

The Role of Islamic Education to the Enhancement of Adolescents' mental well-being in Bulukumba Regency

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Abstract

Adolescents are an age group undergoing a dynamic psychosocial developmental phase and are vulnerable to various mental pressures such as stress, anxiety, and depression. In Bulukumba Regency, these challenges are exacerbated by the influence of digitalization, social pressures, and low mental health literacy among adolescents. This study aims to analyze the role of Islamic education in enhancing adolescent mental well-being through an approach based on spiritual, moral, and local cultural values. The method used is a literature review by examining various sources related to Islamic education and adolescent mental health. The findings indicate that Islamic education, implemented through activities such as Qur'an memorization (tahfizhul Qur'an), Islamic counseling, psychoeducation based on religious values, and the integration of local cultural values such as siri' na pacce, plays a significant role in shaping mental resilience, emotional stability, and spiritual balance among adolescents. The main challenges faced include academic pressure, weak social support, low mental health literacy, social media influence, and socioeconomic factors. The recommended solutions involve enhancing teacher capacity, active roles of family and community, and the implementation of Islamic digital literacy programs. This study concludes that Islamic education in Bulukumba holds strategic potential as an integrative approach to fostering adolescent mental health both preventively and curatively.

Keywords: *Islamic Education; Mental well-being; Adolescents; Bulukumba.*

INTRODUCTION

Adolescents are in a dynamic developmental phase filled with challenges as they transition toward adulthood. The process of identity formation, intense emotional changes, and complex social pressures often lead to mental health issues such as stress, anxiety, and depression. Data indicate that mental health problems among adolescents have significantly increased since the onset of the pandemic, thereby necessitating a more integrated and comprehensive approach (Rofiki et al., 2023). This situation is further exacerbated by the weak spiritual guidance system, which has not been well integrated into formal educational approaches. In such circumstances, Islamic education holds great potential to serve as an instrument for fostering adolescent mental health through an

approach based on spiritual values, morality, and character development (Muttaqin & Ahmad, 2024).

In this regard, Islam-based education plays a significant role in supporting adolescent mental health. Several studies have shown that teaching methods oriented toward values such as patience, empathy, as well as the implementation of Islamic counseling and psychological education, have been proven to enhance students' mental resilience and overall mental health (Yus et al., 2023). For example, the implementation of Islamic Mental Health Psychoeducation among students at MAN in Banjarmasin successfully improved mental health literacy and adolescent well-being with significant results (Norhayatun et al., 2023).

Bulukumba Regency in Sulawesi selatan Province is one of the regions rich in Islamic traditions and local culture that synergize with each other. In the daily lives of the Bulukumba community, religious values remain a reference point. Bulukumba Regency, which is abundant in Islamic values and Bugis-Makassar culture, such as the philosophy of *siri' na pacce*, provides an important context for this study (Rofiki et al., 2023). However, various modern challenges such as digitalization, peer pressure, and globalization tendencies have the potential to displace local values and create internal conflicts among adolescents. Research conducted by Indriana et al. emphasizes the importance of integrating Islamic education within the current digital context to build the mental resilience of Generation Z through healthy technology literacy.

Research by (Indriana et al., 2023) highlights the importance of integrating Islamic education in the digital era to nurture adolescent mental health through healthy technology literacy. Furthermore, Islamic-based counseling has also been proven to yield positive results. A study conducted at Muhammadiyah Senior High School in Surakarta demonstrated that a comprehensive approach combining the practices of dhikr, prayer, and tazkiyatun nafs (self-purification) can reduce levels of stress, anxiety, and sleep disorders among adolescents (Muslimah et al., 2024). This indicates that Islamic practices possess both preventive and curative value in maintaining psychological health.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach with a literature review method, focusing on the analysis of relevant literature related to theory, Islamic education, and adolescent mental well-being in Bulukumba Regency. The research involves the collection and examination of various journal articles and books discussing Islamic education and adolescent mental health to ensure more accurate research findings. The selection of sources was conducted selectively based on their relevance to the themes of Islamic education and adolescent mental well-being.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Concept of Islamic Education and Adolescent Mental Well-being in Bulukumba Regency

Islamic education is a process aimed at building and developing individuals holistically, encompassing spiritual, intellectual, emotional, and social aspects. The focus of this education is not solely on mastering religious knowledge but also on shaping strong character and personality based on the values of the Qur'an and Hadith. In this way, Islamic education assists adolescents in achieving a balance between their spiritual and physical dimensions, enabling them to face life's changes with wisdom and patience. The fundamental principles of Islamic education emphasize the importance of instilling good morals such as honesty, sincerity, patience, reliance on God (tawakal), and gratitude, which serve as essential foundations for fostering adolescents' mental resilience in coping with life's pressures (Dawam and Syaidah, 2024).

