychological Bulletin*, 135(1) (2009), 69–93.

<sup>54</sup> Hamka, *Tafsir Surah al-Fatihah dan Juzuk 1* (Selangor: PTS Publishing House, 2018), 144.

<sup>55</sup> Mohamad, A. D., Hamjah, S. H. & Mokhtar, A. I., "Konsep Tazkiyah al-Nafs Menurut al-Harith bin Asad al-Muhasibi," *Jurnal Sultan Alauddin Sulaiman Shah* 4(1) (2017), 115-125.

<sup>56</sup> Kartini, A. H., "Taqwa Penyelamat Ummat," *Al 'Ulum* 52(2) (2012), 26-35.

<sup>57</sup> Al-Qur'an, Surah al-A'raf 7:35; Surah al-Zukhruf 43:67-68

happiness<sup>58</sup> and success<sup>59</sup> in both this world and the hereafter.<sup>60</sup> According to Kuning, *taqwā* is a positive mental attitude and spiritual disposition that involves mindfulness of God's commands and the avoidance of what is prohibited.<sup>61</sup>

In Islam, self-control and self-regulation are greatly influenced by an individual's level of *taqwā*. This relationship is grounded in Qur'anic teachings that link *taqwā* to a person's capacity to regulate behavior through the performance of righteous deeds and the avoidance of wrongdoing, both in one's relationship with Allah SWT and with fellow human beings. Numerous Qur'anic references highlight the relationship between *taqwā* and self-control as well as self-regulation. Some of these references include the following verses, which means: "People, We created you all from a single man and a single woman and made you into races and tribes so that you should recognise one another. In God's eyes, the most honored of you are the ones most mindful of Him: God is all-knowing, all-aware,"<sup>62</sup> and "This is the Scripture in which there is no doubt containing guidance for those who are mindful of God; who believe in the unseen, keep up

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<sup>58</sup> Kartini, "Taqwa Penyelamat Ummat," 26–35; Zuhdiyah, Karolina, S., Oviyanti, F., Aflisia, N. & Hardiyanti, Y. S. D., The Variety of Happiness Perspective and Its Implementation in Learning Process," *Psikis: Jurnal Psikologi Islami* 6(1) (2020), 102–115.

<sup>59</sup> Surah al-Baqarah 2:5; Surah al-Ma'idah 5:100; Surah al-Tahgaban 64:16.

<sup>60</sup> Wahab, M. A., Masron, T. A., & Karia, N., "Do Taqwa and Syukur Predict Muslims' Proclivity to Emotional Intelligence? An Empirical Analysis," *International Journal of Ethics and Systems* 40(1) (2024), 153–174; Sufya, D. H., & Abas, N. A. H., "Exploring Life Satisfaction as a Bridge between Taqwa and Psychological Well-Being in Muslim Adolescents," *International Journal of Islamic Educational Psychology* 5(2) (2025), 337–355.

<sup>61</sup> Kuning, A. H., "Takwa dalam Islam," *Jurnal Pendidikan dan Pemikiran Islam* 6(1) (2018), 103–110.

<sup>62</sup> Surah al-Hujurat 49:13.

the prayer, and give out of what We have provided for them; those who believe in the revelation sent down to you, and in what was sent before you, those who have firm faith in the Hereafter."<sup>63</sup> The other verse is, which means: "O believers! Be mindful of Allah in the way He deserves, and do not die except in a state of full submission to Him."<sup>64</sup>

The verses above collectively emphasize the fundamental importance of *taqwā* in human life. *Taqwā* is presented as a noble moral and spiritual quality in the sight of Allah SWT, rooted in faith in the unseen, belief in the truth of the Qur'an and previous revelations and conviction in the reality of accountability on the Day of Judgment. *Taqwā* is not shaped by faith alone; it is also cultivated through religious practices such as prayer and spending from one's provision in the way of Allah SWT. Faith and piety, therefore, are nurtured within the framework of Islamic belief and submission to Allah SWT.

Based on the discussion above, *taqwā* functions as an internal mechanism that enables adolescents to restrain themselves from harmful and destructive behaviors, while guiding them towards actions that promote well-being. *Taqwā* thus encompasses an integration of knowledge, faith, and religious practice. Adolescents with effective self-control and self-regulation require sound knowledge, firm faith, and consistent religious practice. Accordingly, adolescents in the cyber-era need to strengthen their inner moral and spiritual capacities by cultivating *taqwā*.

