

# Digital Parenting to Protect Children from Internet Addiction at Muhammadiyah Elementary School Klopogodo

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## ARTICLE INFO

### Article history

Received : Jan, 2024

Revised : Mar, 2024

Accepted : Mar, 2024

### Keywords

Protection;

Internet Addiction;

Digital Parenting;

## ABSTRACT

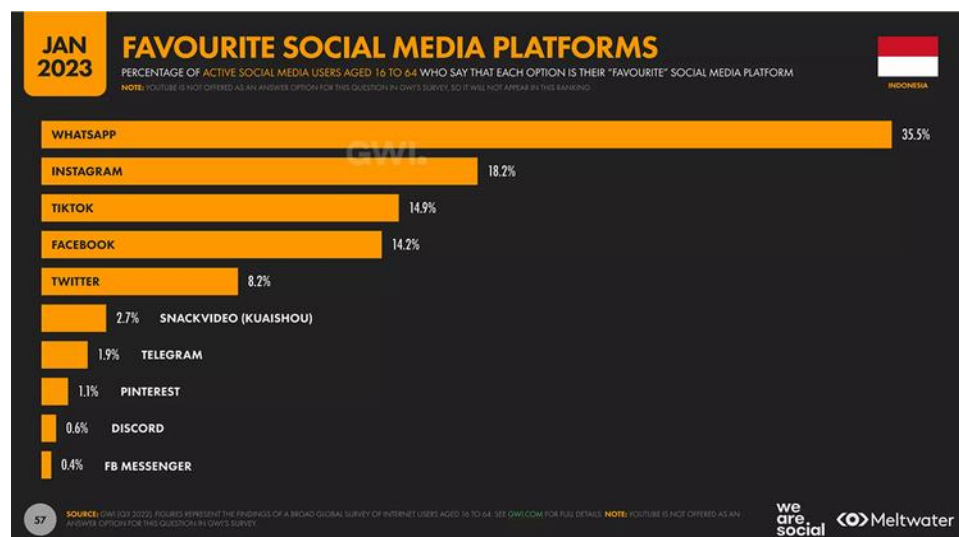
*Technology is an incredibly useful breakthrough in helping us with our daily activities, and one of them is the internet. The Internet is a network system that covers the entire world through telecommunication channels such as telephone, radio links, satellites, and so on. Indeed, the Internet provides significant benefits for education, research, business, and various aspects of life. However, behind these great benefits, the internet also has negative aspects. One of the negative impacts often associated with the internet is addiction or internet addiction. Internet addiction is a syndrome characterized by spending a considerable amount of time using the internet and being unable to control its usage when online. The side effects include anxiety, depression, declining physical health, declining mental health, and even disruption of daily activities. Internet addiction can be experienced by anyone and any institution, including Muhammadiyah Elementary School in Klopogodo, Gombong District, Kebumen. Several efforts can be made to reduce the negative impact and protect children from internet addiction, one of which is using the digital parenting method. Digital parenting is a method used to protect children from internet addiction by providing clear boundaries regarding what is allowed and what is not allowed when using digital devices and the internet. Digital parenting implemented at Muhammadiyah Elementary School in Klopogodo has had a significant positive impact. Teachers have felt the benefits of digital parenting, as it has made children more obedient in using their phones. Limiting phone usage, restricting applications, and controlling access to certain content has greatly helped parents in parenting.*

## A. Introduction

Technology is created to simplify human life in accomplishing tasks. (Siregar & Nasution, 2020) One of the technologies that facilitate human life and is used daily is information technology. Information technology assists us in processing, analyzing, and accessing relevant information quickly, clearly, and accurately. Information technology is also used by all sectors, including government, private, and even individuals.

Essentially, information technology is a tool to realize an intelligent and advanced nation. One type of information technology utilized in daily life is the internet. The Internet is a vast network consisting of millions of interconnected computer devices exchanging information through specific protocols. (Setiyani, 2010) It encompasses the entire world through telecommunication channels such as telephone, radio links, satellites, and others.

According to a report released by We Are Social in 2023 regarding internet users' app usage in Indonesia aged between 16 and 64 years old, the most used application is WhatsApp, used by 92.1 percent of people in Indonesia. Instagram ranks second with a percentage of 86.5 percent. Here is the complete list of the top 15 most used social media platforms by internet users in Indonesia aged 16 to 64 years old:



**Figure 1.** Graph of the most popular applications in Indonesia

Internet indeed provides significant benefits for education, research, business, and other aspects of life. Therefore, we should encourage children and teenagers to use the Internet as a tool to help improve education, increase knowledge, and expand opportunities and empowerment to achieve a better quality of life. The advancement of information and communication technology should also be utilized for the welfare of society. However, behind the benefits of the Internet for education and its usefulness for society, the Internet itself can be addictive for its users. Concerning the education of children and teenagers, the digital era offers various opportunities for convenience, but the magnitude of threats cannot be overlooked.

With the abundance of information available on the internet, teenagers will exhibit their natural curiosity as teenagers are always interested in learning new things, but sometimes they are unaware of the risks that may arise. The internet can also influence the behavior of children, as they see what is on the internet.

