



Digital Detox Strategy for Schools and Families to Strengthen Students' Religious Character

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ABSTRACT

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The rapid development of digital technology has affected the social life and character formation of the younger generation, especially in students' religiosity. Excessive use of digital devices risks shifting spiritual values, lowering the quality of self-reflection, and reducing direct interaction. This research aims to develop and evaluate digital detox strategies that involve schools and families in strengthening students' religious character. The method used is qualitative research with a case study design at school. Data was collected through interviews, observations, and documentation. The results of the study show that collaboration between schools and families in limiting technology use and strengthening religious values has been effective in strengthening students' religious character, increasing focus on learning, and reducing dependence on digital technology. This research contributes to the development of a digital detox model that is not only restrictive but also educational and transformative. In practice, this study guides schools and families in designing technology management programs oriented towards strengthening religious character.

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INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of digital technology has brought significant changes to people's lives, including shifts in social interaction patterns and the character formation of the younger generation (Yıldız & Nur, 2024). The main point of this research lies in the importance of strengthening religious character amid increasingly uncontrolled (Grigore & Cobzeanu, 2025; Marita et al., 2025). The reason is that excessive use of digital devices has been shown to shift spiritual values, reduce direct interaction, and diminish the quality of students' self-reflection (Hasanuddin & Sukandar, 2026). Evidence shows that studies report an increase in gadget addiction in school-age children, which has an impact on

decreased self-control and social empathy (Fitriyani, 2024; Kar et al., 2025) In addition exposure to unfiltered digital content also contributes to the degradation of moral and religious values. The conclusion of this condition is the need for strategic interventions that not only limit the use of technology but also lead students to return to religious values in a balanced manner (Amirudin et al., 2025; Jenuri et al., 2025). Therefore the digital detox strategy is relevant as an approach that is not only restrictive but also educational and transformative in holistically building students' character (Mai et al., 2025; Nashit, 2025)

The main problem facing society today is the imbalance between the use of digital technology and the formation of students' character, especially in the aspect of religiosity (Sugianto, 2024; Utami, 2024). Many families and educational institutions lack a structured mechanism to manage technology use healthily. This causes students to spend excessive time in the digital world without adequate support (Ibrahim et al., 2025). As a result, worship quality declines, spiritual discipline weakens, and awareness of moral values declines. In addition, the lack of synergy between schools and families in supervising and guiding the use of technology exacerbates this condition (Buaya & Kolibu, 2024). The family environment often places responsibility on the school, while the school has limited control over student activities outside of study hours (Hilal et al., 2024; Li et al., 2025). This condition creates a gap that allows for systematic character degradation. Therefore an integrated approach is needed that actively involves both parties in building healthy digital habits and is oriented towards strengthening students' religious values.

The phenomenon that occurs in the field shows that students today are increasingly dependent on digital devices in their daily lives, both for academic and entertainment purposes (Ali et al., 2025; Giray et al., 2024). Observations in various schools indicate that the use of gadgets not only occurs outside class hours but also covertly during the learning process (Leek et al., 2026). In addition many students prefer spending time on social media rather than engaging in religious activities such as reading the scriptures, praying, or participating in religious activities in the school and family environments (Rahayu et al., 2025). On the other hand, parents tend to provide access to technology without adequate control as a form of compensation for the limited time they spend with their children (Bao et al., 2024; Tang et al., 2024). This causes a weak internalization of religious values in students' daily lives. In fact, some cases show a decrease in spiritual awareness and an increase in individualistic behavior. This phenomenon shows that digital technology not only affects behavior but also the mindset and values students embrace, so it requires a more systematic and integrated approach.

Previous research has extensively examined the impact of digital technology on students' psychological and social development. Several studies have shown that interventions that limit the time spent using gadgets can improve learning focus and mental well-being (Meng et al., 2025). In addition the concept of digital detox began to be introduced as a strategy to reduce dependence on technology. Other research also highlights the importance of character education in shaping positive student behavior, including through the integration of religious values in the curriculum (Purwaningsih & Ridha, 2024). However most research still focuses on a partial approach, either on technological aspects or on character education separately. In addition digital detox implementation is often individual and does not involve the broader social environment, such as family and school, at the same time. This shows that the approach used is still not comprehensive enough to address the complexity of the problems students face in the current digital era.