### ***Taqwā* (Piety) Element: *Īmān* (Faith/Belief)**

How is *taqwā* cultivated within the adolescent self? *Taqwā* is grounded in *īmān* (faith) and reinforced through

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<sup>63</sup> Surah al-Baqarah 2:2-4.

<sup>64</sup> Surah Ali 'Imran 3:102.

righteous practice (*amal*).<sup>65</sup> While a comprehensive discussion of *īmān* and *amal* would require extensive elaboration, this study focuses on the essential elements relevant to the present discussion. *Taqwā* is stated in earlier Qur'anic verses, such as in Surah al-Baqarah, which refers to belief in God, the angels, the prophets, the Day of Resurrection, and the revealed scriptures.<sup>66</sup>

According to the Prophet's (PBUH) hadith, *īmān* entails belief in Allah SWT, His Angels, His Prophets, His revealed scriptures, and the Day of Resurrection.<sup>67</sup> *īmān* generates inner conviction and motivation to pursue what is morally right and desirable, arising from sound knowledge and self-awareness.<sup>68</sup> Such self-awareness is essential to fulfilling the obligations of ibadah to Almighty Allah SWT.

#### ***Taqwā* (Piety) Element: 'Amal (Practice)**

*Taqwā* is not developed through belief alone; it must be reinforced through righteous deeds and consistent good practices. At the core of righteous practice are the performance of obligatory *ṣalat* (prayers) and the act of spending a portion of one's wealth for the cause of Allah SWT.<sup>69</sup> According to the Prophet's Hadith,

"Islam is built upon five pillars: bearing witness that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, establishing prayer,

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<sup>65</sup> Hamka, *Tafsir Surah al-Fatihah dan Juzuk 1*, 145.

<sup>66</sup> Surah al-Baqarah 2:2-5.

<sup>67</sup> Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, ed. Muḥammad 'Abd al-Qādir Aḥmad 'Aṭā (Cairo: Dār al-Taqwā li al-Turāth, 2001), 1:48.

<sup>68</sup> Mohamad, A. D., et al, "Konsep Tazkiyah al-Nafs," 115-125.

<sup>69</sup> Surah al-Baqarah 2:2-5.

giving zakat, performing pilgrimage (Hajj), and fasting during the month of Ramadan."<sup>70</sup>

This indicates that *taqwā* is fundamentally built upon ibadah (devotional) practices for the sake of Allah SWT. The integration of *īmān* and ibadah practices nurtures the self with values such as love, compassion, hope, trust in Allah SWT (*tawakal*), acceptance (*riḍā*), patience (*ṣabr*) and gratitude (*shukr*), which collectively contribute to the development of virtuous character and moral conduct.<sup>71</sup>

According to Zaidan, righteous practices are grounded in Islamic and *sharī'ah* principles, encompassing '*ibādah* (acts of worship), *mu'āmalah* (social and civil transactions), and *akhlāq* (moral conduct). Ibadah refers to specific practices that connect individuals to Allah SWT, while *mu'āmalah* and *akhlāq* govern ethical conduct and social relations among human beings. Such righteous practices promote well-being not only for individuals but also for society.<sup>72</sup>

### ***Taqwā* (Piety) Element: 'Ilm (Knowledge)**

What, then, is the source of *īmān* and '*amal*? The primary source is knowledge derived from the Qur'an and Hadith.<sup>73</sup> From an Islamic perspective, foundational knowledge encompasses three core domains: '*aqīdah*, *sharī'ah*, and *akhlāq*.<sup>74</sup> '*Aqīdah* forms the foundation of

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<sup>70</sup> Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, ed. Muḥammad Fu'ād 'Abd al-Bāqī Kitāb al-Īmān, Bāb Bayān Arkān al-Islām wa Da'ā'imih al-'Izām, (Riyadh: Dar al-Salām, 2000), no. 21, 29.

<sup>71</sup> Kartini, A. H., *Taqwa Penyelamat Ummat*, 26-35.

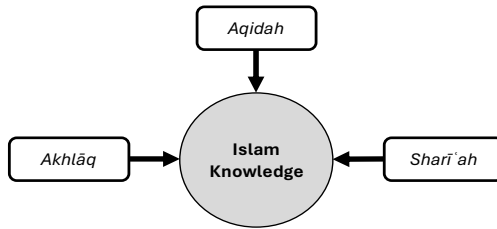
<sup>72</sup> Zaidan, A. K., *Uṣūl al-Da'wah: Islam & Dakwah*, trans. Solehan Ayub (Kuala Lumpur: Pustaka Salam, 2002; original work published 1976), 11-14.

