Preventing Social Deviance through Religious Education and Literacy in West Nusa Tenggara

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Abstract:

This study investigates the role of Islamic Education (IE) in fostering family resilience in West Nusa Tenggara (NTB), where rapid social transformations challenge traditional moral frameworks. The research aims to explore how religious education and literacy serve as preventive measures against social deviant behavior. The study finds that IE, operationalized through Pesantren, Madrasah, and Majlis Taklim, integrates key theological values such as tawakkul, sabr, and syukr into families' daily lives, enhancing emotional regulation, coping capacity, and crisis management. Furthermore, religious literacy strengthens these effects by enabling individuals to apply moral principles in diverse social contexts. The research employs a qualitative approach with a normative-descriptive design, utilizing literature review and document analysis. The study contributes to expanding Family Resilience Theory (FRT) and Social Capital Theory (SCT) by incorporating a socio-theological perspective, highlighting the importance of institutional collaboration among families, schools, and religious organizations. The findings emphasize the need for educational reforms and suggest that integrating religious literacy into curricula can foster long-term moral resilience and social harmony.

Keywords: Islamic Education, Family Resilience, Religious Literacy, Social Deviance

Abstrak:

Penelitian ini menyelidiki peran Pendidikan Islam (IP) dalam menumbuhkan ketahanan keluarga di Nusa Tenggara Barat (NTB), di mana transformasi sosial yang cepat menantang kerangka moral tradisional. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi bagaimana pendidikan agama dan literasi agama berfungsi sebagai langkah pencegahan terhadap perilaku menyimpang sosial. Studi ini menemukan bahwa IP, yang dioperasionalkan melalui Pesantren, Madrasah, dan Majlis Taklim, mengintegrasikan nilai-nilai teologis utama seperti tawakkul, sabr, dan syukr ke dalam kehidupan sehari-hari keluarga, meningkatkan regulasi emosi, kapasitas mengatasi masalah, dan manajemen krisis. Lebih lanjut, literasi agama memperkuat efek ini dengan memungkinkan individu untuk menerapkan prinsip-prinsip moral dalam berbagai konteks sosial. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain normatif-deskriptif, memanfaatkan tinjauan pustaka dan analisis dokumen. Studi ini berkontribusi pada perluasan Teori Ketahanan Keluarga (Family Resilience Theory/FRT) dan Teori Modal Sosial (Social Capital Theory/SCT) dengan memasukkan

perspektif sosio-teologis, menyoroti pentingnya kolaborasi kelembagaan antara keluarga, sekolah, dan organisasi keagamaan. Temuan ini menekankan perlunya reformasi pendidikan dan menunjukkan bahwa mengintegrasikan literasi keagamaan ke dalam kurikulum dapat menumbuhkan ketahanan moral jangka panjang dan harmoni sosial.

Kata kunci: Pendidikan Islam, Ketahanan Keluarga, Literasi Agama, Penyimpangan Sosial

INTRODUCTION

Rapid social transformation driven by globalization, digital technology, urbanization, and cultural exchange has reshaped traditional structures of social interaction and moral orientation in contemporary societies (Arifin, 2022; Yudhianto et al., 2024). While these changes have introduced various advancements, they have also created complex challenges, including the weakening of traditional value systems and the emergence of deviant social behavior (Wang et al., 2025). The significance of this research lies in its focus on understanding how these shifts have impacted communities and contributed to changes in social dynamics. This research is essential because it provides critical insights into how societies can better address the growing concerns related to the breakdown of traditional moral values and the rise of deviant behaviors, offering preventive strategies for a more harmonious social order (Khoirohnissah, 2023).

The issue at hand concerns the weakening of traditional moral frameworks in the face of accelerating social change, leading to the emergence of various forms of social deviance (Rastgar et al., 2023). This situation is particularly evident in regions like West Nusa Tenggara, where religious traditions have long served as a moral anchor, yet are increasingly challenged by modernity. These deviant behaviors, if left unchecked, can undermine social cohesion and disrupt communal harmony (Damayanti et al., 2024). In this context, understanding the role of religious education and literacy as preventive measures becomes crucial, particularly in regions where strong religious values coexist with rapidly changing societal norms.