The negative impact that occurs after teenagers become acquainted with and have unrestricted access to the internet is a decrease in social interaction because they are too engrossed in using the internet, which makes them stay indoors too often, even just in their rooms, so they rarely interact socially with others and engage in activities outside the home, thus their social level will likely decline as they no longer engage in social activities as before. The negative impact of the internet is also evident in the manners of teenagers, where they often disregard the words of their parents or people talking to them, and even because they are too engrossed in using their phones, and playing on the internet, they do not respond to greetings from people they meet on the street.

In addition to the above-mentioned negative impacts, there is another negative impact of the internet that often occurs, namely addiction or internet addiction. Internet addiction can have significant side effects on the lives of children experiencing it. These side effects include anxiety, depression, deterioration of physical health, deterioration of mental health, and even disruption of daily activities. The characteristics of children who are affected by Internet addiction include: reduced focus, becoming more emotional, difficulty making decisions, difficulty communicating with others, difficulty expressing emotions, low fighting spirit, antisocial behavior, and so on.

Besides all the above-mentioned, there is one good method that can be used to protect children from internet addiction, namely by using the digital parenting method. Digital parenting is a method

used to protect children from internet addiction by providing clear boundaries to children regarding what is allowed and what is not allowed when using digital devices and the internet.

Internet addiction is also complained about or experienced in the education world, especially at MI Muhammadiyah Klopogodo. At MI Muhammadiyah Klopogodo, there is a phenomenon of many students reported by their parents who have been using gadgets too much, whether it is for playing online games, watching videos, or surfing the internet. With the numerous complaints from parents about children who are addicted to the Internet, there needs to be a program to address this issue. One program that can address the problem of internet addiction is by using the digital parenting method described above.

## **B. Method**

The method used in this community service program is to utilize socialization and counseling approaches tailored to the conditions of the students, parents, teachers, and educators at MI Muhammadiyah Klopogodo. The method employed involves utilizing experience sharing and mentoring. There are several stages to be carried out in the implementation of the community service program, including:

### **1. Observation and problem identification stage**

The first stage is direct observation at the location where the community service is held, namely at MI Muhammadiyah Klopogodo. During this observation, problem identification is conducted by interviewing individuals from MI Muhammadiyah Klopogodo, including the caregivers of the Madrasah, Madrasah teachers, and students enrolled in MI Muhammadiyah Klopogodo.

### **2. Handling stage**

After completing the first stage and obtaining a comprehensive overview of the community service location, the next stage is the handling stage. This stage is crucial as it involves efforts to provide understanding, enlightenment, and education about internet addiction to students, parents, teachers, and educators at MI Muhammadiyah Klopogodo. Tips are also provided in this stage on how to control the negative impacts of internet addiction. Understanding is disseminated through socialization at MI Muhammadiyah Klopogodo.

### **3. Activity evaluation stage**

The third stage involves evaluating all the efforts made in this community service program. Through this evaluation, it is hoped that areas that are lacking and need improvement will be identified. Additionally, the evaluation stage can also indicate which aspects are already good and can be further developed. The aim is for this program to be beneficial to parents when dealing with issues related to internet addiction.

## **C. Results and Discussion**

### **Internet Addiction**

Internet addiction is a syndrome characterized by spending a significant amount of time using the internet and being unable to control its use while online (Young, 1996). The reason why teenagers are more likely to use the Internet is that they feel more liberated from parental supervision or pressure (Prensky, 2001). Additionally, the Internet serves as the primary means of communication for teenagers to interact with each other. However, unrestricted internet use can lead to negative consequences for its users. The negative consequences include decreased interest, a preference for escaping reality into the virtual world, and the development of addiction (Berdibayeva et al., 2016). Internet addiction behavior has consequences that can be more severe than drug addiction (Hendriyana,

2023). When someone experiences internet addiction, they may experience several negative consequences, such as:

1. Drastic mood or emotional changes
2. Easily becoming angry and feeling quick boredom
3. Disruption of sleep patterns and poor sleep quality
4. Symptoms of depression and excessive anxiety, increasing the risk of suicide
5. Physical health problems leading to a decline in overall health
6. Losing friends in the real world due to a lack of real social interaction
7. Increased likelihood of conflicts within the family
8. Damaging productivity at work

Internet addiction is the attachment of an individual to a habit from which they cannot break free (Nurhidayah et al., 2021). Internet addiction is influenced by internal and external factors (Fernandes et al., 2021). Factors contributing to internet addiction include loneliness experienced by individuals, low self-control, varying personalities, individuals with family problems, individuals experiencing academic stress, and peer influence.

#### **Internet addiction at MI Muhammadiyah Klopogodo**

MI Muhammadiyah Klopogodo is one of the educational institutions with MI level in Klopogodo, Kec. Gombong, Kab. Kebumen, Central Java. In carrying out its activities, MI Muhammadiyah Klopogodo operates under the auspices of the Ministry of Religious Affairs. MI Muhammadiyah Klopogodo, better known as Sekolah Alam MI Muhammadiyah Klopogodo, is an Islamic school that provides excellent educational services for all its students.