<sup>73</sup> Abdullah, W. A. A., Zhaffar, N. M. & Tamuri, A. H., "Aplikasi Kemahiran Berfikir Aras Tinggi (KBAT) dalam Pendidikan Islam Mengikut Bidang," *Sains Insani* 5(1) (2020), 14-21.

<sup>74</sup> Din, H., *Manusia dan Islam*, 21; Abdullah, W. A. A. et al, Aplikasi Kemahiran Berfikir Aras Tinggi (KBAT), 14-21.

Islamic knowledge, relating to belief and conviction as a Muslim and a *Mu'min*.<sup>75</sup> It encompasses the doctrine of *tawhīd*, which affirms the Oneness and Omnipotence of Allah SWT, as well as belief in the Day of Resurrection and the Hereafter.<sup>76</sup>

Diagram 1: The Scope of Foundational Knowledge in Islamic Studies



Source: Adapted by researcher

*Shari'ah* refers to the system of obligations and regulations governing human life, derived from the primary Islamic sources of the Qur'an and Hadith. It also encompasses *fiqh*, which addresses the legal rulings concerning human actions and conduct.<sup>77</sup> *Akhlaq* refers to Islamic ethics, moral character and values. It may be categorized into two types: *maḥmūdah* (praiseworthy) *akhlaq* and *madhmūmah* (blameworthy) *akhlaq*. In Islam, *akhlaq* emerges from inner psychological and spiritual purity shaped by genuine faith and *taqwā*.<sup>78</sup> Practicing praiseworthy *akhlaq* is emphasized in Islam to establish

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<sup>75</sup> Mustapha, N. A., Sham, F. M. & Mokhtar, A. I., "Program Dakwah di Institusi Pemantapan dan Perkaderan Akidah Malaysia (IPHAM) dalam Memantapkan Akidah Remaja," *Al-Hikmah* 11(2) (2019), 3–19.

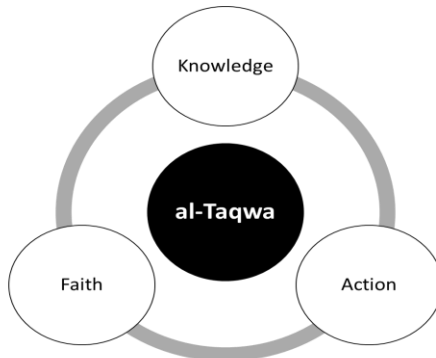
<sup>76</sup> Din, H., *Manusia dan Islam*, 59.

<sup>77</sup> Abdullah, W. A. A. et al, Aplikasi Kemahiran Berfikir Aras Tinggi (KBAT), 14-21.

<sup>78</sup> Zaidan, A. K., *Usul al-Da'wah: Islam & Dakwah*, 107.

and sustain positive relationships with others at the social level. Such ethical conduct begins within the family and extends to relationships with neighbors, the wider society, and governing authorities.<sup>79</sup>

Diagram 2: The Key Element of *Taqwā*



Source: Adapted by the researcher

It can be inferred that faith functions as a central source of inner strength for self-control among adolescents. According to Jasmi, Mustari and Chik, an excellent adolescent is characterized by firm faith in Allah SWT,<sup>80</sup> which motivates obedience to divine commands and restraint from prohibited actions as guided by the Qur’an and Hadith. Belief in the Day of Resurrection and the Hereafter further strengthens adolescents’ motivation to adhere to religious teachings, grounded in the conviction that all human actions will be accounted for

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<sup>79</sup> Al-Ghazali, M. *Peribadi Muslim*, trans. Osman Haji Khalid (Kuala Lumpur: Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia, 1997), 1–7; Hussin, Z., et al., “Pembangunan Akhlak dan Moral Masyarakat Lestari,” *Al-Hikmah* 7(2) (2015), 72-87.

<sup>80</sup> Jasmi, K. A., Mustari, M. I. & Chick, N. A. B., “Membina Remaja Cemerlang dengan Kerohanian,” in *Remaja Hebat Siri 1: Dasar Pembangunan Remaja Hebat*, ed. K. A. Jasmi (Johor Bahru: Penerbit UTM, 2017), 57–81.

before Allah SWT on the Day of Judgement, resulting in either reward or punishment.