In West Nusa Tenggara, the tension between preserving religious values and responding to the impacts of modernity is palpable. While the region retains a strong religious identity, the acceleration of urbanization, digital technology, and globalization has introduced new challenges (Moslimany et al., 2024; Arifah et al., 2025). Religious traditions, once central to social life, are now confronting unfamiliar cultural influences (S. Arifin et al., 2024). This has led to the emergence of behaviors that diverge from socially accepted norms, creating concerns among local communities. Despite the presence of various religious institutions, such as schools and Islamic boarding schools (pesantren), there remains an ongoing need to evaluate the effectiveness of religious education and literacy in preventing social deviance amid rapid societal transformations (Wardah et al., 2024).

Research on social deviant behavior has often focused on sociological explanations and policy interventions. Yet, there is a gap in exploring the specific role of religious education and literacy in curbing social deviance. Studies have

indicated that while religious education can shape individual behavior, its effectiveness may be diminished without a comprehensive understanding of religious teachings. Existing literature has not adequately addressed the interplay between religious education and literacy as key components of moral formation. This research gap necessitates an investigation into how strengthening religious education and literacy can act as preventive measures against social deviant behavior, specifically within the socio-religious context of West Nusa Tenggara.

Previous studies have examined moral education and its relationship with social deviance, yet few have analyzed the synergistic role of religious education and literacy in shaping moral resilience (Mérida-López et al., 2020). Some studies have explored the role of religion in shaping ethical behavior, but they often treat religious knowledge as a static concept rather than a dynamic tool for navigating contemporary challenges (Aldboush & Ferdous, 2023). This research seeks to fill this gap by providing insights into how religious education, when combined with religious literacy, can address the root causes of social deviance. The contribution of this study lies in its nuanced understanding of religious education's potential to promote moral responsibility in modern societies.

The novelty of this research lies in its focus on religious literacy as a critical component of moral education. While traditional religious education has emphasized the transmission of doctrinal knowledge, this study posits that religious literacy, which encompasses critical thinking and contextual understanding, is essential for navigating the complexities of contemporary social life. This shift in focus enables a more comprehensive approach to moral education that not only preserves religious values but also enhances individuals' ability to apply them across diverse and evolving social contexts. The research will contribute to the development of strategies that integrate religious education and literacy as practical tools in promoting social harmony and moral resilience.

The research problem at hand is to explore how strengthening religious education and religious literacy can serve as preventive measures against social deviant behavior in West Nusa Tenggara. This investigation will provide a deeper understanding of how religious values are internalized and applied in response to modern challenges. The central argument is that by enhancing religious literacy alongside religious education, individuals can better navigate the moral dilemmas posed by contemporary society, thereby fostering a stronger moral foundation and promoting social cohesion. The study's findings will provide valuable insights for educators, policymakers, and religious leaders in developing more effective strategies to address social deviance through value-based education.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative research design with a normative-descriptive approach to examine the role of religious education and religious

literacy as preventive measures against social deviant behavior in West Nusa Tenggara. A qualitative approach is chosen because it is better suited to exploring ethical values, educational principles, and religious norms that influence moral behavior within society, rather than quantitatively measuring social phenomena. This approach allows for a deeper understanding of how religious education and literacy can strengthen moral resilience in a dynamic social context.

The research is conducted in West Nusa Tenggara, selected for its distinctive social and cultural characteristics, where a strong religious identity coexists with rapid social transformation driven by globalization and urbanization. This region's uniqueness, with its religious diversity and deeply rooted traditions, makes it an ideal location to explore how religious education and literacy can serve as preventive strategies against deviant behavior. Additionally, the social and cultural conditions in West Nusa Tenggara offer a rich perspective on the integration of religious education and literacy to address social challenges.

Data collection in this study is conducted through a literature review and document analysis. Secondary sources, including religious texts (notably the Qur'an), classical and contemporary Islamic scholarly works, peer-reviewed journal articles, and relevant policy documents related to spiritual and moral education, are utilized. Data are gathered through systematic literature review and document analysis to ensure the selected sources are thematically aligned with the research objectives.