Adolescent mental well-being is a crucial aspect to consider, as adolescence is a transitional phase faced with various complex psychosocial challenges. In Bulukumba Regency, adolescents experience pressures from changes in their social environment, the significant influence of technology and social media, as well as family economic problems that can lead to stress and anxiety. The effective implementation of Islamic education can serve as an effective means to maintain and enhance mental well-being by strengthening their religious and spiritual identity, which can provide meaning in life and inner peace (Rosyada et al., 2022).

The Islamic psychoeducational approach has demonstrated positive outcomes in enhancing mental health awareness among adolescents. Through education that integrates understanding of symptoms of stress, depression, and anxiety with religious principles, adolescents are equipped with the ability to recognize and effectively manage psychological pressures. Programs such as spiritual guidance and Islam-based counseling available in schools and Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) provide a safe space for adolescents to share their problems and receive solutions aligned with Islamic values (Norhayatun et al., 2023). This is particularly important given the persistent negative stigma surrounding mental health issues, which often causes adolescents to hesitate in seeking professional help.

Religious activities performed regularly, such as the five daily prayers, dhikr (remembrance of God), reading the Qur'an, and fasting, have also been shown to provide positive effects both physically and psychologically. These activities help reduce stress hormone levels, such as cortisol, and increase the production of endorphins, which can induce feelings of happiness and calmness. Furthermore, such acts of worship foster discipline and self-control, which are essential for maintaining mental health and preventing psychological disorders. Spirituality in Islam offers a profound perspective on the meaning and purpose of life, thereby helping

adolescents avoid feelings of despair or nihilism that often arise during their search for identity (Ali and Abdul Mu'iz, 2021).

In addition to individual aspects, the role of family and community is highly influential in the success of Islamic education in enhancing adolescents' mental well-being. The family, as the primary and foremost environment for the child, must implement Islamic values in daily life, both through exemplary acts of worship and open, loving communication. A healthy social environment supported by Islamic brotherhood (*ukhuwah Islamiyah*) strengthens emotional security, reduces the risk of social isolation, and enhances a sense of belonging, which is crucial for adolescents when facing various challenges (Andriyani et al., 2022). Religious social activities involving adolescents can foster a sense of responsibility, empathy, and social solidarity, which are important factors for mental well-being.

In Bulukumba Regency, several Islamic educational institutions such as *madrasahs* and *pesantrens* have implemented programs to strengthen character and mental resilience through a comprehensive spiritual approach. In-depth studies of the Qur'an and Hadith related to patience in facing life's challenges, practices of self-reflection, and the enhancement of moral character through religious extracurricular activities constitute important elements in the mental development of youth in the region. This method supports adolescents in managing stress and life pressures in a positive and productive manner, as well as helping them build hope and motivation in their lives.

The Role of Islamic Education in Improving the Mental Well-being of Adolescents in Bulukumba Regency

Islamic education in Bulukumba Regency plays a strategic role in strengthening the mental resilience of adolescents amid the challenges of the digital era, which is fraught with psychological and social pressures. In this region, religious education functions not only as a means to instill Islamic knowledge but also as an instrument that soothes the soul and reinforces the meaning of life. Based on observations and field studies, the integration of spiritual values within Islamic education has been proven to have a positive impact on the psychological stability of adolescents, particularly in coping with anxiety, academic stress, and environmental pressures.

Various activities such as weekly *halaqah* (study circles), character development, Qur'an memorization (*tahfizhul Qur'an*), and the study of classical Islamic texts are integral components of the Islamic educational approach implemented in Bulukumba. Adolescents who actively participate in religious activities, both within school and community settings, tend to exhibit higher emotional stability compared to those who do not receive structured spiritual guidance. Spiritual practices such as reading the Qur'an and performing *dhikr* (remembrance of God) have

therapeutic effects in reducing mental stress by fostering tranquility, spiritual connection with God, and enhancing life hope (Rosyada et al., 2022).

The Islamic education approach in Bulukumba also addresses aspects of counseling and character development. Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers serve not only as instructors but also as moral and psychological mentors for students. They understand the challenges faced by adolescents, such as bullying, identity crises, and anxiety about the future. PAI teachers who possess interpersonal skills and psychological insight are able to create a safe space for students to openly express their problems (Islami et al., 2025). In some schools, PAI teachers even initiate informal Islamic counseling sessions integrated into both classroom activities and extracurricular settings.