Righteous practice, guided by the principles of the Qur’an and Hadith, plays a crucial role in strengthening adolescents’ self-regulation. Supported by faith and knowledge of what is permissible and prohibited, religious practices enable adolescents to regulate their behavior, pursue righteous actions, and avoid self-harm. The cultivation of noble moral values not only seeks the pleasure of Allah SWT but also safeguards adolescents’ well-being in both worldly life and the hereafter.<sup>81</sup>

Table 1 illustrates that Islamic ethical guidance operates simultaneously at the level of belief, regulation, and moral conduct, reinforcing self-control and self-regulation across multiple dimensions of adolescent behavior in the cyber environment.

Table 1: Islamic Ethical Guidance Related to Adolescent Behavior in the Cyber Environment

Domain		Guidance	Source
Self-control	‘ <i>Aqīdah</i>	Realize that Allah SWT knows everything that humans do, whether overtly or secretly.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Al-Qur’an, Surah al-Baqarah 2:216; Surah al-An’am 6:3; Surah al-Nahl 16:19.</li> </ul>
		Allah SWT will be rewarded for every deed in this world and the hereafter.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Al-Qur’an, Surah Yasin 36:65; Surah al-Inshiqaq 84:7-9; Surah al-Kahf 18:49.</li> </ul>

<sup>81</sup> Jasmi, K. A., Saleh@Masrom, S. F. M. & Razali, S. S., “Peranan Islam dalam Membentuk Peribadi Remaja Cemerlang,” in *Remaja Hebat Siri 2: Akhlak Dasar Pembangunan Remaja Muslim*, ed. K. A. Jasmi (Johor Bahru: Penerbit UTM, 2017), 1–18.

		God predetermined each person's destiny, so there is no need to compare oneself with others.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Al-Qur'an, Surah al-Ra'd 13:8</li> <li>● Hadith <i>Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī</i>, Kitāb al-Tawḥīd, Bāb Qawlih Ta'ala (وَلَقَدْ سَبَقَتْ كَلِمَتُنَا لِعِبَادِنَا (الْمُرْسَلِينَ)) Surah al-Saffat (37):171, No.6900.<sup>82</sup></li> </ul>
Self-regulation	<i>Sharī'ah</i>	Keep limits on relations between men and women.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Hadith <i>Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī</i>, Kitāb al-Nikah, Bāb lā Yakhluwanna Rajulun bi Imra'at illā ma'ah Dhū Maḥram wa al-Dukhūl 'alā al-Mughībah, No. 4832.<sup>83</sup></li> <li>● Hadith <i>Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī</i>, Kitāb al-Ḥajj, Bāb Ḥajji al-Nisā'i, No. 2391.<sup>84</sup></li> </ul>
		Investigate each news received.	● Al-Qur'an, Surah al-Hujurat 49:6.
		Do not make negative assumptions and	● Al-Qur'an, Surah al-Hujurat 49:12.

<sup>82</sup> Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, ed. Muḥammad 'Abd al-Qādir Aḥmad 'Aṭā, Kitāb al-Tawḥīd, Bāb Qawlih Ta'ālā: Wa Laqad Sabaqat Kalimatunā li-'Ibādinā al-Mursalīn (Cairo: Dār al-Taqwā li al-Turāth, 2001), no. 6900, 3:562.

<sup>83</sup> Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Kitāb al-Tawḥīd, Bāb Qawlih Ta'ālā: Wa Laqad Sabaqat Kalimatunā li-'Ibādinā al-Mursalīn, no. 4832, 3:44.

<sup>84</sup> Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Kitāb al-Nikāh, Bāb lā Yakhluwanna Rajulun bi Imra'at illā wa ma'ah Dhū Maḥram wa al-Dukhūl 'alā al-Mughībah, no. 2391, 1:446.