The collected data are analyzed using thematic content analysis. This analysis involves data reduction, thematic categorization, and interpretive analysis to identify core themes, including moral internalization, ethical reasoning, religious literacy, and preventive education. These themes are interpreted within the frameworks of Islamic normative perspectives and social theory. During this phase, the data are filtered and organized to identify emerging patterns that provide deeper insights into the role of religious education and literacy in preventing social deviance.

To ensure data validity, the study uses source triangulation by comparing insights from religious texts, academic literature, and policy documents. This triangulation process helps verify the consistency and reliability of the findings. Since this study does not involve human subjects, it poses minimal ethical risks. All sources are properly cited, and the analysis emphasizes an educational and preventive framework, rather than an evaluative or judgmental perspective.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION
Result
This section presents the main findings of the study on the role of religious education and religious literacy in preventing social deviant behavior in West

Nusa Tenggara. The findings indicate that religious education plays a crucial role in shaping moral behavior, but its effectiveness is significantly enhanced when paired with comprehensive religious literacy. Additionally, institutional collaboration, including the involvement of families, schools, and community-based organizations, further strengthens its preventive capacity. The integration of Islamic teachings with contemporary moral and educational theories underscores the importance of a holistic approach to moral development in addressing social deviance.

Religious Education as a Foundation for Moral Internalization

The findings of this study reveal that religious education serves as a fundamental mechanism for moral internalization, aligning with Durkheim's (1995) theory that religion acts as a moral regulator by reinforcing collective norms and social solidarity (Najafov, 2025; Febriani, 2021). In West Nusa Tenggara, religious education delivered through families, schools, and religious institutions functions as a continuous process of transmitting values such as self-restraint, responsibility, and respect for others. These values, central to Islamic education, act as protective factors against social deviance, aligning with Adeoye's (2025) perspective that religious education aims to develop akhlaq (moral character) (Adeoye, 2025). However, the study also highlights the importance of moving beyond rote learning and ritualistic instruction. The findings indicate that religious education becomes more effective when it incorporates ethical reasoning and reflective understanding, enabling individuals to address contemporary social challenges better (Thoyib et al., 2024). This conclusion contrasts with more traditional approaches that focus primarily on memorization of religious texts, without fostering critical engagement, underscoring the need for reforms in how religious education is delivered in modern contexts.

Furthermore, the study underscores the significant role of religious literacy in enhancing the preventive potential of religious education. This finding supports Meutia (2021) argument that religious illiteracy often leads to a superficial or fragmented understanding of religious teachings, weakening their ethical application (Meutia & Daud, 2021). By contrast, religious literacy encourages individuals to interpret religious teachings critically, making it easier for them to apply moral principles contextually. The concept of hikmah (wisdom), as discussed by Junaris (2022), emphasizes the importance of understanding and applying religious values thoughtfully and prudently, which is central to the study's findings (Junaris et al., 2022). In West Nusa Tenggara, religious literacy helps individuals navigate the complexities of social change without abandoning core ethical principles. This suggests that educational strategies in the region should not only focus on increasing the quantity of religious education but also on enhancing its depth and contextual understanding to build stronger moral resilience.

Theoretical implications of these findings suggest that religious education and literacy must be integrated into broader educational frameworks that promote ethical awareness and moral reasoning. In particular, this study emphasizes the importance of fostering a deeper, more reflective engagement with religious teachings, which is essential for addressing modern social issues. From a practical perspective, the study highlights the need for policy reforms in religious education that prioritize not only doctrinal knowledge but also critical thinking, ethical reasoning, and contextual understanding. This will ensure that religious education becomes a more effective tool in shaping individuals' moral behavior and resilience against social deviance.

Practically, the study suggests that both religious education and literacy should be incorporated into broader socialization processes, including family, school, and community-based programs. These institutions must collaborate to provide a more holistic approach to moral education that integrates theoretical and practical elements of religious knowledge. Additionally, educators and policymakers should work together to develop curricula that emphasize ethical reasoning, reflective understanding, and contextual moral application, ensuring that religious education remains relevant and effective in addressing the evolving challenges of contemporary society (Kulsum & Manshur, 2025).