Research on strengthening religious character is generally conducted through formal educational approaches, such as value-based learning or religious activities in schools (Ismail, 2025). Meanwhile, studies of the role of the family in character formation often stand alone, unassociated with the use of digital technology (Evendi et al., 2025). The research gap that emerged was the lack of an integrative model combining digital detox strategies with strengthening religious character through collaboration between schools and families. In addition most studies have not evaluated the effectiveness of these strategies holistically, including behavior, spirituality, and social environmental involvement (Surbakti et al., 2024). This limitation is important to overcome because character building cannot be done in part but requires a comprehensive, sustainable approach. Therefore, this research aims to fill this gap by developing and evaluating more comprehensive and contextually relevant strategies.

The novelty of this research lies in developing a digital detox strategy that not only focuses on reducing technology use but also strengthens students' religious character through a collaborative approach between school and family. This approach integrates aspects of digital control, habituation of religious values, and the active involvement of parents and teachers in the process of character building. The state of the art of this study is a holistic intervention model that simultaneously combines the dimensions of technology, education, and the social environment. Thus, the strategies developed are not only preventive but also constructive in fostering positive student habits. In addition this study emphasizes indicator-based evaluation, so that the effectiveness of strategies can be analyzed empirically. This is important to ensure that the interventions carried out actually have an impact on behavior change and the improvement of students' spiritual qualities.

Based on this background, this study seeks to address how to develop and evaluate a digital detox strategy involving schools and families to strengthen students' holistic religious character. The main argument put forward is that strengthening religious character cannot be achieved solely through technological restrictions but requires integrating the control of digital use with the habituation of spiritual values in daily life. In addition the active involvement of schools and families is believed to create an environment conducive to the internalization of religious values. Thus, the strategies developed are expected to address the challenges of the complex digital era and provide applicable, sustainable solutions. This approach also has the potential to serve as a replicable model across various educational contexts.

This research is expected to make a significant contribution both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, this study enriches the study of technology integration, character education, and the role of the social environment in shaping students' religious character. In practice, the results of this research can serve as a reference for schools and families in designing more effective strategies for managing technology use that strengthen religious values. In addition, this research also provides policy recommendations for stakeholders in the education sector to develop programs that support the formation of students' character in the digital era. Thus, this research is not only relevant in the academic context but also has real implications in improving the quality of education and forming a generation with strong and religious character.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a qualitative research design with a case study type. The case study was chosen because it aims to develop and evaluate digital detox strategies that involve schools and families to strengthen students' religious character. The case study allowed researchers to explore in greater depth how the strategy is applied in real life within a single school, focusing on the dynamics among the school, family, and students. This approach allows for a deeper understanding of the influence of digital detox on students' religious character in a limited but focused environment.

The research was conducted at SMP 2 Tiworo Selatan, a school located in an area relatively far from the city center, which faces its own challenges in terms of access to technology and the digital influence on students. The reason for choosing this location is to understand the conditions of students who may be more exposed to digital devices, as well as the importance of family and school in shaping students' religious character. This location is also considered representative of the conditions of schools in rural areas with diverse social backgrounds, which is particularly relevant to the study of digital detox and religious character.

This study will use several data collection techniques to obtain a comprehensive picture of the implementation of digital detox strategies and their impact on students' religious character. The first technique was in-depth interviews with 12 informants, including principals, teachers, parents, and several students. The purpose of this interview is to gain an in-depth, diverse perspective on the application of digital detox strategies and their influence on students' religious character development. In addition participatory observations will be conducted, with researchers directly involved in daily school activities, including the implementation of digital detox programs and students' interactions with their digital devices. This observation is important for obtaining more contextual data and understanding the dynamics that occur at school and at home. The third technique is documentation, in which the researcher will analyze related documents, such as school policies on technology use, digital detox programs, and records of activities relevant to the formation of students' religious character.

Tabel 1. Informan Penelitian

Informant	Education		Gender		Amount
	S1	S2	P	L	
Principal	1	-	-	1	1
Teachers	1	1	-	2	2
Guardian of Pupils	2	2	3	1	4
Students	-	-	4	1	5

To analyze the collected data, the researcher will perform several structured steps. Data condensation will involve selecting and consolidating relevant data from interviews, observations, and documentation. The main focus of this step is on information on the implementation of digital detox and its impact on students' religious character. Furthermore, data reduction will involve sorting, organizing, and categorizing data into themes aligned with the research focus, such as the influence of digital detox on religious behavior, parental involvement, and the role of schools. The reduced data will be presented in the form of data displays, such as tables, diagrams, or narratives, to facilitate further understanding and analysis. Finally, data verification will be carried out through source triangulation, combining interview, observation, and documentation results to ensure data validity and consistency, so that the results obtained can be trusted and reflect the real conditions.