The family factor also plays a crucial role in supporting adolescent mental health. A study by Shodiq et al. (2025) confirms that religious education conducted within the family environment can mitigate the negative impact of disharmonious household conditions on the child's psychological well-being (Shodiq et al., 2025). This is highly relevant in Bulukumba, where Islamic values within families are consistently upheld. Parents actively participate in their children's spiritual education by instilling religious values such as patience, gratitude, and reliance on God (*tawakal*).

In today's digital era, adolescents also face pressures stemming from social media, consumerist culture, and a high tendency toward social comparison. To address these challenges, several schools in Bulukumba have implemented digital literacy programs based on Islamic values. These programs teach students to maintain ethical communication in the virtual world, exercise patience in facing negative comments, and limit consumption of unproductive content. Such Islamic digital literacy approaches help maintain adolescents' emotional balance (Indriana et al., 2023).

One of the flagship programs contributing to adolescent mental health is the Tahfizul Qur'an program. This program is not only aimed at increasing the memorization of verses but also serves as a medium for spiritual strengthening and character building. Research by Muttaqin et al. (2024) indicates that the process of memorizing the Qur'an, which involves *dhikr* (remembrance), repetition, and deep contemplation of the meanings of the sacred verses, can reduce academic stress levels as well as enhance concentration and inner tranquility (Muttaqin et al., 2024). Participants in the Tahfiz program also demonstrate improvements in discipline and emotional regulation.

Islamic education in Bulukumba is also inseparable from local wisdom, one of which is the value of *siri' na pacce* originating from the Bugis-Makassar culture. This value teaches the importance of a sense of shame in committing sins (*siri'*) and concern for the suffering of others

(pacce). The integration of this cultural value with Islamic teachings creates a strong moral foundation in shaping responsible and empathetic adolescent behavior.

Research by Azfar et al. (2024) emphasizes the importance of a humanistic approach to Islamic education, which adapts teaching methods to the psychosocial conditions of learners. This approach is considered more effective compared to rigid and normative conventional methods (Azfar et al., 2024). In Bulukumba, several Islamic educational institutions have begun to implement gentler, more communicative, and stigma-free teaching strategies to create a psychologically healthy learning environment.

Based on the foregoing explanation, it can be concluded that Islamic education in Bulukumba Regency has evolved into a system that not only emphasizes theological aspects but also pays attention to the mental health of adolescents. Through an integrative approach encompassing spiritual guidance, Islamic counseling, Qur'an memorization (tahfizh), Islamic digital literacy, and the reinforcement of local cultural values, Islamic education has proven effective in shaping the psychological resilience of the younger generation. If continuously developed in an adaptive and professional manner, this system holds great potential in cultivating a generation that is mentally healthy, spiritually strong, and resilient in facing the challenges of the times.

Challenges and Solutions in Improving the Mental Well-being of Adolescents in Bulukumba Regency

It is important for adolescents to maintain good mental health so that they can grow healthily and succeed in life. In Bulukumba Regency, ensuring that adolescents have good mental health is not an easy task. This issue arises from various factors, such as internal personal struggles, societal pressures, and a lack of support from environments like schools and families. Because this problem is complex, it requires special attention and a comprehensive approach. Some of the challenges frequently faced by adolescents include:

a. Academic pressure and limitations of the education system

One of the major issues faced by adolescents in Bulukumba is the significant academic pressure they experience. Excessive assignments, competition for grades, and expectations from parents and educators can lead to prolonged stress and anxiety, which disrupt their mental stability. Unfortunately, the education system has not yet fully responded to this problem. Many educators lack sufficient knowledge and skills to recognize and address students' mental health issues (Idris, 2023). Although the local government has made efforts to provide training for Guidance and Counseling teachers, limitations in the number of experts and the lack of psychological facilities remain considerable challenges.

b. Social Pressure and Ineffective Communication Within Families

Social factors also play a major role as primary causes disrupting the mental health of

adolescents in Bulukumba. Unrestricted social interactions, bullying, and various forms of verbal and physical harassment at school increase the risk of psychological problems among teenagers. In this context, poor communication between parents and children plays a significant role. (Andi Marlah Susyanti Akbar and Halim, 2020) revealed that a lack of emotional bonds and open dialogue within families can drive adolescents to engage in risky behaviors, including immoral acts, which have recently drawn public attention in the Bulukumba community.

c. Low Mental Health Literacy.