Preventive Orientation over Repressive Approaches

The findings of this study highlight the importance of preventive strategies over repressive or punitive approaches in promoting moral behavior. The research shows that preventive measures, particularly those rooted in education and religious literacy, are more sustainable and socially acceptable than punitive measures. This aligns with the normative Islamic framework, which emphasizes the role of persuasion, wisdom, and moral example in ethical transformation (Nurhasan et al., 2025). The Qur'anic directive in Surah An-Nahl (16:125) explicitly calls for promoting moral values through wisdom and good counsel, a principle central to Islamic education (Mau, 2024). This approach contrasts with repressive strategies, which rely heavily on external enforcement and control, often leading to short-term compliance but not fostering long-lasting moral change. In this study, the emphasis on voluntary moral compliance, fostered through religious education, aligns with Islamic teachings that prioritize internal motivation for ethical behavior rather than coercion.

This study's findings also resonate with contemporary educational theories, particularly those that emphasize internal motivation and moral autonomy as key factors influencing ethical behavior. Fajli Aijat (2024) argues that the most effective moral education encourages individuals to regulate their behavior through internalized values and ethical reasoning rather than through external rewards or punishments (Mau, 2024). In this regard, the study reveals that religious education, when paired with religious literacy, facilitates the development of self-regulation, which is essential for making morally informed

decisions without the need for external control (Hakim, 2025). This theoretical alignment underscores the importance of preventive education in shaping morally autonomous individuals capable of navigating ethical dilemmas independently.

Theoretical implications of these findings suggest that moral education should be viewed not as a tool for enforcing compliance, but as a means to cultivate moral reasoning and self-regulation. This shift in perspective requires educators and policymakers to rethink traditional models of moral education, moving away from repressive measures and toward developing intrinsic motivation and ethical awareness. From a practical standpoint, this means that educational systems should prioritize the development of critical thinking, ethical reasoning, and self-discipline, which enable individuals to make ethical choices independently (MATABOGE, 2025). By integrating religious literacy into broader educational curricula, religious institutions can play a significant role in fostering a moral environment that encourages individuals to uphold ethical standards voluntarily.

In practice, these findings suggest that religious education and literacy programs should be designed to foster a culture of personal responsibility and moral autonomy (Rastgar et al., 2023). Rather than relying on punitive measures to deter social deviance, educators should focus on promoting values such as self-restraint, accountability, and compassion. This can be achieved by integrating ethical reasoning and religious literacy into the curriculum in a way that encourages individuals to reflect on their values and the consequences of their actions (Alhosani & Alhashmi, 2024). By fostering an educational environment that emphasizes wisdom, reflection, and ethical commitment, religious education can contribute to the long-term moral resilience of individuals and communities, reducing the need for repressive social control mechanisms.

Institutional Synergy in Moral Education

The findings of this study emphasize the importance of institutional synergy in strengthening religious education and literacy, a concept that aligns with Nasrin's (2025) argument that primary socialization within the family has a lasting impact on an individual's moral orientation (Nasrin et al., 2025). The study reveals that moral education is most effective when families, schools, and religious institutions collaborate, each playing a complementary role. Family-based religious education is foundational, as it imparts core values through daily interactions and modeling of ethical behavior. In contrast, formal educational institutions provide structured instruction, offering opportunities for more systematic ethical reflection (MATABOGE, 2025). Religious institutions, such as pesantren and community-based religious organizations, further contribute by contextualizing moral teachings within communal life. This collaborative approach aligns with the broader theoretical framework of socialization, but it also highlights how integrating religious literacy into these institutions amplifies

the effectiveness of moral education.

From a theoretical perspective, this study reinforces the idea that effective moral education requires a multi-institutional approach. While the existing literature often emphasizes the role of individual institutions, such as the family or schools, this study underscores how their combined efforts are more effective in shaping moral behavior. In West Nusa Tenggara, the presence of pesantren and community-based religious organizations plays a crucial role in institutional synergy, helping to bridge the gap between religious education and practical moral application (Badrun, 2024). This is particularly relevant in the context of rapidly changing social dynamics, where institutional collaboration can help reinforce and adapt religious values to contemporary social challenges. The study's findings support the notion that religious literacy is most impactful when promoted within a collaborative framework that integrates formal and informal educational systems.