		spy on or backbite others.		
		Convey only transparent and trustworthy news.	● Al-Qur’an, Surah al-Baqarah 2:283.	
		Spread and convey only necessary information.	● Al-Qur’an, Surah al-Mu’minun (23):3.	
		Do not make stories about others (slander).	● Al-Qur’an, Surah al-Baqarah 2:191,217	
		Do not buy/ obtain stories, entertainment, or something from unclear or doubtful sources.	● Al-Qur’an, Surah Luqman 31:6	
		Avoid hacking, scamming, stealing information and data (phishing).	● Al-Qur’an, Surah al-Nisa’ 4:29; Surah al-Anfal 8:27; Surah al-Nur 24:27 ● Hadith <i>Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Kitāb al-Buyū’</i> , Bāb Man Yukhda’ fi al-Bay’, No. 3861. <sup>85</sup>	
	<i>Akhlāq</i>		Do not insult and speak bad words.	● Al-Qur’an, al-Nisa’ 4:418
			Always show the righteous side of matters.	● Hadith <i>Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, Kitāb al-Adāb</i> , Bāb Man Kāna Yu’min bi Allāh wa al-Yawm al-Ākhir falā

<sup>85</sup> Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Kitāb al-Buyū’, Bāb Man la Yakhda’ fi al-Bay’, no. 1533, 665.

		Yu’ dhi Jārah, no. 5559. <sup>86</sup>
	Do not be proud of worldly matters.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Al-Qur’an, Surah Hud 11:15-16; Surah Luqman 31:18.</li> </ul>
	Do righteous and protect the good name of parents and family.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Al-Qur’an, Surah al-Baqarah 2: 215; Surah al-Isra 17:23-24.</li> <li>● Hadith <i>Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim</i>, Kitāb al-Birr wa al-Ṣalāt wa al-Adāb, Bāb Birr al-Wālidayn, no. 6507.<sup>87</sup></li> </ul>
	Respect and safeguard the rights of fellow humans regardless of religion, race, or age.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Al-Qur’an, Surah <i>ar-Ra’d</i> 13:8.</li> <li>● Hadith <i>Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī</i>, Kitāb al-Īmān, Bāb Aiy al-Islām Afḍal, no. 10.<sup>88</sup></li> </ul>
	Do not be envious, jealous of, or hostile to others.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Al-Qur’an, Surah al-Qasas 28:77</li> <li>● Hadith <i>Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim</i>, Kitāb al-Bir wa al-Ṣolah, Bāb Tahrīm Zalim al-Muslim, no. 6541.<sup>89</sup></li> </ul>

Source: Adapted by the researcher

<sup>86</sup> Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Kitāb al-Adāb, Bāb Man Kāna Yu’min bi Allāh wa al-Yawm al-Ākhir falā Yu’ dhi Jārah, no. 5559, 3:219.

<sup>87</sup> Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Kitāb al-Birr wa al-Ṣilah wa al-Ādāb, Bāb Birr al-Wālidayn, no. 2548, 1118.

<sup>88</sup> Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Kitāb al-Īmān, Bāb Aiy al-Islām Afḍal, no. 11, 1:9.

<sup>89</sup> Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Kitāb al-Birr wa al-Ṣilah wa al-Ādāb, Bāb Tahrīm Zulm al-Muslim wa Khaḍliḥ wa Iḥtikhāriḥ wa Damih wa ‘Irdih wa Māliḥ, no. 2564, 1124.

## The Role of Parents in Building Piety and Regulating Internet Use Among Adolescents

In Islam, parents play a crucial role in cultivating adolescents' God-consciousness (*taqwā*).<sup>90</sup> Children are entrusted to their parents, who bear the responsibility of nurturing and educating them in accordance with Islamic teachings. As the individuals closest to their children from birth, parents possess both authority and influence in shaping adolescents' values and behavior. This relational proximity positions parents as the earliest mentors and primary role models in adolescents' moral and spiritual development.<sup>91</sup> The Prophet (PBUH) said in a hadith, meaning:

Every new-born child is born in a state of fitrah (natural disposition or true worship of Allah). Then his parents make him a Jew, Christian or Magian."<sup>92</sup>

According to Zaky, parents constitute the central pillar in ensuring that adolescents develop into physically and psychologically healthy adults. Effective nurturing plays a critical role in shaping adolescents' personality and character, thereby contributing to more positive developmental outcomes and a better future.<sup>93</sup>

Religion emphasizes the cultivation of piety within the adolescent self, beginning from early childhood. The values of piety can be nurtured at a young age through the

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<sup>90</sup> Othman, N. & Khairollah, S., "Exploring the Relationship Between Islamic Personality and Parenting Style," *International Journal of Islamic Thought* 4 (2013), 48–57; Agus, Z., "Konsep Pendidikan Islam bagi Remaja Menurut Zakiah Daradjat," *Raudhah Proud to be Professional: Jurnal Tarbiyah Islamiyah* 4 (1)(2019), 11–24.