To ensure the validity of the data in this study, the researcher will use several data checking techniques. Source triangulation will be used by collecting data from various sources, such as interviews with teachers, parents, and students, as well as observation and documentation. This aims to assess whether the data obtained are consistent. Furthermore, member checking will be carried out by rechecking the interview results with the resource persons to ensure the accuracy and suitability of the information obtained in line with their understanding. An audit trail will also be implemented, recording every step taken during the study, including how the data is collected and analyzed, to provide transparency and allow others to follow and verify the processes carried out. Finally, consistent conclusions will be drawn by examining the results to ensure they are based on valid, accountable data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Increased Involvement of Parents and Teachers in the Formation of Students' Religious Character

Increased involvement of parents and teachers in shaping students' religious character involves both parties actively guiding and supporting students in internalizing religious values. This includes communication between parents and teachers to plan, supervise, and direct students in carrying out activities that support the formation of religious character, such as carrying out worship well, attending recitation, and practicing moral values in daily life. In the field, this involvement manifests in activities carried out jointly between schools and families, such as religious learning with parents, religious guidance at home, and supervision of technology use at home and at school.

In an interview with the Principal, he stated, "We strive to continue to communicate with parents in every activity related to the religious character of students. For example, we hold regular meetings with parents to discuss students' spiritual development, as well as guide how they can accompany their children at home." These interviews show that the school is committed to actively involving parents, not only in academic matters but also in religious character formation. In addition, the school guides parents on instilling religious values in their children at home.

The parent of one of the students said, "I feel more empowered by the guidance from the school on how to accompany my child so that they are not negatively affected by technology. We also often discuss the importance of maintaining a balance between using technology and time for worship or religious activities." These interviews indicate that parents feel more engaged and more aware of their role in guiding their children toward the formation of religious character. Parents are beginning to realize the importance of

collaborating with schools to ensure their children are not only academically intelligent but also spiritually and religiously strong.



Figure 1. Parental assistance in learning the Qur'an at home

The increased involvement of parents and teachers in shaping students' religious character is reflected in both images, which show direct support for religious learning activities in both the family environment and a more structured educational context. The picture above shows parents or family members guiding children to read the Qur'an at home as a means of internalizing religious values through example, worship habits, and personal supervision. The activity emphasized that the formation of students' religious character cannot be done in part, but requires continuous synergy between family and school through communication, mentoring, and the strengthening of spiritual and moral values in daily life. Thus, collaboration between parents and teachers is an important factor in supporting students not only in understanding religious teachings cognitively, but also in living and practicing them in real life.

Based on interviews and observations, it can be concluded that parents' and teachers' involvement in shaping students' religious character is going quite well. There is increased awareness among parents and teachers of the importance of collaboration in guiding students. Parents are becoming more active in guiding their children, both in terms of wise use of technology and in religious activities at home. In addition, schools play an important role in providing guidance to parents and organizing activities that involve both parties, such as joint prayer, which offer opportunities for parents and students to share experiences and deepen their understanding of the importance of religious values in daily life.

Based on the available data, the pattern observed is an increase in communication and in the involvement of parents and teachers in fostering students' religious character. There is an intense collaborative effort between the two parties to ensure that students are not only academically formed, but also have a strong religious character. In this pattern, teachers and parents alike play active roles in guiding students through activities that combine religious values with restrictions on technology use. This shows that a single party cannot form

students' religious character; it requires integrated cooperation between the school and the family.

Reduced Reliance on Digital Technology and Increased Student Focus on Learning

Reducing reliance on digital technology in the field involves limiting excessive use of digital devices, particularly mobile phones and social media, to improve the quality of time spent on religious learning and activities. On the other hand, increased student focus on learning is related to students' ability to concentrate more during the teaching and learning process, without the distraction of technology, thereby maximizing academic achievement and deepening understanding of subject matter. The implementation of the digital detox strategy aims to provide a balance between the use of technology and the need to develop critical thinking skills and a deep understanding of learning.

In an interview with the Principal, he stated, "We have limited the use of mobile phones in the classroom, and we advise students to use technology only at certain times, such as during lessons that require online research. In this way, we hope that students can be more focused in their studies and not be distracted by social media." This interview revealed that schools have taken firm steps to limit the use of unnecessary digital devices, aiming to help students focus more on learning. These restrictions are not only applied in the classroom but also encompass broader policies on device use in the school environment.