The practical implications of these findings suggest that to enhance moral education, institutions must foster closer collaboration. Educational policymakers should promote partnerships between families, schools, and religious organizations to ensure that moral values are consistently reinforced across various social contexts. This integrated approach can help individuals internalize religious values more deeply, strengthening their ethical decision-making skills. For instance, schools and pesantren should not only focus on religious instruction but also on fostering critical thinking and ethical reasoning through religious literacy (Moslimany et al., 2024). By encouraging this synergy, religious institutions can better address social challenges and support the community's moral development, ultimately contributing to a more cohesive and resilient society.

Implications for Moral Resilience and Social Harmony

The study's findings underscore the significant role of religious education and literacy in fostering moral resilience, which refers to the ability of individuals and communities to maintain ethical integrity despite social change and moral ambiguity (Moslimany et al., 2024). This finding aligns with Ibrahim (2025) concept of social capital, which highlights the importance of shared values and trust in sustaining social cohesion (Ibrahim et al., 2025). The study reveals that religious literacy enhances moral resilience by equipping individuals with the interpretive skills and ethical reasoning necessary to navigate complex social dynamics (Ibrahim et al., 2025). This finding is consistent with existing literature, which argues that moral resilience is not a fixed trait but a dynamic process that can be developed through continuous education and engagement with evolving societal norms (Rushton, 2023).

The theoretical implications of this research emphasize the need to integrate religious education with broader sociological frameworks that prioritize social capital and community cohesion. While Putnam's concept of

social capital focuses on the role of shared values in maintaining social networks and trust, this study extends that framework by demonstrating how religious education and literacy can contribute to a shared moral framework that strengthens social harmony (Havemann & Pridmore, 2005). The dynamic nature of moral resilience, as highlighted in the study, suggests that it requires ongoing reinforcement through dialogue and education, particularly in the face of modern challenges. This aligns with contemporary theories of moral development, which emphasize that ethical behavior is shaped by both internal and external factors, including social institutions and educational systems (Yasin et al., 2025).

In practice, the findings imply that educational institutions, religious organizations, and policymakers must prioritize the continuous development of moral resilience by promoting religious literacy (Rushton, 2023). By equipping individuals with the tools to critically engage with their religious teachings and apply them in various social contexts, communities can better adapt to social changes without sacrificing their core ethical principles. This approach will not only strengthen moral resilience but also enhance social harmony by fostering shared values and mutual trust. In practical terms, this could involve integrating more comprehensive religious literacy programs in schools, pesantren, and community organizations, ensuring that individuals are prepared to navigate moral dilemmas with wisdom and ethical reasoning. This strategy contributes to a more resilient society capable of facing the complexities of modern life while maintaining its moral integrity.

Discussion

The findings of this study align with previous research emphasizing the importance of value-based education in preventing social deviance (Piazza et al., 2024). Value-based education has long been recognized for its role in shaping moral awareness, strengthening ethical reasoning, and encouraging socially responsible behavior (Kasmini et al., 2025). This study supports these findings by highlighting that value-based education fosters long-term behavioral change by focusing on internal moral regulation rather than external control. This approach proves to be more sustainable than punitive measures, as it cultivates ethical self-regulation. However, the study extends existing literature by emphasizing religious literacy as a critical component that enhances the effectiveness of religious education. While many studies examine moral education broadly, they often overlook the interpretive aspects of religious understanding, which are essential in navigating contemporary social challenges. This research demonstrates that without sufficient religious literacy, religious education may lead to shallow normative compliance, lacking in depth, contextual awareness, and ethical reflexivity (Jirásek, 2023). Religious literacy, therefore, acts as a bridge, helping individuals apply religious teachings in ways that are meaningful and relevant to today's social realities.