Low mental health literacy is one of the main obstacles in improving mental well-being among adolescents in Bulukumba. A study conducted by (Brooks et al.,2021) revealed that the IMPeTUs intervention an interactive digital application combining storytelling and games, developed collaboratively with adolescents, parents, teachers, and medical professionals—has successfully increased awareness of mental disorder symptoms. This intervention also encouraged adolescents aged 11 to 15 in Java Island to better manage themselves and seek help. However, to date, a similar level of literacy in Bulukumba remains low, resulting in adolescents' limited ability to identify symptoms of stress, anxiety, or depression in themselves or among their peers.

d. Lack of Social Support and Self-Efficacy

The lack of support from the social environment and low self-efficacy are serious obstacles to improving the mental health of young people in Bulukumba. A study conducted in Makassar by Ibnu and Sandy (2025) demonstrated that stable social support and a high level of self-efficacy serve as protective factors against psychological stress in adolescents. Strong independence is also directly associated with a reduction in psychological pressure. In Bulukumba, the existing social structure actually has the potential to strengthen social support through close relationships among community members. However, this potential is often hindered by family problems, difficulties in adapting to social changes, and structural challenges such as migration and poverty, which can diminish adolescents' mental resilience against psychological stress (Ibnu and Sandy, 2025).

e. The Influence of Social Media on the Mental Well-being of Adolescents

Social media has become an inseparable part of the lives of adolescents in Bulukumba. Platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and WhatsApp are intensively used by teenagers for communication, entertainment, and self-expression. However, excessive use of social media can trigger various psychological disorders, including social anxiety, depression, and sleep disturbances. This is caused by phenomena such as Fear of Missing Out (FOMO), social comparison, and the pressure to present a perfect image in the virtual world (Winarko, 2023).

Moreover, cyberbullying cases represent a serious threat associated with social media use.

Many adolescents in rural areas, including Bulukumba, fall victim to negative comments, rumor spreading, and online harassment. The lack of digital literacy education makes it difficult for them to distinguish between positive and negative content, rendering them vulnerable to misinformation, violence, and pornography (Fitriah et al., 2023). A study indicates that social media usage exceeding four hours per day correlates with an increased risk of anxiety and depression disorders among Indonesian adolescents (Afsari et al., 2024). Additionally, social comparison and digital media addiction contribute to decreased self-esteem and body image disturbances (Khayru & Issalillah, 2022).

f. Socio-Economic Factors and Access to Mental Health Services

The socio-economic conditions of families also significantly affect the mental health of adolescents. In Bulukumba Regency, the majority of the population still falls within the lower-middle economic category. Adolescents from underprivileged families often face economic pressures, domestic conflicts, and limited access to educational and health facilities, all of which can exacerbate their psychological conditions. According to the I-NAMHS survey, approximately 15.5 million Indonesian adolescents experience mental disorders annually, with major risk factors including poverty, family conflicts, and limited access to mental health services (I-NAMHS, 2021). In rural areas such as Bulukumba, professional psychological services remain scarce, expensive, and inaccessible to impoverished communities.

Based on the explanation above, it is evident that adolescents in Bulukumba face various serious issues related to mental well-being. Given the complexity of this matter, a comprehensive approach is required, involving multiple stakeholders and taking into account the local context in seeking solutions. Efforts to improve the mental well-being of adolescents in Bulukumba necessitate not only actions from the education and health sectors but also active participation from families, communities, and local government. The following outlines several solutions that can be gradually implemented to address these challenges.

Issues related to academic pressure and limitations within the education system, for example, can be addressed by enhancing the capabilities of teachers, particularly in the field of Guidance and Counseling (BK), through continuous training on mental health literacy, early detection of stress, and emotional management among adolescents. Many teachers in underdeveloped areas still lack the skills to handle students' psychological problems; therefore, training focused on psychosocial curriculum is highly necessary (Idris, 2023). Additionally, school-based programs such as IMPeTUs, developed in Java, have proven effective in improving both teachers' and students' understanding of mental health through the use of interactive media and reflective sessions (Brooks et al., 2021).

Social issues such as bullying and ineffective communication within families require solutions through community- and school-based interventions. Marlah Susyanti and Halim (2020)

emphasize the importance of parental participation in parenting workshops, where they are equipped with skills to foster more open communication and establish better emotional bonds with their children (Marlah Susyanti & Halim, 2020). Furthermore, the implementation of modules like IMPeTUs also includes educational components for families, assisting parents in understanding adolescents' emotional states and how to provide appropriate support.

Inadequate mental health literacy remains a significant challenge that needs to be addressed. To overcome this, technology-based approaches can offer promising alternatives. Applications such as IMPeTUs, which combine narratives, games, and online consultation sessions, have proven effective in helping adolescents identify signs of mental disorders and encouraging them to seek early support (Brooks et al., 2021). The involvement of schools, educators, parents, and healthcare professionals in disseminating such applications or similar modules in areas like Bulukumba will greatly support the enhancement of literacy among adolescents.