One of the students revealed, "At first I found it difficult to reduce my cell phone use, but after being directed by my teachers and parents, I began to be able to limit my cell phone use to only studying and other important activities. I feel more focused while studying, and my grades are also starting to improve." This interview shows that students have experienced positive changes after the implementation of restrictions on technology use. Siti admits that although it was difficult at first, with the guidance and support from the school and parents, she was able to reduce her dependence on digital devices and focus more on learning activities.



Figure 2. Religious learning with digital technology.

The image shows the implementation of religious learning activities in a classical setting, with many students, where a speaker delivers the material in front of the class using a presentation medium, while the students sit in an orderly manner and pay close attention. This condition reflects efforts to reduce dependence on digital technology, as shown by the lack of use of personal devices such as mobile phones during activities, thereby preventing students' attention from being distracted by social media or other digital distractions. Learning that takes place directly, centered on interaction between the presenter and students, creates a conducive learning environment, increases concentration, and encourages students' active involvement in understanding the material presented. In addition, schools' strategies to restrict the use of digital technology help improve students' focus, enabling them to absorb learning materials, especially those related to religious values, more in-depth and effectively.

Based on field observations, the researcher noted significant behavioral changes among students. During the learning process, students check their phones less often and focus more on the subject matter delivered by the teacher. In addition, there is increased student participation in class discussions and activities that involve direct interaction with peers and teachers. The researchers also noted that outside class hours, some students prefer to participate in extracurricular activities that develop their religious character, such as attending recitations and group discussions on moral values.

Based on interviews and observations, it can be concluded that reducing dependence on digital technology and increasing students' focus on learning have a positive impact. Restrictions on mobile phone use in the classroom and guidance from parents and teachers make students more focused on learning activities, as evidenced by increased active participation and academic achievement. It also fosters the student's self-development in social skills and discipline. Although students initially find it difficult, with constant support, they can reduce their dependence on technology and make better use of their time for more productive things.

Strengthening Religious Values Through Collaborative Digital Detox Program between School and Family

Strengthening religious values through a collaborative digital detox program between school and family refers to the efforts made by both parties (school and family) to work together in guiding students to focus more on strengthening religious character. This is done by combining restrictions on the use of unnecessary digital devices with activities involving religious values, both

at school and at home. In the field, this is reflected in joint programs between schools and families, such as joint prayers, religious discussions, and other activities that encourage students to practice religious values actively. The program aims to create an environment that supports students in maintaining a balance between technology use and the strengthening of their religious character.

In an interview with a religious teacher, he said, "We often invite parents to cooperate in religious activities at school, such as joint recitation and joint prayer. We also ask parents to assist their children in limiting the use of technology, especially at night, so that their time can be more focused on worship or other religious activities." These interviews show that schools play an important role in creating programs that engage parents. Through a collaborative program, students not only receive religious instruction in school but also receive support from parents at home to strengthen their religious values. Parental involvement is an important element in strengthening the internalization of religious values.

One of the parents of the students said, "We were given guidance by the school on how to accompany the children in terms of technology. We try to restrict mobile phone use and replace it with religious activities such as tadarus or joint prayer. This really helps my son to be more focused and get to know religion better." These interviews reveal that parents feel empowered by schools to guide their children in building religious habits. Parents not only impose restrictions on technology use but also replace it with activities rooted in religious values that can strengthen understanding and appreciation of religious teachings.

Based on field observations, the researcher noted that there were routine activities involving parents and students in school religious programs. Every weekend, a joint recitation is held, which is attended by students and parents. During the event, students and parents together participate in religious studies that discuss various moral and religious values. Outside of school activities, many students also engage in religious activities at home, such as tadarus Al-Qur'an, alongside their parents. This shows that there is a synergy between the school and the family in strengthening students' religious values. In observation, it was also seen that students became more focused in participating in these activities, thereby strengthening their religious character.

Based on interviews and observations, it can be concluded that strengthening religious values through digital detox programs that involve collaboration between schools and families has a positive impact on students. Schools and families work together to guide students in living a balanced religious life by limiting technology use and replacing it with religious activities

that reinforce religious character. The active involvement of parents in these activities plays a significant role in helping students focus more on religious values and strengthening their spiritual discipline.

The data above show close cooperation between schools and families to strengthen students' religious values. Religious activities held jointly between parents and students, both at school and at home, create an environment that supports the better internalization of religious values. In this pattern, there is a balanced effort to restrict the use of technology and increase religious activities, which ultimately helps students focus more on developing their religious character. These collaborations have proven effective in fostering positive habits that not only strengthen students' religious character but also increase their active participation in religious life.