Internet addiction is also experienced by students at MI Muhammadiyah Klopogodo. Students there are indicated to be addicted to the internet. Initial surveys found that students spend too much time staring at their phone screens each day. The students are in a worrying stage because they are already deeply addicted. This statement is reinforced by the admission of several parents who informed teachers that their children are staring at their phone screens from after school until bedtime. Another admission from parents is that their children do not obey their parents' instructions. Their children tend to be defiant and prioritize playing with their phones. What is more surprising is that parents find their children saying vulgar words or cursing while playing with their phones. These profanities occur when they are playing online games. Therefore, dedication to internet addiction is very much needed at MI Muhammadiyah Klopogodo. The dedication carried out by Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta in collaboration with MI Muhammadiyah Klopogodo provides education to teachers about parenting and digital parenting.

Related to the learning process, the digital generation tends to use technology to obtain the desired information. Individual learning abilities are faster because they receive information quickly at their fingertips. (Khoirroni et al., 2023) The habit of frequently utilizing technology makes parents worried and consider various ways to address this issue. Generally, parents should accompany their children in using gadgets. (Nurhidayah et al., 2021) However, if they only accompany their children without doing more than that, it will not have much impact on addiction. There is a need for a method beyond just accompanying. One method that can be tried is by using the digital parenting method. Digital parenting or digital caregiving provides clear boundaries to children about what is allowed and what is not allowed when using digital devices and internet access. Digital parenting means using digital technology as a tool for child-rearing using digital media. (Rodhiya, 2020)

In implementing the digital parenting method, the focus of parents is on controlling. Parents must feel challenged by the current situation where their children are adept at using devices independently and are very difficult to supervise at all times. Mastering the technology used at present

will also be a challenge for parents. However, as parents, they must be willing to learn so that the digital parenting method can work well.

Guidance and supervision of parents in the digital era are called digital parenting. Digital parenting or digital caregiving is a parenting strategy related to rules for using digital devices, both online and offline, aimed at protecting children's safety from the threat of internet addiction.

The education and socialization conducted at MI Muhammadiyah Klopogodo focuses on parenting and digital parenting. The difference between regular parenting and digital parenting lies in the perspective of these two approaches. Digital parenting focuses more on supervision and control of children in accessing the internet or their phones. Meanwhile, parenting in general is overseeing and regulating children's behavior in daily life. Below are the documentation of the socialization and education on digital parenting:



**Figure 2.** Education and Socialization at MI Muhammadiyah Klopogodo





**Figure 3.** Education and Socialization at MI Muhammadiyah Klopogodo



**Figure 4.** Participants of education and socialization at MI Muhammadiyah Klopogodo

One of the applications used to assist us in implementing digital parenting is Google Family Link. Google Family Link is an application developed by Google to help families monitor and control their children's activities in real time. This application aims to limit children's activities so they do not spend too much time operating their phones or accessing potentially harmful apps or websites. The application can also track the location of children when parents are away from them. In essence, the

focus of this application is to enable parents to control their children's phone usage and internet browsing.



**Figure 5.** Family link application

The impact felt by teachers after implementing digital parenting using the Google Family Link application is quite diverse. The most dominant impact is that they experience tremendous benefits from this application. They can monitor and control their children in a more structured manner. The most noticeable implementation is when they set schedules for their children's phone usage. Their children are given specific times to access their phones each day. When the allotted time is up, the children's phones will automatically lock. This greatly facilitates parents in monitoring their children with specific screen time limits.

With the use of the Google Family Link application, parents can also control which apps can and cannot be accessed by their children. This will protect children from harmful apps or those containing elements of pornography and violence. With the Google Family Link application, parents can monitor their children's activities. With strict supervision and control from parents, this digital parenting approach can be successful.

#### **D. Conclusion**

Based on the results of the community service conducted at MI Muhammadiyah Klopogodo, Gombong District, Kebumen Regency regarding digital parenting, several conclusions can be drawn, including:

1. The education and socialization conducted at MI Muhammadiyah Klopogodo received a warm reception and very positive appreciation from the MI Muhammadiyah Klopogodo authorities. The MI Muhammadiyah Klopogodo authorities are very pleased with their school's education and socialization program on digital parenting. Digital parenting is a new knowledge for them, which is a development of the parenting knowledge they already have. Digital parenting also opens up new insights and knowledge for the teachers at MI Muhammadiyah Klopogodo, in addition to parenting knowledge itself.
2. The community service program conducted at MI Muhammadiyah Klopogodo helps the school authorities in monitoring and controlling students or children in using their phones. This monitoring and control aim to prevent and avoid students or children from internet addiction.
3. The technology used in community service at MI Muhammadiyah Klopogodo is the Google Family Link application. This application can help teachers or parents to monitor and limit their children in using phones. The progress of using the Google Family Link application is felt by the

teachers who have tried the application. They can limit the time children spend playing with phones and monitor their activities while using phones.

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