<sup>91</sup> Jasmi, K. A. et al., "Pendidikan Awal Remaja," 37–56.

<sup>92</sup> Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Kitāb al-Janā'iz, Bāb mā Qīla fī Awlād al-Mushrikīn, (Riyadh: Darussalam, 1997), no. 1384, 1:331.

<sup>93</sup> Zaky, E. A., "Adolescence: A Crucial Transitional Stage in Human Life," *Journal of Child & Adolescent Behavior* 4(6) (2016), e115.

provision of a supportive environment that encourages moral and spiritual development, such as listening to Qur'anic recitation and engaging in the remembrance of Allah SWT (*dhikr*) while reflecting upon its meanings. In the Qur'an, Luqman's advice offers clear guidance for parents on instilling piety in their children. Luqman's counsel to his children highlights several key principles in nurturing piety and moral discipline.<sup>94</sup>

- 1) Instilling faith (*īmān*) in Allah SWT, alongside unwavering respect and obedience towards parents, regardless of circumstances.
- 2) Developing awareness of Allah's omniscience, recognizing that nothing escapes His knowledge or observation.
- 3) Emphasizing the establishment of *ṣalat* (prayer) as a fundamental means of communication between the servant and the Creator.
- 4) Cultivating social responsibility through the encouragement of righteous conduct and the discouragement of wrongdoing.
- 5) Promoting respect for others by avoiding arrogance, pride, and demeaning behavior.
- 6) Instilling refined moral character, including courtesy, moderation in conduct, humility in movement, and gentleness in speech.

In strengthening the values of *taqwā* in adolescents, parental role modelling is essential. Parents are therefore expected to exemplify *taqwā* through their daily conduct within the family. Such practices include performing congregational prayers, engaging in *tadarrus al-Qur'an* (reading the Qur'an by turns in a group), participating in *usrah* (small group religious discussion), exchanging greetings with *salām* and practicing forgiveness before sleeping and upon waking, sending *ṣalawāt* (blessings)

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<sup>94</sup> Surah Luqman 31:12-19.

upon the Prophet (PBUH) and holding regular *dhikr* (remembrance of Allah SWT) sessions with family members. The consistent cultivation of these practices fosters sustained religious engagement and enhances adolescents' appreciation of religious values.

Nevertheless, *taqwā* may be weakened when adolescents are immersed in environments that contradict Islamic principles. While religious knowledge and practice nurture inner *taqwā*, parental guidance and digital awareness are essential for monitoring adolescents' online engagement and identifying factors that may undermine their moral development, in line with the Islamic obligation to enjoin good and prevent wrongdoing.

Previous studies have shown that parents play an influential role in reducing problematic internet use among adolescents, particularly when an educational approach is adopted rather than punitive measures.<sup>95</sup> Vasaló and Escario found that adolescents' internet use can be effectively regulated when parents are aware of their children's activities, whereabouts, and social interactions.<sup>96</sup> The literature consistently recognises parents as the primary source of social influence in protecting adolescents from internet addiction.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> Esen, B. K. & Gündoğdu, M., "The Relationship Between Internet Addiction, Peer Pressure and Perceived Social Support Among Adolescents," *The International Journal of Educational Researchers* 2(1) (2010), 29–36; Keuhlen, K. D. et al., "Stop! Collaborate and Listen: A Content Analysis of Peer-Reviewed Articles Investigating Parenting Strategies for Managing Adolescent Internet Use," *Contemporary Family Therapy* 42 (2020), 163–174.

<sup>96</sup> Vasaló, L. V. & Escario, J. J., "Predictors of Excessive Internet Use Among Adolescents in Spain: The Relevance of the Relationship Between Parents and Their Children," *Computers in Human Behavior* 92 (2019), 344–351.