Table 2. Strengthening Religious Values Through Digital Detox Program

Informant Position	Interview Excerpts	Indicator
Principal	"We hold regular meetings with parents to discuss how they can be more involved in strengthening students' religious character."	Direction and guidance given to parents in accompanying students
Teacher	"We often invite parents to cooperate in religious activities at school, such as joint recitation and joint prayer."	Involvement of teachers and parents in joint religious activities
Parents	"We are trying to restrict the use of mobile phones and replace them with religious activities such as tadarus or joint prayers."	Parental involvement in guiding children through religious activities

Based on the table above, it can be seen that collaboration between schools and parents in guiding students to reinforce religious values shows an effective pattern in improving students' religious discipline and understanding. Religious teachers play an active role in involving parents in school religious activities. In contrast, parents actively guide their children by replacing time spent on technology with religious activities such as tadarus and prayer together. The pattern that emerged showed that, with intense cooperation between the two parties, students became more focused on carrying out religious activities and internalized religious values more strongly. It also fosters positive habits that directly strengthen students' religious character.

Discussion

This research reveals that strengthening students' religious character can be done through a digital detox program that involves collaboration between schools and families. These findings align with previous studies showing that restricting the use of digital technology can help increase students' focus on learning and strengthen their religious character (Adeoye et al., 2025). For example, research by Sowmya et al. (2025) indicates that excessive technology

use can impair concentration and degrade the quality of interpersonal relationships (Sowmya et al., 2025). However what distinguishes this research is the collaborative approach that involves both parties, namely the school and the family, in shaping the religious character of students. This digital detoxification program, involving both parties, not only limits technology use but also introduces activities to foster students' religious character. This topic has not been widely studied in the literature (Hoang et al., 2026).

The involvement of parents in guiding students' religious character found in this study is also consistent with research by Wang et al. (2024), which shows that parental participation in their children's education has a positive impact on the formation of moral and religious character (Chen et al., 2024). However, this study adds insight by showing that collaboration between parents and schools in limiting technology use, as well as joint activities such as joint prayer and *tadarus*, has a more significant impact on strengthening students' religious character. This highlights the importance of synergy between the two parties in creating an environment that supports the development of better religious character.

This study enriches the literature on integrating character education, technology, and the role of the family. Previously, many studies examined the impact of restricting technology use separately from character education, as Selwyn (2024) found (Capraro et al., 2024). This research, on the other hand, shows that approaches that combine technology management with the formation of religious character can provide more holistic outcomes and have a greater impact on students (Capraro et al., 2024). This approach also opens the door to developing more integrated theories of the relationships among character education, technology, and family, which have been discussed separately.

In practice the findings of this study provide highly relevant recommendations for education policy, especially for addressing the challenges posed by the growing use of digital technology among students. Restrictions on the use of digital devices implemented in schools, accompanied by guidance for parents, can serve as a model for other schools seeking to strengthen students' religious character (Rochim & Khayati, 2022). Another practical implication is the importance of more intense communication between schools and families in designing programs that support the development of students' religious character. For example, schools could hold more parent-involved activities, such as joint study or religious guidance, to offset the use of technology at home.

While these findings support the existing literature, there are still implementation challenges that need to be addressed. Reducing dependence on digital technology is not always easy, especially given the growing role of technology in students' daily lives. Therefore, the success of the digital detox

program depends heavily on the active involvement of parents and schools in consistently accompanying students. This research emphasizes the need for a more structured and sustainable approach to ensure that strengthening religious character through digital detox programs can be carried out effectively in both school and family contexts.

CONCLUSION

The most important finding of this study is that strengthening students' religious character can be effectively achieved through digital detox strategies involving collaboration between schools and families. This program not only limits excessive technology use but also creates a supportive environment for character formation through joint activities between both parties. The study highlights the importance of synergy between family and school in guiding students to remain focused on developing religious values amid rapid technological advancement in daily life. Furthermore, this research contributes significantly to the fields of character education, technology, and family involvement in education by introducing an integrated digital detox model that combines technological limitations with religious character strengthening, an approach that has rarely been explored in previous studies. However, the study has several limitations, including a limited sample size, a short research period that restricts observation of long-term impacts, and the focus on only one school with specific characteristics. Therefore, future studies are recommended to involve broader samples, include schools with diverse characteristics, and further examine the long-term effects of digital detox programs on students' religious character, social development, and the potential role of technology in supporting sustainable character education.

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