This finding aligns with Moore's (2025) argument that religious illiteracy weakens religion's capacity to function as an ethical guide, especially in pluralistic societies (Supriyadi et al., 2025). Religious literacy enables individuals to navigate moral dilemmas, avoid rigid or literalist interpretations of religious teachings, and engage more constructively with diverse social contexts (Hakim, 2025). This study thus reinforces Moore's argument by showing that religious literacy enhances the transformative potential of religious education by fostering critical reflection, moral reasoning, and contextual judgment (Gulo & Tapilaha, 2024). Theoretical implications from an Islamic normative perspective also resonate with this approach. The concept of hikmah (wisdom) in Islam, which emphasizes thoughtful understanding, prudence, and ethical discernment, supports the study's finding that religious education should not be limited to doctrinal knowledge but should also include an interpretive dimension. Islamic educational traditions have long highlighted the importance of integrating textual knowledge with contextual awareness to ensure that religious values are applied effectively and contribute positively to social harmony (Mala & Hunaida, 2023). This study validates the continued relevance of these classical Islamic principles in addressing contemporary social issues, demonstrating their adaptability in modern settings.

The practical implications of these findings stress the importance of integrating religious education with religious literacy to ensure its effectiveness in promoting moral resilience. Educational systems, particularly in regions like West Nusa Tenggara, should focus not only on the transmission of religious knowledge but also on the development of interpretive skills that allow individuals to engage with their faith in a way that is relevant to contemporary societal challenges. By strengthening religious literacy, individuals will be better equipped to make ethical decisions and contribute positively to their communities (Guna & Yuwantiningrum, 2024). Additionally, the study highlights the importance of cultural and religious grounding in preventive strategies against social deviance. Preventive approaches that are rooted in local religious traditions are more likely to be accepted and sustained by the community. Strategies that disregard local values or impose external frameworks may lack legitimacy and fail to achieve lasting impact (Tetteh et al., 2024). This underscores the need for context-sensitive approaches that are culturally and religiously grounded to foster genuine behavioral change.

Furthermore, this study emphasizes the importance of institutional collaboration in reinforcing the effectiveness of religious education and literacy. Religious education cannot function in isolation; it requires the synergy of families, educational institutions, and religious organizations (Buaya & Kolibu, 2024). Collaboration among these institutions helps to reinforce moral messages across various social contexts, ensuring consistency in value transmission. The study's findings suggest that the integration of religious education and religious literacy offers a comprehensive preventive framework that not only strengthens

individual moral resilience but also contributes to broader social harmony (Shodiq, 2024). By advancing religious literacy as a central concept, this research offers valuable insights into the potential of value-based education to promote social cohesion and provides practical recommendations for educators and policymakers seeking sustainable solutions to social deviance. These findings contribute meaningfully to the academic discourse on moral education, underscoring the importance of an integrated approach that combines ethical content and interpretive capacity.

CONCLUTION

The most important finding of this study is that Islamic Education (IE), operationalized through Pesantren, Madrasah, and Majlis Taklim, plays a central role in shaping family resilience within West Nusa Tenggara (NTB) 's socio-cultural context. The study demonstrates that IE functions as a socio-theological mechanism, embedding theological values such as tawakkul, sabr, and syukr into the daily cognitive and emotional life of families. These values act as meaning-making frameworks that enhance emotional regulation, strengthen coping capacity, and reduce crisis-related distress, aligning with Family Resilience Theory (FRT). This provides new insights into how Islamic education contributes to family resilience by integrating deep theological principles into the development of individuals' and families' ability to withstand challenges.

The strength of this study lies in its contribution to expanding Family Resilience Theory (FRT) and Social Capital Theory (SCT), incorporating a socio-theological perspective often overlooked in resilience studies, particularly in non-Western Muslim contexts. Scientifically, the research enriches family resilience literature by highlighting the role of Islamic educational institutions in fostering social capital and offering emotional, material, and spiritual support through strong social networks. However, the study has limitations, such as its focus on a single region, West Nusa Tenggara, which may limit generalizability. Future research could compare family resilience across different Indonesian regions and explore how religious education integrates with other programs, like family counseling and disaster preparedness, to strengthen resilience in diverse social and cultural contexts.

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