Furthermore, to address the lack of social support and low self-confidence, interventions focusing on strengthening adolescents' social networks through group activities and peer mentoring are highly recommended. Research conducted by Ibnu and Sandy (2025) in Makassar demonstrated that life skills training and community-based activities such as peer support are effective in enhancing adolescents' mental resilience and boosting their self-confidence (Ibnu & Sandy, 2025). The existing social structure in Bulukumba holds significant potential if properly managed through collaboration with youth organizations, educational institutions, and local religious leaders.

In efforts to improve the mental well-being of adolescents in Bulukumba Regency, mental health literacy-based interventions represent a crucial strategic step. One proven effective approach is the implementation of mental health literacy and psychoeducation programs at both community and school levels. These programs focus on enhancing adolescents' understanding of basic psychological issues, identifying symptoms of mental disorders, reducing stigma, and providing life skills training. Research by Pusvitasari, Viyani, and Heryadi (2023) demonstrates that empowering youth cadres through mental health literacy training at Ngaglik 2 Community Health Center successfully improved their ability to recognize and respond appropriately to psychological conditions. This program also had a positive impact on improving communication between adolescents and their families as well as their surrounding environment (Pusvitasari et al., 2023).

In addition, the implementation of brief school-based interventions also constitutes a practical solution that can be adapted by schools in Bulukumba. Educational sessions lasting 1–2 hours, covering the introduction to mental health, adolescent emotional stress, and the importance of seeking help, have been proven to significantly enhance students' understanding. Siahaan and

colleagues (2024) conducted a study among junior high school students in Jakarta and found that this brief intervention improved students' positive attitudes toward help-seeking and reduced stigma associated with psychological disorders (Siahaan et al., 2024). Similar models can be replicated in schools in Bulukumba by adapting them to the local social and cultural context.

By integrating these various solutions, it is expected that the mental health of adolescents in Bulukumba can improve gradually, sustainably, and based on comprehensive research.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

Islamic education in Bulukumba Regency plays a crucial role in enhancing the mental well-being of adolescents. It assists them in coping with contemporary pressures encountered at school, in social interactions, and within themselves. Islamic education in this region not only imparts religious knowledge but also shapes good character in spiritual, emotional, social, and intellectual dimensions. By integrating the teachings of the Qur'an, Hadith, moral values, and regular worship, Islamic education helps adolescents develop greater mental resilience, discipline, and spiritual awareness. In practice, Islamic education in Bulukumba adapts to address adolescent mental health issues. Various programs are implemented, such as Qur'an memorization (tahfizhul Qur'an), weekly halaqah sessions, moral guidance, Islamic counseling provided by Islamic Education (PAI) teachers, and lessons on digital technology grounded in Islamic values taught in madrasahs, pesantrens, and public schools. Religious activities that are routinely performed, such as prayer, dhikr (remembrance of God), reading the Qur'an, and fasting, have been proven to calm adolescents' minds and reduce stress. Additionally, local values such as *siri' na pacce* enrich Islamic education with cultural elements that strengthen adolescents' morals and social awareness. However, efforts to improve the mental health of adolescents in Bulukumba still face numerous challenges. High academic pressure, an education system that has yet to fully address psychological issues, lack of communication within families, insufficient knowledge of mental health, and inadequate social support remain major problems. To address these issues, comprehensive solutions involving multiple stakeholders are required. Teachers' capacities, especially in Guidance and Counseling, need to be enhanced through training on mental health so that they can detect and manage students' psychological problems. Moreover, parents should be involved in Islamic parenting programs and family communication workshops to create a healthy emotional environment at home. The utilization of digital technology, such as the IMPeTUs application or interactive modules based on Islamic values, can also accelerate the improvement of mental health literacy among adolescents and the general community. Furthermore, strengthening adolescents' social relationships through community activities, peer support, and

community-based counseling can help boost their self-confidence and psychological resilience. Overall, Islamic education in Bulukumba has provided a strong foundation for building a mentally healthy, spiritually resilient younger generation capable of facing life's challenges wisely and productively. If this approach continues to be developed effectively, professionally, and based on data, Islamic education will not only serve as a moral and spiritual safeguard but also become an effective means to strengthen adolescents' mental health amid social, cultural, and technological changes.

Suggestion

My suggestion is that Islamic education in Bulukumba Regency should continue to grow by using a more connected approach that addresses young people's mental health. Teachers, parents, and schools need to work together to create an environment that supports mental well-being. They can do this by wisely and consistently using Islamic values, local culture, and digital technology.

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