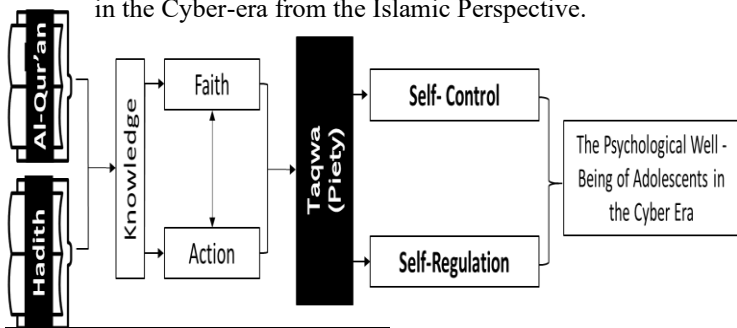
<sup>97</sup> Martins, M.V., "Adolescent Internet Addiction: Role of Parental Control and Adolescent Behaviours," *International Journal of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine* 7(3) (2020), 116–120;

Accordingly, in guiding and educating adolescents, religion emphasizes a wise and balanced approach, which includes gentle advice, positive communication, and the appropriate use of rewards and discipline.<sup>98</sup> Such an approach enhances adolescents’ receptiveness to guidance and increases their willingness to comply with parental direction

**Taqwā as a Mechanism for Psychological Well-Being**

Based on the literature review and conceptual analysis, this study proposes that *taqwā* functions as a core mechanism in strengthening adolescents’ psychological well-being in the cyber era. As illustrated in Figure 3, adolescent psychological development from an Islamic perspective is inseparable from the integration of knowledge (*‘ilm*), faith (*īmān*), and righteous practice (*‘amal*), which collectively shape the capacity for self-control and self-regulation. This integration provides an internal foundation that enables adolescents to evaluate, control, and direct their behavior ethically within a complex and challenging digital environment.

Diagram 3: Model of Adolescent Psychological Development in the Cyber-era from the Islamic Perspective.



Chemnad, K., “Is It Contagious? Does Parents’ Internet Addiction Impact Their Adolescents’ Internet Addiction?” *Social Science Computer Review* 41(5) (2023), 1691–1711.

<sup>98</sup> Zin, A. A.M., Siren, A. & Jalil, S. J. A., *Psikologi dalam Dakwah* (Kuala Lumpur: Universiti Malaya Press, 2020), 253–254.

In contrast to mainstream psychological approaches, which typically conceptualize self-control and self-regulation as cognitive skills, behavioral strategies, or outcomes of self-training, the model proposed in this study positions *taqwā* as an internal mechanism grounded in faith, God-consciousness, and accountability in the Hereafter. Within the Islamic framework, self-regulation is not merely the ability to control impulses or plan behavior but involves a continuous awareness of divine accountability.

Although previous studies have shown that self-control training, parental monitoring, and environmental regulation can reduce adolescents' risky behaviors, these approaches are limited in the cyber context. Under such conditions, reliance on external monitoring becomes fragile and insufficient. Therefore, this study argues that *taqwā* functions as a more effective internal mechanism that enables adolescents to regulate their behavior autonomously in digital spaces. Through God-consciousness, *taqwā* fosters ethical self-monitoring in digital behavior.

This discussion further emphasizes that the development of *taqwā* does not occur in isolation but requires a supportive environment, particularly through the role of parents. Parents function as external support agents who reinforce adolescents' internal mechanisms through role modelling, guidance, and prudent supervision. Within this framework, parental control is framed as a moral educational process rather than a restrictive practice.

From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to Islamic psychology by conceptualizing *taqwā* as a holistic self-regulatory construct encompassing cognitive, emotional, motivational, and spiritual dimensions. From a practical perspective, this conceptualization has implications for the development of

Islamic education grounded in digital literacy, parental guidance programs, and psychospiritual interventions for adolescents.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, the psychological challenges faced by adolescents in the cyber era represent a growing concern that requires serious and sustained attention. This study highlights that adolescents' vulnerability in the digital environment is closely linked to their capacity for self-control and self-regulation, both of which are essential for maintaining psychological well-being. From the perspective of Islamic psychology, this article conceptualized *taqwā* as an internalized source of inner strength that supports adolescents' self-control and self-regulation in navigating the demands of the cyber world. This study contributes to the existing literature by offering a conceptual integration between Islamic psychological constructs and contemporary cyber-behavioral challenges, particularly by framing *taqwā* as a core mechanism underlying self-regulation in digital contexts.

Beyond identifying these challenges, the study underscores the complementary role of parents as external agents who provide guidance, supervision, and a supportive environment to reinforce adolescents' moral character and psychological capacities. In terms of practical implications, the findings suggest the need for structured interventions that integrate religious values, particularly *taqwā*-based approaches, into digital literacy, parenting strategies, and adolescent development programs to enhance resilience against cyber-related risks. Taken together, the integration of *taqwā* within the adolescent self and proactive parental involvement form a foundational religious framework for addressing the psychological challenges of adolescents in the cyber era.

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